Pathfinder® Campaign Setting™

Horror Realms

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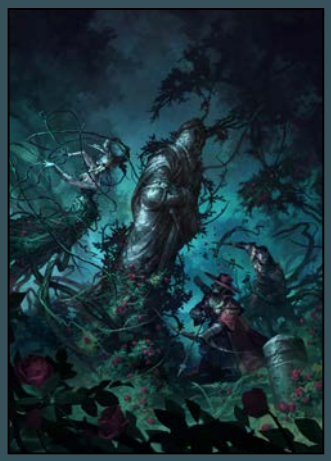

ON THE COVER

Imrijka and Valeros team up against a nightmare from the Ethereal Plane—a thorn-covered pakalchi sahkil—in this moody cover art by Michal Ivan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Pattern of Killers 2

Searchers After Horror. 4
New rules allow a host of character classes to experience the ghastly elements introduced in *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*. Arcanists can touch the Outer Rifts at a terrible cost, and bards can learn creepy new masterpieces. Druids, hunters, and rangers discover what happens when their animal companions suffer terrible demises. Monks can find purer focus in the pain of self-mortification. Oracles can be struck with new corrupted curses. Shamans can channel a spirit of the Dark Tapestry, while summoners can befriend aberrant eidolons.

Strange, Far Places 20
Expore seven chilling locations across Golarion, including a dangerous bog at the Crown of the World, a town with a terrifying secret in Galt, an isolated island off the coast of Geb, the home of viking cannibals in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, the haunted land of Shenmen in Tian Xia, a dark forest in Nidal, and a remote Ustalavic hamlet with a tragic history.

Corruptions and Haunts 50
Along with an examination of the role of monsters in horror games, this chapter presents three new corruptions. The aboleth corruption puts the afflicted's mind under the control of the veiled masters, and characters with the demonic corruption become twisted Abyssal monsters, while those struck with the plagued corruption turn into walking fonts of disease. In addition, this chapter introduces three new types of variant haunts that will strike fear into any character.

Reference

This book refers to several Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at **paizo.com/prd**.

Advanced Class Guide	ACG	*Ultimate Combat*	UC
Advanced Player's Guide	APG	*Ultimate Intrigue*	UI
Horror Adventures	HA	*Ultimate Magic*	UM
Occult Adventures	OA		

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The Pattern of Killers

Rifza Dilatru, a history and philosophy student at the University of Korvosa, recently vanished in western Varisia while investigating what he believed to be a link between all murderers. Among the belongings he left behind in his room at the Rusty Dragon in Sandpoint were a number of books he'd removed from the university and a journal. The journal contained his notes for his intended first publication, an article titled "The Pattern of Killers." The books have been returned, but—despite attempts to suppress them—the contents of Dilatru's journal have leaked into scholastic circles throughout Avistan. His theories could encourage new investigations into the subject, queries that may lead researchers to the same mysterious fate as that of Rifza Dilatru. It's as if he disappeared into thin air...

—Missing persons report filed under "Open Cases"

Notes from "The Pattern of Killers"

What it takes to murder another cannot be an intrinsic quality of humanity, for the murderer's acts are deviations from the norm. When a murder occurs, it is outside the accepted values of civilized society, not an event that is welcomed and understood. It is an aberration of behavior, a distinct flaw in the nature of the personality, and yet not one so rare as to be unheard of. Murders happen all the time, there can be no denying it, but slayings of a certain kind spark in my mind a more sinister fear than that associated merely with the advent of death. It's one matter to be confronted with a crime of passion—one can almost understand (yet never condone) the deadly urge a jilted lover succumbs to when encountering his paramour's secret companion, or the passionate rage of a slandered or cheated merchant when faced with the source of his distress. These killings, in my studies, are followed by often overwhelming sensations of guilt and shame, as if the very mind of the murderer has grown ill with the soul it is attached to. Vengeance slayings too assuage my fears, for here the righteousness of the act mitigates the crime; the death, as regrettable as one person's end may be, only betters society as a whole.

No, what vexes and worries me are those who murder not from passion but from need—those who enjoy the act of killing and indeed seem to take an invigorating influx of spiritual verve from the act of ending another creature's life. The armies and mercenary bands of the world are rife with those who have tried to justify their bloodlust by hiding under the banner of a nation or company. They sate their destructive urges in a way sanctioned by a superior or at least in the guise of patriotism. In such cases, at least the urge to kill is tempered and even constrained by the chain of command or other laws and restrictions enforced by the army or company's leadership.

And that brings me to my central fear: that there exists a force, external to all known intellect or faith, holding parallel to the immortal soul but existing within its shadow, that compels a man or woman to kill. I call this force "the pattern."

The hallmarks of those who fall under the pattern's influence are as shocking in their similarity as they are subtle in their manifestations. To the untrained eye, the Mosswater Marauder, the Temple Hill Slasher, the Splatter Man, or Korvosa's own Key-Lock Killer may seem unrelated. Looking closer, however, we find something disturbing—these mass murderers, for all their disparities in temperament, location, and method, shared something fundamental. The Mosswater Marauder sought to rebuild his wife's skull by harvesting pieces from victims he bludgeoned to death. The Temple Hill Slasher murdered many in a frustrated search to find links among the souls of the recently slain. The Splatter Man tormented his victims with their own names before he murdered them, hoping to harvest power from an induced fear of their own identity. Finally, the Key-Lock Killer terrorized Korvosa by habitually infiltrating homes, murdering a single inhabitant, and then leaving with no trace other than the "unlocked" and mutilated corpse he left behind.

All of these murderers shared something in common—patterns. The Mosswater Marauder sought patterns in bone fragments. The Temple Hill Slasher sought patterns in souls. The Splatter Man sought patterns in names. And the Key-Lock Killer sought patterns in the locks he carved into the flesh of his victims with sharpened keys. These are quite different patterns, true, but all were created by the same underlying master pattern I have come to believe lies within the damaged souls of all these murderers—predators of society that I have come to call "pattern killers."

As I looked to other examples, I again and again found evidence of patterns. Killers who stalked only blonde elven women and kept locks of their hair as trophies. Killers who murdered during galas and banquets with poison delivered via a victim's favorite drink. Killers who slaughtered only the firstborn sons of noble families. Killers who carved strange sigils in the flesh of their victims, or who left body parts strewn in complex arrangements on riverbanks, or who left their victims posed in faux-artistic displays in public squares. Always, at the core of their aberrance, was the pattern.

The notorious Skinsaw Cult knows of the pattern, yet its members misinterpret it as whispers from their god, Norgorber. In truth, I suspect even Norgorber is but a slave to the pattern. In teaching those who worship him in his incarnation as Father Skinsaw that those they slay shape the future, he is but following his own compulsions. The notion that the pattern can hold mortal and god alike fast in its clutches only speaks further to its awesome power.

Even in the work of the most notorious of all of Avistan's pattern killers, the mass murderer Riktus Scroon, one sees the pattern lurking. Scroon confessed to the murder of 953 men, women, and children, and his pattern was particularly horrific—he sought out young victims freshly in love, abducted them, and tormented them for hours before leaving them in specially excavated pits to expire from their wounds. He separated his victims from each other physically, but not so far that they could ignore the others' cries of pain as each died in anguish. It took 13 tries to execute him, but I believe that this is what Scroon sought. I believe that of all the killers who have plagued our land, he came closest to solving the pattern. They say Scroon did not die when he expired during that thirteenth execution, but transcended mortality to be born again in the Abyss as the Nightripper. Certainly, the debased few who worship the Nightripper today believe him to be Scroon reborn, and these worshipers have become pattern killers in their own right.

I come now to my own research in western Varisia. Here, the people of Sandpoint have recently endured the vile attentions of their own pattern killer, a man once known as Jervis Stoot but remembered now as Chopper. He slaughtered 26 people before he was caught and executed by a mob. As with every other pattern killer, he followed his own pattern. He collected the eyes and tongues of his victims. Some think he did so out of an obsession with carrion birds, but I have come to believe differently. The pattern sent him to collect his trophies, and—just as Scroon before him, just as the Skinsaw Cult now—I believe Stoot was on the verge of discovering the pattern's solution. His home on an islet just outside of town has remained abandoned since his death, and I intend to investigate it. To search it. To take measurements with my tools to determine the psychic residue left within his home. With these methods, I believe I can detect traces of the pattern, measure it, and in so doing quantify it. I can solve it. And in solving it, I believe I can cure this world of its pattern killers. I shall deliver Avistan from the clutches of the parasite that has lingered in all of our souls. I shall master the pattern and unravel it from within!

Searchers After Horror

It would be useless to describe the playing of Erich Zann on that dreadful night. It was more horrible than anything I had ever overheard, because I could now see the expression of his face, and could realise that this time the motive was stark fear. He was trying to make a noise; to ward something off or drown something out—what, I could not imagine, awesome though I felt it must be. The playing grew fantastic, delirious, and hysterical, yet kept to the last the qualities of supreme genius which I knew this strange old man possessed.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Music of Erich Zann"

This chapter puts a sinister spin on several character classes not usually associated with horrific themes (unlike horror-friendly classes such as the inquisitor, the mesmerist, the spiritualist, and the witch). It includes bard and shaman archetypes that base themselves around contacting unknown supernatural terrors lurking in the Dark Tapestry. Arcanists gain new alien disciplines, monks can unlock macabre ki powers based on self-mutilation, and oracles gain new types of curses based on the corruption rules in *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*. Classes that gain animal companions can now learn what happens when they carelessly mistreat these companions. Lastly, the summoner gains the ability to call forth an eidolon that manifests in a hideous, aberrant form.

While it's easy to craft a horror-themed character, they can prove difficult to integrate into some campaigns. If you have an idea for a character that uses material from *Horror Adventures*, this book, or another book entirely, talk to your GM before the game begins to make sure your character concept is appropriate for the game. Even if it turns out the game you're joining isn't particularly themed toward horror, you can use the following idiosyncrasies to infuse a spark of the disturbed and sinister into your character in a way that won't entirely derail the campaign's themes. Of course, if the game you're joining is all about horror, these peculiar mannerisms will work perfectly to help define your character!

Horrific Quirks

Effective horror crafts an unsettling mood—something that can be tricky to convey through roleplaying. A great way to add an element of fear to your character (that won't disrupt the game) is to select one of the following quirks at the start of game play. These quirks do not provide any rules-based advantage to a character, but when properly presented, they can provide a fun way to help make your character seem just a little unhinged.

Collector: You collect trophies from your kills. Not because you want to—because you have to. What you collect is up to you; it could be something minor like jewelry or items of clothing, or it could be more disturbing, such as fingers, ears, locks of hair, fingernails, teeth, or other small but gory tokens harvested from monsters and enemies you slay. You don't have to display your collections openly, and it can actually feel much creepier if you never reveal what you do with your trophies. Alternatively, you might forgo collecting in favor of leaving something behind on the bodies of the dead, be it a small mark cut in the brow, a good-bye kiss on the cheek of the departed, or a dead insect placed into the victim's mouth. You don't need to rationalize your behavior if you don't want to—after all, even you might not know why you do the things you do, just that you have to do them.

Haunted: Since childhood, you've experienced episodes in which you are plagued by nightmares, visions, or voices. The episodes might be subtle or come in the form of seizures or blackouts during which you believe you make contact with a supernatural entity of unknown origin. Though you feel a sort of duty to respond to the episodes, they leave you with the ominous feeling that they come from a sinister force with a foreboding motivation. It may have been months or even years since you've had an episode, but you know that each time you drift to sleep, you could be visited again. It's possible you've developed a ritual of some sort to help protect you before you go to sleep—placing a memento from your childhood under your pillow, reciting a specific short prayer just before bed, or simply ensuring that you always sleep against a wall or in a corner. Whether or not these rituals actually work... who can say?

Obsessed: You have a morbid fixation with death and feel compelled to always keep notes on all the ways it encroaches on your life. You record the nature of every death that occurs in your vicinity in a journal. What exactly you jot down is up to you. Your notes could merely entail the name or description of the creature that died. They might include sketches of tombstones for the departed creature. They could even involve short poems immortalizing the events of a particular death. You may fear that a dead creature's spirit might come back to haunt you if you don't honor it in this way.

Scarred: The haunted quirk above represents a brush with horror that left a spiritual mark on you, yet some terrors are all too physical. You may have been attacked by a rabid animal, endured grisly torments at the hand of an insane captor, or fought in a harrowing war or conflict. Your trials have left you marked in an obvious way—the most typical one is a hideous scar that is impossible to ignore. The maiming you endured could have cost you a finger or two, or left you with a noticeable limp or periodic fits of tremors. The scar isn't overwhelming enough to impact your mobility or physical capabilities, but it's a clear remnant of some hideous past trauma.

Unredeemed: At some point in your past, you performed an atrocious act of one sort or another that you absolutely refuse to discuss with others. This act may be a mere construct of your imagination or a faulty (even implanted) memory. Whatever its origin, every so often you hint about the act, especially after witnessing an atrocity or horror similar in theme to what haunts you. When such events occur, your personality changes for a short time. If you're normally carefree and gregarious, you grow grim and morose. If you're normally serious, you might cackle uncontrollably. Whatever the cause of your behavior, you feel a strong urge to keep the truth secret save from your most trusted friends—but perhaps even from them as well!

Exploits of the Outer Rifts

Arcanists experiment with ancient knowledge and mystic lore, manipulating their own natural abilities to unlock powerful arcane secrets. Despite extensive effort, not all arcanists achieve the power they seek. Some discover that their blood lacks the innate power of a sorcerer's, or that deciphering mysteries in ancient tomes requires a degree of scholarly discipline they do not have. Undeterred, such individuals continue their quest by turning to the powerful mysteries of the Outer Rifts, be they blasphemous secrets found in lost ruins, tricks of magic etched into fiendish runestones, or any other dangerous form of sinister exploitation from these horrific realms. Not all arcanists who choose this route are necessarily evil—they justify these exploits by claiming to be in control of their actions and to use the tools of their enemies against them. Nevertheless, those who bend magic using exploits from the Outer Rifts should be wary of attracting the wrong attention or enabling a greater evil than that which they seek to defeat.

Arcanist Exploits

All of the following exploits can be learned by arcanists of any alignment, but these exploits come with a risk. If you use an Outer Rift exploit and in doing so reduce your arcane reservoir to 0, you immediately gain the stain of one manifestation from the accursed, demonic, hellbound, or possessed corruption. The GM chooses which corruption, manifestation, and stain you receive; this stain persists for 24 hours. Reducing your arcane reservoir to 0 in this way multiple times within a 24-hour period results in a new stain for each such instance, and each time you do so you reset the timer for all stains gained in this manner to 24 hours. At the GM's option, multiple instances of abusing exploits in this manner could result in a permanent corruption, but otherwise these corruptions are temporary and do not progress. You can never gain a gift from a corruption in this way.

Unless otherwise noted, the saving throw DC for an arcanist's exploit equals 10 + 1/2 the arcanist's class level + the arcanist's Charisma modifier.

Blood Tears (Su): As a move action, the arcanist can expend 1 point from his arcane reservoir to cause his eyes to turn red and weep tears of blood. During this time, the arcanist's vision is blurred by blood, and he treats all gaze attacks as if he were averting his eyes from a creature, but that creature does not gain concealment against him. At a distance of greater than 30 feet, all creatures or objects viewed by the arcanist gain concealment. As a standard action that ends the blood tears exploit, the arcanist can wipe the tears from his face and flick them with a free hand, splattering all creatures in a 15-foot cone. Creatures in this area must succeed at a Will save to avoid becoming staggered with extreme pain and anguish for 1 round. If the arcanist doesn't wipe his bleeding tears away, the effects of this exploit can persist for a maximum duration of 1 minute per arcanist level.

Damnation Susurrus (Su): The arcanist can spend 1 point from his arcane reservoir as a standard action to manifest a choir of insidious whispers, which echo in the mind of a single target within 30 feet, urging the target to harm itself. A creature that fails a Will save to resist this effect becomes overwhelmed by the voices and succumbs to their suggestions. On its turn, it drops any objects it holds and harms itself, inflicting 1d6 points of damage. At 3rd level, and again at every 3 levels thereafter, the arcanist can target an additional creature with this exploit, to a maximum of 7 targets at 18th level. Damnation susurrus is a mind-affecting effect.

Fiendish Proboscis (Su): The arcanist can spend 1 point from his arcane reservoir as a standard action to grow a long, articulated proboscis covered with small spiky hairs. The appendage grows from the arcanist's face and houses a highly flexible, muscular tongue tipped with a cartilaginous barbed quill. The proboscis lasts for 1 round per arcanist level, during which time the arcanist cannot speak or use verbal components. The arcanist can end this exploit's effects early as a swift action. As a standard action, the arcanist can attack a target with the proboscis's tongue. This is a primary natural weapon with a 10-foot reach. Attacks with the tongue resolve as a touch attack. If the arcanist uses his tongue and hits a creature capable of casting spells or using spell-like abilities, he drains a portion of the target's magical ability and adds 1 point to his arcane reservoir (points gained in excess of the reservoir's maximum are lost). If the arcanist hits a creature that cannot cast spells or use spell-like abilities, the tongue instead drains a portion of the target's life force and heals the arcanist of 1d6 points of damage. Regardless of the target's ability to use magic, the tongue's unnerving siphoning of magical or life energy causes the struck creature to become sickened for 1 round.

Rift Fog (Su): As a standard action, the arcanist can spend 1 point from his arcane reservoir to create a 5-foot-radius vortex of chilling fog adjacent to him. Hints of leering, fiendish faces whirl within the mist. As a move action, the arcanist can direct the cloud of rift fog to move in any direction at a speed of 30 feet to a maximum range of 60 feet from the arcanist. The fog may ascend or jump up to 30 feet to strike a target. Once the fog ends its movement, coils of its otherworldly mist surround any targets that are wholly or partially in its area. The fog's supernaturally cold temperature causes 1d6 points of cold damage to affected creatures. A creature damaged by rift fog becomes slowed (as per the *slow* spell) for the following round if it fails a Will save. Once created, rift

fog persists for 1 round per 2 arcanist levels (minimum of 1 round), or until the arcanist activates a new exploit.

Shadows Out of Light (Su): The arcanist can spend 1 point from his arcane reservoir to pull fiendish essence from the Outer Rifts into his own shadow. Malformed and nearly amorphous, the shadow-things swarm across his body, turning his eyes completely black and distorting his physical form. These shadows persist for 1 round per 2 arcanist levels (minimum of 1 round) and grant the arcanist a +2 deflection bonus to his Armor Class. The shadows are threatening, and as long as they persist the arcanist is considered armed for the purpose of flanking or threatening an attack of opportunity. Whenever a creature provokes an attack of opportunity from the arcanist, he may make the attack of opportunity with his shadow, striking as a touch attack that deals a number of points of cold damage equal to 1d6 + the arcanist's Charisma modifier plus 1 point of Strength damage. A successful Fortitude saving throw negates the Strength damage. This ability does not itself increase the number of attacks of opportunity the arcanist can make in a round, but feats like Combat Reflexes do allow him to make multiple attacks of opportunity with his shadow. The shadows cannot be compelled to make normal attacks—they lash out in this way only as a reaction to being provoked.

Soulrider (Su): The arcanist can, as a swift action while he casts a spell that targets one living creature, spend 1 point from his arcane reservoir to infuse his spell with a manifestation of fiendish energy called a "soulrider." The soulrider attaches to the target of the spell and buries itself in the target's subconscious mind, persisting there as long as the arcanist maintains at least 1 point in his arcane reservoir, until the arcanist dismisses the soulrider (this requires a standard action), or until the arcanist successfully infects another creature with a soulrider. The target of the spell can resist having the soulrider attach to its soul with a successful Will saving throw (this is in addition to any saving throw the spell itself might or might not allow). If the target resists the spell's effects with a successful save or other methods (such as via spell resistance or by being immune to that spell's effects) the soulrider automatically fails to attach to the victim. *Detect magic* and *detect evil* can uncover the presence of a soulrider. As long as the soulrider persists, the arcanist can track the targeted creature as if it were under the effect of *status*, and the creature takes a –2 penalty to any saving throw against a mind-affecting effect created by the arcanist. While the soulrider remains bonded to the target, the arcanist can spend 1 point from his arcane reservoir to communicate with the target as per *sending*. Soulrider is a mind-affecting effect.

Tentacles (Su): As a swift action, the arcanist can spend 2 points from his arcane pool to sprout a pair of rubbery tentacles that grow from his upper chest. At the same time, his arms shrink into sickly, malformed stubs, capable of only rudimentary actions such as lifting small objects or making somatic gestures. Rings, bracers, and other items worn on the atrophied arms and hands remain in place, but magic items that require hands to activate cannot be used while the arcanist's arms are in this state. Likewise, the use of weapons or shields is impossible during this time. The arcanist has full control over his hideous tentacles and can use them to deliver touch spells, or as secondary natural weapons that deal tentacle damage as appropriate for a creature of the arcanist's size (1d4 for Medium arcanists, or 1d3 for Small ones) modified by 1/2 the arcanist's Strength score. The arcanist's reach with these tentacles is 5 feet longer than his normal reach.

Haunting Performances

Terror is as viable an emotion to evoke in performances as any other, but bards who focus on such artistic works often find themselves alone, without audiences to "enjoy" their artistry. Be it the mute musician who looks to the darkness between the stars as a way to replace a lost voice, or the mournful soul who seeks to capture the devastating effects of a banshee's aria, these bards have learned to evoke fear in unusual ways.

Bardic Masterpieces

The following bardic masterpieces allow a bard to create horrific magical effects in place of a feat or a bard spell known. For full rules on bardic masterpieces, see page 21 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic*.

Banshee's Requiem (Sing)

By filling your performance with the mournful angst of a lost love, your song evokes the inexorable pull of the grave upon every living thing.

Prerequisite: Perform (sing) 17 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 6th-level bard spell known.

Effect: All living creatures you select within 30 feet at the start of your turn each round gain 2 negative levels unless they succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 your bard level + your Charisma bonus). This is a death effect and a sonic effect. This performance has audible components.

Use: 3 rounds of bardic performance per round.

Action: 1 full round action.

Music Beyond the Spheres (Dance, Sing, String)

You use your own life force to create a phantasmagorical impression of eldritch vibrations with your wild, flailing dance and erratic tones. The performance unravels and remakes the fabric of reality around you according to your designs.

Prerequisite: Perform (dance, sing, or string) 13 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 5th-level bard spell known.

Effect: When you enact this unnerving bardic performance, you take 2 points of Constitution drain or 2 points of Wisdom drain (your choice) to create an effect similar to *limited wish*, except that the effect is interpreted by an alien entity of the Dark Tapestry. If you have at least 17 ranks in Perform (dance, sing, or string), and you destroy a magic or technological item worth at least 25,000 gp as a material component and take 4 points of Constitution drain or Wisdom drain, you can instead produce the effects of a *wish* with this performance. The GM interprets how precisely the effects of this bardic performance are granted by the entity that you contact. This performance has audible and visual components.

Use: 1 round of bardic performance.

Action: 1 full round action.

Relentless Reprise (Keyboard, Sing, String, Wind)

Your song replays endlessly in your target's mind, sapping resolve and sanity.

Prerequisite: Perform (keyboard, sing, string, or wind) 4 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 2nd-level bard spell known.

Effect: Whenever you end a bardic performance, you can add a quick reprise that makes it unnaturally catchy. Any creature within 30 feet of you when you finish your performance will run the risk of having your tune replaying endlessly in its mind. Unless the creature

succeeds on a Will saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 your bard level + your Charisma modifier), the tune distracts it for 1 day per bard level. The creature takes a –4 penalty on concentration checks, initiative checks, and Perception checks as long as it remains distracted. The creature's sleep also becomes fitful, requiring half again as long for the usual benefit and entirely negating the benefits of full bed rest beyond a normal rest. Once per day upon waking after rest, the creature can attempt a new Will saving throw to shake off the relentless reprise. If it fails, the creature takes 1d2 points of Wisdom damage (or 1d4 points of sanity damage if using the sanity rules from *Horror Adventures*). This is a curse effect with audible components.

Use: 1 round of bardic performance.

Action: 1 immediate action.

Mute Musician (Bard Archetype)

A mute musician forswears speech for the unnatural songs and thunderous silences of the depths of space. She learns to blend light and sound in seemingly impossible ways. Some mute musicians look to the darker aspects of Desna as their inspiration for these performances, but most mute musicians find their muse in the alien sounds of the Elder Mythos and the entities that orbit the blind idiot god Azathoth, who floats in the heart of the Dark Tapestry.

Mute (Ex): A mute musician has a disability or injury (possibly self-inflicted or even psychological) that prevents her from speaking or vocalizing. Language-dependent effects (including Perform [oratory]) require the bard to be able to use telepathy, nonverbal languages, or writing to communicate. She cannot use Perform (sing) or speak languages, though she can still create audible bardic performances by means of a musical instrument. A mute musician can provide verbal and somatic components for spells she casts via any musical instrument in which she has ranks in the appropriate Perform skill.

Eschew Materials (Ex): A mute musician gains Eschew Materials as a bonus feat at 1st level.

This ability replaces bardic knowledge.

Bardic Performance: A mute musician gains the following bardic performances.

Symphony of Silence (Su): At 3rd level, the mute musician's music muffles all other sounds within a 30-foot radius. All creatures in the area of effect gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws made against sonic attacks or language-dependent effects. This bonus increases to +3 at 7th level, +4 at 11th level, +5 at 15th level, and +6 at 19th level. Symphony of silence relies on audible components.

This bardic performance replaces inspire competence.

Maddening Harmonics (Su): At 14th level, the mute musician can create a performance so baffling and discordant that it usurps all thought within a 30-foot radius with chaos and entropy. The mute musician can select which creatures in this area are affected by the maddening harmonics and which are not. All targeted creatures within this area must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 the bard's level + the bard's Charisma modifier) or be confused for as long as they can hear the performance. If the creature succeeds at its saving throw, it is immune to this ability for 24 hours. This performance relies on audible components.

This bardic performance replaces frightening tune.

