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ADVENTURE PATH[™]



Wrath of the
Righteous

CITY OF LOCUSTS

by Richard Pett



Anevia Tirabade
Spymaster of Drezen

If Anevia accompanies the PCs, advance her to be a 17th-level rogue. After the campaign, she semi-retires with her wife to help rebuild the Tirabades' family farm, yet as long as demons remain, she continues to go on scouting missions into the Worldwound to finish them off.



Aravashnial
Riftwarden of Drezen

Advance Aravashnial to be a conjurer 7/riftwarden 10. After the campaign, Aravashnial returns to Kenabres to restore the Riftwarden presence, hoping to focus the group on watching over Sarkoris to prevent a new Worldwound from opening in the future.

HORGUS GWERM
Foul-Tempered Treasurer

If Horgus accompanies the PCs, advance him to be an aristocrat 4/rogue 14. He returns to Kenabres after the campaign to aid in rebuilding the city, his time spent with the heroes having reformed his self-centered personality into one of altruism and patriotism for his country.



Irabeth Tirabade
Leader of Drezen

If Irabeth joins the PCs in their adventures, advance her to be a 17th-level paladin. Although offered stewardship of Drezen after the campaign, Irabeth and her wife Anevia opt instead to return to rural Mendev, where they hope to rebuild the Tirabade farmstead.



Queen Galfrey
Ruler of Mendev

If Queen Galfrey accompanies the PCs, advance her to be a 17th-level paladin. Soon after the campaign, she is able to finally look for an heir to her throne—either by pursuing a romantic interest with a PC or choosing a likely hero to directly inherit her mantle of rule.



Sosiel Vaenic
High Priest of Drezen

If Sosiel accompanies the PCs, advance him to be a 17th-level cleric. After the campaign, the church, impressed with his devotion, offers him the chance to found a new cathedral anywhere he chooses—he selects his hometown of Carpenden in Andoran.

ARON KIP
Warden of Drezen

If the PCs bring Aron along to travel with them, advance him to be a rogue 7/low templar 10, opting for the redemption choice at the final level of low templar and making him NG. He and Sosiel are wed, and he accompanies his husband to Carpenden to found a Shelynite temple.



Arueshalae
Risen Succubus of Desna

Arueshalae should be advanced to be a master spy 10/trickster 6 if she accompanies the PCs. Unless she remains with a lover on the Material Plane, she travels to Desna's court to pledge her loyalty, and becomes, in time, a powerful agent of the goddess.





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ADVENTURE PATH  PART 6 OF 6

CITY OF LOCUSTS



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<i>Demons Revisited</i>	DR	<i>Pathfinder Adventure Path #37</i>	AP37		

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Paizo Publishing, LLC
7120 185th Ave NE, Ste 120
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It's the End of the World(wound)

Changes are coming to Avistan by the end of the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path, whether your players' characters succeed at or fail their quest to close the Worldwound. The Worldwound is either going to expand significantly and, perhaps, consume all of Avistan—or even all of Golarion... or it's going to close and be over and done with, all thanks to the actions of a unique band of mythic heroes, the likes of which an Adventure Path (and by extension Golarion) has never before seen.

Keep two things in mind for this adventure. First, it's meant to showcase the horrors of the Worldwound as a motivation to the heroes, and thus features mature themes that include torture, suicide, and sexual content—adjust encounters as appropriate for your players' comfort levels.

Second, the consequences of this adventure are limited to this Adventure Path. The events of this adventure can alter the geography of the Inner Sea region. They can see the death and rise of gods. They can change the course of any future

campaigns in dramatic ways. The article “Beyond the Campaign” on page 64 explores these possibilities in greater detail, but remember, we at Paizo make no assumptions about when most Adventure Paths, including this one, begin in relationship to any others. Future Adventure Paths and products published by us will continue to assume that the Worldwound is still open, that Deskari and Areelu are still plotting, and that the crusaders are still traveling north to bolster Mendev's borders. The time may come when we might decide to do a sequel of sorts to Wrath of the Righteous... but for now, that time is a long way off. The next Adventure Path—Mummy's Mask—takes place far to the south and is focused on Osirion rather than the Worldwound and mummies instead of demons!

Immortal PCs

The PCs have reached 9th tier as this adventure begins, and that means they're all immortal. This mythic ability is a

game changer—a total party kill is no longer the end of the campaign. This adventure anticipates that, and to a certain extent even expects it. If the PCs are all slain, their equipment is claimed by those who defeated them and their bodies are destroyed, eaten, or scattered; when they come back to life 24 hours later, the PCs may be together or split up, but the first few times this happens, no immediate foes should be nearby. Give the PCs a chance to recover and reoutfit themselves with lesser gear—at this point, the primary goal for the PCs should be a rematch against the foe that defeated them, but unless they took pains to protect their gear, they may find the rematch to be even more difficult. However, the fact that they now know more about their foe and can prepare more appropriately, combined with the likelihood that the foe thinks they're still dead and will be startled to face them again, gives them an advantage in this next fight. Also consider giving the PCs a chance to regain their gear in other ways, such as by infiltrating the foe's lair and gathering their equipment before facing their nemesis again. Alternatively, the significant NPCs and the crusaders can certainly reoutfit the PCs with loaned gear and items in the interim.

Death, in the end, should be a temporary setback for the mythic PCs at this point, but remember that if they die too often and lose too much time, Deskari and Areelu may be able to tear the Worldwound wide open! (See “Beyond the Campaign” for the timeline of this apocalyptic event.)

Wrapping Things Up

The various allies the PCs have gathered to their side during the course of this adventure have had months, perhaps even years, to get to know the PCs, advise them, and aid them. This adventure makes no assumptions that any of these NPCs still live, but it's likely that at least a few of them (if not all of them) do. You'll know by this point which of these NPCs are particularly important to the PCs, and you should take pains to include them in this adventure. Give these NPCs a chance to wrap up their storylines. If one of them has been hungering for vengeance against an enemy the PCs confront in this adventure, try to let that NPC be present at that final fight. If an NPC has been pursuing a romantic relationship with a PC or another NPC, perhaps the two lovers get married in a hasty ceremony conducted after Drezen is defended but before the PCs set off on their mission. At the end of this adventure, these NPCs can help the PCs close the Worldwound, since the close bonds they forged over the course of Wrath of the Righteous represent a potent source of power to wield against the disruptive and devastating forces of the Abyss.

Consider also the PCs' campaign traits. While the stories stemming from the PCs' campaign traits played out to their intended conclusions in the third adventure of Wrath of the Righteous, these traits continue to affect the PCs beyond that point. As this Adventure Path concludes, look for ways to use the PCs' campaign traits to provide a bit of closure as well!

on the cover

Wayne Reynolds finishes off the Wrath of the Righteous with the campaign's two most dangerous villains—seductive and deadly Areelu Vorlesh in the foreground, and Deskari himself dealing with some pesky adventurers in the background!

Mythic Trials in “City of Locusts”

Unlike the last few adventures, there aren't a lot of mythic trials awaiting the PCs this time. If they miss one here or there, feel free to allow the defeat of other powerful foes or the discovery of significant bits of world lore to stand in for replacement trials!

Trial 1: The PCs must defeat Aponavicius (most likely by invading her realm and slaying the marilith; see page 12).

Trial 2: The PCs must retrieve the *Nahyndrian chisel* and defeat Mistress Anemora (see page 25).

Trial 3: The PCs must find the Suture, determine his nature, and rescue him from the Foundry (see page 35).

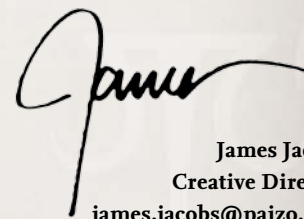
Trial 4: The PCs must defeat the Storm King (see page 36)

Trial 5: The PCs must traverse the heart of the Worldwound (see page 45).

Non-Mythic Finales

In previous adventures, options to run the adventure for a non-mythic group were available. In “City of Locusts,” this gets a bit more complex. Many of the encounters in this adventure are significantly higher in power than CR 20. In addition, “City of Locusts” has a relatively hard-and-fast time limit—the adventure more or less forces the PCs to push through more encounters before resting and recovering than normal.

If you want to run “City of Locusts” for a non-mythic group, your best bet is to simply rebuild the more powerful foes so that they're closer to CR 20 in power. Consider replacing Deskari's stat block with that of Echo of Deskari (see page 48), and then rebuild all other monsters in the adventure as appropriate so that none have a CR as high as the Echo does. Further, you should remove or at the very least significantly expand the restrictions imposed by the countdown before the Worldwound opens. Even then, the adventure should prove a memorable and quite challenging one for a high-level party!



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CITY OF LOCUSTS

⌘ PART 1: THE DEFENSE OF DREZEN

PAGE 7

Once again, Drezen comes under the attack of the marilith Aponavicius, but this time the heroes of the Fifth Crusade are there to defend it!

⌘ PART 2: STORM KING'S SHADOW

PAGE 14

A dangerous journey to the ruined city of Iz to gather resources for the closing of the Worldwound puts the heroes in direct confrontation with the Storm King.

⌘ PART 3: THRESHOLD OF THE END

PAGE 37

Armed with the rituals and resources they need, the PCs delve into the heart of chaos to face its most powerful guardians in an attempt to finally close the Worldwound forever!

⌘ PART 4: CLOSING THE WORLDWOUND

PAGE 55

All that remains is to perform the ritual of closing from the *Lexicon of Paradox*, yet even if the heroes close the Worldwound, Deskari must still be dealt with!

Advancement Track

"City of Locusts" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

L18

The PCs should be 18th level/9th tier at the beginning of the adventure.

L19

The PCs should be 19th level soon after they start Part 2.

L20

The PCs should be 20th level by the time they begin exploring Threshold.

T10

The PCs become 10th tier when they traverse the Worldwound in area **F11**.

Adventure Background

A billion buzzing wings signal his approach. The world shudders and bleeds as he rises. Some say he foreshadows the end and call him the Usher of the Apocalypse. In the Worldwound, a realm scarred and infected by his presence, the sky boils crimson and the land below crumbles and dies. But a few heroes have the potential to halt the advance of the Lord of the Locust Host. Will they be enough? Can anyone face Deskari and his plague of demons, or is this the advent of the end of days?

All demon lords seek to expand their Abyssal realms, be it by conquering greater lands, growing new regions from their victims' corpses, or infecting other worlds like a disease. Deskari's realm is the Rasping Rift, a horrific maze of chasms that reach away into forever both above and below. His realm expands by extending its rifts into other worlds, and few know the horror of this expansion more intimately than denizens of Golarion. Deskari wants nothing more than to draw a significant portion of this world into his own rift, and now, he is finally ready to finish the job. If all goes according to plan, the cancer of canyons by which he's invading Golarion may even consume the world entire.

It has been long in coming, this day, this terrible day. Many might believe it began at the start of the Age of Lost Omens, when Deskari's greatest mortal agent, the witch Areelu Vorlesh, engineered the opening of the Worldwound deep under the prison tower Threshold, yet this was more precisely the culmination of a long-laid plan. Deskari's interest in Sarkoris winds back through the centuries, to when he first took notice of a singular "thinness" between the land and his own realm—a happenstance quirk of the underlying structure of reality he instructed his cult to explore. His worship grew and flourished, and by 4406 AR his agents had secret temples scattered throughout the Northmounds of central Sarkoris. Yet these agents moved too quickly, too blatantly, and their plans were discovered. Deskari sought to aid them by investing his power in the greatest of his priests, transforming him into a sort of avatar, yet this act only further drew the attention of his enemies. Aroden himself finally defeated Deskari's avatar, mere hours before the demon lord would have fully finished his transposition into the avatar's body. His echo was driven across the land, forced to retreat through Mendev, where Aroden finally forced him and his demon armies into the Lake of Mists and Veils in 4433.

For well over a century, Deskari seethed in his Abyssal realm, but largely turned his interests elsewhere. It wasn't until a woman named Areelu Vorlesh called upon him that his attentions returned to Sarkoris. Imprisoned in the tower of Threshold for the crime of using arcane magic, Areelu had discovered the same thinness between this world and the Abyss that had drawn Deskari to it before, and when she

pledged her loyalty to him in return for aid in destroying the land that had betrayed her, the demon lord saw his chance. After 6 years of labor, Areelu, having recruited the aid of two other powerful arcane spellcasters and fellow prisoners under false pretenses of escaping, finally managed to open the destructive rift that would become the Worldwound. On the other side, Deskari used his scythe *Riftcarver* to widen the hole, beginning a chain reaction of devastation that saw the destruction of central Sarkoris and the rise of the Worldwound. Many scholars have theorized about the significance of this event's timing, as the Worldwound opened only weeks after the death of Deskari's old enemy Aroden, yet to date no evidence that this convergence of events was anything more than coincidence has surfaced.

For the next century or so, Deskari continued his acts of attrition, violence, and psychological warfare against the world, first against the Sarkorians, and then after they were all but defeated, against the Mendevian crusaders who came to try to contain his armies. After decades of skirmishing, corruption, and torment, however, Deskari has had his fill of toying with his victims and is finally ready to finish the job. Yet now, as he can taste victory, the crusade has finally produced a group of heroes who might just have a chance to stop him!

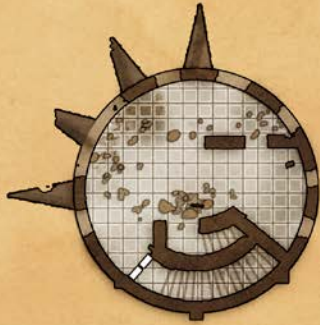
Part 1: The Defense of Drezon

At the start of this adventure, Deskari's forces launch a final all-out assault on their enemies. Every city along the border is attacked by demonic armies as Deskari and his most trusted minions focus on the complex ritual that will prepare the Worldwound to rip wide open. Areelu Vorlesh and several of the more powerful agents have gathered in the tower of Threshold to perform this ritual, while the bulk of the rest of the forces are on the march. Drezon, being the home of the PCs, is one of the cities initially targeted by the enemy—in particular, by the marilith Aponavicius, who is eager to retake her first prize.

Once the events of "City of Locusts" begin, the PCs should have the feeling that there's little chance for rest. Since the adventure is on a "timer," the luxury of taking long breaks to recover should not be there for the PCs. They can certainly make quick trips to other cities via teleportation to resupply, but if they dally too long, they'll risk not being able to stop Areelu and Deskari from opening the Worldwound. The timing of when this apocalyptic event might happen is left entirely to you—if it occurs, see "Beyond the Campaign" starting on page 64 for more details.

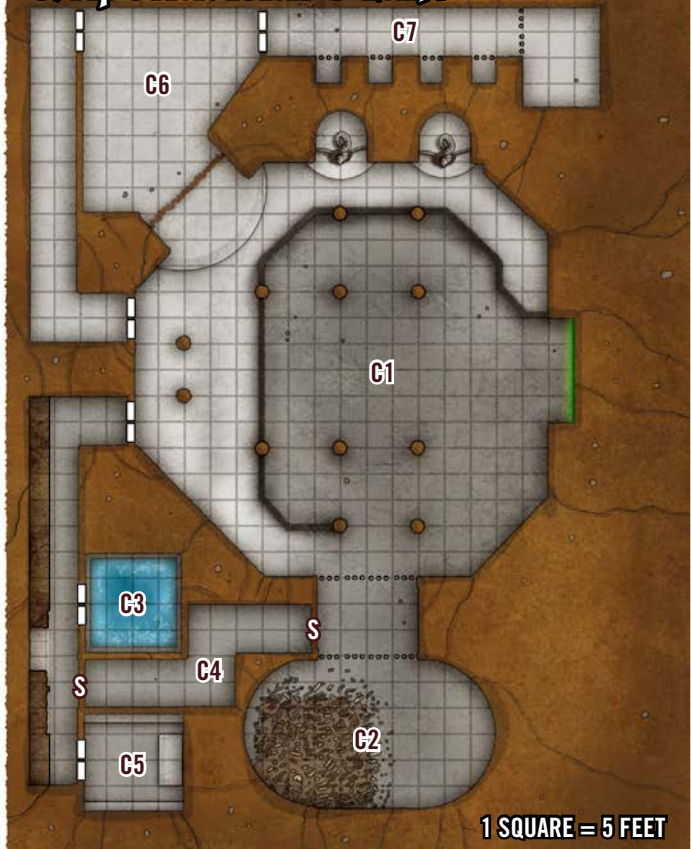
The timing of when Aponavicius's attack on Drezon begins is also left to you, but once the marilith and her armies strike, the attack commences swiftly indeed, with her demonic legions invading and attacking key parts of the city.

A. Demons in the tower



B. Opening the Portal

C. Aponavicius's Lair



THE BATTLE BEGINS

Aponavicius's army is an immense force of vrocks, babaus, and mythic apocalypse locusts augmented by smaller groups of more powerful demons pressed into service. Aponavicius directs the battle via *astral projection* from her portable command center—a tiny extradimensional demiplane she can access via a magical pool in her lair (see area C3). Her projected image appears among her troops, issuing orders and reappearing on the battlefield as needed.

There is little warning of the attack—the demonic forces teleport in and appear at the southern and northern borders of Drezen, just beyond the 10-mile radius of protection afforded by the *Sword of Valor*. The artifact doesn't prevent the demons from surging in to attack physically, but does cause them pain and penalties. Once the attack begins, the PCs should either realize it or be informed immediately.

This part of the adventure does not focus on the battle itself, but rather on a desperate series of encounters that face the PCs as they handle specific scenes that unfold during the battle. The PCs' actions in these encounters should determine the battle's results—if they can infiltrate Aponavicius's lair and defeat the marilith, you should

assume that Drezen's armies endure heavy casualties, but in the end are victorious and turn back the demon army. If the PCs fail, they are likely killed by the marilith and her guardians, and the fate of Drezen and the Worldwound is in Deskari's hands.

You can play out the mass combats in Drezen if you wish, either by using the narrative mass combat rules detailed in *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign*, by building troops of babaus and other demons using the rules for troop battle presented on page 16 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #71: Rasputin Must Die!*, or using a different mass combat rules system of your choice, but this adventure does not focus on that aspect of the battle.

A. DEMONS IN THE TOWER (CR 18)

Creatures: Moments after the battle for Drezen begins, the PCs should be made aware of a shocking fact—the demons have already reached Citadel Drezen! A group of nalfeshnee demons has landed on the citadel's roof and begun slaughtering guards there—this adventure assumes this attack takes place in what was once the lair of the mythic chimera Soltengrebbe (area F23 in “Sword of Valor”—the map for this encounter is reproduced above), but if it makes more sense for the attack to occur elsewhere, feel free to

change it as needed. How the PCs learn of the attack is irrelevant—they might be at the location when the demons attack, they could see the attack commence, or a significant NPC could warn them of the attack. If the PCs ignore this attack, the nalfeshnees press their way into the citadel and can wreak great havoc on the place—at your discretion, this could result in the deaths of one or more significant NPCs or the loss of treasure and magical items stored in the citadel. This encounter is meant to be little more than a “warm up” for the PCs, though, and if they skip it and go directly into the next encounter, don’t worry.

The nalfeshnees are nearly overwhelmed with battle lust and enjoy destroying the castle’s physical structures almost as much as slaying its inhabitants. Remember, the *Sword of Valor* prevents them from teleporting and imposes a –4 penalty to their AC and on saving throws. A nalfeshnee reduced to 40 or fewer hit points flees the battle and does not return.

NALFESHNEES (4)

CR 14

XP 38,400 each

hp 203 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 65)

B. OPENING THE PORTAL

Once the nalfeshnees have been dealt with, take a few moments to describe to the PCs how their armies are doing against the demonic invaders—this is the time to make them feel that they’ve made a difference, so describe their armies heroically holding off flights of vrocks and hordes of babaus, and even facing large demons like shemhazians or ulkretths (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #73 82). Before the PCs can race off to join the battle, though, a new development comes to their attention—one of the walls in the basement of Citadel Drezen has started glowing with Abyssal runes and appears to be transforming into a portal!

The wall in question is in the old Ritual Chamber (area G10 in “Sword of Valor”; this room’s map is reprinted on page 8 of this adventure), to the west of the northern side chamber. This wall once contained a portal to Aponavicius’s personal extraplanar realm, but when she left Drezen at the start of “Sword of Valor,” she deactivated this portal. The PCs may have recognized the intended purpose of the wall earlier on, but now, Aponavicius is attempting to reactivate the portal from the other side—if she can get it open, she can invade Citadel Drezen from within!

The report of this looming event should be given to the PCs by Aravashnial or Arueshalae if possible, as these two NPCs know much of Abyssal portals and should be able to impress upon the PCs the danger of letting the portal manifest. At the same time, the NPC tells the PCs that if they do let it manifest and then use it to invade Aponavicius’s realm, they may be able to cut the army’s

head off by defeating its commander—the opportunity for a swift resolution to the assault on Drezen should be too good to pass up.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive in the ritual chamber, they should do so just in time to see the glowing wall of runes flash with sickening mauve light and then disgorge a mass of chattering, locustlike fiends. These monsters are particularly powerful apocalypse locusts—monsters normally used by the Worldwound as its least powerful mythic monsters. These are much more powerful than the standard apocalypse locusts, and while the vaguely humanoid locust-winged monsters are deadly foes that immediately attack the PCs, they are but the vanguard of the coming assault on the citadel. Once the greater apocalypse locusts come through the portal into the room, the wall’s energies suddenly dim, its magic temporarily consumed. But as the PCs fight these creatures, describe how the glowing wall is slowly rebuilding its radiance, as if a new wave of monsters were about to arrive at any moment. The next wave won’t arrive for several minutes, giving the PCs plenty of time to defeat the first wave and plan their response, but the PCs shouldn’t know this immediately.

GREATER APOCALYPSE LOCUSTS (4)

CR 14/MR 6

XP 38,400 each

Advanced apocalypse locust (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 12)

CE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar, mythic^{MA})

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 13, flat-footed 25 (+2 Dex, +2 dodge, +16 natural, –1 size)

hp 212 each (16d10+124)

Fort +14, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

DR 10/epic; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee 2 pincers +26 (2d6+12 plus grab), sting +27 (1d6+12 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks Abyssal torment, breath weapon (30-ft. line, 6d6 fire damage plus accursed brand, Will DC 22 negates, usable every 1d4 rounds), constrict (1d8+18), maddening buzz, mythic power (6/day, surge +1d8), powerful pincers

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +18)

Constant—*see invisibility*

At will—*blight* (DC 19), *greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *telekinesis* (DC 19)

1/day—*creeping doom*

TACTICS

During Combat The greater apocalypse locusts each begin the battle by casting *creeping doom* on their foes. In melee, they coordinate their attacks on paladins first, seeking obvious

worshippers of good deities if no such targets are apparent. At range, they are fond of using *telekinesis* to disarm foes.

Morale The greater apocalypse locusts fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 34, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 15, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +29; **CMD** 43

Feats Dodge^M, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (pincer), Lightning Reflexes^M, Multiattack, Power Attack^M, Weapon Focus (pincer)

Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +23, Fly +23, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (religion) +21, Perception +22, Stealth +17, Survival +22

Languages Abyssal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Abyssal Torment (Su) If a victim takes ability damage from a greater apocalypse locust's poison, it suffers wracking pain and takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks until the damage is healed.

Accursed Brand (Su) A creature that fails its saving throw against a greater apocalypse locust's breath weapon has his flesh branded by the fire and suffers hallucinations for 24 hours. During this time, the victim becomes tainted—good-aligned clerics and all druids, monks, and paladins are treated as if they'd temporarily broken their codes of conduct. Characters who have a class that's restricted to a good alignment or lawful alignment are treated as ex-members of that class for 24 hours. *Atonement* instantly ends this effect.

Maddening Buzz (Su) As long as three or more apocalypse locusts live and churn their wings, any creature within a range of 100 feet + 10 feet per apocalypse locust must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or become confused (CL equals 14 + number of apocalypse locusts present). This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1 Con plus Abyssal torment; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Powerful Pincers (Ex) A greater apocalypse locust's pincers are primary attacks.

Development: Once the locusts have been dealt with (or even during the fight if a PC wants to stop to examine the glowing wall), a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check confirms that the portal is quickly reactivating, and that this time the magic is forming a stable link, connecting the realm beyond to Drezen permanently. The portal functions at CL 20th, and can be temporarily dispelled as a magic item as appropriate, but unless the entire wall is destroyed, the portal continues to recharge.

Alternately, the PCs can assist in the opening of the portal and use it to invade the other side by either succeeding at a DC 30 Use Magic Device check or by concentrating on the portal while touching the glowing wall for 3 consecutive rounds. Doing so causes the magic of the portal to backlash, possibly stunning whatever may be found on the other side

of the portal for a short period. A successful DC 25 Spellcraft check is enough to deduce this possibility.

C. APONAVICIUS'S LAIR

The realm beyond the portal has served the marilith Aponavicius as a lair for hundreds of years. She normally accesses the realm via a device known as a *quasit key* (see page 63), but for many years, she maintained a permanent portal to her lair from Citadel Drezen as well so that she could travel to and from the pocket dimension more frequently. The lair itself is a small complex that appears to be carved out of a deep red stone, and is in fact located on the fringe of Deskari's Abyssal realm, the Rasping Rifts. As such, the lair shares the planar traits detailed in the sidebar on page 11.

Air flow and temperature are constantly maintained in this tiny complex, which physically lies more than 2,000 miles from the closest other open space—it's possible to use *greater teleport* to travel from the lair to other points in the Rasping Rifts, but regular teleport spells lack the range required to make such a journey. Doors in the den are made of a strange deep-blue wood that is itself as hard as steel, but are kept unlocked unless otherwise noted. The entire place is lit by a soft red glow that fills the area with dim light at all times, yet no obvious source of the illumination is apparent. Even if Aponavicius is defeated, the stink of reptile musk lingers in this complex for decades.

Only one significant battle takes place in this complex, and that fight can easily rage across multiple areas of the lair. After the PCs defeat Aponavicius, they can use this complex as a staging area of their own—by using the *quasit key*, they can access the realm once per day regardless of their actual location, and thus can use it as a shortcut back to Drezen once the portal between the two locations is active. Brief descriptions of the contents of the seven areas within the lair are summarized below.

C1. Audience Hall (CR 16): This vast chamber has an 80-foot-high vaulted ceiling supported by numerous pillars carved to resemble coiling snakes. An alcove in the east wall is decorated with glowing runes—those who travel to this complex via the reactivated portal in Citadel Drezen's dungeon appear in this alcove, and can return to the ritual hall under Citadel Drezen by merely touching the wall and concentrating as a move action. A sloped stone ramp leads up to a 20-foot-high balcony that overlooks the rest of this area, while a second balcony leading from area C6 overlooks this one from 20 feet above. Aponavicius prefers to meet with visitors while standing on this balcony. Two alcoves in the north wall each contain metal statues of Deskari—these are both advanced iron golems, which lumber forth to attack intruders on sight. To the south, a pair of iron portcullises normally block access to area C2, but at this point both are raised so the guardian therein can come forth to aid in the defense of the area.

ADVANCED IRON GOLEMS (2)

CR 14

XP 38,400 each

hp 165 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 162, 294)

C2. Pyralisia's Kennel: A large nest of bones, rubble, and half-melted weapons and other bits of metal dominates this chamber. To the east lies a bone-dry fountain. This chamber is where Aponavicius prefers to keep her favorite pets—her most recent acquisition is nothing less than a unique, corrupted phoenix named Pyralisia. A character who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (local) check recognizes the creature, who is also known to the crusaders as the Rain of Embers. Pyralisia first rose to prominence during the First Crusade, when she aided in the creation one of the first *wardstones*. She sacrificed herself to close an Abyssal rift that threatened the *wardstone's* completion, only to be reborn as a remorseless creature of chaos and evil. Since then, stories of her rampages against crusaders have turned her into something of a legend—the story holds that if she could be slain again, the cleansing properties of her resurrection would restore her to neutral good, yet to date, none who have tried to defeat her have come close to doing so. She has been curiously absent during the battles of the Fifth Crusade, and her presence here explains why—she was captured before this crusade began, and has been kept here as a plaything, pet, and guardian by Aponavicius. She swiftly moves to attack any intruders in the room.

PYRALISIA, THE RAIN OF EMBERS

CR 18

XP 153,600

Female unique phoenix (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Mythical Monsters Revisited* 50)

NE Gargantuan magical beast (fire)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*, *detect magic*, low-light vision, *see invisibility*; **Perception** +39

Aura shroud of flame (20 ft., DC 28)

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 13, flat-footed 26 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +20 natural, -4 size)

hp 287 (23d10+161); regeneration 10 (cold or good)

Fort +20, **Ref** +19, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities self-resurrection; **DR** 15/good; **Immune** fire; **SR** 29

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Melee bite +28 (2d8+9 plus 4d6 fire and 4d6 electricity), 2 talons +28 (2d6+9/19-20 plus 4d6 fire)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +27)

Constant—*detect good*, *detect magic*, *see invisibility*

At will—*bestow curse* (DC 21), *chain lightning* (DC 23),

continual flame, *greater dispel magic*, *wall of fire*

Rasping Rifts Planar Traits

The Rasping Rifts are part of the Abyss, but as with all Abyssal realms, the exact nature of this region's planar traits vary slightly from the standard traits for the Abyss detailed on page 191 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*. The Rasping Rifts have the following traits.

- **Divinely Morphic and Sentient:** Deskari can alter the layout of the Rasping Rifts at will, but it sometimes changes itself as well as old rifts collapse into rubble and new ones rip open into the void.
- **Strongly Chaos-Aligned and Strongly Evil-Aligned:** A -2 circumstance penalty applies on all Intelligence-, Wisdom-, and Charisma-based checks attempted by creatures that aren't chaotic or evil. The penalties for the chaotic and evil components of the alignment trait stack.
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities with the chaotic or evil descriptor are enhanced, as are all spells that summon, create, or specifically target vermin.
- **Impeded Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities with the lawful or light good descriptor are impeded, as are spells that grant flight, grant levitation, or protect against falling.
- **Finite Shape:** The Rasping Rifts extend for thousands of miles horizontally in a complex tangle that sometimes opens into other Abyssal Realms. While some of the rifts eventually narrow to ledges, the largest of them plunge up and down for vast distances—it's possible to fall all the way down into the qliphoth-ruled depths of Yad Iagnoth, or fly up and out of the Abyss, although such a physical journey would take longer than most creatures live.
- **Direction:** The direction of north in the Rasping Rifts points toward the realm's heart, where Deskari's city-sized fortress hangs above a bottomless rift.

3/day—*fire storm* (DC 25), *mass inflict critical wounds* (DC 25), *quicken wall of fire*

1/day—*destruction* (DC 24), *meteor swarm* (DC 26)

TACTICS

During Combat Pyralisia uses flyby attack and favors her spell-like abilities in combat. She uses her fiery attacks to damage foes while simultaneously healing the iron golems in area C1.

Morale Pyralisia fights to the death. If she self-resurrects in the Abyss, she must attempt at a DC 25 Will save. If she succeeds, she returns as a neutral good phoenix; if she fails, she returns in her neutral evil form. An *atonement* spell cast on her remains before her self-resurrection allows her to automatically succeed at this saving throw. If restored to a good alignment, she pledges her aid to the PCs and promises to help them in whatever way she can.

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 23, **Con** 24, **Int** 23, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +23; **CMB** +36; **CMD** 53

Feats Blinding Critical, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (talons), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*wall of fire*), Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +30, Fly +30, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (nature) +29, Perception +39, Sense Motive +28, Stealth +20

Languages Auran, Celestial, Common, Ignan

SQ corrupted flames (DC 28)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Corrupted Flames (Su) Whenever a creature begins its turn within Pyralisia's shroud of flame, it must succeed at a DC 28 Will save or gain 1d4 temporary negative levels as the spell *enervation*. Whether or not this save is successful, an affected creature is immune to this effect for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

C3. Projection Pool: This room contains a 10-foot-deep pool of warm, brimstone-scented water. This entire pool is magically enhanced, and as long as it is filled with water, any one Large or smaller creature that floats within the pool can use it to cast *astral projection* (self only) once per day (CL 20th). Aponavicius uses this pool often to direct her armies in the Worldwound without directly placing herself in danger. Only one creature can make such use of the projection pool at any one time. A single coloxus demon is always posted here, with orders to watch over the marilith while she uses the pool and her physical body is helpless. The demon wears a *ring of spell storing* containing a *sending* spell it can use to warn Aponavicius if her body is in danger.

COLOXUS DEMON

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 168 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 72*)

C4. Secret Passageway: A successful DC 35 Perception check is needed to notice the secret doors that open into this hallway. Large levers to either side of the eastern door raise and lower the portcullises between areas C1 and C2.

C5. Aponavicius's Treasury: This room contains large displays along the north and south walls, and a single stone slab to the east. Here, Aponavicius displays her favorite trophies and treasures gained over the course of her time served in the Worldwound. She keeps a weapon from every significant crusader and enemy she's slain, and dozens of them line the walls of this room—49 of them in all, of which 21 are +1 *weapons* and 28 are +2 *weapons* (or +1 *weapons* with +1-equivalent special abilities). Feel free to pick and choose the exact type of weapons as you wish. The eastern stone slab is used to display her more significant trophies, items claimed from the bravest and most deadly of her foes. This collection of weapons and shields includes a +2

dancing rapier, a mace of smiting, a sun blade, a +3 reflecting heavy steel shield, a +3 flaming burst holy scimitar, a +3 disrupting warhammer, and a rod of lordly might. If she's captured any significant NPCs, she also keeps any gear taken from them in this room as well for the time being.

C6. Aponavicius's Boudoir: This large chamber is strewn with immense cushions, furs, censers filled with smoking incense, hookahs, and other similar furnishings—this is where the marilith Aponavicius comes to rest, relax, and enjoy the company of her favorite slaves of the week. This room is currently empty.

C7. Prison Block: The four smaller cells to the south are each warded with permanent *dimensional lock* spells; the cell doors themselves are kept tightly locked (Disable Device DC 40). The cells are currently unoccupied, unless any of the PCs' significant allies have been captured, in which case they can be found here. Keys to each cell hang on pegs in the room to the east, which serves as a cozy and well-equipped torture chamber.

Confronting Aponavicius (CR 24)

Of course, the PCs' primary goal in invading the lair should be to track down and kill Aponavicius, general of the armies attacking Drezen and one of the highest-ranking demons in the Worldwound. Her death will deal a critical blow to the enemy, and should cause the swift collapse of the armies at the PCs' door. Yet Aponavicius is a powerful foe, and the PCs would be well advised to take care when attacking her.

When the PCs first enter the demon's den, she is using the projection pool in area C3 to lead her armies via *astral projection*. This leaves her physical body vulnerable—she's floating in the pool, attended only by a coloxus demon servant. As soon as this demon hears the sounds of battle (even accounting for distance through two closed doors, the demon still automatically succeeds at the DC 13 Perception check to notice a fight in the easternmost portion of area C1), it uses the *sending* spell in its *ring of spell storing* to alert Aponavicius that her lair has been invaded. The marilith can't immediately return; she must take a few rounds to make sure her armies are in good hands and won't panic upon her sudden departure—only then does she end the *astral projection* effect and awaken in this room. It takes her 1d4+4 rounds to do this, so if the PCs can get to her body before this time limit is up (or better yet, can reach this room without alerting her guardian), they may be able to dispatch the marilith before she awakens.

APONAVICIUS

CR 24

XP 1,228,800

Female marilith fighter 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 63*)

CE Large outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +37

City of Locusts

Aura *unholy aura* (DC 26)

DEFENSE

AC 43, touch 17, flat-footed 39 (+11 armor, +4 deflection, +4 Dex, +15 natural, -1 size)

hp 455 (23 HD; 16d10+7d10+329)

Fort +32, **Ref** +20, **Will** +16; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2; **DR** 10/cold iron and good;

Immune electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10;

SR 28

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +3 *katana* +37/+32/+27/+22 (2d6+16/15-20), +3 *shotel* +36 (2d6+9/19-20/x3), +3 *khopesh* +36 (2d6+9/19-20), +3 *falcata* +36 (2d6+9/17-20/x3), +3 *flaming kusari gama sickle* +35 (1d8+8/18-20 plus 1d6 fire), +3 *frost kusari gama ball* +35 (1d4+8/18-20 plus 1d6 cold), tail slap +27 (1d8+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (tail slap, 2d6+15 plus crushing coils), infuse weapon, multiweapon mastery, weapon training (heavy blades +1)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +24)

Constant—*true seeing*, *unholy aura* (DC 26)

At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *project image* (DC 25), *telekinesis* (DC 23)

3/day—*blade barrier* (DC 24), *fly*

1/day—*summon* (level 5, 1 marilith 20%, 1 nalfeshnee 35%, or 1d4 hezrous 60%)

TACTICS

Before Combat Aponavicius attempts to summon a marilith and casts *fly* before seeking out the PCs.

During Combat Aponavicius doesn't immediately enter combat with the PCs. Rather, she uses *project image* to confront them, then uses *blade barriers* and *telekinesis* to soften them up. Once this tactic no longer seems viable, she slithers in to attack with her bewildering array of exotic weapons.

Morale Aponavicius is done with giving up and fleeing—she fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 19, **Con** 36, **Int** 20, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 27

Base Atk +23; **CMB** +34 (+38 disarm); **CMD** 52 (54 vs. disarm)

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (falcata, katana, khopesh, kusarigama, shotel), Greater Disarm, Improved Critical (katana), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (katana), Weapon Specialization (katana)

Skills Acrobatics +29 (+33 when jumping), Bluff +34, Diplomacy +34, Fly +34, Intimidate +34, Knowledge (engineering) +31, Perception +37, Sense Motive +29, Stealth +25, Use Magic Device +34

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ armor training 2

Gear +5 *breastplate*, +3 *flaming*/+3 *frost kusarigama*, +3 *keen human bane shotel*, +3 *keen lawful outsider bane falcata*, +3 *unholy khopesh*, +3 *wounding katana*, *glove of storing*, *quasit key*

Story Award: Defeating Aponavicius is a mythic trial.

CONCLUDING THE BATTLE

Once the PCs defeat Aponavicius, they need to present her remains to the armies that are attacking Drezen to break



Aponavicius

their morale. Displaying her body or head would certainly suffice, but so would holding her weapons aloft at an obvious place such as from a watchtower surrounding the citadel. The demons disband swiftly as soon as they know their leader, whom they had believed to be immortal, has been defeated, teleporting away to cower in places scattered across the Worldwound. News of Aponavicius's defeat spreads though the Worldwound quickly, and in the end is the triggering event that causes demonic armies all along the borders to collapse and fall back, perhaps for the last time. Khorramzadeh and his most powerful allies retreat to Iz, fearful that the PCs may be coming for them next, while Arelu redoubles her efforts to rip the Worldwound open.

In the short term, this should be a time of great celebration for the PCs. Allow them a day or so to recover, oversee repairs to the citadel, and tend to the sick and wounded. Ensure the PCs know that although the defenders and locals are still clearly terrified, they have survived the battle thanks to the PCs' actions. The PCs should feel the adulation of the locals, and within an hour a new song begins to spread: "The Heroes of Drezen," an uplifting ballad that chronicles the deeds of each PC—if you wish, you can take the time to craft a short song customized to the party, with at least one line of the song referencing a great deed for each PC.

But that night, the ground rumbles softly with what feel like minor earthquakes, which grow in frequency. And to the south, the sky turns an ugly crimson-orange, as if somewhere near Iz the world has caught afire.

PART 2: STORM KING'S SHADOW

The night after the battle, one of the PCs experiences a divine vision. This PC should be the Herald of Iomedae, or barring that, any PC who has a deific parent. In the vision, the PC is told that the end of days is fast approaching—that heroes' string of successes against the Worldwound has finally forced Deskari's hand, and he intends to rip the wound open and engulf much of Avistan in the Rasping Rifts. The Lord of the Locust Host no longer desires the constant steady stream of anguish and despair the long-lasting crusade has supplied him with. He is ready to finish what he started, and his greatest champion, Arelu Vorlesh, is even now preparing the final ritual to finish the job she started over a century ago.

Only one option remains—the PCs must heal the wound in the world. Such an action is fraught with terrible dangers, for the wound can be healed only at its source, and that source is wreathed in the secret mists of the wound itself, a barrier beyond the power of any spells to penetrate. The wound is a madness, a land that sheds its skin like a snake, a place where what is seen cannot be trusted, and where the line between Golarion and the Abyss is at its thinnest. The deity granting the vision sadly reminds her chosen that even in such times, it is not the place of the

divine to interfere, and thus the PCs must seek their own solution to the problem. As the vision fades, the PC knows that solution lies in the pages of the *Lexicon of Paradox*.

Iomedae also grants this vision to the leader of the crusade, Queen Galfrey. Galfrey knows what must be done, and at some point soon after the vision occurs, she teleports into the PCs' proximity, wearing a grave and exhausted look on her face. Yet she bears good news, for the method to seal the Worldwound forever has finally been found in the pages of the *Lexicon of Paradox*!

The PCs and Queen Galfrey have already utilized a lesser version of this ritual to close a minor portal between the Abyss and the Material Plane back in "The Midnight Isles," but she informs the PCs that the task ahead of them in closing the Worldwound at its source within the tower known as Threshold is a much more dangerous and involved task. The PCs are, of course, free to assault Threshold at once if they wish, but Galfrey warns them that to do so without preparation would be suicide, even for a group as powerful as theirs. Furthermore, to shut down the Worldwound, the PCs will need to place several *dimensional locks* within the prison tower of Threshold, on both sides of the Worldwound—these *dimensional locks* are akin to planting explosive charges in key architectural locations. They'll resonate with the ritual itself and magnify it as needed to finish the job. Unfortunately, no mere casting of a *symbol of sealing* will do—this casting must be made with the use of a special focus—the *Nahyndrian chisel* used by the Storm King to destroy the Kenabres *wardstone*.

Galfrey suggests that the PCs should seek to accomplish three tasks before tackling the Worldwound itself—securing the *Nahyndrian chisel* from Deskari's cult and slaying its high priest, learning the nature of a mysterious secret related to the Worldwound's formation referred to only as "the Suture," and assassinating the army's general—Khorramzadeh the Storm King. Once these tasks have been accomplished, the external defenses that could protect Threshold will be thrown into disarray. The PCs will still face great challenges within the prison tower, but they will not need to simultaneously contend with wave after wave of reinforcements from elsewhere in the Worldwound.

Fortunately, she says, all three of these missions can be accomplished in close proximity to the other. Unfortunately, that proximity lies within the heart of the greatest of the fallen cities of Sarkoris—Iz.

MISSIONS IN IZ

Queen Galfrey can go over the three goals the PCs should seek to accomplish in Iz in greater detail, but you should allow the PCs to determine how best they wish to approach these three goals. Once these goals have been accomplished, they can move on to the task of closing the Worldwound

forever. If the PCs ask Galfrey for details on how this will work, see the start of Part 3 on page 37 for details.

