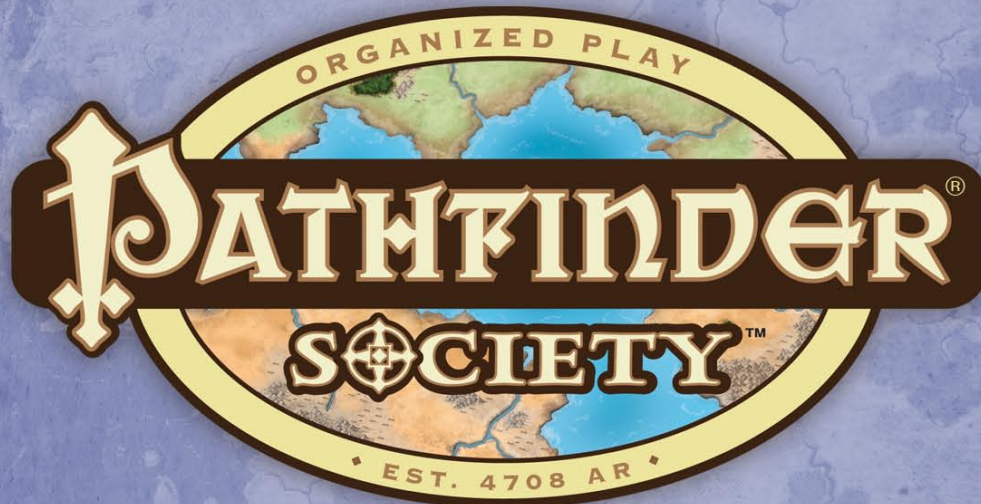


A PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO



THE HERESY OF MAN, PART II WHERE DARK THINGS SLEEP

By Greg A. Vaughan and Kevin Wright



THE HERESY OF MAN, PART II: WHERE DARK THINGS SLEEP

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 2–07

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Pathfinder Society Scenario 2-07: The Heresy of Man, Part II: Where Dark Things Sleep is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 5th- to 9th-level characters (Tiers: 5–6 and 8–9). This scenario is designed for play in Pathfinder Society Organized Play, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This scenario is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

The OGL can be found on page 22 of this product.

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THE HERESY OF MAN, PART II: WHERE DARK THINGS SLEEP

BY GREG A. VAUGHAN AND KEVIN WRIGHT



With the outbreak of a virulent new plague in the countryside around the Rahadoumi city of Manaket, the Pathfinder Society sent in a team of Pathfinders to illegally smuggle a cleric into the country in order to protect a secret Pathfinder project in that area. These events, as described in Pathfinder Society Scenario 2-06: *The Heresy of Man, Part I: The First Heresy*, saw the worthy healer Agosa Agion secretly brought into the country through the notorious smugglers' fortress of Qassabah Heb Amar and escorted to the small village of Wadi al-Hesr, where he was left to make contact with the Pathfinder team already in place there. With their mission accomplished, the Pathfinder team that brought Agion into Rahadoum was free to head into the city of Manaket in pursuit of their own goals and interests.

Those same Pathfinders have now been called upon by Venture-Captain Obo in Manaket, who has grim news for them and a perilous new mission.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The sun-scorched desert of Rahadoum has buried many things over the numberless centuries: fabled treasures of long-dead magi, towering monuments to ancient kings, and mighty cities once teeming with vast multitudes—all have been overwhelmed and drowned beneath the omnipotent desert sands. But for all its hoary years and awful, timeless strength, there is one thing the desert could not bury: the undying legacy of Verdizaam Charad, Immolated Mirza of the Molten Citadel.

Over 70 centuries ago, Verdizaam Charad was one of many efreet and other genies called forth by the mortal wizards of the ancient Jistka Imperium. The declining Imperium needed the elemental warriors' help in opposing the brash young nation of Osirion that continued to grow and thrive to their east, cutting off much trade and inciting desert raiders to encroach upon the Imperium's holdings. Time and again throughout this centuries-long struggle, the armies of the two nations clashed on the field of battle, and after a time the newly formed nation of Tekritanin sent raiders against the sorely pressed Imperium as well. It was during these latter years of the conflict that the Imperium wizards of the Citadel

WHERE ON GOLARION?

The small village of Wadi al-Hesr is located near the major Rahadoumi metropolis of Manaket, center of trade and learning. While Rahadoum values arcane study, religion of any sort is strictly forbidden throughout the entire nation. For more information on the godless nation of Rahadoum, see the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting* or *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*.



of the Weary Sky began summoning as many efreet and other geniekind as they could to aid them in their cause.

From their desert citadel, the Imperium wizards sent forth their bound genie hordes to face their many enemies and enjoyed great success on the field of battle for the first time in centuries of warfare. But the Pharaoh of Forgotten Plagues, whose name has been lost to history, was not content to allow these elementalists wizards to wreak havoc among his Tekritanin proxies and called upon his most powerful necromantic advisors, the Usij, to defeat this genie threat.

So it was that Verdizaam found himself laid low in a battlefield ambush by powerful spellcasters hiding among the desert raiders that he fought. His lesser allies destroyed by the ambush, Verdizaam fought to break free from the magical cordon around him but in the end fell among his comrades on the field. When he awoke at the next moonrise to find himself transformed into an undead horror—a great ghul—he learned then that he

THE HERESY OF MAN SERIES

Where *Dark Things Sleep* is the second part of The Heresy of Man series set in the godless nation of Rahadoum on the Inner Sea's southern coast. All three parts of The Heresy of Man series are designed for Tier 5–9 and are meant to be played in order: *The First Heresy* first, followed by *Where Dark Things Sleep*, and concluding with *Beneath Forgotten Sands*. If players at your table have played the final installment of the series before this adventure, ask them to keep to themselves any information which might ruin the play experience for their fellow players. Likewise, if a player has not played *The First Heresy*, provide them the “story so far” information before the adventure background on page 3.

served a new master: Ahriman, Lord of the Divs, and his followers, the foul Usij who bound him.

Verdizaam spent 3 centuries in service to the Usij, used against the Imperium and his own kind as a living weapon. The Usij made Verdizaam a carrier of a deadly disease called Night Plague that was designed specifically to strike the royal houses of the Jistka Imperium. Over the centuries, the plague contributed to the winnowing of the Jistkans' most able rulers until the royal lines were so depleted and scattered that wars of succession began, spelling the Imperium's final doom. With the Jistkans' destruction complete, the Usij had no further need for Verdizaam, and they sealed him in a secret tomb where he could forevermore lie in dreamless slumber and await the calling of his dread liege, Ahriman.

Verdizaam's tomb was lost to history, engulfed by the desert sands, until eventually the city of Manaket grew up not far from its location, and a necropolis for the city's dead was established at the site of the lost tomb. Recently, the ambitious researchers and treasure-seekers of the Pathfinder Society began a secret project in the Karzha Necropolis, seeking to unearth some trace of the ancient Jistka Imperium. Their delving disturbed Verdizaam's slumber and he awoke anew, coming forth from his hidden tomb.

Verdizaam Charad found modern Rahadoum had grown on the bones of the ancient Jistkans, its inhabitants the racial descendants of the ancient Imperium's survivors. Feeling the stir of his long-ago imperative, Verdizaam once again unleashed the Night Plague in and around the city of Manaket, walking among its inhabitants invisibly or disguised as a fellow citizen. Those most strongly related to the ancient Jistkan royal families were soon dying, and the very Pathfinders that had disturbed the ghul's slumber sent out a call for help. Too late, though, did the help arrive, for Verdizaam Charad had already located their base of operations, and had begun gathering forces to retake the ancient treasures looted from his tomb.

SUMMARY

Having successfully brought the cleric Agosa Agion into Rahadoum to protect the Pathfinder mission in Wadi al-Hesr from the spreading plague, the PCs find themselves contacted by Venture-Captain Obo of the Swordmeet Lodge in Manaket with the dire news that Agosa and the entire Pathfinder team in Wadi al-Hesr have disappeared.

Following the few clues the missing Pathfinders left, the PCs discover within the tomb they were investigating in the Karzha Necropolis the entrance to a much, much older tomb dating back to the days of the Jistka Imperium. Traveling within this older tomb, the PCs immediately discover that the Pathfinders trespassing in the tomb disturbed an ancient evil that emerged to take its vengeance on the interlopers, evinced by the corpses of the Pathfinders they were sent to retrieve.

