

PATHFINDER SOCIETY

YEAR OF THE SERPENT



SERPENTS' IRE

By John Compton



SERPENTS' IRE

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO #7-98

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SERPENTS' IRE

BY JOHN COMPTON



Before his death 115 years ago, the esteemed Jhandorage Vaulnder Alexayn, one of the Aspis Consortium's founders, gathered together a group of scholars to explore radical new means of increasing profits. To sustain this research, he funded their work in perpetuity, dedicating a portion of the Consortium's profits to them off the books. Today, only a handful of the Consortium's members—but not the board of directors referred to as the Patrons—know of the existence of Conference Z, much less that the group has siphoned gold out of the Aspis treasuries. Even Conference Z's director, Professor Tantis Mais, only knows of the experiments started since his tenure began, and older tests that are still ongoing remain a mystery. For those in Conference Z, secrecy and continued funding are paramount, for these allow them to carry on their work undisturbed.

Professor Kramolag is one such researcher. Her continued successes in the study of alien religions allow her to maintain several satellite facilities associated with her primary lab in Nidal. There, she has captured and cultivated both alien species and humanoid cultists dedicated to otherworldly powers like the Outer Gods, dissecting and interviewing them to better understand the faiths beyond the stars. She might have continued her work in relative peace had a rogue faction within the Consortium known as the Korholm Agenda not learned of her clandestine operation and blackmailed her into aiding their nefarious schemes. Chief among her coerced contributions were studies of planar disturbances near the Thuvian city-state Pashow, where attempts to transport the fabled *sun orchid elixir* with teleportation ended in the vials' tragic loss.

Believing that her part in these plots had concluded, Professor Kramolag has been attempting to clean up loose ends. She is unaware that an elite team of Pathfinder agents recently upset the Korholm Agenda's plans in Thuvia and secured her research. This information has enabled the Pathfinder Society and the Aspis Consortium—who both seek the Agenda's destruction—to deduce where the professor's facilities lie.

WHERE ON GOLARION?

Serpents' Ire takes place on a plantation for medicinal plants in eastern Nidal, in the shadow of the Mindspin Mountains. The country reveres Zon-Kuthon, a god of darkness and pain, demonstrating its devotion through self-mutilation, torment, and the application of the agony-inducing toxins grown and brewed at this remote facility. The plantation obscures a secret Conference Z research laboratory called Slumbersun in the tunnels below, where even more vile experiments produce dangerous mutants and pitiless scholars. For more information on Nidal and Conference Z, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Occult Mysteries*, available at your local hobby store and online at paizo.com.



Iaovin Ratarion, one of the Aspis Patrons, has elected to handle this matter quietly. He has managed to track down the Consortium budget's carefully hidden line items that fund Professor Kramolag's research. He intends to learn what he can of her operation, send a destructive message to convey his displeasure at her ongoing theft, and then prevent any other Patrons from acquiring knowledge of her scientific inquiries. After all, he who wields the greatest secrets reaps the greatest revenues, and the Aspis Consortium revels in profit.

GM RESOURCES

Serpents' Ire makes use of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, *Advanced Class Guide (ACG)*, *Advanced Player's Guide (APG)*, *Advanced Race Guide (ARG)*, *Occult Adventures (OA)*, *Ultimate Combat (UC)*, *Ultimate Equipment (UE)*, *Ultimate Magic (UM)*, *Bestiary 2*, *Bestiary 3*, *Bestiary 4*, and *Bestiary 5*. This adventure assumes the GM has access to these sourcebooks. All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd, and the relevant rules from the Bestiary volumes are reprinted at the back of the adventure for the GM's convenience. All of the pregenerated characters' rules except those drawn from the *Core Rulebook* are reprinted on their character sheets.

Ratarion has compiled an elite team of utterly loyal or utterly expendable agents to raid the site and report back to him. Several are one-time collaborators of the Korholm Agenda whom he has cornered and provided a grim offer: embark on this extremely dangerous mission against their former employer or be branded an enemy of the Aspis.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Shortly after meeting with Iaoivin Ratarion and receiving their mission, the PCs travel to a medicinal plant plantation in eastern Nidal, beneath which lies one of Professor Kramolag's clandestine Conference Z laboratories—a top-secret facility called Slumbersun. The PCs infiltrate the plantation, finding valuable evidence for their patron, identifying the entrance to the underground facility, disabling its security protocols, stealing its key, and setting up distractions to cover their incursion into the complex. If at least one of the players has played *Pathfinder Society Scenario #6-98: Serpent's Rise*, the PCs might also encounter the cutthroat halfling Joliryn. She has arrived independently to retrieve a package for her Korholm Agenda master and is no friend of the PCs. If the PCs attract too much attention, guards emerge from within the facility, giving away its location but robbing the PCs of their personal resources and the element of surprise.

Shortly after entering the facility, the PCs encounter a team of researchers who attempt to repel them while destroying key research notes and sounding the alarm. Time is of the essence; if the PCs don't hurry, the lab technicians might eliminate all of the intelligence that Iaoivin Ratarion requires. To delay the intruders, the lab staff locks down major hallways, forcing the PCs to cut through one of the artificial alien habitats. There, a pack of otherworldly beasts lays an ambush.

As the PCs quickly explore the complex facility and race toward its heart, they can recover powerful magic items as well as crucial intelligence that explains more of the lab's purpose. They also encounter an unlikely ally, a neh-thalggu from beyond the stars that swears its cooperation in exchange for its freedom and a chance to destroy the laboratory's chief officer Kar Zaweeb.

Expecting intruders, Kar Zaweeb, a mutant aranea, begins extracting the chemically induced nightmares of his test subjects to fight the PCs. This ploy buys him time to cast powerful spells before combat, so the PCs must prioritize either neutralizing the nightmare creatures before they fully form or confronting Kar Zaweeb before he becomes too powerful. In either case, the PCs are in for a challenging showdown.

GETTING STARTED

The PCs begin the adventure in Ostenso, home of the Aspis Consortium's headquarters, having gathered there at the behest of invitations that make no pretense of their attendance being optional. Thestil and Zurnzal are less integral to the adventure; if there are fewer than six players, consider setting these characters aside. Before they arrive, each receives a letter from a contact or has a chance to review an important journal entry; distribute **Player Handouts #1–6** to their respective players. Once everyone has had a chance to read the message and ask for any clarifications, read or paraphrase the following.

The *Hall of Blades* is as ostentatious as the rest of the Aspis Building in Ostenso, which serves as the headquarters for Consortium operations worldwide. Thousands of swords and knives of every size and curvature hang from racks, populate glass-covered display cases, and even constitute the frameworks of a trio of deadly chandeliers.

With an expression halfway between bitter and bored, a Chelish man in a richly embroidered jacket silently assesses each of his agents in turn over steepled fingers before taking a glass of wine in one hand. "Let it never be said that the Aspis Consortium lacks a sense of humor. Fortunately for some of you," he adds before swirling the glass and taking a sip, "it also has an underreported appreciation for mercy.

"It is now apparent that the Korholm Agenda, a rogue faction within the Consortium, has been provoking the Pathfinder Society into violence against us, all the while maneuvering for a power play whose details are above your pay grade. We've come to an understanding with the Society that by sharing intelligence about these upstarts, we can better crush them and get back to the ugly business of clawing at each other's throats. Pathfinder agents recently uncovered troubling evidence that the Korholm Agenda has been siphoning hard-earned gold from our accounts to fund an operation in eastern Nidal. Take note: stealing from the Consortium is a bad idea because a powerful Patron—me—

will send a team of armed professionals—that's you—to make an example by destroying everything you hold dear."

Mr. Ratarion pauses for effect before continuing. "This Nidalese facility is hidden within or beneath a plantation known as Wirholt's Rictus, with which the Consortium does business twice yearly. I've never received reports of a clandestine operation beneath those hills, so they've no doubt found ways to hide their presence. Your job is to ferret them out; secure any records that can inform me to their plans, contacts, or other safe houses; kill any of the traitorous operatives, and leave their hideout a smoldering ruin that sends a clear signal to their friends. Do whatever you can to avoid raising the alarm. If they're smart—and assume they are—they're also prepared to destroy key evidence if they suspect they're under attack."

He pauses in a moment of self-reflection. "I did say something about mercy, didn't I? Perhaps that was an exaggeration. Regardless, do you have any questions? I hope you have questions. The last team that didn't ask questions flubbed their mission and found themselves tragically unemployed—fatally so, in some cases."

Iaovin Ratarion knows a well-informed team is more likely to succeed, so he suppresses his snide impulses to best prepare the PCs; likely questions and his answers are below. If a PC examines the room's myriad blades, she finds that all of them are of at least masterwork craftsmanship.

Detect magic reveals a riot of magical auras, including several extraordinarily powerful weapons like a *luck blade*, a *+1 brilliant energy kukri*, and a *holy avenger*. Stealing any of the weapons from the heart of the Aspis Building and living to tell the tale is beyond the PCs' abilities.

What does the plantation grow? "The Nidalese are obsessed with pain, and some of them grow bored with whipping themselves and driving spikes into one another's flesh. Wirholt's Rictus grows a wide variety of medicinal plants, which its employees convert into a wealth of pain-inducing chemicals and drugs. The market for such curiosities is rather sparse beyond Nidal, but the Consortium makes enough money shipping the stuff to distant ports that we can afford to send a convoy there twice a year."

What kind of operation are we looking for? "Based on the intelligence I procured, the Korholm Agenda is performing some kind of occult research there—possibly

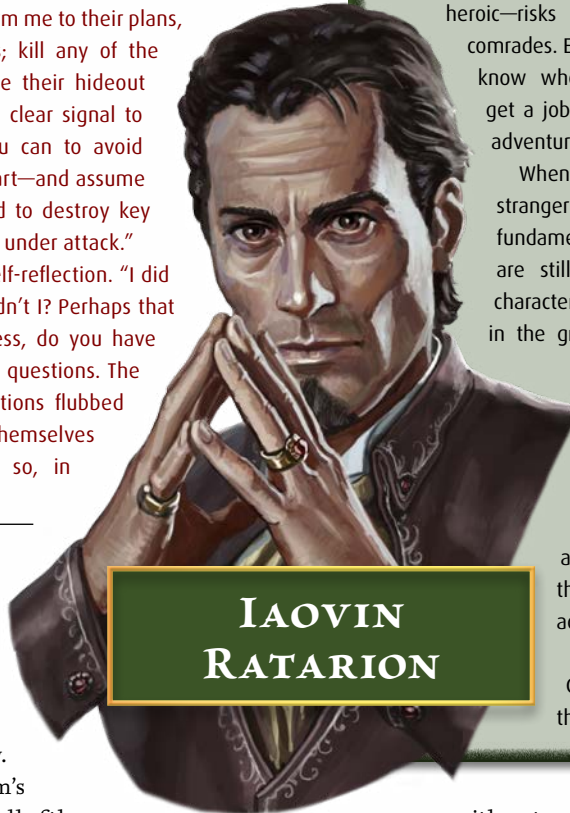
PRESENTING EVIL

Serpents' Ire presents a rare opportunity in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign to portray evil characters. Even so, it is important that players exercise some restraint. After all, one can be deviously villainous without being a reckless sociopath. Some of the pregenerated characters might even be willing to take extraordinary—arguably heroic—risks in the name of their cause and comrades. Even members of the Aspis Consortium know when to set aside their rivalries and get a job done. Let evil alignments flavor the adventure, not spoil the fun.

When running this in a public setting with strangers, let the players know that the fundamentals of the organized play campaign are still in effect: don't kill each others' characters and don't be a jerk. If everyone in the group is already a friend, you might consider relaxing these rules; while everyone is getting settled, discuss the option with your group and decide where the line is between evil and obnoxiousness.

No matter what, be mindful of your audience, and be prepared to rein in the tone if anyone's depictions of evil actions become too distasteful.

In the end, you're an experienced GM. Use your best judgment, and keep the game fun for everyone.



IAOVIN
RATARION

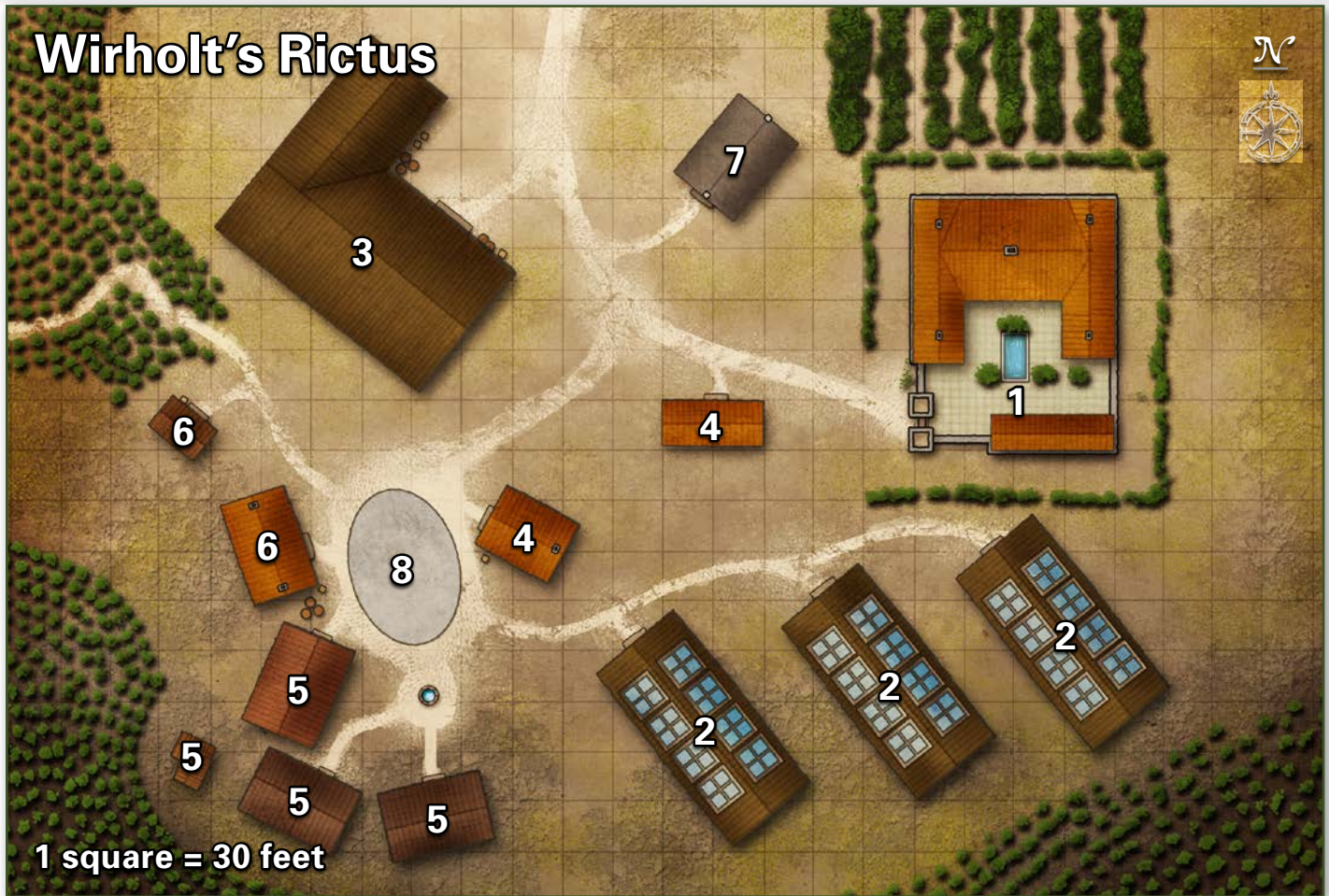
with extraplanar influences. It's also possible that the Agenda uses the site as a training facility or other more mundane outpost. All of you have a wide range of skills that should be enough to handle any challenge."

Will it raise suspicions if we're obviously Aspis agents? "I suspect it would. Aspis teamsters visited the plantation about a month ago, so we aren't expected back for at least a season. A few of you might be able to lie your way past curious minds, but to get anywhere sensitive, plan to avoid notice."

Can we borrow some of these weapons? "No. They'll accomplish far more here on display than in your meager hands."

Once the PCs have asked questions and made any last-minute purchases in Ostenso, Iaovin calls for an arcane assistant to teleport the PCs to Nidal, only a few miles from Wirholt's Rictus.

Taking Extra Time: The PCs—Rataji in particular—may want to prepare new spells or recharge the *staff of caustic fury*. Advise the player that she is welcome to



Wirholt's Rictus

1 square = 30 feet

customize Rataji's spells prepared, but the character's spell array is well suited to handle the threats ahead; removing one or more spells may leave the PCs underequipped against certain challenges. For the purpose of this adventure, the *staff of caustic fury*'s maximum number of charges is 5—a balancing factor for its cost when calculating the character's wealth and its potential impact during the adventure.

WIRHOLT'S RICTUS

Eastern Nidal abuts the Mindspin Mountains, providing only middling arable land. The same mineral signatures made famous by the nearby Brimstone Springs also leave the rocky soil uniquely suited to grow a range of rare medicinal plants. The plantation known as Wirholt's Rictus—its grisly name a reverent tribute to the current owner's great-grandfather—is one of several such specialized farms that produce much of Avistan's supply of harrowleaf, saw-edge heather, pathos berries, night nettle tea, and a unique strain of somnus root. While these all have legitimate medicinal uses, the Nidalese value them most when converted into a host of pain-inducing drugs that allow Kuthites to experience and inflict chemically-induced pain. There are few buyers outside Nidal, yet the

Aspis Consortium takes care to supply those far-flung masochists at considerable cost. Beyond the Consortium, few others transport the niche drugs, leaving Wirholt's Rictus isolated and unaccustomed to handling visitors.

During the slowest times of the year, the plantation has a staff of approximately 40 souls, swelling to five times that during the peaks of harvest and planting. The owner **Temarra** (LE female human expert 4/fighter 3) oversees the operation year-round, personally flogging those who do not meet their quotas and reporting to the Umbral Court those who don't seem to enjoy the punishment; to her, these are clearly traitorous souls who have betrayed the Midnight Lord Zon-Kuthon. The result is a loyal workforce that keeps its gossip to a whisper, asks few questions, and rarely challenges a new face, as it probably belongs to a replacement for an incapable employee.

The plantation manor sits atop one of the higher hills, giving it a commanding view of the rolling rows of cultivated bushes, shrubs, and grasses. These provide the PCs sufficient cover to approach the central area surreptitiously if they prefer to sneak in, giving them a good look at the layout and letting them identify key structures before splitting up to reap secrets and sow mayhem. Basic descriptions of each building are below.

1. Manor: This single-story manor is just elegant enough to entertain visiting buyers and just modest enough to let the owner leverage her humble means to demand higher prices. A 10-foot-tall wall, gate, and perimeter of shrubs provide considerable privacy from the rest of the plantation—especially effective in allowing Conference Z operatives to conduct business without being observed. This location is described further in area A (page 11). The manor doors are locked, but the PCs can steal a manor key (see Acquiring Keys on page 9).

2. Greenhouses: The elevation and latitude beget a somewhat chilly climate, so frost and reduced sunlight are often a problem during the winter months. A trio of greenhouses made of wood and glass shelters the most sensitive plants and fosters the seedlings for other species until they can be transplanted outside.

3. Warehouse: This is the principle storage site for the plantation's tools, its food supply, baled leaves, and refined products. The northern wing also serves as an impromptu barn for the few horses and livestock.

4. Processing Facilities: These two buildings contain millstones, cauldrons, pestles, delicate glassware, and more. The plantation employs five skilled pharmacists versed in testing soil conditions, pulverizing leaves, distilling tinctures, rolling cigars, and a wealth of other tasks to create the finished products exported across Nidal. The processing facilities contain research that the PCs can steal (see Steal Research page 10). The PC can also attempt to steal keys from the lead pharmacist Halvair (see Acquiring Keys on page 9).

5. Residences: Three barracks house the field hands and skilled laborers. A kitchen house stands to the southwest. A dozen other houses are scattered throughout the plantation, but the most important workers reside here.

6. Smokehouses: Several of the leafy plants must be dried carefully before shipping or processing, all of which happens in these buildings.

7. Kuthite Shrine: No Nidalese settlement is complete without a place to worship Zon-Kuthon. A metal and bone rendition of the dark god's unholy symbol adorns the front entrance. A heavy curtain just inside the door helps shut out light and muffle the screams of those within. Many of the residents use this chapel to lash, scar, or otherwise harm themselves in pursuit of the Midnight Lord's dark approval. More information about this location appears on page 10.

8. Threshing Yard: This oval of stucco and aggregate is where the laborers bring dried berries and grains for threshing, removing unwanted husks, skins, and kernels.

PART 1: INFILTRATING THE FARM

The PCs begin at a disadvantage, for although they know that Wirholt's Rictus hides some clandestine facility, the

A FAMILIAR FACE

The halfling Joliryn fought alongside several of the PCs during their attack on the Grand Lodge, and she has visited Wirholt's Rictus several times over the past year in order to deliver messages and retrieve some of Professor Kramolag's coerced research. In fact, if at least one of the players brings a Chronicle sheet from *Pathfinder Society Special #6-98: Serpent's Rise*, Joliryn is at the plantation on important business when the PCs arrive. Note that the *Serpent's Rise* Chronicle sheet can be applied to any of the player's characters, not just the one participating in this scenario.

Joliryn begins Part 1 aboveground, having recently retrieved several promised documents from Slumbersun; any attempt to gather information notes the recent return of an especially cruel halfling on a result of 15 or higher. During the second phase of Part 1, Joliryn emerges from the manor and inadvertently meanders to where one or more PCs are. She recognizes Rataji, Shohiraj, and Zurnzal on sight, earning the group one strike unless they already succeeded at a Disguise or Stealth check to avoid notice. She takes whatever precautions she must to then use a *scroll of dimension door* to return to Slumbersun, where she quietly begins mobilizing its defenses. She doesn't mind watching the facility destroyed—after all, Professor Kramolag has been resisting the Korholm Agenda's orders of late, so this would be painful lesson—but Joliryn rarely backs down from a chance to make something bleed. If the PCs do spot Joliryn and confront her, she guilefully observes that they're on the same side and that she's been scouting things here over several months. She then proceeds to feed the PCs several plausible but misleading lies about the threats ahead, augmented by the *scroll of glibness* she used earlier to toy with the researchers' feelings (Bluff +24). Even if the PCs avoid Joliryn's notice, she returns to Slumbersun as suspicions (accumulated strikes) grow.

Joliryn's presence provides an additional challenge, but it also provides an opportunity for the PCs to gain additional rewards. She carries research material, which can earn the PCs additional Evidence Points. If a player has the Joliryn's Foe boon on her Chronicle sheet for *Serpent's Rise*, Joliryn also has a unique ring that PC can earn (see area B).

entrance is not obvious from casual observation. The PCs need to infiltrate the farm, sniff out the entrance, and disable the safeguards there without raising the alarm—a difficult task, considering the plantation sees little traffic, causing strangers to stand out. While the laborers may not ask questions, the PC's presence makes them wary, and Temarra is adept at reading the workers' emotions.

EVIDENCE POINTS

Over the course of the adventure, the PCs accumulate Evidence Points, which serve as an abstract representation of how much valuable intelligence they have recovered. Unless the PCs do something catastrophically purposeful like set fire to what they've found, they cannot lose Evidence Points. Their actions can, however, reduce the number of Evidence Points available in a location—typically because the facility's researchers are actively destroying documents, data, and other proof of their operations. Evidence Points indicate the PCs' overall success at the end of the adventure.

Shohiraj Only: Shohiraj is on the lookout for special evidence that she can steal and deliver to the Pathfinder Society without the Aspis Consortium finding out. In order to do this, she must succeed at a check to recover one or more Evidence Points, after which she must succeed at a DC 25 Sleight of Hand check to hide it before any of her allies spot her theft. If she is completely out of sight of her allies—such as in the processing facility stealing pharmaceutical notes—she doesn't need to attempt the check. Failing means her allies catch her in the act, and each subsequent attempt increases the DC by 5. Note that Shohiraj's theft doesn't harm the group's efforts—she copies the information and turns over the originals to the Consortium.

