

AEGIS OF EMPIRES

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THE BOOK IN THE OLD HOUSE

BY ALISTAIR J. RIGG



PATHFINDER
COMPATIBLE



THE BOOK IN THE OLD HOUSE

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WELCOME TO THE AEGIS OF EMPIRES ADVENTURE PATH

Welcome to the Lost Lands, the campaign setting of the adventures and books by Frog God Games and Necromancer Games before it! “But this is Legendary Games?” you say. Yes, yes it is, but as the principal developer of the Lost Lands setting — having the privilege and pleasure of combing through every single product, word-by-word, from those two companies’ considerable catalog of books to determine how it all fit together into a coherent whole — I had the opportunity to continue my work with the setting. By mutual agreement upon the end of my tenure with Frog God Games in 2018, I was able to provide them with the bible of Lost Lands material I had been collating since 2010 and was graciously allowed to retain the rights to continue to make my own contributions to the setting I had poured so much into in Lost Lands-compatible products. I also purchased the rights to the *Aegis of Empires Adventure Path* that had already been in the works for some time (though under the name *Ashes of Empires* at that time, and changed due to similarities in titles from other companies that were being released in a similar timeframe), so I could continue the development I had already started on it and nurture it through to the end. That Legendary Games was willing to adopt such a project, was icing on the cake and what has allowed me to put this product into your hands.

- Greg A. Vaughan

SPECIAL ELECTRONIC FEATURES

We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the official [Archives of Nethys](#) ([2e.aonprd.com](#)) as well as [pf2.dzopfsrd.com](#). If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized.

ABOUT LEGENDARY GAMES

Legendary Games is an all-star team of authors and designers, founded by Clark Peterson of Necromancer Games, Inc. Legendary Games uses a cooperative, team-based approach to bring you, the Paizo fan, the best expansion material for your game. We are gamers and storytellers 1st, and we believe that passion shows in our products. So check us out, and Make Your Game Legendary!

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WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE THE THE BOOK IN THE OLD HOUSE

The job is simple: escort a nobleman as he explores the old, abandoned estate he purchased—fast and easy coin for a group of seasoned adventurers. But why is the entire neighborhood around the manor deserted, yet the house has never been vandalized nor would the most desperate vagrant venture under its roof? Glimpses of dark, furtive movements in the vacant windows and disappearances nearby bring whispered rumors about its mysterious former owner, and wild theories about things as mundane as the deafening nightly chorus of frogs in its wooded yards. Perhaps there is more to the story than meets the eye, and it is for good reason they say you can never judge a book by its cover.

The Book in the Old House is a *Pathfinder Second Edition* adventure for 1st and 2nd-level characters in the **Lost Lands Campaign Setting**. This rich and exciting world 20 years in the making has been home to dozens of adventures from Necromancer Games and Frog God Games and produced with their cooperation to be compatible with *The World of the Lost Lands* campaign guide! It is the first of six adventures in the **Aegis of Empires Adventure Path**, with each adventure exploring hitherto unexplored areas of the Lost Lands with a combination of horror, intrigue, deadly danger, and the lure of ancient mysteries.

While designed for use with the Lost Lands, these adventures are loosely connected rather than following a strictly controlled plotline, enabling you to easily place them into any campaign world. Your heroes can explore at their own pace to discover the secrets of antiquity or be consumed in their seeking as they brave the dark paths of the *Aegis of Empires*.

Legendary Games was founded on the principle of delivering first-class product for your *Pathfinder Second Edition* experience, brought to you by the very authors who design and contribute to the adventures, hardbacks, and campaign supplements you are already using. The Legendary Games tradition is to combine rich story and background, innovative layout, beautiful aesthetics, and excellence in design that is second to none. This product is the latest in that tradition, and we hope you enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it. Game on!

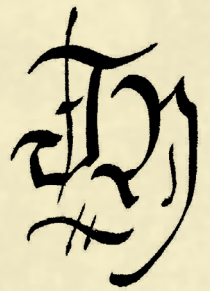


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The following superscripts are used throughout the text to indicate the supplements, rulebooks, and accessories referenced in this adventure.

^{AK:M} = Ancient Kingdoms: Mesopotamia by Necromancer Games (The Book of Aeons, p. 30)

^{BM} = The Black Monastery by Frog God Games

^{FBRC} = Freebooter's Guide to the Razor Coast by Frog God Games

^{FGG1} = FGG1: Fane of the Fallen by Frog God Games

^{LL4} = LL4: Cults of the Sundered Kingdoms by Frog God Games

^{LL7} = LL7: The Blight: Richard Pett's Crooked City by Frog God Games

^{LL8} = LL8: Bard's Gate by Frog God Games

^{QoD4:CB} = Quests of Doom 4: The Covered Bridge by Frog God Games

^{TB2} = TB2: Horror in the Sinks by Frog God Games.

THE BOOK IN THE OLD HOUSE

The Book in the Old House is a *Pathfinder Second Edition* adventure for four to six player characters of 2nd level. The adventure is composed of two parts and it is intended that some amount of time occurs between the two, providing the perfect opportunity for the GM to throw in another short adventure and throw the players off of any suspicion that there are more matters to attend to at the Old House. However, if preferred, the two parts of the adventure can be run one immediately following the other. It is recommended that the PCs are 3rd level before starting the second part of the adventure.

The Book in the Old House can be placed in any campaign setting but, though it is not an official Lost Lands adventure, it is designed for and fully compatible with the **Lost Lands Campaign Setting** of Frog God Games. In the Lost Lands, the primary adventure location is set in a run-down neighborhood of Eber (EE-bur), the capital of the Kingdom of the Vast, an independent kingdom located just southwest of the central Kingdoms of Foere (föh-AIR) across the Plains of Eauxe (OH). The adventure is ostensibly set in the year 1317 I.R. (though the GM can change this to whatever year best fits his campaign) and takes place during one of the hot, dry summers that regularly afflict the western central plains of Akados.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In 3367 I.R., Sir Barivoren Wallix of Courghais, Knight of Macobert, discovered that his aged uncle Ellerby Wallix — commonly known as Old Eb — was an alienist and delver into forbidden lore. In his youth Old Eb had discovered a page from the *Codex Ibnathi* during his explorations beneath the ruins of ancient Tircople in the East. From the writings he acquired an ysaqqua (see **Appendix C**) named Kyssoqga (kiss-OGG-ah) as a familiar, and with its help, he was able to make contact with all manner of foul beings and engage in horrific bargains in exchange for power and knowledge. After Sir Barivoren discovered his uncle's disturbing practices, he attempted to capture Old Eb and bring him to justice. Unfortunately, Old Eb's otherworldly contacts warned the sorcerer beforehand, and he was able to flee the city and disappear to the west of the kingdom before the knighthood could catch him.

It was Sir Barivoren's intention to continue the pursuit and cleanse the Wallix family of Old Eb's taint, but in his investigation into Eb's doings something inside Sir

Barivoren snapped. With Eb Wallix out of sight and out of mind, the Knights of Macobert were largely content to drop the whole matter altogether, but Sir Barivoren's growing obsession with his uncle would not allow that. He enacted a crazed plan to spur his order into action by perpetrating the murders of no less than three of his Brother Knights. This plan which became known as the Courghais Macobert Murders backfired, and Sir Barivoren soon found himself declared anathema and pursued as a traitor by the Knights. He fled into the wilds and was never seen again.

Shamed by this cursed legacy, Barivoren's younger brother Reliman dropped the Wallix name and officially adopted the name of his father, Voren, as his surname. He then moved his family to Tourne (TORN) in the distant Kingdom of the Vast to escape the mark of pariah upon his family in Foere. Not insignificantly, because of the declaration of anathema against Sir Barivoren, his title of Knight of Macobert was transferred to Sir Barivoren's closest living relative. Reliman became Sir Reliman Voren of Tourne, Knight of Macobert. Oblivious to this honorific, Sir Reliman spent the rest of his days drinking himself to death in shame over his family's fall.

An unexpected consequence of the Macobert Murders and the publicity they caused was that the knighthood's inaction in the matter of Ellerby Wallix was unearthed along with a great number of grievances against them involving allegations of corruption, greed, and general malaise. The opinion of the kingdom, and specifically the peoples of the imperial capital of Courghais, turned against the beleaguered Knights of Macobert, and they soon found themselves assailed on all sides by political and legal challenges. Within six years, the unrest and a series of escalating political miscalculations caused the power of the Court of Courghais and the Crown of the Overking himself to turn against the knighthood, and the Knights were ordered to surrender all property and assets and turn themselves over to the Overking's inquisitors for royal questioning.

Many Knights packed their wealth and fled the prosecution of the Crown, while others resisted and were arrested or struck down. Some of those who fled were caught and arrested as well. More than a few of both groups were lynched by angry mobs turned against powerful men and women whom they had once seen as their protectors. When the smoke had cleared, the Knights of Macobert in Courghais were no more. The few survivors had fled or gone into hiding. The Overking issued a Writ of Outlawry against the knighthood, with all properties and assets confiscated by the Crown. Any future possibility for pursuit of Barivoren or Eb Wallix was lost in the turmoil.

TIMELINE OF THE BOOK IN THE OLD HOUSE*

Imperial Record (I.R.)	Erylle Cycle (E.C.)	Huun Chronicle (H.C.)	Event(s)
3291	9775	796	Ellerby Wallix born in Courghais
3312	9796	817	Ellerby “Eb” Wallix makes first journey to Tircople
3320	9804	825	Coram Poer builds home on Front Street in Eber
3351	9835	856	Eb Wallix discovers page of <i>Codex Ibnathi</i> beneath Tircople, begins research into dark and forbidden rituals
3367	9851	872	Barivoren Wallix uncovers his uncle Ellerby’s atrocities; Eb Wallix flees west one step ahead of pursuing Knights
3370	9854	875	Sir Barivoren Wallix perpetrates Macobert Murders in Courghais
3371	9855	876	Sir Barivoren’s deeds discovered, flees into wilds beyond Foere; Reliman Wallix inherits title as Knight of Macobert, relocates to Tourne and takes Voren as family name
3373	9857	878	Macobert Murders and Barivoren’s subsequent escape reveals corruption and malaise within knighthood, public opinion turns against Knights of Macobert
3379	9861	882	Court of Courghais orders Knights of Macobert to surrender all property and submit to royal questioning
3380	9864	885	Knightly Order of Macobert largely destroyed in Courghais, the few survivors go into hiding
3382	9866	887	Old Eb Wallix emerges from hiding, purchases house in Eber to continue experimentation with <i>Codex Ibnathi</i> , acquires familiar Kyssoffa
3390	9874	895	Old Eb driven mad by abominable practices and commits suicide; Kyssoffa secures house on Front Street
3450	9935	955	Knights of Macobert removed from Crown’s Writ of Outlawry, Order slowly begins to re-establish its reputation and standing in Foere
3498	9982	1003	Watchman kills intruder breaking into Old House, watchman disappears two days later
3515	9999	1020	Urvitus Voren discovers Barivoren’s documents and begins researching the accusations against Eb Wallix
3517	10,001	1022	Current year

* Excerpted from the *Lost Lands Campaign Setting* timeline by Frog God Games.

To Old Eb, the fall of the Knights of Macobert was a stroke of luck. After years of hiding among the badlands of the Kingdom of the Vast, the old wizard emerged in the former provincial capital of Eber. There he purchased an abandoned home on Front Street and set up shop in earnest to continue his disturbed and disturbing studies. After several years the unseen inhabitant of the Old House — as the place had become known — became the subject of

increasing rumor, with many locals suspecting all manner of depravities. None proved willing to investigate the house and its stories of curses, hauntings, and foul visitations, so Eb Wallix was left to continue his work unmolested.

However, all was not entirely of beneficence to the old alienist. After only eight years in the house his studies into sanity-shredding secrets resulted in revelations that



caused him to knot a rope around his neck and happily take his own life, seemingly ending the story of Ellerby Wallix. With Old Eb no more, Kyssogga set about sealing up the Old House and beginning preparations for the long vigil until his master's return.

More than a century after Old Eb's death, Urvitus Voren, descendant of Reliman Voren and heritor of his title of a Knight of Macobert, discovered papers belonging to his ancestor Barivoren that detailed the importance of destroying all that remained of the villainous alienist, Ellerby Wallix. Determined to discover what had become

of this shameful forebear, Sir Urvitus began to investigate this strange relative of generations before. His digging eventually brought him to the Old House on Front Street as the last known whereabouts of Old Eb. The Voren family had seen considerable financial recovery over the past 120 years, and Sir Urvitus was able to purchase the property from an apathetic city with the intention to thoroughly investigate it and then ultimately demolish it to remove any trace of ancestral stain from his family line. However, aware of the sinister reputation of the Old House, Sir Urvitus decided to bring in professional help through his solicitors Abshire & Dunnage in order to assist in the initial exploration of the derelict's rumor-haunted interior.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs are hired by a young knight who has recently purchased an old house in the city of Eber. The house once belonged to an ancestor of the knight who was rumored to have been a practitioner of dark arts and, since his disappearance more than a century ago, the house has garnered a sinister reputation as a haunted and ill-rumored place. The PCs arrive to meet the knight on the morning of their appointment to find that he has already entered the house and stands mesmerized before a portrait of his foul ancestor. Once revived he is able to assist the party in exploring and clearing the house of several haunted manifestations and other strange phenomena, including a ghoulish mandrill locked in the basement that has languished as an experiment of the old wizard since his disappearance. Once the house is cleared, the knight pays the PCs for their services. They can go on their way, seemingly done with the adventure.

At some time later determined by the GM the PCs are contacted by the law firm representing the knight. One of the firm's solicitors has disappeared after going to the knight's newly purchased home, and the PCs are asked to follow up and find out what happened. The PCs arrive as night falls and a storm blows in. There is no sign of the solicitor, but the knight invites them inside for dinner. As the evening progresses the storm strikes and fully awakens the latent spirit of the house, the tormented soul of the old wizard that has begun to slowly possess the mind and body of his descendant. Faced with newly awakened threats and foul hauntings, the PCs must locate the knight and stop him before the old wizard can complete the possession and bring the full powers of his vile magical tome to bear upon the city once again.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The Book in the Old House begins at the law chambers of Abshire & Dunnage in the city of Eber, where the PCs meet with **Myram Abshire** (LG middle-aged male human expert 5), a partner of the firm.

The meeting room in the chambers of Abshire & Dunnage conveys the same air of solemnity and sobriety as the gentleman with whom you are here to discuss employment. An imposing antique

table of stained wood with matching leather-upholstered chairs is surrounded by shelves of weighty tomes on a variety of civic and legal matters. Windows high up the walls bathe the room with the clear light of this early summer morning while affording the necessary privacy for such sensitive discussion.

A slight, middle-aged man with thinning gray hair and gray eyes magnified by thick spectacles formally greets you as you take your seats. "Good morning and thank you for your attendance," he starts, in a thin yet confident voice. "Our client, Sir Urvitus Voren of Tourne, has requested your presence here to discuss an opportunity we understand is in line with your skills and interests.

"Sir Urvitus, an honorable member of the Most Worthy Knights of Macobert and upstanding member of the chamber of commerce in our sister city of Tourne has recently charged this firm with locating trustworthy individuals of diverse talents to assist in the conclusion of some property matters here in Eber. Our research has led us to believe that you all will fit the bill nicely, so we wish to employ you on our client's behalf. Sir Urvitus has recently come into the ownership of a local property that has some significance to certain branches of his ancestry. This house has a certain sinister reputation and has sat vacant for more than a century.

"Sir Urvitus is not by nature a superstitious man, but he has not been successful to this point in his life by being foolish. He knows that rumors and tall tales often bear some kernel of truth. He seeks to hire professionals capable of dealing with any unexpected matters that come to a head during the exploration of this property and assisting with cleaning out any threats it may hold so that he can assess the property's current value and see to its ultimate disposition based on the findings of this survey.

"That is to say, the house is rumored to be haunted. While he tends to disregard such rumors as poppycock, Sir Urvitus nonetheless is aware that dangers could, in fact, exist within. He is seeking to hire someone to protect him and assist him in the house's exploration, and he wanted more than just dumb muscle hired off the streets. Hence, my offer to you. The offer is to pay your group a total of 300 gold shekels for your services, half up front to cover any equipping expenses you might have, and half upon the completion of the property's examination. The house is a small manor of the kind commonly constructed by the rising merchant class of a few centuries ago and is not overly large. Sir Urvitus expects that the job should not require more than a day to complete.*

"If all of this is agreeable to you, I have the contract of employment already prepared for you to sign, and the first half of the payment present. Upon execution of the agreement, Sir Urvitus is waiting in my office to meet you and answer any questions you might have at this time."

*Shekels are the gold coins of the City-State of Castorhage, adopted by the Kingdom of the Vast with its formal independence from Foere in 3245 I.R. See pages 216 and 220 of **LL7: The Blight: Richard Pett's Crooked City** by Frog God Games.

Myram Abshire does indeed have 15 gp in his valise and will allow the PCs to exam the employment contract if they wish. It is a standard short-term labor agreement that describes the PCs' role as "investigative specialists" and places them in the employ of Sir Urvitus for the duration of the house's exploration for the agreed upon sum of 30 gp. The property in question is described on the contract as "the Old House on Front Street, City of Eber". The contract already bears Sir Urvitus's signature, and Abshire will countersign as witness. A Society, Linguistics, or Profession (law) check reveals it to be very standardized language with no hidden agenda or clauses. Likewise, Sense Motive checks reveal Mr. Abshire to be completely on the up and up. The contract is nonnegotiable, however, as Sir Urvitus has allotted a strict budget for this endeavor.

Assuming the PCs agree to the contract, Abshire gives them their down payment and then escorts them to his office to meet their employer. **Sir Urvitus Voren** (NG male human knight) is a tall, lean man in his mid-twenties with an aristocratic brow and a noble bearing. His blond hair is tied back in a short ponytail, and he speaks in a refined manner but with a cordial tone. He greets the PCs with extended hand as they enter, obviously well-pleased that they have accepted his offer. See **Appendix B** for details on Sir Urvitus.

Sir Urvitus will answer any questions the PCs may pose for him regarding the job. Attempts at Sense Motive will confirm the earnestness of his proposition. Myram Abshire will leave the room to allow the discussion to proceed in private. Likely questions for Sir Urvitus and their answers are provided below.

What exactly must we do? "I want you to help me explore this supposedly "haunted" house and clear it of any hazards, such as infestations of dangerous vermin, criminal squatters, and, if there are indeed haunting spirits, those as well. I have purchased the house and everything in it from the city, so no looting if you please. I am doubtful that there is anything of value that remains within, but there could be still intact art or antiques that would be of value to me. Of course, anything that has clearly been brought in from outside by any inhabitants is fair game for you. I have no interest in acquiring "spoils". I also admonish you to strive not to damage anything if at all possible. Obviously, the exigencies of necessity could require a certain amount of damage in preservation of our life and limb, but I'd like to keep it to a minimum.

"Finally, though I have some skill with a blade and will be armed and prepared for danger, I am well aware that

you are the professionals at this and will rely on you to deal with any unexpected menaces we may encounter and to protect my person. Though I am a Knight of Macobert, it is more of an honorific title in my family than any true martial description. It has been many generations since my ancestors thundered into battle atop an armored charger with lance at the ready. So you will be in charge of security, though I ask that you defer to me on any decisions that must be made in regards to the house or its contents.

"I've never been in the house and could find no copies of its architectural designs in the city records, but from its size I estimate that it has approximately 20 rooms. I anticipate that it shouldn't take more than a day to explore all of them after which you will receive the second half of your payment, your duties successfully discharged."

Why have you purchased this house? "I believe that it has some possible connection to the history of my knightly order and may have served for a time as a residence of some ancestor of mine. So much was lost in the purges of the knighthood in 3380 and records of my family's flight to Tourne from Courghais are scant. I would like to fill in some of these blanks, and if in doing so determine some truly sinister association with my lineage then to set it aright and remove any stain upon my family once and for all.

"After that...I suspect I will demolish the house and finally put the past to rest. Perhaps I shall donate the land to become a city park. I honestly really don't know at this point. I think the investigation will play a large part in determining my course."

What do you mean by 'sinister association with your lineage'? "It's rather embarrassing unfortunately. My research over the last few years has uncovered the existence of an old outlaw by the name of Ellerby Wallix, usually referred to as Eb, who was rumored to be a sorcerer and practitioner of foul practices. He apparently fled Courghais just ahead of a manhunt conducted by the Knights of Macobert and led by his own nephew, Sir Barivoren Wallix. This all occurred only a few short years before the so-called Macobert Murders that ultimately led to the downfall of the Knights in Courghais and their suppression for decades across the rest of Foere. The records of this time are sketchy, but Sir Barivoren is known to have disappeared in the time of the murder scandal and the subsequent purges. He is either victimized or implicated in the affair, depending on which sources you consult.

“In any case my family line moved from Courghais to Tourne in the person of my many-times-great grandfather Reliman, and the records indicate that at the time of the move Reliman changed his surname from Wallix to Voren, the name of his father. Reliman appears to have been the younger brother of Sir Barivoren and subsequently inherited the knighthood after Barivoren’s disappearance, the same title that I now carry. So, while not in my direct line of descent, there is nevertheless within my distant family both a vile sorcerer in Eb Wallix and possibly a murderous traitor in Sir Barivoren. It appears that after lying low for a decade or more, Eb Wallix may have purchased the very house we are going to explore and lived there as his last known residence. The rumors of hauntings and curses only seem to lend credence to this theory. As you can see, I would have a direct interest in not only discovering the truth of such matters but setting old dishonors aright.”

What do you know about this property? “Not much. It was constructed in 3320 by a local merchant named Coram Poer. At that time Front Street was known as an affluent and growing part of the city, though since then it has become one of the older, poorer parts of town. Poer dealt in the import and export of textiles with lands to the west and appears to have died when a ship he was on went down during a storm on the Crescent Sea. A childless widower, Poer had no known heirs so the house reverted to the possession of the city and remained largely vacant with a few tenants renting it for short periods of time over the years.

“Eventually it came into the possession of one “Elling Walls” — which I believe to have been the alias of the missing Ellerby Wallix — in 3382, only two short years after the purge of the Knights in Courghais when any continued pursuit of the sorcerer would have ended. Over time, the house gained a sinister reputation as a place of evil, and eventually Elling Walls simply disappeared. Walls had no known heirs, and there was not even actual proof of death. He just wasn’t seen anymore after 3390. No one wanted to buy the ill-rumored place, so once again it reverted to the ownership of the city.

“When I ran across information on the house in my own recent queries into my family history, I made the connection that Elling Walls was likely Eb Wallix and purchased the property from the city to complete my investigations into the matter and put the whole matter to rest once and for all...which is, of course, where you come in.”

What are the rumors of curses and hauntings? “I honestly don’t know much. Just the usual ghostly sightings,

strange lights, disappearances, things of that nature. I must confess my research has been into more concrete matters of branches of the family tree, legal records, and titled ownership. That might be a line of query that you can look into more before we begin our actual entry into the property.”

When do we go in? “I’ll meet you at the house at first light tomorrow morning. I have some meetings that I have to attend this afternoon, and Abshire has to procure the keys to the property from the city assessor. Abshire can give you directions, and we’ll convene there so we can go in together. In the meantime, you can use the funds you’ve been paid to make any last-minute preparations or do research of your own. I have no idea what we’ll find, so we’ll have to play it by ear from there.”

What do you do? “I am somewhat embarrassed to say that my grandfather and father substantially reversed the family fortunes with lumbering in the southern baronies of Foere. As a result, I have been afforded the luxury to pursue my own interests. I still oversee the timber leases, but the actual work largely lies with the foremen and factotums that I employ to manage affairs. I spend most of my time engaged in antiquarian pursuits and, for the past few years, researching and piecing together the details of my family’s history. I’m something of a dilettante, I guess you could say. Hence my need for persons such as yourself to assist me in this.”

