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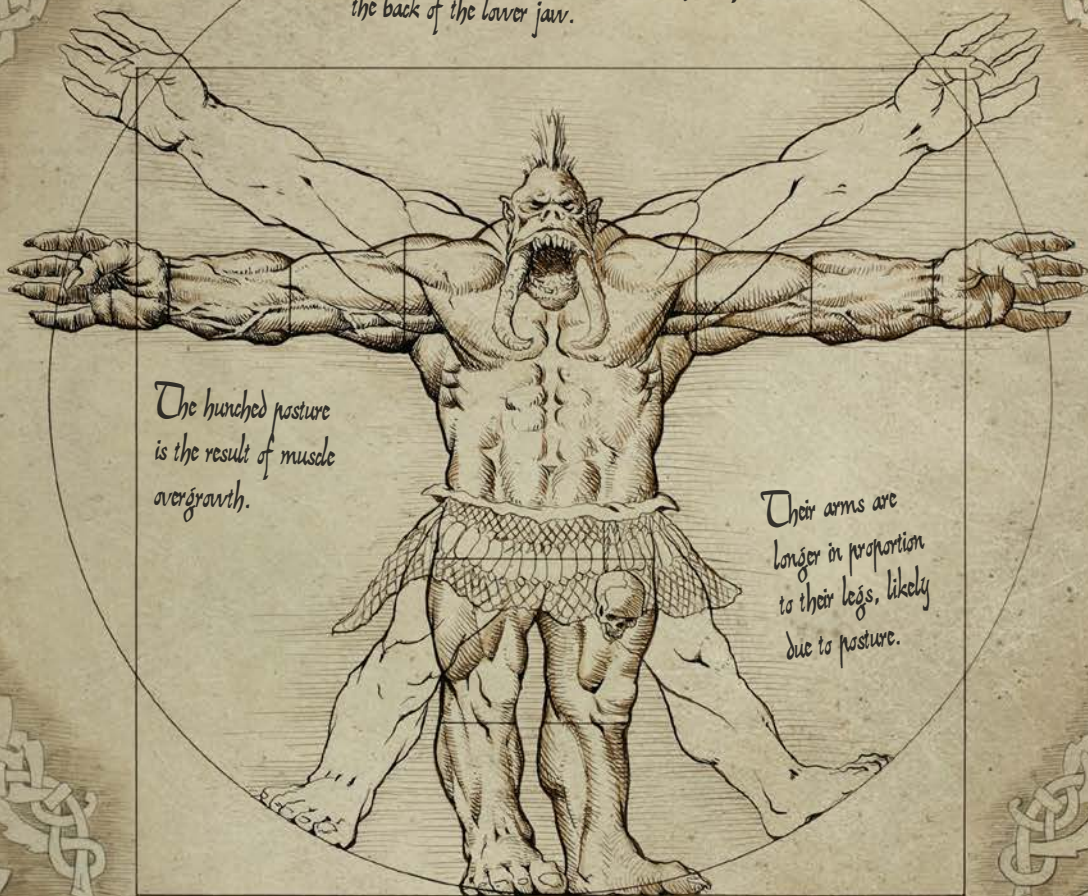
GIANTSLAYER[™]

BATTLE OF BLOODMARCH HILL

by Patrick Renie



Cave giants have elongated tusks that grow from the back of the lower jaw.



The hunched posture is the result of muscle overgrowth.

Their arms are longer in proportion to their legs, likely due to posture.

2014
CERAN



Cave Giants


These brutal, bestial giants are found anywhere that cave mouths open to the surface of Golarion. It is assumed that cave giants are related to both ogres and orcs, combining the tusks and underground habitat of orcs with the brute strength and dim wit of ogres. Conditioned to stooping through caves and underground passages, cave giants rarely stand fully upright, and it pains them to do so for too long.



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ADVENTURE PATH  PART 1 OF 6

**BATTLE OF
BLOODMARCH HILL**

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FIRST ADVENTURES

My first roleplaying game experience was in 7th grade, in a dimly lit, unfinished basement on a cloudy spring day. Matt, the TA from my Humanities class, was the GM. I'd already made half a dozen different characters because I liked rolling the dice so much, but I finally settled on a particularly dashing young male character with brown hair, pale skin, and hazel eyes. I may as well have named him Patrick "Mary Sue" Renie for all our physical similarities and his idealized personality traits. For while I was a bumbling 12-year-old kid who'd managed to scrounge together just enough friends to play a tabletop roleplaying game on a Saturday afternoon, Mary Sue Renie wasn't just socially adept—he was a *paladin*. To 7th-grade me, playing a paladin was akin to playing the star quarterback of the party, and I was stoked to have such clout, even if it was entirely in my head.

I don't remember the names of locations or characters—or even the plot of the adventure, honestly—but I do remember our first encounter, which stands out in my mind to this day. The party, led by my intrepid Mary Sue paladin, was traveling the countryside when we stumbled upon a gruesome sight: an upturned wagon, its horses gone and its passengers murdered in what appeared to be a grisly highway robbery.

"A gentle breeze blows across the tall grass on the side of the road," Matt narrated. "You're still about half a day's journey from town. What do you do?"

Finally. The moment I'd been waiting for: the moment when the GM speaks those sacred four words that make a gamer's hairs stand on end.

"I loot the bodies," I said.

Matt looked at me, then his notes. He took a breath.

"Alllll riiiiight..." he said slowly.

“What do I find?” I asked.

“You don’t find anything. Whoever killed these travelers already looted their bodies and the wagon.”

“I don’t find anything? They’ve got to have something on them. Are they still wearing their shoes?”

“Shoes? I mean, I guess so. Yeah, they’re wearing shoes.”

“Sweet. I take their shoes. If there’s nothing else, I say we head out.”

(The rest of the party stared, speechless, as their star quarterback pilfered footwear from commoners’ bodies.)

“Are you sure? Do you want to inspect the bodies? Look for tracks?” Matt asked.

“No, not really. Let’s head toward town.”

Shortly thereafter, Matt revealed that the gods were pretty pissed at their paladin. After he’d witnessed my character’s indiscretion in the face of an otherwise tragic scene, my character’s deity revoked his divine powers, and he could no longer lay on hands.

“What the heck?!” I cried. “What kind of paladin can’t lay on hands?”

“This kind, apparently,” Matt said.

It was like the coach taking the star quarterback off the field after a single play.

The rest of the day is a Mountain Dew–induced blur. I can, however, safely say that that was the day I fell in love with roleplaying games. It’s been a weird relationship, and it still generally ends up with me losing some of my powers and/or stealing peoples’ shoes, but at the end of the day, there’s no other way I’d have it.

As for my paladin, well... Let’s just say I prefer to play chaotic neutral fighters nowadays.

RUMORS AROUND TRUNAU

The PCs may hear any of the following rumors during their investigation in Part 1 of the adventure. These tidbits of local lore can help point them to leads if they get stumped or inspire them to visit key adventure locations.

d8 Rumor


- 1 “Someone went and bought up all the shovels in town. I guess they figured no one else needed to dig a well or plant a garden.” (True—Skreed’s half-orcs bought the shovels for their failed excavation in the Plague House.)
- 2 “When he found Rodrik’s body, Patrol Sergeant Omast Frum fell off the wagon—hard. I don’t know what kind of guilt is weighing the sergeant down so much, but he’s been drinking and talking to himself nonstop. The only meaningful work Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath could find for the poor drunk is cleaning up the vandalism that’s been drawn all over town.” (True; see **Lead #3**.)
- 3 “Most of us townsfolk live with our families or close friends, so you can imagine it can be hard to get some alone time. I guess I can see why so many youngsters

ON THE COVER

The PCs might feel they’re a bit too inexperienced to face giants this early in their adventuring careers, but the orcs of the Twisted Nail don’t share their concerns. For their raid on Trunau, the orcs have brought along their favorite “war machine,” the cave giant Crusher, who appears on this month’s cover. If the PCs are lucky, Crusher might be weakened by the time they confront him, but rest assured, he’s just the first of many more giants to come over the course of the Giantslayer Adventure Path!

sneak off to the Plague House after dark, but I still don’t condone it.” (True, though this has nothing to do with what’s happening at the Plague House; see **Lead #7**.)

- 4 “Don’t they say, ‘The villain always returns to the scene of the crime?’ Well, even if they don’t, I sure won’t be staying at the Ramblehouse anytime soon—not until that innkeeper Cham Larringfass takes a closer look at who she rents rooms to, at least.” (False—Skreed has no intention of returning to the Ramblehouse.)
- 5 “Rodrik always had a soft spot for half-orcs—anyone who’s read *The Other Side of Contempt* could tell you that. But I never would have guessed that he and that Brinya Kelper character were together. I wonder what she knows about Rodrik’s friendship with that invalid in the sanctuary, Katrezra?” (True; see **Lead #2**.)
- 6 “Have you heard about Meriman’s son, Othdan? He supposedly went out to visit a friend at a farm not far south of here several days ago, but no one’s seen him since.” (True; see area **H14**.)
- 7 “White swords? The biggest white sword around here is the one on the steeple of the Sanctuary. It used to be on the old burned church outside town. Some say it’s a miracle it wasn’t destroyed back when the orcs torched the place long ago.” (True; see **Lead #4**.)
- 8 “Sara Morninghawk makes pretty much all the hopeknives in Trunau, and there’s no better smith in town. She and her apprentices can personalize any blade to order, from engraved blades to gem-studded hilts. There were some raised eyebrows when she married that dwarf, Agrit Staginsdar, but I wasn’t too surprised—Sara’s always been one to take in the weird ones.” (True—this hints at Sara offering shelter to Katrezra; see **Lead #6**.)



Patrick Renie
Pathfinder Adventure Path Author

GIANTSLAYER™



BATTLE OF BLOODMARCH HILL

PART 1: MYSTERIES IN TRUNAU

PAGE 8

The heroes are asked to investigate whether an apparent suicide in the town of Trunau was actually a murder, only to discover the threads of a larger conspiracy that could threaten the town's very existence.

PART 2: TRUNAU UNDER SIEGE

PAGE 33

When Trunau comes under attack, the heroes must help defend the town from savage orcs by lighting beacons, rescuing townsfolk, and disabling orc siege engines. Their efforts culminate in a battle against the orcs' cave giant ally.

PART 3: TOMB OF THE HILL GIANT HERO

PAGE 51

The orcs' attack on Trunau reveals the existence of a previously unknown crypt beneath the town. In the aftermath of the raid, the heroes enter the tomb of an ancient giant champion to hunt down the mastermind behind the attack.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Battle of Bloodmarch Hill" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

- 1 The PCs begin this adventure at 1st level.
- 2 The PCs should be 2nd level by the time they start exploring the Plague House basement.
- 3 The PCs should be 3rd level by the time they face the waves of attacking orcs at the western gate barricades.

The PCs should be 4th level by the end of the adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The border separating the orc hordes of Belkzen and the human crusaders of Lastwall has been a contentious one for as long as the two nations have existed. Even after the defeat of the Whispering Tyrant in 3827 AR, the orcs of Belkzen continued to grow stronger and more ambitious, repeatedly overrunning the defensive lines Lastwall erected along its borders. The Hold of Belkzen gradually expanded southward—first to the Sunwall, then to Harchist's Blockade, and finally to the Hordeline.

During Belkzen's campaign to breach the Sunwall in the forty-third century AR, the Twisted Nail orc tribe counted the hill giants of the Heart Eater tribe among its strongest allies.

The alliance was an unusual one in that the hill giants' self-styled Hero Chieftain Uskroth commanded the obedience of both orcs and giants. The Twisted Hearts, as the combined tribes came to be known, were a force to be reckoned with, and Uskroth led the army to victory after victory against Lastwall, even claiming territory south of the Kestrel River while other Belkzen orcs were halted at the River Esk. Uskroth's ambitions proved too great, however; without the backing of other orc tribes or giant reinforcements from the north, the Twisted Hearts were unable to hold the territory they had conquered, and they were eventually overwhelmed by Lastwall's crusaders.

The final battle between the Twisted Hearts and the humans took place on Bloodmarch Hill, where Hero Chieftain Uskroth finally fell with 23 spears and swords planted firmly in his flesh. The few surviving Twisted Hearts managed to temporarily drive the humans back south, but both the orcs and hill giants knew their campaign was over without their mighty leader. Before the Twisted Hearts retreated north, they laid Uskroth to rest in a tomb beneath Bloodmarch Hill, burying the giant hero with his favorite weapon, a stone warhammer named *Agrimmosh*, which Uskroth had claimed was the hammer of Minderhal himself. The subterranean crypt was carefully hidden so that in the future, when Belkzen pushed Lastwall back again, the orcs and giants could reclaim the treasures within and the glory of Hero Chieftain Uskroth.

In the centuries since the Twisted Hearts fell to Lastwall and the Knights of Ozem, the armies of Belkzen have continued to strain against the human territories on all sides. Orc memories are short, and few among the Twisted Nail tribe remember their ancestors' alliance with the Heart Eater hill giants or the existence of the tomb of Hero Chieftain Uskroth. Now, the human town of Trunau sits atop Bloodmarch Hill, inhabited by the descendants of those who refused to flee when the orcs overwhelmed

the Hordeline in 4517 AR. The hardy folk of Trunau have stubbornly resisted the orcs for centuries, unaware that Uskroth's tomb lies beneath their feet.

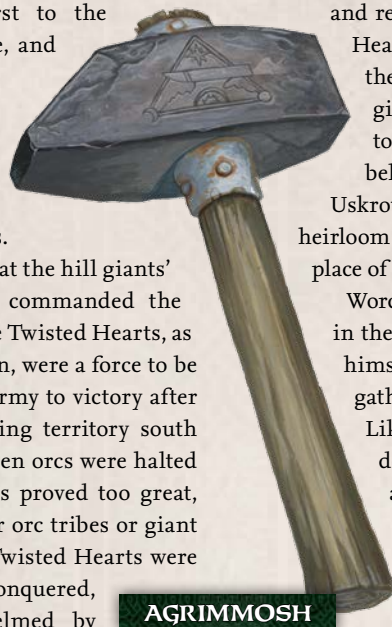
Hill giant memories are even shorter than those of orcs, but a recent discovery by a Heart Eater hill giant chieftain named Grenseldek has driven her to once again ally her tribe with the orcs of the Twisted Nail. A distant descendant of Uskroth, Grenseldek ostensibly seeks to destroy Trunau and reestablish the glory of the legendary Twisted Hearts. In truth, Grenseldek has little interest in the humans or reuniting the orcs and the hill giants. Her true objective is finding Uskroth's tomb and obtaining the great treasures she believes are hidden there—including both Uskroth's fabled hammer, *Agrimmosh*, and a family heirloom that supposedly serves as a map to the resting place of a famed giantslayer, Nargrym Steelhand.

Word has reached Grenseldek that far to the south in the Mindspin Mountains, a storm giant calling himself Volstus the Storm Tyrant has begun gathering an army of giants under his banner. Like Tar-Baphon before him, Volstus plans to dominate the orc hordes of Belkzen, then lead a combined army of giants and orcs against the nations of western Avistan. Grenseldek's cunning plan is to offer her hand in marriage to the Storm Tyrant, presenting the treasures recovered from the tombs of both Uskroth and Nargrym Steelhand as

her dowry. In Grenseldek's mind, these riches should be more than sufficient to secure Volstus's affections. He will make Grenseldek his queen, and she will surpass even the legendary deeds of her ancestor Uskroth.

Grenseldek has constructed her scheme carefully, knowing that she will likely have only one chance to plunder Uskroth's tomb beneath the noses of the humans of Trunau. Unwilling to risk the giants of her tribe, Grenseldek has sent a team of half-orcs led by a canny and ruthless alchemist named Skreed Gorewillow to infiltrate the town and find Uskroth's tomb, as well as weaken Trunau's defenses. When these agents locate the entrance to the tomb, Grenseldek plans to send a band of orcs to attack Trunau and plunder the crypt. As long as Grenseldek gets the contents of Uskroth's tomb, the orcs may keep whatever else they pillage.

So far, Skreed and his half-orc agents have managed to enter Trunau and begin the search for the entrance to Uskroth's tomb, but a patrol captain of Trunau's militia named Rodrik Grath has caught wind of the danger and begun an investigation. As Rodrik gets closer to unraveling the saboteurs' aims, Skreed decides to remove the threat—a catalyst that may cause Grenseldek's plans to crumble completely.



AGRIMMOSH

PART 1: MYSTERIES IN TRUNAU

This adventure takes place in the town of Trunau in the Hold of Belkzen, one of only a few human settlements in the otherwise orc-dominated land. The player characters should all be residents of Trunau or recent arrivals to the small town. The information and campaign traits in the *Giantslayer Player's Guide* can be useful for generating backgrounds and thematically appropriate characters.

Trunau is fully detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Towns of the Inner Sea*, including additional rumors, location details, and NPCs—all particularly useful if you want to immerse the PCs in the history and traditions of the community. A complete, spoiler-free gazetteer and a brief primer on Trunau can be found in the *Giantslayer Player's Guide* (a free download available on paizo.com). *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Belkzen, Hold of the Orc Hordes* also goes into detail about the history and dangers of the orc-dominated lands surrounding Trunau. Although you can easily run “Battle of Bloodmarch Hill” using only the details presented in this adventure, these additional sources provide a wealth of information to help make the town come alive.

TRUNAU

LN small town

Corruption +0; **Crime** -1; **Economy** +0; **Law** +0; **Lore** -1;
Society +4

Qualities insular, racially intolerant (orcs)

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council (Council of Defenders)

Population 780 (620 humans, 50 halflings, 40 half-orcs, 20 dwarves, 15 half-elves, 10 gnomes, 25 other)

Notable NPCs

Chief Defender Halgra of the Blackened Blades (CG female old human ranger 3/barbarian 5)

Councilor Agrit Staginsdar (LN female dwarf wizard 5/fighter 1)

Councilor and Banker Lessie Crumkin (LN female human cleric of Abadar 4)

Councilor Sara Morninghawk (NG female half-orc barbarian 3/expert 3)

High Priestess Tyari Varvatos (LG female human cleric of Iomedae 6)

Master of Stores Kessen Plumb (NG male human expert 3)

Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath (LN male human ranger 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 1,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 5,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th

Minor Items +1 heavy steel shield, +1 light crossbow, cowardly crouching cloak^{UE}, oil of shillelagh, ring of spell knowledge^{IUE}, scroll of divine power, scroll of magic weapon, wand of magic missile; **Medium Items** +2 greatsword, potion of resist energy (fire); **Major Items** —

TRUNAU AT A GLANCE

The following locations in Trunau appear in the adventure. For more detailed information on these and other locations in the town, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Towns of the Inner Sea* or the *Giantslayer Player's Guide*.

A. Commons: This open-air amphitheater lies in the center of town, and has a stone floor and raised stage at its southwest end. The Commons hosts militia training, school lessons, important ceremonies, and other festivities.

B. Ramblehouse: Many of Trunau's halfling residents live in the Ramblehouse, a boardinghouse that is also the town's sole inn.

C. Longhouse: Trunau's largest building, the Longhouse contains a huge common room for meetings, barracks for the town's unmarried militia members, storerooms, and the town's emergency food supply, the *siegestone*. In addition, Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath and his two sons, Rodrik and Kurst, normally reside within the Longhouse.

D. Brinya Kelper's Lodgings: This boardinghouse provides lodging for several of Trunau's residents who don't possess property of their own in town, including the half-orc weaver Brinya Kelper.

E. South Tower: This tower forms the southern anchor for the first of Trunau's inner walls, which separate the plateau holding inner Trunau from the main gate at ground level. During the investigation, Patrol Sergeant Omast Frum can be found here attempting to remove the graffiti that mars the tower's walls. Orc artillery makes quick work of this tower in Part 2 of this adventure.

F. Sanctuary: When Trunau's old church of Iomedae—now known as the Plague House (area H)—was burned by marauding orcs, Iomedean missionaries built this new temple inside the town's walls. Although the Sanctuary's priests are careful to stay out of government and politics, some Trunauans question how much of the clerics' loyalties lie with Lastwall rather than Trunau.

G. Clamor: Officially called Morninghawk's Fine Steel, Clamor is Trunau's smithy. Virtually all metalwork in the town, including the crafting of hopeknives for its citizens, falls under the purview of the half-orc councilor and smith Sara Morninghawk.

H. Plague House: Also known as the Burned Church, this old, burnt-down ruin outside Trunau's walls is the subject of numerous horror stories—most Trunauans avoid the place, believing it to be haunted. The Plague House is fully detailed on page 24.

I. Flame of the Fallen: To prevent orcs from desecrating their remains, Trunau's dead are burned in a pyre here; the pyre also serves as a beacon during times of siege.

J. Commons Beacon: One of several beacons used during orc attacks, this pyramid of wood and kindling is kept built near the Commons (area A), ready to be lit quickly in the event of an orc raid.

TRUNAU



K. Inner Gates Beacon: Another pyramid of wood and kindling stands in the inner quarter (area L), just before the gates to the town's upper quarter.

L. Inner Quarter: Walled and gated at either end, this slope climbs between Trunau's lower quarter and the stone plateau of Bloodmarch Hill 40 feet above, forming a choke point and killing ground for invaders assaulting the town. The inner quarter is detailed beginning on page 35.

M. Hopespring Beacon: Yet another pyramid of wood and kindling stands in lower Trunau near the town's water source, the Hopespring (area O), ready to be lit as a beacon should the town come under attack.

N. Barterstones: These broad, flat slabs of stone outside the town proper host an open-air market where a significant portion of Trunau's trade occurs.

O. Hopespring: This fresh and reliable spring wells up from deep within Bloodmarch Hill before cascading in a small waterfall down to the town's reservoir in lower Trunau. Trunau draws all of its fresh water from the Hopespring, whose existence is the reason the town was founded here in the first place.

EVENT 1: THE HOPEKNIFE CEREMONY

At the start of the adventure, Trunau's citizens have gathered in the Commons (area A), the large amphitheater in the center of town, to celebrate the birthday of Ruby, the youngest daughter of the town's leader, Chief Defender Halgra of the Blackened Blades. It is not just any birthday for Ruby, though—it is her twelfth birthday, which means she has come of age and will receive her very own hopeknife (see the *Giant Slayer Player's Guide* for details on this Trunauan tradition). Halgra is officiating the ceremony, assisted by Kurst and Rodrik Grath, prominent members of the town militia and the two eldest sons of Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath.

To set the scene for the players and get the adventure rolling, read or paraphrase the following.

Jubilant fills the evening air in the normally staid town of Trunau, for it is the twelfth birthday of the Chief Defender's youngest daughter, Ruby, and the townsfolk have been preparing all day for the ceremony and festivities to follow. A throng of spectators has amassed at the town Commons; the buzz of the crowd subsides as the weathered town leader, Halgra of the Blackened Blades, takes the stage and begins to speak.



RODRIK GRATH

"Thank you all for joining us this night. I take immense pride in my responsibility as Chief Defender, especially when it comes to the honor of the hopeknife ceremony. It is always a great privilege to bequeath Trunauan youths their hopeknives as they come of age." Halgra stops speaking long enough to open an ornamental case and retrieve a slender, ornately decorated dagger hanging from a silver chain. "But tonight is a special occasion, for the recipient of this hopeknife is none other than my youngest daughter." Once again, Halgra pauses, but this time she turns to talk to the child beside her.

"Ruby, by the traditions of our town, you have come of age. This hopeknife represents your responsibilities as an adult and defender of Trunau. You must be willing to use it on yourself, your fellow Trunauans, and your family—even me, should it come to that. It will be a far quicker death than that which the orcs will offer, and providing it is your duty. Do you swear to guard Trunau from all comers, and to use your hopeknife only for its intended purpose?" Ruby—dusky skinned, black haired, and painfully shy—nods her head in response to her mother's question.

"If the orcs come, and there is no other option, this is where you cut—here, here, and here." Halgra demonstrates which arteries to sever while Ruby watches. When she is finished, Halgra sheathes the hopeknife and places the necklace around Ruby's neck before turning back to

address the crowd.

"Tonight, Ruby becomes a full member of our community! Let us welcome her, and celebrate her passage into adulthood! Trunau forever!" The crowd echoes Halgra's last words in unison, signaling the end of the ceremony.

Once Halgra finishes her speech, the townsfolk waste no time transitioning to the ceremony's more light-hearted festivities, including a number of games in which Ruby is the key player. The first such game is tug-of-war, which traditionally pits the hopeknife receiver against Trunau's best defenders. For the past several years, Kurst and Rodrik Grath have taken on this role alongside several other members of Trunau's militia.

When Kurst and Rodrik announce the game of tug-of-war, Ruby is allowed to choose a number of spectators from the crowd to participate in the game on her side. An awkward child, Ruby takes a hard look at the crowd before making her choice: the PCs. Once she has made her selections, the crowd ushers the PCs onto the stage so that they can help the young Ruby win her first game as an adult.

To play out the game of tug-of-war, use miniatures on a gaming mat to represent the two teams, leaving 30 feet (6 squares) between the closest members of each team.

Lay a piece of string between the two teams and draw a line in the middle of the gap, 15 feet (3 squares) from either side. Each team attempts an initiative check each round; the PCs with the highest initiative modifier should roll for the PCs' team, while the opposing team has an initiative modifier of +2. The team with the highest result gains a +2 bonus on the opposed Strength check for that round.

Determine the total Strength modifier for the PCs' team by combining the Strength modifiers of the PCs with Ruby's Strength modifier of -1. Kurst and Rodrik's team has a total Strength modifier of +7. As a full-round action each round, each team attempts a Strength check opposed by the other team's Strength check. The winning team pulls the rope (and the opposing team) 5 feet toward its side. For every 5 points by which the winning team exceeds the opposing team's check, the winning team pulls the rope an additional 5 feet. A team can take 10 on the opposed check, but cannot take 20. The opposed checks continue each round, with a new initiative check each round, until the first member of a team is pulled across the center line, at which point that member's team loses the match.

While Kurst and Rodrik put on a good show, their objective isn't to win the game of tug-of-war—it's to let Ruby feel like a hero for the night. The guards do their best to match the strength of the youth being honored and her chosen allies, and aren't afraid to break a sweat if faced with particularly strong opponents, but if it looks like Ruby is about to lose, Rodrik loosens his grip and onlookers from the crowd rush to join Ruby's team, easily pulling the Graths' team across the line. After all, the focus of the night's events is Ruby's emergence from youth, and it would hardly be a celebration of her coming of age if she lost her first trial as an adult!

During the hopeknife ceremony and the festivities afterward, allow the PCs a chance to mingle with the townsfolk. The PCs can learn much about Trunau and its customs by asking around with a successful Diplomacy check to gather information or a Knowledge (local) check. The result of the check determines the information learned, as detailed in the table below.

LOCAL LORE

Result	Rumor
5+	"The hopeknife is more than a weapon—it's a symbol. To Trunauans, earning your hopeknife is a mark of your place in the community. When you earn your hopeknife, it means you are wise enough to make adult decisions, old enough to know what it means to fear, and strong enough to protect your neighbors, even if it costs you your own life."
10+	"Even though she's the Chief Defender's daughter, Ruby has to pledge to uphold the Standing Vow in

OTHER FESTIVITIES

It's possible that the PCs may not stand a chance in a game of tug-of-war against Trunau's elite. In this case, you should replace the tug-of-war match with a challenge more suited to the PCs' strengths, such as a game of hide and seek throughout the town for agile or cunning PCs, or a porridge-eating contest using the town's emergency food source, the *siegestone*, for characters with strong stomachs. Regardless of what event you decide on, the PCs should have some meaningful interaction with both Rodrik and Kurst during the course of the celebration.

order to receive her hopeknife, just like the rest of us. She must agree to hold Trunau against all comers and to never forfeit her homeland willingly. That is the Vow."

12+ "Rumor has it that Rodrik Grath is next in line for the position of patrol leader after his old man Jagrin retires. Jagrin's a good commander, but he's getting old, and it might be time for some new blood in the militia's leadership."

15+ "Shame about the graffiti all over town. The militia's got better things to do than clean up youngsters' messes, but even stranger is how long it lasts. Try as one might, soap and water don't do a thing to those marks!"

18+ "Have you read Rodrik Grath's latest work, 'The Other Side of Contempt'? He's our own home-grown writer. It's a controversial poem, but that's what makes Rodrik's writing so strong—he's not afraid to push limits."

22+ "Rodrik Grath is slated to replace his father as patrol leader, but from what I hear, he's more concerned with his poems and plays than with militia matters. He's diligent, don't get me wrong, but I'm not quite sure either of the Grath boys is ready to lead the town's defense."

No matter how the festivities of the hopeknife ceremony ultimately go, Kurst and Rodrik Grath approach the PCs at some point during the evening. They've taken a measure of the PCs' strength during the tug-of-war match, and in the interest of securing future defenders for Trunau, the brothers now make an honest effort to learn about the PCs. If most or all of the PCs are native Trunauans, the Graths encourage the PCs to join the town's militia. Throughout the conversation, the PCs likely learn a bit about the Graths as well; Rodrik and Kurst answer any questions about themselves and rarely waste the chance for a friendly jab at each other.

RODRIK'S WRITINGS

Rodrik Grath is well known throughout Trunau not only for his role as a prominent militiaman, but also for his beautiful poems and riveting plays, which he publishes using the small printing press at the Trunau Countinghouse. The following are a few of Rodrik's most locally famous pieces.

Ballad of the Bloodmarch: Rodrik wrote his hit poem "Ballad of the Bloodmarch" after Trunauans held off the orcs of the Legbreaker tribe for 6 days before finally routing them. The epic piece is not as somber as its name might indicate, and it is practically synonymous with Trunauan pride and the iconic militaristic fervor of the townsfolk. While the poem does manage to capture much of the solemn reverence that accompanies the trials and horrors of warfare, those sobering themes are contrasted by emotionally powerful scenes of wartime heroism and examples of holding one's own. In 4710 AR, Chief Defender Halgra declared "Ballad of the Bloodmarch" to be Trunau's official anthem.

Hommel and Brekka: Rodrik's last play is widely considered to be his best work. The love story of *Hommel and Brekka* is told in four acts, though the play's running time is less than 1-1/2 hours. That the playwright managed to compress all of the most meaningful aspects of a forbidden relationship into such a short work is a testament to his talent. While the play's namesake characters are actually a Shoanti warrior (Hommel) and a Chelish conqueror (Brekka), Rodrik drew upon significant personal experience while writing the play. Trunauan readers particularly enjoyed the air of the exotic in the play; while Rodrik has never visited the Storval Plateau, he was entranced as a boy by the stories of that land's sprawling plains, rolling river valleys, and hardened native people.

The Other Side of Contempt: Easily Rodrik's most controversial poem among Trunauans, this six-stanza monody weaves the tale of a young half-orc whose orc mother died when human raiders overran the orc settlement in which he grew up. Rodrik reined in his writing somewhat after this flop, though he privately claims that his critics are simply too closed-minded to understand the deeper significance of his poem.

Rodrik is a confident man with a hearty laugh and an honest smile. He is self-assured, an excellent swordsman, and a locally respected writer as well (see Rodrik's Writings, above). Kurst is more reserved, and while just as capable as his brother, he seems content to remain in Rodrik's shadow. It is clear throughout the PCs' exchanges with the brothers that Rodrik is the older brother (even if only by a few minutes) and the dominant one in the relationship, and while shy Kurst makes a modest effort to engage the

PCs, it is ultimately Rodrik who comes off as the more likable, talented, and forthcoming of the two siblings. At any rate, the conversation should be lighthearted and entertaining, and should give the PCs some connection to a pair of the adventure's key NPCs. After the conversation has run its course, the brothers politely excuse themselves to check on the other celebrants.

As the celebrations wind down for the night, the PCs will likely need to a place to stay. Unless the PCs have already secured lodgings elsewhere, any Trunauan can point the adventurers to the Ramblehouse, a halfling-run boarding house that is also the only inn in town (area B). As it happens, Rodrik Grath is staying at the Ramblehouse as well. Cham Larringfass, the establishment's eccentric proprietor, may mention as much to the PCs, noting that they'll be in safe hands tonight especially. By the time the PCs go to bed, however, Rodrik has long since shut the door to his room and turned in for the night.

Story Award: If the PCs win the tug-of-war game against the Trunauan guards, award them 400 XP.

A DEATH AT THE RAMBLEHOUSE

When the PCs awake the following morning, they find many of Trunau's residents in a state of dismay. A large crowd has gathered outside the Ramblehouse, and the news spreads quickly: Patrol Captain Rodrik Grath has been found dead! The inn's owner, Cham Larringfass, discovered Rodrik's body in his room, his wrists fatally lacerated and his bloody hopeknife in his limp hand. The town militia arrived soon after and roped off the entire building to investigate the scene, but all signs point to a suicide, a fact that saddens many of the town's citizens.

SPEAKING WITH KURST

Whether or not the PCs are staying at the Ramblehouse, they are soon approached by Kurst Grath, the brother of the deceased. At this point, the extent of Kurst's social anxiety should become clear, as well as how much he relied on his older brother for guidance. Overwhelmed by his responsibilities to his family and his dead brother, Kurst is incapable of taking charge of the investigation into Rodrik's death and asks the PCs to look into the matter on his behalf.

"I'm sure you've heard by now that my brother, Rodrik—you met him last night—was found dead this morning, and I've had my hands full since. Right now, the official cause of death is suicide, but I just can't believe that. Something else has to be going on. Unfortunately, Rodrik was the best investigator in Trunau; if he were on the case, solving the mystery of his death wouldn't take long, but with just me left, we might never know what really happened." Kurst sighs heavily.

"I simply can't handle the investigation and tend to my family duties at the same time. I may be a patrol captain, but right

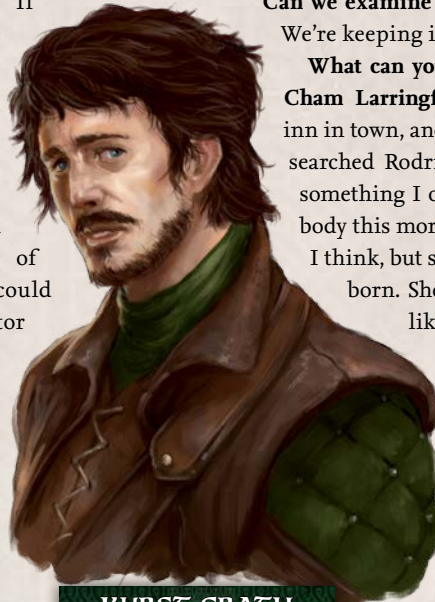
now, I feel my responsibilities as a brother outweigh my other duties. Still, I can't just let this lie. I'm afraid I've exhausted all my other options—the members of Trunau's militia are competent defenders during siege times, but they're not sleuths by any means. I need your help. Will you investigate my brother's death?"

Try to ensure that the PCs have some motivation to investigate Rodrik's death for Kurst. If one of the PCs took the Trunau Native campaign trait (see the *Giantslayer's Player's Guide*), that creates an obvious hook. Alternatively, you can modify Rodrik as needed to create a connection with one or more PCs. For example, if one of the PCs worships Sarenrae, then Rodrik could have been a worshiper of the Dawnflower as well. Fighter PCs could have studied under the same instructor as Rodrik, or rogue PCs could have apprenticed with Rodrik under the same guildmaster. If the PCs have no connections to the Grath brothers or Trunau, Kurst asks them for help precisely because they are strangers. Trunau is a close-knit community, and if Rodrik was murdered, then his killer is most likely a fellow citizen. Kurst doesn't know whom he can trust, so he turns to outsiders—the PCs—for aid. Kurst is fully detailed in the NPC Gallery on page 58.

Kurst asks the PCs to investigate three leads that might help them unravel the mystery of Rodrik's death: the crime scene at the Ramblehouse, where they can also question the inn's proprietor, Cham Larringfass; Brinya Kelper, a half-orc weaver whom Kurst recently learned had been conducting a clandestine love affair with Rodrik for some time; and Omast Frum, a patrol sergeant in the militia, long-time friend of the Graths and one of Rodrik's frequent patrol partners. Perhaps these people might be able to shed some light on the events leading up to Rodrik's death.

The PCs likely have questions for Kurst regarding the investigation. The following are Kurst's answers to some of the PCs' most likely queries.

Shouldn't your father (Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath) or the militia take charge of the investigation? "Unsurprisingly, my father isn't doing too well right at the moment, and I don't think he'll be willing to spare any officers from the outskirts of town. Even if he was, our militia is trained to fight orcs, not investigate mysterious deaths—especially one that's officially a suicide. And my father has forbidden me from talking with 'that half-orc temptress' who he thinks seduced Rodrik. I need you."



KURST GRATH

Why do you think Rodrik's death wasn't a suicide? "I know my brother, and I know he wouldn't kill himself. By his own account, he was in love with Brinya and was planning to marry her, even if our father disapproved. There's something fishy about all of this, and I won't dishonor Rodrik's memory by accepting his 'suicide' without ruling out that something else happened."

Can we examine the body? "If you think it will help. We're keeping it in the Sanctuary until the funeral."

What can you tell us about the Ramblehouse and Cham Larringfass? "The Ramblehouse is the only inn in town, and a boardinghouse as well. I've already searched Rodrik's room, but perhaps you can find something I overlooked. Cham discovered Rodrik's body this morning. She's originally from Molthune, I think, but she's lived in Trunau since before I was born. She shows some favoritism to small folk like herself, but she's a nice enough sort."

What can you tell us about Brinya Kelper? "She and Rodrik were engaged to be married, but only a few people, myself included, knew about their relationship. Brinya's a half-orc. Her heritage doesn't matter to me, but it does to my father, which is why Rodrik kept it secret. That's why Rodrik was staying at the Ramblehouse. My father somehow found about the two of them, and he and Rodrik had a falling out over it. Since my father has forbidden me to visit her, could you check up on her and make sure she's okay? You can also ask her whether anything seemed strange about Rodrik the last couple of nights."

What can you tell us about Omast Frum? "Omast is a long-time friend of my family, and he's always been like an uncle to Rodrik and me. He has a long history in Trunau, and most people think of him fondly as a local eccentric and a well-meaning lush. As a patrol sergeant, he accompanied Rodrik on many patrols. Maybe the two of them discovered something on one of those patrols."

Are there any other possible suspects? "Not that I can think of, but you might ask around town. My brother touched many lives in Trunau, so I wouldn't discount anyone as a possible lead. Anything out of the ordinary could be a potential clue."

Are there any other clues? "The only thing I have is Rodrik's hopeknife, which he supposedly used to kill himself. I'll need it back for his funeral, but if you think it might help, you can have it until then."

How can we get in touch with you? "Ask for me at the Longhouse. I need to plan Rodrik's funeral and manage his affairs, but if I'm not there, leave word and I'll get in contact with you as soon as possible."

Once the PCs have asked their questions and confirmed any details with Kurst, he gives them the hopeknife found on Rodrik's body, then bids them farewell.

RODRIK'S MURDER

As Kurst suspects, his brother Rodrik did not commit suicide. Instead, he was murdered by the half-orc saboteur Skreed Gorewillow, who panicked when Rodrik's investigations threatened to uncover Skreed's plot. Although Rodrik suspected something strange was going on in town, he had not yet put all the pieces together, and it was merely by chance that he came close enough to discovering Skreed's plans that the half-orc decided to eliminate the meddlesome patrol captain.

The PCs won't encounter Skreed until the very end of this adventure, and even then they may never figure out exactly how he assassinated Rodrik so efficiently. Nevertheless, you should use the following details of Rodrik's dealings and Skreed's murder scheme to seed additional information into the PCs' interactions when appropriate and to help them reach a satisfying conclusion to the murder mystery.

For several months before his death, Rodrik had been secretly courting Brinya Kelder, a half-orc weaver. Although half-orcs are less stigmatized in Trunau than in many other settlements, Rodrik insisted on keeping the relationship hidden from his father, Jagrin, a man who has utterly despised orcs since his wife's death at orc hands years ago. As a result, Rodrik and Brinya clandestinely met in the abandoned Plague House just outside town, sneaking over the town palisade to share their love amid the ash and rubble of the former church.

One night, however, while Rodrik was waiting in the Plague House for Brinya to arrive, he surprised a lone flood troll—an intermediary between Skreed's half-orc infiltrators inside Trunau and the Twisted Nail orcs waiting to attack the town—lurking amid the ruins. The troll ran off when it realized it had been seen, but Rodrik was so alarmed by the event that he ended the couple's meetings at the Plague House.