Ceaseless Performance (Su): At 15th level, the mute musician can continue taking the free action to maintain a bardic performance even while confused, cowering in fear, dazed, nauseated, panicked, paralyzed, petrified, silenced, staggered, stunned, or unconscious. Even if the mute musician is killed, she can continue to take the free action to maintain her performance as long as she has rounds remaining. Only the utter destruction of the mute musician's body (such as via *destruction* or *disintegrate*, or by reducing the bard to a negative hit point total equal to 10 × her Constitution score) causes the performance to end.

This ability replaces inspire heroics.

Song of the Conjunction (Su): At 18th level, the mute musician can harmonize with the alien chorus beyond the music of the spheres, creating a portentous cosmic alignment. This effect duplicates a *gate* used to travel, save that the destination point must be on the same plane as the bard, but it is not otherwise limited by distance.

This bardic performance replaces mass suggestion.

Insights from Beyond (Ex): At 2nd level, a mute musician adds two abjuration, conjuration (calling), conjuration (summoning), or conjuration (teleportation) spells from the sorcerer/wizard spell list to her list of bard spells known. At 6th level and every 4 bard levels thereafter, she can choose two more spells to add to her spells known.

This class feature replaces versatile performance.

Dulled Horror (Ex): At 2nd level, a mute musician gains a +4 bonus on saves against confusion, fear, insanity effects, and the supernatural abilities of aberrations.

This class feature replaces well-versed.

Eldritch Caesura (Su): At 10th level, a mute musician can insert unsettling silences into her otherworldly music by spending an additional 1 round of bardic performance per round. This supernatural technique impossibly blurs the line between music and light, transmitting audible performances and sonic bard spells through most barriers save lead. This allows the music and sonic spells to affect creatures across planar boundaries (including on the Ethereal or Shadow Planes), vacuums, and areas of magical silence.

This class feature replaces jack-of-all-trades.

Ex-Mute Musicians: A mute musician who regains the ability to speak or chooses to speak aloud loses all abilities granted by this archetype. She can regain the archetype's abilities by spending 24 hours without speaking.

Accursed Companions

When a character calls upon the aid and companionship of one of nature's children, she forges a sacred pact to care for and cherish that creature. In exchange, the animal companion serves as her guide and guardian. The bond between the two strengthens, and the animal companion moves beyond its primal instincts and its soul blossoms. This transcendence is both beautiful and wondrous, but as with all magic, there is always a cost. As an animal companion's consciousness grows, it can sometimes attract the attention of the spiritual energies that hide in plain sight everywhere. While some of these forces are good or indifferent, others lurk in the void, in the deepest shadows where death waits. When the right moment comes, these darker entities latch onto these proud companions with a vicious hunger. Should the character fail to protect her companion, corruption ebbs forth and fills the once-magnificent creatures with vile intent. Cursed and corrupted, these companions return to their masters broken, scarred, and distraught. Theirs is a curse they are bound to share, for when mortals fail to protect their bonded companions, so too shall those mortals suffer.

When a cavalier, druid, hunter, ranger, or other character loses an animal companion to a disturbingly gruesome death, particularly if that fate could have been avoided through an act the character chose not to or was unable to take, the soul of the slain animal companion sometimes remains bound to the character. In such cases, this scarred soul infests the next companion the character takes.

Gaining an Accursed Companion

Any character with the animal companion or mount class ability can choose to gain an accursed animal companion once a previous animal companion has suffered a violent, humiliating, or particularly horrible death. The character must then choose to gain an accursed companion while performing the ritual to replace the slain companion. At the GM's discretion, the player might automatically gain an accursed companion unless she takes the time to seek atonement for allowing her previous companion to die.

Accursed Companion Manifestations

An accursed companion's unnatural condition manifests in one of the following ways, chosen at the time the companion is gained. Once selected, the choice cannot be changed. Who gets to choose the manifestation depends on the GM's preference (the manifestation may even be randomly determined).

All manifestations grant a boon in combat to the animal companion but a disadvantage to the master. An animal companion's accursed manifestation can be activated in one of two ways: the companion's master can deliberately trigger a manifestation by making a successful DC 20 Handle Animal or wild empathy check as a move action, or the manifestation can take place when a specific trigger occurs, as detailed in each manifestation's entry.

When an accursed companion manifests its condition, the companion's master can resist or mitigate the debilitating side effect with a successful Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the accursed companion's HD + the accursed companion's Wisdom modifier [minimum +0]). However, manifestations that are constant (such as festering flesh or unsavory friends) have an equally constant effect on the companion's master, and these effects cannot be mitigated or resisted in any way. An accursed companion can only be affected by a manifestation once per hour unless the manifestation is constant. All side effects on an accursed companion's master are mind-affecting effects.

Bestial Flashes (Su): The companion is haunted by the previous companion's fear and pain during its death. This manifestation is triggered automatically whenever the accursed companion takes damage from a single blow in excess of half its current hit points. When an accursed companion suffers bestial flashes, it gains a +2 morale bonus on all attack rolls and damage rolls made on natural attacks, and gains a +4 morale bonus on rolls to confirm critical hits. Once triggered, a bestial flash lasts for 1 minute. When a bestial flash occurs, the mind of the companion's master is overwhelmed with images of feral savagery. She becomes confused for 1d4 rounds and is then sickened for the remainder of the minute that the bestial flash persists. On a successful Will save, the master is instead sickened for only 1d4 rounds.

Bloodthirsty (Su): The companion becomes consumed with bloodlust that drives it into a frenzy of savage ferocity. This manifestation is triggered automatically whenever the accursed companion makes a successful critical hit with a natural attack. When the companion becomes bloodthirsty, it flies into a rage and gains +2 Constitution and +2 Strength, but it also takes a –2 penalty to its AC. The rage lasts until the battle is over or for 1 minute, whichever is shorter. It cannot end its rage voluntarily. The companion's master is overwhelmed with rage as well for this period, although this rage is unfocused and distracting, preventing the master from doing anything but growling, hissing, shrieking, and making other animalistic howls, during which time the master cannot speak or use spells with verbal components. A successful Will save reduces the duration of the master's rage to 1 round.

Festering Flesh (Su): The companion looks horrific and smells worse. Its rancid flesh reeks of rot and crawls with fleas, ticks, and other vile parasites. Despite its obvious grotesqueness, the creature is quite affectionate, perhaps even overly and inappropriately so. This manifestation is always active—the accursed companion is immune to the sickened and nauseated condition. The master, on the

other hand, becomes consumed by fears of contagion to the extent that she takes a –2 penalty on all saving throws against disease effects.

Palsy (Su): The poor creature is stricken with palsy. It drools constantly and its muscles spasm with tics and twitches. The palsy doesn't impact its abilities, and actually aids the accursed companion when it loses mobility from other sources. The first time each day that the accursed companion becomes paralyzed, grappled or otherwise has its movement impaired, a *freedom of movement* effect automatically activates on the accursed companion. This effect persists for 1 minute, during which time the companion's master becomes nauseated unless she succeeds at a Will save (in which case she is merely sickened for the duration).

Rabid Vomit (Ex): A crust of froth lines the rim of the accursed companion's mouth. This manifestation is triggered automatically on the third round of any combat—on this round, the accursed companion always takes a standard action to vomit diseased pus and bile in a 15-foot cone (after moving, if it can, to capture as many enemies in the area of effect as possible). All creatures in this area must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 the accursed companion's HD + the accursed companion's Constitution modifier) or become nauseated for 1d4 rounds and contract rabies (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87). On a successful save, the targets are merely sickened for 1d4 rounds. When the accursed companion makes this vomit attack, its master is overwhelmed by the sensation of a mouthful of diseased bile. She is stunned for 1 round and nauseated for 1d4 rounds thereafter unless she succeeds at a Will save, in which case she is merely sickened for 1d4 rounds.

Scavenger (Su): This companion is particularly intrigued by undeath, often playing with carcasses and presenting decaying body parts as gifts to its master. This manifestation is triggered automatically when the companion successfully damages a corporeal undead with a natural attack. For 1 minute, the companion gains a +2 bonus on all attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws against undead. During this time, the companion's master becomes more susceptible to the undead, and takes a –2 penalty to all mind-affecting effects created by any undead creature.

Unexpected Frenzy (Su): The accursed companion looks normal, but some conditions or phrases cause the animal to fly into a murderous frenzy. When an accursed companion gains this condition, the GM determines three specific situations that can trigger the manifestation of the unexpected frenzy, such as a character petting the companion on the head, a keyword or key phrase such as "good dog," or the sight of a specific type of creature within 10 feet. The first time each day one of the three triggers occurs, the accursed companion flies into its frenzy. Its eyes glow, and any sounds it makes take on an eerie, hollow echo. The companion acts as if under the effects of *haste* for 1d4 rounds before returning to normal, and it typically attacks the source of its trigger. While her companion is frenzied, the master is overwhelmed with shame and despair, suffering as if under the effects of a *crushing despair* spell for twice the length of the accursed companion's frenzy. A successful Will save negates this effect.

Unsavory Friends (Su): The companion manages to attract the company of less desirable species. It has an uncanny knack for finding centipedes, bats, mice, and other vermin, even in areas where such pests might not be all that common. Even more unusual, the companion makes it a habit to play with such creatures and becomes angry and defensive if anything threatens its vermin friends. This manifestation is constant. Immune to the distraction effect caused by all swarms, the animal companion is comfortable and even welcomes the nauseating sensation of its crawling friends. The companion's master, unfortunately, never gets used to finding squirming bugs or wriggling maggots in the companion's vicinity and takes a –4 penalty on all saving throws against any swarm's distraction ability.

Mortifications

To many, it may seem strange to interpret pain as an ideal to strive toward, yet some mortals steep themselves in its bitterness. To these men and women, pain exists to serve the self as a reminder of the frailty of the body. To overcome and endure such suffering is to overcome the limitations of the flesh.

Scarred Monk (Archetype)

Scarred monks find unique clarity in physical discomfort. For monks who seek the truth hidden in pain, the practice of mortifications of the flesh helps to achieve enlightenment and acquire disturbing powers. Those who worship Zon-Kuthon tend to be particularly eager to explore the limitations of the flesh, yet monks of his faith are not the only ones to use self-mutilation and scarification to seek personal enhancement and power.

Mortifications (Su): Detailed below are a number of unusual, grisly, and harrowing processes known as mortifications that a monk can inflict upon herself in exchange for an unusual ki power. The monk must adhere to a philosophy that finds power in self-mortification; among the deities of the Inner Sea region, Zon-Kuthon's devoted are the most associated with this practice, but other lawful faiths, such as those dedicated to the empyreal lords Neshen and Vildeis, the infernal duke Zaebos, or the whore queen Doloras, count mortifications among their approved methods of self-enlightenment. While mortal followers of the mysterious kyton demagogues are rare in the Inner Sea region, the kytons also encourage their monk worshipers to invest deeply in mortifications.

A scarred monk chooses her first mortification at 4th level, selecting one from the list of potential mortifications detailed below. The scarred monk gains another mortification every 3 monk levels after this, to a maximum of six mortifications at 19th level. Once a scarred monk selects a mortification, she cannot change it. Some mortifications have prerequisites, such as already knowing certain mortifications or attaining a specific level (as noted in their descriptions). Unless otherwise stated, a scarred monk cannot select an individual mortification more than once.

When a scarred monk gains her first mortification, she gains a number of ki points equal to 1/2 her monk level + her Wisdom modifier. These ki points can only be spent to activate powers granted from mortifications or to make ki strikes. A scarred monk cannot spend ki points to make an additional attack at her highest attack bonus when making a flurry of blows, to increase her base speed, or to give herself a +4 dodge bonus to AC, nor can she use any of the other powers normally granted to monks that utilize their ki pools.

Mortifications alter the ki pool and replace high jump, wholeness of body, abundant step, and empty body.

Armor of Scars (Su): A scarred monk can force ki into her extensive scars, hardening them like armor. Provided she has at least 1 ki point in her pool, she gains a +1 bonus to her natural armor. A scarred monk can take this mortification multiple times; its effects stack.

Blood Eagle (Su): The monk's rib bones are unusually prominent and press hideously against the flesh of her chest. As a swift action, she can spend 1 ki point to cause her ribs to break through her flesh, lacerating and tearing any opponent that has engaged her in a grapple attack or that has swallowed her whole. This does not cause the monk any damage; a few seconds after she extrudes them, the ribs retract into her body, leaving behind angry red welts. The ribs deal an amount of slashing damage equal to her base unarmed strike damage to any creature that is currently grappling her or has swallowed her whole. If the monk attempts to escape from that grapple in the same round, she adds the amount of damage her ribs inflicted to her Escape Artist or CMB check as a circumstance bonus.

Contortionist (Su): Over the years, the scarred monk has broken many of her bones and reset them at odd and repulsive angles to allow her to contort into entirely unnatural forms. The monk can spend 1 ki point as a free action to gain a +20 circumstance bonus on any Escape Artist check.

Doll Face (Su): When acquiring a new face with the face collector mortification (see below), the scarred monk can spend an additional 2 ki points to perform an eerie blood ritual that gives the stolen flesh the appearance of aged ceramic. When the face is stitched to her flesh, the monk gains the appearance of

an aged porcelain doll, complete with cracked and peeling paint and a glassy, unblinking stare. A scarred monk with a doll face does not gain the bonus on Disguise checks but does gain a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks. Once per hour, the scarred monk can cause the doll face to shift and appear as the face of a lost loved one or friend of a single viewer within 30 feet—that targeted individual must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the scarred monk's monk level + the scarred monk's Charisma modifier) or become nauseated with fear for a number of rounds equal to the number of mortifications the scarred monk has. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. Unlike a face of flesh, a doll face ages and cracks, falling off and restoring the scarred monk's true and deformed face after 24 hours. A scarred monk must have the face collector mortification to take this mortification.

Eyes Stitched Shut (Su): The scarred monk can stitch her eyes shut. This takes 1 minute to accomplish, after which the monk is effectively blind. However, as long as the monk retains at least 1 point in her ki pool, she gains blindsense to a distance of 60 feet. She can detect living creatures with at least 1 point of damage within 30 feet of her as if via blindsight. The monk can remove the stitches as a full-round action to restore her normal sight and end this effect.

Face Collector (Su): This mortification requires a monk to surgically remove the flesh from her face, surrendering her appearance and all associated identity. The flesh of her face heals into a featureless mass of scars at the end of this surgical ritual. Thereafter, at the cost of 1 ki point and as a standard action, the scarred monk can alter her facial features to duplicate those of a dead body she touches. The body must be of the same creature type as the scarred monk, and as her face changes, the corpse's face withers away into rot and decay. This grants the scarred monk a +8 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks to appear as that individual (although the penalties for gender, race, age, and size still apply). As a side effect to this unnatural shifting of appearance, a scarred monk gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws against scrying effects. For 24 hours after claiming a new face, this bonus increases to +4.

Pain Binding (Su): By spending 1 ki point when she makes a single unarmed strike against a living creature as a standard action, the scarred monk can link her own pain to the creature struck. For a number of rounds equal to the total number of mortifications the scarred monk has, any time the scarred monk takes lethal damage, the creature she has bound her pain to must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the monk's level + the monk's Charisma modifier) or take an equal amount of nonlethal damage. The effects of pain binding end immediately once the pain-bound creature falls unconscious.

Rings of Pain (Su): The scarred monk has pierced her flesh with numerous large metal rings. As a standard action and at the cost of 2 ki points, she can tear one of these piercings free from her flesh to flood her body with searing pain. As she does so, she exudes waves of agony in a 30-foot radius to deal damage equal to twice the monk's unarmed strike modified by twice her Wisdom modifier to all creatures in the area of effect. A successful Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the monk's level + her Wisdom modifier) halves the damage, but on a failed Will save, a creature is sickened by the pain for 1 round. A scarred monk must be at least 10th level to take this mortification.

Share Pain (Su): Whenever the monk takes damage from a weapon, she can spend 1 ki point as an immediate action to cause the body of her attacker to suffer the pain of that blow. The attacking creature must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 the monk's level + the monk's Wisdom modifier) or take damage equal to the amount the weapon blow inflicted on the monk and become staggered from the pain for 1 round as well. A successful saving throw halves the damage the attacker suffers from shared pain and negates the staggered effect.

Third Eye (Su): The scarred monk bores a hole in her brow and then implants a mummified or alchemically preserved third eye in this opening. The third eye must come from a creature of the same size and creature type as the scarred monk. The scarred monk can then spend 1 ki point to gain *true seeing*, as per the spell, for 1 round. A scarred monk must be at least 13th level to take this mortification.

Tongueless Master (Su): The monk assumes a vow of silence and slices out her own tongue. Thereafter, she wears the preserved appendage on a cord about her neck. She can no longer speak or cast spells with verbal components. Whenever she hits a creature with an unarmed strike, she can spend 1 point from her ki pool to steal the voice from her target. The target can resist this effect with a successful Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the scarred monk's level + her Wisdom modifier), otherwise the victim loses the ability to speak or cast spells with verbal components for a number of minutes equal to the total number of mortifications known by the scarred monk. During this time, the scarred monk can speak in the victim's voice.

Torturous Vision (Su): As a move action, the scarred monk can spend 1 ki point to cause a creature that recently wounded her to suffer—in one sudden blast of agony—the pain of all the wounds the scarred monk has endured. The monk can target any living creature within 60 feet who has been affected by share pain in the last 24 hours. The creature becomes stunned with pain for 1 round and then staggered for 1d3 rounds unless it succeeds at a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the monk's level + the monk's Wisdom modifier). The scarred monk must be at least 13th level and have the share pain mortification in order to take this mortification.

Curses of Corruption

An oracle's curse can take the form of a nascent corruption. If an oracle takes any of the following curses, she might, at the GM's discretion, become more susceptible to gaining the corruption of the same name.

Aboleth: Your mind is marked by aboleth tampering, either as a result of a close encounter with one of these creatures while you were a child, or even through an ancestor, close family member, or one of your sisters or brothers in faith—this associate's interaction with the aboleths may be all that it takes to infect you. You take a –2 penalty on saving throws against mind-affecting effects and add *charm person* and *hypnotism* to your list of 1st-level oracle spells known. At 5th level, add *minor image* to your list of 2nd-level oracle spells known. At 10th level, add *modify memory* to your list of 4th-level oracle spells known. At 15th level, add *veil* to your list of 6th-level oracle spells known.

Accursed: You are cursed with misfortune and sorrow, and you cannot gain benefit from morale bonuses. However, you gain a +4 bonus to all saving throws against curse effects. At 5th level, add *ill omen*[APG] to your list of spells known. At 10th level, add *greater brand*[APG] to your list of spells known. At 15th level, you are immune to curse effects except for your own oracle curse.

Deep One: The lure of the ocean tugs at your soul. You reduce your base land speed by 5 feet. You gain a swim speed equal to your land speed, and if you already have a swim speed, you increase it by 10 feet. At 5th level, your natural armor bonus increases by 1 as your skin thickens. At 10th level, you gain a +1 bonus to your caster level when casting spells underwater and when casting spells with the water descriptor. At 15th level, you gain the benefits of *freedom of movement* while underwater.

Demonic: Your heart is cursed with the pull of the Abyss. You cannot cast spells with the good or lawful descriptors, nor can you summon good or lawful creatures. Good and lawful creatures instinctively distrust you, and you take a –4 penalty on all Diplomacy checks against such creatures. You gain a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Intimidate checks. Diplomacy is not a class skill for you, but Bluff or Intimidate (choose one) is. At 5th level, you gain a +4 bonus to all saving throws against fear effects. At 10th level, you gain immunity to poison. At 15th level, any weapon you wield is treated as chaotic and evil for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Ghoul: While your actual dietary needs don't change, you crave the flesh of sentient creatures. You can only go without food for 12 hours before you begin to starve, and when you do starve, the DC of the Constitution check to avoid taking damage increases by 5. If you feed on fresh, raw flesh (no older than 1 hour) from a creature of your own race, you gain a +1 morale bonus on all saving throws for 24 hours. At 5th level, you add *ghoul touch* to your list of 2nd-level oracle spells known. At 10th level, you become immune to paralysis and disease. At 15th level, you gain the effects of *heroes' feast* whenever you feed on the raw flesh of a sentient creature, and the effects of this *heroes' feast* double if the flesh you eat comes from a member of your own race (this effect applies no more often than once per day).

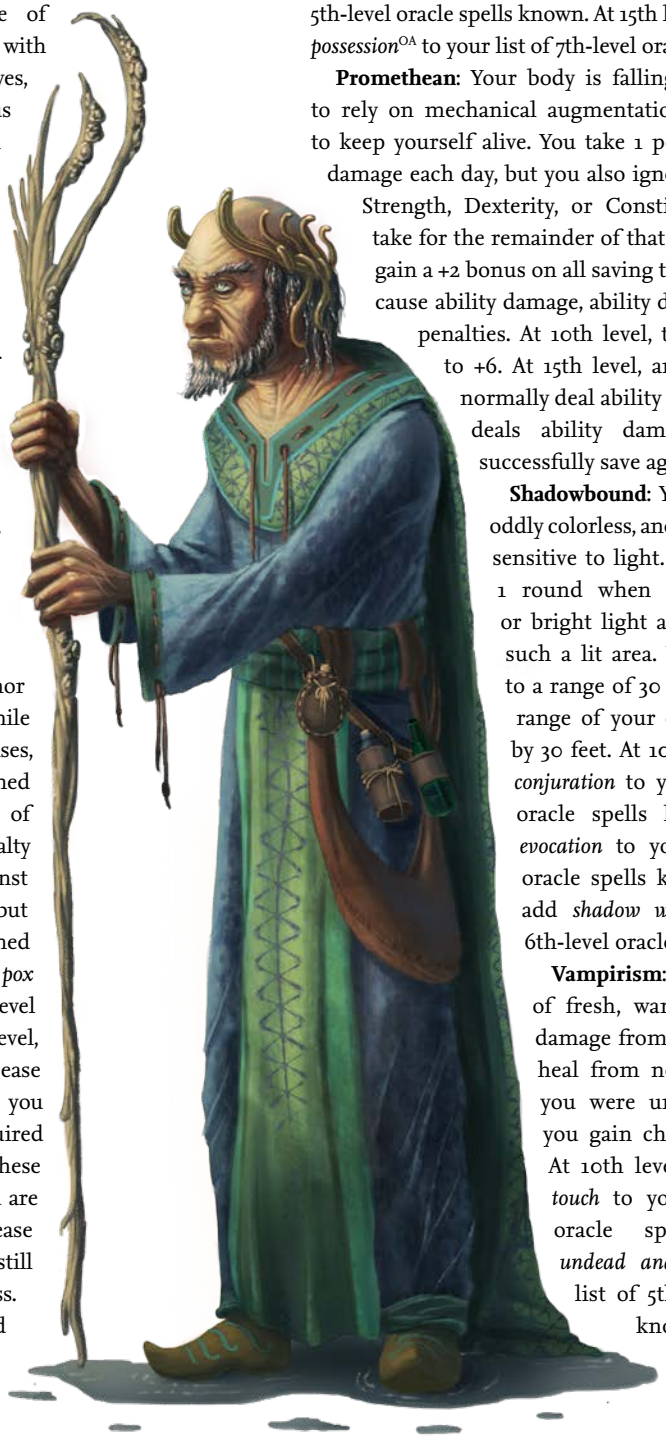
Hellbound: Infernal influence grants you profane insight and weighs on your soul. You cannot cast spells with the good or chaotic descriptors, and you can't summon good or chaotic creatures. Good and chaotic creatures instinctively distrust you, and you take a –4 penalty on all Diplomacy checks against such creatures. You gain a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Intimidate checks. At 5th level, you gain a +4 bonus to all saving throws against charm effects. At 10th level, you gain immunity to fire. At 15th level, any weapon you wield is treated as lawful and evil for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Hive: You were exposed at a young age (perhaps even before you were born) to the alien species known as the hive, but this exposure did not result in a full-blown infestation by these otherworldly monsters. Others (including animals) find the unsightly spines and rough growths that periodically emerge from your flesh to be disturbing and distracting, and you take a –4 penalty on Bluff, Diplomacy, Handle Animal, and Ride checks. Once per day as a standard action, you can cough up an ovoid, leathery sphere that can be hurled as a flask of acid, though it becomes inert after 24 hours. At 5th level, you gain the benefits of *endure elements* in hot environments and are immune to infestations (save for those from the hive itself). At 10th level, your skin deformities grow numerous enough to increase your natural armor bonus by 1. At 15th level, you gain acid resistance 20.

Lich: Every living spellcaster hides a secret in their flesh—a unique, personalized set of conditions that, when all are fulfilled in the correct order, can trigger the transformation into a lich. Normally, one must expend years and tens of thousands of gold pieces to research this deeply personalized method of attaining immortality. Yet, in a rare few cases, chance and ill fortune can conspire against an unsuspecting spellcaster. You have unknowingly) fulfilled most (but not all) of the ritualistic components to achieve lichdom. You have yet to turn into an undead creature, but you are close. You take damage from positive energy and heal from negative energy as if you were undead. At 5th level, add *control undead* to your list of 2nd-level oracle spells known. At 10th level, add *undead anatomy I*[UM] to your list of 3rd-level oracle spells known and *undead anatomy II*[UM] to your list of 5th-level oracle spells known. At 15th level, you are immune to death effects.

Lycanthropy: You suffer from a minor form of lycanthropy. The exact animal your body and mind are

aligned with can vary, but you should choose an animal that matches your faith thematically. In times of stress or unease, you cannot speak—only growl and snarl like an animal. This ability works similarly to the tongues curse, but whenever you are in combat, you cannot speak at all. This does not interfere with spellcasting but does apply to spells that are language dependent. A character under the effects of *speak with animals* can understand you, and you can communicate with such characters normally. You can speak with animals when in this condition. Choose one type of animal commonly associated with lycanthropy (such as rats, wolves, or bears); you gain a +4 bonus on Handle Animal checks with these creatures. At 5th level, add *charm animal* to your list of 1st-level oracle spells known and *animal messenger* to your list of 2nd-level oracle spells known. At 10th level, add *beast shape I* to your list of 3rd-level oracle spells known and *beast shape II* to your list of 5th-level oracle spells known. At 15th level, you gain damage reduction 5/silver, and if you already have this type of damage reduction, it increases in value by 5 (to a maximum of DR 15/silver).