Sir Urvitus has no other useful information to convey to the party and will conclude the meeting with handshakes all around and the reminder to meet him at the house tomorrow morning at first light, giving the PCs the rest of the day to make their own preparations. PCs will be unable to accompany Sir Urvitus any further today as he will be sequestered in meetings with local merchants. Myram Abshire will provide the PCs with directions to the house and then depart to procure the keys to the property from the city and give them to Sir Urvitus, leaving the PCs to their own devices.

INVESTIGATING THE OLD HOUSE

If the PCs wish to gather information about the house before meeting Sir Urvitus, they can do so with Diplomacy checks or Society checks to recall knowledge. Characters who are natives of Eber gain a +2 bonus on this check. Consult the table below to determine what each PC knows or has learned. They obtain the information for the DC they rolled as well as any DCs below their check.

DC	Result
5	An old house has stood at the far end of Front Street for as long as anyone can remember. It's far grander than the buildings nearby but it has always stood shuttered and empty. No one goes near it, not even vagrants.
7	There must be a frog pond in the yard behind the Old House, because on summer nights you can hear the things croaking from blocks away.
10	The Old House is haunted. There have been flickering lights and strange sounds heard over the years, like scratching or shrieking or rattling. Sometimes, it's said, the shutters open and a silhouette of a man can be seen inside.
15	The Old House isn't natural; it's too intact. It looks run down, but on closer inspection: no missing shingles, no broken windows. It should be a wrecked ruin after all this time but it's not. It's not normal, just too... whole. Even vandalism can't permanently damage it. It's like it doesn't want to be broken, and the vandals just gave up eventually.
17	People say that the man who lived in the Old House died inside and that his body and all his possessions are now guarded by his ghost.
20	One of the summer derechos hit the Old House with lightning years ago. The roof caught fire, and it looked like the whole structure was going to go up in a blaze, probably along with a good portion of the surrounding, tinder-dry city. But then the fire just went out. Even in the high winds without a drop of rain, it just extinguished. And just take a look at that old roof now, barely even a scorch mark left where half of it should be burnt off. That house doesn't want to die.
25	A night watchman caught an intruder trying to break into the Old House 20 or 30 years ago and killed him in the scuffle that followed. Two days later that watchman disappeared while walking his beat and was never seen again. They never did figure out what happened to that watchman or who the dead intruder was.
27	The house became the property of the city a long time ago after its owner disappeared, but nothing was ever done with it. Apparently, it has now been sold to some noble from Tourne.
30	The man who lived in the Old House last was the Anonymous Artist of Eber. His works still hang in buildings all around Eber, though mostly in private collections up on the Hill nowadays. There's still one in the Law Courts, as well as the College Library

ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATION

If the party wishes to follow up on any of the information gained during the gathering of information on the Old House, they can do so to a certain extent in the limited time they have. Below are the necessary checks to follow up on specific items and the information that can be obtained.

NIGHT WATCHMAN DISAPPEARANCE

If the PCs wish to follow up on the rumored disappearance of the night watchman, they can do so by visiting the archives of the city's central watch station and succeeding at either a DC 15 Diplomacy check or DC 20 Deception check, or by offering a bribe of at least 2 gp to the clerk on duty. If successful they can confirm that a night watchman named Creutz Hasten allegedly killed an intruder at the Old House in 3498 and then did indeed disappear without a trace while walking his beat in that neighborhood two nights later. There were no leads or suspects, and the case was never solved.

If the PCs succeed on their check by 5 or more or issue a bribe of at least 3 gp they can also learn that the body of the

intruder, an unidentified male human, disappeared from the cold cellar of the central watch station that same night before it could be interred in a pauper's grave and was never found. Its disappearance was likewise never solved.

THE ANONYMOUS ARTIST OF EBER

Anyone making a DC 15 Society check is aware of the Anonymous Artist of Eber. PCs who are residents of Eber gain a +2 bonus to this check. Anyone who has identified Old Eb's self-portraits hidden in the paintings within the Old House can locate similar inclusions in these public displays with a DC 22 Perception check (see Paintings in the Old House).

VISITING THE HOUSE

It is possible that the PCs may decide to visit the house before meeting their employer there the next morning. The beginning of the adventure relies upon the PCs arriving at the house after Sir Urvitus. If they choose to do so, it is appropriate to advise them that anyone participating in such activities will be unable to take any of the other



investigative activities mentioned above, requiring a separation of the party if they wish to do both. Most players tend to be loath to split the party, and this may be sufficient to dissuade them from a preemptive visit, especially if combined with the events of **A Strange Watcher** described below to truly pique their paranoia. And if they wish to investigate it during the night, they should be warned that they will be subject to the fatigue rules, with spellcasters requiring rest unable to obtain their full spell allotment. However, it is possible they will persist in such an endeavor regardless of the GM's gentle nudging. In this case, it is not unreasonable for them to get sidetracked in their efforts so that they can't make it to the house in time for their early investigations: perhaps some personal matter arises requiring their attention, an old friend spots them and engages them in a prolonged conversation, a watchmen suspicious of their armor and weaponry so blatantly on display stops them for questioning, it is market day and

the streets so crowded that it will take too long to make the journey and get back in time for any other plans, etc. Likewise, if they simply intend to show up particularly early prior to the stipulated meeting time of sunrise, assume that Sir Urvitus has arrived just a little bit earlier and run the adventure as written.

A STRANGE WATCHER

During the course of the party's investigations on the evening before they set out to explore the house, allow each PC to make a Perception check. The PC who makes the highest check notices at one point in the early evening what appears to be a large gray frog the size of a cat. The frog sits quietly in the shadows and appears to be watching them. The PC catches only a glimpse of the creature, and upon looking again it is gone. Searching for the creature finds no trace of it.

CHAPTER ONE: AN EXORCISM IN EBER

When the PCs arrive at Front Street for their scheduled appointment with Sir Urvitus outside the Old House, provide the following description.

The Old House is a grand structure for this part of the city, and clearly the largest in the area, both in ground area and height. Two stone stories, rising to a third at the back, all covered in patches of olive and mauve mosses, are capped by sloping, wood shingle roofs that protect an agglutination of dried mud bird nests beneath their eaves. A raised, vine-covered porch of dried hardwood stretches across the front and forms the base of a railed balcony above double doors. All the windows are shuttered, their once vibrantly colored paint now dull and flaking.

While of obvious great age with its dark green creepers, silvery lichens, and other plant life that has grown into its structure, the house's crumbling stone walls and wooden porch and roofs remain remarkably whole. No marks of vandalism mar its exterior, and no fragments of broken glass litter the ground, indicating that the covered glass windows are likely still intact. There are not even any missing shingles, which is in itself an oddity in this windblown region.

Of most immediate note, however, is the gray stallion that currently stands tethered to the porch rail by the front steps (A1).

PCs who wish to examine the exterior can determine, with a successful DC 15 Crafting or DC 13 Architecture Lore check that, although the old house is certainly weathered and dilapidated, it still appears to be structurally sound and in strangely good shape considering its many decades of abandonment. Likewise, anyone specifically examining the roof with a DC 20 Perception check notes that one section of it bears faint scorch marks of an old fire, but even there the roof's integrity remains intact with no holes or missing shingles.

The tethered steed is a combat-trained light warhorse named Olomew. It is well trained and, though it appears a bit skittish, will allow PCs who make a DC 14 Nature check to Command an Animal or Diplomacy check to Make an Impression using wild empathy check to approach. Anyone examining its gear finds the initials "U.V." worked into the leather of the fine saddle, confirming that this is indeed the mount of Sir Urvitus. It is carrying nothing of value other than its tack.

WAR HORSE

CREATURE 2

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) "Horse"

Initiative Perception +6; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Development: If the party spends more than a few minutes on the porch or on the street outside the Old House, a neighbor, **Maeve Hollick** (N middle-aged female human midwife), emerges from a house farther down the street to voice her concerns. Maeve knows that people shun the house with good reason and is concerned for the man she saw enter earlier this morning. She noticed him arrive about a half hour ago and open the front door with a ring of keys he was carrying, so she assumed he was there on official business, but she has not seen any sign of him since and is worried. She can give a good description of the man as he was carrying a lantern in the predawn dark, and she watched him from her window as she ate her breakfast porridge. The description she provides matches that of Sir Urvitus, though unlike yesterday he was apparently armed and armored. She did not see any further details.

THE OLD HOUSE ON FRONT STREET

The Old House stands at the end of Front Street in the oldest quarter of Eber. Somewhat grander than the surrounding dwellings, the house was originally designed and constructed by a successful merchant, Coram Poer, as his home. After his death at sea, the home reverted to the city and was placed on the market where it had languished for years. Eventually it was sealed up and forgotten by the city until years later when Eb Wallix discovered it and decided it would make a perfect base from which to continue his macabre research. His combination of manipulative skills and arcane abilities ensured that he obtained the house and all of its contents for a song, and it remained in his possession until his own disappearance almost a decade later. The Old House has since reverted to the city's ownership again. A newly acquired sinister reputation and rumors of disappearances related to it has left it locked up and largely unmolested other than the occasional foolhardy and short-lived intrusion over the years.

FEATURES OF THE OLD HOUSE

The 1-foot-thick outer walls (Climb DC 20, Hardness 14, 56 HP, 28 BT) are constructed of large mortared stones. Unless otherwise specified, ceiling height is 15 feet on the first floor, and 10 feet on the second and third floors. Floors are fitted with smooth floorboards, many of which have warped over the decades and creak when tread upon, imposing a -2 penalty on Stealth checks within the house.

Inside, gray dust and cobwebs cover surfaces in most open areas, and mildew and black mold growths are common but harmless. While the house is certainly in a state of abandoned disrepair, the influence of the *Codex Ibnathi* protects its sanctum from true structural damage. Broken door locks, smashed windows, and the like are treated as normal but the walls and floors are treated as though they have hardness 10. Attempts to burn the house down also find it remarkably resistant to fire — individual pieces of furniture might burn fitfully, but the flames tends to fizzle and fail to spread. In addition, damages to the windows, doors, and structure of the home somehow seem to lessen over time until, years later, they are somehow wholly intact again.

The front and back doors lead into opposite ends of the central hall (A2). The house is fitted with good wooden doors (1-1/2 inches thick, Hardness 5, 40 HP, 20 BT) throughout. Some interior doors have simple locks but most have none. All exterior doors have good quality locks. All doors and other objects with locks, as well as several without, are also affected by *lock* (heightened to 2nd). The listed DCs to Pick a Lock using Thievery and to Force Open using Athletics include adjustments for this spell. Even though keys for all of the locks in the house can be found within, a key only adds a +4 circumstance bonus to checks to open a lock. As a result of being secured by a high-level spellcaster, the locks in the Old House are effectively unopenable by the PCs. Fortunately, the Old House permits Sir Urvitus to open most locks as though they were unlocked. The *lock* spell ends on each lock, door, or container he opens, but if it was physically locked, it remains so if closed again. It is not, of course, immediately obvious that Sir Urvitus can open the locks and so this will need to be discovered.

Entrance into the house can also be gained via the cellar chute (A1a) or through various windows, but all are locked or cannot be opened, and all have external wooden shutters that can be operated with a rotating handle on the internal wall. All window shutters are closed and their handles are secured with *lock* (Thievery DC 20) and cannot be reached from outside and so shutters locked in this way must usually be Forced Open (Athletics DC 32) to gain access to the glass windows.

It is also possible to climb up onto the wooden roof of the porch or verandah (Athletics DC 15) to gain access to various second story windows or to the front or rear balconies (A13, A16), though of all the house's covers, these exterior roofs have suffered the most over the years and are now worm-eaten and fragile. Medium creatures will crash through after 1 round and Small creatures must make a DC 18 Reflex save to avoid the same fate. Creatures smaller

than size Small can safely traverse these roofs. If a creature attempts to scale the southern side of the house, it is a DC 20 Athletics check to the roof of the second story from the top of the porch. The house's main roof is only moderately sloped away from the central peak but it still requires a DC 5 Acrobatics check to traverse to the south-facing windows of the attic.

Light sources within the house are detailed in room descriptions and, unless otherwise noted, are *everburning candles* (see sidebar). The rest of the house is dark or dimly lit if in an area with access to natural light from outside.

GM Note: There are several areas that contain sections marked "Urvitus" within their descriptions. These detail specific interactions with Sir Urvitus that occur if he is with the party when they are in that area. Therefore, they only become relevant once the party has located him in the drawing room (A10) and he has joined their further exploration. Refer to **Appendix B** for further description of Sir Urvitus.

There are two sets of area descriptions for the Old House. The descriptions for **Chapter 1** (denoted by area A) pertain to the initial visit to the house, and the descriptions for **Chapter 2** (denoted by area B to avoid confusion) pertain to the second visit to the house, when it is explored after **Event 2**. Not every room in **Chapter 2** has a B description, and when none is given assume that the room is in the state that it was left in by the PCs' initial incursion in **Chapter 1**.

EVERBURNING CANDLE		ITEM 1
EVOCATION	LIGHT	MAGICAL
Price 9 gp; Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk —		
This otherwise normal candle has a <i>continual flame</i> spell cast on its wick. Due to the small size of its wick, it sheds light only as an ordinary candle, but otherwise acts as an everburning torch. If the candle is broken, its <i>continual flame</i> no longer functions.		

PAINTINGS IN THE OLD HOUSE
While most of the furnishings and other contents in the house originally belonged to Coram Poer, Eb Wallix developed skills as a master painter over the long years of his life, and it is his work that now adorns the walls. While these paintings are of various sizes, depictions, and

individual values, they are all masterworks that would sell easily in Eber where the brushwork and colors are instantly recognizable to art collectors as works of the Anonymous Artist of Eber.

As Eb did not leave the house very often, those works that contain images of Eber and its citizens were created with the aid of *clairvoyance* and *scrying*. Many of the paintings that contain depictions of people also contain a self-portrait hidden somewhere within the scene. Eb did this precisely so that they could be used as targets of the *portrait mask* (see **A21**), enabling him to spy on the prominent local families and institutions he anonymously gifted them to. However, his skill at obscuring and varying his embedded self-portraits ensures that it is not at all obvious that many of the paintings contain his image. A character needs to study several different paintings that contain Eb's image before a successful DC 15 Art Lore or DC 20 Perception check reveals that they all contain a depiction of the same person—the person in the huge portrait in the drawing room (**A10**).

Eb achieved his unique style by replicating lucid visions of the dreamlands using paints produced from extraplanar pigments he bartered for with summoned entities. His paintings use blood and other richly colored ichors of angels and fiends, tempera from the eggs of void-stirges, and humors from the spawn of aquatic aberrations. They are combined to form vibrancies and subtleties of color that change with different lighting.

The paintings and many other valuable contents of the house are *not* detailed in the “Treasure” section of an area description, however, because these items belong to Sir Urvitus and are not intended to be taken by the PCs. Furthermore, many of these items will be destroyed before **Chapter 2**. If a PC steals an item — which may be difficult to achieve with Sir Urvitus present — assign a value that seems appropriate. Eb's paintings, in particular, which reflect an average Craft skill result of 32 (see “Crafting” in Chapter 4 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook [Second Edition]*), have values 1d4+2 times higher than their Craft value due to their unique colors, style, rarity, and reputation. Most of them will require some restoration to achieve that full value, however.

Items that *do* appear in the “Treasure” section, therefore, are intended for the PCs. Sir Urvitus may recommend that the PCs use them when they are found, or he will gift them to the PCs at the end of that part of the adventure.

FEAR, DISTURBANCES, AND NIGHTMARES

The sinister influence of the *Codex Ibnathi* has prevented the evil soul of Eb Wallix from reaching the afterlife, and as a result the house is haunted by the trapped spirit of the insane alienist. Eb's supernatural presence in the house, however, does not reflect any consciousness or purpose, or exist as a single haunt or ghost. His spirit is shattered, its most potent shards usually manifesting as harmless, yet distressing, psychological phantasmagoria, but sometimes presenting as more dangerous phenomena.

These nightmares and disturbances exist not only to create dramatic tension for the characters and their players on their first visit to the house, but also to reveal otherwise undiscoverable aspects of Old Eb and his historical activities. However, many of them also place the PCs on edge and confer the frightened condition. Each nightmare or disturbance occurs only once, regardless of how many times a location is visited or a creature sleeps within the house, and they are only experienced by the PCs, not Sir Urvitus.

While disturbances and their effects are detailed in the areas in which they occur, nightmares can occur anywhere that a character loses consciousness inside the Old House, be it from physical injury, natural sleep, or magically or otherwise induced sleep effects such as from the wallixtabay's soporific pollen (**A16**).

Each time a character is exposed to a nightmare, give out one of the **Handouts 1A–1G** detailed in **Appendix A** (selected or determined randomly) and award the PCs 10 XP. Additionally, they must succeed at a Will save with a DC of 12 +1 for each previously experienced nightmare or take become frightened 1 for 1d4 hours. A PC cannot attempt to naturally fall asleep in the old house until they are no longer under a fear effect induced by a nightmare.

FIRST FLOOR

The ceiling throughout the first floor is 15 feet high except for along the corridor running parallel to the stairs, which slopes down from 15 feet high in the central hall (**A2**) to 10 feet high in the corridor running between the drawing room (**A3**) and dining room (**A6**) to accommodate the stairs above.

A1. FRONT PORCH

A short flight of steps ascends to the wooden porch; its structure faded and worm-eaten, its interior obscured by an overgrowth of leafy vines. A notice is nailed to a rail post.

Dark green vines that grow over the porch bear tiny white flowers, and the exterior walls of the house are patched with mosses and lichens. A DC 12 Nature check confirms that these are all normal local flora. The porch itself is devoid of any furniture and raised 2 feet off the ground. Wooden slats across the face of the base prevent access to the crawlspace below the porch unless they are broken or pried apart. However, the crawlspace only extends back as far as the stone of the house's foundation. The notice nailed to the rail post declares, "Private Property. Trespassers and thieves will be prosecuted."

The wooden front doors and frames are warped but still function. They are fitted with brass door knockers shaped like leering gargoyles. A DC 15 Perception check from the base of the porch stair is sufficient to notice that one of the front doors is ajar.

At the northwest corner of the porch is a wooden box set in the ground with a sloped door bearing a padlock with an *arcane lock*, though the old, worm-eaten wood can be more easily smashed through. This opens to a cellar chute through which coal and wood were once delivered but which was never used while Eb was in residence. It descends at a steep angle to the storage cellar (A22) 10 feet below. The padlock key is in the observatory (A20).

Wooden Coal Chute Door: Hardness 5, 20 HP, 10 BT, Athletics (Force Open) DC 32.

Arcane-Locked Padlock: Hardness 7, 28 HP, 14 BT, Thievery (Pick a Lock) DC 32, Athletics (Force Open) DC 32.

A2. CENTRAL HALL

The following description assumes the PCs enter by the front door. Modify it appropriately if they enter from another direction.

A wide hall hung with paintings runs the length of the house and is partitioned by a pair of dusty curtains. A long rug with vibrant green and blue patterning runs down the center of the hall. A narrow table stands against the east wall opposite a staircase with a mahogany balustrade. A burning candle in an iron candlestick atop the table dimly illuminates the central portion of the hall. Cream-colored wallpaper with thin, dark green vertical stripes



peels in places from the upper portion of the walls while the lower section is simple, whitewashed stone. In the southern vestibule, an unused hat rack is positioned against a decorative entrance arch, while a dark green curtain blocks off the northern portion. A thin layer of dust covers every surface, and patches of black mold speckle the painted wooden ceiling and the walls.

There are 11 paintings hung along the hall, each showing a different scene of Eber life; three with hidden self-portraits of Old Eb (see **Paintings in the Old House**). The rug is of exquisite Ashurian^{LL7 - p. 48} manufacture, and the candle is an everburning candle.

Beyond the curtain at the northern end of the hall, a line of coat pegs is mounted on the west wall and an empty wooden shoe rack is pushed against the wall opposite. The back door leads out onto the rear verandah (A7) but it is arcane locked (Disable Device DC 40); its key is in the observatory (A20).

A character who makes a successful DC 15 Perception or DC 10 trained Survival check notices Sir Urvitus' footsteps in the dust. A successful DC 10 trained Survival check to follow his tracks notes that he advanced along the hallway, paused to look at several of the paintings, opened the midway curtain, ascended the stairs, carefully picked his way around the bones on the landing (A8) as he continued to turn to examine some of the paintings, and then walked into the drawing room (A10).

Disturbance: When the characters first begin to examine the paintings, the character with the highest Perception check hears the squeak of a floorboard on the second floor directly above them.

Urvitus: If Urvitus is present he takes a moment to examine the paintings (he only glanced at them briefly upon first entering) and excitedly declares them to be the works of the Anonymous Artist of Eber — a virtual treasure trove of Eber culture.

A3. PARLOR

The walls of this parlor, on which paintings of various sizes hang, have wooden wainscoting on the lower parts and patterned wallpaper above. Items of furniture, including several upholstered but mildewed chairs and marble-topped wooden tables, are positioned on a woolen carpet. Cobwebs hang from a decorative, coffered ceiling and silver candelabra are positioned around the room in which several candles still provide illumination. An ornate alabaster fireplace is the focal point of the room. A wooden harpsichord strewn with books of sheet music stands to the northeast, covered in a fine dust.

Through a combination of lack of use and lack of exposure to the elements, the contents of the parlor are in relatively good condition despite their great age. This parlor was designed to be a formal room for guests to be received and entertained, though Eb Wallix never made use of it for these purposes.

The harpsichord is made of rosewood and, if played, anyone trained in a music-related skill will note that it is of masterwork quality and still — strangely — perfectly tuned. Eight paintings depict landscape views from within the city and major city landmarks, including the Royal College, temples, and Law Courts; two contain hidden self-portraits. The carpet is an Ashurian^{LL7-p. 48} masterpiece that, when cleaned, is revealed to be woven with arabesques in deep shades of green. Each of the 6 silver candelabra holds two unlit candles and one everburning candle.

Disturbance: A character who has heard the fugue in the west guestroom (A14), or who has the correct notation of it, may play its basic melody on the harpsichord with a successful DC 15 Performance check. The first character to successfully play the melody receives a rush of triumphant joy followed by a brief vision of a thick, black leather-bound tome placed atop the harpsichord in front of them. The title of the book, written in Aklo, is applied in elaborate and exquisite gold leaf on the front: *Reflections on Hali*. A character who does not understand Aklo can decipher the title with a DC 22 Occultism check or otherwise transcribe their vision of the script with sufficient accuracy for others to decipher with a successful DC 15 Occultism or Perception check. This is a vision of Eb's grimoire that can be found in the study (A21).

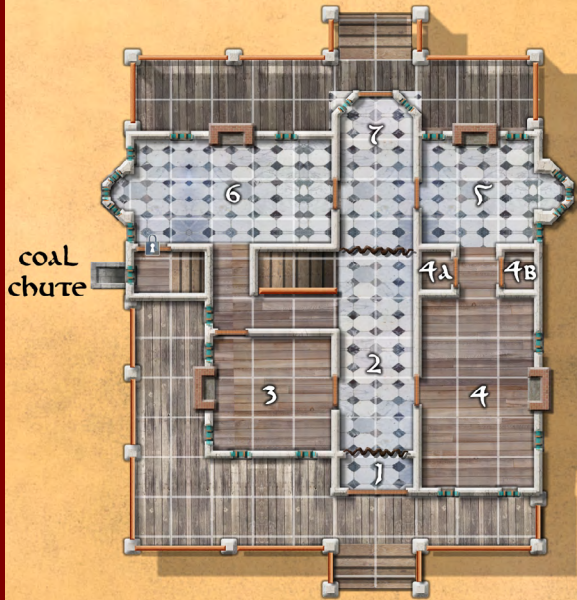
If a character exceeds the Perform DC by 5 or more, the vision widens until they see a tiny gray frog-like creature with four tentacles protruding from its flanks crawl up onto the book. Its head is unlike a frog's though, with a flattened humanoid-like face that looks like a horrible old man's, and its front legs end in black-nailed hands instead of frog-like toes. As the vision fades, other characters witnessing this masterful performance see the harpsichord player's face briefly transformed into the same hateful leering visage as the weird toad's, and they must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

Once the melody has been played successfully, if anyone tries to play the harpsichord again the instrument is now horribly out of tune. A DC 15 Crafting, trained Performance, or appropriate Lore skill check is required to tune it — a process which takes at least 1 hour and which requires the relevant tools.