As they venture into this tomb of forgotten antiquity, the PCs encounter the ghoulish servitors of Verdizaam, created by the necromancers of the Usij to serve and protect the great ghul. Making their way deeper into the tomb, they play a game of cat and mouse in a series of puzzles and a battle of wits against Verdizaam himself. Ultimately, they face the great ghul in his burial vault, where they may forever end the threat of the Night Plague. There they recover the lost artifact that awoke the ghul from his slumber in the first place and face their final challenge to escape the tomb alive—a riddle presented by a guardian sphinx.

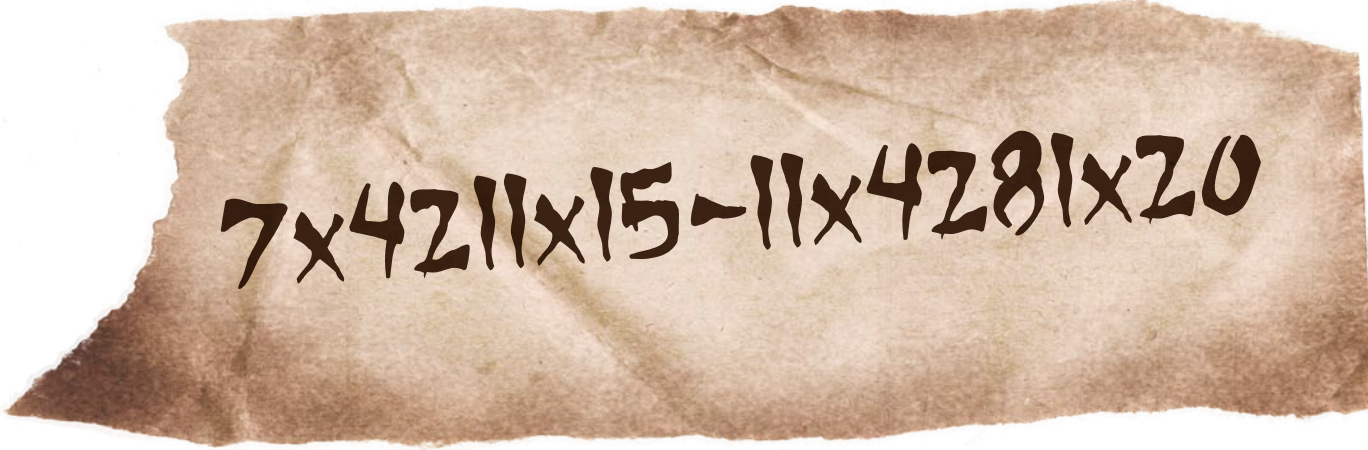
GETTING STARTED

Read the following as the adventure begins:

“They’ve been missing for almost a week now,” the dour venture-captain says, holding a bucketful of feed over the stable door as the gorgeous stallion eats its fill. Venture-Captain Obo, the ranking Pathfinder in the Manaket region, strokes its nose fondly, then removes the bucket. His beard is lustrous but dominated with gray, and his voice is cultured and deep, a pleasing baritone.

“There were four of them, including your friend Agosa Agion. They had been researching some ancient artifacts of the Jistka Imperium that they had uncovered somewhere near Wadi al-Hesr. Very rare specimens indeed. Loot from some long-forgotten tomb, surely. The whole thing was very hush-hush since it could provide a lead to one of the lost cities of Jistka buried somewhere under the sands of the Rahadoumi desert. That’s something the Aspis Consortium and any one of a dozen or more other organizations would want to get their hands on, so it’s got to be Pathfinders that get there first.

“Musin Ptomais, the leader of the team, informed me by missive that they had found an artifact of particular interest—



7x4211x15-11x4281x20

some sort of ancient puzzle that could form a map to this lost city, but that they had to return to the source to try and make sense of it. He promised that as soon as they were certain of its location, they would send me word. He wouldn't tell me any more than that, though. At the time all the precautions seemed a bit silly, but now with this business with the Shadow Lodge traitors in our midst, Ptomais is looking like a genius." Obo sighs wearily, opens another door, and leads out a magnificent chestnut stallion. Grunting as he bends over, the Pathfinder carefully inspects its hooves.

"I never heard from them again. I sent my servants to their base of operations in Wadi al-Hesr, but the place was broken into and ransacked. The only thing of interest my servants could find was this."

At that, he holds out a scrap of papyrus.

Give the PCs **Handout #1**.

"Follow the footsteps of those Pathfinders and find them. Bring them out of whatever trouble they've gotten into, and then send me word." He heaves a saddle onto the mount and tightens the girth. "Or bring them here directly. Either way, we've got to make sure that the information they carry is safe in Pathfinder hands. I only fear that Amenopheus and the Shadow Lodge may be behind this whole thing, and that we may already be too late."

Venture-Captain Obo swings gracefully into the saddle. "My servant Sayeki will take you to Wadi al-Hesr if need be. Complete the task quickly; we are in a race against those who would destroy the Pathfinder Society."

Without another word, Obo spins his mount around and rides out of the stable.

The Pathfinder team—consisting of Musin Ptomais, Desi Talan, Verit of Aspenthar, and Agosa Agion, the cleric the Society smuggled in to protect the expedition—are now very dead. Having disturbed the tomb of Verdizaam Charad without realizing it when they recovered the

puzzle map, they realized that they would need to go back to try to find the means to decipher it. The poor souls delved into the home of the great ghul and were never seen again.

The scrap of paper Obo gave the PCs reveals little. Any PC with an Osirian background (or Sayeki if no PCs have an affinity to the nation) knows that this is an old dating convention of northern Garund that literally means, "In the seventh month of the year 4211 on its fifteenth day until the eleventh month of the year 4281 on its twentieth day." If none of the players thinks of it, a DC 10 Intelligence check allows any PC to realize that this is the birth and death dates from a tombstone. A DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check quickly reveals that the most likely location for such a thing is a centuries-old cemetery not far from Wadi al-Hesr that has been used by Manaket and its outlying villages for dozens of generations. This graveyard, known as the Karzha Necropolis, can be easily located, lying less than 5 miles from Wadi al-Hesr, and provides the PCs their first real clue as to where to begin their investigation. Magical divination likewise points the PCs in this direction though it provides no direct information on the status of the missing Pathfinders unless explicitly asked.

If they so wish, the PCs can visit the markets of Manaket and spend a few hours equipping themselves before departing. If they wish to purchase divine items, refer to the Divine Magic Items sidebar. After a few hours of such shopping, Sayeki becomes impatient and insists that the PCs set out for Wadi al-Hesr or the Karzha Necropolis; time may be running short for the missing Pathfinders.

The PCs can reach either location within an hour by camel or horseback, or 3 hours on foot. If they elect to go to Wadi al-Hesr, Sayeki takes them to the modest hovel from which the Pathfinder team had been secretly working. The building was obviously broken into rather recently. The place is trashed and there are no clues to

DIVINE MAGIC ITEMS

Rahadoum has banned overt worship of any deity, but most magic items of a divine nature are still readily available in the nation's markets. Bards, druids, oracles, rangers, and witches may still create potions or wands of *cure light wounds*, for example, and all of them may do so without the explicit worship of a god. In instances where PCs wish to buy items requiring a cleric, inquisitor, or paladin spell, they must deal with the black market. The item costs the same for the purposes of maintaining balance in the organized play environment, but PCs should still get the impression that what they've bought is illegal and was very difficult to procure.

be found other than that a successful DC 22 Perception check (Tier 8–9; DC 26) locates a partial footprint in the dust under one of the windows where something evidently climbed in. Whatever it was had elongated humanoid feet with long, jagged toenails.

The PCs do not know this but when the Pathfinders returned to delve deeper into the necropolis, Agion stayed behind. The Pathfinders were ambushed and a force of dread ghouls backtracked them under cover of darkness and abducted Agion as well, along with anything that looked to be of interest or value.

When the PCs head to the necropolis, they find a vast burial ground occupying over 20 square miles, filled to nearly bursting with modest gravestones and just as many marble tombs, sepulchers, and crypts. Its recesses form a veritable maze in which an individual could easily become lost. Access is not restricted during the day, and the PCs can easily locate the portion of the cemetery that was used in the time range around 4281 AR with a DC 17 Diplomacy or Knowledge (history) check (Tier 8–9; DC 21). Once they find the right area, it takes 1d10 hours (–1 per PC participating in the search, minimum 1 hour) to locate the proper tomb with the dates on the slip of papyrus. This is the tomb of one Adel al-Manhir, a landowner of some wealth, long dead and buried in the necropolis. His mausoleum is a simple single-room affair made of sandstone whose door has been forced open. The inside of the crypt measures 10 ft. by 20 ft., and shelves holding desiccated corpses line the walls—servants of the deceased. An ornate, stone sarcophagus stands in the middle of the room. The dust around it has been disturbed, and a DC 15 Perception check determines that the lid has been removed and replaced recently. If the PCs push the lid off (DC 20 Strength check), it reveals the following:

The slab falls away to reveal a black aperture. A horrific miasmatic stench rushes from the hole, a nauseous mixture of neglect, decay, and sweet spices. No corpse lies within the tomb, only the top of a flight of irregular stone steps leading steeply downward into the earth.