Always looking for new material for his writing, Rodrik realized the troll encounter could perhaps be the start to one of his greatest stories yet. He plunged himself into his duties as patrol captain with a fierce determination, and began discreetly visiting the Plague House to look for more evidence of the flood troll and its strange doings

in the area. Rodrik's private investigation—the details of which he shared with no one, not even Brinya—soon consumed all of his attention, and he kept detailed records of his observations in his personal journal.

In the weeks before his death, Rodrik frequently visited the Sanctuary to meet with a half-orc named Katrezra, an oracle known to have strange visions. Katrezra reported having dreams of the Plague House, a fact that Rodrik found ominous, considering his own recent experiences there. On the day of Ruby's hopeknife ceremony, Rodrik resolved to go back to the Plague House one last time, but he left the journal containing the details of his investigation behind with Katrezra on the half-orc's recommendation.

Before Rodrik could return to the Plague House, however, Skreed Gorewillow became aware of his inquiries and decided to remove the curious writer before he could uncover more damning evidence. During the festivities following the hopeknife ceremony, Skreed used his *kin's face tattoo* (see page 61) to assume a human guise and procure a room at the Ramblehouse. While paying Cham Larringfass handsomely to rent him a room without requiring his name, Skreed snuck a look at Rodrik's name and room number in the inn's register.

Once he secured a room, he retired there to wait out the hopeknife ceremony, then hid himself in Rodrik's room.

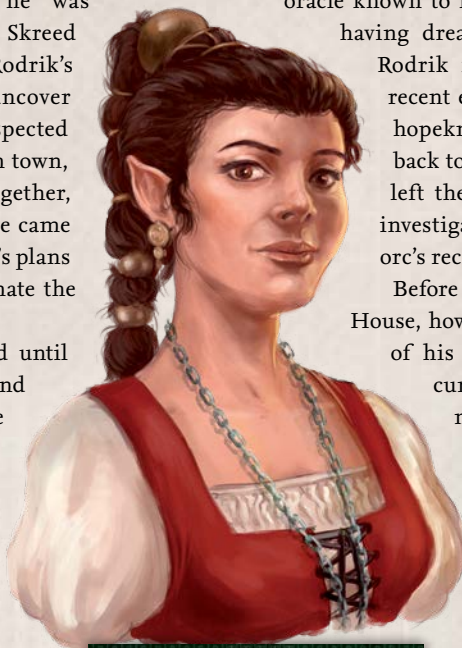
When Rodrik returned to the inn after the hopeknife ceremony, he was unaware of the half-orc assassin hiding beneath his bed. Taking advantage of Rodrik's exhaustion, Skreed knocked the patrol captain unconscious by slipping him some oil of taggit, then used a hopeknife stolen from the town smithy to slit Rodrik's wrists, staging the death as a suicide. The deed done, Skreed drank an extract of *invisibility* and secretly left the Ramblehouse.

When Katrezra heard about Rodrik's death the next morning, he left the Sanctuary, taking Rodrik's journal with him, and sought asylum with Sara Morninghawk in the back room of her smithy, Clamor. He has remained in hiding there, fearing for his own life.

With Rodrik out of the way, Skreed and his agents have resumed their search of the town for the entrance to Uskroth's tomb, ready to signal the orc raiders outside Trunau to attack as soon they find it.

INVESTIGATING RODRIK'S DEATH

The PCs can pursue Kurst's leads in any order they wish. The various steps in the investigation are presented in the most likely order in which the PCs will find clues and follow



CHAM LARRINGFASS

up on them, but the actual order in which these events occur should be based on the PCs' actions. In some cases, the PCs might need to revisit locations or talk to characters they've already questioned based on leads they uncover later in the investigation. Remember that Trunau's settlement modifiers (listed in the town's stat block on page 8) apply to various skill checks made within the town, several of which will likely come up during the PCs' investigation (see pages 205–206 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* for details on settlement modifiers).

There are five major clues that the PCs can discover during their investigation: the hopeknife found with Rodrik's body; word of Rodrik's private investigation of the Plague House; Rodrik's journal, wherein he recorded the results of his investigation; the half-orc Katrezra, with whom Rodrik shared some of his suspicions; and the presence of strange half-orcs in town. In addition, the white swords painted throughout the town are a clue, though these are something of a red herring and not directly connected to Rodrik's death (see **Lead #4**). If at any time the PCs start to flag or run out of leads, feel free to have Kurst stop by to jump-start the investigation with new information.

LEAD #1: THE RAMBLEHOUSE

There are two leads to investigate at the Ramblehouse (area B): the Ramblehouse's innkeeper, Cham Larringfass, who was one of the last Trunauans to see Rodrik alive, and the room where Rodrik Grath's body was found.

Questioning Cham Larringfass

While most townsfolk know **Cham Larringfass** (CG female halfling expert 4) to be a good-natured—if somewhat grating—person, she nonetheless holds several key clues to the investigation. Cham found Rodrik's body in the morning when she knocked on his door to wake him up, as he'd requested the night before. She screamed and fainted when she saw Rodrik lying on his bed, bloody and still, his vacant eyes gazing toward the ceiling. Other Ramblehouse residents heard the ruckus, called the militia, and helped Cham recover her senses.

Cham initially claims not to recall anything out of the ordinary about the night before Rodrik's body was discovered, but a successful DC 15 Sense Motive check indicates she's hiding something. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidate check can convince Cham to allow the PCs to look through the inn's registry (halflings gain a +2 circumstance bonus on this check). The only entry of note in the register is a single human man who rented the Ramblehouse's last room after Rodrik had reserved his room, but before the patrol captain had checked in for the night. This entry stands out because the guest's name has not been recorded in the register.

If questioned about this guest, Cham breaks down into fearful sobs and quickly explains herself. "He refused to give me his name," she manages between gulps of air, "and he paid me a fistful of gold. He said he'd be gone before sunrise. I didn't ask any more questions. I had no idea that something like this would happen!" The halfling can give a general description of the man, but she doesn't remember any specific features that would help identify him. Once this information is revealed, Cham complies fully with the PCs' investigation and doesn't attempt to obfuscate any further evidence.

If the PCs ask about half-orcs staying at the inn or any other unusual guests, Cham reveals some of her prejudice against non-halflings, claiming that "a bunch of half-orcs and other thuggish tall-folk" came in about a week ago and reserved practically every free room in the Ramblehouse. She didn't recognize any of them from around town, but by the time Rodrik's body was discovered, the travelers had already checked out. Cham has no idea where the travelers might be now. The Ramblehouse's register confirms Cham's statement.

Rodrik's Room

If the PCs ask to investigate the murder scene, Cham takes them upstairs to the room where Rodrik spent his last night. When the PCs enter the room, read or paraphrase the following.

This sparse room contains only a single cot and a writing desk. The cot is a cheap affair with a straw-stuffed mattress, now stained red with blood and stripped of its linens, while the desk is a slightly nicer piece of furniture that has nonetheless been chipped and worn by time. A cracked window in the southern wall is the only exit other than the room's door.

The militia has already removed Rodrik's body, leaving only the bloodstained mattress behind, but they didn't discover all the clues in the Ramblehouse. A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Perception check while looking under the bed finds a scrap of paper stuck between the headboard and the wall. The scrap is a receipt for a new hopeknife from Morninghawk's Fine Steel ordered by Rodrik to replace the one he had lost (see **Handout #1** on page 16). In addition, a PC who succeeds at a DC 19 Perception check while searching the writing desk discovers a false bottom in the desk drawer, though the compartment underneath is empty.

Development: If the PCs want to investigate the receipt, they should go to Morninghawk's Fine Steel, more commonly known as Clamor (see **Lead #6**). If the PCs ask Cham about the secret compartment in the writing desk in Rodrik's room, she confides that many of the Ramblehouse's rooms contain such "trick drawers" in which knowledgeable guests can secure valuable possessions.

Morninghawk's Fine Steel

Receipt of Purchase

Customer: *Rodrik Grath*Order: *One (1) hopeknife*

Additional Options

 Engraving Silver Matching SheathEngraving should read "*For Rodrik, my love*"Smith: *Urnsul***HANDOUT #1***Melira,*

I shouldn't be away for much longer. We still haven't found what we're looking for, but it's only a matter of time, and the other preparations are proceeding as planned. A meddling militia patrol captain has been poking around, but I don't foresee him being a threat for much longer. Once our work is done, it won't matter anyway, and I can return to you. I marvel that I found you in the midst of all this, and think of you constantly. Soon, my beloved.

HANDOUT #2

Story Award: If the PCs find Rodrik's hopeknife receipt, award them 600 XP.

Other Ramblehouse Rooms

The PCs might also wish to investigate other rooms in the Ramblehouse. The rooms rented to the party of foreign half-orcs have been seriously vandalized. While most of the damage is repairable, the walls of some of the rooms are marked with graffiti that won't come clean even after hours of scrubbing. This graffiti was drawn with the same marker dye the half-orc saboteurs have used to demarcate possible tomb entrances all around the town (see **Lead #4**). If the PCs investigate those markings, a successful DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check reveals the dye is the same.

The room of the nameless man who checked in the night before is empty (Skreed never even slept in the bed), save for a clue in the "trick drawer" in its writing desk, which can be found with a successful DC 19 Perception check (PCs who already know of the existence of these trick drawers gain a +2 circumstance bonus on the check). Inside the secret compartment is a slip of dirty old parchment containing an unfinished letter from Skreed to his lover Melira in Freedom Town, which he wrote while waiting for Rodrik to check into the inn (see **Handout #2**). In his haste to leave the inn after murdering Rodrik, Skreed accidentally left the letter behind. While the clues contained in the letter are oblique enough that the PCs won't be able to solve the entire mystery at this point, they do hint at a larger plot and the possible culprit behind Rodrik's murder.

Story Award: If the PCs find Skreed's letter, award them 400 XP.

LEAD #2: BRINYA KELVER

Rodrik's fiancée, **Brinya Kolver** (NG female half-orc expert 3), occupies humble rooms in a boarding house just northwest of the Commons (area **D**). If the PCs visit Brinya on the day of Rodrik's death, they catch her in an unenviable state, her face wracked with grief and stained by hours of tears. She composes herself as best she can during the PCs' interview, but breaks into sobs periodically throughout the conversation. Her emotions become less volatile on the days after the death, though, and if the PCs haven't questioned her by evening on the day following the discovery of Rodrik's body, she seeks out the PCs herself.

Brinya can fill in the details of her relationship with Rodrik. The couple had been seeing each other for months, and Rodrik finally proposed to her using his mother's ring. Even once they were engaged, Rodrik was careful to keep the relationship hidden from his father, who wouldn't approve of the match.

Brinya grudgingly respected her beloved's wishes for privacy, though his cowardice inspired no shortage of annoyance as well, and was a source of contention between them. It didn't help that Rodrik soon became preoccupied with some sort of investigation, what he called "his greatest work"—the details of which he refused to share with Brinya. To make matters even worse, Rodrik's father, Jagrin, did finally find out about the couple's relationship, and repudiated his son for betrothing himself to a "filthy half-orc."

If at any point the PCs show Brinya the hopeknife found with Rodrik's body, read or paraphrase the following.

Brinya's face suddenly grows sober. "That's not Rodrik's hopeknife," she says levelly after examining the knife, "because *his* hopeknife was *mine*. At least, it used to be. When we got engaged, we traded hopeknives to symbolize our union, and had

Sara Morninghawk engrave them with our love notes.” Pulling at her heavy silver necklace, Brinya reveals her own hopeknife dangling from the chain. “See? This was Rodrik’s hopeknife. It says, ‘For Brinya, my love.’ I don’t know where that hopeknife came from, but it’s not Rodrik’s. It’s not the knife I grew up with.”

Brinya goes on to reveal that Rodrik lost the hopeknife she had given him in the course of his investigation. When she learned of the loss on the night of Ruby’s hopeknife ceremony, Brinya was furious, and she told Rodrik she didn’t want to see him again until he found it or otherwise made things right. If she had known that night would be the last time she would see her beloved, Brinya laments, she would have acted much differently. With Rodrik’s death, Brinya’s anger at him quickly transformed into overwhelming grief, and she unfairly blames herself for his death.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check, or who is a native of Trunau, knows that engaged or married couples exchanging hopeknives is a common tradition in Trunau. Examining the hopeknife found with Rodrik lends credence to Brinya’s story—the dagger is clearly unfinished, and while it’s designed to display an inscription on the blade, it bears none.

If asked about Rodrik himself, Brinya talks at length about his beautiful poems (which initially attracted her to him), and about how Rodrik was always writing something. She confides that Rodrik kept a journal as well, and suggests the entries he wrote up to his final night might provide insight into his murder. Unfortunately, she has no idea where the journal might be. Obviously, there’s his room in the Ramblehouse, but Rodrik also frequently went to Trunau’s Sanctuary with his writing. According to Brinya, Rodrik said he had a “thoughtful muse” there, but he never elaborated. Brinya had always just assumed her lover was finding solace in devotion to Iomedae, but now she wonders if there really was someone at the church—someone who might know more about what happened to Rodrik, or worse, betrayed him.

Brinya knows nothing about the presence of strange half-orcs in town, nor does she have any information on the graffiti of white swords appearing all over town.

Development: To confirm Brinya’s claim that the hopeknife found with Rodrik’s body was not his, the PCs must find either Rodrik’s receipt for a new hopeknife in his room at the Ramblehouse (see **Lead #1**) or locate the

hopeknife Brinya gifted him, which he accidentally left at the Plague House (see **Lead #7**). They can also go straight to Sara Morninghawk’s smithy, Clamor, to investigate the hopeknife’s provenance (see **Lead #6**). Lastly, they can go to the Sanctuary in hopes of tracking down Rodrik’s journal or contact (see **Lead #5**).

Story Award: If the PCs question Brinya and discover that the hopeknife found with Rodrik was not his, award them 400 XP. In addition, award the PCs 400 XP for learning of the existence of Rodrik’s journal.

EVENT 2: RABID WOLF ATTACK (CR 2)

This event takes place after the PCs have uncovered the first major clue in their investigation, either Rodrik’s hopeknife receipt or Skreed’s letter in the Ramblehouse (see **Lead #1**), or after learning from Brinya Kelver that the hopeknife on Rodrik’s body was not his own (see **Lead #2**). This encounter should occur in the evening or at night.

Creatures: Several days ago, Skreed Gorewillow drugged three young wolves and smuggled them into town in the back of a cart, then dosed them with a neurotoxin of his own design that infected the animals with a virulent disease and drove them insane with bloodlust. When

Skreed learns that the PCs are investigating Rodrik’s death, he releases the apparently rabid wolves to attack the PCs as they walk down the streets of Trunau to their sleeping quarters.



BRINYA KELVER

DISEASED YOUNG WOLVES (3) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Young wolf (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 295, 278)

hp 9 each

Melee bite +0 (1d4–1 plus disease and trip)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) Skreed’s toxin has since developed into a full-blown disease that the wolves can transmit via their bites.

Bleeder’s Disease: Bite—injury; save Fort DC 10; onset 1d2 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d2 Dex damage and alchemical hemophilia (when taking bleed damage, victim takes 1 point of additional damage each round); cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Development: If the PCs inspect the wolves’ bodies, a successful DC 10 Heal or Craft (alchemy) check reveals that the animals weren’t rabid as they initially seemed, but had in fact been poisoned—possibly indicating that this wasn’t just a chance attack.

EVENT 3: FREEDOM TOWN ASSASSINS (CR 3)

This event occurs the night after the PCs discover their second major clue, either finding physical evidence in the Ramblehouse (see **Lead #1**), or after talking with Brinya Kelder and learning more about the hopeknife found with Rodrik's body (see **Lead #2**). Run this encounter after the PCs have gone to sleep.

Several days ago, Skreed Gorewillow hired a gang of human mercenaries from Freedom Town—a lawless settlement of criminals, exiles, and escaped slaves on the border between Belkzen and Lastwall—to come to Trunau and act as backup for his saboteurs. By this time, Skreed has caught wind of the PCs' investigations, so he has contacted the mercenaries and ordered them to kill the PCs.

Creatures: Four Freedom Town assassins come to attack the PCs in their sleep, using alchemical liquid blades (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 108) as murder weapons. The assassins slip through a window or door and get as close as they can to the PCs' beds without waking them up.



FREEDOM TOWN ASSASSIN

If all of the PCs are asleep, at least one of them must succeed at a DC 25 Perception check to notice the intruders and wake up before they strike. Otherwise, any PC awake or on guard can attempt a DC 15 Perception check to notice the assassins' approach.

FREEDOM TOWN ASSASSINS (4)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Human rogue 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 10 each (1d8+2)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee liquid blade +2 (1d6+2/19-20 plus poison) or

short sword +2 (1d6+2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

Before Combat The assassins add a dose of small centipede poison to their liquid blades and activate the alchemical weapons before combat.

During Combat The assassins make frequent use of their Gang Up teamwork feat, picking off opponents by surrounding and stabbing them one at a time. If the assassins' liquid blades break or evaporate, they switch to their short swords.

Morale If at least two of the assassins are defeated, the other two attempt to flee.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Combat Expertise, Gang Up^{APG}

Skills Acrobatics +5, Bluff +3, Climb +6, Disable Device +5, Disguise +3, Escape Artist +5, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5, Use Magic Device +3

Languages Common, Orc

SQ trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, antitoxin, liquid blade^{UE}, Small centipede poison (1 dose), smokestick; **Other**

Gear leather armor, light crossbow with 10 bolts, short sword, thieves' tools, beryl worth 50 gp, 4 gp

Development: Skreed used his true appearance (rather than that of his *kin's face tattoo*) every time he met with the mercenaries, so if questioned, the would-be assassins reveal that their employer is a half-orc

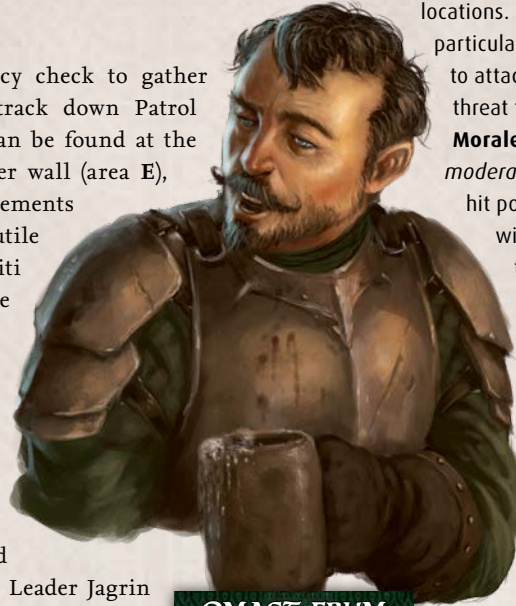
with significant facial tattoos, though they don't know his name. Unfortunately, the PCs will likely have a hard time matching that description to anyone in town, since Skreed has otherwise shown his face in public only while disguised as a human. Beyond this, the assassins know nothing—they don't even know the reason why they were hired to kill the PCs in the first place.

LEAD #3: OMAST FRUM

A successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to gather information is required to track down Patrol Sergeant Omast Frum, who can be found at the South Tower of Trunau's inner wall (area E), dangling from the tower's battlements by a rope tied to his belt. His futile attempts to wash away the graffiti that recently appeared there are creating quite the spectacle.

Creature: A long-time family friend of the Graths and a recovering alcoholic, Omast Frum has always seen himself as a protector and mentor of the Grath boys. When Rodrik and Kurst came of age and joined Trunau's militia, Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath asked Omast to make sure his sons were safe, whether out on patrol or within the town walls. The humble sergeant took this task very seriously, and in the wake of Rodrik's mysterious death, Omast is faring poorly.

Omast was the first guard on the scene when Rodrik's body was found. Afterward, Omast picked up the bottle again. He started drinking more heavily than ever, and hasn't stopped since. Omast blames himself for Rodrik's death and mopes about town in a drunken stupor, looking for vandalism to clean up in hopes that he might appease the spirit of Rodrik, whom he believes haunts his nightmares from beyond the grave.



OMAST FRUM

PATROL SERGEANT OMAST FRUM CR 4
XP 1,200

Male middle-aged human fighter 5
NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

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

hp 42 (5d10+10)

Fort +4, **Ref** -1, **Will** +0 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

Weaknesses alcoholic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk greatsword +8 (2d6+4/19-20)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +4 (1d10-2/19-20)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat In combat, Omast repositions enemies around the battlefield, forcing them into positions where his allies can flank them or attack them from strategic locations. He sunderes the weapons or armor of particularly tough enemies, though he is unafraid to attack and kill those he deems too great a threat to continue living.

Morale Omast drinks his potion of *cure moderate wounds* if brought to fewer than 20 hit points, but he's willing to share his potion with allies in need as well. If he's reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, Omast attempts to retreat, though he stays and fights to the death to defend the lives of native Trunauans.

Base Statistics When Omast is sober, his statistics are **hp** 37; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2; **Melee** mwk greatsword +9 (2d6+4/19-20); **Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow +6 (1d10/19-20); **Str** 13, **Con** 12; **CMB** +6 (+8 reposition, +8 sunder); **CMD** 17 (19 vs. reposition, 19 vs. sunder); **Skills** Climb +7, Handle Animal +4, Heal +9, Intimidate +7, Perception +6, Ride +4, Sense Motive +3, Swim +5. If cured of his alcohol addiction, Omast's statistics are **Fort** +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2; **Melee** mwk greatsword +10 (2d6+6/19-20); **Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow +6 (1d10/19-20); **CMB** +7 (+9 reposition, +9 sunder); **Skills** Climb +8, Handle Animal +4, Heal +9, Intimidate +7, Perception +6, Ride +4, Sense Motive +3, Swim +6.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5 (+7 reposition, +7 sunder); **CMD** 18 (20 vs. reposition, 20 vs. sunder)

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Reposition^{APG}, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Heal), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Skills Climb +6, Handle Animal +2, Heal +7, Intimidate +5, Perception +4, Ride +2, Sense Motive +1, Swim +4

Languages Common, Orc, Shoanti

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, smokesticks (2), thunderstones (2); **Other Gear** mwk breastplate, mwk greatsword, mwk heavy crossbow with 20 bolts, *ring of protection* +1, hip flask

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alcoholic (Ex) Omast is currently drunk and suffering from moderate addiction to alcohol. While drunk, he is

HALF-ORC WITCH-HUNT

While tensions between humans and half-orcs in Trunau don't boil to the surface until the beginning of the orc raid in Part 2 (see area J), it's possible that the PCs might try to round up all of the half-orcs in town based on the clues they've uncovered during the course of their investigation. Though it might seem logical (or even necessary), a witch-hunt is bound to inspire ire from more than a few of the towns' residents, including influential members of the Town Council such as Halgra of the Blackened Blades, the half-orc Sara Morninghawk, and Sara's wife Agrit Staginsdar, making this a difficult proposition, to say the least.

Even if the PCs do manage to track down all of Trunau's half-orcs, only one of Skreed's half-orc agents, Daktani, is actually a Trunau native, and the PCs will likely discover him at the Plague House (see area H11). The other half-orc saboteurs are lying low in a house in town purchased by Skreed Gorewillow in human guise. Even if the PCs go from house to house in search of half-orcs and knock on the door of the house where the infiltrators are staying, Skreed gruffly answers the door while disguised as a human with his *kin's face tattoo*, and the PCs are unlikely to be able to search every room of every house in town.

If subtle discouragement proves insufficient in deterring the PCs from pursuing the route of a half-orc round up, the PCs' actions eventually catch the attention of the town's leader, Halgra of the Blackened Blades, who is outraged at the very idea of "a half-orc inquisition." Some of her children—Trunauans through and through—are half-orcs, and the Grand Defender shuts down the witch-hunt and harshly reprimands the PCs for their apparent prejudices, no matter how convinced they are that half-orcs are behind Rodrik's murder.

considered to be sickened. When not under the effects of alcohol, his addiction imparts a -2 penalty to his Strength and Constitution scores. Rules for drugs and addiction can be found on pages 236-237 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*.

Questioning Omast

When the PCs first encounter Omast, he is mourning over the loss of Rodrik. He's deeply drunk and can barely manage a coherent thought. Because he is so intoxicated, Omast does not respond well to traditional logic or reasoning. Omast takes even the minutest turns of phrase at face value, too stupefied to decipher nuances or suggestions. When he's not talking about getting another drink, he's lamenting the loss of "poor, young Rodrik, that magnificent bastard," with genuine sorrow. Try to play up Omast's inebriation

and distorted mental state in a way that allows the PCs to figure out how to steer the conversation in their favor.

While drunk, Omast freely shares his feelings on many matters, though such information is only tangentially related to the PCs' investigation and is mostly useless in that regard. Omast has an intense dislike for half-orcs, whom he considers reminders of the greatest threat to Trunau. According to Omast, more and more half-orcs have been showing up in town recently, threatening the livelihoods and well-being of "worthy Trunauans." He knows Rodrik shared a friendship with the half-orc Katrezra, and his jealousy is palpable (he describes the oracle as "a crippled oaf who lounges in the Sanctuary's beds spouting curses and lies of prophetic dreams"), but Omast is unaware of Rodrik's relationship with the half-orc Brinya Kelver.

Beyond lamenting Rodrik's death and moaning about half-orcs, the only other information a drunk Omast imparts is about the graffiti of "white swords" that has appeared all over town, which he has dedicated himself to eradicating, so far without success. That the graffiti he's been trying to erase for days has not yet come clean doesn't seem to faze Omast, who mumbles something about "a sign from Rodrik" or some other supernatural phenomenon. See **Lead #4** for more information on the graffiti of white swords throughout Trunau.

In order to get any more useful information out of Omast, the PCs must get the guard sober or somehow convince him that there was nothing he could do to prevent Rodrik's death. This is meant to be a roleplaying encounter first and foremost, so it is up to the GM to determine when the PCs have successfully placated the morose drunk or when Omast's inebriation has simply run its course. Unless prevented from doing so, Omast continues drinking, remaining in a constant state of intoxication. While magic might be employed to temporarily negate Omast's drunkenness (or even cure his addiction), such means may be beyond the PCs' reach at this point, and pulling him out of his stupor now should be a social challenge that rewards creative solutions. If the players come up with a clever way to soothe Omast, allow the encounter to evolve naturally—above all, make sure the group is entertained. At the end of the day, the PCs simply need to be able to interact with a more coherent Omast than the one they initially meet, whether that means curing his debilitating alcoholism or assuaging his crippling guilt.

If the PCs sober Omast up or manage to convince him that he is not responsible for Rodrik's death, they can gain a valuable ally in the fight to come, as well as information that's useful to their investigation. Once sober, Omast can tell the PCs of his relationship with the late Rodrik in more coherent detail, and he can help analyze the facts and evidence they have gathered so far. Omast doesn't trust the

half-orc Katrezra, whom he claims Rodrik met with shortly before his death, so he recommends the PCs find the man and question him, directing them to Trunau's Sanctuary. He also advises them to talk to Cham Larringfass at the Ramblehouse if they haven't already done so.

If shown the hopeknife that was found on Rodrik's body, Omast frowns and mutters, "This blade isn't up to Sara's normal craftsmanship." He is referring to the fact that Sara Morninghawk—for whom he bears a grudging respect—and her assistants forge nearly all of Trunau's hopeknives at her workshop, Clamor, and the smith's weapons are usually much higher quality than the unfinished hopeknife Rodrik allegedly used to kill himself. He suggests the PCs go talk to Sara at her smithy if they get a chance, since she may be able to shed some light on the nature of the murder weapon.

Development: If the PCs want to talk to the half-orc seer Katrezra, they should look for him at the Sanctuary (see **Lead #5**). Cham Larringfass and the Ramblehouse are detailed in **Lead #1**. To talk with Sara Morninghawk about the hopeknife, the PCs should visit her smithy, Clamor (see **Lead #6**).

Story Award: If the PCs question Omast and learn of the unusual nature of Rodrik's hopeknife or otherwise glean important information from the guard, award them 400 XP. In addition, if the PCs manage to get Omast sober and back on the wagon at any point during the adventure, award them an additional 600 XP.

LEAD #4: WHITE SWORDS

Patrol Sergeant Omast Frum (see **Lead #3**) has been busy attempting to clean up strange graffiti all over Trunau. This graffiti takes the form of white crosses or swords, and thus far has resisted all efforts to clean or remove it. In truth, this graffiti is the handiwork of the half-orcs infiltrating Trunau, who have used a specially formulated alchemical marker dye (*Ultimate Equipment* 104) to tag potential entrances to Uskroth's tomb in preparation for the upcoming raid against the town. This marker dye is made of such potent paints and oils that it cannot be removed by any means other than magic.

Unfortunately, the white swords are something of a red herring for the PCs' investigation; while they do hint at the planned orc raid on Trunau, the markings are only tangentially related to Rodrik's murder, and it is unlikely the PCs will realize the significance of the graffiti until it is too late. Nevertheless, the white swords might steer the PCs, indirectly, toward other leads in their investigation.

Omast can direct the PCs to the following locations in Trunau where this graffiti has been discovered. PCs investigating any of these locations can attempt a DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check to identify the marker dye used to create the markings. In addition, a PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check can surmise that

IF THE INVESTIGATION STALLS

Katrezra's vitality may be fading with age, but his preternatural visions increase in number and vividness with every night as the orc raid on Trunau draws closer. If the PCs have figured out that they need Rodrik's journal or know that they must find Katrezra, but they seem stuck or at a loss for where to look, feel free to have Katrezra send a messenger to them—likely Sara Morninghawk's wife, Agrit Staginsdar, who can point the PCs toward her wife's smithy, Clamor (see **Lead #6**).

the "white swords" might be crude representations of Iomedae's holy symbol, a clue that could point the PCs toward the Sanctuary (see **Lead #5**). Graffiti currently marks the following locations.

Barterstones (area N): A large white sword has been painted on the eastern face of the largest rock in this area, visible above the roofs of the market stalls set up in the stones' shadow.

Commons (area A): Someone has used a broad brush to paint a wide white cross or sword on the stone floor of the Commons amphitheater. There are no other clues to be found here.

Hopespring (area O): Even the continual shower of mist from the Hopespring's waterfall doesn't erase the marker dye forming a white sword on the rock wall behind the town reservoir. When the Twisted Nail orcs finally manage to break into Uskroth's tomb in Part 3 of this adventure, Skreed and his wolf minions enter the crypt through a hole in this rock wall (see **Event 6**).

Sanctuary (area F): Besides the sizeable white sword representing Iomedae's own holy sword that juts from the roof of the temple, a thick white cross or sword has been painted on the rock face behind the Sanctuary.

South Tower (area E): The large white sword dominating the side of this guard tower is much larger than any of the other graffiti marks in town, and is visible from even beyond Trunau's walls. It's a mystery how somebody managed to paint a mark 30 feet tall and 10 feet wide on a garrisoned tower.

LEAD #5: SANCTUARY

The PCs likely come to the Sanctuary (area F), Trunau's church of Iomedae, in search of Rodrik's journal or the half-orc Katrezra, or while investigating the graffiti of white swords painted throughout the town. The Sanctuary's high priestess, **Tyari Varvatos** (LG female human cleric of Iomedae 6), a young woman from Lastwall, is happy to talk with the PCs. If asked, Tyari says she doesn't know anything about Rodrik keeping a journal, but she did notice the

Patrol Captain meeting with Katrezra, a long-time half-orc resident of the Sanctuary, frequently in recent weeks. She occasionally overheard the two muttering about ghosts, half-orcs, hopeknives, and white swords, but she wasn't able to parse any of the information into more meaningful details. Tyari mentions that Katrezra claims to have visions, and though she can't vouch for their prophetic accuracy, the priestess does believe they are more than just hallucinations.

If the PCs ask to speak to Katrezra, Tyari informs them that he disappeared a few nights ago without telling anyone. The half-orc left his bed neatly made, so she doesn't suspect any foul play, though she does admit it was odd of Katrezra to leave on the same day that Rodrik's body was discovered. However, she reasons that the half-orc seer can't have gone far, since his crippling condition causes him considerable physical pain and drastically limits his mobility. In addition, she believes he would be unlikely to leave Trunau (to return to his orc tribe, for example), since he sought sanctuary in the church long ago, and has become a devout follower of the Inheritor.

"Unfortunately," Tyari says when the PCs have finished questioning her, "I have no more insight into your investigation. Iomedae's light shines on those who seek the truth, however, and you are always welcome at this Sanctuary should you need healing or other assistance from the church."

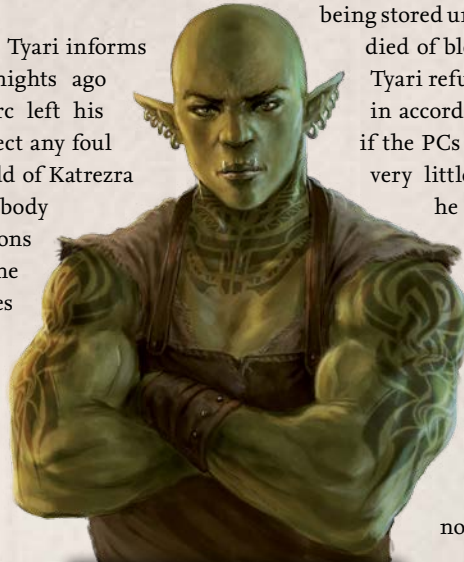
The only other prominent character at the Sanctuary is **Brantos Calderon** (LG male human paladin 4), who accompanied High Priestess Varvatos from Lastwall's Castile Firrine to Trunau. If questioned, Brantos reveals that he had some dealings with Rodrik Grath, but he can't provide the PCs with any useful information about Rodrik beyond an impression that the patrol captain was investigating something. Brantos has no idea what the focus of Rodrik's investigation might have been, but he seemed to enjoy his work. He knows nothing about any journal that Rodrik may have kept.

Brantos had more frequent dealings with Katrezra, since he was largely responsible for taking care of the half-orc invalid when the chapel's acolytes were occupied elsewhere. Brantos knows that Katrezra's past was painful, and that while the half-orc has no love for his full-blooded kin, the seer is a benevolent man who has a soft spot for fellow half-orcs. According to Brantos, Katrezra has proved himself a loyal defender of Trunau on multiple occasions and has many friends in town, but Brantos does not know where the seer has vanished to.

Neither Tyari nor Brantos knows anything about the graffiti of white swords throughout the town, including the large one painted on the cliff face behind the Sanctuary, but both are adamant that the priests at the Sanctuary have nothing to do with them, and doubt any connection between the markings and Iomedae's faith.

If the PCs ask to examine Rodrik's body, Tyari or Brantos takes them to the basement room where his body is being stored until the funeral. Rodrik appears to have died of blood loss after slitting his own wrists.

Tyari refuses to cast *speak with dead* on the body, in accordance with Jagrin Grath's wishes. Even if the PCs have access to such magic, they learn very little, as Rodrik was unconscious when he died, though the corpse can confirm that Rodrik did not commit suicide. A *detect poison* spell discerns the existence of poison in the body, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Craft (alchemy) or Wisdom check can identify the poison as oil of taggit. This revelation hints at foul play, but is not decisive evidence, as oil of taggit results only in unconsciousness, not death.



SARA MORNINGHAWK

LEAD #6: CLAMOR

Eventually, the PCs' investigations should bring them to Morninghawk's Fine Steel, commonly known in town as "Clamor" (area G). The PCs may come to Trunau's smithy after finding Rodrik's receipt for a replacement hopeknife at the Ramblehouse, or may be steered here by Brinya or Omast. The PCs might have also found out about Clamor's smith, Sara Morninghawk, just by asking around town about half-orcs or hopeknives; Sara is herself a half-orc, and the vast majority of the hopeknives in Trunau are crafted at Clamor.

Clamor is a squat, cramped building in the western corner of lower Trunau. The clang of metal on metal rings out of the building most hours of the day, and the heat from the forge fills the stifling smithy. **Sara Morninghawk** (NG female half-orc barbarian 3/expert 3), the town's half-orc, half-Shoanti smith, diligently plies her trade during daylight hours, retiring to her home in the inner quarter to spend the evenings with her wife Agrit Staginsdar.

Sara Morninghawk is also harboring another key figure in the investigation: the half-orc seer Katrezra, formerly a resident of the Sanctuary. When he learned of Rodrik's death, Katrezra came to Clamor and asked Sara to hide him, fearing for his own life because of his involvement with Rodrik and the murdered man's investigation. By the time the PCs visit Clamor, the crippled oracle has likely been lying low in the smithy for several days, but the PCs

must ask the right questions (based on the clues they've already uncovered) before Sara divulges his presence or Katrezra reveals himself.

The exact layout of Clamor isn't important, but Katrezra should be within earshot of the storefront so he can reveal his presence to the PCs when appropriate. While the PCs may visit Clamor at any time, they won't be able to progress in the investigation until they know to look for Rodrik's journal or Katrezra. Mentioning either of these clues at Clamor garners the attention of Katrezra, who makes himself known as soon as he realizes the PCs are trying to solve Rodrik's murder and aren't out to kill him.

Questioning Sara Morninghawk

Sara Morninghawk is already aware of Rodrik's death, and if the PCs tell her they're involved with the investigation, she does her best to cooperate. She keeps a detailed registry of customers and their orders, and if the PCs show her the receipt found in the Ramblehouse, she can match it to her own records of Rodrik coming in to place an order. Sara confirms that Rodrik commissioned a new blade a week before his death. She did the preliminary work on the knife, then handed it off to one of her apprentices, whom she assumed finished the blade.

"I guess it doesn't matter so much anymore," she says, "but I wonder where it went—it must be around here somewhere." After a few minutes searching for the knife, Sara comes up empty-handed. "I'll bet that clumsy oaf Urnsul put it somewhere before she up and quit the other day; it's hard to get good help. I'll let you know if I find the blade."

If the PCs show Sara the hopeknife found on Rodrik's body, she is surprised. She confirms that it was the knife she was working on for Rodrik, but she has no idea how it came into his possession.

If asked about Urnsul, or if the PCs ask about any strange half-orcs in town, Sara explains that Urnsul was a new apprentice she took on several weeks ago, but the woman went missing the day after Ruby's hopeknife ceremony. Urnsul was a recent arrival to Trunau, and Sara took pity on her when the young half-orc explained her tragic story in broken Common. In truth, Urnsul was one of Skreed Gorewillow's half-orc infiltrators. She came to Clamor under the guise of a struggling refugee in need of work, and when Skreed decided to kill Rodrik, he ordered Urnsul to steal Rodrik's replacement hopeknife to use as the murder weapon, though she failed to realize that the inscription on it was not completed. Her work done,

Urnsul fled from Clamor after Rodrik's murder to rejoin her allies at Skreed's Trunauan hideout.

Sara does not reveal Katrezra's presence at Clamor, even if asked directly, but if the PCs question her about the white swords in town, or mention Rodrik's investigation, she responds, "I don't know anything about that, but there's someone else you should talk to." At this point, she brings out Katrezra to talk to the PCs (see Questioning Katrezra, below).

Development: If the PCs suspect Sara of involvement with Rodrik's death, she has an alibi—after Ruby's hopeknife ceremony, she spent a quiet night at home with her wife, Agrit Staginsdar. If the PCs question Agrit, the couple's stories line up perfectly.

If the PCs require further proof, this would be a good time for Katrezra to show up and tell the PCs that Sara's words are true. After all, Katrezra reasons, if Sara was behind Rodrik's murder, she surely would have silenced him as soon as he came to her smithy seeking asylum.

Story Award: Award the PCs 600 XP for finally confirming that the hopeknife found on Rodrik's body was not his original hopeknife.



KATREZRA

Questioning Katrezra

Assuming the PCs figure out the right questions to ask at Clamor, they can finally talk to the one person who knows the most about the circumstances surrounding Rodrik's death: the half-orc seer **Katrezra** (CG male half-orc fighter 4/oracle 1). Katrezra was raised among the orcs of the Empty Hand tribe, and now suffers from painful afflictions and weeping sores gained from his time at the Brimstone Haruspex, an orc temple in the caldera of a smoking volcano in the Kodar Mountains, whose highly caustic fumes supposedly grant insight into the future. Although the sulfurous gases maimed him and symptoms of his overexposure still trouble him, Katrezra gained minor oracular powers from inhaling the fumes, and he soon left the barbarous orcs to seek sanctuary in Trunau.

The PCs likely have some questions for Katrezra pertaining to their investigation or the half-orc's dealings with Rodrik. The following are the oracle's answers to some of the PCs' most likely queries.

Why did Rodrik come to you? "It is no great secret that I was cursed with preternatural visions many years ago, during my time with the Empty Hand. Since I left those savages, many have sought my counsel into matters ranging from the mundane to the dire, but I'm afraid the omens that assault my dreams are nigh indecipherable, even to me, and I have no means of directing them.