Secure the Chisel: Divinations have revealed that the *Nahyndrian chisel* is now kept as a bauble by the high priest of Deskari's faith—a woman known among the faithful as Mistress Anemora. Very little is known of this mysterious figure, for the church of Deskari is very decentralized organization—cults exist in discrete cells that have little contact with each other. The cult believes that the *Nahyndrian chisel's* use has passed, and its leader keeps it now as nothing more than a sacred relic. All of these cult cells eventually report to Mistress Anemora. In addition to securing the chisel, if the PCs can assassinate Mistress Anemora, the church of Deskari will fall to internal bickering and strife for several weeks, perhaps months—more than enough time for the PCs to finish the task of closing the Worldwound without the cult being able to move against them. Mistress Anemora dwells somewhere within the walls of an old Sarkorian brothel called the Yearning House, but what sort of horrors the demons have turned this place into, no spy can say. Nevertheless, Galfrey's spies suggest that of the two sites in Iz the PCs need to visit, the Yearning House is slightly less dangerous than the Soul Foundry.

Learn about the Suture: At the Soul Foundry, lead is alloyed with captured souls to create an unusual and unstable material known as soul-lead, one of many vile materials used in the creation of Abyssal constructs like retrievers, warmonger wasps, and devastators. The Soul Foundry's foreman, a half-babau dwarf known as the Filleted Man, is also called "the Suture's keeper." The *Lexicon of Paradox* notes only that the Suture, whatever it is, was created when the Worldwound opened, and that its presence at the original portal greatly increases the ease of closing it.

Assassinate the Storm King: Challenging Khorramzadeh in his palace in the heart of Iz would be foolish. Not only is this sprawling structure immense and well guarded, but it's unknown whether Khorramzadeh is even there—attempts to scry upon the Storm King or otherwise discern his location have been consistently failing of late, perhaps because he is being protected by Deskari himself. But if the PCs manage to accomplish the above two tasks, Galfrey is confident that Khorramzadeh will not be able to stay away; he will be forced to step in and do what his minions could not—personally defeat the PCs—or suffer Deskari's wrath. The PCs should be ready to face Khorramzadeh within seconds of accomplishing the second of the above two goals.

APOCALYPSE COUNTDOWN

Although previous adventures in "Wrath of the Righteous" have avoided incorporating a countdown that limits the amount of time the PCs have to accomplish their mission, that luxury ends once the PCs defeat Aponavicius. At that moment, the enemy knows without a doubt that the PCs

Turning Back the Clock

Although the advancing apocalypse may seem to be a swift and inevitable doom, if the PCs need some extra time to finish the adventure, they can slow the process in several ways. Each option listed below is followed by a DC; this is the Knowledge (arcana or planes) check required to come up with the act that will slow the advancing apocalypse if the players don't come up with the idea themselves.

Powerful Magic (DC 35): *Miracle* and *wish* can both be used to turn back the clock 1 day per casting (minimum of an effective day 0), but only once per spell before the ritual adjusts to resist further castings of either powerful effect. A mythic *wish* instead resets the clock back to effective day 0, but only if *wish* hasn't yet been used to affect the schedule.

Prayer (DC 25): A prayer to a deity can, in some cases, result in a reprieve. If the Herald of Iomedae prays for intervention from Iomedae, or a divine scion prays to her deity, or if *any* player prays to Noctacula (this is a chaotic and evil act—but see "Beyond the Campaign" on page 64), the ritual's progress can be slowed so that it doesn't advance for a day. Prayer can only affect the ritual's schedule once during this adventure, regardless of which deity is beseeched.

Significant Triumph (DC 30): Defeating Khorramzadeh or Areelu Vorlesh causes the clock to turn back 1 day per defeat. Defeating Mistress Anemora causes the clock to stop advancing for 1 day.

Other Gambits: At your option, other significant actions taken by the PCs can hold back the clock as well.

have the capacity to stop them, and they work feverishly to complete the ritual to widen the Worldwound, now in its final stages. The PCs have only days to complete this adventure if they wish to stop the apocalypse Deskari has engineered. Use the following schedule of events to spur the PCs on. If they are unable to close the Worldwound in time, the resulting devastation will be great indeed.

Day 0: The PCs defeat Aponavicius and defend Drezen.

Day 1: Areelu Vorlesh begins the final stage of the ritual to tear the Worldwound wide open; Deskari focuses energies from the core of the Rasing Rifts from the portal's far side. The skies above the Worldwound grow more oppressive and overcast. At this point, the energies to build enough to result in the apocalypse on the fifth day—even the death of Areelu or Deskari's defeat cannot stop this inevitability. Only closing the Worldwound before this event occurs can stop it.

Day 2: Abyssal influence extends out of the Worldwound. All of Threshold is now affected by the Rasing Rifts planar traits. The saving throw DCs of all spells and spell-like abilities from demons and worshipers of Deskari

in Threshold gain a +2 profane bonus. The sky above the Worldwound turns black, with eerie ribbons of red light and strange flickering stars; lighting is now treated as perpetually night.

Day 3: Abyssal influence extends farther, covering much of the Wounded Lands. All of Iz is now under the effects of the Rasping Rifts planar traits. All worshipers of Deskari in the Worldwound gain a +2 profane bonus to AC and on saving throws and attack rolls. Tremors begin to affect the Worldwound, wracking the landscape 1d4 times per hour at random intervals. A tremor lasts for 1d4 rounds, during which all ground is treated as difficult terrain and spellcasting is complicated by violent motion (concentration DC 15 + the level of the spell cast). The timing of when tremors occur is left to you to decide, but they should have an unnerving knack for occurring during battles when things otherwise seem to be going well for the PCs.

Day 4: The entire Worldwound becomes infused with the Rasping Rift's planar traits. Abyssal upheavals (see page 38) now occur throughout the Worldwound, not just within Threshold. All demons and worshipers of Deskari in the region gain fast healing 10 and are treated as if under the effects of *haste*.

Day 5: The Worldwound tears open! The temporary bonuses granted from days 2–4 end as the Abyss absorbs the Worldwound and the rift begins growing outward to consume Avistan. See *Concluding the Adventure* and the “Beyond the Campaign” article for repercussions.

THE CITY OF IZ

Iz hangs upon the edge of the Worldwound like a condemned man in a noose, its jagged, decaying buildings dangling at the edge of a vast dark rift. The silence of the city streets is unnerving, yet the screams and shrieks and sounds of metal scraping on stone that periodically pierce the silence are worse. A sickness hangs about the city, a pallid smog that dances with the dark shadows of the Abyss, an otherworldly cancer caressing this world with terrible jagged rifts. Even the sky seems to bleed.

During the height of Sarkoris, the grand city of Iz was the only city in the nation that could be considered a metropolis, but even in those days it was underpopulated for its size. Today the city is all but abandoned, and serves as little more than a trophy for the Worldwound as its districts slowly crumble away into the Worldwound's steadily approaching canyons. Only a third of the city remains, and most of its ruined buildings lie empty, or at most are infested with demonic vermin. Many of its larger or key structures have been claimed by powerful demons or minions of Deskari—the Yearning House and the Soul Foundry being two such examples. The streets of Iz are largely empty now. Until recently, trains of sacrifices being marched to Iz from Undarin were a regular sight here, yet as the end of the

Fifth Crusade draws near, even these periodic breaks to the ruined city's ghost-town qualities have abated.

The settlement is known today as the City of Locusts, for the skies above constantly buzz with carnivorous swarms of these pests, drawn to the region by Deskari's growing influence. The swarms pay no attention to creatures who move about on the ground below, only attempting to feed on those who dare fly higher than 100 feet above.

This adventure does not cover the journey to Iz, nor much in the way of exploring the largely empty ruined city—the PCs don't have time for distractions, after all, and they know exactly where they're going. Galfrey can provide precise directions to the Yearning House or the Soul Foundry, enough to allow the PCs to use *greater teleport* to arrive on site but not within the buildings themselves. If the PCs use other methods to reach these sites, feel free to have them attacked along the way by powerful foes, but take care not to distract the players with too much extraneous fighting. They'll need all their resources to handle the challenges this adventure has planned for them!

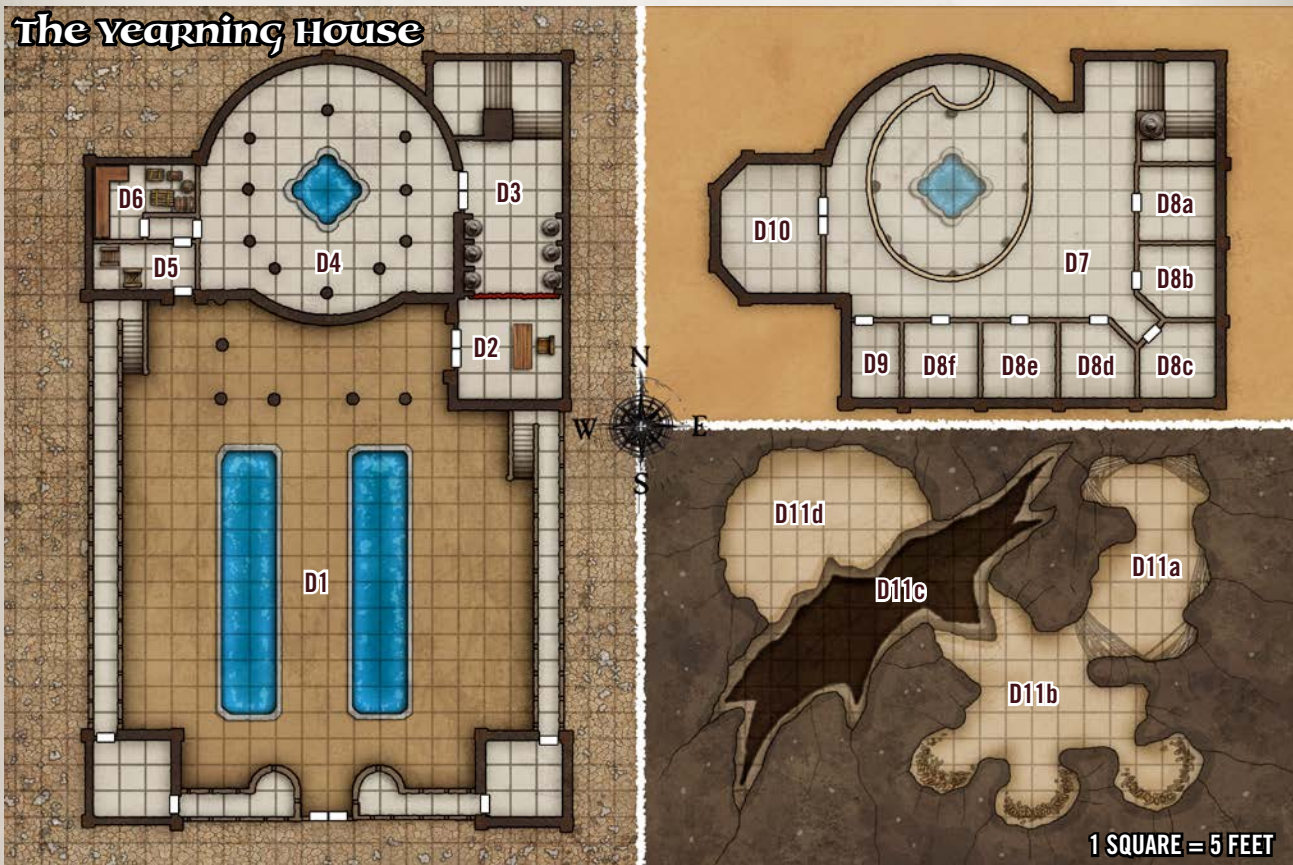
THE YEARNING HOUSE

Iz hardly qualifies as a thriving city, yet there are places within its crumbling expanse that somewhat ape the purposes of structures in a healthy city. The Yearning House and the Soul Foundry are two such locations, but of the two, only the Yearning House accepts visitors from beyond the city's crumbling walls. Run by the drider Anemora, Deskari's high priest, the Yearning House is outwardly a brothel and drug den, but it's actual purpose is to gather souls for use as trade or raw materials. The Yearning House's occupants are mythic succubi, and while they do serve as companions for fiends and powerful cultists and other Worldwound allies, their primary function in the building is to drain souls, store them in gemstones, and send them on to where they may be needed. Visitors to the Yearning House pay not in gold or magic, but in living offerings of mortals whom the succubi, known as the Pleasers, can drain of life.

The Yearning House is a large, garish establishment where clientele range from the obscene to the horrific, and trouble is a wrong glance away. It resembles a dark fairyland brothel; its air is thick with strange drugs and scents, and its clientele slump amid cushions and furs or in private rooms while acts come and go atop a large central stage.

The following encounters present the Yearning House as it is when the PCs first arrive, its visitors and staff arranged throughout the building. The method by which the PCs seek out Mistress Anemora and claim the *Nahyndrian chisel* is left to them—they can go in with weapons drawn to clean the place out, or they can opt for a stealthier method of disguise and intrigue. Both tactics present their own specialized dangers, and both can easily result in failure if the PCs don't take care!

The Yearning House



Although the Yearning House is less of a brothel and more of a place where souls are harvested for use by the Worldwound as raw materials, it remains a location that is not appropriate for all groups. You know your players' comfort levels, so you should adjust the site as appropriate in your game; the encounters as set up here are relatively tame but can go either direction if you wish.

The Yearning House presents another challenge as well, for the PCs will face simulacra of themselves therein. These aren't intended to be significant challenges, but rather to serve as disturbing and unsettling elements. Excluding the PC simulacra doesn't affect the challenge of the adventure much at all.

If you do choose to include the simulacra, you'll need to borrow your PCs' character sheets before the session to stat them up; we can't provide these statistics for you. Don't worry overmuch about getting the numbers exactly right; remember that as half-strength copies of the PCs, these things won't last long in a fight anyway. The PC simulacra should omit all mythic powers; they should have half the power of the PCs as they were at the start of this adventure—likely resulting in 9th-level versions of them, since the PCs should begin this adventure at 18th level. The simulacra should be equipped with minor magic items and gear appropriate

for their classes; give each one gear worth about 10,000 gp in total.

D1. Courtyard (CR 18)

This dry courtyard contains dust, chunks of jagged rubble, a few lonely brambles, and two long reflecting pools filled with brackish water. It's surrounded by a ten-foot-high stone curtain wall. Two twenty-foot-high watchtowers stand to the south, while a soot-caked stone building with a central dome sits to the north.

Creatures: The Yearning House courtyard is guarded by a group of particularly deformed ash giants and four unusual constructs built originally to serve as companions for visitors. These marble constructs, shapely humanoid creatures called soulbound shells, have been demoted to guardians now that the Pleasers serve in this capacity. The ash giants patrol the courtyard itself, while the soulbound shells walk the curtain wall. Their reaction to the PCs depends on whether the PCs are disguised or not—if the PCs arrive without bothering to conceal their identities, the ash giants chuckle lecherously while the soulbound shells greet the PCs, speaking in tandem in melodious tones, "Welcome to the Yearning House, heroes. You are

expected within. Please enjoy your stay!” If the PCs ask for more information, the guardians refuse to speak more—they know only that Sister Perversion, the Yearning House’s acting madam, has been expecting the PCs’ arrival for some time. If the PCs arrive in disguise, the giants and soulbound shells move to confront them, demanding invitations and names. A successful Bluff check can secure passage—otherwise they attack. They also attack if the PCs seem intent on doing violence to those within the building to the north. The giants hurl blocks of rubble or step up to engage in melee while the soulbound shells remain on the catwalks and use their magic. All eight fight to the end.

ADVANCED ASH GIANTS (4)**CR 12****XP 19,200 each**hp 175 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 126)**SOULBOUND SHELLS (4)****CR 12****XP 19,200 each**

CE Medium construct

hp 132 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 249)**D2. Entrance (CR 12)**

The south and east walls of this twenty-foot-square room are carved with depictions of humans and demons in a scandalous carnal tangle. A red silken curtain hangs to the north, the fabric glittering with sparkling gems. A single mahogany desk sits to the east before a large chair. The only object atop the desk is a ledger bound in flesh.

Creature: A lone coloxus demon named Mazillgarub is posted here. As the PCs enter, he speaks in a soft, unsettlingly pleasing voice. If he recognizes the PCs, he bows deeply and thanks them for their visit, assuring them that “all is ready for your pleasure,” before offering to escort them to the Debauchery (area **D4**). If he doesn’t recognize the PCs, a successful Bluff check combined with a good story is not enough to secure passage into the room beyond—the demon also wishes to know how the PCs plan to pay for their visit. The only currency accepted is souls, of course, but these souls need not be “pre-captured.” Living sacrifices will do, but convincing the demon that some of the PCs or their allies are those sacrifices requires additional successful Bluff checks.

In any event, Mazillgarub swiftly alerts the Pleasers via telepathy of the PCs’ arrival, and Sister Perversion learns of them via the Pleasers’ telepathy soon thereafter.

MAZILLGARUB**CR 12****XP 19,200**Coloxus demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 72)

hp 168

Treasure: The curtain is silk and replete with gemstones—it is worth 6,000 gp in total. The ledger on the desk keeps track of the visitors to the Yearning House over the years, yet these visitors invariably use obviously false names. The PCs may be disturbed to find names like “Galfrey” or even “Aroden” scrawled here and there in the pages, but finding their own names used in more recent entries might be even more disturbing.

D3. Parlor (CR 17)

Six statues of attractive nude demons—succubi to the west and incubi to the east—line the southern half of this hall. A set of wide stairs leads up to the north, while to the side looms a pair of doors, their facades gilt in gold and depicting a scene of wanton debauchery.

Apart from the statues, this parlor is relatively bare. The stairs to the north lead up to area **D7**.

Trap: The salacious statues that guard the southern part of the parlor are the components of an insidious trap meant to capture, humiliate, and destroy intruders. The trap is semi-aware, infused with a magical intelligence that lets the trap not only observe and examine intruders, but also be influenced by the telepathic commands of the demons who run the place. If the PCs are expected, Sister Perversion telepathically commands the trap to let them pass—likewise, if the PCs manage to bluff their way into the Yearning House, the trap lets them pass. Otherwise, the trap waits until as many targets as possible that are not chaotic evil are in its area of effect before triggering—it can affect everyone in this room.

When triggered, a tangle of animated wires and metal tendrils lashes out from the statues, attempting to entrap a single target. If the mesh is successful, the wires pull the victim into a painful embrace against the statue, which sprouts blades and hooks and begins to squirm and writhe against the victim, swiftly reducing the victim to shreds. The magic of this attack carries with it a potent *suggestion* effect as well, similar to that produced by a succubus’s energy drain—each round a creature is entrapped, it must resist this *suggestion* or interpret the agonizing pain inflicted as overwhelming pleasure and be unable to take any action on its own to resist or escape.

EXQUISITE MOMENT OF DEATH BY PLEASURE**CR 17****XP 102,400****Type** magic; **Perception** DC 40; **Disable Device** DC 40**EFFECTS****Trigger** visual (*detect law, detect good, true seeing*); **Reset** automatic**Effect** Atk +20 ranged touch (5d6+16 slashing plus grab and constrict; CMB +26; CMD 36; constrict 5d6+24 slashing);

suggestion (Will DC 23 negates); multiple targets (up to 6 creatures in area **D3**)

D4. The Debauchery (CR 18)

The ceiling of this large room rises to a dome some 50 feet above a central pool filled with unnaturally blue, smoking water. Murals on the walls and ceiling above provide an orgy of garish color, depicting all manner of obscene acts depicted in frightful realism in oils by a master artist. A wide balcony rings the room at a height of twenty feet above the floor, which is strewn with blankets, bottles of fluid, cushions, furs, hookahs, smoking braziers, and other devices. The air is thick and hazy and warm, reeking of sweat, incense, and tangy exotic drugs.

This room, known as the Debauchery, is the primary entertainment chamber of the Yearning House (along with the balcony above). Here, visitors can socialize, relax, and engage in all manner of distraction, ranging from the ample amounts of drugs and alcohol to pursuits of a carnal nature.

The pool in the middle of the room radiates strong conjuration (teleportation) magic, as it is a portal that connects the Yearning House to the Silk Embrace, a small cavern bisected by one of the Rasping Rifts in the Abyss (see areas **D11–D13**). The pool is only 3 feet deep. To activate it, a creature needs only to dip its head into the waters and inhale—doing so instantly transports the user to area **D11** of the Silk Embrace. Note that unless the traveling creature can breathe water (or doesn't have to breathe at all), it must spend that first round after arriving coughing out the water or it immediately begins to drown. The nature and function of the pool, as well as how to activate it, can be determined with a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check—a successful DC 30 Use Magic Device check to activate the pool can also transport a creature without the need to inhale the waters.

Creatures: This room is normally occupied, and the first time the PCs visit should be no exception. The Yearning House is staffed by six mythic succubi known collectively as the Pleasers, and many of them will be present here, entertaining and attending to their guests. The Pleasers are aided by a number of custom-built simulacra they've created; the mythic succubi often switch between different simulacra, but presently their assistants are built from the legendary PCs themselves! There should be one simulacrum of each PC present in this room, but feel free to add a few more based on significant NPCs that the PCs might be particularly fond of. These simulacra are used for menial tasks, humiliating entertainments, and even torture or sacrifice—after all, when one breaks, it's easy enough for a Pleaser to create a replacement. (If you don't have time to craft simulacra of the PCs for use in this encounter, simply omit them from the room—they serve

thematic and psychological purposes rather than being load-bearing encounter components.) In addition to the Pleasers and the simulacra, numerous visitors are present when the PCs arrive. There are four visitors in all—when the PCs arrive, two of these visitors (Lady Blemish and the Tall Stranger) are each occupied with a Pleaser up in one of the private rooms above, and are detailed in that area (area **D8**)—the other two visitors can be found here, lounging and relaxing. The large number of creatures in the room make an encounter here complex, so make sure to study each of the individual creatures detailed below before running this encounter.

PC SIMULACRA (1 PER PC)

CR —

XP —

hp varies

Maligntra: The most powerful of the regular visitors to the Yearning House is the vrolikai demon Maligntra, one of many assassins who serve Deskari. Maligntra's original purpose upon being assigned to the Yearning House was to serve as Deskari's ears and eyes—a spy, essentially, tasked with listening and watching who comes and goes. Yet in that time, Maligntra has grown obsessed with the House's madam, the seraptis demon known only as Sister Perversion, and today the vrolikai sees himself as something of the seraptis's personal bodyguard. Sister Perversion was first delighted by the attention, but she's long since grown tired of it and has regulated Maligntra to this outer chamber, where he spends the bulk of his time crouched in a mound of cushions in the northeast portion of the room, silently watching and observing while sipping strange liqueurs. The vrolikai immediately begins to communicate with Sister Perversion when he spies the PCs, intending to keep her updated, but swiftly comes to realize that something strange is going on with the seraptis and teleports up to area **D10** to investigate 1 round after any combat begins in this area. The demon's swift death and resulting shriek send chills down the spines even of the Pleasers. Since it's exceedingly unlikely that Maligntra becomes involved in a fight with the PCs as a result, this adventure does not assume the PCs earn XP for defeating him.

MALIGNTRA

CR 19

XP 204,800

Vrolikai (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 81)

hp 332

Yethyarr: The deadly tataka rakshasa Yethyarr is a recent visitor to the Yearning House, and is enjoying a hookah of pain-infused smoke imported at great expense from the Abyss while receiving a “massage” from two Pleasers

(choose randomly), who use their claws to scrape and cut at the rakshasa's skin—this slashing damage can't penetrate the rakshasa's damage reduction, but he quite enjoys the sensation. Yethyarr is caught off guard if combat breaks out in the Debauchery, and hangs back for the first few rounds of a fight that takes place here, only entering combat if he is first attacked himself. If the PCs are looking like they're losing the fight, the tataka rakshasa steps in to aid the Pleasers, hoping to curry a bit of favor from the house for helping. He wants little to do with a fair fight, though, and teleports away via *dimension door* as soon as it becomes apparent the PCs are winning the fight.

YETHYARR**CR 15****XP 51,200**Tataka rakshasa (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 230)**hp** 225

Pleasers: These half dozen mythic succubi attend to customers' needs, whatever they may be, and while they answer only to their madam, Sister Perversion, they also know that the Yearning House is a front for Mistress Anemora, the leader of Deskari's cult. They guard this information with their lives, and do what they can to maintain the appearance that the building is nothing more than a particularly exotic house of deviance.

The six Pleasers all appear as beautiful succubi in their natural forms, but each has adopted her own favored "working" form to use while on duty in the Yearning House. They tend to remain in these forms even when in combat (and as such, all six forms retain claws for use in battle and wings for flight). Although they all seem eager to serve, their primary purpose here is to harvest souls—either taken from payments provided by customers in the form of living sacrifices, or from customers whose payments are deemed not good enough. Each Pleaser possesses a specific specialty, appearance, and key bit of information she might use to try to tempt a player character into sinning or providing a soul for in payment (or to bargain for her life with, if she's captured). All of the Pleasers know how to activate the portal to the Silk Embrace, and each has her own knowledge specialty.

- **Pleaser Ammon (geography):** Dark-skinned Ammon prefers a male form and has a sadistic, abusive personality. He has taken a particular interest in the way Iz crumbles into ruins, and can accurately predict what sections of the Soul Foundry will go next if a collapse occurs (see page 36). Ammon is currently located in area **D8b**.
- **Pleaser Eudora (planes):** Towering and heavily tattooed Eudora claims to be one of Areelu Vorlesh's mentors. She is the most arrogant of the Pleasers, and fancies herself to be the group's leader—the others suffer her for the sake of house politics. She can accurately predict how long it

will take for Areelu to open the Worldwound completely, as well as what effects this will have on the region as the days of the ritual go on. She also knows that Areelu keeps one of her greatest enemies, the God Caller Opon, as a sort of disembodied spiritual "pet" in Threshold, trapped within a magical brazier.

- **Pleaser Ismarelda (religion):** Dusky Ismarelda is a contortionist who uses her incredibly long blonde hair to cover her nudity—she enjoys receiving pain as much as Mahulda enjoys inflicting it, and she wears both of her severed and mummified pinky fingers on a necklace. She is the most religious of the Pleasers, and is the only one who knows Mistress Anemora is a drider. She also knows that Mistress Anemora keeps the *Nahyndrian chisel*, along with several other treasures, hidden in her lair in a *portable hole* tucked into a scrimshawed angel's skull.
- **Pleaser Mahulda (arcana):** Lavender, hooved, and soft-spoken Mahulda seems delicate as crystal, but her appetite for inflicting pain exceeds even that of Pleaser Ammon. Although her appearance seems quite feminine, she is in fact a hermaphrodite. She knows that the bond between Areelu and her quasit familiar Gimcrak is so strong that the familiar's death will significantly weaken the mythic witch, but hasn't decided on how best to use this information for her own personal gain. She is currently in area **D8f**.
- **Pleaser Micajah (engineering):** Slender Micajah has a voice like an angel, has crimson skin and dark feathered wings, and is completely androgynous in appearance. She alone of the succubi has no interest in sex, preferring to seduce purely via intellectual conversation. She knows that scales shed from Terendelev while the dragon still lived can cause the ravener great pain.
- **Pleaser Preshea (nature):** Obese Preshea specializes in administering drugs and creating exotic food and alcohol. She knows that the masters of the Soul Foundry have been using tainted *ambrosia* to keep someone or something that's imprisoned in the building docile.

PLEASERS (4)**CR 12/MR 4****XP 19,200 each**Advanced succubus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 68*)CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, mythic^{MA})**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*; Perception +27**DEFENSE****AC** 27, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+6 Dex, +11 natural)**hp** 190 each (12d10+124)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14**DR** 10/epic and cold iron or epic and good; **Immune** electricity, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 31**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)**Melee** 2 claws +18 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks consume soul, energy drain, mythic power (4/day, surge +1d8), penetrating enchantments, profane gift, soul trapping, sneak attack +6d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +23)

Constant—*detect good, tongues*

At will—*charm monster* (DC 25), *detect thoughts* (DC 23), *ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *vampiric touch*

1/day—*dominate person* (DC 26), *summon* (level 3, 1 babau 50%)

Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +23)

7th—*simulacrum*

6th—*flesh to stone* (DC 27), *mass suggestion* (DC 27)

5th—*mind fog*

TACTICS

During Combat One Pleaser uses *mind fog* at the start of combat, while the others immediately use *mass suggestion* to try to convince the enemies to assume subservient or humiliating positions and to remain in those positions for the duration. Pleasers are fond of turning such victims to stone via *flesh to stone*. In combat, they use mind control to prevent enemies from coordinating defense so they can focus on fewer targets at once in melee, much preferring to flank foes or feint to get in more sneak attacks.

Morale A Pleaser attempts to flee combat if reduced below 40 hit points, offering her profane gift or her specific information as a bribe or payment for freedom if captured.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 22, **Con** 24, **Int** 24, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 33

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 31

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise^M, Greater Feint, Improved Feint, Iron Will^M, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +34, Craft (sculpture) +22, Diplomacy +26, Disguise +26, Fly +21, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (varies) +19, Perception +27, Perform (dance) +23, Profession (courtesan) +16, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +21

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Hallit; telepathy 100 ft.; tongues

SQ change shape (*alter self*, Small or Medium humanoid), simple arcane spellcasting

Gear black sapphires (one worth 20,000 gp, one worth 15,000 gp, and two worth 10,000 gp each)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Consume Soul (Su) As a standard action, a mythic succubus can consume a soul stored in a gemstone she carries. Doing so affects her as if by a *heal* spell (CL 15th) and grants her a +4 profane bonus to her Charisma for 1 minute.

Penetrating Enchantments (Su) A mythic succubus's enchantment spell-like abilities and spells can affect creatures normally immune to mind-affecting effects of any sort, but such creatures gain a +4 bonus on saving throws to resist these effects.

Soul Trapping (Su) If a mythic succubus kills a creature, she

Encounters in the Debauchery

How events play out in the Debauchery can vary, but in all likelihood, combat will be the end result. The Pleasers and guests in the private rooms above (area **D8**) will join any fight here, as does Mazillgarub from area **D2**, but the building's madam, Sister Perversion, does not join the fight until the battle is over, for when the PCs attack, the demon lord Nocticula seizes control over the seraptis, intending to use her to deliver a message to the PCs. If a battle in the Debauchery goes bad for the PCs, you can consider having a Nocticula-controlled Sister Perversion enter the battle to aid the PCs so Nocticula can speak to them when things are over; otherwise, the possessed seraptis emerges from area **D10** to address the PCs once the battle is over. If the PCs enter area **D10** before starting a fight in the Debauchery, Nocticula speaks to them there but does not accompany them into the Debauchery to help them fight. In this case, the PCs may end up having to fight Sister Perversion at the same time as the rest of the building's inhabitants.

can attempt to trap its soul in a gemstone she carries as an immediate action, affecting the soul as if by the spell *soul bind*. A successful DC 27 Will save negates this effect. If the creature being targeted was slain by the mythic succubus's energy drain attack, it receives no saving throw to resist this effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

D5. Side Entrance

Several large crates sit at the west end of this narrow storage area. The door to the south is chained tightly shut.

The key to the locks on the chains that bar the door to the south of this room is kept by Sister Perversion—until the chains are removed, a successful DC 34 Strength check is needed to smash the door down.

Treasure: Among the crates are stored exotic drugs and rare alcohol, along with other tools of the Yearning House's trade, worth 5,500 gp in total. One crate contains 3 doses of *ambrosia*^{MA}, but all of these doses are tainted by the Abyss. Anyone who consumes this cursed *ambrosia* must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or become staggered by its overwhelming foulness for 24 hours.

D6. The Cornucopia (CR 12)

The groaning shelves of this bustling kitchen are crammed with barrels of salted meats, cases of brandy and pesh, and hundreds of other luxuries.

Creatures: A single coloxus demon named Norxusnagthi, attended by a half-dozen quasit minions, toils constantly in this chamber. The overworked but completely loyal demon is in charge of providing all of the exotic foods and refined drugs needed by visitors to the house. The coloxus is a wretched coward, and if attacked, he immediately teleports away, leaving the simpering quasits to their fates. If prevented from fleeing, the coloxus can provide the PCs with a detailed map of the Yearning House and can list all of the building's current occupants in return for a promise of mercy.

NORXUSNAGTHI**CR 12****XP 19,200**Coloxus demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 72)**hp** 168**QUASITS (6)****CR 2****XP 600 each****hp** 16 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 66)**D7. The Lash (CR 7)**

This curving balcony coils most of the way around the large room below, its length curling like the lash of a whip. To the north, the balcony widens just before it ends—here, a tangle of spiky iron cages lean outward, suspended at an angle by chains.

The stairs lead down to area **D3**.

Creatures: The three cages are used to imprison enemies of the Worldwound so that they might endure the iron-maiden-like cruelties of the cages while looking down upon the debaucheries below. Most mortals don't last long here, so Sister Perversion greatly prefers imprisoning good outsiders within. Currently, a hound archon whimpers and writhes within each cage, their bodies pierced and impaled by jagged iron spikes. These cages function as *dimensional shackles* on any creature locked within, and they actively suppress the archons' healing. While the archons are locked in the cages, anyone attempting to heal damage to an archon must succeed at a DC 35 caster level check. A successful DC 40 Disable Device check is needed to open a cage and release an archon—if this check is failed by 5 or more, the archon takes 2d6+10 points of damage (this damage bypasses the archon's damage reduction). At your discretion, other methods of rescuing the hound archon, such as casting *disintegrate* on a cage, could work as well. For the purposes of *dispel magic* and other level-dependent effects, the cages function at CL 18th.

HOUND ARCHONS (3)**CR 4****XP 1,200 each****hp** 39 each (currently 0)

Story Award: For each hound archon the PCs manage to rescue, award them 9,600 XP.

D8. Pleasure Chambers (CR 19)

All of these nearly identical rooms are luxuriously appointed, with padded leather chairs, huge beds with feather mattresses and other garish peripherals such as gilt tables, fancy oil lamps burning scented oil, and long mirrors. The decor exudes an overt sexuality, and despite their cleanliness, the rooms have a tangible seediness about them. The Pleasers use these private chambers to entertain guests—at this time, areas **D8b** and **D8f** are in use.

Area D8b: The current occupants of this room are Lady Blemish and Pleaser Ammon. Lady Blemish is a green-skinned slimy demodand and a frequent customer to the Yearning House—a mercenary and bounty hunter who has largely abandoned her kind to work in the Worldwound. The Yearning House is her favorite place to relax between missions and unload crusaders she's captured alive. The demodand's vice of choice is sex—she is currently spending some time with her favorite Pleaser, Ammon. Lady Blemish is strangely protective of the Yearning House, and if combat begins, she loudly and brazenly steps in to protect the Pleasers and the establishment, hoping to earn a few free nights as a reward for her aid. The Pleasers are, of course, only too delighted to let her take the brunt of the initial damage in a fight. If the slimy demodand is reduced to 50 or fewer hit points, her bravery crumbles and she flees.

LADY BLEMISH**CR 16****XP 76,800**Slimy Demodand (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 70)**hp** 241**PLEASER AMMON****CR 12/MR 4****XP 19,200****hp** 190 (see page 20)

Area D8f: This room's occupant is a towering, hideous creature known only as the Tall Stranger. This 9-foot-tall humanoid figure is an unusually lawful-minded ecorche—an undead atrocity who is fond of the tingling sensation that results from having rock salt massaged into its skinless flesh. The Tall Stranger is the agent of a hidden society of devil worshipers from Ustalav—a group known as the Harlequin Society. This group, having read the writing on the wall, fears that the demons of the Worldwound are nearing a full-scale invasion of Ustalav, and has sent the Tall Stranger north on several diplomatic missions to attempt to organize an arrangement with the Storm King such that when Ustalav falls, the Harlequin Society will be allowed to continue to exist. While on these missions, the Tall Stranger also spies and observes, seeking any indication that the demons may, in

fact, not be in as strong of a position to invade as they seem. The Tall Stranger has heard of the PCs, but didn't put much stock in these stories. If the PCs attack, though, he watches the battle silently from the balcony. If the PCs win the fight, he aids them in finishing off the last of the Pleasers before introducing himself as a "servant of an interested party to the south, one eager to see the Worldwound fall." The Tall Stranger won't offer much direct aid to the PCs, but he has learned much about the situation in Iz. You can use him to inform the PCs about anything you feel they should have learned already but through poor luck or chance, did not. In particular, the Tall Stranger knows that the Soul Foundry hides a unique and apparently immortal demon called the Suture whose existence is fundamentally tied to the Worldwound—he suspects that the Suture may be the transformed remains of the first demon to step through the portal, and that in his supernatural flesh might lie a key to closing the Worldwound—if only the Suture could be brought to the actual original portal within Threshold. Alas, the Tall Stranger knows little more—finding out as much as he has about the Suture has been something of a miracle, he confides. Before he departs, the Tall Stranger wishes the PCs luck, admitting that for once, the rumors of heroes have turned out to be most impressive facts. For more information on the Tall Stranger's masters in the Harlequin Society, see page 56 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Rule of Fear*.

THE TALL STRANGER

CR 16

XP 76,800

LE ecorche (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 109)

hp 209

PLEASER MAHULDA

CR 12/MR 4

XP 19,200

hp 190 (see page 20)

Story Award: Award the PCs XP as if they'd defeated the Tall Stranger in combat if they learn what he knows of the Suture.

D9. Storeroom

Treasure: This cramped area is used to store various devices and components required in the day-to-day operation of the Yearning House. A search of the room uncovers a scattering of valuables, including a *potion of delay poison*, a *potion of meld into stone*, a *potion of displacement*, an *elixir of fire breath*, 3 doses of tears of death, and a *periapt of proof against poison*.

D10. The Obscene Boudoir (CR 20)

This chamber is decorated with furniture crafted from death—piles of cushions covered with wan skin, a chandelier made of

sinew and bone, and objects made of body parts. A huge circular black mirror hangs opposite the door, while a massive bed on a frame of bones sits to the southwest. The walls are painted with horrific scenes of suicide, carnal excess, and all manner of shocking deviance. The soft sounds of moaning—both from pleasure and pain—whisper through the room.

The decor in this room is not only upsetting and vile, but also infused with Abyssal energies that cause the furniture to groan and moan and periodically twitch. Any nonevil characters who enters the room must make a successful DC 28 Will save to avoid being sickened by the display for as long as they remain in the room.

Creature: This hideous boudoir is the domain of Sister Perversion, a powerful seraptis demon and the madam of the Yearning House. She reports directly to Mistress Anemora (most often via her magical mirror—see Treasure, below), but by and large she is left to run the building as she sees fit.

Sister Perversion prefers to spend her time either observing her Pleasers doing their work via her magic mirror, or enjoying herself with victims. She is particularly fond of skinning her partners alive and using the flesh as a snack for one of the many mouths on her arms or to decorate her boudoir, but once a partner dies, she loses interest and has a Pleaser dispose of the remains.

The seraptis has served many demon lords during her long career, with Deskari being but the latest, but as the PCs arrive, Sister Perversion is seized by one of her previous patrons, Noctacula, who wishes to speak once more to the heroes who recently impressed her so on the Midnight Isles. She uses the *mirror of mental prowess* to observe events in the Yearning House, waiting until after the PCs have defeated its guardians before she approaches them. As Noctacula greets the PCs, her shadowy image flickers around the seraptis's body.

"And so here are my heroes again, once more vexing and testing the patience of a Lord of Chaos. How utterly charming! You're here seeking that bauble, the chisel the Storm King used to break your little toy, but you won't find it here. The mistress of Deskari's cult keeps it for herself in her own lair deep in the Rasping Rifts, but I know how you can get there. Indeed, I know more than you might wish to know about what is on your failing horizon..."

Of course, the PCs are free to attack the possessed seraptis at any point, but if they do so, Noctacula makes a sound of disappointment, then says, "So be it—enjoy your fates, fools!" before she abandons the seraptis to her fate.

If the PCs wish to parley with Noctacula, though, the Lady of Shadow deigns to speak for a moment. Some likely questions and possible answers are given on page 24.

How can we recover the Nahyndrian chisel? Noctricula can tell the PCs how to use the pool in area **D4**, or barring that how to use the *mirror of mental prowess* to view Mistress Anemora's lair. The priest carries the chisel on her person as a relic of her faith.

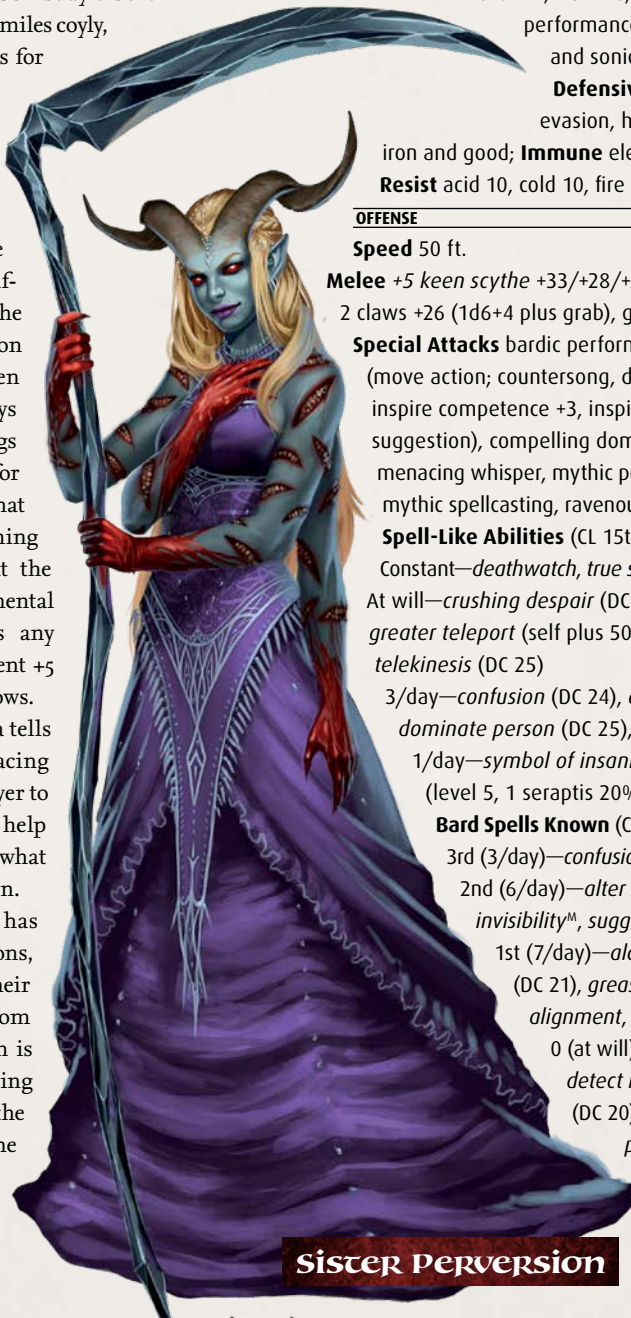
What is the Suture? Noctricula can explain to the PCs about the Suture's nature, how he came to be what he is today, and how he can aid in closing the Worldwound (see area **E12** for details).