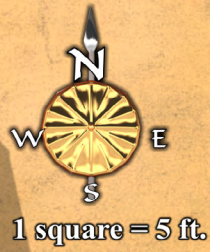
Urvitus: While he asks the PCs to be careful not to damage the sheet music or harpsichord, his attention is primarily taken by the paintings, which he declares to contain historical depictions of Eber. If a PC heard the music in the west guestroom (A14), Urvitus encourages them to play it on the harpsichord. If it does not occur to the PCs, he eventually also suggests that it may be recorded in one of the pieces of sheet music (see "Treasure" below).

Treasure: While the furniture and paintings hold considerable value, the books of sheet music are the real treasure here, which can be determined with a DC 20 Crafting, Society, or trained Performance check. There are well over 100 works for keyboard instruments. Several of the pieces, however, are unique or at least very rare, including some local compositions. One fugue piece, entitled (in

THE OLD HOUSE



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



ATTIC



BASEMENT

Helvaenic) “Over the Brink” can be identified as the music heard in the west guestroom (A14) with a successful DC 12 trained Performance check. Characters using this notation receive a +4 bonus to play the fugue and may do so without having heard it. The music is worth 120 sp and Sir Urvitus gifts it to the PCs when the contract is complete if they successfully played the melody.

Story Award: If the PCs receive the vision of Eb’s grimoire, award them XP for a CR 1 encounter. If they performed well enough to also see Kyssoffa, award them XP for a CR 2 encounter instead.

A4. KITCHEN

The stone-tiled floor space of this large kitchen is dominated by a long table, heavily scored by knife and chopper and now infested with fungal blooms. Above the table, a panoply of pots and pans hangs from hooks on a ceiling rack. Cupboards and shelves containing more cooking equipment line walls once whitewashed but now black with mold. A glazed-brick hearth set with an iron oven is built into the east wall, flanked by two large stone sinks.

As Eb had no need to eat or drink and found little joy in doing so, having always associated the acts with distraction from his studies or mind-numbing social interaction, this room went virtually unused throughout his occupancy.

A knife block on one of the shelves contains two cooking knives large and sharp enough to be used as daggers, and a drawer contains, among other utensils, a steel meat chopper that can be used as a handaxe, and an iron meat mallet that can be used as a light mace.

Urvitus: Urvitus will thumb through the utensils thoughtfully but has no real comment to make here.

A4A. PANTRY

This pantry is lined with shelves from floor to ceiling but is otherwise empty.

A4B. LARDER

This larder has several deep shelves, a number of meat hooks hanging from the ceiling, and is thick with black mold but otherwise empty. It is noticeably cooler than the surrounding rooms, an effect of its enclosure against an outer wall and above the cistern in the basement.

A5. SCULLERY

The stained, stone-tiled floor of this scullery is sunk a step below the rest of the ground floor of the house. Slatted wooden mats are placed beneath two sinks to either side of a large stone hearth set against the north wall, as well as beneath a third, smaller sink against the east wall. Cobwebbed storage shelves crammed with all manner of dust-covered crockery, pans, wooden buckets, cleaning tools, and other mundane household items line the walls around a work table. Two empty wooden tubs sit in the southern corners, and a wooden mangle is positioned in a bay window in the east wall, fungal filaments drooping from its rollers.

A rotating wooden handle is set into the wall above the wooden tub in the southeast corner. The end of a rusted metal pipe protrudes from the wall next to it. If the handle is turned, it draws water from the basement cistern up through the pipe via a screw pump.

Urvitus: Urvitus marvels at the craftsmanship of the running water after confirming that it is still functional and wonders aloud if the house might be in good enough shape to salvage altogether.

A6. DINING ROOM

A long central table in this dining room is surrounded by thirteen chairs, all carved from the same dark hardwood that panels the walls. Shelves in the northeast and southeast corners of the room hold trays of fine-looking cutlery and crockery. Above the mantel of a large stone fireplace in the middle of the north wall hangs a framed painting, and smaller paintings hang on the south wall. A fine layer of dust covers the floor and furniture.

An iron fireguard stands in front of the fireplace and an iron bucket of tongs and pokers is placed to one side. The south door that leads to the basement is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); its key is in the observatory (A20). The dinnerware contains fine silverware, a crystal decanter with 18 matching goblets, and a range of hand-painted plates, chargers, chafing dishes, and serving platters. The 3 paintings in this room each depict an Eber cityscape with the long masterpiece over the fireplace containing a hidden self-portrait.

Disturbance: The first character to approach the door in the southwest corner hears footsteps in the room above him. The footsteps seem to match the PC’s relative position exactly and move as she moves. If she touches the door in this room, she hears the slow creak of a door opening directly above. If she moves away from the door, or stops to involve the other characters, the sound of the footsteps ends.

Urvitus: Urvitus admires the paintings and the fine selection of serving wares here. He is as startled as the PCs by a report of footsteps above. Once it occurs, he becomes visibly angry and want to charge upstairs to confront the “intruder”. He will not leave his hired specialists behind to do so, however, deferring to their judgment in the matter.

A7. REAR VERANDAH (LOW 2)

A wooden verandah, overgrown with vines and creepers that also cover an upper balcony, spans the rear of the house. Steps lead up onto the verandah, which grants access to the house’s back door.

The verandah looks out over a short backyard that ends at an extension of the city wall. It is featureless and uninteresting. Despite rumors that the PCs may have heard, there is no pond present and no unusual presence of frogs croaking. The verandah itself is built in the same fashion as the porch (A1). The back door is closed and *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); its key in the observatory (A20).

The vines that grow over the verandah are the same as those on the porch. Characters who nevertheless take the time to examine the plant life here and succeed on a DC 15 trained Nature check identify that, intermingled with and partially obscured by the creepers that cover the verandah, the tendrils of a different type of plant grow from the balcony above. These shoots descend to the ground to either side of the verandah stair. It’s impossible to tell the type of plant — the wallixtabay (see A16) — from an examination of its tendrils alone, but the size and number of them suggest that the plant or plants are likely quite numerous or large.

The tendrils of the wallixtabay grow down to the ground around the sides of the verandah stair and along much of the face of the verandah itself. These tendrils do not bear thorns or flowers, and they do not provide the plant with sustenance, but they do extend the range of its tremorsense to effectively cover a 30-foot radius from the verandah. The wallixtabay keeps these tendrils dormant and “plant-like” but if enough of them are damaged, it immediately climbs over the sides of the balcony above and descends down the verandah to attack.

Development: In the upper northeast corner of the verandah is the distinctively layered, papery shape of a large wasp nest about 2 to 3 feet in diameter. It can be spotted with a DC 15 Perception check. These inch-long, sand-stripped wasps are native to the region of the Vast around Eber and are not aggressive unless their nest is disturbed, such as by someone cutting down the vines or climbing around that section of the verandah. If that occurs, they swarm to attack.

EBER WASP SWARM CREATURE 2

N LARGE ANIMAL SWARM

Perception +8; darkvision

Skills Acrobatics +10

Str -4, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** -5, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -1

AC 15; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

HP 25; **Immunities** precision, swarm mind;

Weaknesses area damage 5, splash damage 5;

Resistances bludgeoning 5, piercing 5, slashing 3

Speed 20 feet, fly 40 feet

Swarming Stings ♦ Each enemy in the swarm’s space takes 1d12 piercing damage (DC 18 basic Reflex save) and is exposed to Eber wasp venom. A successful save negates the poison exposure.

Eber Wasp Venom (poison) **Saving Throw** Fortitude DC 18; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison and clumsy 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 1d6 poison and clumsy 2 (2 rounds)

Urvitus: If the PCs discover the wasp nest, Sir Urvitus suggests that it might be best to leave it alone, rather than anger the wasps unnecessarily. They can be smoked out later when the house is demolished. If the PCs insist, however, he permits them to clear it.

SECOND FLOOR

The ceiling throughout the second floor is 10 feet high. All window shutters are *locked*.

A8. LANDING

Between the ground and second floor, this landing displays a grisly scene. The scattered bones of a humanoid skeleton, still clad in the frayed scraps of clothing, lie on a large, faded stain that covers the whole of the landing. Several paintings hang on the walls of the landing and along the stairs.

The skeleton is that of Creutz Hasten, the night watchman who disappeared in 3498 I.R. After interfering with the machinations of the Old House in seeking a new master, Hasten was abducted by Kyssoffa while walking his beat two nights later, taken to the house, and left in one of the upper guest bedrooms. Severely mentally depleted by the ysaqquan’s venom, Hasten only made it to the landing before he was ambushed by a swarm of ysaqquan toads that silently awaited him on the lower flight. His bones are randomly

scattered across the landing, but his entire skeleton is present. A PC who examines the bones can determine, with a successful DC 12 Medicine check, that they have been gnawed by many tiny teeth. Additionally, a gold ring can be found with successful DC 15 Perception check. A successful DC 10 Society check to recall knowledge will identify the ring's seal as that of the Eber City Watch. The inside of the band is etched with "Watchman, Junior Grade C. Hasten".

There are nine paintings hung along the stairwells and around the landing that show different scenes from ordinary life in Eber. Three of the paintings contain hidden self-portraits.

Urvitus: Urvitus noted the skeleton upon his arrival at the house and wishes it to remain undisturbed until identification and a proper burial can be arranged. He permits the PCs to carefully examine the bones, however, and is overjoyed if the ring is discovered and identified. He takes it from the PCs but promises an additional reward as thanks, which they can choose from among the house's contents. Use your discretion in what Urvitus will allow in exchange but note that anything that will potentially identify the occupant as his ancestor will not be permitted.

A9. UPPER HALL

Characters ascending to the hall from the stairs can see into the drawing room (A10) through the open door. The drawing room is dimly lit but characters with low-light vision, darkvision, or who succeed on a DC 15 Perception check see Sir Urvitus standing in that room with his back to them (see A10 for more information).

More paintings decorate the burgundy papered walls of this upper hall. A rug patterned with tessellating shapes in various shades of green stretches along the hall's length between two archways obscured by thick, burgundy curtains. Single doors stand closed in the west and south walls, while the northernmost of two in the east wall is opened into a room beyond. On a small, circular stand in the northeast corner, opposite a carved wooden balustrade that overlooks a stairwell, an iron candlestick bears a lone candle with a flickering flame.

The four paintings in this hall, one of which contains a hidden self-portrait, depict landscapes surrounding Eber. The rug is of Virik design*. The candle is an everburning candle.

Behind the curtain at the north end of the hall, a lateral corridor runs between the master bedchamber (A18) and

the salon (A17) with another curtained archway opposite leading to the library (A15). The door at the end of the hall beyond the southern curtain leads out onto the front balcony (A13) but it is *locked* (Athletics/Theivery DC 32); its key is in the observatory (A20).

Urvitus: Urvitus has already been in this area, having passed through to reach A10. He does not have anything to add to its exploration.

A10. DRAWING ROOM

The first time the PCs enter the room, they find Sir Urvitus here. He is standing motionless, staring at a full-length portrait that is hung in the center of the east wall between two draped windows, an unlit lantern in his hand. He has his back to the door and he partially obscures the portrait.

Richly upholstered couches and chairs, arranged along with small side tables upon an arabesque carpet of gold and crimson, dominate the center of this drawing room. A well-stocked cellaret nestles against the northwest corner, and tall glass-doored bookcases stand to the southwest. Framed paintings decorate the room's burgundy-papered walls, and an elaborate wooden chandelier, from which several candles illuminate the drawing room with dim flickering light, spreads like the roots of a tree beneath a coffered ceiling.

The five paintings in this room are all unidentified portraits; four are of Wallix family members that Eb painted from memory, and the full-length piece on the east wall is a self-portrait. The family portraits, which include Barivoren, Reliman, their father (Eb's brother) Voren, and Rocshan (Eb's sister) are all grotesque caricatures depicted to appear simple-minded, a reflection of the artist's disdain for them that can be realized with a successful DC 15 Crafting, Art Lore, or Perception check.

The self-portrait depicts a gaunt, old man wearing the refined clothing of the Courghais gentry of yesteryear, an expression of superiority and contempt on his wizened features. His advanced age gives the lie to a head of luxurious dark curls that fall to his velvet-mantled shoulders as naught but a wig kept in place by a finely wrought silver circlet and bejeweled diadem. He poses in front of a desk in what appears to be a library, his left hand obscured behind his back and his right hand resting upon the head of a cane, with a signet ring evident on the little finger. A successful DC 25 Society check will identify the seal as House Wallix, a noble family from Courghais who disappeared in the years following the Foerdewaith Wars of Succession around 150 years ago.

* Virik is the adjectival demonym of the Viroeni people. See page 50 of *LL7: The Blight: Richard Pett's Crooked City* by Frog God Games.

The bookcases contain 20 books that comprise plays both comedic and tragic, volumes of poetry of varying quality but which mostly focus on sagas and epics, biographies of the lives and deeds of famous adventurers, and a scattering of texts from local religions. The cellaret contains bottles of a variety of hard liquors along with goblets of metal and glass. The carpet is of Ashurian make, and there are 5 *everburning candles* in the chandelier.

Sir Urvitus is standing transfixed by the painting, the result of an initial fascination effect from the *Codex Ibnathi* that has now faded but from which Sir Urvitus has transitioned into a natural, trance-like state. He will remain so entranced for another 1d4 minutes after the PCs discover him unless he is snapped out of it. Any reasonable action to break Sir Urvitus's trance will work, including touching him, moving into his line of sight, or even shouting at him. Simply talking to him will not, however. A *detect magic* or similar spell or effect will discover no evidence of magic at work here; the initial magic was weak and has long gone.

SIR URVITUS VOREN OF TOURNE **CREATURE 4**

see **Appendix B** (page 47)
Initiative Perception +12

Urvitus: When his attention is gained, Sir Urvitus quickly composes himself and apologizes for being so distracted by the portrait, claiming that he was entranced by its exquisite workmanship and detail. In truth, he also believes that it could be a depiction of Old Eb (see below), and he was fascinated by what he thinks could be his first detailed sight of his ancestor. The subtlety of the fascination effect is such that it seems completely natural to Sir Urvitus, and he will meet suggestions to the contrary with abrupt skepticism unless presented with evidence.

If asked why he entered the house alone, Sir Urvitus explains that he found the front door open, and then heard the creak of floorboards on the second floor. He assumed that thieves had entered and went in to investigate immediately. He is not positive that the creaking floorboards were caused by footsteps but has no idea why the front door would be open, and he openly wonders if there might be someone hiding in one of the unexplored rooms.

If asked what he has been doing since he entered, Sir Urvitus looks thoughtful for a moment before explaining that he has been captivated by the house and many of the paintings that he has discovered within, and he marvels at their craftsmanship. He can also provide a brief summary of

the areas he explored (**A2**, **A8**, and **A9**) on his way to this room.

PCs suspicious of the painting and the apparent effect it has on Sir Urvitus receive no agreement or sympathy from the knight. He brooks no damage being done to any of the paintings or other furnishings as a result of simple speculation of their role in any claimed supernatural occurrences and dismisses any such concerns as superstitious at worst and unlikely at best. Sir Urvitus recognizes the value of the various works of art, and he believes that the true source of any haunting in the house must be identified and dealt with directly, without resorting to the unnecessary destruction of valuable property.

Once all questions are answered, Sir Urvitus joins the party and assists them in the rest of the exploration.

Disturbance: The first time a character returns to this room without Sir Urvitus, they once again see him standing and staring at the portrait — even if they know he is elsewhere in the house. This time, however, as soon as a character tries to attract his attention or moves to try to gain a view of his face, his head slowly turns toward them, rotating at an unnatural angle to do so. When the character sees the figure's face, it is not that of Sir Urvitus,



but of the wizened old man in the portrait, his features twisted into a predatory, malicious leer. In that instant, the character also notices that the portrait has changed, from a depiction of the old man, to a figure dressed in Sir Urvitus' armor, its face scratched out as though by claws. The figure then immediately disappears and the portrait returns to normal. As the PC experiences this disturbance, they are momentarily aware of an overpowering malignance enveloping them, and a noxious, charnel stench that fades as quickly as it threatened to turn their stomach. The PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

Story Award: If a character experiences the disturbance in this room, award the PCs 10 XP each.

A11. EAST GUESTROOM

A large wooden bedframe and mattress is positioned in the center of this room. A writing desk with a simple chair stands against the east wall near a polished stone fireplace in the northeast corner with a triple-branched candelabrum bearing unlit candles on the mantel. A wardrobe and chest of drawers stand against the west wall, and five paintings hang upon the walls.

The five paintings in this room are of Eber rooftop cityscapes, one of which has a self-portrait hidden in the window of one of the buildings. The wardrobe and drawers contain nothing but clothing hangers and old mothballs. A drawer in the desk contains a writing kit.

Urvitus: Urvitus spends a few moments admiring the paintings in this room and even manages to catch sight of the shadowy figure hidden in the painting bearing the self-portrait. He points it out when he finds it, thinking it just an interesting detail that the Anonymous Artist included but wonders aloud if it might be a self-portrait.

A12. BATH & PRIVY

The floor and lower walls of this small room are tiled. It contains a wooden bath and privy, along with a couple of wooden buckets and a mop. A mirror is mounted to the west wall.

A13. FRONT BALCONY

The front balcony is overgrown with the same local white-flowered vines that grow over the porch (A1) but is otherwise empty. The door into the house is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); its key in the observatory (A20).

Treasure: A close examination of the exterior wall here can determine with a successful DC 20 Nature check that one of the mosses is a rare species prized for its alchemical properties. It is worth 20 sp if sold to an alchemist or herbalist within 3 days of harvesting.

A14. WEST GUESTROOM

A wide wooden bedframe with a stripped mattress is pushed against the south wall of this bedroom. A writing desk and chair stand beneath a window in the west wall, opposite a door in the northeast corner. A metal bucket of blackened fireplace tools sits next to a stone hearth with an iron mesh fireguard in the middle of the west wall. A wardrobe and chest of drawers stand against the north wall. Six paintings hang around the walls. Unlit candlesticks sit on the desk and on the south end of the mantelpiece.

The six paintings in this room are of various streets in Eber as they looked in Eb's time. Two have self-portraits in them. A mirror is attached to the interior side of one wardrobe door, but the wardrobe and drawers contain nothing else but clothes hangers. A drawer in the desk contains materials for writing, including inkpens, ink wells (long dried), a blotter, and several sheets of fine vellum.

Disturbance: As the PCs first leave this room, the PC with the highest Performance skill (or the character with the highest Charisma otherwise) hears a few isolated notes coming from the harpsichord in the parlor (A3) below. This is swiftly followed by an urge for that PC to close the door and remain in the room alone to listen to the music. If he does so, after a few seconds, the music from the harpsichord resumes and a strange, haunting fugue plays — audible only to the PC alone in the room — for 1 minute. The music has recurrent passages of a captivating melody, but it immediately ends if the door to the parlor is opened. Characters who descend to the parlor while a character in this room hears the music find the doors to that room closed and the parlor empty.

Urvitus: If a character informs Sir Urvitus that they hear music from the parlor and of an urge to remain alone in the room to listen to it, he is intrigued and recommends that they do so while the rest of the group stands guard outside. If a PC wants to go down to the parlor to investigate, Sir Urvitus encourages them to descend quietly and remain outside the parlor so as not to disturb the musician until they're informed that the music has finished. Once the music has ended, Sir Urvitus is eager to understand what the PC heard and suggests that they try to hum it or, better still, play it on the harpsichord below. He is similarly eager to discover the musician and so advises another visit to the parlor.

A15. LIBRARY

Three free-standing tall bookcases in the west section of this library complement floor-to-ceiling shelving along its west and south walls. A desk of stained wood with an upholstered chair is pushed against the east wall, and a comfortable armchair is positioned in a canted bay window beyond, the view from which is obscured by leaves and vines that have grown over its windows and glass-paneled door from outside. A painting hangs on the wall over the desk.

The bookcases and shelves contain several hundred books that comprise dictionaries of 13 modern languages, encyclopedias from a number of noted academicians of varying expertise, and treatises on topics including architecture and engineering, carpentry, stonemasonry, weather, geography, medicine, herbalism, history, nobility, music and composition (which include instructional manuals for learning the harpsichord and other instruments), botany, and zoology.

The single painting in the room depicts a view of the Royal College from within its grounds. A self-portrait of Eb hides among a crowd of students.

The glass-paneled door in the alcove leads out onto the rear balcony (A16) but it is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); its key is in the observatory (A20). The windows, however, can be opened. The plant life that grows on the rear balcony and verandah has grown up against the balcony door and both windows making it difficult to see beyond. PCs who spend at least a minute trying to gain a view of the exterior and who succeed at a DC 20 Perception check see that the plants outside bear small white flowers, all of which are closed — an unusual behavior in the daytime as revealed by a successful DC 12 Nature check. Opening or breaking the door or windows will elicit a response from the creature in area A16.

Urvitus: Urvitus is delighted to find this intact library and will immediately begin thumbing through the works present to get an idea of its value.

Treasure: A long, careful search through the library will discover 21 books of some value. They are worth 1d4 x 5 sp each.

A16. REAR BALCONY (MODERATE 3)

The white-flowered vines that grow over the verandah (A7) continue up and over the rear balcony in a dense mat of greenery. The door into the house is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); its key in the observatory (A20).

The white-flowered vines intermingle with those of a plant creature called the **wallixtabay**. Once a normal xtabay, over the years, while it has fed on local birds and other wildlife, it has been sustained and controlled by the power of the *Codex Ibnathi* and has slowly absorbed the influence of the haunting presence in the house. It has gained a semblance of intelligence and has slowly grown to match the surrounding flora in appearance, but the petals of its flowers still bear strange face-like patterns. However, the patterns now resemble the leering visage of a horrible old man — an old man the PCs may recognize from the portrait in the drawing room (A10). Additionally, creatures affected by the monster's pollen experience nightmares from Old Eb's tormented spirit (see **Fear, Disturbances, and Nightmares**).

WALLIXTABAY

CREATURE 3

N LARGE PLANT

Perception +10; low-light vision, tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +8, Stealth +11

Str +1, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** -3, **Wis** +3, **Cha** -1

AC 19; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +8

HP 45; **Weaknesses** slashing 3; **Resistances** acid 6

Speed 5 feet, climb 5 feet

Melee ♦ vine +11 (acid, agile, finesse, reach 10 feet),

Damage 1d12+3 bludgeoning plus 1d6 acid

Devour ♦♦♦ While a creature is under the effects of the wallixtabay's soporific pollen, the plant may occupy the same square as the sleeping creature and slowly sap the life from it. Every round the wallixtabay uses this ability, the affected creature must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or be drained 1. This feeding is curiously painless, and normally isn't enough to waken a foe put to sleep by the plant. Each round this feeding continues, the sleeping victim can attempt a new DC 20 Will save to awaken.

Root ♦ (concentrate) Until the next time it acts, the wallixtabay appears to be a normal plant. It has an automatic result of 31 on Deception checks and DCs to pass as a non-creature plant.