Plagued: You suffer from minor ailments and sicknesses. While you struggle to resist new diseases, you have grown accustomed to the many inconveniences of sickness. You take a –1 penalty on all saving throws against disease or infestation effects, but you are immune to the sickened condition. At 5th level, add *pox pustules*[APG] to your list of 2nd-level oracle spells known. At 10th level, increase the save DC of any disease effect you create by +2, and you raise the number of saves required to recover naturally from these diseases by 1. At 15th level, you are immune to the effects of disease and infestations, but you can still function as a carrier for sickness.

Possessed: Another mind shares your body, interfering with your control, and it's more difficult for you to concentrate as a result. You take a –2 penalty on all concentration checks, and concentrating to maintain a spell duration provokes attacks of opportunity. Whenever a foe attempts to use an effect to possess or dominate you and the effect allows a saving throw to negate, you may roll twice and take the better of the two results. At 5th level, if you become dazed or stunned, you can choose instead to become confused for twice the duration the daze or stun effect would have normally lasted. At 10th level, add *possession*[OA] to your list of 5th-level oracle spells known. At 15th level, add *greater object possession*[OA] to your list of 7th-level oracle spells known.

Promethean: Your body is falling apart, forcing you to rely on mechanical augmentations or replacements to keep yourself alive. You take 1 point of Constitution damage each day, but you also ignore the first point of Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution damage you take for the remainder of that day. At 5th level, you gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws on effects that cause ability damage, ability drain, or ability score penalties. At 10th level, this bonus increases to +6. At 15th level, any effect that would normally deal ability drain on you instead deals ability damage whenever you successfully save against the effect.

Shadowbound: Your pigmentation is oddly colorless, and your eyes are highly sensitive to light. You are blinded for 1 round when exposed to normal or bright light and dazzled while in such a lit area. You gain darkvision to a range of 30 feet. At 5th level, the range of your darkvision increases by 30 feet. At 10th level, add *shadow conjuration* to your list of 4th-level oracle spells known and *shadow evocation* to your list of 5th-level oracle spells known. At 15th level, add *shadow walk* to your list of 6th-level oracle spells known.

Vampirism: You crave the taste of fresh, warm blood. You take damage from positive energy and heal from negative energy as if you were undead. At 5th level, you gain channel resistance +4. At 10th level, you add *vampiric touch* to your list of 3rd-level oracle spells known and *undead anatomy II*[UM] to your list of 5th-level oracle spells known. At 15th level, you gain damage reduction 5/magic.

Spirits of the Dark Tapestry

Shamans open themselves up to the spirit world on a daily basis, seeking to speak to the spirits and gain insight and power. Yet, not all spirits are those of the natural world. Just as the Dark Tapestry exists far from the realm of sanity in this world, so spirits from the Dark Tapestry lurk in the outermost reaches of that realm.

Dark Tapestry (Shaman Spirit)

A shaman who selects the Dark Tapestry spirit is often a misanthropic loner. While she may well work with others, she rarely does so of her own volition. Instead, she seeks out the aid of a small group (such as a party of adventurers) as a result of an obscure vision or other influence from the Dark Tapestry that she might not fully comprehend. More often, though, a Dark Tapestry shaman is encountered not as a member of a group, but as the leader of a cult in a remote region—these shamans, of course, work best as NPC villains and not as PCs.

The spirits of the Dark Tapestry have often been known to whisper dangerous secrets to mortals who dwell on sane worlds. Such spirits might be found anywhere touched by the light of baleful stars, but they are most frequently found lurking around unfathomably ancient ruins of aberrant civilizations with links to the Dark Tapestry. On Golarion, these spirits can often be found near old ruins in Osirion or the Sodden Lands, although they are also quite active throughout the county of Versex in Ustalav. Many shamans who invoke the spirits of the Dark Tapestry also worship one or several of the Outer Gods or Great Old Ones of the Elder Mythos, be it out of fear or misinformed adoration. Other entities associated with the Dark Tapestry, particularly the Dominion of the Black, seem less likely to be associated with that realm's spirits, so it may well be that the spirits that shamans call upon when they turn to the Dark Tapestry for power are in fact the idle thoughts of horrors such as Nyarlathotep, Yog-Sothoth, or even Azathoth.

Spirit Magic Spells: *entropic shield* (1st), *contact entity I*[HA] (2nd), *contact entity II*[HA] (3rd), *black tentacles* (4th), *contact entity III*[HA] (5th), *feeblemind* (6th), *contact entity IV*[HA] (7th), *insanity* (8th), *interplanetary teleport*[UM] (9th).

Hexes: A shaman who chooses the Dark Tapestry spirit can select from the following hexes. As with all hexes, the DC to save against the special abilities granted by this spirit is equal to 10 + 1/2 the shaman's level + the shaman's Wisdom modifier.

Alien Summons (Su): Whenever the shaman calls or summons one or more creatures, one creature of her choice arrives with the advanced creature simple template. The creature presents a distorted mockery of the usual creature summoned, its body deformed and alien in nature. This chosen creature's anatomy is so confounding that it is immune to the additional damage from critical hits or precision damage (such as that granted by sneak attack).

Brain Drain (Su): As a standard action, the shaman can violently probe the mind of a single intelligent creature within 60 feet. The target can attempt a Will save to negate the effect and immediately know the source of this harmful mental prying. Creatures that fail their saving throws are racked with pain, taking 1d6 points of damage for every 2 shaman levels the shaman has. After successfully damaging a creature with this ability, the shaman can sort through the jumble of stolen thoughts and memories as a full-round action and then attempt a single Knowledge check using the victim's skill bonus rather than her own. If the victim wasn't trained in the Knowledge skill the shaman wishes to use, then this check must be attempted as if untrained as well. The randomly stolen thoughts remain in the shaman's mind for a number of rounds equal to her Wisdom modifier, and the shaman can attempt one Knowledge check per round using these drained thoughts. This ability does not give access to memories or other personal information known by the victim. Brain drain is a mind-affecting effect. The shaman can use this ability once per day at 1st level, plus one additional time per day at 5th level and for every 5 levels beyond 5th, to a maximum of five times per day at 20th level.

Cloak of Darkness (Su): The shaman conjures a cloak of semisolid shadowy darkness that grants her a +4 armor bonus. At 7th level and every 4 levels thereafter, this bonus increases by 2. This bonus is from a force effect. She can use this cloak for 1 hour per day per shaman level. The duration does not need to be consecutive, but it must be spent in 1-hour increments.

Maddening Whispers (Su): At will as a standard action, the shaman can invoke whispers from spirits of the Dark Tapestry to speak directly into the mind of a single target within 30 feet. These whispers utilize no known language, yet the victim nevertheless feels convinced that, somehow, it was almost able to comprehend the message. The target must succeed at a Will saving throw or be confused for 1 round. At 8th level and again at 16th level, the confusion caused by this hex lasts for 1 additional round. Whether or not the save is successful, the shaman cannot target that creature with this hex again for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Pierce the Veil (Su): The shaman gains darkvision to a range of up to 30 feet. If the shaman already has darkvision, its range increases by 30 feet. At 8th level, this ability becomes enhanced, allowing the shaman to see perfectly in darkness of any kind, even that created by *deeper darkness*.

Spirit Animal: The shaman's spirit animal has an alien physiology, including twitching tentacles, additional but blind eyes, or strangely deformed limbs. The spirit animal gains the shaman's choice of a swim speed or a climb speed equal to its highest speed, and one of its natural weapons increases in reach by 5 feet. If it did not have a natural weapon, it gains a tentacle attack as a secondary natural weapon with 5-foot reach. Damage for this tentacle is standard for a creature of the spirit animal's size (1d2 for a Tiny spirit animal, or 1d3 for a Small one).

Spirit Ability: A shaman who chooses the Dark Tapestry spirit as her spirit or wandering spirit gains the following ability.

Touch of the Void (Su): As a standard action, the shaman is able to perform a melee touch attack that deals 1d6 points of cold damage + 1 point for every 2 shaman levels she has. At 10th level, any creature the shaman strikes with this touch or with a melee weapon must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or be fatigued for a number of rounds equal to 1/2 the shaman's level. This has no effect on creatures that are already fatigued. The shaman can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Greater Spirit Ability: A shaman who chooses the Dark Tapestry spirit as her spirit or wandering spirit acquires the following ability upon gaining access to the greater version of that spirit.

Horrific Glimpse (Sp): Once per day, the shaman can gain the effects of *contact other plane* after 1 hour of meditation. No components are required in order to use this ability, but the shaman does not get to select which plane she contacts. Instead, this version of the spell contacts an alien mind from somewhere in the Dark Tapestry, be it a hive mind of alien monstrosities, the disembodied sentience of a dead planet, or even the slumbering and insane mind of a Great Old One or Outer God. The shaman must succeed at a DC 16 Wisdom check rather than an Intelligence check to avoid a decrease in Intelligence or Charisma when using this ability. If she fails the check, her Intelligence and Charisma scores each fall to 8 for 5 weeks, as the alien minds thus contacted prove as destructive to mortal thoughts as direct contact with the most powerful of deities. The types of answers provided by the horrific glimpse, be they true answers, ignorance, lies, or random answers, are considered equal to those of a greater deity if the questions being asked concern the Material Plane, but they are equal to those of a demigod if the questions posed concern any other plane.

Also once per day (but only after first using this ability as per *contact other plane*), the shaman can reveal a fragment of this horrific vision to another creature, as per *phantasmal killer*, except that the target takes 1d4+1 points of Wisdom damage regardless of the results of any of its saving throws. The body of a creature slain by this effect is always hideously mutilated and savaged, making spells like *speak with dead* useless.

True Spirit Ability: A shaman who chooses the Dark Tapestry spirit as her spirit or wandering spirit acquires the following ability upon gaining access to the true version of that spirit.

Unbound Form (Su): The shaman can assume a variety of forms, as per *greater polymorph*, for 1 minute per day per shaman level. The minutes need not be consecutive, but they must be spent in 1-minute increments. When she assumes these forms, some element of the new shape always sets it apart from a typical specimen, such as strangely colored eyes, limbs that bend in unusual ways, or a slimy coating of mucus over the flesh.

Manifestation: Upon reaching 20th level, the shaman becomes an unnatural spirit of the Dark Tapestry. She gains damage reduction 5/— and immunity to acid, critical hits, and sneak attacks. While she retains much of her original appearance, several minor cosmetic changes leave no doubt as to her now-alien nature. Her eyes might appear as solid spheres of blackness, her fingers might writhe like tentacles, or her legs might bend backward at the knees.

Once per day, the shaman can cast *shapechange* as a spell-like ability without requiring a material component, but the form the shaman assumes via this spell-like ability is never something that looks of natural origin to the shaman's home world.

Aberrant Eidolons

Alien entities from the farthest stars, the lightless depths of the Darklands, the sea itself, or even a lunatic's nightmares have long intrigued summoners who become obsessed with the monstrous form. While most summoners call upon outsiders from the Great Beyond, some discover the secret to summoning alien entities from strange corners of the Material Plane. These summoned minions are known as aberrant eidolons. Aberrant eidolons share many abilities and physical features with the nonoutsider aberrations that dwell in forgotten or nameless reaches of reality, but these malformed entities are still outsiders like any other eidolon for the purposes of determining which spells affect them.

The following rules for aberrant eidolons are designed for the unchained summoner—see *Pathfinder RPG Pathfinder Unchained* for more details on this optional variant of the summoner class.

Alignment: Chaotic evil, chaotic neutral, neutral, or neutral evil.

Base Form: Aberrant (bite, grab [tentacle mass], tentacle mass), biped (limbs [arms], limbs [legs], slam), quadruped (bite, limbs [legs, 2]), or serpentine (bite, grab [bite], reach [bite], tail, tail slap).

Base Evolutions: Starting at 1st level, aberrant eidolons gain the following class skills in place of those normally gained by eidolons: Escape Artist, Intimidate, Knowledge (pick one), Perception, Stealth, and Climb, Fly, or Swim (pick one). The summoner can choose four additional skills to be class skills for his eidolon. Aberrant eidolons count as both aberrations and outsiders for spells and effects. They gain a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting effects.

At 4th level, aberrant eidolons add 1 point to their evolution pools.

At 8th level, aberrant eidolons gain immunity to mind-affecting effects (including morale bonuses).

At 12th level, aberrant eidolons gain DR 5/slashing. They also gain the blindsense evolution as a bonus evolution.

At 16th level, aberrant eidolons gain the blindsight evolution. They also gain telepathy with a range of up to 100 feet.

At 20th level, aberrant eidolons gain the ability to use *transmogrify*[APG] as a quickened spell-like ability once per day. These eidolons can gain the benefit of a *transmogrify* spell any number of times per day.

Aberrant Base Form

The following base form is used by aberration eidolons as well as equally strange entities; this form is available to the following eidolon subtypes: aberrant, daemon, demon, and elemental.

Starting Statistics: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Saves** Fort (good), Ref (poor), Will (good); **Attack** bite (1d6), tentacles (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str 12, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Aberrant Evolutions

The following evolutions are used by aberrant eidolons and other strange eidolons.

1-Point Evolutions

The following evolutions cost 1 point from the eidolon's evolution pool.

Basic Psychic Magic: Select one spell from the following list: *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *grave words*[OA], *know direction*, *lullaby*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, or *telekinetic projectile*[OA]. The eidolon can cast that spell as a psychic spell at will. The spell requires thought and emotion components as normal for psychic magic (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 144). The eidolon's caster level is equal to the eidolon's Hit Dice – 2 (minimum CL 1st). The save DC equals 10 + 1/2 the eidolon's HD + the eidolon's Charisma modifier. This evolution can be selected more than once, selecting a different spell each time. *Requirements*: Aberrant subtype, Charisma 10.

Tentacle Mass (Ex): The eidolon grows a thick mass of tentacles that can be used as a

primary natural weapon. The tentacles deal 1d8 points of damage if the eidolon is Medium. Eidolons with the grab evolution that is linked to a tentacle mass can use that ability to grapple foes of up to the eidolon's size, and they can also use this evolution in place of the serpentine base form to qualify for the constrict evolution. *Requirements*: Aberrant subtype.

2-Point Evolutions

The following evolutions cost 2 points from the eidolon's evolution pool.

Blood Frenzy (Ex): When the eidolon is dealt damage, it enters a blood frenzy. It gains a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls and weapon damage rolls and attacks the nearest creature each round, friend or foe, although it ceases attacking its summoner after hitting once. The frenzy lasts for 5 rounds or until the eidolon can perceive no creatures. At the end of that time, the eidolon is fatigued for 1 minute. It cannot enter a blood frenzy while fatigued. *Requirements*: Aberrant, daemon, or demon subtype; summoner level 7th.

Intermediate Psychic Magic: The eidolon gains 2 points of psychic energy that it can spend each day. Select one spell from the following list: *compel hostility*[UC], *lesser confusion*, *hypnotism*, *mind thrust I*[OA], or *vanish*[APG]. The eidolon can use that spell thereafter as a psychic spell by spending 1 point of psychic energy. The caster level and save DC are the same as for basic psychic magic. This evolution can be selected more than once, selecting a different spell each time. The eidolon's amount of psychic energy available to spend each day does not stack—it uses only the highest number of points granted by its most powerful psychic magic evolution. *Requirements*: Aberrant subtype; basic psychic magic evolution; Charisma 11; summoner level 5th.

3-Point Evolutions

The following evolutions cost 3 points from the eidolon's evolution pool.

Advanced Psychic Magic: The eidolon gains 5 points of psychic energy that it can spend each day. Select one spell from the following list: *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *disfiguring touch*[UM], *id insinuation I*[OA], *mind thrust II*[OA], or *touch of idiocy*. The eidolon can cast that spell as a psychic spell by spending 2 points of psychic energy. The caster level and save DC are the same as for basic psychic magic. This evolution can be selected more than once, selecting a different spell each time. The eidolon's amount of psychic energy available to spend each day does not stack—it uses only the highest number of points granted by its most powerful psychic magic evolution. *Requirements*: Aberrant subtype; intermediate psychic magic evolution; Charisma 12; summoner level 7th.

Alien Consciousness (Ex): The eidolon's mind is dangerously incomprehensible to mortals who contact it. Nonaberrations that read the eidolon's mind or make mental contact with it take 1d4 points of Wisdom damage (or 1d8 points of sanity damage, if you use the sanity rules from *Horror Adventures*). This contact also includes communication via telepathy—an eidolon that has telepathic capability must initiate this particular contact as a swift action against a single target in order to force its alien consciousness on another creature. A successful Will saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 the eidolon's HD + the eidolon's Charisma modifier) halves the damage. Once a creature has been subjected to the eidolon's alien consciousness, it is immune to further damage from that eidolon's alien consciousness for 24 hours. The eidolon's summoner is immune to his own eidolon's alien consciousness, but he can still be affected by other eidolons' alien consciousnesses. This is a mind-affecting effect. *Requirements*: Aberrant or protean subtype; summoner level 9th.

4-Point Evolutions

The following evolutions cost 4 points from the eidolon's evolution pool.

Amorphous (Ex): The eidolon's biology lacks discernible weak points. It is not subject to critical hits and sneak attacks. *Requirements*: Aberrant or elemental subtype; summoner level 9th.

Disease (Ex): One of the eidolon's natural weapons carries a disease chosen from the following list: bubonic plague, filth fever, leprosy, red ache, or shakes. Each hit forces a saving throw against the disease's normal effects. The disease has no onset, however. The save DC equals 10 + 1/2 the eidolon's Hit Dice + the eidolon's Constitution modifier. The eidolon can expose a creature to its disease no more than once per round. By spending 2 additional evolution points, you can instead choose the following additional diseases: demon fever (only if the eidolon has the demon subtype), devil chills (only if the eidolon has the devil subtype), or slimy doom. *Requirements*: Aberrant, daemon, demon, or devil subtype or the undead appearance evolution[UM]; summoner level 7th.

Superior Psychic Magic: The eidolon has 7 points of psychic magic to spend each day. Select one spell from the following list: *confusion*, *deeper darkness*, *displacement*, *jester's jaunt*[APG], *id insinuation II*[OA], or *mind thrust III*[OA]. The eidolon can cast that spell as a psychic spell by spending 3 points of psychic energy. The caster level and save DC are the same as for basic psychic magic. This evolution can be selected more than once, selecting a different spell each time. The eidolon's amount of psychic energy available to spend each day does not stack; it uses only the highest number of points granted by its most powerful psychic magic evolution. *Requirements*: Aberrant subtype; advanced psychic magic evolution; summoner level 11th; Charisma 13.

Strange, Far Places

The psychology of places, for some imaginations at least, is very vivid; for the wanderer, especially, camps have their "note" either of welcome or rejection. At first it may not always be apparent, because the busy preparations of tent and cooking prevent, but with the first pause—after supper usually—it comes and announces itself. And the note of this willow-camp now became unmistakably plain to me: we were interlopers, trespassers; we were not welcomed... We were the first human influences upon this island, and we were not wanted. The willows were against us.

—Algernon Blackwood, "The Willows"

Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures does not attempt to cover every possible subgenre of horror. Instead, it focuses on seven specific subgenres: body horror (horror from the body or from within the flesh), cosmic horror (horror from beyond humanity's ken), dark fantasy (the realm of horrific fairy tales), ghost stories (tales of hauntings and the haunted), gothic horror (horror dripping with atmosphere and often incorporating warped romantic themes), psychological horror (horror from the mind or involving loss of sanity), and slasher horror (tales revolving around a remorseless, unstoppable killing force).

This chapter explores seven of Golarion's more horrific realms, each of which provides an example of how the seven subgenres of horror explored in *Horror Adventures* manifest on Golarion. These are regions where terror, madness, and fear rule, where the dead walk among the living, where your neighbors may not be who you believe them to be, where the boundaries between this world and realms of nightmare wear thin—strange, far away places where the monsters rule. These regions range from relatively small islands or remote villages all the way up to entire nations. Yet horror is not limited to these seven examples—every nation and stretch of wilderness on Golarion has the potential to harbor dreadful secrets and frightening foes.

Body Horror: The corruption of the flesh has long terrified those who endure or observe its effects. The transformation of life into corporeal undeath, such as that which is the norm in Geb, is perhaps the most widespread manifestation of body horror in the Inner Sea region. Other examples exist, however, such as the fleshwarping practices of the drow, certain arcane sects in Nex, the sinspawn of ancient Thassilon, or the invasive and monstrous surgical torments inflicted upon mortals by kytons or derros. In other cases, body horror rises in the form of contagion and infection. Plant monsters are a common source of such awful scenarios, with vegepygmies, yellow musk creepers, bodythieves, and fungus queens representing the transformation of flesh into plant or fungal matter.

Cosmic Horror: The alien entities of the Elder Mythos or the monstrous creatures that populate the Dominion of the Black personify all that is cosmic horror, and their agency can be felt across the Inner Sea region, from small towns in Varisia to the back woods of Ustalav to the desert sands of Osirion. Cultists of the Outer Gods and Great Old Ones can be found throughout the Inner Sea and beyond, yet they typically keep to more rural areas where their blasphemous rituals and strange rites can proceed without interruption. Despite this, some larger settlements, such as Ustalav's Carrion Hill, have long hosted the influence of the Elder Mythos. Yet cosmic horror is not confined to the cosmos of the Material Plane. Even the gods themselves must bow before the greatest of cosmic horrors, such as the unknowable change that came upon the ancient god Dou-Bral, which transformed him into Zon-Kuthon. This is the same otherworldly influence that corrupts the order of nature itself within the nation of Nidal.

Dark Fantasy: This genre of dark fantasy can be applied to most regions of the Inner Sea. This brand of horror can be seen in the violent madness of goblinkind, the debased perversions of twisted fey, the sinister manipulations of society by shapechangers like doppelgangers or faceless stalkers, and the cackling machinations of hags, whether these menaces influence entire nations (such as the White Witches in Irrisen) or smaller domains (such as the Witch-Fen of Azra Sahota in the Crown of the World).

Ghost Stories: The nations of Ustalav and Geb both have their share of ghostly legacies, and legends of haunted houses, phantom ships, and spirit-plagued graveyards can be heard across the face of the world, yet the haunted land of Shenmen is perhaps the greatest redoubt for haunts on Golarion. Here, the very land itself is infused with stories of ghosts. Yet one need not travel far to find evidence of ghosts and hauntings, for it seems that every town and village in the Inner Sea region plays host to at least one manor, building, or abandoned shack believed to be infested by evil spirits.

Gothic Horror: No land on Golarion personifies the dark and forbidden themes of gothic horror more precisely than mist-shrouded Ustalav. Here, among remote castles, fog-choked streets, primeval forests, and rugged mountains lie all the classic trappings—werewolves, vampires, ghosts, ancestral curses, mad alchemists, and more.

Psychological Horror: The threat of possession by spirits, of creeping and insidious madness, or of the loss of one's personality can strike anywhere—such is the strength of psychological horror. Wherever the human mind exists, there also lies the capacity for doubt and distrust, for paranoia and psychosis. Yet it seems that in certain parts of the world, madness and paranoia are all the more common—places like Galt make perfect hunting grounds for those forces that prey upon society and the mind. Psychological horror can be effectively combined with body horror themes as well, particularly in shadowy Nidal or in the tormented society of the drow.

Slasher Horror: The violence and brutality of Golarion's monstrous races ensure that slasher horror is always close at hand. Whether it's the murderous and savage attention of bugbears or ogres, or the more subtle but no less violent machinations of the Skinsaw Cult, examples of slasher horror are found throughout the Inner Sea region. Yet in certain corners of the world, such as the cannibal-haunted isle of Kalva in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, such violence is the norm.

Crown of the World

Up here on the Crown, it's not just the cold or lack of food that means the difference between life and death. There are more than wild beasts out there in the endless white, I can assure you. You think a mere polar bear or wolf turned Old Agram into the thumb-sucking vegetable he is today? No, he was once just like you and me—young, strong, foolish. But the Crown has a way of seizing those things you take most for granted, like your sanity. Out there, on the High Ice, you've no greater enemy than your own mind.

—Immoktuu, Erutaki guide

CROWN OF THE WORLD

Remote Arctic Continent

Location beyond Golarion's arctic circle

Horror Genres cosmic horror, dark fantasy, ghost story, psychological horror

Horrific Threats arctic madness, frost worms, polar bears, shantaks, wendigos, wikkawaks, winter hags, winter wolves, winterwights, yetis

Horrific Locations Dead Man's Dome, The High Ice, Hills of Mournful Calling, Nameless Spires, Witch-Fen of Azra Sahota

Blinding snowstorms. Howling winds. Numbing cold. These are the sensations evoked by the Crown of the World, the lonely winterscape that blankets the northern reaches of the globe in an eternally frozen shroud. The great spans of ice and snow are desolate and perilous, and those foolhardy enough to attempt traversing the Crown are forever changed by the experience.

Signs of life are rare on the Crown of the World, but most travelers consider this a blessing more than a curse, for more than benign moose or penguins call these lands home—ravenous polar bears (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 41), cruel frost giants, savage winter wolves, and devastating frost worms (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 126) also dwell on the Crown, and all enjoy the taste of warm flesh. Yet even these monsters quail against the true horrors that haunt the ice. The looming shantaks (*Bestiary 2* 244), the flesh-hungry wendigos (*Bestiary 2* 281), the sinister winter hags, and the lumbering threat of the yeti all figure prominently in survivors' harrowing tales to the region, alongside bone-chilling stories of encounters with the frozen dead such as winterwights (*Bestiary 2* 283) or snowbound ghosts that haunt the High Ice. Beyond such monstrous threats, the ever-present possibility of pure madness dwells in the frozen expanse, self-made horrors unique to this harsh landscape of ice and rime that should give any would-be adventurer pause.

History

Whether gazing at the soaring Wall of Heaven, watching castle-sized glaciers split from Whitefang Bay's ice shelves, or making one's way toward the fabled Nameless Spires at the northern pole, one can hardly avoid marveling at the ancient wonders and otherworldly artifacts that dot the otherwise unassuming landscape of the Crown of the World.