How long will it be before the Worldwound opens? The demon lord can tell the PCs how many days they have left, but can also advise the PCs on methods to slow down or even turn back the advancing doomsday clock.

Why are you helping us now? She smiles coyly, saying only that she has her reasons for seeing Deskari laid low. If any of the PCs refused her direct aid in "The Midnight Isles" before traveling to the island of Colyphyr, she adds that in her many eons of existence, she has met few mortals who have had the courage, wisdom, and self-control to resist her offers, and that she was quite moved by the PCs' devotion to their ideals and convictions when they refused her aid before. She says she's helping the PCs now, no strings attached, to show her respect for their convictions, even hinting that she might be able to learn something from the PCs. The revelation that the PCs' earlier refusal left a fundamental impression on a demigod grants any PCs who refused her aid a permanent +5 morale bonus on all Will saving throws.

Will you help us more? Noctricula tells the PCs that if they wish her aid in facing Deskari, they have but to offer a prayer to her and she will do what she can to help them, but for now she is eager to see what the PCs can accomplish on their own.

Once you feel enough time has passed or the PCs run out of questions, Noctricula wishes the PCs luck in their quest, hints that she'll be watching from afar, and vanishes. Sister Perversion is stunned for a round after this, giving the PCs a round to try to defeat the seraptis before she recovers—she has a full memory of what just happened, and is desperate to slay the PCs before they can move forward with their quest.



SISTER PERVERSION

CR 20

XP 307,200

Female seraptis bard 7/trickster 4 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos* 58, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 44)
CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +18^M; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *deathwatch*, *true seeing*; Perception +35

Aura gaze of despair (30 ft., DC 27), *unholy aura* (DC 28)

DEFENSE

AC 39, touch 20, flat-footed 33 (+9 armor, +4 deflection, +6 Dex, +10 natural)

hp 400 (22 HD; 15d10+7d8+287)

Fort +22, **Ref** +16, **Will** +19; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Abilities bloodless, evasion, hard to kill; **DR** 10/cold

iron and good; **Immune** electricity, poison, bleed; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee +5 *keen scythe* +33/+28/+23/+18 (2d4+17/x4), 2 claws +26 (1d6+4 plus grab), gore +26 (2d6+4)

Special Attacks bardic performance 26 rounds/day (move action; countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion), compelling domination, fleet charge, menacing whisper, mythic power (11/day, surge +1d8), mythic spellcasting, ravenous embrace

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +25)

Constant—*deathwatch*, *true seeing*, *unholy aura* (DC 28)

At will—*crushing despair* (DC 24), *dispel magic*,

greater teleport (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only),

telekinesis (DC 25)

3/day—*confusion* (DC 24), *demand* (DC 28),

dominate person (DC 25), *fly*

1/day—*symbol of insanity* (DC 28), *summon*

(level 5, 1 seraptis 20% or 1 glabrezu 40%)

Bard Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +17)

3rd (3/day)—*confusion*^M (DC 23), *dispel magic*^M

2nd (6/day)—*alter self*, *gallant inspiration*^{APG}, *invisibility*^M, *suggestion*^M (DC 22)

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *charm person*

(DC 21), *grease* (DC 21), *undetected*

alignment, *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*,

detect magic, *ghost sound*

(DC 20), *mage hand*, *message*,

prestidigitation (DC 20)

M mythic spell

TACTICS

Before Combat Sister Perversion casts a

Sister Perversion

mental *alarm* three times per day on the balcony outside the door to her room, and *undetectable alignment* on herself every day.

During Combat Once released from Noctacula's control, Sister Perversion is stunned for the first round of combat. After this, she immediately teleports elsewhere in Iz to prepare for combat by casting *fly* and *invisibility*, then uses *demand* to contact a PC to suggest that PC should undress and cast aside all of his or her equipment. Sister Perversion then casts *mythic invisibility* on herself and returns to attack, starting the fight with *dominate person* and *mythic confusion* and switching to melee attacks once her foes are scattered and distracted by her mind-controlling magic (or sooner if it becomes apparent her enemies are resistant or immune to these tactics).

Morale Sister Perversion fights to the death rather than face punishment for failure from Mistress Anemora.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 23, **Con** 32, **Int** 18, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +28; **CMD** 48

Feats Ability Focus (dominate person), Arcane Strike, Bleeding Critical, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Improved Initiative^M, Iron Will^M, Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Diplomacy +34, Intimidate +34, Knowledge (engineering) +15, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (local) +31, Knowledge (nobility) +31, Knowledge (planes) +31, Knowledge (religion) +31, Perception +35, Perform (dance) +34, Perform (sing) +34, Stealth +30

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ amazing initiative, bardic knowledge +3, enhanced ability (Cha), lore master 1/day, recuperation, subtle magic, versatile performance (dance, sing)

Gear +5 *mithral chain shirt*, +5 *keen scythe*, *dimensional shackles*, *ring of evasion*, assorted jewelry worth a total of 4,400 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloodless (Ex) Sister Perversion is immune to bleed effects and to attacks that utilize blood drain to function.

Compelling Domination (Su) When Sister Perversion uses *dominate person* (as a spell or spell-like ability), its victims do not actively resist the control and do not gain a new saving throw when ordered to take actions against their nature unless those actions are obviously self-destructive, in which case the victim does get a new saving throw with a +2 bonus to escape the effects of the domination.

Gaze of Despair (Su) Sister Perversion's gaze fills the minds of those within 30 feet with overwhelming and soul-crushing despair. Anyone who fails a DC 27 Will save upon being exposed to her gaze immediately takes 1d6 points of Charisma drain and is staggered for 1d6 rounds. If the Charisma drain would normally reduce a creature's Charisma to 0, that creature instead succumbs to overwhelming suicidal urges and attempts to end its life by the most

convenient method at hand, subject to GM discretion. (In most cases, this effect causes a creature to make a coup de grace attempt on itself, but if a more dramatic method of self-destruction is available, the creature takes that action.) Once a creature reaches this suicidal state of despair, it remains in that state until its Charisma score is restored to its normal maximum—if methods of restoring lost Charisma are not available, the suicidal victim must be restrained at all times to prevent attempts to kill itself. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Grab (Ex) Sister Perversion gains a cumulative +4 bonus on grapple attempts for each successive claw attack that hits in a single round, provided the claw attacks all hit the same target. If she grabs a foe, she can use her ravenous embrace.

Ravenous Embrace (Su) Once per round, a creature grappling or grappled by Sister Perversion can be attacked by the ravenous, toothed wounds that decorate her arms. These teeth bite and chew, automatically dealing 4d6+12 points of damage each round—in addition, the wounds caused by the ravenous embrace cause 2d6 points of bleed damage and 1d4 points of Strength drain as the seraptis drinks away the victim's blood and other vital fluids. As long as the seraptis is within 30 feet of a foe suffering bleed damage from her ravenous embrace, the blood that flows from the victim writhes through the air into the seraptis's arm maws, healing the seraptis by an amount equal to the amount caused by that round's bleed effect.

Treasure: The mirror on the wall is a *mirror of mental prowess* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 311); it provides the PCs another way to escape or enter the Silk Embrace.

D11. Entrance Cavern

The walls of this twenty-foot-high cavern are covered in spots by thick, shaggy spider webs. A distant howling, as if of a violent windstorm, shrieks beyond a web-clogged opening in the cave to the south.

This cavern exists on the Rasping Rift in the Abyss. Characters who travel to this area from the pool in area **D4** appear in the northern half of the cavern. No return portal is created by this pool, unfortunately—those who are ritually drowned in the pool are meant to wander this small cavern complex until the mistress of the place finds and devours them.

The webs blocking the entrance to area **D11b** function as a *web* spell (CL 20th), and automatically return 24 hours after they are destroyed. Area **D11b** is often used by the area's mistress as a place to imprison her favored offerings—if a significant NPC was abducted earlier, the PCs may find that NPC bound and near death in one of this cavern's alcoves.

Area **D11c** is one of the countless side spurs of the Rasing Rifts—it falls away below into the infinite and rises up as well—other rifts connect to this one here and there far below and far above.

Creature: The ruler of this small region, the drider Anemora, has been the leader of Deskari's cult in the Worldwound for decades, yet she has not held a very public presence in that role. Much of her time is spent exploring the Rasing Rifts or scouting other worlds for possible new sites for the Rasing Rifts' expansions once Golarion has been claimed. Currently, Mistress Anemora is serving in a support role to Arelu's efforts in Threshold, and has been spending the last few days in meditation and concentrated prayer in area **D11d**, lending her support to the expansion of the Worldwound. Momentary interruptions to this won't delay the ritual, but killing the drider certainly will!

Anemora's meditation allows her to notice when any magical portals open into her realm, and if any planar travelers arrive. With a successful Perception check, unmodified by distance or line of sight, she notices such arrivals immediately upon their appearance in area **D11**.



Mistress Anemora

MISTRESS ANEMORA

CR 22

XP 614,400

Female drider cleric of Deskari 14/hierophant 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 113, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 32)

CE Large aberration

Init +13; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., *detect good*, *detect law*, *detect magic*, *true seeing*; Perception +37

DEFENSE

AC 40, touch 23, flat-footed 33 (+9 armor, +5 deflection, +5 Dex, +2 dodge, +2 luck, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 446 (23d8+343)

Fort +25, **Ref** +16, **Will** +29; +4 vs. poison and fear

Defensive Abilities hard to kill; **Immune** sleep; **Resist** fire 10; **SR** 32

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee *staff of the hierophant* +25/+20/+15/+10 (1d8+12), bite +18 (2d6+3 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks channel negative energy 7/day (DC 21, 7d6), destructive smite (+7, 14/day), destructive aura (+7, 14 rounds/day), faith's reach, inspired spell, inverted spontaneous casting, mythic power (11/day, surge +1d8), mythic spellcasting, weapon master (14 rounds/day), web (+20 ranged, DC 25, 9 hp)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)

Constant—*detect good*, *detect law*, *detect magic*

3/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

1/day—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *deeper darkness*, *dispel magic*, *levitate*, *suggestion* (DC 17)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities

(CL 20th; concentration +31)

14/day—*battle rage* (+7 damage)

Cleric Spells

Prepared

(CL 20th; concentration +31)

9th—*energy drain*

(DC 30), *miracle*

(DC 30), *power word*

kill^P, *quicken slay*

living (DC 26), *true*

resurrection, *quicken*

wall of stone

8th—*quicken*

divine power, *fire storm*

(DC 29), *greater spell*

immunity, *quicken*

poison (DC 25), *power word stun*^o, quickened *unholy blight* (DC 25)

7th—quickened *bestow curse* (DC 24), *blasphemy* (2, DC 28), quickened *blindness/deafness* (DC 24), *disintegrate*^o (DC 28), quickened *dispel magic*^m, quickened *searing light*

6th—*blade barrier*^{pm} (DC 27), *harm*^m (DC 27), *heal*, *heroes' feast*, quickened *hold person* (DC 23), quickened *sound burst* (DC 23), *word of recall* (DC 27)

5th—*breath of life*, *flame strike*^m (DC 26), *greater command* (DC 26), *insect plague*, *shout*^o (DC 26), *spell resistance*, *true seeing*

4th—*air walk*, *dimensional anchor*, *dismissal* (DC 25), *divine power*^o, *giant vermin*, *poison* (DC 25), *sending*

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 24), *blindness/deafness* (DC 24), *dispel magic*^m (2), *magic vestment*^o, *meld into stone*, *searing light* (2)

2nd—*death knell* (DC 23), *desecrate*, *enthrall* (DC 23), *hold person* (DC 23), *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 23), *spiritual weapon*^o, *status*

1st—*command* (4, DC 22), *entropic shield*, *obscuring mist*, *sanctuary* (DC 22), *true strike*^o

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 21), *create water*, *mending*, *read magic*

D domain spell; **Domains** Destruction, War; **M** mythic spell

TACTICS

Before Combat Anemora casts *magic vestment* and *heroes' feast* daily. She casts *greater spell immunity* once she notices intrusion into her realm—since word of the PCs' tactics and abilities has spread, she can choose spells she knows her enemies favor. She casts *true seeing*, *air walk*, *spell resistance*, and *freedom of movement* (the last from her staff) before entering combat. Just before entering combat, she casts *sending* to alert Areelu Vorlesh that the PCs are attacking her, more out of courtesy than any hope that the witch will send help (she won't).

During Combat Anemora remains out of melee combat, and augments her spells with the Quicken Spell metamagic feat each round. Her first act each round is to use a quickened *wall of stone* to wall off some of the PCs while also casting *blasphemy* in hopes of banishing at least one PC. Remember, her faith's reach mythic ability allows her to cast spells like quickened *slay living*, quickened *poison*, *mythic harm*, and spontaneously cast inflict spells at a range of 30 feet. She saves her *miracle* for emergencies. If reduced below 200 hit points, she casts *heal* on herself; if reduced below 200 hp again, she uses her *amulet of the planes* to flee to Golarion, then uses her healing magic to restore herself before using the amulet again to return to the Rasping Rifts, whereupon she casts *word of recall* to return to area **D11d** to continue the fight.

Morale Anemora uses her *amulet of the planes* to flee to Golarion if reduced to 50 hit points or fewer.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 21, **Con** 32, **Int** 13, **Wis** 32, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 46

Feats Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge^m, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Selective Channeling, Spring Attack, Toughness^m

Skills Bluff +24, Climb +15, Knowledge (religion) +27, Linguistics +7, Perception +37, Spellcraft +22

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Elven, Undercommon

SQ amazing initiative, enhanced ability (Con), profane gift (+2 Wis), recuperation, undersized weapons

Combat Gear *staff of the hierophant*^{ue} (8 charges), unholy water (6); **Other Gear** mwk mithral chain shirt, *amulet of the planes*, *belt of physical perfection* +6, *headband of inspired wisdom* +6, *Nahyndrian chisel*, *ring of protection* +5, *ring of minor fire resistance*, *robe of scintillating colors*, unholy symbol, two diamonds (worth 25,000 gp each), fine jewelry (worth 8,000 gp), 10 pounds of silver dust (worth 50 gp), *true seeing* ointment (2 doses worth 250 gp each)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Profane Gift (Su) Anemora is under the effects of a profane gift (+2 Con) granted to her by a succubus named Lelaxiss whom she has bound and imprisoned in a distant hidden locale.

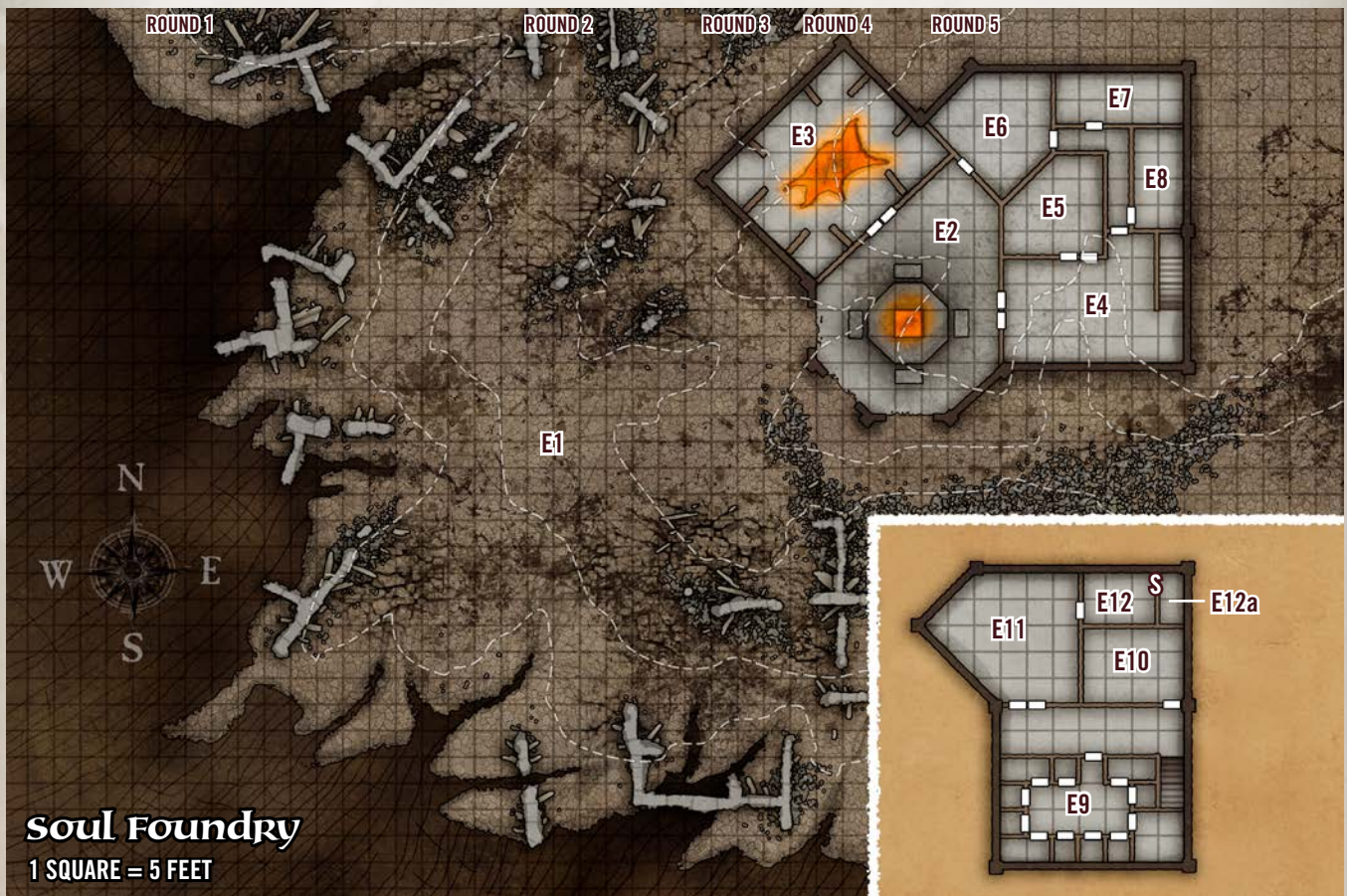
Development: If the PCs slay Anemora, the countdown to the opening of the Worldwound pauses for 1 day. If the PCs don't confront her, or if she manages to escape, she makes her way back to the Worldwound (likely after a day's passage so she can cast *word of recall* to teleport to the Yearning House), uses *true resurrection* to restore Sister Perversion to life if the seraptis has been slain, then with the seraptis's aid travels to Threshold to join Areelu in defending the tower. Where she and Sister Perversion are encountered in that complex is left to you.

Story Award: Killing Anemora is a mythic trial.

E. SOUL FOUNDRY

Lying not far from the Yearning House, the Soul Foundry is one of the few production facilities in the largely deserted city of Iz. The building is used for the creation of a foul material known as soul lead—a soft, malleable metal infused with mortal souls that is used in the creation of Abyssal constructs. Two foul monstrosities run the Soul Foundry: a half-babau dwarf named the Filleled Man and his hideously malformed companion, Lord Stillborn. At your option, you can replace one or both of these characters with surviving villainous NPCs from earlier in the campaign—Staunton Vhane could replace the Filleled Man, for example, and Xanthir Vang could stand in for Lord Stillborn. If you take this option, increase the level and power of these NPCs so their CRs match those of the NPCs they're replacing.

Disrupting the Soul Foundry or killing its leaders won't impact the Worldwound Ritual, but the acquisition of the wretched but mythic demon kept prisoner within the building certainly will. This demon, once a powerful derakni



Soul Foundry

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

demon in Deskari's employ, is now a powerfully mythic but still pitiable dretch known as the Suture. Immortal as long as the Worldwound exists, yet carrying within his flesh the key to stitch the wound shut forever, the Suture has long presented Deskari's minions with a quandary—as long as the Suture exists, he presents a threat to the Worldwound, but the Worldwound itself prevents his destruction. And so over the decades, the miserable demon has been kept prisoner by no fewer than a dozen powerful “wardens” in as many different impromptu prisons. After Raliscrad, the Suture's previous location, nearly fell to the crusaders during the previous adventure, the mythic dretch was whisked away to here in Iz and placed under the care of the Filleted Man—much to the Suture's agony, for the Filleted Man does quite enjoy torturing a creature that cannot die.

The Soul Foundry is a squat, stone structure perched perilously close to the edge of the Worldwound. Only the building's exceptional architecture has kept it upright, when all the neighboring buildings have collapsed into ruins. The walls of the Soul Foundry are magically treated reinforced masonry (hardness 16, hp 360, break DC 65), while its doors are of iron (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28) and are typically left locked (Disable Device DC 40); both the Filleted Man and Lord Stillborn carry keys to these doors.

Area E2 and E3 are both lit by molten lead, but the rest of the complex is without illumination—its occupants use darkvision to navigate the halls.

Normally, the Filleted Man can be found in either area E11 or area E12 and Lord Stillborn in area E8, but once they're aware that the PCs have arrived (likely as a result of a loud fight in area E1), the two seek each other out and prepare an ambush. Feel free to play this ambush out as you see fit—most likely, they wait until the PCs are involved with a fight against the foes in areas E2 or E3 before they sneak in to attack. Refer to areas E8 and E11 for their statistics and tactics.

E1. Soul Foundry Plaza (CR 21)

A single bunkerlike stone building sits amid the ruins here, not far from the edge of the rift into the Worldwound itself. The southwestern facade of the building is open to the air, revealing a forge within, while the surrounding plaza is a tangle of partially collapsed walls and stony rubble.

The rubble strewn plaza is considered difficult terrain. In places, crumbled walls still stand—these vary in height from 3 feet to 7 feet.

City of Locusts

Creature: The plaza is under the watchful protection of one of the Storm King's newest triumphs—the defiled remains of the silver dragon Terendelev. After her murder at the onset of the attack on Kenabres (see “The Worldwound IncurSION”), the balor had the silver dragon's body and head brought back here to Iz. Over the course of many weeks, necromancers and cultists alike toiled over the dragon's remains, eventually animating them as a ravener. This hideous defilement has not only prevented the noble silver dragon's soul from moving on to its reward, but also prevents her restoration at her allies' hands via effects like *true resurrection*. The fact that the resulting undead atrocity is a powerful and loyal minion is almost an afterthought.

Although Terendelev is quite intelligent, in her undead state she is completely subordinate to Khorramzadeh's will. Currently, her sole responsibility is the guardianship of the Soul Foundry—the Storm King has not seen fit to tell Terendelev that she's actually guarding the Suture, but the undead dragon suspects that there's something of great value in the building and it's not just the soul-lead operation that the Storm King is worried about.

Terendelev prefers to nest in the rubble just west of the Soul Foundry, at area E1a. At rest, her bones look like nothing more than an ancient silver dragon's remains (identifiable as such with a successful DC 30 Knowledge [arcana] check). When she moves, the bones become infused with fell green energy.

The dragon's head is not physically attached to her body—the vertebrae destroyed by Khorramzadeh's blade exist now only as a ghostly figment. The ravener's head remains roughly where it should be nonetheless.

TERENDELEV

CR 21

XP 409,600

Female ancient silver dragon ravener (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 110, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 230)

CE Gargantuan undead (cold)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsense 120 ft., darkvision 240 ft., *detect evil*, dragon senses, fog vision; Perception +45

Aura cowering fear, frightful presence (30 ft., DC 32, 10 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 43, touch 10, flat-footed 43 (+5 deflection, -1 Dex, +33 natural, -4 size)

hp 387 (25d8+275)

Fort +24, **Ref** +15, **Will** +23

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, reflective scales, soul ward (250 hp); **DR** 15/good; **Immune** acid, cold, paralysis, sleep, undead traits, vorpal immunity; **SR** 30

Weaknesses scales, vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (poor); cloudwalking, graceful flight

Melee bite +35 (2d8+21/17-20), 2 claws +35 (2d6+14/19-20), tail slap +33 (2d8+7/19-20), 2 wings +33 (2d6+7/19-20)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

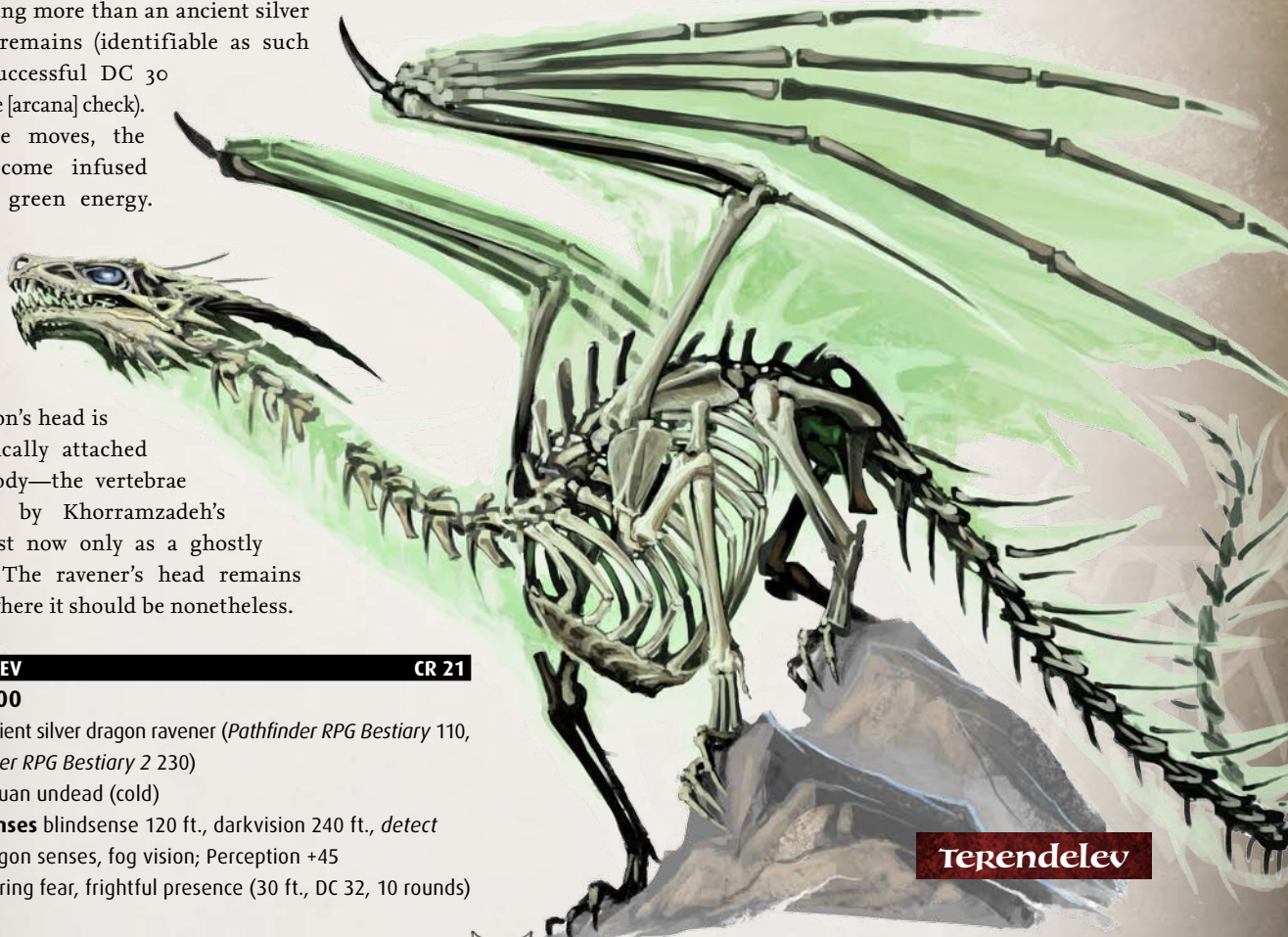
Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. cone, DC 32, 20d8 cold and 2 negative levels), crush (Medium creatures, DC 32, 4d6+21), energy drain, paralyzing breath, soul consumption, soul magic, tail sweep (Small creatures, DC 32, 2d6+21)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 25th)

At will—*control weather*, *control winds*, *detect evil*, *feather fall*, *fog cloud*

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 18th; concentration +28)

9th—*imprisonment* (DC 30)



Terendelev

8th—*greater shout* (DC 29), *maze*
 7th—*banishment* (DC 28), *greater teleport*, *prismatic spray* (DC 28)
 6th—*greater dispel magic*, *flesh to stone* (DC 27), *mass suggestion* (DC 27)
 5th—*break enchantment*, *dismissal* (DC 26), *feeblemind* (DC 26), *sending*
 4th—*dimension door*, *dimensional anchor*, *greater invisibility*, *wall of ice* (DC 24)
 3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *tongues*
 2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 23), *glitterdust* (DC 23), *mirror image*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 23), *scorching ray*
 1st—*alarm*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 22), *silent image* (DC 22), *unseen servant*
 0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

During Combat Terendelev casts *greater invisibility* on the first round of combat and takes to the air. She uses her breath weapon on the second round, then follows that by casting *imprisonment* and other spells, resorting to melee attacks only against foes who are capable of attacking her in melee. If reduced to 1 hit point so that she starts taking damage to her soul ward instead, she takes a round to cast *sending*, begging the Storm King for help, but Khorramzadeh ignores her cries for now, hoping to avoid a fight against the PCs before they've been sufficiently softened up; he intervenes only if they secure the Suture.

Morale Terendelev fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 39, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** 28, **Wis** 29, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +25; **CMB** +43; **CMD** 57 (61 vs. trip)

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Expertise, Critical Focus, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +24, Diplomacy +38, Fly +17, Intimidate +46, Knowledge (arcana, engineering, history, local, nobility, planes) +37, Perception +45, Sense Motive +37, Spellcraft +37, Stealth +23, Use Magic Device +38

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Halfling, Terran

SQ change shape

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Scales (Ex) The scales shed by Terendelev at the start of this Adventure Path are anathema to the ravener. Any PC who carries one of these items (see "The Worldwound IncurSION") gains a +5 bonus to his AC and on all saving throws against the ravener's attacks, and any damage the character deals to the ravener is deducted from her hit points and her soul ward simultaneously.

Vorpal Immunity (Ex) Terendelev has already been decapitated; she is now immune to further attacks that decapitate.

E2. The Forge (CR 16)

An octagonal forge with a churning fire within dominates this open air, stone-floored work area. Four anvils sit around the forge, and the waves of heat radiating from the fires are intense. The stench of molten metal is almost overwhelming.

This forge is used to craft and repair items for the Storm King and other important generals and principals of the war effort, and also to forge components for the construction of Abyssal constructs like devastators, retrievers, and warmonger wasps. A creature forced into the central square of the forge (such as by a bull rush) takes 20d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 25 half).

Creatures: The forge is attended by a group of six highly skilled mythic salamanders, creatures who are themselves exceptionally difficult to damage. The salamanders do not participate in any fight in the plaza between the PCs and the ravener, but they do remain alert and observant—if the PCs survive the fight with the ravener, they immediately move to attack using their bows.

The forge is the dwelling of a mythic fire elemental. This creature only emerges to defend the area if it is intruded upon by enemies, but it fights to the death once it emerges from the fires.

INVINCIBLE ADVANCED SALAMANDERS (6)**CR 8****XP 4,800 each**

hp 102 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 240, 294; *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 224)

Ranged +3 *flaming burst composite longbow* +13/+8 (1d8+8/×3 plus 1d6 fire)

MYTHIC FIRE ELEMENTAL**CR 14****XP 38,400**

hp 202 (*Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 195)

E3. The Pool of Molten Souls (CR 18)

Several bins line the walls of this room, each filled with stacks of ingots of dull gray metal. A twisted crack bubbles in the ground, filled with bubbling and sputtering molten metal that fills the area with noxious fumes.

The crack in the ground is filled with molten lead in which souls extracted via magic have been infused. The crack is heated by a planar bleed between the Material Plane and the burning fires in a molten rift in the Abyss. The rift is only 5 feet deep—treat the molten soul-infused lead as lava when determining the damage taken by any creature exposed to it. The bins hold ingots of soul-lead—now and then, as supplies run low, an invincible salamander slithers in here to cast another few dozen

ingots from the essentially inexhaustible supply of molten stuff in the middle of the room.

Creature: A single strange guardian watches over this room—a powerful, violet-hued ooze made of melted *Nahyndrian crystal*. This is an advanced immortal ichor, an intelligent ooze composed from the blood of a dead demon lord. This particular immortal ichor is chaotic evil. In addition to serving as this room's guardian, it is also responsible for steeping soul gems in the molten lead in order to keep the lead infused with souls. The creature isn't immune to damage from contact with molten lead, but can regenerate that damage swiftly enough. It pursues foes throughout the immediate area, and fights to the death.

ADVANCED IMMORTAL ICHOR **CR 18**

XP 153,600

hp 310 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 156, 288)

Treasure: There are hundreds of pounds of soul-lead here, but the stuff is worthless save for in the construction of Abyssal constructs. Of greater interest to the PCs, perhaps, is the +3 *construct-bane returning throwing cold iron warhammer* hidden in the northernmost alcove—a successful DC 30 Perception check reveals its presence.

E4. Workroom

Workbenches line the walls of this room, each cluttered with tools for metalworking and for crafting all sorts of strange devices.

Treasure: When he's not tormenting the Suture or serving the Storm King as an assassin, the Filleted Man can often be found here, working on his latest project. An examination of the room reveals several key construct components for things like retrievers (identifiable as such with a successful DC 30 Knowledge [arcana or planes] check), and a partially completed +2 *unholy battleaxe*. The components and supplies here are worth 12,000 gp in all.

E5. Storage

Crates and other containers fill this room.

Treasure: Little of interest is stored here, although an examination of the tools and supplies kept here reveals an unusual amount of surgical and alchemical supplies—more than one would expect to find in a forge storage room. The valuable supplies are worth 1,500 gp in all.

E6. Death Cages

Chains dangle from dozens of hooks in the ceiling of this room. Black birdcages sized for humans hang from several chains.

Each of the cages in this room is made of adamantine (hardness 20, hp 75, break DC 48) and are kept locked (Disable Device DC 40). The keys to the locks are carried by Lord Stillborn and the Filleted Man. This room is warded by a permanent *dimensional lock* (CL 20th).

Creatures: This room is used to imprison six vanth psychopomps. Each skeletal, birdlike outsider is kept in a separate cage, and their periodic shifting and thrashing, born of discomfort and madness, keep the cages constantly swinging. Normally silent and stoic, the vanths shriek and howl once they spot the PCs, begging for release in a cacophony of Abyssal, Celestial, and Infernal. Normally protectors of souls from those who seek to capture them as they journey from death to the Boneyard, these vanths were captured by the Filleted Man after they came looking for the cause of the destruction of souls in the area. He keeps them as additional pets to torment—if the PCs swiftly set to releasing the vanths, the psychopomps follow them around and serve as loyal minions in thanks, but if the PCs delay rescuing them for more than a minute, the vanths grow frustrated and start attacking with their *searing lights* to punish the PCs for not aiding them.

A rescued and thankful vanth can use *locate creature* to track down the Suture if so requested, provided the PCs have learned enough about the Suture (such as from speaking to Nocticula) to describe it accurately.

VANTH PSYCHOPOMPS (6) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 76 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 221)

E7. The Trophy Room

The walls of this room are devoted to the display of trophies—the preserved heads of all manner of creatures are displayed, ranging from those of deformed vermin to those of demons, but the primary displays feature the heads of slain crusaders.

The Filleted Man displays his hunting prowess here. An examination of the trophies reveals creatures as diverse as demons, devils, dragons, angels, and more, but over half are of crusaders who fell to the Filleted Man. In each case, the cut to the creature's neck is precise and clean—all of these were slain by the half-babau's *vorpai* sword.

E8. Lord Stillborn's Cradle (CR 20)

The air in this room reeks of vinegar and bitter chemicals. Numerous shelves on the walls contain jars of murky liquid in which float and twitch a nightmarish array of deformed fetuses from all manner of life. Some of the jars are much larger, sized for the unborn children of giants, perhaps, and sit upon the floor. Three of these larger jars are empty of displays and are

barely a third full of preservatives; stains around the floor of these jars indicate frequent spillages, as if the things that once floated within have made it a habit to crawl in and out of their glass homes.

Creature: The Filleted Man's partner, Lord Stillborn, is a monstrous undead creature known as a pickled punk. Deformed fetal monstrosities given foul unlife, most pickled punks are the offspring of human-sized mothers—Lord Stillborn is the child of a long-dead ash giant priest of Sifkesh, and as such he is much larger than the norm for his hideous kind. Lord Stillborn has a monstrously huge head with a second, vestigial face that wears a constant, idiotic leer. Despite his deformed body, he moves with a quick and efficient grace, and his skill at murder is matched by few.

When not aiding his accomplice, Lord Stillborn prefers to spend his time soaking in one of the large jars in this room. If the PCs make it this far without alerting him, they find the small undead assassin floating in one of the jars—floating, but not sleeping. He immediately clambers out of his jar to attack when he notices intruders.

Like his mother before him, Lord Stillborn is a devotee of the demon lord Sifkesh, yet he has thrown his lot in with the Filleted Man out of an interest to see what happens to

the Worldwound. The deformed assassin enjoys playing with the minds and despairs of victims, and is particularly fond of threatening to drown victims in molten lead. He knows a little about the Suture, but not the demon's full history—only that the Storm King has entrusted the Filleted Man with the demon's keeping.

LORD STILLBORN

CR 20

XP 307,200

Male advanced pickled punk rogue 6/assassin 10/trickster 4
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 214, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 44)

NE Small undead

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 20, flat-footed 22 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +6 Dex, +2 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 286 (18d8+202)

Fort +13, **Ref** +18 (+2 vs. traps), **Will** +11; +5 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities evasion, hard to kill, uncanny dodge; **DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee *sword of subtlety* +21/+21/+16 (1d4+7/17-20), bite +19 (1d4+3 plus attach)

Special Attacks angel of death 1/day, control the mindless, death attack (DC 20), irritant, mythic power (11/day, surge +1d8), path dabbling (precision), quiet death, sneak attack +8d6, surprise strike, swift death 1/day, true death (DC 25)

TACTICS

During Combat Lord Stillborn starts combat by using his *wand of greater invisibility* so he can maximize his sneak attacks against foes. He relies on his *wand of enervation* for ranged attacks, and if reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, he flees into the Soul Foundry to find a hiding spot and uses his *wand of inflict serious wounds* to heal up before returning to the fight.

Morale Lord Stillborn flees if reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, fighting to the death only if cornered. If he escapes, he seeks healing and then devotes himself to tracking down and slaying the PCs, preferring to attempt assassinations when one PC is alone.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 23, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 36

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge^M, Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Skill Focus (Stealth), Spring Attack, Toughness^M, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +27 (+23 when jumping), Bluff +20, Craft (alchemy) +12, Disguise +20, Knowledge (local) +12, Perception +24, Stealth +34, Use Magic Device +20



Lord Stillborn

Languages Common

SQ amazing initiative, death throes, enhance magic items, hidden weapons, hide in plain sight, improved uncanny dodge, opportune, poison use, recuperation, rogue talents (bleeding attack +8, combat trick, stand up), trap sense +2, trapfinding +3

Combat Gear *wand of enervation* (20 charges), *wand of greater invisibility* (10 charges), *wand of inflict serious wounds* (20 charges); **Other Gear** +5 *leather armor*, *sword of subtlety*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *belt of physical might* +6 (Str, Dex), *ring of protection* +1, key ring, 430 gp

E9. The Cruel House

This room sings with the moans and cries of the damned. Nearly a dozen iron-barred cells of differing sizes, each filthy with ordure and decay, line the walls. Jars containing severed body parts and organs all preserved in brine decorate each cell's floor.

Lord Stillborn keeps his favorite victims here, stashing them in these cells for later recreational vivisection and torture—the little horror is fond of preserving nonessential body parts and organs, and then decorating each creature's cell with jars of its severed parts. His victims are all in various stages of amputation and mutilation; each victim is naked, but supplied with a small razor-sharp knife tethered to an iron piercing through the forearm or around a rib. The expectation is that any prisoner kept here may end its torment at any time via suicide. Most of the prisoners eventually chose this option, with those whose hands or fingers have been amputated and who thus can no longer wield a blade being the sorry few exceptions. The wretches kept here are essentially hopeless and aimless—you can have NPCs who've been abducted appear here, but they will likely need magic to regenerate their lost body parts and to restore their broken minds.

E10. Foundry Treasury (CR 19)

The door to this room is always kept locked and trapped—make sure you're familiar with how the trap works (see Trap, below) before reading the room description to the PCs!

This rectangular room is replete with treasure—several overflowing chests sit along the walls, interspersed with numerous larger objects of value such as tapestries, statues, and paintings. A mound of glowing gemstones sits on a small round table in the northeastern corner of the room.

Trap: The door to the treasury is trapped—this trap triggers regardless of whether the door is opened by key, lock pick, or force. The trap can visually detect those attempting to enter, and unless the door is opened by the Fillested Man or Lord Blemish (or by someone disguised as one or the other with a successful DC 40 Disguise check),

the trap triggers as soon as the door is opened, encasing the hallway in *walls of force* and then creating a mobile, *mythic blade barrier* that moves back and forth across the hall.

FLENSING WALLS TRAP

CR 19

XP 204,800

Type magic; Perception DC 40; Disable Device DC 40

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*true seeing*); **Reset** automatic

Effect spells (*walls of force* appear along all walls, floors, and ceiling of the hallway south of area E10, CL 15th, duration 15 rounds; *mythic blade barrier* moves back and forth along the hall from north to south, 15d8 force damage per round, Reflex DC 19 negates damage for 1 round, CL 15th, duration 15 minutes)

Treasure: The Soul Foundry's treasury is but one of dozens of places the Storm King has stashed the wealth he and his armies have gathered from the ruins of Sarkoris. Each of these treasuries is guarded by one of the Storm King's favored minions—this one is guarded by the Fillested Man and Lord Stillborn. The items within the chests, and the other objects of value scattered about include 264,032 cp, 198,019 sp, 93,104 gp, 10,400 pp, 50 pounds of minor gems and jewelry worth a total of 15,500 gp, a platinum circlet set with emeralds worth 20,000 gp, a gold torc inlaid with scenes of subtly disturbing-looking fey worth 15,000 gp, a *sylvan scimitar*, a +5 *thundering evil-outsiderbane heavy repeating crossbow*, a *lyre of building*, a *staff of the woodlands* (2 charges), a *rod of security*, a *mantle of faith*, and a set of *bracers of armor* +6. The glowing gems on the table are all black sapphires that contain souls for eventual use elsewhere—there are 10 gems worth 5,000 gp each, 5 gems worth 10,000 gp each, and 3 gems worth 20,000 gp each.