Soporific Pollen ♦♦ (incapacitation, inhalation, primal, sleep); The wallixtabay releases a cloud of sleep-inducing pollen in a 10-foot radius emanation. Each creature within the cloud

must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or fall unconscious for 1d3 minutes (3 minutes on a critical failure), during which time they receive no Perception check to wake up and experience revelatory nightmares (see Development). A creature that succeeds on the Will save cannot be affected by the wallixtabay's soporific pollen for 24 hours.

Treasure: While the wallixtabay has caught and consumed a vast number of birds and other small wildlife over the years, its ability to break down and completely absorb flesh and bone means that there is little evidence of that fact. However, a few years ago, a brave halfling thief dared to defy the house's reputation and climbed up to the rear balcony to attempt to rob the house of its valuables. All that now remains of the plucky adventurer can be found scattered beneath the plant if it is destroyed and a DC 17 Perception check is made. The halfling's belongings include a set of infiltrator thieves' tools, a short sword, 2 daggers, a jade cat, a silver belt buckle with a hidden compartment (Perception DC 25) containing a standard skeleton key, and a scattering of 7 gp, 12 sp, and 8 cp.

A17. SALON

A DC 20 Athletics check is required to force open the south door to this room as furniture has been piled behind it.

This room looks like it was a salon, but its once-fine furnishings are now stacked haphazardly in the southwest corner, blocking a door there. The mantel of a fireplace in the north wall bears a three-branched candelabrum, its three lit candles casting long, flickering shadows across a number of easels along the south wall that hold paintings of varying sizes and stages of completion. An array of artist's supplies and paraphernalia are scattered about, and the walls, floor, and ceiling bear paint splatters here and there.

The furniture stacked against the south wall includes a black walnut writing desk and chair, a long divan embroidered with floral patterns with three matching cushions, two upholstered, fan-backed armchairs, a rolled-up carpet of Virik design (see footnote, page 18), an assortment of small side tables, and a cherry wood spinning wheel. The artist's paraphernalia includes painting supplies and tools, a pestle and mortar, a finely ground hand-held mirror, and a variety of powdered

pigments — many of them quite rare. There are also several jars of mixed paints, most of which have dried out but some of which are still well-sealed and usable. One small crate packed with straw holds three dark red leathery eggs roughly the size of a fist. A successful DC 26 Occultism check identifies them as void-stirge* eggs, an extremely rare and valuable source of egg tempera. The lit candles are *everburning candles*.

There are nine unfinished paintings in this room, three each on primed canvas, primed vellum, and paper, and all pinned to panels on the easels or propped up against the walls. They depict portions of weird landscapes and bizarre creatures with charcoal sketching loosely suggesting what may have been to come. While they are unfinished, their state of incompleteness makes them no less valuable to collectors of the Anonymous Artist of Eber's work.

Urvitus: Urvitus is instantly smitten with the unfinished artwork. He recognizes it as the work of the Anonymous Artist immediately and becomes very excited by this find. He will try to ensure the protection of the art from any damage.

Treasure: A successful DC 15 Crafting or Art Lore check confirms that 9 sealed flasks of oil paint are flammable and can be treated like alchemist's fire if ignited (taking one action) and thrown (taking an additional action). The painting supplies and tools in the room are equivalent to two sets of masterwork artisan's tools for paintings. The pigments are worth a total of 1,300 sp for their combined rarity, and the void-stirge eggs could be sold to an artist or collector for 300 sp each.

A18. MASTER BEDROOM (SEVERE 3)

The bedroom is dimly illuminated by three candles in a triple candelabrum atop the mantel of a stone hearth in the northeast corner. Ancient ashes fill the grate behind a meshed iron fireguard, and pokers and other blackened fireplace tools hang from hooks at one side. A large bed beneath a window in the north wall is unmade, its blankets tossed to one side. A long, iron-bound chest sits along the foot of the bed, and an armoire and chest of drawers stand against the south wall. A padded armchair sits in a bay window to the west. Paintings hung on the walls around the bed and over the fireplace display vivid, warm colors that compliment those of a luxurious, deep carpet beneath the bed and chest.

* Void-stirges are aberrations of the vastnesses of outer space where they soar through the darkness between worlds beholden to unknown powers. On some worlds they are known as byakhee, but that name is not Open Content and so cannot be assigned to them here. For more information on void-stirges, see **AoE4: Legend of the Burning Star** or **AoE5: Race for Shataakh-Uulm**.

Uncommon**Martial Weapon**

Price	Damage	Bulk	Hands	Group	Weapon Traits
5 gp	1d6 P	1	1	Sword	Deadly d8, disarm, finesse, versatile B

This slender light blade lies within a wooden container that serves as both its scabbard and hiding place. You can use the undrawn sword cane to deal bludgeoning damage. A Stealth check to Conceal an Object can be made with a +4 item bonus to effectively disguise a sword cane as a walking stick.

The walnut armoire is beautifully carved with a branching design, and has a full-length mirror mounted on the inside of its left-hand door. It, along with its matching chest of drawers, contains expensive men's clothing, including footwear and a variety of wigs that were fashionable among the Courghais nobility some two centuries ago. A dark wooden cane with a steel pommel shaped like the mantle of a squid is propped against the headboard. Careful examination reveals it to be a +1 *sword cane*, the tentacles and arms of the squid delicately engraved along the length of its blade; it is worth 750 sp. The lit candles are *everburning candles*.

The door in the south wall leads to a staircase that ascends to the attic. It and the door into the master retreat (A19) are locked but not physically *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); their keys, along with that of the chest, are in the observatory (A20).

Disturbance: The first PC to view his reflection in the armoire's mirror suddenly notices that it has a terrified expression on its face, and its eyes are weeping blood. A figure stands obscured behind the PC's reflected self, the dark curls of a wig falling across its shoulders. In that moment, the PC is acutely aware of an evil presence directly behind them, along with the nauseating odor of rotten meat. If the PC turns away from the mirror, the vision disappears and they see nothing behind them, but if they continue looking at the mirror, the figure comes into view; it is the same horrible old man depicted in the drawing room portrait (A10) but behind him they see the bed made, with an open book and a wand laid atop it. The vision then fades. In either case, the PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

Urvitus: Urvitus recognizes this as Old Eb's master bedroom and wants to take the time to thoroughly search

and catalog the room's contents before venturing elsewhere in the house.

Treasure: Concealed beneath the blankets on the bed is a book by Cikzin Qiao written in her native Xaon* and entitled *Uncoiling Mortality*. It is a dense, theoretical treatise mixed with occult teachings that advances a convoluted and recursive argument — virtually impenetrable to anyone not trained in Xi'en philosophy — that mortality and its confinement of the mind is the result of an esoteric extradimensional parasite. Various “proofs” of this entity's existence are shown along with a ritual in which the final act of suicide results in the expulsion of the parasite and an escape from death. If any of the PCs shows an interest in this book, Sir Urvitus gifts it to them upon satisfactory completion of their contract. It is worth 100 sp.

A PC who searches the bed with a successful DC 20 Perception check can also find a *wand of unseen servant* fallen between the mattress and the bedframe.

The chest is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32) and **trapped**. It contains men's jewelry, gems, and precious stones worth 1,750 sp along with 2 pp, 38 gp, and a leather scroll case containing the deed to the Old House under the name of “Elling Walls”.

Trap: The chest is trapped with a summoning rune. If it is triggered, a hell hound appears and attacks the party. If it uses its breath weapon in the bedroom, the carpet and bedclothes may be set alight. The flames fail to find purchase in the dusty carpet and quickly go out leaving blackened patches, but the blankets continue to burn. If the fire is not extinguished with 5 rounds, the book concealed beneath them is destroyed, though the fire does not spread beyond the bed.

*Xaon is the language of the Xi'en Hegemony on the western shore of Akados. See page 56 of *LL7: The Blight: Richard Pett's Crooked City* by Frog God Games.

SUMMONING RUNE

HAZARD 3**COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP****Stealth** +10 (trained)

Description An invisible rune on the chest creates an invisible, spherical magical sensor with a 10-foot radius.

Disable Thievery DC 20 (trained) to erase the rune, or *dispel magic* (3rd level; counteract DC 18) to counteract the rune

Summon Monster \curvearrowright (occult, conjuration, summon); **Trigger** A creature damages the chest or tries to open it, such as by trying to pick the lock. **Effect** A hell hound is summoned adjacent to the chest. The hell hound rolls initiative and remains for 2d6 rounds, after which the spell ends and the hell hound disappears. The hell hound also disappears if someone disables the trap before the duration expires. The hell hound can use 3 actions each round and can use reactions, unlike most summoned creatures.

Reset The trap resets each day at dusk.

HELL HOUND

CREATURE 3

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) “Hell Hound”

Initiative Perception +9; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Story Award: If the PCs see Old Eb, the book, and the wand in the disturbance, award them 20 XP.

ATTIC

The ceiling throughout the attic is 10 feet high at its central peak, sloping down to the north and south, and meeting those walls around 5 feet up. Heavy timber joists run throughout the top 3 feet of space. All windows are locked.

A19. MASTER RETREAT

The door in the south wall leads to a staircase that descends to the second floor. It and the door into the master bedroom (A18) are *locked* but not physically *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); their keys are in the observatory (A20).

A pair of upholstered armchairs mark this garret space with sloped ceilings as a private sitting room; one is in the center of the room facing a small hearth and one faces outward in a bay window to

the west. A small side table with a book atop it stands next to the central chair, both positioned on a finely woven rug of tessellating blue patterns that covers most of the wooden floorboards. A short stand bears a 2-foot diameter, painted wooden globe at the side of a window in the north wall. Low shelving packed with a variety of books, scroll cases, and loosely bound parchments and papers stretches along the west and south walls. Doors stand in the south and east walls, the latter ajar. Black iron candelabra on the shelves and mantelpiece bear single candles whose dim light illuminates several colorful paintings hung on the walls.

There are five candelabra around the room, each containing a single black everburning candle.

The globe is constructed from two overlapping hemispheres that portray the known world as of around 150 years ago and can be rotated around a tilted axis. Anyone who searches the device can discover a concealed switch (Perception DC 12) that unlocks the hemispheres, allowing them to be rotated apart to reveal a cellaret containing a bottle of brandy, a bottle of whiskey, two wooden goblets, and two vials of gray liquid which each contains a single dose of ysaquan venom (see **Appendix C**).

The book on the side table is detailed in “Treasure” below. The rest of the texts in this room are concerned with the more esoteric foci of Old Eb’s studies, covering specific elements within the domains of arcana, occultism, the planes, religion, and obscure languages, and they are written in a variety of modern, ancient, and extraplanar languages.

The eleven paintings around the room each contain a detailed depiction of an extraplanar entity. A successful Occultism check at the indicated DC will identify a voidstirge (see **A17**; DC 24 and anyone who has experienced the nightmare in **Appendix A: Handout 1F** will recognize it as the same creature), a denizen of Leng^{B2} (DC 26), a mi-go^{B4} (DC 24), an urhag^{B6} (DC 20), a zoog^{B3} (DC 17), and an ysaquua (see **Appendix C**: cannot be identified with an Occultism check but anyone who has seen Kyssogga in the parlor disturbance [A3] or in one of the nightmares [see **Appendix A: Handout 1E**] will recognize it as the same creature).

A successful Religion check at the indicated DC will identify a cacodaemon^{B2} (DC 15) and anyone who has experienced the nightmare in **Appendix A: Handout 1D** will recognize it as the same creature), a cythnigot qliploth^{B2} (DC 15), an espilil sahkil^{B5} (DC 15), and a zebub accuser devil^{B2} (DC 18).

The library in this room can be used to help identify all of the creatures in the paintings apart from the ysaqqua, on which it has no information. Using the library in this way takes 1d3 x 10 minutes per check and allows the skill to be used untrained with a +4 circumstance bonus.

Note: Many of the above creatures have *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* statistics but do not yet exist in *Pathfinder Second Edition*. The superscript notations above point to the resources where such creatures can be found, and the lore of these alien beings can be used easily in any campaign even if the PCs do not directly encounter them.

Urvitus: Urvitus is fascinated by the paintings and books, quickly discovering that the books may be used to identify the strange creatures in the paintings. He would like to spend a bit of time perusing the books to do just that but will not press if the PCs refuse.

Treasure: The book on the side table is written in Old Suli* and is titled *Stirring the Dreamtea*. The author, Imru Halabassi, describes the use of herbal and spiced teas to induce lucid dreaming states, claiming that different such infusions provide access to different regions of the Dreamlands. It is face-up and opened to a section that discusses islands in the dreamsea. If any of the PCs shows an interest in this book, Sir Urvitus gifts it to them upon satisfactory completion of their contract. It is worth 200 sp.

A20. OBSERVATORY (SEVERE 3)

This attic room is covered in dark paintings of constellations mounted around its walls and upon its sloped ceiling, with scattered stars and colored fields provide sparse points of light against backgrounds of deep purple and black. Two telescopes, elaborately constructed from polished wood and brass, are mounted on rotating pedestals, one in a wide bay window in the north wall, and the other at the easternmost of two south windows. Several tables stand against the walls, all cluttered with charts, mathematical and scientific tools and devices, recordings of observations, and various writing implements. In the center of the observatory, an overturned stool and a ring of keys lie beneath the frayed end of a rope dangling down from the rafters.

The paintings and charts are seemingly worthless but the other astromantic** equipment on the tables includes

some finely crafted items that could be of some value. The keyring holds keys for the front and back doors (A1, A7), the cellar chute (see A1a), the front and rear balconies (A13, A16), the door to the attic in the master bedroom (A18), the master retreat (A19), the study (A21), the wine cellar (A24), and the cell and the chain's padlock (A25), making 11 keys in total. Touching it, or the rope that hangs from the topmost beam down to 8 feet above, triggers the room's **haunt**.

Haunt: This room is where, following an epiphany of exquisite insanity, Old Eb's explorations into forbidden knowledge culminated in his suicide by hanging. At the moment of his demise, the Codex Ibnathi ripped the spirit from his body and trapped his evil soul within the house, after which Kyssogga undertook the laborious process of removing his body for storage in the cellar below (see B23 in Chapter 2). Nevertheless, a fragment of Old Eb's psyche manifests here as a haunt.

SUICIDAL EPIPHANY

HAZARD 4

HAUNT

Stealth DC 23 (trained). A successful Perception check notices a shadow cast on the wall as if a body still hung from the rope in the center of the room.

Description Splinters of an insane mind that haunt the observatory manifest ghostly nooses and try to force creatures to re-enact their suicide.

Disable Three successful DC 21 trained Occultism or DC 23 trained Religion checks (in any combination) made within 20 feet of the frayed rope disrupt the haunt for 1 day. A failure triggers the quietus (if not yet active) and negates one existing success. A success with both skills identifies that burning the frayed rope completely to ashes and then dissolving them in holy water may permanently destroy it.

A noose vanishes if it sustains 8 or more damage. The haunt is disrupted for 1 day if all nooses vanish.

Ghostly Noose AC 10; **Fort** +10; **Ref** +2; **Will** +12

Ghostly Noose HP 8; **Immunities** critical

* Old Suli is the language of the ancient tribes of eastern Akados in the Plains of Sull region spoken some 7,500 years ago and largely now extinct. See page 18 of *LL4: Cults of the Sundered Kingdoms* by Frog God Games.

**Astromancy is a magical art combining astrology with the physical laws of astronomy. See page 197 of *LL7: The Blight: Richard Pett's Crooked City* by Frog God Games.

hits, object immunities, precision damage;
Resistances all damage 5 (except force, ghost touch, or positive; double resistance vs. non-magical)

Quietus \curvearrowright (death, emotion, fear, mental, occult);

Trigger A creature touches or moves the keyring or the frayed rope. **Effect** One ghostly noose per living creature in a 20-foot radius of the frayed rope drops from the rafters, and the haunt takes control of those creatures, forcing them to hang themselves.

All creatures must attempt a DC 21 Will save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target begins to slip a noose around its neck but suddenly regains control of itself and the noose vanishes; the target becomes frightened 1.

Failure The target slips a noose around its neck. The noose tightens and hauls the target off the ground; the target becomes frightened 2 and must begin holding its breath. When the target can no longer hold its breath, it falls unconscious and begins to suffocate**.

Critical Failure The target attempts a DC 20 Fortitude save. If the target succeeds, it is subject to the effects of a failure instead. If the target fails, it is subject to the effects of a failure but the number of rounds it can hold its breath for is reduced by 5 (minimum 0).

** See "Drowning and Suffocating" in Chapter 9 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook (Second Edition)*

Disturbance: Any PC who is suffocated to unconsciousness by the haunt recalls a specific vision if they subsequently recover, rather than one of the usual nightmares of this place. This vision is that they are standing on the shore of a vast lake beneath a cloudless night sky. The air is quiet and still, and the lake's surface is a mirror unmarred by the slightest ripple. They can feel the presence of someone — or something — standing behind them; the hair on the back of their neck is standing up and their skin crawling, but they cannot turn around to see who or what it is. The more they are unable to ignore this presence, the greater their terror became. Suddenly, they felt the presence move into the sky above the lake, where the water at the lake's center rose up toward it in a liquid cylinder of perfectly reflected stars. The PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or become frightened 2 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

Urvitus: Sir Urvitus notices both the whispering and the emotional despair as soon as the haunt is triggered but does not initially realize what it is. Nevertheless, he is unaffected by the haunt's effect, and attempts to rescue affected PCs. Once the haunt is defeated, he encourages the PCs to find a way to permanently destroy it (e.g., by burning the rope).

Treasure: Valuable equipment in the room includes sterling artisan's tools for the creation of astromantic charts (incorporating an astrolabe and two sextants) and a fine spyglass. The two mounted telescopes are worth 300 gp each but are bulky and permanently affixed to the floor. Removing them will require considerable effort, and Urvitus will not hear of it. An obsidian globe suspended within a silver frame sits on a table against the east wall. Specks of silver are seemingly randomly distributed over its surface and within. Some constellations of these specks bear a resemblance to those in some of the unknown star charts around the room. This item is worth 70 gp, and Sir Urvitus gives it to the PCs as an additional reward if they permanently destroy the haunt.

Story Award: If any PC experienced the disturbance, award the party 60 XP.

A21. STUDY (SEVERE 2)

A flickering violet light suffuses this garret room. A long writing desk of stained wood stands before a large bay window in the east wall. In the center of the desk, a strange leaden candelabrum with curving branches seems to writhe in the quivering luminescence emitted by the numerous black candles it holds. More candelabra stand on wooden cabinets to either side of the door as well as on the mantel of a curiously carved stone hearth to the north. A painting hangs above the triangular firebox, which is filled with an inky darkness unperturbed by the violaceous light. Heavy black drapes are drawn across a window to the south. At each side of the bay window, paintings hang above square iron coffer.

On the desk is Eb's grimoire, *Reflections on Hali* (see sidebar). Inkpens, pots of colored inks, and a blotter pad are neatly arranged around it, along with several sheets of paper and vellum beneath an irregularly shaped, spiked paperweight of silvery metal. Closer examination of the large candelabrum on the desk reveals that it is fashioned like a squid, the pedestal its curved mantle and the branches its arms and tentacles. It holds 13 black *everburning candles*, each with a violet flame.

The two paintings depict views of alien landscapes. In one, a forlorn village huddles at the edge of a wasteland beneath jagged foothills that rise to towering mountains in the distance. Traders, their silhouettes concealed by robes, treat with hunched and twisted humanoids that emerge from the huts, while huge, reptilian winged horses with bird-like beaks look on. In the other, jagged slopes of a shattered caldera jut from a dark sea, a strange architecture of colonnades, minarets, and spiraling steps lining their flanks above black-sailed ships in the waves below. A successful DC 20 trained Occultism check identifies these as depictions of the Plateau of Leng. The third painting is detailed in “Treasure” below.

The cabinets contain a large supply of material components and foci for spellcasting and arcane research. These includes several small boxes containing locks of hair from *scrying* targets (all of whom are now long dead) and several jars of preserved organs, eggs, and embryos which a successful DC 24 Occultism check will identify as coming from a void-stirge (see A17).

The stone fireplace is carved with eldritch symbols that a DC 20 Arcana, Occultism, or Religion check reveals as linked to the conjuration and worship of the Outer Gods and Great Old Ones. The angles of the stonemasonry create overlapping areas of shadow into the firebox. If the magic is detected, a DC 22 Occultism check can identify a conjuration metamagic effect that doubles the duration of creatures summoned into its space. If the firebox is illuminated or a creature with darkvision searches it, a successful DC 22 Perception check discovers a rune that can be erased with a successful DC 22 Thievery check, or counteracted with *dispel magic* (5th level, DC 20) to negate this summoning gird.

The iron coffers are exceptionally well-made, large enough to hold a cubic foot of goods, and worth 20 gp each. Both are **trapped** and each contains 12 of Old Eb’s research journals: the northernmost covering the years from 3365 I.R. to 3376 I.R. and the southernmost covering from 3377 I.R. to 3384 I.R., with the remaining four unbound and blank. The nature and content of these journals is up to the GM but note that Sir Urvitus does not grant permission for the PCs to attempt to decipher them (see “Urvitus” below).

Traps: Each of the iron coffers is trapped with a summoning rune. If triggered, the monster flies out of the black triangular gulf in the fireplace to attack.



SUMMONING RUNE**HAZARD 3**

COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP**Stealth** +10 (trained)

Description An invisible rune on an iron coffer creates an invisible, spherical magical sensor with a 10-foot radius.

Disable Thievery DC 20 (expert) to erase the rune, or *dispel magic* (3rd level; counteract DC 18) to counteract the rune.

Summon Monster \curvearrowright (occult, conjuration, summon); **Trigger** A creature moves, damages, or opens the coffer. **Effect** A monster is summoned which crawls out of the black triangular gulf of the firebox; the north rune summons a grothlut, and the south rune summons a web lurker. The monster rolls initiative and remains for 2d6 rounds (4d6 rounds if the summoning gird is still active), after which the spell ends and the monster disappears. The monster also disappears if someone disables the trap before the duration

expires. The monster can use 3 actions each round and can use reactions, unlike most summoned creatures.

Reset The trap resets each day at dusk.

GROTHLUT **CREATURE 3**

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) “Fleshwarp, Grothlut”

Initiative Perception +5; darkvision

WEB LURKER **CREATURE 3**

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) “Web Lurker”

Initiative Perception +10; darkvision

Urvitus: Sir Urvitus does not grant permission to decipher the journals — he wants to understand them and his uncle first before deciding whether or not to share with anyone else.

Treasure: The valuable components and foci in the closets include a crystal lens worth 50 gp, 3 pieces of onyx worth 40 gp each, gold dust worth 10 gp, and 4 vials of lead-based ink worth 5 gp each. The third painting shows a self-portrait of Old Eb in the style of a mask. This portrait mask is described in **Appendix E**, as is the magical tome called *Reflections on Hali*. The strange paperweight is a cold iron ingot worth 15 gp.

Story Award: If a PC identifies and uses the portrait mask, award the party 30 XP.

BASEMENT

The ceiling throughout the basement is 10 feet high. Floors are dry, hard-packed earth. Walls are plaster over brick, marred with many water stains and speckles of mold growth. Unless otherwise detailed, there is no light source other than whatever the PCs carry.

A22. STORAGE CELLAR

This large, cobwebbed basement space is supported by two brick columns at its center. Logs and chopped wood are stacked in the northwest corner, with a hatchet and woodsaw laid on a large, score-marked stump between the western column and the wall. In the southwest corner, a wooden dust-screen door stands open to reveal a small mound of coal piled beneath a chute that slopes up to the west. A bucket lies on its side next to the coal pile, and

a shovel and brush are propped against the west wall nearby. A stack of chairs, crates, chests, and other items of furniture are stacked in the northeast corner.