Fossils buried in the stone and ice beneath the tundra hint that creatures both big and small have inhabited the Crown of the World for far longer than sentient races have existed on Golarion. To this day, megafauna such as woolly mammoths and polar bears occupy the hills and shores of the Crown, making a traveler's potential refuges such as ice caves and glacial bays potentially deadly landmarks. And then there are the more horrific beings that dwell on the Crown, for psyche-sapping undead, flesh-rending aberrations, and titanic monstrous beasts are all known to occupy the arctic lands between Tian Xia and Avistan.

The Crown of the World's indigenous people, the Erutaki, have lived on the ice for countless years. Their lives are stolid by necessity—the brutal ice affords no levity for its dwellers—and they pass down their somber dispositions through myths and legends. Erutaki oral histories are riddled with dark tales of monstrous arctic creatures and mysterious phenomena. It would be foolish to think these stories hyperbole, however; the otherworldly threats stalking the Erutaki are very real, and those non-natives who are wise would do well to heed the Erutaki warnings. More than one adventuring party has been saved by the sage advice of an Erutaki elder or seer. These gifted spirit-talkers can predict avalanches

days in advance, magically ward individuals against blinding snowstorms, and pacify wild beasts with arcane whispers to make them aid travelers hoping to survive their journey across the Crown. For those who lose their minds on the High Ice—a common occurrence in a realm where the sun doesn't set all summer and doesn't rise all winter—an Erutaki shaman's soothing touch can provide respite from even the most devastating trauma.

Several landmarks on the Crown of the World hint that intelligent creatures dwelled on the Crown before humans. The most obvious example is also one of the most mysterious: the Nameless Spires on the High Ice. Located on and around the northern pole of Golarion, this dense cluster of thousand-foot-tall towers defies logic and begs more questions than it answers. None dare travel into the strange city—those who do surely go mad—but many speculate that it marks the location of grand treasure or ancient magic.

For more information on the Crown of the World, including a full gazetteer and map of the region, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #51: The Hungry Storm.*

HORRIFIC LOCATIONS

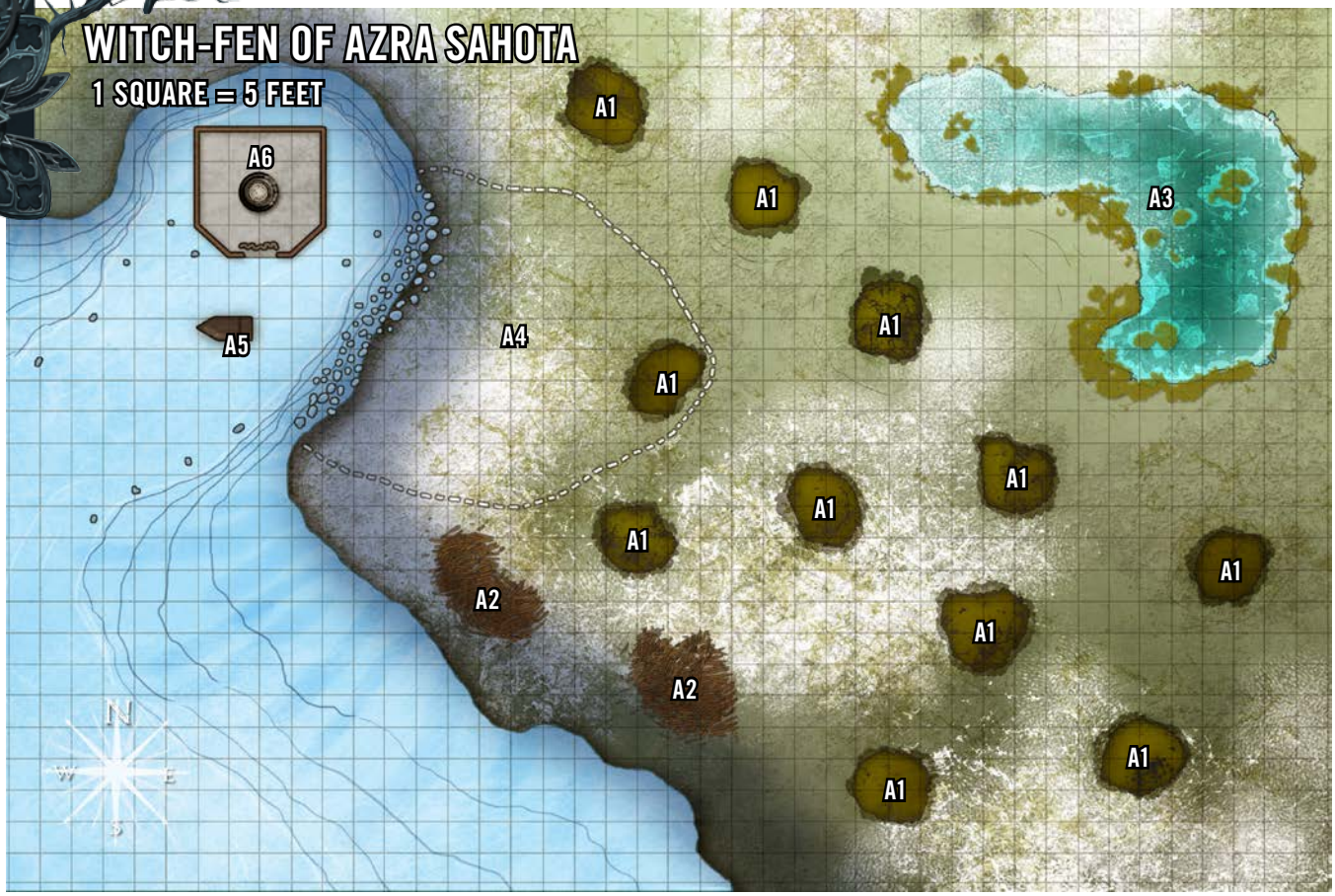
The mysterious marshland known as the Witch-Fen is not marked on any map of the Hazalin Marshes, a sprawling bogland abutting Whitefang Bay on the Avistani side of the Crown of the World. Indeed, those travelers who have seen the swamp have arrived mostly by accident, and none have returned from the experience the same as they left.

The PCs may come upon the Witch-Fen of Azra Sahota by accident, but those who purposefully seek out the fen will never find it. The ever-shifting mire might even seek out wandering PCs, appearing around them overnight if they camp in or near the Hazalin Marshes—what appears to be a remote hot spring at dusk may transform into a stinking bog come sunrise. A seemingly distant tar pit may come into full view far quicker than expected, despite attempts to circumnavigate it. Remote Erutaki farmhouses may gradually transform into animal dens made of mud and thistles as the PCs traverse the Path of Aganhei.

Whatever the specifics, the circumstances by which the PCs come to the Witch-Fen of Azra Sahota should be mysterious and supernatural, and they should find themselves in the thick of things before having an opportunity to avoid the area (or despite their best efforts to do so). At the heart of the fen lies Azra Sahota's hut, perched atop a frozen escarpment overlooking the swamp. Some of the dangers in this heart (animal dens and sinkholes) can be encountered throughout the Witch-Fen, but others are unique to this central area. All are described in brief below.

A1. Steaming Sinkholes: Thick clouds of gray-green, highly toxic steam constantly seep from the sinkholes dotting this rolling swamp. Creatures who come within 10 feet of a sinkhole's edges must attempt a DC 20 Fortitude save. On a failed save, affected creatures feel lightheaded for a moment but otherwise remain physically unchanged. The true nature of the effect becomes clear the next time an affected victim looks at an animal or magical beast, including an animal companion, familiar, or mount—upon doing so, instead of the animal's usual visage, the victim sees the face of a dead loved one or fallen ally from the victim's past. To interact with such a creature, the affected victim must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or become nauseated for 1d3 rounds and become unable to interact with the animal. In addition, affected

AZRA SAHOTA



individuals take a –5 penalty on Handle Animal and Ride checks as long as they remain in the swamp and for 24 hours thereafter. This is a mind-affecting curse effect.

Each sinkhole is 15 feet deep and 10 feet wide at the bottom. Creatures that fall to the bottom of a sinkhole must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or become afflicted with the curse described above. The bottom of each sinkhole is covered in countless bones of animals and humans, as well as rot grub swarms (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 215) that feed on these putrefying remains.

A2. Animal Dens: Thick mounds of dry brush, thorny vines, hardened dung, and rotting tree branches protrude from the fen like cysts upon the earth. Each mound is centered on a wide burrow dug into the earth beneath the mound. Various monstrosities dwell in these dens throughout the fen, but the two located here so close to the witch's lair serve as her pets and her bodyguards. Each is a wikkawak natural wereboar barbarian 3/rogue 3 (*Bestiary 4* 278, *Bestiary 2* 182) who must earn Azra's special permission to appear in hybrid or wikkawak form—permission she only very rarely grants.

A3. Black Pond: More a cesspool than a pond, this stagnant body of water is where Azra's minions toss many of their victims, and serves as the birthplace of the winter hag's horrific lake-spawn. The lake is perfectly still, and the only features worth noting are several patches of reeds sticking out from various corners of the water. Hidden beneath the black water, a pair of unusually intelligent globsters (fey creature globsters advanced to 10 HD; *Bestiary 3* 116, 131, and 290) wait for prey to come within striking distance of the reeds. If creatures approach but then walk away from the pond, the fey globsters slowly emerge and attempt to surprise them with a ravenous attack. During combat, the fey globsters drag any PCs they knock unconscious back to the pond to drown them. At night, the surface of this lake typically freezes over with a thin layer of ice, but the lake-spawn's tactics are relatively unchanged (although they must succeed at a DC 12 Strength check as a move action to break through the ice).

A4. Avalanche Zone: Piles of unstable rocks and boulders, obscured in a thick layer of snow, line the edge of this steep 50-foot-tall slope. Azra's minions are responsible for watching over the swamps below, but her blacksmith Larianth (see area **A5**) is tasked with triggering the rockslide primed here if he sees any living creatures approaching. The rockslide is much smaller than a typical avalanche; it has a width of 1d6 × 10 feet. Otherwise, treat the rockslide as an avalanche for the purpose of determining damage and whether the PCs are buried.

See Avalanches on pages 429–430 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for full rules.

A5. Larianth's Anvil: A badly deformed ogrekin blacksmith named **Larianth** (NE male ogrekin fighter 10; *Bestiary 2* 204) serves his witch mistress here as a craftsman and sentinel. Gruesome boils cover Larianth's face and neck, but his abnormalities hardly hinder his expert blacksmithing abilities. When he is not manning his anvil or piling more rocks on top of the avalanche trap (area **A4**), Larianth wanders around the swamp collecting the remains of animals or people who fell into the sinkholes or were drowned by the lake-spawn.

A6. Azra Sahota's Hut: Lining the path winding up to this hut, human skeletons bound together with sap and tar hunch in grisly poses like macabre statues. More skeletons pose around the hut like gruesome sentinels, gripping rusty swords, pikes, and ranseurs in their clenched fists. Even more haunting, the skeletons around the hut have been draped in the hides of bears, boars, and elk—the head of each animal hide positioned over the human skeleton's skull like a sagging, oversized mask.

The hut itself is made of crumbling timber, with black mud for mortar and thatched swamp reeds for the roof. The building looks impossibly rotten, yet stands sturdy despite its rapidly deteriorating building materials. Mounted over the hut's threshold is the poorly stuffed carcass of a grizzly bear—but where its face would be is instead the twisted, screaming visage of a human man.

Within the hut, a giant cauldron takes up the center of the living area. Crooked shelves line the den and hold hundreds of bottles, canisters, jars, and vials filled with chemical preservatives, extracted bodily fluids, and foul-smelling tinctures. A chimney in the center of the thatched roof allows smoke and steam from the cauldron to escape the den.

The self-styled "Empress Hag" **Azra Sahota** (NE female winter hag witch[APG] 9; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 279) dwells here, toiling at her cauldron and waiting for Larianth to bring her the corpses of her swamp's latest victims. Within the giant, steaming pot is a foul green liquid emitting an overpowering stench. Creatures who are burned by the scalding water (such as if the cauldron is tipped over) take 2d6 points of fire damage and must succeed at a DC 19 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1d3 rounds. Creatures immersed in the cauldron takes 10d6 points of fire damage per round and must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d6 rounds and permanently blinded.

In combat, Azra attempts to charm the strongest-looking PCs before using her area-affecting attacks to wreak as much havoc as possible, regardless of the damage dealt to her dwelling. She moves the fight outside if possible, using *control weather* to create a snowstorm (which she can see through, thanks to her snow vision). If she realizes she's outmatched, Azra attempts to flee her swamp—if she is successful, the PCs are left in the swamp alone, and the supernatural terrain slowly disappears in the hag's absence.

Arctic Madness

Traveling with a small group of fellow adventurers with ample supplies through beautiful landscapes dotted by bastions of ancient civilization can be a joyful and enriching experience. Yet as beautiful as the sights can be on the Crown of the World, the threat of insanity lurks.

Madness can strike a traveler in a number of ways beyond those detailed in *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*—but the most common way for someone to lose their sanity among the ice is as a result of starvation and exposure to the cold and elements. A character who suffers starvation damage while in the Crown of the World has a cumulative 2% chance per day of developing some form of madness. If the character is alone, this chance is doubled.

Of the forms of madness described in *Horror Adventures*, the following afflictions are those most likely to afflict travelers in the Crown of the World: delirium, fugue, hallucination, or in the worst cases, wendigo delusion (see below) or catatonia (an affliction that is, in effect, a death sentence for a lone traveler in the frozen wasteland). See page 182 of *Horror Adventures* for more rules on madness, as well as guide to reading a madness stat block.

WENDIGO DELUSION

Type greater madness; **Save** Will DC 20

Onset 1d6 days

Effect –6 penalty on Wisdom-based checks and concentration checks; –8 penalty on Will saves against supernatural wendigo psychosis; potential nausea and cannibal urges (see below)

Dormancy Effect –4 penalty on Will saves against supernatural wendigo psychosis

DESCRIPTION

A person who is driven to commit cannibalism to survive conditions of overwhelming isolation and hunger might contract wendigo delusion. A victim of wendigo delusion never fully recovers from his ordeal, and becomes convinced that the flesh of creatures of its own race is the only food it can gain sustenance from. The creature suffers from constant hunger pangs and minor but distracting hallucinations. When the victim consumes food other than the flesh of a creature of his own race, he must succeed at a Will save against wendigo delusion or be nauseated for 1d3 hours. For 24 hours after feeding on the flesh of a creature of his own race, the sufferer of wendigo delusion does not take the skill and concentration check penalties from wendigo delusion. A creature that suffers from this madness also takes a penalty on saving throws against the wendigo psychosis curse inflicted by true wendigos.

Farnvale

To think when I fled to Farnvale, I feared the Gray Gardeners. When I heard of a place deep in Boarwood where the Gray Gardeners never went, it seemed a godsend. My sister came with me, and the town seemed fine enough, but now I know better. Now I'm hiding in this old lumber camp, waiting for dawn and a chance to escape north through the woods, but I can see their torches. They are going to find me. I can hear my sister's voice among the hunters, but it's not her that calls my name. I'll kill whatever she is now before I let her take me alive.

—Anonymous note found in an abandoned lumber camp near Farnvale

FARNVALE

Idyllic Town Harboring a Dark Secret

Location Galt (central Boarwood)

Horror Genres body horror, dark fantasy, psychological horror

Horrific Threats bodythief, haunted lumber camps, loss of identity, pod-spawned creatures

Horrific Locations abandoned lumber camps, establishments run by pod-spawned creatures masquerading as humans, false church, sinister manors

Farnvale is a little, easily overlooked town in Galt's Boarwood, and that's just how its inhabitants like it. Located too far from any significant settlements to be of interest to anyone with real power, Farnvale's isolated location in the densest part of the Boarwood ensures that visitors are rare. The few who do pass through are typically both impressed and unsettled by the town's tranquility; nowhere else in Galt do neighbors speak openly with everyone they encounter—yet those students of human nature quickly note the forced artificiality of a Farnvale citizen's friendliness. In fact, the entire village has long been ruled by a sinister mastermind: a bodythief that has replaced the entire town's populace with its spawn.

The fact that Farnvale remains a glaring blind spot for the Gray Gardeners means that those hoping to flee agents of the revolution sometimes seek out the remote town as a hiding place. Others come to Farnvale to track down a missing friend, while still more simply stop overnight while on their way to somewhere else. The populace of Farnvale does its best to maintain a facade of humanity, but the pod-spawned denizens—devoid of any need to eat or rest or all-too-human emotional reactions—are far from perfect replacements for the human condition. Those uncomfortably curious or observant guests who spend more than a few nights in Farnvale are typically abducted and brought before the town's inhuman ruler for full "indoctrination" into the village.

FARNVALE

LE small town

Corruption +3; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +2; **Law** –4; **Lore** +0; **Society** –4

Qualities insular, religiously intolerant (nature religions)

Danger +0; **Disadvantage** cursed (society –4)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government secret syndicate (bodythief)

Population 1,450 (1,200 pod-spawned humans, 200 pod-spawned halflings, 25 pod-spawned dwarves, 25 other pod-spawned humanoids)

Notable NPCs

Cherise Allerique (LE female pod-spawned human rogue 12; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 20)

Mayor Generva Maneux (LE female pod-spawned human aristocrat 5; *Bestiary 4* 20)

Jura Korten (LE male pod-spawned human ranger 12; *Bestiary 4* 20)

Orendicus Poul (LE male pod-spawned cleric 9; *Bestiary 4* 20)

Rosette Bossona (LE female pod-spawned halfling rogue 8; *Bestiary 4* 20)

MARKETPLACE

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

Minor Items 3d4; **Medium Items** 1d6; **Major Items** —

QUALITIES

Religiously Intolerant The people of Farnvale are prejudiced against religions focused on nature, such as the worship of Erastil, Gozreh, or the Green Faith. (*Members of such faiths must pay 150% of the normal price for goods and services*)

HISTORY

Farnvale was founded by the leaders of an Isarn-based lumber guild who had grown dissatisfied with fines and fees levied against them. The guild attracted some attention from trappers and hunters who had likewise grown frustrated trading in Isarn, and at the first sign of spring in early 4630 AR, these few dozen folks left Isarn in a number of wagons to seek out a better life. Led by a charismatic man named Zarren Rostladner, the woodcutters and hunters set off into the Boarwood in search of a remote place to call their own. When they came upon an idyllic meadow nestled deep in the woods, a place seemingly untouched by human hands, Zarren founded his new town. He named it Farnvale for its idyllic location within a large meadowland bordered by hills in the midst of the larger forest, and for many decades, the settlement slowly grew. When the Red Revolution racked Galt, Farnvale grew significantly in size, as hundreds fleeing the violence in larger cities throughout Galt sought out friends of friends and distant relations who had gone to live a simpler life in the countryside. Until recently, this life remained relatively safe and isolated from the attentions of the Gray Gardeners. The fact that Farnvale produced just enough to sustain itself and engaged in very little trade kept it from the attention of those with grander sights. Unfortunately, this self-bred isolation and self-sufficiency would prove to be a terrible curse when a particularly inhuman threat took notice of the town.

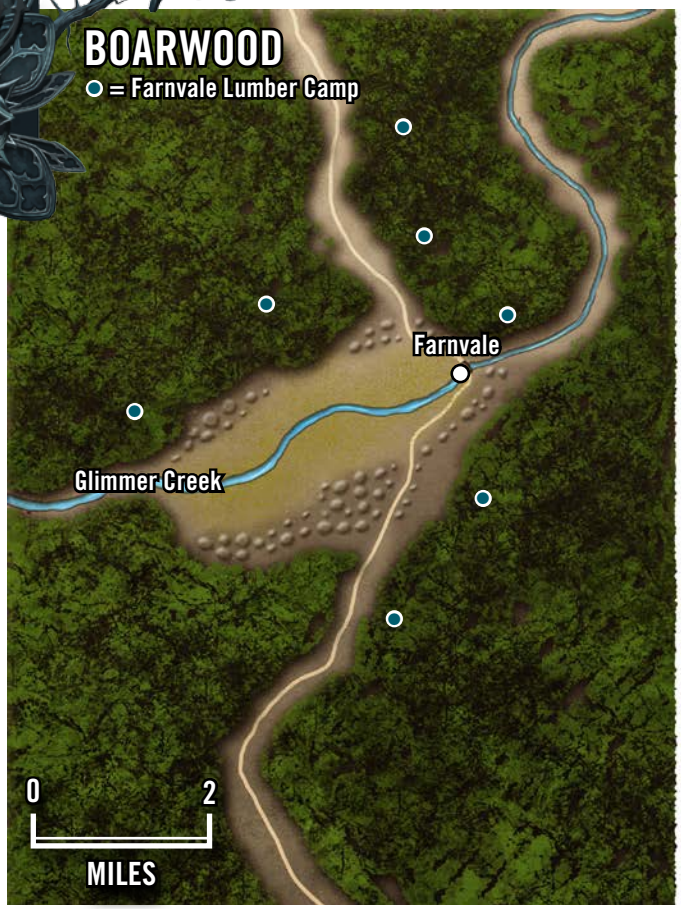
Like so many others, Jura Korten fled his home during the onset of the Red Revolution in 4667 AR, and for many years lived the simple life of a trapper based out of Farnvale. His trips into the vastness of Boarwood grew increasingly long, and eventually lasting for three seasons with him only returning "home" to Farnvale for winter. But in 4701 AR, Jura made the fateful mistake of seeking out a legendary dire bear said to dwell in a particularly remote and dense part of Boarwood. Jura never found "Old Snarler," as the legendary bear had come to be known. Instead, he found something far more dangerous—a bodythief (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 20).

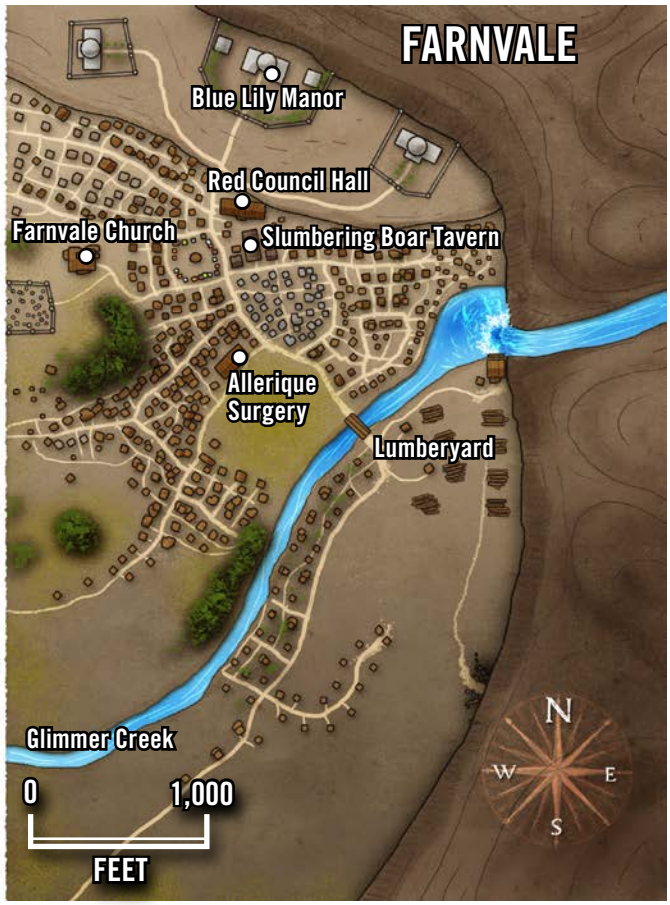
CHERISE ALLERIQUE

Jura was consumed by the sinister plant, and when it learned of Farnvale's presence, the plant immediately recognized the remote town as the perfect place to colonize—a sizable population of creatures having limited contact with the outside world. Jura, now a pod-spawned creature loyal to the bodythief, led the malevolent plant back to Farnvale's outskirts, a journey that took several weeks due to the plant's slow speed. Before reaching Farnvale proper, they came upon one of the town's many lumber camps. Jura stole into the camp and overpowered several laborers over the course of a single night, bringing a dozen victims back to his bodythief master for transformation. The next dawn, as the remaining folk at the camp woke to find half of their number missing, Jura led his small group of fresh pod-spawned kin back into the camp to overpower those who still lived. The pod-spawned slaves repeated this tactic on each of the lumber camps surrounding Farnvale before turning their attention to the town itself. The transformation of all Farnvale's citizens was horrifyingly swift, and by the end of the week the assimilation of the remote town was complete. All those who once dwelt in Farnvale were now the emotionless thralls of a monstrous overlord.

HORRIFIC LOCATIONS

Farnvale is isolated by rolling hills that once provided the town with enough natural resources to maintain independence from outside trade. Today, the town's entire populace has been transformed by a bodythief into pod-spawned plant duplicates of the original residents. When the rare visitor arrives in town, these emotionless creatures do their best to put on the appearance of an idyllic society, but they know well that the longer a visitor stays, the likelier it is for that visitor to realize the truth. The citizens do their best to learn about visitors—disguising their questions about friends, associates, and plans as idle curiosities, when in fact they are attempting to discern if the visitor would be missed if they vanished. If the pod-spawned creatures deem the visitor would not be missed by anyone of import outside of Farnvale, they induct the newcomer into the town by overpowering and bringing the newcomer before the bodythief (which dwells now in a large garden in Blue Lily Manor on the northern edge of town)





for consumption and transformation. Other visitors are encouraged to move on from town in the friendliest way possible. Anyone who proves both increasingly suspicious of the town's inhabitants and seems unwilling to leave on their own accord are generally murdered and dragged off into Boarwood, their bodies mutilated and left for potential discovery by those seeking missing friends or relatives. The bodythief does its best to avoid assimilating and replacing those who would be missed. In this way, the citizens of Farnvale have managed to keep their secret, blaming "legendary beasts of the surrounding woods" (Old Snarler the dire bear is a favorite) for the deaths of those who go missing in the forest.