“Rodrik originally approached me to ask for advice while courting Brinya Kolver. The love-struck fool—bless his soul—thought I might have some special insights into the traditions of her people or visions of the couple’s everlasting happiness... but come now, do I look like the romantic type?” He smiles wryly, then shakes his head and moves on. “I couldn’t help him with his relationship, but we gradually became close friends. I’d been experiencing vivid hallucinations of white swords or crosses, and dreams of the Plague House outside town. When I told him of them, he seemed to think my dreams might help with his investigation. I told him about my visions as best I could, but the muse of my nightmares is as abstruse as she is unkind.”

What was Rodrik investigating? “To be truthful, I don’t think even he knew exactly what he was looking for. Rodrik had run afoul of a flood troll in the Plague House not long ago, and the poor fellow was convinced it was not just an isolated incident. He came to me seeking guidance, and his curiosity was piqued by my visions. I told him that flood trolls are native to Belkzen, but they rarely roam this far south of the Flood Road. Since learning of his investigation, though, I have had nightmares unlike any before, and I fear that some greater evil may be at play within Trunau’s walls.”

Why did you go into hiding? “Rodrik had plans to go back to the Plague House, but because of the unease I felt from my visions, I suggested he leave his journal with me, which he did. The night of his death, my visions were even more terrible, though still indecipherable. When news of Rodrik’s death reached me in the morning, I knew it must have been foul play, so I fled the Sanctuary, fearful that whoever targeted Rodrik would come after me as well. His death grieves me to no end, but at least my efforts bought me enough time to share this information with you.”

Do you know who killed Rodrik? “I don’t, and worse, I didn’t predict the ill fate that befell him. But even if I had, I’ve learned there is little one can do to combat fate.”

What’s in the Plague House? “I have seen visions of the Plague House many times these past few weeks, and though I can’t say with any certainty what these divinations might mean, I believe there is more beneath the ashes of the Burned Church than soot and rubble.”

Development: Katrezra gives the PCs Rodrik’s journal in the hopes that it will help them clear up the circumstances of his death (see **Handout #3** on page 25), and suggests they investigate the Plague House (see **Lead #7**). Although the Plague House represents the final step in the PCs’ investigation, they might still be interested in tracing the other clues they’ve uncovered to their logical conclusions. Eventually, however, they should realize that all trails lead to the Plague House.

Story Award: If the PCs talk to Katrezra and secure Rodrik’s journal, award them 800 XP.

LEAD #7: THE PLAGUE HOUSE

Sooner or later, likely after meeting Katrezra and finding Rodrik’s journal, the PCs should visit the ruins of the Plague House (area **H**) outside Trunau’s walls to follow up on Rodrik’s investigation.

H. PLAGUE HOUSE

The Plague House, also known as the Burned Church, was Trunau’s original church of Iomedae. When orc raiders burned the building down and killed the priests within, the church of Iomedae decided to build a new chapel inside the city walls. The ruined church became known as the Plague House following a tragedy 50 years ago, when Trunau was afflicted with a plague. The town’s authorities hastily rebuilt the structure and used it to quarantine the plague victims, but a mysterious fire consumed the building a few days later, killing everyone inside—patients and healers—and leaving the infamous site once again in ruins. None have attempted to rebuild it since.

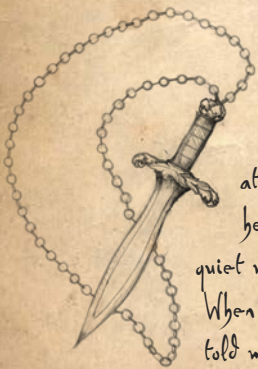
When Skreed Gorewillow and his half-orc infiltrators first came to Trunau, they took up residence in the Plague House’s mostly forgotten basement, as the group’s cleric believed they might be able to tunnel from there into Uskroth’s tomb. Having found no sign of an entrance to the tomb after nearly a week of frustrated digging, Skreed killed the cleric and ordered the team to move into Trunau proper—first to the Ramblehouse, then into an old house in upper Trunau that Skreed purchased from an unscrupulous seller at the Barterstones. Skreed ordered a native Trunauan accomplice, a half-orc cutpurse named Daktani, to regularly visit the Plague House to meet with a pair of flood troll messengers (one of whom Rodrik accidentally encountered) to coordinate the activities of Skreed’s infiltrators and the Twisted Nail orcs waiting to attack the town.

There are multiple ways of entering the ruined building: through the front doors (area **H1**), the collapsed wall in the ruined sitting room (area **H3**), the open wall or the back door in the collapsed stairwell (area **H6**), and the hole in area **H6** that open into the basement (area **H12**). Unless otherwise noted, the doors on the Plague House’s ground level are of good wooden construction (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 16), while those in the basement are iron (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28). Ceilings within the Plague House are generally 10 feet high and all rooms are dark, though those areas with exterior windows have normal light during the day.

H1. Front Entrance

The Plague House’s front doors sit three feet above the ground. Charred wooden beams and ash are all that remains of a small porch and stairs that once led to the entrance. The small windows flanking either side of the doorframe are broken,

How I wish I could divulge my fears and hopes to my beloved Brinya. The risk is too great, of course—I would hate to implicate her in the dire scheme I've only just started to unravel. Not to mention how much I fear her ire over my loss of the hopeknife she gifted me. What a fool I have been these past few weeks.



I still haven't found the hopeknife, and whoever's making the replacement at Clamor is certainly taking her time. Katrezra was oddly quiet when I met with him today. When I asked for his thoughts, he told me to leave him be, and to give

up my foolish investigation altogether. He was so supportive of my mission until now—what could have changed his heart so?



Katrezra's visions of the Plague House have been getting more frequent as the days go on. He claims "something wicked lurks beneath the ashes of the past." I'm fearful of what his strange dreams portend,

but I must investigate the Plague House ruins once again. Tonight is Ruby's hopeknife ceremony; tomorrow I will search the ashes once more. Katrezra has recommended he hold onto my journal for safekeeping, and while I am hesitant to part with my writings for even a moment, I know his logic is sound.

HANDOUT #3

but a large stained glass window dominating the face of the building to the right remains in fine shape, and shows a varicolored image of Iomedae holding her sword aloft.

Climbing up the burnt landing to the front doors requires a successful DC 5 Climb check or a boost from an ally. The doors are charred and weather-beaten heavy oak, but they open easily enough.

H2. Haunted Infirmary (CR 3)

Two rows of scorched, wrought-iron bedframes take up most of the space in this soaring chamber, resting between a fire-blackened altar to the southwest and double doors to the northeast. A second set of double doors leads to the northwest, and a single iron door exits the chamber to the southeast. Brightly colored holy figures stare down from the stained-glass windows built into the blackened stone walls, their visages noticeably less damaged than the rest of the room.

When the church was first built, this large chamber served as the sanctuary for Iomedae's worshipers. After the church was destroyed by raiding orcs, the sanctuary was converted into an infirmary for Trunau's plague victims.

However, the Plague House's second fiery destruction killed all within shortly thereafter, including the patients, who were too weak to escape the flames.

The vaulted ceiling is 25 feet high in this room. One of the beds conceals a trap door in the floor that can be found with a successful DC 18 Perception check. The half-orc agent Daktani uses the trap door to enter and exit area H11 in the Plague House's basement. During the day, the rickety trap door can be opened easily, but at night, Daktani is always careful to bar the trap door behind him when he goes down into the basement. Fortunately, the trap door is in bad repair (hardness 5, hp 8, break DC 15).

Haunt: The spirits of the plague victims who died here have long haunted this room and are the leading cause behind Trunau's superstitions regarding the Plague House. The haunt activates as soon as a living creature walks down the aisle between the beds. Daktani avoids the haunt using Stealth, having accidentally triggered it the first time he used the trap door.

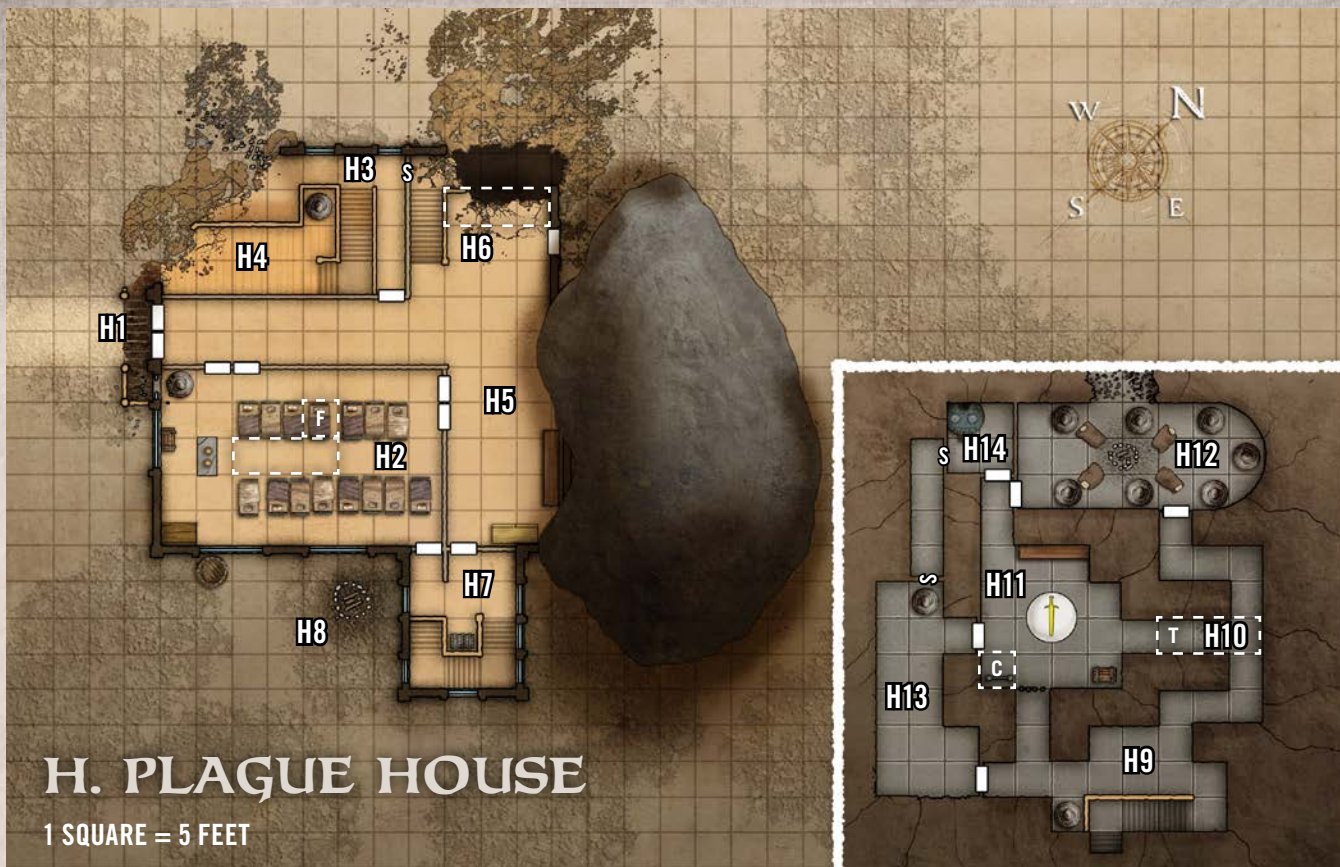
RESTLESS PLAGUE VICTIMS

CR 3

XP 800

NE haunt (5-ft.-wide-by-15-ft.-long aisle)

Caster Level 3rd



H. PLAGUE HOUSE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Notice Perception DC 21 (to notice the stench of burning flesh)
hp 6; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 hour

Weakness tricked by Stealth

Effect When this haunt is triggered, the burnt corpses of plague victims appear on the bedframes, sitting straight up and screaming, their mouths full of fire and ashes. All creatures in the area are targeted by a heightened *scare* spell (Will DC 14).

Destruction Casting *hallow* within this chamber permanently destroys the haunt.

Treasure: Over the years, occasional visitors to the Plague House—especially young Trunauan couples—have accidentally left behind belongings in the ruins. Searching through the ashes of furniture and in the corners of the room turns up a small haul of ornamental valuables, including an ornate hopeknife (worth 100 gp), a heart-shaped gold locket (worth 45 gp), and 63 sp.

Development: If the PCs break open the barred trap door at night, the noise alerts Daktani in area H11, who hastily leaves the Plague House before the PCs encounter him.

H3. Ruined Sitting Room (CR 1)

Most of this room is in shambles, and the western wall has collapsed in a heap of rubble. A staircase to the northeast leads

to a wooden loft upstairs; the area beneath the loft is filled with fallen beams, jumbled bricks, and other debris.

The stairs lead up to the loft at area H4. A secret door in the northeast wall leads to the underside of the staircase in area H6, but it's practically falling off its hinges, so only a successful DC 15 Perception check is required to locate the door.

Creatures: Two giant centipedes have nested among the rubble and debris beneath the wooden loft. The centipedes come out of hiding and attack any creatures entering this room through the collapsed western wall or climbing up the stairs to area H4.

GIANT CENTIPEDES (2)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 43)

H4. Private Shrine

Most of this wooden loft is still standing—this is the only remnant of the building's destroyed second floor. The roofless chamber is completely exposed to the elements and filled with soot-covered debris, fire-damaged furnishings, and charred wooden beams. A large, soot-covered brass statue of a goddess with a longsword

in one hand and a kite shield in the other stands precariously on the northern edge of the platform above a rickety flight of stairs.

The Iomedean priests once used this gallery as a private chamber in which to rest between sermons and privately worship their goddess in a more secluded setting. The priests in charge of rebuilding the Plague House refurbished the room to serve as an office, though that role was likewise short lived. The stairs descend to area **H3**.

PCs who succeed at a DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check recognize the statue as Iomedae. Any worshiper of Iomedae who prays before the statue gains a +2 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects for 24 hours. If the statue is cleaned of soot and polished beforehand, this bonus increases to +4. An individual can gain the benefits of this effect once per week.

H5. Ruined Hall (CR 2)

The support walls and pillars that once connected the Plague House to the huge boulder behind it have burnt and crumbled in this ruined chamber, revealing nearly the entire face of the monolithic stone as well as much of the sky above. Jagged red runes have been painted onto the rock in long, broad strokes that reach from top to bottom. A cabinet on the southeast wall and a tall bookcase against the northeastern wall are all that remain of the room's furnishings.

The runes painted on the rock (which older Trunauans sometimes refer to as the "Freestone") spell out the name "Skreed" in Orc. Any PC who speaks Orc or who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Linguistics check can decipher the characters. The leader of the half-orc saboteurs slathered his name here in war paint, partly to mock the people of Trunau after his tribe destroys their village, and partly to solidify his own mark on this miserable human town.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check spots "R + B" carved on a support beam near the bookshelf—a lingering reminder of the last time Rodrik and Brinya met in the Plague House to share their love.

Creature: A giant spider waits in the eastern corner of the room. It hides in its webs, so a successful DC 23 Perception check is needed to notice it before it strikes.

ADVANCED GIANT SPIDER **CR 2**
XP 600
hp 22 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 258)

Treasure: An abandoned hopeknife sits in plain sight on one of the shelves in the bookcase to the northeast. Its blade bears the inscription, "For Rodrik, my love." This is the hopeknife that Brinya originally gave to Rodrik, but he misplaced it here. In addition, the bookcase contains a

false back that can be discovered with a successful DC 16 Perception check. The small cubby behind the false back holds an ornate gold coffer studded with numerous gems. The coffer is empty, but is itself worth 500 gp.

Pushing aside the rotted boards in the cabinet to the southeast reveals an iron flask containing *oil of magic weapon* and another holding a *potion of shield of faith*, a beat-up steel scroll case (worth 5 gp) holding two *scrolls of knock* and a *scroll of summon swarm*, and two vials of holy water.

Development: If the PCs bring Rodrik's hopeknife back to Kurst, he considers it solid proof that his brother's suicide was in fact a murder. If the PCs have already interviewed Brinya, the knife also confirms her story. However, if they haven't yet discovered the other major clues—Rodrik's receipt for a replacement hopeknife (see **Lead #1**) and his journal, in the hands of Katrezra at Clamor (see **Lead #6**)—Kurst urges the PCs to continue their investigation. If Rodrik didn't actually commit suicide, as this new evidence suggests, then who is responsible for his death? And where did the other hopeknife come from? A successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to gather information or Knowledge (local) check is sufficient for the PCs to learn that nearly all of the town's hopeknives are made at Sara Morninghawk's smithy, Clamor (see **Lead #6**).

H6. Collapsed Stairwell (CR 3)

The wooden staircase here that once led to the upper story has all but crumbled to ashes. The northern wall has collapsed, and the floor underneath has sunk entirely, leaving a dark, gaping hole in the ground surrounded by rubble. A single door exits the room to the northeast.

The pile of rubble surrounding the collapsed wall and hole in the ground is 15 feet high, requiring a successful DC 14 Climb check to scramble up or down. The hole leads to area **H12** in the basement beneath, but the floor surrounding it is unstable (see Hazard, below). The door to the northeast leads outside, but it is stuck closed (break DC 16). In addition, a secret door beneath the staircase to the northwest leads to area **H3**, and can be found with a successful DC 15 Perception check.

Creatures: Two adolescent spiders, from the same brood as their older sibling in area **H5** to the southeast, lurk amid the rubble and cobwebs beneath the ruined staircase here. The stealthy vermin attempt to strike from above without being noticed, but launch a full-out assault thereafter. The spiders flee if they are attacked with fire (such as a burning torch) or if their webs are set ablaze.

YOUNG GIANT SPIDERS (2) **CR 1/2**
XP 200 each
hp 10 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 258)

Hazard: The floor in this room is particularly unstable near the hole in the floor. Any character can notice the danger with a successful DC 15 Perception check; characters with the stonecunning ability gain a +2 bonus on the check, and can automatically attempt a check to notice the unstable floor upon coming within 10 feet of the hazard. Any Medium or larger creature that steps in one of the three squares adjacent to the hole causes the floor to collapse; anyone standing in any of the squares marked on the map when this happens must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or fall 20 feet into area **H12** below, taking 2d6 points of falling damage.

Story Award: If the PCs overcome the hazard, either by noticing the danger and avoiding it or by falling victim to it and surviving, award them 400 XP.

H7. Annex (CR 1)

Two iron doors connect this small stone extension to the Plague House's main building. A large steel lockbox sits in front of a steep stone staircase that winds down into darkness.

The staircase leads down to area **H9**.

Creatures: Three giant rats range between this room and the basement below, scavenging for food. They attack any creature entering the room.

DIRE RATS (3) **CR 1/3**
XP 135 each
 hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 232)

Treasure: The steel lockbox in the room has been magically sealed with an *arcane lock* since before the Plague House burned down half a century ago. Daktani and the other half-orcs weren't able to open the chest, which must either be broken open (hardness 10, hp 30, break DC 33), unlocked with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check, or bypassed with a *dispel magic* or *knock* spell. Breaking open the chest with brute force has a 75% chance of breaking each item inside (roll separately for each breakable item). The lockbox contains a *potion of darkvision*, a *scroll of barkskin*, a *scroll of ghostbane dirge*^{APG}, a masterwork hand crossbow, and a case containing 10 normal bolts, 10 cold iron bolts, and 10 silver bolts.

H8. Fire Pit

A shallow fire pit surrounded by a ring of stones sits in a corner formed by two of the Plague House's walls.

Daktani burns alchemically treated coals to signal the flood trolls to come to meetings in the Plague House. If the PCs arrive here at night, bright blue coals smolder in the fire pit. A successful DC 13 Craft (alchemy) check is enough to reveal the coals' alchemical nature.

H9. Basement Stairwell

The stone stairs end in a stark subterranean chamber. Doorways to the northwest and southwest offer egress from the room. Around the corner to the south, a lone statue has been relegated to a dusty corner behind the stairs.

The statue depicts Iomedae (recognizable with a successful DC 10 Knowledge [religion] check) in a pose of peace, with both her hands wrapped loosely around the hilt of her sheathed sword, which looks oddly askew.

Treasure: The statue's sword is a masterwork longsword. When Daktani moved this statue from area **H13** to loot the urns behind it, he accidentally knocked the sword out of Iomedae's grasp. He returned the weapon to roughly the way it was, failing to realize that the sword itself is worth much more than the few coppers in the urns.

H10. Trapped Hallway (CR 2)

Daktani is no fool, and he knows there is a high risk of being discovered when he meets with the flood trolls in the Plague House's basement. To prevent unwanted guests or vermin from disturbing him in area **H11**, the half-orc has set a trap in this hallway.

Trap: Using a camouflaged pressure plate, a trio of bear traps, and some wire rigging, Daktani has created a clever trap capable of maiming and restraining up to three intruders at once. Stepping on the pressure plate (marked **T** on the map) triggers the interlinked traps, affecting any creatures in the marked squares.

INTERLINKED BEAR TRAPS **CR 2**
XP 600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 15; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual; **Bypass** hidden switch (Perception DC 25)

Effect Atk +10 melee (2d6+3); sharp jaws spring shut around the creatures' ankles and hold the creatures immobile; creatures can escape with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check, DC 22 Escape Artist check, or DC 26 Strength check; multiple targets (up to three targets in a 15-ft. line)

Development: If Daktani (see area **H11**) becomes aware of intruders in this area, he uses his cunning trigger rogue talent to remotely trigger the traps here before confronting the invaders with the help of the flood troll Ghaer.

H11. Meditation Chamber (CR 4)

Embedded into the floor of this chamber is a ten-foot-diameter granite emblem of a faded gold and white longsword. Four passages lead out of the chamber in different directions. A

portcullis blocks the southern exit, and a sturdy wooden door leads west. A ladder in the southern corner of the room leads upward, and a small chest and decrepit bookshelf face one another from opposite walls.

The wooden portcullis to the southeast is currently closed (hardness 5, hp 30, lift DC 25); a lever on the wall adjacent to the portcullis raises or lowers the gate. The ladder leads to the trap door in area **H2** above. With a successful DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check, a character identifies the circular seal on the floor as a depiction of Iomedae's holy symbol.

Creatures: Daktani is a middle-aged half-orc resident of Trunau and an accomplice of Skreed Gorewillow. Although he's lived in town his whole life and Trunau has a reputation for welcoming his kind, Daktani has always felt the sting of prejudice more painfully than other half-orcs in town. When Skreed approached Daktani and asked him to take part in a plot that would assure the devastation of Trunau and guarantee Daktani a leadership position in Skreed's orc tribe, the rogue was only too happy to agree.

Skreed tasked Daktani with scheduling regular meetings with the flood trolls who serve as emissaries between Skreed's half-orc saboteurs and the Twisted Nail orcs poised to attack Trunau to keep both groups updated on each other's progress. The flood troll Ghaer and her twin sister Lehi have been taking turns meeting with Daktani, causing much confusion on the half-orc's part, but ensuring that neither flood troll has more than half the information necessary to bring down the orcs' raid in case one of them should be captured.

If the PCs visit the Plague House during the day, this room is empty. After sunset, however, the half-orc traitor Daktani and the flood troll Ghaer are meeting here. Ghaer has been away from flowing water for more than 24 hours, thereby gaining a +2 natural armor bonus to her AC. If Daktani is alerted to the PCs' approach, such as by hearing them enter through the trap door in area **H2**, he and Ghaer flee the Plague House basement as fast as possible.

Melee mwk morningstar +4 (1d8+1) or short sword +3 (1d6+1/19–20)

Ranged dagger +5 (1d4+1/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat If forced to fight, Daktani tries to hinder opponents with dirty tricks and his tangleburn bag, flanking with Ghaer as much as possible to make sneak attacks. Daktani dodges around the basement and ruins above, both of which he knows quite well by now. He attempts to lead enemies into traps (using his cunning trigger rogue talent to set off the trap in area **H10** if it hasn't yet been triggered), through monster-infested areas, and anywhere else hazardous enough to shake pursuers.

Morale If Ghaer is defeated and Daktani is reduced to 5 hit



DAKTANI CR 2

XP 600

Male middle-aged half-orc rogue 3

LE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 20 (3d8+3)

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

Defensive Abilities evasion, orc ferocity, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

DAKTANI

points or fewer, he tries to escape with the use of his smoke pellets or *potion of vanish*. If escape seems unlikely, the cowardly half-orc lays down his weapons and surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 11, **Int** 14, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3 (+5 dirty trick); **CMD** 16 (18 vs. dirty trick)

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Dirty Trick^{APG}

Skills Acrobatics +9 (+13 when moving through a threatened square or enemy's space), Bluff +5, Climb +7, Disable Device +10, Disguise +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +6, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9

Languages Common, Giant, Hallit, Orc

SQ orc blood, rogue talents (cunning trigger^{APG}), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, *potions of pass without trace* (2), *potion of vanish*^{APG}, smoke pellets^{UE} (2), tangleburn bag^{UE}; **Other Gear** leather armor, daggers (5), mwk morningstar, short sword, *belt of tumbling*^{UE}, alchemically treated coals (see area **H8**), crowbar, thieves' tools, key to area **H14**, garnet (worth 50 gp), 30 gp

GHAER**CR 2****XP 600**

Female flood troll (see page 88)

hp 22

Treasure: The bookshelf holds little of value—only the mostly destroyed pages of Iomedae's holy text, *Acts of Iomedae*, and several other weathered scriptures. The chest, however, contains much of the loot Daktani has vengefully stolen from Trunauans over the years as well as some items Skreed gave him for safekeeping, including 1 ounce of *sovereign glue*, 2 doses of *universal solvent*, 50 feet of silk rope, a disguise kit (with 6 uses remaining), a set of thieves' tools, a noble's outfit worth 75 gp, a signet ring worth 50 gp, and coins totaling 237 gp, 155 sp, and 55 cp.

Development: If Daktani and Ghaer get wind of the PCs and leave the Plague House before the PCs encounter them, you should endeavor to guide the PCs back to the Plague House at a later point to give them another chance to encounter the conspirators. If their meeting was interrupted by the PCs, Daktani and Ghaer meet again the following night. The traps in area **H10**, the corpse of the half-orc cleric Akrish in area **H12**, and the presence of the prisoner Othdan in area **H14** all point to the Plague House's recent occupation, and should provide enough reasons for the PCs to visit the site again in hopes of uncovering the truth behind Rodrik's investigation and his subsequent death.

If the PCs capture either Daktani or Ghaer alive, they can learn a bevy of information about the recent goings-on in Trunau. Ghaer only speaks Giant, however, and knows only half as much as Daktani, since she shares her duties with her twin sister, Lehi. Daktani, on the other hand,

is easier to communicate with and knows much more—but even then, there are gaps in his knowledge. It doesn't take much threatening to get the cowardly rogue to talk, though he stays cagey on details unless intimidated with physical force, and even if he intimidated, attempts to keep as many details as possible to himself.

Daktani knows that a group of half-orcs has infiltrated Trunau, and that an orc raid on the town is planned for the near future. He doesn't know the details, or when the attack is supposed to take place—only that the half-orcs are looking for something in town first. Skreed never specified to Daktani who exactly he was working for, always cryptically referring to his other partners as “the tribe.” Daktani can give the PCs the name of his contact, Skreed Gorewillow, but since Daktani met with Skreed only while the alchemist was in his true half-orc form, and since Skreed disguises himself as a human whenever he walks about Trunau, it would be virtually impossible for the rogue to locate or point out his boss. Skreed picked Daktani as his accomplice for this very reason—since Daktani has his own residence in Trunau, Skreed could keep the rogue ignorant of the other half-orcs' hideout in the town. As such, Daktani has no way of knowing the location of his boss or any of the other half-orc saboteurs.

H12. Hall of Heroes (CR 1)

This once-grand flagstone hall is filled with statues of different celestial creatures in every corner. An old fire pit in the center of the room is bordered on all sides by moth-eaten bedrolls, while shovels, picks, and other digging equipment lie strewn about a shallow tunnel bored into the northeastern wall. The ceiling above the tunnel has collapsed, leaving a hole open to the sky above a pile of burnt rubble.

The pile of rubble in this room leads up to area **H6** 20 feet above. A successful DC 14 Climb check is required to scale the debris. This is where Skreed's half-orcs originally dug in search of Uskroth's tomb, on the advice of the group's cleric, Akrish. The half-orcs left their shovels and other digging equipment here when they vacated the Plague House basement in the days leading up to Ruby's hopeknife ceremony.

Creatures: As they dug toward where they believed Uskroth's tomb to be, Skreed's half-orcs inadvertently struck a rat tunnel. To the half-orcs' dismay, the vermin that poured forth from the warren were no ordinary rats, but undead horrors able to become ghostly apparitions. Two of these shadow rats—undead vermin with rotting, translucent skin—still lurk in the rubble, and attack any living creatures investigating the partially dug tunnel or pile of rubble.

SHADOW RATS (2)
CR 1/2
XP 200 each
Tome of Horrors Complete 504

NE Tiny undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE
AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 5 each (1d8+1)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities incorporeal form, shadow blend; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE
Speed 40 ft., climb 15 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d3–2 plus 1d2 Strength damage and disease)

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

STATISTICS
Str 6, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 8 (12 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse^B
Skills Climb +10, Perception +8, Stealth +14; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth; uses Dex to modify Climb

SPECIAL ABILITIES
Disease (Ex) *Filth fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 11, *onset* 1d3 days, *frequency* 1/day, *effect* 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage, *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Incorporeal Form (Su) As a standard action a shadow rat can assume an incorporeal form. It can maintain this form for up to 1 hour per day. In this form, the shadow rat gains the incorporeal subtype and has AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+1 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 size). The shadow rat can still bite corporeal opponents while in its incorporeal form, but its attack deals only Strength damage and doesn't cause hit point damage or disease.

Shadow Blend (Su) In any condition of illumination other than bright light, a shadow rat can disappear into the shadows as a move action, giving it total concealment (50% miss chance). Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability; a *daylight* spell, however, does.

Strength Damage (Su) A shadow rat deals Strength damage to living foes it bites. A creature reduced to 0 Strength does not die but cannot move and is unconscious.

Treasure: The body of the half-orc cleric Akrish still lies here where Skreed killed him, partially obscured amid the loose rocks and dirt of the aborted tunnel. None of the other half-orcs dared move the body for fear of Skreed's retribution, and the rats and other vermin have had their fill of the corpse. Pulling the cleric's remains from the rubble requires

a successful DC 10 Strength check. The macabre corpse still wears a suit of sturdy chainmail, and his pockets hold a *wand of cure light wounds* with 8 charges remaining, a fine silver dagger (worth 160 gp), a red gold unholy symbol of Nulgreth, the Blood God (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Belkzen, Hold of the Orc Hordes*) worth 60 gp, and six black onyx gems (worth 25 gp each).

H13. Urn Repository (CR 3)

The walls of this chamber are pocked with skull-sized cubbyholes, each containing a single brass or clay urn—some long since shattered or dented, others still intact. A lightly colored stone statue depicting a burning chariot wheel occupies the northwest corner of the room. Two iron doors on the eastern wall allow egress from the room.

A successful DC 17 Knowledge (religion) check is enough to recognize the statue here as Jingh, one of Iomedae's celestial emissaries. A secret door behind the statue of Jingh can be spotted with a successful DC 18 Perception check. The cobweb-ridden passageway behind it leads to the secret door into area H14.

Creature: When he first arrived in Trunau, Skreed brought an infant gelatinous cube with him to use as a guard for the half-orcs' hideout. After a few too many of his saboteurs fell victim to the cube, however, Skreed moved the monster to this chamber and shut it inside, where the iron doors would


SHADOW RAT

keep it at bay. The cube has since grown to adult size and still waits in the center of the room, hungry for food.

GELATINOUS CUBE**CR 3****XP 800****hp 50** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 138)

Treasure: Daktani looted most of this room before Skreed moved the gelatinous cube here, but missed several items of value, which are now embedded in the ooze: a *scroll of hold portal* in a steel scroll case (worth 50 gp), a masterwork chain shirt, a falchion, a star rose quartz amulet worth 75 gp, and coins totaling 20 gp, 95 sp, and 144 cp.

H14. Furnace Room

An old cast-iron furnace and a pile of coal occupy the corners of this cramped chamber. Ash and fallen rubble clutter the area around the furnace where the chimney above has collapsed.

The iron door leading into this room from area **H11** is locked (Disable Device DC 20); Daktani (see area **H11**) carries the key. The secret door in this room can be discovered with a successful DC 20 Perception check.

Creature: Rodrik Grath wasn't the only one to stumble upon Grenseldek's plot against Trunau. Several nights ago, before one of his meetings with Ghaer, Daktani caught a young man named **Othdan** (NG male human commoner 2; use the stats for a pig farmer on page 256 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* if necessary) snooping around the Plague House. When Othdan spotted Daktani, the half-orc knocked the boy unconscious, dragged him to the furnace room, and locked him inside. Daktani is worried that he made a mistake in capturing the boy; he has no idea what to do with a prisoner, and he's worried that killing Othdan might cause more problems than it solves. For now, Daktani's content to let the boy rot in here. Othdan doesn't make much noise for fear of angering the volatile half-orc who kidnapped him, but if he hears the PCs' voices in the hallway outside the furnace room, he begins yelling for them to set him free. Neither Othdan nor Daktani is aware of the secret door that leads to area **H13**.

It was dark when Daktani captured Othdan, so the bewildered commoner didn't get a good look at his captor's face. If he sees Daktani again, though, he immediately recognizes him and cries, "That's the one! That's the one!" While Othdan could overhear snippets of conversation from within his cell, he couldn't understand anything Daktani and Ghaer were saying because they always spoke in Giant.

**OTHDAN**

Treasure: Despite being cooped up in the room for several days, Othdan did not find the sack of 55 pp hidden beneath the pile of coal here, but a PC can discover it with a successful DC 15 Perception check. In addition, Othdan gives the PCs a *campfire bead* (*Ultimate Equipment* 286) if they return him to Trunau.

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Othdan and return him safely to Trunau, award them 800 XP.

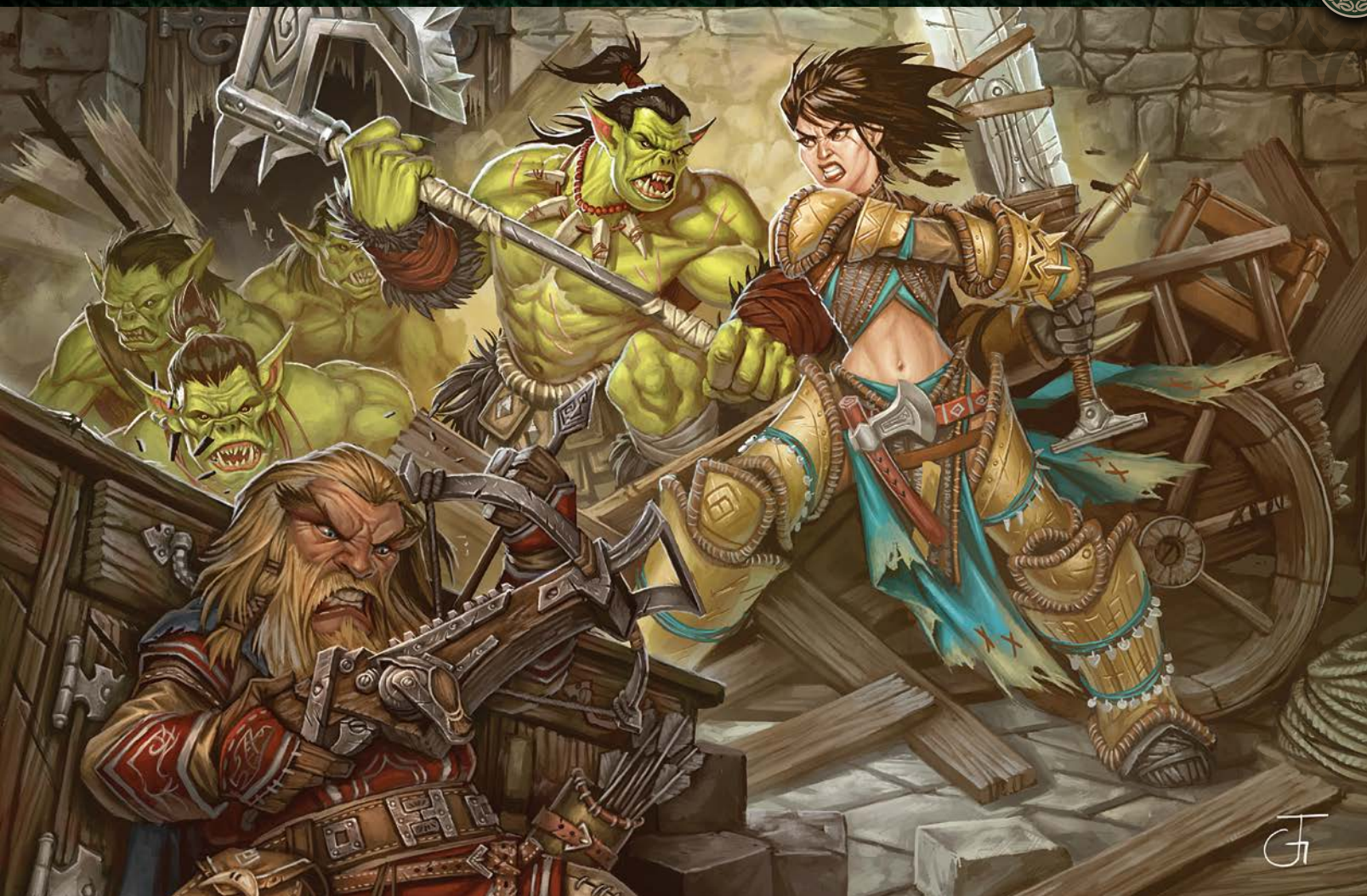
EVENT 4: RODRIK'S FUNERAL

Once the PCs have explored the Plague House and faced Daktani and Ghaer, Kurst asks the PCs to join him at the Flame of the Fallen (area **I**) for Rodrik's funeral just before sunset. In addition to Kurst and his father Jagrin, Brinya and Omast are present, as well as Katrezra, assuming the PCs have tracked him down and received Rodrik's journal from him. High Priestess Tyari Varvatos officiates the ceremony. After consecrating the Flame of the Fallen with sacred herbs, Tyari

performs a traditional requeining of the deceased's hopeknife. If the PCs found Rodrik's real hopeknife in the Plague House and give it to Brinya, Jagrin, Kurst, or Tyari, Tyari performs the ritual using the deceased hero's true blade. Otherwise, she uses a ceremonial replacement hopeknife. Heating the hopeknife in the alchemically infused flames causes the blade to turn pure black, and after the ritual is over, Tyari hands the dagger to Rodrik's grieving fiancée, Brinya.

If the PCs report their investigatory findings to Kurst or his father Jagrin, the elder Grath releases a long breath, saying "At least we know Rodrik didn't disgrace himself with an unnecessary suicide." Depending on how much information the PCs have gleaned about the planned orc attack on Trunau, they may have some dire news for the Graths and the other citizens. By this point, Kurst has come to terms with his brother's death, and he takes the news with surprising resolve. As long as the attack won't take place until the half-orcs signal for it, Kurst reasons, and as long as the militia keeps guards stationed at the beacons and around the city walls, Trunau has little to fear. Even if the saboteurs signal the attack from outside the town's walls without being detected, the militia should have time to sound the alarm and close the gates.

For now, it seems that the orc threat is not immediate, and Kurst wishes to spend the rest of the day honoring his fallen brother's life. Such peace is not destined to be, however, for the orcs strike earlier than even Skreed Gorewillow anticipated.



PART 2: TRUNAU UNDER SIEGE

Never a patient woman, the hill giant chieftain Grenseldek has gotten tired of waiting for Skreed's signal, and has ordered the Twisted Nail orcs waiting outside town to attack Trunau and find Uskroth's tomb. In addition to the horde of orcs headed toward Trunau, nearly a dozen half-orc infiltrators are already within the city walls. The carefully crafted strategies of these saboteurs make it easy for the rest of the raiders to get past the town gates and ensure the attack will be one of the most successful orc raids on Trunau in the town's history.

This adventure assumes that the orc raid begins at sundown immediately following Rodrik's funeral, but the attack can occur earlier or later depending on whether the PCs have completed their investigation of Rodrik's murder and how close they are to uncovering Skreed's conspiracy. If the PCs have veered off track or are taking too long to complete their investigation, the surprise raid can be used to redirect the action away from the murder mystery and to the heart of the adventure.

Regardless of the specifics, the attack should begin at a particularly dramatic moment, when the PCs know something is up but before Trunau can completely ready itself for the raid. The orcs attack at sundown to maximize their advantage against the light-dependent humans of Trunau. Read or paraphrase the following once the raid begins.