E11. Fillested Man's Lair (CR 20)

This large chamber is an exquisitely decorated bedroom. An immense bed sits to the northwest, while the center of the room is open for sparring. A few of the well-used sparring dummies bear more than a passing resemblance to familiar figures.

The sparring dummies are decorated to look like the PCs—the Fillested Man finds it relaxing to spar against the greatest of his enemies' champions, after all.

Creature: Something of a whispered legend in Iz, the Fillested Man (so named for the fact his red flesh looks almost as if he'd been skinned) has long served the Storm King as a bounty hunter. Born a dwarf with a name he has now long forgotten, the Fillested Man became a half-babau decades ago, not long after the Worldwound opened. Captured by Arelu Vorlesh, he became an initially unwilling victim in her early experiments with the *Lexicon*

of *Paradox* and the ritual of becoming a half-demon. The Filleted Man was her first success, and she went on from there to apply the ritual to herself to become a half-succubus. She has since released the now-evil dwarf from her servitude, allowing the half-babau to make his own fortune and name among the demons of the Worldwound. Today, the Filleted Man thinks of Areelu Vorlesh as a sort of mother figure.

The Filleted Man is encountered in this room only if the PCs make it this far without alerting others in the building to their presence. In this case, he's either sleeping or sparring here, or tending to his torture tools in area **E12**. His reaction to intruders is one of shocked anger—he attacks on sight, even if he doesn't recognize the PCs for who they are.

FILLETTED MAN

CR 20

XP 307,200

Male half-babau dwarf ranger 15/guardian 6 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited 6, Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures 26*)

CE Medium outsider (dwarf)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*; Perception +20

Aura *unholy aura* (DC 17)

DEFENSE

AC 39, touch 17, flat-footed 36 (+9 armor, +4 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural, +7 shield)

hp 312 (15d10+225)

Fort +23, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13; +6 vs. mind-affecting effects, +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities absorb blow, acidic blood, adamantine mind, evasion, hard to kill, impervious body, mythic saving throws, quick recovery, to the death; **DR** 10/magic and epic, DR 2/—; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 31

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +3 *vorpal longsword* +25/+20/+15 (2d6+12/17-20), +5 *light shield* +29 (1d4+14 plus bull rush), bite +19 (2d6+4)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dwarves +6, elves +2, good outsiders +2, humans +4), hatred, mythic power (15/day, surge +1d8), smite good, sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th)

3/day—*acid fog*, *darkness*, *poison* (DC 13), *unholy aura* (DC 17)
1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 16), *greater teleport*, *keen edge*, *see invisibility*, *unholy blight* (DC 13)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +14)

4th—*freedom of movement*
3rd—*cure moderate wounds*, *strong jaw*^{APG}
2nd—*barkskin*, *protection from energy*, *wind wall*
1st—*alarm*, *lead blades*^{APG}, *longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat The Filleted Man casts *unholy aura*, *keen edge*, *see invisibility*, *barkskin*, *longstrider*, *freedom of movement*, *lead blades*, and *strong jaw* on himself before combat.

During Combat The Filleted man prefers to focus his attacks on available favored enemies if he can, flanking them if possible. With no strong ranged attack option, he relies exclusively on his ranged spell-like abilities or allies against enemies who maintain range superiority over him.

Morale The Filleted Man flees to Threshold to join Areelu via *greater teleport* if reduced to fewer than 75 hit points. If he can, he tries to bring Lord Stillborn with him.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 15, **Con** 30,
Int 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +24;
CMD 41 (45 vs. bull rush and trip)

Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Dodge, Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Iron Will^M, Power Attack^M, Shield Focus, Shield Master, Shield Slam, Toughness^M, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Craft (weapon) +15, Craft (armor) +15, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (religion) +12, Perception +20, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +20, Survival +20

Languages Abyssal, Common, Dwarven, Orc

SQ amazing initiative, camouflage, favored terrain (cold +2, Abyss +2, urban +6), hunter's bond (companions), quarry, recuperation, swift tracker, track +7, wild empathy +14, woodland stride

Gear +3 *adamantine chainmail*, +5 *light steel shield*, +3 *vorpal longsword*, *belt of physical might* +4 (Str, Con), *winged boots*, key ring, 2,226 gp



Filleted Man

E12. Private Torture Chamber (CR 12)

This room's torture equipment is well organized and obviously kept in good repair; it's also obviously well used. Clots of sticky blood and chunks of flesh cling to the devices or lie spattered on walls or across the floor.

The secret door to area **E12a** is well hidden, but can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check. A successful DC 20 Survival check when examining the blood reveals telltale smears leading to and from the secret door, though—and it also grants a +10 circumstance bonus on any subsequent attempts to find the secret door. The door is locked (Disable Device DC 40).

Creature: This room is where the Filleted Man entertains himself by torturing and tormenting the immortal demon he keeps locked up in the secret room to the east—the Suture. Whenever the Suture is about to die from its torment, the Filleted Man tosses the expiring demon back into the secret cell, so the Suture's death throes affect only the empty room, and the next time the urge for some recreational vivisection strikes the Filleted Man, the Suture has revived and is ready for another round of torments. The Suture is currently alive, shuffling and whimpering in its cell—a successful DC 10 Perception check is needed to notice these sounds. If the PCs establish conversation with the Suture via shouting (in Abyssal), he can be convinced to reveal the location of the secret door... but only if he believes the PCs don't intend to torture him.

The Suture is normally allowed the run of this cell, but sometimes he's manacled to a chain attached to one wall. He's a pitiful sight: a deformed dretch with no real lower torso to speak of—only a pair of crippled, twitching legs and a stubby broken tail. He moves around by “walking” on his hands. When the Worldwound first opened, the Suture was one of the more powerful of Deskari's derakni demons, yet as the first demon to step through the Worldwound after it was opened, he absorbed all of its latent power, becoming the final sacrifice to stabilize the rent between worlds. He reformed as a dretch, the basest of demons, and a crippled one at that. Yet the Worldwound had also infused him with power. Areelu Vorlesh quickly realized that this new demon's body represented a metaphoric suture that could help reseal the Worldwound, given the right circumstances. She spent many years looking for a way to kill the Suture and remove the threat, but eventually came to realize that the mythic dretch was essentially immortal. When she simply tried to take him away from the region to hide him in a distant place, she found that beyond a certain distance from the Worldwound, the Suture simply died in an explosion of electricity, only to reform somewhere in the region around Threshold. She finally decided the best tactic would be to

hide the Suture, moving him from prison to prison under an ever-changing parade of guardians. She handed over this responsibility to the Storm King several years ago.

The Suture has no concept of his importance to the Worldwound—he knows only that he exists to be tormented. When the PCs report to Galfrey later (see the start of Part 3), she swiftly puts two and two together and realizes the value the mythic dretch represents. Of course, while the dretch is hardly a danger to the PCs, the fact that his presence dampens mythic power and causes pain is a constant thorn in their side. Canny PCs may hit upon the idea of transporting the wretch in a *portable hole*, or keeping him in some remote location until the time comes when he must be brought to the Worldwound for his destiny. Of course, if not well guarded, the Suture makes every attempt to escape captivity, and if he gets loose, it may become quite difficult to find him!

THE SUTURE

CR 12/MR 10

XP 19,200

Unique dretch (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 60)

CE Small outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, mythic^{MA})

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +12

Aura pain (30 ft., DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 13, flat-footed 26 (+2 Dex, +15 natural, +1 size)

hp 132 (2d10+121); fast healing 15

Fort +14, **Ref** +2, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities reflect death, rejuvenation; **DR** 10/epic and cold iron or epic and good; **Immune** electricity, pain, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 23

Weaknesses Worldwound-bound

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+3), bite +6 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks dampen mythic power, mythic power (10/day, surge +1d12), simple divine spellcasting

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1/day—*cause fear* (DC 13), *stinking cloud* (DC 15), *summon* (level 1, 1 dretch 35%)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +9)

7th—*blasphemy* (DC 24), *word of chaos* (DC 24)

6th—*harm* (DC 23)

4th—*sending*

TACTICS

During Combat The Suture relies on *blasphemy* and *word of chaos* at first, then focuses his feeble melee attacks on those who lie senseless as a result. Otherwise, he spends the duration of every battle attempting to hide and avoid being hurt if possible, simpering and whining all the while.

Morale The Suture knows that death holds no permanence, but does not enjoy dying. He attempts to flee and hide if reduced to fewer than 100 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 28, **Int** 9, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Great FortitudeSM, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill FocusSM (Stealth), ToughnessSM

Skills Bluff +7, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (planes) +4, Perception +12, Stealth +14

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ death throes

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Pain (Su) The Suture's body is constantly wracked with pain, causing all living non-outsiders within a 30-foot spread to writhe in sympathetic agony as well. At the start of any round in which a creature is in this area, it must succeed at a DC 23 Fortitude save or be staggered by the pain for 1 round. Once a creature succeeds at this saving throw, it is immune to the Suture's aura of pain for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based, and includes a +10 racial bonus.

Dampen Mythic Power (Su) The Suture's presence impedes the function of mythic power other than his own. All mythic creatures within a 30-foot spread of the Suture take a -2 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks (no save). All costs for expending uses of mythic power are doubled while in this area.

Death Throes (Su) If the Suture is slain, his body explodes in a blast of red lightning, filling a 30-foot-radius spread and dealing 20d6 points electricity damage to all creatures in the area of effect. A successful DC 20 Reflex save halves this damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Reflect Death (Ex) The Suture is immune to death effects, and any death effect that specifically targets him is automatically reflected back in full at the target, as if via *spell turning* (this ability also affects supernatural death effects).

Rejuvenation (Su) The Suture cannot be permanently slain as long as the Worldwound remains open. If killed by any method, he returns to life at the place he died (or in the closest available space able to support his weight; see also Worldwound-Bound, below). Long-term effects that disable him, such as *flesh to stone*, *imprisonment*, or *temporal stasis*, automatically fail after 24 hours, releasing him from the condition with no further harm. If the Worldwound is closed, he immediately perishes forever.

Worldwound-Bound (Ex) If the Suture ever travels farther than 100 miles from Threshold, he immediately dies (triggering his death throes). When he rejuvenates, he appears at a random location within a 10-mile radius of Threshold. Travel to other planes triggers this death, with the exception of entering the Rasping Rifts at Threshold.

Entering an extradimensional pocket (such as that created by *rope trick* or a *portable hole*) does not trigger a death.

WRATH OF THE STORM KING (CR 26)

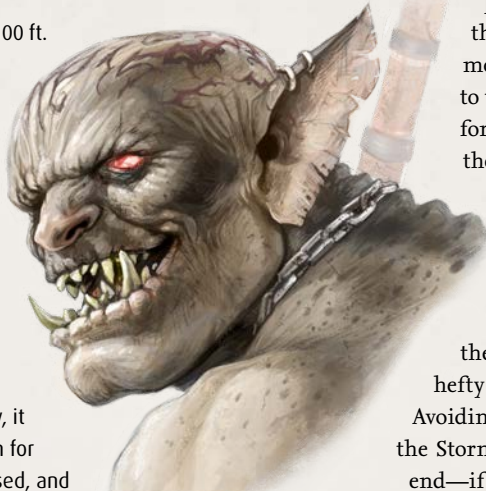
Once the PCs claim the Suture, regardless of how far they've progressed in the rest of the adventure, the Storm King knows immediately. He moves swiftly at this point, teleporting to the Soul Foundry's yard and bellowing for the PCs to show themselves. If the PCs hesitate, the Storm King immediately starts destroying the Soul Foundry to get to them.

While the PCs need not directly confront Khorramzadeh, defeating him is a mythic trial, can set back the advancing clock, and provides a hefty amount of experience and treasure. Avoiding the fight may be wiser, but accepting the Storm King's challenge will pay off in the end—if he can be defeated!

The fight against the Storm King should be dynamic, with the mythic balor lord pursuing the PCs into the Soul Foundry if they don't emerge to fight him in the open. Worse, as the PCs claim the Suture, the Worldwound heaves and buckles as if it knew the enemy had claimed one of its weakest links.

As the battle commences, tremors shake all of Iz. Creatures standing on the ground must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save each round or fall down. Worse, as time moves on, sections of Iz crumble away into the rift below. The map of the Soul Foundry shows numerous numbered dotted lines that show how portions of the chasm crumble away over the course of the battle. Each dotted line is noted by a number—this number corresponds to the round in which portions of the map crumble away to meet this new cliff edge. The collapse occurs at initiative count 0 in each round, and any creature standing on the ground beyond the crumbling edge plummets a mile into the chasm below. Eventually, the Soul Foundry collapses—any characters within the building at this time take 8d6 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and is pinned beneath the rubble. Of course, this won't last much longer, for by round 8, all of the region shown on the map is gone.

The tremors continue until Khorramzadeh is slain or the PCs flee Iz, but by that point, the city itself has been reduced by 25% of its previous size—the single largest collapse the ruins have yet endured.



The Suture

KHORRAMZADEH

CR 26/MR 5

XP 2,457,600

hp 605 (see page 60)

Part 3: Threshold of the End

The timing of when Galfrey explains the plan to close the Worldwound is left to you. If the PCs wish to hear the plan before the travel to Iz, Galfrey is perfectly willing to go over the details at that point—likewise, she'll wait until they're finished with Iz if the PCs prefer, in which case they or she will need to travel (likely via teleportation) to a meeting place.

The investigation of the *Lexicon of Paradox* has yielded a significant success, yet the method the magical tome reveals will close the Worldwound is a daunting task. Parallels to the method used to close the portal in the Midnight Fane exist, but overall the procedure to close such a large and devastating rift between worlds is much more complex and dangerous. While numerous openings to the Rasping Rifts exist in the Wounded Lands, the ritual to close them all at once must be performed where the wound first opened—in the heart of the prison tower known as Threshold.

The ritual to close the Worldwound requires an exceptionally difficult (and likely impossible) series of simultaneous skill checks—the ritual is detailed in Part 4 of this adventure, but Galfrey can tell the PCs that the ritual needs at least four people who are skilled in at least one of the following: Disable Device, Knowledge (planes), Linguistics, Perception, Spellcraft, and Use Magic Device. A character capable of casting good spells or of smiting chaos or evil can aid as well. One of the participants must carry the *Lexicon of Paradox* and lead the ritual. Of course, if the PCs wish, they can invite Galfrey or any other significant NPC along to help perform the ritual (even if this merely means teleporting the NPC in once Threshold has been properly prepared and its defenses lowered).

Fortunately, the *Lexicon of Paradox* reveals several other things that can be done in the time leading up to the ritual to augment the chances of success. Galfrey recommends the PCs accomplish as many of these as they can before attempting to close the rift (see Part 4 for more details).

Assassinations: The deaths of Mistress Anemora, Khorramzadeh, and Areelu Vorlesh will weaken the portal, although now that the enemy has already started to widen the rift, their deaths alone won't be enough to stop the end.

Dimensional Locks: If the PCs weaken the extraplanar nature of Threshold by casting *dimensional lock* at key places within the building, they can further enhance their chances of closing the portal. These spells should be placed in parts of the tower where the planar energies are particularly powerful—anywhere that *detect magic* reveals overwhelming conjuration magic. There are four such locations, one on each of the surviving floors of the tower (areas F2, F6, F20, and F25).

Nahyndrian Chisel: Using this artifact as part of the ritual should enhance the ritual's overall potency. Alternatively, a spellcaster can use *mage's disjunction* to cause the same effect, but doing so runs a greater personal risk.

Recruit Allies: Finally, having loyal and trustworthy allies to provide moral support can only help—bringing in significant NPCs during the last stage of the ritual can provide benefits.

The Suture: The *Lexicon of Paradox* is vague as to the Suture's nature beyond confirming his presence will hasten the Worldwound's closure. A successful DC 35 Knowledge (planes) check confirms that the Suture's unique history and link will provide a large bonus if the mythic dretch is present and in close proximity to the Worldwound portal when the closing ritual is performed.

The method and magnitude of how these preparatory actions will help the ritual are detailed in Part 4.

Approaching Threshold

While the PCs are free to approach the tower of Threshold on foot or by air, the location of the ancient prison is well documented, and learning its location well enough to use *greater teleport* to travel to the region is perhaps the best option. Of course, any attempt to teleport directly into Threshold will fail (see Threshold Features on page 38), and the crusaders know this, having attempted such acts before in the past. Arriving on a nearby cliff side overlooking the tower is the safest bet.

As the PCs come within sight of the ruin, read or paraphrase the following.

Here, at the Worldwound's heart, even the ground is forsaken. Sheer rifts gape open, forming a roughly circular pit nearly a mile across. Rivulets of molten lava cascade from the cliff sides into a boiling, bubbling lake of rancid filth and wriggling, wormlike creatures, while above the black storm clouds clench in a slowly spinning vortex. Demons of every sort wallow in the lake. Now and then, one breaks free and starts clambering up the cliffs or flies into the air, but half the time the monsters tumble back into the lake of worms to begin again. At the center of the lake, a thousand feet below the lowest cliff top surrounding it, a spike-walled tower of black stone emerges from the squirming filth, rising to a height of a hundred and twenty feet over the squirming surface below. This is what remains of the prison tower of Threshold, a structure wedged in the very gullet of the Worldwound itself.

The lake is filled with millions of wriggling larvae. The creatures are particularly ravenous; treat them as rot grubs if any creatures enter the lake (see area F11). The lake is 2,000 feet deep, and is riddled with portals that periodically open and close. Every round a creature swims in the water, there's a 10% chance it swims through a portal and is deposited in the Rasping Rifts at some distant point in that realm.

Here, so close to the source of the Worldwound, reality shifts and writhes between the Material Plane and the

Abyss. As a result, strange, semi-real sensations and visions plague those in the vicinity—these events are known as Abyssal upheavals. While Abyssal upheavals are generally nothing more than disturbing features that manifest and have little game effect, they have an unnerving tendency to occur during times of violence and stress, such as combat. You can also use these to spice up otherwise empty rooms the PCs visit more than once as you see fit. Finally, feel free to add more upheavals of your own design, using the following as inspiration.

ABYSSAL UPHEAVALS

d12	Result
1	A featureless sack enclosing a small humanoid wrapped in a bag of thick warty skin appears. The bag contains a dretch, and unless aided by outside help, the creature suffocates a minute or so after appearing.
2	A tormented humanoid outline tries to drag itself free from the nearest wall, pawing from within the surface before fading away.
3	The wailing of babies fills the air for 1d4 rounds.
4	Something big slams into an adjacent wall. The thing hits the wall twice more, threatening to destroy it, then all is still. This can even occur when no walls are nearby.
5	A great bell strikes six times somewhere very far away. (These bells presage the ringing of the bells in the Chapel of the Locust Plague in area F14 .)
6	The ground lurches as if it had suddenly become a living thing. Every creature standing in the area must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or fall prone.
7	A random character feels a rasping hot tongue lick his cheek.
8	The sound of sobbing fills the air for 1d4 rounds.
9	The smell of rotting, sugary meat fills the air for an hour.
10	For a fleeting moment, a random character's face twists and shifts into a demonic form.
11	An unpleasantly large and moist egg appears by a random PC. Any damage to the egg breaks it open—it breaks open on its own in 2d4 rounds, releasing an <i>acid fog</i> (CL 20th) in the area.
12	Vermin scuttle and teem upon the walls, floor, and ceiling, transforming into a fiendish army ant swarm, a fiendish locust swarm, or another insect swarm.

THRESHOLD FEATURES

Threshold was once used by the Sarkorians to imprison those found guilty of practicing arcane magic. Here, under the watchful eyes of their wardens, the arcane spellcasters could continue their research, albeit while heavily supervised. The wardens viewed Threshold more as a retreat or academy than a prison, but the spellcasters kept within were not fooled—to them, it was never anything more than a prison especially designed to hold their kind. When Areelu Vorlesh

was imprisoned here in 4598 AR, she immediately turned her attention toward an escape. She recruited two fellow prisoners to her cause, and with their aid, opened a portal to the Rasping Rifts, creating the Worldwound and plunging the tower of Threshold into a sort of in-between realm lodged twixt the Material Plane and the Abyss. This original portal (see area **F11**), still remains in the heart of the tower. Here the PCs must eventually perform the ritual of closing from the *Lexicon of Paradox*.

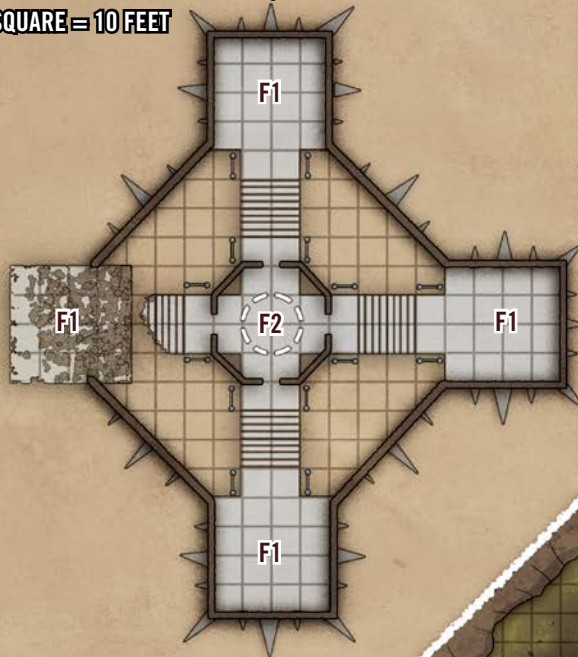
Threshold and the lake it floats within are treated as if they were on the Rasping Rifts—the planar traits of that realm are in full effect here. Additionally, this planar bleed causes the entire region to function as if it were another plane for the purposes of teleportation. Characters can teleport to the edge of the cliffs surrounding Threshold, but not from elsewhere directly into the tower itself. Within the region, teleportation effects are similarly impeded. Whenever a character attempts to use a teleportation effect, the character must succeed at a DC 30 caster level check or the attempt fails. If the attempt fails, the spell is lost and the caster takes 1d4 points of ability drain to Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma (whichever is highest—determine randomly if there are ties). Demons gain a +4 racial bonus on this concentration check, yet even they tend to resist attempting teleportation except in emergencies. Even if the teleportation attempt works, one can teleport only between areas **F1–F10** or between areas **F12–F26**—teleportation between these two areas is affected as if the distance were separated by a planar boundary.

The interior of Threshold is under the effects of an *unhallow* (CL 20th) spell to which has been linked a *freedom of movement* spell that affects all worshipers of Deskari. The building's walls have been infused with Abyssal energy, and while made of stone, they have a drastically increased strength (hardness 25, hp 1,200, break DC 70). The doors are made of similarly reinforced cold iron (hardness 25, hp 180, break DC 32) and automatically lock when closed (Disable Device DC 40 to unlock). The touch of any demon (including redeemed demons like Arueshalae and half-demons like Areelu) causes these doors to swing open automatically (this is a free action).

Further, the walls of Threshold are alive with vermin—maggots and spiders and locusts and centipedes and more. These creatures create a constant distracting susurrus of skittering sounds that imposes a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks made against the PCs and their allies. This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect. Should any of the PCs or their allies touch any of Threshold's walls, it immediately takes 2d6 points of swarm damage and must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. Area effect damage that includes a portion of any wall clears out that section's swarm for 1 round before new vermin clamber out of the walls to replace those lost.

Threshold Roof

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



Threshold Prisons

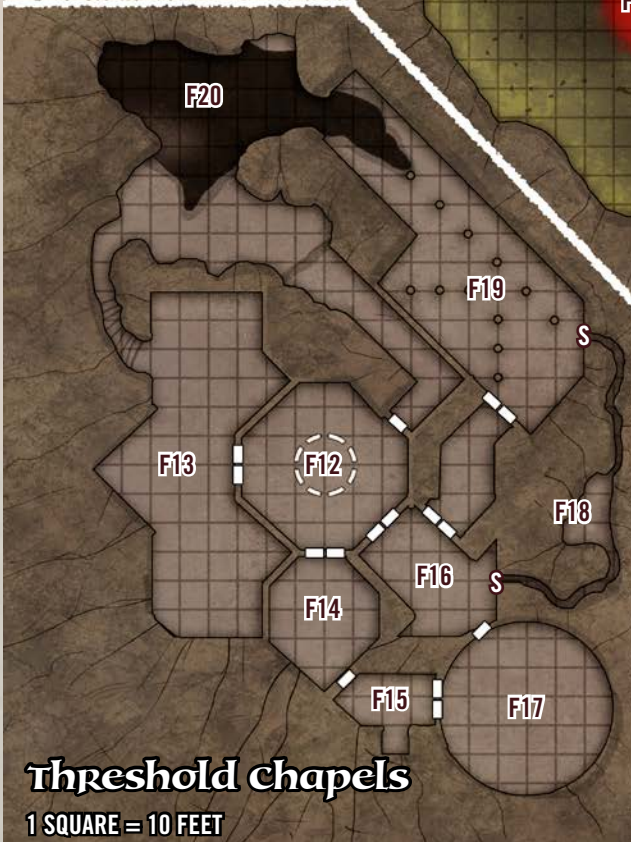
1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



F11



F20

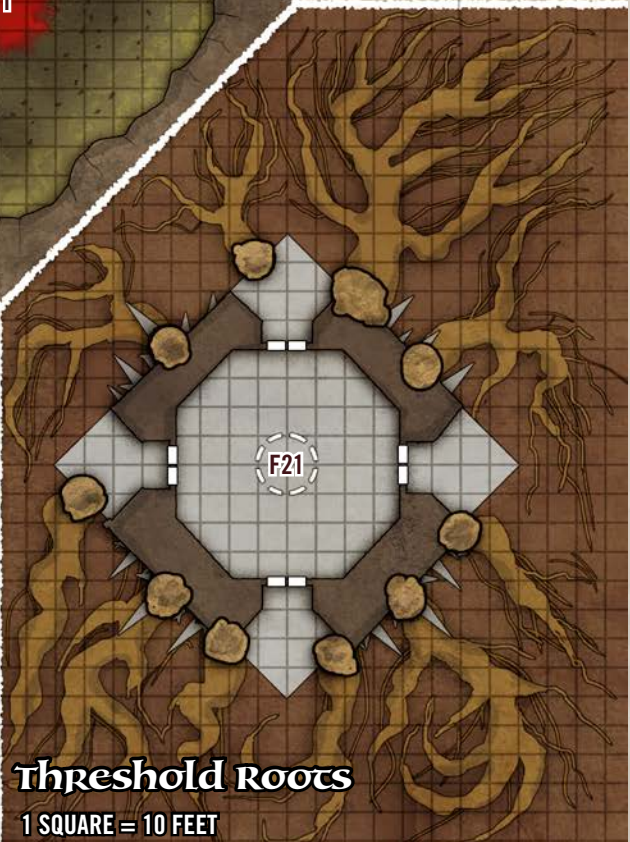


Threshold chapels

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

Threshold Roots

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



F1. The Outer Spires (CR 21)

Three of the tower's four spires still arch up into the sky above the lake of worms, but the fourth lies partially crumbled in ruins. The central spire of the tower rises up twice as high; the rooftop surrounding it is splattered and scored with blood and fire.

Each surviving spire's floor sits 20 feet above the floor of area F2. The lower areas in the four corners of the rooftop are a further 20 feet down, and can be accessed via numerous ladders.

Creatures: These four towers originally served as guard posts and watchtowers to monitor for potential attacks; they serve much the same purpose today. A priest of Deskari known simply as a rasper—a one-time tiefling who underwent a vile ritual suicide in the Rasping Rift to become a worm that walks made of thousands of locusts—and her fiendish black

dragon mount stand guard together atop each of the three surviving spires. The three pairs of guards keep watch diligently while the Worldwound ritual continues below, and they immediately take to the air to attack any obvious intruders.

The rasper posted on the northernmost tower has been targeted by Areelu's *status* spell, so she knows the instant this particular priest is harmed in combat.

RASPERS (3)

CR 15

XP 51,200 each

Tiefling cleric of Deskari 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264)

CE Medium vermin (augmented outsider, native)

Init +4; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +20

DEFENSE

AC 36, touch 26, flat-footed 32 (+6 armor, +4 deflection, +4 Dex, +8 insight, +4 shield)

hp 178 each (14d8+112); **fast healing** 15

Fort +15, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17

Defensive Abilities worm that walks traits;

DR 15/—; **Immune** disease, paralysis, poison, sleep;

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d4–1 plus grab)

Special Attacks channel negative energy

3/day (DC 17, 7d6), destructive aura

(+7, 14 rounds/day), destructive

smite (+7, 11/day), disincorporate,

squirming embrace, tenacious,

weapon master

(14 rounds/day)

Domain Spell-Like

Abilities (CL 14th;

concentration +22)

11/day—battle rage

(+7 damage)

Tiefling Spell-Like

Abilities (CL 14th,

concentration +14)

1/day—darkness

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 14th;

concentration +22)

7th—*blasphemy* (DC 25), *disintegrate*^o

(DC 25), *mass cure serious wounds*,

repulsion (DC 25)

6th—*blade barrier*^o (DC 24), *greater dispel*

magic, *heal* (2), *word of recall* (DC 24)

5th—*quicken divine favor*, *flame strike* (DC 23),

insect plague, *shout*^o (DC 23), *spell resistance*

4th—*air walk*, *divine power*^o, *cure critical wounds*,

dimensional anchor, *poison* (DC 22), *sending*, *unholy*

blight (DC 22)

Rasper

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 21), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic vestment*, *protection from energy*, *searing light*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds* (3), *hold person* (DC 20), *resist energy*, *spiritual weapon*^o

1st—*command* (DC 19), *cure light wounds* (3), *sanctuary* (DC 19), *shield of faith*, *true strike*^o

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 18), *detect magic*, *mending*, *stabilize*
D domain spell; **Domains** Destruction, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Each rasper casts *air walk*, *bear's endurance*, *shield of faith*, and *spell resistance* on herself before combat, and casts *magic vestment* on her buckler. One of the raspers casts *sending* to alert Areelu that the PCs are attacking just before combat begins.

During Combat Each rasper directs her dragon to breathe acid as often as possible, supporting these attacks with ranged magic. Melee is a tactic of last resort, but if the PCs attempt to enter area **F2**, the raspers and their dragons swiftly move to engage in melee there to prevent the activation of the *phase door* to area **F3**. Raspers are fond of using their *selective metamagic rods* to render themselves and their allies immune to *blade barriers* and *flame strikes*.

Morale If reduced to 50 or fewer hit points, a rasper casts *word of recall* to retreat to area **F17**, whereupon she heals herself and then moves to area **F21** to stay at Areelu's side to protect her. A rasper fights to the death when doing so.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 19, **Con** 22, **Int** 12, **Wis** 26, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 39 (35 vs. grapple)

Feats Craft Wondrous Item, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat, Quicken Spell, Ride-By Attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Toughness

Skills Bluff +2, Knowledge (religion) +18, Perception +20, Ride +20, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +18, Stealth +14

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic

SQ fiendish sorcery, profane gift (+2 Wis),

Other Gear +4 *leather armor*, mwk buckler, *headband of inspired wisdom* +6, *selective metamagic rod*^{UE}

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Profane Gift (Su) Each of these clerics has used *planar ally* to contact a succubus to gain her profane gift—a profane bonus to Wisdom.

FIENDISH ANCIENT BLACK DRAGONS (3)

CR 17

XP 102,400 each

hp 297 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 93, 294)

F2. Rooftop Entrance

The floor of this open area is of polished stone in the center, but fades gradually to a rougher surface the farther out from the center it radiates. Above, the vaulted ceiling of the central spire rises to a height of fifty feet.

The central 10-foot-radius section of the floor here radiates strong conjuration (creation) magic. The floor here is a permanent *phase door* (CL 20th) that opens only for chaotic evil outsiders, but does so automatically at their touch, remaining open for 1 round. A successful DC 30 Use Magic Device check to emulate an alignment is enough to trick the door to open, but using the Suture to open the *phase door* works just as well. Barring these methods, others (such as *passwall* or simple physical destruction) can allow access to area **F3** below. Note that characters who cannot fly fall 70 feet to the floor of area **F3** when they use this *phase door*.

The peak of this area, as the highest point in the tower, is one of four locations where Threshold's conjuration magic is particularly potent—placing a *dimensional lock* near the peak of the spire helps to destabilize the Worldwound and boosts the chances for the ritual to close it to succeed.

F3. Central Hall

The walls of this dark, dismal hallway seethe and crawl with vermin whose rasping wriggling fill the air with an unsettling susurrus. The air stinks of despair, smoke, sweat, blood, and worse. The stone floor has a smooth polish in the middle of the hallway, where the corridors intersect, but it's rough elsewhere.

The floor and ceiling at the junction are both permanent *phase doors* (see area **F2** for details). The door in the ceiling leads to area **F2**, while the door in the floor drops any who pass through it 30 feet into the heart of the Worldwound (area **F11**).

F4. Balcony (CR 20)

A triangular balcony, its railing adorned with spikes of stone, looks out over the churning lake of worms and demons. Above, a partially ruined spire hangs precariously over the balcony, while a pair of large iron doors sits in the wall to the east.

Trap: This balcony affords a more conventional entrance into Threshold's prison level, but the doors into area **F3** are not only locked tight, but also warded by a deadly trap—if the doors are opened before the trap is disarmed or bypassed, they open not into Threshold, but directly into the Rasping Rifts, releasing demonic guardians.

RASPING RIFT PORTAL TRAP

CR 20

XP 307,200

Type magic; **Perception** DC 40; **Disable Device** DC 40

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (when doors are opened); **Reset** automatic;

Bypass a demon's touch on the doors deactivates the trap for 1 round

Effect spell effect (*gate*; doors open directly into a remote corner of the Rasping Rift, allowing two katpaskir demons (see page 86) through to attack—the portal always remains open, but the katpaskirs guarding it are replaced once every 24 hours)

F5. Arcane Cells (CR 19)

This vast chamber combines a sprawling torture chamber and a prison bloc. Its vaulted ceiling rises forty feet overhead, and the chamber's expanse is decorated with all manner of strange torture implements and devices. The north and south walls feature stacks of prison cubicles, each just under ten feet square, rising in four stories up to the ceiling. Each cell contains a desk, bed, and chamber pot, and is sealed with a wall of black metal bars with no apparent method of entry. Dozens of glowing runes are carved into the walls of a large northern alcove.

Each of the prison cells is warded with a permanent antimagic field, and the bars to the cells are made of adamantine. Each of the 72 cells is keyed to a specific rune on the northern wall—touching one of these runes and concentrating as a move action causes the bars to the corresponding cell to turn ethereal, allowing the occupant to come and go.

The ground floor cell in the southeast corner is never occupied, and its bars are nothing more than a permanent image, nor is the cell itself warded by antimagic. The secret door in the east wall of this cell can be spotted with a successful DC 40 Perception check.

Creatures: This room was once used to house the bulk of Threshold's prisoners, yet today, all of those original occupants are long dead (with the exception of two, who are now kept elsewhere). Of the 72 cells, only a dozen currently contain prisoners, and all of these are insane, ruined shells of men and women plucked from the crusade. In most cases, arms, legs, and facial features and other body parts have been amputated from these prisoners. All are insane—at your option, spells like *greater restoration* and *regenerate* can heal these poor souls, and some of them may then be able to provide clues or aid to the PCs.

These prisoners (and new victims periodically brought here by others) are the primary entertainment of several demons whose only purpose is to torture. A particularly creative shemhazian demon named Auvax and his eight kalavakus demon minions react with glee to the arrival of new playthings like the PCs, but as soon as any one demon is slain here, the others immediately call for aid from their master, the balor lord Diurgez Broodlord, via telepathy. The balor lord comes to join the fight immediately once this occurs (although he chooses to come join the fight on foot rather than risk teleporting). See area **F6** for more information on Diurgez.

AAUVAX

CR 17

XP 102,400

Advanced shemhazian demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 80, 292)
hp 280

ADVANCED KALAVAKUS DEMONS (8)

CR 11

XP 12,800 each

hp 145 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 78)

F6. Chamber of Summoning (CR 24)

The air in this room is hot and rank, smelling of burning, rotten flesh. A faint haze shimmers in the air, and the insects that creep and the vermin that cling and crawl on the walls seem particularly agitated. Numerous magical circles, some glowing, others merely etched with chisels, decorate the floor of the otherwise empty room.

This room was used before the fall of Sarkoris to conjure and commune with extraplanar forces—it was here that Areelu performed many of her initial experiments (under a veneer of other activities to disguise her true goals from Threshold's wardens) into the opening of the Worldwound.

The small side room to the northeast holds a large number of components for the use of conjuration magic. The secret door in the wall of this side room can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check.

This room is one of four where Threshold's conjuration magic is particularly potent—placing a *dimensional lock* in this room helps to destabilize the Worldwound and boosts the chances for the ritual to close it to succeed.

Creature: Before Areelu's recent arrival, the balor lord Diurgez Broodlord had been tasked by Deskari with ruling Threshold, but the witch's arrival has, in effect, demoted the balor to the position of a mere guardian. Diurgez seethes at this development, and would dearly love to betray Areelu, yet he knows better than to rouse Deskari's wrath. Instead, he hopes to be the one to defeat the PCs and thus prove to Deskari his value over Areelu. The balor spends his time here, meditating among his swarms while waiting patiently for the PCs to arrive—preferably with their resources already taxed somewhat from fights against raspers, dragons, demons, and the like—before he rouses himself to seek the intruders out and finish them off.

DIURGEZ BROODLORD

CR 24

XP 1,228,800

Male balor lord rogue 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 58)

CE Large outsider (chaotic, demon, evil)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *true seeing*;
Perception +48

Aura flaming body, *unholy aura* (DC 28)

City of Locusts

DEFENSE

AC 41, touch 24, flat-footed 30 (+4 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 dodge, +16 natural, +1 shield, -1 size)

hp 546 (28 HD; 20d10+8d8+400)

Fort +32, **Ref** +26 (+2 vs. traps), **Will** +27

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge; **DR** 15/cold iron and good; **Immune** electricity, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 31

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Melee +5 *defending vorpal battleaxe* +39/+34/+29/+24 (2d6+16/19-20/x3), *master's lash* +39/+34/+29 (1d4+16/19-20 plus 1d6 fire)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (20 ft. with whip)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6, swarm-infested

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +30)

Constant—*true seeing*, *unholy aura* (DC 28)

At will—*dominate monster* (DC 29),

greater dispel magic, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of gear only), *power word stun*, *telekinesis* (DC 25)

1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 27), *fire storm* (DC 28), *implosion* (DC 29), *summon* (level 9, any 1 CR 19 or lower demon 100%)

TACTICS

During Combat Diurgez releases a swarm of ticks each round during the first 3 rounds, and is fond of holding victims within these swarms' confines via *telekinesis*. He doesn't bother making attacks against foes unless they manage to actually damage him, at which point he stops playing around and uses his deadly weapons to their full effect.

Morale Diurgez fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 33, **Dex** 30, **Con** 38, **Int** 24,

Wis 28, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +26; **CMB** +38;

CMD 63

Feats Combat Expertise, Critical Focus, Dodge, Double Slice, Greater Feint, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (battleaxe),

Improved Critical (whip), Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Staggering Critical, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Acrobatics +38 (+42 when jumping), Bluff +38, Disable Device +41, Fly +43, Intimidate +41, Knowledge (arcana) +35, Knowledge (local) +38, Knowledge (planes) +38, Perception +48, Sense Motive +40, Spellcraft +35, Stealth +37, Survival +31, Use Magic Device +41

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; *tongues*

SQ death throes, rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, combat trick, resiliency, surprise attack), trap sense +2, trapfinding +4, vorpal strike, whip mastery

Gear +5 *defending battleaxe*, *master's lash*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Swarm-Infested (Su) Diurgez is immune to damage and effects caused by swarms, and can elect to exclude swarms



Diurgez Broodlord

from taking any damage from his energy-based attacks. He can direct the actions of any mindless swarm within 90 feet as a free action. Three times per day as a swift action, he can expel a fiendish advanced tick swarm from his body; the swarm appears in any four contiguous 10-foot squares adjacent to him, has a fly speed of 50 ft. (perfect), and lasts until it is slain.

F7. Library

The walls of this room seethe with crawling vermin, even where they contain numerous recessed shelves on which are lined hundreds of books, scrolls, and even stone tablets. The vermin scuttle furiously over these objects, yet the passage of their tiny claws and rasping mandibles do no damage.

Treasure: The collection of books in this room is vast indeed, and referencing the books while making a Knowledge (arcana or planes) check imparts a +6 circumstance bonus on the check. Of course, interacting with the books puts the user in contact with the swarming walls and possible damage—the vermin don't harm the books and scrolls but that concession is not extended to those who wish to peruse the shelves' contents. Among the books are a few magical items as well: a *scroll of gate*, three *scrolls of plane shift*, a *scroll of binding*, a *scroll of greater planar ally*, a *greater book of extended summoning*^{UE}, two empty *blessed books*, and a *book of the loremaster*^{UE}. At your discretion, wizard spellbooks from long-dead inhabitants of Threshold may be found here as well.

F8. Alchemical Lab

This densely cluttered laboratory features several tables heaped with strange vats of bubbling matter, smoking fluids in glass jars, and stacks of filthy surgical instruments.

This lab was originally used to investigate alchemical sciences. The demons kept this lab relatively unchanged, but don't often use its resources.

Trap: This lab hasn't been used in some time, and several of the chemicals and components in the lab have decayed into an unstable, traplike danger. At the end of a round during which a character moves in this room, there's a 20% chance the trap triggers—this chance increases by 20% for each additional character moving in the room, and rises to 100% if any of the magical items in the room are disturbed. When the trap goes off, a chain reaction of explosions shatters several containers and fills the room with a nasty gray mist that causes swift fiendish mutations and madness in those who succumb. Creatures who succumb immediately deform into fiendish parodies of their true forms and become

confused as they thrash and lurch about the room until the effects wear off after 2 minutes.

UNSTABLE ACCELERANT

CR 18

XP 153,600

Type magic; Perception DC 40; Disable Device DC 40

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity or touch; **Reset** none

Effect transformation (for 2 minutes, all targets that fail a DC 23 Will save gain the entropic creature simple template [*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 292*] and act as if under the effects of an augmented mythic *confusion* spell [CL 20th] ; this is a mind-affecting effect); multiple targets (all creatures in area **F8**)

Treasure: A search of the room reveals a few still viable magical items, including an *elixir of fire breath*, 2 doses of *dust of disappearance*, a *scroll of polymorph any object*, and a *bountiful bottle*^{MA}.

Development: If the trap triggers, the raspers from area **F9** come to investigate in 1d4 rounds.