Allerique Surgery: The people of Farnvale, being emotionless plants, do not have much interest in matters of faith. What passes as religion in the town is little more than a sham (see the entry for the Farnvale Church below), and thus offers no true healing services. In fact, in all of Farnvale, only Cherise Allerique offers medical services. In life, Cherise was a wanted criminal who fled the city of Edme rather than face imprisonment for her crimes. She came to Farnvale to hide out, and had planned on leaving town to seek out a new life elsewhere, but fell victim to her own greed when she misinterpreted the situation in Farnvale and grew to suspect Blue Lily Manor of hiding a great treasure. She broke in to the manor to find the "treasure" was in fact the bodythief, and was swiftly consumed and duplicated.

The bodythief has come to greatly value Cherise's particular skills, for in life she was a talented trickster gifted with the ability to manipulate magical treasures. Today, she plays the role of a small-town druid/sorcerer who specializes in the use of restorative and healing tonics, when all of her magical tricks are actually produced via wands, potions, and trickery with Sleight of Hand, Use Magic Device, and her False Casting feat (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic* 10). Of course, when tending to a wounded or sick local, she has no need for this chicanery, but when wounded or ill visitors seek aid in Farnvale, Cherise does her best to help them without arousing suspicion. In cases where she's unable to do so, she instead uses her large collection of poisons (including blue lily extract—see below) and sneak attacks to render victims unconscious for swift transport either to Blue Lily Manor and transformation via the bodythief, or into the wilds to be dressed up as victims of monster attacks.

Blue Lily Manor: Blue Lily Manor was originally built to serve as the home for Farnvale's mayor, but today the manor has been left to slowly fall apart. Ivy clings to its walls and its yards are overgrown. Locals tell visitors

that the manor was simply too complex to maintain on Farnvale's modest resources, and point out that the town's mayor prefers to live in more humble apartments in the town hall. Characters who press are told that the town's first mayor committed suicide in the manor and that his ghost haunts the place—the townsfolk keep the manor out of respect for his memory, but none dare live in the frightening building.

In truth, Blue Lily Manor has become the domain of the bodythief that rules Farnvale. The manor is constructed around a central courtyard garden, and it is within this overgrown square that the bodythief now dwells. The manor is protected by a large number of pod-spawned creatures loyal to the bodythief—the plant keeps its less humanoid minions within the manor, where they can both remain out of sight from visitors and help to defend the approach to the bodythief's lair. These defenders include several pod-spawned bugbears and pod-spawned spriggans that use their knack for stealth to maintain the appearance of a haunted building. Other, more exotic and more dangerous pod-spawned monsters dwell deeper within the manor as well, including none other than Jura Korten, the bodythief's first Farnvale victim. The central garden features a large bed of rare blue lilies—plants that are in fact advanced xtabays (*Bestiary* 2 292, 289) once bred as an experiment by the manor's original insomniac inhabitant.

Farnvale Church: The only church in Farnvale is an ancient circular temple ostensibly open to anyone who wishes to worship any deity, but the twice-weekly morning services led by the town priest Orendicus Poul is closed to visitors. Originally a worshiper of Erastil, Orendicus lost his spellcasting and other supernatural abilities when he became a pod-spawned creature, and he can perform no divine wonders today. The "faith" he preaches is a warped variation of that of Erastil, one that focuses on the value of community and self-sufficiency. He no longer refers to this faith as the worship of Erastil. This religion has no name, and those who practice it do not actually have faith, being pod-spawned slaves. Locals merely refer to their weirdly hollow worship sessions as "going to church." A character who observes the vacant prayers and listless services need only make a DC 12 Knowledge (religion) check to note that the sermon given by Orendicus seems to revere nothing of note and contains no pearls of wisdom or any particular element of zeal at all.

Farnvale Lumber Camps: Several abandoned lumber camps dot the forested hills around Farnvale. Farnvale's bodythief does not mind when local monsters, such as forest drakes (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 107), hodags (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 148), leucrottas (*Bestiary* 2 178), or owlbears claim these camps as lairs; indeed, the presence of these creatures can help to explain the fates of those overly curious visitors the pod-spawned creatures are forced to kill. Now and then, groups of bandits or roving tribes of savage humanoids take these abandoned camps as their own, but such creatures are usually murdered and left to rot. As a recent experiment, the bodythief has transformed one band of highway robbers and keeps them stationed in the camp south of Farnvale, where they carry on the work of harvesting trees, but at a much reduced pace from what one would expect from such a camp. The bodythief is considering expanding more groups into similar lumber camps as well, so as to physically expand Farnvale with new buildings as it continues to absorb more victims into its "society."

Lumberyard: The lumberyard is the busiest part of town, but in a town like Farnvale, "busy" still appears laconic and slow. The citizens of Farnvale process lumber here for the sole purpose of building homes for new inductees into the town. For now, the rate at which the bodythief creates new pod-spawned townsfolk is not even close to outpacing the demand for more lumber. The slowness of the workers may well serve as one of the first clues to visitors that not all is as it seems in Farnvale.

Red Council Hall: The Red Council Hall is both town hall and administrative center of the town government. Mayor Generva Maneux can be found here, although she is available to meet with constituents only once per week on Oathday afternoons.

Slumbering Boar Tavern: The Slumbering Boar Tavern is Farnvale's inn and choice place for drink, but none in town partake except when visitors arrive. The proprietor, Rosette Bossona, seems a bit too eager in welcoming visitors, and rings the loud bell hanging above the door to the tavern as soon as anyone enters the empty room. She explains this as a customary Farnvale greeting to newcomers, when in fact it is an alarm to the townsfolk that they need to start acting "human." Soon after the bell rings, locals drift in and make a show of eating and drinking, yet no one eats or drinks to excess. Of course, if Rosette determines that the PCs are folks who are unlikely to be missed, she makes sure that the food and drink they order is poisoned with blue lily extract (see below).

SOOTHING POISON

The people of Farnvale make use of the following rare toxin to help mask their condition and prepare visitors for transport to the bodythief.

BLUE LILY EXTRACT

Type poison (contact or ingested); **Save** Fortitude DC 14 (18 if ingested)

Onset 1 minute; **Frequency** 1/hour for 6 hours

Effect 1d4 Wisdom damage plus –4 penalty on Sense Motive checks and saving throws versus sleep effects for 1 hour; **Cure** 2 saves

Geb

I nearly lost my last meal when I saw the victim my undead hosts had chosen for the day's ceremony—my old friend Tarber, who we'd lost weeks before and now looked on the verge of death. I held my ground, hoping my skeletal makeup wouldn't betray my surprise. Tarber whimpered as they tied him to a jagged rock at the base of the dry waterfall. A ghoul standing nearby pulled a lever. Putrid white foam and countless human bones cascaded down the cliff's face before crushing my dear friend and silencing his screams beneath the crashing falls.

—from master spy Aigus Kreeve's report on his infiltration of Crabfield Island

GEB

Battle-Scarred Nation of the Undead

Location Southeastern Garund

Horror Genres body horror, dark fantasy, ghost story, gothic horror

Horrific Threats haunts, mutated animals, necromancers, undead of all kinds

Horrific Locations Axan Woods, Corpselight, Crabfield Island, Geb's Rest, Graydirge, Mechitar, Yled

Skeletal serfs shuffle through the cracked, weed-choked streets, setting their bones into place and stretching what remains of stiffened tendons as they make their way toward the town square. A crier with empty eye sockets shouts to all who can hear her: "Today's sacrifice thought himself above the immortals—above the gods, above our savior and lord, King Geb—and for that he will pay the ultimate price." At the square, a forlorn heretic kneels on a wooden platform, his hands tied behind his back, his eyes pointed toward heaven. His mouth is twisted into a scream, but no sounds come forth. Behind the man, a black-robed wizard, her face shrouded in shadow, poises an iron staff on the heretic's neck like a headsman's axe. As the townsfolk gather around, the spell continues, and the heretic's mouth froths with pink ooze. Intestines boil forth from the man's throat and fall from his lips like rotting fruit. His organs wrap around his neck and body. Then, in what is both an instant and an eon, the ritual is done. The heretic stands, sloughing away his flesh and organs and muscles to adjust his now-exposed skeleton. He looks toward the awestruck townsfolk and finally addresses his silent audience with only a blood curdling scream. The crowd erupts into raspy, hollow cheers.

This is but one of the many horrific but common scenes encountered daily by the citizens of Geb—an arcane kingdom wracked by war, ruled by a necromantic ghost-king, and populated almost entirely by the undead.

History

Geb is one of the oldest nations in the Inner Sea region, and its libraries contain exhaustive historical records that rival the elves' in both age and thoroughness. The country's incredible cultural memory is due in large part to Geb's unique populace, which has been almost entirely composed of undead citizens since the early years of the Age of Destiny. During those tumultuous years, Geb was engaged in a vicious war with the neighboring wizard state Nex, and the stakes escalated rapidly as both countries' rulers strove for victory. In their final bids for power, Nex ravaged Geb's lands and people with devastating magic, and King Geb responded by reanimating the entirety of his now-dead citizenry into shambling skeletons, zombies, and worse.

Thousands of years later, the warring nations remain in a stalemate, with Nex's ruler having gone into hiding and Geb's king risen as a ghost who refuses to rest until he defeats his rival. The people of Geb never recovered from the horrid actions of their king, and the population of this country now consists almost entirely of undead.

Because of its unique citizenry, Geb is different from most realms of horror in that its few cities pose significantly more danger to living travelers than its most remote corners. Though living creatures may walk freely among the city streets in the capital of Mechitar, mortals must be constantly wary of envious or hungry undead who abuse the living for amusement or—worse—enslave them as chattel. Mundane activities such as bartering with merchants or even finding food (a rare commodity) become potentially deadly experiences in Geb.

HORRIFIC LOCATIONS

The eerie plains, rocky foothills, and undead-populated cities that dominate Geb's mainland may be the haunted kingdom's best-known features, but these locales tell just a fraction of the nation's storied history. To get a true sense of Geb, one must travel to one of its most isolated corners: the haunted shores of Crabfield Island. Crabfield Island's unpleasant moniker comes from an early journal entry written by the island's first Gebbite explorer, Savian Dertruge.

We struck land just before daybreak. A silver sickle of moon hung low across the horizon, appearing to lodge in the island's crown. First Mate Stiney manned the oars of the boat taking our landing party aground; he piloted us through the dark as best he could, the boat's leaky bottom scraping against rocks and coral reefs as we plunged toward the island. When we finally came to the beach, our raft slid easily onto the flat rocks covering the sand. I stepped off the boat first, but fell back in as the earth beneath my feet shifted and moved. I blamed my poor coordination on long months at sea combined with Stiney's shoddy rowing—until I noticed the boat still moving despite being firmly grounded. Inch by inch, our boat crept along the shore of its own volition, carrying us nearer to the jungle-covered mountains dominating the island's center. When the sun finally crested the horizon, rays of light washed over us and the rocky beach. Stiney gasped and pitched forward. I grabbed his collar to keep him in the boat. All along the shore, carrying us like the dark ocean waves that brought us here, millions of flat, black-shelled crabs scuttled over one another between the tree line and the water like a rushing tide. We stared agape, awestruck as the shells of the sea of crabs glistened in the dim light of dawn, before we realized we'd already been carried a quarter mile from shore. We watched our ship continue to retreat farther back as our crawling hosts carried us to the heart of their island...

Axwel Harbor: This bustling trading hub is the most populated settlement on Crabfield Island, and serves as a crucial connection for the distribution of onyx gemstones mined from the Iron Chelae. In addition to shrewd gem merchants, the city of Axwel Harbor also boasts a surprising number of "fishers." Rather than fish for food, these seafaring dead (many of them draugr) scour the ocean floor in search of lost wartime treasures, coral reefs rich with rare spellcasting components, and large sea creatures to transform into undead aquatic mounts.

Skilled fishing crews venture southward from Axwel Harbor into colder waters, where they hunt for pods of orcas, baleen whales, and even blue whales. Undead artisans refine and ship the whale oil to every corner of Geb, where it is used in arcane rituals and sold at an exorbitant premium to mortals in need of fuel for their lamps and lanterns. Back in Axwel Harbor, gangs of undead burglars note the presence of lanterns in homes (which darkvision-gifted undead have little use for) as locations of easily robbed mortals, who must sleep at night and thus provide easy opportunities for unscrupulous undead thugs. The town's somnolent mayor, Crabfield Island's resident Blood Lord, **Geron Roselorn** (NE male human vampire necromancer 13), turns a blind eye to these and so many other depredations.

GERON ROSELORN

Bonefall: A small creek called the Spinal Wash runs from the peaks of the Iron Chelae through West Tkan. The putrid runoff is collected in an artificial basin at the top of a rocky escarpment called Bonefall, which overlooks the town. At the base of the cliff, where the rivulet would normally cascade down as a fine mist, the skeletons of hundreds of corpses lie in a massive pile. The undead wizards who govern West Tkan gather the townsfolk at Bonefall to mark special occasions and celebrate the sacrifice of living mortals. Undead villagers congregate at the base of the cliff and tie their latest mortal sacrifices to rocks at the bottom of the waterfall. Black Wizard **Eremi Dolorium** (NE female human zombie lord cleric of Urgathoa 8; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 286) presides over the occasion, publicly condemning the victims before submitting the sacrifices to their final punishment by ordering a minion to open the floodgates above. Mere seconds later, the basin's waters gush forth and cascade down the cliff face, crashing onto the sacrifices and drowning them in a deluge of foul water.

Crabfield Point: It was here that the scarcely known explorer Captain Savian Dertruge made landfall upon Crabfield Island in 112 AR, which up to that point had

been simply called "Itara" by the island's native Garundi population. Dertruge's ill-fated expedition resulted in him losing nearly his entire crew, and his chronicles of the landing are hair-raising enough to deter even the most foolhardy Pathfinders from exploring the shore. Those few who have made their way to Crabfield Island's southern tip reiterate stories similar to Dertruge's tale of a sea of black crabs. The creatures themselves seem to worship a powerful entity known as the Rasping Wretch (CE elder gongorinan qlippoth cleric of Yamasoth 11; *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #64 90) that dwells in a large cave in the northern foothills of the Iron Chelae, and the crabs' penchant for capturing victims to offer up to the gongorinan's ovipositions have made Crabfield Point a place that even undead avoid.

East Tkan: At the height of the conflict between Geb and Nex, the city of Tkan was Mechitar's first defense against naval incursions from Nex and its allies. Warships aiming for Mechitar's harbor must either weave through the treacherous Black Straits separating Crabfield Island from the mainland, or else attempt to circumvent Crabfield Island by sailing east of it and then looping back—a major time-sink during a brutal war where every day at sea counted. Those who dared the straits typically faced death upon the merciless Obari Ocean, while ships sailing past Tkan risked being boarded by Gebbite sailors patrolling the harbor from their schooners and brigantines.

In the years after the wizard-king Geb presumably defeated his lifelong rival Nex, Tkan's ill-guided governance, led by the wasteful Lord-Mayor **Ariigo Grayliver** (NE male human mummy lord bard [dirge bard[UM]] 12; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 176), began enforcing ever-more-stringent laws on the city's few remaining mortals. As he emptied the city's coffers and consigned the living to slave camps near the mines to the west, Grayliver's advisers planned a coup to overthrow their leader. The plot worked, and the despot fled the city with his loyal drudges in tow, finding refuge in the slave camps he'd helped design.

Now, East Tkan's moderate leadership is led by Councilwoman **Arabin Solswith** (LE female human arcanist[ACG] 6/ranger 8), making it one of the few civilized places in Geb where living outsiders are welcome. Locals simply call it Tkan, citing their historical claim to the name, but Geb's council of Blood Lords officially recognizes the town as East Tkan, since most of the council's shadowy members secretly favor the cruel and brutish designs of Grayliver to the west.

Golden Garden: The haunted manor known as Golden Garden is located at the northern tip of Yellow Mire, and served as the summer home of some of Geb's aristocratic elite before the land was ravaged by Nex's spells. Now, the crumbling mansion sinks a few inches each year into the surrounding swamp, which has been reduced to a field of

fetid muck. The cursed wetlands around the manor bear all manner of warped produce and plants, but strangest of all are the monstrous yellow musk zombies and other undead plant creatures that arise from the bubbling mire.

Other than the musk zombies, one of the two sole residents of "the Garden" is an undead elf named **Liara Tepteki** (CE female elf swamp mummy ranger 10; *Bestiary 5* 178) who once served as Blood Lord Roselorn's adviser and lover. She, along with her gashadokuro (*Bestiary 4* 121) bodyguard Carpasyn, watches over Golden Garden and monitors the horticultural experiments on behalf of her master. Blood Lord Roselorn sent Liara to be his emissary at the Garden after the two had a romantic falling out, and he has begun to worry that she may be plotting against him. His mistrust is not without merit—Liara has indeed been experimenting with new breeds of yellow musk creepers (see below) that she's kept hidden from Roselorn. The jilted elf hopes to send one of her deathspore zombies to Axwel Harbor so that it may assassinate her ex-lover and open the door for her to assume the blood lord's role as one of Geb's governing elite.

Iron Chelae: The steep mountain peaks collectively known as the Iron Chelae divide Crabfield Island down the middle. It is not iron, however, that makes these jungle-choked mountains one of Geb's most important geographic features—it is the countless deposits of black onyx gems, so valuable for the animation of the dead, hidden throughout the valleys and summits. Dozens of mining camps riddle the western side of the mountain range, where the mountains' rain shadow creates a drier, more favorable clime for the undead laborers from Axwel Harbor. On the storm-struck east side of the mountains, the few expeditions into the treacherous jungle hills come from the slave camps of West Tkan. Few parties tread into the mountain range proper, and no traversable passes are known to exist. At night, bloodcurdling screams of monstrous animals echo from the mountaintops and throughout the jungle corridor, and the entire landscape seems to pulse to the beat of a distant war drum.

West Tkan: When he was ousted as the leader of Tkan, Lord-Mayor Grayliver (see East Tkan above) sought refuge amid the slave colony he founded in the foothills east of the Iron Chelae. Now, he rules over the mining "town" like a despot, aided by a cadre of undead wizards. The wizards, who call themselves the Black Wizards of Tkan, have their own agenda, however, and merely tolerate Grayliver's existence as it currently serves their needs.

The living chattel of West Tkan—enslaved humans whose sole purpose is to breed before being transformed into members of the undead caste—consider the sacrifices taken to nearby Bonefall to be among the lucky ones. Several times already, would-be do-gooders from East Tkan have attempted rescue missions to save the slaves here, but all have ended in disaster.

Yellow Mire: Mindless skeletons and zombies belonging to Blood Lord Roselorn (see Axwel Harbor above) scrape the soil along Crabfield Island's eastern swamps—a region known as Yellow Mire—for precious yellow musk creeper seedpods. More drudges carry heavy loads of these pods north and then west, bypassing the Iron Chelae to deliver their payload to Lord Roselorn's doorstep. What exactly Roselorn hopes to achieve with this sludgy horticultural experiment is anyone's guess, though it is well known that yellow musk creepers are capable of transforming the living into undead-like flora. Recently, Roselorn's ex-lover living in Golden Garden to the north has begun intercepting deliveries of yellow musk creeper seeds to augment her own nefarious experiments.

Zombies of Yellow Mire

The yellow musk zombies born in Yellow Mire may be familiar to adventurers who have encountered yellow musk creepers in the past, but the abominable flora of Golden Garden are an altogether separate horror. Below are three of the most common varieties of yellow musk zombies that arise from Golden Garden, which otherwise share statistics with typical yellow musk zombies.

Deathspore Zombie (CR +1): With stark black rashes streaked across their rotting faces and skeletal bodies, these yellow musk zombies are more imposing than their typical counterparts; they gain a +4 bonus to their Strength score and have a Charisma of 14. A creature struck by a deathspore zombie's natural attack has a chance of being afflicted with the following poison.

Deathspore Toxin: Injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *initial effect* 1 Con drain; *secondary effect* 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 2 saves.

Gold Musk Zombie (CR +2): These advanced yellow musk zombies have DR 5/cold iron as well as acid, cold, and electricity resistance 5, and they can be healed by negative energy as if they were undead. In addition, any creature slain by gold musk zombies becomes a gold musk zombie in 1d4 rounds. These new gold musk zombies are weakened for the first 24 hours of their existence, and take a –2 penalty on all d20 rolls and checks, receive –2 hit points per Hit Die, and do not create additional gold musk zombies from the creatures they kill. After 24 hours, these penalties are lifted.

Pale-Puff Musk Zombie (CR +0): Weaker than their yellow musk counterparts but far more numerous, pale-puff musk zombies do not gain a bonus to Strength from becoming a zombie and have a Charisma score of 6. A large puffball of stinky yellow pollen grows out of the zombie's head from a sturdy brown stem. The first time a pale-puff musk zombie takes any amount of damage but isn't destroyed by the attack, the puffball breaks apart and spreads over a 5-foot-radius area, affecting any creatures in the area as a yellow musk creeper's pollen spray ability.

Kalva

It's not enough to say that the Ulfen of Kalva are cannibals. Kalva is barren, yet there's still the possibility of farming and raising good meat. No, the residents of Kalva do what they do for reasons beyond hunger. I traveled to that forsaken island to attempt to learn those motivations. In my research, I have deliberately and eagerly, exposed myself to the worst natures of humanity. Only by observing the depths to which the flesh and mind can fall can I push my own research toward true discovery. My trip to Kalva remains the only time I regret such investigation.

—from the research notes of the necromancer Kraeghan

KALVA

Island of Viking Cannibals

Location Lands of the Linnorm Kings

Horror Genres body horror, dark fantasy, ghost story, slasher horror

Horrific Threats dangerous fungi, drakes, Kalva cannibals, mindslaver mold, mutated animals

Horrific Locations Beldam Tunnels, Blooded Feasting Hall, Dock of the Husk, Drakesgrave

The island of Kalva is synonymous with depravity and lunacy among the people of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. No ruler claims Kalva's barren landscape. The island is considered part of the region of Icemark—a barren area not worthy of its own monarch. The people of Kalva are unique specimens of humanity, each standing no less than 6 feet tall, with tough and wiry frames. These inhabitants are furiously tenacious, forged by millennia of harsh conditions and foul rites of passage. Many believe that Kalva's separation from the Ironbound Isles is intentional, for no Linnorm King has desired to conquer the desolate landscape or tame the bestial Ulfen that dwell within.

Few venture to Kalva by choice, and the rocky shores of the island deny larger ships a safe berth. Those explorers determined to make such a journey must take smaller rowing craft and brave deadly shoals and tumultuous waves. The isle's edges are mist-covered wastelands, abandoned by most locals. Villages line the twisting, slick foothills protecting the island's interior, each home to violent savages seeking to strip the flesh from the still-living bodies of their enemies. Vast thermal vents, hot springs, and fields of varied fungi dominate the lush central region of the island. Kalva's inhabitants come here in search of the fabled mindslaver mold—a mind-controlling plant they believe gives them a direct connection with a distant deity.

History

In 801 AR, at the onset of winter, Ulfen longships set sail into the greatest naval battle in generations. Aron-Strom Sunbilt, heir of the long-deposed Jarl Strom Sunbilt, had returned to the Lands of the Linnorm Kings at the front of a vast fleet of mercenary vessels, seeking revenge for the nearly millennia-old death of his forefather and the ongoing persecution of his extended family. The battle was unlike any the Ulfen had fought, as Aron's fleet hosted countless spellcasters. Assuming a swift victory, Aron was astonished when his vessels were overwhelmed by the same resounding defiance that had defeated his distant relative. But as Ulfen warriors boarded Aron's ship and claimed the upstart's head, the remaining wizards enacted a final spell to conjure forth a great storm, decimating the longships and scattering their proud warriors across the unforgiving sea.

The few survivors of the Ulfen longships and the mercenaries of Aron's fleet alike ended up shipwrecked on the nearby island of Kalva. The first great snow of winter had already descended, and by the time the survivors made it ashore, a blizzard fell with blinding intensity. Scattered across the shores of Kalva, the surviving groups had little time to continue their battle, and instead hunkered down against the encroaching elements.

One particularly adventurous Ulfen, Mira Farstad, opted to brave the harsh winter, and set out toward the center of the island. Protected by the cover of hills and warmed by the thermal vents, Mira discovered a hidden gateway to the mystical First World. Whatever happened on the other side of the portal remains a mystery, but when Mira returned to Kalva, she did so as the first

human host of the insidious mindslaver mold (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 194).

As news of Mira's transformation spread, the central foothills of the island became a shunned place, and the remaining castaways battled one another for survival on the island's barren edges. Aron's mercenaries were ultimately defeated by the martially superior Ulfen. But it was not enough for the Ulfen to simply vanquish their enemies, for they were dangerously low on supplies, and Kalva provided little. Seeing no other option, the stranded Ulfen took the first step in their descent into degeneracy by feeding upon the flesh of these last enemies to fall to their axes.

As winter subsided, the survivors knew they could not return to the lives they once had, nor would they, as the rigors of Kalva made them stronger day by day. Soon enough, they built inroads to the center of the island, where they were forced to confront Mira, now fully engulfed in the mindslaver mold and speaking for the "great spirit" that had blessed her. The fungus-infested woman offered power undreamed of, and in their continued damnation, the Ulfen accepted.

Much has changed in the millennia since these initial castaways found themselves stranded on the island. The once-desperate cannibalistic actions of the natives are now tradition, and tribes of Kalvamen battle one another to this day. The consumption of dead and (preferably) living alike is a staple of life on Kalva. Mira, the first mindslaver-touched Ulfen, has long passed away, yet her place of honor endures through the actions of subsequent mold-speakers. The current speaker, Old Crone **Mavkaii** (CE female old human sorcerer 13) is reaching the end of her considerable life, but still manages the spread of the mold throughout the island.

HORRIFIC LOCATIONS

Sharp rocks bar practically every nautical approach to the island of Kalva. The land beyond this hazardous approach is equally inhospitable, with nothing but bleak gray sands all along the island's periphery. A constant bank of fog creeps up onto the isle's beaches, concealing flattened tundra within. The Kalva tribes dwell as nomads in the island's interior. Animals long mutated by consumption of Kalva's alien fungi wander this area. The heart of Kalva is the only region that could be considered hospitable, filled with fields of lichen and small lakes formed around hot springs.