As the sun sinks below the horizon, the peaceful evening is shattered by the brazen calls of signal horns. Shouts and screams from the town's lower quarter join the clamor, followed by a crash as an airborne boulder smashes into one of the guard towers. Trunau is under attack!

When the raid begins, the solemn atmosphere at the Flame of the Fallen transforms into a chaotic race to prepare Trunau for attack and protect its citizens. Patrol Captain Jagrin Grath and Omast Frum immediately rally the nearby guards and take command of the town militia to repel the invaders. Those residents capable of fighting stop

what they are doing and head to the walls, while the town leaders hurry noncombatant townsfolk into the Longhouse for safety. The Battle of Bloodmarch Hill has begun!

Kurst Grath immediately approaches the PCs. Their success in investigating Rodrik's death has made them de facto members of Trunau's militia, and Kurst asks them for their help in defending the town. He orders the PCs to light the beacons kept in readiness in various locations around town—he'll need to assemble other militia members to thwart the attack, and the PCs are already an organized group, so they can move more quickly.

Kurst's instructions are simple. First, the PCs must light the beacons at three key locations around town: the Commons beacon (area J), the inner gates beacon (area K), and the Hopespring beacon (area M). The Flame of the Fallen (area I) is already lit from Rodrik's funeral, but if the Trunauans are to have a chance in this fight in the dark, the other beacons must be lit as well.

The PCs' secondary objective is to secure as many areas as possible as they make their way to the beacons. While slaying orcs is helpful, it's even more important for the PCs to rescue townsfolk from danger. For now, Kurst tells the PCs to direct anyone they find in Trunau's upper quarter to head to the Longhouse (area C) to take refuge or rally with the other defenders.

RESOLVE POINTS

Throughout this part of the adventure, the PCs have the chance to accrue Resolve Points by performing heroic deeds or carrying out important tasks. You should keep track of the number of Resolve Points earned by the PCs, as this will determine the difficulty of their encounter with the cave giant, Crusher (see **Event 6**), at the conclusion of the orc raid. While the PCs need not know of the existence of Resolve Points, you should encourage the PCs to perform actions that reward these points by lauding their brave efforts in defending the town whenever they receive a Resolve Point, and describing the carnage wrought by the orc raiders whenever they fail to gain a Resolve Point.

J. COMMONS BEACON (CR 3)

Because it is visible from nearly all sides, the Commons beacon is the most important beacon in upper Trunau (apart from the Flame of the Fallen). It is also the closest beacon to the Flame of the Fallen, and is thus likely to be the first one the PCs ignite once they receive their orders from Kurst. Lighting the beacon is the easy part—a lit torch is enough to set the 10-foot-wide pyramid of wood and kindling ablaze—but the chaos surrounding the fire pit might be more troublesome for the PCs.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive at the Commons beacon, a lynch mob has formed around Brinya Kelver, led

by a cleric named Baseil Sabask from the nearby Trunau Countinghouse, the town's temple of Abadar. Although half-orcs are usually accepted in Trunau (at least 40 of them reside here), Baseil has never been able to overcome his racial prejudice. He is tired of seeing war besiege his hometown time and again, and now that his home is under attack, he's ready to take action. Though Baseil doesn't truly believe that Brinya is responsible for the orc raid, neither does he think that she is completely innocent. When Baseil spotted Brinya in the street, he lashed out at her verbally, attracting the attention of other residents. The situation quickly escalated from there, and now the PCs find themselves faced with a potential riot.

Calming the townsfolk quickly before anyone is harmed requires a silver tongue. While the PCs can resolve this encounter strictly through roleplaying, they can also de-escalate the situation with Diplomacy. Baseil is the obvious ringleader of the enraged Trunauans; his starting attitude is unfriendly, and a successful DC 23 Diplomacy check is required to shift his attitude to indifferent. If the PCs succeed at this check, they can attempt a DC 18 Diplomacy check, which, if successful, shifts Baseil's attitude to friendly and ends the threat. Alternatively, the PCs can try to appeal to those townsfolk who are less riled up. If the PCs succeed at two consecutive DC 15 Diplomacy checks, enough of the mob backs down to essentially overturn Baseil's leadership.

Coercion is a slightly more difficult prospect. Violence begets violence, and the townsfolk view threats toward Baseil or any other member of the mob as threats toward all "true Trunauans" (a racially charged term that excludes Trunauan half-orcs). Nonetheless, a proper show of strength and a successful DC 13 Intimidate check is enough to silence Baseil and quell the riot. If combat does break out, only six of the townsfolk, as well as Baseil, take up arms against the PCs; the rest hang back to see how things turn out and flee if attacked.

BASEIL SABASK

CR 1/2

XP 200

Mercenary healer (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 44*)

hp 9

TACTICS

Morale Baseil fights until reduced to 3 hit points or fewer, or until four of the townsfolk have been defeated, at which point he casts *longstrider* and attempts to escape.

ENRAGED TOWNSFOLK (6)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

Village idiot (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide 308*)

hp 6 each

TACTICS

Morale An enraged townsfolk surrenders if reduced to 3 hit points or fewer. Once half their number have been defeated, the other townsfolk yield.

Treasure: Brinya is already grateful to the PCs for their efforts investigating Rodrik's death, and is even more so if they save her from the mob here. If the PCs recovered Rodrik's hopeknife from the Plague House and it was consecrated in the Flame of the Fallen during Rodrik's funeral, Brinya offers them the blade—now a magical dagger called *Brinya's Love* (see the Brinya's Love sidebar)—along with her thanks, promising that “When the time is right, Rodrik's spirit will help protect those who laid his soul to rest.”

Development: If the PCs fail to stop Baseil and the other townsfolk from targeting Brinya, the situation looks grim. Just before violence breaks out, however, Chief Defender Halgra arrives. She gains the attention of the entire crowd with a well-placed thunderstone, and commands the townsfolk in her booming voice to leave Brinya alone and take their places on the walls or seek shelter in the Longhouse. She harshly reprimands Baseil and looks none too pleased with the PCs as well, though she doesn't outright say anything to them. She bothers to address the PCs only if they look puzzled or taken aback, in which case she reiterates Kurst's orders and points them toward the inner gates beacon (area K), warning that they'll need to think and act more quickly if they're going to survive the raid.

Story Award: If the PCs quell the riot without harming anyone, award them 800 XP. If the PCs manage to not only prevent the riot but also usher the crowd to safety, award them 1,200 XP instead.

Resolve Points: The PCs earn 1 Resolve Point for stifling the riot, plus an additional Resolve Point if they steer the crowd toward the safety of the Longhouse.

K. INNER GATES BEACON

The inner gates beacon is a relatively easy objective to reach, and the guards at the gate raise the portcullis to allow the PCs to enter the inner quarter, shutting it after them. Conditions on the other side of the gate contrast starkly with those in upper Trunau. In the short time between the start of the raid and the PCs' arrival here, the Twisted Nail orcs have already wrecked much of the inner quarter, utterly destroying the wood pile readied for the beacon, setting fire to multiple buildings, toppling fortifications, and slaying as many townsfolk as possible.

As the PCs get their bearings, Kurst Grath appears, leading a squad of stalwart Trunauan militia members. Kurst orders the PCs to secure the inner quarter as they make their way toward the final unlit beacon near the Hopespring (area M). Already under heavy attack, the



BRINYA'S LOVE

When the hopeknife that Brinya gave to Rodrik was consecrated in the Flame of the Fallen, it was imbued with a portion of Rodrik's spirit and Brinya's love for him.

BRINYA'S LOVE		PRICE
		5,052 GP
SLOT none	CL 7th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA moderate transmutation [good]		

The fire-blackened blade of this hopeknife bears the inscription “my love” in stark silver and glows with light equivalent to a *light* spell when drawn. *Brinya's Love* is a *+1 dagger* infused with the soul of the fallen hero Rodrik Grath and the tears of his fiancée Brinya Kelver. Once per day on command, the wielder can grant the weapon the *ghost touch* weapon special ability for 1 minute. During this time, *Brinya's Love* sheds light equivalent to a *daylight* spell and the wielder gains a +3 sacred bonus to his CMD against disarm and sunder attempts directed at the hopeknife.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>blade of bright victory</i> ^{UM} , <i>daylight</i>	2,677 GP

inner quarter may well fall to the raiders if the PCs don't restore some semblance of order as they navigate the maze of rubble. Meanwhile, Kurst says, he'll lead a sortie from the town to drive “that thing” that's throwing boulders at the town closer to the walls so Trunauan archers can hit it (the PCs will face this monstrous creature themselves in **Event 6**).

L. INNER QUARTER

Entering the inner quarter, the PCs must navigate burning rubble, obstructed pathways, and half-destroyed buildings to get to lower Trunau and light the final beacon at the Hopespring. As the PCs wind their way through the war-torn district, dark storm clouds move in over the town, mingling with smoke and the fading light of day to reduce the ambient brightness in the town to dim light. Remember that unless the PCs have darkvision or other means to see in darkness, the creatures they face in areas of dim light have concealment (20% miss chance).

The following encounters in the inner quarter are all location-based, but generally speaking, you can run this portion of the adventure as a sandbox, allowing the PCs to choose where they go. However, you should try

to ensure that the PCs have overcome most, if not all, of the encounters in the inner quarter before they reach the western gate barricades (area L11).

L1. Southern Barricade

A makeshift barricade has been hastily constructed before the inner quarter's southern gate. The barricade is already covered in the spilled blood of raiders and innocents alike, and several victims of the bloody fight are strewn about the ground north of the barricade.

The barricade is approximately 3 feet high and 5 feet wide. It has an AC of 5, hardness 5, hp 20 per 5-foot square, and a break DC of 20. It costs 2 squares of movement to cross a barricade. A barricade provides cover, but only to creatures within 30 feet of it. An attacker can ignore the cover if he's closer to the obstacle than his target.

Creatures: Acolytes from the Sanctuary and the Trunau Countinghouse have set up a small medical station behind the barricade here. The clerics are busily tending to injured militia members and townsfolk, and have no time to talk with the PCs, other than to tell them that if they find any injured townsfolk in the inner quarter, they should bring the wounded back here to receive medical attention. Guards garrisoned in the southern gate towers will then escort those wounded who are fit to walk back to the Longhouse in upper Trunau.

If the PCs are injured, the acolytes can treat their wounds using the Heal skill before sending the PCs back onto the battlefield; they have no magical healing to spare. The acolytes have a +10 modifier on Heal checks, including a Wisdom modifier of +3 (for treating deadly wounds).

Development: The PCs can earn story awards and Resolve Points by rescuing key townsfolk from the inner quarter and bringing them here for safety. These key townsfolk—and the rewards for rescuing them—are detailed in the locations where they are found. In all, the PCs can bring up to five key townsfolk back to the barricade: Agrit Staginsdar and Sara Morninghawk from area L3, Rabus Clarenston from area L5, Aleril from area L9, and Silvermane from area L12.

L2. Guard Towers

Twenty-foot-high crenellated stone walls, interspersed with 30-foot-high guard towers, bracket either end of the inner quarter. Unless otherwise detailed, these towers have two stories inside (a ground floor and an upper floor that is level with the top of the walls) connected by simple wooden ladders. Most of the guard towers are accessible via a door on the ground, though some can be entered only from the curtain wall connecting the towers. During the raid, these doors are locked (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25,

Disable Device DC 30). The dead guard in area L4 has a key that unlocks all of the doors; short of that, whenever the PCs reach a tower, there is a 25% chance that a Trunauan guard is inside and can let them in.

Each of the towers is described below, with the exception of the eastern lookout tower; this location is detailed in its own encounter (area L7).

L2a–b. Southern Gate Towers: These towers can be entered only from upper Trunau, through doors in their southern walls. Secondary doors in both towers lead to the connecting curtain walls. Each of these towers contains a mechanism that can independently lift the southern gate portcullis.

L2c. Southern Lookout: This tower is accessible only from the wall connected to area L2b. A heavy ballista (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 160) sits atop the tower. Three Trunauan guards crew the ballista, firing at orcs attacking the town from the east.

L2d. Inner Gates Lookout: This 40-foot-high tower stands atop Bloodmarch Hill and is one of the highest vantage points in the town, providing a wide view of the entire inner quarter as well as upper Trunau to the southwest. It has a door at ground level to the southwest and another door on the curtain wall. If the PCs visit this location before they've secured the inner quarter, they can see the current status of the inner quarter from the top of the tower and gain valuable reconnaissance. Allow the PCs to attempt Perception checks to pinpoint potential encounter locations within the inner quarter. This intelligence shouldn't spoil any surprises or give the PCs an unfair advantage, but it can give you the opportunity to point the players toward areas that they haven't yet explored or fully cleared.

L2e–f. Western Gate Towers: These towers are similar to the southern gate towers (areas L2a–b), with doors at ground level from the inner quarter and atop the curtain walls. Two portcullises form the western gate. Each tower contains a winch for one of the gates; thus, both towers must be occupied in order to lift or lower both portcullises. The doors to these towers remain locked, but all the guards within have been killed. Currently, one of the portcullises is raised and inoperable; the second one is lowered and in place, but the orcs are in the process of battering their way through it (see **Event 5** for details).

L2g. Northern Lookout: Like the southern lookout (area L2c), this tower is accessible only from atop the curtain wall. The PCs can also use this tower to learn about the situation around Trunau. From here, the PCs can locate potential encounters within the inner quarter. In addition, they clearly see lower Trunau and the barren hills to the north, which are infested by dozens—if not hundreds—of orc raiders, dire wolf mounts, and barbaric siege weapons.



L3. Staginsdar Household (CR 2)

Long flames lick the walls of this sizeable house, and burning beams crumble to the ground beneath the weight of the sagging roof. Though the front entrance remains accessible for now, the conflagration rages beyond control, threatening the lives of any residents that might be trapped inside.

The home of Councilors Agrit Staginsdar and Sara Morninghawk was set ablaze by a flaming boulder that also ignited the trees in area L8. The PCs have 8 rounds from the time this encounter begins until the house is completely consumed by fire, blocking the exits and making escape all but impossible. In addition, the house is filled with smoke, which provides concealment to all creatures inside (see Hazard, below). If the PCs douse part of the fire (which requires multiple gallons of water, such as the amount created by a *create water* spell), they can stave off the house's destruction by 1 round per such attempt.

Creatures: Sara Morninghawk and her wife Agrit Staginsdar (LN female dwarf wizard 5/fighter 1) were here at home when the first volley of boulders struck the inner quarter and set their house ablaze. If the PCs enter the house, they find Agrit desperately trying to free Sara, who is trapped

beneath a fallen beam. Sara is unconscious and dying—she currently has -4 hit points, and dies at -14 hit points. Sara must be stabilized, and at least one of the PCs must help Agrit hold the beam off Sara as a full round action to prevent her from taking 1 point of fire damage each round (in addition to the 1 point of damage she takes from dying, if she hasn't yet been stabilized). Completely freeing Sara requires the combined strength of at least two PCs and Agrit together (or three PCs). Each participating character must take two consecutive full-round actions to effect the rescue—the trapped smith is freed on the third round.

To make matters worse, a gang of Twisted Nail orc raiders arrives at the scene just as the PCs do, and the PCs must hold off the bloodthirsty orcs while trying to save Agrit and Sara. The orcs fight to the death unless the house seems in danger of imminent collapse, in which case they flee the building.

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (3)

CR 1/3
XP 135 each
hp 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 222*)

Hazard: Anyone inside the burning house must succeed at a Fortitude save each round (DC = 15 + 1 per previous

ALTERNATIVE ORCS

To enhance the flavor of the PCs' encounters with orcs throughout Part 2 of this adventure, feel free to make simple adjustments to the base Twisted Nail orc statistics, adjusting your descriptions of the encounters accordingly. The following rules options can be swapped in for the default orcs' statistics from the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* or *Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex*; simply replace the indicated stat block line with one of the listed options to represent orcs with different weapons or feats. The Weapon Focus feat is not factored into the attack bonuses below—add 1 to the listed attack bonus if the orc has Weapon Focus in the listed weapon. The attack bonuses of weapons marked with an asterisk (*) have been calculated with the assumption that the orc's Weapon Focus feat was replaced by Exotic Weapon Proficiency in that weapon.

Some of the listed feats are teamwork feats, which can inspire fresh and interesting combat tactics for orc raiders. Full rules for teamwork feats can be found in the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*.

Melee greataxe +4 (1d12+4/×3)
orc double axe +4 (1d8+4/×3) or orc double axe +0/−4 (1d8+3/1d8+1/×3)
spiked chain* +4 (2d4+4)

Ranged bolas^{UE*} +1 (1d4+3 nonlethal)
composite shortbow +1 (1d6+3/×3)
tanglefoot bag +1 touch (entangle)
throwing axe +1 (1d6+3)

Feats Blood Vengeance (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 56)

Coordinated Maneuvers (*Advanced Player's Guide* 156)

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (any weapon above that's marked with an asterisk)

Paired Opportunists (*Advanced Player's Guide* 166)

Power Attack

Swap Places (*Advanced Player's Guide* 172)

Weapon Focus (any weapon above)

attempt) or suffer the effects of smoke inhalation (*Core Rulebook* 426).

Treasure: As a reward for their rescue, Agrit gives the PCs a gold necklace set with beautiful white agates and moonstones worth 1,500 gp. A *pearl of power* (1st level) forms the centerpiece of the necklace.

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Agrit and Sara and bring them back to the southern barricade (area L1), award the PCs 400 XP for each NPC rescued (maximum 800 XP).

Resolve Points: If the PCs safely bring Agrit and Sara to area L1, award the PCs 1 Resolve Point per NPC rescued.

L4. Inner Quarter Well

The stench of death hangs over this small square in Trunau's inner quarter. Bodies of all kinds—orcs and humans, men and women, children and the elderly—lie scattered across the cobblestones where they fell. Veins of watery blood crawl from the base of the well in the center of the square, spreading from the limp body of a slain Trunauan guard draped over the side of the well. A rare moment of silence on the battlefield accentuates the sounds of crackling flames in the distance and the steady, hollow drip of blood into the well.

This area offers the PCs a moment's respite as well as a cache of much-needed resources. Allow the PCs several rounds to recover, examine their surroundings, and otherwise gather their bearings. If the PCs start to lose momentum, don't be afraid to interrupt their prolonged rest with the arrival of a group of orc raiders (see area L3) or Freedom Town thugs (see area L5).

Treasure: The dead guard draped over the edge of the well dropped his crossbow into the water 20 feet below, but his other armaments remain on his person, including a longsword, a heavy steel shield, 10 crossbow bolts, a healer's kit with all 10 uses remaining, 50 feet of hemp rope, a key to the doors of the guard towers surrounding the inner quarter (area L2), and 15 gp. His scale mail is broken—a long gash runs down the side where the soldier was fatally wounded. A *potion of cure light wounds* lies in the bloody mud at the base of the well, where it fell from the guard's lifeless hand before he could use it to save himself.

L5. The Killin' Ground (CR 2)

The Killin' Ground is a popular bar in Trunau known for its moonshine. The architecture of the tavern is unique—a retractable canvas roof and a 1-foot gap separating the walls from the ground allow rain to clean the establishment's floors. Some of Skreed Gorewillow's agents were drinking here when the raid began, and they took advantage of the chaos to attack the bar's other patrons. Some of the patrons managed to flee to safety, but many did not. The tavern's proprietor, **Rabus Clarenston** (CN male human rogue 2/expert 2) survived only by playing dead after he was struck by a half-orc's greataxe.

Creatures: A half-orc saboteur named Rishka and two human thugs from Freedom Town are still here when the PCs come by; already drunk before the raid began, the bandits have eschewed joining the rest of the raiders to instead indulge in the Killin' Ground's potent moonshine. All of the saboteurs are considered sickened because of their inebriation. They attack as soon as they see the PCs, calling out drunken insults and fighting to the death.

RISHKA**CR 1****XP 400**Skulking brute (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 144)**hp** 19**Weaknesses** sickened**FREEDOM TOWN THUGS (2)****CR 1/3****XP 135 each**NE foot soldier (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 286)**hp** 8 each**Weaknesses** sickened

Treasure: If the PCs kill the invaders and rescue Rabus, the barkeep gruffly thanks them and offers them alchemical remedies for their trouble. In addition to free drinks for life at the Killin' Ground, he gives them two *potions of remove sickness* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 234) and two vials of soothe syrup (*Ultimate Equipment* 101), which may come in handy later when the PCs encounter a drunken Omast Frum in **Event 5**.

Development: Like the Freedom Town assassins in **Event 3**, the human thugs know very little about their employer or his motives, having met Skreed only while he was in his human guise. The half-orc Rishka is more knowledgeable, as she belongs to the Twisted Nail tribe and knows Skreed. If magically compelled or tortured for long enough (which is a long time for an orc of the Twisted Nail), she can tell the PCs that Skreed was in charge of the infiltration, and that they need to find him if they want justice for the murder of that “bumbling town guard.”

Story Award: Award the PCs 400 XP for rescuing Rabus Clarenston.

Resolve Points: If the PCs bring Rabus safely back to area **L1**, award them 1 Resolve Point.

L6. Looted Homes (CR 2 each)

This small cluster of homes has been abandoned, the residents having fled to the safety of the Longhouse in upper Trunau.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive at this location, a successful DC 15 Perception check reveals the presence of ransacking orcs inside the houses. Each of the three homes contains four Twisted Nail orcs busily looting the buildings of anything valuable.

The PCs might be able to sneak up on the looters if they're stealthy enough (the distracted orcs take a -5 penalty on any Perception checks); otherwise, the orcs charge any non-orcs they don't immediately recognize. Thanks to the noise of the surrounding battle, even if one houseful of orcs is alerted to the PCs' presence, the orcs in the other domiciles remain oblivious.

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (12)**CR 1/3****XP 135 each****hp** 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

Treasure: The orcs have already looted most of the useful goods and supplies from the homes and piled the valuables outside next to a crude cart stacked with orc equipment. The pile contains mostly clothing and food, but a successful DC 14 Perception check while searching through the pile is enough to find 3 doses of armor ointment (*Ultimate Equipment* 102), a bundle of 20 tindertwigs, a golden bird cage (worth 60 gp), four bottles of fine wine (worth 10 gp each), and a masterwork lute. The cart holds a masterwork flail, two orc double axes^{UC}, half a dozen broken falchions, three suits of leather armor, a heavy wooden shield, two climber's kits, two grappling hooks, and 100 feet of hemp rope.

**FREEDOM TOWN THUG**

L7. Eastern Lookout (CR 4)

The door to this guard tower is ajar when the PCs arrive, and several Trunauan guards lie dead on the bottom floor.

Creatures: Six Twisted Nail orcs currently occupy this tower, along with the leader of the raid, an orc skald named Kagak of the Rolling Thunder. Three orcs are stationed on the bottom floor, while the remaining three guard the second floor. Kagak himself stands atop the tower's crenellated roof, violently beating his war drums, spurring on his allies below and striking fear into the hearts of any Trunauans who hear the rhythmic pounding.

If they hear the sounds of battle on the first floor, the orcs on the second floor rush to the roof to join Kagak and ready actions to throw their javelins at attackers climbing onto the roof. Once Kagak begins his raging song (see his Tactics section, below), the orcs in the tower gain the benefits of his inspired rage ability. The skald does not leave the roof, even if he hears his allies being slain below, unless the entire tower is brought down from under him.

KAGAK OF THE ROLLING THUNDER CR 2
XP 600

Male orc skald 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 49)



KAGAK OF THE ROLLING THUNDER

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +1 shield)

hp 23 (3d8+6)

Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Abilities ferocity

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk battleaxe +4 (1d8+1/×3)

Ranged throwing axe +2 (1d6+1)

Special Attacks rage powers (strength surge), raging song 8 rounds/day (inspired rage [+2 Str/Con, +1 Will], song of marching)

Skald Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st (4/day)—*ear-piercing scream*^{UM} (DC 12), *hideous laughter* (DC 13), *lesser confusion* (DC 13), *sleep* (DC 13)

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *mending*, *message*, *read magic*, *resistance*

TACTICS

During Combat Although he has been beating his drums for quite a while, Kagak waits to begin his raging song, which gives his allies the benefits of inspired rage, until enemies enter the tower below. While the orcs under his command engage foes, Kagak casts spells such as *ear-piercing scream*, *hideous laughter*, and *sleep*. He uses his scrolls as needed, summoning monsters, instilling fear in his enemies, or charming opponents.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, Kagak imbibes his *potion of cure moderate wounds* or uses his *wand of cure light wounds* to stay in the battle. He fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13

Feats Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Climb +3, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +7, Perform (percussion) +7, Spellcraft +4

Languages Common, Orc

SQ bardic knowledge +1, versatile performance (percussion), weapon familiarity

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scrolls of cause fear* (2), *scroll of charm person*, *scrolls of grease* (2), *scroll of remove fear*, *scrolls of summon monster I* (2), *wand of cure light wounds* (24 charges), thunderstone; **Other Gear** mwk chainmail, mwk light steel shield, mwk battleaxe, throwing axes (5), antitoxin, war drums

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (6)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

Development: From atop the eastern lookout, the PCs can see lower Trunau and the craggy hills beyond the town's walls. To the northwest, just on the other side of the Barterstones (area N), a group of orcs is operating a catapult, bombarding the guard tower above the Hopespring (area O) with flaming boulders. To the west, another massive boulder smashes into one of the town's guard towers, which collapses into a heap of rubble (see area L13).

In addition, small groups of orc raiders can still be seen charging toward the town's main gate. With a successful DC 25 Perception check, the PCs can make out the forms of mounted Trunauan guards—Kurst and his companions—charging a group of orcs to the north who are accompanying a monstrous giant hurling boulders at Trunau's palisade.

Resolve Point: Award the PCs 1 Resolve Point for defeating Kagak of the Rolling Thunder.

L8. Burning Trees (CR 3)

Thick plumes of pea green smoke billow into the air here, where three hardy trees that flank the road have been set ablaze with green alchemical fire. The air reeks of sulfur and ashes.

Trunau's buildings weren't the only victims of the orcs' flaming boulders—a stray artillery shot landed in the midst of these trees at the outset of the raid, setting fire to some of Trunau's scant flora and creating an area of dangerous smoke (see Hazard, below).

Creatures: An orc ranger is reveling in the destruction of the burning trees along with her trio of trained hounds. The orc drank a *potion of air bubble* (*Ultimate Combat* 222) before entering this area, rendering her immune to the alchemical smoke, though the dogs are still affected (see Hazard, below). While the dogs obey their mistress blindly at first, they spend no longer than 3 rounds in the smoke if they can help it, fleeing outside the cloud whenever possible to avoid the negative effects of smoke inhalation.

CAUSE FOR PAUSE

To emphasize the chaotic nature of the orc raid, you should allow the PCs few opportunities to recuperate between encounters in the inner quarter, preferably restricting such moments of respite to locations specifically called out in the adventure as good opportunities to rest (such as area L4 or just prior to **Event 5**). However, if the PCs are particularly beleaguered or low on resources, you can add one or two of the following optional encounters at any time to ensure that the PCs don't become battlefield casualties.

- A dead apothecary cradles a portable alchemist's lab in his lifeless arms. Nearly everything in the kit is smashed, except for two vials of antitoxin and a container of smelling salts (*Ultimate Equipment* 101).
- A damaged wooden footlocker lies open and abandoned in the middle of the street. A bundle of clothes spills out of the open locker, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Perception check notices a *potion of cure light wounds* and a healer's kit with 5 uses remaining hidden inside the muddy garments.
- The body of an acolyte from the Sanctuary or the Trunau Countinghouse lies dead in the street, bristling with orc javelins. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check while searching the body turns up a *wand of cure light wounds* with 9 charges remaining.

ORC BEAST-TAMER

CR 1

XP 400

Female orc ranger 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 17 (2d10+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities ferocity

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee orc double axe +2/+2 (1d8+4/1d8+1/x3)

Ranged javelin +4 (1d6+3)

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

TACTICS

During Combat The orc beast-tamer orders her dogs to attack any enemies as a move action, supporting them with thrown javelins. In melee, she attacks with her orc double axe, focusing her attacks on human opponents.

Morale The orc fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (orc double axe)

Skills Climb +8, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +4, Perception +6, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Orc

SQ track +1, weapon familiarity, wild empathy +1

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2), acid (2), caltrops; **Other Gear** leather armor, javelins (3), orc double axe^{UC}, scabbard of honing^{UE}, 36 gp

DOGS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

SQ tricks (combat training)

Hazard: The noxious fumes of the alchemical smoke make travel through this area dangerous, if not outright lethal. The smoke obscures vision within the area marked on the map, granting concealment to creatures inside the cloud. The smoke is also laden with alchemical irritants, and all creatures within the cloud take a

–5 penalty on sight-based Perception checks. Creatures entering this area without protection must succeed at a Fortitude save each round (DC = 15 + 1 per previous check) or be nauseated for 1 round. A creature nauseated by the smoke for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. A creature nauseated for 3 or more consecutive rounds takes 1 point of Constitution damage each round from the poisonous reagents mingled with the smoke. Creatures that hold their breath gain a +2 circumstance bonus on their Fortitude saves; covering their mouths with wet cloths or a similar material grants a +1 resistance bonus on the saves.

L9. Dark Alley (CR 4)

As the PCs approach this area, allow them to attempt DC 13 Perception checks to hear the guttural voices of orcs threatening someone down this dark alleyway. In contrast to the dim light in the rest of the district, the narrow alley is obstructed by debris and shrouded in almost complete darkness.

Creatures: Two half-orcs, Urnsul and Vorom, have cornered a human man named Aleril at the end of this alleyway. The villains are speaking in rough Common, and though their exact words are hard to make out, the seething hatred in their voices is clear. At one point, Vorom says, “Move an inch and five of my best come to join us. They won’t be as friendly as we are.” The half-orc is not bluffing; his orc allies are currently ransacking a nearby building (area L10) and are ready to join Urnsul and Vorom at a moment’s notice.

The PCs might be able to sneak up on the half-orcs and take them out quietly if they act tactically. The walls of the buildings flanking the alley have been badly damaged in the attack; gaps and breaks in the wood planks along the entire wall of the eastern building act as arrow slits, granting



ORC BEASTCAMER

improved cover to any archers attacking creatures in the alley from behind the walls.

URNSUL **CR 2**
XP 600

Female half-orc fighter 1/rogue (spy) 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 135)

CE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 22 (3 HD; 1d10+2d8+3)

Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, orc ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk warhammer +6 (1d8+2/×3)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat Urnsul tries to set up flanking opportunities with Vorom to make sneak attacks, and she uses Power Attack with her warhammer as long as she successfully hits doing so.

Morale Urnsul fights until reduced to 0 hit points, when her Fight On feat kicks in. At that point she attempts to escape using her *potion of vanish*. If flight seems unlikely, she surrenders instead.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

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

Feats Fight On^{APG}, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (warhammer)

Skills Bluff +6, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Giant, Orc

SQ orc blood, rogue talents (honeyed words^{APG}), skilled liar +1

Combat Gear *potion of vanish*^{APG}, alchemist's fire (2), thunderstone; **Other Gear** mwk studded leather, light crossbow with 10 bolts, mwk warhammer, *shield cloak*^{UE}, 7 gp

VOROM **CR 2**
XP 600

Traitorous brigand (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 81)

hp 30

Treasure: Aleril is grateful to the PCs for saving him. Aleril is not actually a citizen of Trunau, but rather a native of Lastwall; he was visiting a trade partner when the raid began. While he doesn't have much on his

person, he rewards the PCs with one of his most prized possessions—a set of portable platinum merchant scales worth 600 gp.

Development: If they're attacked, Urnsul and Vorom call out for the orcs in area **L10** to join them. The orcs are distracted by their looting, however, and must succeed at a DC 10 Perception check to hear the battle. If alerted, they join the fight in 1d4 rounds.

Urnsul stands out among the predominantly male orc raiders as both a half-orc and a woman. The PCs may also recognize her name from questioning Sara Morninghawk in Part 1. By interrogating Urnsul, the PCs can learn some valuable background information about the attack. If coerced, Urnsul explains her role in Skreed's grand scheme, laying it out in rough terms. Knowing that she has few options, she is unafraid of punishment at the hands of her orc masters (their abuse is nothing new to her anyway). She gives the PCs full details on how she posed as an apprentice for Sara Morninghawk, stole Rodrik's hopeknife, and hid with the other half-orcs in Trunau.

See Questioning Sara Morninghawk on page 23 for more details. Urnsul knows Skreed is the mastermind behind the entire plot and is responsible for killing Rodrik, but the PCs will need to find Skreed to figure out the reason why the Twisted Nails are so keen on infiltrating Trunau.

Story Award: Award the PCs 400 XP for rescuing Aleril and bringing him to safety at area **L1**.

Resolve Points: If the PCs save Aleril and defeat his orc captors, the party earns 1 Resolve Point. If the PCs get some information out of Urnsul as well, award them an additional Resolve Point.

L10. Orc Looters (CR 2)

Splintered rubble is all that remains of the wall that once separated this kitchen from the adjacent living area. The shattered windows in the walls allow an ominous breeze to waft through the eerie, abandoned home. All the shelves and cabinets have been thoroughly looted or partially destroyed, and the foundation and floorboards have caved in where a smoldering boulder landed in the house.

Creatures: True to the word of Vorom in area **H9**, five orc raiders are busily pillaging this building while awaiting further instructions from their commanders. Unless they've already joined Urnsul and Vorom in area **L9**, the orcs immediately attack anyone who enters the building.


URNSUL

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (5)**CR 1/3****XP 135 each****hp** 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

Treasure: Between them, the orcs have managed to loot valuables worth a total of 500 gp.

L11. Western Gate Barricades

The orcs have breached the inner quarter's western gate. When the PCs arrive at this location, the only thing standing between the orcs and the rest of the inner quarter are two makeshift barricades. See **Event 5** for details of this battle.

L12. Lone Body

A crumpled body lies on the ground behind some buildings ruined in the devastation of the raid.

The body lying near the rubble of the fallen tower (area **L13**) is that of a local celebrity named **Silvermane** (N male elf druid 8). With a successful DC 10 Knowledge (local) check, a character recognizes Silvermane as the mute druid who has watched over Trunau's Hopespring for untold centuries. While Silvermane's motives are unknown, the townsfolk regard him as an ally for his many courageous deeds in previous raids. Silvermane is unconscious but stable at -6 hit points. If the PCs manage to revive him, the druid is still fatigued and badly battered, having suffered the effects of numerous doses of poison at the hands of the orcs, and needs to be helped to safety.

Development: Regardless of whether the PCs rescue him, Silvermane survives the raid. His status has no effect on the events of this adventure, but his presence here foreshadows the role he has to play in the next adventure, "The Hill Giant's Pledge."

Story Award: Award the PCs 400 XP for escorting Silvermane to area **L1**.

Resolve Points: Taking Silvermane to the southern barricade (area **L1**) earns the PCs 1 Resolve Point.

L13. Fallen Tower

This impressive tower once connected Trunau's western inner wall to the side of Bloodmarch Hill, but smoldering wreckage is all that remains of the fallen tower.

The tower fell when it was struck by one of the orc raiders' flaming boulders. Once the gates at area **L11** are closed (see **Event 5**), this is one of the only ways out of the inner quarter. If the PCs take this route, they must succeed at DC 15 Climb checks to scale the rubble to reach the lower section of Trunau and the Hopespring beacon (area **M**).

EVENT 5: ORCS AT THE BARRICADES

When the orc raid began, Skreed Gorewillow's half-orc saboteurs sabotaged the western gate to the inner quarter, allowing the orcs' vanguard into the district (the PCs have likely dealt with many of these orcs and half-orcs in the preceding encounters). Members of Trunau's militia managed to close one of the gate's two portcullises following this initial attack, and were able to construct two barricades behind the gates in preparation for another assault, but all of the guards in the gate towers (areas **L2e** and **L2f**) and at the barricades have either fled or been killed. When the PCs arrive at area **L11**, the orcs are in the process of breaking through the portcullis, and are about to pour through the gate (see *Waves of Orcs* on page 46). Use the map on page 49 for this encounter.

Creature: The PCs encounter a familiar face at the barricades, one they likely haven't seen since before the raid began: Patrol Sergeant Omast Frum. He alone has decided to stand against the orc waves coming through the western gate, but without the PCs' help, he's doomed to failure. If the PCs sobered up Omast earlier, he's sober now; if not, they can attempt to do so now (the reward they received from Rabus Clarenston in area **L5** would be helpful in this endeavor), drastically improving both the sergeant's ability to coordinate attacks and the PCs' chances of defeating the oncoming hordes. You should represent this development through both roleplaying and his actions in combat with the orcs. Otherwise, Omast is intoxicated as much by booze as by heroic fervor, and as the orc waves near, he wastes valuable time sipping from his flask, stumbling over debris, and generally making a mess of things when he's not shouting slurred orders for the PCs to "give them orcs what they came here for" and "let loose the fury of the flaming logs!"

PATROL SERGEANT OMAST FRUM**CR 4****XP 1,200****hp** 42 (see page 19)

Story Award: If the PCs get Omast sober and have not yet received the story award for doing so, award them 600 XP.

Defensive Tactics

In the time between the closing of the western gate portcullis and the PCs' arrival, Omast has managed to stockpile an arsenal of weapons and supplies at the two barricades facing the gate. The PCs, along with Omast, can utilize these supplies to lay waste to the orc hordes coming through the gate. The following encounters give the PCs several opportunities to use unusual strategies, improvised siege weapons, and large-scale defensive maneuvers against large numbers of orcs—the tactics detailed below provide examples of such strategies. Reward bold or particularly clever tactics when appropriate, but don't be afraid to let the

PCs wallow in their despair if they make foolish or unwise choices. It shouldn't take a tactician to know that hiding behind a barricade is safer than running out in the open, and a PC who charges headlong into the oncoming orcs might earn herself an early grave rather than securing a spot for herself among the heroes of Trunau.

Barricades: Two barricades have been set up on the hill leading toward the western gate. The barricades are approximately 3 feet high and 5 feet wide. A barricade has an AC of 5, hardness 5, hp 20 per 5-foot square, and a break DC of 20. It costs 2 squares of movement to cross a barricade. A barricade provides cover, but only to creatures within 30 feet of it. An attacker can ignore the cover if he's closer to the obstacle than his target. See page 195 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for more details on low obstacles and cover.

Brace and Reach Weapons: Omast has gathered a glaive (which has the reach special weapon feature), a guisarme (reach and trip), a halberd (brace and trip), two longswords (brace and reach), and a ranseur (disarm and reach). The weapons are standing upright in a barrel near the westernmost barricade.

Fallen Orcs: Keep track of where individual orcs fall as they are dispatched by the PCs. While bodies and prone allies don't normally impede movement, the barricades and the craggy nature of the inner quarter's hill create a special exception. A square containing a single fallen orc does not require additional movement, but it cannot be charged through; a square containing two fallen orcs costs 2 squares of movement to cross; a square containing three or more fallen orcs costs 3 squares of movement to cross. If the PCs can cause orcs to fall in particular spaces (such as by taking readied actions that trigger when an orc enters a specific square), the number of fallen enemies can quickly pile up, in effect strengthening the barricades.

Flaming Boulder: A large boulder that came crashing into Trunau not long after the raid began sits in the middle of the hill between the two barricades (area **L11a**). The boulder is nearly 10 feet across, and the PCs can roll the stone down the hill (toward the gates) at almost any angle. Additionally, the boulder picked up some of the same alchemical reagent that set fire to the trees in area **L8**, and can be ignited with a torch. Starting the boulder on its journey downhill requires a move action and a successful DC 13 Strength check. The boulder travels in a 10-foot-wide line, attacking all creatures in its path. The boulder has a melee attack bonus of +10; on a successful hit, it deals 3d6 points of bludgeoning damage (plus 1d6 points of fire damage if it's on fire). In addition, any creature struck by the boulder must succeed at a DC 10 Reflex save or be knocked prone. The boulder crashes through any barricades in its path, but comes to a halt when it hits a sturdy solid object such as the inner quarter's wall.

Rolling Logs: Two bundles of logs have been lashed to the western side of the westernmost barricade, one on each side

A DEADLY ENCOUNTER

The barricades encounter in **Event 5** can be particularly lethal if the PCs aren't ready for it, or if they make consistently bad rolls or poor decisions. The purpose of the orc waves isn't to outright ruin the PCs—rather, it's meant to illustrate the sheer chaos and tenacity of an orc raid while giving the low-level PCs a fighting chance of defeating large numbers of orcs. Play up the chaos of orc warfare in the orcs' tactics, which are haphazard and sometimes even outright foolish in the heat of battle. An orc raider might well charge headlong into the PCs' barricade, waste a round throwing javelins at the Trunauan guards defending the western gate's battlement, or pause to claw a sack of gold from a nearby corpse while slipping in the muck and blood of his fallen allies.