All the items in this room are mundane. The crates and chests contain old household supplies and tools including a mattock, sheets, linens, and the like. Other than the tools and a 20-foot coil of hempen rope — one end frayed as though roughly sawn through — nothing of use or value can be found here. A DC 25 Perception check, however, does turn up an old portrait wrapped in a grimy dust cloth. The painting is old and in poor shape, cracked from drying and yet speckled with mildew from the damp. It depicts a regal, middle-aged man in fine clothing. A DC 22 Society check reveals that the portrait depicts Coram Poer, the original builder of the house who was lost at sea nearly 250 years ago.

Urvitus: Urvitus quickly guesses who is in the portrait even if the PCs don't and decides to keep it as a piece of historical memorabilia.

A23. ROOT CELLAR

Dusty, dirt-lined shelving covers the cobwebbed walls of this musty space suggesting it may once have been a root cellar. Pallid fungal growths, like long etiolated toadstools, protrude from within some of the shelves.

There is nothing of interest here. A DC 15 Nature check determines that, while certainly unusually large and possibly unique, the fungi are harmless specimens. Originally there was an archway to the south, but it was sealed off and plastered over at the time of Old Eb's death. It is indistinguishable from the surrounding walls and cannot be discovered as anything other than normal for this portion of the adventure. It is further detailed in **Chapter 2**.

A24. WINE CELLAR

The door to this room is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32); its key is in the observatory (**A20**).

The smell of vinegar is strong in here. The room's walls are stacked with small wooden barrels, stoppered clay pots, and a few partially filled racks of corked glass and wooden bottles. A few wineskins and amphorae hang from thick cords threaded through small iron hooks embedded in the ceiling joists.

Almost all of the wines in here have turned to vinegar in the last 150 years ago, rendering them largely worthless as a comestible. However, despite the quality of the wine here,

many of these ancient vintages still carry a high value to wine enthusiasts who will be willing to part with large amounts of coin for the experience and the hope. If sufficient effort to locate and court appropriate noble purchasers is made, the contents of this cellar could be sold for 200 gp.

Urvitus: Urvitus will open one bottle and quickly determine that it is ruined. He asks the PCs not to molest any more of them because he intends to investigate their resale value as described above.

A25. CELL (SEVERE 2)

The door to this room is *locked* (Athletics/Thievery DC 32) but opens automatically for Sir Urvitus. Its key is in the observatory (A20).

A central brick pillar with a length of thick, iron chain looped around the base reinforces this cellar space. A long-cold fireplace is built into the north wall, and a stone cistern stands in the southeast corner, its surface damp with condensation and fuzzy with growths of mold. Tiny bits of debris are strewn across the floor.

PCs who examine the debris notice, with a successful DC 12 Perception check, that it primarily consists of fragments of bone and cloth. These are the remains of townsfolk or travelers who attempted to ransack or exorcise the Old House in the past. They were slain or disabled by Kyssogga, the haunt, or another resident or effect, and were then dimension doored to this room by Kyssogga as an offering to its resident.

This room was originally the servants' quarters, but Eb used it to house a mandrill he experimented on and infected with ghoulish fever. This **Thing in the Basement** is huge for a mandrill, standing just under 4 feet tall (although it primarily moves crouched on all fours) and weighs 70 pounds. Its wrinkled pale gray skin is now mostly hairless, and contrasts sharply with the bright blues and reds of its snout and callused buttocks. The muscular canine-like maw above a gashed-open throat is filled with deadly fangs, and the creature's nails have lengthened into gruesome claws.

The tortured howls of this poor creature led Eb to cut out its vocal cords. It wears an iron collar attached to the chain that is wrapped around the central pillar and padlocked in place (Athletics DC 25, Thievery DC 20); the key is in the observatory (A20). While the chain enables it to move up to 10 feet from the pillar but no farther, its Gruesome Lunge ability may surprise opponents who think they're out of its reach.

THE THING IN THE BASEMENT

CREATURE 4

N SMALL GHOUL UNDEAD

Perception +11; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +10, Stealth +10

Str +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** -4, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

AC 21; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

HP 60, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious

Speed 25 feet, burrow 5 feet, climb 25 feet

Melee ♦ claw +12 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d8+4 slashing plus paralysis

Melee ♦ jaws +12 (finesse), **Damage** 2d8+4 piercing plus ghoulish fever and paralysis

Consume Flesh ♦ (manipulate) See Ghoul Abilities.* The ghoul regains 2d6 Hit Points.

Ghoulish Fever (disease) See Ghoul Abilities*; DC 18.

Gruesome Lunge ♦ The Thing distends one of its arms, stretching its flesh and bone and allowing it to make a claw attack as above as if its reach were 10 feet until the end of its current turn.

Using this ability throws the Thing somewhat off balance, reducing its AC by 2 until the beginning of its next turn.

Paralysis (incapacitation, occult, necromancy) See Ghoul Abilities*; DC 18.

Swift Leap ♦ (move) See Ghoul Abilities.*

* *Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition)* "Ghoul"

Tactics: The creature clings to the top of the central column, using its width to hide from the PCs' view so it can leap with surprise on whomever enters the room first. Driven by an eternal craving for flesh, the ghoulish mandrill attacks in a frenzy of teeth and claws, using its Gruesome Lunge if intruders try to hang back. It always takes the first opportunity to drag paralyzed creatures into the northern section of the room before continuing to attack other opponents. The ghoulish mandrill has no sense of self-preservation and fights to the death.

Urvitus: Urvitus is horrified by the presence of this disgusting creature and the implications of its long confinement. He lets the PCs lead the way in combat, but he takes part to assist them in destroying the creature however he can.

COMPLETING THE EXPLORATION

Sir Urvitus does not consider the PCs' contractual duties complete until every location in the house has been explored and rendered safe — except, of course, the sealed basement which should remain undiscovered until **Chapter 2**. Thus, all the creatures discovered should have been defeated and the haunt in the observatory (A2o) permanently destroyed.

Once Sir Urvitus is satisfied that the house is safe, he locks it up, and thanks the PCs as he accompanies them back to Abshire & Dunnage to secure their final payment. Acknowledging the dangers that were faced in the house, Sir Urvitus gifts the PCs with any treasure that was found on the rear balcony (A16) and in the master bedroom (A18).

With the final payment made and further consideration noted, the PCs are released from their contract with some final signatures. They are requested not to discuss what they found inside until Sir Urvitus has properly cataloged and cleared the property of its contents and the planned demolition is complete. Within an hour Abshire & Dunnage has stationed guards hired from the mercenaries' guild outside the front and rear of the house to keep the property safe from intruders now that its veil of secrecy and fear has been broken. Four guards remain on watch day and night with orders to ensure that no one other than Sir Urvitus enters the property.

No further involvement from the PCs is required and, for all intents and purposes, this should appear to be the end of the adventure.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The PCs' activities should now occupy them elsewhere for at least several days, though this can easily be a month or more as they partake of other adventures sufficient to help them reach 3rd level in preparation for this adventure's unexpected second chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: BACK TO FRONT STREET

Despite the PCs' previous efforts, the dangers of the Old House are far from resolved. Over the course of the days following the PCs' exploration, Sir Urvitus went about

his business of cataloging and boxing valuable contents while engaging Abshire & Dunnage to negotiate with local tradespeople regarding the property's demolition. But within the house, the awakening Codex Ibnathi coalesced Old Eb's fragmented soul into the portrait in the drawing room (A1o) where its ability to beguile the knight increased in power and slowly leeched away at his mind and soul. In the process the portrait has, little by little, transformed from the image of his evil ancestor into the image of Urvitus himself.

These events have brought a change over the young knight. Urvitus has now changed his intentions towards the house. Where once he intended to demolish an eyesore and neighborhood hazard to replace it with something new and better, now he merely seeks to renovate the Old House enough to be habitable again and to move in. He can't articulate the reason for this change of mind, merely that it is what he wants to do. To that end he has discharged the services of Abshire & Dunnage as well as the tradesmen and guards they had engaged. He has become secretive and closed as his transformation into a new manifestation of Old Eb continues.

As preparation of this living receptacle for Eb Wallix's spirit approaches completion, the Codex Ibnathi summons additional guardians. These undead remains of a party of adventurers who dared the haunted grounds over a century ago have languished in shallow graves in the basement for all these years. Now they have awoken from dark dreams and claw their way out of the ground, ready to serve. This, unfortunately, coincides with the day that Myram Abshire goes by the Old House seeking some final signatures from Urvitus Voren to conclude their business relationship. Mr. Abshire has not returned.

EVENT 1: THE MISSING SOLICITOR

It has been at least several days since the PCs completed their contract with Sir Urvitus. They are again in Eber, though it is possible that they have just returned from some other foray abroad. In any case, they receive a sealed message marked with the stamp of Abshire & Dunnage. Breaking the seal, the party finds a message from Norrrys Dunnage (see **Handout 1H**).

If the PCs decide to visit Norrrys Dunnage first, they find him to be greatly distressed, both through worry for his partner, and for the fact that the PCs are delaying their investigation to speak with him. He confirms everything in the letter and urges them to hurry. He will once again pay half of the 300 sp agreement up front as a retainer if the PCs ask but insists that they haven't time to go shopping. Night is swiftly falling and Myram Abshire is still unaccounted for.

It is early evening by the time the PCs arrive at Front Street. Read the following when the party reach the property.

The dry winds of a central Akados derechos whirl through the increasingly deserted streets of this section of Eber, as the people head inside and close up their homes to take shelter from the weather. In the darkening skies to the west you can see the leading edge of the storm, silent flickers of orange heat lightning occasionally illuminating it from within. Ahead you see the shutters of the Old House now open, with the warm glow of lamplight peeping from behind drawn curtains. Smoke issues from the chimneys, quickly dissipated by the wind gusts that whip across the rooftops. It seems Sir Urvitus has indeed decided to make a home of the old place.*

All the exterior doors are physically locked but no longer magically locked (Athletics DC 30, Thievery DC 25). If the PCs knock, the door is answered after a minute or so by Sir Urvitus. He is unarmed, unarmored, and wearing a long gray dressing gown. He looks disheveled and tired, with several days of beard growth and unkempt hair. Urvitus stares at the PCs for a few moments, thoroughly confused, until finally he recognizes them and welcomes them inside with a sudden smile. He apologizes, stating that he has not been sleeping well with all the recent renovation work. He invites the PCs in for dinner, leading them along the hall to the dining room (B6), seemingly oblivious to whether they are actually following or not. He is clearly out of sorts and keeps up a constant stream of chatter, failing to answer any questions asked of him.

Chests, crates, and other signs of recent packing are noticeable along the walls of the central hall (B2) and block the doors to B3 and B4 with their stacks as Urvitus leads the party into the house. The tantalizing smell of a roast hangs in the air, and Urvitus explains that he was just about to sit down to a meal. He insists that the party join him, promising to answer any questions they have over dinner.

SIR URVITUS VOREN OF TOURNE CREATURE 4

Appendix B

Initiative Perception +12 (see Conditions below)

Items none

Conditions stupefied 5

EVENT 2: DINNER WITH SIR URVITUS

This event takes place in area B6 of the Old House.

The dining room is warmed by the hearth, the flames adding to the illumination from several candles on its mantel and along the long table that is set for one. Most of its chairs are now stacked against the walls. The corner shelves are emptied, their contents boxed in crates at their bases. The room has been mostly cleaned of dust but marks are visible on the walls around where the paintings once hung.

As the PCs enter the room, Urvitus begins unstacking sufficient chairs for everyone and removing cutlery and plates from the crates in order to make a spot for each of the PCs. He continues to prattle on as he works and fails to answer any questions of import. After only a few moments, the PCs have a place setting for each of them. Sir Urvitus bids them to be seated while he goes to the kitchen to retrieve the food. If the PCs allow him to do so, he comes forth a moment later bearing a platter covered in succulent slices of roast and a delectable-looking selection of sautéed vegetables. In the crook of his arm he also carries a bottle of wine of a quality local vintage.

Sir Urvitus personally serves the food to each of the PCs and pours the wine himself before settling into his own seat and beginning to eat. Once he has had a few sips of wine, his nerves seem to calm somewhat and he becomes more able to converse intelligently and field questions. As the conversation continues, however, and the howls of rising wind buffeting the house and the growing rumble of thunder distract him, he frequently loses his train of thought, not resuming unless prompted by the PCs.

If asked about Myram Abshire, Sir Urvitus initially gives a blank look of unrecognition, but after a moment seems to remember him. He does not recall seeing Mr. Abshire recently and is vaguely concerned that he seems to have gone missing. If asked about the demolition of the house, he waves away the thought of those plans and indicates that he has discovered too many treasures in the house to warrant its complete destruction, whereas a renovation will serve his purposes even better. He does not inquire about the PCs' adventures or travels at all. If the PCs volunteer such information he listens politely, but it's clear with a successful DC 10 Perception check that he is not quite sure why it is being shared with him and that he is not following much of what they say.

* A *derechos* is a violent summer windstorm common to the western plains of Akados. See **Appendix D: Eber and the Kingdom of the Vast**, page xx.

Over the course of the conversation the PCs are likely to grow increasingly worried — or even suspicious — about Sir Urvitus, but if they share concerns about his health, he replies that he is just overtired. A successful DC 15 Sense Motive or Medicine check, however, indicates that there has been a severe degradation in his mental acuity that appears to go beyond simple exhaustion. In truth, and unbeknownst to both Sir Urvitus and the PCs, the *Codex Ibnathi* has drained his mental acuity, leaving him stupefied 5.

After the PCs have had a few minutes to question Sir Urvitus and grow frustrated or suspicious, proceed with **Event 3**.

GM Note: If the PCs do not allow Sir Urvitus to head to the kitchen to retrieve the food or attempt to follow him, skip the rest of **Event 2** and proceed directly to **Event 3** below.

EVENT 3: THE WIND SQUALL

This event likely occurs in area **B6**, but if the PCs were uncooperative with Sir Urvitus in **Event 2**, it could just as easily occur in area **B2** or elsewhere in the house as necessary.

Unless the PCs have forced the issue as described under the “GM Note” in **Event 2** above, the dinner conversation with Sir Urvitus progresses until the PCs assert themselves, perhaps by beginning to explore the house or to examine Sir Urvitus more closely (attempting to manhandle him or cast spells, for instance). When that occurs (or at whatever moment seems right for your game), read the following description.

The constant howl of the wind is suddenly intensified as a sensation like a physical force striking the house in an explosion of noise and motion causes the entire structure to shake violently and for its timbers to creak and pop in protest. Windows explode in a shower of glass, immediately snuffing all light sources as the squall winds whip into the room like rampaging invaders.

In seconds the squall line has passed and the wind, though still intense, is somewhat reduced. The clunks and thuds of windblown debris striking the house and other nearby buildings are still audible, and the only light is provided by the crackles of lightning that sporadically illuminate the night. The house itself is quiet except for the wind that seems to now moan incessantly through its halls and rattle its doors, while glass debris on the floor tinkles in the shifting air currents. Elsewhere can be heard stranger sounds — a faint night chorus of croaking frogs and the isolated, prolonged notes of a harpsichord.

Of Sir Urvitus, there is no sign.

At the moment that the wind squall struck the house, two things occurred. The force of the wind blew out all of the house’s windows on the north and west sides, rushing in to overturn light objects and extinguish all light sources, magical or mundane, including the *continual flames of everburning candles*. Any magical light sources carried by the party that were not being used (such as *everburning torches*, etc.) are still functional, but any active light spells, exposed everburning torches, and even *flaming weapons* are extinguished. *Flaming weapons* can be reignited as normal, and the PC’s own *continual flame* spells will reignite on their own after 1d4 rounds of suppression, though the *everburning candles* of the house will not do so. This is not a normal function of storm winds, as the party will surely deduce. That it is an effect related to a manifestation of the *Codex Ibnathi*’s power, however, is less obvious.

Anyone inside the house in an area with windows on the north or west walls is exposed to the flying shards of shattered glass (areas **B2** [north section only], **B3**, **B5**, **B6**, **B8**, **B12**, **B14**, **B15**, **B17**, **B18**, and **B19**). These deal 1d6 points of slashing damage to each creature exposed to them (basic DC 15 Reflex save for half damage). Sir Urvitus is not subjected to that damage as explained below. The glass shards function as caltrops in those areas thereafter.

The second thing that occurred when the wind squall struck the Old House is that the *Codex Ibnathi*, long reposing sluggishly in area **B26**, at last becomes fully awake and immediately calls its new servant to it. Reacting to the threat that the PCs now pose, the codex rushes the completion of the *trompe l’oeil* (see **B21**) by completing the leeching of Sir Urvitus’s will. The knight falls unconscious as he is immediately whisked away by the power of the *Codex Ibnathi* to **B23** where the party can find him shortly. Its accumulated power largely spent, the codex falls quiescent, relying on its new portrait *trompe l’oeil* manifestation (**B21**) and *Kyssogga* (**B26**) to protect it. The PCs are now on their own and must search through the house for Sir Urvitus, for Myram Abshire, and for answers.

Though the winds continue to blow outside with the force of a windstorm, within the aboveground floors of the house they are only of moderate force, which blows loose papers and the like about and may eventually extinguish open flames and topple light unsecured objects. There are no wind effects at all in the basement unless the PCs open the coal chute doors which will create moderate-force winds in **B22** but cause no further effects in the area.

SECOND TOUR

As the PCs explore the Old House a second time, use the room descriptions designated as **B** below. If a room does not have a **B** description, assume that it is unchanged from its **A** description in **Chapter 1** except for the general changes as noted. Most of the basic features of the old house remain unchanged for the party's second foray through the house. Unless otherwise noted all light sources, mundane or magical, have been extinguished by the fury of the seemingly supernatural winds that crashed into the house. Damage caused to the house by the PCs' first visit still exist and are awaiting repairs.

One major change to the house is the absence of nightmares and disturbances. The fragments of Eb Wallix's soul are now gathered within the portrait in **B21** and have formed the Wallix trompe l'oeil.

B2. CENTRAL HALL

The hall is now lined with stacked boxes, crates, and chests that Sir Urvitus was intending to fill with contents he wished to keep, some of which are already partially full. A 5-foot-wide path snakes between these stacks, which also block the doors to the parlor (**B3**) and the kitchen (**B4**).

Treasure: Among the containers here can be found the sheet music (unless already given to the PCs at the conclusion of **Chapter 1**), four paintings, and six silver candelabra from the parlor (**A3**), all three paintings and some of the crockery and cutlery from the dining room (**A6**), all nine paintings from the stairwell and landing (**A8**), and the Virik (see footnote, page 18) now rolled up and four paintings from the upper hall (**A9**).

B3. PARLOR (MODERATE 3)

When this room is approached after **Event 3**, the sound of the harpsichord discordantly playing to a choir of frogs croaking can be heard. The eastern door to this chamber is blocked by the stacked boxes in **B2**.

Broken glass covers the floor of the parlor. The two west-facing windows are shattered, their curtains blowing in the wind gusts. The harpsichord still stands where it was, seemingly none the worse for wear from the storm. Beneath the ripped-away wallpaper and paneling, numerous small holes are now visible in the walls, along with runes and glyphs that seem to writhe and crawl. A large hole can be seen in the coffered ceiling in the southeast corner of the room.

Originally lurking in the west guestroom (**B14**) above, after **Event 3** a **ghast** crawled into this room through the hole in the ceiling and began playing the harpsichord. Its flesh bears old deep wounds and new ones from which shattered glass still protrudes. Its face is hideously misshapen, with its maw freakishly wide and one eye socket lower than its cheekbone. It plays its discordant notes seemingly in a reverie, but suddenly leaps to attack if attacked or if a PC comes within 10 feet. Additionally, **6 ysaqquan toads** crawl over the walls, croaking ominous, barely intelligible threats about the "return of master" and praises to Kyssogga from their weird, old man faces. They watch the PCs intently but quickly disappear into the holes if approached. They only attack if they cannot escape. Once inside the holes, they are able to scamper through the dead spaces between studs and escape the PCs.

GHAST

CREATURE 2

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) "Ghast"

Initiative Perception +8; darkvision

Items *crying angel pendant* still attached to tattered remnants of armor

YSAQQUAN TOADS (6)

CREATURE -1

See **Appendix C** (see page 48)

Initiative Perception +5; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Hazard: Anyone who studies the strange, crawling symbols inscribed on the walls exposed by the torn wallpaper must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or become fascinated. This fascination is only automatically broken if the subject is attacked. Every 2d4 rounds on his turn, the subject may attempt a new saving throw to end the effect. This is a full-round action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Fascinated characters must make a DC 20 Arcana, Architecture Lore, Crafting, Engineering Lore, or Occultism check with a +1 bonus for each round of fascination when the effect ends. Characters who succeed gain temporary insight into seemingly impossible spatial distortions that grants them a +1 status bonus on Will saves against the illusory effect created by the *Codex Ibnathi* (see area **B26**) and immunity to the effect for 24 hours following a successful save, but this knowledge unsettles them and they become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

B4. KITCHEN (MODERATE 3)

The western door to this chamber is blocked by the stacked boxes in **B2**



This room escaped the worst of the windstorm, its windows still intact and closed. The table has been partially cleared of the previous fungal infestation but, disgustingly, the rancid remains of the ghoulish mandrill corpse from the house's basement prison lie atop it, roasted in a savory sauce and apparently carved for dinner. Judging by its partially skeletonized corpse, it appears that most of the creature has already been consumed. The disconcertingly delicious aroma of the butchered corpse barely masks a more repugnant smell that seems to come from somewhere to the north.

The increasingly insane Sir Urvitus has been dining on the decayed mandrill corpse for several days, though his excellent culinary skills have made it into a palatable

dish. Unfortunately, if any of the PCs partook of the meal provided by the deranged knight, they now realize what it was they were eating and must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or become sickened 1 for 1d4 rounds.

Anyone moving between the pantry (B4a) and larder (B4b) can make a DC 20 Perception check. A successful check notices two things: one is that the air between these two doors is subtly cooler than elsewhere in the room, and the other is the sound of faint scratching coming from behind the pantry door (B4a). Within the pantry are 2 **ysaqqan toads** licking the ancient wallpaper from the walls. They immediately flee into a small hole in the wall if the door is opened (see B3). Hiding within the larder (B4b) is a ghost. It is rail thin, and its pallid skin is covered in **brown mold**. It attacks if the door is opened but prefers to wait until it hears the door to B4a open before lurching forth and attacking with surprise from behind. The effects of the ghost's stench and the brown mold's heat absorption are blocked by the larder door, but once the door is open both have their normal effect on anyone and anything within range, including the extinguishing of open flames.

MOLD-COVERED GHOST **CREATURE 4**

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) "Ghost"

Initiative Perception +8; darkvision

Brown Mold Growth (cold, fungus) The flesh of this ghost is overgrown with a symbiotic 5-foot patch of brown mold (see below).

BROWN MOLD **HAZARD 2**

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL FUNGUS

Stealth DC 15 (trained)

Description Mold growth feeds on warmth, drawing heat from anything around it. The temperature is always cold in a 30-foot radius around it.

Disable Survival DC 18 (trained) to remove the mold without triggering its heat absorption.

HP 5 per 5-foot square (typically 20 for an initial 10-foot square patch); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage; **Weaknesses** cold 5; **Resistances** fire 5

Heat Absorption ↻ **Trigger** A source of heat, such as most living creatures or an open flame, comes within 5 feet of the mold's space. The mold can't use this reaction if it's in direct sunlight or if it

takes cold damage. **Effect** The mold instantly grows to occupy all adjacent 5-foot squares that contain a heat source, and all living creatures (and other heat sources at the GM's discretion) within 5 feet of the enlarged mold growth take 1d10+4 cold damage (simple DC 18 Fortitude save).