F9. Necromancy Lab (CR 19)

Several stone slabs sit in this room, atop which lie the partially dissected and, in many cases, badly decayed bodies of dead men and women. Vivisection tools lie on the tables, as do numerous jars of entrails and strange fluids.

This lab was once a place where the wardens urged their arcane “guests” to explore and study the difference between arcane and divine healing—the power of bards and witches to use healing magic was fascinating to the wardens. Since Sarkoris's fall, the demons have repurposed this room to serve as a necromancy laboratory.

Creatures: Four raspers toil in this room, working together on the body of a dead human paladin (or, if you're feeling cruel, the body of an abducted significant NPC) in hopes of triggering a post-mortem transformation into a graveknight. Their efforts have failed so far, and the raspers are frustrated—the PCs' arrival gives them a delightful and much-needed change of pace, and they attack at once. If they hear an explosion or bellowing from areas **F8** or **F10**, they quickly move to investigate those rooms.

RASPERS (4)

CR 15

XP 51,200 each

hp 178 each (see page 41)

Treasure: The paladin's body is naked, but his gear lies heaped on the floor nearby. This consists of a +4 *heavy steel shield*, +4 *full plate*, a *sunblade*, and a *scarab of protection* (3 charges left).

F10. Grafting Lab

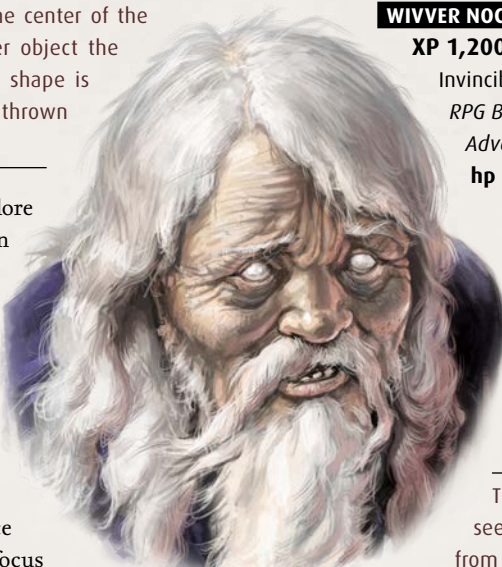
This room smells bitter—the reek of stale chemicals and vinegar hangs heavy in the air. Shelves swarming with vermin and containing countless body parts preserved in glass containers of brine line the walls, while a few stone tables heaped with deformed bones sit in the center of the room. The central table holds a larger object the size of a kneeling man, although the shape is obscured by the bloodstained sheet thrown over the figure.

This lab was originally used to explore the school of transmutation—in particular, it was used to study polymorphing effects. The relationship between druidical wildshape and the various arcane polymorph spells was fascinating to Threshold's original wardens, and they granted special favors to prisoners who made strides in studying this relationship. Since then, the demons have changed the focus of this lab to the magic of fleshwarping—the practice of twisting and transforming living creatures into vile monsters. It was in this lab that cultists of Deskari first created the demonic vermin that are so widespread throughout the Worldwound today. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) is enough to confirm this lab's purpose.

Creature: The shape under the sheets is a pitiable sight indeed—from the neck up, it appears to be an old Tian man, but from the shoulders down, the person's body is a twisted, tangled, twitching mass of pulsating flesh and broken limbs that hang off the edges of the table, looking more sluglike than humanoid. Clad in tattered purple robes that do little to hide his deformities, the malformed monstrosity shifts and moans under the sheet not long after the PCs enter the room—if no one investigates under the sheet in 3 rounds, the figure utters a shriek of despair.

This sorry wretch is, in fact, one of the two arcanists who unwittingly aided Areelu in the creation of the Worldwound. Now a half-mad, barely intelligent creature, this fleshwarp was once a powerful wizard named Wivver Noclan. He, along with the summoner Opon, tried to stop Areelu from opening the Worldwound but failed, and the witch repaid his treachery by transforming him into the monstrous and immortal fleshwarp that sits atop this slab today. Wivver has remained here for the past century or so, gibbering and moaning softly, constantly starving yet never quite succumbing. While Wivver is no use to the

PCs in his current state, granting him the mercy of death can aid the PCs in closing the Worldwound. Note that if Wivver is attacked but not killed before he takes an action to use his piteous moan, his cries alert the raspers in the nearby lab.



Wivver Noclan

WIVVER NOCLAN

CR 4

XP 1,200

Invincible grothlut fleshwarp (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 103, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 224)

hp 50

Development: If Wivver shrieks or uses his piteous moan, the raspers in area **F9** come to investigate in 1d3 rounds.

F11. The Worldwound (CR 20)

The walls of this immense chamber are seemingly made of pulsing, decayed flesh from which spurs and fragments of worked stone protrude like jagged bones. The vast space sprawls is eighty feet high, but there is no floor—only a vast, swirling lake of maggots that form a slowly churning vortex at the center. Deep in this sucking, gurgling whirlpool of worms shimmers a nauseating, pulsating orange light.

This room is the heart of the Worldwound, a churning portal of vileness and foul verminous horror. The vortex in the middle drops down 200 feet—creatures that pass through this worm-lined hole emerge through the ceiling into area **F12**. The vortex's throat is 10 feet in diameter and is located directly below a *phase door* in the ceiling above that leads to area **F3**—see area **F2** for how this *phase door* functions. A character who passes through that door from area **F3** and who cannot fly immediately falls into the hole below, provoking attacks of opportunity from 1d3 nearby Worldwound grubs (see *Creatures* on page 46) as they fall through the hole between worlds to land on the floor in area **F12**, taking 20d6 points of falling damage from the impact. Yet such victims might count themselves lucky, for the lake is composed entirely of rot grubs. Any person who contacts the lake is exposed to the grubs (see page 245 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* for rules on rot grubs as a hazard).

This entire area radiates overwhelming conjuration (chaotic and evil) magic. At the end of every round a nondemon remains in this room (remember that Worldwound grubs count as demons), that creature must succeed at a

DC 25 Will save or go permanently insane (as per the spell of the same name).

Creatures: The rot grubs are the least of the worries in this chamber, for swimming among them are four immense, demonic versions of the ravenous maggots. These creatures are each 60 feet long, and are known as Worldwound grubs. They can swim through and among their lesser rot grub kin unharmed, and immediately move to attack anyone who enters the area.

WORLDWOUND GRUBS (4)

CR 16

XP 76,800 each

CE Gargantuan magical beast (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 215, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound* 52)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 120 ft.; **Perception** +18

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 4, flat-footed 30 (–2 Dex, +26 natural, –4 size)

hp 262 each (15d8+195)

Fort +21, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

DR 10/cold iron; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 bites +25 (6d6+18/19–20 plus poison and grab)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Special Attacks gnaw, rapid biting

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +18)

1/day—*darkness*, *earthquake*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *insect plague*, *vomit swarm*^{APG}

TACTICS

During Combat A Worldwound grub generally eschews its spell-like abilities to make bite attacks against foes. If faced with a foe that remains in flight out of range, the grubs merely dive deep to avoid a fight.

Morale The Worldwound grubs fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 46, **Dex** 6, **Con** 34, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +33; **CMD** 41

Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +16, Perception +18, Stealth +4, Swim +41

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; *tongues*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rapid Biting (Ex) A giant demonic rot grub bites with astounding speed; it can make one additional bite attack in a round as a swift action.

Story Award: Passing through the Worldwound into area **F12** is a mythic trial, and should be the final trial the PCs must endure before becoming 10th tier.

F12. The Heaven of Maggots (CR 20)

This room is filled with the constant, roiling sound of thunder—the source of which is readily obvious, for the ceiling fifty feet above is a swirling lake of maggots churning around a vortex made of billions of wriggling white grubs. A nauseating orange light glows far above in the vortex's heights. Now and then, grubs drip down from above to splatter onto the floor, which crawls with all manner of hungry vermin that feed on the fallen as quickly as they land.

The floor in the middle of this room functions as a *phase door* identical to that in area **F2**; it leads to area **F21**. While it has the same polished appearance as the other *phase doors*, the thick layer of vermin and grub juice smeared over it obscures this feature, which can be noted if the area is cleaned or with a successful DC 20 Perception check.

Each round, there's a 10% chance per character that several rot grubs drip down from above to attack that character. The vermin that scurry on the floor are not numerous enough to constitute a swarm. The rumble of the torrent above penalizes listen-based Perception checks with a –5 penalty.

Creature: This chamber is guarded by a single powerful guardian—an Abyssal construct known as a devastator. The monster is immune to the effects of the rot grubs that rain down from above, and the volume of its attacks are more than enough to be heard over the din of the vortex above. The devastator doesn't pursue foes beyond this room, but does attack foes who remain in reach or line of sight in other rooms.

DEVASTATOR

CR 22/MR 8

XP 614,400

hp 365 (see page 90)

Development: The devastator's powerful attacks and the constant rain of rot grubs makes occupants of nearby rooms reluctant to come join the fight, but they certainly prepare to defend themselves once they hear combat here.

F13. The Crawling Chapel (CR 22)

This cathedral-like space has a towering ceiling that rises to a height of a hundred feet. Masses of vermin crawl along every surface, their different colors shifting constantly to form sinister runes and strange messages out of their massed bodies. The swarms on the wall to the west glow with a nauseating orange light to form two huge runes that vaguely resemble an insectile face.

The vermin crawling upon the walls constantly spell out prayers to Deskari in Abyssal as they writhe and wriggle on

City of Locusts



the walls. Those on the western walls that glow with light are more dangerous—the runes they make appear similar to the rune of Deskari (see page 88), but are imbued with magical power (see Trap, below).

Creatures: This vast chapel is currently host to a small group of raspers intent on lending their devotional energies to the ritual led by Arelu in area F21. The raspers are focused on the ritual, and take a –4 penalty on Perception checks, but they can cease concentrating to attack the PCs if needed without endangering the ritual itself. A pair of advanced retrievers stand guard to the north and another to the south—they and the raspers fight to the death and pursue foes throughout this level as best they can.

RASPERS (10) **CR 15**
XP 51,200 each
hp 178 each (see page 40)

ADVANCED RETRIEVERS (2) **CR 12**
XP 19,200 each
hp 167 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 234, 294)

Trap: The vermin crawling on the western wall of this cathedral constantly form powerful magical symbols as they undulate and writhe. The first round the PCs enter this area, the vermin form themselves into an immense *symbol of insanity*. The vermin disband on the second round, then on the third round form a *symbol of weakness*. They disband again on the fourth round, and on the following round reform a *symbol of insanity*, continuing to cycle through these two symbols again every other round. All of these symbols are heightened to 9th level. Successfully disabling this trap merely indicates that the underlying magical nodes on the walls have been destroyed—it does not remove the vermin from the walls. Likewise, removing the vermin from the walls without disabling the trap merely renders the trap nonfunctional until the vermin return. Chaotic evil creatures are immune to the effects of these symbols.

VERMINOUS SYMBOLS **CR 13**
XP 25,600
Type magic; Perception DC 34; Deception DC 34

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (heightened *symbol of insanity*; heightened *symbol of weakness*; Will or Fort DC 23 negates)

F14. Chapel of the Locust Plague (CR 22)

The walls of this chamber are decorated with lurid frescoes of vermin eating the world. These are given an added layer of horror by the presence of living vermin that creep and crawl along their surfaces. The image of a towering demonic insect wielding a massive scythe made of bone looms within each fresco. A pair of immense bells hangs from the ceiling, forty feet above.

The image of the towering demonic insect seems to portray none other than Deskari himself. A closer examination of the decorations reveals that the parts of the world shown being destroyed are those held dear to the observers—closer examination reveals individuals known to the observer being savaged by demons.

The enormous bells that hang from the ceiling await the moment where the ritual to tear open the Worldwound is completed, at which point they begin ringing in the new apocalypse. At that point, or if they are rung before this point (by being struck by a weapon blow, for example), the clamorous sound deals 20d6 points of sonic damage to all creatures in this room (Reflex DC 20 half).

Creature: With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (planes or religion) check, a character confirms that the immense image of “Deskari” on the walls here shows not the demon lord, but his avatar, the Echo of Deskari, driven into the Lake of Mists and Veils in 4433 AR. One round after any creature that is not chaotic evil enters this room, the bells above ring once, dealing damage to all creatures in the room. One round later, the images of the Echo of Deskari on the walls shatter as the actual avatar steps into the room to challenge the PCs. Once he manifests, the Echo pursues the PCs relentlessly, even beyond Threshold, in his focused attempt to slay them.



Echo of Deskari

ECHO OF DESKARI CR 22/MR 8
XP 614,400

Advanced derakni (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound* 43)

CE Large outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, mythic^{MA})

Init +20^M/+0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +38

Aura unholy aura (DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 39, touch 21, flat-footed 31 (+4 deflection, +8 Dex, +18 natural, -1 size)

hp 430 (20d10+320); fast healing 15

Fort +22, Ref +20, Will +15

DR 10/epic and good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 33

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +4 brilliant energy scythe +33/+28/+23/+18 (2d6+19/19-20/x5), bite +24 (1d4+5 plus poison), sting +24 (1d8+5 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks Abyssal scythe, drone, mythic power (8/day, surge +1d10), swarm master, swarm-infested

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th)

Constant—*unholy aura* (DC 23)
 At will—*blasphemy* (DC 22), *contagion* (DC 19), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *gust of wind*
 3/day—*enervation*, quickened *summon swarm*
 1/day—*imprisonment* (DC 24), *insect plague*, *summon* (level 9, 1d3 mariliths, 75%)

TACTICS

During Combat The Echo of Deskari begins combat by attempting to cast *imprisonment* on a PC who looks frail, then follows that up by attempting to summon mariliths. After that, it attacks foes in melee. It uses *blasphemy* if it is surrounded by foes and is being overwhelmed, hoping to banish some foes for a time back to the Material Plane.

Morale The Echo of Deskari fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 27, **Con** 30, **Int** 13, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +31 (+33 bull rush); **CMD** 53 (55 vs. bull rush)

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Improved CriticalSM (scythe), Improved InitiativeSM, Improved Iron Will, Iron WillSM, Lunge, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*summon swarm*), ToughnessSM

Skills Acrobatics +31, Fly +33, Knowledge (religion) +24, Perception +38, Sense Motive +30, Stealth +27, Survival +30

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft., word of Deskari

SQ death throes, dual initiative

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Abyssal Scythe (Su) The Favored of Deskari can, as an immediate action, manifest a +4 brilliant energy scythe in his hands. Unlike a normal brilliant energy weapon, this weapon can harm living and nonliving creatures equally well. This scythe vanishes if it ever leaves the Favored's grip.

Death Throes (Su) When the Favored of Deskari is slain, his body splits open to unleash a short-lived explosion of ravenous flesh-eating locusts that immediately fill a 30-foot-radius spread. All creatures in this area take 10d6 points of slashing damage and take 10 points of bleed damage from the wounds—a successful DC 30 Reflex save halves the damage and negates the bleed damage. This attack penetrates damage reduction as if it were an epic evil magic weapon. The save DC is Constitution-based.

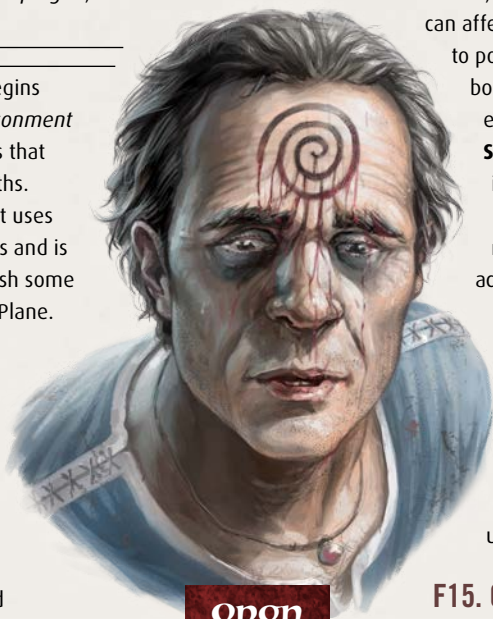
Drone (Su) By buzzing its wings as a free action, whether in flight or not, the Favored of Deskari creates a 60-foot-radius aura of droning sound. Any non-demon that begins its turn in this area must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or become confused for 1d4 rounds, affected as if by *mythic confusion*.

A mythic creature that succeeds at this save is immune to the drone for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting sonic effect that demons are immune to. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Poison (Su) Bite or sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 30; *frequency* 1/round for 10 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Con drain and staggered for 1 round; *cure* 3 consecutive saves. This poison can affect creatures that are normally immune to poison, although such creatures gain a +4 bonus on their saving throws against the effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Swarm-Infested (Su) The Echo of Deskari is immune to damage and effects caused by swarms. It can direct the actions of any mindless swarm within 90 feet as a free action. Any swarm it creates via its spell-like abilities deals triple the normal amount of swarm damage; this damage penetrates damage reduction as if it were an epic evil magic weapon.

Word of Deskari (Su) The Echo of Deskari can communicate with all vermin, and they follow his commands unerringly if they are nonintelligent.



Opon

F15. Opon's Prison

A small alcove sits in the southern wall of this hallway, within which sits a single pillar on which a slowly smoldering brass censer carved to look like a swarm of locusts sits, lazy curls of purple smoke wafting up from within.

Two powerful arcanists aided Areelu in the creation of the Worldwound, yet she had deceived her accomplices, who realized the witch's true intentions only at the last moment. One of these was the wizard Wivver, now a mindless and immortal abomination (see area **F10**). The other was a man named Opon, a summoner who was part of the Sarkorian tradition of the god callers. Of the two, Opon came closer to defeating Areelu than Wivver, and as such Areelu saved a special torment for him.

Opon now exists in a state halfway between life and death, his soul trapped within the fumes of the brazier on display in this alcove. His current predicament is similar to that caused by a metamorphosis *binding* spell—he has no true body, but can manifest his head and shoulders amid the fumes of the brazier when a creature stands before it and invokes his name. The PCs can learn of this via powerful divination magic if they haven't heard rumors of Opon's entrapment in a brazier (such as from one of the Pleasers in the Yearning House or the notes found in area **F18**).

If Opon's name is spoken within 30 feet of the brazier, his face manifests in the vapors above, a look of despair

on his features. A spiral rune, the mark of his long-dead destroyed eidolon, weeps blood on his brow. Opon knows little about what has transpired in the world since his death and imprisonment, but is eager to learn more and to speak to any who might grant his spirit freedom. In exchange, he can tell the PCs what he knows about Areelu's early history—this is unlikely to give any insights into her weaknesses, but you can use Opon to provide the PCs with an intimate tale of the days leading up to the Worldwound's manifestation if you wish. If the PCs reveal they intend to challenge Areelu, Opon asks to witness the event—bringing his brazier along so he can observe the PCs' confrontation with the witch can grant an unexpected advantage to them (see area **F21**).

The brazier is portable, but it cannot be put out without destroying it. Extinguishing it allows Opon's spirit to move on to face his final judgment in the Boneyard.

F16. Outer Sanctum

The walls of this chamber are decorated with images of a vast rift tearing open through an idyllic landscape, and growing in size as it spreads south to engulf the space around an iron door.

The secret door to area **F18** can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check.



Gimcrak

F17. Chapel of Wounds (CR 22)

A thirty-foot-high dome rises above this circular chamber. The walls of the room are made of pulsing, raw flesh that twists and throbs, and is covered with ravenous vermin. As quickly as the vermin feed on the bleeding walls, the cancerous flesh regenerates. The floor heaves like the flank of an immense squamous beast. Its meaty surface erupts with wounds only to scab over a heartbeat later. A vortex of orange energy shimmers above the center of the room, five feet above a fifteen-foot-diameter, dome-shaped cage made of sinew and bone.

This vile room is where Areelu Vorlesh began the ritual to open the Worldwound years ago, and is where she started the new ritual to finish the job as this adventure began. She's moved on to Threshold's roots (area **F21**) to complete the ritual, but this room remains infused with power. The vortex of orange energy is one of the four focal points the PCs can disable with a *dimensional lock* spell.

Any creature that walks on the surface of this room's semi-living floor treats it as difficult terrain.

Creatures: The cage of sinew and bone contains a single creature—a lhaksharut inevitable named Imezlen, captured decades ago by Areelu after the inevitable attempted an ill-advised invasion of Threshold to try to close the Worldwound on its own. The tower's defenders slew the inevitable's minions, but had to call on Areelu for aid against the lhaksharut—she captured it alive and keeps it in a state of constant pain in this cage (hardness 20, hp 240, break DC 36). The long, thin barbs of raw chaos on the cage bars keep Imezlen at 0 hit points and prevent its regeneration—further, it's currently suffering from 20 permanent negative levels. If it can be released and cured, the inevitable eagerly joins forces with the PCs and aids them as best it can for the rest of this adventure.

The inevitable's presence is one of several things that helps to maintain the stability of the ritual—if the inevitable is killed or freed, this reduces the difficulty of closing the Worldwound (although the act isn't enough in and of itself to stop the apocalypse).

A group of four katpaskir demons are on hand to prevent this from occurring. The demons are accompanied by Areelu's quasit familiar, Gimcrak. While the katpaskirs immediately move to attack the PCs and work to defend the cage containing the inevitable, Gimcrak hangs back to observe their tactics and prepare a death attack.

GIMCRAK

CR 17

XP 102,400

Male quasit familiar rogue 2/assassin 10/trickster 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 66, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 44)

CE Tiny outsider (chaotic, demon, evil)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 34, touch 29, flat-footed 27 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +2 dodge, +12 natural, +2 size)

hp 268 (20 HD)

Fort +11, **Ref** +16, **Will** +16; +5 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities deadly dodge, evasion, hard to kill, improved evasion, vanishing move; **DR** 5/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee *mournful razor* +22/+17/+12 (1d3+3/17–20), bite +14 (1d4), claw +14 (1d3 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks angel of death 1/day, death attack (DC 22), deliver touch spells, mythic power (11/day, surge +1d8), quiet death, sneak attack +6d6, surprise strike, swift death 1/day, titan's bane, true death (DC 25)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

At will—*detect good*, *detect magic*, *invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*cause fear* (30-ft. radius, DC 11)

1/week—*commune* (six questions)

TACTICS

Before Combat Gimcrack uses invisibility to remain unseen, but knows it's quite likely the PCs will notice him anyway, and as such hides near the inevitable's cage.

During Combat Gimcrack studies a PC to prepare for a death attack. Once he attempts this, he spends a few rounds in melee, making use of titan's bane to make sneak attacks against Medium PCs.

Morale Areelu has a *status* effect on Gimcrack, and if she notices him become wounded or otherwise debilitated, she uses her *bracelet of friends* to teleport him to her side at area **F21**.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 21, **Con** 11, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge^M, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (war razor), Iron Will^M, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +28, Bluff +23, Craft (alchemy) +25, Diplomacy +23, Disguise +23, Escape Artist +28, Fly +32, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Knowledge (planes) +25, Knowledge (religion) +12, Linguistics +8, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +31, Use Magic Device +23

Languages Abyssal, Common; empathic link, telepathy touch
SQ amazing initiative, hidden weapons, hide in plain sight, improved uncanny dodge, poison use, recuperation, rogue talents (bleeding attack +6), share spells, store spells, trapfinding +1

Gear +5 heavy fortification leather armor, *mournful razor*

KATPASKIR DEMONS (4)

CR 18

XP 153,600 each

hp 304 each (see page 86)

IMEZLEN

CR 20

XP 307,200

Lhaksharut inevitable (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 164)

hp 337 (currently 0)

F18. Areelu's Retreat

This rough stone cavern has been transformed from a plain cave into a well-appointed personal retreat, complete with a small bed and writing desk. Everything is covered with a layer of dust.

Treasure: Areelu Vorlesh used this secret cavern as a personal retreat many times over the past century, but once she developed the mythic ability to craft her own extradimensional sanctum, she abandoned it. Most of her treasure has been cleaned out, but a search of the room reveals a *wand of cure serious wounds* (3 charges), a *wand of scrying* (1 charge), a *scroll of break enchantment*, a *scroll of plane shift*, a *scroll of dispel magic*, a jar of *restorative ointment* with 1 dose left, and several pages of notes. The majority of these are idle lists of magical components, theories of dimensional travel, and prayers to Deskari, but among the notes is a mention of Opon's brazier in area **F15**, and of never completed plans to increase his torment by adjusting the brazier so that he would feel constant pain, "even when his name isn't used to manifest his consciousness."

F19. The Chapel of Chasms (CR 20)

The vermin-covered walls of this large chamber are crisscrossed by representations of chasms, rifts, and trenches, each depicted in incredible realism. To the northwest, a real chasm pierces the wall and floor, while throughout the rest of the room wriggling columns seemingly composed entirely of swarms of vermin extend to the ceiling forty feet above.

This chamber is used by the vermin cultists to meditate upon the power of Deskari, for the vermin pillars emanate a continuous buzzing that helps worshipers of the demon lord to concentrate. After spending 5 rounds in this room, non-worshipers of Deskari must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or become temporarily confused by the buzzing—this confusion effect lasts for 5 rounds, after which the visitor is immune to the effect until he leaves and reenters the room.

Creatures: This room is guarded by four bythos aeons who long ago succumbed to the maddening presence of the Worldwound. Once guardians of planar travel, they have now become addicted to the Worldwound's proximity, and

spend their time drifting aimlessly in this room. The aeons immediately attack anyone who attacks them (including confused creatures), or any intruder that they realize is here to destroy the Worldwound. Once combat begins, the mad aeons fight to the death.

MAD BYTHOS AEONS (4)

CR 16

XP 76,800 each

hp 207 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 10)

F20. The Feculence (CR 20)

The floor drops away into a large rift filled with a churning mass of seething rot and decay and worse. Vermin cling in sheets to the walls and squirm in the foulness below, and the smell rising up makes the eyes water and the gullet heave in protest.

This foul pit contains a churning morass of filth and decay—rotten material siphoned in here from those who die within Threshold. A creature that enters the area above the pit itself must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save each round to avoid being nauseated, and a creature in contact with the filth below takes a –5 penalty on this save (this is a poison effect). The filth is 30 feet down, and is another 40 feet deep.

Creature: One of Deskari's favorite demonic vermin—indeed, the first of its kind to be created here in Threshold so long ago, dwells to this day within these filthy waters. The creature is a demonic eurypterid—an Abyss-warped water scorpion that has, over time, become a powerful mythic barbarian in its own right. Now and then,

Deskari or AreeLu have unleashed the favored

upon their enemies, but for now they leave the creature here to wallow in its decay.

THE FAVORED OF DESKARI

CR 20

XP 307,200

Demonic spitting eurypterid barbarian 6/champion 2 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound* 52, *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #37 79, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 20)

CE Gargantuan magical beast (aquatic, augmented vermin)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.;

Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 11, flat-footed 36 (+5 armor, +5 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +22 natural, –2 rage, –4 size)

hp 418 (22 HD; 16d8+6d12+302)

Fort +27, **Ref** +8 (+2 vs. traps), **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities hard to kill, improved uncanny dodge; **DR**

10/cold iron; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 55 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +37 (2d6+23/19–20), sting +37 (2d6+23 plus poison)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft. (30 ft. with sting) **Special Attacks** fleet charge, mythic power (7/day, surge +1d6), mythic rage, rage (24 rounds/day), rage powers (knockback, powerful blow +2, strength surge +6), spit

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +23)

1/day—*darkness*, *earthquake*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *insect plague*, *vomit swarm*^{APG}

TACTICS

During Combat The Favored of Deskari uses *greater teleport* to relocate up into an upper ledge from the pit below to attack foes in melee. It uses its spit attack against foes who stay out of range.

Morale The Favored of Deskari fights to the death.



The Favored of Deskari

STATISTICS

Str 48, **Dex** 13, **Con** 34, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 17
Base Atk +18; **CMB** +41 (+43 bull rush); **CMD** 56 (58 vs. bull rush)
Feats Awesome Blow, Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Dodge, Fleet, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Iron Will, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Iron Will^M, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Toughness
Skills Climb +33, Perception +16, Swim +41
Languages Abyssal
SQ amazing initiative, amphibious, fast movement, impossible speed, skitter, trap sense +2
Gear *amulet of mighty fists +4, bracers of armor +5, ring of protection +5*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 30; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Con and 1d4 Dex; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.
Spit (Ex) As a standard action, the Favored of Deskari can spit a high-pressure jet of water in a 40-foot line that deals 10d6 points of nonlethal damage to all creatures in the area of effect. In addition, these creatures are stunned for 1 round. A successful DC 30 Fortitude save halves the damage and negates the stun effect. Unlike a normal spitting eurypterid (which must recharge its water stores as a full-round action while submerged), the Favored of Deskari can use this ability at will. The save DC is Constitution-based.

F21. Threshold's Roots (CR 28)

The domed ceiling of this immense chamber rises to a height of nearly two hundred feet above. The walls are covered with twisting brown vines that extend outward through open double doors in the east, north, south, and west sides of the room. Beyond these doors, thicker brown roots extend from the external walls out over a landscape of blasted stone set amid a plain crisscrossed with chasms that grind and thunder and grow wider and longer with each passing moment.

Characters who use the *phase door* in area **F12** emerge on the floor of this chamber, and vice versa—gravity subtly reversing itself as they appear here. The four doors lead outside into the Rasping Rifts—characters who step outside find that Threshold extends upward over 200 feet, and its walls resemble a twisted, diseased tree trunk with a tangle of roots extending out in all directions. Dozens of slowly growing canyons extend from various points on the horizon toward Threshold—they will reach area **F21** once the ritual is complete, at which point the Worldwound opens and Threshold is destroyed—yet this is only the beginning of the apocalypse. See the Concluding the Adventure section on page 57 and “Beyond the Campaign” on page 64 for ideas on how to continue the campaign if the PCs don’t reach this area in time to stop the Worldwound ritual.

Creatures: Here, at the very base of Threshold, Areelu Vorlesh has been continuing the ritual to tear open the Worldwound. Until the witch is defeated, the PCs’ chances of closing the Worldwound are slim, but even with her defeat, success is not guaranteed. Areelu is not alone here, after all—she is protected not only by four powerful vrolikai demons sent to her side by Deskari himself, but also by the undead remnants of the Storm King. If Khorramzadeh was slain in Part 2, Deskari intervened and saw to the balor’s swift return as a mythic nightwalker, assigning him as a bodyguard for Vorlesh. If the PCs got this far without slaying Khorramzadeh, they should encounter the balor in his full glory. Likewise, if Diurgez Broodlord, the Echo of Deskari, Gimcrak, and the Favored of Deskari were not already slain, they should be encountered here as well.

If the PCs have Opon’s brazier and call forth his spirit during this fight, his very presence is enough to aggravate and distract Areelu, and she spends a round wasting her actions on an attempt to destroy the brazier instead of immediately attacking the PCs.

AREELU VORLESH

CR 27

XP 3,276,800

hp 551 (see page 58)

TACTICS

During Combat Areelu begins combat by casting *gate* from her *major ring of spell storing* to call a hekatonkheires titan (see page 268 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*—and note that the titan must squeeze to fit through the 20-foot-wide portal) to join the fight, then casts quickened *mythic dominate person* on a paladin or healer. On the second round, she casts *mass hold monster* and quickened *blindness/deafness* (the latter on an archer or wizard). On following rounds, she continues to stay at range and attacks with her spells. She casts *heal* on herself whenever she drops below 300 hit points. She saves *Wail of the banshee* for emergencies when she’s surrounded, and she won’t hesitate to use her *iron flask* to capture any powerful outsiders the PCs are traveling with. Note that since this fight takes place in the Rasping Rifts, she could, in theory, use her *iron flask* on a PC as well!

ADVANCED VROLIKAIS (4)

CR 20

XP 307,200 each

hp 370 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 81, 292)

KHORRAMZADEH REBORN

CR 20/MR 8

XP 307,200

Unique nightwalker (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 201)

CE Huge undead (extraplanar, mythic^{MA}, nightshade)

Init +6^M; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., darksense, *detect magic*, low-light vision; Perception +29

Aura desecrating aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 39, touch 39, flat-footed 37 (+2 Dex, +29 natural, -2 size)

hp 368 (21d8+274); fast healing 15

Fort +17, **Ref** +13, **Will** +21

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, deflective armor, endure light; **DR** 15/epic, good, and silver; **Immune** cold, undead traits; **SR** 39

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +35 (4d6+28/19-20/x3 plus 4d6 cold)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks channel energy (8d6, DC 26, 11/day), fear gaze, impaling strike, mythic power (8/day, surge +1d10), penetrating fear, powerful blows, swift sundering

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +22)

Constant—*air walk, detect magic, greater magic fang*

At will—*contagion* (DC 20), *deeper darkness, greater dispel magic, unholy blight* (DC 20)

3/day—*confusion* (DC 20), *haste, hold monster* (DC 21), *invisibility, quickened unholy blight* (DC 20)

1/day—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *finger of death* (DC 23), *plane shift* (DC 23), *summon* (level 7, 4 greater shadows 100%)

TACTICS

During Combat Khorramzadeh remains near Areelu's side, using his spell-like abilities at range to attack the PCs. He moves to engage any PCs who approach too close to Areelu in melee, hoping to prevent them from engaging the witch in combat.

Morale The former balor fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 41, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +32; **CMD** 44

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Critical[™] (claw), Improved Initiative[™], Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes[™], Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (unholy blight), Toughness[™], Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (planes) +26, Knowledge (religion) +29, Perception +29, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +29, Stealth +18 (+26 in dim light and darkness), Swim +36

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ death throes, dual initiative

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) If slain, Khorramzadeh explodes in a blast of black fire that deals 100 points of damage (half fire, half unholy damage) to anything within 100 feet (Reflex DC 26 half). A creature that fails its Reflex save against this effect also gains 1d4 negative levels. A successful DC 26 Fortitude save 24 hours later is needed to remove these negative levels. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Deflective Armor (Ex) Khorramzadeh's natural armor is infused with potent energies that allow it to apply its full bonus to his touch Armor Class.

Endure Light (Ex) Khorramzadeh does not possess the normal aversion to light shared by most nightshades.

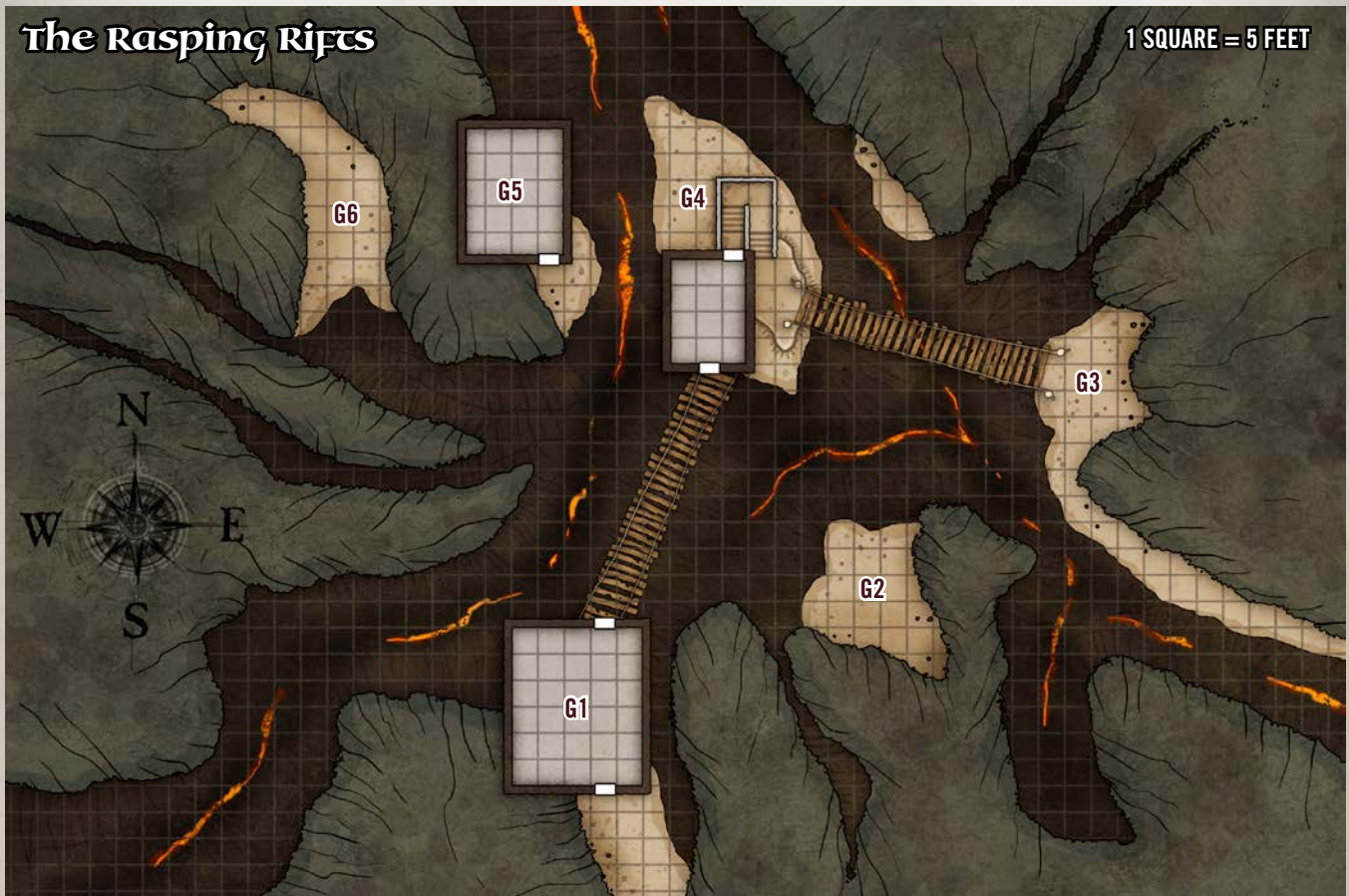
Impaling Strike (Ex) On a critical hit with his claw against a Large or smaller creature, Khorramzadeh impales the victim. This allows the mythic nightwalker to make a grapple check as a free action as if he possessed the grab special attack. If he establishes a grapple in this way, Khorramzadeh does not gain the grappled condition himself.

Penetrating Fear (Ex) Any fear effect generated by Khorramzadeh can affect creatures normally immune to fear effects, although such creatures do gain a +4 bonus on any saving throws made against such effects.

Powerful Blows (Ex) Damage from Khorramzadeh's claw attacks is always modified by 1-1/2 times his Strength modifier.



Khorramzadeh Reborn



PART 4: Closing the Worldwound

In order to close the Worldwound, the PCs must undertake a lengthy and dangerous ritual described within the pages of the *Lexicon of Paradox*. The ritual must be performed within the heart of the Worldwound, in area **F11**, and takes place over three stages, each of which is presented below.

STAGE 1—PREPARATION

One character must lead the ritual by reading several passages out of the *Lexicon of Paradox*. This character must be able to read Abyssal, Aklo, Druidic, Hallit, and Thassilonian (or be under the effects of *comprehend languages*). This preparation ritual requires concentration and takes 6 minutes. At the end of each minute, the reader must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or take 1d4 points of Wisdom damage as the contents of the *Lexicon of Paradox* slowly drive her mad. Casting spells like *restoration* on the reader periodically can help ensure the reader doesn't collapse from Wisdom drain before the preparation ritual ends. During this 6 minutes, the character must name all others who are to aid in the paradox ritual, designating them either primary or secondary participants. Only PCs can be designated as primary participants. PC cohorts

and companions (such as eidolons), or one of the eight significant NPCs listed in the inside front cover of this adventure can be designated as secondary participants. Once this preparation begins, the shuddering and shrieking of reality swiftly alerts everything within the tower. Any guardians left alive in Threshold swiftly converge on area **F11** to attack the PCs once they begin the ritual, so it's certainly best if they clear the tower out before beginning!

STAGE 2—INVOKE PARADOX RITUAL

After the preparation ritual ends, the lake of maggots churning around the Worldwound freezes, motionless, as if time had stopped. Blasts of orange light churn up from the depths of the vortex below. At this point, the primary participants in the ritual (as designated in Stage 1—this includes the character leading the ritual) must focus their spiritual energies on the Worldwound. The PCs can use the following methods of focusing their energies.

Disable Device: The character visualizes the Worldwound as an immense trap that she can dismantle by pulling just the right spheres of power from it until it collapses on itself.

Knowledge (planes), Perception, or Spellcraft: The character can observe the magical pathways along which

the Worldwound's energies travel, and can inform the ritual participants which are the weakest links.

Linguistics: The character can aid the ritual leader by helping interpret the maddening inscriptions within the *Lexicon of Paradox*.

Magic or Smiting: A character can cast a spell with the lawful or good descriptor directly into the Worldwound, or use a smite evil or smite chaos attack to make a physical attack on the Worldwound in an attempt to destroy it.

Use Magic Device: The character can unravel the Worldwound's anchors to cast it adrift.

Making the Checks: Once the primary participants each decide how they wish to focus their spiritual energies on the Worldwound, they must attempt the appropriate skill checks or attacks. If the character is using a spell, she can attempt a concentration check or a caster level check as if attempting to penetrate spell resistance. If the character is smiting, she makes an attack roll. If the check or attack is successful, the PCs gain 1 Closure Point. If the check or attack fails, no Closure Point is generated and that PC gains 1d4 negative levels as a portion of her soul is drawn into the Worldwound (Fortitude DC 30 negates). If the PCs accumulate 4 Closure Points, move on to Stage 3; otherwise, they must restart the ritual from Stage 1—in this case, they retain any Closure Points that they have already accumulated.

Paradox Ritual DC: A successful DC 100 skill check, concentration check, or caster level check, or a smite attack result of 100 is needed to damage the Worldwound and earn a Closure Point. Even high-level PCs will have difficulty achieving this, but fortunately there are methods to reduce the difficulty—see the table below.

STAGE 3—CLOSE THE WORLDWOUND

Once the PCs have accumulated 4 Closure Points, the orange glow in the vortex goes out for 1 round. The *Lexicon of Paradox* must be thrown into the dark vortex at this point—if it is not thrown into the vortex within 1 round, the Worldwound returns to normal, the

apocalypse clock advances by 1 day, and the PCs must restart the ritual (unless the advancement of the clock results in the Worldwound opening completely, in which case the *Lexicon of Paradox* is destroyed—consult “Beyond the Campaign” on page 64 for the ramifications of what happens next).

DESKARI'S VENGEANCE (CR 29+)

Once the *Lexicon of Paradox* is hurled into the Worldwound, reality explodes in a blast of orange light that seems to paradoxically last an instant and an eternity. When the light fades, the PCs find that they have been cast deep into the Rasping Rifts, landing amid several old buildings scattered among a number of bottomless canyons. This region is represented on the nearby map—roll 1d6 to determine which area (from G1 to G6) each PC appears in (it's possible for PCs to all appear in the same area).