Assuming he's sobered up, Omast is a brave combatant who looks out for the PCs, even if it means putting himself in harm's way. If the PCs are having an especially difficult time, consider reducing the numbers of orcs in later waves or having a few Trunauan militia members show up to reinforce them (use the stat blocks for foot soldiers on page 286 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* for these guards). If all else fails, Omast throws himself in front of the hordes in a last-ditch effort to allow the PCs to escape over the rubble of the ruined tower south of the gates (area **L13**). In this case, the PCs gain XP only for the orc waves they actually defeated.

of the road (areas **L11b**). This timber can be cut loose to roll downhill with devastating effect. Releasing the lashings of one of the log bundles requires two full-round actions (thus, releasing a bundle takes one character 2 rounds, and two characters 1 round; four characters could release both bundles in 1 round). Alternatively, a bundle can be released as a standard action by dealing at least 2 points of damage to the lashings with a slashing weapon. When unleashed, a bundle of logs tumbles down the hill in a 20-foot-wide line, attacking all creatures in its path. A bundle of rolling logs has a melee attack bonus of +15; on a successful hit, it deals 3d6 points of bludgeoning damage. In addition, any creature struck by the logs must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or be knocked prone. The rolling logs stop when they reach the western curtain wall.

Sharpened Stakes: The easternmost barricade is equipped with sharpened and splintered wooden fences that Omast salvaged from the wreckage of nearby homes. A PC can ready an action to impale an incoming attacker on the fence posts as though readying a brace weapon against a charge. If readied in this way, the fence posts deal 2d8 points of damage to an orc that ends its movement on the barricade in a square threatened by the PC.

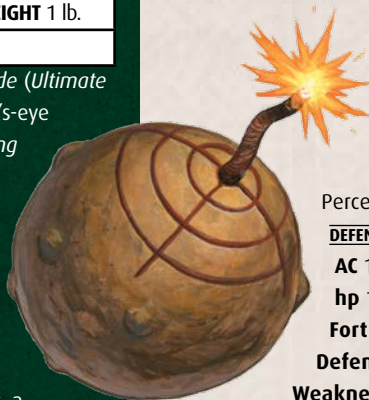
UNERRING GRENADE

Orc bombardiers make use of the following magically enhanced alchemical bomb.

UNERRING GRENADE		PRICE
		266 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA moderate divination		

The warped clay sphere of this +1 *fuse grenade* (*Ultimate Equipment* 107) is painted with a crimson bull's-eye symbol and its fuse is dyed red. An *unerring grenade* can be lit as a move action and thrown like a splash weapon. An *unerring grenade* veers toward its target, whether a creature or a grid intersection, negating any miss chances that would otherwise apply, such as from concealment. The thrower still has to aim at the right square or grid intersection. An *unerring grenade* otherwise functions as a normal fuse grenade (Reflex DC 16 half).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>true seeing</i>	186 GP



Waves of Orcs

Once the PCs have had a few rounds to deal with Omast and plan their tactics, the battle begins. The orcs come through the gate in four waves. Omast and the PCs start behind the westernmost barricade. The orcs and other enemies in each wave start at the entrance to the inner quarter, in the squares just southeast of the gate. Except where noted, the waves of bloodthirsty orcs eschew traditional tactics like ranged fighting and stealth in favor of a single massive onslaught, blindly charging toward the barricades and fighting to the death.

Each wave of orcs appears at the beginning of a specified round at the entrance to the inner quarter, whether or not the PCs have managed to dispatch the orcs from the previous wave. If the PCs make poor decisions or have a string of bad rolls, the number of orcs on the battlefield can multiply rapidly.

Round 1: First Wave (CR 3)

Creatures: The first wave of six orcs has just broken down the western gate's portcullis with a Large battering ram (*Ultimate Combat* 166). As soon as they're through the gate, the orcs drop the ram and run at full speed toward the barricades.

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (6)	CR 1/3
XP 135 each	
hp 6 each (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 222)	

Round 4: Second Wave (CR 3)

Creatures: An orc bombardier joins three orcs for the attack's second wave. Rather than charge headlong into the fray, the orc bombardier allows the other three to rush the PCs, preferring to stay back and soften the PCs up with arrows or thrown splash weapons before advancing toward the barricade.

ORC BOMBARDIER	CR 1
XP 400	
Orc fighter 2 (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 222)	
CE Medium humanoid (orc)	
Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1	
DEFENSE	
AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)	
hp 19 (2d10+4)	
Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -1 (+1 vs. fear)	
Defensive Abilities bravery +1, ferocity	
Weaknesses light sensitivity	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft.	
Melee falchion +5 (2d4+4/18-20)	
Ranged composite shortbow +4 (1d6+3/×3)	
STATISTICS	
Str 16, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 6	
Base Atk +2; CMB +5 (+7 grapple); CMD 17 (19 vs. grapple)	
Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light catapult), Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike	
Skills Craft (alchemy) +6, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Perception +1	
Languages Common, Giant, Orc	
SQ weapon familiarity	
Combat Gear <i>unerring grenade</i> (see sidebar), alchemist's fire (2), smokesticks (2), tanglefoot bag; Other Gear hide armor, composite shortbow (+3 Str) with 20 arrows, falchion	

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (3)	CR 1/3
XP 135 each	
hp 6 each (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 222)	

Round 8: Third Wave (CR 4)

Creatures: Nine orcs make up the third wave. If the PCs haven't yet been pushed back to the second barricade by the time the third wave emerges, six of the orcs pick up the Large battering ram (*Ultimate Combat* 166) dropped by the first wave and charge toward the barricade at full speed (30 feet per round if the orcs take a double move action), attempting to break it.

TWISTED NAIL ORCS (9)	CR 1/3
XP 135 each	
hp 6 each (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 222)	

Round 13: Fourth Wave (CR 5)

Creatures: The final wave of orcs consists of three orc shieldbreakers, an orc beast-tamer, and a monitor lizard.

MONITOR LIZARD CR 2

XP 600

hp 22 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 194)

ORC BEAST-TAMER CR 1

XP 400

hp 17 (see page 41)

ORC SHILDBREAKERS (3) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Orc fighter 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 9 each (1d10-1)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities ferocity

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee shotel +5 (1d8+4/x3)

Ranged pilum +3 (1d8+4)

TACTICS

During Combat The orc shieldbreakers use their shotels to get around opponents' shields in melee and throw pilums at out-of-reach opponents.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** 8, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shotel), Point-Blank Shot

Skills Climb +8, Intimidate +4

Languages Common, Orc

SQ weapon familiarity

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, antitoxin, alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, dagger, pilums^{UE} (3), shotel^{UE}, 3 gp

Development: Once the PCs defeat the fourth wave of orc raiders, Trunauan guards manage to retake the western gate towers. They fix the second portcullis and drop it into place, effectively quarantining the inner quarter. Give the PCs a few rounds to catch their breaths

and recuperate from the onslaught of orcs before they move on to light the final beacon at the Hopespring (area M). In order to get into lower Trunau, the PCs will have to look for another means of getting past the western gates, such as climbing over the rubble of the fallen tower at area L13 or scaling the western walls of the inner quarter (which requires a successful DC 25 Climb check), perhaps using the climbing gear found in area L6.

Story Award: If the PCs defeat all four waves of orcs, award them an additional 1,600 XP for the feat. If Omast survives the battle, award the PCs an additional 800 XP.

Resolve Points: As long as Omast survives the battle, award the PCs 1 Resolve Point for each wave of orcs they defeat (maximum of 4 Resolve Points). The PCs gain no Resolve Points for this encounter if they leave Omast to die.



ORC SHILDBREAKER

M. THE HOPESPRING BEACON (CR 3)

Once the PCs exit the inner quarter, the final beacon at the Hopespring is finally within reach. Trunau's lower quarter is surprisingly peaceful for now, as most attackers have already passed through, though the sounds of battle still rage throughout the town.

Trap: The wood pile for the beacon is still intact and ready to be set alight, but passing orcs have dusted it with an explosive alchemical powder concocted by Skreed. When the PCs go to light the beacon, allow them to attempt DC 15 Perception checks. If successful, they notice a yellow-white powder coating the logs and stones of the fire pit. A successful DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check is enough to identify the mysterious alchemical substance and the danger it poses should the beacon be lit.

Unfortunately, the powder is extremely sticky and difficult to remove. Pouring water over the powder washes it away, but soaks the wood as well. However, washing off the powder with alcohol (such as the wine found in area L6) neutralizes the powder. Magic can also be used, though it would take at least 10 castings of *prestidigitation* to remove the powder, and the longer the PCs wait to ignite the fire, the harder it becomes for Trunau to gain an advantage in the siege. Allow the PCs to come up with their own creative solutions to clearing the trap from the beacon, if they are able, but if all else fails, a successful DC 25 Disable Device check will remove the danger.

If the beacon is lit without first removing the explosive powder coating the wood, it explodes in a violent conflagration of green fire.

EXPLODING BEACON

CR 3

XP 800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger special (see above); **Reset** none

Effect explosion of green fire (2d6 points of fire damage and chance of catching on fire [*Core Rulebook* 444]; Reflex DC 20 half); multiple targets (all targets in a 15-ft. radius around the 10-ft.-diameter fire pit)

Development: Once ignited, the bonfire stays lit, regardless of whether the trap has been triggered. After the PCs light the beacon, Trunauan guards arrive, but they are still threatened by flaming boulders launched from orc artillery behind the Barterstones outside the town (area N). The PCs must eliminate the orc bombardiers and their siege engine if the heroes are to save Trunau.

N. BARTERSTONES BOMBARDIERS (CR 4)

An open-air market is usually held atop the flat rocks of the Barterstones, but the stalls and shops have been destroyed in the orc raid, and the stones now shield an

orc siege engine. The Twisted Nail orcs possess many war machines, but they brought only a few for the raid on Trunau. The light catapult (*Ultimate Combat* 162) behind the Barterstones is the only siege engine the orc raiders still have in this fight, but they've managed to hold on to it tenaciously thus far, and have wreaked quite a bit of havoc on lower Trunau with their bombardments.

Creatures: Three orc bombardiers are all that's left of the siege engine crew behind the Barterstones, but that's enough to operate the catapult at full efficiency. Two of the orcs fire the siege engine while the third bombardier acts as crew leader, barking coordinates to his allies as they aim and helping to reload after each shot.

The orc bombardiers attempt to grapple the PCs and move them into the catapult's bucket so that the orcs can launch the heroes at the very town they're trying to protect. As long as two of the other bombardiers are still standing, one remains near the catapult, making ranged attacks with his composite shortbow or readying an action to fire the catapult if any foe is unlucky enough to end up in the catapult's bucket. A creature launched from the catapult sails 50 feet through the air and takes 5d6 points of falling damage.

ORC BOMBARDIERS (3)

CR 1

XP 400 each

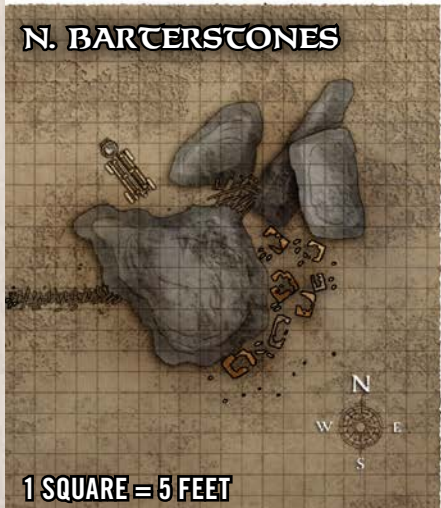
hp 19 each (see page 46)

Hazard: A number of unattended explosives are stacked next to the light catapult (see *Treasure*, below). If the catapult is ever in the area of a spell that deals fire damage, the explosives have an 80% chance of igniting, causing a devastating chain reaction 1 round after the spell is cast (the lit fuses can be heard with a successful DC 19 Perception check). This chain reaction deals 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures in a 15-foot radius (no save) and deafens such creatures for 2d6 minutes (Fortitude DC 17 negates).

Treasure: In addition to their gear, the orcs have some useful alchemical items. An alchemist's lab leans against the catapult, along with three bags of flash powder, six fuse grenades, two pellet grenades (one cold iron, one adamantite), and a tangleburn bag (see pages 106–109 of *Ultimate Equipment* for details on these items).

Development: Even if the PCs defeat the orc bombardiers, the catapult still poses a threat to Trunau. To fully put the catapult out of action, it must be either destroyed (hardness 5, hp 50) or disabled (Disable Device DC 20), which takes 2d4 rounds.

Alternatively, a PC with the know-how might be able to use the light catapult to lay waste to the orc raiders still outside the town's walls. While the exact details of such tactics are beyond the scope of this adventure, if the PCs have invested skill points in Knowledge (engineering) or



Profession (siege engineer) or have taken feats such as Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light catapult), their efforts should not go unnoticed. The full rules for siege weapons can be found in Chapter 3 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat*.

Resolve Points: If the PCs disable or destroy the catapult, or make effective use of the catapult to aid Trunau, award them 1 Resolve Point.

EVENT 6: THE HOPESPRING GIANT (CR VARIES)

Once the PCs have destroyed the orc artillery at the Barterstones, they are hailed by Trunauan guards atop the town walls, who inform them that lower Trunau is under attack by a new foe: a giant! Fleeing from Kurst and his outriders, the giant and its handlers entered the town and headed for the Hopespring (area O), where the giant has already torn a hole in the side of Bloodmarch Hill, allowing Skreed Gorewillow to enter Uskroth's tomb (area P). Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs reach the Hopespring.

The stench of blood and smoke hangs thick in the air. In the darkness, the crackling of fires mingles with the war cries of orc raiders and the screams of townsfolk. The Hopespring beacon burns brightly, illuminating the pool at the bottom of the

Hopespring's waterfall as well as a rough hole gouged into the side of Bloodmarch Hill.

The Hopespring empties into a shallow pool called the Hope Pond that serves as the town reservoir. The water eventually trickles through cracks in the rock into a subterranean channel before emerging as a stream some miles away, but the pool is particularly deep in parts. Light blue areas on the map are about 2 feet deep and count as a shallow bog (costing 2 squares of movement to enter), while dark blue areas are 4 feet deep and count as a deep bog (costing 4 squares of movement to enter and granting improved cover to mostly submerged characters). See page 427 of the *Core Rulebook* for details on shallow and deep bogs.

Creatures: The Twisted Nail raiders' most prized "war machine" is a monstrous, stunted cave giant whom the orcs simply call "Crusher." Crusher is not smart. He has been abused and thoroughly tortured by the Twisted Nail orcs since the tribe found him as an abandoned infant in the orcs' hunting grounds. Over the years, an array of orcs have been responsible for the training and punishment of Crusher, and woe betide those unlucky orcs who find themselves shackled to the cave giant to serve as Crusher's

“handlers” during raids. For his part, Crusher enjoys the company, though he is quick to anger, and many orc handlers have been smashed to pulp because of Crusher throwing a violent tantrum during the heat of battle.

Crusher waits on the southern side of the pool, in front of the entrance to Uskroth’s tomb, accompanied by four orc handlers—one chained to each of the giant’s limbs. Two orc beast-tamers control Crusher’s legs and move with the giant, giving orders to the two orcs who pull chains attached to Crusher’s arms in various directions to clumsily direct his attacks. The PCs begin the encounter on the road north of the pool. Use the map on page 49 for this encounter.

All of the PCs’ efforts to defend Trunau during the orc raid come to fruition during their fight with Crusher and his handlers. Depending on how many Resolve Points the PCs accrued throughout Part 2, they may have an easier time taking down the cave giant. Use the table on the following page to determine how to modify this encounter based on the number of Resolve Points the PCs have accrued, representing the effects the PCs’ actions have had on the town’s morale and the ability of other Trunauan defenders to weaken the cave giant before the PCs face it. These adjustments are cumulative.

CHAINED ORCS (2) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

TACTICS

During Combat Shackled to Crusher’s arms, these orcs must spend move actions to move with the giant and standard actions to direct Crusher’s attacks.

CRUSHER **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Male unique cave giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 127)

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +6 natural, –1 size)

hp 76 (9d8+36)

Fort +10, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3 (+2 vs. violent temper per handler)

Defensive Abilities ferocity, rock catching

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +12 (1d8+6) or

2 chains (with orcs) +9/+4 (2d6+6) or

2 chains (without orcs) +11/+6 (1d8+6)

Ranged rock +6 (1d8+6)

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

Special Attacks flailing chains, rock throwing (100 ft.), violent temper

TACTICS

During Combat Crusher uses his slam attacks as directed by his orc handlers until they are dead or until he succumbs to his violent temper, at which point he uses his chains—with or without attached orcs.

Morale Crusher knows only pain, and he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 10, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +13 (+15 sunder); **CMD** 23 (25 vs. sunder)

Feats Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slams)

Skills Climb +4, Intimidate +8, Perception +6

Languages Orc

SQ axe wielder, handlers

Gear broken breastplate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Flailing Chains (Ex) Because he has been shackled for most of his life, Crusher is highly capable of fighting using the chains of his manacles. Crusher’s chain attacks deal different amounts of damage depending on whether or not orcs are still chained to his wrists. With attached orcs, Crusher takes a –2 on attack rolls with his chains. On a successful hit, the attached orc takes damage equal to the amount of damage Crusher deals as the giant swings his allies wildly about and smashes them into opponents. If the attached orcs die, their bloody corpses fall off the chains after 1 round. Thereafter, Crusher makes chain attacks without attached orcs.

Handlers (Ex) Crusher requires the constant attention of four handlers—two orc beast-tamers controlling his legs and two chained orcs controlling his arms. Normally, Crusher follows his leg handlers with little need for direction, allowing the beast-tamers to take normal actions during combat. The two orcs chained to his arms, however, must spend move actions to move with the giant and standard actions to direct Crusher’s attacks. If not directed in this way, the giant takes no actions, moaning in pain or gazing listlessly at the blood on the battlefield until he eventually succumbs to his violent temper. For each orc handler still conscious and attached to him, Crusher gains a cumulative +2 bonus on Will saves against his violent temper ability (maximum +8).

Violent Temper (Ex) Crusher becomes violently enraged if he isn’t tended to by his “little green play-people.” Each round of combat on his turn, Crusher must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or become enraged for 4 rounds. While enraged, Crusher gains the confused condition and does not follow the guidance of his handlers. He gains a +2 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution (including 9 additional hit points), a +1 morale bonus on Will saves, and a –2 penalty to Armor Class. Crusher always makes chain attacks while enraged. After raging, Crusher is fatigued for a number of rounds equal to the number of rounds spent enraged, and he cannot become enraged again while fatigued or exhausted. This effect is otherwise identical to a barbarian’s rage.

RESOLVE POINT TOTAL

Resolve Points Earned	Encounter Adjustments	Adjusted CR
0	No adjustments.	CR 7
1-5	Remove the two orc beast-tamers.	CR 6
6-10	Change Crusher's statistics to reflect the following: AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size); hp 50; -2 on all rolls (including damage rolls).	CR 5
11+	Remove the two chained orc handlers. In addition, Crusher automatically succumbs to his violent temper for the duration of the combat.	CR 4

ORC BEAST-TAMERS (2) CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 17 each (see page 41)

Development: Once the PCs defeat Crusher and his handlers, the orc raid is effectively halted. With the loss of both their siege engine and their cave giant, the Twisted Nail orcs are defeated and demoralized, and flee back into the Belkzen wilderness.

With the immediate threat of the orc raid past, the tunnel opened by Crusher in the side of Bloodmarch Hill (area **P1**) is the next most pressing matter. Once the PCs have had some time to catch their breaths, Kurst Grath rides up. He informs them that Trunauan guards saw a lone humanoid accompanied by wolves dash into the tunnel almost immediately after the giant opened it, followed shortly after by another humanoid figure. Kurst asks the PCs to enter the tunnel, secure whatever's inside, and apprehend or flush out whoever's hiding within. Meanwhile, Kurst appoints guards outside the tunnel entrance to make sure no one else enters or exits it. When the players are ready to enter Uskroth's tomb, continue to Part 3.

Story Award: Regardless of the actual CR of this encounter, award the PCs 3,200 XP for defeating the cave giant and his orc handlers.

PART 3: TOMB OF THE HILL GIANT HERO

Centuries ago, the combined orcs and hill giants of the Twisted Hearts tribe buried Hero Chieftain Uskroth in a natural cavern beneath Bloodmarch Hill. Now, with the help of the cave giant Crusher, the Twisted Nail orcs have unearthed the cavern once again. The figures seen rushing into the newly opened tunnel were none other than Skreed Gorewillow—the killer of Rodrik and the leader of the half-orc insurgents in Trunau—and the flood troll Lehi. Skreed has been tasked by the hill giant chieftain Grenseldek with recovering Uskroth's legendary hammer and the map to the tomb of the giantslayer Nargrym Steelhand from Uskroth's crypt. None of the Trunauan guards who witnessed Skreed's entrance know what the half-orc's motives are within the cavern beneath Trunau, but whatever he's up to, it can't be good, and the PCs must act quickly if they are to catch him.

P. USKROTH'S TOMB

Uskroth's tomb has been sealed for centuries, and while the humans of Trunau have had no idea that the crypt lay beneath their town, a small number of creatures have managed to find their way inside over the years. Water from the Hopespring originally carved these caverns and continues to flow through the tomb to this day, but beneath Bloodmarch Hill, the water is fetid and tainted.

Uskroth's tomb consists of a series of connected caverns over two levels separated by 20 feet of elevation. The entrance tunnel from the Hopespring (area **P1**) leads to the upper level, while the lower level (area **P3**) is flooded to a depth of 1 to 2 feet. The ceilings in Uskroth's tomb are roughly 15 to 20 feet high in the caverns' upper levels, and all areas in the caverns are in darkness.

P1. Tunnel Entrance

Gossamer cobwebs hang from the ceiling of this rough tunnel, and the misty spray from the Hopespring's waterfall outside glimmers faintly on strands of spider silk. Chunks of rubble lie scattered on the floor amid piles of dirt.

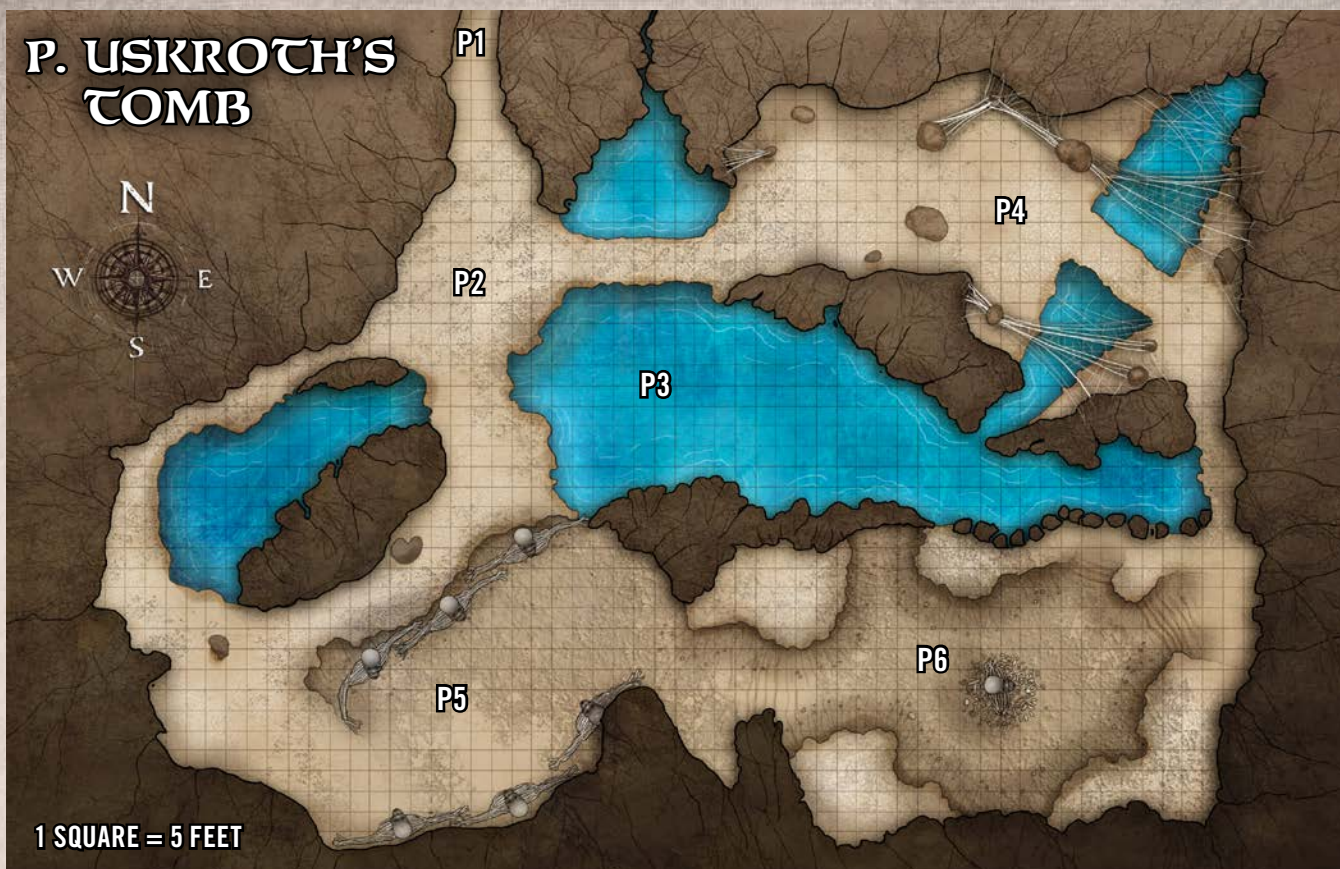
The tunnel burrows south beneath Bloodmarch Hill for approximately 150 feet to area **P2**. The giants and orcs of the Twisted Hearts dug this tunnel to carry Uskroth's body inside the tomb, then sealed the passage with *stone shape* when they left. Now the tunnel stands open once more, the stone seal broken by the cave giant Crusher.

P2. Entrance Cavern (CR 4)

The air in this cavern is humid but cool, and a thin sheen of condensation coats its rocky walls. A narrow passage exits the cavern to the west. To the south, the floor drops away into darkness, while a bridge of stone leads to another cavern to the east. The sound of trickling water echoes through the cavern.

Creature: As in the Plague House, a number of shadow rats have infested Uskroth's tomb, drawn to the necromantic energies that animated Uskroth's guardian in area **P5**. A swarm of the undead vermin inhabits this chamber, attacking any living creature that enters the tomb.

P. USKROTH'S TOMB



SHADOW RAT SWARM

CR 4

XP 1,200

Tome of Horrors Complete 586

NE Tiny undead (swarm)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities half damage from piercing and slashing, incorporeal form, shadow blend, swarm traits; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 15 ft.

Melee swarm (2d6 plus 1d4 Strength damage and disease)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +4; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +10, Perception +10, Stealth +20; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth; uses Dex to modify Climb

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) *Filth fever*: Swarm—injury; save Fort DC 15; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Incorporeal Form (Su) AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 size); see page 31.

Shadow Blend (Su) See page 31.

Strength Damage (Su) See page 31.

P3. Flooded Caverns (CR 2)

Dark water, thick mud, and silt cover the floor of this cavern, separated from the rest of the cave by steep cliffs and muddy escarpments. A trickle of water can be heard from the east.

This cavern lies 20 feet below the level above and is completely flooded with water 1 to 2 feet deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a flooded square, and the DC of Acrobatics checks in this chamber are increased by 2. Creatures that fall into this cavern from above take 2d6 points of damage from the fall (the water is not deep enough to mitigate the fall).

Creature: The flood troll Lehi (twin sister of Ghaer, whom the PCs may have encountered in area H11) followed Skreed into Uskroth's tomb. Heavily wounded during the orc raid, Lehi retreated to this cavern, where the flowing water allowed

her to regenerate (and currently gives her cold resistance 5). She attacks anyone entering (or falling into) this area.

LEHI **CR 2**

XP 600

Female flood troll (see page 86)

hp 22

TACTICS

Morale If reduced to 10 or fewer hit points by acid or fire damage that she cannot regenerate, Lehi attempts to flee to area **P6** to join Skreed.

Development: If the PCs do not fall into or explore this cavern, Lehi eventually leaves and joins Skreed in area **P6**, likely arriving a few rounds after the PCs join battle with the half-orc and his wolves.

P4. Spider-Infested Ravine (CR 5)

Tangles of thick white webbing fill a ravine at the eastern end of this cavern. A thick, flat slab of dark gray stone forms a bridge across the ravine.

The ravine drops 20 feet to area **P3**.

Creatures: Two gryphs—six-legged, storklike beasts with greasy feathers and razor-sharp beaks—inhabit this cavern, along with four adolescent spiders. The gryphs keep clear of the spiders' webs, and the spiders instinctively avoid the gryphs. The aggressive gryphs attack any living creature entering the cavern, hungry for fresh meat, and attempt to grapple any creatures caught in the webs (see Hazards, below) and implant eggs in them. The spiders wait patiently among the webs on the ceiling; a successful DC 23 Perception check is needed to spot them before they drop onto the heads of unsuspecting prey.

GRYPHS (2) **CR 1**

XP 400 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 150)

YOUNG GIANT SPIDERS (4) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 10 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 294, 258*)

Hazards: Sheets of spider webs span the ravine and hang between stalagmites in this cavern. Creatures approaching a web must succeed at a DC 20 Perception check to notice it; failure means the creature walks into it and is entangled. An entangled creature can attempt to escape with either a successful DC 12 Escape Artist check or a successful DC 12 Strength check with a –4 penalty. A 5-foot square of spider web has 16 hit points and DR 5/—. Fire ignores the damage reduction and deals double damage.

See the web universal monster rule on page 305 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* for more details.

In addition to the webs, the ledges above the ravine are treacherous. If two or more adjacent creatures stand in any of the spaces adjacent to the ravine, the dirt shelf gives way underneath their feet, triggering a small landslide into the ravine. Each affected creature must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or tumble into the ravine, immediately becoming entrapped in the spiders' webs. A falling character can avoid the webs and catch herself on the slope 5 feet below the ledge with a successful DC 20 Climb check. A successful DC 10 Climb check is required to scale the sloping walls of the ravine.

P5. Guardian Chamber (CR 6)

A wide ramp slopes down to the floor at the western end of this cavern. Half a dozen huge humanoid skeletons, each ten feet tall or more, line the walls of the cavern, standing in silent vigil.

The floor of this cavern lies 10 feet below the level of the tomb's upper caverns.

When the Twisted Hearts buried Uskroth in this tomb, they interred several of their chieftain's faithful hill giant followers beneath Bloodmarch Hill as well. Showing an unusual amount of reverence for their dead, the hill giants entombed their fallen comrades in crevices and crannies in the walls of



GRYPH

this cavern. Anyone examining the skeletons can identify them as hill giants with a successful DC 17 Knowledge (local) check.

Creatures: The Twisted Hearts' shaman animated one of the hill giants buried here as a skeletal guardian to watch over its honored leader in undeath as it did in life. The shambling monstrosity remains to this day, guarding the passage to Uskroth's burial chamber against any would-be trespassers. In addition, a single dire shadow rat has taken up residence here, and scurries out of the rib cage of one of the giant skeletons to attack living creatures entering the chamber. Both undead fight until destroyed.

DIRE SHADOW RAT CR 1

XP 400

Tome of Horrors Complete 504

NE Small undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 11 (2d8+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities incorporeal form, shadow blend;

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d4 plus 1d3 Strength damage and disease)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 13 (17 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Climb +11, Perception +8, Stealth +15; **Racial Modifiers**

+4 Stealth; uses Dex to modify Climb

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) *Filth fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 12, *onset* 1d3 days, *frequency* 1/day, *effect* 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage, *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Incorporeal Form (Su) AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 size); see page 31.

Shadow Blend (Su) See page 31.

Strength Damage (Su) See page 31.

USKROTH'S GUARDIAN CR 5

XP 1,600

Hill giant skeleton (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 150, 250)

NE Large undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +2 natural, -1 size)

hp 45 (10d8)

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

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee broken +1 spear +12/+7 (2d6+9) or
2 claws +13 (1d6+7)

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

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 25

Feats Improved Initiative^B

Gear mwk chainmail, broken +1 spear

Treasure: In addition to the armaments of Uskroth's guardian, searching the entombed hill giant skeletons reveals the following treasures: 12 Large martial or exotic weapons (three of which are masterwork), six suits of Large medium or heavy armor (two are masterwork), and 1,600-gp worth of Large adventuring gear. The exact details of the equipment should be selected to appeal to your PCs, though the total value of this additional treasure should not exceed 3,500 gp.

P6. Uskroth's Burial Chamber (CR 6)

Ledges and stairs are carved into the stone walls of this wide-open, high-ceilinged natural cavern. Embedded in a fifteen-foot-tall spire of centuries-old bones stands the skeleton of a massive armored warrior. Though its flesh has long since rotted off its frame, the skeleton still stands proud and regal amid the trappings of battle and mounds of gleaming treasure. The skeleton's battered half-plate and scarred helmet hint at its many battles, and the warlord's hands are clenched around a massive stone hammer. Beneath the helmet, a thick, round rock has been embedded in one of the skeleton's otherwise empty eye sockets.

The main floor in this cavern is level with that in area P5. The ledges surrounding the room are 10 feet above the floor, level with area P4 and the rest of the upper caverns.

The ossuary-like spire in the center of the cavern is the final resting place of the hill giant Uskroth, Hero Chieftain of the Twisted Hearts tribe. His followers entombed him in a crude altar of his enemies' bones and broken equipment along with his own armor and his legendary hammer, *Agrimmosh*.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive in this area, they finally encounter the villain responsible for murdering Rodrik Grath and orchestrating the orc attack on Trunau—the half-orc alchemist Skreed Gorewillow, who is accompanied by two dire wolf companions. Skreed and his wolves entered this chamber by way of the small tunnel to the northeast, just managing to avoid the shadow rat swarm in area P2 and the gryphs and spiders in area P4. Skreed assumes the hammer in the skeleton's hands is *Agrimmosh*, but he has yet to find the treasure map to the giantslayer's tomb. He is currently

searching the ledge to the southeast, unaware that the map he seeks is the stone embedded in the giant's eye (see Treasure, below). Skreed is all too happy to slay the adventurers who unraveled his plot, and he holds back nothing as he launches into bloody battle against the heroes, aided by his dire wolf companions on the floor of the cavern. Skreed is fully detailed in the NPC Gallery on page 60.

DIRE WOLVES (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 each
hp 37 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 278)

SKREED GOREWILLOW **CR 3**

XP 800
hp 29 (see page 60)

Treasure: The skeleton of the Hero Chieftain is still clad in *Uskroth's armor* (see the sidebar on this page) and holds *Agrimmosh, the Hammer of Unmaking* in its bony hands (see page 56).

In addition, Uskroth was entombed with much of his treasure. The chests, vases, and other containers piled around Uskroth's funerary spire are overflowing with coins, gemstones, jewelry, and other fineries worth a total of 1,300 gp. In addition, scattered among the treasure are several items valuable in their own right, including a masterwork breastplate, a suit of masterwork splint mail, four *+1 human-bane arrows*, 13 adamantite crossbow bolts, a masterwork orc double axe^{UC}, a *heavyload belt*^{UE}, a *scroll of phantasmal killer*, a *scroll of tongues*, and a *wand of inflict moderate wounds* with 7 charges remaining.

The rock lodged in Uskroth's eye socket is no simple stone. Removing the fist-sized hunk of dark, igneous rock and examining its other side reveals it to be a magnificent geode whose rich violet and verdant emerald crystals form glittering crystalline patterns. A successful DC 28 Appraise or Knowledge (dungeoneering) check reveals the geode to be a spectacular pleochroic variety of tourmaline, the nearest known deposits of which lie in the Mindspin Mountains to the south and west. While it would take an expert appraiser to price the large geode, its value is secondary to its true function as a treasure map. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (geography) or DC 24 Knowledge (local) check reveals that the geode's structure is no fluke of nature; the geode's crystalline valleys and mounds reflect the exact topography of the Mindspin Mountains, and a carved groove along the mountains seems to indicate a trail through the mountain range. The "map" leads to the tomb of the fabled giantslayer Nargrym Steelhand, but unfortunately, it is incomplete. In order to fully use the map, the PCs must find the second half of the geode, which is in the possession of the hill giant



USKROTH'S ARMOR

Hero Chieftain Uskroth wore a suit of armor that blessed him with enlarged size and great strength.

USKROTH'S ARMOR		PRICE 11,350 GP
SLOT armor	CL 5th	WEIGHT 100 lbs.
AURA faint transmutation		

This battered, well-used suit of *+1 half-plate* automatically resizes itself to match the size of its wearer. Once per day on command, the armor can bestow upon its wearer the effects of *righteous might* for 5 rounds. The wearer's alignment determines the DR gained from this ability. A good wearer gains DR 5/evil, an evil wearer gains DR 5/good, and a wearer who is neither good nor evil chooses which DR to gain the first time she activates this ability—once chosen, it cannot be changed.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 6,350 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>righteous might</i>	

Grenseldek. The only clue to the second half of the map lies in a letter (written in Giant) from Grenseldek to Skreed (see **Handout #4** on page 56), which can be found on Skreed's body. See *Concluding the Adventure* for details on following up on the clues in the letter.

Story Award: If the PCs defeat Skreed Gorewillow and acquire *Agrimmosh*, award them 1,600 XP.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have defeated Skreed Gorewillow, the orc threat to Trunau is truly ended—for now. But there are still questions remaining to be answered: why did the orcs attack, and what was their interest in the giant's tomb beneath Bloodmarch Hill? If the PCs managed to capture Skreed alive, they can interrogate the half-orc to learn all of the plot's details, including the motive behind Rodrik Grath's murder, and the hill giant Grenseldek's interest in the hammer *Agrimmosh* and the geode "treasure map" in Uskroth's tomb (Skreed does not know why the giant chieftain wanted these items, however, nor does he have any knowledge of Volstus the Storm Tyrant).

Even without Skreed's testimony, however, the PCs can still learn some of the reasons behind of the orc raid. The banners carried by the orcs bore the emblem of a misshapen iron spike. With a successful DC 10 Knowledge (local) check,

GET ME USKROTH'S HAMMER AND ROCK. I WANT EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE BARROW TOO. BUT I HAVE TO HAVE THE HAMMER AND THE ROCK. I THINK IT LOOKS LIKE THE ROCK I ALREADY HAVE AND SHOWED YOU. I HAVE TO HAVE BOTH ROCKS TO KNOW THE WAY TO THE GIANTKILLER'S TOMB, SO MAKE SURE YOU GET THE RIGHT ONE. THEN BRING THE HAMMER AND THE ROCK BACK TO THE FORT.

SIGNED,
GRENSELDEK,
GLORIOUS CHIEFTAIN OF THE
TWISTED HEARTS

HANDOUT #4

a character identifies the orcs as members of the Twisted Nail tribe, an orc tribe dwelling in the northern Mindspin Mountains that is ruled by a hill giant chieftain. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check knows that the Twisted Nail orcs inhabit a ruined border fort called Redlake Fort. Once part of Harchist's Blockade, Redlake Fort stands near the River Esk, north of Trunau.

In addition, Grenseldek's letter to Skreed provides additional clues. The fact that it was written in Giant certainly points toward giant involvement in the orc attack on Trunau, and a successful DC 10 Knowledge (local) or DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check is enough to identify Grenseldek as the hill giant leader of the Twisted Nail orc tribe. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (history) check also recognizes the "Twisted Hearts" as a combined tribe of orcs and giants that was led by the giant hero Uskroth, as outlined in the Adventure Background. If the PCs were unable to identify the geode found in Uskroth's burial chamber as a map, the letter also hints at that function and the location of the other half of the map.

If all else fails and the PCs are unable to learn this information on their own, Trunau's leaders are eventually able to piece together the important details from fractured bits of information gleaned from captured orc raiders. Regardless of how they gain this information, it is important that the PCs learn that a giant was behind the attack on Trunau, that she was seeking specific items from the tomb beneath the town, and that she leads a combined tribe of orcs and giants from a lair to the north.