The time the PCs have in which to perform their tasks is limited; this part of the adventure is broken into a limited number of phases that each represent about 20 minutes of activity, effectively serving as “turns” for the PCs to investigate points of interest and pursue other plans. The number of phases the PCs receive depends upon their skill at evading detection. A PC can travel to up to two locations during her turn—in case she wants to peek at both places before making up her mind or cast a spell on an ally—but she can only gather information, search, or perform another significant action at one location in each turn. Major tasks include gathering information, setting traps, stealing research, pilfering keys, exploring the Kuthite Temple, and infiltrating the manor.

To streamline play, inform the players of the phases mechanic before they begin their investigation, and list the eight locations described starting on page 6—their basic functions are apparent from the outside on a cursory glance.

In order to track the plantation's awareness of the PCs, the GM should tally the number of strikes that the PCs accumulate. Each strike represents a significant mistake a PC made during the infiltration. Although no single strike ruins the PCs' plan, accumulating enough strikes does raise the alarm (see Red Alert on page 15); this number is equal to 2.5 times the number of PCs (rounded down). At

the beginning of each phase, each PC must attempt a DC 20 skill check to avoid attracting unwanted suspicion, and the DC increases by 1 at the end of each phase to reflect the plantation's increasing awareness of visitors. Each PC can attempt a different check so long as it supports her personal strategy. This adventure assumes that the PCs will use Bluff (to pretend to be a visiting merchant or fast-talk why the Consortium sent another convoy several months too early), Disguise (to disguise oneself as one of the employees), or Stealth (to avoid notice entirely). Failing such a check earns the group one strike. These checks only represent moving about the property without attracting unwanted attention, and certain locations might include additional ways to earn strikes. No matter how well the PCs perform at their infiltration, they always earn at least one strike at the end of each phase to represent minor clues or hints that they leave behind. As a result, it is not necessarily practical to send in only one or two sneaky operatives. Everyone should participate at least once!

Some of the PCs might take an especially aggressive approach to infiltrating Wirholt's Rictus, such as kidnapping laborers whom they brutally interrogate or causing distractions before kicking in a locked door. As long as the PCs are being somewhat stealthy about their actions and aren't letting witnesses escape to cry out for help, consider substituting more aggressive checks such as Intimidate and combat maneuver checks in place of the suggested skills listed during this part of the adventure. However, the team always earns at least two strikes at the end of such a phase, not one; such tactics raise suspicions much more quickly.

At the end of each phase, the PCs can reconvene to briefly share notes and split up again to pursue different objectives. Be sure to provide the PCs a qualitative sense of how many more strikes they can accumulate at the end of each round (e.g. describing how alert the workers are, whether Temarra is especially agitated, etc.). There is no strict time limit on this part of the adventure, but the GM should aim to resolve these scenes within 60–90 minutes so that there is plenty of time left for the rest of the adventure.

Saving Throws and Skill Checks: This part of the adventure presents set DCs for opposed skill checks, helping to streamline the adventure. Should the PCs pursue an unexpected tactic, default to DC 20 for most skill checks that should be challenging but approachable. For the purpose of saving throws, assume that Temarra has a Fortitude and Will save bonus of +7 and a Reflex save bonus of +3, Halvair has a Fortitude and Reflex save bonus of +7 and Will save bonus of +3, and the other workers have a save bonus of +3 for all their saving throws.

Special: Several PCs have special skills that allow them to perform actions more quickly, spells that might allow

them to circumvent a skill check, or other options they might apply creatively. Grant PCs anywhere from a +2 to a +10 bonus on the check, depending on their creativity and the option's power. As guidelines, Eramay's quick interrogator ability should grant her a +5 bonus on checks to gather information, and casting *invisibility* should grant a PC a +10 bonus on a Stealth check. Thestil's *detect thoughts* might allow her to bypass certain Sense Motive checks and might provide a bonus at the GM's discretion on other checks.

GATHERING INFORMATION

There are dozens of employees who work at Wirholt's Rictus, and although virtually none of them know of Slumbersun, many have seen indirect signs that there's something more to the plantation than meets the eye. The PC might eavesdrop on a conversation or converse with laborers to learn more—she can attempt such spying virtually anywhere on the plantation. If she used Stealth to avoid earning a strike, the PC can attempt a Perception check to overhear information. If she used Bluff or Disguise, she can attempt a Diplomacy, Knowledge (local), or Perception check. The information she learns is based on the result of that check.

15+: Wirholt's Rictus specializes in five cash crops: harrowleaf, saw-edge heather, pathos berries, night nettle tea, and somnus root—all of them medicinal plants. Most of the crop is processed in the two central buildings, where it is turned into pain-inducing chemicals in high demand in Nisroch, Pangolais, and Ridwan. Because it is hard to judge the potency of a fresh batch, workers are often conscripted to test the products, whose purity is measured in part by the pitch of the subject's screams. Causing trouble is a sure way to become the next guinea pig, and the lead pharmacist Halvair keeps records of the grisly side effects in his lab.

20+: Not everyone who visits the plantation is a merchant. Some of them are creepy enough that the field hands assume these are visitors from the Umbral Court, and that's always reason to keep one's head down and not get too curious. Few laborers ever enter the manor compound, which the owner Temarra keeps locked except when there are visitors. Only she and the chief pharmacist Halvair carry the keys, and the former often makes a trip to the Kuthite shrine before returning to the manor. Whenever someone enters without permission, Temarra is quick to arrive, almost as though she could sense when someone goes where he's not welcome.

25+: There are several concealed pipes that rise from the ground throughout the plantation, and workers occasionally hear faint voices rising from these small ports. Five years ago, a picker called Etan asked Temarra about one of the pipes. He disappeared into the manor

and was never seen again. Everyone else has wisely feigned ignorance about the pipes ever since. The pipes are about a foot in diameter—large enough for ventilation, but too small (and obstructed by grates) to climb down.

30+: Cloak-shrouded visitors frequently slip into or away from the manor compound late at night, often carrying packages of odd shapes. Twice, field hands observed figures silently leading a large beast of some form—certainly not a horse—into the compound. Once, the beast seemed to stare back at the witness, who later heard otherworldly screams echo feebly from the concealed pipes.

ACQUIRING KEYS

The lead pharmacist Halvair and the owner Temarra each carry a set of keys that access different parts of the property, allowing the PCs to bypass several locked doors. Temarra carries a key to the manor as well as a key that unlocks the passage to Slumbersun below (see area A3). Halvair carries a key to the manor and a key to the pharmaceutical files (see Steal Research above). Halvair stays in and around the production facilities, so the PCs can take his keys in the same phase that they attempt to steal his research. Taking Temarra's keys involves tracking her down, which takes the entirety of the phase.

Acquiring the keys requires approaching the manager in question, which likely requires an additional DC 20 Bluff, Disguise, or Stealth check or some similar ploy. If the PC fails, she can try again during that phase, though the DC increases by 5. Any failure earns the group one strike. Once the PC approaches her target, taking the keys without being noticed requires a successful DC 20 (for Halvair) or DC 28 (for Temarra) Sleight of Hand check.

Temarra is especially difficult to pickpocket in part because she obsessively reaches down to clutch the key ring. This habit makes her wont to reach for the keys at the same time as the larcenous PC and also quick to notice their absence. A PC watching her can discern her nervous habit with a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check, and deduce that unless a pickpocket provides suitable replacement for the key ring (i.e. something of a similar shape that makes a jangling sound), Temarra won't remain ignorant of the theft for long. Likely fake rings include Halvair's keys as well as any number of odds and ends a PC might find in the warehouse. A PC can find an appropriate replacement with a successful DC 20 Perception check. Alternatively, a PC can try to remove a particular key from the ring with a successful DC 33 Sleight of Hand check.

Development: If a PC fails an attempt to steal the keys from either Halvair or Temarra, the group earns one strike. If a PC steals Temarra's keys, does not replace them with a fake, and does not spend his next turn sneaking up to return the keys surreptitiously—likely after quickly

unlocking a door—the group earns 1d2 strikes at the end of each phase as Temarra becomes increasingly concerned about having lost them.

KUTHITE SHRINE

Although worshipping Zon-Kuthon is often a personal practice consisting of self-inflicted pain, building a shrine to the Midnight Lord helps encourage piety and deflect any unwanted questions from Nidal's Umbral Court. Most workers subject themselves to some form of torture at least once a week, whether they “need” it or not. This is also where Temarra publicly performs any punishments to make an example of an employee.

The shrine's door is heavy, and a thick curtain inside further insulates the building so that sound does not easily escape, and light does not easily enter. There are also several large torture devices, as well as an assortment of more portable tools for inflicting pain. If the PCs wish to attack, abduct, or interrogate a target, there's hardly a safer place to do so than here. Just remember that even though torture is a common element in Nidalese culture, the gaming table isn't the best place to explore the graphic details; if the PCs want to be evil and physically coerce someone's compliance, gloss over the process, let them attempt an Intimidate check, and move on.

Among the implements are five daggers, a silver light mace, and a silver-tipped cat o' nine tails (treat as a light flail that deals slashing damage). The cat o' nine tails is an important component in opening the concealed door into Slumbersun (see area A3), though the PCs are very unlikely to guess that until they communicate with the aeon in area A2.

PREPARE DISTRACTIONS OR SET TRAPS

No plan goes perfectly, and it pays for the PCs to set a few booby traps or set a delayed fuse to burn down a building to draw attention away from where they want to go. They can trap nearly any structure, though there are several especially convenient targets. The smokehouses already contain live embers, so it is a relatively simple matter to displace burning fuel or lay a combustible trail so that the building catches fire as much as several hours later. The warehouse is full of tightly packed, mostly flammable material. It is harder to set ablaze but all the more spectacular once it has fully ignited, producing a roaring flame that erupts with plumes of narcotic smoke. Due to the moisture and green plants, the greenhouses are harder to burn. Nonetheless, an enterprising PC might clamber to the roof and loosen the glass skylights so that they fall and shatter when someone slams the door. Entertain other clever ideas that the PCs propose. As long as the PC's sabotage would harm or alarm bystanders, it likely qualifies. Successfully setting a trap or sabotaging

a building requires a DC 15 Craft (traps) check or DC 25 Disable Device check. Falth's use of his *mandate of misfortune* also qualifies as setting a trap. However, unless he successfully controls the conjured daemon Hsakorkinath, it teleports away and immediately wrecks havoc on the plantation. This earns the group 1d3+2 strikes at the end of each phase, including the current one. Hsakorkinath's statistics appear on page 40.

A PC who is inside the manor can attempt to reconfigure the trap in area A3 so her allies can bypass it while it harms her enemies. This task is much more difficult than creating a new trap. The PC must first find the trap (Perception DC 25), after which she must succeed at either a DC 25 Craft (traps) check or a DC 35 Disable Device check.

Development: Although Falth takes a special interest in laying traps and causing property damage regardless of the usefulness of such actions, the traps help the PCs if they draw too much attention. The traps damage the guards who respond to an alarm, dealing 3d6+6 damage to each before the beginning of combat. If a PC repurposed the trap in area A3, instead apply its effects to the guards who respond to the alarm (or the enemy creatures in area B).

Alternatively, the PCs can manually trigger the trap to create a distraction, allowing them to reach the manor courtyard without risking incurring a strike (see area A1). However, if the PCs do not begin Part 2 by the end of the phase in which they intentionally set off a trap, Temarra calls for the guards (see Red Alert on page 15).

STEAL RESEARCH

While the most valuable research lies deep below ground, there is still important data that a PC can steal on the surface. The processing facilities contain professional logs tracking what finished products the plantation has produced over the past year. Acquiring these records requires two steps: bypassing the pharmacists and breaking into the locked file. The pharmacists are busily at work, so a PC can slip past their notice with a DC 20 Stealth check—or a DC 20 Disguise check if one of the PCs has lured off one of these workers, subdued him, and dressed up as him. An individual pharmacist is no match for a PC—a PC can defeat a pharmacist without a formal combat. Alternatively, a PC might be able to present her visit as official business with a DC 20 Bluff or Diplomacy check. These skilled workers are amenable to showing around a visiting merchant and showing off samples of their wares, though they become increasingly suspicious over time if the PC is not accompanied by Temarra.

Once inside the processing facilities, a PC needs to break into the pharmacists' files. A good lock (Disable Device DC 30) keeps the reinforced chest closed, though

Halvair (LE male human alchemist^{APG} 5), the lead pharmacist, keeps the key with him at all times (see Acquiring Keys below). If the PCs have somehow subdued or distracted the pharmacists, they can instead attempt to force open the chest (hardness 10, hp 20, break DC 25). Identifying relevant research from among the mundane reports takes about 5 minutes and a successful DC 15 Intelligence, Knowledge (nature), or Linguistics check; pocketing the research without incident requires a successful DC 20 Sleight of Hand check or a clever cover story. Being caught while attempting to steal research earns the group one strike and causes the pharmacists to usher the PCs out of the building, ending that part of the phase.

If Halvair has one weakness, it is his blind loyalty. He often obeys orders reflexively from Temarra or Nidalese authorities, and a PC who is disguised as one of these figures is likely to earn his almost unwitting cooperation. His familiarity with these individuals increases the DC of any Bluff or Disguise check to impersonate them by 5; however, it also decreases the DC of any other checks to deceive, coerce, or influence Halvair in that guise by 5. An especially skillful impersonator might even convince Halvair to unlock and surrender his files voluntarily.

Development: Among the research are several unsettling documents of live drug tests gone terribly wrong. Many of the subjects were later transported to the manor, and few emerged later in any recognizable form. Provide the players **Player Handout #7**, and award the group 2 Evidence Points.

A. THE MANOR

The manor is a walled compound intended to keep curious eyes far from Conference Z business while providing a comfortable place to conduct less clandestine business and host visitors. The easiest way to reach the interior is through the main gate, though Temarra unlocks it and the three doors into the manor (DC 30 Disable Device each) only when coming and going; both Halvair and Temarra carry a manor key that undoes these locks. Athletic PCs may prefer to clamber over the walls, which requires both a DC 20 Climb check and a DC 20 Stealth check. If a PC fails, she can try again during that phase, though the DCs both increase by 5. Any failure earns the group one strike. If a PC approaches Temarra under the guise of a visiting merchant, he might convince her to invite him inside. Doing so requires the PCs to succeed at a DC 25 Bluff or Diplomacy check. On a failed skill check, Temarra believes the PC to be a wandering vagrant and advises him to leave the plantation before he finds himself violently thrown out.

If the PCs get as far as the courtyard without a chaperone, they can explore for a time without worrying

about attracting unwanted attention. As the GM, loosely consider how much time the PCs have spent in the manor. Once they've spent 5–7 minutes of game time poking around, consider wrapping up that phase and moving onto the next one. This time limitation might mean those PCs cannot reunite with their allies to discuss the group's next move.

Except where noted below, most rooms in the manor are bedrooms, meeting rooms, or other facilities of little note. The few employees who work as servants only enter the manor while Temarra is present, and only then for a few hours to perform chores or prepare meals. The rest of the time, they tend the crops alongside everyone else.

A1. Courtyard (CR 2)

Flowering thorn bushes grow from elevated planters in this courtyard, whose central feature is a rectangular pond flanked by eyeless angels.

Because the season for commercial visitors is coming to a close, Temarra has begun neglecting the upkeep of the plants here. About a dozen koi fish lazily circulate about the pond, and a handful of crows amble about the perimeter of the compound. The crows have learned that Temarra pitches a fit anytime they fly near the main door (inadvertently setting off the *alarm* set there), so they avoid most of the courtyard. A PC can discern that the crows seem wary about the courtyard with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check or DC 25 Sense Motive check.

ALARM TRAP

CR 2

Type magic; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 26

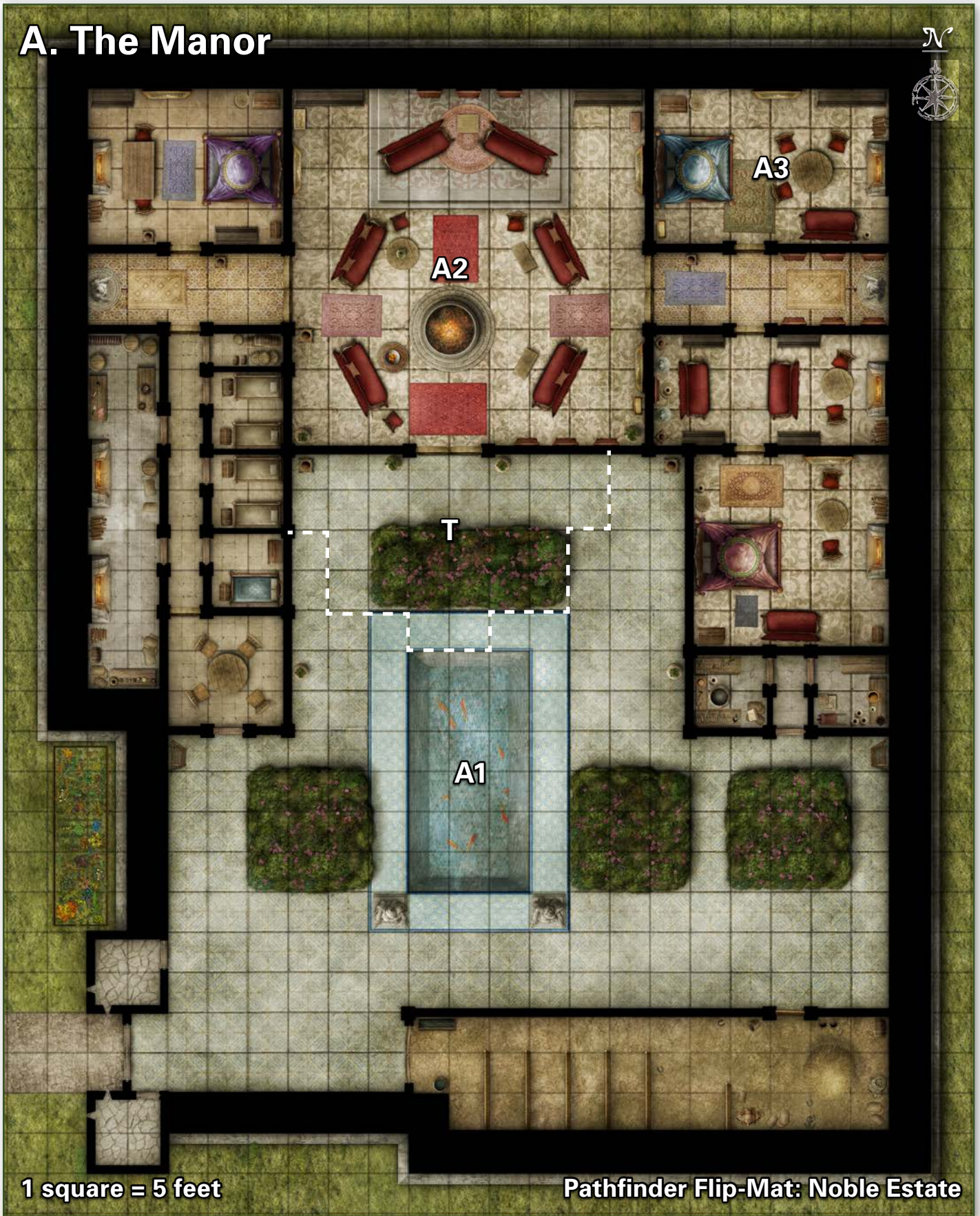
EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); **Reset** 1 hour

Effect spell effect (*alarm* [mental alarm])

Development: If the PCs trigger the alarm, Temarra immediately departs for the manor to investigate. She arrives 1d3 minutes later, and if she finds a PC there, she immediately initiates the Red Alert (see page 15). The PC can attempt a second DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or DC 20 Sense Motive check to sense that the crows are especially agitated, and that they anticipate that something bad will soon happen. The PCs can detect Temarra's approach 30 seconds before she arrives with a DC 20 Perception check, giving them one last chance to flee, albeit with a –5 penalty on any checks to escape. Before she arrives, each PC has several options. He can escape, such as by quickly leaving through the gate or climbing over a wall, allowing him to evade Temarra but wasting the rest of his actions for the phase. He can instead hide in the compound with a successful DC 20 Stealth check with the same results.

A. The Manor



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Noble Estate

Alternatively, he can attempt to diffuse the entire situation by pretending one of the crows triggered the alarm, such as by imitating their sounds, spooking the flock, and causing them to fly off. This ploy requires a successful DC 20 Bluff check, which causes Temarra to swear audibly before departing without further incident and allows the PCs at the manor to continue with the rest of the phase.

If a PC triggers the alarm but escapes or hides, he earns the group one strike. Successfully framing the crows for the incident earns the PCs no strikes.

A2. Grand Hall

Half a dozen upholstered sofas make a lazy circle around the middle of this high-peaked hall. A broad, brass brazier smolders with banked coals. Thin tapestries in bold, dark colors hang from the walls, as well as tall mirrors to the north and south. Overhead, a curious chandelier of coarse crystal and twisted, inhuman, metallic arms radiates light from a handful of glowing stones.

This hall is where most of Temarra's entertaining takes place, and this is one of the few spaces she cares to keep comfortable and welcoming to foreigners.

Creatures: The chandelier is not an esoteric work of art; it is a theletos aeon that has operated here for its own reasons for five years (see page 14 *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* for a better sense of aeons' mysterious ways). Like most of its kind, this theletos monitors and manages the balance of freedom and fate, liberty and slavery. Inscrutable as its motives are to Temarra, it has remained because it understands the multiverse truly needs the heinous experiments and conditions in the facility below. The head researcher Kar Zaweab has conscripted the aeon to help maintain the security of the secret facility below, even going so far as to build some of the lab's defenses so that the aeon could turn them on or off to better prevent the experiments below from escaping. It has served dutifully; however, it can sense a change approaching, and the time has come to facilitate the site's destruction.

Like all aeons, the theletos communicates through envisaging, a form of telepathy that projects images and visions rather than words into the recipient's head. As a PC looks throughout the room and glimpse themselves in a mirror, the theletos reaches out to them and makes it seem as though images are forming behind the PCs in the mirror's glass—as much a way to deflect the outsiders' actual presence and agency. If a PC succeeds at a DC 17 Knowledge (planes) check, he identifies the chandelier's true nature. The aeon seems unimpressed by the PCs identifying it and continues its attempts to communicate.

It addresses the PCs present with symbolic titles, such as showing a climbing, thorn-covered vine for Zurnzal

or a tarnished silver coin with a Mwangi face for Rataji. It then shows a bird's eye view of Wirholt's Rictus as a set of manacles draws tight around the image like a noose. Suddenly, the symbolic representation of the PC breaks those chains, and the plantation falls into chaos as fires break out and monsters surge from the manor into the wilderness. It then shows a series of timepieces breaking, like hourglasses cracking and sundial snapping in two, signaling these events are long overdue. Then it waits for the PCs to respond. The following are several likely questions and their answers. If the PCs don't understand its message, it attempts to rephrase with different images.

Can you help us? The aeon envisages a set of scales teetering as if unbalanced. One side sinks down to show a debt unpaid.

How can you help us? The aeon envisages iron doors slamming closed. A jagged crystalline form then hovers before the doors and flings them open to show metallic hallways beyond strewn with bodies. It then shows the symbolic forms of the PCs cautiously entering those hallways and marveling at the corpses.

What must we do to earn your help? The aeon envisages breaking chains, flying birds, and free-falling rocks. An infant appears surrounded by the vacuum of space. The theletos is attempting to show that it demands an expression of freedom—not for itself but in some other way. There is no “right” way to demonstrate freedom, so be open-minded as the PCs explore options. They might elect to smuggle the koi fish to a nearby stream, or Falth could summon Hsarkorkinath and let the daemon do as it pleases. They might sneak into the Kuthite shrine and break all of the restraints within. They might cross to the stables and cut all of the bridles and buckles. Unless the PCs devise an especially clever and efficient demonstration of liberty, this deed likely requires one phase of action to complete.

How do we reach this secret facility? The aeon shows a fancy, four-poster bed retracting into a wall, revealing a reinforced trap door. A shower of padlocks appears and clicks open in unison. The room grows red before a whip cracks. Nine silver coins stained in blood clatter atop the trap door, and the red room's appearance returns to normal. The aeon attempts to communicate that the PCs require two different keys—one to unlock the trapdoor and another to disable the trap.