The PCs aren't the only ones who've been placed here—the demon lord Deskari arrives as well (roll 1d6 again to determine his starting location among the six possibilities), along with four advanced balor slaves and eight greater apocalypse locusts (determine their starting positions randomly as well). The demon lord immediately attacks the PCs, infuriated and eager for revenge. He is joined by any of the powerful NPCs from Threshold who still live, and does his best to destroy the PCs. Of course, defeating Deskari is purely optional for the PCs at this point—their primary mission, the closing of the Worldwound, has already been completed. Fleeing the Abyss via *plane shift* or other means is certainly an option—but unless Deskari is defeated, the demon lord continues to hound and stalk and vex the PCs.

If the PCs defeat Deskari, he does not die—the Rasping Rifts revive him via his Abyssal resurrection, but after this defeat, Deskari retreats into the depths of his realm to await his year of recovery. Brave PCs may realize that this is a singular chance for them to seek out the Lord of the Locust Host and finish the job, once and for all! (If you feel that such an end to the Wrath of the Righteous

REDUCING PARADOX RITUAL DC

Accomplishment	DC Adjustment
Each secondary participant taking part in the ritual	-2
Each <i>dimensional lock</i> placed in one of the four key locations in Threshold (maximum once per location)	-4
Imezlen is freed or slain	-4
Mistress Anemora is slain	-4
<i>Nahyndrian chisel</i> is used or <i>Mage's disjunction</i> is successfully cast at the Worldwound during Stage 1 (only once)	-4
Opon's spirit is released to the Boneyard	-4
Wivver Noclan is slain	-4
Khorrarnzadeh is slain	-6
Areelu Vorlesh is slain	-10
Having the Suture present during the ritual	-10



Adventure Path is too anticlimactic, feel free to rule that the closing of the Worldwound has momentarily disrupted Deskari's connection to the Rasping Rifts. In this case, the demon lord must defeat the PCs to regain control of his realm—if he is slain, he remains dead and his body joins those of other slain demon lords in the Rift of Repose.)

Finally, PCs who had the foresight to prepare with Nocticula for this contingency may call upon her for aid in this battle as well with a short prayer. In this case, you should have Nocticula's statistics from page 86 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #76 handy, for the demon lord appears at the side of the one who called her in such an event to aid the PCs in the fight. Faced with such unexpected odds, Deskari flees and does not return after 3 rounds of combat if Nocticula has not been slain or banished. If she remains at the end of this fight, she asks the PC who called upon her to return with her to the Midnight Isles—if that PC refuses, she attempts to take him or her by force, returning without her prize only if reduced to fewer than 100 hit points.

DESKARI **CR 29**

XP 6,553,600

hp 742 (see page 88)

ADVANCED BALORS (4) **CR 21**

XP 409,600 each

hp 410 each

GREATER APOCALYPSE LOCUSTS (8) **CR 14/MR 6**

XP 38,400 each

hp 212 each (see page 9)

Concluding the Adventure

By closing the Worldwound, the PCs have accomplished a miracle. Sarkoris remains overwhelmed by demons, and Deskari might still live to fight another day, but the Fifth Crusade has ended in glorious success! The PCs have achieved the highest level of power—where they go from here is up to them, but the article “Beyond the Campaign” explores the repercussions of the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path in detail—be the PCs victorious or not!

Areelu Vorlesh

Few have had such a deleterious effect upon the world of Golarion as Areelu Vorlesh, the primary architect of the Worldwound—yet if her plans come to fruition, what she's accomplished to date will seem like child's play.

AREELU VORLESH

CR 27

XP 3,276,800

Female half-succubus human witch 10/demoniac 10/archmage 8
(*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited* 54, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos* 46, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 14)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, native)

Init +29^M; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +25

Aura *unholy aura* (DC 27)

DEFENSE

AC 48, touch 44, flat-footed 37 (+11 armor, +4 deflection, +9 Dex, +2 dodge, +2 insight, +6 natural, +4 shield)

hp 551 (20 HD; 10d6+10d8+469)

Fort +37, **Ref** +27, **Will** +27 (+31 vs. mind-affecting effects)

Defensive Abilities enduring armor, greater familiar link, hard to kill, mythic saving throws, never surprised or flat-footed, reverse scrying, swarm walker, unstoppable; **DR** 10/cold iron, good, and magic; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 35

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee *Deskari's Tooth* +32/+27/+22 (1d4+20/19-20), +5 claw +26 (1d4+19), +5 bite +26 (1d6+19), +5 sting +26 (1d4+19)

Special Attacks energumen (+6 Con), hexes (charm [2 steps, 14 rounds], evil eye [-4, 17 rounds], healing [cure moderate], misfortune [2 rounds], retribution [14 rounds], slumber [10 rounds]), mythic power (19/day, surge +1d10), mythic spellcasting, passion, smite good 1/day, wild arcana

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +29)

3/day—*charm monster* 3/day, *darkness*, *unholy aura* (DC 27)

1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 26), *detect thoughts* (DC 21),

dominate monster (DC 28), *dominate person* (DC 24),

ethereal jaunt, quickened *insect plague*, *greater teleport*,

summon demon, *summon monster III* (vermin only),

summon monster IX (fiends only), *unholy blight* (DC 23)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 19th; concentration +33)

9th—*foresight*, quickened *dominate person*^M (DC 29), *mass hold monster* (DC 33), *mass suffocation*^{APG} (DC 33), *wail of the banshee* (DC 33)

8th—quickened *dimension door*, *horrid wilting* (DC 32), *maze*, *mind blank*, *trap the soul* (DC 32)

7th—*greater teleport*, *heal*^M (2), *insanity* (DC 31), *plane shift*^M (DC 31), quickened *suggestion*^M (DC 27)

6th—quickened *blindness/deafness*, quickened *cure moderate wounds*, *flesh to stone*^M (DC 30), *geas/quest*, *greater dispel magic*, *mass suggestion* (DC 30), *true seeing*

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 29), *cloudkill*^M (DC 29), *cure critical wounds*, *dominate person*^M (DC 29), *feeblemind* (DC 29), quickened *ray of enfeeblement*, *teleport*

4th—*black tentacles*, *confusion* (DC 28), *cure serious wounds* (2), *dimension door*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 28), *spite*^{APG}

3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance* (DC 27), *dispel magic*^M (2), *lightning bolt* (DC 27), *pain strike*^{APG} (DC 27), *suggestion*^M (DC 27), *twilight knife*^{APG}

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (3), *false life*, *hidden speech*^{APG}, *status*, *vomit swarm*^{APG}, *web* (DC 26)

1st—*beguiling gift*^{APG} (DC 25), *charm person* (DC 25), *cure light wounds* (3), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 25), *reduce person* (DC 25), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *message*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 24)

Patron dimensions^{PSFG}; **M** mythic spell

TACTICS

Before Combat Areelu casts *false life*, *foresight*, *mind blank*, *spite*, *true seeing*, and *unseen servant*, and from her *ring of spell storing* she casts *shield*. She assumes demonic form and activates her energumen just before a fight begins. In addition, she casts *status* daily, targeting one of the raspers in area **F1** and her familiar Gimcrak—as a result, she knows immediately if any of these creatures is harmed.

During Combat Areelu's combat tactics are detailed in area **F21**.
Morale Areelu attempts to escape at 80 hp or fewer, thereafter making vengeance against the PCs her highest priority.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 28, **Con** 48, **Int** 38, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 29

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 41

Feats Combat Expertise, Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Demonic Obedience, Dodge^M, Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative^M, Iron Will, Mythic Crafter, Quicken Spell, Toughness^M

Skills Acrobatics +29, Bluff +29, Craft (alchemy) +37, Diplomacy +29, Disguise +29, Escape Artist +29, Fly +36, Intimidate +32, Knowledge (arcana and planes) +37, Knowledge (engineering, local, and religion) +24, Knowledge (history) +27, Knowledge (nobility) +21, Linguistics +17, Perception +25, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +37, Stealth +19, Use Magic Device +32

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Halfling, Hallit, Infernal, Necril, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ amazing initiative, ancient, change shape (*alter self*, any Medium humanoid, 1/day), competent caster, damned, demonic form, demonic mark, inherent bonuses (+4 Dex, +4 Con, +4 Int), mythic familiar, obedience, profane pact, recuperation, sanctum, scry on familiar, wealthy, witch's familiar (quasit named Gimcrak)

Combat Gear *ambrosia* (3 doses), *ring of major spell storing* (*blasphemy*, *haste*), *ring of major spell storing* (*gate*, *shield*), *wand of enervation* (42 charges); **Other Gear** *Deskari's Tooth*, *amulet of natural armor* +5, *belt of physical perfection* +6, *bracelet of friends* (attuned to Gimcrak), *crystal ball with true seeing* (stored in her glove), *glove of storing*, *headband of mental superiority* +6, *iron flask*, *Robe of the Rifts*, spell component pouch, various gems and diamonds worth 42,000 gp in total (including a black sapphire worth 20,000 gp for *trap the soul*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ancient (Ex) Areelu Vorlesh is well over a century old. She retains her +3 bonuses to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma for her age, but does not take any of the penalties to her other ability scores.

Damned (Ex) If Areelu is killed, her soul is claimed by the Abyss for transformation into a demon.

Demonic Form (Ex) As a standard action, Areelu can assume demonic form for up to 20 minutes per day. She gains the chaotic, demon, and evil subtypes as well as DR 10/cold iron and good. She gains telepathy 100 feet and a sting natural attack. Her weapons are treated as chaotic and evil for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Demonic Mark (Ex) Areelu bears Deskari's rune. Once per day, she can use this mark as part of casting a spell to give that spell the chaotic and evil descriptors. This prevents the spell from being expended as she casts it.

Energumen (Su) Once per day as a free action, Areelu can allow herself to be infused with a demonic spirit for up to 10 rounds, during which she gains a +6 profane bonus to her Constitution and immunity to electricity and poison. When this effect ends, she becomes confused for 10 rounds. At the start of each round of confusion, she may attempt a DC 25 Will save to end the effect immediately.

Mythic Familiar (Ex) Areelu's familiar, Gimcrak, is a gift to her from Deskari, and is far more powerful than normal. If Gimcrak is killed, Areelu immediately loses 10 uses of her mythic power for that day and gains 2 negative levels.

Passion (Su) Up to 20 times per day, Areelu can drain energy from a mortal she lures into an act of passion—unwilling victims must be grappled first. Her passion imparts 1 negative level to the victim. A successful DC 29 Fortitude save removes 1 of these negative levels. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Profane Pact (Su) Areelu has a +4 profane bonus to her Intelligence, the result of a pact forged decades ago with a lilitu demon^{WOR}. The lilitu's brand appears on Areelu's neck.

Summon Demon (Sp) Areelu can use *summon monster VI* once per day to conjure one succubus, 1d3 babaus, or 1d4+1 brimoraks^{BOTD2}. She can also use *summon monster VIII* once per day to conjure one hezrou, 1d3 vrocks, or 1d4+1 succubi.

Swarm Walker (Su) Areelu can walk through any swarm without fear of taking damage or suffering any ill effects—swarms recognize her as one of their own. As long as she stands within a swarm, she gains a +4 bonus on Initiative checks and on all saving throws.

Wealthy (Ex) Areelu has the gear of a 20th-level PC.

Creator of the Worldwound and Deskari's most powerful servitor, Areelu Vorlesh is eager to see her masterwork expand and hurtle Golarion into the Rasping Rifts as a prize for her demonic lord.



KHORRAMZADEH

The leader of the Worldwound's armies and the most powerful of the true demons that serve Deskari, Khorramzadeh the Storm King rules over the ruins of Iz. He eagerly awaits a time when his empire can expand to encompass all of Avistan after it has been devastated and drawn into the Rasping Rifts.

KHORRAMZADEH
CR 26/MR 5
XP 2,457,600

 Male balor lord (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 58)

 CE Large outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, mythic^{MA})

Init +16^M/−6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *true seeing*; Perception +49

Aura flaming body, *unholy aura* (DC 28)

DEFENSE
AC 48, touch 48, flat-footed 41 (+11 armor, +3 Dex, +4 dodge, +21 natural, −1 size)

hp 605 (30d10+440)

Fort +34, **Ref** +23, **Will** +29

Defensive Abilities deflective defense, resist smite; **DR** 15/cold iron, epic, and good; **Immune** electricity, fire, poison;

Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 37

OFFENSE
Speed 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Melee *Noriznigath* +46/+41/+36/+31 (2d6+19/17–20), +5 *vorpal flaming burst whip* +45/+40/+35 (1d4+18/19–20 plus 1d6 fire)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (20 ft. with whip)

Special Attacks mythic power (5/day, surge +1d8), stormlord

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +30)

 Constant—greater *nondetection*, *true seeing*, *unholy aura* (DC 28)

 At will—*chain lightning* (DC 26), *dominate monster* (DC 29), *greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self and gear only), *power word stun*, *sending*, *telekinesis* (DC 25)

 3/day—*limited wish*, quickened *telekinesis* (DC 25)

 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 27), *earthquake*, *fire storm* (DC 28), *implosion* (DC 29), *righteous might*, *storm of vengeance*, *summon* (level 9, any 1 CR 19 or lower demon 100%)

TACTICS
Before Combat Khorramzadeh casts *storm of vengeance* over the area.

During Combat Khorramzadeh uses his spell-like abilities at first, using *telekinesis* to hurl non-flying PCs off the cliff edge, dominating others, and blasting survivors with *fire storm* and *implosion*. Once he moves on to melee combat, he casts *righteous might* on himself and then focuses on healers first in battle.

Morale Khorramzadeh has little choice when the final battle begins—he fights to the death rather than face greater punishment by Deskari for his failure.

STATISTICS
Str 36, **Dex** 25, **Con** 36, **Int** 24, **Wis** 26, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +30; **CMB** +44; **CMD** 65

Feats Combat Reflexes, Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Double Slice, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Critical (whip), Improved Initiative^M, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Lightning Reflexes^M, Master Craftsman, Power Attack^M, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (telekinesis), Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Acrobatics +37, Bluff +43, Craft (weapons) +40, Fly +39, Intimidate +43, Knowledge (engineering) +37, Knowledge (local) +40, Knowledge (planes) +40, Linguistics +12, Perception +49, Sense Motive +36, Spellcraft +37, Stealth +33, Use Magic Device +43

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Hallit, Necril, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ death throes, dual initiative, vorpal strike, whip mastery

Gear +5 *breastplate*, +5 *flaming burst whip*, *Noriznigath*
SPECIAL ABILITIES
Deflective Defense (Ex) Khorramzadeh's touch AC is modified by armor and natural armor bonuses.

Death Throes (Su) Khorramzadeh's death throes are more devastating than those of a typical balor. When killed, Khorramzadeh explodes in a flash of fire that deals 200 points of damage (half fire damage, half unholy damage) and permanently blinds anything within 200 feet (Reflex DC 38 halves the damage and negates the blindness). One round after this explosion, an *earthquake* (CL 20th) is triggered as well, centered on the point where the Storm King's body fell. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Greater Nondetection (Sp) Khorramzadeh is constantly warded by a powerful *nondetection* effect—this effect works as *nondetection*, but is always in effect. There's no chance of penetrating this ward with a caster level check.

Resist Smite (Ex) Khorramzadeh is difficult to affect with smite attacks, such as by a paladin's smite evil ability. When a creature attempts to make Khorramzadeh the target of any smite effect, Khorramzadeh can try to resist the smite by attempting a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + the Hit Dice of the creature attempting the smite attack + the Charisma modifier of the creature attempting the smite attack). On a successful save, not only is that smite attack wasted, but the backlash of power also causes the source of the smite

attempt to become staggered for 1 round unless it succeeds at a DC 38 Will save. This save DC is Constitution-based.

Stormlord (Su) Khorramzadeh's spell-like abilities, death throes, and flaming body abilities can deal electricity damage instead of fire damage, as appropriate—he can decide to adjust his fire damage in this way instantaneously. Electricity resistance is halved against this electricity damage, and electricity immunity is treated as resist electricity 20. Up to once per round when he is affected by electricity damage, he can choose to be healed of an amount of damage equal to the amount of electricity damage dealt rather than simply be immune to the damage.

Khorramzadeh's days as a mortal are now all but forgotten by the demon, save for vague memoirs of a reign of terror as a vile warlord who butchered his own children. After rising from this warlord's soul (and absorbing the souls of his equally vile children), the balor learned quickly in the ovens and furnaces of the Abyss, and swiftly came to be a much-feared general of Pazuzu's armies. During a potent storm in the Abyssal Realm of Verakivhan, where he was waging war against the troll legions of the demon lord Urxehl, the balor ascended to the status of lord among its kind. After taking the head of a mythic marilith known as the Typhoon of Blades and absorbing the heart of the violent storm she controlled, he made the lightning his own and became known thereafter as the Storm King. He left Pazuzu's service that day and began to make his own way as a powerful Abyssal monarch.

Eventually, the Storm King was chosen by Deskari to serve as the general of his armies in the Worldwound. Khorramzadeh's first significant victory against the crusaders occurred in 4692 AR, when he launched an attack on Kenabres and managed to crack that city's *wardstone* before the city's defender, the silver dragon Terendelev, nearly slew him. These events more than anything else drove him to launch a second attack on the city at the start of this Adventure Path—an attack that would prove a great success. His ascension to mythic power is relatively recent, the result of an early brewing of *Nahyndrian elixir* that nearly killed him, but in the end, reforged him into an even greater threat to the world than before.

Yet the recent turn of events have both frustrated and disturbed the Storm King, for in the wake of several notable triumphs, he has watched as time and time again a single band of heroes has undone his masters' work and potent alliances. The defeat and disgrace of Baphomet, Deskari's most powerful ally, served as a final straw for Khorramzadeh, and he withdrew to the city of Iz, knowing

full well that it was only a matter of time before the enemies of the Worldwound, the so-called heroes of the Fifth Crusade, would seek him out. Khorramzadeh has rarely known fear in his eons as a balor lord, yet now that tickle of doubt has settled into his black, burning heart.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The Storm King serves as a significant threat in this adventure, and his defeat should give the PCs a significant reason to cheer. Yet even in death, Khorramzadeh will not rest quietly—he is destined to return near the adventure's end as a powerful nightshade.



WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “City of Locusts.” Player-appropriate handouts for the treasures detailed here appear in *Pathfinder Cards: Wrath of the Righteous Item Cards*.

DESKARI'S TOOTH		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT weapon	CL 20th	WEIGHT 2 lbs.
AURA strong conjuration and necromancy (evil)		



A gift to Areelu from Deskari himself, *Deskari's Tooth* is a +6 anarchic unholy dagger that automatically casts *soul bind* whenever it is used to slay a foe, provided no soul is currently stored in the blade. A soul of any power can be stored in the blade in this manner, but only one soul at a time. If the dagger's wielder is slain while a soul is contained in *Deskari's Tooth*, the soul is instantly consumed and the effect or attack that would normally have slain the wielder is instead negated. If *Deskari's Tooth* is used to perform a coup de grace on a lawful good creature, it can be used to cast *lesser planar binding*. If the lawful good creature has more than 11 Hit Dice, the dagger can instead be used to cast *planar binding*, and if the creature has more than 17 Hit Dice, it can instead be used to cast *greater planar binding*.

DESTRUCTION

Deskari's Tooth must be used by a paladin to commit suicide, so that the paladin's soul becomes bound to the blade. If that soul is later used by a demon to prevent death, the dagger shatters upon preventing that death.

MOURNFUL RAZOR		PRICE 182,308 GP
SLOT weapon	CL 20th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA strong necromancy and transmutation		



A *mournful razor* is a +3 vorpal war razor capable of inflicting particularly distressing and demoralizing wounds. The weapon resizes automatically to fit the hand of its wielder, from Tiny to Huge. Regardless of the weapon's size, it always functions as a light weapon. Each

time a *mournful razor* damages a foe, the blade absorbs a tiny fraction of that foe's despair and sadness. Whenever a creature takes sneak attack damage from a *mournful razor*, the creature so damaged must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be infused with these thoughts of despair and self-loathing. The target so affected by the weapon has a 50% chance to act normally each turn; otherwise, it takes no action. This curse persists as long as the target remains wounded from any source (it ends immediately once the victim is completely healed of all damage).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 91,308 GP
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Craft Magic Arms and Armor; *bestow curse*, *circle of death*, *keen edge*

MASTER'S LASH		PRICE 120,302 GP
SLOT weapon	CL 15th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA strong evocation		



A *master's lash* is a large +5 flaming burst whip. In addition to the fire damage caused, any creature struck by a *master's lash* also takes 2d6 points of burn damage; this burn damage can be resisted with a successful DC 19 Reflex save. Three times per day, the wielder of a *master's lash* can command it to burn away the target's will to resist commands as well. Activating this is a free action—the target must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or it takes a –2 penalty on all Will saves for 24 hours. These penalties can stack, and are a curse effect.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 60,302 GP
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Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bestow curse* and *fireball*, *flame blade*, or *flame strike*

NAHYNDRIAN CHISEL		MINOR ARTIFACT
SLOT none	CL 20th	WEIGHT 5 lbs.
AURA strong transmutation		

This large chisel appears to be made of deep purple crystal—it is, in fact, carved from the heart of a single enormous *Nahyndrian crystal*. Imbued with devastating magic, the *Nahyndrian chisel* may be used three times per day to target a creature or object with a *mage's disjunction*. Activating this ability requires the user to make a successful touch attack against the target. A *Nahyndrian chisel* can be used as an improvised weapon in combat—when so utilized, it has a +3 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls, deals 1d4 points of piercing damage on a hit, and automatically bypasses any damage reduction (including DR/epic or DR/—).

DESTRUCTION

If a *Nahyndrian chisel* is successfully used to destroy an artifact, it must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or be destroyed.

Wrath of the Righteous Treasures

NORIZNIGATH		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT weapon	CL 20th	WEIGHT 10 lbs.
AURA strong evocation (evil)		



The favored blade of the Storm King, *Noriznigath* is named for the first nascent demon lord it was used to behead, and is a Large +6 *unholy longsword*—as with all slashing weapons, *Noriznigath* becomes a *vortal* weapon in the hands of a balor. The body of a creature decapitated by *Noriznigath* is disintegrated if the decapitation results in death, and heals the wielder of 100 points of damage.

DESTRUCTION	
<i>Noriznigath</i> melts into blood and mist if its namesake, the long-dead nascent demon lord Noriznigath, is restored to life.	

QUASIT KEY		PRICE 70,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 13th	WEIGHT 12 lbs.
AURA strong conjuration (teleportation)		

A *quasit key* appears as a glass jar filled with preserving fluids in which a pickled quasit floats. Each *quasit key* is attuned to a specific location in the Abyss when created, and as long as it is carried (even if it's carried in an extradimensional space), the carrier can use *plane shift* to transport himself and up to eight other creatures that are joining hands to that location (the *quasit key* found in this adventure is keyed to area C1 of Aponavicius's lair). If used in the Abyss, the *quasit key* instead uses *plane shift* to transport its user back to wherever the key was last used to travel to its linked location. Until a *quasit key* is used to travel to its linked Abyssal location, it has nowhere to go from the Abyss itself and does not function while in the Abyss. A *quasit key* functions only twice per day.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 35,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>plane shift</i>	

RIFTCARVER		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT weapon	CL 20th	WEIGHT 80 lbs.
AURA strong conjuration and evocation [earth]		



Riftcarver is an immense weapon carved from exoskeleton plates pried from the body of the now-long-forgotten monstrosity that birthed Deskari into the Abyss. The demon lord emerged fully formed, and the crafting of this weapon

was among the first of his acts—*Riftcarver* aided the demon lord tremendously in those first few thousand centuries of his life, and was the primary tool he used to dig the Rasping Rifts.

Riftcarver is a Gargantuan +5 *defending unholy wounding scythe*. As part of its first successful hit against a target in any

one round, *Riftcarver* can infest the creature hit with rot grubs (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 245). Once per minute as a standard action by striking at the ground, *Riftcarver* can create an *earthquake* centered on the target's location. *Riftcarver's* wielder never suffers any ill effects from earthquakes created by the scythe. Once per day, the scythe can be swept through the air as a standard action to rip a hole between worlds that serves as a 20-foot-diameter *gate*—this *gate* can be used only for planar travel, not for calling creatures. *Riftcarver* is made of the chitin of an Abyssal monster, yet it is treated as adamantine for the purposes of damaging objects and penetrating hardness.

Smaller versions of this artifact, built to be used by Medium cultists, also exist. Called *rotcarvers*, the majority of these weapons have been captured and destroyed by the crusaders by the Fifth Crusade. A *rotcarver* is a +3 *scythe* that can infest those it strikes with rot grubs, or can transform its user into a rot grub swarm. *Rotcarvers* are detailed on page 51 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms*.

DESTRUCTION	
If the remains of its ancient, forgotten source can be located and restored to life, <i>Riftcarver</i> can be destroyed by using it to deliver a coup de grace against that creature. If the attack slays the resurrected horror, <i>Riftcarver</i> crumbles to dust.	

ROBE OF THE RIFTS		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT body	CL 20th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA strong transmutation (evil)		



The *Robe of the Rifts* is crafted of what appears to be fine silk, but is in fact forged of congealed dreams siphoned from the minds of slumbering spellcasters as they were ritually murdered. It was created by Areelu Vorlesh to augment her melee prowess soon after her transformation into a half-succubus in a process that involved humiliating

favors granted to 13 separate demon lords. The *Robe of the Rifts* grants the following enhancements when it is worn.

- The wearer's attack rolls and damage rolls with all melee weapons are modified by her Intelligence modifier, not her Strength modifier. This modifier is never halved for secondary attacks, but neither is it increased for two-handed attacks.
- The wearer applies her armor and natural armor bonuses (if any) to her touch AC.
- The wearer gains a +6 profane bonus on all saving throws.
- The robes infuse the wearer's natural attacks (if any) as if she wore an *unholy amulet of mighty fists* +5.

DESTRUCTION
The <i>Robe of the Rifts</i> must be donned by a humanoid with an Intelligence score of 3 or lower, who must repeat the 13 debasements Areelu performed for demon lords when creating the robe with 13 different and unwilling angels.



Beyond the Campaign

Amid the horrors, a strange sort of peace swept through the inner sea after the Fall. As the last great push into the worldwound failed, the rift tore itself ten times larger, and demons soon stormed through a dozen nations. Those who remained bonded together to save what they could from the invasion. Cheliox and Andoran joined forces with Taldor to stem the tide of demonic forces. The mighty Ulfen to the west marched through Irrisen, picking up witches along the way, to fight on the new front lines at the Tusk Mountains. In this tragedy, we threw away our petty differences in favor of a chance at life, and still we fight on."

—captain Thasil Montrou

The Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path has reached its climax, and the PCs have taken on the demonic onslaught from the Worldwound, put down the terrible fiends that urged it forth, and sealed an Abyssal scar on the face of Golarion. So what happens next?

Now They Are Legends

If these mythic heroes progress through the Adventure Path as expected, they end the campaign at the highest level they can attain and with the maximum number of mythic tiers. This easily makes them among the most powerful mortals in the Inner Sea region—if not on Golarion altogether. On their path from humble 1st-level adventurers to the heights of mythic potential, it's likely the characters have formulated ambitions of their own. Since the PCs can no longer progress in levels, the only reward left to gain (other than wealth) is a satisfying personal narrative. Many exciting storylines can sprout from long-term interests the characters developed as they progressed through the campaign, and these seeds are the best things to build upon when deciding how to continue this mythic campaign. A few such possibilities are touched upon briefly below.

Create a Realm: Some PCs might just want to get away from it all and make their own quiet place in the multiverse: their own demiplane. It's an expensive endeavor—though the cost for the focus needed for the *create demiplane* spells is low, casting *permanency* each time you add on to the demiplane can get pricey. This might be a good choice for a contemplative character, like an alchemist who wants a special lab, or a wizard dedicated to private study.

Forge a Nation: If the PCs are inclined to build their own kingdom, they could carve out a portion of the ruins of Sarkoris and begin rebuilding. As their fame spreads, the PCs should find no shortage of followers eager to help with building a new town—once the place is safe. If any of the PCs are Sarkorian, they could restore their ancestral lands to their former glory, perhaps after stumbling upon traces of their lineage and homeland in the ruins of the Worldwound. For rules on kingdom building, see *Pathfinder RPG: Ultimate Campaign*.

Found a Religion: Depending on what character classes and tier abilities the PCs chose as they advanced, it's possible at least one PC is capable of granting spells to her followers. If a character has divine aspirations, she could continue the story by spreading her faith to the people of the Inner Sea. How well people accept this new religion is dependent on its tenets, and even a good faith might be regarded differently in Andoran than it would be in Cheliox. For the most part, people of the Inner Sea would be grateful to this burgeoning deity after learning of her involvement in the sealing of the Worldwound.

Guide Politics/Use Influence: Having saved the world and being among the most powerful beings in the Inner

Sea, the PCs have an ability to influence politics in nearly any organization or nation. The PCs could use their clout to edge two nations toward peace, sway the popularity of a certain royal or noble family, or bolster the power of a small state. After the PCs' success leading the fight into the Worldwound, leaders of good nations are inclined to trust them. On a smaller scale, the PCs could build an academy or temple, or found their own organization.

Hunt or Redeem Demon Lords: If Deskari still lives, the PCs may seek to finish the job and assault him in his stronghold—likewise, Baphomet may be a likely target for revenge. But in the case of Noctricula, a different option might exist, for among her faithful are certain heretics who believe she seeks ascension to divinity as the goddess of outcasts, artists, and the glories of midnight. What if these heretics are correct? What if Noctricula's aid to the PCs during this campaign was merely the first of her overtures toward a rise from evil? Of course, the Abyss abhors a vacuum, and if the PCs aid Noctricula in becoming a chaotic neutral goddess, a new queen of succubi is certain to rise in her place—perhaps the transformed soul of Arelu Vorlesh herself will take up this mantle and seek vengeance against those who ruined her plans!

Retirement: Playing through an Adventure Path is a commitment, and many players are eager to go on to new character concepts and fresh storylines. Sometimes it's nice to finish a campaign by getting the players together for a final session where everyone talks about where their characters ended up after the campaign. That way they can conclude their characters' stories with everyone else and wrap things up after a big high point.

Following Victory

Now that the Worldwound is sealed, there's still much to be done in the broken land once known as Sarkoris. The century-long infestation of demons has defaced this land, but its touch is not permanent. It would take many decades to repopulate Sarkoris, and centuries for the land to completely recover—if that level of healing is even possible. This article points out only the most powerful threats and important issues in each region of the Worldwound—more information about the ruined land and ideas for other adventures there can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound*.

If any of the Worldwound's major players (such as Aponavicius, Khorramzadeh the Storm King, or Arelu Vorlesh) survived their encounters with the PCs, they might want to take their chances facing off against the PCs again. Each encounter would depend on the NPC's tactics and motivations, but all would likely hit the PCs when they are not expecting it. Likewise, if the PCs know that these enemies slipped through their grasp, they might already have plans to hunt them down.

Even if the PCs don't personally handle them, many of the following issues may require allocating troops, and PCs may wish to act as advisors to Queen Galfrey.

Frostmire: Compared to other parts of the Worldwound, this region is relatively untouched. The demons flowing in from the Abyss didn't find much of interest in this land, as it was untamed and had few inhabitants to corrupt. Even the barbarian raiders to the south and west don't venture too deeply into Frostmire. Because of this, rehabilitating Frostmire would be relatively easy.

While the PCs were working to close the Worldwound, the Pathfinder Society led an expedition into the demonic land

to locate and secure a lost sky citadel called Jormurdun, located in Frostmire. By the time the PCs successfully closed the Worldwound and completed the campaign, the Pathfinder Society had found the stronghold and secured the entrance. Yet danger remains—the site's current ruler, a kalavakus demon known as Yealek-Vor—still holds the inner depths of Jormurdun and is attempting to transform the citadel to a vast temple to Shivaska the Chained Maiden.

Riftshadow: If the PCs were successful in the campaign, it's likely that most of the powerful beings in Riftshadow have met their ends, though Riftshadow needs serious work if it is ever to be restored to anything resembling normal life. This area is second only to the Wounded Lands in the number of demons and threats that need to be dealt with. Many of demons in Riftshadow are not particularly powerful on their own, but they have numbers on their side. Cleansing the whole region would cost the crusaders a great deal of time and casualties. For every day the PCs spend fighting hordes of demons in Riftshadow, dozens of crusaders live to see another day. Missions could involve reclaiming and rebuilding the fallen cities of Storasta, Raliscrad, and Undarin. The PCs could lead forces of crusaders to drive out the demons and undead, and to rebuild the cities, or at least make them safe for people to try to reclaim ancestral possessions that have sat in demons' hoards for the last century. Sarkorians refugees might be looking for more than heirlooms—thousands of slaves and other mortals destined for sacrifice are held throughout Riftshadow. Most of these camps are located in the demon-run cities in Riftshadow. Last but not least, as the watershed of Sarkora River, this land was once a belt of lush, green forests and fertile fields. If the PCs were able to cleanse the river, such as via a mythic *terraform* spell, it would go a long way to restoring Sarkoris.

Sarkorian Steppe: The armies of demons never truly focused on this region of Sarkoris. The demons populating this land settled into a life as petty warlords leading small bands of demons in clashes with the Kellid barbarians who have worked to hold the steppe for the last century. In this wild land, the PCs could approach Khraigorr Half-Face and his Hornbreakers to better outfit the raiding group and use them to help restore the Worldwound.

Khraigorr is obsessed with defeating a vavakia demon named Gashgelag, with whom he's had a rivalry for some time. Khraigorr pledges fealty to the PCs if they can arrange an honest fight to the death between him and Gashgelag to settle things. If the PCs approach the demon with this offer, the fiend immediately agrees.

Stonewilds: In this former haven for the druids of Sarkoris lair two of the more powerful evils in the Worldwound, still locked in conflict after a century.



Eliandra

From his palace of Greengrave, the vrolikai inquisitor Shaorhaz commands a large demonic army, and would certainly know of the PCs and their achievement, likely sending multiple waves of minions to confront them and attack from different approaches before seeing to the task himself. By himself, Shaorhaz is a CR 23 threat—his full statistics can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited*.

Demons aren't the only dangerous creatures in the Stonewilds, however. The undead druids known as siabrae are as dangerous to humanoids as to the demons they despise. They are led by Auzmezar, Master of the Circle of Hierophants, a mythic siabrae druid who lives with the other siabrae among the stone menhirs that once marked the center of their society. Once the Worldwound is cleared of demonic influence, it would be a great mercy for the PCs to put the undead druids to rest.

The Wounded Lands: Immediately upon the closure of the Worldwound, Mendev begins sending out units of crusaders to scout the Wounded Lands and report back to provide intelligence for missions to rescue slaves and other captives. These units frequently encounter pockets of powerful demons who went to ground when the PCs closed the Worldwound, and the PCs can aid the restoration effort by purging these holdouts on their own. As in Riftshadow, most of the demons' mortal captives live in ruined cities and slave pens. This region also has the largest number of cultists, especially those newly corrupted. While purifying this region, the PCs need to consider what to do with all the cultists. Redeeming them takes time, but many of these wretched souls are simply brainwashed.

Major locations in the Wounded Lands like Iz need to be completely cleaned out, and the PCs could be asked to accompany crusader strike teams, as without their aid, performing this level of building-to-building searches could take years.

Among some of the other important locations in the area is an ancient Sarkorian crypt called the Blackearth Cairn, controlled by a cult of Sifkesh. Its ruler, **Jaalika** (CE female seraptis^{BOTD2} cleric of Sifkesh 12), is exceptionally dangerous as the cult has possession of a potent artifact called the *Crown of Feasting Ravens*. Now that the Worldwound has been healed, Jaalika has grown more paranoid and has dug in her forces to protect the cairn for as long as possible, knowing that any day she could be displaced.

An excellent ally in restoring Sarkoris is **Eliandra** (CG female aasimar cleric of Pulura 20). She has held the temple known as Pulura's Fall for the last century, besieged by spectral undead and a demon named Belsefelek that have kept her and her followers trapped in their stronghold. The wards that keep out the demons and undead also magically sustain Eliandra's life, so she

can never leave Pulura's Fall, but once the siege is ended, she can provide healing and her potent divine magic to those in need.

Eliandra is driven by her faith. Her efforts over the last century have left her with bouts of feeling drained, frustrated, and tired, though her faith in the Shimmering Maiden is strong as ever and she tries hard to keep her situation from coloring her mood. One of the various stains on the land Eliandra is particularly concerned about is Lake Ipona. Now tainted and poisoned, the lake once provided crystal clear water to most of Sarkoris. If the lake could be cleansed and the waters made to flow again, it would wash over the land, revitalizing it and providing sustenance to natural fauna and flora. It would take centuries for the watershed to return to normal by itself, but with the great power wielded by the PCs, they could heal the lands much faster with magic such as that mentioned in the Riftshadow section.

When Heroes Fall

If the heroes fail to close the Worldwound, demons stream into Golarion as rifts open throughout the northern reaches of Avistan—an event the people of the Inner Sea come to refer to as the Fall. The Abyssal scar on the world tears itself 10 times larger, and Deskari's army surges with new recruits. What follow are accounts of what might happen around the Inner Sea if the PCs fail.

BREVOY

Small and isolated, Brevoy initially serves as a haven for Mendevian refugees. This causes a political schism among Brevoy's rulers, and thanks to their disorganization, the land is overrun by demons within 6 months of the PCs' failure.

HOLD OF BELKZEN

After the Fall, some of the waves of demons that push through Ustalav flow into the Hold of Belkzen. There they initially meet resistance from the orc warlords. Strong, skilled at warfare, and always eager to fight, many of the proud tribes that held this land for so long refuse to be taken over or wiped out by the agents of the Abyss, and claim a handful of small victories, holding the line within the Tusk Mountains so the demons are forced through Ustalav to get at the heart of Belkzen.

Once more demons make their way through into Belkzen, however, they collect warlike tribes of orcs that venerated various demon lords, pulling them into the demonic host to supplement the forces of chaos streaming from the Worldwound. Some of these tribes are sent into Ustalav to finish off the few pockets of resistance remaining in that haunted land, and others fanned out into neighboring countries such as Varisia, Lastwall, Nirmathas, and the Realm of the Mammoth Lords.

IRRISEN

As the rulers of a strict and insular nation, the White Witches of Irrisen have no intention of being taken over by demons. As the first refugees press into the icy nation, Irrisen begins amassing armies to defend its borders. An accord is made with the Linnorm Kings to join forces against the Worldwound's expansion, and Irrisen's queen expects to easily end the threat and claim part of the Realm of the Mammoth Lords in the process.

KYONIN

Familiar with ongoing demonic threats, the elves of Kyonin use guerrilla tactics against the invading demons. They know their territory well, and successfully fight back for the first few weeks following the invasion of Kyonin. However, after the demons from the Worldwound align with Treerazer and the elves realize how dire the situation actually is, they decide to evacuate from Golarion once again, retreating to Sovyrian—this time destroying the *aiudara* behind them.

MENDEV

After the fall of Kenabres at the start of the campaign, the failure of the PCs is the final nail in the coffin of the nation of Mendev. The strongest enemy of the demons of the Worldwound, Mendev is the first focus of the fiends of the Abyss. After unending assaults, Kenabres is reduced to complete rubble, and within a matter of weeks Nerosyan falls as well. The demons press the remaining crusaders back to the shores of the Lake of Mists and Veils, and Brevoy takes in many of these refugees. Some flee down into Numeria, but that nation suffers its own losses. Though small pockets of resistance hold their ground, within a month there is nothing left in Mendev resembling a government, and the crusaders are merely a hassle to the demons instead of a threat.

NUMERIA

When the Fall occurs, the Technic League members—in their hubris—think they can use their captive technology to stand against the demons. While some of their weapons are successful at first, they fail to consider that many demons are brilliant in their own right, and have natural immunities to electricity and poison that make some of these technological weapons harmless. In a month, holdouts in Numeria begin seeing demons wielding these same advanced weapons to root out the resistance. Some sadistic and enterprising demons merge demon flesh and robotic technology into death-dealing machines of horror.

The last bastion of defense is Starfall. In the weeks and months after the Fall, the Technic League delves deeper and with more frequency into the Silver Mount, pulling untested technology from within. Some search for weapons, while others hope to find another vessel that would allow them to leave Golarion. Their engineers work

feverishly to study a device they feel could be a weapon to truly turn the tide. Hastily assembling the purported weapon, an engineer accidentally triggers the device and a blinding explosion rocks Starfall, reducing the city to a pile of ash spread around a deep crater. The explosion can be seen for miles, and its mushroom-shaped cloud billows high into the air. Radioactive dust veils the sun and the Inner Sea's winds spread this deadly mix far and wide.