YSAQQUAN TOADS (2)

CREATURE -1

See **Appendix C**

Initiative Perception +5; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

B6. DINING ROOM

See **Event 2** for a description of this room prior to the damage caused by the wind in **Event 3**. The door to the cellar is locked (Athletics DC 25, Thievery DC 20), but if the room is searched a DC 23 Perception check can locate a ring of keys that fell from the knight's pocket when he was magically taken from the room. This ring holds the keys previously found in area **A20** that open all of the doors in the house.

B8. LANDING

The skeleton of the night watchman is no longer here, and all the paintings are now boxed in the central hall (**A2**).

B9. UPPER HALL (TRIVIAL 3)

Characters ascending to the hall from the stairs can see into the drawing room (**B10**) through the open door. The drawing room is dark, but characters with darkvision or who succeed on a DC 15 Perception check with a light source see a mass of torn pieces of paper swirling in the air inside.

A strong wind whips and howls throughout the upper hall between the smashed windows of the library to the north, and a door to the south that hangs askew on its hinges. The curtains in all the archways along this hall have been torn from their hangings and two to the north lie in a heap on the floor, revealing the trashed library and its gyre of shredded pages, some of which have been scattered as far as the curtain to the south. The southern curtain has also been torn down but is now draped over what appears to be a person. This person stands perfectly still beneath the fluttering curtain folds, looking for all the world like someone wearing a sheet and pretending to be a ghost.

The wind throughout this hallway is a strong and severe current between the broken window of **B12** and the windows of **B15**. This imposes a -2 penalty on attacks with

ranged weapons and Tiny-sized creatures are subject to the movement requirements and penalties of strong wind (see "Moving in Wind," *Pathfinder Core Rulebook [Second Edition]*). Nonplussed by this wind is a creature that is indeed concealed beneath the drape. This is a ghoul that remains motionless until the curtain is removed, or either it or the creature in the drawing room (**B10**) is attacked.

GHOUL

CREATURE 1

Pathfinder Bestiary (Second Edition) "Ghoul"

Initiative Stealth +7; darkvision

B10. DRAWING ROOM (LOW/MODERATE 3)

The door to this room is open. The room itself is dark, but characters with darkvision or who succeed on a DC 15 Perception check with a light source see a mass of torn pieces of paper swirling in the air inside.

The door to this room is open and the wind from the hallway lifts and swirls hundreds of pieces of torn paper within, partially concealing an occupant. This figure, dressed in priestly vestments, is standing in the room with its back to the door as though studying the large portrait of the old man, much as Sir Urvitus did the first time you visited this place. However, that portrait is now missing. In its place, the wallpaper has been ripped away to reveal eldritch symbols inscribed on the walls beneath, symbols that seems to writhe and crawl.

All of the contents of this room have been trashed by something in a frenzy, something other than simply the winds of the storm. Everything is damaged or destroyed, including all the remaining paintings and even heavier furniture. Nothing, however, has been subjected to as much destruction as the religious texts that once filled the now-shattered glass-fronted bookcases. Those texts have now been shredded into pieces, the very pieces that currently swirl throughout the room.

The wind in this room is severe, and if combat occurs here the swirling pages grant concealment to everyone in the room. Though it is currently dark outside, this is from the storm front that moved in and obscured the evening sun with its heavy cloud cover. It is actually still a few minutes until sunset. As a result, the standing figure, a **huecuva**, still appears as it did in life 119 years ago: a human priestess of Vanitthu* dressed in clerical vestments and wearing a bejeweled silver holy symbol of her god prominently around her neck.

HUECUVA**CREATURE 3****CE MEDIUM UNDEAD****Perception** +10; darkvision**Languages** Common**Skills** Athletics +8, Deception +9, Intimidation +9, Religion +7, Stealth +6**Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

False Humanity (illusion, occult) During the day, a huecuva is cloaked in an illusion that makes it look and sound like the living creature it once was. This effect functions similarly to *illusory disguise* (heightened to 3rd level), providing a +4 status bonus to its Deception checks to Impersonate. Regardless, the huecuva's scent never changes—it always exudes a faint stench of grave dust and decay. Creatures with the scent ability receive a +2 circumstance bonus on Perception checks to see through the disguise. At night (regardless of whether the huecuva itself knows night has fallen) this illusion fades and reveals the creature for what it truly is.

AC 19; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10**HP** 45 (negative healing); **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious

Faithlessness Aura (abjuration, aura, occult) The huecuva and all undead creatures within 30 feet receive a +2 status bonus on saves against divine spells or abilities.

Speed 25 feet**Melee** ♦ claw +11 (agile, disease), Damage 1d6+3 slashing plus filth fever

Filth Fever (disease) The sickened and unconscious conditions from filth fever don't improve on their own until the disease is cured. **Saving Throw** DC 18 Fortitude; **Stage 1** carrier with no ill effect (1d4 hours); **Stage 2** sickened 1 (1 day); **Stage 3** sickened 1 and slowed 1 (1 day); **Stage 4** unconscious (1 day); **Stage 5** dead

Development: The PCs are likely to be suspicious, The huecuva pretends to be a local cleric named Sara who entered the house to defeat its evil but became entranced by its symbols (she gets a +2 circumstance bonus to Deception

checks on this as it is more or less true — albeit 119 years after the fact). She knows that Myram came to the house in search of Sir Urvitus, for it was she who tortured and killed the solicitor in the attic above. Sara claims that she is a friend of Myram Abshire's and is searching for him (no circumstance bonus to her Deception check for this lie). Her appearance is, of course, an illusion which will fade with the setting of the hidden sun 2d6+2 rounds after the PCs encounter her. She likewise drops the façade if she enters combat. In her true form, her vestments have completely rotted away to reveal withered, dead flesh speckled with a (harmless) yellow-brown mold, but the holy symbol of Vanitthu still hangs on a silver chain around her neck. This symbol can be snatched with a successful Steal combat maneuver and used as an improvised silver weapon that deals 1d2 bludgeoning damage.

Hazard: The crawling symbols revealed beneath the ripped wallpaper have the same effects as those in the parlor (see **B3**).

Treasure: The holy symbol of Vanitthu is worth 110 sp.

B12. BATH & PRIVY

The door to this room has been nearly torn from its hinges by the force of the wind. Shards of glass and broken mirror litter the floor and are strewn inside the scratched and gouged tub.

This room's winds are of severe force as in **B9**.

B14. WEST GUESTROOM (TRIVIAL 1)

All of the contents of this room are trashed apart from one of the paintings that now lies on the floor beneath a fragment of the shredded mattress. A strong wind blows through the shattered west windows, their glass in shards lying scattered throughout the room. A section of the floor in the southeast corner has been torn up revealing a hole through to below. Torn wallpaper reveals a number of small holes in the plaster and lath of the wall behind.

The hole torn through the floor leads to the parlor (**B3**) below. A ghost initially lurked in this room but crawled down into that chamber during **Event 3**. Currently an **ysaqquan toad** remains here and croaks praise to Kyssoqga before fleeing into the wall space as the PCs enter. As elsewhere, it fights only if prevented from fleeing. If the ghost and toads in **B3** have not been encountered yet, they can clearly be heard through the hole in the floor, though they cannot be seen unless a PC dares sticking his head down into the room below.

* Vanitthu is the God of the Steadfast Guard, a deity of defense and justice. See page 44 of *Freebooter's Guide to the Razor Coast* by Frog God Games.

YSAQQUAN TOAD

CREATURE -1

See **Appendix C**

Initiative Perception +5; darkvision, scent (imprecise)
30 feet

B15. LIBRARY

The bookshelves here have been destroyed and their contents ripped apart in the wild, whipping winds. Hundreds of pages now swirl about as gusts continue to rush in through the shattered windows. Shards of glass cover the floor and crunch underfoot.

The wind in here is of severe force. A DC 20 Perception check notices a red stain slowly beginning to spread across the plaster in the center of the ceiling. This is blood slowly seeping through from **B20** above, though it looks an awful lot like the manifestation of a haunt and causes anyone seeing it to make a DC 10 Will save or become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

B17. SALON

Someone or something has destroyed the unfinished paintings that once adorned the easels in this room, and it does not appear to have been the work of the wind. Nevertheless, the wind does blow into this chamber through the shattered northern windows and creates a further mess of the place.

The ghoul in **B9** destroyed the works in here in a fit of maniacal glee, but the stacked furniture to the south has escaped the destruction elsewhere in this room. The room is otherwise the same as the PCs remember it, though the leathery voidstirge eggs have been removed from where they were stored if the PCs left them behind. These were recently cooked with lentils and eaten by the increasingly deranged Sir Urvitus.

B18. MASTER BEDROOM

While the windows here are likewise blown out, this room has otherwise largely been refurbished for use by Sir Urvitus. His clothing and other personal items are currently stored in the chest and armoire, but none of the gear he was carrying during the PCs' first foray into the Old House is present (see **B23**).

B20. OBSERVATORY (MODERATE 3)

All the windows in this room are strangely intact, though the storm winds still clearly blow just beyond their glass. The chamber otherwise remains exactly as before with the notable exception of where once there was only a frayed rope hanging above an overturned stool, a fresh rope now dangles with a newly dead and

mutilated corpse. You immediately recognize the familiar face of the solicitor, Myram Abshire, his congenial features frozen in a death rictus of fear and pain. But his death by strangulation did not come easily, as his legs have been stripped of their breeches and partially flensed, with the feet missing, and there are clear signs that something had been feeding messily upon the stumps. The smears and footprints in the still tacky blood pooled beneath the corpse provides further proof, if any were needed.

The dangling corpse is indeed the unfortunate missing Myram Abshire. The huecuva in **B10** caught him when he arrived and spent some time torturing him and letting the ghoul and ghosts feed on him as he slowly strangled. Anyone who witnessed the blood in **B15** immediately understands this to be the source of it and must make a DC 18 Will save or become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes. Other than Myram's presence (and the absence of the haunt that should have been previously destroyed by the PCs), this room is otherwise the same as it was left.

Development: While the PCs are present in this room, flashes of lightning in the storm outside momentarily illuminate the room brightly and cause the shadow of the disfigured corpse to loom large on the opposite wall. When this occurs, the shadow coalesces and emerges from the wall, floating towards the PCs and pleading for salvation. Poor Myram's spirit has become an **allip** from the shocking circumstances of his demise, and the insane spirit now seeks release from its torment or company in death.

ALLIP

CREATURE 4

CE MEDIUM INCORPOREAL SPIRIT UNDEAD**Perception** +10; darkvision**Languages** Aklo, Common**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Intimidation +12, Stealth +12**Str** -5, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4**AC** 20; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12; +1 status to all saves vs. positive**HP** 40 (negative healing); **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all 5 (except force, ghost touch, or positive; double resistance against non-magical)**Maddening Mind** \curvearrowright (enchantment, mental, occult) Anyone targeting an allip with a thought detection, mind control, or telepathic effect makes direct contact with its tortured mind and

is affected by the allip's stupefying touch.

Speed fly 25 feet

Melee ♦ ghostly hand +12 (agile, finesse, magical),

Damage 2d6+3 negative plus stupefying touch

Babble ♦ (auditory, enchantment, incapacitation, mental, occult) An allip mutters to itself, creating an hypnotic effect. Each sane creature within 60 feet must attempt a DC 20 Will save to avoid becoming fascinated by the allip's babble. The effect lasts for 1 round, but if the allip uses this ability again on subsequent rounds, it extends the duration by 1 round for all affected creatures.

Success The creature is unaffected and temporarily immune to this allip's Babble for 24 hours.

Failure The creature is fascinated. It stays still and doesn't act. If attacked by the allip, the creature is freed from its fascination at the end of the allip's turn.

Critical Failure As failure, but if attacked by the allip, the creature can attempt a new save at the start of its next turn, rather than being freed at the end of the allip's turn.

Stupefying Touch (enchantment, mental, occult) A creature hit by an allip's ghostly hand Strike must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or become stupefied 1 (stupefied 2 on a critical failure) and the allip gains 5 temporary hit points. If the target fails additional saves against this ability, the condition value increase is cumulative to a maximum of stupefied 4. This condition value decreases by 1 every 24 hours.

Treasure: A search of Abshire's body finds a leather scrip tucked into a jacket pocket. Within are 30 sp and a single document on Abshire & Dunnage letterhead. It is a statement of reconciliation indicating that the solicitors made an accounting error and overcharged Sir Urvitus Voren for their services by the amount of 30 silver pilasters*. It merely required his

countersignature so they could refund him that amount and square their books.

B21. STUDY (SEVERE 3)

This chamber appears largely as before, whole and undamaged. Even the howling winds of the storm seem somehow muted herein. As in the rest of the house, the strange violet candles that once provided their garish glow have been extinguished, though the presence of the intact and closed windows belies exactly how this occurred.

The other difference of note is the large painting that now stands on the writing desk, propped up into the curtained alcove formed by the bay windows. It is the portrait of Old Eb Wallix from the drawing room, but now subtly different. PCs could swear the features are the same as they were before, but now can't help but see an uncanny resemblance to Sir Urvitus in the image of the old man that they had never noticed before. So closely do they favor one another that it is as if they are one and the same person, separated only by some great span of years, and it is impossible tell if it is that Sir Urvitus has come to look more like the painting or that the painting has come to look more like the young knight.

The portrait is the focal point of Eb Wallix's spirit in the house as well as the focus of Urvitus's leached away soul. With the final effort of the energized *Codex Ibnathi* in **Event 3**, the last of Urvitus's conscious essence was drawn from him and absorbed into the painting, animating the old wizard's image as a **trompe l'oeil** possessed of his vile spirit. As soon as the PCs recognize the portrait, its painted figure cackles evilly and moves out of the frame, disappearing to the left as though the frame was merely a window into another room. Using its switch paintings ability, the **trompe l'oeil** escapes to the portrait nearest to the root cellar (**B23**)—likely the old painting of Coram Poer in the storage cellar (**B22**).

There is no way for the PCs to enter the portrait and pursue the image (even if they wished to), but it did leave behind a tantalizing clue. If a PC examines the now-empty portrait, he sees parts of the background that were previously obscured by the figure — the surface of the desk the figure once



* Pilasters are the silver coins of the City-State of Castorhage, adopted by the Kingdom of the Vast with its formal independence from Foere in 3245 I.R. See pages 216 and 220 of *LL7: The Blight: Richard Pett's Crooked City* by Frog God Games.

stood in front of is now fully revealed. Upon it lies a single page covered in strange writings and glyphs. It is impossible to make out details, but the strange page gives off an almost palpable aura of menace and the sense that it is at the heart of the foul presence that inhabits the Old House. When the page from the Codex Ibnathi is discovered in **B26**, it will be easily recognized as the one represented in this painting.

THE WALLIX TROMPE L'OEIL CREATURE 5

See **B23**

Initiative Deception +12; darkvision

Development: When the trompe l'oeil emerges in the basement, it immediately uses its connection to Sir Urvitus to command his catatonic body to take up the mattock or some similar tool in **B22** and begin to smash through the south wall in **B23**. At this point, the PCs can begin to hear the thudding strikes of Urvitus's efforts. This requires a DC 22 Perception check from the house's attic level, a DC 17 check from the second floor, or a DC 12 check from the first floor, which is reduced to a simple DC 2 check if either the coal chute or the door leading from **B6** to **B22** is opened.

B22. STORAGE CELLAR (MODERATE 3)

Most of the stored supplies remain as they were left, though some of them have been pushed out of the way to reveal an area of the hard-packed earth north of the columns that has been disturbed, revealing four shallow pits. Dozens of frog-like creatures writhe and squirm through the stacked furnishings and other bric-a-brac pushed into the corners.

The shallow pits are the graves of adventurers who met their fates in the Old House more than a century ago and have since been revived as the ghosts and ghouls encountered upstairs. A DC 15 Survival check determines that several creatures dug their way up and out of the ground here, not down into it. If anyone thinks to look for the mattock that was stored here, it is missing if Urvitus has already fetched it for use in **B23**.

Though only a few dozen are visible at one time, there are hundreds of the strange ysaqquan toads present in this room, praising the "return of master" and promising the PCs imminent doom in their strange croaking voices. They flee deeper into the piled detritus if approached, but if they are attacked or the PCs attempt to exit towards **B23**, they stream forth to form an **ysaqquan toad swarm** and attack. They pursue anywhere the PCs go in the basement but will not go upstairs.

YSAQQUAN TOAD SWARM CREATURE 3

See **Appendix C**

Initiative Perception +10; darkvision, scent (imprecise)
30 feet

Treasure: The remains of the adventurers' gear that has not completely succumbed to decay can be found within the four shallow graves. Each grave can be searched with an hour of digging and sifting combined with a DC 17 Perception check. They contain the remnants of mundane gear such as pitted sword blades, belt buckles, rusted buttons, and one of the following items: Grave 1. A +1 *low-grade silver mace* bearing the symbol of Vanitthu (see footnote, page 36) that glows with *light* upon command; Grave 2. A steel hipflask inscribed with "*For some warmth when you're not with me. —L.*" holding a still-good *lesser healing potion*; Grave 3. A *minor sturdy steel shield*; and Grave 4. a rotting belt pouch holding 7 gp, 3 sp, 35 cp.

B23. ROOT CELLAR (SEVERE 3)

It is possible that the PCs will come here before having searched the rest of the house. If so, they will find the comatose form of Sir Urvitus lying upon the floor, but none of the other activities or changes to the room as described below. If that is the case, Urvitus is still unconscious due to the stupefying power of the Codex Ibnathi. Even if awakened, he remains bleary and confused as long as the stupefied condition persists. Only when the trompe l'oeil has been killed will he regain his full mental powers and be able to recall what has happened to him. He is clearly in no shape to accompany the party or answer questions. Regardless of what the PCs do with him, the power of the House will ensure that he is magically brought back here after the PCs encounter the trompe l'oeil in **B21**, so this encounter can occur as written.

The following description assumes that the encounter with the trompe l'oeil in **B21** has occurred before the PCs arrive here.

The thudding noise that reverberates through the walls of the house comes from in here. This room has changed since the last visit. The shelving on the south wall has been removed and laid aside to expose the plastered wall behind it. Sir Urvitus stands before this wall, dust-streaked, slack-jawed, and staring. His hands hold an old, rusted mattock that he raises again and brings down with a crash upon the exposed wall. He has obviously been at it for some time. The plaster and lath of the wall have been broken through in dimensions almost the size of a man, revealing a hollow space beyond. Embedded within this space stands the desiccated, leathery corpse of an old man with a disheveled black

wig upon his head and the ragged remnant of a noose around his neck. His jaw hangs agape and his eyes stare like black beads from the shriveled flesh of his face.

Sir Urvitus remains in a catatonic state, his body being used as a simple automaton by the will of the Codex Ibnathi manifested through the Wallix trompe l'oeil. He continues to hack at the wall but will make no move to attack or defend himself. A simple DC 10 Perception check can discern his state of catatonia and simple automation, and he does not resist any efforts to stop or disarm him. If Urvitus is forcefully ordered, he will stand peacefully in a corner or even exit the room, oblivious to the goings-on around him.

Urvitus's efforts in this state have succeeded in uncovering the mortal remains of Old Eb Wallix where they were sealed up in the wall by Kyssoffa after his death. His restless spirit has remained within this corpse — not animating, but rather inhabiting it — until the catalyst of his brother's descendant enabled the Codex Ibnathi to draw upon the strength of the young knight's spirit and combine it with the gathered splinters of the alienist's shattered soul to animate Old Eb's portrait as a trompe l'oeil. The Wallix trompe l'oeil is also present in the room. It stands beside Urvitus, now wearing the knight's missing gear and instructing him in the demolition of the wall. This close to the recovery of the Codex Ibnathi, it immediately attacks and seeks to destroy the PCs before they can thwart its plans.

THE WALLIX TROMPE L'OEIL CREATURE 5

UNIQUE **CE** **MEDIUM** **CONSTRUCT** **SOULBOUND**

Perception +12; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Daemonic, Infernal

Skills Acrobatics +10, Arcana +11, Athletics +9, Crafting +15, Deception +12, Diplomacy +8, Dimension of Dreams Lore +13, Intimidation +10, Occultism +15, Performance +8, Religion +13, Society +11

Str +2, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** +4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +1

Personality Fragments The Wallix trompe l'oeil shares fragments of Old Eb's personality, as well as shards of his memories. The Wallix trompe l'oeil matches Old Eb's alignment and gains the corresponding alignment traits.

Items paint leather armor, 2 paint +1 *shortswords*, 4 paint daggers, paint *bracers of missile deflection*, paint platinum signet ring

AC 22, **Fort** +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14

HP 82; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

Attack of Opportunity ⤵

Immediate Rejuvenation (occult) When the trompe l'oeil is destroyed, it immediately reforms on one of the eligible paintings in the house. The only way to permanently destroy the Wallix trompe l'oeil is to destroy all the eligible paintings before destroying the creature.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ⬠ paint +1 *shortsword* +15 (agile, finesse, versatile S), Damage 1d6+2 piercing

Melee ⬠ paint dagger +15 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 ft., versatile S), Damage 1d4+2 piercing

Occult Innate Spells DC 22; **3rd** *summon entity*, *summon fiend*

Occult Prepared Spells DC 22, attack +15; **2nd** *darkness*, *see invisibility*; **1st** *command*, *fear*, *grim tendrils*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *chill touch*, *daze*, *ghost sound*, *shield*, *telekinetic projectile*

Occult Focus Spells DC 32; **3rd** (2 Focus Points) *augment summoning*, *dimensional steps*

Enter Painting ⬠ (occult) The trompe l'oeil can enter a painting it touches. When it does so, its physical body disappears, and its image appears in the painting. The trompe l'oeil can use its normal senses and attempt Perception checks to notice anything occurring near the painting. While within a painting, the trompe l'oeil can talk and move anywhere within the picture or even temporarily alter it (such as by picking a flower in the painting). It cannot use any spells or other abilities while within an image, other than Switch Painting. The trompe l'oeil can use one action to leave the painting. Once it leaves the painting, the image immediately reverts to the appearance it had before the trompe l'oeil entered. If someone destroys or damages the painting, the trompe l'oeil is unharmed, but exits the image.

Hide in Painting ⬠ The trompe l'oeil can freeze in place while within a painting. Creatures must

actively Seek and succeed at a DC 22 Perception check to detect the trompe l'oeil's true nature while in this form.

Switch Painting ◆◆◆ (occult) The power of the Codex Ibnathi enhances the ability of the Wallix trompe l'oeil to enter paintings within the Old House. The Wallix trompe l'oeil can move from a painting it has entered to appear in any other mostly intact painting in the house.

Tactics: During combat the trompe l'oeil fights intelligently, responding to the greatest threats and retreating to more advantageous ground when available, making use of its enter painting and switch paintings abilities where possible. It summons cacodaemons, imps, hell hounds, quasits, rust monsters, and sinspawn to provide flanking for its attacks or to stymie archers and spellcasters who remain at range. Note that, as it is wearing armor, it has a 15% arcane spell failure chance. The trompe l'oeil fights until destroyed, relying on its immediate rejuvenation ability to keep returning it to the fight. Unless destroyed by the PCs, the following areas still contain an undamaged painting: **B3**, **B14**, **B21**, and **B22**. Each time it is slain, it collapses into a splash of multi-colored paint.



When the trompe l'oeil is destroyed, the paint versions of Sir Urvitus's equipment revert to their normal forms. These belong to Sir Urvitus, and he would like them back. However, if the PCs are insistent upon claiming them, he does not protest in gratitude for their efforts to save him.