The stairs lead down 120 feet to the lair of Verdizaam Charad, the accursed ghul known as the Immolated Mirza. The construction of these tunnels is over 7,000 years old and reflects the influences of ancient Osirion and the Jistka Imperium, as can be recognized with a DC 20 Knowledge (history) or DC 25 Knowledge (engineering) check. Unnumbered rooms are empty of all save dust and traces of ancient murals and writings.

Mission Notes: Qadira faction PCs may wish to take the time to count and observe the quality of the mounts in Venture-Captain Obo's stables, which host a total of five fine horses, including the one he rode away on, all of northern Garundi stock. Cheliox faction PCs should make note of the location of the Pathfinder's hovel in Wadi al-Hesr.

ACT I: GETTING UNDER THE SKIN (CR 5 OR CR 8)

Ancient Osiriani hieroglyphs cover this chamber's dusty walls and floor. A body lies face down at the foot of the stairs, dressed in a tan robe, a blotch of red staining its back. The repugnant smell of decaying flesh hangs in the air.

The body is that of the unfortunate Pathfinder Desi Talan. He stumbled at the bottom of the stairs and triggered the arrow trap, which killed him instantly. Attempts to speak with his corpse reveal only that something struck him dead as he stepped onto the floor, but he never saw what. If asked about what brought him down here, he reveals that his party found a mysterious puzzle box and hoped to find answers to it here.

A DC 17 Perception check on the surrounding floor finds a jumble of footprints in the dust and sand that lies atop the ancient flagstones. A DC 20 Survival check allows a PC to sort out that at least two shod humanoids fought a number of unshod creatures with long toenails here and then fled east. Only moments after Talan's death, Ptomais and Verit were ambushed by dread ghouls and forced to flee farther into the crypt.

PCs who succeed at a DC 30 Perception check at the foot of the stairs may discover scratches and grooves in the wall indicating a heavy stone has been lowered and raised here a number of times over the centuries. This is a magical seal built into the tomb, activated with a command word known only by Verdizaam Charad. PCs may disable the sealing stone with a DC 35 Disable Device check. Note that a PC may take 20 on this check if she is not threatened, as there is no penalty for failure.

The hieroglyphics all proclaim the inimitable excellences of the Immolated Mirza, Verdizaam Charad,

Crypt of the Immolated Mirza

One square = 10 feet

Karzha Necropolis - Ground Level

One square = 10 feet



INFESTATIONS

Parasites such as scarab beetles, ear seekers, or rot grubs cause infestations, a type of affliction similar to diseases. Infestations can only be cured through specific means; no matter how many saving throws are made, the infestation continues to afflict the target. While a *remove disease* spell (or similar effect) instantly halts an infestation, immunity to disease offers no protection, as the infestation itself is caused by parasites.

and of his many triumphs over the scum of the Jistka Imperium. Verdizaam claims credit for the downfall of the entire nation. This may not be strictly true, but the disease he carried certainly played a part, and it gives him solace as he faces an eternity of undeath.

The hole from which the arrow trap fires is hidden among the hieroglyphs on the wall directly across from the bottom of the stairs. Anyone stepping into the square at the bottom of the stairs activates the trap. One of the dread ghouls eventually comes along and removes any arrows from the scene in order to keep from tipping off intruders to the trap's presence. The trap automatically resets itself each round until it has fired 10 arrows. Then it must be manually reloaded.

Creatures: After being slain by the trap, Talan's body has become infested with eight carnivorous scarab beetles. These small, iridescent creatures burrow under the skin of their victim and behave as a rot grub infestation as described on page 245 of the *GameMastery Guide*.

Scarab beetles feed on flesh and nest in corpses, generally a handful infesting a single corpse at a time. A DC 15 Perception check is enough to notice and avoid the beetles. Otherwise, 1d6 scarab beetles swiftly burst from the carcass when it is disturbed and burrow into the new victim. This victim can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid the beetles (but only if aware of the beetles' presence). Any amount of damage reduction is enough to provide immunity to infestation.

Once scarab beetles have infested a living body, they burrow toward the host's heart, brain, and other key internal organs, eventually causing death. On the first round of infestation, applying flame to the point of entry can kill the beetles and save the host, but this inflicts 1d6 points of fire damage to the victim. Cutting the beetles out also works, but the longer the beetles remain in the host, the more damage this method does. Cutting them out requires a slashing weapon and a DC 20 Heal check, and inflicts 1d6 points of damage per round that the host has been infested. If the Heal check is successful, one beetle is removed. *Remove disease* kills any scarab beetles in or on the host.

Tier 5–6 (CR 5)

ARROW TRAP CR 1

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic

Effect Atk +15 ranged (1d8+1/x3)

SCARAB BEETLES (1d6) CR 4

Type infestation; Save Fortitude DC 17

Onset immediate; Frequency 1/round

Effect 1d2 Con damage per beetle

Tier 8–9 (CR 8)

WYVERN ARROW TRAP CR 7

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic

Effect Atk +20 ranged (1d6 plus wyvern poison/x3)

SCARAB BEETLES (1d6) CR 4

Type infestation; Save Fortitude DC 17

Onset immediate; Frequency 1/round

Effect 1d2 Con damage per beetle

Treasure: A search of Desi's body reveals his +1 *chain shirt*, a masterwork cold iron rapier, and 2 *potions of cure light wounds*. His masterwork lute lies broken beneath his body. In Tier 5–6, he also possesses 2 flasks of holy water and a *scroll of bless weapon*. In Tier 8–9, the rapier is a standard +1 *rapier* and he also possesses a *potion of remove disease*.

Rewards: If the PCs discover Desi's equipment, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 147 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 368 gp.

ACT 2: PLAYING POSSUM (CR 7 OR CR 10)

Two bodies lie slumped and bloody on the flagstones of this room. One of the corpses leans against the wall, stripped to the waist, its chest cavity torn open and hollowed out. The other body lies face down in the middle of the floor, clothed in desert garb with a green turban.

The room itself is spacious, though part of the roof seems to have fallen in, leaving a clutter of stone debris on the floor. Alcoves line the walls, each one holding an ornate

sarcophagus. At the far end stands a 30-foot-tall stone idol of a winged humanoid beast with a horned, lion-like visage.

This room is an example of early Osirian architecture dating back almost 8,000 years. The idol is identifiable with a DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check as Ahriman, Lord of the Divs, a powerful fiend of Abaddon.

The body slumped against the wall is Verit of Aspenthar, one of the unfortunate Pathfinders who entered Verdizaam Charad's haven. He was captured by the dread ghouls and brought before their master. For days, he was tortured and interrogated, then slain and given to the ghouls. They decided to use his remnants as bait for an ambush on any who might try to find the missing group. If his corpse is spoken to magically, he relates how he was dragged before a cloaked being who questioned him for days before murdering him, but he cannot recall details of any rooms or inhabitants within the tomb. If Verit's body is not destroyed or blessed, he will rise as a ghoul at the next moonrise.

The robes and green turban of the other figure seem strangely familiar to the PCs, and with a DC 12 Perception check or DC 15 Wisdom check, PCs recognize them as being those worn by Agosa Agion when they smuggled him into Rahadoum.

Creatures: Several dread ghouls hide behind the sarcophagi with total concealment waiting to attack, and the body dressed in Agosa's robes is actually that of a dread ghoul cleric pretending to be the missing healer. These dread ghouls are the personal guard of the Immolated Mirza, created by the Usij to defend him for all eternity, and the cleric is mullah and commander of his guard. They all resemble ancient humans, with flesh grayed and desiccated from the endless years, jagged, clawlike nails on fingers and toes, and eyes that dimly glow with an inner hunger and malice. If the PCs don't investigate the undead cleric first, he moans to draw their attention. When they get within 10 feet of him, he rolls over and channels negative energy to hurt the party. That is the signal for the other ghouls to rise and attack from all sides with surprise. As the PCs deal with them, the mullah continues to cast spells from a defensive position for as long as possible before joining in the fray.