What's down there? The aeon envisages red coats fluttering as if worn by invisible figures. Hands emerge from the sleeves, stained red as if dipped in blood. Glowing eyes and flashing teeth form a screeching chorus of fear and pain behind metal bars. Among these is a monstrous crab with intelligent eyes and gnashing jaws. The scene fades, and the crab beast appears fighting alongside the symbolic representations of the PCs present; it then grabs one of the red coats and squeezes with a claw, causing blood

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Theletos aeons are guardians of fate and prophecy, and they have the uncanny ability to grant some creatures—perhaps those chosen by fate or by the theletos itself—a glimpse of their futures. A PC who identifies the theletos with a DC 17 Knowledge (planes) check knows about its knack for prophecy. If asked to tell someone’s fortune, the aeon obliges and extends a hand for a petitioner to touch. The result depends on the character, appearing in each case as one or more cryptic visions.

Eramay: A silver Aspis badge splits into three badges that spin and fan out as if to create a crown. The crown brushes against a compass, which falls upon flagstones, shattering the glass and causing the needle to list aimlessly as if unable to find north.

Falth: The aeon recoils in pain. The shock exposes Falth to the aeon’s wreath of fate ability.

Rataji: Over the jungle, the sun shines for a moment before its warmth visibly bleeds outs and shrouds the land in shadows. Countless millions of ants flood across the jungle, as a small red dot in the night sky shines and casts the carnage in crimson light.

Shohiraj: A man and a woman—both young—wear compasses around their necks as they stand before a wall inscribed with names. They tearfully place a broken compass at its base before departing. Watching from afar, a woman wearing a mask of falling water bows her head, salutes the two, and turns to enter an elegant tower.

Thestil: The aeon recoils in pain. The shock exposes Thestil to the aeon’s wreath of fate ability.

Zurnzal: A thorny vine climbs up a crumbling trellis before wrapping itself around an iron sconce bearing an unlit torch. As the vine coils higher, the torch springs to life with haunting, green flame. As if attracted to the light, a trio of praying mantises with red-hued carapaces clambers up the vine toward the flame. The vision fades just before the three arrive, making it unclear whether the mantises extinguish the fire or throw themselves upon it.

to pour from the neck and sleeves. The alien crustacean is actually the neh-thalggu Aaog-Shagga held captive in Slumbersun,

and the theletos’s vision foretells that the aberration could be a powerful ally to the PCs.

THELETOS

CR 7

hp 76 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 14, see page 40)

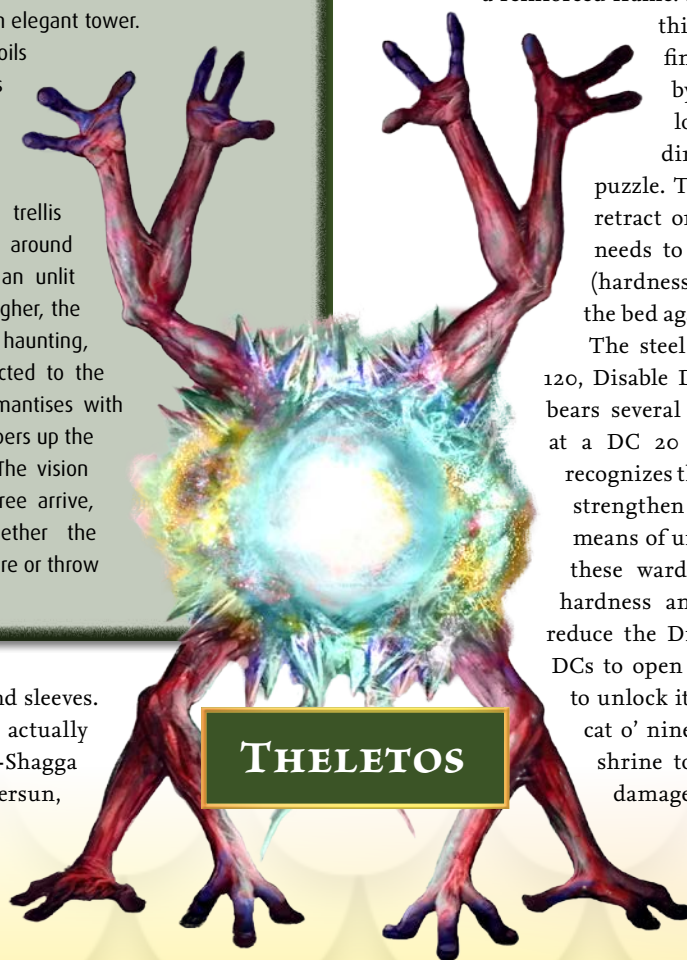
Development: If a PC successfully expresses freedom, the theletos disables the trap in area A3 and prepares to assist them again later (see area C). The theletos also grants each PC a one-time benefit while adventuring in Slumbersun; before attempting an attack roll, saving throw, skill check, or ability check, he can use this benefit to roll 1d6 and add the result to his d20 roll. This benefit represents various safety protocols failing at an opportune time, pipes bursting to knock an enemy off balance, or the like. Be sure to describe an interesting effect attributable to the theletos’s intervention when a PC uses this ability.

A3. The Secret Entrance (CR 8)

Like the two other well-appointed bedrooms in the manor, this chamber has a canopy bed, a table, fireplace, and several shelves. Unlike the other rooms, this spare bedroom rarely sees use, and it conceals a reinforced entrance into Slumbersun’s labs below. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check finds seams and inset hinges in the bed’s frame that allow it to fold up against the east wall like an accordion to reveal a steel trapdoor set into a reinforced frame. If the PC exceeds the DC of

this check by 5 or more, he also finds a hidden catch activated by shifting the fireplace’s iron log holder in several different directions, like solving a puzzle. This catch causes the bed to retract on its own. Otherwise, a PC needs to dismantle part of the bed (hardness 5, hp 20) or forcibly collapse the bed against the wall (break DC 20).

The steel trapdoor (hardness 20, hp 120, Disable Device DC 45, break DC 38) bears several runes. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check recognizes that the runes both magically strengthen the portal and bear a ritual means of unlocking it. A PC can dispel these wards (CL 10th) to reduce the hardness and hit points by half and reduce the Disable Device and Strength DCs to open it by 10. The intended way to unlock it, though, is to use a special cat o’ nine tails found in the Kuthite shrine to inflict at least 1 point of damage to an intelligent creature



THELETOS

and then slap the bloodied barbs against the door. This causes the trapdoor to open and temporarily disables the trap.

Trap: Thanks to the immense quantities of chemical agents created here, it was natural for the researchers of Slumbersun to guard the entrance with a poison gas trap. If someone opens the door from the side of area A3 without disabling the trap or performing the blood ritual, the entire room fills with dangerous gas.

VEXING INSANITY MIST TRAP CR 10

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 35

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic (contains 3 doses)

Effect poison gas (insanity mist); never miss; onset delay (1 round); multiple targets (all targets in area A3)

Development: The trapdoor slides aside to reveal a set of spiral stairs that lead down to Slumbersun and area B.

RED ALERT (CR 9)

If the PCs accumulate a number of strikes that equals or exceeds 2.5 times the number of PCs, Temarra or another plantation worker executes one of several emergency contingencies to alert Slumbersun of an imminent threat. Although the hidden entrance in area A3 is the primary way into the facility, there are several secondary, concealed access points scattered throughout the plantation that allow Slumbersun to bring in larger shipments or deploy guards at a moments notice. Where on the plantation this encounter occurs is up to the GM, though it should be fairly close to wherever the PCs were causing the most trouble during that phase. These guards spring from a concealed trapdoor near the PCs, and the door begins closing automatically—a process that concludes at the end of the fourth round of combat. An adjacent PC can attempt to jam the door as a standard action, effectively providing the PCs an alternate route into Slumbersun. All the while, a grating, whining siren blares across the plantation, clearly signaling to the players that their presence is no longer a secret.

Creatures: The initial response team includes two brainwashed defenders specially trained by Professor Kramolag and her lieutenants. Accompanying them is an arcane spellcaster: this is Joliryn if any player has a Chronicles sheet for *Serpents' Rise* or a Bureau of Criers mage if not. Joliryn's *wrathful ring of spell storing* only appears if at least one player earned the Spoils of the Siege (Joliryn) boon on her Chronicle sheet.

BUREAU GUARDS (3) CR 4

Human cavalier 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 32)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +7

SCALING RED ALERT

For a group of four PCs, remove one Bureau guard from the encounter. The other guards lose the benefits of their special conditioning ability.

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 47 each (5d10+15)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5; +2 vs. fear or mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk silver warhammer +11 (1d8+3/×3)

Ranged throwing axe +8 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks challenge 2/day (+5 damage), tactician 2/day

TACTICS

Before Combat The guards select Slumbersun as their ward, granting them a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls whenever they are directly defending it. This bonus has been included in their statistics.

During Combat The guards prefer to remain near one another to benefit from their Tandem Trip feat as they shield their arcane ally from melee threats. They then try to keep the PCs on the ground. Their order's challenge benefit allows them to avoid provoking an attack of opportunity against the target of their challenge.

Morale The guards fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8 (+10 bull rush); **CMD** 19 (21 vs. bull rush)

Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Tandem Trip^{UC}

Skills Bluff +7 (+9 to conceal information about Slumbersun), Climb +5, Intimidate +7, Linguistics +4, Perception +7, Ride +1, Sense Motive +10

Languages Aklo, Common

SQ keeper, order of the seal^{UC}

Combat Gear *oil of magic weapon, potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** mwk breastplate, mwk heavy steel shield, mwk silver warhammer, throwing axes (2), *cloak of resistance* +1, everburning torch

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Conditioning (Ex) The guards have sustained months of brutal conditioning, granting them a +1 bonus on their saving throws. This bonus increases to +3 against fear or mind-affecting effects. This replaces the guards' banner, cavalier's charge, expert trainer, and mount special abilities.

BUREAU MAGE CR 7

Half-elf evoker 8

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 75 (8d6+45)

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

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +4 (1d4/19-20)

Special Attacks intense spells (+4 damage)

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

At will—elemental wall (8 rounds/day)

7/day—force missile (1d4+4)

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

4th—*detect scrying*, *dimension door*, *fear* (DC 18), *resilient sphere* (DC 19)

3rd—*dispel magic* (2), *fireball* (DC 18), *slow* (DC 17), *stinking cloud* (DC 17)

2nd—*false life*, *fox's cunning*, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *resist energy*, *scorching ray*

1st—*expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* (2), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *shield*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *light*, *message*

Opposition Schools enchantment, illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat The mage already has *detect scrying*, *mage armor* and *false life* active. The bonuses from these spells are included in his statistics. If summoned by the red alert, he also casts *shield*.

During Combat The mage uses his spells to trap, wall off, and slay the PCs, favoring *slow* against targets tripped by the guards.

Morale If at least one of the Bureau guards is no longer fighting, the Bureau mage casts *dimension door* to escape once reduced to 15 or fewer hit points. He then uses his *scroll of whispering wind* to contact Kar Zaweeb with an update of the situation.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

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

Feats Fast Study^{UM}, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration, Toughness

Skills Appraise +15, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, nature, planes) +15, Perception +3, Spellcraft +18; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Elven, Shadowtongue, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (*ring of counterspells*), elf blood

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *ring of counterspells*, *scroll of whispering wind*; **Other Gear** dagger, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *cloak of resistance +1*, 49 gp

JOLIRYN

CR 7

Halfling magus (eldritch scion) 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 9, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 104)

NE Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +1 size)

hp 63 (7d8+28)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7; +2 vs. fear

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *agile kukri* +12 (1d3+5/15-20)

Ranged dart +10 (1d3)

Special Attacks eldritch pool (+2, 7 points), magus arcana (arcane accuracy^{UM}, disruptive^{UC}), spell combat, spellstrike

Magus Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +11)

3rd (2/day)—*force punch*^{UM} (DC 17), *keen edge*

2nd (4/day)—*bear's endurance*, *frigid touch*^{UM}, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

1st (5/day)—*grease* (DC 15), *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *vanish*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

Bloodline arcane



JOLIRYN

TACTICS

Before Combat Joliryn has already cast *keen edge* on her kukri and use a *scroll of glibness*. The bonuses from these spells are included in her statistics. If summoned by the red alert, she has also already cast *shield*.

During Combat Joliryn launches a spell or two to weaken her foes before eagerly jumping into melee combat. There she uses spell combat and spell strike to slice up her foes—especially those tripped by the Bureau guards.

Morale Joliryn spent much of her life as a Chelish slave to a cruel master, so she's not above whinging, groveling, or even feigning mental domination to save her own skin. If it's clear that she won't win the fight, she either goes down fighting (if truly desperate) or tries to trick her way into being let go. She's even willing to accompany the PCs and help them a little in order to turn on them later or slip away.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Combat Casting, Disruptive, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +5 (+1 when jumping), Bluff +4 (+24 when lying), Climb +1, Fly +9, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (planes) +5, Perception +1, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +8, Use Magic Device +10; **Racial**

Modifiers +2 Acrobatics, +2 Climb, +2 Perception

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal

SQ bloodrager bloodline (arcane^{ACG}), medium armor

Combat Gear *spellguard bracers*^{UE}, *wrathful ring of spell storing*; **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, +1 *agile kukri*, dagger, darts (4), mwk kukri, *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of alluring charisma* +2, spell component pouches (2), evidence, 40 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+1 Agile Kukri An agile weapon allows its wielder to apply her Dexterity bonus to its weapon damage rather than her Strength bonus. This is incorporated into Joliryn's stats above.

Evidence Joliryn carries a set of instructions signed "S.P" that politely but firmly instruct her to retrieve the possessions that S.P. lent to Slumbersun. She also carries a small leather pouch containing a mummified monkey holding an iron bell. The mummy has a faint aura of conjuration. Whenever a PC attempts to analyze its aura, it shrieks and attempts to bite an adjacent creature, if there is one (Atk +4, 1d3-4 damage). The bell bears an inscription in Abyssal, "whom has been summoned". The bell has a moderate aura of conjuration that analysis indicates is connected to calling forth a creature from another plane. Ringing the bell produces a surprisingly deep tone but no other effect. Together, these items count as 2 Evidence Points.

Exceptional (Ex) Joliryn is an exceptional agent with wealth appropriate for a PC of her level and built using 20 point-buy. This increases her effective CR by 1.

Wrathful Ring of Spell Storing Joliryn only has this ring if a player earned the Spoils of the Siege (Joliryn) boon from *Serpent's Rise* on her Chronicle sheet. When Joliryn was a slave to Alranair Leroung in Cheliox, she learned that he faked his magical abilities with the help of this ring. Thanks to her success during the raid on the Grand Lodge, the sadistic halfling earned enough gold to hire a mercenary team to accompany her on a bloodthirsty homecoming that resulted in one very dead noble and a new ring on her finger. The ring acts as a *minor ring of spell storing* and currently contains *fireball* (CL 7th, DC 17). The ring is further enchanted so that the wearer can apply the Empower Spell metamagic feat to one stored spell by only increasing the effective spell level by one, not two. The wearer does not need to have the Empower Spell feat to use this ability.

Development: Triggering the red alert also alerts Slumbersun's researchers, and after not receiving any word that the threat has been neutralized, they begin destroying records and other evidence that Iaoivin Ratarion desperately wants. This is reflected in the adjustments to the total Evidence Points available in areas of Part 2 noted on the following pages. Furthermore, skip the encounter in area B.

If the PCs fail to enter the secret passage before it closes, they must enter through area A3; at the end of each phase, another team of guards emerges from a different part of the facility to confront the PCs. These attacks continue until the PCs either enter Slumbersun or flee entirely.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat the guards, reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,500 gp. If they do not trigger the red alert, ignore this adjustment.

PART 2: THE LABORATORY BELOW

Beneath Wirholt's Rictus extends one of Professor Kramolag's two satellite facilities: Slumbersun, more a tangled network of halls, studies, and artificial ecosystems than a compact laboratory. A combination of etched metal signs, sealed areas, and trial and error allow the PCs to navigate the facility without extraordinary difficulty. Rather than depict the entire complex, this adventure simply portrays several key areas and junctures. Unless otherwise noted, each room has walls, ceilings, and floors made of treated iron alloys that resist rust and other degradation (Climb DC 25), and the ceilings are 10 feet high. Rows of magical orbs embedded along the upper edges of the walls bathe the rooms and hallways in green-tinted light. The doors are made of iron (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28) and open by sliding into recesses in the walls. Several important points in the facility are equipped with specially treated blast doors (hardness 20, hp 120, break DC 38) made to withstand extraordinary punishment. Roughly a

A WEALTH OF RESEARCHERS

Professor Kramolag employs several dozen researchers and assistants at this facility, all overseen by the monstrous Kar Zaweeb. Except where noted otherwise, the typical researcher is a 4th-level human expert with 18 hit points, AC 11, a Will saving throw bonus of +5, and a +8 bonus on Craft (alchemy), Handle Animal, Heal, Knowledge (dungeoneering, engineering, geography, and nature), and Perception checks. Each of the researchers knows how to navigate the site, can activate a handful of safety protocols, and can explain the purpose of several rooms. Should the PCs charm or coerce a researcher into helping them, simply grant the PCs a +2 bonus on Disable Device and Knowledge checks as long as the researcher accompanies them. At the GM's discretion, the researcher might attempt a skill check if the PCs lack training in the proper skill.

Each researcher knows of Kar Zaweeb, though the mutant aranea typically remains in his human form, hiding his true nature. In general, the staff fear the lead researcher and know that he commands unusual spellcasting abilities. The researchers also know of Professor Kramolag, though few have worked with her directly; they are aware that she maintains an additional facility elsewhere, though she rarely allows anyone to visit both sites in order to preserve secrecy. Despite working here, each employee knows only a fraction of the site's secrets; in this way the GM can use a researcher as a mouthpiece to relay additional information—couched in his own speculation and fear—to the PCs.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B

For a group of four PCs, remove one Bureau guard from the encounter. The other guards lose the benefits of their special conditioning ability.

dozen major ventilation shafts connect certain areas to concealed points on the surface.

B. RECEIVING LAB (CR 9)

Shortly after the PCs descend into Slumbersun, they enter this laboratory through the west door.

Fluid-filled canisters attached to the walls contain a range of small creatures floating in stasis. An overturned operating table has broken one of these containers, spilling viscous liquid across the floor. A much larger glass cylinder stands to the southeast, though it appears empty.

This room serves as a receiving room for new subjects and materials, providing a team of researchers a chance

to vet any arrivals to ensure they're fit and won't infect the other experiments. This is also the farthest Temarra has ever traveled into the facility; despite her authority above ground, her only way to speak with lab authorities is to travel here and beg an audience. Having received word that intruders have entered the complex, guards have assembled here to fend off the PCs.

Creatures: The specially conditioned guards want nothing more than to protect Slumbersun's secrecy and sanctity. If one of the players has earned the Spoils of the Siege (Joliryn) boon, Joliryn is here providing backup. If not, a Bureau of Criers mage is present instead. All of the enemy combatants here wear a special copper medallion, protecting them from the integrated weapon trap here.

Note that if the PCs fought these guards already as a result of triggering the red alert, this lab is abandoned.

Trap: Conference Z experiments with cutting edge technology, magic, and alchemy, and one of the fruits of their labor is this autonomous ray platform consisting of a rune-inscribed ruby in a reinforced mount built into the south wall. The device scans its surroundings constantly, and it fires weakening beams at anyone not wearing a copper medallion. It fires once per round at a random target—preferentially shooting creatures not benefiting from cover or in melee—and cannot turn far enough to target creatures south of its position. A PC can disable this platform as though it were a trap, or he can smash it (hardness 10, hp 10).

AUTONOMOUS RAY PLATFORM

CR 4

Type magic; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*alarm*); Reset automatic

Effect spell effect (heightened *ray of enfeeblement* [DC 13, CL 4th], Atk +8 ranged touch)

BUREAU GUARDS (3)

CR 4

hp 47 each (see page 15)

BUREAU MAGE

CR 7

hp 75 (see page 15)

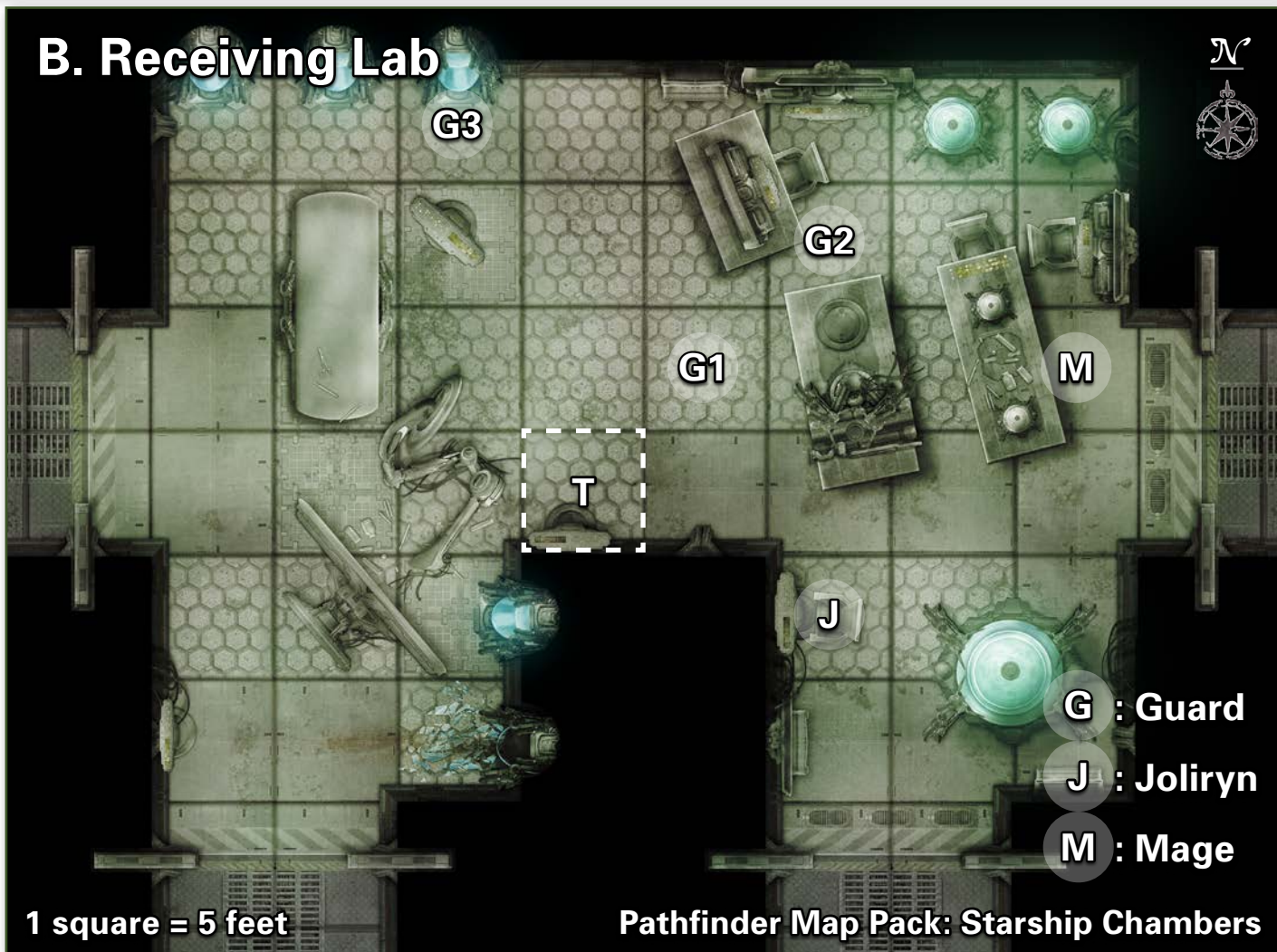
JOLIRYN

CR 7

hp 63 (see page 16)

Evidence: This room contains several unknown creatures kept preserved in fluid as well as several logbooks that describe sundry bizarre fauna, pieces of creatures, chemicals, and other supplies brought into the facility. These records go into little detail but suggest the lab has been in operation for at least 5 years. This is also the PCs' first chance to learn the facility's name: Slumbersun.

B. Receiving Lab



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Starship Chambers

These notes and the more promising creature samples provide the PCs 2 Evidence Points. If a PC succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or dungeoneering) to identify the creatures or a DC 25 Linguistics check to identify important texts, the PCs gain 1 additional Evidence Point.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat the guards, reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,500 gp. If you skip this encounter because the PCs triggered the red alert, ignore this adjustment.