Development: When the trompe l'oeil is permanently slain, the splinters of Eb's soul and the mind of Sir Urvitus are released. Sir Urvitus immediately recovers from his unconscious and stupefied conditions and awakens from his nightmare with a scream. He is bewildered and terrified from his ordeal and recalls nothing of his occupancy of the house for the past several days, but he is acutely aware that the source of the evil that infests the house lies behind the root cellar wall. He encourages the party to find that source and destroy it and joins them to lend his aid.

This can be accomplished by pulling the mummified body of Eb Wallix from its encasement in the wall. It is not animate. Removing it from the cavity where it has been encased reveals that it has been plugging up the opening into **B26** beyond. Once the body is removed, that room becomes visible and can be entered by chipping away just a little more of the plaster. See **Sealed Basement** below.

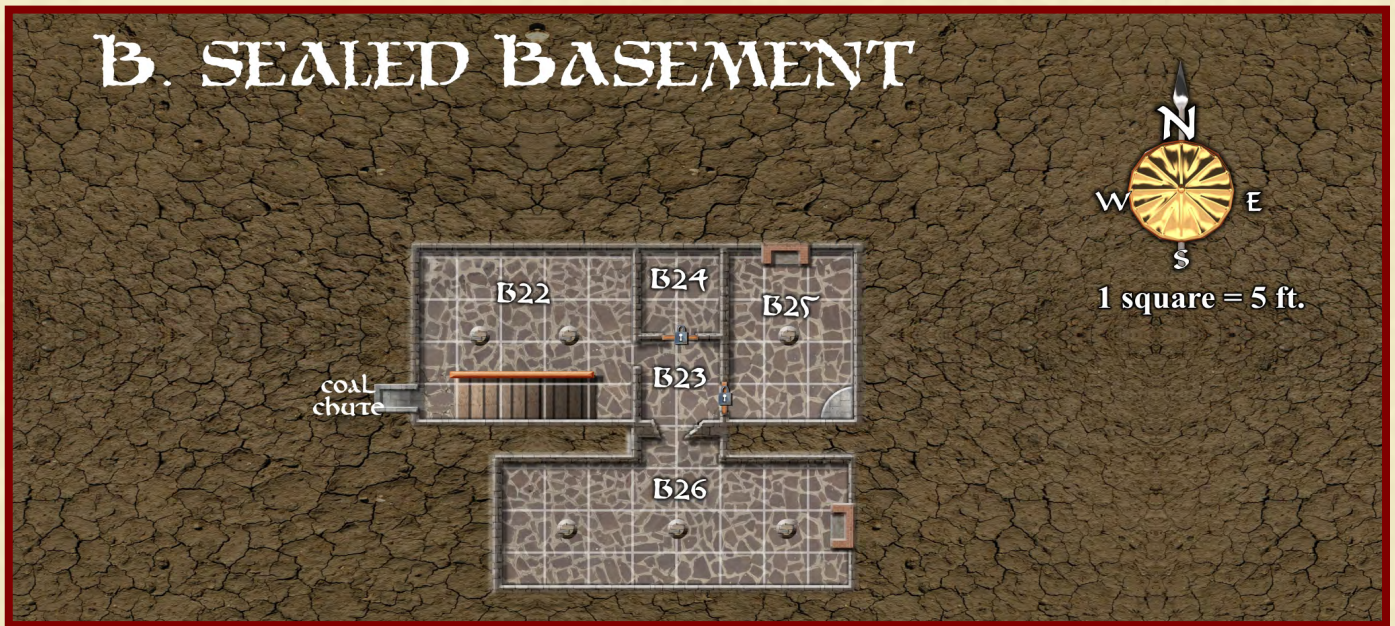
Treasure: A search of Old Eb's corpse turns up a lesser ring of sustenance (see **Appendix E**) and the remains of a spell component pouch.

B25. CELL

This room looks little different from how you left it, though the corpse of the ghoulish mandrill is obviously no longer present. The bones of a humanoid skeleton have been disarticulated and laid out before the long-cold fireplace in a strange, three-armed configuration.

It is apparent that the bones represent an entire skeleton, and a DC 12 Medicine check reveals that they have been gnawed by many tiny teeth. Anyone who examined the bones previously discovered at area **A8** and makes a DC 15 Perception check realizes that the skeletal remains are one and the same. These are the bones of the late-night watchman Creutz Hasten. A DC 18 Perception check can even locate his gold ring among the remnants as described in **A8**. It is possible that the PCs left these bones with Sir Urvitus to deal with after having explored the Old House in **Chapter 1**. However, if the PCs took the bones with them when they left in order to have them properly interred, returned to the city, etc., they are nonetheless present here once again and require everyone who knew they had been previously removed to make a DC 18 Will save or become frightened 1 for 1d4 x 10 minutes.

B. SEALED BASEMENT



Anyone examining how the bones are laid out can see that they form a rough triskelion configuration. A DC 25 Occultism recognizes this as resembling the Yellow Sign, an unholy rune associated with the cult of the Great Old One Hastur^{LL4 - p. 45}.

SEALED BASEMENT

A passage once extended between areas **B23** and **B26**. Prior to his death, Old Eb undertook some minor renovation to seal off the chamber beyond by erecting a wall of plaster and lath that looked identical to the surrounding walls of the basement. Lead shavings mixed in with the plaster served to block magical detection of the sealed entry or the room beyond and its contents. With Eb's death, Kysogga and the power of the *Codex Ibnathi* undertook to embed his mortal remains within the wall to serve as the final seal of the concealed sanctuary and to ensure that his troubled spirit would remain inextricably attached to the Old House. Only by destroying the *Codex Ibnathi* page found in **B26** can the house truly be exorcised from the taint of the old wizard's essence.

The sealing wall itself is easily broken, which should have largely already occurred through the efforts of the catatonic Sir Urvitus.

Plaster and Lathe Wall: 2-1/2 feet thick; Hardness 8; 100 HP (currently 77); 50 BT.

B26. CHAMBER OF THE BOOK (SEVERE 3)

The walls of this ancient cellar are black with the mold seen throughout the house, though where before it was patchy, here it

is all pervasive. It covers the walls in an almost-unbroken layer, except where occult runes that glow with a violet light have been inscribed. The mold doesn't extend where those runes mark the wall, as if recalcitrant to even touch the profane symbols. Three pillars likewise coated in the black mold support the sagging stone ceiling. At the eastern end stands a fireplace, its hearth now a pool of soot-black rainwater that has leaked down an ancient flue. The shallow dark waters roil with tiny toad spawn, and the cacophony of batrachian voices is louder here than anywhere else in the house. The whole place is filled with a swampy odor.

Between the central and western pillars an intricate circle of silvery runes and a five-pointed star have been dug into the earthen floor and decorated with ornamental designs. A wrought-iron bookstand is in the center of this circle. Upon it rests a single, dry leathery sheet of parchment covered in arcane runes and symbols visible even from the doorway. Its frayed edge reveals that it was clearly torn from some larger work at some time in the past.

This chamber was Eb Wallix's main workshop and summoning chamber and where he kept the single page of the *Codex Ibnathi*^{AKM} that formed the basis of his experimentation and study. He used this room to conjure and interrogate outsiders and other extraplanar beings. Now, it is the lair of Kysogga, the yssaqquan's children, and the page.

The shallow pool that fills the fireplace is the gathering place of the ysaqquan toads that inhabit the house and is full of their gelatinous spawn. Congregated around the pool is an **ysaqquan toad swarm**. Sitting in the conjuration circle next to the bookstand is a small, deformed, toad-like creature.

This is the ysaqqua **Kyssogga**, a tiny aberration bound to the page of the *Codex Ibnathi* that Eb Wallix discovered. Its purpose is to protect the codex page against those who would destroy it and to guide those who would understand the page's secrets and fulfill its purpose. When Eb uncovered the codex page, **Kyssogga** manifested from a sigil inscribed upon it. **Kyssogga** became his familiar and set about guiding him in the interpretation of the text. **Kyssogga** is immortal and patient. Since Eb died, it has been awaiting the arrival of a new master. It has also created a colony of ysaqquan toads to help protect the codex page. The swarm does not attack unless attacked or ordered to by **Kyssogga**.

KYSSOGGA **CREATURE 1**

See **Appendix C** ("Ysaqqua")

Initiative Perception +6; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

YSAQQUAN TOAD SWARM **CREATURE 3**

See **Appendix C**

Initiative Perception +10; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Tactics: Unless the PCs attack first, **Kyssogga** waits for them to approach the conjuring circle before initiating the combat. It remains within the circle as though it provides protection, though in truth the circle is not enchanted and does not protect or entrap anything within. **Kyssogga** remains observant and allows the PCs to approach. If any PC comes within 5 feet, **Kyssogga** lets out a massive croak ordering the swarm to attack and uses its tongue to try to poison opponents.

At that same moment, the page awakes to defend itself and creates an illusory distortion effect. The angles and corners of the entire room subtly twist and contort, creating unnatural and impossible shapes. Any creature in or entering the area must succeed at a DC 17 Will save at the start of its turn or become disoriented. Disoriented characters treat the area as difficult terrain and are sickened 2 for 1 round. In

addition, whenever a disoriented creature uses an action to move, roll 1d8 to see which direction it moves. On a 1, the creature moves in its intended direction, with 2 through 8 rotating around the creature's starting square in a clockwise direction. Only the creature's first 5 feet of movement each round are affected in this way—it can move normally for any remaining movement, either from the same action or from later actions, as the creature acclimatizes to the distortion. The distortion effect can be mitigated by studying the arcane writings inscribed upon the walls through the house (see **B3** for details). If all of the inscriptions on the walls in this room are covered somehow, this effect ends. **Kyssogga** and the ysaqquan toads are unaffected by this effect. **Kyssogga** then attacks using the pillars for cover.

Development: If **Kyssogga** is killed, his body dissolves into a foul-smelling mist which dissipates after 1 round. In the next round, a glyph on the codex page that resembles a stylized image of the tentacle-laden frog suddenly glows and **Kyssogga** leaps forth at full hit points to attack once again. As long as the page is intact, **Kyssogga** cannot truly be killed and will respawn 1 round after being destroyed. If the page is destroyed, this effect as well as all of the supernatural effects within the Old House cease immediately and any remaining ysaqquan toads scatter and disappear into the woodwork and surrounding debris to never be seen again.

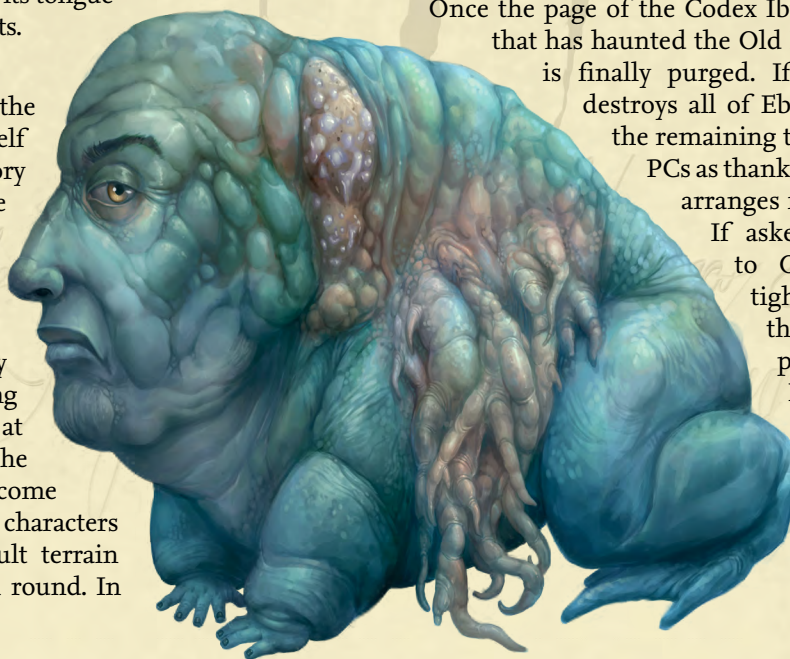
Codex Ibnathi Page: Hardness 5; 25 HP (no BT); Immunities cold, critical hits, electricity, object immunities, precision damage, sonic; Resistances acid 5, fire 5.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the page of the *Codex Ibnathi* is destroyed, the evil that has haunted the Old House for almost 150 years is finally purged. If Sir Urvitus survives, he destroys all of Eb's journals but gives all of the remaining treasure in the house to the PCs as thanks for saving his life. He then arranges for the house's demolition.

If asked about his relationship to Old Eb, Urvitus remains tight-lipped and indicates that public knowledge of the past should remain buried.

He offers the enduring friendship of House Voren to the PCs, however, and offers hospitality whenever the PCs are in Tourne.



APPENDIX A: PLAYER HANDOUTS

HANDOUTS 1A–1G

The PCs may remember one of the following nightmares if they awoken in the Old House. For more information, refer to the Fear, Disturbances, and Nightmares sidebar.

HANDOUT 1A

You are walking through the Old House, from room to room, but the sense of someone or something following you — something horribly threatening, that you don't want to believe is there, that you don't want to set eyes upon for the terror of making it real — is growing with each step. You dare not turn around to see if anything is there, but the horror keeps rising until it is almost unbearable and then, as you are about to succumb and turn, a cold touch on the back of your neck snaps your muscles into painful rigidity as a noisome feter overwhelms you. Your stomach turns and your failing body tries to retch but lacks the strength to expel the vomit. The rising gorge reaches your mouth, but then begins to slowly seep back into your lungs... blocking your airways, preventing you from drawing breath...

HANDOUT 1B

You are standing in a room with several easels bearing various paintings in progress. The one in front of you is a scene of Eber's octagonal law courts as viewed from outside the building. There are groups of advocates, judges, and citizens in discussion on the plaza. It looks complete, but you are holding something in your right hand as you carefully add an additional figure behind one of the groups, a figure dressed in finery with a wig of dark curls. As you begin to paint its facial detail, you glance at your right hand and see that you are holding a mirror. It is not your reflection that it bears, but that of an old man whose features instantly contort into horrific, murderous rage as you suddenly realize he is staring directly at you...

HANDOUT 1C

You are in a windowless room standing over an ape-like creature with a blue and red dog-like muzzle. The creature lies on the ground, a thick chain attached to a metal collar around its neck. It tries to snarl as you crouch down, but it is lethargic, weak, barely able to move. Still, it eats the strange crimson-frilled black fungus that you feed it, its tongue bruising and swelling in its throat. But then, gripped by a weird compulsion, you eat the disgusting repast too. You feel the pain in your throat, the grip of a fever, and an awful, insatiable hunger rising from the pit of your stomach...

HANDOUT 1D

You are standing over a man who lies on the floor. He is dressed in his nightclothes — torn in places where angry red welts were raised on his skin — and asleep, though obviously having a disturbing dream, as the sweat on his brow, the agitated moans, and involuntary twitches attest. You hold a journal and, as you utter a strange sound, "Ph'nglui," the script on the page shifts and crawls into a different language, with a different meaning. As you incant the new words, you stab downward with a curved knife, and an arterial spray soaks the orb-like body of a deep sea monstrosity that descends from above you to the man's throat, the creature's maw crammed with rows of mismatched fangs drooling expectantly as its piscine eyes roll idiotically.

HANDOUT 1F

You are standing in a space suffused with a violet glow. In front of you a hideous creature appears, a vulture-headed thing with insect antennae, hunched on dog-like legs, large tenebrous wings folded around it. As it moves closer, an outstretched claw offering you a clutch of noxious, leathery eggs, you see that its flesh is rotten, infected, as though it was already dead and decomposing. You take the eggs and step back, inviting the creature to fall upon the sleeping form of a man on the ground below you. Its serrated beak punctures his neck and begins voraciously drinking his blood.

HANDOUT 1E

You are sitting in an armchair in a shuttered room. You pick up a small vial of a milky fluid from a side table, carefully uncork it, and drink the contents. Your thoughts and perception swiftly become dull, blurring, dimming, until a wavering point of light begins to penetrate the cloying miasma. It slowly brightens and then accelerates toward you, becoming clearer as you break the surface of a dark sea, gasping for a breath that will not come. . . that cannot come. You see a shore — though it is far away — and twin mounts rising beyond, farther still. As you begin to swim toward it, a tiny frog-like thing surfaces ahead of you and leads the way. But the sea is like molasses, and your limbs are ensnared by slithering tentacles that rise from below and begin to drag you back under.

HANDOUT 1G

You are bursting with joy, a triumphant excitement, as you walk across a room with an angled ceiling. From a table covered in strange charts, you drag a stool back to the center and carefully step up onto it, standing up to reach a noose hanging from a rafter above. Almost laughing to yourself, you slip the rope over your head and draw it tight upon your neck before, without ceremony or hesitation, stepping off the stool. The rope tightens further, crushing your windpipe, pressure building in your eyes and rupturing a blood vessel in one. The blood pooling inside your eye blinds you faster in it than your air-starved sight in the other fades. The lines of the room becoming jagged, trembling, circling as the elation fills you.

HANDOUT 1H

Gentlefolks

I humbly request your immediate assistance.

There have been some irregularities regarding the house on Front Street where you recently helped our client, Sir Urvitus Yoren of Tourne, to "clear it of any dangers". Not long after you rendered your services, Sir Urvitus elected to keep the property and move in rather than undertake its demolition as planned. Shortly afterward, he discharged the firm of Abshire & Dunnage from his service and dismissed all of the hired guards and tradesmen we had engaged on his behalf. All of those decisions are, of course, well within his rights as a client, and Abshire & Dunnage takes no umbrage when a client has determined that we have rendered the maximum service to them of which they had need.

Nevertheless, I would be remiss if I did not say that Sir Urvitus's demeanor had begun to change during that same time period. Having never worked directly with him I could not say from personal experience, but Mr. Abshire mentioned to me on several occasions that his heretofore ebullient client had become more and more elusive and withdrawn. Matters seem to have come to a head this very morning, however, when Mr. Abshire dropped by the property to obtain some final signatures from Sir Urvitus in order to close our accounts with him. That was some ten hours ago and I have just learned that Mr. Abshire, normally a stalwart sort, has missed two meetings and a hearing before a magistrate today—totally uncharacteristic of him! By checking around I have determined that no one has seen him since he left to drop by the Yoren property on Front Street.

I know it is possibly only the reputation of that property and the hinted changes mentioned by Mr. Abshire, but I am very concerned for the well-being of my business associate. I also respect the privacy of our clients and do not wish to bring unwanted attention upon Sir Urvitus for what may only be the worries of a nervous man. Because of your past experience with both Sir Urvitus and the property and the skills and discretion that you have previously demonstrated, I wish to engage your services once again.

The job is simple enough. Please proceed to the property on Front Street and determine if Mr. Abshire was there and where he may have gone afterward if he is there no longer. Your payment will be the same as per the previous engagement, to be paid in full by the firm upon your return. But please, I ask you, undertake this in all haste, for I truly fear that Myram Abshire and possibly even Sir Urvitus, as well, may be in dire jeopardy.

Very truly yours,

Norris Dunnage, Esq.

Abshire & Dunnage

Solicitors-at-Law



APPENDIX B: SIR URVITUS VOREN OF TOURNE

Standing around 6 feet tall with a lean build, Sir Urvitus is a nobleman in his mid-twenties. He wears a gleaming silver breastplate and pair of bracers, each engraved with a heraldic device. A pair of short-bladed swords are cross-sheathed on his back, a hilt over each shoulder, and a pair of daggers are scabbarded at each hip. He speaks with a refined accent and a strong tone that seems accustomed to giving orders.

SIR URVITUS VOREN OF TOURNE CREATURE 4

NG HUMANOID HUMAN

Perception +12

Languages Common, Elven

Skills Acrobatics +12, Athletics +11, Diplomacy +9, Heraldry Lore +7, Intimidation +7, Nature +7, Society +7

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** +1, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +1

Items fine clothing, leather armor, 2 +1 short swords, 4 daggers, *bracers of missile deflection*, 2 lesser *potions of healing*, platinum signet ring (50 sp), belt pouch with 11 sp

AC 21; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7

HP 60

Attack of Opportunity ⤴

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ +1 *shortsword* +13 (agile, finesse, versatile S),
Damage 1d6+2 piercing

Melee ♦ dagger +12 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 ft., versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

Ranged ♦ dagger +12 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 ft., versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

Double Slice ♦♦ **Requirement** Sir Urvitus is wielding two melee weapons, one in each hand. **Effect** Sir Urvitus make two Strikes at the same target, one with each of melee weapon, each using his current multiple attack penalty. If both attacks hit, combine their damage, and then apply resistances and weaknesses only once. This counts as two attacks when calculating his multiple attack penalty.



Twin Parry ♦ **Requirement** Sir Urvitus is wielding two melee weapons, one in each hand. **Effect** Sir Urvitus gains a +1 circumstance bonus to AC until the start of his next turn, or a +2 circumstance bonus if either weapon has the parry trait.

Sir Urvitus Voren is a direct descendant of Reliman Voren. He is a knight of Macobert and, although still young at 23 years of age, of good standing within the Order. He usually resides at his family's estate in Tourne, a city around 200 miles to the east of Eber, located in the foothills of the Blackrock Mountains.

Sir Urvitus is thoughtful and reflective, considerate of his fortunate position yet proud of what he knows of his family's name, history, and tradition. It was, therefore, of great concern to him when he discovered the documents of his ancestor Sir Barivoren that ultimately revealed the change in his family name and the terrible scandal that started with the attempt to bring Ellerby Wallix to trial. Now that his research has brought him into possession of the Old House in Eber, his motivation is to render it safe, remove any valuable contents, and then have it demolished. Thus, while he will never condone damage to its contents, he will permit necessary damage to the house, such as breaking down locked doors.

As the PCs' employer, Sir Urvitus is placed in a natural leadership role. Despite his noble upbringing, he is never imperious or demanding in his tone. He values the talents and advice of the PCs highly and treats them as trusted allies. He does not seek to drive or control their exploration unless they begin to contradict or contravene his general guidance or wishes, such as by damaging or removing the house's contents or unreasonably refusing his requests.

As a sensate, Sir Urvitus is keen to attune himself to the house. While exploring it, he focuses on trying to gain a full sensory experience of each room that primarily derives from its sights, sounds, smells, and space. He communicates in this way with the PCs, looking for corroboration or challenges to his perceptions.

APPENDIX C: NEW MONSTERS

YSAQQUA

This large toad's sickly gray skin seeps a milky ichor. Bloodshot eyes bulge horribly from a flattened face and its oversized mouth is crammed with jagged black fangs. Four tentacles curl from its warty flanks and drag listlessly on the ground, and its short forelegs end in tiny human-like hands.

YSAQQUA

CREATURE 1

RARE **CE** **TINY** **AMPHIBIOUS** **ABERRATION**

Perception +6; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Languages Aklo, Aquan, Common; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +2 (+6 jumping),

Deception +6, Intimidation +8, Occultism +6,

Stealth +7

Str -1, **Dex** +2, **Con** +4, **Int** +1, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +3

AC 16; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +8

HP 26; **Immunities** controlled, disease, poison, unconscious; **Weaknesses** lawful 3; **Resistances** acid 3, cold 3

Poisonous Skin Each time a creature touches the ysaqqua or hits it with an unarmed attack or natural weapon, that creature is exposed to ysaqqua venom.

Speed 15 feet, burrow 5 feet, climb 15 feet, swim 20 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +7 (chaotic, finesse, poison), **Damage**

1d8-1 piercing plus 1d4 chaotic and ysaqqua venom
Melee ♦ tentacle +7 (agile, chaotic, finesse, poison),

Damage 1d4-1 bludgeoning plus 1d4 chaotic and ysaqqua venom

Melee ♦ tongue +7 (chaotic, finesse, poison, reach 5 feet), **Damage** 1d4 chaotic and ysaqqua venom

Occult Innate Spells DC 17; **5th dimension door** (self only), **4th read omens**; **2nd invisibility** (at will; self only); **1st detect alignment** (at will, lawful only), *fear*;

Constant speak with animals (frogs and toads only)

Occultic Healing ♦ (concentrate, healing, necromancy, occult); **Frequency** once per round.