Tier 5–6 (CR 7)

THE MIRZA'S GUARDS (4) CR 2

Male human dread ghoul monk 2 (*Advanced Bestiary* 76)
LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

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

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +3 Wis)
hp 19 each (2d8+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, evasion; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 claw +4 (1d6+2 plus paralysis), bite +4 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis)

Special Attacks command ghouls, create spawn, disease, flurry of blows, paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 13; elves are immune to this effect), stunning fist (2/day, DC 14)

TACTICS

Before Combat The Mirza's Guards wait patiently hidden behind the four northernmost sarcophagi in the chamber, awaiting the signal from their leader.

During Combat The dread ghouls surround the PCs, trying to paralyze their foes. Once they have paralyzed a PC, they divert their attacks to the next mobile PC.

Morale The dread ghouls have guarded their master for millennia, and do not hesitate in their commitment now. They fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Scorpion Style, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8 (+12 jump), Climb +18, Escape Artist +8, Perception +8, Stealth +8, Survival +13; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +8 Survival

Languages Ancient Osiriani

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Command Ghouls (Su) A dread ghoul can automatically command all normal ghouls within 30 feet as a free action.

Normal ghouls never attack a dread ghoul unless compelled.

Create Spawn (Su) Any creature killed by a dread ghoul that is not subsequently eaten rises at the next midnight as a dread ghoul. The new dread ghoul is not under the control of its creator.

Disease (Su) *Ghoul Fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

THE MIRZA'S MULLAH CR 4

Male human dread ghoul cleric of Ahriman 4 (*Advanced Bestiary* 76)
CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 39 (4d8+16)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d6+4 plus disease and paralysis) and 2 claws +7 (1d6+4 plus paralysis) or

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+1 *heavy mace* +9 (1d8+5) and bite +2 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 14, 2d6), command ghouls, create spawn, destructive smite 7/day (+2 dmg), disease, paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 14, elves are immune to this effect), spontaneous casting (inflict spells)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th, concentration +8)
7/day—touch of darkness (2 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 4th, concentration +8)

2nd—*blindness/deafness*^D (DC 16, blindness only), *death knell* (DC 16), hold person (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *cause fear* (DC 15), *entropic shield*, *divine favor*, *true strike*^D

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Destruction

TACTICS

Before Combat The Mullah lies immobile on the ground and feigns mortal injury to lure PCs toward him. When the first PC approaches within 10 feet, he rolls over and channels negative energy.

During Combat The Mullah casts defensively for as long as he can safely do so, allowing his minions to fight melee, and healing them as needed with channeled negative energy. If forced into close combat, however, the Mullah fights with his mace.

Morale The Mullah can think of no greater honor than being destroyed serving his lord and the great div Ahriman. He fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18

Feats Combat Casting, Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Skills Climb +16, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +8, Spellcraft +8, Survival +12; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +8 Survival

Languages Ancient Osiriani

SQ aura

Gear breastplate, desert robes and turban, +1 *heavy mace*, unholy symbol

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Command Ghouls (Su) A dread ghoul can automatically command all normal ghouls within 30 feet as a free action. Normal ghouls never attack a dread ghoul unless compelled.

Create Spawn (Su) Any creature killed by a dread ghoul and that is not subsequently eaten rises at the next midnight as a dread ghoul. The new dread ghoul is not under the control of its creator.

Disease (Su) *Ghoul Fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Tier 8–9 (CR 10)

THE MIRZA'S GUARDS (6)

CR 3

Male human dread ghoul monk 3 (*Advanced Bestiary* 76)

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+1 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +5 Wis)

hp 27 (3d8+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8; +2 vs. enchantment

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, evasion; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis) and 2 claws +6 (1d6+2 plus paralysis) or

mwk kama flurry of blows +6/+6 (1d6+2) and bite +1 (1d6+1 plus disease and paralysis)

Special Attacks command ghouls, create spawn, disease, flurry of blows, paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 13, elves are immune to this effect), stunning fist 3/day (stun, DC 17)

TACTICS

Before Combat The Mirza's Guards wait patiently hidden behind the four northernmost sarcophagi in the chamber, awaiting the signal from their leader.

During Combat The Mirza's Guards surround the PCs, initially attacking with their claws to increase the chances of paralyzing their foes. Once they have paralyzed a PC, they use their flurry attack with their kamas.

Morale The Mirza's Guards have guarded their master for millennia, and do not hesitate in their commitment now. They fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 24

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Scorpion Style, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +10 (+14 jump), Climb +18, Escape Artist +10, Perception +11, Stealth +10, Survival +16; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +8 Survival

Languages Ancient Osiriani

SQ fast movement, maneuver training, still mind

Gear masterwork kama, *bracers of armor* +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Command Ghouls (Su) A dread ghoul can automatically command all normal ghouls within 30 feet as a free action. Normal ghouls never attack a dread ghoul unless compelled.

Create Spawn (Su) Any creature killed by a dread ghoul and that is not subsequently eaten rises at the next midnight as a dread ghoul. The new dread ghoul is not under the control of its creator.

Disease (Su) *Ghoul Fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

THE MIRZA'S MULLAH

CR 8

Male human dread ghoul cleric of Ahriman 8 (*Advanced Bestiary* 76)

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

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

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 75 (8d8+32)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +10

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claw +11 (1d6+5 plus paralysis), bite +11 (1d6+5 plus disease and paralysis) or

+1 *heavy mace* +13/+8 (1d8+6), bite +6 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 7/day (DC 16, 4d6), command ghouls, create spawn, destructive aura (+4, 8 rounds/day), destructive smite (+4, 7/day), disease, paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 16; elves are immune to this effect)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12) 7/day—touch of darkness (4 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +12)

4th—*divine power*, *inflict critical wounds*^D (DC 18), *order's wrath* (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*, *prayer*, *rage*^D

2nd—*blindness/deafness*^D (DC 16; blindness only), *death knell* (DC 16), *desecrate*, *hold person* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *cause fear* (DC 15), *entropic shield*, *divine favor*, *shield of faith*, *true strike*^D

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Destruction

TACTICS

Before Combat The Mullah lies immobile on the ground and feigns mortal injury to lure PCs toward him. When the first PC approaches within 10 feet, he rolls over and channels negative energy to harm the PCs.

During Combat The Mullah casts defensively for as long as he can safely do so, allowing his minions to fight melee, and healing them as needed with channeled negative energy. If forced into close combat, however, the Mullah fights with his mace.

Morale The Mullah can think of no greater honor than being destroyed serving his lord and the great div Ahriman. He fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 12, Con —, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 14

Base Atk +6; CMB +11; CMD 22

Feats Combat Casting, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Skills Climb +18, Knowledge (religion) +12, Perception +12, Spellcraft +12, Survival +12; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +8 Survival

Languages Ancient Osiriani

SQ aura, eyes of darkness (4 rounds/day)

Combat Gear *pearl of power* (1st); **Other Gear** +1 *breastplate*, +1 *heavy mace*, *dust of illusion*, unholy symbol

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Command Ghouls (Su) A dread ghoul can automatically

DISCOVERING VERDIZAAM EARLY

What happens if the PCs discover their invisible tormentor early? While much of the scenario centers around Verdizaam's taunts and riddles, if the PCs manage to locate him before the scenario assumes they do, either through a fortuitously placed *glitterdust* or *invisibility purge* spell, conduct the battle with the ghul as written in Act 5, altering tactics as necessary to accommodate the new encounter area.

command all normal ghouls within 30 feet as a free action.

Normal ghouls never attack a dread ghoul unless compelled.

Create Spawn (Su) Any creature killed by a dread ghoul that is not subsequently eaten rises at the next midnight as a dread ghoul.

The new dread ghoul is not under the control of its creator

Disease (Su) *Ghoul Fever*: Bite—injury; save Fort DC 16; onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Development: Verdizaam Charad first becomes aware of the PCs' presence within the tomb as they battle his mullah and guardians. He uses his *greater invisibility* spell-like ability to enter the room and observes the battle unseen from a safe distance. After the fight is over and the PCs take stock of the situation, Verdizaam speaks to them in a booming voice using *ventriloquism* to make the idol appear to speak.

“Welcome, mortals, to the Land of the Dead and Domain of the Divs. By the mighty Ahriman, I welcome you. Know that you have violated the tomb of the Immolated Mirza, the august lord genie Verdizaam Charad. You seek that which the grave robbers took and will meet the same fate as them unless you turn back now and depart forever these holy chambers.”