C. BRETHEDA DOME 3 (CR 10)

As the PCs wind their way deeper into the complex, word of the intruders spreads deeper into Slumbersun. Many of the facility's defenses are designed more to keep creatures from escaping than they are to prevent others from entering—an observation a PC can make with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering or engineering) check. Nonetheless, the PCs find the likely route deeper blocked by a reinforced blast door that a researcher lowered several minutes earlier. The only alternative route leads south into an artificial, forested habitat where the researchers

SCALING ENCOUNTER C

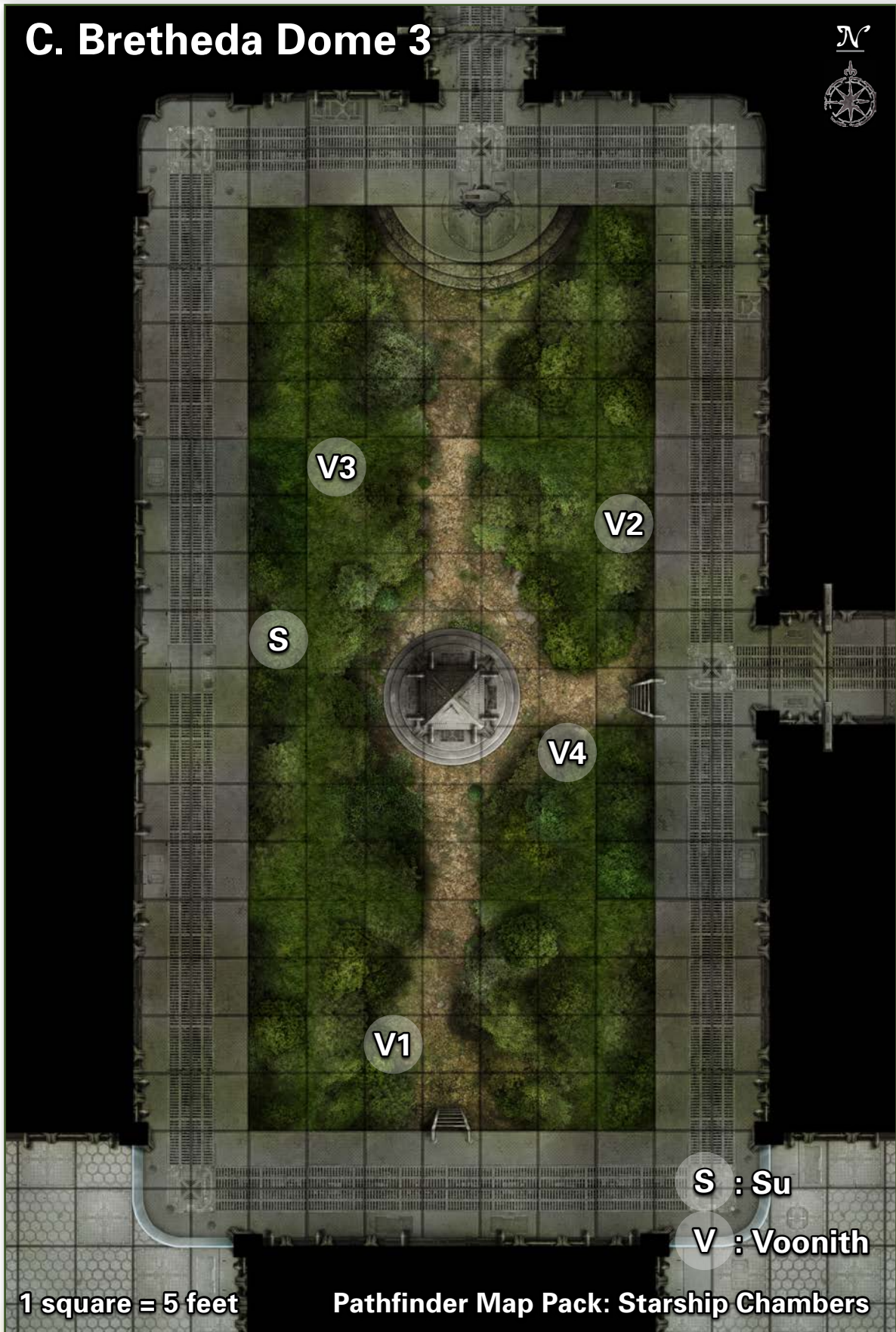
To accommodate a group of four PCs, remove two of the arboreal vooniths.

breed and contain alien species for experimentation. A metal inscription etched above the door reads "Bretheda Dome 3." With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (geography) or DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check, a PC can recall that the planet Bretheda is known as "The Cradle" due to its many moons that support a wide variety of alien species.

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs open the door into this area.

Blue-hued light emanates from the domed ceiling at the center of this two-story, artificial environment. Broad metal grates make a perimeter about the room about ten feet above the lush habitat below. Paths cross between strange shrubs and low trees, and vines cling to the walls and dangle in clumps across parts of the ceiling. At the center of the room stands a small

C. Bretheda Dome 3



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Starship Chambers

metal pavilion. Behind the thick glass in the southern corners of the room lie small laboratories filled with bookshelves, dissection tables, and workbenches.

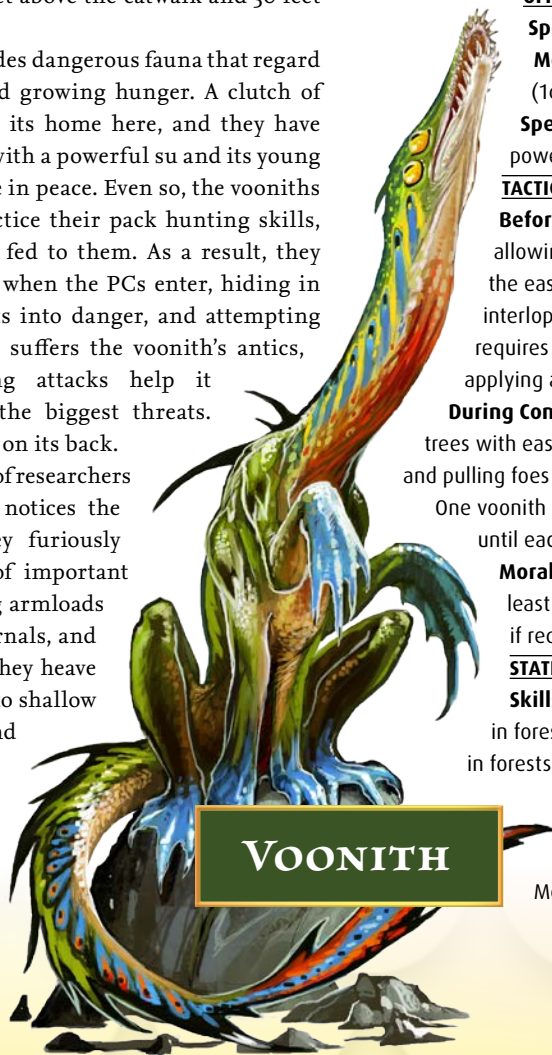
This is one of several Brethedan Domes, dedicated to sustaining several specimens adapted to life in warm jungles under a thick, heat-trapping atmosphere whose composition is slightly different than that of Golarion. The unfamiliar balance of oxygen, nitrogen, and other gases makes this room appear misty and gives it a disturbingly tangy smell. Breathing this air for an extended period of time might be deleterious, but for the purpose of this adventure, it is unsettling at most.

The plants are all reminiscent of Golarion's own, yet each is eerily different in subtle ways (e.g. a deciduous jungle tree instead has coniferous needles, vines might sound like they're squealing in pain as internal gases escape through the cuts, etc.). Climbing any of the plants requires a successful DC 15 Climb check. The foliage grants concealment to creatures low to the ground from attacks on the platform, and vice versa. The pavilion at the center of the room is a small elevator that the researchers use to introduce live prey into the room and feed the strange beasts.

The ceiling rises 20 feet above the catwalk and 30 feet above the alien habitat.

Creatures: The flora hides dangerous fauna that regard the PCs with caution and growing hunger. A clutch of arboreal vooniths makes its home here, and they have come to an uneasy truce with a powerful su and its young to share the limited space in peace. Even so, the vooniths relish the chance to practice their pack hunting skills, toying with the animals fed to them. As a result, they exhibit sinister cunning when the PCs enter, hiding in the foliage, luring targets into danger, and attempting to separate prey. The su suffers the voonith's antics, knowing their harrying attacks help it identify and eliminate the biggest threats. The su carries five young on its back.

Beyond the glass, a trio of researchers in each of the two labs notices the PCs as they enter. They furiously hasten the destruction of important records, carrying heaping armloads of parchment, bound journals, and esoteric equipment that they heave into furnaces or dump into shallow vats of acid kept on hand for just such a purpose. The hardened glass provides the researchers modest protection from attacks (hardness 3,



VOONITH

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

The encounter in area C is optional. If fewer than 2-1/2 hours remain in which to complete the scenario, no creatures attack the PCs. Reduce the total number of Evidence Points found in each of the labs to the south by 1 to account for the PC's simpler journey.

hp 12), and if the PCs kill at least one of the researchers in a lab, the other two attempt to flee through doors not shown on the map. A PC within 30 feet of the glass barrier can also attempt to scare off the researchers—and thus halt their destruction of evidence—with a successful DC 20 Intimidate check. If the PCs earned the theletos's assistance, an image of the theletos appears in the center of the western lab on the second round of combat, and that room fills with yellowish green poisonous gas. These vapors function as *cloudkill*, killing all three researchers in that room in seconds. After 1 minute, the gas dissipates.

ARBOREAL VOONITHS (4)

CR 4

Variant vooniths (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 283, see page 41) hp 37 each

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+1 plus pull), 4 claws (1d3+1)

Special Attacks blood-freezing howl, pounce, powerful pull

TACTICS

Before Combat Three of the vooniths lie in wait, allowing the fourth to clamber about toward the eastern end of the enclosure and distract interlopers. Spotting one of the hiding vooniths requires a successful DC 26 Perception check before applying any penalty for distance.

During Combat The vooniths scamper through the trees with easy, pouncing on PCs, harrying weak targets, and pulling foes off the metal ledge to the ground below. One voonith uses its blood-freezing howl each round until each has howled once.

Morale The vooniths fight to the death until at least two are defeated. After that, a voonith flees if reduced to 7 or fewer hit points.

STATISTICS

Skills Climb +13, Perception +8, Stealth +12 (+16 in forests), Swim +13; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in forests

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Powerful Pull (Ex) An arboreal voonith is able to use its pull ability against Medium and smaller creatures.

SCALING THE LAB WARREN

For a group of only four PCs, reduce the check DCs to find Evidence Points in the warren by 3.

SU

CR 8

hp 114 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 238, see page 40)

TACTICS

Before Combat The su lurks beneath the foliage, hoping to avoid notice. Spotting the hiding su requires a PC to succeed at a DC 29 Perception check before applying any penalty for distance.

During Combat The su uses *id insinuation II* to baffle its prey before clambering onto the platform to attack with its natural weapons. It uses its swift action to attack with its tail or use more psychic abilities as the situation demands.

Morale Morose and bitter, the su fights to the death.

Development: Once the PCs have broken through the glass walls, they can depart through the doors further to the east and continue exploring Slumbersun.

Evidence: Each of the two labs contains 3 Evidence Points worth of valuable intelligence (6 points total). At the end of each round of combat, one of the two labs' assistants (selected at random) destroy enough data to reduce that lab's Evidence Points by 1. Once a lab is reduced to 0 Evidence Points, its researchers flee. If the PCs triggered the Red Alert in Part 1, the western lab starts with only 2 Evidence Points.

Reward: If the PCs fail to defeat the su and vooniths, reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,500 gp. There is no treasure here; instead this

reward represents the unguarded valuables found in the rooms beyond.

THE LAB WARREN

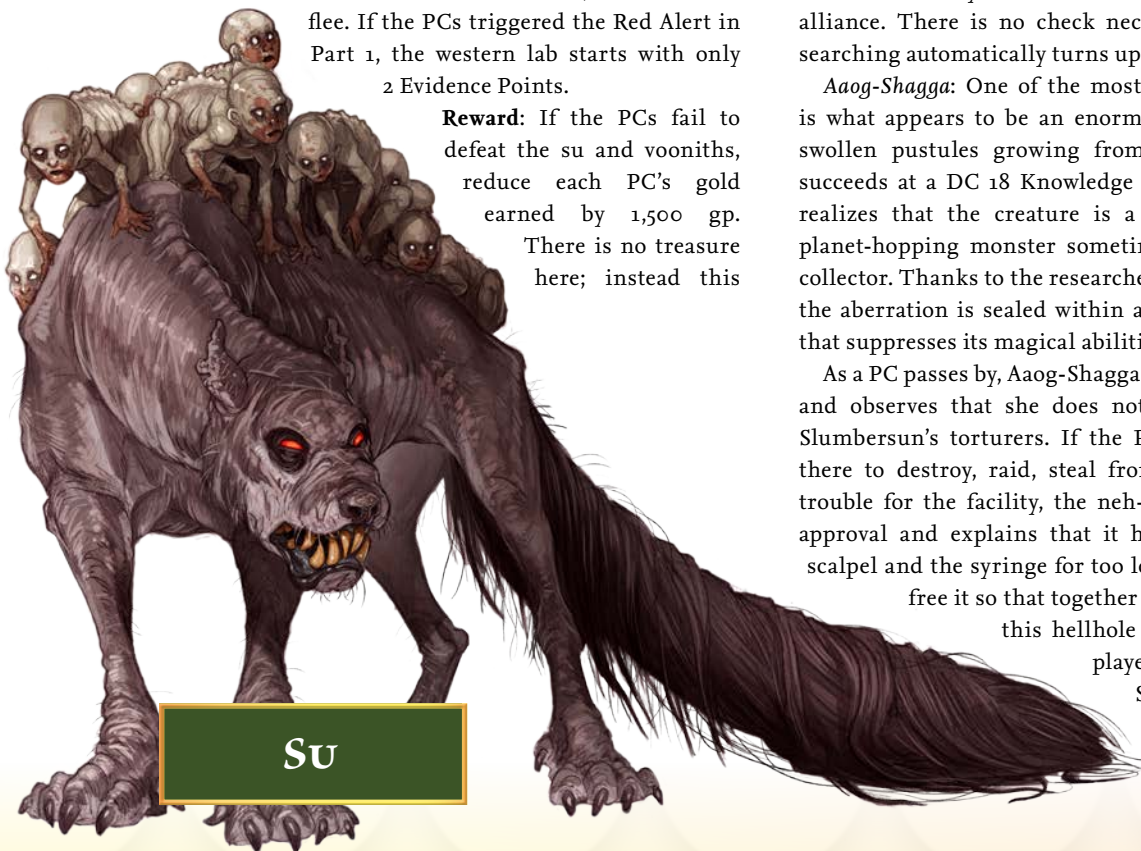
Once the PCs depart area C, they enter a maze of assorted laboratories, hallways, storage lockers, and containment cells. There is not a map for this region; rather, this is a brief, freeform opportunity for the PCs to break into different areas, recover more evidence, steal powerful tools, and find a possible ally. Although the PCs are theoretically able to spend as much time as they like here, there's only enough time to search for a short time before the lead researcher Kar Zaweeb (see area D2) assesses that the intruders are still at large, triggers a second set of alarms, and begins a last-ditch effort to defend—or destroy—Slumbersun.

Each PC has two chances to explore this twisting knot of rooms before that happens. As during Part 1 of this adventure, let each PC choose one of the following pursuits: find allies, find evidence, or find treasure. Most of these investigations take place within earshot of the other PCs, which should allay some players' concerns about splitting the party.

Find Allies: There are two allies of note in the laboratories, each of which represent alien life forms brought to Slumbersun by the Bureau of Criers at Professor Kramolag's behest. Both are eager to help the PCs because they would both benefit from a short-term alliance. There is no check necessary to find an ally; searching automatically turns up one of these two.

Aaog-Shagga: One of the most impressive specimens is what appears to be an enormous, mutant crab with swollen pustules growing from its back. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check realizes that the creature is a neh-thalgggu, an evil, planet-hopping monster sometimes known as a brain collector. Thanks to the researchers' proper precautions, the aberration is sealed within a reinforced metal cage that suppresses its magical abilities.

As a PC passes by, Aaog-Shagga hails her telepathically and observes that she does not appear to be one of Slumbersun's torturers. If the PC confirms that she's there to destroy, raid, steal from, or otherwise cause trouble for the facility, the neh-thalgggu broadcasts its approval and explains that it has suffered under the scalpel and the syringe for too long; it asks that the PC free it so that together they might lay waste to this hellhole together. Whether the players know it or not, Aaog-Shagga is a possible player character who can replace one of the current PCs or



allow a player whose PC has already died another way to keep playing. Should the PC be skeptical of this offer and the neh-thalggu's motives, it points out that if it remains, it will die; if it escapes and betrays the PC, it will likely die; if it cooperates—even with an inferior life form—it has a chance for vengeance and escape. As the aberration candidly observes, a day may come eons from now that their two species might fight for dominance, but the PC's actions today shall have no bearing over future uncertainties. It is far better to accept help, no matter how distasteful, than to fail and be forgotten.

Opening the cage requires attentive manipulation of the latches, leaving the PC exposed to the aberration's pincers just as the door opens. If a PC perished already, Aaog-Shagga forgoes this chance to feast on a fresh brain and joins the group without incident. If none of the PCs have died, ask the player if he would prefer to continue the adventure as Aaog-Shagga. If he agrees, the neh-thalggu dismembers the PC immediately after the cage opens. If the player is not interested, make the same offer to the other players; if one accepts, Aaog-Shagga consumes that PC and replaces him, assuring the others that no further outbursts will follow. If none of the players wish to use the neh-thalggu, it follows the PCs for the rest of the adventure, provides cryptic insights, and consumes the lead researcher Kar Zaweeb at the end of the adventure. It should not harm the PCs unless a player wants to use this character.

The PCs may react strongly to Aaog-Shagga consuming one of their allies. If they challenge the sincerity of the alien creature's alliance, it explains that if it were to devour another one of them, it would not have space left to consume Kar Zaweeb, and tells the rest of the PCs to "consider yourselves safe by nature of association, for the time being."

The Aballon Initiative: Professor Kramolag focused her efforts on understanding and repurposing alien life forms, among them a form of parasitic flatworm common among creatures capable of starflight. To her surprise, the invertebrates demonstrated rudimentary intelligence and empathic communication, perhaps the better to steer their hosts toward dense population centers to facilitate the parasite's propagation. Slumbersun's researchers found ways to alchemically augment a generation of these flatworms so that they would grant their hosts extraordinary physical prowess. This so-called Aballon Initiative—so named after the solar

system's speedy, innermost planet—came to a halt several months ago following a reallocation of resources.

One of the parasites still survives in a vacuum-sealed tank labeled "Aballon Initiative." It uses its limited empathic communication to contact the searching PC, sending him feelings of friendship and urgency. By sending signals of approval or disappointment, the flatworm is able to help even an unobservant PC find the tiny organism and communicate. It attempts to offer its services empathically, projecting concepts of speed, closeness, and power. It can only sense the PC's feelings in response, and if it "hears" concern or doubt, it tries to reassure the PC with promises of symbiosis and health. A PC can identify the creature only as some kind of parasitic or symbiotic worm with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check.

If a PC opens the tank and welcomes the worm's help, it wriggles up the PC and painlessly burrows into his ear, nostril, or a fresh wound. While host to the parasite, the PC can gain the benefits of *haste* once per day for 1d3 rounds. When the effect ends, the PC becomes fatigued for twice as long.

Find Evidence: The lab warren contains 6 Evidence Points total. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, nature, planes, or religion) or Linguistics check or a DC 25 Perception check recovers important intelligence and earns the group 1 of the available Evidence Points. Exceeding the DC by 5 or more instead earns 2 Evidence Points. Also provide the first PC who succeeds at such a check **Player Handout #8**, and provide Eramay **Player Handout #9** the first time she succeeds at a check. Remember that if the PCs triggered



AAOG-SHAGGA

the red alert at Wirholt's Rictus, there are only 5 Evidence Points here. Inform the PCs once they've recovered all of the available evidence, and allow other PCs to spend their turn pursuing other tasks.

Find Treasure: The lab warren contains many strange and wonderful treasures. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception or Spellcraft check finds one of the treasures listed below. Exceeding the check by 10 or more instead turns up two of the treasures. The PC must still successfully identify the item (Spellcraft DC listed below), though the GM might allow some trial and error to uncover an item's purpose. The GM can distribute these items in any order, though if Zurnzal searches for treasure, he should find the *elixir of toxic talents* before uncovering any other treasures.

Elixir of toxic talents (Zurnzal only): This is a highly noxious infusion intended to grant the imbibers extraordinary, permanent abilities. When Zurnzal recovers it, provide Zurnzal's player with **Player Handout #10**, which records patients' responses to the serum. If Zurnzal consumes the elixir, he must attempt a DC 20 Fortitude save against a poison effect. If he fails by 5 or more, he takes 2 points of Constitution drain and one of his arms permanently transforms into a pustule-covered tentacle. He can still make his unarmed strikes with this tentacle as normal. If he fails by less than 5, he takes 2 points of Constitution damage. If he succeeds at the save, he gains the ability to exude poison from his hands once per day, effectively gaining the supernatural ability to "cast" *poison* (DC 16). If he exceeds the save DC by 5 or more, he also gains a +2 bonus on saving throws against poison and can choose to activate his once per day poison ability as an immediate action when struck by a natural attack, exposing the attacker to the poison instead of making a touch attack.

Necklace of shattered dreams (Spellcraft DC 25): This delicate steel chain with five obsidian beads functions as a *necklace of fireballs* (type II), but it deals negative energy damage rather than fire damage (Will DC 14 for half) and is at risk of exploding when subjected to negative energy damage rather than fire.

Scabbard of bleeding edges (Spellcraft DC 20): This sheathe appears to be woven from sickly green spider silk. It functions as a *scabbard of keen edges* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 318) except that it grants the affected weapon the *wounding* weapon enhancement for 5 minutes. When activated, sweet-swelling ichor sweats from between the threads for several seconds, and the affected blade appears noticeably serrated.

Vampiric metamagic rod (Spellcraft DC 33): This unwieldy curiosity is the petrified leg of some giant insect covered in spines that make it nearly impossible to grip comfortably. Once per day, a spellcaster can use the

rod to add any combination of the following metamagic feats to a spell he casts so long as the effective spell level would not exceed 7th level: Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell, or Widen Spell. After resolving the spell effect, the user immediately gains a number of negative levels equal to the total spell level adjustment of the metamagic feats applied. These negative levels last for 24 hours. This item otherwise functions as a metamagic rod.

Viridium Moonbeast (Spellcraft DC 26): This statuette of a tentacle-headed, quadruped is cast in sickly green metal. It functions as a *bronze griffon figurine of wondrous power* but has a fly speed of only 20 feet (good). Its bite attack sickens its target for 1d3 rounds (DC 15 Fortitude negates). While animate, it intermittently babbles telepathic nonsense and incensed proclamations of doom to its owner.

Development: Once the PCs have each performed two major actions, Kar Zaweeb initiates a dangerous protocol in the deepest lab, causing a new siren and flashing lights to spring to life. This signals the PCs that there is no time left to dawdle. If they insist on spending more time searching this area, every additional set of actions reduces the number of Evidence Points in area **D2** by 2. Any delays also cause the nightmare beasts in area **D1** to mature 1 round earlier. As long as the PCs quickly wrap up their business here and move on, they arrive in area **D** without any drawbacks.

D. PROJECT LIAVARA

Perhaps Slumbersun's greatest success was Project Liavara, an initiative to extract the dreams from alien minds and manifest imperfect homunculi of their nightmares to better understand the dreamers' beliefs and fears. The procedure requires powerful chemical sedatives and hallucinogens derived from the plantation crops above. It is extremely harmful to the subject, causing patients to hemorrhage from the ears, thrash uncontrollably, and awaken with psychological scars. To Kar Zaweeb and Professor Kramolag, these are minor prices to pay in the name of science.

D1. Nightmare Aposakrasis Lab (CR 9)

The PCs enter from the east. The doors to the west and southeast are both shut. The southwest doors lead directly to area **D2**.

Dozens of conduits and tubes run up and down the walls of this lab, connecting a trio of beds to a trio of large glass vats to the west. Within the vats undulate formless blobs of organic matter that briefly grow arms, pseudopods, and faces before those features melt back into the roiling masses. An unconscious

D1. Nightmare Aposakrasis Lab



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Starship Chambers

humanoid lies strapped to each bed with heavy leather restraints ratcheted tightly closed, which the sleeping forms strain against wildly as they scream madly at phantasmal terrors.