Effect The ysaqqua regains 1d6 Hit Points.

Ysaqqua Venom (poison, virulent); **Saving Throw**

DC 18 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 8 hours;

Stage 1 stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** stupefied 2, and slowed 1 (1 minute); **Stage 3** unconscious (see below) with no Perception check to wake up (2d4 minutes); **Stage 4** unconscious (see below) with no Perception check to wake up (2d4 hours).

The ysaqqua (iss-AHK-wah) is a revolting fusion of toad, squid, and human: a large anura with prehensile forepaws, a flattened face reminiscent of a horrible old man's, and flaccid tentacles emerging from its sides. Its wide humanoid mouth has blackened fangs and its skin weeps a milky poison.

The venom of an ysaqqua not only erodes its victim's sanity but is also an oneirogen that induces lucid dreaming. A creature that falls unconscious through the secondary effect of ysaqqan venom 'awakens' in a lucid body within the Dimension of Dream for an initial 2d4 minutes. When that duration has elapsed, the creature must succeed at a Will save at the same DC as the venom in order to wake; failure means that the creature remains unconscious and within the Dimension of Dream for a further 2d4 hours.

Ysaqqua do not age, eat, sleep, or breathe and are effectively immortal, dying only through violence. They associate with common frogs and toads and can even breed with them, producing anything from large, aggressive poisonous batrachian specimens (often with vestigial humanlike features or other sickening deformities) to ysaqqan toads (see below).

An ysaqqua will often agree to serve a chaotic or evil mortal and act as a guide to occult realms and entities. Through an occult ritual, an ysaqqua can also become a familiar or companion to a mortal spellcaster. The master usually

allows the familiar to envenom him at least once per week to be guided into strange realms in the Dreamlands from which, eventually, the master may never awaken.

Ysaqqua are 1 foot long and weigh about 6 pounds.

YSAQQUAN TOAD

This warty gray-skinned toad has a curiously flattened face, and tiny human-like hands in place of its front toes. It seeps a milky substance from behind its large eyes and its oversized maw is crammed with jagged fangs.



breeding, the ysaqquan (iss-AHK-wahn) toad is the result. Weighing up to two pounds and around 6 inches in body length, it is on the larger size for a toad. Its face is flattened like a human's, its oversized mouth has several lines of short sharp fangs, and its bulging eyes glint with a cunning, malevolent intelligence, for not only is Kyssoqga able to breed with anura, it can speak with — and thus educate — them.

With over a century of breeding and education for his colony in the Old House, Kyssoqga's efforts have grown in efficacy. The average lifespan

of his progeny has doubled — in correlation with their improved intelligence and breeding — from around ten years to twenty or more. As a result, ysaqquan toads have now transcended rudimentary animal intelligence and are able to understand, and, with their more humanoid mouths and hands, speak and write the Common tongue.

The venom of an ysaqquan toad is similar to that of its ysaqqua parent but weaker. A creature that falls unconscious through the secondary effect of ysaqquan toad venom does not awaken in a lucid body within the Dimension of Dream unless a Will save (at the same DC as the venom) to awaken after the initial 2d4 rounds duration is failed. If the creature does enter the lucid dreaming state, another Will save after the initial duration of 2d4 minutes must succeed or the creature remains unconscious for a further 2d4 hours.

YSAQQUAN TOAD CREATURE -1

RARE CE TINY AMPHIBIOUS ABERRATION

Perception +5; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +4, Athletics +1 (+5 jumping), Intimidation +4, Stealth +6

Str -3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +3, **Int** -2, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +2

AC 14; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

HP 9; **Immunities** poison

Poisonous Skin Each time a creature touches the ysaqquan toad or hits it with an unarmed attack or natural weapon, that creature is exposed to ysaqquan toad venom.

Speed 15 feet, burrow 5 feet, climb 15 feet, swim 20 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +5 (finesse, poison), **Damage** 1d6-3 piercing and ysaqquan toad venom

Ysaqquan Toad Venom (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 15 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 9 minutes; **Stage 1** stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** stupefied 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** stupefied 2 and slowed 1 (1 minute); **Stage 4** unconscious (see below) with no Perception check to wake up (2d4 minutes).

Kyssoqga (and other ysaquas like him) can sire offspring with female frogs and toads. After well over a century of such

YSAQQUAN TOAD SWARM

A squirming, roiling, hopping morass of flat-faced toads with tiny human-like hands and sharp fangs in oversized maws creates a cacophony of croaking and almost-human verbalizations.

YSAQQUAN TOAD SWARM CREATURE 3

RARE CE LARGE AMPHIBIOUS ABERRATION SWARM

RARE, CE, LARGE, AMPHIBIOUS, ABERRATION, SWARM

Perception +10; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +6 (+10 jumping), Intimidation +10, Stealth +9

Str +1, **Dex** +2, **Con** +3, **Int** -2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +3

AC 16; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

HP 56; **Immunities** poison, precision, swarm mind;

Weaknesses area damage 5, splash damage 5;

Resistances bludgeoning 3, piercing 5, slashing 5

Poisonous Skin Each time a creature touches the ysaqqan toad swarm (such as by being in the swarm's space) or hits it with an unarmed attack or natural weapon, that creature is exposed to ysaqqan toad venom.

Speed 15 feet, burrow 5 feet, climb 15 feet, swim 20 feet

Swarming Bites ♦ Each enemy in the swarm's space takes 2d6 piercing damage (DC 18 basic Reflex save) plus ysaqqan toad venom.

A ysaqqan toad swarm consists of hundreds of ysaqqan toads. They swarm to defend their territory or when ordered to do so by their progenitor, Kyssoffa.

APPENDIX D: EBER AND THE KINGDOM OF THE VAST

The Vast is relatively young as an independent kingdom, having only declared its independence from Foere in 3224 I.R., and having only achieved an armistice with Foere that informally recognized its independence in 3245 I.R., though the Court of Courghais continues to refer to the kingdom by its ancient vassalage name of the Duchy of Kear^{QoD4:CB} in formal decrees and discussion even if it doesn't hold any true power over those lands.

The history of the Duchy of Kear as a vassal of Foere and province of Hyperborea extends back for thousands of years. Harmost Kear is mentioned in Hyperborean records as far back as the century following the Battle of Hummaemidon^{LL4}, and the Kear family continued to the lands west of the central kingdoms until the Plains of Eauxe^{QoD4:CB} were calved off and reorganized into a marchland some centuries later, leaving a duchy somewhat reduced in area but strengthened in centralization and effectiveness of its authority.

The history of Akados's western plains remained relatively quiet, serving as a breadbasket and grazing lands for the greater kingdom until the time of the Second Great Crusade against the Huun of Libynos in 2970 I.R. At that time, as Overking Yurid rallied the lords of Foere and took them afield to the desert lands of the East^{LL4}, a threat rose unbidden in Kear. The vampire lord known as the Singed Man, rumored to have come from the curse-haunted streets of forbidden Vilik Strad, appeared and swiftly conquered the unsuspecting and depleted forces of the duchy. With its duke and a large portion of its fighting men battling the Huun in Tircople, the duchy proved little challenge to the undead fiend and his minions of the night. So swift was the duchy's fall that even King Prudus II of Castorhage was caught unawares as he traveled across the duchy and was slain, raising his widow Constance as queen of that city-state^{LL7a}. In less than a fortnight, the Singed Man controlled nearly the whole of the duchy and had crowned himself as the Infernal Tyrant.

With the return of the main force of the crusader armies by 2977, Overking Yurid tasked his Battle-Duke, Ormand of the Rampart, with breaking the Infernal Tyrant's hold on Kear and liberating its hostage populace. However, the proud warleader Ormand proved no match for the guile of the Singed Man, and the army of the Foerdewaith was resoundingly defeated on the Plains of Eauxe at the Battle of Seilo Ford. Even Ormand was lost, though he was not slain. Instead the Singed Man enslaved him as a vampire spawn and placed him as general over the infernal armies of Kear. Under the former Battle-Duke's leadership, the forces of Kear went on a new offensive and spread the reach of the Infernal Realm of Kear from Tarry in the west to Eber in the east. Where a united front might have proven decisive, Castorhage and Foere were stunned by the atrocities committed against their respective nobility, and neither was willing to shoulder the burden of responsibility for curbing the vampire tyrant's ambitions. With a sea guarding the former and many miles of empty grassland separating the latter, both crowns turned inward and left the desolate folk of Kear to their fate^{LL7a}.

More than a century of internal unrest and plagues followed in Castorhage and Foere, and Kear continued its gradual consumption of surrounding lands. By 3102 the Infernal Tyrant's grasp had reached its largest extent, stretching from Tarry to Tourne and including most of the Plains of Eauxe to the north. The situation would linger another century still until in 3128 I.R. the paladin-lord and hero, Sir Varral the Blessed of Saymere Valley arose and challenged this tyranny. Sir Varral destroyed both the Singed Man and the Vampire Duke Ormand, freeing the remaining people of Kear from the darkness they had known for more than 150 years^{QoD4:CB}.

With the liberation of Kear, the duchy was reinstated. Rulership passed to the nephew of the Overking since its former ruling family had been wholly exterminated in the preceding century and a half. This new Duke of Kear ruled from Eber and retained Tourne as the second city of the depopulated realm. Castorhage used its naval presence to annex Tarry on the Fetid Sea as its own mainland port, and Foere and Kear found themselves in position to do little about this small encroachment on a distant town. As Kear was unable to sustain or effectively rule the desolate grasslands to the north, the Plains of Eauxe were once again apportioned from the duchy as a marchland of Foere and given to rule by marquises appointed by the Overking^{LL7}.

Though it had little direct effect on the Duchy of Kear, an important and ultimately alarming development that arose from the long oppression of the population was the appearance of an order of black-robed, mendicant monks that began distributing alms and feeding the impoverished refugees of the war-torn land. Over time this order grew and gained the official recognition of the Overking of Foere as a benevolence society, becoming known as the Black Brotherhood. As the Brotherhood expanded its influence and holdings, it largely moved on from its work in Kear into the central lands of Foere, building impressive temples and chapterhouses in major cities across the kingdom. They became a major financial institution of Foere after loaning great sums to the Crown in order to offset the disastrous losses of the Third Great Crusade in 3173. Matters ultimately came to a head when the Brotherhood's allegiance to dark powers was uncovered and its fortified monastery on the Hill of Mornay in the Old Tors was besieged and subsequently destroyed nearly two centuries later^{BM}.

The political turmoil of the Foerdewaith Wars of Succession following the disaster of the Battle of Tsar reached even to Eber until in 3224 I.R. Duke Oden declared the lands of Kear as the Kingdom of the Vast, independent from the Crown of Foere. With Foere largely occupied by the uprisings of their former vassal states in the east, the Crown could do little to immediately suppress this rebellion, and the Vast was soon joined in rebellion by the Margrave of Bret Harth who declared his own Kingdom of the North Heath carved from the northern reaches of the Plains of Eauxe in the following year^{LL7}.

Skirmishes occurred between Foere and the allied kingdoms of the Vast and the North Heath up and down the Meander River for the next few years, with neither side gaining a clear advantage, but resulting in the death of the last Marquis of Eauxe. Castorhage officially recognized

the independence of the two kingdoms in 3228, placing additional pressure on the Kingdom of Foere and its sovereignty claims over those realms. After the Grand Duchy of Reme was finally able to secure its own independence from the Foeredwaith Crown, it too lent its support to the independence of the fledgling kingdoms^{LL7}.

Unable to sustain its fighting against Oceanus and other splinter states to the east while maintaining a belligerent stance in the west, Foere finally reached an armistice with Vast and North Heath in 3245 I.R. leading to the true independence of both nations^{LL7}. Relations between North Heath and Vast remain cordial along with those of Reme. Vast maintains peaceful-if-strained relations with Foere and the close-by Principality of Olduvar and keeps a wary eye on ever-incorrigible Castorhage even while maintaining friendly diplomatic ties. The Plains of Eauxe are administered directly by distant Foere, but its people are friendly to neighboring Vast for all practical purposes. The halfling realms of The Dale^{LL7} and The Low Country^{LL7} south of the Worn Tooth Peaks^{LL7}, the elven Caer Myrddin^{FGG1}, and human Kingdom of Myrridon^{FGG1} even farther to the south likewise maintain amiable ambassadors in Eber, leaving few if any true threats to the young, battle-scarred kingdom's security.

The Vast is a roughly triangular land of rolling plains that stretches 700 miles at its widest point in the north from where the Worn Tooth Peaks meet the Crescent Sea in the west, to where the Meander River flows from the Blackrock Mountains, and 300 miles from Streeth Ferry on the Meander River in the north to the fortress of Cailin Lee the south where the Vast borders the Principality of Olduvar, a vassal state of the Kingdoms of Foere. Its principal cities are the capital, Eber, and its sister-city of Tourne to the east. There are numerous other smaller cities, towns, and hamlets, but with the nation's recent history of war, oppression, and subjugation by an undead tyrant, it is much less densely populated than many of the other nations of the central Kingdoms of Foere.

The Vast is a fertile land with good grazing and cropland but is extremely dry during peak summer months. At this time the prevailing winds from the west bring storm systems from the Crescent Sea that dump their precipitation on the intervening Worn Tooth Peaks and then come down out of those mountains as howling windstorms. Known locally as derechos, these dry windstorms are often accompanied by spectacular lightning displays resulting from the static discharge of the accumulated dust they carry. In particularly dry years these can result in dust storms that sweep across the plains, and wind-blown wildfires are a constant threat to the Vastlanders during the summer months.

EBER

(EE-bur)

The capital of the Kingdom of the Vast is the ancient city of Eber.

EBER

N METROPOLIS

Qualities Eber is an academic city, where law and lore are prized. However, despite its strategic location it also is somewhat insular, separated from other cities by rather depopulated hinterlands, where wildfires are frequent. Crime and corruption are ever-present in Eber, inflamed by its rumormongering citizens.

Government overlord

Population 38,849 (26,000 humans; 5,050 halflings; 4,273 half-elves; 2,330 half-elves; 777 elves; 419 other)

Notable NPCs

Oncellan FitzOden, King of the Vast (LN male human noble)

Bubregé Kirkenwald, Lord of Eber (N male human politician)

Depopulated Hinterlands Though freed from the grip of the Infernal Tyrant almost 400 years ago, the scars of his reign run deep. Eber is the capital of a vast kingdom still underpopulated from the massive slaughter perpetrated upon its citizens during that time.

Inflammable Eber and its surrounding lands are subject to the high risk of fires every summer due to the dry and windy conditions. This damages the economy and creates a certain breed of opportunism, corruption, and ruthlessness within some of its inhabitants.

Eber is an old city that traces its days to an early Hyperborean military encampment in the days of Oerson, established during the consolidation of his kingdom following the Battle of Lake Crimmormere^{LL8-18} and the beginning of the elven withdrawal from central Akados. It is a city that has outgrown its walls on several occasions over the millennia of its existence only to shrink back within them following one of the sporadic catastrophes that have marred its existence. Currently its inner city remains within the protection of well-maintained walls and is actually one of the newer sections of the town, expanded and refurbished after the undead forces of the Infernal Tyrant were ousted by Sir Varral the Blessed^{QoD4CB-5}.

The oldest part of the city lies to the west and is ostensibly encompassed by some of the city's oldest extant walls, though these are in universally poor repair and in some places require no more than taking a big step from the ground outside in order to surmount them. Front Street, which appears in this adventure, is found in this older, poorer section of town and runs from one end of the city section to the other, representing what was at one time the early town's outermost defensive line. The wall that ran along Front Street was torn down long ago to encompass the street within the enlarged district surrounded by its current dilapidated walls. Homes and businesses were eventually constructed along this original wall line, including the titular Old House that came to be occupied by the wizard Eb Wallix.

APPENDIX E: ESOTERIC TREASURES

The treasures found in area **A21** include a magical tome called *Reflections on Hali* and a new magic item called a *portrait mask*.

REFLECTIONS ON HALI

Reflections on Hali is the grimoire of the occultist Ellerby "Old Eb" Wallix. Within its covers, along with a host of arcane spells, are Old Eb's notes on the summoning and calling of extraplanar entities in relation to the optimal requests that should be made of them. Along with general guidance for dealing with entities from across the breadth of the inner, outer, and esoteric planes, the names of 13 such creatures with their proclivities and anathema are detailed.

Additionally, a record of the use of ysaquuan venom to induce lucid dreaming states suitable for exploration of the Dreamlands is included. It focuses on the navigation of the dreamsea to the Dreaming Shore of the Plateau of Leng.

Finally, it details the formulae for various paints using pigments from extraplanar sources and binding them with esoteric oils and the eggs of outsiders and aberrations.

REFLECTIONS ON HALI (OCCULT GRIMOIRE)

A thick, black leather-bound tome with its title written in Aklo in elaborate and exquisite gold leaf on the front. Its delicate pages are inscribed with precise and tiny characters in a variety of languages, including Abyssal, Draconic, High Boros, and Infernal, but none so prevalent as Aklo.

Protections *secret page* hides the creature names, the navigation of the dreamsea, and the paint formulae. The command word “Ph’nglui” is provided in nightmare vision 1D, so clever PCs may be able to discover this information.

SPELLS

Cantrips—*chill touch, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, guidance, light, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, read aura, shield, sigil, telekinetic projectile*

1st—*alarm, charm, command, detect alignment, fear, floating disk, grim tendrils, illusory disguise, lock, mage armor, mending, mindlink, phantom pain, protection, summon fey, unseen servant, ventriloquism*

2nd—*comprehend language, continual flame, darkness, darkvision, deafness, dispel magic, ghoulish cravings, invisibility, misdirection, restoration, restore senses, see invisibility, silence, touch of idiocy, undetectable alignment*

3rd—*bind undead, blindness, circle of protection, clairaudience, dream message, glyph of warding, hypercognition, locate, mind reading, secret page*

4th—*clairvoyance, detect scrying, dimension door, dimensional anchor, discern lies, glibness, modify memory, nightmare, private sanctum, suggestion, telepathy*

5th—*banishment, dreaming potential, summon entity, tongues*

6th—*repulsion, scrying, true seeing, wall of force*

Rituals—**5th** *planar ally*; **6th** *planar binding*

MAGIC ITEMS

PORTRAIT MASK ITEM 5

INVESTED **MAGICAL**

Price 30,000 gp

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

This wooden mask is detailed with the features and coloration of a person’s face. A person who wears the mask becomes aware of the direction and distance to all artistically rendered images of the mask’s current face (paintings, sculptures, etc.) within 1 mile.

Activate ♦♦ *envision*; **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** You fill one specific image within range with your consciousness. The image gains the full range of your normal senses (sight, hearing, smell, etc.) and you can make a Perception check to notice anything occurring nearby. The image also gains

a limited form of animation. Statues and similar three-dimensional representations can move their heads, make gestures, and talk, but cannot attack or leave their square without assistance. Portraits or similar two-dimensional representations bearing your likeness can also talk and your image can move anywhere within the picture or even temporarily alter it (such as by picking a flower in the painting). You cannot use any spells or other abilities while within an image. While inside an image your own body is unconscious and can’t wake up normally. You may leave the image at any time as a free action, returning you to your body. Once your consciousness departs from an object bearing your likeness, it immediately reverts to the appearance it had before you entered it. If someone destroys or damages the image, you return to your body unharmed. The effect can be sustained for up to 5 minutes, or until it is terminated by some outside means, such as a *dispel magic* cast upon either the image or your body, or if your body is killed.

Activate ♦ *envision*; **Effect** You change the mask’s appearance into an artistically painted rendition of your own face. This change is permanent until it is changed again by another wearer.

A person who dons the *portrait mask* while it is in the form of Old Eb’s face becomes aware of the following images: in the Old House — **A2** (3), **A3** (2), **A6** (1), **A8** (3), **A9** (1), **A10** (1), **A11** (1), **A14** (2), **A15** (1); and scattered elsewhere in Eber — the Royal Citadel, the Royal College library, the Law Courts, the Mercenary Guildhouse, the Temple of Vanitthu, and 10 in manor houses scattered around the city.

LESSER RING OF SUSTENANCE ITEM 4

UNCOMMON **CONJURATION** **INVESTED** **MAGICAL**

Price 1,250 gp

Usage worn; **Bulk** –

This polished wooden ring constantly refreshes your body. You don’t need to eat or drink while wearing it. A *lesser ring of sustenance* doesn’t function until it’s been worn and invested continuously for a week. Removing it resets this interval and, provided that you have gone at least 1 day + your Constitution modifier relying on the ring for your sustenance, you are immediately subject to the effects of starvation and thirst (see *Pathfinder Core Rulebook (Second Edition)*, “Starvation and Thirst”).



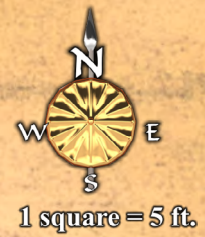
FIRST FLOOR



1 square = 5 ft.

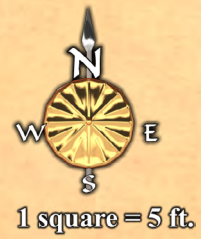


SECOND FLOOR





ATTIC





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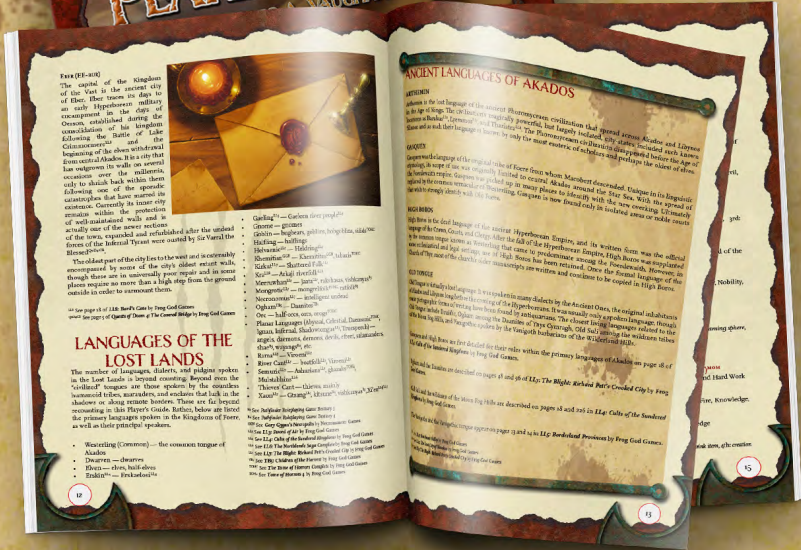
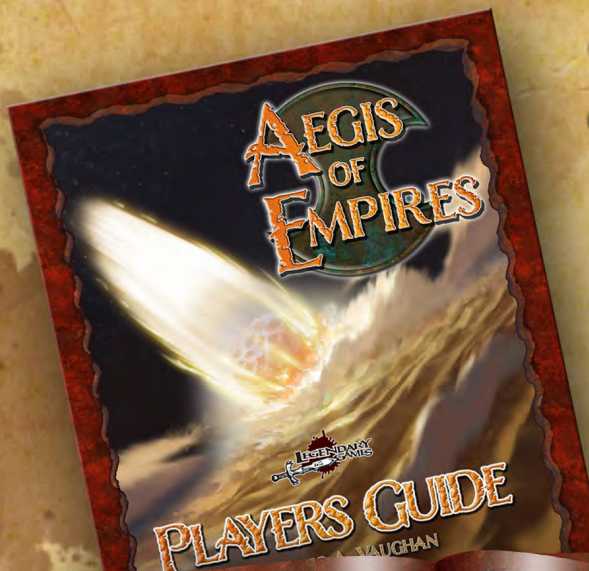
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