Unless the PCs depart immediately, after only a short pause Verdizaam continues. If the PCs attack or attempt to get into the idol, he quietly departs the chamber to await the PCs elsewhere, and they miss out on the clues he provides in his taunting jibes.

“You mortals be brave, and the Immolated Mirza acknowledges your courage, foolish though it may be. Therefore, I offer you not certain death but a chance to succeed in your quest. Two ages have passed since I last walked the earth and two puzzles shall you pass before you do so again. If you win through, the goal of your quest shall be your salvation as well. Should you fail, your bones shall adorn my tent.

“So let us begin. I have ensured that you will be unable to leave until our little game is through. Remember this, my little mice, for it may serve you again in the end. ‘Half past the new

moon and twice the tides break, the sphinx feeds at the noon, and reclines in its wake.”

Immediately after pronouncing this statement, Verdizaam utters the command word to seal the tomb and departs the room. PCs who succeed at a DC 15 Perception check hear the sound of grinding stone and a loud thud coming from the tomb’s entrance.

The pronouncement he has given may frustrate the PCs to some extent as it is actually not a riddle at all but rather provides a hint to the answer to the final riddle in Act 6; that is the “riddle within the riddle.” Regardless of what kind of answer the PCs come up with, nothing happens and eventually they must leave the room.

If they decide to head back to the exit, they find that a massive stone block—10 feet thick—now blocks the stairway up into the necropolis. In its face is a strange rectangular indentation of an unidentifiable design. Short of breaking through 10 feet of solid stone or succeeding at a DC 35 Disable Device check, the only way to get the stone block to retract back into the wall is to place the puzzle map found in Act 6 back into the indentation, which acts as a key and causes the block to recede.

Treasure: A search of Verit’s body uncovers a dagger, a light crossbow with 10 arrows, a *scroll of shield*, and a *wand of resist energy* (CL 3rd, 12 charges)

Mission Notes: Andoran faction PCs may wish to prevent Verit’s corpse from rising as an undead creature. To do so requires burning or dismembering the body, or a successful casting of *remove disease*.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the dread ghouls and discover Verit’s gear, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 308 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 1,738 gp.

ACT 3: TROPHY ROOM (CR 6 OR CR 9)

A variety of statues and showcases of all shapes and sizes line this chamber. The sculptures are constructed of various kinds of stone or rusting iron, and the cases are covered in dust. A marble walkway leads a meandering path through the room and ends at a stone table at the far end upon which rest two items: the severed head of your old companion Agosa Agion—mouth and eyes agape in a rictus of surprise or confusion—and a silver chalice bearing the symbol of his deity, Sarenrae.

This chamber serves as a trophy chamber of sorts for Verdizaam Charad. It memorializes the great ghul’s

centuries-long campaign against the Jistka Imperium. The statues are images of his most hated foes; most of the cases once held a body part or precious object owned by one of Verdizaam’s defeated enemies. Examples of a few of these trophies are included in the sidebar below, and you can fill in any additional details as you please. All inscriptions are written in Ancient Osiriani (legible to modern speakers of Osiriani with a DC 25 Linguistics check or non-speakers with a DC 30 Linguistics check).

The severed head on the table is that of Agosa Agion, and is now dried and stiff with its brain cavity scooped out and the inside of its skull polished. The chalice is likewise recognizable as one of Agosa’s liturgical items. Both are filled with a single draught of some thick, dark red liquid with a spicy, seared aroma. A DC 21 Craft (alchemy) or Heal check (Tier 8–9; DC 25) identifies it as some kind of blood spiced with thick wine and unknown substances. It is actually a concoction made of Verdizaam’s own viscous blood and can provide certain benefits if drunk as described below.

Development: As the PCs search this chamber, Verdizaam enters invisibly using his *greater invisibility* spell-like ability. He stands in a corner of the room and throws his voice via *ventriloquism* to the general vicinity of the severed head and says:

“Well met again, mortals. Your courage exceeds your wisdom. And the next riddle will address that deficit.”

“In a nation of godless folly, who is the greater fool? The follower of the empty god, unable even to protect its own, or the follower of an empty man, filled only with the knowledge of his own inadequacy?”

“Choose wisely, and we shall drink together to your choice: you the cup of your choosing, and I the other. For when we finally meet, one will make the drinker a lion and the other a craven jackal before him.

“Is it the accomplishment of man that emboldens his steps through his mortal journey or his faith in the unseen? Choose, and choose well, or choose not at all and face the stinging venom of your own folly.”

Verdizaam waits for a PC to drink one of the draughts of blood-wine, either from the sacred chalice, representing faith in the unseen gods, or from the hollowed skull of Agosa, representing the fundamentally errant philosophy of man. These juxtapositions represent the internal conflict of Rahadoum as Verdizaam has observed it in his recent explorations outside the tomb. Neither of the draughts is magical or harmful and both taste slightly spicy and burnt. Remember which draught the PC drinks, as this choice will come into play in Act 5. Verdizaam waits until the PCs leave the room and drinks down the other receptacle before exiting the room invisibly.

If no PC drinks a cup within 5 rounds or both cups are drunk by PCs, then Verdizaam considers the PCs to have refused his riddle. He speaks a command word in Ancient Osiriani, releasing the cobra constructs hidden beneath the stone table, and departs the room to await the PCs in area 5.

Creatures: The stone table has a hollow at its center accessible by a secret door (DC 35 Perception check) that can only be opened from within save through the use of magic. Coiled within this hollow are two advanced giant adamantine cobras. When Verdizaam opens the secret door, they emerge and attack anyone in the room, fighting until destroyed.

Tier 5–6 (CR 6)

ADVANCED ADAMANTINE COBRA (2) CR 4

N Small construct (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 182)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 23 (+2 Dex, +12 natural, +1 size)

hp 41 each (3d10+25)

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

DR 10/—; **Immune** construct traits; **SR** 15

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+1 plus poison)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth +12; **Racial Modifiers** +6 Stealth

SQ find target

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Find Target (Su) Once per day, an iron cobra's creator can order it to find and kill a specific creature within 1 mile, which it does as if guided by *discern location*. The creator must have seen or be holding an item from the specified creature for this order to function. In the case of these cobras, their creators (the Usij) are long dead.

Poison (Ex) An iron cobra's bite injects poison from a hidden reservoir within its body. Because it is a construct, the cobra does not naturally produce this poison, and its creator must refill this reservoir manually. The reservoir holds enough poison for 3 successful bite attacks, after which the creature merely deals bite damage. Refilling the reservoir takes 5 rounds and provokes attacks of opportunity.

Medium Spider Venom: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str damage; *cure* 1 save.

Tier 8–9 (CR 9)

ADVANCED ADAMANTINE COBRAS (6) CR 4

hp 41 (use the stats from Tier 5–9)

Treasure: The silver chalice is worth 50 gp.

STATUARY AND SHOWCASE EXAMPLES

A. Time and erosion have erased the features of this sandstone statue, yet it seems to wear the accoutrement of a pharaoh. The tarnished, silver plaque at the base of the statue reads, "Hehmket II. As the rodents gnaw your still-living bones, I dance in the entrails of your hours. VC I"

B. This badly-rusted statue portrays a richly dressed bey on his knees, hands raised in supplication and eyes wide with terror. Graffiti has been carved into it with a chisel, curses and profanity. Its plaque says, "Sayit, Eater of Dung. Betrayal is a sharpened blade, coated in acid. Yet betraying the betrayer is sweeter than new honey. Roast in the Inferno, old friend. VC I"

C. This iron sculpture represents a bizarre monster. Its upper torso is that of a beautiful, cat-eyed, sharp-fanged woman, while the lower body is that of a lioness (identifiable as a lamia with a DC 20 Knowledge [nature] check). A dozen arrows pierce its hide, and her face is contorted with agony. An inscription below it reads, "Larasesh the Languid, Star of My Sky and Delight of My Nights. I used to love her, but I had to kill her. VC I"

D. This stone box seems to hold a number of brown sticks. Closer inspection shows that they are ancient finger bones.

E. A scattering of pebble-like teeth litters the bottom of this chest. Carved into the bottom of the box is the name "Hatmah abd Khohimin" surrounded by the word "FOOL" written dozens of times.

Mission Notes: Osirion faction PCs should take note of Agosa Agion's fate. Cheliox faction PCs may wish to recover some of Hatmah abd Khohimin's teeth.