This is the first of the laboratories built for the Liavara Project. Ever since Kar Zaweeb perfected the means to sustain larger nightmare creations, he has used this lab less and area **D2** more. Using a unique distillation of somnus root produced at the plantation above, Kar Zaweeb induces nightmare-haunted sleep in a patient. As the frightful dreams coagulate in the dreamer's subconscious, the series of wires and tubes channel the psychic reverberations to the corresponding glass vat. There, the organic slurry responds by taking the shape and ascribed behaviors portrayed by the dreamer's nightmare, and the expensive machinery and alchemical additives help stabilize the new life form so that it doesn't immediately fall apart once exposed to air.

This equipment is an incredible scientific prototype, but it also represents an imminent threat to the PCs (see Creatures on page 26). Equally concerning to the PCs is that Kar Zaweeb waits in the next room preparing for combat, and the longer the PCs spend here, the harder the next encounter will be. He cackles as he activates the even

larger nightmare vat just out of sight, taunting the PCs about their impending demises while his new, hideous creation loudly destroys research records. Be prepared for the possibility that several of the PCs might rush ahead to confront the lead researcher in area **D2** while others linger here to disable the growing nightmares.

There are four intended ways for the PCs to stop the nightmare-spawning process, and they are detailed below. Each of the first two process-halting actions the PCs succeed at removes one nightgaunt from the encounter, while the last removes the nightmare artist.

Awaken a Patient: A PC can spend a full-round action attempting to awaken an adjacent patient with a successful DC 20 Heal check or DC 30 Intimidate check. Feeding the patient an antitoxin as part of the check grants the PC a +5 bonus on the check. Awakened patient shuts down the respective vat's growth entirely.

Destroy a Vat: Each of the vats has 10 hit points and hardness 5. If destroyed, the half-formed nightmare creature inside clings to life as a hungry flesh (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 152, see page 40) with 2 growth points for every round it was able to form.

Disable Machinery: A PC can spend a full-round action next to one of the vats to deactivate it with a successful DC

SCALING ENCOUNTERS D1 AND D2

Make the following changes to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Area D1: One of the vats malfunctions after one round. Remove one of the nightgaunts from this encounter.

Area D2: Reduce the skill check DC to operate the control panel by 5. Kar Zaweeb is unable to cast 5th-level spells, and he only has one 4th-level spell slot remaining.

25 Disable Device or Knowledge (arcana or planes) check. Doing so shuts down that vat's growth entirely.

Kill a Patient: Each of the unconscious humanoid has 5 hit points and a Constitution score of 12, requiring 17 points of damage to kill. If slain, a patient's corresponding vat deactivates, but the half-formed nightmare creature struggles to escape anyway. At the beginning of the next round, it breaks free and emerges as a hungry flesh (*Bestiary* 4 152, see page 40) with 2 growth points for every round it was able to form.

Creatures: Each of the patients is experiencing a traumatic nightmare that is shaping one of the new life forms in the vats to the west, and each vat contains one of these budding creations. Two of these are nightgaunts, inscrutable creatures from the Dimension of Dreams. The other patient dreams of the cruel halfling Joliryn, who savagely tormented patients whenever she could for her own amusement. Each round at initiative count 10, each of the creatures grows stronger and more distinct. After growing for three rounds, the creatures metamorphose and take identifiable shapes, after which their growth can no longer be interrupted. At the beginning of the fourth round, each of the creatures rolls initiative and enters the combat, bursting out of its respective vat as a free action on its turn.

As Kar Zaweeb is the twisted mind that helped give them life, these nightmare creatures avoid attacking him. The nightmare artist that takes Joliryn's form is an even more vile portrayal of the halfling, complete with nonfunctional horns curling from her head, a snake's tongue, hollow eye sockets, and other frightful features. Its body and all of its equipment dissolve into a formless slurry 1 minute after the creature dies.

NIGHTGAUNTS (2) **CR 4**

hp 37 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 203, see page 39)

TACTICS

During Combat The nightgaunts target the least burly-looking PCs first, attempting to tickle them then drop them into inopportune positions on the battlefield.

Morale The nightgaunts fight to the death. One minute after they die, their bodies dissolve.

NIGHTMARE ARTIST **CR 8**

Nightmare halfling magus (eldritch scion) 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 204, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 9, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 104)

NE Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +1

Aura fear (60 ft., DC 16), frightful presence (30 ft., DC 16)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +6 Dex, +1 size)

hp 63 (7d8+28); regeneration 5 (good spells and weapons, silver)

Fort +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7; +2 vs. fear, +4 vs. illusion effects

Defensive Abilities illusion resistance, protection from good;

DR 5/good or silver

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 10 ft. (perfect)

Melee +1 agile kukri +14 (1d3+7/15-20)

Ranged dart +12 (1d3)

Special Attacks eldritch pool (+2, 9 points), magus arcana (arcane accuracy^{UM}, disruptive^{UC}), night terrors (DC 16), spell combat, spellstrike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +13)

Constant—*protection from good*

3/day—*detect thoughts* (DC 18), *dream*, *nightmare* (DC 21), *suggestion* (DC 19)

1/day—*shadow walk* (DC 21)

Magus Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +13)

3rd (2/day)—*force punch*^{UM} (DC 19), *keen edge*

2nd (5/day)—*bear's endurance*, *frigid touch*^{UM}, *glitterdust* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

1st (6/day)—*grease* (DC 17), *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *vanish*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

Bloodline arcane

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 22, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Casting, Disruptive, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +8 (+4 when jumping), Climb +2, Fly +20, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +1, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +15, Use Magic Device +12; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Acrobatics, +2 Climb, +4 Intimidate, +2 Perception, +4 Stealth

Languages Aklo, Common, Halfling, Infernal

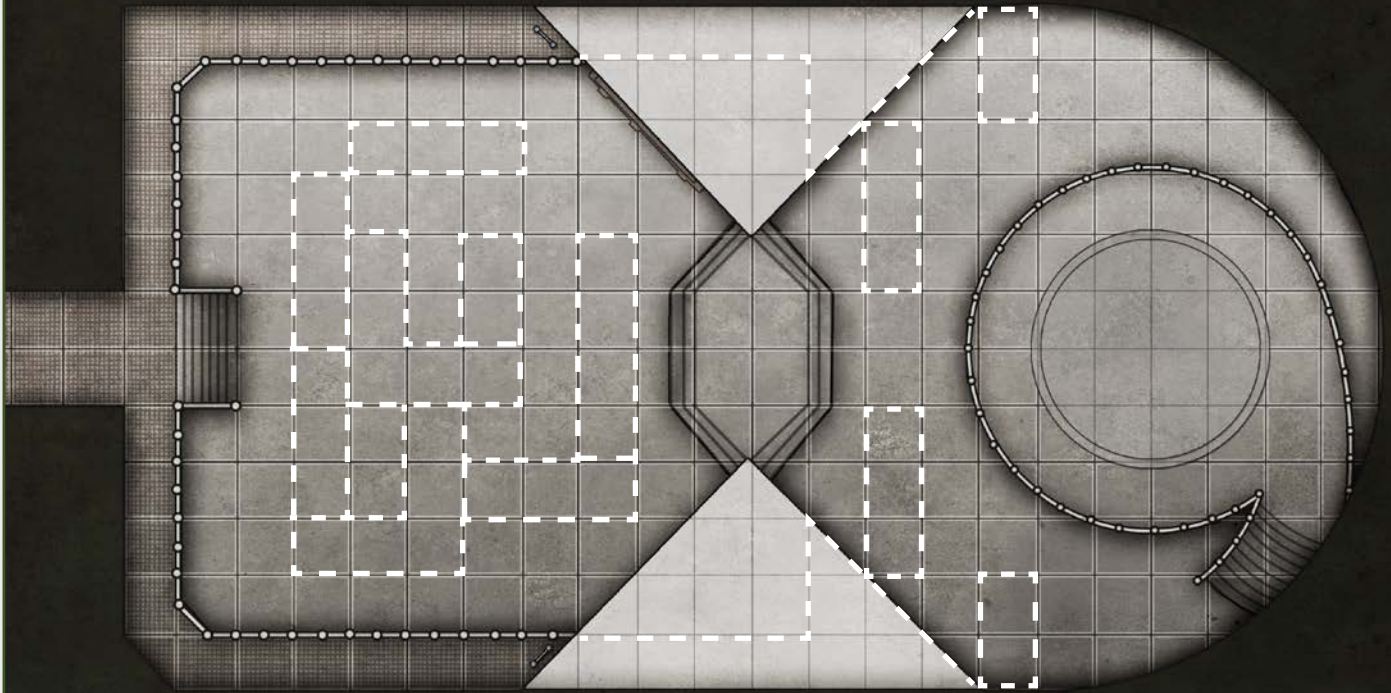
SQ bloodrager bloodline (arcane^{ACG}), feign death (DC 16), medium armor

Combat Gear *spellguard bracers*^{UE}; **Other Gear** +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 agile kukri, darts (4), cloak of resistance +2, headband of alluring charisma +2

TACTICS

Before Combat The nightmare artist manifests with the benefits of *keen edge*, which have been included in its statistics.

D2. The Arkanen Lab



1 square = 5 feet

During Combat The nightmare artist takes immeasurable glee from inflicting fear and torment upon the PCs, and peppers the combat with sadistic taunts. It is utterly merciless in its attempts to cause as much pain to the PCs as possible, and indifferent to any damage that they deal to it. It does not spend time casting its buff spells, such as *shield*. It does, however, consider using *suggestion* to propose that the most troublesome PC flee with her life.

Morale The nightmare artist fights until it is destroyed.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+1 Agile Kukri An agile weapon allows its wielder to apply her Dexterity bonus to its weapon damage rather than her Strength bonus. This is incorporated into the nightmare artist's stats above.

Exceptional (Ex) The nightmare artist is a version of the halfling Joliryn, who is an exceptional agent with wealth appropriate for a PC of her level and built using 20 point-buy. This increases the nightmare artist's effective CR by 1.

Fear Aura (Su) All creatures within a 60-foot radius that see or hear the nightmare artist must succeed at a Will save or be shaken for as long as they are within the aura. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the fear aura for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear affect.

Feign Death (Ex) Whenever the nightmare artist is unconscious, it appears dead. When conscious, it can also make itself appear dead as an immediate action. Any creature that physically interacts with the nightmare artist feigning death must succeed at a DC 16 Heal check or Will saving throw to recognize it is actually alive.

Frightful Presence (Su) This ability activates when the nightmare artist charges, attacks during a surprise round, or succeeds at a DC 15 Intimidate or Perform check. Its frightful presence has a range of 30 feet.

Illusion Resistance (Ex) The nightmare artist automatically disbelieves illusions (no saving throw required) and has a +4 bonus on saving throws to resist illusion effects.

Night Terrors (Su) This ability allows the nightmare artist to torment a creature while it is sleeping. It plays no role during this adventure.

Development: The longer the PCs spend here, the more time Kar Zaweeb has to prepare for combat. See area **D2** for more details.

D2. The Arkanen Lab (CR 11)

This segmented chamber is immediately adjacent to area **D1** to the north.

Like a cathedral forged in the name of science, this laboratory has an arched ceiling that soars to a height of fifty feet. The room constricts near the middle where a low, stepped platform formally partitions the two halves. To the north, a narrow metal walkway hugs the walls about five feet above the open workspace. To both the east and west, the walkway terminates in twenty-foot ladders that lead to higher observation decks. Easily three labs' worth of tables, shelves, and other heavy equipment hovers thirty feet off the floor, suspended by chains. Beyond to the south, lies a circular, elevated platform with a curving set of stairs.

This lab represents the next generation of magical and alchemical technology for the Liavara Project, distinguished by two major developments. First, instead of a constrained glass vat, the nightmare creature here manifests within an adapted summoning circle atop the round platform. Second, instead of tapping into a sleeping creature's dreams, a creature can attach a series of magical sensors to its head and—with sufficient force of will—consciously shape the nightmare creature's form.

In order to maximize space in the room, most of the lab equipment is kept suspended in the air. By manipulating controls along the north partition, a creature can raise, lower, or rotate any number of these fixtures. In this way, the room can be reconfigured from a small library to a lab to an operating room. Kar Zaweeb has left an *unseen servant* here and can command it to raise and lower any of the features whose forms are outlined on the map. Thanks to his natural climb speed and exceptional jumping ability, Zaweeb is able to clamber about beneath and between this suspended furniture with relative ease. When to his advantage, he can also command the *unseen servant* on his turn to cause a desk or shelf to ascend or descend, blocking the PCs or ridding them of cover. A PC adjacent to the control panel can choose to raise or lower a feature as a move action, though doing so is at first a matter of trial and error; randomly determine which of the twelve features moves. If a PC succeeds at a DC 25 Disable Device or Perception check, she can piece together which control affects the feature she wants to move. Features rise and fall slowly enough that they do not cause damage; a creature is instead displaced in the direction of its choice.

Hazard: By the time the PCs arrive in area **D**, the lead researcher Kar Zaweeb has already triggered the nightmare synthesis procedure in area **D1** and has attached the magical sensors to his body to activate the more powerful device here. At the beginning of this multi-part encounter, he begins imagining all of the horrors he has witnessed and perpetrated in this lab. Thanks to this lab's technology, his thoughts manifest in the summoning circle as an unholy serpentine monstrosity comprised of wailing patients, broken glass, rusty wire, and alchemical fluids. The waking nightmare responds directly to Kar Zaweeb's thoughts

in crude and instinctive ways; each round it can perform one standard action and one immediate action from the following list.

- If Kar Zaweeb casts a spell, as a standard action, the nightmare can spray acid from its eyes that burns all creatures in a 5-foot radius centered around any point in the lab. This spray deals 4d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 15 for half).
- If Kar Zaweeb takes damage from an attack or fails a saving throw, as an immediate action, the nightmare screams in pain. This scream deals 2d4 points of sonic damage to the source of the attack and staggers her until the end of her next turn (Fortitude DC 13 negates the staggering effect)
- If Kar Zaweeb moves at least 10 feet on his turn, as a standard action, the nightmare can attack strike any creature within 40 feet of the summoning circle. This is a bite attack with a +15 bonus to hit that deals 3d6+9 points of damage and 1 point of Strength damage.
- If Kar Zaweeb hits with a melee attack, as a standard action, the nightmare can spit a cloud of colorless poisonous gas that fills a 5-foot-radius area for 1 round. Creatures in this area must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1d3 points of Dexterity and Charisma damage.

Kar Zaweeb's conscious thoughts sustain this nightmare. If he is unconscious or dead, the nightmare collapses in on itself in a chorus of screams and shadows. If he is stunned or otherwise unable to perform mental actions on his turn, the nightmare is also unable to act. This hazard increases the encounter's effective Challenge Rating by 1.

Creatures: The aranea Kar Zaweeb was among Professor Kramolag's first experimental subjects. He fought back vociferously at first, but Professor Kramolag's toxins weakened his willpower and eventually forced his compliance. He was one of the only two survivors of the painful series of mutations and surgeries that followed. When he awoke, he was a transformed creature with extra appendages, extraordinary cognitive functions, and awakened psychic abilities. Professor Kramolag easily subdued him when he tried to turn on her, but rather than punishing him, she offered him a role as her chief assistant. In the years since, Kar Zaweeb has served loyally, instead acting out all of his sadistic revenge fantasies upon his experiments.

KAR ZAWEEB

CR 10

Mutant aranea psychic 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 180, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 30, *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 60)

NE Medium aberration (augmented magical beast)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +6 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 100 (10 HD; 5d6+5d10+55)

Fort +13, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10

Weakness spasms

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +13 (1d8+1 plus poison), 2 claws +13 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks painful reminder (1d6, 4/day), phrenic amplifications (intense focus^{OA}, mindshield^{OA}), phrenic pool (3 points), poison, web (+13 ranged, DC 17, 10 hp)

Psychic Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +16)
1/day—*detect thoughts* (DC 17)

Psychic Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +16)

5th (4/day)—*phantasmal web*^{APG} (DC 21)

4th (6/day)—*ego whip* II^{OA} (DC 20), *greater oneiric horror*^{OA} (DC 20)

3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *heroism*, *mental barrier* II^{OA}

2nd (8/day)—*confess*^{APG} (DC 18), *hold person* (DC 18), *mind thrust* II^{OA} (DC 18), *pain strike*^{APG} (DC 18), *thought shield* I^{OA}

1st (8/day)—*burst of adrenaline*^{OA}, *command* (DC 17), *jump*, *mage armor*, *persuasive goad*^{UM} (DC 17), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 16), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *open/close* (DC 16), *prestidigitation*, *stabilize*

Psychic Discipline pain^{OA}

TACTICS

Before Combat Before the PCs arrive, Kar Zaweeb has already cast *jump*, *mage armor*, and *unseen servant*.

Each round that the PCs delay in area **D1**, he uses one of his scrolls (which makes sound the PCs might hear) or casts *heroism* augmented by spending 2 phrenic pool points on his mindshield amplification in anticipation of combat.

During Combat Kar Zaweeb leaps from hanging bookshelf to suspended table in order to keep out of reach while debilitating the PCs. If the PCs rushed into this room without dealing with all of the vats in area **D1**, Zaweeb knows they might yet spawn reinforcements, so he prefers spells that slow the PCs. Otherwise he uses whatever best keeps him alive and harms his foes.

Morale After what the mutant aranea has seen, nothing scares him anymore. He fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 22, **Con** 20, **Int** 22, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24

Feats Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Logical Spell^{OA}, Scarring Spell^{OA}, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +19 (+67 when jumping), Bluff +9, Climb +17, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Knowledge (nature) +14, Knowledge (planes) +14, Perception +13, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +14

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal, Sylvan, Undercommon

SQ change shape (humanoid, *alter self*), live on (1d6, 2/day), mutations (celerity, feral, leaping)

Combat Gear *scroll of blur* (CL 5th), *scroll of bull's strength* (CL 5th), *scroll of entropic shield* (CL 5th), *wand of magic missile* (CL 7th, 10 charges); **Other Gear** *coat of resistance* +3 (functions as a *cloak of resistance* but occupies the body slot), electrum Aspis Consortium badge

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Celerity (Ex) Kar Zaweeb gains a +2 bonus on Initiative checks. As a swift action, he can gain the benefits of *haste* for 1 round. He can use this ability once every 1d4 rounds.

Feral (Ex) Kar Zaweeb gains a stronger bite attack and two claw attacks, reflected in his stats above.

Leaping (Ex) Kar Zaweeb gains a +10 bonus on Acrobatics checks to jump and is always treated as though he had a running start when jumping.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Strength; *cure* 1 save.



KAR ZAWEEB

Spasms (Ex) When Kar Zaweeb fails a Reflex save, he loses the ability to perform attacks of opportunity and immediate actions for 1 round. During this time, he also loses his Dexterity bonus to AC, his Dexterity bonus on ranged attacks and attacks made using finesse weapons, and his Dexterity bonus to all Dexterity-based ability checks and skill checks.

Evidence: This large laboratory contains more records, strange specimens, financial documents that confirms this lab's funding came from the Consortium, and correspondence between the lead researcher and Professor Kramolag, who appears to live along the Nidalese coast. The mutant's electrum Aspis Consortium badge is especially troubling, for there's no record of such badges existing or fitting anywhere in the organization's hierarchy. Only some of the documents begin to identify the badge's affiliation: an operation referred to only as "Conference Z." Collectively, these findings represent 4 Evidence Points.

Remember that although Conference Z is a published element in the setting's canon, virtually nobody knows of their existence—even the Consortium's Patrons! The PCs discovery represents the first confirmed record of this operation. What might result remains to be seen!

Development: Once the PCs have defeated the aranea and ransacked this lab, they have little time before Slumbersun's final defense sequence initiates: flooding different sectors with poisonous gases or caustic mist, unleashing pain-blinded patients, and worse. If the PCs didn't explore part of the compound earlier, they've effectively missed their opportunity to do so. Those who heed the third set of sirens and recorded statements of imminent destruction can escape without harm. Those who insist on staying behind perish when part of the lab collapses and several corridors seal off entirely. If the players are so inclined, let them contribute to the destruction as befits their fancy and resources.

Reward: If the PCs fail to defeat the Kar Zaweeb and the nightmare creations in area D1, reduce each PC's gold earned by 2,000 gp.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs released Aaog-Shagga, the neh-thalggu explains that although gratitude is a foreign concept and debt to Golarion's feeble inhabitants would be anathema, it has determined that it hates them least among the other indigenous life forms of this backward planet. The aberration then flies off to pursue its own agenda.

The PCs' return trip seems uneventful until they cross into Cheliax. Within an hour, a team of Aspis operatives led by a finely dressed Garundi agent named Amersanus Valacosti. He informs the PCs that his team is to escort them back to Ostenso for debriefing and that they are to

speak of nothing that they saw to anyone except Iaovin Ratarion. As they approach the Aspis Building, members of Valacosti's team teleport the PCs directly into the Aspis Building and shepherd them to the Hall of Blades. He snidely debriefs them, asking probing questions and repeatedly reminding them that what they discovered is to be kept completely confidential—even with regards to high-ranking members of the Consortium. For their service and compliance, he also assures them that they will be paid in full for their work, whether that's in gold, favors, or the tearing up of pending bounties.

As long as the PCs recovered at least one of the following items from the lab warren, they gain the Esoteric Item Research boon on their Chronicle sheets: *necklace of shattered dreams*, *scabbard of bleeding edges*, or *viridium moonbeast*. Cross off any items that they did not recover from the boon. If the PCs succeeded on their primary success conditions, they all receive the Unwavering Resolve boon on their Chronicle sheets. Finally, if the PCs defeated Joliryn, any players who earned the Spoils of the Siege (Joliryn) boon also earn the Joliryn's Foe boon.

PRIMARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

The PCs must earn at least 13 Evidence Points, recover **Player Handout #8**, and defeat Kar Zaweeb. Doing so earns each PC 1 Prestige Point.

SECONDARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

The PCs' secondary success conditions are tied to accomplishing goals unique to each character, assigned in the handouts they received at the beginning of the adventure. Fulfilling the conditions below earn that PC 1 additional Prestige Point.

Aaog-Shagga: This PC must perform one of the following actions: confirm a critical hit against Kar Zaweeb, successfully deal rend damage to Kar Zaweeb, reduce Kar Zaweeb to 0 or fewer hit points during combat, or consume Kar Zaweeb's brain within 1 round of his death.

Eramay: This PC must recover the reports about Falth (**Player Handouts #8 and #9**), trigger the tiefling's code phrase, and survive until the end of the adventure.

Falth: The group must not have triggered the red alert during Part 1 and this PC must perform two of the following actions during the adventure: successfully set up a trap during Part 1, destroy an inanimate object or barrier during a combat encounter, use his deadly weather domain ability for at least 3 rounds of combat, confirm a critical hit during combat, or perform an act of wanton destruction (GM's discretion).

Rataji: This PC must survive the adventure and the group must earn at least 17 Evidence Points.

Shohiraj: After succeeding at a check to earn at least 1 Evidence Point, this PC must succeed at a DC 25 Sleight

of Hand check to surreptitiously pocket that evidence for delivery to the Pathfinder Society.

Thestil: This PC must survive the adventure and the group must not have triggered the red alert during Part 1.

Zurnzal: Zurnzal must acquire key information or a unique tool that grants him an advantage in climbing the

ranks of the Aspis Consortium. There are two intended options for this mission. First, Zurnzal can receive a vision of his fate from the theletos aeon in area **A2**. Second, he can imbibe the *elixir of toxic talents* found in the lab warren and succeed at the associated Fortitude saving throw.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1: LETTER TO THE LOYALIST

Agent Eramay,

This will be the first time you've knowingly served my interests, but I assure you we are no strangers. I have reviewed your portfolio and accomplishments extensively, all of which are most satisfactory. I've requisitioned you from your less pressing duties for a critical mission whose secrecy is paramount to the Consortium's future success. Unfortunately, to prevent my enemies from learning of this assignment, I have had to dredge the bottom of the scruples barrel. To put it bluntly, you're the only one I trust. Some of your comrades respond badly to authority figures, so while I'm not going to call you the leader of this operation, you're the leader.

Among your hapless colleagues is a tiefling known as Falth. It's no coincidence I've recruited his dubious services, for my records show Falth first came to our attention in eastern Nidal, where I'm sending you. In fact, his unique psychological profile may even align with your destination, and I think there's a connection—even if he doesn't know it. Keep an eye on him, and keep an eye out for any information that might explain his history there. Just don't shadow him constantly, otherwise he'll become nervous and... catch fire or vomit frogs. Just trust me on that; he has a history. If you do discover anything important, don't hesitate to act on that information if it will help the mission.