Beldam Tunnels: Old Crone Mavkaii dwells alongside the eldest of the Kalva cannibals within a sprawling series of tunnels under the center of the island. The walls of these humid caverns are home to hundreds of unique varieties of fungi, including the mindslaver mold that controls those living within. While Mavkaii is barely capable of moving, some of the elders patrol the caverns, each a fungi-enhanced juggernaut of muscle and rage. These guardians ensure none but the anointed (those infested by the mindslaver mold) may enter. Additional fungal creatures (*Bestiary 4* 116), ranging from infested vermin to some specimens of Kalva's more bestial drakes, stalk the mazelike tunnels.

Old Crone Mavkaii espouses alien truths and seemingly contradictory orders, all under the stones of an elaborate archway. The stone edifice is utterly removed from the traditional architecture of the Ulfen, but clearly has numerous fey influences. While seemingly inert, the archway is actually a portal to the distant First World, specifically connecting to a region under the sway of the Eldest known as the Green Mother. The first mindslaver mold made its way to Kalva through this connection to the First World, and whatever purpose the enigmatic Eldest has for the future of the island's ravenous inhabitants remains unknown.

Drakesgrave: Kalva is home to numerous species of drakes, including mist drakes (*Bestiary 4* 79), shadow drakes (*Bestiary 4* 80), and spire drakes (*Bestiary 4* 81). While most of these draconic creatures prowl the whole of the

MAVKAII

island, a solemn mist-shrouded region of Kalva is theirs alone. Known as Drakesgrave, this region is littered with the jutting rib-bones and skeletal wings of long deceased drakes and larger draconic beings. More disturbing is the abundance of humanoid bones mixed among them.

The region is less of a draconic graveyard as it is a communal feeding ground for groups of drakes caring for their young. Unlucky souls stranded on the island finding themselves overpowered by a rampage of drakes are often brought here, where the drakes feed the still-living to their growing whelps. The area itself doubles as a haven from the depredations of the Kalva cannibals, as it's just as likely for Drakesgrave to be filled with a group of voracious drakes as it is to be eerily empty. The cannibal Ulfen of Kalva refrain from entering the region, lacking a taste for the stringy meat of drakes and realizing the cost of battling in this region is often too high.

One notable inhabitant in Drakesgrave is the emaciated **Liefbrenner** (CE female degenerate cairn linnorm; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 288; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 182). After enduring a supernatural affliction that left it constantly starving, the creature fled to Kalva for fear of Ulfen hunters seeking its head to become king. Liefbrenner is hauntingly gaunt, easily mistaken for a skeletal variant of the species. Knowledge of the linnorm's presence on the island would doubtless earn the attention of less scrupulous Ulfen, particularly those seeking an easier path to the title of kingship.

The Blooded Feasting Hall: A group of nine Ulfen set sail to join White Estrid in her famous raid on the Nidalese city of Nisroch. Known as "The Blooded," these warriors returned to the Lands of the Linnorm Kings with untold spoils from their raiding. Desiring a place to convene among themselves and their trusted warriors, the Blooded constructed a vast feasting hall on one of the islets just off the coast of Kalva. Many called the Blooded mad for their arrogance in building so close to Kalva and its depraved inhabitants, but the Blooded responded simply by saying "Let Kalva come, and see what it is to fight true Ulfen!"

The Blooded Feasting Hall fell to strife among its members. Since the Blooded's journey to Nisroch, several of their number had become enamored of Nidal's shadowy magic, believing they could gain even further might by harnessing the terrifying powers resident Kuthites employed in defense of the city. At the height of a disagreement between the Blooded over this dark magic, the feasting hall was set aflame. It's unknown how many of the nine powerful warriors perished or escaped the ensuing madness, but at least one of their members—the skald Riborg—perished in the flame and smoke.

Today, the Blooded Feasting Hall exists as a foreboding ruin visible from the shores of Kalva, nestled atop its mist-ringed islet. **Riborg** (CN male human ghost skald[ACG] 12) now patrols the wrecked chambers of the burned husk that was once the feasting hall. Not a hostile spirit, he instead guides those visiting the island to enter the mist-choked chambers of the hall's interior. Each room connects to a ghostly reconstruction of vistas from the Blooded's long history. Perhaps by surviving each of the presented vistas would it be possible to learn the full history of the Blooded, the truth behind their dissolution, and the plans of any survivors.

Crow Witch Tribe: The Crow Witch is a polarizing figure among the people of Kalva. Her history is obscured, and some believe her to be a gift from the spirits of the island itself. Regardless, the Crow Witch disregards Kalva's close association with and dependence upon the mindslaver mold. Such is the force of her command that her tribesfolk refuse to use common hallucinogenic substances derived from the mold—a singular rarity in Kalvan history.

The Crow Witch Tribe has recently strengthened itself by absorbing several smaller tribes on the isle. Much of this rise to power is the result of the Crow Witch's ability to change humans into more bestial version of themselves, creatures known as skinwalkers (*Bestiary 5* 233). A small blessing to those venturing to Kalva is that the Crow Witch and much of her tribe's members have moved off the island, now plaguing local fishing lanes as part of some larger scheme. More information on the Crow Witch and the actions of her tribe are described in the Pathfinder Tales novel *Skinwalkers*.

Dock of the Husk: The vast remains of an enormous kraken cover the shores along a particularly rocky patch of Kalva's eastern shore. **Jormar Skapsson** (CE male human barbarian 8) claimed the remains several years ago, slowly growing his tribe within the relative safety of the creature's decaying corpse. Jormar now tasks his warriors with constructing a grand fleet of longships, guided by supposedly "holy visions" granted by a brew of fungal ale. These fungi-infused concoctions are steadily supplied by the mindslaver-controlled elders of the island's interior, who tacitly approve of Jormar's grand undertaking.

Hide harvested from the beached kraken corpse compose the sails of Jormar's fleet, but the lack of wood means that no ships have yet launched from the hold. Those serving Jormar meanwhile test their skills in small skiffs and vessels claimed from those foolishly coming ashore. Their raids are emboldened by the bone-wrought armor and weapons they bring into battle. Jormar personally supervises the assembly of the fleet, believing—based on the hallucinogenic visions of his mindslaver brews—that his ships will soon set sail to bring brutality to the mainland.

Kalvan Prometheans

The people of Kalva endured centuries of exposure to the living plant known as mindslaver mold. The corruption that stems from this First World plant life occurs over prolonged contact with the substance, and thus those partaking in food or drink tainted by the mold slowly find themselves just as controlled by the mold as those who have been directly infested. The most dangerous of these corrupted barbarians gain the implacable stalker template (*Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures* 238) and are counted as champions of the isle. But for most who survive these infusions, the effects closely mimic those created by the promethean corruption (*Horror Adventures* 32). In this variant corruption, rather than replacing body parts with machine-like elements, the Kalvan prometheans replace their limbs with fungal or plant-like enhancements.

Catalyst: Kalvan promethean corruption stems from two means. The first method requires direct interaction with the mold, and the target must survive the encounter and somehow avoid infestation. The second—and more common—method involves the consumption of matter already afflicted by the taint of the mindslaver mold.

Progression: Whenever you consume meat touched by mindslaver mold (this includes almost all natural food on Kalva), you must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC = 15 + your corruption level) or take a –4 penalty on Will saves for the following 24 hours. You also immediately fail any Will saves against the infestation ability of the mindslaver mold. Each time your corruption progresses, your alignment shifts one step toward neutral evil as the mindslaver mold grows over more and more of your flesh.

Kalva Sight

You can see beyond the sight of normal creatures.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 2nd.

Stain: Your eyes change to a milky white, forever marking you as touched by the mold of Kalva. You take a –2 penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks when people can discern your unnatural eye coloration. This penalty increases to –6 when dealing with people of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings or those familiar with the residents of Kalva.

Gift: You gain Blind-Fight as a bonus feat. You can reroll any attack missed due to concealment. You count the miss chance as being half as high (for example, a 50% miss chance becomes 25%) when making this reroll. You gain a +4 bonus on Perception checks and Sense Motive checks against creatures of your race, for the scent of their delicious flesh and its variations as a creature's emotional state fluctuates is visible to you as an unmistakable glow.

Special: This is a special promethean manifestation available to those who succumb to Kalva's variant, and replaces access to the Replacement Limb manifestation.

Shenmen

"Then take it from me!

"Know that this place is a godless hell, and you'll find no wealth here!

"Just as I came and deposed the ones before me, you'll one day find yourself confronted by those who come and say they can do better. And just like you, they won't, no matter their intentions. There's no salvation or victory here; there's only death and misery. Enjoy the fruits of your victory, and may they visit upon you all the punishments you deserve—in this life and the next."

—Governor Chiou Mingxia, prior to her death

SHENMEN

Forsaken Land of Ghosts and Spiders

Location Central Tian Xia

Horror Genres dark fantasy, ghost story, psychological horror

Horrific Threats corrupted bandits, evil fey, ghosts, jorogumos

Horrific Locations Baakai, Gossamer Mountains, Pek Peh, Spectrewood, Sze, Yin-Sichasi

Rain blankets the lands of Shenmen in a pervasive gloom. The region's neighbors covet these lands for their ample supply of lumber and rich veins of silver, but this lust for Shenmen's natural resources is more than kept in check by the nation's well-deserved reputation as a cursed land.

Those brave, foolish, or forsaken enough to live within the few settlements of Shenmen rarely see the lands beyond their home. Life in Shenmen is one of relentless toil, matched with dogged adherence to long-standing traditions and the constant fear of attracting the unwelcome attention of something supernatural and hungry. The few humanoid inhabitants of Shenmen practice numerous rituals and traditions to ward against the horrors threatening their meager communities, but even these do little to guarantee safety—for within the forests, hills, mountains, and waters of Shenmen live the most depraved of creatures.

Befouled fey meander the forests, corrupted and cursed bandits roam the foothills, and all manner of ghost and spirit ply Shenmen's waters. Yet none of these terrors match the true rulers of Shenmen. The jorogumos, spidery women of unparalleled beauty and cruelty, rule from their cavernous homes within the Gossamer Mountains. The jorogumos are linked to Shenmen's history of greed and terror.

History

The origins of Shenmen date back to the rise of the empire of Yixing, Tian Xia's first great empire. The wandering Tien people initially had little reason to settle in the rainy territory that would become Shenmen. Yet that changed when they learned of the abundance of lumber and silver found there. The empire of Yixing was ravenous for such resources, and the conquering nation's insatiable appetites led to the first true settlement of Shenmen. In that distant age, the lands of Shenmen were free of the monstrous inhabitants that dwell there today, and those first settlements flourished as resources flowed like water out of Shenmen and into the growing empire.

But Shenmen would not remain this idyllic land of plenty for long. Legends tell that a nameless woodscutter sought to reverse the ill fortunes of his family, and so traveled to the foothills of the Gossamer Mountains, where he discovered a hidden waterfall. There, the woodsman found nuggets of pure silver scattered casually along the pool's shores. As he claimed this rich bounty, he noticed a single spider weaving its web along the edge of the fall. The man thanked the spider for the silver, and promised he would not abuse this gift—that he would visit only once a year on the anniversary of this first bountiful event. The decades went by, and every year the woodsman returned to replenish his family's stores of silver, offering a prayer of thanks to the spider that blessed the waterfall each time. In time, the woodcutter grew frail and old, and passed his duty onto his eldest child.

For centuries, this family tradition continued, the silver always replenishing and the spider always there to receive thanks for the bounty. But on the family's 400th

visit to the pool, a callous and self-absorbed descendant of the original woodcutter took the silver he believed was his family's birthright and did not bother to thank the spider. Worse, he returned but a week later with several friends, eager to brag of his bounty and harvest another load of precious metal. He was confronted with no spider but a hauntingly beautiful woman in robes of fine silk. When she scolded him for his greed and pride, he did not listen—instead, he tried to convince her to return to his village as his wife.

Doubly insulted, the woman simply smiled sweetly and gave the man a choice: he could take another load of silver for his family—and she made clear that this would be the last gift of silver his family would ever receive—or he could go back to his family empty handed and not return for more silver until he could send a more gracious and polite child to carry on the tradition he was unfit for. The man guffawed and attempted to take the woman home by force, only to find the wrist he took was the talon of a great spider. The woman transformed and bit the assailing youth, and as her poison coursed through his veins, he collapsed. As he lay dying upon that pool's shore, he watched in horror as the spider transformed back into the woman. With a tone of almost sadistic glee, she informed him that he had brought an end to humanity's time in Shenmen.

Whether or not this story is true is in large part irrelevant, but one thing is certain—the jorogumo now rule Shenmen. They control the land from their cavernous homes within the Gossamer Mountains, ruling as unknowable fears and ever-present spies rather than stern tyrants, and letting the fear of what they may do or might see blunt any disobedience in the hearts of their cowering subjects. Only in the years following Lung Wa's collapse did the jorogumo take more direct action, openly seizing the nation as their own at the behest of the merciless Lady **Lang Loi** (NE female jorogumo witch[APG] 14; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 156). To the outside world, the legends of "spider maidens of Shenmen" are simply rumors, with most believing the nation to be controlled by vying bandit gangs and corrupt nobles.

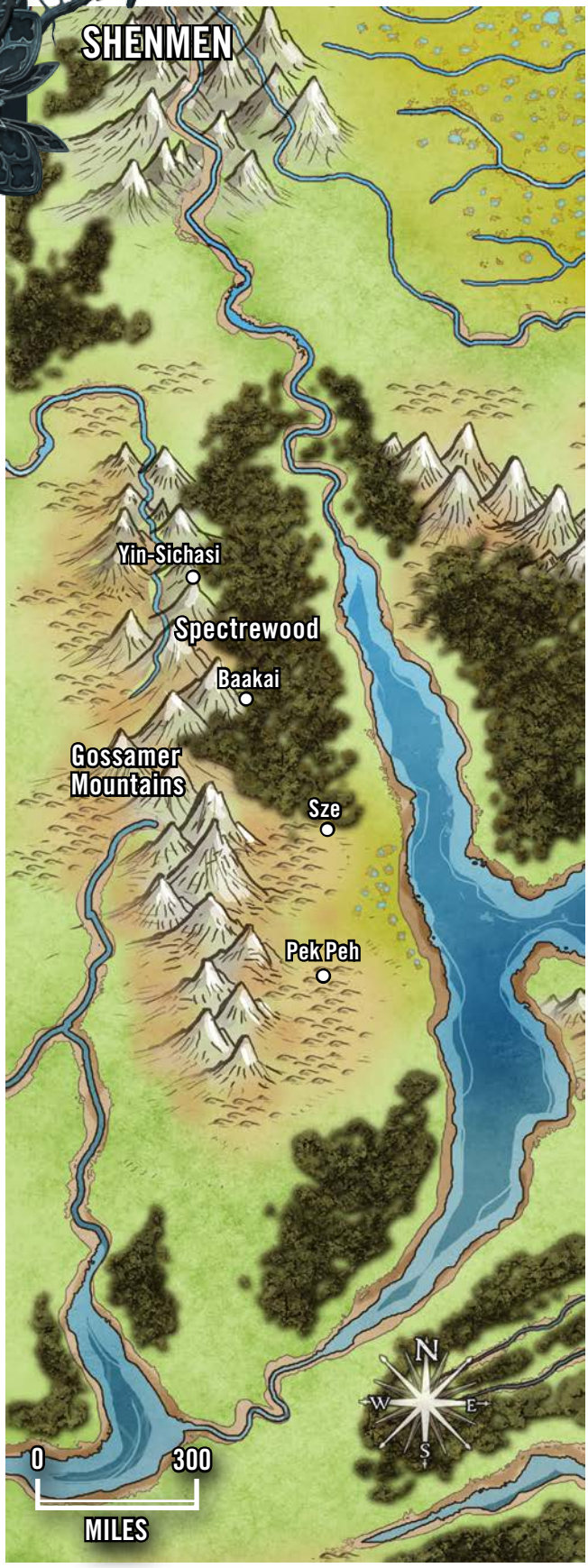
The current situation in Shenmen is far more dire than any Successor State report could explain. The ghosts of slain officials from previous empires now haunt the woods, risen to enforce draconian policies on a people already struggling to survive. Even the resident fey have fallen to corruption; the continued pilfering of their forests turned them into malicious beings of spite and vengeance. And above it all, from their silk-shrouded thrones in the Gossamer Mountains, the jorogumos look on with delight as angry spirits and vengeful ghosts wreak havoc on humanity.

HORRIFIC LOCATIONS

Shenmen is a land perpetually blanketed by rain and fog. Sun is a rare commodity and is viewed as an ill omen, for it preludes the coming of an extended period of darkness and rain. Clouds come from the east, over the Sea of Ghosts and up the windward side of the Gossamer Mountains, where they disgorge most of their moisture prior to climbing he high altitudes of the peaks. Despite the realm's spidery rulers, Shenmen is defined by a perpetual gloom cast by the land's many unsettling spiritual elements.

Baakai: This picturesque town sits in the foothills of the Gossamer Mountains, perched above the looming Spectrewood to the east. Baakai is the largest human settlement in Shenmen, as it is somewhat shielded from the surrounding horrors. Rigid adherence to tradition ensures that the malicious fey and restless spirits of the forest are kept (mostly) at bay. Appeasing the spider maidens of the

PATH MAIDEN



Gossamer Mountains and nearby Yin-Sichasi is an entirely different matter. To this end, the people of Baakai perform a series of rituals dating back to the time of Yixing, in which promising teenagers are ceremonially selected from the populace. Those chosen ascend a nearby mountain path in the Ritual of Ascension as offerings to the jorogumos. Clad in ceremonial robes and anointed with rare perfumes to protect them from the vengeful Path Maidens haunting the mountain heights, those chosen to partake in the Ritual of Ascension carry a great honor, for while none have ever returned from this journey, the act of making it ensures the jorogumos leave Baakai to its own fate for 1 more year.

Gossamer Mountains: Rainfall drenches the lower slopes of the great Gossamer Mountains. Winding paths curve throughout the peaks, weaving between rock and natural rivers. Stone markers line the edges of these paths, each inscribed with prayers to the deities of the Dragon Empires. At higher altitudes, the rainfall abates, eventually replaced with thick sheets of vaporous fog. This fog, teamed with the raucous sound of rushing water from nearby streams and waterfalls, often disorients those seeking to traverse the mountain's dismal upper paths.

The Gossamer Mountains hold few living creatures save the jorogumos in their city of Yin-Sichasi. The lucky explorers are those who fall prey to the mountains' miasmic fog and plunge to their death off unseen cliffs. The less fortunate are those who draw the attention of the mountain ghosts. Among the most feared of the mountain's dangers are spectral maidens—ghostly women who served Pharasma in life but fell from her grace by ignoring the Mother of Souls' welcoming calls upon their deaths. They still wear the cerulean and violet vestments of Pharasma, and hunt the living in the mountains. These dreadful spirits are known as Path Maidens, each of which is a unique ghostlike incorporeal undead seeking vengeance against the living who dare walk the mountains' high paths. Their wrath is particularly fierce against living worshipers of Pharasma, for the Path Maidens view their one-time patron as the greatest lie and the source of their eternal torment.

Pek Peh: This town rests atop the highest hill in Shenmen's foothills. As much a stronghold as a settlement, Pek Peh houses some of the most dogged and debased of the nation's humanoid populace. Bandit monarchs have ruled the town since the fall of Lung Wa, at first fortifying the settlement against the coming of a resurgent empire or eager Successor State, only to find their defenses tried by the lurking horrors of Shenmen itself. Since that time, the settlement prospered only under the guiding hand of emotionless leaders who put the needs of the community above trivialities like compassion.

Today, Lord **Howin** (LE male human fighter 8) rules Pek Peh from the High House of Many Blessings, a fortress within an already fortified town. He maintains

his rule through repeated reminders to his people of the horrors that lurk beyond their gates. Howin's second-in-command, **Tin Jiayi** (NE female kitsune rogue 6; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 175), leads "scouting parties" beyond the walls of Pek Peh, though these are in truth gangs of bandits preying on wanderers and smaller settlements. The spoils of Pek Peh's banditry are twofold: they provide the town much-needed resources, while also securing prisoners who are in turn secretly shipped off to the jorogumos of the Gossamer Mountains as tribute, appeasing their interest in Pek Peh.

Spectrewood: If half of Shenmen's great resources is the silver of the Gossamer Mountains, the other half is the darkwood and timber of the Spectrewood. Spiders and their kin dwell in many of the trees, and it takes an expert woodcutter to tell which trees are safe for harvesting, and which would eject a colony of angered vermin if felled. Even more troubling are the nests of ettercaps inhabiting the edges of the forest, springing to action whenever their verminous kin are endangered.

The changing of the nation's fortunes have altered the fey of the Spectrewood. The people of Shenmen know that in ages past, the woods were home to a teeming variety of jovial spirits, but now the forest is home to nightmarish fey. Once defenders of Shenmen's drenched glades, silk dryads (a variant dryad whose powers are tied to the webs of their giant spider allies as much as to the blighted trees they dwell within) loyal to the jorogumo rulers stalk the Spectrewood, their motives as twisted as the forms of their victims' withered carcasses.

Sze: To the people of Sze, much has changed since the fall of Lung Wa. The settlement went through a number of changes in leadership, especially in the waning days of the empire. As Lung Wa collapsed, Sze was appointed a final series of governors, who made a valiant attempt to tame the region before the last moved on to find glory elsewhere. At that moment, the people of Sze thought to claim their own destiny, but were sadly mistaken.

Governor **Chiou Mingxia** (NE female human ghost mesmerist[OA] 10) rose from her improperly maintained grave shortly after her successors departed Sze. She continues to rule the settlement to this day, imposing an ancient and harsh interpretation of Lung Wa's laws on the impoverished people of the town. Chiou Mingxia rules from the charred remains of the old governor's palace, to which vast quantities of darkwood, ebony, and elm are gathered by the toiling populace. All attempts to explain the demise of the empire to the ghost have failed, and the people meaninglessly gather more and more resources to rot in the endless rain, well aware that to stop would earn the deadly ire of their undead governor.

Yin-Sichasi: This hauntingly beautiful city is home to Shenmen's jorogumos, their arachnid kin, and their magically controlled humanoid slaves. Yin-Sichasi rests in a vast hollow cavern within the Gossamer Mountains, the ceiling of which is spiderwebbed with cracks. Rushing water freely falls from these cracks, and over a dozen immense waterfalls cascade to a basin several thousand feet below the city. Webs of taut spider silk capable of holding incredible weight crisscross the cavern between the falling water, creating walkways for the inhabitants of this unearthly city. Edifices of darkwood and silver—resources claimed as tribute from the human villages of Shenmen—stand atop the thick silken webs, acting as homes, palaces, and temples to those inhabiting the city. Light is not required by the arachnid citizens, but hundreds of giant spiders trot along the walkways with light-emitting gems embedded in their abdomens. Above it all rules Lady Lang Loi, the most powerful of the jorogumo and the mistress of all Shenmen.

Portraits of Mistress Osa

Yamada Osa (LG female human occultist[OA] 13) toured the breadth of Tian Xia. During her travels, she studied the culture of various nations and their distinct settlements. She spent much time in Shenmen, where she stayed in the town of Baakai and learned of the Ritual of Ascension. Her ultimate fate is unknown, but she left many paintings scattered across the world. Those she painted during her stay in Shenmen captured the twisted spiritual energy of the land. Far more than simple images—each painting is in fact a powerful artifact, though whether this was an intentional effect or some later development in the wake of Osa's disappearance is unknown.

OSA PAINTING		MINOR ARTIFACT
SLOT none	**CL** 15th	**WEIGHT** 10 lbs.
AURA strong conjuration and divination		

Several *Osa paintings* exist, each displaying a hand-painted Shenmen landscape. These paintings react to specific groups of individuals, sensing in them a likeness between their fates and the curse that haunts Shenmen. Creatures viewing the landscape that are deemed worthy (GM's discretion) are selected by the painting, and a likeness of that creature appears in the depicted scene. Once a full group is selected (usually four, but sometimes only one and at other times a group of a dozen or more), the portrait triggers and each of the creatures depicted must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be transported to the viewpoint depicted, across any distance (including across planes), via teleportation. Once the group has been gathered, they are placed under the effects of a *geas/quest* spell (no save) to undertake a specific action in that region, preventing them from leaving Shenmen until the task is completed.

DESTRUCTION

Once a selected group is brought to Shenmen and completes the task set by the *Osa painting*, the painting itself turns into a blank, nonmagical canvas.

Uskheart

"The truth that awaits us all is the same truth that our Midnight Lord learned when he traveled beyond reality and ascended beyond pain to become the glorious Zon-Kuthon. One can see shadows of this truth in the red claw of the predator, the choking grip of the strangling vine, and the remorseless cruelty of the windstorm. The natural world of which we are part exists to feed a greater power. Those who take the Uskbond know this. We shall winnow out our failings, focus our strengths. When all life ends and the Midnight Lord takes the last of the Uskhearted, that one shall know Truth."

—Eloiander of Ridwan, leader of the Shades of the Uskwood

USKHEART

Primeval Forest Realm of Sinister Druids

Location central Nidal

Horror Genres body horror, cosmic horror, dark fantasy

Horrific Threats hive infestation, mi-go, monstrous vermin, Shades of the Uskwood

Horrific Locations Broodmother's Cradle, Hive Camps, Pool of Sorrows, Temple of Mutilations

Many are drawn to Nidal out of morbid curiosity, for the nation is infamous for its dark passions and inexplicable violence. Nidal is an old country, arguably the oldest in the Inner Sea region, and its traditions predate much of modern history. It is devoted to the god of darkness and pain, and its people have long reveled in the embrace of despair and agony. That they worship Zon-Kuthon not out of fear but out of admiration and desire is to many an incomprehensible contradiction. Further confusing and intriguing scholars of the human condition is the fact that such an ancient nation simply bowed to a relative upstart like Cheliax, but to the true Nidalese, the humiliation of subjugation is but another flavor of pain and loss—conditions held to be pure and true by the Midnight Lord. Yet not all of Nidal's citizens share this perspective.