Rewards: If the PCs choose a cup to drink or defeat the cobras, reward each tier thusly:

All Tiers:

Give each player 8 gp.

ACT 4: SANDTRAP (CR 5 OR CR 8)

The floor of this circular chamber is covered in a rich layer of cream and charcoal-colored sand. A magnificent, wavy pattern has been formed in the sand, the design and combination of colors creating a brilliant work of art. Shiny stones are scattered throughout the arrangement, making the pattern appear to be a splendid, if peculiar, star-lit sky. Massive granite statues of ancient armed soldiers stand at attention along the walls.

Creatures: The entire effect of the sand and stones is merely the incidental effects of a giant ant lion digging its trap into the earth. The sand is just oddly colored sand and the stones are merely bits of quartz thrown up in the digging.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

Act 4 is an optional encounter. If there are more than 2 hours remaining for the PCs to complete the scenario, then run Act 4 as normal. If there is less than 2 hours remaining, then this is merely an empty room.

If the PCs enter the room, they step into the area of the sand trap that alerts the ant lion to emerge and attack. A giant ant lion resembles an arachnid with an oversized abdomen and wickedly hooked mandibles. In Tier 8–9, there are two giant ant lions in the pit and a giant lacewing lurking in the shadowy vaults of the ceiling that assists its offspring in capturing prey. A lacewing is a mature ant lion that has molted into a gigantic spindly insect with four gossamer wings and the same slashing mandibles as an ant lion.

ANT LION SAND TRAP CR —

Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device —

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 20-ft.-deep, 60-ft.-diameter sand trap (creatures slide to the bottom and take no damage), DC 15 Reflex save avoids; climbing out of the sand trap requires a DC 20 Climb check.

Tier 5–6 (CR 5)

GIANT ANT LION CR 5

N Large vermin (*Pathfinder RPG Bonus Bestiary 5*)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+10 natural, –1 size)
hp 60 (8d8+24)

Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +2

Immune vermin traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

Melee bite +10 (2d8+7 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks sand trap

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 11, Con 17, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 10

Base Atk +6; CMB +12 (+16 grapple); CMD 22

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sand Trap (Ex) A giant ant lion can create a 60-foot-diameter trap in any sand or soft surface. Creating a sand trap takes 1 hour.

A giant ant lion can make an attack of opportunity against any creature that falls to the bottom of its sand trap. These creatures can move across sand traps at their normal speed and are immune to these trap effects.

Tier 8–9 (CR 8)

GIANT ANT LIONS (2) CR 5

hp 60 (use the stats for Tier 5–6)

GIANT LACEWING CR 6

N Huge vermin (*Pathfinder RPG Bonus Bestiary 5*)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +8 natural, –2 size)

hp 85 (10d8+40)

Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +3

Immune vermin traits

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +12 (2d8+10)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 24, Dex 16, Con 19, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 10

Base Atk +7; CMB +16; CMD 29

Skills Fly +5

ACT 5: PRIDE AND PESTILENCE (CR 8 OR CR 11)

This room is decorated to resemble the interior of a massive tent. Canvas hangs from the ceiling giving the illusion of a bivouac set up in the wilderness. The interior of this false tent is opulent in the extreme. Lush carpets and plump cushions cover the floor. Intricately carved chairs and divans are strewn about the place. The air smells of orange blossoms. A large brazier, its



coals banked and glowing, stands at the back wall. A table stands next to it, an open map covering its surface. Silken garments hang on stools or peek out of chests and wardrobes. A pair of ornate scimitars hangs from the central post in the middle of the room. A covered doorway stands across from the entryway. For all the wealth displayed here, it seems odd that several hyenas are snarling and fighting at the foot of the central post, yipping and biting and hurling froths of drool around the room.

Here is the lair of Verdizaam Charad, the Immolated Mirza and bane of all things Jistka. From this place, the great ghul concocts his schemes and plots the downfall of his enemies. From this sanctuary, the undead genie propagated the infamous Night Plague that has wreaked such havoc in Rahadoum lately. Longing for his former life of freedom and war, he has made this room look like one of the tents in which he used to dwell during his old campaigning days.

Creatures: The hyenas are pets of the great ghul, and are presently fighting over the bony remains of Agosa Agion and Musin Ptomais, the unfortunate Pathfinders who stumbled upon Verdizaam's tomb and paid for the discovery with their lives. In Tier 8–9, two of the hyenas are actually lesser ghuls created by Verdizaam, currently amusing themselves in hyena form. By the time the PCs enter, Verdizaam has activated his *greater invisibility* and lurks close to the brazier on the far side of the room, maneuvering for position and awaiting the ideal time to attack. When finally revealed, Verdizaam is a ghoulish creature of taut, decayed skin over bony limbs with an oversized lower jaw lined with rows of razor sharp teeth. Black claws tip his hands, and his legs end in donkey hooves rather than feet.

If either Verdizaam or a PC drank from the silver chalice in Act 3, that individual gains the effects of a *rage* spell for the duration of this encounter but without the loss of decision-making capabilities as is usual for that spell. Anyone that drank from the skull cup gains the shaken condition while facing the individual who drank from the chalice in combat.

Tier 5–6 (CR 8)

VERDIZAAAM CHARAD, THE IMMOLATED MIRZA CR 7

Male efreeti great ghul sorcerer 2 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting*;

Dark Markets, A Guide to Katapesh 62)

NE Medium undead (shapechanger)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +10 natural)

hp 96 (8d8+2d6+52)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +11

NIGHT PLAGUE

The Usij created the Night Plague as a carefully engineered disease to afflict only the royalty of the Jistka Imperium. After all, what good was a conquered land if all the peasants who keep it running were dead? When Jistka finally fell, the surviving upper classes became the peasants under the victors' new rule and now their blood flows through inhabitants throughout the Inner Sea. Their descendents are most prevalent in modern-day Rahadoum. If Verdizaam touches any PC with his plague's caress ability, there is a 25% chance that PC carries the target bloodline and becomes infected. A PC who does not carry the Jistkan bloodline is immune from Night Plague. If that PC hails from Rahadoum, they are automatically infected.

Night Plague: touch: save Fort DC 24; onset 1 round; frequency 1/day; effect 1d6 Str, 1d3 Con, and fatigue; cure 1 save.

DR 10/cold iron and good; **Immune** undead traits, **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +14 (2d6+6), 2 claws +13 (1d6+6 plus bleed)

Special Attacks cursed claws, heat, bleed (1), rend (2d6+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +15)

At will—*greater invisibility* (self only)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +6)

7/day—plague's caress

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 2nd; concentration +6)

1st (5/day)—*hypnotism* (DC 15), *ventriloquism*

o (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*

Bloodline Pestilence (*Pathfinder* #29 29)

TACTICS

Before Combat Verdizaam begins the encounter under the effects of *greater invisibility* and positions himself in optimal striking position before initiating combat.

During Combat Verdizaam does not hesitate to use his hyenas as living shields, constantly moving to keep them between him and his foes, then leaping forward to slash with his claws. He raises his body temperature to inflict fire damage with his attacks. He becomes invisible if he begins taking significant damage, moving about the PCs and attempting to infect them with Night Plague with his plague's caress ability.

Morale Verdizaam fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (illusion), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Bluff +20, Climb +14, Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +15, Linguistics +4, Perception +17, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +15, Survival +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +8 Survival to follow tracks

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Ignan, Infernal, Jistka
SQ create spawn, genie-kin, change shape (humanoid or hyena)
Gear wayfinder containing a mulberry pentacle ioun stone, ornamental scimitar worth 250 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by Verdizaam becomes a ghoul on the next moonrise. Likewise a slain janni becomes a ghul, and a slain genie becomes a great ghul. Blessing or destroying the body prevents this reanimation.

Cursed Claws (Ex) Verdizaam's wickedly curved claws are as hard as steel and count as both cold iron and magic for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction.

Genie-Kin (Ex) For all effects related to race, Verdizaam is considered a genie even though he is no longer an outsider.

Heat (Ex) As a free action, Verdizaam can raise his body temperature to that of molten iron or lower it to that of cold, undead flesh. His red-hot body deals 1d6 points of fire damage whenever he hits in melee, or in each round he maintains a hold while grappling.

Plague's Caress (Sp) Seven times per day, Verdizaam may make a melee touch attack as a standard action that exposes the target to Night Plague. This disease was genetically engineered by the Usij to infect the nobility of the Jistka Imperium and functions differently than other diseases. See the Night Plague sidebar for more information.