First and foremost, ensure the mission goes smoothly. This venture won't appear anywhere on your official records, but I assure you it will be a significant boon to your future advancement in the Consortium.

—Jaovin Ratarion

PLAYER HANDOUT #2: LETTER TO THE CATASTROPHE

Falth,

My records show that you have participated in four different assignments with the Arpis Consortium, all of which you failed in appalling ways. The Korrosan endeavor was a disaster, and we're not even going to speak to the mess you left in Azir. To my vexation, we still don't know what you managed to do outside Saringallow, but to this day the locals throw rocks at our agents and claim we're werewolves. You have all the charm, reliability, and inclination for good behavior of an Alkenstar foundry on International Arson Day, which is a holiday I've just made up; it's called wit. Curiously, I find myself in need of an agent with your twisted cocktail of talents.

Someone has done a great disservice to the Consortium, and I want to send that someone a clear message that doing so was a bad idea. I want it to be your brand of harsh lesson. If that means their home collapses at an inopportune time, their cow catches fire, or they wake up in several pieces, so be it. I'll be very disappointed if you don't walk away from a smoldering wreck—disappointed as in “you'll wake up in several pieces” disappointed.

Finally, let me make it abundantly clear that you'll be working with a team, and I expect that team (including you, yes) to maintain a low profile until you have identified your main target and are prepared to strike. After that, trust your insane instincts, and avoid killing my other agents.

—Jaovin Ratarion

PLAYER HANDOUT #3: LETTER TO THE DISGRACED

To my prospective partner in profit,

Has a nice ring to it, yes? I've always considered myself a fine judge of talent, and it shames me that our parent organization would cast ill-informed accusations against your character on such shaky evidence. Don't think me so blind as your bitter colleagues. I have several lucrative projects in mind—even one planned in your Mwangi homeland—that would benefit from your skills. With the right word to your superiors, I could make that happen.

Of course, there is that matter of your being branded a traitor to the Consortium. Consider this a down payment on your trust and cooperation: I have already negotiated a deal of sorts in which you perform a very hush-hush service for the Consortium in exchange for a full pardon. My connections believe you're being sent to retrieve highly classified information held by very nervous people. No doubt it's both valuable and a difficult read—something your lowbrow companions will struggle to comprehend. That's why you're so important. Ensure that your crew is very thorough in finding every last scrap. Each text is one more bank note for buying your way back to your Aspis badge and a lifetime of prosperity.

*Gods speed,
Maiveer Sloan
Executive Director
Bronze House, Magnimar*

PLAYER HANDOUT #4: LETTER TO THE PROFESSIONAL

shohiraj,

I am delighted to hear that you have adopted a cover identity for such noble reasons—equally pained am I to hear that the Aspis Consortium has betrayed professional etiquette and painted you as a scapegoat for its own problems. I would like little more than to claim this an exception to the organization's otherwise exemplary behavior, but we both know that would be a lie. My colleague Nefti and I concluded several years ago—admittedly at sword-point—that working for the Aspis is like selling incense to fire elementals: lucrative, but inevitably self-destructive. Between you, Nefti, and me, we've started working with the Pathfinder Society, and they've treated the two of us pretty well.

I suspect your recent spat with the Aspis might have you seeking a new employer. Call me presumptuous, but I've already negotiated with the Society to accept your services and provide you a refuge. As a fair warning, though, venture-captains tend to be rather jittery at first around former Consortium hirelings, so you're going to need a sign of good faith. I happen to know that you're going to infiltrate a covert facility that the Consortium wishes to keep secret. Wouldn't it be generous to share those secrets with the Society as well? Be sure that you recover some of that information, hide it away, and make a copy for your new possible allies. Succeed, and I can guarantee you a bright future in Absalom.

—Kafar

PLAYER HANDOUT #5: JOURNAL ENTRY OF THE ENIGMA

The most reliable sign that the Aspis Consortium has botched a project is that they hire us. We cleaned up their disaster in Goka. We would have repaired their sad excuse for an alliance with the Lissalans, had the Society's goons not intercepted our team. Now there's an upstart band called the Korholm Agenda who has been stealing money to fund some clandestine project. Pitiful. The Consortium's lucky they pay well.

No doubt they're going to team ourselves up with novices who cannot guard their own thoughts, and they're trusting us to keep those fools from tripping over their own feet—and every alarm. Again, at least they pay well. If we're to make a decent profit on this venture, we'll need to ensure that it's a clean job and that we don't attract too much attention too early.

Also, we're falling back into the bad habit of recording our innermost thoughts in writing. We should destroy this silly message. After all, leaving important documents lying about is what lets the Pathfinders keep learning of secret plans, and we won't be guilty of that same nonsense.

PLAYER HANDOUT #6: JOURNAL ENTRY OF THE AMBITIOUS

Even a year later I find myself shaking with rage at the phrase, "Your friend in Tamran"—the title used by Madreki Gael, the incompetent Varisian who sponsored my rise in the Aspis Consortium. Madreki seemed clever enough at first, but he only talked big because he had big friends. It's worth remembering that those big friends were the real source of my troubles. Despite what they and Madreki claimed, they were running a shady operation called the Korholm Agenda. The Aspis Consortium sees me as a threat thanks to working for those goons, so it's up to me to earn their trust again. Selling out Madreki and all of his secrets seems to have been a good first step.

It's not enough. It's never enough. This has set me back in my plans, and one of my orc blood's weaknesses is that I don't have years to spare. If I am to achieve the recognition and power I deserve, I must take drastic action and even greater risks. This upcoming job promises plenty of each. While I'm in the field, I should keep an eye out for unique advantages I can make my own. Were I able to see the future, I might know exactly what I must do. If I had the right equipment, I might destroy all who challenge me.

Risks and rewards. Risks and rewards.

PLAYER HANDOUT #7: PHARMACEUTICAL RECORDS

These records document several special orders for strange medicines as well as batches of conventional medicines that had unforeseen side effects in the test subjects.

Hallucinogenic Gas: Diluted, this gas serves as a mild anesthetic. Concentrated, it is dramatically dulls all of the senses with long-term effects. Temarra ordered the entire batch be delivered to the manor with no further questions.

Sleeping Serum: This syrup of somnus root typically helps combat insomnia. More than five years ago, the pharmacists allowed a batch to steep too long (in addition to several other errors). The resulting fluid caused an even deeper sleep, but the test subjects began convulsing and screaming from night terrors they could not escape. One of the patients died from fright. Temarra ordered the entire batch delivered to the manor with no further questions. She has since ordered five more batches using the same failed recipe, all with the same destination.

PLAYER HANDOUT #8: COMPILED REPORTS

Your research has turned up several important entries, summarized below.

Experiment #44: Records show this test subject was a tiefling kidnapped from Korvosa. All attempts to “improve” him resulted in terrible complications and fits of screaming. Even psychological treatments appear fruitless, despite hypnotherapy and contingent compliance treatments. #44 escaped following an altercation that left three researchers dead, and he is presumed dead or insane.

Experiment #316: The neh-thalggu is reported understandably upset at initial attempts to extract the brains stored in its body, and its attempts to resist experimentation resulted in more secure confinement. These brains appear to be from a variety of humanoid creatures, but attempts to extract the organs’ stored secrets have been fruitless. The aberration is scheduled for further extractions in one month’s time.

Experiment #322: A report notes that this elf is of particular value due to her inherent connection to cosmic forces, which allowed researchers to begin experimentation immediately. Professor Kramolag took a special interest in the subject and ordered her moved from Slumbersun to the Wingless Rock facility for further training. Initial tests to assess whether the subject’s power is derived from a conventional deity such as Desna or a more esoteric force are inconclusive.

Liavara Project Update: An update notes that the test subjects in this procedure are experiencing increasingly powerful nightmares and that the alchemical preservation techniques allow the nightmares to manifest in the flesh with increasing stability. The adjacent Arkanen Lab is now complete, allowing the creation of even larger creatures.

Formal Reprimand: Lead researcher Kar Zaweeb wrote an official reprimand to his subordinates, insisting that the halfling Joliryn is not authorized to torment test subjects; those involved in Project Liavara have manifested her as their greatest source of fear, much to Zaweeb’s displeasure. He instructs all staff to be firmer with the halfling and report any further incidents of her trying to cut employees.

PLAYER HANDOUT #9: CONTINGENT COMPLAINT TREATMENT REPORT

Doctor Zaweeb,

We have completed the procedure to subdue Experiment #44 and disable his supernatural outbursts. Initial tests have proven catastrophic; when the trigger phrase is spoken aloud, instead of becoming compliant, he simply begins speaking in tongues, spitting lightning, and snapping his metal restraints. #44 is still valuable for parts and live cultures, so I propose we perform surgery soon to ensure his permanent docility. If you wish to see his response for yourself, do so at your own risk. The trigger phrase is "Thrice sworn by Aroden's mercy."

Special: You now know that the tiefling Falth carries a subliminal directive triggered by the code phrase above. If Eramay speaks this code phrase when Falth can hear it, he enters a state of furious destruction for 3 rounds—give the player this handout for reference at that time. His deadly weather domain ability is automatically triggered, and all critical threats in this area are automatically confirmed. Once during this period, Falth can cast *shatter* (CL 8th, DC 15) as a move action. At the end of this period, these effects and any active judgment he has immediately end.

PLAYER HANDOUT #10: MEDICAL REPORT

Doctor Zaweeb,

Serum 16 continues to prove ineffective—not because the formula is flawed but because the test subjects are. Their imperfect immune systems are unable to weather the side effects, causing side effects so severe that they might as well be considered lethal. As you directed, I have continued trials nonetheless. As I hypothesized, the utterly mundane subjects exhibited signs of enhanced cognitive abilities, heightened strength, and other beneficial mutations, but the patients quickly succumbed to complications. I insist we not continue these trials until we have a truly powerful patient who can survive the process. Please provide us additional resources to track down such a subject, and we'll prove Serum 16's potential.

APPENDIX: STAT BLOCKS

The following stat blocks are used in this scenario.

CEUSTODAEMON

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 65

NE Large outsider (daemon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*, *detect magic*, *see invisibility*; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 68 (8d10+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

DR 10/good or silver; **Immune** acid, death effects, disease, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph effects, sleep effects; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +11 (2d6+4), 2 claws +11 (1d6+4)

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

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone; 6d6 fire damage; Reflex DC 17 for half; usable once every 1d4 rounds)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +10)

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

At will—*dimension door*

3/day—*dispel magic*, *fly*

1/day—*hold monster* (DC 17), *slow* (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Power Attack, Step Up

Skills Bluff +13, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (planes) +9,

Perception +15, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +8, Survival +9

Languages Abyssal, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ drawn to service

DESCRIPTION

This brown, shaggy-furred beast stands on slate grey hooves.

Its head resembles that of a maniacal horned ape.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drawn to Service (Su) When brought to another plane with a *planar binding* or *planar ally* spell (or any similar calling effect), a ceustodaemon takes a -5 penalty on the initial Will save and on its Charisma check to refuse service. A ceustodaemon also takes a -5 penalty on saves against *binding*, *planar binding*, and other spells designed to bind a creature to a particular plane as long as the daemon is commanded to serve as a guardian for a single area or small complex.

HUNGRY FLESH

CR 3

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 152

N Large ooze

Init -3; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., scent; Perception -5

DEFENSE

AC 8, touch 6, flat-footed 8 (-3 Dex, +2 natural, -1 size)

hp 47 (5d8+25); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

Fort +6, **Ref** -2, **Will** -4

Defensive Abilities amorphous; Immune ooze traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee slam +5 (1d6+4 plus disease and grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (1d6+4 plus disease)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 5, **Con** 20, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7 (+11 grapple); **CMD** 14 (can't be tripped)

SQ compression, monstrous growth, reactive regeneration, slime trail

DESCRIPTION

A quivering pile of tumorous flesh, this creature leaves a trail of slime as it hungrily searches for sustenance.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) Tumor infestation—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *onset* 1 minute; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d2 Con and 1d2 Cha; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. Anyone who dies from tumor infestation turns into a hungry flesh 1d4 hours later. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Monstrous Growth (Ex) A hungry flesh gains growth points from its reactive regeneration ability or from eating creatures. When it consumes a creature that's been dead no more than an hour, it gains 1 growth point if that creature is of its size or one size category smaller, or 2 growth points if its meal is larger than it is. Eating a creature takes a full-round action if it is the same size or smaller than the hungry flesh or 1 minute if it is larger. Each time a hungry flesh reaches 5 growth points, it gains the giant creature simple template. This template stacks with itself each time the hungry flesh gains another 5 growth points, but the hungry flesh can't increase its size beyond Gargantuan. When it stops gaining growth points, a hungry flesh loses a single application of the giant creature simple template for each hour that passes.

Reactive Regeneration (Ex) Whenever a hungry flesh takes piercing or slashing damage, it regenerates 5 hit points and gains 1 growth point.

Slime Trail (Ex) A hungry flesh leaves behind a trail of slime that acts as a *grease* spell (DC 17). Any living creature that touches this slime with bare flesh must succeed at a Fortitude save (with a +4 bonus) or contract tumor infestation. The slime dries up after 1 minute. The save DC is Constitution-based.

NIGHTGAUNT

CR 4

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 203

CN Medium monstrous humanoid (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** all-around vision, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 37 (5d10+10)

Fort +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities faceless; **Immune** cold, gaze attacks, inhaled poison, scent-based attacks

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d6+4 plus grab)

Special Attacks clutches, tickle

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9 (+17 grapple); **CMD** 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Fly +7, Perception +6, Stealth +11; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Aklo (can't speak)

SQ no breath

DESCRIPTION

This lanky ebon humanoid has batlike wings, horns, and a long prehensile tail, but lacks a face.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Clutches (Ex) A nightgaunt has a +4 racial bonus on grapple combat maneuver checks. If a nightgaunt uses its fly speed to move itself and a grappled target, it can fly at full speed.

Faceless (Ex) A nightgaunt has no face, but can still see in all directions as if its entire body were an eye. It is immune to gaze attacks, but not to illusions that rely upon vision to function. It has no need to breathe, and is immune to all inhaled and scent-based effects.

Tickle (Ex) As a swift action, a nightgaunt can use its tail to tickle a grappled or helpless foe with horrible efficiency. The target must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

SU

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5 238

CE Medium magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 114 (12d10+48)

Fort +11, **Ref** +12, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities improved evasion; **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** disease

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +16 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 bleed), 2 claws +16 (1d6+4/19–20 plus grab)

Special Attacks bleed (1d6), pounce, prehensile tail, rake (2 claws +16, 1d6+4), whelp magic

Psychic Magic (CL 12th; concentration +15)

0 PE (see whelp magic)—*id insinuation*^{0A} (3 PE, DC 16), *mind thrust III*^{0A} (3 PE, DC 16), *thought shield II*^{0A} (3 PE)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 19, **Con** 16, **Int** 7, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16 (+20 grapple); **CMD** 31 (35 vs. trip)

Feats Critical Focus, Dodge, Improved Critical (claw), Mobility, Nimble Moves, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +14, Climb +12, Perception +10, Stealth +11 (+19 in forests); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics, +8 Stealth in forests

Languages Aklo (can't speak); telepathy 100 ft.

SQ whelp family

DESCRIPTION

This emaciated quadruped has a mouth full of jagged teeth and a cluster of bald, mewling offspring clinging to its back.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Prehensile Tail (Ex) A su can use its tail to attempt a dirty trick^{APG}, disarm, steal^{APG}, or trip combat maneuver against an adjacent opponent as a swift action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Whelp Family (Su) A su always carries 3–6 (1d4+2) Diminutive infant su on its back that share a telepathic bond with their parent, acting as extra eyes for the adult. Area effects target the su and not its whelps, but individual whelps can be targeted with attacks (AC 18; 4 hp). If the su dies, its whelps die as well. A helpless su's whelps can be easily killed or removed from the su (removing them from the su also immediately kills them). If all of a su's whelps are slain, the su immediately loses its all-around vision and improved evasion and is sickened until it regains at least one new whelp. A su replaces lost whelps at a rate of one whelp per week.

Whelp Magic (Sp) Su whelps possess psychic powers that fade with age. As a swift action, a su can command one of its whelps to activate a psychic spell using the psychic magic special ability. A whelp can also maintain concentration on a spell, provided the su spends a swift action. Any spells that grant bonuses to their target apply to the su as well as its whelps. The whelps have a pool of 3 PE per whelp, and each time a whelp dies the remaining pool reduces by 3. A su with no whelps can't use psychic magic.

THELETOS

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 14

N Medium outsider (aeon, extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 76 (9d10+27); fast healing 5

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +12

Immune cold, critical hits, poison; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)

Melee 2 slams +13 (1d6+4), 2 tentacles +8 (1d4+2 plus fate drain)

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

Special Attacks wreath of fate

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +10)

At will—*augury*, *command* (DC 12), *doom* (DC 12), *sanctuary* (DC 12)

3/day—*bestow curse* (DC 14), *enthrall* (DC 13), *touch of idiocy* (DC 13), *dispel magic*, *remove curse*, *suggestion* (DC 14)

1/day—*charm monster* (DC 15), *lesser geas* (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 11, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 28 (can't be tripped)

Feats Dodge, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will

Skills Fly -2, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (planes) +16, Perception +16, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +14

Languages envisaging

SQ extension of all, void form

DESCRIPTION

Four bandy limbs, each splitting at the elbow into two three-fingered forearms, emerge from this strange creature's crystalline body.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fate Drain (Su) A theletos has a pair of flexible crystalline tentacles with which it can drain a creature's sense of fate and destiny. Whenever it strikes a foe with these tentacles, the creature struck must attempt a DC 17 Will save or take 1d4 points of Charisma damage. Until a creature's Charisma damage from this ability is healed, the victim takes a -2 penalty on all saving throws (regardless of the actual total amount of Charisma damage it takes). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Wreath of Fate (Su) As a full-round action every 1d4 rounds, a theletos can release a 60-foot cone of energy from its chest. Any intelligent creature struck by this cone must make a DC 15 Will save or become nearly overwhelmed with the knowledge of various fates that destiny has in store for him—there is no way to make sense of these myriad dooms and boons, and as a result, the victim is staggered. As long as this condition persists, the victim can choose to make two rolls when attempting an attack roll, a saving throw, or a skill check—he must accept the worse

of the two rolls, but in so doing the wreath of fate passes from his soul and he is no longer staggered by this ability. Wreath of fate is a curse effect, and as such can be affected by *break enchantment* or *remove curse*—the effective caster level of this curse is equal to the theletos's HD (CL 9th in most cases). The save DC is Charisma-based.

VOONITH

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 283

CN Small magical beast (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 37 (5d10+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+1 plus trip), 4 claws +7 (1d3+1)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks blood-freezing howl, pounce

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18 (26 vs. trip)

Feats Ability Focus (blood-freezing howl), Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +12, Swim +14

SQ amphibious

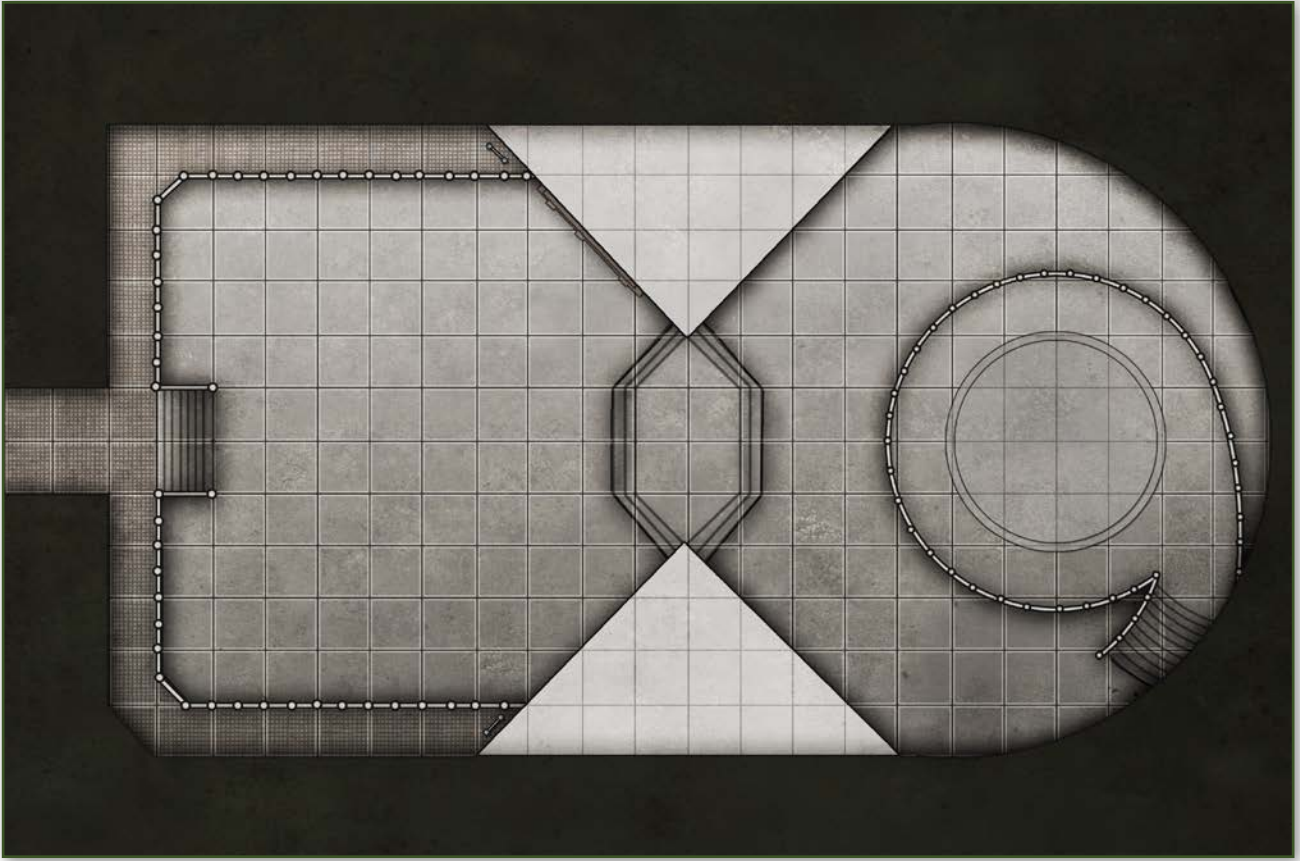
Languages Aklo

DESCRIPTION

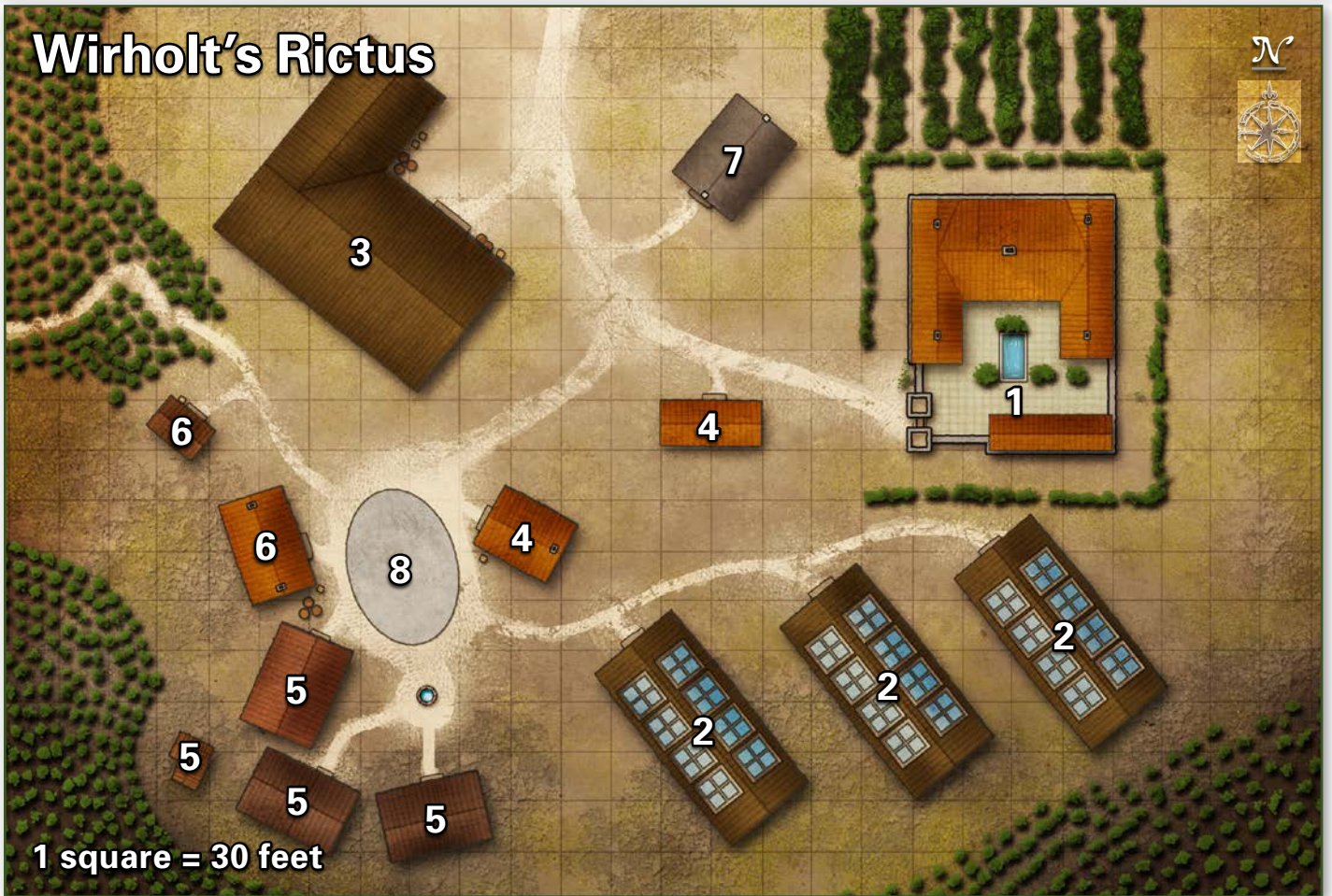
This brightly colored, long-necked amphibian has six legs, a fanged snout, and numerous finlets running down its spine.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood-Freezing Howl (Su) As a standard action, a voonith can unleash a bloodcurdling howl. All creatures within a 30-foot-radius burst must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or become dazed for 1 round and then shaken for an additional 1d6 rounds. Any creature that makes a successful save against a voonith's howl is immune to the same voonith's howl for 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Wirholt's Rictus



- 1. Manor
- 2. Greenhouses
- 3. Warehouse
- 4. Processing Facilities

- 5. Residences
- 6. Smokehouses
- 7. Kuthite Shrine
- 8. Threshing Yard

Pathfinder Society Scenario #7-98: Serpents' Ire

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THE LOYALIST

Eramay is a warrior, a scholar, and an unshakable member of any team. That is likely why the Consortium trusts her with this important and secretive task.