History

Regardless of the opinion of the intelligentsia in Pangolais, debate remains over the Umbral Court's capitulation to Cheliax during the later years of the Everwar. While the members of the "omnipotent" Umbral Court managed to hold their positions as Nidal's rulers, many of the country's citizens refused to acknowledge servitude to Cheliax. Antioccupation sentiment swelled quickly, and a number of influential individuals spoke out against the Court. Their dissent sparked a bloody reprisal known as the Midnight Inquisitions, during which masked agents of the Umbral Court quickly rounded up anyone suspected of insurrectionary speech or action and sentenced them to public execution by torture. Eventually, these inquisitions restored order to Nidal's cities, yet they were unable to make any progress at all against the oldest of Nidal's organizations—the Shades of the Uskwood.

These druids have long believed that the natural world is not a place designed to welcome humanity, and that civilization is a blight that the natural order must endure, in the same way a person must withstand unsightly symptoms of a disease. To the Shades of the Uskwood, Nidal bending the knee to Cheliax was a prime example of the fallacies and weaknesses of society. However, not only were the Shades surprisingly resilient in the face of the inquisitors' torture, but their plots against Cheliax proved to be so enigmatic and to have such long timelines that the Midnight Inquisitors ultimately turned their attention to more pressing threats. Cheliax, for its part, took Nidal's advice to leave well enough alone. Since then, the Shades of the Uskwood have been free to pursue their mysterious agenda—and may in fact have the government's tacit approval.

Horrific Locations

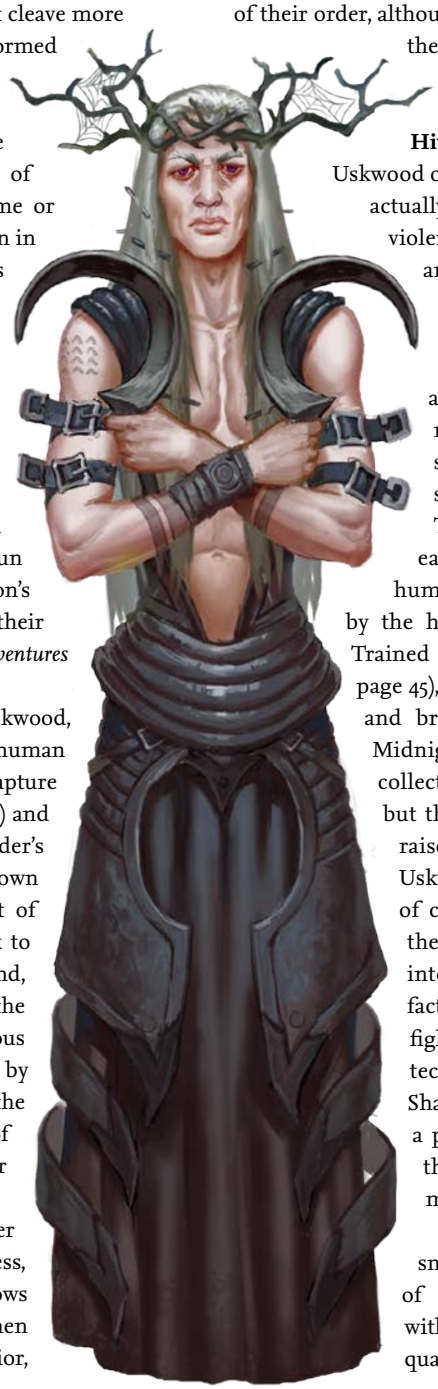
Each year, a rash of disappearances coincides with the Eternal Kiss, a Kuthite holiday that takes place during the first new moon of the year. Over the course of 11 evenings, dozens vanish from the alleys of Pangolais. The loss of such a comparative few barely registers when held against the capital's total population, yet as the years pass and the disappearances continue, the numbers slowly grow. One witness claims to have seen individuals walking off into the woods, as if in a dream. Within the shadows, he

spotted the form a ghostly pale figure beckoning to the victims, and rumors have since begun to surface about the nature of the mysterious figure. Some say it is a ghost or forest spirit, but others insist the figure is one of the Shades of the Uskwood, come to exact retribution on the decadents who dwell in the city. These rumors hold a grain of truth: the Shades are behind the disappearances, but they are not luring the desperate away from Pangolais out of vengeance—they instead seek sacrifices for one of the group's oldest projects.

Long have the Shades of the Uskwood sought to discover examples of alien nature that cleave more closely to whatever it is that transformed Dou-Bral into Zon-Kuthon so many eons past. Several years ago, their search revealed a singularly vile and frightening form of life—a race of strange creatures that live to consume or transform everything they find. Known in certain texts as the "hive," these aliens (who refer to themselves with an Aklo word that human voices cannot speak) represent a wholly inimical form of life unlike anything in the natural order here on Golarion—yet they are not extraplanar or supernatural entities. In the hive, the Shades of the Uskwood have found an intriguing example of nature run amok in a way that echoes Zon-Kuthon's ancient transformation and confirms their beliefs. See *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures* for more information about the hive.

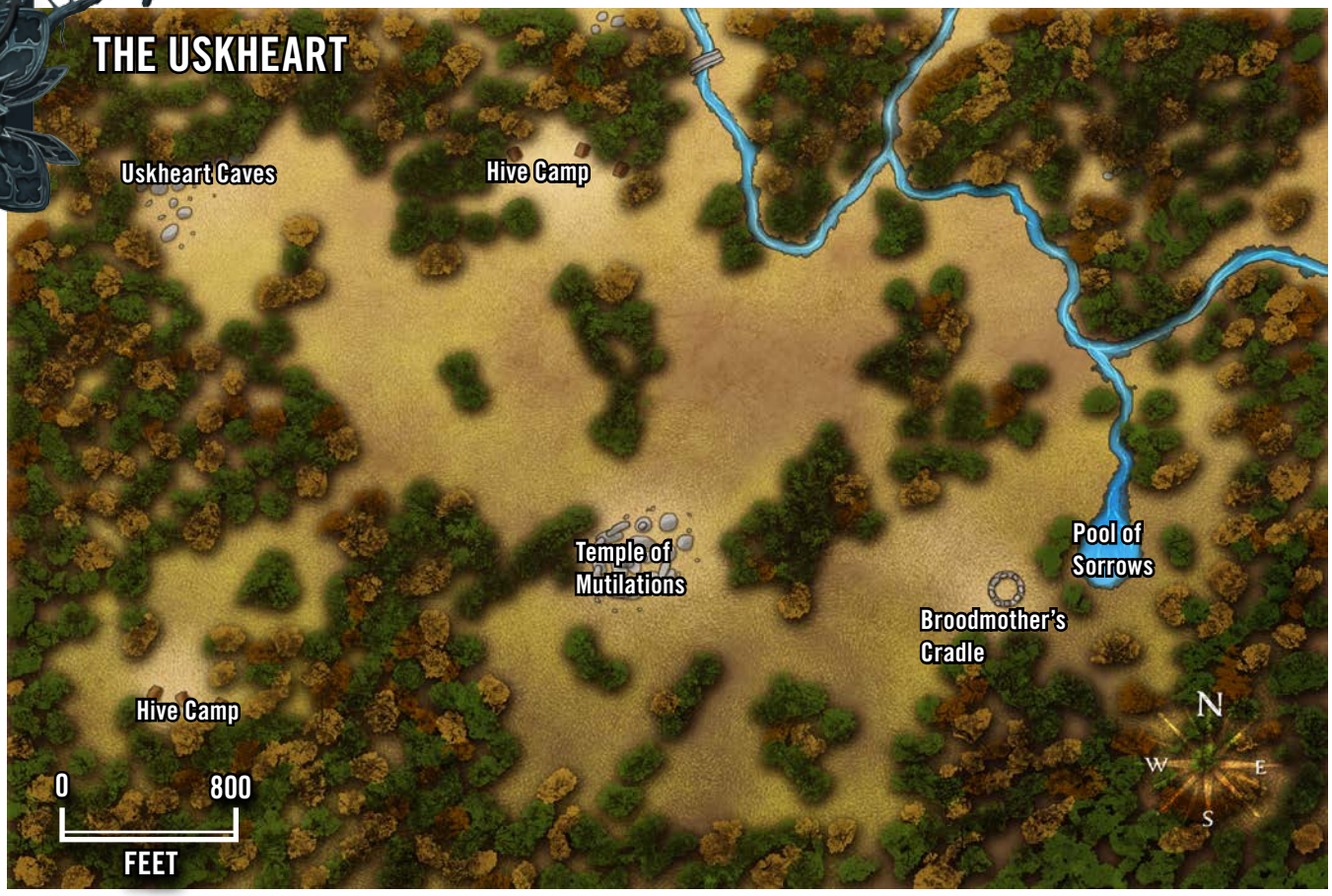
The leader of the Shades of the Uskwood, **Eloiander of Ridwan** (NE male human druid 15), helped to engineer the capture of a hive queen (*Horror Adventures* 236) and brought her to the center of his order's power, a region of the Uskwood known as the Uskheart. There, in the heart of the unnatural forest, the Shades seek to explore the mechanisms of the hive and, they hope, a method of controlling the corruptions it spreads. This dangerous project is but one of many pursued by the Shades, and explorers who enter the Uskheart will discover no shortage of ways to lose their minds, bodies, or even souls.

Broodmother's Cradle: In the center of a clearing stands a great, roofless, octagonal stone spire with no windows or doors. The cradle is hollow, and when the druids need access to its interior, they use *stone shape* to open a doorway into a sealed antechamber, closing this door before opening the inner wall. Within this hollow spire resides the hive queen Eloiander captured, a dangerous and fecund monster that does little more than lay eggs and feed on the victims the Shades provide her. Now and then, the hive queen spares one of these victims, instead transforming that person into one of her corrupted spawn. The druids are quick to appropriate most hive warriors that the queen produces and bring them into the hive camps (see below) in nearby reaches of the Uskheart for the druids to train in the ways of their order, although Eloiander has smuggled a few of them out to other locations throughout Nidal—for what purpose, none can say.



Hive Camps: The Shades of the Uskwood often visit the Uskheart, but very few actually live here. Prone to arguments and violent conflicts (just as one often sees among aggressive species of animals in the wild), these druids live in small groups or alone throughout the Uskwood. But in the Uskheart, a few druids have set aside their natural instincts and dwell together so they can teach the ways of their sect to those infested by the hive. Two of these so-called "hive camps," each populated by a few dozen humanoids who have become corrupted by the hive queen, exist in the Uskheart. Trained in the ways of the Uskbond (see page 45), taught to embrace their infections, and brainwashed to be servants of the Midnight Lord, this small but growing collection of corrupted minions are but the latest in a long string of agents raised and trained by the Shades of the Uskwood. What impact this small army of corrupted druids might have when they are finally ready to be released into the world is unknown—but the fact that they are being trained to fight particularly against Chelish techniques certainly implies that the Shades of the Uskwood are nearing a point where an all-out war on who they see as their nation's oppressors may come to fruition.

Pool of Sorrows: Hidden within a small grove in the forest rests a pool of still water, its shoreline marked with an artificial ring of coarsely quarried bedrock. The pond might



look serene; thick swirls of duckweed and lilies growing along the shore, and the water's glimmering dark surface ripples with water-skimmers and flies. On the bank sits a small raft of sturdy pine logs lashed together with vines, supporting a long pole and nearly 20 feet of badly rusted chain in a basket woven from bark. Anyone poling the raft across the pond feels the pole crunching against the bottom, and closer inspection reveals the pool is lined with bones. A small isle of slime-covered rocks rises from the center of the pool, supporting a slightly crooked, rusted pole about the diameter of a human arm and nearly 10 feet tall. Druids occasionally come to the pole to meditate on the nature of pain. Such meditations involve being bound to the pole and smeared with animal fat, honey, and seed, after which the druid is left for a number of days, during which mosquitoes, crows, and other scavengers come to peck, pluck, and gnaw at the individual's flesh.

The Pool of Sorrows seems devoid of fauna to any who explore its depths. No fish or other animal can be found within these dark, silty waters, yet they are not particularly toxic. The pool is just shy of 20 feet deep for the most part, but its bottom drops away into a seemingly endless submerged shaft just off the southern shore of the central island. The water within this 30-foot-wide shaft is unusually cold and still, and the walls are scarred with the marks of immense talons. The druids of the Uskheart know that deep below the Pool of Sorrows dwells an ancient beast—an undead tarn linnorm whose name has been lost. The slumbering monster has not risen from the Pool of Sorrows in modern memory, and the Shades are content to let the creature lie. Yet, should the need arise, it is said that leaders among the Shades know of a special ritual that can waken the undead linnorm and call upon its aid.

Temple of Mutilations: Deep in the heart of the Uskwood stands a great ancient manor house centered on a large dome of stone. Lichen-spotted and draped in knotted strands of hanging moss, the house's gaping black windows hiss softly as the passing forest breezes blow through. Gnarled trees close in around the house, slowly beginning to engulf it with their bulk. Broad steps climb to the overgrown entrance, where an doorway leads into an open foyer lined with towering pillars and arches. Drawing closer, observers slowly realize that the structure is built from the bones of hundreds of creatures, lashed with sinew, darkened with blood, and cemented with lime. The macabre craftsmanship is exquisite. This temple serves as the most holy site for the Uskheart's defiant overseers.

The temple's caretaker is an aging albino druid with the title **Master of True Revelations** (NE male druid 14), a man second in rank only to Eloiander. Attended in the temple by numerous verminous minions, corrupted animals, and fanatic Uskheart druids, the master preaches that one can witness the true nature of humanity only by subjecting oneself to extreme pain. Rumors of deeper dungeons below the temple sometimes beckon adventurers to attempt a foolhardy raid, but to date, very few of these adventurers have emerged again from the temple—at least, few who are recognizable as the same being who ventured forth. Recently, one survivor who claims to have escaped the dungeons below the Temple of Mutilations began spreading stories of her encounters in the hidden chambers to the anyone on the streets of Egorian who would listen. However, her warnings and revelations on the nature of the strange torments that her adventuring party endured before her escape were largely discounted as ravings. Whatever the truth might be, she has recently gone missing. While most assume she perished from misadventure, there are those who whisper that the agents of the Uskwood managed to infiltrate the capital of Cheliax unseen to abduct one of the few who escaped their clutches.

Uskheart Caves: Northwest of the temple lies a shallow, boulder-strewn valley pocked by several dozen small limestone caves likely formed about the same time as the larger Shadow Caverns just to the north. Prior to the founding of the Temple of Mutilations, the first druids of the Uskheart used these caves for shelter and storage. Today, the deep caverns have been colonized by alien allies of the Shades—an invasion of mi-go (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 193) and their otherworldly minions. The druids have allowed the mi-go full run of the caves and no longer have full knowledge of the dangers within. Their alliance with the mi-go has lasted for hundreds of years despite significant differences in mind and body, for the two groups have found common ground in their adoration of the impartiality of the natural world. The mi-go mine the deepest parts of the Uskheart caves for ores and minerals quite rare on their homeworld, and they trade strange secrets to the Shades of the Uskwood in return for permission to conduct their operations here—knowledge of where to find a hive queen being but the latest in a long line of vile whisperings revealed to the druidic order.

Shades of the Uskwood

The Shades of the Uskwood have developed specialized druidic practices that set them apart from other druids—practices that go far beyond merely eschewing the use of fire. All Shades must eventually craft a personal Umbrae-Token that ties their soul and doings to the Uskwood's fell power. Most druids who join the organization create their tokens upon first gaining a druid level and taking the Shade of the Uskwood feat (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 288), for until a prospective Shade does so, she is not allowed into the druidic inner circle of the Uskwood. Indeed, those druids who claim to wish to join the order and who do not take this feat within a few months of joining invariably find themselves hunted down and sacrificed to Zon-Kuthon.

The Shades of the Uskwood have developed another method of pledging themselves to the Midnight Lord—the Uskbond. Any neutral evil druid who worships Zon-Kuthon can take the Uskbond, but not all such druids do, for taking this oath replaces all other options granted by nature bond, preventing the druid from gaining an animal companion or selecting a domain. The choice to take the Uskbond must be made when a druid gains her first level, and the choice, once made, cannot be changed.

The Uskbond (Unique Domain)

The Uskbond functions as a unique domain with the granted powers and domain spells below. A druid who takes the Uskbond must be neutral evil and worship Zon-Kuthon. A druid who has taken an archetype that alters or replaces nature bond cannot take the Uskbond.

Absorb Pain (Su): Whenever you take lethal damage, you can choose as an immediate action to convert a number of points of this damage equal to 1d6 + your Wisdom modifier into nonlethal damage. When you use this ability, you gain a +4 profane bonus on all saving throws versus pain effects during the following round. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

Gruesome Display (Ex): At 8th level, as a standard action you can alter your appearance in such intense, horrific ways that onlookers become nauseated. One creature you select within 30 feet who can see you must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your druid level + your Wisdom modifier) or be nauseated for a number of rounds equal to 1/2 your druid level. Every 2 levels beyond 8th, you can affect one additional creature, to a maximum of seven targets within 30 feet at 20th level. Each time you activate your gruesome display, you must affect at least one target, but you can choose to affect fewer targets than your maximum. Once you've targeted the maximum number of creatures granted by level (regardless of whether they successfully save to resist the effect or not), you cannot use gruesome display again for the remainder of the day. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Uskbond Spells: 1st—*delay pain*[UM], 2nd—*lesser curse terrain*[HA], 3rd—*excruciating deformation*[UM], 4th—*curse terrain*[HA], 5th—*symbol of pain*, 6th—*greater curse terrain*[HA], 7th—*verminous transformation*[HA], 8th—*supreme curse terrain*[HA], 9th—*maze of madness and suffering*[HA] (haunted forest only).

Vale of Honorless Graves

"Since my childhood, I have always dreaded the dusk. That's when I hear most clearly the soft and seductive whispers that hide within the crickets' hum as the sun dies. The susurrus slithers into my ears each night, so I have never known true rest. Even the righteous crusaders couldn't scour the whispers away, and in my ventures beyond my homeland, the whispers still find me. Only when I truly listened did I realize they were not something from the world speaking to me, but something within me speaking to the world. And now, at long last, I know what they want me to do."

—Koslav Oris, soon after praying at St. Alcrion's Shrine for the first time

VALE OF HONORLESS GRAVES

Remote Hamlet Plagued by Violent Psychosis

Location Ustalav (Ulcazar)

Horror Genres ghost story, dark fantasy, psychological horror

Horrific Threats Whispering Tyrant agents, contagious madness, psychotic settlers, torture, undead

Horrific Locations ancient and haunted tombs, crude prison basement, haunted town square

Ustalav's history has touched many lands throughout the Inner Sea region. Today, few folk fail to recognize the name of this land's infamous Whispering Tyrant, Tar-Baphon, or the Shining Crusade that drew warriors from nearly every country in Avistan to break his reign of terror. Despite his fall, Tar-Baphon's legacy continues to influence Ustalav and its citizens. In remote Ulcazar in Ustalav's heart lies one of many sites that was savaged and scarred during the Whispering Tyrant's reign, a tiny settlement known to some as Satravah, but more widely referred to as the Vale of Honorless Graves.

History

During the Shining Crusade, the Whispering Tyrant's agents found that transforming the bodies of fallen heroes yielded singularly potent weapons against those heroes' surviving kin. Necromancers scoured the lands for the corpses of Tar-Baphon's most powerful enemies, defiling and turning them into wretched undead slaves. Arazni, once Aroden's herald, was the most infamous to succumb to this, but she was far from the first.

The crusaders sought many ways to thwart these vile efforts, and as the Shining Crusade wore on, many knights took to hiding their fallen dead in clandestine locations or unmarked graves. Many deaths went unacknowledged by both the nobility and the clergies, save for brief notes scrawled into a long-lost church ledger. While all denied the practice, rank-and-file soldiers often made mention of secret burials, disdainfully referred to as "honorless graves," and they took to posthumously sainting their fallen leaders so they would not be forgotten. The shrine at Satravah marks the grave of one such vanquished hero: a young general known as Alcrion Tornavich, whose troops cleared the passes at Amaans. During the retreat, an assassin shot Alcrion with a vile arrow that turned Alcrion's veins black and afflicted him with a swift, fatal, and particularly painful doom. To keep word of his death from their enemies, Alcrion's soldiers secreted his corpse away in an ancient tomb in the nearby foothills before retreating back to Ardis. While his death was never reported, a few years later, one of Alcrion's lieutenants returned to the site and erected a statue of an angelic figure kneeling before a small fountain to honor him. Over the years, travelers began using the shrine as a marker to the start of one of the lesser-known roads leading to the Monastery of the Veil. Eventually, a group of settlers erected cobbled shacks around the fountain, which became the weather-beaten hamlet of Satravah.

Horrific Location

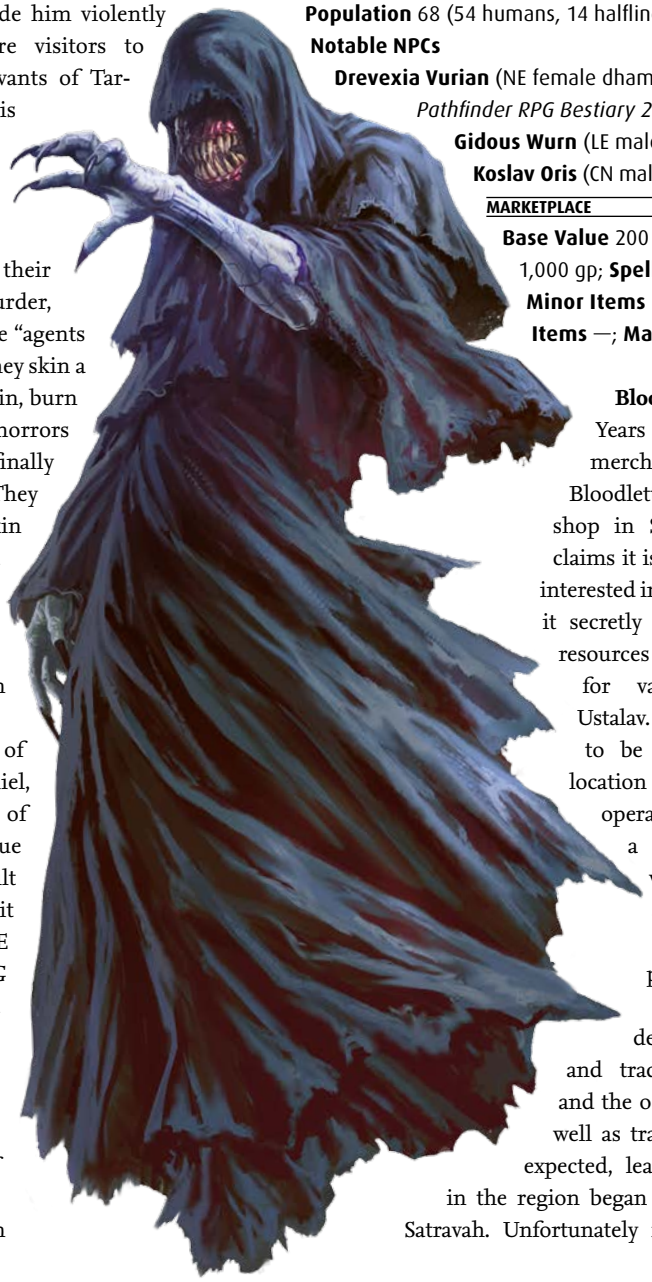
Until recently, the Vale of Honorless Graves had little to offer visitors. Satravah's scant population consists of barely more than a dozen families whose heavy features carry more than a hint of Kellid ancestry, along with an uncanny similarity hinting at a bit too much close interbreeding. They live in piecemeal shacks and maintain little contact with the outside world. The rocky soil remains fertile enough for the people of Satravah to grow root vegetables, and when the seasons permit, they gather edible grasses, shrubs, and berries, or make the two-day trek north to Lake Kavapesta to gather snails,

lake clams, and eels. This hard life assures that even the children look age-weary, their tired eyes glistening like gray pebbles above raw, wind-chafed cheeks and cracked lips pulled taut and expressionless against ragged teeth.

At present, a villager named Koslav Oris acts as Satravah's political and spiritual advisor, though he holds no formal title. Six months ago, Koslav suffered a seizure while standing before the statue in the town square. Upon reviving, he claimed to have been granted a vision from an angelic messenger sent by Ragathiel. This revelation, Koslav claimed, declared him the heir to one of the villagers' oldest traditions—the Blood Reckoning. He has since convinced the villagers that Satravah is a holy site and that agents of the Whispering Tyrant seek the shrine to drain it of its sacred power.

Koslav's delusions have made him violently psychotic. He cannot picture visitors to Satravah as anything but servants of Tar-Baphon; each night, he and his disciples rally and patrol the surrounding lands. When they encounter travelers after dusk, they mercilessly attack and kill them. Then, to save their own souls from the sin of murder, they prepare the corpses of the "agents of the Tyrant" for ascension. They skin a victim to cleanse the flesh of sin, burn out the eyes to absolve the horrors they have witnessed, and finally stake the body to a large tree. They lash the victim's tattered skin to two large branches jabbed into the corpse's back to create a hideous set of wings, upon which they believe the victim's purified soul can ascend to the Great Beyond.

Unknown to all, the source of Koslav's vision is not Ragathiel, but the bitter, restless shade of the very man that the statue at Satravah's center was built to honor. The tortured spirit of **Alcrion Tornavich** (CE advanced geist; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 288, 124) has waited hundreds of years for a host to free him from his forgotten grave. The the necromantic magic of the vile arrow that laid him low and the shame of having an honorless burial saw to his spirit's transformation into a vile undead known as a geist. While he cannot leave his tomb, Alcrion uses his power to control the villagers by haunting his statue, and with Koslav Oris, he has found a host he can wholly influence. Through this weak-willed man, Alcrion has drawn the entire population of Satravah under his dark influence.