DIRE HYENAS (2) CR 3

hp 26 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 179)

Tier 8–9 (CR 11)

VERDIZAAAM CHARAD, THE IMMOLATED MIRZA CR 10

Male efreeti great ghul sorcerer 7 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Dark Markets, A Guide to Katapesh* 62)

NE Medium undead (shapechanger)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +10 natural)

hp 160 (8d8+7d6+97)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

DR 10/cold iron and good; **Immune** undead traits, **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +16 (2d6+6), 2 claws +15 (1d6+6 plus bleed)

Special Attacks cursed claws, heat, bleed (1), rend (2d6+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +16)

At will—*greater invisibility* (self only)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +12)

8/day—plague's caress

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +12)

3rd (5/day)—*contagion* (DC 18), *fly*, *major image*

2nd (7/day)—*detect thoughts* (DC 17), *magic mouth*, *misdirection*, *summon swarm*

1st (8/day)—*cause fear* (DC 16), *charm animal* (DC 16), *hypnotism* (DC 16), *magic aura*, *true strike*, *ventriloquism*
 o (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *resistance*

Bloodline Pestilence (*Pathfinder* #29 29)

TACTICS

Before Combat Verdizaam begins the encounter under the effects of *greater invisibility* and positions himself in optimal striking position before initiating combat.

During Combat Verdizaam does not hesitate to use his ghul servants as living shields, constantly moving to keep them between him and his foes, then leaping forward to slash with his claws. He raises his body temperature to inflict fire damage with his attacks. He becomes invisible if he begins taking significant damage, moving about the PCs and attempting to infect them with his plague's caress ability.

Morale Verdizaam fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 27

Feats Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Stealth), Spell Focus (illusion), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Bluff +28, Climb +14, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +17, Linguistics +4, Perception +21, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +18, Survival +13; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +8 Survival to follow tracks

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Ignan, Infernal, Jistka
SQ create spawn, genie-kin, change shape (humanoid or hyena)

Gear ebon wayfinder with mulberry pentacle ioun stone, ornamental scimitar worth 250 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by Verdizaam becomes a ghoul on the next moonrise. Likewise, a slain janni becomes a ghul, and a slain genie becomes a great ghul. Blessing or destroying the body prevents this reanimation.

Cursed Claws (Ex) Verdizaam's wickedly curved claws are as hard as steel and count as both cold iron and magic for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction.

Genie-Kin (Ex) For all effects related to race, Verdizaam is considered a genie even though he is no longer an outsider.

Heat (Ex) As a free action, Verdizaam can raise his body temperature to that of molten iron or lower it to that of cold, undead flesh. His red-hot body deals 1d6 points of fire damage whenever he hits in melee, or in each round he maintains a hold while grappling.

Plague's Caress (Sp) Eight times per day, Verdizaam may make a melee touch attack as a standard action that exposes the target to Night Plague. This disease was genetically engineered by the Usij to infect the nobility of the Jistka Imperium and functions differently than other diseases. See the Night Plague sidebar for more information.

GHULS (2)

CR 5

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Dark Markets, A Guide to Katapesh 62
NE Medium undead (shapechanger)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +10 natural)

hp 76 (8d8+40)

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

DR 5/good; **Immune** undead traits, **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +12 (2d6+6), 2 claws +12 (1d6+6 plus bleed)

Special Attacks bleed (1), cursed claws, rend (2d6+6)

TACTICS

Before Combat The ghuls begin in hyena form, fighting with the real hyena over the scraps of the dead Pathfinders' bodies.

During Combat When combat begins, the ghuls change shape into their natural forms and attack the PCs to protect their master.

Morale The ghuls fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

Feats Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Self-Sufficient, Toughness

Skills Bluff +12, Climb +14, Heal +4, Intimidate +15, Perception +17, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +13, Survival +12; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Perception, +8 Survival to follow tracks

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Ignan, Infernal

SQ genie-kin, change shape (hyena, *beast shape II*)

DIRE HYENAS (2)

CR 3

hp 26 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 179*)

Treasure: Among the many artifacts of ancient Jistka strewn throughout this chamber is a large clay tablet with a number of hinged pieces of metal affixed to its surface. It appears to be a puzzle of some sort, and the PCs will recognize it as the Jistkan puzzle-map that they seek. Unfortunately, as the other Pathfinders discovered, it is completely inscrutable in its complexity. For its puzzle to be deciphered, the PCs will need some sort instructions or hints as to its meaning. As a treasure of antiquity, it is worth 10,000 gp and is of utmost interest to the Pathfinders.

Mission Notes: Taldor faction PCs may recover the Jistkan puzzle-map or any other authentic artifact from this chamber. Additionally, they may attempt to capture one of the hyenas alive, which requires the use of Handle Animal or magical means. Qadira faction PCs will probably be interested in recovering a portion of Verdizaam's diseased flesh, while Osirion

faction PCs should find Ptomais's *wayfinder* and *ioun stone* of great importance.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Verdizaam and his minions, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 1,729 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 3,187 gp.



Verdizaam Charad

ACT 6: RIDDLE ME THIS (CR 6 OR CR 8)

Descending steps lead to a large room, built entirely of silver-flecked black basalt. On each of the five walls is carved an immense, golden rune. A dais stands in the middle of the room, and reclining at its ease on the dais is a tawny sphinx. Her eyes miss nothing and glint with hidden mysteries. A simple prayer rug lies in front of the dais.

One of the golden runes on the pillars is a *symbol of persuasion* (DC 20) created by the occupant of the room. She invites the PCs to step forward and kneel on the prayer rug before her, in order to see who has succumbed to the symbol and who hasn't.

Creatures: This is Hetepheres, Whisperer of Enigma, a young sphinx. Verdizaam Charad encountered her in the desert south of Manaket and defeated her in a match of riddles. She reminded him of his lost love Larasesh, and his victory granted him power over her for 99 years. That was only 6 months ago, and the loss and the servitude chafe at proud Hetepheres. Considering her to be better protection than any safe or stronghold, the great ghul entrusted unto her many of his secrets. Even though Verdizaam may be dead, the sphinx still considers herself bound to keep his secrets until the 99 years are ended. That is, unless someone else can defeat her in battle of wits. A DC 22 Perception check (Tier 8-9: DC 26) notices a fine silver chain running from a shackle around one of her rear paws to a bolt affixed to the floor—a mark of her enslavement to Verdizaam, though her honor keeps her from breaking the puny chain and freeing herself.

Tier 5–6 (CR 6)

HETEPHERES CR 6

Female reduced HD sphinx (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 257*)

N Large magical beast

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +9 natural, –1 size)

hp 68 (8d10+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 50 ft. (poor)

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d8+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +12, 1d8+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12)

Constant—*comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *read magic*,
see invisibility

3/day—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*

1/day—*dispel magic*, *locate object*, *legend lore*

1/week—any one of the following: *symbol of fear* (DC 20),
symbol of pain (DC 19), *symbol of persuasion* (DC 20), *symbol*
of sleep (DC 19), *symbol of stunning* (DC 21); all symbols last
for 1 week maximum.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 18, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 25

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will

Skills Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Fly +6, Knowledge (history) +6,

Knowledge (nature) +6, Perception +17, Sense Motive +14,

Spellcraft +12

Languages Common, Draconic, Sphinx

Tier 8–9 (CR 8)

HETEPHERES CR 8

Female sphinx (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 257*)

hp 102

Development: If the PCs approach and kneel on the rug, Hetepheres nods gravely to them, and then recites this riddle: “What magnificent creature moves about in the morning on four legs, at midday uses two, and at evening stands on none. The more legs has she, the hungrier she be.” The sphinx then settles back on the dais, licking her fur and watching with inscrutable eyes.

The answer is, of course, a sphinx, as hinted at by Verdizaam in Act 2. In the morning, she pads around on all fours, seeking prey. At noon, she pounces on her victim, leaping on two legs. At evening, she reclines and rests, content with a full belly. If the PCs successfully solve the riddle, she leans back and opens a secret compartment in the hollow dais, allowing the PCs to take the book within. Of course, if the PCs can't solve the riddle, they can always just kill the sphinx and take the book themselves.

If the PCs do not kneel on the prayer rug and speak respectfully, she refuses to acknowledge them, attacking if they become violent or abusive.

Treasure: The dais upon which Hetepheres sits is hollow (DC 23 Perception check), and contains 1,820 gp worth of precious desert amethyst and a book written by the former efreeti in Ancient Osiriani. In this book is written the truth about his role in the fall of the Jistka Imperium (see “Background” above) as well as the secret to solving the puzzle-map in Act 5.