ERAMAY

Female half-elf cavalier (constable) 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced*)

Player's Guide 32, Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the

Street 17)

LE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 shield)

hp 80 (8d10+28)

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8; +2 vs. enchantments

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)

Melee +1 *corrosive scimitar* +13/+8 (1d6+5/18-20 plus 1d6 acid) or unarmed strike +12/+7 (1d3+4)

Ranged javelin +9 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks challenge 3/day (+8 damage), tactician 2/day (swift action, Escape Route)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +12 (+14 disarm, +14 grapple, +14 trip); **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Escape Route^{UC}, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Toughness

Skills Bluff +7, Climb +4, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (religion) +15, Linguistics +10, Perception +17, Sense Motive +13; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Celestial, Common, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon

SQ apprehend, badge, elf blood, order of the tome^{UC}, powerful knowledge, quick interrogator, specialized knowledge, squad commander

Combat Gear scroll of *breath of life*, scroll of *bull's strength*, scroll of *cure light wounds* (6), scroll of *cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *divine favor*, scroll of *divine power*, scroll of *faerie fire*, scroll of *owl's wisdom*, scroll of *remove fear* (CL 4th), scroll of *remove paralysis*, scroll of *spider climb*; **Other Gear** +2 *dastard*^{APG} chainmail, +2 buckler, +1 *corrosive scimitar*, javelins (2), cloak of resistance +2, headband of inspired wisdom +2, flint and steel, hemp rope (50 ft.), torches (3), silver Aspis badge, 51 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+2 Dastard Chainmail See Eramay's challenge ability.

Apprehend (Ex) Eramay gains Improved Unarmed Strike as a bonus feat and can attempt a grapple combat maneuver check instead of an attack at the end of a charge. She also gains a +2 bonus on Perception checks and on some combat maneuver checks, included in her statistics. She does not treat crowds as difficult terrain.

Badge (Ex) As long as Eramay wears her Aspis badge prominently, allies within 30 feet who can see her gain a +3 morale bonus on saving throws against charm, compulsion, and fear effects and a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls against her challenge target.

Challenge (Ex) Three times per day, Eramay can challenge a foe she can see as a swift action. She deals an additional 8 points of damage to her target with melee attacks, but she takes a -2 penalty to her AC against all other creatures. Thanks to her +2 *dastard chainmail*, she also gains a +2 profane bonus to her AC against the target of her challenge. The challenge lasts until the target is unconscious or dead, or when the combat ends.

Escape Route Any character with this feat provokes no attacks of opportunity for moving through squares adjacent to or within the space of any ally who also has this feat.

Favored Class Bonus Eramay has a unique option for her favored class bonus, which she uses to augment her badge ability.

Order of the Tome (Ex) Eramay gains a +4 bonus on Linguistics checks. When she issues a challenge, she receives a +2 bonus on saving throws against the target's spells and spell-like abilities, and she receives a +2 bonus on Bluff and Sense Motive checks against the target. She must protect written knowledge (or at least approved written knowledge) at all costs. If she fails to uphold this edict, she loses this ability's benefit to her challenge ability for 24 hours.

Powerful Knowledge (Ex) Eramay can read and activate divine spell scrolls as if she were a 4th-level divine spellcaster, and she treats her Wisdom as 15 for the purpose of activating scrolls. She must attempt a caster level check to use the following powerful scrolls or suffer a mishap: *breath of life* (DC 9) and *divine power* (DC 7).

Quick Interrogator (Ex) Eramay can attempt a Diplomacy check to gather information in 1d6 × 5 minutes and attempt a Diplomacy or Intimidate check to change someone's attitude in 5 rounds.

Specialized Knowledge (Ex) Eramay gains a +4 bonus on Knowledge (religion) checks. This ability has been factored into her statistics.

Squad Commander (Ex) Eramay can spend 1 minute laying out a plan to activate her tactician ability without having it count against her number of uses per day. She must trigger this ability within 1 hour of making the plan, and the benefits last for 8



minutes. She can have only one plan at a time; making a new plan negates the old one.

Tactician (Ex) Eramay receives Escape Route as a bonus feat. Twice per day as a standard action, she can grant this feat to all allies within 30 feet who can see and hear her; this lasts for 7 rounds.

Eramay proudly graduated as part of Erages Academy's first class with a focus in esoteric religions and swordplay—training that caught the Pathfinder Society's attention and earned her accelerated admission. Her faith in the Society diminished over time thanks to the unpolished leadership of venture-captains and the Grand Lodge's often irresponsible mishandling of dangerous artifacts. The last straw was when she uncovered the identity and shameful secret of a member of the Decemvirate while during an adventure in Absalom. Appreciating the comparably honest underhandedness of the Aspis Consortium, she defected and offered her valuable intelligence in exchange for fair treatment and fair wages. So far the Consortium has earned her loyalty, and she is now a silver agent entrusted with salvaging delicate operations. At least on paper, she is the team leader for this operation, though she recognizes that with such a diverse array of experts and bullheaded agents, she is better off inspiring action than mandating orders.



THE CATASTROPHE

Falth is a loose cannon with a traumatic past, so he is rarely hired for missions that can't handle a few "accidents."

FALTH

Male tiefling inquisitor of Zythus 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264,

Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide 38)

NE Medium outsider (native)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

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

hp 59 (8d8+16)

Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

Resist cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk heavy pick +9/+4 (1d6+2/x4), gore +3 (1d6+1) or gore +8 (1d6+3)

Ranged +1 *cruel composite longbow* +12/+7 (1d8+3/x3)

Special Attacks bane (8 rounds/day), destructive smite (+4, 6/day), judgment 3/day

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +7)

1/day—*improve trap*^{ARC}

Inquisitor Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11)

At will—*detect alignment*, *discern lies* (8 rounds/day)

Inquisitor Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11)

3rd (3/day)—*burst of speed*^{UC}, *keen edge*, *litany of entanglement*^{UC} (DC 16)

2nd (5/day)—*invisibility*, see *invisibility*, *spiritual weapon*, *unholy ice weapon*^{CG}

1st (5/day)—*comprehend languages*, *divine favor*, *doom* (DC 14),

ear-piercing scream^{UM} (DC 14), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 13), *brand*^{APG} (DC 13), *detect*

poison, *guidance*, *read magic*

Domain Destruction (Catastrophe subdomain^{APG})

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 20, **Con** 12, **Int** 11, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23

Feats Deadly Aim, Enflaming Fire^{UC}, Lookout^{APG}, Point-Blank Shot,

Precise Shot, Toughness

Skills Bluff +1, Climb +6, Craft (traps) +9, Diplomacy –1, Intimidate +18

(+22 to influence evil outsiders), Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge

(dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (planes) +11, Knowledge

(religion) +4, Perception +14, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +18; **Racial**

Modifiers +2 Bluff, +2 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Common

SQ deadly weather, monster lore +7, solo tactics, stern gaze +4, track +4
Combat Gear *mandate of misfortune*, *screaming arrows* (2), *scroll of heroism*, *scroll of lesser restoration*, *searing arrow*^{APG}, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (15 charges); **Other Gear** +2 *studded leather*, +1 *cruel composite longbow* (+2 Str) with 40 arrows, mwk heavy pick, *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, *darkshire amulet*^{APG}, mwk artisan's tools (Craft [traps]), tindertwigs (5), iron unholy symbol of Zythus, 60 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+1 Cruel Composite Longbow When Falth strikes a creature that is frightened, shaken, or panicked with his bow, the creature becomes sickened for 1 round. If he uses the bow to knock unconscious or kill a creature, he gains 5 temporary hit points that last for 10 minutes.

Bane (Su) Falth can imbue one of his weapons with the *bane* weapon special ability as a swift action. He must select one creature type when he uses this ability (and a subtype if the creature type selected is humanoid or outsider). Once selected, the type can be changed as a swift action. This ability only functions while Falth wields the weapon, and he can use it for up to 8 rounds per day; these rounds do not need to be consecutive.

Darkside Amulet This iron locket contains a fragment of Falth's daemonic ancestor, increasing his energy resistances to 10 each. In addition, he gains a +4 insight bonus on Intimidate checks (rather than Diplomacy checks) to influence evil outsiders.

Detect Alignment (Sp) Falth can cast *detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, or *detect law* as a spell-like ability at will.

Discern Lies (Sp) Falth can *discern lies*, as per the spell, for 8 rounds per day. These rounds do not need to be consecutive. Activating this ability is an immediate action.

Domain Zythus grants Falth the Catastrophe subdomain, which gives him the following two abilities.

Deadly Weather (Su) Falth can summon an ever-changing 40-foot-radius storm of destruction for 8 rounds per day. Each round, the storm has one of the following effects: driving rain (–4 on all Perception checks and ranged attack rolls), heavy snow (all terrain is considered difficult), howling winds (–8 on Fly skill checks and ranged attack rolls), or lightning bolts (as *call lightning*). Other effects depending on the weather might also apply (at the GM's discretion). You choose which effect takes place each round, but no effect may be repeated on the following round. These rounds do not need to be consecutive.

Destructive Smite (Su) Falth can use this ability up to six times per day before making a melee attack. If he hits, he gains a +4 morale bonus on the damage roll.



Enflaming Fire Falth receives a +2 bonus on ranged attacks made against any foe flanked by his allies.

Judgment (Su) Three times per day, Falth can pronounce judgment upon his foes as a swift action, granting him any two of the benefits listed below; as a swift action, he can change one of the benefits to a different option. Once activated, this ability lasts until the combat ends, at which point all of the bonuses immediately end. Falth must participate in the combat to gain these bonuses. If he is frightened, panicked, paralyzed, stunned, unconscious, or otherwise prevented from participating in the combat, the ability does not end, but the bonuses do not resume until he can participate in the combat again.

Destruction: Falth gains a +3 profane bonus on weapon damage rolls.

Healing: Falth gains fast healing 3.

Justice: Falth gains a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls.

Piercing: Falth gains a +3 profane bonus on concentration checks and caster level checks to overcome a target's spell resistance.

Protection: Falth gains a +2 profane bonus to AC.

Purity: Falth gains a +2 profane bonus on saving throws.

Resiliency: Falth gains DR 2/magic.

Resistance: Falth gains acid or sonic resistance 6.

Smiting: Falth's weapons overcome damage reduction as if they were magic and evil.

Lookout Whenever Falth is adjacent to an ally, he may act in the surprise round as long as the ally would normally be able to act in the surprise round. If he would normally be denied the ability to act in the surprise round, his initiative is equal to his initiative roll or the roll of the ally - 1, whichever is lower. If both he and his ally would be able to act in the surprise round without the aid of this feat, he may take both a standard and a move action (or a full-round action) during the surprise round.

Mandate of Misfortune This decaying parchment acts as a *scroll of lesser planar ally* with three exceptions. First, Falth can activate it despite not having *lesser planar ally* on his spell list. Second, the scroll is reusable once per month. Third, it summons an emaciated, vulture-headed ceustodaemon named Hsakorkinath who serves Zlyphus and requires no payment. However, the ceustodaemon is only willing to cause property damage, slay relatively defenseless creatures, and spread terror—acts it sets off to perform immediately unless Falth can cow it with a successful DC 30 Intimidate check, in which case he can dictate when and where it strikes. After 1 hour, Hsakorkinath returns to Abaddon.

Monster Lore (Ex) Falth gains a +7 bonus on Knowledge checks to identify creatures' abilities and weaknesses. This bonus includes an extra benefit from his favored class bonus.

Screaming Arrow This arrow functions as a *screaming bolt*.

Searing Arrow This +1 *flaming arrow* continues to burn its target each round, dealing 1d6 fire damage on the attacker's turn for the next 3 rounds. Removing the arrow requires a DC 10 Heal check and prevents any further damage from the arrow (the DC increases to 15 if the target tries to remove the arrow from itself). Removing the arrow destroys it, and it burns up after 3 rounds pass.

Solo Tactics (Ex) Falth benefits from his teamwork feats (Enflaming Fire and Lookout) as though his allies also had those feats.

Stern Gaze (Ex) Falth gains a +8 bonus on Intimidate checks and +4 on Sense Motive checks. These are already incorporated into his stat block and include an extra benefit from his favored class bonus.

Teamwork Feat Falth can switch his Enflaming Strike feat into another teamwork feat up to 3 times per day. However, Enflaming Strike is particularly effective for his fighting style and the composition of his team in this adventure.

Track (Ex) Falth gains a +4 bonus on Survival checks to track creatures (+7 total).

Variant Tiesling (Ex) Falth possesses a gore attack as a primary attack. He also is able to cast *improve trap* once per day as a spell-like ability. These replace his fiendish sorcery and spell-like ability racial traits.

Spells Falth can cast the following spells.

Brand: Falth marks a creature he touches with a brand or mark consisting of no more than six characters (fortitude DC 13 negates). This deals 1 point of damage to the target.

Burst of Speed: As a swift action for 1 round, Falth gains a +20-foot bonus to his speed, his movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity, and he can move through Large and larger creatures' spaces.

Ear-Piercing Scream: Falth can unleash a powerful scream that only one target within 45 feet can hear. The target takes

4d6 points of sonic damage and is dazed for 1 round. On a successful DC 14 Fortitude save, the target takes half damage and is not dazed.

Improve Trap: This spell takes 1 minute to cast and improves one trap within 45 feet. It increases the Perception DC to find the trap by 5, the Disable Device DC to disable it by 5, or the trap's attack bonus or saving throw DC by 2. During this scenario, this spell can instead grant Falth a +5 bonus on Craft (traps) check to set up a trap.

Litany of Entanglement: As a swift action, Falth entangles one creature within 45 feet that is standing on solid ground for 1 round (DC 16 Will negates).

Unholy Ice Weapon: Falth creates a masterwork heavy pick out of frozen unholy water for 8 minutes. This uses the melee entry of his own heavy pick but deals an additional 8 points of cold damage on each hit.

Falth's life has been a string of unfortunate accidents. He was born with fiendish features to human parents in Korvosa. An accident. His mother left him behind at a dingy orphanage after he was born. It could only be an accident. The orphanage "ran out of beds" and kicked him to the streets. Pray it was an accident. Some nicely dressed gentlemen kidnapped him and sold him to Nidalese researchers. An accident, of sorts. While under the blade of hateful surgeons in a facility deep underground, he heard the call of Zlyphus, the Grim Harvestman and patron of unhappy accidents. Falth raised his hand in a plea to the dark god, but when his eyes focused he found his arm covered in blood and the researchers dead at his feet—surely an accident.

Ever since leaving that foul laboratory behind, he has been a force of misfortune posing as a simple tracker and hunter. The Aspis Consortium made the mistake of hiring him 2 years ago but discontinued the relationship after the targets he was supposed to bring back alive consistently showed up dead following "unfortunate accidents." Now it is no accident that the Consortium has decided to employ him once more; he hears someone has angered the organization greatly, and his unique penchant for collateral damage will send an unmistakable message to the rebels known as the Korholm Agenda.

THE DISGRACED

Confident and charming, Rataji is able to get his way with most people even without resorting to magic.

RATAJI

Male human enchanter 8

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +2

Aura despair (30 ft., 8 rounds/day)

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 58 (8d6+24)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee staff of caustic fury +3 (1d6-1)

Ranged light crossbow +5 (1d8/19-20)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +13)
8/day—dazing touch

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)

4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *crushing despair* (DC 20), *greater invisibility*, *telekinetic charge*^{MC}

3rd—*dispel magic*, *haste*, *heroism*, *inflict pain*^{OA} (DC 19), *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *suggestion* (DC 19)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *silent charm person* (DC 17), *hideous laughter* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *disguise self*, *ear-piercing scream*^{UM} (DC 16), *magic missile* (2), *shield*, *unprepared combatant*^{UM} (DC 17)
0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *message*, *ray of frost*

Opposition Schools conjuration, necromancy

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 21, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell,

Skill Focus (Bluff, Spellcraft), Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness

Skills Bluff +19, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana, local, nature, planes) +16, Linguistics +16, Spellcraft +19

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Auran, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven, Halfling, Infernal, Kelish, Orc, Osiriani, Polyglot, Sylvan, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (amulet of spell cunning), enchanting smile

Combat Gear *pearl of power* (1st level), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of dispel magic* (CL 12th), *scroll of fly*, *scroll of glitterdust*, *scroll of hold monster*, *scroll of mage armor* (CL 6th), *scroll of stonewood*, *staff of caustic fury* (5 charges); **Other Gear** light crossbow with 10 bolts, *amulet of spell cunning*^{APG}, *circlet of*

persuasion, *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of vast intelligence* +2, *diamond dust* (worth 250 gp), *spell component pouch*, *spellbook*, *bronze Aspis badge*, 47 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Amulet of Spell Cunning This silver locket allows Rataji to prepare an additional 3 levels of spells per day. He has used it to prepare an additional 3rd-level spell.

Arcane Bond Rataji can use his arcane bond to cast any spell in his spellbook once per day, which includes all prepared spells as well as the following spells: 1st—*expeditious retreat*, *silent image*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*resist energy*, *see invisibility*, *touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*deep slumber*, *displacement*; 4th—*fire shield*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *stoneskin*.

Aura of Despair Rataji can emit an aura that imposes a -2 penalty on ability checks, attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, and skill checks to all of his enemies within 30 feet. This aura is a mind affecting-effect.

Staff of Caustic Fury This staff allows Rataji to use the following spells, dealing acid damage instead of fire damage: *burning hands* (1 charge), *fireball* (2 charges), *wall of fire* (3 charges).

Spells Rataji can cast the following spells.

Ear-Piercing Scream Rataji unleashes a scream that only one target within 45 feet can hear. The target takes 4d6 points of sonic damage and is dazed for one round. On a successful DC 16 Fortitude save, the target takes half damage and is not dazed.

Inflict Pain Rataji inflicts wracking pain on a target with 45 feet, imposing a -4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks for 8 rounds (Will DC 19 reduces duration to 1 round).

Telekinetic Charge Rataji can telekinetically launch an ally within 45 feet to any other location within 45 feet. This movement provokes no attacks of opportunity. If he causes the ally to land adjacent to an opponent, the ally can spend an immediate action to make a melee attack against that opponent with a +2 bonus on the attack roll.

Unprepared Combatant Rataji causes one target within 45 feet to take a -4 penalty on initiative checks and Reflex saves for 8 minutes (Will DC 17 negates).

The affable Rataji entered the prestigious Magaambya academy of arcane knowledge at a young age.

There he amazed both his instructors and his classmates with his mastery of subtler spells, and few doubted that he might one day enter the ranks of the



honored Tempest-Sun mages. However, the flood of successes and praise gave Rataji the impression that he was extraordinary and somehow above the rules. When a daring compulsion leveled at one of his teachers failed, he earned the sharp rebuke of the school's headmaster, as well as a lesson in humility. A Tempest-Sun mage is a force for good, he was told, and only by witnessing the darker elements of humanity can one understand true compassion.

The headmaster sent Rataji to the cutthroat city of Bloodcove, a coastal city populated by pirates, owned by the Aspis Consortium and made rich by the exploitation of the Mwangi Expanse. What he experienced there was not revulsion but admiration, for the Consortium were unabashed artists of propaganda. Impressed, he signed on as a contractor. He served with distinction for 4 years before being offered a promotion to silver agent if he led an assault on the Pathfinders' Grand Lodge. He has since learned that a rogue faction known as the Korholm Agenda engineered the attack in defiance of the Consortium, and by participating, he had become a traitor. His newfound status as a silver agent quickly vanished, and his future in the consortium became uncertain.

An Aspis representative has since contacted the disgraced Rataji, offering to wipe his record clean if he participates in an especially risky and secretive mission.



THE PROFESSIONAL

The *Aspis Consortium* may be coldly efficient in its business dealings, but it's a lucrative employer. Shohiraj's professional demeanor has earned her respect and good pay in the otherwise dangerous business of breaking and entering.

SHOHIRAJ

Human unchained rogue 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Pathfinder Unchained* 20)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

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

hp 51 (8d8+8)

Fort +4, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities danger sense +2, evasion, improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 menacing sap +12/+7 (1d6+6 nonlethal) or

mwk rapier +12/+7 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged +1 light crossbow +12 (1d8+1/19-20)

Special Attacks debilitating injury, sneak attack +4d6

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 21, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22

Feats Deft Hands, Extra Rogue Talent^{APG}, Iron Will, Quick Draw, Sap

Adept^{UC}, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +16, Bluff +12, Climb +7, Diplomacy +7, Disable

Device +24, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +9, Knowledge (local) +12,

Perception +15, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +18 (+22 to

conceal a weapon), Stealth +16, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +12

Languages Common, Kelish

SQ rogue talents (deft palm^{UC}, fast stealth, ninja trick [wall climber^{UC}],

trap spotter, underhanded^{UC}), trapfinding +4

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of displacement*,

potion of invisibility, *wand of true strike* (5 charges), alchemist's fire

(2), antitoxins (2), smokesticks (2), tanglefoot bags (2); **Other Gear**

+2 glamer^{UC} studded leather, +1 light crossbow with 20 bolts, +1

menacing^{UC} sap, mwk rapier, belt of incredible dexterity +2, cloak of

resistance +1, eyes of keen sight^{UC}, handy haversack, climber's kit,

crowbar, disguise kit, grappling hook, hammer, masterwork thieves'

tools, pitons (4), silk rope (100 ft.), tindertwig (5), 13 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+1 Menacing Sap When Shohiraj is wielding her sap and adjacent to

an enemy, the bonus on attack rolls that she and her allies gain

from flanking that enemy increases by 2 (for a typical total of +4).