The people of Trunau hail the PCs as heroes, not only for their brave deeds during the orc raid, but also for their diligence in solving the murder of Rodrik Grath and unraveling the mysteries of the Plague House and the tomb

beneath Bloodmarch Hill. The treasure the PCs liberated from Trunau's ravaged homes and fallen residents during the course of the raid rightfully belongs to the town or the survivors, but if the PCs offer to return the valuables to the town, they're compensated for their heroic efforts with an amount of gold equal to half the gear's value (in effect allowing the PCs to legally "sell" their treasure within Trunau's walls). Any other treasures found by the PCs are theirs to keep, with the thanks of the people of Trunau.

Kurst and Jagrin Grath and the rest of Trunau's militia are glad to receive closure over the death of Rodrik. Although Trunau has weathered many orc raids in the past, the Twisted Nails' attack was by far the most devastating in recent history, and left the inner quarter largely in ruins. Skreed Gorewillow's half-orc saboteurs dealt a terrible blow to the town's morale that will likely heighten tensions between Trunau's human and half-orc residents for some time. Trunauans are nothing if not perseverant, however, and the efforts to rebuild the town begin the day after the raid. Trunau's leaders order Uskroth's tomb sealed once more, and the ruins of the Plague House are consecrated and ritually cleansed with fire to put the structure to rest once and for all.

Of more immediate concern, however, is the sobering news that the orc raid was actually instigated by a giant searching for the treasures in Uskroth's tomb. Assuming that the PCs defeated Skreed and recovered the treasure from the tomb, Trunau's Council of Defenders is concerned that this giant may attack the town again in a second bid to get ahold of the items she was seeking. Soon after the PCs exit Uskroth's tomb, Chief Defender Halgra of the Blackened Blades approaches them with a request, which kicks off the next installment of the Giantslayer Adventure Path, "The Hill Giant's Pledge."

AGRIMMOSH, THE HAMMER OF UNMAKING

The stone giants of the Mindspin Mountains believe that the giant god Minderhal used his hammer *Agrimmosh* to forge the first giant. This creation was imperfect, however, so he crafted another and granted it life, creating the first stone giant. Pleased with what he had now wrought, Minderhal pulverized his first creation with a final blow of the *Hammer of Unmaking*, and its pieces became all of the other races of giants that came to populate the world.

AGRIMMOSH		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT none	CL 20th	WEIGHT 10 lbs.
AURA strong transmutation		

Agrimmosh appears to be a simple stone blacksmith's hammer engraved with Minderhal's holy symbol. It functions as a +2 *impact*^{UE} *warhammer* that automatically resizes itself to match the size of its wielder. Once per day as a full-round



action, the wielder of *Agrimmosh* can use the hammer to cast heightened *enlarge person* (Fortitude DC 23 negates). This effect lasts for 20 minutes. Whenever the wielder of *Agrimmosh* confirms a critical hit against a creature of the humanoid type, the target creature must succeed at a DC 23 Fortitude save or shrink by one size category, as by heightened *reduce person*. This effect lasts for 20 minutes.

In addition, *Agrimmosh* has other powers that are currently dormant. When the *Hammer of Unmaking* is struck against *Minderhal's Forge* in the Cathedral of Minderhal (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #93: Forge of the Giant God*), these powers are reawakened, and *Agrimmosh* gains the following abilities.

Whenever the wielder of *Agrimmosh* successfully strikes a creature with the hammer, as an immediate action he can attempt a targeted dispel check against the struck creature, as *dispel magic*, to end a single ongoing transmutation effect that alters the target's size. Other ongoing spells and effects are unaffected. The wielder uses the hammer's caster level as his own when attempting such a dispel check.

Agrimmosh also gains 3 charges, which renew at the beginning of each day. The wielder can expend the listed number of charges to activate one of the following spell-like abilities as a full-round action; expending an extra charge to activate the spell-like ability reduces the casting time to a swift action instead. Regardless, the wielder of *Agrimmosh* can activate only one of the weapon's spell-like abilities per round.

- Heightened *enlarge person* (1 charge, DC 23; this replaces *Agrimmosh's* 1/day *enlarge person* ability)
- Heightened *mass enlarge person* (2 charges, DC 23)

Lastly, *Agrimmosh* can be used in conjunction with *Minderhal's Forge* at the Cathedral of Minderhal to resize magic armor and weapons. More details on this ability can be found in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #93*.

DESTRUCTION

If *Agrimmosh* is heated in *Minderhal's Forge* at the Cathedral of Minderhal for 10 years and then quenched in the blood of a slain rune giant, it loses all of its magical abilities and is destroyed, shattering into a thousand pieces.

KURST GRATH

After growing up in the comforting shadow of his twin, Rodrik, Kurst Grath finds his entire world turned upside down when he must unravel the mystery surrounding the death—and possible murder—of his older brother.

KURST GRATH**CR 4****XP 1,200**

Male human cavalier 1/ranger 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 32)

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 40 (5d10+9)

Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +6 (1d8+2/19–20), light shield +5 (1d3+1) or

mwk longsword +8 (1d8+2/19–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +9 (1d8+2/×3)

Special Attacks challenge 1/day (+1 attack rolls, +1 damage), combat style (weapon and shield^{APG}), favored enemy (orcs +2), tactician 1/day (standard action, 3 rounds, Swap Places)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st—*delay poison*

TACTICS

During Combat Kurst uses his bow if fighting at range, though if his foes attempt to close the gap, he jumps on his mount, Hope, and charges into battle with sword and shield. If he encounters orcs, Kurst activates his hunter's bond ability, and uses his tactician ability to grant allies use of Swap Places in combat.

Morale If reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, Kurst drinks a potion of *cure light wounds*. If he has expended all of his healing options and the battle is clearly not favoring his side, he gathers up as many fallen allies as he can on his mount and calls for retreat. Few humanoids can keep up with Hope's speed, so Kurst directs the escape as best he can, regrouping his allies when they've reached safety and can plan their next course of action.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Improved Shield Bash, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Swap Places^{APG}, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Climb +5, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +8, Ride +10, Stealth +8, Survival +8

Languages Common

SQ favored terrain (mountain +2), hunter's bond (companions), mount (horse named Hope), order of the shield, track +2, wild empathy +5

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2), thunderstone;

Other Gear mwk hide armor, +1 *light steel shield*, mwk composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, mwk longsword, *cloak of resistance +1*, antitoxin, sunrods (3), tindertwigs (5), 19 gp

Kurst and Rodrik Grath were both born within a span of minutes, but the brief delay between Rodrik's emergence and that of his fraternal twin Kurst marked the boys' relationship from that day forward. Throughout childhood, Rodrik demonstrated to all that he was the older, wiser, and more responsible brother, while Kurst lingered in the shadows, always striving to catch up to his trailblazing sibling. The death of Ila Grath, the twins' mother, during an orc ambush devastated the entire family, but Rodrik inspired his heartbroken father and siblings to move past the tragedy and unite as a family. Following in his parents' footsteps, Rodrik became a patrol captain in Trunau's militia, and Kurst once again followed his brother's lead. Throughout his life, Kurst has deferred to Rodrik without resentment—both have played their roles for so long that neither thinks anything of it.

That is destined to change, however, when Kurst finds himself without his brother's guidance for the first time in his life. Fortunately for him, Kurst learned the principles of good leadership by observing Rodrik, and needs only the opportunity to step out of his brother's shadow and show the world that he can stand on his own.

Kurst is a boyish young man in his twenties with curly light brown locks and dark eyes. He stands 6 feet tall and weighs only 150 pounds, but his narrow frame belies his true strength, and he is a scrappy combatant who is unafraid to fight. Kurst's intense gaze and honest smile are sure signs of his thoughtfulness and strong moral compass, which, despite his small-town naivete, have so far always steered him true.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Kurst's primary role in the Giantslayer Adventure Path is as a quest-giver and information-provider during "Battle of Bloodmarch Hill," but he can also serve as a potential ally for the first half of the campaign. At the beginning of this adventure, the PCs meet the young man in one of his darkest hours. When Rodrik is found dead at the Ramblehouse after an apparent suicide, the Grath family is once again bereaved. Kurst must take on the leadership role his brother had always filled to care for his family and figure out what happened to his brother, commissioning the PCs to question suspects and investigate his late brother's final days.

While Kurst proves to be somewhat underwhelming as a leader during the earliest parts of the murder investigation, as the story progresses, you should make efforts to show the players that there is more to Kurst than meets the eye. The PCs will have many opportunities to interact with Kurst and become intimately familiar with the patrol captain and his family. With his brother dead and his family falling apart, Kurst is vulnerable and feels more alone than ever before. A caring friend might be just what he needs to regain his confidence, and such a friendship could easily blossom into a romance once the safety of Trunau is secured. By the time the PCs have defeated the Hopespring cave giant and are ready to enter Uskroth's tomb, you can portray Kurst with a stronger voice, more confident speech, and a hardened demeanor, or add any other personality traits to demonstrate his growth into a strong leader.

Kurst's character development can serve as a model for similarly fluid trajectories on the part of your players' characters. Rather than shelving PCs' backstories, players can use what has transpired in their characters' pasts to inform their attitudes during their current adventures. Through Kurst's powerful personality transformation, the players may glean ideas of their own regarding how a PC may react to overwhelming adversity, or the death of a fellow party member.

If the PCs have impressed Kurst during the adventure—likely by solving his brother's murder and successfully defending Trunau during the orc raid—he might be willing to accompany them when they leave Trunau as the campaign continues. Kurst is an adept woodsman as well as a warrior, and if asked, he is more than happy to help guide the PCs to Ghostlight Marsh in "The Hill Giant's Pledge" or even lead them to the hidden valley of giants in "Forge of the Giant God." Beyond this, however, Kurst's guidance gradually proves less useful, and unless he has forged some strong personal bond with the PCs, or has become a cohort through the Leadership feat, he is likely to eventually leave the PCs to return home to his friends and family in Trunau.

If Kurst is killed while adventuring with the PCs, the three surviving members of the Grath family are distraught, having now lost their two eldest sons as well as their matriarch. Kurst and Rodrik's father, Patrol Leader Jagrin Grath (who is described in greater detail on page 63 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Towns of the Inner Sea*), does not openly blame the PCs for the death of his second son, but he does not forgive them their carelessness either—especially if Kurst was the only member of the party to perish. Overall, the death of yet another Trunauan hero does not reflect well on the PCs, and while you should not make accommodations to artificially preserve Kurst's life, it would be wise to have Kurst take his leave of the PCs before they begin facing dangers above his caliber.



SKREED GOREWILLOW

A cunning half-orc alchemist, Skreed Gorewillow was a perfect fit to infiltrate Trunau and make preparations for the Twisted Nail orcs' raid on the town.

SKREED GOREWILLOW
CR 3
XP 800

Male half-orc alchemist 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 26)

CE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

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

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 29 (4d8+8)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +1; +2 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities orc ferocity; **DR** 10/magic vs. ranged (40 points)


OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cold iron falchion +5 (2d4+1/18–20 plus poison [black adder venom]) or

dagger +4 (1d4+1/19–20 plus poison [blue whinnis])

Ranged bomb +9 (2d6+3 fire) or

light crossbow +8 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks bomb 9/day (2d6+3 fire and catch fire, DC 15, 10-ft. radius)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 4th)

2nd—*elemental touch*^{APG} (DC 15), *protection from arrows*

1st—*bomber's eye*^{APG} (2), *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*

TACTICS

Before Combat Skreed has poisoned his weapons. Before combat, he drinks his Dexterity mutagen and extract of *protection from arrows*.

During Combat Skreed drinks an extract of *bomber's eye* and attacks from range as long as he is able, throwing explosive bombs or alchemical splash weapons as needed and focusing his attacks on anyone who looks as if he'd pose a threat from a distance. He uses his precise bombs discovery to ensure his dire wolf allies take as little damage from his bombs as possible. If pressed into melee, Skreed attempts to flank with his wolf allies, reapplying black adder venom or bloodroot poison to his blades as a move action using swift alchemy as needed.

Morale Skreed longs for the blood of his enemies, so he fights to the death against the PCs.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 20, **Con** 13, **Int** 16, **Wis** 6, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 19

Feats Brew Potion, Extra Bombs^{APG}, Iron Will, Throw Anything

Skills Craft (alchemy) +11, Disable Device +14, Disguise +4, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Giant, Orc, Ulfen, Varisian

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +4), discoveries (explosive bomb, precise bombs [3 squares]), mutagen (+4/-2, +2 natural, 40 minutes), orc blood, poison use, swift alchemy

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, acid (2), alchemist's fire (2), black adder venom (2 doses), bloodroot (2 doses), blue whinnis, liquid ice^{UE} (2), oil of taggit,

tanglefoot bag, thunderstones (2); **Other Gear** mwk studded leather, mwk cold iron falchion, dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *formula alembic*^{UE}, *kin's face tattoo* (see the sidebar), *true love locket* containing a lock of hair (see the sidebar), alchemy crafting kit^{UE}, antitoxin (2), formula book (contains all prepared extracts plus *enlarge person*, *invisibility*, *shield*, and *stone fist*^{APG}), mwk thieves' tools, portable alchemist's lab^{UE}, letter from Grenseldek (see page 56), 37 gp

As the most frail of the many half-orc offspring born in the human slave pen of the Twisted Nail tribe, Skreed Gorewillow escaped the blades that felled his half-siblings only because of his cunning. He was spared to serve as a future shaman or battle priest for the Twisted Nails, and though his formative years were brutal, he flourished amid the violence and bloodshed of the true orcs around him. Bullying and abuse from orc children did not faze the eerily stoic half-orc. Even as a child, Skreed could discreetly create dozens of toxic slurries, flesh-burning unguents, and paralytic tinctures out of only crushed bugs and scavenged flora, and poison became his favorite method of dealing with his tormenters.

As he grew older, Skreed paired his mastery of improvised alchemy with the shamanistic traditions of the Twisted Nail clan and cultivated a relationship with the tribe's hill giant chieftain, Grenseldek. By the time Skreed was 16, Grenseldek had appointed him as the tribe's youngest witch doctor.

Skreed is 6-1/2 feet tall and gangly for a half-orc, weighing only 200 pounds. The dark blond locks on his head suggest Ulfen descent, but Skreed never knew his mother, nor has he ever cared to.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Impressed with Skreed's intelligence, Grenseldek chose the alchemist to lead the team of half-orcs infiltrating Trunau when the giant planned her attack on the town. For the most part, Skreed performed his duties admirably, but his murder of Rodrik Grath was enough to raise some eyebrows and give the PCs a chance to undo Skreed's carefully laid plans and finally confront him face to face in Uskroth's tomb.

Before infiltrating Trunau, Skreed traveled to Freedom Town to hire mercenaries to supplement his forces. There he fell in love with a human woman named Melira, who gave Skreed a *true love locket* (see the sidebar) so they could keep track of each other. The lock of hair inside Skreed's locket belongs to Melira. Skreed can make little use of the locket in this adventure (the same holds true for the PCs, if they acquire the locket from Skreed), but if Skreed dies at the conclusion of this adventure, Melira learns of his demise through the linked lockets. The PCs will encounter Melira in the next adventure, "The Hill Giant's Pledge," where Skreed's death provides motivation for her actions against the PCs.

SKREED'S MAGIC ITEMS

Throughout this adventure, Skreed makes frequent use of a magical tattoo. The *kin's face tattoo* originally appeared in *Pathfinder RPG Player Companion: Bastards of Golarion*.

KIN'S FACE TATTOO		PRICE
		1,600 GP
SLOT none	CL 5th	WEIGHT —
AURA faint illusion		

This intricate tattoo covers the bearer's face in thousands of hair-fine lines of ink and carefully incised scars. The bearer can activate the tattoo to cause the marked design to shift and the scars to open and pull the bearer's face into a different shape. The bearer then gains the benefits of *disguise self*, save that he can take only the form of a specific half-orc, human, or orc, and the disguise lasts up to 5 hours per day. This duration need not be continuous, but it must be used in 1-hour increments.

The material components for the *kin's face tattoo* include rare pigments that are mixed with the bearer's blood, then worked into the bearer's skin. To remove this tattoo the tattooed portions must be erased and the scars healed.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	800 GP
Inscribe Magical Tattoo (<i>Pathfinder RPG Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic</i> 16), <i>disguise self</i>	

TRUE LOVE LOCKET		PRICE
		6,000 GP
SLOT neck	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint divination		

These gold heart-shaped pendants, which open to reveal small hollows inside, always come in pairs and must be on the same plane of existence to function. When two people with a strong emotional bond (such as good friends, family members, or romantic partners) each wear one of the lockets containing a keepsake from the other person (usually a lock of hair or small picture), the lockets' magic becomes evident. After 24 hours of wearing a linked locket, each wearer knows the condition of the other as via a constant *status* spell. In addition, when either wearer uses the aid another action to assist the wearer of the linked locket, the bonus gained is increased by 1. Lastly, once per day, each wearer may use one of the known skills of the wearer of the linked locket, as *borrow skill* (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 207). If either wearer of a linked *true love locket* takes the pendant off, has it forcibly removed, is killed, or travels to another plane, both lockets cease to function until reattuned for 24 hours.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	3,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>borrow skill</i> ^{APG} , <i>status</i>	



GIANT PRIMER

LONG ago, there was a kingdom where humans and giants lived together in harmony. The humans weren't strong, but they could dream of towers that pierced the sky and bridges that spanned the sea. The giants were not imaginative, but they had strength. The giants and humans joined together to forge a grand kingdom. They believed that nothing was impossible if they worked together.

Then a terrible calamity destroyed the kingdom. Giants blamed humans for not imagining that such a thing would happen. Humans blamed giants for not being strong enough to prevent it. The humans fled down into the valleys, the giants up into mountains. And so it is today—giants hide among the peaks and humans live below. Giants and humans have each built their own kingdoms since, but none are as magnificent as when they worked together.

—Varisian folktale

According to the mythology of many races (including the legends of the giants themselves), true giants are the mortal descendants of titans—who are in turn the children of gods. But just as not every creature of the dragon type is a true dragon, not every humanoid with the giant subtype is a true giant. So how does one identify a true giant when the category is said to include creatures of burning flame and beings of freezing cold, masters of rushing water and disciples of solid stone? With so much variety, one might think the only things true giants have in common are height and an affinity for throwing and catching rocks, but they share another important attribute: over generations, true giants adapt to their environments. While other creatures evolve slowly through a process of natural selection, true giants become one with their surroundings, taking on characteristics of the climate and terrain, and adopting the form and manner of the smaller humanoids who share their habitats.

Good and neutral giants often appear to be idealized versions of smaller humanoids. They serve as models to which smaller creatures can aspire, like the heroes of ancient legends. Evil giants, on the other hand, embody physical and moral defects. These villains are loathed not just for the evil they inflict upon smaller races, but also because they remind the smaller races of their own failings. Yet whatever their moral or ethical bent, all giants are passionate creatures who believe in living life to its fullest.

OTHER GIANTS

The giants featured on the following pages are the ones most commonly encountered in the Inner Sea region, but they are not the only kinds of giants present in those lands. Listed below are several varieties of giants that are present but rarely seen around the Inner Sea region, though several types are common elsewhere on Golarion.

Ash Giants: These leprous creatures are the descendants of giants warped by eldritch or extraterrestrial energies. Capricious and frequently cruel, ash giants have an uncanny connection to the monstrous vermin that share their territories. Ash giants are most often encountered in the Mana Wastes, Numeria, and the depths of the Darklands. (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 126*)

Cliff Giants: Cliff giants' reddish brown skin is striated in yellow and white, reflecting the weathered badlands and canyons they call home. Though benevolent, cliff giants eschew the company of other humanoids in favor of communing with the natural world. A loose confederation of cliff giants dwells in the Shattered Range. (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 126*)

Desert Giants: From a distance, desert giants might be confused with Garundi nomads, but up close there is no mistaking their great height. Desert giants can survive weeks without water as they travel between oases. The giants

are protective of their territories, but not unsympathetic to lost travelers. Desert giants make their homes in the deserts of northern Garund and Qadira. (*Bestiary 3 128*)

Jungle Giants: These giants have barklike skin marked with intricate tattoos, which grant them magical protection. Male jungle giants look after and protect the villages, while female giants venture out to hunt and wage war. Jungle giants resent any intrusion into their territories in the Mwangi Expanse. (*Bestiary 3 129*)

Ocean Giants: Sailors describe these giants as the seas personified. Some ocean giants are kindly, using their powers to help creatures above and below the waves. Others are cruel, enslaving aquatic races and sinking ships at the slightest provocation. (*Bestiary 4 127*)

River Giants: These giants are nomadic, traveling inland waterways on wooden barges. River giants may ferry members of smaller races for a price, but travelers should beware: river giants are sometimes good and sometimes evil, but they're always unpredictable. Though it's believed that river giants are native to Tian Xia, their populations are increasing along the Sellen River. (*Bestiary 4 128*)

Rune Giants: The runelords of Thassilon magically bred these giants to lead their armies, imbuing them with magical powers of command. Considered mythical by even other giants, rune giants still live in desolate ruins in the mountains of Varisia and the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 130*)

Shadow Giants: Shadow giants adorn their light-devouring skin with golden armor, bright feathers, and bleached bones, and propitiate dark deities with self-sacrifice and cannibalism atop basalt pyramids. Though their kind is native to the Plane of Shadows, several shadow giant families have sworn allegiance to Nidal's Umbral Court, and it is believed that others live across the Arcadian Ocean. (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary 15*)

Slag Giants: One of the runelords' earliest experiments, slag giants are a magical cross between fire and stone giants. Abandoned by their creators in favor of more powerful hybrids, slag giants desire little save the opportunity to practice metalwork. Other giants, especially fire giants, often employ slag giants for their crafting skills. (*Bestiary 4 129*)

Taiga Giants: These seminomadic hunter-gatherers are wary of outsiders. Taiga giants continue to live as they did before the rise of Thassilon, and can call upon their ancestor spirits to empower them. Though mostly found in wooded areas in the Crown of the World, some taiga giants live in the forests of northern Avistan. (*Bestiary 2 131*)

Wood Giants: Resembling elves, wood giants consider themselves the stewards of deep woodlands. Peaceful and melancholy, wood giants dwell in the heart of many of Avistan's larger forests, but are rarely seen by humanoids. (*Bestiary 2 132*)

CAVE GIANTS

Combining the features of ogres and feral orcs, cave giants are the embodiment of primitive brutality.

Average Height: 9–11 feet

Average Weight: 900–1,100 pounds

Favored Weapons: Battleaxes, clubs

Favored Companions: Giant frilled lizards, monitor lizards, orcs, troglodytes



Cave giants would measure close to a dozen feet tall if they ever rose from their perpetual stoops. Their skin tones range from slate gray to a dark mossy green. Cave giants have manes of bristly black or gray hair that run from their heads down their backs. Their faces resemble those of orcs taken to monstrous extremes and framed with elephantine tusks. Cave giants clothe themselves in hides decorated with bones.

As their name suggests, cave giants live in rocky underground tunnels and caverns, rarely approaching the surface during the day. They keep giant lizards as smaller humanoids keep dogs, but they are cruel and neglectful masters.

Cave giants survive as hunter-gatherers, subsisting on subterranean animals and plants, yet they're intensely envious of the innovations and yields other races produce. Lacking both talent and patience necessary for creation or cultivation, they take what they desire by raiding other races or by enslaving them. Cave giants especially prize metal weapons, as they're always at war, either with their own kind or with other races.

Though not particularly religious, cave giants pay homage to Rovagug as the cause of earthquakes and eruptions. Their priests are mostly barbarians and rangers, though a few divine spellcasters exist. The latter are often devoted to grand but futile schemes, such as freeing the Rough Beast or blotting out the hated sun.

The subterranean region of Nar-Voth is home to the majority of cave giants. Surface dwellers most often encounter them in caverns below the Kodar, Mindspin, and Tusk mountains. Cave giants are especially common at the intersection of these three mountain ranges in the dangerous Hold of Belkzen. The ubiquitous nature of the Darklands means that cave giants can be found beneath almost any part of the Inner Sea region.

CLOUD GIANTS

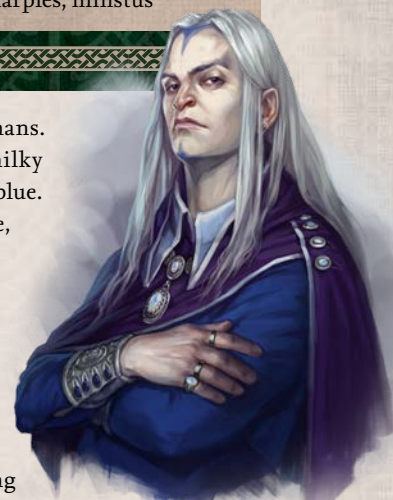
Epicurean and philosophical, cloud giants are divided between those who help smaller races and those who would rule them.

Average Height: 17–20 feet

Average Weight: 4,000–5,500 pounds

Favored Weapons: Morningstars, spears

Favored Companions: Griffins, hippogriffs; *good:* dragon horses, pegasi; *evil:* harpies, mihstus



Cloud giants resemble lean humans. Their skin tones range from milky white to pale gray to soft blue. They have fair hair—white, gray, or pale blonde—but richly colored eyes, which are usually gray, violet or blue. Cloud giants prefer to wear the finest clothing and jewelry they can afford.

These giants dwell in the highest peaks, literally up among the clouds. Good cloud giants usually live in mansions or castles of immense dimensions; evil cloud giants instead dwell in crude stone forts, often incorporating natural caves into the structures. Legends tell of cloud giants living in floating castles built on solid clouds, but such stories are considered apocryphal even among their kind.

Cloud giants are ostentatious with their wealth. They decorate their homes with fine art, magic items, and exotic birds, any of which may be of gigantic proportions. They are lovers of music, especially the harp, and they enjoy food prepared with rare and exotic ingredients.

The politically and philosophically charged cloud giants take pleasure in debating all manner of subjects. This trait led to the schism between the altruists (good cloud giants who believe the giants have a duty to help lesser races) and the pragmatists (evil cloud giants who believe that a being earns only what he takes by his own power).

Most cloud giants revere Gozreh's male aspect, whom they call Ioz'om, the Sky Father. Those with an interest in magic follow Nethys, while some evil cloud giants worship Rovagug.

After Earthfall, most of the surviving cloud giants retreated to the peaks of the Kodar Mountains. While many remain there—often ensconced in the ruins of ancient Thassilon—the giants have also expanded into the Menador and Mindspin mountain ranges. A few giant families claim solitary peaks in areas beyond western Avistan in order to distance themselves from the politics of cloud giant society.

FIRE GIANTS

Resembling twisted dwarves made huge, fire giants are masters of metallurgy and military tactics.

Average Height: 12–16 feet

Average Weight: 5,000–9,000 pounds

Favored Weapons: Armor spikes, greatswords

Favored Companions: Ettins, hellhounds, pyrohydras, red dragons, trolls



Fire giants have the stocky build of dwarves. Their skin ranges from deep red to coal black. Most fire giants have fiery orange hair, though some have black or leaden manes. Their irises glow red, gold, or orange. They are rarely seen without their metal armor. Like male dwarves, male fire giants sport long, unruly beards.

Almost all fire giants have some unsightly feature, such as blemished skin, misshapen limbs, or a hunched spine. These deformities don't detract from the giants' strength. Indeed, fire giants view these as signs of a strong bloodline and divine favor.

Fire giants live in castles and walled villages that are either carved from caverns or built of stone and metal. Befitting these giants' militaristic lifestyle, their architecture is constructed with an eye toward efficiency and defensibility, as well as a clear sense of hierarchy. Their lairs often incorporate volcanic elements such as rivers of lava or smoking fumaroles. While such features may be deadly to other races, the fire giants find them soothing.

Fire giants are renowned for their metalworking talents, especially with the arms and armor they produce for themselves and other giants (and rarely for smaller races). Fire giants value fine craftsmanship, regardless of its origin.

Most fire giants worship Zursvaater, the Prince of Steel, who they believe created the fire giants from mere stone giants. Zursvaater, they hold, gave them the gifts of fire, steel, and slaves—asking for only their unswerving loyalty in return, in both life and death.

Fire giants can be found wherever there is volcanic activity, from the depths of the Darklands to the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. The greatest concentrations of fire giants are in the Kodar Mountains of Avistan and the Barrier Wall Mountains of Garund.

FROST GIANTS

Though they claim to have once ruled a mighty empire, frost giants now live as fearsome hunters and raiders.

Average Height: 14–16 feet

Average Weight: 2,600–3,000 pounds

Favored Weapons: Greataxes, warhammers

Favored Companions: Ogres, remorhazes, white dragons, winter wolves, yetis



Frost giants are often compared in appearance to Ulfen warriors. However, their skin is pale blue or white, like that of a frozen corpse, and always cold to the touch. Their hair and eyes usually match, being yellow, white, or light blue. Frost giants wear their hair (and beards) long, often braided, and sometimes coated in rime.

Around half of all frost giants live in nomadic tribes. They follow herd animals, raiding settlements they encounter along the way and taking temporary shelter in glacial or earthen dugouts. Other frost giants live in permanent settlements, usually in caves of ice or stone, or built from the blocks of ancient ruins. Here the frost giants hoard the spoils of their raids against nearby settlements and passing caravans.

Might makes right among the frost giants. The strongest giant is named the jarl, and she rules the tribe until another can defeat her in single combat. The frost giants view smaller races as food or slaves. When a tribe is on the move, its slaves are chained to a slave handler—a figure who receives great respect among the frost giants.

These giants believe their race was created when Thremyr fell into the Steaming Sea. Though the demigod is revered by almost all frost giants, he cares little for his creations. Some frost giants dwelling among other races have taken to worshipping Gorum and Norgorber alongside Thremyr. A rebellious few reject their creator, turning instead to the demon lord Kostchtchie.

Frost giants are most populous along the cold northern border of Avistan, from the Stormspear Mountains through the Winterwall Glacier to the Tusk Mountains, as well as among the higher peaks of the Kodar Mountains. Smaller groups of frost giants encountered on other snowy summits often claim to be the scions of lost kingdoms.

HILL GIANTS

The most commonly encountered true giants, hill giants seem to reflect and magnify humanity's worst traits.

Average Height: 9–13 feet

Average Weight: 1,000–1,300 pounds

Favored Weapons: Greatclubs, heavy maces

Favored Companions: Ogres, orcs, dire wolves



Hill giants are hideous even by giant standards. Their skin is naturally pale pink, but a lifetime spent outdoors colors them a ruddy tan. Their hair and eyes are usually black or brown. Their facial features are ill proportioned, and often further marred by scars, broken noses, or missing teeth. Hill giant clothing is a patchwork of untreated hides and other humanoid's castoffs.

Most hill giant tribes are nomadic.

Though they prefer temperate hills, these giants are able to survive in a range of climates and terrains, due to their hardiness and stubbornness. They lair in natural caves and abandoned ruins.

Hill giants have little regard for abstractions such as beauty or intelligence. They value strength above all else, and look for this quality in their leaders and their slaves. Fortunately for other races, hill giants are also lazy and shortsighted, and many folktales tell of heroes using deceptive talk or magic to escape from threatening hill giants.

Not ones for deep philosophy, hill giants are evil out of habit rather than because of ideology. There are rare instances of lone hill giants developing consciences, whether on their own or as a result of contact with other races. Such giants might be adopted by small communities where they serve as laborers or defenders, but they face ostracism from most other humanoids and their own kin.

Hill giants are more superstitious than religious, though some tribes practice shamanism. When they do find religion, they are drawn to violent gods such as Fandarra, Norgorber, Rovagug, or Urazra.

Of all the true giants, hill giants are the most frequent type encountered by adventurers. Not only are they the most prolific of their kind, but they also prefer the same temperate regions as many humanoid races. Hill giant tribes and individuals can be found in almost every corner of Avistan and Garund.

MARSH GIANTS

Reverence for an ancient evil that dwells beneath the sea has devolved the marsh giants both physically and morally.

Average Height: 9–14 feet

Average Weight: 1,400–1,600 pounds

Favored Weapons: Clubs, gaffs, terbutjes, tridents

Favored Companions: Aberrations, boggards, giant frogs, merrows



Marsh giants are hideous amalgams of fish, frog, and humanoid. Their faces are inhuman, with dark, unblinking eyes and large, thin-lipped mouths. Though humanoid in shape, marsh giants' bodies are flabby and hairless, with green, scaly skin, the better to blend in with their surroundings. Marsh giants rarely wear much in the way of clothing, but sometimes wear golden jewelry given to them by the sea-spawn of Dagon. Other creatures find the jewelry's intricate geometric designs unnerving—sometimes even maddening.

According to legend, marsh giants are the descendants of a tribe of hill giants who committed an act so evil even other giants thought it unforgivable. To avoid reprisal, the giants fled to a desolate marsh, where centuries of inbreeding and strange rituals have adapted them to a semiaquatic existence. Marsh giants live in crude shacks of mud, stone, and plant material, which hide them from view but do little to keep out the environment.

Marsh giants are hateful even to each other, yet they are bound together in their worship of the demon lord Dagon, drowning victims and burying treasures as offerings to their abyssal lord. Marsh giants believe they can gain a creature's power by consuming it, and even cannibalism is not taboo. Sometimes they mate with abominations from the deep; the resulting offspring, known as "brineborn," possess physical mutations and increased magical ability.

The Sodden Lands are home to the largest concentration of marsh giants, and many of them believe the Eye of Abendego is a conduit to Dagon's abyssal realm. Multiple marsh giant cults make their homes in Avistan's larger wetlands, including Avalon Bay in Ustalav, the Mushfens in Varisia, and the Sellen Basin of the River Kingdoms. Even small stretches of marshland may play host to these giants.

STONE GIANTS

Though to outsiders it appears homogeneous, stone giant society is divided between technology and ancient spiritualism.

Average Height: 10–15 feet

Average Weight: 1,400–1,600 pounds

Favored Weapons: Greatclubs, heavy picks, spears

Favored Companions: Dire bears, earth elementals, mammoths, other megafauna



Towering twice the height of humans, with hairless skin the color and texture of rock, stone giants might easily be mistaken for statues rather than living things. Indeed, their wide chests and angular features are reminiscent of primitive sculptures, and their lanky limbs seem to bend at odd angles. They wear leather clothes, dyed brown and gray to match their rocky surroundings.

Stone giants can be found in any rocky terrain, but prefer mountainous regions above the tree line but below the snow line, and are most comfortable living enclosed by stone in natural caves. Although they generally disdain agriculture, they raise goats and sheep, and sometimes cultivate wild grapes to make sour wine.

The eldest couple in a clan rules over the rest of the members. Often, these leaders are true elders—stone giants who can hear the voices of the stones, and even have command over them.

After the fall of Thassilon, a schism formed in stone giant society. Some continued to practice the masonry and metallurgy they had learned from their hated masters, and turned the craft to their own ends. Others rejected such technology as evil, and sought to reclaim their spiritual heritage from before the empire's rise.

Today, most stone giants remain true to the old ways, revering ancestor spirits rather than gods. More progressive giants worship Erastil (whom they call Estig), Minderhal, or Fandarra. Recently, evil stone giants have been turning to the worship of Urazra.

Even thousands of years after the fall of Thassilon, the Storval Plateau remains the heart of stone giant culture. The majority of stone giant clans reside in the Kodar and Tusk mountain ranges. Individual stone giants, and sometimes even whole clans, have been encountered in temperate mountains elsewhere, following the mysterious whispers of the earth spirits.

STORM GIANTS

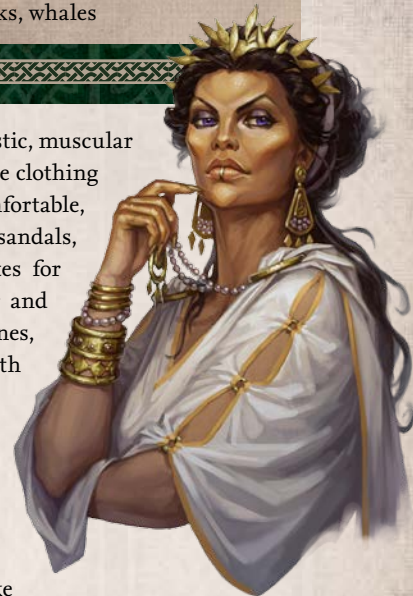
Storm giants believe in living in luxury. Though their benevolent, powerful emotions often get the better of them.

Average Height: 19–24 feet

Average Weight: 10,000–15,000 pounds

Favored Weapons: Greatswords, longbows, tridents

Favored Companions: Bronze dragons, griffins, rocs, sea serpents, sharks, whales



Storm giants resemble majestic, muscular humans. They find restrictive clothing both distasteful and uncomfortable, favoring loose tunics and sandals, though they don breastplates for battle. Most have dark hair and olive or bronze skin tones, though some who live beneath the sea develop pale blue or green skin. Rarely, a storm giant is born with skin, hair, or eyes in shades of violet—a coloration seen as a sign of divine blessing.

Most storm giants make their homes in isolated locations where the sea and land meet—such as rocky coastlines and volcanic islands—and build towering structures from which to look out over their fields and pastures. Under these giants' care, crops and animals can grow to stunning proportions.

Storm giants live alone or in extended families of no more than half a dozen individuals led by an elder; larger groups are practically unheard of. Individuals are often taken by wanderlust and may be absent from their keeps for decades or longer. A storm giant's hoard often includes mementos from distant places she has visited, and wealth with which she generously rewards the smaller humanoids—typically elves, humans, merfolk, or tritons—that she employs to tend to her property.

The storm giant pantheon includes sky-father Hyjarth and sea-mother Tourithia (both aspects of Gozreh), their daughter Syriss (Shelyn), and a number of demigods, such as the sailor Aegirran, the matriarch Bergelmir, the huntress Skode, the trickster Skrymir, and Tjasse who tamed the roc.

Storm giants are found living on islands and under reefs all along the coasts of Avistan and Garund, from the Steaming Sea to the Obari Ocean. The Jagged Reach, an island off the southwest coast of Rahadoum within sight of the Eye of Abendego, is home to a large number of storm giants and a pilgrimage site for many more.



GIANT'S TOOLBOX

The half-elf Thundin had a true talent for enchantment. He was also a downright bastard who enjoyed stealing lovers from enemies and friends alike. But in a scrap, his charms could turn the tide of battle. From the start, the assault on the cloud fortress went by the numbers. Just as Thundin foretold, the giants were susceptible to his charms. Before his magical haze subsided, we hobbled and slaughtered them. Not long after, the queen and her treasury were in our sights. I don't know which was more dazzling: the vista from the lofty chamber, or the monarch herself. Thundin went to work. He cracked a sly grin and spoke his words of power, confident in his arcane prowess. And then, with a shocked scream and a blur of blue robes, the half-elf was gone. That day, we learned there are some giants you just can't charm.

—FROM THE JOURNAL OF GENDIN YETH, ADVENTURER AND SELLSWORD

Giants have haunted legends and myths from the very dawn of the storyteller's art. Like humans on a grander scale, giants are physical power incarnate. The following rules focus on giants' strengths, granting them extra tools and abilities that highlight their stature, power, and innate talents.

GIANT FEATS

Giants capitalize on their size and affinity for the primal elements to impose their wills on enemies. The following selection of feats grants giants even more ways to gain advantages over smaller opponents.

AWESOME THROW (COMBAT)

Your ranged attacks can send smaller opponents flying.

Prerequisites: Str 25, Throw Anything or rock throwing, Improved Bull Rush, size Large or larger.

Benefit: As a standard action, you can perform the awesome throw combat maneuver. You do this by making a thrown weapon attack; if you don't have the Throw Anything feat, you must use a large, bulky, and relatively regular-shaped object with a hardness of at least 5 (such as a rock or treasure chest). If that attack hits a corporeal opponent smaller than you, the opponent takes damage and is knocked away, flying 10 feet in a straight line away from you and falling prone. If an obstacle prevents the completion of your target's move, the target and the obstacle each take 1d6 points of damage, and the target is knocked prone in a space adjacent to the obstacle.

FLAME WARRIOR (COMBAT)

The raging inferno of your body flows through any sword or axe you wield.

Prerequisites: Fire subtype, giant subtype.

Benefit: You naturally transfer the heat of your body to any metal melee weapons you wield, dealing 1d6 additional points of fire damage.

FROST WARRIOR (COMBAT)

The frigid cold of your body makes your melee attacks more formidable.

Prerequisites: Cold subtype, giant subtype.

Benefit: You naturally transfer the cold of your body to any metal melee weapons you wield, dealing 1d6 additional points of cold damage.

FORTITUDE OF GIANTS

Your great mass and vigor allows you to shrug off the effects of poison and fatigue.

Prerequisites: Con 14, Great Fortitude, giant subtype.

Benefit: When you attempt a saving throw against a poison effect or an effect that inflicts the fatigued condition, roll twice and take the higher result.