REALM OF THE MAMMOTH LORDS

After the Fall, the Kellid tribes notice demons scrambling over the Tusk Mountains and begin mounting a force to contend with them. Tribes grudgingly put aside any lasting conflicts and join together in defense of their ancestral lands. Despite their barbarian might and powerful mammoths, the Kellids fare no better against this demonic expansion than the people of Sarkoris did over a hundred years ago. The demonic forces take over the Realm of the Mammoth Lords in short order. After losing more than half of their land, the Mammoth Lords find reinforcements from an unlikely pair of allies—their Irriseni neighbors to the west, backed up by the Ulfen from the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

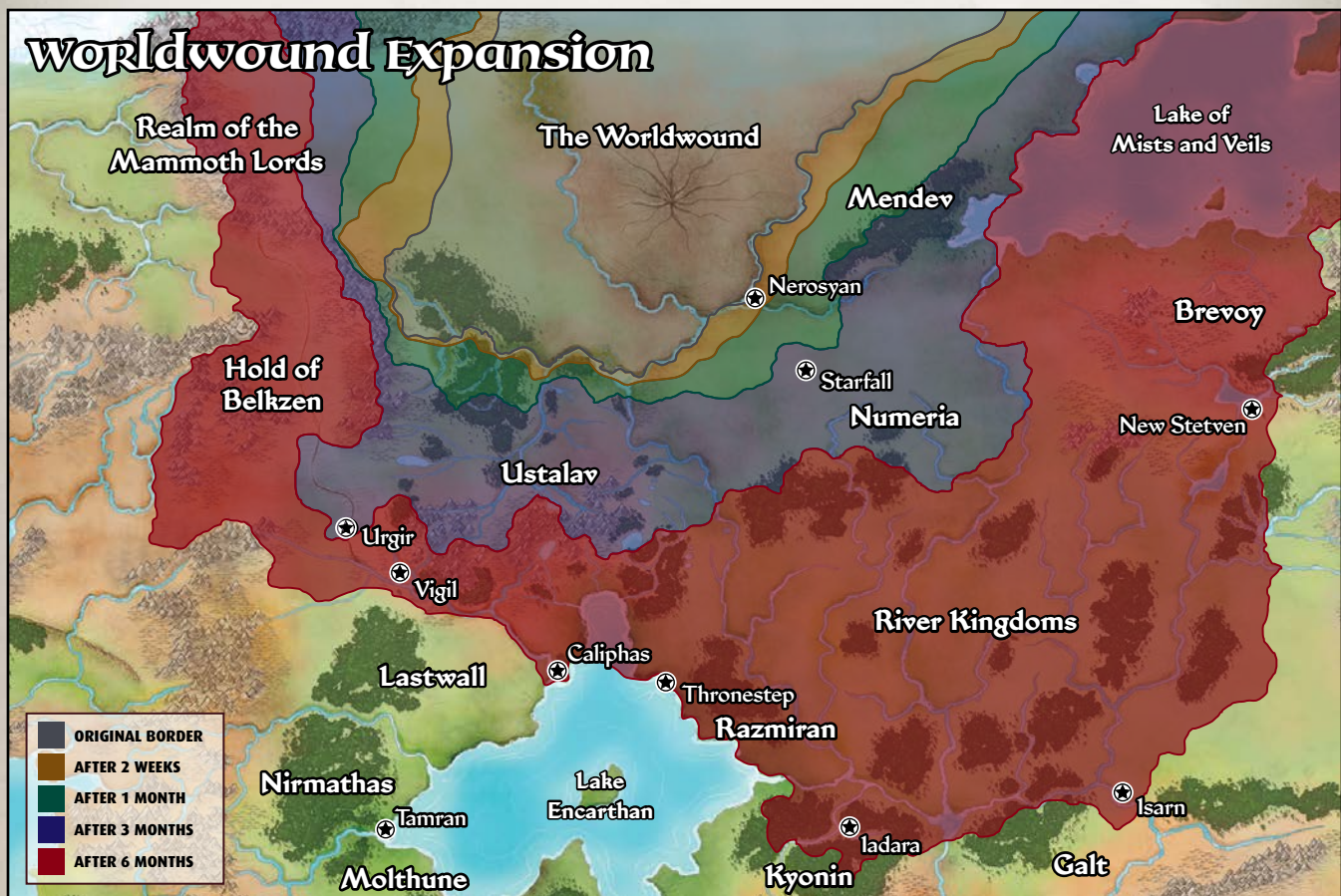
RIVER KINGDOMS

Fractured and disorganized, most of the River Kingdoms fall into demonic hands shortly after Numeria is overrun. Conquering this territory allows the demons to descend into Razmiran, Kyonin, and Galt, prompting a contract between Andoran, Chelias, and Taldor to temporarily align against the Worldwound's threat.

USTALAV

After standing guard along their northern border for a century, Ustalav's defenses begin crumbling once the Fall happens. The first wave of demons pierces these defenses at the Moutray River at Ardagh. Some forces manage to make a stand for a month, but in time each outpost along the river falls. Dipping into the coffers of House Odranti, the Prince easily raises forces to supply reinforcements, and Countess Carmilla Caliphvaso takes the opportunity to accuse the prince of seeing to his own county instead of putting all of Ustalav first. As the invasion breaches the borders of Ustalav, one of its more powerful denizens—the black dragon Seryzilian—agrees to help the demons take the region if they leave the Graidmere Swamp in the dragon's possession, an offer the demons gladly accept.

Demonic werewolves have long been a threat in the Shudderwood just north of Ustalav's borders, but after the Fall, these creatures make bolder moves into the country, where they bully other werewolves into their pack and infect new people to grow their forces. In short time, these cruel creatures descend into Canterwall.



As Canterwall is the breadbasket of Ustalav, once it falls to the demonic invasion, the rest of the nation slips into starvation. This in turn prompts some vampires to rise against the demons to protect their food supply—the people of Ustalav. The vampires don't rally to the cause until the front lines of the demonic forces reach Ardis or Karcau, and after that they can be seen fighting alongside humans in some of the pitched battles. Also helping in the fight, the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye use its knowledge of outsiders and magic against the demons, but as bright as the order's scholars and occultists might be, it's not enough to make much difference. After a few failures, the group leaves Ustalav and regroups farther south to explore a new approach.

As the fight drags on and more counties fall to the invasion, the demons transform Caliphass into a massive slave pen. All captured mortals are brought back to the capital to await sacrifice, torture, or worse. In neighboring Virlych, the marilith Kaltestrua uses the chaos of the Fall to rally demons to her side and march on the Cenotaph. There, instead of working to free the Whispering Tyrant, she gathers the army of undead under her banner and sets off to claim as much of Ustalav as she can. In less than a year, Ustalav is completely overrun.

INNER SEA ALLIANCES

After the Fall, many nations bind together to better fight the oncoming apocalypse.

Inner Sea Alliance: Once it seems Golarion's apocalypse is at hand, Andoran, Cheliax, and Taldor form the Inner Sea Alliance. All three have the wealth and forces to contend, but Cheliax is the best suited to combat the demon horde. Hellknights train and outfit recruits by the hundreds every day. Though most of the forces of Hell are uninterested in the outcome of the conflict, powers in Cheliax are able to secure the aid of an infernal duke and his army of devils. Taldor and Andoran both provide armies, taking Galt and splitting its lands between them.

West Encarthan Confederacy: After Ustalav falls and the Inner Sea Alliance is formed, Lastwall, Molthune, and Nirmathas follow suit and create the West Encarthan Confederacy to march north to defend the new front lines. Razmiran falls within a month of invasion, and its refugees brave Lake Encarthan to reach the western shores to join the confederacy. Internal conflicts invite corruption, but the soldiers are strong and know their battlefields. The West Encarthan Confederacy manages to hold the lines and the demonic threat is contained in Ustalav as long as the Inner Sea Alliance stands.



Deskari

Deskari, called the lord of the locust host and usher of the Apocalypse, rose from humble origins to become a great source of evil on Golarion. His "father," the demon lord Pazuzu, mated with an unnamed giant insectlike demon in the Abyss, and from this union Deskari was hatched, was born, or simply emerged into existence. Somewhat protected by Pazuzu's strong influence and sheltered by his Abyssal realm, Deskari was able to gather thousands of troops under his banner, found an insidious cult on the Material Plane, develop into a nascent demon lord, seize his own Abyssal realm, and elevate himself to full demon lord status.

Long before the Worldwound opened, the thin planar boundary between Deskari's realm and the land once known as Sarkoris allowed the demon lord to prey upon the mortal humans there, which put him into frequent conflict with the living god Aroden. Eventually, Aroden was able to defeat Deskari's avatar and drive many of his demons and cultists into the Lake of Mists and Veils. However, this was only a temporary setback for the demon lord—with the help of a powerful worshiper in Sarkoris, he was able to revive his cult there less than 200 years later and create many small portals into the city of Threshold. Upon Aroden's death in 4606 AR, Deskari's influence on Golarion ripened and burst, transforming Sarkoris into the demon-haunted Worldwound. This gave the demon lord a solid foothold on Golarion, and now he plays a patient game of corruption and advancement as his minions press the borders of their influence slowly forward until they can make Golarion the doorstep of the Abyss or fully drag it into the realm of chaos.

Despite his monstrous and inhuman appearance, Deskari is not a mere brute or a mindless thing like a common insect; such a creature would not be able to rise to the power of a demon lord, as it would inevitably be outwitted or enslaved by a creature of greater intelligence or magic. Rather, Deskari is a genius who has lived for thousands of years, and understands the nature of mortal fear, sins, and souls. And just as a hive is willing to sacrifice drones and soldiers to destroy a dangerous invader or expand its territory, Deskari is willing to spend the lives of his minions or even allow great losses if doing so helps him achieve victory in the long run.

One example of Deskari's intellect is his strategy for taking over Golarion through the Worldwound. He could have sent his armies surging over the land in massed waves to conquer the world, but such a purposeful act would have aroused great alarm in the celestial realms and been met with immediate resistance by the many good churches and other factions. Instead, the demonic leadership tested the waters with a disorganized wave of troops with murder and pillaging on their minds. These demons were eventually turned back, leaving the impression that the armies were a leaderless mass of frenzied fiends obviously unable to work together—a tide that, while dangerous, could be contained by walling it away.

Furthermore, some in that first wave actually teleported to various dark places in the world, stirring up deep-lairing monsters and luring mortals into sin. Deskari's

initial intent was that many more would do so during later waves, but the construction of the *wardstones* limited the use of teleportation. Fortunately, he had a secondary plan: giving those crusading against his armies time to defeat themselves by succumbing to corruption and unwittingly doing the demons' jobs for them. And despite being contained within the ruined land of Sarkoris, the demonic armies had plenty of targets to destroy and torment while they awaited the next big onslaught.

With the aid of Baphomet and his cult of Ivory Templars, the demons used this time to pick away at the mental fortitude of the crusaders, using disguised demons or hidden cultists to vex and stir contempt, and then let human nature do the rest. The crusaders have become shot through with corruption, treachery, and sin, weakening themselves with witch hunts, pillaging, and infighting over the best strategy for defeating the demons. Meanwhile, the reach of the Worldwound creeps outward every day—and the influence of the Abyss on mortals outpaces its physical presence in the world.

Deskari thinks of himself as superior to other demon lords, especially those who arose from humanoid creatures. His chitinous flesh is harder, his eyes are more numerous and more perceptive, and his saliva is a deadly poison. A child of two powerful

demons, he was never a mortal, and therefore was never a larval soul, so he deems his origin more pure—he was always a demon and never anything else, and thus he has always been superior to any demon lord who had a mortal life before becoming a demon. Likewise, he esteems other lords who predate mortal sin (including his father, Pazuzu) or who originated as *clippoth* more than the once-mortal. He does not speak of this attitude, but it guides his plans and his interactions with his minions and peers.

Deskari hungers for power, territory, and the resources to feed his armies and monstrous brood. His eventual plans for total conquest might put him in opposition with other demon lords with similar interests, but the timeline for these endeavors is long enough that he expects to defeat them directly or to have infiltrated their realms with his own agents and destroyed them from within before they pose a significant threat.

Many of his demonic minions are mindless (or near mindless) creatures who obey him (or his generals) only because of his and his generals' special ability to communicate with vermin. These minions' mindlessness makes them dangerous to all other nearby creatures, and ensures these demonic vermin are impervious to bribery



DESKARI'S ABYSSAL MINIONS ARE LIKE VERMIN IN THE WORLD OF MORTALS. LIFT A PIECE OF WOOD, AND THEY ARE THERE. SPLIT A STONE, AND YOU WILL FIND THEM.

—THE BOOK OF THE DAMNED

The Rasping Rifts

Deskari's Abyssal realm, known as the Rasping Rifts, is a horrific maze of chasms and canyons infested with insectile monsters. In some places the walls and ledges are carpeted with so many crawling things that the tainted soil is buried under a thick layer of molted husks and particulate bug feces. In other places the skies—barely visible above the realm's steep walls—are permanently darkened by flying swarms the size of cities. Many regions constantly rumble and hiss with the noise of subterranean warrens built by demon-faced giant ants ready to burst outward and seize any intruder; others are flooded with floating pools of poisonous, stagnant water and home to house-sized Abyssal mosquitos that can drain a Medium creature dry in moments. Many of these areas are bottomless, eventually emptying into the realm of the qliphoth, but some contain ravines with semipermanent floors.

Giant vermin the size of warships are homes, nests, and transportation for voracious gangs of Deskari's minions, who goad their nearly invulnerable war-steeds forward with pain or offerings of food (usually larva or captured demons). Giant vermin, retrievers, swarms, riftcreepers (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound* 57), vermleks (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2* 54), and derakni (*The Worldwound* 43) are the most common inhabitants. Many of these creatures carry strange diseases native to the Abyss, and infect opponents with every physical attack.

The strange hive-cities of the Rasping Rifts cover the canyon floors and extend upward along the cliff faces, as most inhabitants can fly or at least climb without risk of falling. Most cities contain at least one permanent portal to the Worldwound, facilitating the demon lord's invasion and conquest of Golarion. Less useful portals open intermittently or allow only smaller creatures through; these rarely have a permanent camp or structure associated with them. These unattended portals are a means for mortals to sneak into Deskari's realm unobserved, or for opportunistic demons to reach the Material Plane without paying the demon lord's minions for access to the permanent portals.

or attempts to charm them. Unless he has need of them or requires them to specifically avoid a creature or fragile plan, he allows his creatures to roam free and consume anything they can kill.

With his worshipers, Deskari is aloof, impersonal, and ruthless. He is quick to punish unexpected failures, but coolly tolerant when a minion doesn't complete a task the demon lord didn't expect it to finish, or if the failure is part of a greater plan. Although Golarion is his current focus,

he has plans for many worlds, and sometimes his priests may not communicate with him directly for years at a time, instead receiving their spells through his demonic generals as he focuses his attention on other realms.

As the demon lord of locusts, he is aware of the natural cycles of eggs and swarming. He knows that swarms naturally consume everything in their path and leave a barren wasteland, and understands that sometimes a swarm must in turn be consumed to sustain another creature. Just as some insects remain buried for years to mature before they swarm, he instructs his cultists to remain hidden and quiet until he deems it is time to strike. Those who emerge too soon and are destroyed for their haste are unfit specimens unworthy to serve him in their current form—but they provide him with new larval souls with which he can create new demons. Some cultists bury their Abyssal allegiance so deeply they forget who they serve (sometimes using magic to facilitate this), awakening only for a specific trigger or at the demon lord's will so they can carry out their mission.

Deskari appears as an insectoid centaur creature. His lower half resembles a six-legged locust. From where the locust's head should be sprouts a vaguely humanoid torso covered in chitinous plates, with arms holding a terrible scythe called *Riftcarver*. This blade looks like the scissoring claw of a mantis and was crafted from the remains of his father's monstrous mate. Deskari's head is that of a monstrous insect, with bulging eyes, multiple mandibles around a serrated mouth, and a crown of spikes or antennae. His wings are individual swarms of biting flies extending from his back, and he can see with their countless eyes just as well as with his own.

When Deskari is pleased, locusts consume enemies' supplies or gather harmlessly on walls, blades become poisoned, hostile swarms disperse, and worshipers' awareness expands as if they could see in all directions. When he is angry, sounds are drowned out by a hideous buzzing, swarms turn hostile and consume anything they can reach, the earth collapses into sinkholes, and bones become brittle.

Deskari is chaotic evil, and his portfolio is chasms, infestation, and locusts. His weapon is the scythe. His unholy symbol is a pair of crossed locust wings that are dripping with blood. His sigil resembles a one-eyed insect's head. His domains are Chaos, Destruction, Evil, and War. His priests are adepts, clerics, witches, and fallen paladins. Although locusts are part of his portfolio, he has no druid worshipers—in fact, he and his followers are especially hateful toward druids.

Outside of the Worldwound, Deskari—like most demon lords—is worshiped in secret, particularly in Mendev, northeastern Numeria, and Brevoiy. Some of these cults pretend to be lust- or vengeance-cults of Calistria, deceiving ignorant layfolk into believing that locusts are sacred animals to the goddess. Within the Worldwound, he is

worshiped openly, and his faith is one of the most popular ones in that cursed land. Most of these Worldwound cults are led directly by one of Deskari's servitors, usually one with levels in a priestly class, or by a powerful mortal paired with a demon of the same strength.

Most Deskari cultists are humanoid denizens of the Worldwound. Tieflings with insectile features often worship him, as their hideous deformities usually make them unwelcome in other religions (even those of other demon lords). A small number of worms that walk pray to him, particularly those who seek to speed up the end of the world.

Other quasi-cultists are little more than slaves and playthings of Deskaran demons, compelled by the threat of torture to give lip service to Deskari. Many of these demons are completely inhuman, having metamorphosed multiple times as they rose in Deskari's favor, and the larger ones have taken to adorning themselves with humanoid slaves chained or otherwise attached to their bodies. Broken by torture and the horrors they have seen, these slaves phonetically echo whatever their captor says. Cultists call these demons "evangelists of Deskari" and lavish them with gifts when they visit a temple.

Many cultists serve Deskari thinking that they'll be rewarded for their worship when he takes over the world. However, he sees them all as pawns in his bid to dominate the mortal world, and will kill, sell, enslave, or sacrifice them if necessary. Their mortal lives mean little to him—even less than those of his demon minions—for if they die loyal to him, they'll reform as larva in his Abyssal realm to serve as either food for his demons or raw material for creating new demons. The smarter cultists realize this is their fate, and graft demonic flesh onto themselves (see demonic implants, *Lords of Chaos: Book of the Damned*, Vol. 2 44) or enter pacts to sell their souls in a bid to be rewarded by becoming more powerful demons in death.

Services to the Lord of the Locus Host involve humming and hissing, playing percussion instruments (often skulls filled with finger bones and sealed shut with resin), burning candles, and sacrificing animals or humans. Sacrifices are usually fed to a live insect swarm (either one living in the temple or one summoned by a priest), and the bones are kept as trophies and decorations for the temple or ritual items. Some rituals require tearing up a holy text from another religion, and perhaps feeding it to a swarm if such creatures eat paper or leather. Cultists place little value on ceremonial clothing, even in the Worldwound—displays of power are more important than wearing the "proper" garments. Most prefer segmented armor that makes them look like insects.

Deskari has no interest in marriage, and his cult has no dogma for or against it. He himself "mates" as he wants or plants his eggs in creatures if he wants to reproduce, and considers the concept of swearing an oath to a particular mate as stupid as promising your food that you won't eat



any other kind of food. Likewise, his followers may take lovers or concubines or make temporary or permanent arrangements according to their desires or local customs. In many cases, a wealthy cultist takes an attractive slave as a mate, sacrificing it to the demon lord when it is no longer sufficiently pleasing.

Temples and shrines

Deskari's temples are usually built in caverns or ruined churches, or set into the walls of cliffs or chasms. Most include a pit full of insects or worms, which are used for performing his demonic obedience and for disposing of sacrificed creatures. In lands where his worship is forbidden, these temples are often disguised as worm farms, with the bins of squiggling vermin supposedly used to enrich the soil for better farming.



A Priest's Role

As with most demon cults, priests' main task is to acquire power and use it to further their patron's plans for domination. Priests are expected to watch for opportunities to corrupt or destroy enemies or the plans of enemies. Many become skilled at concealing or eradicating bodies, and may ally themselves with a thieves' or assassins' guild in this role. Priests usually have ranks in Bluff, Intimidate, Knowledge (nature), and Perception.

Daily tasks for a priest usually involve cultivating local vermin, exploring suitable places for expansion and colonization, or sending resources or slaves to the Worldwound to aid in the demon lord's efforts there. Although Deskari's priests work together with other cult cells (especially in the Worldwound), they are not averse to infiltrating and destroying cults that worship other deities—even other demon lords.

Holidays

Worshippers of Deskari honor the first day of spring, a time of new life when insects emerge from their cocoons, and the harvest moon, when those creatures descend upon mortal crops and devour them, leaving ruin and sorrow in their wake. Some cultists breed swarming insects and deliberately free them during Desna's Swallowtail Festival, allowing them to tear apart the goddess's butterflies to devastate the morale of her worshippers.

Commandments

As Deskari's main interests are infiltrating new territory and destroying those who oppose him, his commandments echo these sentiments.

All Fall to a Thousand Bites: A swarm defeats its enemies not because of the strength of its individuals, but with the unified power of overwhelming numbers. The loss of one creature in a swarm is meaningless if the swarm survives, and these losses may actually be essential for victory, like ants drowning themselves to form a bridge across a river so their fellows may cross. If you serve the Usher of the Apocalypse, you may be sacrificed to achieve that goal—or another may fall so you may succeed.

Life Feeds on Life: It is the nature of every living thing to sustain itself by consuming weaker creatures. Even hives may turn to cannibalism if food is scarce so that the greater whole may survive. Be willing to sacrifice your minions, your allies, or even your own flesh if that means you succeed. A man who starves to death is useless, but one who survives by eating his own arm may live to fight on. Do what you must do in order to persevere.

Holy Text

Deskari's holy text is a confusing, almost poetic series of 10 inscribed clay tablets called *One Thousand Voices in My Flesh*. Part spiritual guide, part screed against the mortal world, it is a first-person anecdote written by a human priest infested with Deskari's eggs, which spoke to him in many voices until he was compelled to take his own life by leaping into a chasm. It includes many odd phrases in Abyssal that have different meanings depending on whether the speaker is talking about minds, living bodies, or food.

Relations With Other Religions

Deskari is the son of demon lord Pazuzu and is on friendly terms with him. Nominally, the Usher of the Apocalypse is subservient to the Lord of the Wind Demons, but in practice they are near equals, and Deskari's success has added to Pazuzu's status. He is allied with Baphomet, whose secret cultists are experts at infiltrating and corrupting mortals, and whose work is a critical part of Deskari's plan to conquer Golarion. Many other demon lords have agents running loose in the Worldwound, though most of these are just opportunists who paid Deskari for the use of the portals from his realm to the Material Plane and have no ongoing relationship with him.

Deskari has a minor rivalry with nascent demon lord Izyagna (*Lords of Chaos: Book of the Damned*, Vol. 2 38), a demon who exists simultaneously in seven horrific antlike bodies and can command swarms. However, Izyagna serves Lamashtu, so Deskari is reluctant to act against Izyagna for fear of turning the Mother of Monsters against him.

Variant Spellcasting

Clerics of Deskari may prepare *create pit*^{APG} as a 3rd-level spell, *cape of wasps*^{UM} as a 4th-level spell, *vermin shape I*^{UM} as a 4th-level spell, *vermin shape II*^{UM} as a 5th-level spell, and *acid pit*^{APG} as a 6th-level spell. His antipaladins can prepare *cape of wasps* and *vermin shape I* as 4th-level spells. His priests also have access to the following spell.

ABYSSAL VERMIN

School transmutation; **Level** antipaladin 2, cleric 4, sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 4 (Deskari)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one vermin or vermin swarm

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (see text); **Spell Resistance** yes You infuse the target with power from the Abyss, granting it the fiendish creature simple template. The swarm gains DR 5/good if it has at least 5 Hit Dice, or DR 10/good if it has at least 11 HD. It gains cold resistance 5 and fire resistance 5 if it has at

Customized Summon List

Deskari's priests can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells.

Summon Monster IV

Vermlek (*Lords of Chaos: Book of the Damned*, Vol. 2 54)

Summon Monster V

Fiendish giant locust (*Bestiary* 4 183, 288)

Summon Monster VI

Fiendish giant mosquito (*Bestiary* 2 193, 292)

least 5 HD, or cold resistance 10 and fire resistance 10 if it has at least 11 HD. It gains spell resistance equal to its CR + 6. Once per day, it can smite good (as a swift action against a good opponent, the vermin adds its Charisma bonus to its attack rolls and its HD to its damage rolls until the opponent is dead). If the targeted vermin is under your command, it automatically fails its saving throw against this spell. This spell has no effect on vermin that already have the fiendish creature simple template.

Servitor Demons

Deskari's demons usually have one or more insectile body parts, even those with humanoid forms such as babaus and vrocks. A Deskaran succubus might have compound eyes and locust wings, a Deskaran quasit might have insect heads, a Deskaran nabasu could resemble an anthropomorphic mosquito, a Deskaran glabrezu might have mantis claws instead of crab claws, and so on. Many of these fiends are his creations, a direct result of him implanting eggs in past victims. Some of the more powerful demons in his realm are his hideous children and grandchildren, born of many kinds of demons (although he is likely to consume any offspring who show inclinations of turning against him).

Planar Allies

In addition to his servitor demons, Deskari has several generals who serve him in the Rasing Rifts and within the Worldwound, including the following.

Kzuhisaak: This demonic vermin^{WOR} giant locust (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 183) has a fiery breath weapon and can fly into a rage like a barbarian. She carries swarms of her young in hollow spaces on her abdomen, and has been known to spray her hungry hatchlings at troublesome opponents. She prefers offerings of aasimars or archons, preferably ones that have been paralyzed with poison.

Mnikhrask: This derakni^{WOR} Abyssal sorcerer practices a strange form of blood-based necromancy and uses his powers to reanimate the shriveled husks of his victims. He uses these creatures as bodyguards and shock troops, and prefers sacrifices of ogres, trolls, and hill giants for this purpose.



The steal

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: SWEET ICHOR 6 OF 6

Letter received by Venture-Captain Zhanneal of Razmiran,
6 Sarenith

Two Solar Lantern guardians blocked the doorway to Ylyda Ssyn's laboratory.

"You must let me pass, my friends," I told them, "to protect your mistress from a mistake she will long regret."

I could only hope that the reputation I had gained with them, by dint of the coin and goods you provided to keep their fortress afloat, would now allow me to sway them against their leader's orders. Under ordinary circumstances, only a fool urges a crusader to insubordination. But Ylyda Ssyn had sorely tested their loyalty since Sir Byre's death, with her withdrawal into mourning and failure to appoint his successor. Vitta had spread the word that their back

pay depended on us—on me. To say any of these things to them would arouse their sense of honor, force them back into Ylyda Ssyn's corner. But if they took them into consideration as things unsaid, I might gain entry.

The taller of the two sentinels took the bait. "What sort of mistake?"

"What is your name, my friend?"

"Harsal."

"Harsal, she has taken one of us to... punish. As she did Uldii." Here I took a greater risk—did they secretly hate what Ylyda Ssyn had done to their erstwhile comrade, grafting her with demon flesh? Or did they, fanatics to the bone, believe that she had been dishonored just deserts? "But he did not break the vow of celibacy that we all must obey here. I have obeyed her edict. As I'm sure you have."

Doubt raced across their faces.

"What will your fellows think, if word gets out that anyone can be placed upon her surgery table? First it's my friend Calliard. Then it might be me. Then you." I could see them wavering, Harsal most of all. So I spoke only to him. "She is not herself. Grief has blinded her. Do you want to tell your fellows that you could have stopped her, and did not?"

Harsal closed his fist at me. "If you're lying to me, outlander..."

"Take me in, and see for yourself."

He left his partner on guard and escorted me inside. There stood two more guards, along with Gad and Vitta. The door to the inner surgery room swayed open. Inside, Calliard squirmed against the leather straps binding him to an operating slab. In a far corner stood a cage large enough to hold a misshapen figure, once a man, now bristling with hairy insectlike appendages. This had to have been the crusader Uldii was caught with. Like her, he had been subjected to Ylyda Svyn's ghastly experiments. With a sidelong glance, I saw Harsal's shock at this sight. As I suspected, the rank-and-file might know of this project, but had been shielded from its results.

Harsal called out to his comrades. "I'm told that this one has been taken, even though he did not break the commandment."

Ylyda Svyn wheeled on him. "Who gave you permission to enter here?"

He shrank from her reproaches like a scolded dog. "Is it true?"

She marched toward him. "Don't you want to get out of this godsforsaken place?"

"Of course, milady."

Already it was clear that Harsal's usefulness had ended. He couldn't stand up to her.

She turned the masked side of her face toward him. "I make a moral sacrifice today. As we have all sacrificed, exposing ourselves to the madness of this place. Yet I am sure that inside this wanderer's veins lies the final secret, the one that will allow us to cleanse this land. If I'm wrong, it's my soul I risk, and no one else's. All you need to do is stand aside. Do you understand me, Harsal?"

He stared at the toes of his boots. "Yes, milady."

She plucked a scalpel from a drawer. Gad and Vitta lunged to stop her; guards restrained them. Not wanting to push Harsal any further, I resisted the urge to do the same.

"Don't do this," Gad said.

The alchemist ignored him, instead moving over to the slab to slice apart Calliard's tunic, exposing his chest and upper arms. Through the pale skin over his heart, a strange network of black veins could be seen—surely a symptom of prolonged demon blood abuse.

"You will forgive me for this, my son," Ylyda Svyn told Gad, "once you see the results."

Gad strained in his captor's bear hug. "Can't you see you've gone over the edge? You have no reason to think this will even work!"

She tapped herself on the temple. "Years of study plus a flash of insight—that's all one needs to change the world! Have you read Janung's *Greater Collecteana*—the section on the bodily humors?"

"Can't say I have."

"The Worldwound is poisoned with the bile of the Abyss, of which this" she said, pointing to the crystal, "is the elemental template. Your friend here..." She traced the tip of the scalpel, digging into, but not yet piercing, the flesh, "is poisoned with the blood of demons. Bile cancels blood, blood cancels bile. It's right there in the text!"

"Go ahead," said Gad, "bleed him. You don't have to kill him."

The scalpel quivered in her hand. "You don't see. I must comprehend how the veins connect to the muscle, as the Abyssal infections connect to stone and sand, the flesh of the land."

She turned to me, as if noticing my presence for the first time. "How about you, Ba-El? Do you also doubt me?"

"I did, milady," I stammered, "but I know nothing of humors and alchemy..."

"I thought Gad understood," she said, "but maybe it's you Iomedae has sent to aid me, as she sent Calliard to this alchemical altar. Will you?"

I wondered why she didn't ask Harsal, then realized he had to stand ready to cut me down if I tried anything. "I, too," I told her, "would do anything to destroy this accursed place."

"Not destroy, Ba-El. Restore." Step by step, she instructed me to set up a device, consisting of a rack, a bottle-like glass contrivance with a funnel on top, and an articulated copper tube, sealed with wax at the joints, terminating in a sharp, hollow point, which she called a trocar. I pieced it together next to Calliard's slab. Its purpose was all too easily divined: the trocar would be jabbed into Calliard, the better to drain his blood through a valve or allow fluid poured into the bottle to flow into his veins.

"What are you doing, Racid?" Gad demanded.

"Showing loyalty! She treated you like a son, and when she needs you, you doubt her?"

Ylyda Svyn patted me on the back. "Now listen carefully. This must be carefully timed. To touch the crystal, I must prepare a mixture. It evaporates quickly. As soon as I pour it on the crystal, you will take it and place it in the transfer bottle. Understood?"

I nodded, scarcely believing my luck. She was about to give me possession of the crystal, while Gad and the others were restrained. To escape with it, I would only have to get past Harsal, and then the guardian at the door. A blow to the throat with my elbow would remove Harsal from the

equation. A surprise stab at the door guard would follow. Then it was a matter of running for the gate...

The gate. It would be closed, and by then there would be pursuit. How would I get around that?

From a low cupboard Ylyda Svyn removed a pair of stoppered bottles. One contained a clear liquid, the other a powder resembling white sand. She measured about an inch of the liquid into a mixing cup, and scooped up a quantity of the powder. These she carried over to the apparatus containing the crystal, and mixed them together into a spouted jar.

From the corner of my eye, I saw Gad and Vitta duck down, Gad wresting himself free of his guardian's arms. By instinct I did the same.

A billow of smoke erupted from the mixing jar. It rose to fill the room, leaving a layer of breathable air at about the four-foot mark. Ylyda Svyn, Harsal, and the other guards choked and convulsed, clutching their throats. Vitta, who barely had to hunch to stay below the smoke, rushed to Calliard's slab and undid his straps. Rolling to avoid the smoke, the bard dove to the floor and slid along it in awkward snakewise fashion.

Ylyda Svyn thudded to the ground. Harsal and his comrades passed out soon after.

Gad, meanwhile, crawled to the cupboard of alchemical supplies, withdrew a smaller bottle of clear liquid, and took a scoop of the white powder Ylyda Svyn had used. An empty vessel under his arm, he knee-walked to the apparatus. He mixed the two substances together, held his breath, and stood to pour the resulting liquid onto the crystal. Once it was covered, he snatched it out of the apparatus and into a pouch at his belt.

I remembered what he had said when I lay poisoned in their camp outside Aaramor:

I know a little about alchemy.

He had either found the alternate substance he needed here in the lab, or added it to the list of ingredients you bought and paid for. A list that was made after he learned about the need to treat the crystal before handling it.

I recalled how Ylyda Svyn assigned the two of us to stow those ingredients. That must have been when he made the switch, replacing the agent that created the smoke with the one Ylyda Svyn had meant to use.

The guard at the door, hearing the falling bodies, came in, and was herself felled by the smoke.

As we crawled for the door, I wondered if the vapor would expand to fill the building. But only tendrils of it escaped the laboratory threshold. Taking my cue from the others, I rose to my feet to stride with calm purpose through the

corridor and out into the courtyard. We crossed hastily to the gateway, Vitta hailing their sentinels as Gad detoured to the stable.

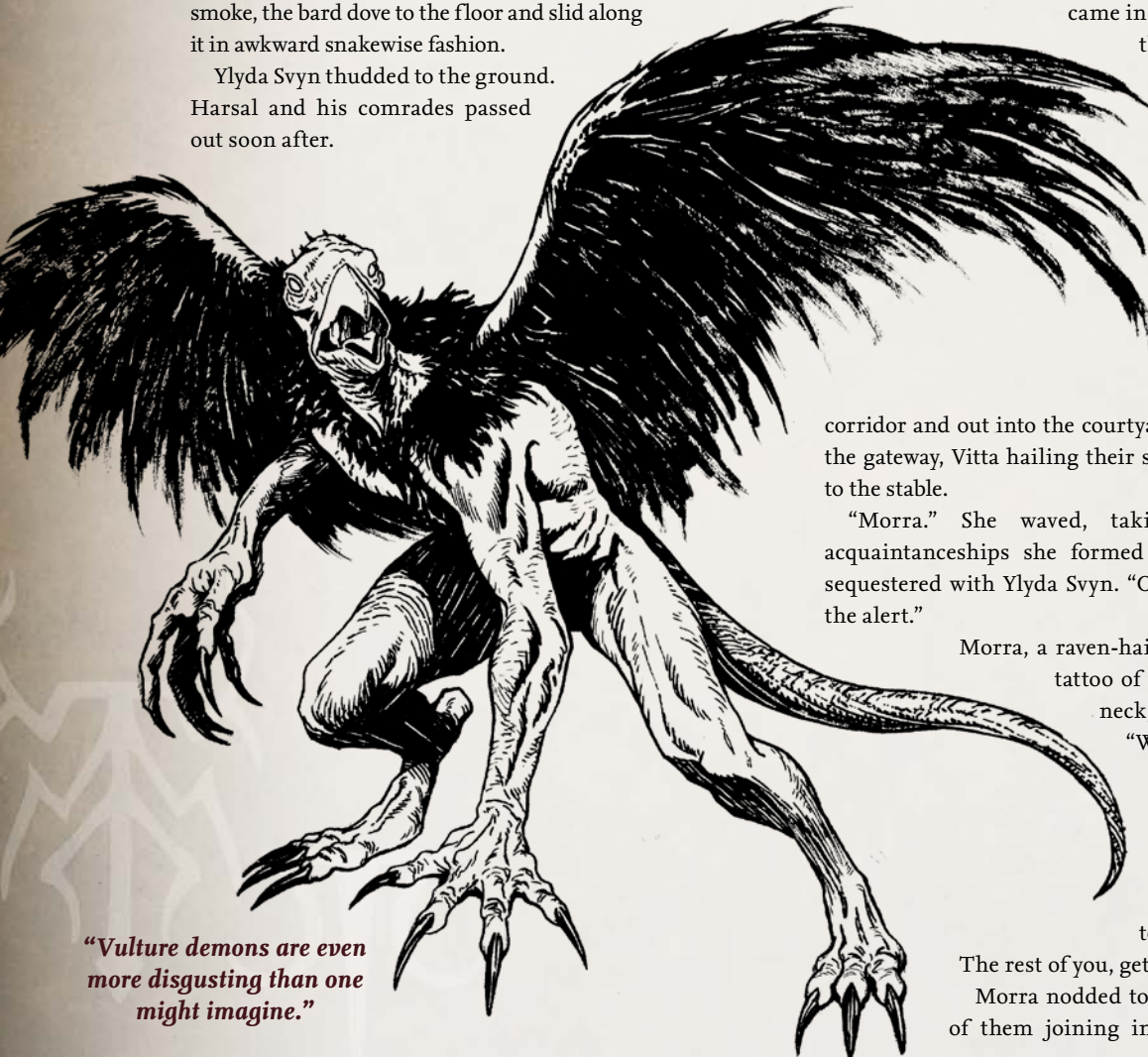
"Morra." She waved, taking advantage of the acquaintanceships she formed while Gad and I were sequestered with Ylyda Svyn. "Open the gate, and sound the alert."

Morra, a raven-haired crusader who bore a tattoo of the Solar Lantern on her neck, reached for her sword. "What is it?"

"Milady's apparatus has gone berserk," Vitta said. "It warns of a giant swarm of demons, headed this way. We're to fortify the wardstones.

The rest of you, get ready."

Morra nodded to her companion, the two of them joining in hauling on the pulley



"Vulture demons are even more disgusting than one might imagine."

mechanism, lifting the gate. Gad led four horses over. We clambered onto them and spurred the horses to a gallop.

Needing answers, I rode alongside Gad's horse. "The smoke—it killed them?"

"They'll wake up any minute," Gad said.

"Then why did you rally them to action? They'll come at us all the faster!"

No one deigned to answer me. A rage bubbled within me. They'd had a plan—if not all along, then at least for long enough to have told me about it. The timing had to have been opportunistic, waiting for the inevitable moment when Ylyda Svyn would succumb to the urge to vivisect Calliard. But that was all the more reason for them to warn me, so that I might properly play my part. What if I had been less persuasive with Harsal?

Or, worse yet—what if I had failed to spot them as they ducked? Why, I'd have been lying on that laboratory floor at that very moment, out cold and waiting to come to with Ylyda Svyn and the rest of them. And then what would have become of me, a conspirator left behind? I'd have been lucky if they gutted me quickly, instead of consigning me to demonic transformation on the alchemist's slab.

A full betrayal, Zhanneal, would have been less of a humiliation. They were as happy to see me doomed as fleeing with them. Ba-El Racid was an extraneous factor, a detail not worth planning for.

Behind us pounded the hoofbeats of pursuit. I turned back to see a dozen crusaders riding after us. In the Worldwound's uncertain terrain, our head start couldn't be depended on. We were out of missile range, but only just. Any obstacle would sink us.

We rode past Ylyda Svyn's makeshift wardstones. Black smoke rose from them. Fissures broke across their crumbling surfaces.

Vitta bore the smug expression of someone proven right.

I pointed at the menhirs, gabbling unintelligibly.

"The wards circle the fort exactly," Vitta illustrated her point with a circular gesture. "They work only when the crystal sits dead center."

"How did you...?"

"Just a hunch," said Vitta. "I had to take apart the wards for a place called the Turquoise Garden once as part of a job, and they worked on the same principle. It was the geometry that tipped it."

I remembered her plotting that map of the fortress. She'd been measuring the distance between fort and menhirs.

The ground shook. It took all my horsemanship to stay in the saddle. Our steeds made unearthly shrieks, of which I had never heard the like—more like crying babies than horses. The sky darkened and throbbed. Globes of a foul substance rained across the landscape. One of them struck my shield; it smelled like vomit and discolored the metal.

"We've got to get out of here," Calliard said.

"What's happening?"

"It's like I thought," he said. "They can sense it."

It took all my will not to draw my scimitar and lop of his head. "Who can sense what?"

"Them," he said, and pointed at the sky.

A demonic host emerged from the thickening clouds—flapping, screeching, clicking, cawing. The demons coagulated into a flock, aimed at the fortress behind us. Of us they took no apparent notice. Their shadow passed over us like an eclipse.

"They've hated Clearwater ever since it was built," said Calliard. "Now they feel it—any of them can get through now."

The oncoming hooves of our pursuers' mounts receded. Turning in the saddle, I saw that they'd reversed direction. They were riding back to warn the others, to defend the fort. Their bravery stirred me; were I in their place, you wouldn't find me racing to the same destination as that demon cloud.

Perhaps connecting the crusaders to the complex they hated so much, demons dipped from the air to attack the riders. They pulled horses into the air and dropped them. Two bat-winged specimens grabbed a crusader by the arms and legs and pulled him in two.

Without realizing it, I'd reined my horse to a halt and turned around to watch the carnage. Gad and the others had left me without so much as a warning cry. Cursing, I wheeled around and kicked my horse, racing to catch up to them. They had the Bile of Abraxas. And a mortal cannot survive in the Worldwound alone, even when most of the demons in the immediate area appear to be otherwise occupied.

Ahead, their three horses approached a forest's edge. I spurred my steed harder, provoking a whinny of protest, and plunged after them. By the time I reached the trees, they were nowhere in sight. My horse balked, refusing to enter the woods. The stinking rain gained force.

A clot of the falling filth hit my mount on the haunches, sending it rearing once again. This time I fell from the saddle, into a muck-filled depression. Soaked to the skin, I rose, my hands out to calm the horse. It kicked at me, rolled its eyes, and shuddered. Its front legs gave way, then those behind. It tipped over and twitched, then went still. I crawled over and placed my hand on its neck, but no pulse beat. The beast had fallen stone dead, and I could have sworn that it willed itself so, so that it would not have to enter the demon wood.

I stood and listened, hoping to pick out some sign of the others in the unearthly downpour. After an eternity or two, I heard an inhuman cry, like a cross between a baboon and an eagle. One voice became a chorus, accompanied by the sounds of battle. I had found my supposed companions—if they lived long enough for me to rescue them. I left my already stiffening steed and charged into the wood on foot.

Resentment clouded my estimation of the swindlers' abilities. By the time I arrived, they had already dispatched two of four vulture-headed demons. I slid into the fray, sinking my scimitar deep into a scaly haunch. The fight resolved into a wet, half-blind slog, impeded as much by the slimy rain falling from leaves overhead as by the power of these creatures—ridiculous in death, but terrifying when snapping and jabbing at you.

When they were all slain, we surveyed our injuries, and as one came to a daunting realization. Our flight from the fortress had left us without packs or supplies—no healing draughts, no water, no edible food. We had the weapons we carried and other minor effects, and miles to go before we left the Worldwound. Without these basics, we were as doomed as the poor souls left to defend Fort Clearwater—though our deaths would likely be slower than theirs.

"You won't want to watch this," Calliard said, and drew his dagger.

We turned our backs, and listened to him plunge it into one of the vulture demons, then slurp its blood straight from the source. He moved back into view, wiping ichor from his lips with the back of his hand. "I can sense when demons are near. Steer us clear of them, as much as that's possible here."

"My client's caravan," I said. "It will be on its way here. If we could meet up with them, we could refresh our supplies..."

"We know their route," said Vitta.

"But we have no map," I shot back.

"I have one up here." She pointed to her head. "They might get waylaid, or sent off course to flee from demons. So might we. But a slim likelihood is better than none."

And so we trudged toward the border according to the planned route of your supply mission. By the end of the second day, Gad, Vitta and I were beside ourselves with thirst. Calliard, having refreshed himself with the blood of vulture demons, showed scant signs of dehydration. He led our way through blackened wood and jagged hill, paralleling the course of a cracked and ancient road. When Calliard sensed demons approaching, he took us farther from it. When they had passed—sometimes when he had ambushed one and slaked himself on its ichor—we returned to the caravan route.