Mission Notes: If the PCs correctly solve the riddle, Hetepheres considers herself beholden to the PCs, who beat her in a battle of wits and defeated her previous captor. Andoran faction PCs may wish to use their position to set the sphinx free, which they may do by simply unclasping the chain from her leg and telling her that her obligation to them is void.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat or free the sphinx and recover the book, reward each tier thusly:

All Tiers:

Give each player 303 gp.

CONCLUSION

Once the PCs possess the Immolated Mirzah's tome, they can easily use the information contained within to unlock the stone blocking their exit. By placing the map in a specific configuration and inserting it in the indentation in the stone, they release its magical lock and it slides silently away. The Pathfinder Society dispatches a new contingent of archaeologists to plumb the tomb for greater mysteries and treasures.

With Verdizaam Charad defeated and the source of the Night Plague eradicated, the remnants of the affliction soon pass, freeing Manaket from a growing threat. The deaths were not nearly as bad as they could have been had the plague spread further thanks to the PCs' efforts. The PCs are no closer to uncovering the Shadow Lodge, but they now possess a rare map that allegedly leads to a lost Jistkan citadel. Surely the Pathfinders will be interested in such an illustrious find, and perhaps such a discovery will lure the Shadow Lodge into the open.

Andoran Faction Handout

The blessings of all free peoples be yours.

Your recent heroics in ending part of the slave trade in Rahadoun have been noted by the council, and our thanks you have. You have truly exhibited yourselves as heroes of liberation. But the masks of slavery are many and do not always come with easily recognizable chains. Many labor for a cause they do not believe in because of a hold others may have over them. As champions of freedom we often meet violence with violence, but we must also look to the higher road and make sure that violence is not all we have to offer. There are sometimes other ways to serve freedom than through the edge of a blade, and I implore you to always keep your eyes open for such.

While you journey in that plague-stricken land, remember that many who have fallen do not rest easy. Undeath too is a form of slavery, and to let a companion fall into its grasp is an atrocity of the first order. Better to commit a friend to the fire than face him again as a slaving horror from beyond the grave. Think on this as you face the adversities that await you, and ensure that none you know find themselves doomed to the slavery of undeath.

Capt. Colson Maldris

For the cause,

Captain Colson Maldris



Faction Missions

Andoran Faction: Andoran faction PCs who ensure that the dead Pathfinders and any of their party killed in battle do not return as undead creatures earn 1 Prestige Award. If they free Hetepheres without killing her in Act 6 they earn 1 additional Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction: Cheliox faction PCs who learn the location of the secret safehouse used by the Pathfinder team in Wadi al-Hesr during Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Award. If they recover the teeth of long-dead Hatmah abd Khohimin in Act 3, they earn 1 additional Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: Osirion faction PCs who report Agosa Agion's death earn 1 Prestige Award. If they recover Musin Ptomais's *wayfinder* in Act 5 they earn 1 additional Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: Qadira faction PCs who report on the number and quality of Venture-Captain Obo's horses earn 1 Prestige Award. If they return with a sample of Verdizaam's flesh, they earn 1 additional Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: PCs from the Taldor faction who retrieve some artifact of the Jistka Imperium in Act 5 earn 1 Prestige Award. If they capture a hyena that has survived exposure to the Night Plague, they earn 1 additional Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction Handout

Tool of the Illustrious One,

I sense that glorious opportunities await you in your desert sojourn, and the House of Throne greatly anticipates your success. Not all of the Pathfinders are adequately trusting of our motives, and while we have for some time attempted to ensure that our cause is properly represented in the project in Wadi al-Hesr, we have been stymied in our efforts to do so by the closed doors and closed minds of others in our order. I pray that while you explore the desert sands in the area of Wadi al-Hesr you might learn the location of the Pathfinder safehouse there and send word of it to us, so that we too may benefit from its discoveries as much as our brother and sister Pathfinders.

This next is from an old friend of mine, someone whose antecedents are somewhat hellish, if you take my meaning. I've no idea what this message means, but was bid to pass it on to you. The missive reads thusly:

"A longtime servant of mine once dwelt in the area now known as Wadi al-Hesr. His name was Hatmah abd Khohimin, and he owed me something of eternal value. If you can bring me any word of him or an item of his (the more personal the better), I will be materially grateful. If not, continue to wallow in your mediocrity."

If you do find anything of this abd Khohimin, give it to me and I will pass it on to my friend.

Obey, and enjoy my pleasure,

Zarta Draldeen
Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

Osirion Faction Handout

Woe be unto us, the followers of the Ruby Prince,

We are betrayed from within. Our very own master, Amenopheus, the Sapphire Sage, has proven a false friend and agent of the Shadow Lodge whom we abhor. His treachery very nearly cost you your lives in your last mission, and we have yet to determine his current whereabouts. The Ruby Prince has placed me in Amenopheus's position, and though I am unfamiliar with the role, I will do what I can.

As long as the Sapphire Sage is free, none who have known him and called him friend are safe, least of which that most honorable healer, Agosa Agion, whom you escorted into the very danger of plague-stricken Rahadourm. Now, as contact with him has been lost, we fear the treachery of Amenopheus and worse. A thousand blessings upon you if you can locate the honorable Agosa Agion and save him from further harm. Please send word when you find him.

Of equal concern is the Pathfinder Musin Ptornais. Once a student of Amenopheus, Ptornais is the leader of the Pathfinder mission in Wadi al-Hesr. In Ptornais's possession is a wayfinder and ioun stone passed to him by his father, also a Pathfinder. It is known that Amenopheus valued this wayfinder highly. I beg of you to recover Ptornais safely or, if that is not possible, retrieve his wayfinder so that it may be kept from the hands of the traitor.



In sorrow and shame,

Amenophim
Amenophim, Humble scribe to the Ruby Prince

Qadira Faction Handout


May peace dwell in your household,

It gladdens my heart to see you still hale and whole. And may it ever be so. I pray that your sojourn in godless Rahadom brings profit both to the Pathfinder Society and to your esteemed soul. I have heard that you will meet with my old friend, Obo, the venture-captain in Manaket. The honored Obo and I share an all-consuming passion: we love that most magnificent and royal of animals, the horse. I have approached him about crossbreeding our stock, but would appreciate the opinion of a third party. How many horses does he keep in his stable? What breeds does he raise? What of their quality? All of these things, I am burning to know. Please send me a detailed report of Obo's horses, and you will know my gratitude.

On a more serious note, our studies into this plague that has beset the area around Manaket have determined that it seems to be self-selecting for certain individuals—almost as if it existed for a specific purpose. Our physicians would study it further to learn of its means of transmission and ways to combat it. Included with this missive is a sealed glass vial. I ask that you retrieve a sample of flesh corrupted by this plague and return it to me for our study. Use utmost caution, and do not expose yourself to the contagion unduly lest you taste its effects first hand.

May your head ever find shade,

Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri



Taldor Faction Handout

Greetings from the Empire,

The antiquities dealers in opulent Oppara have long recognized the ancient Jistka Imperium as a kindred spirit to the modern empire of Taldor, albeit one laid low in days of old—completely unlike Taldor, who continues to stand strong and proud in her military might and cultural achievement. Nevertheless, Jistka is all the rage this season, and I have an interested party all lined up. Surely while you dig through the sands of Rahadom, you can turn up something of interest in regard to the Jistka Imperium. You will be handsomely rewarded for any such artifacts that you find.



Of other note is this plague that has beset your region. We have long feared that the Qadiran barbarians to our south would use some such means as the prelude to a new invasion of our sovereign territory. This has proven effective in wars of the past, yet invariably some of the local wildlife finds a way to survive such plagues and can provide hints to our own physicians in how to combat such tactics. While you are there, seek out some low beast or wild animal that has been exposed to the Night Plague and survived, and bring it back so that we might learn from it and better protect the empire.

Forever Taldor,

BARON JACQUO
Baron Jacquo Dalsine

**SCENARIO 2-07:
THE HERESY OF MAN, PART II: WHERE DARK THINGS SLEEP**

Event _____ Date _____
GM # _____ GM Name _____

Character # _____ Prestige Points

Character Name Andoran Cheliox Taldor
 Osirion Qadira

Character # _____ Prestige Points

Character Name Andoran Cheliox Taldor
 Osirion Qadira

Character # _____ Prestige Points

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 Osirion Qadira

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Character Name Andoran Cheliox Taldor
 Osirion Qadira

Character # _____ Prestige Points

Character Name Andoran Cheliox Taldor
 Osirion Qadira

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