GIANT'S CRUSH (COMBAT)

When you strike hard, you knock smaller foes off their feet.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, Vital Strike, base attack bonus +6, giant subtype.

Benefit: If you hit a creature at least one size category smaller than you with a melee attack while using both Power Attack and Vital Strike, the creature that you attacked is also knocked prone. A successful Reflex save negates this effect (DC = 10 + your base attack bonus). You must choose to use this feat before making the attack roll.

Special: This effect stacks with the effect of Giant's Wallop.

GIANT'S SMASH (COMBAT)

Obstacles do not concern you.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, giant subtype.

Benefit: When you attack an inanimate, unattended object, you ignore the first 5 points of its hardness. You also receive a +5 bonus on Strength checks to knock down or break open doors.

GIANT'S WALLOP (COMBAT)

When you strike, you knock the sense out of smaller foes.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, Vital Strike, base attack bonus +6, giant subtype.

Benefit: If you hit a creature at least one size category smaller than you with a melee attack while using both Power Attack and Vital Strike, the creature you attacked is also dazed for 1 round. A successful Fortitude save negates this effect (DC = 10 + your base attack bonus). You must choose to use this feat before making the attack roll.

Special: This effect stacks with the effect of Giant's Crush.

GREATER AWESOME BLOW (COMBAT)

When you perform an awesome blow, you fling opponents back farther.

Prerequisites: Str 25, Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, size Large or larger.

Benefit: When you make an awesome blow combat maneuver, for every 5 by which your combat maneuver check exceeds the target's CMD, you send the target flying 5 additional feet. Furthermore, this movement provokes attacks of opportunity from your allies.

IMPROVED AWESOME THROW (COMBAT)

When you perform an awesome throw, you knock opponents back farther.

Prerequisites: Str 25, Awesome Throw, Greater Bull Rush, Throw Anything or rock throwing, size Large or larger.

Benefit: When you make an awesome throw combat maneuver, for every 5 by which your combat maneuver check exceeds the target's CMD, you send the target flying 5 additional feet. Furthermore, this movement provokes attacks of opportunity from your allies.

LONGSHANKS

Your long stride allows you extra maneuverability.

Prerequisites: Giant subtype, size Large or larger.

Benefit: Your land speed increases by 5 feet, and you can ignore up to 20 feet of nonmagical difficult terrain each round you move.

STONE SOUL

You're so attuned to the earth that your skin can harden to the thickness of stone.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: Your natural armor bonus increases by 1. Once per day, you can use *stoneskin* (on yourself only) as a spell-like ability. Your caster level is equal to 1/2 your Hit Dice.

Special: You can take this feat up to three times. Each additional time you take this feat, the number of times you can use *stoneskin* per day increases by one.

STORM SOUL

Your attunement to storms grants you immunity to some of their effects.

Prerequisite: Cloud or storm giant.

Benefit: You gain immunity to electricity.

STORM WARRIOR

Your weapons channel the fury of thunderstorms.

Prerequisites: Storm Soul, cloud or storm giant.

Benefit: You can transfer the power of storms from your body to any metal melee weapons you wield, dealing an additional 1d6 points of electricity damage.

WILL OF GIANTS

You are no mere humanoid, to be toyed with by petty enchantments.

Prerequisites: Wis 14, Iron Will, giant subtype.

Benefit: You gain immunity to enchantment effects that target only humanoids, such as *charm person* and *hold person*.

GIANT SPELLS

Giants are often seen as big, hulking brutes lacking subtlety and wit. While some are indeed nothing more than large killing machines, giants have also developed magic that capitalizes on their physical strength and benefits from their opponents' small statures.

BEANSTALK

School conjuration (creation); **Level** sorcerer/wizard 4, summoner 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, M (a small handful of beans)

Range 0 ft. (see text)

Effect a 5-foot-radius beanstalk that grows to a height of 50 ft./caster level

Duration 24 hours

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

When casting this spell, you must plant the material components in soil. When you do, at the end of casting, a large beanstalk rises up from the ground. It's strong enough to support Huge or smaller creatures weighing no more than 2,000 pounds total, and has enough handholds and footholds that it can be climbed as if it were knotted rope (Climb DC 5). At the end of the spell's duration, the beanstalk withers and dies at an accelerated rate, leaving nothing more than a pile of compost.

FLAMING AURA

School transmutation [fire]; **Level** bloodrager 4, cleric 4, magus 4, shaman 4, sorcerer/wizard 4, summoner 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M/DF (a small piece of charcoal)

Range personal



Target you (see text)

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw none (harmless, see text); **Spell Resistance** no (harmless, see text)

The spell allows you channel fire into your very being. If you don't already have the fire subtype, this spell grants you the fire subtype. If you already have the fire subtype, you instead channel the flames from your being outward, creating a 10-foot-radius aura of fire centered on you. Creatures who enter or end their turns in the aura must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or take 1d8 points of fire damage.

Multiple castings of this spell stack; you can cast it once on yourself to gain the fire subtype, then again to manifest the aura of flames around you.

FROSTY AURA

School transmutation [cold]; **Level** bloodrager 4, cleric 4, magus 4, shaman 4, sorcerer/wizard 4, summoner 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M/DF (a chunk of ice or a few drops of water melted from glacier ice)

Range personal

Target you (see text)

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw none (harmless, see text); **Spell Resistance** no (harmless, see text)

The spell allows you to channel cold into your very being. If you don't already have the cold subtype, this spell grants you the cold subtype. If you already have the cold subtype, you instead channel the frost from your being outward, creating a 10-foot-radius aura of cold centered on you. Creatures who enter or end their turns in the aura must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or take 1d8 points of cold damage.

Multiple castings of this spell stack; you can cast it once on yourself to gain the cold subtype, then again to manifest the aura of frost around you.

QUICK THROWING

School transmutation; **Level** antipaladin 2, bloodrager 2, magus 2, paladin 2, ranger 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 1 round/level

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

Those under the effects of this spell become faster in the use of thrown weapons. They can draw thrown weapons (including rocks if they have the rock throwing ability) on their bodies or within their space without the need for the Quick Draw feat, allowing them to make their full normal rate

of attacks with such weapons. This has no effects on other forms of ranged weapon ammunition.

THUNDEROUS FOOTFALLS

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 3, summoner 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one Large or larger creature

Duration 1 round/level

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** no (harmless)

This spell makes the target creature's footfalls shake the ground violently as he trundles, which may knock down smaller creatures as he passes by, though it also makes the target slower on land. The target's land speed is reduced by half (round down to the nearest 5-foot increment), but each time he moves overland adjacent to a creature that is at least one size category smaller than he is, that creature must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or be knocked prone.

THANATOTIC FURY

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (shavings from a holy symbol)

Range personal

Target you (see text)

Duration 1 minute/level

You may cast this spell only if you have the giant subtype. When casting this spell, you channel the fury and the abilities of thanatotic titans, gaining some of their abilities for a short period of time. When you hit a creature capable of casting divine spells, that creature must succeed at a Will saving throw or be unable to cast divine spells for 1d4 rounds and be shaken for the same duration. If the save is successful, the target is instead shaken for only 1 round.

Additionally, your attacks are treated as epic and evil for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

TITANIC ANCHORING

School transmutation; **Level** antipaladin 3, bloodrager 3, cleric 3, magus 3, paladin 3, ranger 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a shaving of oak root)

Range personal

Target you

Duration 1 round/level

You become grounded and nearly immovable. You are immune to the pull and push special abilities, and all bull rush, grapple, overrun, reposition, and trip combat maneuvers made by creatures your size or smaller always fail. You gain a +10 bonus to your CMD against those combat maneuver checks made by creatures larger than you.

CENTERED ON GIANTS

The rules for many character options in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* and other Pathfinder RPG products often assume that creatures are Medium or Small. In the case of a handful of spells with areas that feature a “radius emanation centered on you” such as *antimagic field*, *aura of doom*SM, and *zone of silence*, as well as some of the spells presented in this section, this can result in an area that is effectively useless when coming from a Large or larger caster. As an optional rule (and one that is recommended if you are running this Adventure Path), when a creature casts an emanation or burst spell with the text “centered on you,” treat the creature’s entire space as the spell’s point of origin, and measure the spell’s area or effect from the edge of the creature’s space. For instance, an *antimagic field* cast by a fire giant would extend 10 feet beyond his space (effectively increasing the emanation’s radius by 5 feet).

GIANT ALCHEMICAL WEAPONS

The new alchemical weapons presented in this section have (or at least utilize the rules for) the greater splash weapon special weapon quality.

Greater Splash Weapon: This splash weapon works in some ways like a normal splash weapon (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 202), but its effects cover a larger area. Like a normal splash weapon, a greater splash weapon requires no weapon proficiency, and you throw it by making a ranged touch attack. A hit deals direct hit damage to the target and to creatures and objects in squares within 5 feet of that target. It then deals splash damage to all creatures within 10 feet of the target. If the target takes up more than a 5-foot square, you can choose one of its squares as the center of the effect. The direct damage affects the squares normally, so a Large or larger creature could take both the direct damage and the splash damage depending on the square you choose. The splash damage for a greater splash weapon is 5 points of the appropriate damage type for the weapon.

Like a normal splash weapon, you can also choose to target a specific grid intersection (treating it as a ranged attack against AC 5). If it hits, the greater splash weapon deals direct damage to creatures and objects in

squares within 5 feet of the targeted intersection, and splash damage to creatures within 10 feet of the targeted intersection. As with a normal splash weapon, you cannot target a grid intersection occupied by a creature.

Greater splash weapons can be thrown as if they were a rock using the rock throwing universal monster rule (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 303), and caught with rock catching (*Bestiary* 303), though the DC to catch a greater splash weapon is 10 higher than normal due to its fragile and volatile nature. If a creature fails its Reflex saving throw to catch a greater splash weapon, the weapon automatically breaks, treating the creature attempting to catch it as the splash weapon’s target.

A greater splash weapon can be used only by Large or larger creatures, though it can be used as ammunition in a catapult or trebuchet. When used as ammunition in one of these siege engines, use the range for the engine rather than the greater splash weapon’s range.

GIANT ALCHEMICAL WEAPONS

The following alchemical weapons are frequently used by giants instead of the typical thrown boulders.

Fiery Boulder: A fiery boulder is a large, roughly boulder-shaped version of alchemist’s fire favored by giants. A direct hit from a fiery boulder deals 2d6 points of fire damage and 5 points of fire damage to every creature affected by its splash damage. All creatures affected by a fiery boulder’s direct damage take an additional 2d6 points of fire damage the following round; affected creatures can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage.

Noxious Pig: Giant alchemists make these items by manipulating the controlled decomposition of a dead hog. This greater splash weapon deals no damage, but those within its primary area of effect—the target and those within 5 feet of the target or those within 5 feet of the intersection—must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

Tanglefoot Bundle: This larger version of a tanglefoot bag entangles its target as normal and requires a successful DC 20 Reflex saving throw to avoid being stuck to the floor. In addition, it can affect Huge and smaller creatures, and has a range increment of 60 feet. A creature that is glued to the floor can break free by succeeding at a DC 30 Strength check or by dealing 25 points of damage to the goo with a slashing weapon.

GIANT ALCHEMICAL WEAPONS

Ranged Weapons	Price	Damage	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special	Craft DC
Fiery Boulder	100 gp	2d6	×2	40 ft.	10 lbs.	Fire	Greater splash	30
Noxious Pig	150 gp	—	—	40 ft.	25 lbs.	—	Greater splash, see text	35
Tanglefoot Bundle	250 gp	—	—	60 ft.	20 lbs.	—	Entangle	35

GIANT MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are typically created by giants and complement their inherent abilities.

BOULDER BAG		PRICE 3,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT 200 lbs.
AURA moderate conjuration		

This immense bag is always full of hefty, good-sized rocks and can be carried over the shoulder or on the belt of a Large or larger creature, though doing so does not take up an item slot. On command as a swift action, a Large or larger creature wearing the *boulder bag* can reach into the bag and pull out a rock two size categories smaller than itself that is suitable for use of the rock throwing ability (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 303). No matter how many rocks are taken out, the bag never empties. Furthermore, if a boulder-shaped alchemical item (such as the fiery boulder presented in this article) is placed in the bag, it takes up no weight within the bag, and can also be drawn on command as a swift action, as if it were one of the rocks the bag normally produces.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 1,500 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>secret chest</i>	

GAUNTLETS OF CATCHING		PRICE 6,000 GP
SLOT hands	CL 4th	WEIGHT 20 lbs.
AURA faint abjuration		

Only Large or larger creatures can wear these sturdy leather gauntlets. If the wearer has the rock catching ability (*Bestiary* 303), the Reflex DC to catch rocks is reduced by 5 while she's wearing the gauntlets. Furthermore, the wearer can attempt to catch a thrown rock of which she's unaware, but doesn't benefit from the DC reduction granted by the primary function of the gauntlets. If the wearer does not have the rock catching ability, these gauntlets bestow that ability on the wearer instead of their normal effects.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 3,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Items, <i>shield</i>	

IRON BAND OF IRON MIND		PRICE 15,000 GP
SLOT headband	CL 9th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA moderate abjuration		

This headband grants a +4 bonus on saving throws against all enchantment spells. When worn by a creature with the giant subtype, it makes the wearer immune to enchantments that target only humanoid creatures (such as *charm person* or *hold person*).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 7,500 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>break enchantment</i> , creator must have the giant subtype	

MAGIC BEANS		PRICE 1,400 GP
SLOT none	CL 7th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate conjuration		

This item takes the form of a half-dozen brown beans, usually contained in a simple burlap sack. Ten minutes after the beans are planted in the ground, they sprout into a 350-foot-tall beanstalk as if created by the *beanstalk* spell (see page 70). The *magic beans* are consumed in the process. The beanstalk lasts for 24 hours before collapsing into a pile of rotten plant matter.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 700 GP
Craft Wondrous Items, <i>beanstalk</i>	



CLOSE RELATIONS

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: TALL TALES 1 OF 6

so this is the end, my last day. No, not only mine-ours. What a fine band we make, a ragtag bunch of six... six what? Friends? I suppose. It's the way of friendship, perhaps, to accept each other, warts and all, and what better way to get acquainted with someone's warts than to adventure together? This may be as good a way to die as any. We're a strange bunch to be sure, but reliable. A pair of Ulfen, at least one of whom hasn't washed since he last fell in a river. A halfling alchemist with enough potions, lotions, and bombs for an army of quacks. A dwarf who could stare down a giant without ever needing to fight, but damned if she didn't come prepared to do both. And then there's the last of us—so pale, so... confusing. Just who-or what-is she? Friend? Foe? I may die never knowing.

One thing I do know: we resemble a circus more than an adventuring party. But who really gets to choose the folks they adventure with?

Lucky drunk protect us; what a way to spend our final evening. What I would give to have a member of my family at hand to steel my nerves with the jocular wisdom befitting a shortstone's last day. How my cousins and kith would laugh. Laughter would help, even at the gates of this particular hell.

Alas, I'm the only shortstone here. It's up to me, then, to bring a smile to the faces of those around me. To churn those frowns into grins, slap those grimaces into guffaws. Ah, they've started squabbling again.

Would you be quiet?!"

The other five adventurers stopped their bickering and looked at Silas Shortstone. The gnome cut a dashing figure, even in this fraught moment: his hair neatly oiled, his black waistcoat still bearing most of its obsidian buttons, his enormous, prize-winning mustache still reflected in his fine boots. His kilt and mole sporran were spotless. Somehow, dirt never seemed to stick to him—it was as though recent events had bypassed his appearance for fear of offending it.

"I suggest—if I may be so bold—that this back-and-forth is getting us nowhere. Our position might be tough, even parlous perhaps, but we still have our wits. Well, most of us do. Yes, we're probably going to die, and yes, probably quite horribly. Shredded, mangled, torn limb from limb by cruel, gigantic hands that—" Silas paused and glanced at the worried faces of his companions.

"Yes, anyway. We have no choice but to finish what we started. We know what will happen if we don't, and that outcome could be a lot worse—for all of us. Besides, we've all been in situations of near-certain death before and lived to tell the tale; I think it would do us good to be a little more positive.

"I'm going to tell you a story of a danger long past, though it was just as harrowing as our current peril. Even more so, possibly, for my enemy had a fate worse than death in mind for me. I'm going to tell you about

my first adventure, and a family of ogres who took an understandable shine to me. It seems appropriate, given our present enemy."

A collective sigh arose from Silas's companions as they settled in around the fire and gave him their attention, the sound muffled by the snows beyond the cave's entrance.

The impeccably dressed gnome reached into his pocket and pulled out a match. After pausing to check his pipe, he struck the twig against a nearby stone and smiled as it hissed into flame. "Never be without a match, my old grandfather used to say, so I always keep a trio of them in this leather pouch about my neck. The smallest thing can save your life. Now, are we sitting comfortably?" Silas pulled himself closer to the fire and began to tell his story.

I remember a time when I was new, fresh, unsoiled, lacking experience—in a strictly adventuresome sense, of course. I'd never drawn a sword against a goblin, nor sung a battle chant to overcome a bloodbug, let alone a swarm of them. I knew only one thing: I wanted to make a name for myself as so many other heroes have, as so many of my mighty Shortstone ancestors had done before me. I wanted fame.

We were all of us keen as mustard to have an adventure. With us were my cousin Jarob Shortstone and his niece twice removed, Vincora—a lovely girl, she was. Then there was Meriwether, who had defeated at least two

goblin tribes; Ambrose, who was as skilled with his sword as with magic; and last but not least, Odwar Shortstone, our great-uncle and leader. I was the youngest, and it was I who first heard that ogres had been seen on the edges of the Sanos Forest. Some said adventurers stumbling through the Kreegwood had stirred them up. The ogres out that way had a nasty reputation, and not just for ferocity. They'd been isolated for a long, long time, and we decided to pay them our respects.

I remember the day we set out. It was truly beautiful, clear as a bell. We were so laden down with gear that I started sweating before I'd even lifted my pack onto my shoulders. It seemed we had packed everything we could ever need and more. Ah, to be young and naive again.

I won't go into detail, but suffice it to say the journey was tougher than we'd ever experienced. We ended up throwing half our gear away before we'd even had the chance to tarnish it, and lost the other half in one way or another. After what seemed like forever, we found ourselves deep in the Sanos, away from traveled paths—a place both dark and still. And, we thought, empty. Though empty it certainly wasn't.

The ogres knew the forest better than we did. They knew its echoes, its hidden pathways. They were keen to its nature. One by one they took us, storming out of the dense trees to snatch one of us up, then making off just as quickly into the foliage. They would leave one of us injured, slowing the others, knowing we wouldn't desert our kin. At night, they gave us no rest, calling out to us in the dark, just beyond the edges of our sight. We could hear them crashing through the brush; perhaps they did it deliberately, just to spook us.

Then one night they came all at once, slipping through the dark like oil on a river. We scattered into the darkness, fleeing their hunger and anger and strength. Before I knew it, I was alone in the night. The forest was terribly still and oppressive, like it was trying to smother me in its gloom. I dug myself into a mound of fallen leaves, fished a piece of silver wire out of my sporrán, and wove a magic alarm before crawling deeper into the mound and lying awake, petrified.

Why does time drag so much on nights like that—like these? It's a strange thing about mornings: when you don't want them, they always arrive too soon, but when you need them, they never seem to come soon enough. Eventually, of course, morning did come, and I began my search for my friends and family. But I found nothing.

Not then, at any rate. Forests can be suffocating, even by day, as though sound dies in them. Unless you're desperate to be quiet, in which case every noise you make echoes. Damned uncooperative, forests are. I looked and looked, but found nothing. If I'd been Meriwether, I could have hunted for tracks, but having nothing else

to do, I just sat and tried to think through the smog that was choking my head. With nothing else to do, I prayed. I sang my praises to Cayden Cailean, hoping for some manner of inspiration.

And that's when the ogres came back. I felt a massive hand close around me, and the next thing I saw was the inside of a sack settling over my head, and then everything went dark.

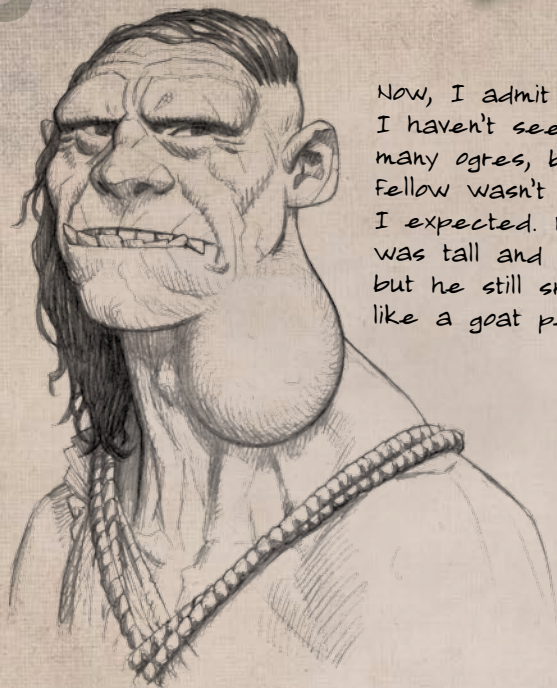
When I awoke, I didn't so much see as hear. There were voices, deep voices, and they were laughing. All their words were in the foul tongue of giants, every other word a shout or curse or both. They were arguing about what to do with me. I couldn't catch much, but I picked out the word "scoop" lots of times, and a word they kept repeating that had something to do with cooking, though their rough dialect was too thick to follow easily. The other words I won't repeat, not in front of pleasant company. Then came footsteps, the sound of an old stair groaning and a door slamming. I tried to get free, but the sack was tied tight and something made of metal was attached to my wrist. Then the sack was pulled off. Daylight slapped me, and my eyes went blurry.

As my eyes adjusted, I saw a shadow—a very big shadow. I could see it waddling, hopping from one foot to the next like a massive and repulsive duck. It was a sight that almost elicited laughter. Then the shape



This was my introduction to ogrekind. She was just a girl.

Ogres are brutal and heartless creatures, but I was enamored with her appreciation and enthusiasm for my fine singing voice.



Now, I admit that I haven't seen many ogres, but this fellow wasn't what I expected. He was tall and lean, but he still smelled like a goat pen.

became clearer. It was a she, you could tell immediately. Her mouth was huge, and a great big tongue, almost like a frog's, kept flopping out. She wore an apron that was covered in grime and blood. I shuddered, wondering if my blood would stain that apron next.

"Where be your voice?" she said, her words sounding like water in a clogged drain. Before I could answer, she pulled back my head, forced my mouth open, and poked her big, filthy finger inside.

"Where be it?" Her prodding stopped, and that's when I saw what my wrist was attached to: a rusty iron sphere a foot across, connected by a chain to a shackle, like something a prisoner might wear. She grabbed the ball and lifted, dragging me into the air behind it.

It's odd what flickers through one's thoughts and feelings at such moments. I had a sudden craving for a glass of fine brandy and a piece of fruitcake—as well, of course, as the desire to pull my short sword from its scabbard, catch the ogre by surprise, and neatly sever her head. A glance, however, showed me my sword wasn't there. I'd have to rely on my tongue's sharpness, then.

"You like my voice?" I said, plying my seductive charms in the giant tongue as best as I could while being dangled by an ogre from a rusty iron sphere attached to my wrist. Even for all my talent, the words sounded ragged at the edges.

She nodded her head vigorously, like an excited child. I started to sing "The Crusty Cormorant." It's not the most popular tune, just an old gnome sailor's shanty about boats and gems, but as soon as I did, she started to hum.

Now let me get this part of the story right. Ogres aren't good singers. They're great at mashing things to jelly

with their clubs, and magnificent at spearing crows with their javelins, but music simply isn't their forte. My accompaniment was approximately ten times louder and more grating than an old dog howling, but it gave me a chance to look about as I sang. I instantly wished I hadn't.

The room was filled by a huge bed: a great mound made of rags and straw and hundreds of dried dead things—mice, rats, and birds, mostly. Hanging around it were ogre ornaments, all revolting. There was a corn doll made partially of humanoid bones with a burnt head, lots of tools for piercing or goring or cutting, and hundreds and hundreds of teeth, which were driven into the other objects. Then there were the bodies. There weren't many, mercifully, but those that were there sickened me. They had been gutted—posthumously, I hoped—and hair and straw had been stuffed into their insides, giving them a lumpy and dried appearance.

I must have stopped singing, because suddenly I was being violently shaken, then swung around. When it eventually stopped, I felt sick. Her face pressed against mine, her breath stinking like the worst midden. "Give me voice!" she shouted, and started to force my mouth open again.

"Wait!" I managed to mumble around her prodding fingers. She gripped my jaw and cocked her head to one side, as though trying to decide whether to pull, push, or squash. I had just a few words to delay the inevitable end. "If you take the voice, it will break. The voice must be given as a..." I realized then that I wasn't quite sure if there was a proper word for gift in the giant tongue, so I guessed at one.

Her eyes opened wide and her jaw dropped, her tongue swinging from a cavern of broken teeth, jagged bits of bone, and undigested mush. Then she blushed, her mouth drawing into a foul grin.

That's when I met the others—her brothers, I'd guess, but with ogres you're never quite sure. I'd barely said my piece when they came lurching in. There were two of them, and homely doesn't begin to describe the pair. One, who I later learned was called Brother Kidney, was thin for an ogre and very tall, though "stretched" might be a better way to describe him. On his neck bobbed a massive goiter, which to be quite honest I first took for a goose he'd got caught in his throat. He, too, wore a butcher's apron—and precious little else—and carried a preposterously large club that had so many nails protruding from it that I was sure he was about to snag it on something. His head was mostly bald, but his remaining hair hung in long threads that he fed across his brow. Behind Brother Kidney was a horrible, hunched ogre, whose bones cracked as he climbed the stairs to the bedchamber. He had the most unsettling leer I've ever seen on a face, and drool ran down his chin.

He eyed me with a mixture of hunger and something more unsettling. This was Uncle Scraul.

The ogres immediately began squabbling, but their dialect was so thick I could hardly catch any words, perhaps mercifully so. The female ogre, who was apparently called Sister Spleen, was clearly suggesting something her kin weren't happy about at all. They both kept pointing to bands of wire they'd wrapped around their little fingers; I wasn't sure what that meant, and tried to stop myself from guessing. There was an awful lot of pushing and pulling—some of which involved me—before Brother Kidney ran downstairs crying. That, believe me, was neither a pretty nor a welcome sight. Soon afterward, Uncle Scraul flew after him, his curses punctuated by his creaking bones. Sister Spleen slowly followed, clutching me like a rag doll and whimpering in a most unholy way.

Spleen lumbered down the stairs and through a doorway to a filthy dining room. She set me on a grimy, bloodstained table, and I watched with fear as she somberly assembled ingredients in a cauldron. She didn't see fit to spice her meal with Shortstone, however, and soon hung the stew over the fire. A little while later, the males came back, drawn by the smell. By their looks, I would have been on the menu straight away if it weren't for Spleen.

After the ogres had filled their bowls (which were actually large milking buckets) with boiled meat, Sister Spleen filled a fourth bucket and nervously moved over to a trapdoor. She gave a knock, and from somewhere below—frighteningly close—came a shuffling and protesting, followed by a frantic scuttling.

"You stay back from the trapdoor now, little sister, or you won't be getting any of this fine soup," Spleen shouted.

I heard something scuttle back, and mad, childlike giggling echoed up from directly below me. Uncle Scraul pulled back a deerskin rug, revealing a trapdoor lashed with iron and padlocks. He solemnly unlocked each latch before nodding silently to Sister Spleen.

What followed was an obviously well-coordinated ritual. Scraul yanked the trapdoor open, Spleen threw the bucket below, and then all three ogres leaped onto the door, which shuddered a few times before whatever was below settled into a symphony of slurps, grunts, and deep swallows.

As I stared, the wormholes in the floorboards caught my eye, and I realized just how flimsy the wood was in that dusty horror house.

"That down there," said Uncle Scraul in answer to the horror on my face, "is our beloved sister, Little Cranny, our own dear kin and angel." He leaned very close to me and whispered, "She's all ours, and one day you'll be meeting her. You can depend upon it. Yarp!"

Scraul was hauled back by Spleen, who gripped his neck and screamed, "No he waint be. He's mine, is the little one,

all mine! He's said the words. You touch him, I'll feed you to her in pieces. He's all mine, especially the voice."

"He won't, once he knows why you called Spleen. Yarp!"

"You don't tell him nothing." Spleen looked angrily at her kin, and that was all I heard of that for a few days.

So began my captivity as a plaything for a family of ogres. Unable to escape my irons, I decided to try to lie low, find out where the keys were, and formulate a plan. At that time, I knew only a speck of magic; aside from some minor tricks, I knew one spell that could weave a magical ward, and another that could make a rope snake around things as if it were alive. If only I'd learned something more aggressive.

Then one night I found out what had happened to my kin. I was entertaining my hosts by singing and playing

They covered the trapdoor like they were trying to hide their behavior.



All of the gruesome dolls were terrible, of course, but the sight of this one was like a knife in the heart.



I felt like I maintained my composure while in the ogres' company, but I was terrified of this one. Little Cranny was hardly little.

the fool—anything to keep out of their bad books. They loved my showy cantrips, and I'd started using one in conjunction with some of my cradlesongs to get them to relax. This particular night, the two boys were in mischievous moods. They had an odd laughing way about them, and did lots of whispering. Cranny was somewhere below, sniggering.

I'd just finished some one-handed juggling when Scraul stood up and said, "Me and Kidney got something to show you. Old friends of yours."

What the ogre brought back in were two of my kin, Meriwether and Uncle Odwar. The ogres had gutted them like chickens, leaving only the carcasses, which they used as puppets. They mocked me with their words. "Oh, please help us, Mister Gnome! We've lost our guts! We're so hungry. Yarhar!" The ogres collapsed into gales of laughter, play-fighting with my beloved kin. They saw my pain, which only made them laugh harder.

They never saw the blow coming. Sister Spleen slammed an ogre-sized fork straight through Uncle Scraul's hand, pinning it to the table. He looked at it dumbly for a second, and then screamed, flailing as he tried to get away. Then I was grabbed by Kidney, who crushed me tight in his hands and hurled me—ball, chain, and all—at his sister. I grimaced, bracing for the fleshy impact, but she ducked and I hit the floorboards, crashing through them and into the darkness below.

Above me, the argument became a full-blown brawl, while from somewhere behind me, I heard breathing.

"Play," said a gravelly voice. The voice of Little Cranny.

A huge meat skewer thrust through the boards from above, then punched through again, followed by an eruption of shouts.

I scuttled away, rushing about below the house, making my way by the scarce light coming through the gaps in the floorboards above. Behind me, the scuttling and screeching became more excited. I found a gap I could squeeze through, but as I tried to pull myself upward, the revolting face of Brother Kidney appeared, followed by his grasping hand. "I'm going to give you to Pappy Grindy!" he yelled. "He's my meat mincer!" Then he was struck again by Sister Spleen. Somewhere above, I could still hear Uncle Scraul dragging the table around as he tried to get his fork-impaled hand free.

I dashed on, pursued by Little Cranny's childlike squeals. In the mottled light, I caught a glimpse of yellow fangs in a bloated head before I fell backward, dropping into a dusty dry space. I was unscathed, despite having been more heavily battered than deep-fried fish.

The space was filled with dolls—dolls made from people. Apparently Little Cranny had been hard at work making them, perhaps for years. The graveyard of obscene figures stared across the basement from blank sockets. Their bodies were stuffed with straw and hair, and were positioned like playthings. Some were sitting, others standing. Two were in an embrace, maybe representing a dance. A few mundane furnishings—chairs, eating utensils, buckets, and lanterns—surrounded the dolls, as though they were ready to recommence their lives at any time.

"I got Pappy Grindy!" shouted a voice far above.

Then Cranny crept in. This was the youngest of the ogres, I assumed, but certainly not the prettiest. Dark eyes leered from beneath a shock of wild hair that stuck out like a whirlwind had caressed it. She had a huge mouth, and crouched forward like a sprinter ready to race—it looked like her deformed bones pushed her body to lean that way. In one hand she held a doll; even in the dim light I could tell it was made from my beloved Vincora. Her poor body was bent and abused, and her mouth retched out hair. The hunched ogre eyed me up and down and said, "Play."

She lurched toward me, her mouth opening wide. Scrambling back on my hands, I felt a wad of wool amid the waste, and an idea came to me. I snatched up a pinch of it and shouted out the words of a spell—one of my minor tricks I used for performances.

Little Cranny stopped. She was dazed for a moment, and started feeling at her head. I frantically searched around for rope in the refuse, and as I found some, a great weight struck the floorboards above us. They buckled, opening a crack in the floor. Through the gap I saw the still form of Sister Spleen, stuck halfway through the collapsed floor. An emotion almost like pity flittered

through me as I pulled at the rope and hastily muttered the words of the spell.

Cranny shook her head and scowled at me. I threw the rope at her and shouted, "Loop and knot!" The rope took on a life of its own, wrapping itself around the revolting ogre. But the rope was weak, and I knew Little Cranny would tear it away in no time.

Then the face of Brother Kidney leered down through the broken floorboards. He was holding something metallic that whirred as he turned a crank. "Time for supper!" he yelled madly. He paused as his hair drooped over his brow in two long, scraggly strands that fell to either side of his face. I grabbed the greasy locks and swung, pulling them below the fractured floorboards before yanking them into a quick knot. He pulled and yelled, only tightening the knot as he did, so I tied another, lashing his head to the floor.

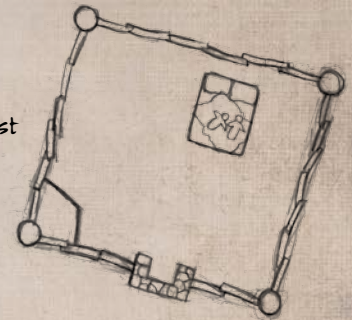
My rope was flailing, but it slowed the room's clumsy occupant, buying me a little time. I saw the lanterns, the hair, and the crumbling floorboards, and hatched a desperate plan. In those precious few seconds, I reached for the pouch about my neck and pulled out a match. It struck beautifully. I started feeding the flame to the room's grisly occupants, burning the hair of the dried dolls and setting the splintered wood alight. The ogres began to struggle

harder. Little Cranny cried out as she staggered away, the flaccid rope still tangled about her legs. I quickly gathered another pinch of wool and cast the same cantrip again, dazing Brother Kidney and enabling me to clamber up past him. I dashed by the inert form of my savior, Sister Spleen, and the still-pinned Uncle Scraul.

By the time I hit the door, the house was already burning, and I was long gone, carrying my iron weight with both arms as I sprinted away from the growing inferno. So far as I know, I was the only thing that escaped the blaze.

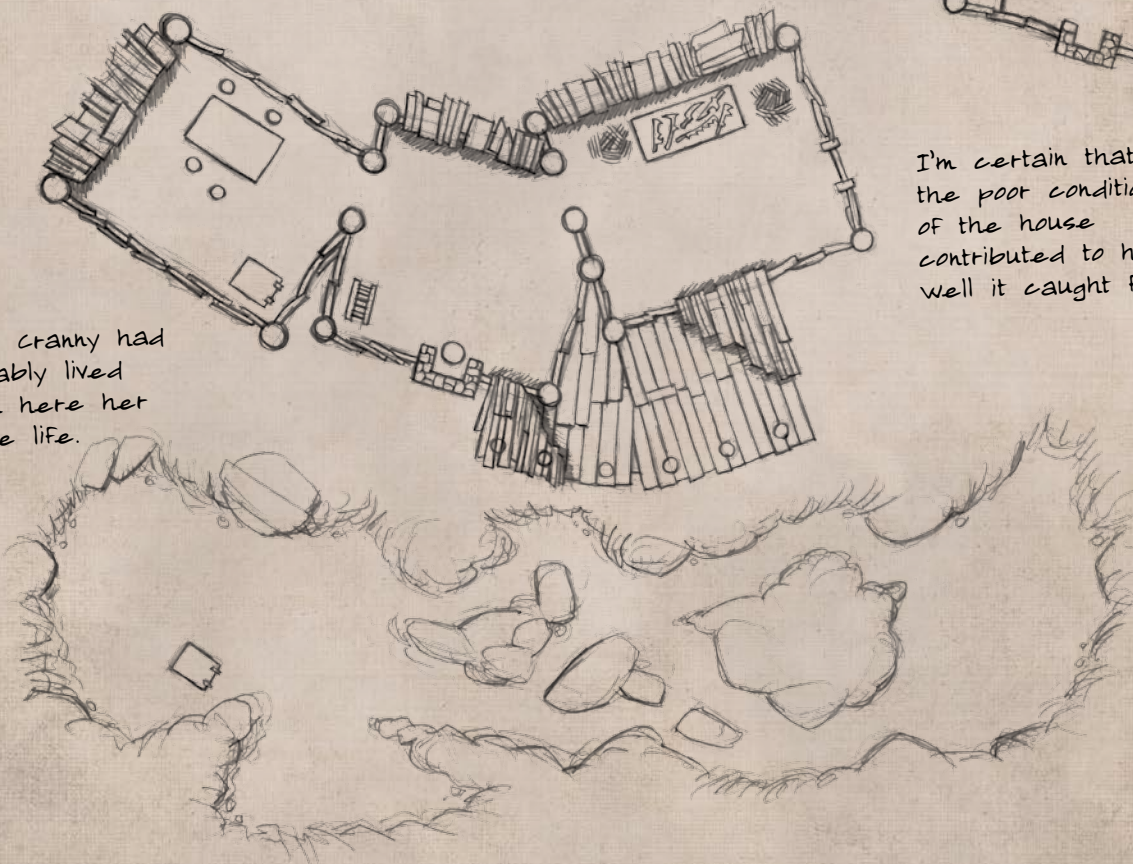
"So you see, my dear friends, the littlest thing can sometimes have the greatest results." Silas sat back, twiddling his burnt match and smiling broadly. After a moment, he turned to the dwarven woman next to him. "That's me, then. Now it's someone else's turn. What's your best giant-hunting story, Angriss?"

They slept in a single room above the rest of the house.



I'm certain that the poor condition of the house contributed to how well it caught fire.

Little cranny had probably lived down here her whole life.





BESTIARY

The spring melt had already begun, and as we traveled the Flood Road, we noticed the ground was growing increasingly soggy, especially as we neared the mountains. On the eighth day of our journey, the stormclouds that had been threatening us with a deluge finally released their downpour. Suddenly, a beast erupted from the tree line and charged our caravan. It resembled a troll, but must have been a young one because the creature stood barely taller than I. It slammed a horse to the ground with its massive claws and quickly clambered over it to get to me. I had enough time to draw my shortsword and stab it, but just as quickly as I withdrew the blade from its flesh, the wound began to knit itself together. Thankfully, Telmor cracked open a case of alchemist's fire and started throwing the flasks at the rampaging troll.

—Mureen Caran, Merchant Guard

Welcome to the Giantslayer Adventure Path Bestiary. This volume of the Giantslayer Adventure Path features mutant trolls, a collection of animals unique to Belkzen and the Mindspin Mountains, three new megafauna, and a template to create undead insects.

ENCOUNTERS IN TRUNAU

The random encounter table presented here features a number of typical threats the PCs could encounter while in Trunau. Much of the adventure doesn't lend itself well to random encounters. The first part of the adventure while the PCs are investigating the murder is best suited for random encounters, so those are the specific encounters that make up this random encounter table. The orc raid in Part 2 of the adventure is difficult enough for the PCs, so it's not recommended that you include any random encounters in that section. The final location of the adventure—the tomb below Trunau—is too small to accommodate random encounters.

GMs who wish to learn more about the town should see page 54 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Towns of the Inner Sea*.

Friendly Faces (CR varies): A number of entries on the table represent various townsfolk, such as the shopkeep, the storyteller, the tavern champion, or the NPCs found in the rowdy bar. You can use these entries to facilitate information gathering. Some of these NPCs even correlate to named citizens of Trunau such as Jess Meeson, a local shopkeep. If the PCs' investigation stalls, you can introduce one of these random encounters to help them along by having the NPC relate some of the information from the Rumors Around Trunau table in the foreword or the Local Lore table on page 11.

Rowdy Tavern (CR 3): Adventurers love a good bar fight, but this encounter can serve more than just their pugilistic desires—a GM can use this encounter to spread information using the same methods mentioned in the above entry. This encounter includes a barkeep (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 303), two drunkards (*GameMastery Guide* 303), and a barmaid (*GameMastery Guide* 302). If the encounter ends up in a fight, only the two drunkards take part in combat.