Danger Sense (Ex) Shohiraj gains a +2 bonus on Reflex saves to avoid traps and a +2 dodge bonus to AC against attacks made by traps. She also gains a +2 bonus on Perception checks to avoid being surprised by a foe.

Debilitating Injury (Ex) Whenever Shohiraj deals sneak attack damage to a target, she can also apply one of the following penalties for 1 round.

Be Wildered: The target takes a –2 to AC against all attacks, and an additional –2 penalty to AC against Shohiraj's attacks.

Disoriented: The target takes a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, and an additional –2 penalty on all attack rolls against Shohiraj.

Hampered: All of the target's speeds are reduced by half (minimum 5 feet), and the target cannot take a 5-foot step.

Deft Palm (Ex) Shohiraj can make a Sleight of Hand check to conceal a weapon in plain sight, even while she is being observed.

Eyes of Keen Sight These lenses grant Shohiraj low-light vision and a +2 bonus on Perception checks. These effects are already included in her stat block.

Fast Stealth (Ex) Shohiraj can move at full speed while using the Stealth skill without penalty.

Rogue's Edge (Ex) Shohiraj can use the Disguise skill to create a disguise in 1d3 minutes.

Sap Adept Whenever Shohiraj uses a nonlethal bludgeoning weapon, such as a sap, to deal nonlethal sneak attack damage, she gains a +8 bonus on her damage roll.

Sneak Attack As the *Core Rulebook* rogue ability of the same name, except Shohiraj can sneak attack creatures with concealment, but not creatures with total concealment.

Trap Spotter (Ex) Whenever Shohiraj comes within 10 feet of a trap, she can attempt an immediate Perception check to notice the trap. The GM should roll this check in secret.

Underhanded (Ex) Shohiraj gains a +4 bonus on Sleight of Hand checks to conceal a weapon.

Once per day, when she makes a sneak attack on the surprise round using a concealed weapon that her opponent did not know about, her sneak attack dice automatically deal maximum damage.

Wall Climber (Ex) Shohiraj gains a 20-foot climb speed, but only when moving along vertical

surfaces; she cannot use it to scale perfectly smooth

surfaces or the underside of horizontal surfaces. While climbing in this way, she can choose to take 10 for a result of 25. She does not lose her Dexterity bonus to AC when climbing vertical surfaces.



Danger was always a girlish fancy for the young sisters Aima and Halma Deschamp, who grew up just outside Oppara. There the two were never far from the bardic colleges and their students, who gushed odes of great heroes and dashing duelists to any who cared to listen. The older Aima gradually outgrew these stories, but Halma longed to live a life of swashbuckling adventure. This left the younger sister vulnerable when a charming adventurer swept Halma off her feet and promised her the world if she would be his bride. As the two sailed away from Taldor, Aima could only hope that her sister's dreams might come true.

It was not to be. Her husband's idea of adventuring involved little profit and a lot of petty larceny and sleeping under bushes. The law eventually caught up with them in a lethal way, but not before Halma had given birth to fraternal twins. When one of the younger sister's associates brought children and news of Halma's death to Aima (who had since moved to Cassomir), there was no question in the elder's mind as to whether she would accept her orphaned niece and nephew. Her only question was how she would afford to raise them. The answer came in the form of a Kelishite man named Kafar, who offered Aima training and a steady job with the Aspis Consortium.

Unlike her deceased sister, Aima approached the dangerous work with the Aspis Consortium as a job, not an adventure. Every

time an associate dies due to a simple mistake or a moment of arrogance, it drives her to be even more coldly professional on the job. Every resulting precaution is another step toward surviving a mission and returning home to raise her adopted children, whom she loves as her own. However, feeding and clothing the two is not enough, for Aima is intent that they never idolize the dangerous life that she leads and then chase whimsical dreams like their biological mother did. As a result, few know anything of the trapezist who calls herself Shohiraj beyond her calculating mind, skill with traps, and undeniable ability to just get the job done.

Since helping the Consortium raid the Grand Lodge a year ago, Shohiraj has learned that her employer Kitio Aspenithi was heading a rogue faction known as the Korholm Agenda, which had never received official Consortium approval to launch the unprovoked attack against the Pathfinder Society. Aspis agents have hounded her and her family since, forcing them to relocate numerous times to dodge the Consortium's thugs. She has assisted Kitio several times since, but her patience with him has waned quickly. She recently met with her friend Kafar to find some way to escape this cycle, and he has offered her new hope. However, the way forward requires that she accept one more dangerous mission from the Consortium under the guise of making amends.



THE ENIGMA

Few within the Aspis Consortium know Thestil's true identity. Far more know the mysterious figure's reputation for stealth and efficiency.

THESTIL SHADOWTONGUE

Female doppelganger mesmerist (toxitiician) 4 (*Pathfinder RPG*

Bestiary 89, *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 38, 98)

N Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 72 (4d8+4d10+24)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

Immune charm, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 bladed belt +13/+8 (1d12+8/x3) or
2 claws +12 (1d8+5)

Ranged dart +8 (1d4+5) or
injection dart +8 (1d4+5)

Special Attacks mesmerist tricks 6/day (compel alacrity, gift of will, mesmeric mirror)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +2)

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 16)

Mesmerist Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd (2/day)—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *tongues*

1st (4/day)—*burst of adrenaline*^{oa}, *doom* (DC 15), *murderous command*tm (DC 15), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*detect poison*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +15 (+19 while using change shape), Climb +10, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +15 (+35 while using change shape), Knowledge

(arcana, local, nobility) +9, Perception +12, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +14, Stealth +12, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff, +4 Disguise

Languages Common, Undercommon, Vudrani

SQ change shape (*alter self*), deft fingers, injection improvement (natural armor decrease^{oa}), injections, mimicry, painful injection, perfect copy, touch treatment 7/day (minor), treatment vials

Combat Gear +1 bladed belt^{ue}, cape of the mountebank, scroll of strong jaw, scroll of vampiric touch (CL 10th), wand of cure

moderate wounds (5 charges), *wand of magic missile* (CL 5th, 5 charges), *acid* (2), *alchemist's fire* (2); **Other Gear** +1 *malleable armor*, longarm bracers^{ue}, darts (6), injection darts (3), grappling hook, silk rope, sunrods (2), ornate bronze Aspis badge, 46 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+1 Bladed Belt On command, Thestil can transform this belt into a single slashing and/or piercing melee weapon of her choice; the weapon has a +1 enhancement bonus. As long as she is holding the weapon, she can also revert it back to belt form with a command. Her Melee entry above assumes she wields the belt as a +1 *greataxe*.

Change Shape (Su) Thestil can change her form to that of any Small or Medium humanoid as if using *alter self*; however this does not adjust her ability scores. She can remain in this form indefinitely.

Deft Fingers (Ex) Thestil gains a +2 bonus Sleight of Hand checks.

This bonus is already applied to her stat block.

Injections (Su) Thestil creates eight psychic injections each day. She can activate one as a swift action, after which she can apply it by touching a creature as a standard action. The target takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and to its natural armor bonus for 2 minutes. When applying an injection, Thestil can attempt a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check to apply it without the target noticing; the target can spot the attempt with an opposed Perception check. If secretly applied, Thestil can choose to delay the injection's effects until she triggers them as a free action while within 140 feet of the target. The effects of multiple injections do not stack.

Injection Dart This behaves like a normal dart but stores a dose of Thestil's psychic injection. If she hits, she can choose to affect the target with her injection. The dart breaks after being thrown.

Longarm Bracers Three times per day as a swift action, Thestil can stretch her arms beyond their normal limits, increasing her reach by 5 feet until the start of her next turn. Her weapon attack rolls take a –4 penalty, but her attack rolls with her claws take no penalty.

Malleable Armor Thestil wears special armor that behaves like +1 *leather armor*. She can change the armor's appearance whenever she uses her change shape ability, and when doing so, she can choose to increase the armor's thickness and flexibility. Doing so increases the suit's total armor bonus to +7 (increasing her AC to 23), decreases her speed to 20 feet, and imposes a –4 armor check penalty until she uses her change shape ability again and reverts the armor to its original composition.

Mesmerist Tricks (Su) Thestil can create hypnotic bonds with an ally she can touch as a standard action up to six times per day. She can have only one trick implanted at a time, and implanting a new trick ends the previous trick. Thestil can trigger the implanted trick as a



free action, even if it isn't her turn. She must be within 140 feet of the ally, and triggering the trick expends it.

Compel Alacrity Thestil can trigger this trick when the subject begins his turn within an enemy's reach. The subject can move 10 feet as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. The movement from this trick doesn't count against the subject's movement speed for that round.

Gift of Will Thestil can trigger this trick when the subject attempts a Will saving throw or a Sense Motive check, or is targeted by an Intimidate check to demoralize him. For a saving throw, the subject uses Thestil's Will saving throw bonus instead of his own. For a Sense Motive check or Intimidate check, he adds Thestil's Charisma bonus as a morale bonus on the check or to the DC. Thestil can't implant this trick on herself.

Mesmeric Mirror This trick creates a decoy duplicate of the subject when the subject is attacked or becomes the target of a spell that requires an attack roll. The triggering attack has a 50% chance of striking the decoy rather than the intended target. Once hit, the image disappears; otherwise, it lasts for 1 minute. This is an illusion (figment) effect.

Mimicry (Ex) Thestil is proficient in all weapons, armor, and shields. In addition, she can use any spell-trigger or spell-completion item as if the spells were on her spell list, with an effective caster level of 4. She must attempt a caster level check to use these scrolls or suffer a mishap: *strong jaw* (DC 7) and *vampiric touch* (DC 10).

Painful Injection (Su) Once per round, when an attack that deals damage hits the target of Thestil's injection, she can cause the creature to take 2 additional points of damage. If Thestil uses this ability to increase her own damage, it instead takes 1d6 extra points of damage.

Perfect Copy (Su) When Thestil uses her change shape ability, she can assume the appearance of specific individuals.

Touch Treatment (Su) Four times per day as a standard action, Thestil can touch a creature and remove the fascinated or shaken condition. This ability is a swift action if she uses it on herself.

Towering Ego (Su) Thestil adds her Charisma bonus to her Will saving throws. This is already applied to her stat block.

Treatment Vials (Su) Every day Thestil prepares three tonics that apply the benefits of her touch treatment ability when imbibed as if they were potions.

Psychic Spellcasting As a mesmerist, Thestil casts psychic spells that lack somatic and verbal components. Instead, her spells have emotion (in place of somatic) and thought (in place of verbal) components. It is impossible to cast a spell with an emotion component while Thestil is under the influence of a non-harmless effect with the emotion or fear descriptor. Thought components are so mentally demanding that they make interruptions and distractions extremely challenging. The DC for any concentration check for a spell with a thought component increases by 10. When casting a spell with a thought component, Thestil can take a move action before beginning to center herself; she can then use the normal DC instead of the increased DC.

Spells Thestil can cast the following spells.

Burst of Adrenaline As an immediate action when she is about to make a d20 roll based on Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution, Thestil gains a +8 enhancement bonus to that ability score for that roll. Afterward, she is fatigued for 1 round.

Murderous Command Thestil can command one living creature within 35 feet to attack its nearest ally for one round with a melee weapon or natural weapon (DC 15 Will negates). If necessary, it moves toward the ally to attack.

Consortium leadership sometimes pokes fun at what they perceive as Thestil's overdramatic "mysterious stranger" shtick, but they cannot doubt her effectiveness. She has twice turned down promotion to silver agent, so her superiors have instead issued her an elaborate bronze badge to recognize her feats without imposing further responsibilities. She approves; it lets her continue to act as the power behind the figurative throne without risking the scrutiny that would pierce her disguise. Ever since Pathfinders interfered with her operations in Magnimar and framed her for treason during the Lissalan campaign—for which she was acquitted long ago—she has been itching for a chance to face a true challenge and reestablish her credentials.



THE AMBITIOUS

All his life, people have told Zurnzal that he could never succeed, yet he has harnessed the anger he feels toward these critics and used it to break his enemies and impress the few allies he has. When those who doubted him stand broken and bloodied, he will know that he was right.

ZURNZAL

Male half-orc brawler 6/assassin 2 (Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class

Guide 23)

NE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 72 (8 HD; 2d8+6d10+22)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7; +1 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities orc ferocity, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +16/+11 (1d8+8) or
unarmed strike flurry of blows +14/+14/+9 (1d8+8) or
mwk short sword +13/+8 (1d6+5/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite shortbow +10/+5 (1d6+5/x3)

Special Attacks brawler's flurry, brawler's strike (magic), close weapon mastery, death attack (DC 14), knockout 1/day (DC 18), maneuver training (dirty trick +1), martial flexibility (swift action) 6/day, sneak attack +1d6

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12 (+15 dirty trick, +14 disarm, +14 grapple, +14 trip); **CMD** 26 (29 vs. dirty trick, 28 vs. disarm, 28 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Dirty Trick^{APG}, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Climb +11, Disguise +10, Intimidate +9, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +13; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Intimidate

Languages Common, Giant, Orc, Varisian

SQ brawler's cunning, martial training, orc blood, poison use

Combat Gear Gaels' revenge poison (2 doses), *patron of cure serious wounds, potion of invisibility, quick runner's shir^{UE}, sandals of the lightest step^{UE}, antitoxin, tanglefoot bags (2)*; **Other Gear** +2 *brawling studded leather*, mwk composite shortbow (+5 Str) with 40 arrows, 20 cold iron arrows, and 10 silver arrows, mwk short sword, *amulet of mighty fists +1, belt of giant strength +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1, disguise kit, bronze Aspis badge, 7 gp*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

+2 Brawling Studded Leather This armor grants Zurnzal a +2 bonus on unarmed attack and damage rolls, including combat maneuver checks made to grapple.

Brawler's Flurry (Ex) When Zurnzal makes a full-attack, he has the Two-Weapon Fighting feat while using unarmed strikes, close weapons, and monk weapons, and he adds his full Strength modifier to all attacks.

Brawler's Strike (Ex) Zurnzal's unarmed attacks count as magic.

Close Weapon Mastery (Ex) Zurnzal can deal 1d6 damage with any weapon from the close weapon group (such as daggers) if he wants.

Desperate Assassination During the first part of this adventure, Zurnzal can attempt a desperate assassination to silence a witness and negate a strike against the party; he can only do this once, and it can only prevent the last strike that would call the guards. In order to negate this strike, Zurnzal must succeed at a DC 20 Stealth check.

Gael's Revenge Poison Zurnzal can safely apply this contact poison (save Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Dex; *cure* 2 saves) to his glove or boot as a standard action and deliver it with an unarmed strike.

Improved Dirty Trick Zurnzal does not provoke an attack of opportunity when using the dirty trick combat maneuver. He gains a +2 bonus on combat maneuver checks to perform dirty tricks and to CMD to defend against them.

Knockout Strike (Ex) Once per day Zurnzal can attempt a one-hit knockout, declaring his attempt before rolling his unarmed attack roll. If he hits and deals damage, the target must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or fall unconscious for 1d6 rounds. The target receives a new save each round to wake up. This ability doesn't work if the target is immune to critical hits or nonlethal damage.

Martial Flexibility (Ex) Zurnzal can spend a move action to gain any two combat feats he doesn't have, as long as he meets the prerequisites, or he can spend a swift action to gain any one combat feat. He keeps the feat for 1 minute. If he uses the ability again before that time, he loses all the feats from the previous use. If the feat has a daily limit and he picks it more than once, it doesn't reset the limit. Good choices include Greater Trip and Power Attack.

Martial Training (Ex) Zurnzal counts his brawler levels as both fighter levels and monk levels for the purpose of qualifying for combat feats.

Quick Runner's Shirt Once per day as a swift action, Zurnzal can activate this shirt to take an additional move action to move and then immediately end his turn, losing any unspent actions.



Sandals of the Lightest Step In any round in which Zurnzal has moved at least 10 feet, he can activate these sandals as a swift action to walk on air (as *air walk*) until the end of the round. He can use the sandals five times per day, but no more than once every 5 minutes.

Although some half-orcs born in Lastwall find acceptance, many green-skinned children raised in that border nation wither under the accusing gazes of warrior families that have lost loved ones to the orc hordes. Zurnzal grew up burdened by his neighbors' assumptions, who often assumed he might yet become a feral beast, despite his gentle heart and service to the community. Even after leaving Lastwall, he has always strived to measure up to his old neighbors' impossible standards. However, over the years his noble goal has twisted into barely controlled anger.

He first drew the Aspis Consortium's attention while working the dangerous Umbral Basis caravan circuit between Molthune and Nidal, where he distinguished himself as a powerful combatant. The consortium seemed like an idea way to get ahead

in life and away from Lastwall, but the half-orc quickly realized that he was as typecast there as anywhere. Most bronze agents simply saw him as another orc-blooded brute to be unleashed at the enemy like an attack dog. Only Madreki Gael—an agent who later joined a faction called the Korholm Agenda—saw the half-orc as anything more than hired muscle, and he began grooming Zurnzal for full Aspis membership.

The half-orc distinguished himself during a raid on the Pathfinders' Grand Lodge, earned his bronze badge, and traveled to Nirmathas to help his patron further. However, the Society was quick to follow and disrupt Madreki's schemes. Furthermore, the Aspis Consortium deemed the Korholm Agenda traitors, including Zurnzal. Rather than hope for leniency, Zurnzal found it more profitable to betray Madreki Gael and traded intelligence of his patron in exchange for an official pardon. While the half-orc's career still suffered a setback, he trusts that by accepting a dangerous mission he can regain the Consortium's full trust.



THE PRISONER

This crab-like nightmare has dedicated its existence to collecting brains, and now it seeks revenge against the head researcher that trapped it here.

AAOG-SHAGGA

Variant neh-thalguu

CE Large aberration

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +5 insight, +2 natural, -1 size)

hp 66 (8d8+30)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

DR 5/magic; **Immune** confusion; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +9 (1d8+6 plus poison), 2 claws +9 (1d6+6)

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

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 2d6+9)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +12)

2nd (7/day)—*acid arrow, alter self, invisibility*

1st (7/day)—*grease, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement* (DC 13),

shield, unseen servant

0 (at will)—*acid splash, dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand,*

open/close (DC 12), *prestidigitation, read magic*

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** 17, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 28 (can't be tripped)

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Eschew Materials, Improved

Initiative, Toughness

Skills Fly +12, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, planes) +15,

Perception +13, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +7, Use

Magic Device +8

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Draconic, Undercommon;

telepathy 100 ft.

SQ brain collection, strange knowledge

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brain Collection (Ex) Aaog-Shagga can store up to seven humanoid

brains and use them to enhance its knowledge and power.

Each stored brain grants it a cumulative +1 insight bonus to AC, concentration checks, and Knowledge checks. Aaog-Shagga can extract a brain from a helpless opponent with a coup de grace attack, or as a standard action from a body that has been dead for no more than 1 minute. If Aaog-Shagga has fewer than seven brains, it gains 1 negative level for each missing brain. Currently it has five brains

and 2 negative levels. Due to the extensive damage to its body from ongoing experiments, Aaog-Shagga can only benefit from consuming the best brains (those from a creature with 5 or more Hit Dice, such as one of the PCs). If it consumes such a brain, it gains the ability to cast 3rd-level spells (it knows *dispel magic* and *slow* and has 4 slots per day) and increases its caster level by 1; increases its insight bonus to AC by 1; increases its bonus on concentration and Knowledge checks by 2; and increases all of its attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and saving throws by 1. He also gains 5 more maximum and current hit points. Aaog-Shagga can only consume one brain in this way; its last slot is reserved for the brain of Kar-Zaweeb.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 6

rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 1 save.

Strange Knowledge All Knowledge skills are class skills for

Aaog-Shagga.

Aaog-Shagga is a neh-thalguu, a powerful alien entity more commonly known as a brain collector. It spent several years curating brains brought to it by a zealous cult of Night Heralds in the port city of Augustana before adventurers raided its residence and killed the cultists. Rather than slaying the aberration, the adventurers subdued it and dragged it to this facility. Here, Aaog-Shagga has suffered under the scalpel of the mutant researcher Kar Zaweeb, who has systematically removed and replaced the brains stored in the neh-thalguu's body in search of some grand discovery. The brain collector has avoided telling

the researcher of the terrible cosmic truths of its homeworld, knowing that the delight of watching his paltry mind go insane from these revelations would only prevent Aaog-Shagga from escaping sooner and rejoining the Dominion of the Black.

Under usual circumstances, Aaog-Shagga would tear apart a band of adventurers sent by the Aspis Consortium. The reason it stays its claws is because it hopes to destroy Kar Zaweeb utterly and consume his brain before fleeing this foul laboratory. No doubt the brain collector has employed even more alien logic to rationalize why it should not kill its new companions.





Pathfinder Society Scenario #7-98: Serpents' Ire

Character Chronicle #

Core Campaign

	A.K.A.		
Player Name		Character Name	Pathfinder Society #
			Faction

This Chronicle sheet grants access to the following:

Esoteric Item Research: After the team at Slumbersun returned from its mission, the Aspis Consortium gained access to several unusual magic items. Ratarion sold temporary access to these items to a crafter within the Consortium, who deduced their methods of creation. Several Aspis agents now carry copies of one of the crafter's recipes. When you defeat one or more agents of the Aspis Consortium, ask your GM to initial after one of these items, granting you access to purchase it. You can gain access to all three items below, but you can only gain access to one item during a single adventure.

Necklace of shattered dreams (**Aura** moderate necromancy; **CL** 10th; **Slot** neck; **Price** 3,000 gp): This delicate steel chain with five obsidian beads functions as a *necklace of fireballs* (type II), but it deals negative energy damage rather than fire damage (Will DC 14 for half) and is at risk of exploding when subjected to negative energy damage rather than fire.

GM Initials: _____

Scabbard of bleeding edges (**Aura** faint evocation; **CL** 5th; **Slot** —; **Price** 12,000 gp): This sheathe appears to be woven from sickly green spider silk. It functions as a *scabbard of keen edges* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 318) except that it grants the affected weapon the *wounding* weapon enhancement for 5 minutes. When activated, sweet-swelling ichor sweats from between the threads for several seconds, and the affected blade appears noticeably serrated.

GM Initials: _____

Viridium moonbeast (**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 11th; **Slot** —; **Price** 10,000 gp): This statuette of a tentacle-headed, quadruped is cast in sickly green metal. It functions as a *bronze griffon figurine of wondrous power* but has a fly speed of only 20 feet (good). Its bite attack sickens its target for 1d3 rounds (DC 15 Fortitude negates). While animate, it intermittently babbles telepathic nonsense and incensed proclamations of doom to its owner.

GM Initials: _____

Joliryn's Foe: You defeated the sadistic halfling Joliryn. You gain access to the following magic item at the listed discount.

Wrathful Ring of Spell Storing (**Aura** faint evocation; **CL** 5th; **Slot** ring; **Price** 16,000 gp): The ring acts as a *minor ring of spell storing*, but it is further enchanted to allow the wearer can apply the Empower Spell metamagic feat to one stored spell by only increasing the effective spell level by 1, not 2. The wearer does not need to have the Empower Spell feat to use this property.

Unwavering Resolve: The reports the Pathfinder Society has managed to piece together regarding the events at Wirholt's Rictus paint a grisly picture. After hearing unnerving rumors about the Aspis Consortium's recent activities, you have steeled yourself to face unspeakable horrors in the field. When you must attempt a saving throw against a fear or confusion effect, you can cross off this boon before rolling the save to gain a +2 bonus. Even if you fail the saving throw, your preparations give you some degree of protection. If you failed a saving throw against a fear effect, you experience a surge of adrenaline that grants a number of temporary hit points equal to twice your character level. These temporary hit points last as long as the fear effect persists. Alternatively, if you failed a saving throw against a confusion effect, you maintain unusual lucidity, which allows you to roll the d100 to determine your action each round twice and take your preferred result. This benefit lasts until the confusion effect ends.

MAX GOLD	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Normal	7-9	2,500	5,000
	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Normal	—	—	—
	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Normal	—	—	—
EXPERIENCE	Starting XP			
	+	XP Gained (GM ONLY)		
	Final XP Total			
	Initial Prestige Initial Fame			
	+	Prestige Gained (GM ONLY)		
FAME	Prestige Spent			
	Current Prestige	Final Fame		
	Starting GP			
	+	GP Gained (GM ONLY)		
GOLD	+	Day Job (GM ONLY)		
	Gold Spent			
	Total			

For GM Only

EVENT	EVENT CODE	DATE	Game Master's Signature	GM Pathfinder Society #
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