On the third day, we heard a commotion ahead. Bloodcurdling screams mixed with shouts in the Hallit tongue. With our last reserves of strength, we rushed on to join this unseen battle. Turning a curve in the road, we came upon the caravan crew in a desperate fight against a mob of amorphous demons that seemed to have cattle skulls for heads. Calliard took point; at his approach, the demons mewled in confusion, falling into disarray. I crashed blindly into them, hewing left and right. They sprayed me with a noxious, freezing slime, but I kept on

swinging. After a few moments of struggle, we reduced some of the creatures to puddles of tissue, and the rest to flight.

We drank greedily from the caravan's dwindling water supply, and made full use of the healing philtres they carried. With our prearranged pass-phrases, I identified myself as your agent, and informed them of the fortress's doom. I took custody of your gifts to its crusaders, disbursing what pay the caravan guards were owed, plus a bonus. Vitta suggested that we should travel out of the Worldwound with them as reinforcements. Though I welcomed the safety in numbers, this would complicate my final task, so I groped for a counterargument. "It's too much to ask of them," I said. "Those demons appeared to recognize Calliard. Others will come for him, now. Should they be expected to lay down their lives to defend him?"

So we went on our way, as before, but no longer by the road. Calliard pushed us deep into the corrupted wilds, navigating around concentrations of demons. We encountered but a few stray fiends along the way, and two days later camped for the night within striking distance of the Numerian border.

I took over watch from Vitta and waited for her now-familiar snoring.

At last, it was time to complete my mission. Yet with the moment now at hand, qualms assailed me. To steal the crystal meant nothing, but the final, necessary steps now bedeviled my conscience. Despite the treacheries you so vividly recounted to me, I owed my life to Gad, and in my own way had fallen prey to his charisma. Weak as it made me, I wanted him to like me. Thus I resolved to depart slightly from your instructions, and to kill him with a single blow while he still slept, without telling him who had sent me, and why he had to die. If all went as hoped, I would not have to hurt Vitta or Calliard at all. Against them you have no quarrel.

I crept over to Gad and began to silently remove the crystal from his pack.

"So," he said, eyes snapping open easily. "You went through with it after all."

And so, in the end, I was left with no choice. I shouted your name as I cleaved my scimitar through his throat, that he might know my hand was but an extension of your own. The others awoke with cries of dismay and came to his defense even as he knelt and clutched at his neck, choking on his own blood. With tear-blurred eyes, I watched as my blade finished Gad, then his two companions. The battle left me exhausted and sobbing, and the three of them murdered, lying on the muck-carpeted forest floor.

To undo the wounds they did me in defending their lives, I drank a healing potion, its syrupy sweetness a lie on my tongue. Though dawn would not come for hours, I could not bear to behold their lifeless bodies any longer,

The Steal

and began my trudge back to civilization, the prize of my victory weighing heavily in my pack.

And that is how I, Ba-El Racid, your loyal servant, stole the Bile of Abraxas from the thief you most hate, who in turn stole it from Ylyda Svyn, who like her Solar Lantern crusaders has now been surely extirpated from this existence by the demon horde.

Expect my arrival, and with it the priceless crystal, within a fortnight.

[Archivist's note: the remainder of the document is written in another hand.]

Vitta says it's spiteful to carry on the ruse so far. Gratuitous, she says. Me, I think it would be spiteful not to. When you start a story, it's your duty to finish it. So long as you start and finish with the truth, what's a little fancy in the middle?

And speaking of truth: the truth of the matter is that I grew so used to writing in Ba-El's manner that I'm sorry to let him go. Thinking and composing as him all these weeks, I've come to feel for the poor bastard.

Yes, Zhanneal, that dropping feeling you're getting in the pit of your stomach is absolutely correct. This is Gad. Ba-El and I each have confessions to make.

Ba-El's confession is that he is dead, and no doubt sorry to disappoint you. He yielded to the toxin the demon fed him back in the bottle shop in Numeria. We did find him, and take him to our camp. We even tried to find an antidote, but it was no use. He left behind an unfinished letter to you, which he penned even as the demon poison dissolved his guts.

The last paragraph he ever wrote described us, his rescuers. The bit where he leaves off and I begin is:

The quickest way to earn a swindler's trust is to make oneself appear to be a gull and a mark.

He lived only slightly longer than that—long enough to tell us about the Bile of Abraxas, and Fort Clearwater, and Ylyda Svyn, and the rest of it.

Thankfully, Vitta managed to attune herself to that useful messenger raven device of his, or none of this would have worked. When we searched his things after his death, we found his journal of past exploits—enough of him left in ink for me to revive him, on the page at least. The handwriting took a while to get the knack of, and I had to throw away a few spoiled pages. But his personality—boastful and insecure, anxious to please, a man of muscle who yearned to be a man of letters—that came right away.

Racid meant to do me dirty, it's true, but what "he" said back in his last letter about me and Ylyda Svyn? It's nearly right. You do have to fall for the marks a little, to let them fall for you. So for Ba-El, I did him

the best honor as I could, seeing things as he would have, describing what he might have done.

Since you Pathfinders are perpetually chronicling everything, even your own failures and embarrassments, you can file this account, and all the details regarding the Worldwound, as true. Only the elements with Ba-El in them are fabrications.

Oh, and the requests for all the goods you shipped us: Some of them we made fine use of, as described. But yes, we pocketed most of it, including the last caravan shipment intercepted on our way out.

And that, then, is my confession. As I don't need to tell you, you won't be seeing the Bile of Abraxas, soon or ever. We've lined up another buyer.

As to Calliard, and whether by pointing us to the Bile of Abraxas, you gave us the means to cure him of his affliction? Well, on that front, I don't suppose you care.

And even if you do, well, that part's none of your business.



"Ba-El Racid isn't quite the man he seems."



Bestiary

A cacophonous buzzing filled the air of the impossible cavern. The walls seemed to stretch higher each time I looked up and the sides of the rift seemed to collapse onto themselves in the distance behind us. Moving forward was the only option, and the buzzing just became louder with each step. Around a bend, a towering creature shuddered into view. It seemed to flicker in and out of existence as it tore at us with its claws between firing destructive green rays at us. We tried to teleport away, but our escape was thwarted—the demon’s magic brought us right back to face its horror.”

—Disou Kertonac, Riftwarden

The Pathfinder Bestiary for this volume of the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path features a demon dedicated to breaking planar boundaries, a devious plant that feeds on death, a towering Abyssal war machine, and Deskari, demon lord of chasms, infestations, and locusts!

MORE MALICIOUS ENCOUNTERS

The random encounter table presented here features a number of typical threats the PCs could encounter while in the ruins of Iz or on the other side of the planar boundary in Deskari's Rasping Rifts. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have 60% chance of a random encounter every hour they spend in Iz and a 75% chance of a random encounter every hour they spend in the Rasping Rifts. Since this adventure spans a range of levels, some of the results might be too simple or too difficult for the PCs, depending on where they are in the course of the adventure. If the result rolled is outside the challenge rating range appropriate for the PCs, roll again or simply choose a more appropriate encounter.

Kek (CR 19): When the Worldwound first opened, this poor, misguided humbaba (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 151) heard tales of a massive rift to the Abyss in the northern lands of Golarion and began a long trek to see the site for himself. Because of Kek's size, many demons and other dangerous creatures let him be instead of engaging the colossal creature, and those who challenged the brute were quickly smashed to pieces. Kek has long heard stories of how he and others of his kind were once servitors of Pazuzu; now, he wishes to visit the Abyss and make amends to the demon lord in order to get back in his good graces. If the PCs offer to bring him along to the Abyss, Kek promises to fight alongside them for up to 1 month or until he can find his way to the Abyssal realm of High M'Vania.

Lanuetwan (CR 20): Called to the Worldwound to close the rift between the Material Plane and the Abyss, the lhaksharut inevitable (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 164) called Lanuetwan was astounded to see the size and nature of the tear between worlds. After his arrival at the Worldwound, Lanuetwan first fought with Khorramzadeh in the skies above Iz, but slunk away after a nearly lethal defeat. Now that the PCs have made their move against the demons, the lhaksharut hopes to gain their assistance in sealing the rift, and plans to destroy anyone and anything that gets in the way of its goal.

Mephuleza (CR 22): Striking across the blistered sky above Iz, the red wurm ravener (*Bestiary* 2 230) Mephuleza periodically swoops down into the Worldwound to bathe in the rift's otherworldly energies. While most demons don't mind the undead dragon's presence above the ruined city, Mephuleza does frustrate some of the more powerful fiends by consuming the souls of captives and torture victims—the demons can't be sure their sacrifices are going to their intended destinations when the undead dragon swallows them up. The ravener can be encountered anywhere within

The winning Monster Is...

Last year, Paizo was approached by August Bender, president of the Digital Designer's Guild, a nonprofit student organization that aids game design students (baltimoreindiegameseminar.wordpress.com). In 2012, August taught a free open workshop course at the University of Baltimore as an introduction to roleplaying games, using Pathfinder as a preferred system. After professors noticed an increase in comprehensive and analytical skills of the students who took August's course, he was asked to teach it again in 2013 with a wider-cast net. As part of this course, he challenged his students to design a monster for Pathfinder and asked Wes Schneider and Adam Daigle to judge his students' creatures, pick one from the many creations, and publish it in a volume of the Pathfinder Adventure Path. In this volume's Pathfinder Bestiary, you'll notice a sinister and bloodthirsty flower—the devious work of Tyler Pomplon. Congratulations on the corpse lotus, Tyler!

10 miles of Iz, including while the PCs are exploring the city. There might even be a powerful being in the city that would pay the PCs to rid Iz of this draconic nuisance.

RUINS OF IZ ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-05	1 marilith	17	<i>Bestiary</i> 63
06-11	1 cairn linnorm	18	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 182
12-14	1d4 ecorches	18	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 109
15-19	1 katpaskir	18	See page 86
20-26	1d8 greater apocalypse locusts	18	See page 9
27-31	1d8 mythic elder earth elementals	18	<i>Mythic Adventures</i> 194
32-37	1d8 mythic elder fire elementals	18	<i>Mythic Adventures</i> 195
38-40	Kek	19	See below
41-46	1d8 raspers	19	See page 40
47-50	1 vrolikai	19	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 81
51-56	1 fiendish ancient red dragon	20	<i>Bestiary</i> 99, 294
57-62	Lanuetwan	20	See below
63-68	1d6 mythic nalfeshnees	20	<i>Mythic Adventures</i> 183
69-72	1d4 nightcrawlers	20	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 200
73-76	1d8 shemhazians	20	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 80
77-84	1 mythic marilith	21	<i>Mythic Adventures</i> 182
85-90	1 devastator	22	See page 90
91-93	1 fomorian titan	22	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 261
94-98	Mephuleza	22	See below
99-100	1d4 thanatotic titans	24	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 267

CORPSE LOTUS

Planted in soil fertilized with corpses, this giant, blood-red flower writhes with prickly vines.

CORPSE LOTUS**CR 13****XP 25,600**

N Huge plant

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +21**Aura** preserving mists (30 ft.)**DEFENSE****AC** 25, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+2 Dex, +15 natural, -2 size)**hp** 178 (17d8+102)**Fort** +16, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6**Defensive Abilities** all-around vision, **DR** 10/slashing;**Immune** plant traits; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10**OFFENSE****Speed** 0 ft.**Melee** 4 vines +20 (1d8+10 plus grab)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 25 ft.**Special Attacks** swallow whole (4d6 acid damage, AC 17, 17 hp)**STATISTICS****Str** 30, **Dex** 15, **Con** 23, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +24 (+26 bull rush); **CMD** 36 (38 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)**Feats** Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Vital Strike**Skills** Perception +21**SQ** camouflage, digest corpse, preserving mists**ECOLOGY****Environment** temperate forests or marshes**Organization** solitary**Treasure** incidental**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Camouflage (Ex) A corpse lotus can blend in exceptionally well with vegetated areas when not taking any actions. A creature must make a successful DC 20 Perception check to recognize a corpse lotus for what it is before the corpse lotus attacks the first time.

Digest Corpse (Su) A corpse lotus can consume a corpse to quickly heal damage it has taken. As a standard action, a corpse lotus can swallow any corpse (but not a skeleton) within reach to grant itself fast healing 5 for 1 minute. Any creature killed by a corpse lotus's swallow whole ability automatically triggers this ability. A corpse lotus must wait until 1 minute after its fast healing has ended before it can use this ability again.

Preserving Mists (Su) Corpse lotuses emanate a fine mist that spreads across the ground to a range of 30 feet. Any corpse within this area is affected as if by *gentle repose*.

Vines (Ex) A corpse lotus's vines are primary natural attacks with the grab ability. A corpse lotus doesn't gain the grappled condition when grappling enemies with its vines.

A corpse lotus begins life as a small flowering plant that blooms near carrion, but given enough time, it can grow into an incredibly large and dangerous monstrosity. This terrifying plant possesses grasping vines capable of pummeling opponents before dragging them toward its beaklike maw. Always found where prey or corpses are abundant, corpse lotuses have been known to grow in dungeons, ruins, and battlefields in addition to more typical wooded locales.

Every corpse lotus has a single bulbous flower in its center, similar in shape to a lotus flower. The blossom's dark petals are streaked with blood-red pigment, and hide an acidic maw in their center. Corpse lotuses in different regions tend to resemble the dominant plant species in the surrounding area (with the exception of its distinct petals), thus granting the plants natural camouflage and enabling them to hide among the foliage. Their vines are thick and convulse violently when grasping at potential prey. Corpse lotuses gain their name from the garden of dead bodies that frequently surrounds the plant—typically animals or humanoids that strayed too close to the lotus. At rest, a corpse lotus can reach 8 feet in height and splay its leaves nearly 15 feet around.

ECOLOGY

Despite being rooted in the ground, corpse lotuses are dangerous predators. While they derive sustenance from sunlight and water, their favored food is fresh meat, which provides enough nutrition for these plants to reach behemoth proportions. Any creature that wanders too near a corpse lotus risks being dragged in by the plant's vines toward its hungry center. The lotus's enormous, exotically patterned petals guard the flower's gaping maw, which is coated in a thick layer of acidic mucus to prevent prey from escaping. This mucus exudes a sweet, fruity aroma that attracts many kinds of animals toward the lotus.

While the corpses that gradually pile up around a corpse lotus would normally eventually block out the plant's sweet odor, corpse lotuses emit a fine, supernatural mist that rolls along the ground around them and preserves their slain bounty. The mist has no color or aroma, and indeed can go completely unnoticed without the aid of magical detection. The anti-aging properties of this mist magically halt the process of decay on the collected corpses, leaving them in much the same state in which they died. Botanists and scholars have attempted to harness the powers of a corpse lotus's preserving mist for restorative elixirs and life-prolonging potions, but the strange vapors have proven useful only for embalming those already deceased.

The preserved corpses surrounding a corpse lotus also help to attract carrion feeders such as vultures, owls, and

beetles to the hungry plant. Rather than decimating these flying scavengers, however, corpse lotuses have evolved to let aerial feeders pass, so that they may inadvertently consume corpse lotus seeds and redistribute them near and far. This is the corpse lotuses' primary means of reproduction. The fact that corpse lotuses of any kind—including the more mundane, miniature variety—can be used to pollinate corpse lotus seeds makes this form of reseeded particularly effective.

A corpse lotus's single, large flower sprouts from a tangled mess of vines and roots near the center of the plant. The flower's petals are surprisingly thick and resilient, guarding the plant both from the elements and from anything that may struggle to escape its grasp. Its vast root system extends for almost 50 feet into the soil, making the plant extremely difficult to uproot, but thankfully also ensuring that the plant is immobile, other than its vines. While most of the vines that sprout from a corpse lotus are harmless and are merely used to transmit information about the plant's surroundings to the center blossom, four larger, much stronger vines extend from the flower and allow the lotus to manipulate corpses, snatch prey, and defend from attacks. These fibrous vines are roughly 10 inches thick, 25 feet long, and incredibly difficult to sever.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Corpse lotuses can be found in forests, jungles, and marshes the world over, though they thrive in wooded areas that are heavily populated or at least close to humanoid settlements. A corpse lotus's seeds are carried in the preserving mist that seeps from the plant's base. These seeds cling to any creatures that venture too near a corpse lotus, and given enough time create a fine film around fallen prey. Practiced adventurers can recognize this film as a telltale sign of a nearby corpse lotus.

Depending on the amount of available meat nearby, a corpse lotus may never grow into the deadly goliath presented here; many remain small, unintelligent flowers. It is possible for a newly sprouted corpse lotus to reach its full maturity in a matter of months if it has access to an ample food supply. In less desirable situations, it can take up to 6 years for one to reach full size.

Upon reaching maturity, a corpse lotus develops a modicum of intelligence on par with clever beasts. This intelligence allows the lotus to distinguish carrion feeders from prey and to ration its food stores during

lean times. A corpse lotus deprived of meat may eventually dwindle back down to a mindless small flower. Corpse lotuses don't attack other plants, oozes, or constructs unless they are attacked first.

Corpse lotuses are not often hunted, but must occasionally be removed from heavily trafficked areas. In some cases, bold entrepreneurs or daring herbalists cultivate corpse lotuses as personal guardians or as symbols of strength. Particularly heinous cultivators may replant corpse lotuses in bare dungeon chambers, outfitting the chambers' ceilings with trapdoors that drop unsuspecting intruders straight onto these hungry plants.



Demon, Katpaskir

Four clawed arms sprout from this fiend's chest like the limbs of a buried insect struggling to crawl free. Overlapping iridescent plates of chitin cascade down the monster's back, shrouding four membranous dragonfly wings.

KATPASKIR**CR 18****XP 153,600**

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*; Perception +37**Aura** distance distortion (30 ft., DC 26)**DEFENSE****AC** 31, touch 15, flat-footed 26 (+5 Dex, +16 natural)**hp** 304 (21d10+189)**Fort** +16, **Ref** +17, **Will** +17

Defensive Abilities *freedom of movement*; **DR** 10/cold iron and lawful; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 29

OFFENSE**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)**Melee** 2 claws +31 (2d6+10/19–20), 4 talons +31 (1d8+10)**Special Attacks** breaching, mirror of the tainted rift**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +26)Constant—*freedom of movement*, see *invisibility*At will—*blink*, *dimension door*, *dimensional anchor*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *plane shift* (DC 23)3/day—*banishment* (DC 23), empowered *disintegrate* (DC 22), *maze*1/day—*gate*, *summon* (level 7, 1d4 fiendish army ant swarms 50%), *summon monster IX***STATISTICS****Str** 31, **Dex** 20, **Con** 28, **Int** 17, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 22**Base Atk** +21; **CMB** +31 (+35 sunder); **CMD** 46 (48 vs. sunder)

Feats Dimensional Agility, Dimensional Assault, Dimensional Dervish, Dimensional Maneuvers, Dimensional Savant, Empower Spell-Like Ability (*disintegrate*), Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack

Skills Bluff +30, Disable Device +29, Fly +29, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (planes) +31, Perception +37, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +27, Use Magic Device +30; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Knowledge (planes), +8 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common; telepathy 100 ft.**SQ** teleportation disruption, warp sense**ECOLOGY****Environment** any (Abyss)**Organization** solitary**Treasure** standard**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Breaching (Su) When a katpaskir calls or summons a demon or creature with the fiendish simple template into an area where the summoned creature's entry would be blocked

by a magical effect (such as *magic circle against evil*, *forbiddance*, or *dimensional lock*), it can force the caster or creator of the effect to attempt a caster level check against the katpaskir's spell resistance. On a failed check, the blocking effect is immediately and permanently negated.

Distance Distortion (Su) Reality bends and warps within 30 feet of a katpaskir. The demon moves and attacks normally through this distorted area, but other creatures within this area treat all distances as if they were double the actual distance for all purposes, including movement, range for spells, and ranged attacks. In addition, a creature that begins its turn within this aura must succeed at a DC 26 Will save or be slowed for 1 round (as the *slow* spell). *Freedom of movement* prevents the slow effect but not any of the other effects of the distance distortion aura. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mirror of the Tainted Rift (Su) When one or more creature with the celestial simple template is summoned as part of the spell or ability within 30 feet of a katpaskir, the katpaskir can, as an immediate action, summon an equal number of creatures of the same type with the fiendish simple template. If a good-aligned outsider is called or summoned within 30 feet of a katpaskir, it can duplicate the calling or summoning spell as an immediate action, calling or summoning one or more demons as if it had cast the same spell.

Teleportation Disruption (Su) When a creature uses a teleportation effect to enter or leave a space within 30 feet of a katpaskir, the caster must immediately attempt a caster level check (DC equal to the katpaskir's spell resistance). On a failed check, the teleportation effect is negated. If it chooses, the katpaskir can instead redirect the arrival location of the teleportation effect to any unoccupied space within 120 feet.

Warp Sense (Ex) A katpaskir can automatically sense disruptions in the planar fabric within 1 mile. The demon is immediately aware of any conjuration effect used within this area, and it also knows the direction and approximate distance. When a teleportation effect is used within 1 mile of a katpaskir (including arriving within this area from somewhere else), the demon can use *clairaudience/clairvoyance* as an immediate action centered on the point the teleportation effect originated from or the point the teleportation effect is directed at as long as the point is within 1 mile; if both points are within 1 mile, the katpaskir can use *clairaudience/clairvoyance* centered on both.

Katpaskirs are a pox and pestilence upon not just the world, but reality itself. Just as bugs burrow into unwatched crevices, katpaskirs pry their way into other realms and dimensions. They gnaw and scratch and grind away at the edges of the universe, the planar junctures where the folds of creation bend in upon themselves. They have

an uncanny sense for finding natural rifts, portals, and convergences, and they seek ever for ways to expand and untether these natural gates. By setting them loose to drift across the world, they unhinge the orderly substrate of the multiverse, casting all into primordial chaos as the planes unravel. Their voices are strange and echoing, like several voices sounding together, each distorted and cacophonous and rising and falling asynchronously in pitch and volume. When not actively engaged in a task, katpaskirs tend to stand perfectly still, with the exception of its insectlike limbs, which rhythmically stroke the air in front of them. When other creature come near—or if some teleporting creature triggers the demon's warp sense special ability—it snaps out of this self-imposed stasis, ready to attack. Katpaskirs are a little over 7 feet tall and weigh just less than 600 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Katpaskirs form in the Abyss from the souls of those apocalyptic preachers, doomsayers, and cult leaders who, not content to merely announce the end of days, took it upon themselves in life to bring a living hell to the realms where they resided. Some led suicide cults of dozens if not hundreds, while others organized ultraviolent gangs of nihilistic thugs, spouting cultured witticisms and philosophical sophistries while perpetrating the basest depravities. For them, the anarchic dissolution of society was only a harbinger of the very real disintegration of all that is.

These fiends are a natural fit for the armies of Deskari, and indeed, katpaskirs have been used by the Locust Lord for many eons as apocalyptic leaders and generals in his plane-spanning campaigns. Some of Deskari's most fervent and influential worshipers are known to have become katpaskirs in the afterlife, earning the powers of cataclysm and madness they so desperately sought while still mortal.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Except in unique circumstances that align with their goals, katpaskirs rarely interact with humanoid cultists of Deskari. In part, this is because their power makes them nigh uncontrollable even for the mightiest spellcaster, but also because these demons see little use in humanity and their ilk. To katpaskirs, mortals are part

of the reality that must be destroyed, not the implements of its destruction. They may make brief use of humanoid minions, but at their earliest opportunity they devour and destroy those seeking to serve them, unleashing a horde of fiendish terrors to finish their mission of ultimate destruction. Crazy cultists of Deskari and powerful members of the Blackfire Adepts sometimes call upon katpaskirs to help the group create new portals to Deskari's Rasping Rifts or tear rifts between worlds, but such humanoids know that such a summoning ensures their own final reckoning as well.

Katpaskirs are drawn to newly opened rifts and thin places between the planes. Upon reaching such areas, a katpaskir may either attempt to accelerate the opening of the rift or wait for whatever creatures come through once it opens.





Demon Lord, Deskari

Larger than an elephant, this towering insectile nightmare wields a scythe made of bone. Its wings are swarms of biting flies, and its inhuman eyes glitter with cruel intelligence.

DESKARI

CR 29



XP 6,553,600

CE Gargantuan outsider (chaotic, demon, earth, evil, extraplanar)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*, *detect law*, swarmsight, *true seeing*; Perception +54**Aura** frightful presence (180 ft., DC 36), *unholy aura* (DC 28)

DEFENSE

AC 47, touch 32, flat-footed 37 (+4 deflection, +10 Dex, +15 natural, +12 profane, -4 size)**hp** 742 (33d10+561); regeneration 30 (epic and good or deific)**Fort** +31, **Ref** +32, **Will** +32**Defensive Abilities** Abyssal resurrection, all-around vision, *freedom of movement*, rasping armor; **DR** 20/cold iron, epic, and good; **Immune** ability damage and drain, charm and compulsion effects, death effects, electricity, energy drain, petrification, poison; **Resist** acid 30, cold 30, fire 30; **SR** 40

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., climb 60 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)**Melee** *Riftcarver* +51/+46/+41/+36 (4d6+30/19-20/x4 plus poison), bite +41 (2d8+8 plus poison), sting +41 (2d6+8 plus poison)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.**Special Attacks** breath weapon, enhanced venom, infestation, poison, swarm master**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 29th; concentration +39)Constant—*detect good*, *detect law*, *freedom of movement*, *true seeing*, *unholy aura* (DC 28)At will—*astral projection*, *blasphemy* (DC 27), *control winds*, *desecrate*, *greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport*, *hungry pit*^{APG} (DC 25), *insect plague*, *shapechange*, *telekinesis* (DC 25), *unhallow*, *unholy blight* (DC 24)3/day—*control weather*, *creeping doom*, *reverse gravity*, *summon demons*, *symbol of weakness* (DC 27)1/day—*imprisonment* (DC 29), *earthquake*, *time stop*

STATISTICS

Str 44, **Dex** 30, **Con** 42, **Int** 29, **Wis** 31, **Cha** 31**Base Atk** +33; **CMB** +54 (+56 bull rush, +58 sunder); **CMD** 92 (94 vs. bull rush, 94 vs. sunder, 100 vs. trip)**Feats** Awesome Blow, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Critical Focus, Flyby Attack, Greater Sunder, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (scythe), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Toughness**Skills** Acrobatics +46 (+58 when jumping), Bluff +46, Climb +74, Disable Device +46, Fly +44, Intimidate +43, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, engineering, planes) +42, Perception +54, Sense Motive +46, Spellcraft +45, Stealth +34, Use Magic Device +46; **Racial Modifiers** +16 Climb, +8 Perception**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Terran, Undercommon; telepathy 300 ft.**SQ** wall crawler

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)**Organization** solitary (unique)**Treasure** triple (*Riftcarver*, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds as a swift action, Deskari can spit out a line of noxious black slime in a 120-foot line that creates a 20-foot-radius-spread puddle of the stuff on the ground where the line terminates. Any creature caught in this area of effect takes 20d10 points of acid damage and is subject to the effects of Deskari's poison. A successful DC 42 Reflex save halves the damage, but does not mitigate the poison's effects. The line and puddle created by this attack remain as active acid on the ground for 1d4 rounds, affecting any creatures that move through an affected area. Damage caused by this breath weapon does not persist into additional rounds, but on the round a creature takes this damage, it is considered to be taking continuous damage for the purposes of spellcasting and concentration checks. The save DC is Constitution-based.**Enhanced Venom (Su)** Any poisons created by Deskari (or even those used by him) become enhanced, and can affect creatures normally immune to poison. If an affected creature is mythic and is normally immune to poison, it instead receives a +4 bonus on its saving throw against Deskari's poison effects.**Infestation (Su)** Whenever a creature becomes poisoned by Deskari, it also becomes infested with thousands of microscopic demonic eggs that quickly multiply and spread throughout the victim's bloodstream and flesh alike. Once infested, a creature remains infested even after the poison's effects end or are cured. A creature that has been infested by Deskari is recognized by all mindless swarms as a host, and such swarms never deal damage to the creature unless influenced and compelled to do so by an outside influence. An infested creature takes a -4 penalty on all saving throws made against Deskari's attacks or spells cast by his clerics. As a swift action, Deskari may command a creature's infestation to accelerate; this deals 20d6 points of damage and stuns the target for 1 round (a successful DC 42 Fortitude save halves the damage and negates the stun effect) as the eggs hatch and a fiendish locust swarm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 183) bursts out of the creature's body (ending the infestation). Infestation is a disease effect, and the save DC is Constitution-based.**Poison (Ex)** Bite, breath weapon, sting, or *Riftcarver*—injury; *save* Fort DC 42; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Constitution drain plus infestation; *cure* 3 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.**Rasping Armor (Su)** The armor plates that protect Deskari's body rasp together whenever he is damaged by a physical attack, creating a discordant shrieking and grinding sound. Every time a

creature strikes Deskari with an attack that deals bludgeoning, force, piercing, or slashing damage, all creatures within 10 feet of Deskari must succeed at a DC 42 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6 rounds. A sickened creature that fails this save becomes staggered for 1 round. A staggered creature that fails this save becomes nauseated for 1 round. Finally, a nauseated creature that fails this save becomes stunned for 1d6 rounds. This is a mind-affecting sonic effect that does not affect demons. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Swarm Master (Su) Deskari is immune to swarm damage and other swarm effects (such as distraction). As a swift action, he can direct the movement of any swarm within 30 feet. An intelligent swarm can resist this compulsion by succeeding at a DC 36 Will save. Any swarm created by or conjured by Deskari deals +3d6 points of swarm damage, and the damage caused by such a swarm is treated as chaotic, epic, and evil for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Swarmsight (Su) Deskari can see through the eyes of any swarm he commands or controls, including the swarm of biting flies that makes up his wings (this swarm, incidentally, grants him all-around vision).

Wall Crawler (Su) Deskari can climb any vertical surface with ease and never has to attempt Climb checks to avoid falling as a result of taking damage. This grants him a +16 racial bonus on Climb checks.

Known as the Lord of the Locust Host and the Usher of the Apocalypse, Deskari has long plagued the region of Sarkoris, ever since he discovered a strange thinness between that nation and his own Abyssal realm. His first attempt to capitalize upon this strange feature ended with his defeat at Aroden's hands, but after the god's death at the outset of the Age of Lost Omens, Deskari and his cult wasted no time in opening the Worldwound to allow the demon lord's plans for Golarion to continue.

Deskari carved his realm from the raw matter of the Abyss using a great scythe called *Riftcarver* (see page 63), a weapon he crafted from the remains of the strange creature his father, Pazuzu, mated with tens of thousands of years ago. Today, Pazuzu and Deskari have what passes as a cordial relationship—the two demon lords do not work together, but neither do they oppose each other's goals on the Material Plane and beyond.

DESKARI'S CULT

Deskari is worshiped primarily by the denizens of the Worldwound on Golarion—by tieflings, fallen crusaders, demons, half-fiends, and all manner of other vile creatures that dwell within that devastated land.

Deskari's symbol is a pair of crossed locust wings dripping with blood. His favored weapon is the scythe, in honor of his devastating weapon of choice, *Riftcarver*, but his worshipers sometimes prefer to use smaller weapons, especially when they must move unnoticed among enemies. Deskari grants access to the domains of Chaos, Destruction, Evil, and War, and to the subdomains of Blood, Catastrophe, Demons, and Tactics.



Devastator

Steel wings like two tower-sized razor blades arc from this mechanized horror's back. Each of its four monstrous limbs ends in an implement of brutality. Its smoldering aura scorches the air, sizzling and crackling with impossible energies that defy reality.

DEVASTATOR

CR 22/MR 8



XP 614,400

CE Gargantuan construct (extraplanar, mythic^{MA})**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +34**Aura** corruption (60 ft.), *unholy aura* (DC 24)**DEFENSE****AC** 44, touch 20, flat-footed 38 (+4 deflection, +6 Dex, +24 natural, +4 profane, -4 size)**hp** 365 (30d10+200)**Fort** +14, **Ref** +20, **Will** +18**Defensive Abilities** absorb good magic, unchanging; **DR** 15/ adamantine and epic; **Immune** acid, cold, construct traits, electricity, fire; **SR** 33**OFFENSE****Speed** 50 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)**Melee** 4 blasphemous weapons +45 (2d8+18/19-20), 2 wings +40 (2d6+11/19-20 plus bleed)**Space** 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.**Special Attacks** bleed (2d6), destroyer, display of Strength, farwalker (2), mythic power (10/day, surge +1d10), rend (2 blasphemous weapons, 2d8+27)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +26)Constant—*unholy aura* (DC 24)At will—*blade barrier*, *dimensional anchor*3/day—*blasphemy* (DC 23), *plane shift*1/day—*destruction* (DC 23), *earthquake*, *implosion* (DC 25)**STATISTICS****Str** 37, **Dex** 23, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 22**Base Atk** +30; **CMB** +47 (+49 bull rush); **CMD** 71 (73 vs. bull rush)**Feats** Awesome Blow, Blind-FightTM, Cleave, Combat Reflexes^M, Critical Focus^M, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (blasphemous weapon), Improved Critical (wing), Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Toughness^M, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (blasphemous weapon), Weapon Focus (wing)**Skills** Acrobatics +21, Climb +28, Fly +18, Intimidate +36, Knowledge (planes) +17, Perception +34**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial**SQ** always a chance, extra mythic power, mythic sight (2)**ECOLOGY****Environment** any (Abyss)**Organization** solitary, pair, or catastrophe (3-13)**Treasure** standard**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Absorb Good Magic (Su)** The twisted angelic essence held prisoner inside each devastator allows these terrifying war machines to harness the energies most commonly employed by their natural enemies. Whenever a creature targets a

devastator with a spell with the good descriptor, the caster must make a successful DC 30 caster level check or the spell is absorbed by the devastator and has no effect. If the devastator is in the area of effect of such a spell and the caster level check fails, the devastator absorbs the entire spell and leaves all other targets unaffected. A devastator gains 5 temporary hit points for every spell level of the spell absorbed. These temporary hit points disappear after 1 hour.

Aura of Corruption (Su) A devastator emanates an aura that bolsters chaotic evil outsiders. Any such creature with 15 or more Hit Dice within 60 feet of a devastator gains a +10 enhancement bonus to Strength and Charisma. In addition, the creature's spell resistance increases by 5. If such a creature doesn't already possess spell resistance, it gains spell resistance equal to 11 + its CR.**Blasphemous Weapons (Ex)** Each of a devastator's wicked weapons and its razor-sharp wings are treated as +5 *unholy* weapons that deal bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage and count as chaotic and evil for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Terrifying, cruel machines forged from Abyssal steel, devastators are central figures in any demonic host's world-razing armies. These skyscraping metal goliaths are capable of driving the mad throngs of demons surrounding them to unthinkable feats of savagery and decimating even the mightiest of angelic choruses. In an unholy act of supreme irony, devastators derive their power from the souls of those goodly outsiders who fall in their attacks against the Abyss, and the war machines are capable of transforming virtue and piety into corrupt energy that fuels their fury. Few have witnessed these massive engines of unfettered chaos and destruction and lived to speak of the experience, but those few who have gazed into the maw of one of these metal monstrosities are forever changed.

These towering abominations hold a special place in the nightmares of holy champions and pure-hearted priests. Faith and the divine favors crusaders rely upon in order to squint into the evil gaze of demonkind affords them nothing against a devastator, which is capable of absorbing such divine energies for its own perverted use. Devastators stand 40 feet tall and weigh upwards of 40 tons.

ECOLOGY

Said to be one of the demon lord Haagenti's vile creations, devastators were built to serve as guardians and war machines for Abyssal hordes. Such a construction is no mere tower of metal, however, since the final step in the creation of a devastator calls for the battered body of an angel (or other powerful good outsider) whose spirit has been shattered and utterly corrupted. Such a fallen angel is kept on the brink of death as it is lashed to the devastator's dread frame, and when the engine is finally activated, any semblance

of righteousness is forever drained from the defeated celestial's screaming spirit. In this way, a devastator's body acts as both a war machine and a brutal cage.

A devastator is painstakingly crafted by hundreds of miserable fiendish dretches, and is wrought of strange metals and materials found in only the deepest, darkest realms of the Abyss. The angelic soul that fuels the construct is the inheritor of an existence of impotent rage, anguish, and humiliation. Some reports claim that the innards of a devastator are more murderous and gnashing than its fearsome exterior, and the unholy ministrations carried out from within the machine defy any mortal definition of torture. The ultimate fate of the twisted angel caged within remains a mystery. Some scholars suppose the angel must surrender to some sort of respite in death. Others whisper fearfully of the unquiet essence that might rise from the broken cage of a devastator—an avenging angel that is filled with dire hatred for the world and that stalks the souls it once swore to protect.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

These sinister machines of pure destruction are all imbued with the corrupted life essence of at least one angel—now twisted into a demented thing filled with the unwholesome urge to sow ruin and agony among its former brethren. Devastators are most often deployed as the guardians of important causeways between the Abyss and invaded territory on other worlds, but occasionally they are assigned to act as the bodyguards or favored toys of particularly powerful demon lords who enjoy having these smoldering monstrosities around in case of a holy raid on their stronghold.

When a new Abyssal incursion is launched against a virgin world, a devastator usually leads the advance force, wreaking untold havoc and redefining destruction for the uninitiated civilizations it touches. Three devastators patrol the Worldwound, hunting parties of crusaders and any other strike forces that might seek to seal off this rift to the Abyss. Each of the three is unique in its appearance

and armaments. Those few crusaders who have survived encounters with the devastators have invented nicknames to better identify them and share intelligence on how to combat or avoid them. The Grinning Grinder is the most active and infamous at present, but some (clerics especially) fear Faith-Breaker more. The third—Fury Engine—terrified crusaders for many years, but it is rumored that the crimson devastator was destroyed in a suicidal assault by a chorus of angels some 30 years ago. Some, however, claim Fury Engine's fate is more involved, whispering that the angels captured the devastator and then secreted the construct to a remote location on some deserted, lonely plane of existence. There, the angels toil tirelessly in hopes of saving the tormented soul of a powerful planetary trapped within the devastator's hellish interior.



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By *Jim Groves*

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WATI, THE HALF-CITY

By *Crystal Frasier*

Dig in to the half-city of Wati! A massive necropolis fills part of the city, drawing a line between the living and the dead. Explore the deadly history of this city at the confluence of the Asp and Crook Rivers, the lifeblood of Osirion. Find out more about the denizens and dangers inhabiting a city devoted to honoring the dead in this double-sized gazetteer.

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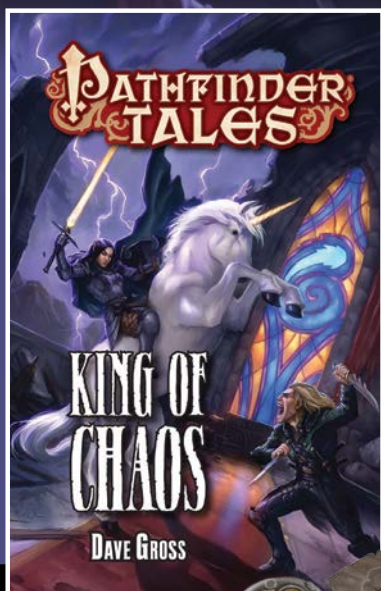
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W&P 13



Khorramzadeh
Demonic Ruler of Iz

Khorramzadeh hopes that his final minions cannot fail, but stands ready to take matters into his own hands. If the PCs survive this adventure, chances are good they defeat the balor lord twice—the second time as an undead, mythic nightwalker risen from his remains.



Areelu vorlesh
Architect of the Worldwound

Unless the PCs think to capture her soul, Areelu undergoes that rarest of transformations upon her death—her soul retains its memories and knowledge as she becomes a powerful and unique nascent demon lord who, given time, will surely rise in power to menace Golarion once again.

Nurah Dendiwhar
Deceitful Worldwound Historian

If Nurah has survived and has been redeemed, she volunteers to accompany the PCs in their final mission. If she remains villainous, she can be encountered in the Soul Foundry, working as one of the Filleted Man's minions. In either event, she's now a 17th-level bard.



Staunton vhane
Traitorous Warden of Drezon

If Staunton has come back as a graveknight in your game, he should be encountered again in Aponavicius's lair, serving as the marilith's deadly bodyguard. In addition to having gained the graveknight template, he is now an antipaladin 15/champion 4.



Xanthir vang
Master of the Blackfire Adepts

If Xanthir Vang still survives, he's now a conjurer 8/blackfire adept 10/archmage 6. He is now located in Threshold, where he serves as the leader of the raspers, locust-bodied worms that walk. He can be encountered anywhere in the adventure where raspers are located.

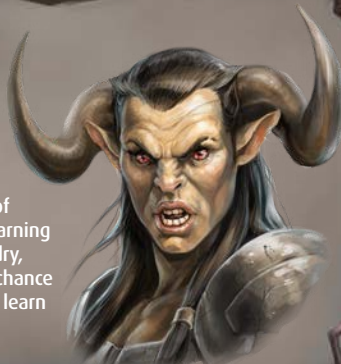


Minagho
Vengeful Agent of Baphomet

If Minagho survived the previous adventure only to be first imprisoned by Baphomet and then rescued by the PCs, she remains their allies only until she sees a chance to betray them in a final attempt to curry favor with both Areelu Vorlesh and the demon lord Deskari.

Hepzamirah
Daughter of Baphomet

Hepzamirah remains dead because of her father's actions, but at your discretion, her soul might be found in one of the soul gems in the Yearning House or the Soul Foundry, giving the PCs one last chance to interact with her and learn any of her final secrets.



Deskari
Lord of the Locust Host

Deskari spends the bulk of this adventure in the heart of his Abyssal realm, the Rasping Rifts, focusing Abyssal energies on expanding the Worldwound. Only if the PCs manage to end this ritual does he seek them out and attack them, hoping for vengeance!



The Last Crusade!

The heroes of the Fifth Crusade have risen to undreamed of heights of power and have dealt blow after blow to the demonic armies of the Worldwound. As they return from their last foray into the Abyss, however, they find that their enemies are no longer just sending minions after them—now they’ve drawn the attention not only of the leaders of the Worldwound, but even of their demonic patron, Deskari, Lord of the Locust Host. Permanently closing the Worldwound is within the heroes’ grasp, but in order to achieve their goal, they must venture where no crusader has ever returned from intact: the crumbling City of Locusts. There, they must defeat its powerful demonic ruler—yet even this is just a stepping stone to the final battle against Deskari himself!

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path concludes the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path and includes:

- “City of Locusts,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 18th-level characters with 9 mythic tiers, by Richard Pett.
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- A look into the cults of Deskari, Lord of the Locust Host, and their desire to bring on the apocalypse, by Sean K Reynolds.
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