Tavern Champion (CR 3): The people of Trunau are hard-boiled survivors, surrounded on all sides by the threat of orc raids and harsh living conditions. Surprising to many outsiders is the number of half-orcs living in the town. While most citizens accept them, not every half-orc avoids persecution, and many others work to prove themselves in their communities. Martial prowess is highly respected in Trunau, and this half-orc is always looking to challenge people to a friendly sparring match. Use the statistics for a tavern champion on page 268 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* to represent this mighty half-orc.

TRUNAU ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01–08	1d6 Freedom Town thugs	1	See page 39
09–16	1 giant spider	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 258
17–25	1d4 shadow rats	1	See page 31
26–40	Shopkeep	1	<i>GMG</i> 283
41–53	Storyteller	1	<i>GMG</i> 272
54–68	Trunau militia	1	<i>NPC Codex</i> 267
69–75	1d6 giant cockroaches	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 58
76–86	1d8 wild dogs	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 87
87–92	Rowdy tavern	3	See below
93–100	Tavern champion	3	See below

GIANT BAGS

Each volume of *Giantslayer* provides a table filled with things an adventurer could find among a giant's possessions. Use these tables as a way to give out interesting treasure or items anytime the PCs loot a giant. Bag tables for other giants can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Giants Revisited*. The following list of random treasure provides a GM with flavorful suggestions for the types of things a cave giant might have in its lair, have among its equipment, or have carried with it in enormous bags.

CAVE GIANT BAGS

d%	Result
01–04	1d8 dead rats
05–11	A polished svirfneblin skull
12–16	1d12 molted monitor lizard skins
17–20	A collection of kobold teeth
21–25	Brass tusk ring (worth 1 gp)
26–32	9 spherical red stones in a silk pouch
33–40	A bloody and broken Medium greataxe
41–44	74 pounds of dried dwarf meat
45–48	<i>Chime of opening</i> with 1 charge remaining
49–52	<i>Pearl of power</i> (1st)
53–54	Jar of phosphorescent fungus
55–57	Goat skin fashioned into a waterskin full of fermented mushroom wine
58–63	Tattered baby bear skins
64–71	Broken pick handle with the initials "FMT" carved into the bottom
72–80	Tattered orc banner wrapped around a severed troglodyte hand
81–82	Dried violet fungus (10 pounds)
83–84	1d4 rough rubies (worth 80 gp each)
85–87	2d10 gold nuggets (worth 10 gp each)
88–91	1–1,000 copper pieces minted by duergar
92–96	3 Medium backpacks containing climbing kits
97–100	60 pounds of half-melted iron ingots (worth 60 sp)

BEASTS OF BELKZEN

Belkzen is home not only to orcs, but also to a large assortment of other unique species, many of which have evolved unusual adaptations to their harsh surroundings.

MINDSPIN RAM

This stark white ram's curved horns appear to have sharp thorns studding every inch of their surface.

MINDSPIN RAM

CR 2



XP 600

N Medium animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 22 (4d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +4 (1d6+1 plus bleed), 2 hooves +2 (1d4)

Special Attacks bleed (1), powerful charge (gore, 1d8+1)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

Feats Multiattack, Nimble Moves

Skills Acrobatics +7 (+11 to cross narrow surfaces), Climb +9, Perception +6, Stealth +7 (+11 in snowy conditions); **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Acrobatics to cross narrow surfaces, +4 Climb, +4 Stealth in snowy conditions



ECOLOGY

Environment cold mountains

Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3-12)

Treasure none

The hardy Mindspin rams are found only in the high peaks of the Mindspin Mountains, where their stark white fur helps them blend into snowbanks to escape the giants and trolls that are prevalent in the area. They take another of their names, "rosethorn rams," from their dangerous horns, which are covered in sharp growths resembling short thorns, and can cause deep, bleeding wounds that slow foes down until the rams can flee or finish would-be hunters with their sharp hooves. The rams' thorny horns also enable them to strip bark from trees for sustenance during difficult winters.

Rigidly adapted to the snowy peaks of their mountain range, the rams are fiercely territorial and protective of the caves in which they make their dens. During breeding season, they become especially aggressive, venturing out to chase off predators and using their deadly horns to drive away competition. Even mountain trolls avoid direct confrontation with the rams at these times, preferring instead to cave in the creatures' dens, then pick through the rubble to gobble up the whole family. Mindspin rams are 4 feet tall and 6 feet long, and weigh up to 500 pounds.

Mindspin Ram Companions

Starting Statistics: **Size** Small; **Speed** 40 ft.; **AC** +1 natural;

Attack gore (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 7; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, scent.

4th-Level Advancement: **Size** Medium; **Attack** gore (1d6);

Ability Scores Str +4, Dex -2, Con +2; **Special Attacks** bleed (gore, 1), powerful charge (gore, 1d8).

SKITTERGOAT

This small goat has sharp horns that wrap around its head to point forward, making it resemble a tiny bull.

SKITTERGOAT

CR 1/2



XP 200

N Small animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 size)

hp 9 (2d8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee gore +3 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks egg cracker

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 11, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13 (17 vs. trip)
Feats Skill Focus (Escape Artist)
Skills Escape Artist +6 (+8 to escape a grapple), Perception +4;
Racial Modifiers +2 Escape Artist to escape a grapple

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate hills or plains
Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3-12)
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Egg Cracker (Ex) A skittergoat's horns are able to crack through the tough shells of ankheg eggs. When a skittergoat charges, its gore attack is resolved against the target's touch AC. In addition, when breaking an object, a skittergoat ignores 1 point of the object's hardness.

This breed of small goats, which dines almost exclusively on ankheg eggs, was only recently discovered living among the low hills and valleys of the Skittermounds. The skittergoats have adapted to life alongside the ankhegs with whom they share their environment: their agility allows them to slip through small spaces in search of eggs, and their speed makes them quite adept at escaping the grasp of angry ankheg mothers. Their relatively docile nature and ability to pierce ankheg eggs with their sharp horns have led to high demand for domesticated skittergoat companions among rangers searching for ankheg nests.

Skittergoats don't often form large herds, since foraging for ankheg eggs is most effectively done alone. A mating pair of skittergoats will generally pair for life, with the female ranging out in search of food while the male stays near the den to protect the young. Mothers regurgitate food for their young after returning from a hunt.

Skittergoat Companions

Starting Statistics: **Size** Small; **Speed** 30 ft.; **AC** +1 natural;
Attack gore (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 5; **Special Qualities** low-light vision.
4th-Level Advancement: **Size** Medium; **Attack** gore (1d6);
Ability Scores Str +4, Dex -2, Con +2; **Special Qualities** egg cracker.

BLACKWISP EGRET

This jet-black bird has a long, hooked beak. Its piercing orange eyes reflect any light that hits them, making them appear to glow ominously.

BLACKWISP EGRET

CR 1/3



XP 135

N Small animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 size)
hp 4 (1d8)

Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1
Defensive Abilities deceptive target

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)
Melee bite +3 (1d4-3)

STATISTICS

Str 4, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 5
Base Atk +0; **CMB** -4; **CMD** 8
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills Fly +4, Stealth +10

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate swamps
Organization solitary, pair, or flock (3-12)
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Deceptive Target (Ex) A blackwisp egret's glowing eyes belie its true position at night. In areas of dim light or darkness, ranged attacks against a blackwisp egret suffer a 20% miss chance.

Blackwisp egrets are relatively harmless during the day, but at night, their glowing eyes are often mistaken for the deadly will-o'-wisps that plague Belkzen's Ghostlight Marsh. Many people flee in terror upon seeing flocks of glowing orbs in the night and wind up twisting an ankle on a gnarled tree root or falling into a sinkhole as they bolt. These misfortunes have led many who travel through Ghostlight Marsh to consider blackwisp egrets unlucky omens.

Blackwisp egrets are hunters and scavengers, living on anything from frogs to fish to carrion left by other denizens of the marsh. Their long, serrated beaks are excellent for cutting through the clothing of deceased travelers, and flocks of egrets on the edge of starvation sometimes even attack living travelers.

Almost invisible at night thanks to their jet-black feathers, the birds are well adapted to hunting by stealth in their environment. They flock together for protection, as even the most dangerous predators avoid such groups when encountered in darkness, fearing that they may actually be a group of will-o'-wisps. The few swamp druids who still make their homes in the marsh have been known to domesticate these birds, encouraging them to slowly circle the druids' homes at night to ward away unwanted visitors.

Blackwisp Egret Companions

Starting Statistics: **Size** Small; **Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor);
AC +1 natural; **Attack** bite (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 8, Dex 17, Con 8, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 5; **Special Qualities** low-light vision.
4th-Level Advancement: **Size** Medium; **Attack** bite (1d6);
Ability Scores Str +4, Dex -2, Con +2; **Special Qualities** deceptive target.

EXOSKELETON

The tattered remains of a dead stag beetle rumble to life, creaking and clattering forward on dry, brittle legs.

EXOSKELETON GIANT COCKROACH CR 1/2



XP 200

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NE Small undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 12 (2d8+3)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** undead traits

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +3 (1d4+1)

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 12 (20 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness^B

Skills Climb +9, Fly –5

SQ burst (DC 11)

EXOSKELETON GIANT STAG BEETLE CR 4



XP 1,200

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NE Large undead

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

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+3 natural, –1 size)

hp 49 (9d8+9)

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

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +10 (2d8+7)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks trample (1d6+7, DC 19)

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 22 (30 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness^B

Skills Fly –10

SQ burst (DC 13)

EXOSKELETON TITAN CENTIPEDE CR 8



XP 4,800

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NE Colossal undead

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

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 2, flat-footed 13 (+11 natural, –8 size)

hp 110 (20d8+20)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +12

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., climb 60 ft.

Melee bite +24 (4d6+25)

Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

Special Attacks trample (6d6+25, DC 37)

STATISTICS

Str 45, **Dex** 11, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +40; **CMD** 50 (can't be tripped)

Feats Toughness^B

Skills Climb +25

SQ burst (DC 20), compression

Found skittering through forgotten tombs, crawling through deep forests, and filling damp caverns, exoskeletons are animated carapaces of arthropods and other vermin. Most exoskeletons are the intentional creations of necromancers, but some of these undead monstrosities arise spontaneously from places awash with negative energy or are created by malfunctioning artifacts. Even though exoskeletons are just as mindless as they were when they were living, they now attack all living creatures on sight, exploding in a burst of dusty remains when they are destroyed.

A spellcaster can create an exoskeleton using *animate dead*. An exoskeleton can be created from a mostly intact dead vermin that has an exoskeleton. This includes arachnids, insects, crustaceans, and even some mollusks, but not soft-bodied vermin such as jellyfish and leeches.

CREATING AN EXOSKELETON

“Exoskeleton” is an acquired template that can be added to any corporeal vermin that has an exoskeleton (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

Challenge Rating: Depends on Hit Dice, as follows:

Hit Dice	CR	XP
1	1/4	100
2	1/2	200
3–4	1	400
5–6	2	600
7–8	3	800
9–10	4	1,200
11–12	5	1,600
13–15	6	2,400
16–17	7	3,200
18–20	8	4,800
21–24	9	6,400
25–28	10	9,600

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Type: The creature's type changes to undead. It retains any subtype except for alignment subtypes (such as good) and subtypes that indicate kind (such as giant). It does not gain the augmented subtype. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Armor Class: Natural armor changes as follows:

Exoskeleton Size	Natural Armor Bonus
Tiny or smaller	+0
Small	+1
Medium	+2
Large	+3
Huge	+4
Gargantuan	+7
Colossal	+11

Hit Dice: An exoskeleton retains the number of Hit Dice the base creature possessed, and gains a number of additional Hit Dice as noted on the following table. If the base creature has more than 20 Hit Dice, it can't be made into an exoskeleton by the *animate dead* spell. An exoskeleton uses its Charisma modifier (instead of its Constitution modifier) to determine bonus hit points.

Exoskeleton Size	Bonus Hit Dice
Tiny or smaller	—
Small or Medium	+1 HD
Large	+2 HD
Huge	+4 HD
Gargantuan	+6 HD
Colossal	+10 HD

Saves: Base save bonuses are Fort +1/3 HD, Ref +1/3 HD, and Will +1/2 HD +2.

Defensive Abilities: Exoskeletons lose their defensive abilities and gain all of the qualities and immunities granted by the undead type. In addition, exoskeletons gain DR 5/bludgeoning.

Speed: An exoskeleton retains all movement speeds. However, its maneuverability for flight drops to clumsy.

Attacks: An exoskeleton retains all of its natural weapons. If the base creature didn't have any natural weapons, it gains a slam attack that deals damage based on the exoskeleton's size, but as if it were one size category larger than its actual size.

Special Attacks: An exoskeleton loses all of its special attacks that rely on a functioning biology (such as poison), but retains any others.

Abilities: An exoskeleton's Strength increases by 2. The exoskeleton has no Constitution or Intelligence score, and its Wisdom and Charisma scores change to 10.

BAB: An exoskeleton's base attack bonus is equal to 3/4 of its Hit Dice.

Skills: Though most vermin are mindless and have no skill ranks, the exoskeleton loses all skill ranks if it had any, and it doesn't retain any racial bonuses it had.

Feats: An exoskeleton loses all feats possessed by the base creature, and doesn't gain feats as its Hit Dice increase, but it does gain Toughness as a bonus feat.

Special Qualities: An exoskeleton loses most special qualities of the base creature. It retains any extraordinary special qualities that improve its melee or ranged attacks. An exoskeleton gains the following special quality.

Burst (Ex): When an exoskeleton is destroyed, its desiccated husk bursts, releasing the dusty remains of the vermin into the surrounding air. Any creature adjacent to an exoskeleton when it bursts must succeed at a Fortitude save or become staggered for 1 round as it coughs and sneezes. Creatures that don't need to breathe are immune to this effect. If the exoskeleton possesses 10 or more Hit Dice, the victim is nauseated instead. The save DC is equal to 10 + 1/2 the exoskeleton's HD + its Cha modifier.



MEGAFAUNA

These massive beasts once ruled Golarion. Although their numbers have dwindled over the eons, several species still roam the planet.

CHALICOTHERIUM

This huge, slothlike creature has long, clawed forelimbs and short rear legs.

CHALICOTHERIUM

CR 6



XP 2,400

N Large animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+9 natural, -1 size)

hp 76 (8d8+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d8+7)

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

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 11, **Con** 18, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +14 (+16 bull rush); **CMD**

24 (26 vs. bull rush, 28 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Improved

Bull Rush, Power

Attack, Toughness

Skills Climb +11,

Perception +10



ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure none

Chalicotheriums are massive creatures resembling sloths with vaguely equine heads and long forelimbs ending in wickedly sharp claws. These creatures are generally docile and will attack only when provoked, but they defend their homes and young from attack viciously. A typical adult chalicotherium is about 10 feet tall at the shoulder and 12 feet long from nose to rump, and weighs 14,000 pounds.

When on the ground, a chalicotherium seems almost to be standing upright, as its short, stocky rear legs support most of its body weight. Its ability to climb is superb, though only exceptionally large trees are sturdy enough to support it, and its long front limbs allow it to quickly ascend to dizzying heights even among relatively sparse foliage. The chalicotherium diet consists mainly of flowers and leaves, and a small family of these animals can quickly strip all the greenery from an area of forest before moving on.

Chalicotheriums are generally found alone or in breeding pairs with young. Chalicotheriums are protective of their offspring, which they produce in small litters of one to three pups at a time. These pups use their still-developing claws to hold on to a thick fat pad on the mother's back.

Chalicotherium Companions

Starting Statistics: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.;

AC +4 natural; **Attack** 2 claws (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 3; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, scent.

7th-Level Advancement: **Size** Large; **AC** +2 natural; **Attack** 2 claws (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +8, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attack** rend (2 claws, 1d6).

DEINOTHERIUM

This creature resembles an elephant, though it has a shorter, thicker trunk and sharp, downward-curving tusks.

DEINOTHERIUM

CR 7



XP 3,200

N Huge animal

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 7, flat-footed 19 (-1 Dex, +12 natural, -2 size)

hp 92 (8d8+56)

Fort +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee gore +13 (2d6+9), slam +13 (1d8+9)

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

Special Attacks sweep, trample (2d8+13, DC 23)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 9, **Con** 22, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 26 (30 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Perception +11, Swim +13

ECOLOGY

Environment any forests or plains

Organization solitary, pair, or family (2 adults and 1 calf)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sweep (Ex) A deinotherium can sweep a target with its downward-curving tusks and knock the victim to the ground. As part of a charge, a deinotherium can move up to twice its base speed in a straight line and make a gore attack at any point during its movement. If this attack is successful, the target is knocked prone and the deinotherium can deal damage with its trample attack before continuing its movement.

Deinotheriums are regal beasts of the same evolutionary family as the elephant, though with a shorter temper that far exceeds that of their more docile cousins. These creatures are known to attack with very little provocation, charging and sweeping a target under their gigantic feet to trample it to death. A typical deinotherium stands approximately 12 feet tall at the shoulder, measures 25 feet from trunk to tail, and weighs 30,000 pounds.

While deinotheriums are herbivores, their quick tempers have given them a reputation as man-eaters. The downward-swooping tusks under a deinotherium's mouth are used to dig for roots and tubers that it can scoop up and devour using its prehensile trunk. It also uses its curved tusks to hook tree branches and pull them close to allow for easier feeding. The trunk itself is much shorter and wider than that of an elephant, and its huge nasal passages give the creature an acute sense of smell.

Deinotheriums are not herd creatures, generally grouping only into small family packs of a calf and its parents. A mother usually gives birth to only a single calf, and will fiercely protect it well into its adult life. The father remains with the mother and calf until the calf reaches maturity, then leaves to find a new mate.

DEINOTHERIUM COMPANIONS

Starting Statistics: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft.; **AC** +4 natural; **Attack** slam (1d6), gore (1d8); **Ability Scores** Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 3; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, scent.

7th-Level Advancement: **Size** Large; **AC** +2 natural; **Attack** slam (1d8), gore (2d6); **Ability Scores** Str +8, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Qualities** sweep, trample.

EMBOLOTHERIUM

This creature is reminiscent of a rhinoceros, but instead of pointed horns on its nose, this creature possesses a blunt, bony protrusion.

EMBOLOTHERIUM

CR 5



XP 1,600

N Large animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+8 natural, -1 size)

hp 59 (7d8+28)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +12 (2d6+12)

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

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 11, **Con** 18, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 3

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Diehard, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Power Attack

Skills Perception +10, Swim +12

ECOLOGY

Environment any plains

Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3-9)

Treasure none

Embolotherium are squat, stocky creatures with hollow, bony protrusions on their snouts that are used as sound resonation chambers, allowing the creatures to create very loud noises to communicate across great distances. An average embolotherium stands 5 feet tall at the shoulder, with a nose-to-tail length of about 8 feet and a weight of 6,000 pounds.

Embolotherium are strict herbivores, grazing on grasses and flowering plants. Their eyesight is very poor, but extremely acute hearing makes up for this deficiency. A herd of embolotherium can be quickly provoked into a stampede, and travelers should be wary of even whispered conversation when near a group of these creatures.

Naturally social with others of their kind, embolotherium are generally found in large groups in flat, grassy areas. Their many layers of tough skin serve as deterrents to attack as well as thermal buffers, allowing them to survive in even frigid temperatures as long as there is sufficient food.

Embolotherium Companions

Starting Statistics: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft.; **AC** +6 natural; **Attack** bite (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 3; **Special Qualities** low-light vision.

7th-Level Advancement: **Size** Large; **AC** +2 natural; **Attack** bite (1d8); **Ability Scores** Str +8, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Qualities** trample.

TROLL, FLOOD

This tall, gangly giant has a thick hide of mottled blue; protruding yellowed canines; narrow slits for eyes; and large, powerful hands that end in wicked claws.

FLOOD TROLL

CR 2



XP 600

CE Medium humanoid (giant)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +4

DEFENSE

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

hp 22 (3d8+9); rain regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1

Defensive Abilities absorbent hide

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks pounce

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 7

Base Atk +2; CMB +4; CMD 18

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5, Swim +11

Languages Giant

SQ hold breath, oversized limbs

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate swamps or rivers

Organization solitary or pair (usually twins)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Absorbent Hide (Ex) A flood troll's flesh is highly resilient to the stresses of long dry periods. A flood troll who has gone without touching flowing water for at least 24 hours gains a +2 natural armor bonus to AC. A flood troll who has touched water within the last 24 hours gains cold resistance 5 instead.

Oversized Limbs (Ex) A flood troll's hands are larger than its body would suggest. Flood trolls can wield Large weapons without penalty.

Rain Regeneration (Ex) A flood troll's regeneration functions as long as the flood troll is touching flowing water or precipitation. Even a slight drizzle is enough to activate the flood troll's regeneration. However, any acid or fire damage dealt to the flood troll suspends its next round of regeneration.

Flood trolls are the mutated runts of scrag broods, cast out by their mothers and destined to haunt the lonely valleys and river basins beneath Avistan's frosty peaks. They lurk amid the craggy hills of Belkzen, Varisia, and other wildlands of northern Avistan, and serve as a menace to orc raiders and human adventurers alike. While smaller and less organized than true scrag, flood trolls' solitary nature and desperation for food often drives them to commit atrocities upon

unsuspecting humanoid populations—atrocities that almost invariably end with the flood trolls' eventual capture and execution.

Flood trolls average 7-1/2 feet tall and weigh 250 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Flood trolls are not actual trolls in the truest sense of the word. Although flood trolls—like their scrag parents—are distantly related to mountain trolls, the species are distinct. Most humanoid societies, however, are content to simply refer to both scrag and trolls using the umbrella term “troll,” linking the species because of overlapping myths and their similar regenerative abilities.

Scrag mothers birth anywhere from two to six younglings in a single brood, and every brood has a small chance of including what the scrag call an *aruk-taii*—“half-scrag” in the Giant tongue—known to many civilized peoples as a flood troll. Scrag with larger broods have a higher chance of producing flood trolls among their young. These runts are invariably smaller and more frail than true scrag younglings, and their growth rate is significantly slower than their non-mutated kin. This makes them undesirable to their scrag mothers and more likely to be eaten by their stronger siblings. Those flood trolls who aren't simply abandoned to the wilds by their mothers are raised as lesser beings, and live in the shadows of their scrag brothers and sisters. Most flood trolls flee their aggressive broodmates before coming of age, preferring to fend for themselves in the terrors of the wilderness rather than deal with their cruel, savage family members.

The mutation that results in a flood troll stymies many of the racial abilities typical to scrag. For one, flood trolls lack the amphibious special quality, making them much less suited to hunting underwater. Unfortunately for them, flood trolls still rely on exposure to water to enable their regenerative properties, meaning they must dwell near water but never wholly within it. Not just any water will do, either—only water that is continually refreshed with minerals and oxygen can regenerate flood trolls. Stagnant or relatively still waters such as small lakes and ponds cannot provide the nutrients flood troll regeneration requires, which means these monsters tend to stay near active waterways and areas with high precipitation where they can find the flowing water and rainfall that helps them to survive.

The mutation that results in a flood troll also affects the creature's reproductive organs, rendering it sterile. Because they cannot reproduce, flood trolls rarely seek out mates or even partners to aid in the hunt. Instead, they lead solitary existences steeped in ire for all living things; they are born amid hatred and rejection, and expect to die the same way.

In rare instances, a scrag mother may produce flood troll twins. In keeping with their primitive superstitions, scrag believe the arrival of two flood trolls is a dire omen that signals the coming of storms and floods, and cannot be dealt with by simply tossing the younglings away. Instead, the scrag believe, in order to appease the dread deities that they believe control the weather and the flow of rivers into their aquatic homes, the scrag must raise aruk-taii twins, *aruk-taikii*, as they would raise their true scrag offspring. The scrag mother—along with the other female scrag in her group—raises and nurtures the twins as best as she is able, albeit with grudging reluctance. In fact, the association between aruk-taikii and inclement weather in these old scrag myths is what originally inspired human adventurers to name the beasts flood trolls.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Flood trolls are monstrous nomads—wandering hunters who follow the herds of game and pay close attention to humanoids' travel patterns as they journey between the distant settlements of northern Avistan. They are cunning by necessity, since they are smaller than their brethren and must often surprise their prey to earn their meals. While not afraid to pounce on their victims once they can catch them, most flood trolls prefer to use stealth tactics and crude traps to put prospective victims in hazardous situations before attempting an ambush.

Scrag mothers eject their flood troll spawn from the brood as soon as the youngling's hormonal mutation makes itself known, which typically occurs a couple of years after the brood is born. Abandoned aruk-taii younglings survive in the wilds by sticking close to a river or freshwater source, and those who fail to find fresh water typically fall prey to wolves or other predators. Solitary by circumstance, flood trolls are seen in pairs only rarely, and usually because the two are twins. Because flood troll twins are pampered and treated with care by their scrag mother (rather than being abused and ostracized), these specimens tend to be more intelligent and creative than their solitary kin. Some flood trolls even learn how to wield arms or poison daggers; woe betide anyone who feels the sting of an aruk-taii rogue's dirk—if not for the blade, then for the savage claws that come afterward.

Because they can survive in arid environments for longer periods, flood trolls are much more common in Belkzen than their scrag forebears. The orcs of Belkzen claim that flood trolls wander over the Mindspin and Kodar mountain

ranges, fleeing their scrag families in the Mushfens and Varisia's other wetlands. In the frigid Lands of the Linnorm Kings and Irrisen, scrag dwelling along the coast of the Arcadian Ocean and in Glacier Lake drive their flood troll offspring south along the Marbleflow River or east toward the Gullik River. While they are most commonly encountered in Avistan, flood trolls may be found around the world, wherever scrag carry the aruk-taii mutation, though their physical features vary somewhat depending on where they originate. The Zenj tribes of the Mwangi Expanse speak of blue-skinned, humanoid horrors—*jeburo* in the Polyglot tongue—that stalk the jungle's riverbeds during the dry season and boldly attack villages as the storm season approaches. A number of these flood trolls make their way into the Sodden Lands. Never lacking for the rain that allows for their regeneration, these flood trolls terrorize the few remaining enclaves of humanity in that drenched land.



CAMPAIGN OUTLINE

Spoiler Alert! On these pages you'll find the background story and brief outline for the *Giantslayer Adventure Path*. If you intend to play in this campaign, be warned! These pages spoil the plot for the upcoming adventures.

From a secluded base high in the Mindspin Mountains, the storm giant warlord Volstus—known as the Storm Tyrant—has plans to raise an army of giants and orcs and use it to drive the region of western Avistan under his boot. This military push threatens not only the nations in the immediate vicinity of the Mindspin Mountains, but the whole continent.

Volstus sees himself as the incarnation of a storm's destructive power and wrath. Early in his plans for conquest, Volstus adventured deep into the Kodar Mountains, where he discovered an *Orb of Dragonkind*. Using the artifact, the storm giant dominated a powerful red dragon and claimed the beast as his mount and companion.

Volstus continued his path to conquest by befriending a tribe of fire giants that lived within a dormant volcano in the Mindspin Mountains. The tribe was known among giantkind as being highly skilled in making and using weapons of war. Volstus wanted to use this tribe of fire giants as the core of his elite forces, so he came to them with a deal—he would lead them to greatness if he could use their lair to capture a cloud castle.

Awed by Volstus's presence and ambition, the fire giants agreed. On the back of his dominated dragon, Volstus soared above the mountains searching for a flying cloud castle. Once the Storm Tyrant found what he sought, the fire giants helped him secure the castle, but the flying fortress was damaged in the attack.

To repair the castle, Volstus kept one of the castle's cloud giant engineers alive and forced him to continue his work. Volstus also needed to know how to control the castle, but the cloud giant did his best to keep such information from the Storm Tyrant. Volstus's coercion quickly turned to torture, and in a blind rage one evening, Volstus murdered the engineer—before he could learn all of the castle's secrets.

Now, as Volstus works to figure out how to fly his newly won cloud castle, he has begun amassing an army of giants from throughout western Avistan. Various bands of giants wander the Mindspin Mountains, training for the coming war in which the giants will take land and wealth from the pathetic smaller humanoids. The first stop is Belkzen, where Volstus is working to gain control of the orc-held land. After that, he plans to send his massive forces to invade any nation that refuses to kneel to the Storm Tyrant.

To accent the Adventure Path, GMs can pick up the following resources: *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Belkzen, Hold of the Orc Hordes*; *Pathfinder Player Companion: Giant Hunter's Handbook*; *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Giantslayer Poster Map Folio*; *Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Giant Lairs*; *Pathfinder Pawns: Giantslayer Pawn Collection*; and the *Giantslayer Player's Guide*, the last of which is available as a free PDF download at paizo.com.

BATTLE OF BLOODMARCH HILL

By Patrick Renie

Pathfinder Adventure Path #91, Levels 1–3

The *Giantslayer Adventure Path* begins in the fortified town of Trunau in the southern part of the Hold of Belkzen. A series of strange events trouble the beleaguered town, and the morning after a hopeknife ceremony, a well-loved citizen is found dead—a death thought to be a suicide. At the town's request, the PCs become involved in the investigation, only to realize that there's something more sinister going on in town. The leader of a small orc tribe, a hill giant chieftain named Grenseldek, has sent half-orc agents into Trunau to find the entrance to the tomb of a hill giant hero that lies below the town and contains a family heirloom—a treasure map that leads to the resting place of a famed giantslayer.

Grenseldek plans to offer her hand in marriage to the Storm Tyrant, using the treasures of the giantslayer's tomb as gifts to win his favor. As the PCs try to find the source of the troubles in Trunau, Grenseldek sends a band of orcs to attack the town, and the PCs must help the citizens defend its walls.

After the attack, the PCs find the newly uncovered entrance to the giant's tomb. Inside, they discover half of the treasure map and an artifact that will prove useful later in the campaign—a legendary hammer named *Agrimmosh, the Hammer of Unmaking*.

THE HILL GIANT'S PLEDGE

By Larry Wilhelm

Pathfinder Adventure Path #92, Levels 4–6

Having defeated the orc attack on Trunau and looted the hill giant hero's tomb, the PCs are sent to find Grenseldek and stop her from ever raiding the town again.

The PCs travel by riverboat through southern Belkzen on the way to Redlake Fort, the ruined Lastwall border fort that Grenseldek has claimed as her lair. Before arriving at the stronghold, the PCs have the opportunity to follow up on a tip they received in Trunau to stop in Ghostlight Marsh and unearth a cache of weapons that may aid in their fight.

Long ago, a group of druids called the Council of Thorns created a demiplane called the Vault of Thorns that they used as a base in what is now Ghostlight Marsh. However, in the centuries since the druids sacrificed themselves to stop an orc horde—and created Ghostlight Marsh in the process—the Vault has been infiltrated by all manner of sinister creatures. The PCs must brave the druids' extraplanar home and claim the treasures that will aid them against Grenseldek and her minions.

Continuing on their journey, the PCs assault Redlake Fort, finally putting an end to Grenseldek's aggression. In the process, the PCs discover that Grenseldek sought the treasure beneath Trunau to court the Storm Tyrant and become his queen. They learn that Volstus has been calling hundreds of giants to a temple of Minderhal that lies in a secluded valley in the Mindspin Mountains. Furthermore, the PCs find the second half of the treasure map they found beneath Trunau, which leads them to the tomb of the famed giantslayer Nargrym Steelhand.

FORGE OF THE GIANT GOD

By Tim Hitchcock

Pathfinder Adventure Path #93, Levels 7–9

Following the information found in Grenseldek's lair, the PCs head into the mountains in search of the valley where the Storm Tyrant is recruiting his army. Before reaching the valley of the giants, they stop at Steelhand's tomb, where they find potent weapons that were forged to slay giants—welcome tools for their next challenge.

Arriving in the valley of the giants, the PCs discover that the recruitment effort is headed by a stone giant who lairs in an ancient temple dedicated to the giant god Minderhal. The PCs must disrupt the camp and pick off its defenders before they can gain access to the temple.

After defeating the temple's protectors, the PCs learn that the Storm Tyrant is in possession of a flying cloud castle, and that giant recruits travel from the valley to a frost giant training camp deeper in the mountains in preparation for joining the Storm Tyrant's army.

ICE TOMB OF THE GIANT QUEEN

By Jim Groves

Pathfinder Adventure Path #94, Levels 10–12

Arriving at the giant training camp, the PCs engage in guerrilla tactics in order to weaken the army of giants and break their ranks. A frost giant graveknight leads

the group of frost giants and issues orders from within an icy crypt. Along the way, the PCs learn that the most promising giant officers are being trained at an elite military academy run by fire giants.

In the process of exploring the frost giant camp, the PCs also meet a red dragon named Naximarra who is trying to infiltrate the giant army for her own purposes. She informs the PCs that the Storm Tyrant possesses a dangerous artifact—an *Orb of Dragonkind*—and tries to secure the PCs' help in recovering the artifact. Is the enemy of your enemy truly your friend?

ANVIL OF FIRE

By Sean K Reynolds

Pathfinder Adventure Path #95, Levels 13–14

Following the trail of the Storm Tyrant's training facilities, the PCs enter the elite fire giant military academy beneath a dormant volcano where they encounter more giants training for Volstus's army, as well as a rookery of red dragons and the magma dragon that oversees them. The fire giants' monarchs, King Tytarian and Queen Quivixia, are loyal to the Storm Tyrant. They were integral to Volstus's capture of the cloud castle, so the fire giants under their command aren't going to let the PCs take the complex easily.

The PCs must defeat the fire giants and their monarchs. During the course of their assault, the PCs have the opportunity to learn some valuable intelligence about the Storm Tyrant, his three captains, and the flying cloud castle he has seized.

SHADOW OF THE STORM TYRANT

By Tito Leati

Pathfinder Adventure Path #96, Levels 15–17

Emerging from the fire giant dungeon, the PCs find themselves in the volcano's caldera with the Storm Tyrant's cloud castle floating above them. The castle is on high alert, so the PCs must make their way into the stronghold without rousing its many defenders.

Meanwhile, the Storm Tyrant struggles against the ghost of the cloud giant engineer for control of the castle. As the PCs reach the flying fortress, Volstus finally wrests command from the ghost and the castle takes to the sky, taking the PCs with it. The PCs must explore the halls of the cloud castle, contend with its guardians, and defeat Volstus's captains before they can face the Storm Tyrant himself. While inside the castle, the PCs encounter the cloud giant ghost and learn that Volstus has a device that will cause the castle to plummet to the ground upon his death.

After deactivating the device, the PCs can finally confront Volstus and his dominated red dragon to put an end to the Storm Tyrant's megalomaniacal push for power once and for all.

THE HILL GIANT'S PLEDGE

By Larry Wilhelm

The orcs attacking Trunau have been defeated, but the danger remains—the hill giant chieftain, Grenseldek, didn't recover the treasures of the tomb beneath the town, and she's still a threat. The heroes must travel by riverboat through the Hold of Belkzen to the abandoned border fort that the giant has claimed as her lair. After battling through Grenseldek's orc and giant allies, the heroes learn of a storm giant warlord called the Storm Tyrant, who's gathering hundreds of giants to his banner in a secluded valley in the Mindspin Mountains—certainly a far greater threat than a single hill giant and a tribe of orcs.

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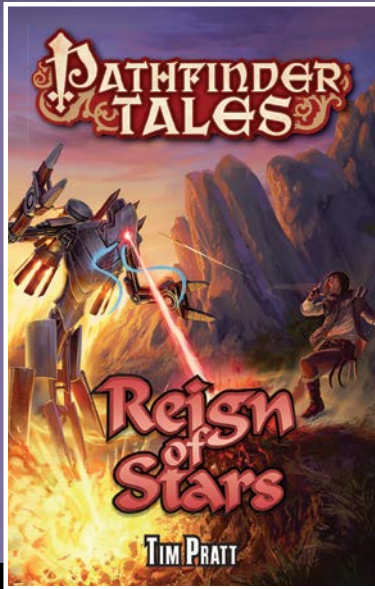
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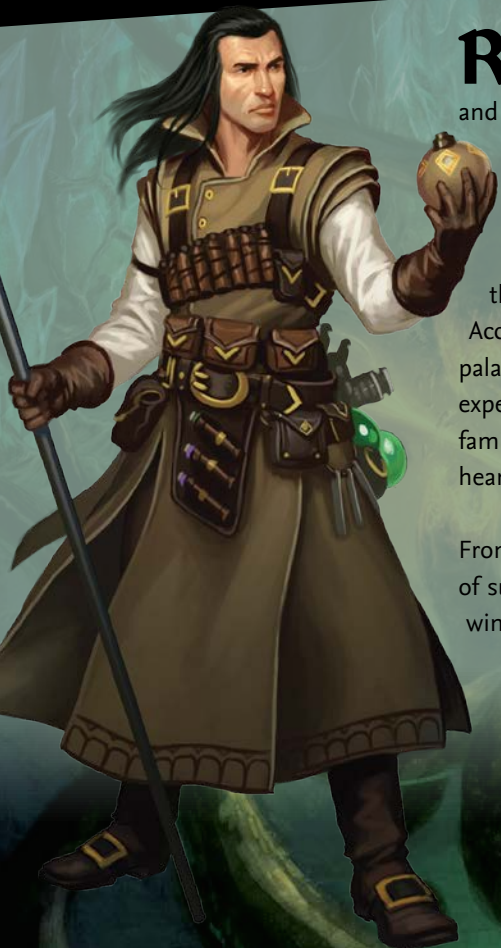
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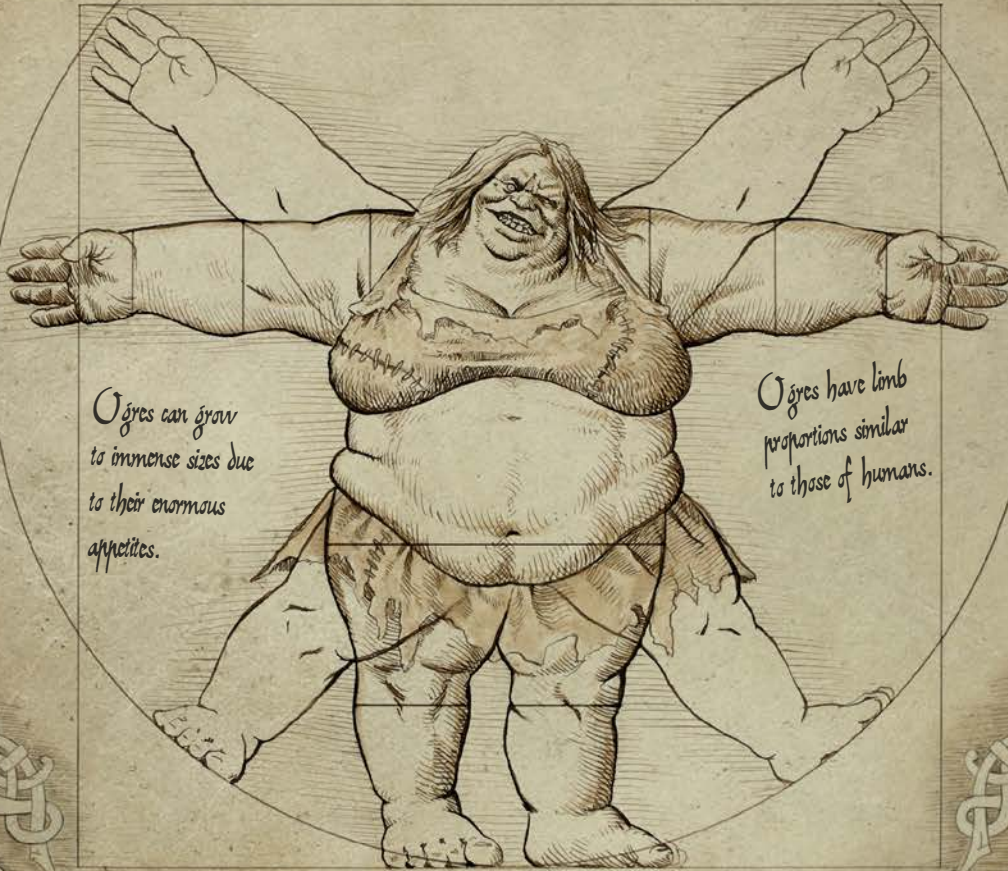
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Nearly every ogre has some deformity, lending to a varied appearance among the species.



Ogres can grow to immense sizes due to their enormous appetites.

Ogres have limb proportions similar to those of humans.

2014
GERAN

Ogres

Barely categorized as giants by some scholars, ogres are degenerate creatures whose twisted existence mocks the civilization of other races. While they organize in family groups, these enclaves are full of inbreeding, violence, and the foulest forms of humor. These debased giants threaten isolated villages and outlying farms in their raids for food, and habitually kidnap and torture the inhabitants.



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