ALCRION TORNAVICH

SATRAVAH

CN hamlet

Corruption –2; **Crime** –6; **Economy** –4; **Law** –1; **Lore** –3; **Society** –10

Qualities insular

Danger –5; **Disadvantages** cursed (–4 to society)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 68 (54 humans, 14 halflings)

Notable NPCs

Drevexia Vurian (NE female dhampir mesmerist[0A] 9; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 89)

Gidous Wurn (LE male human occultist[0A] 6)

Koslav Oris (CN male human commoner 6)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 1,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 2nd

Minor Items 1d6; **Medium Items** —; **Major Items** —

Bloodletter's League: Years ago, a collective of merchants known as the Bloodletter's League set up shop in Satravah. The league claims it is made up of scholars interested in obscure art; however, it secretly procures rare occult resources and human blood for vampires throughout Ustalav. Satravah appeared to be an isolated enough location for the league to run operations, so it purchased a small shack in the village and appointed a man named Gidous Wurn as the proprietor. Gidous proceeded to make decent coin buying and trading basic materials and the occasional antiquity, as well as trafficking in blood. As expected, league clients traveling in the region began making stopovers in Satravah. Unfortunately for Gidous, business

has come to a premature end. Koslav long suspected the merchant of devilry, and raided the shop as Alcrion's influence bolstered the leader's confidence. Uncovering the stash of occult items, Koslav condemned Gidous to death. Desperate, Gidous claimed to be merely a pawn in a larger plot. Koslav believed him and, rather than kill Gidous, imprisoned the man in his own basement. Koslav has posted several guards about the property with orders to kill any and all trespassers. They keep Gidous locked in a leather trunk in the cellar, naked and bound with lengths of coarse, chafing rope. Only his head is visible, protruding through a hole in the trunk. How many more days the man might survive his torments is unclear, but it won't take long before he expires. If rescued, Gidous is quick to promise all sorts of rewards. While he does not himself own any of the wealth he promises, his contacts among the Bloodletter's League elsewhere in Ustalav do indeed have deep pockets. Whether or not they make good on Gidous's promises—or if they instead use these promises to lure do-gooder PCs into their clutches—is left to the GM's discretion.

Koslav's Shack: Koslav's shack lies in the southwest quarter of the village. Much larger than most of the small, ramshackle buildings in which Satravah's citizens cower, the building has a weather-beaten thatched roof in dire need of repair. The shack's whitewashed door has a single nail driven into it, from which a simple wooden holy symbol of Iomedae hangs from a leather thong. Koslav spends little time in this shack today, but he has hidden all of the treasures he looted from the Bloodletter's League under the floorboards. This includes a small fortune in gold and silver, along with a *+1 undead bane dagger* and three tightly sealed vials containing human blood.

Public Hall: The Satravah public hall is a large, single-story, frame-and-timber structure that serves as a gathering place for the townsfolk to share meals, drink, tell stories, pray, and hold town hearings. To the casual observer, all seems normal enough, if a bit rustic, but of late, Koslav has been using the public hall as a courthouse to conduct inquiries into those he or his agents arrest while patrolling nearby roads. It matters little that none of these men and women are actual Whispering Tyrant agents—the trials Koslav puts on here are in large part shams meant to publicly justify the execution of these alleged agents of Tar-Baphon. Koslav's most powerful accomplice in these mock trials is a gaunt woman named Drevexia Vurian, a relative newcomer to Satravah who arrived only a few days after Koslav first succumbed to Alcrion's will. Drevexia presented herself as an agent of Ragathiel, and her hypnotic methods and unnerving eyes provide Koslav with all he needs to convince the villagers

RANDOM WHISPERS

1d6	Action Taken
1	The afflicted wanders the streets, killing and butchering chickens, dogs, goats, horses, and other domestic animals.
2	The afflicted carves unholy runes into his own flesh, dealing just enough damage to become unconscious.
3	The afflicted sets fire to a random building of political or religious significance.
4	The afflicted barges into a church or temple during a ceremony and interrupts by speaking in tongues and ranting madly on the subject of inevitable damnation.
5	The afflicted digs up a few graves, opens the caskets, and sifts through the remains looking for choice mementos for a grisly collection.
6	The afflicted seeks out an innocent to murder and, perhaps, feast upon.

of anyone's guilt. Those found guilty are executed on the gallows near St. Alcrion's Shrine, and their bodies buried in unmarked graves along the village's perimeter.

Ironically, Drevexia herself is a Whispering Tyrant agent. She only recently uncovered the truth of Alcrion's hidden burial and came to the town hoping to exhume and animate his remains. What she found here instead, though, has delighted her. Her methods of execution are customized to encourage those the town slays to rise as mohrgs, but she remains obsessed with Alcrion and hopes to find a way to transport the geist from his tomb to somewhere his presence can help devastate a much larger populace than a mere hamlet in the hills.

St. Alcrion's Shrine: In the center of the town square, a large angelic statue watches over a small pool. Centuries have worn the statue's features smooth, though the villagers believe the figure represents the empyreal lord Ragathiel. Considering the statue to be Satravah's protector, the townsfolk keep it festooned with flowers and occasionally congregate at the pool to offer prayers. Over the past few centuries, the statue has become haunted and now serves as the conduit for Alcrion's dark will. Today, anyone who prays at the statue risks affliction with whispering madness (see below). The whispers are tied directly to Alcrion's will; as such, the afflicted become extremely paranoid when the curse manifests. Victims are filled with the urge to root out and destroy agents of Tar-Baphon, and fear such villains lurk among them. The villagers recently erected a crude but effective gallows in the statue's shadow, and to date nearly two dozen innocents have ended their days here, with the villagers convinced by Drevexia and Koslav that the unfortunate souls are secretly agents of the Whispering Way.

St. Alcrion's Tomb: While popular belief holds that the town's patron is buried in an (in fact abandoned) tomb south of the settlement, his actual remains lie hidden in a larger tomb just west of Satravah. Finding the site's entrance is difficult, and thus far it has rested unopened since Alcrion's burial. The site consists of two crypts—a false crypt at the bottom of a flight of crumbling stairs, and the real crypt hidden by secret passages that connect to the entrance of the stairwell. The tomb dates back further than Alcrion's death, but their precise origin is a mystery. Both sections are heavily trapped and warded. While intended to keep undead out, the wards have also prevented Alcrion's spirit from escaping. Unfortunately, they haven't prevented Alcrion himself from gaining influence over the villagers of Satravah via Koslav.

WHISPERING MADNESS

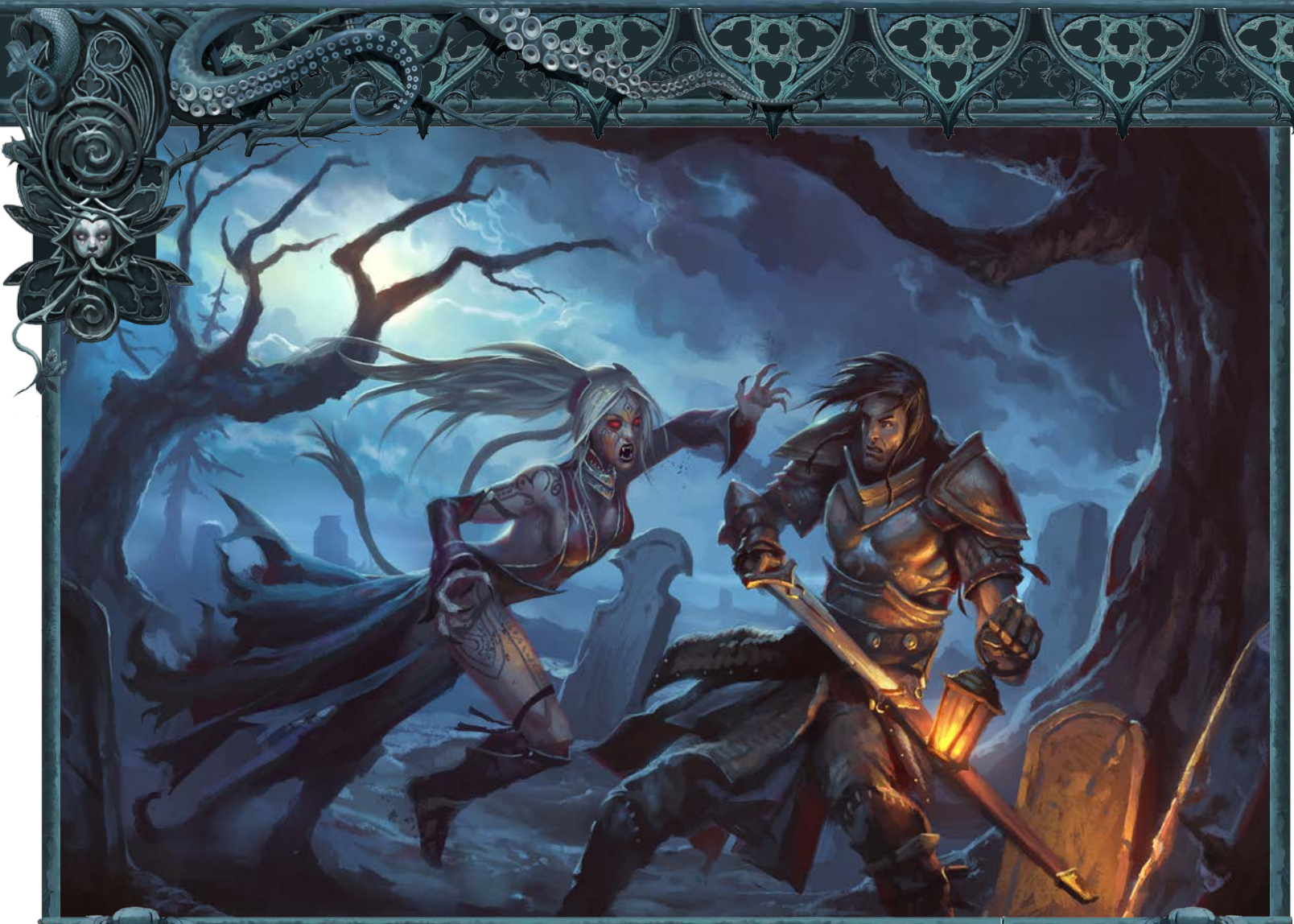
Ustalav has long been steeped in the tormented thoughts of restless souls that hide in the echoing night winds and rippling waters of Lake Encarthan. The children of this land are taught to fear the whispers behind these sounds, for therein lies madness. Folklore warns of ghostly fragments, psychic remnants of nightmares, and frail utterances of the departed that can latch on to mortal hosts and drive them to commit unspeakable acts. Whatever the origin of the whispering madness, too many reports exist to discount the phenomenon. Most believe the madness is contagious and can be spread by contact with the afflicted. Other evidence suggests the whispering madness may have developed from ancestral curses once used to ward off those who might defile burial grounds, or even from a divine punishment ancient priests placed upon their most vicious and disturbed criminals. Whatever the source, whispering madness is very real.

WHISPERING MADNESS

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 18

Frequency 1/1d6 days

Effect Once every 1d6 days, the victim experiences a rising chorus of eerie whispers only he can hear. Some feel familiar and mundane, while others are wholly unfamiliar and echo with a more foreboding tone. Slowly, the insidious voices take over, urging the victim to commit violent and depraved acts. Each day the victim fails to resist the whispers, he loses control of his thoughts and memory. For 1d6 hours, he blacks out and obeys the whispers, performing any manner of vile acts. If the whispering madness does not have a specific course of action, roll on the Random Whispers table above to determine what the victim does under their influence. Whispering madness is a mind-affecting effect.



Corruptions and Haunts

At the core of horror is the monster. Whether it's a deranged killer, a demonic force, a vengeful ghost, or a monstrosity from beyond space and time, the monster is often the key force that brings horror to any story. However, not all monsters are appropriately themed for a horror game. The tables on these pages collect representative creatures from all five *Bestiary* volumes and from *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*, organizing them into the seven subgenres of horror covered in *Horror Adventures* to aid you in constructing adventures of your own design. Note that these seven lists are by no means intended to be exhaustive, but rather representative. Monsters similar to those listed on these pages would certainly fit into similar subgenres of horror. The remainder of this chapter explores ways in which PCs themselves can become monsters via the corruptions introduced in *Horror Adventures* and then expands greatly on the example haunts printed in that book.

Body Horror

Monster	Source
Bodythief	*Bestiary 4* 20
Broken soul	*Bestiary 4* 24
Deep ones	*Bestiary 5* 68–70
Derro	*Bestiary* 70
Doppelganger	*Bestiary* 89
Ecorche	*Bestiary 3* 109
Fleshwarps	*Bestiary 4* 101–105
Ghoul	*Bestiary* 146
Hellwasp swarm	*Bestiary 3* 146
Hive	*Horror Adventures* 236
Intellect devourer	*Bestiary* 180
Jorogumo	*Bestiary 3* 156
Kytons	*Bestiary* 185, *Bestiary 3* 170–174, *Bestiary 4* 176–177
Leukodaemon	*Bestiary 2* 68

Vegepygmy	*Bestiary* 273
Wendigo	*Bestiary 2* 281
Worm that walks	*Bestiary 2* 286
Xill	*Bestiary* 283
Zombie	*Bestiary* 288

Cosmic Horror

Monster	Source
Aboleth	*Bestiary* 8
Bodak	*Bestiary 2* 48
Chaos beast	*Bestiary 2* 54
Colour out of space	*Bestiary 4* 38
Denizen of Leng	*Bestiary 2* 82
Devourer	*Bestiary* 82
Great Old Ones	*Bestiary 4* 135–141
Hound of Tindalos	*Bestiary 2* 158
Hundun	*Bestiary 5* 144
Mi-go	*Bestiary 4* 193
Neh-thalggu	*Bestiary 2* 197
Sahkils	*Bestiary 5* 212–218
Shining child	*Bestiary 2* 245
Shoggoth	*Bestiary* 249
Spawn of Yog-Sothoth	*Bestiary 4* 251
Star-spawn of Cthulhu	*Bestiary 4* 254

Dark Fantasy

Monster	Source
Barghest	*Bestiary* 27
Crawling hand	*Bestiary 2* 59
Green hag	*Bestiary* 167
Mohrg	*Bestiary* 208
Morlock	*Bestiary* 209
Mothman	*Bestiary 2* 194
Quickling	*Bestiary 2* 227
Redcap	*Bestiary 2* 233
Scarecrow	*Bestiary 2* 238
Skeletal champion	*Bestiary* 252
Skeleton	*Bestiary* 250
Tooth fairy	*Bestiary 4* 262
Wight	*Bestiary* 276

Ghost Story

Monster	Source
Allip	*Bestiary 3* 12
Banshee	*Bestiary 2* 41
Dybbuk	*Bestiary 3* 108
Ectoplasmic creature	*Bestiary 4* 82
Geist	*Bestiary 4* 124
Ghost	*Bestiary* 144
Poltergeist	*Bestiary 2* 211
Shadow	*Bestiary* 245
Spectre	*Bestiary* 256
Will-o'-wisp	*Bestiary* 277
Wraith	*Bestiary* 281

Gothic Horror

Monster	Source
Attic whisperer	*Bestiary 2* 34
Bat swarm	*Bestiary* 30
Carrion golem	*Bestiary 2* 136
Crypt thing	*Bestiary 2* 60
Death coach	*Bestiary 5* 67
Dhampir	*Bestiary 2* 89
Dread lord	*Horror Adventures* 234
Dullahan	*Bestiary 2* 111
Flesh golem	*Bestiary* 160
Grim reaper	*Bestiary 5* 134
Lich	*Bestiary* 188
Lycanthropes	*Bestiary* 196–198
Mummy	*Bestiary* 210
Rat swarm	*Bestiary* 232
Sayona	*Bestiary 4* 231
Thanadaemon	*Bestiary 2* 74
Trompe l'oeil	*Horror Adventures* 242
Vampire	*Bestiary* 270
Vukodlak	*Bestiary 5* 272
Waxwork creature	*Horror Adventures* 246
Wolf	*Bestiary* 278

Psychological Horror

Monster	Source
Belier devil	*Bestiary 2* 85
Caller in darkness	*Bestiary 5* 48
Contract devil	*Bestiary 3* 76
Gray	*Bestiary 5* 129
Immortal ichor	*Bestiary 4* 156
Night hag	*Bestiary* 215
Pazuzu	*Bestiary 4* 50
Shadow demon	*Bestiary* 67
Succubus	*Bestiary* 68
Tulpa	*Bestiary 5* 254
Unknown	*Horror Adventures* 244

Slasher Horror

Monster	Source
Babau demon	*Bestiary* 57
Bogeyman	*Bestiary 3* 42
Bugbear	*Bestiary* 38
Draugr	*Bestiary 2* 110
Faceless stalker	*Bestiary 2* 122
Fext	*Bestiary 5* 115
Graveknight	*Bestiary 3* 138
Grendel	*Bestiary 4* 145
Implacable stalker	*Horror Adventures* 238
Ogre	*Bestiary* 220
Ogrekin	*Bestiary 2* 204
Purrodaemon	*Bestiary 2* 73
Revenant	*Bestiary 2* 235
Zuvembie	*Bestiary 3* 289

CORRUPTIONS ON GOLARION

A corruption is a sinister influence that can strike anywhere on Golarion, but each has areas of the world where it is more prevalent and invasive. *Horror Adventures* provides further details on 11 of these corruptions, while an additional three (those marked with an asterisk [*]) are presented on pages 53–59.

Aboleth*: Aboleth corruptions can arise from repeated or prolonged exposure to aboleth ruins or artifacts, but they can also be inherited, sometimes skipping many generations before subtly manifesting. Anyone might be secretly subject to aboleth influence, although the risk is highest in concentrated hubs of power near coastlines or certain aboleth-ruled regions of the deep Darklands. Carefully hidden communities of gillmen have managed to undo aboleth programming with mind-altering alchemy and meditation, but they guard the secret of their locations for fear of aboleth reprisal.

Accursed: The accursed often receive their curses from priests of Calistria or Gyronna, vengeful fey, hateful hags, or magically defended ruins of lost empires such as Ancient Osirion or Thassilon. The accursed are particularly common in regions such as Galt, Irrisen, Osirion, the River Kingdoms, Ustalav, and Varisia. Many ethnic Varisians claim to be able to cure the accursed with elixirs that they must brew in a different manner for each individual. Unfortunately, few know the secret to create such brews, and far more are simply using the opportunity to make their own fortune peddling false cures or, worse, to actively foster the corruption in those they profess to aid.

Deep One: Deep ones are rumored to haunt many of Golarion's oceans, and their influence is felt from the west coasts of Avistan and Garund through the ruins of Azlant all the way to the east coast of Arcadia. Linked primarily to the worship of various entities of the Elder Mythos, or of local elders who have become quasideities themselves, deep one corruption tends to occur the most in remote fishing villages or on islands. It's rare, but not unheard of, to encounter one corrupted by this eldritch influence in urban areas; the deep ones' presence can certainly be felt in some quarters of Absalom, Katapesh, and certain coastal cities in Cheliax and Nidal.

Demonic*: Close contact—whether it's painfully hostile or recklessly friendly—with demons, the Worldwound, the Abyss, or anything derived from such sources can inflict this corruption. In addition to the Worldwound and nearby lands, demonic corruption also takes root with alarming frequency in the Mwangi Expanse, those parts of the Darklands where secretive drow worship demon lords, and within the blasted reaches of the Tanglebriar south of Kyonin. Repeated dabbling in fiendish magic and long-term use of demonic implants or demonic drugs frequently inflicts this corruption. Removing demonic corruption requires chaining the vile impulses it has awakened, generally with prolonged meditation or atonement for actions taken under Abyssal influence. Sages of the Magaambya in the Mwangi Expanse offer to teach ways to remove demonic corruption that involve communion with angels and nature spirits.

Ghoul: The ghoul city of Nemret Noktoria deep beneath Osirion sometimes schemes to recruit promising "immigrants" from the surface nation of living souls by quietly exposing them to ghoul fever. Explorers of the Darklands, especially below Nex, Osirion, and Thuvia, also commonly fall victim to this corruption after close calls, yet this corruption is also spreading with frightening speed along the Lost Coast of Varisia. Some clerics of Sarenrae teach that praying while in a meditative whirl

helps calm the stirring of ghoulish hunger, but purging it permanently requires whirling through purifying flames lit by the focused light of the sun.

Hellbound: The hellbound corruption is rampant among certain political factions within Cheliax and known among diabolical cults in Isger, Nex, and elsewhere, even if those who carry the corruption work to hide its influence. Anyone whose strongly lawful or evil actions further a diabolical pact—even those unaware of their role—might become hellbound. The most educated of Cheliax's infernally trained lawyers can sometimes find loopholes in certain individuals' hellbound bargains, but manipulating and abusing such loopholes always puts the manipulator in danger of succumbing to the corruption as well.

Hive: The alien entities of the hive exert little influence on Golarion at the moment, as the druids of the Uskwood in Nidal are one of the strongest vectors of their infestation. The Shades of the Uskwood have done well at containing and controlling the corruption, but elsewhere, hive corruption grows unchecked in areas less frequently traveled, particularly in remote corners of Numeria or the depths of the Valashmai Jungle in southern Tian Xia. Certain technological solutions to the corruption are said to exist in Numeria, but the Technic League's control over all such matters stifles the truth of these claims.

Lich: Lich corruption is most common among members of the Whispering Way and the aristocracy of Geb. A spellcaster brought near death by necromancy might also succumb to lich corruption, especially if conditions approach the personal formulae for that particular soul to become a lich in the first place. Clerics of Pharasma teach that a lich's soul can be bound back into its living body through potent rituals, but whether these same rituals can be adapted to reverse corruptions that do not involve a phylactery is unclear.

Lycanthropy: Lycanthropy occurs throughout all of Golarion, but it is particularly common in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings (where the condition is not always feared) and Ustalav (where the condition is often feared, and with just cause). Specific lycanthropic corruptions vary from region to region. For example, a wereshark corruption is spreading in certain areas of the Shackles, while weretiger and werepanther corruptions are said to be deliberately fostered among hidden sects of death cultists active in Jalmeray. Dusty old texts from Lozeri in Ustalav speak of methods by which one can skin a corrupted lycanthrope to remove the corruption, but powerful healing magic would be required to ensure the subject's survival.

Plagued*: The plagued corruption is a constant threat in the wilds of Iobaria, Isger, the Mwangi Expanse, and the Sodden Lands, but new pockets of this corruption can spring up whenever and wherever plagues or epidemics manifest. Cultists of Apollyon, Ghlaunder, and Urgathoa often seek out this corruption and grow it in willing and unwilling subjects. Keleshite doctors of legendary skill claim to have removed the plagued corruption by giving patients prolonged treatment in isolation from all potential disease vectors, along with having them atone for any diseases spread carelessly. Priests of Desna teach that atonement by traveling to experience a wide array of diseases can allow the patient to throw off the corruption, provided that she takes appropriate measures not to spread her own disease along the way.

Possessed: Possessed corruptions appear in places haunted by unquiet spirits, most notoriously in Geb, Nidal, and the Worldwound. Mind-shattering experiments performed in countries such as Nex, Numeria, and Ustalav have also been known to cause this corruption. Infamous lecturers and treatises from the University of Lepidstadt in Ustalav suggest experimental operations might allow the possessing mind to be separated physically from a victim of the possessed corruption. Preparing and performing the experiment differs for each corruption and requires alchemical research.

Promethean: Promethean corruptions can result from experimental alchemical treatments known in universities in Qadira, Thuvia, and Ustalav, but these corruptions most often arise as an adjunct to the studies of fleshwarping. Treating the exotic sorts of wasting that can produce promethean corruption is rumored to be within the ability of the Honored of Osibu in the Mwangi Expanse—provided the secret location of Osibu can be discovered and the Honored can be convinced to help.

Shadowbound: Shadowbound corruptions are most common in Nidal, where political dissidents as well as promising but unpredictable young leaders have developed this corruption after suffering Kuthite tortures. Gnomes seem particularly susceptible to this corruption, which may have mysterious and sinister links to the Bleaching. In response, gnomes of the Steaming Sea have discovered that a shadowbound victim can be revitalized with a harrowing journey into the most resplendent and dangerous wilds of the First World, where an infusion of life itself can stem or even reverse the corruption.

Vampirism: Vampires hide in most regions, but they are famously public about their nature and power in Geb and Nidal, where alchemists sell costly treatments they claim can intentionally inflict vampirism. Vampires remain a quiet scourge in hidden corners of Ustalav and many other lands. Gebbite researchers in Mechitar have experimented at length with vampirism corruptions, finding that they can be removed by exposure to true sunlight for at least 24 hours and alchemically replacing all of the victim's blood with the blood of an unaffected individual.

Aboleth Corruption

The veiled masters have long controlled countless minions in the Inner Sea region's political arenas.

Catalyst

Sinister agents of the eldritch aboleth empire have brainwashed you.

Progression

Whenever you have the opportunity to gather intelligence valuable in political intrigue or relevant to the specific interests of your brainwasher (GM's discretion), you must attempt a Will saving throw (DC = 15 + your manifestation level). Failure means you black out and unwittingly attempt to seize the information when you have the best chance to do so undetected in the next week. Whether or not you manage to do so depends on the GM's discretion and your abilities, but if obtaining the information is obviously beyond your means, you may instead work to undermine the defenses surrounding the intelligence so you or another corrupted agent can attempt to gain the information at a later date. If you succeed at this saving throw, you resist the unexpected urge, but the DC of future saving throws against your corruption's progression increases by 2. This increase is cumulative, but it reverses when you fail the saving throw or your corruption progresses. Whenever you make a significant sacrifice to assist your aboleth master or advance its agenda in a way that harms innocents, your corruption progresses.

Corruption Stage 1: The first time you perform such an action, you find it harder to question your own motives. You take a –2 penalty on skill checks made to investigate your corruption, and your alignment shifts one step toward lawful evil.

Corruption Stage 2: The second time you perform such an act, the skill check penalty doubles, and your alignment becomes lawful evil.

Corruption Stage 3: The third time you perform such an act, you become a willing pawn to the veiled masters under the GM's control.

Removing the Corruption

Psychic conditioning can reverse aboleth corruption, but only if the implanted agenda is understood in detail.

Manifestations

The following are manifestations of aboleth corruption.

Fathomless Psyche

Your memory becomes increasingly unreliable.

Gift: Your mind contains gaps that serve as traps to those who contact it. You gain a +2 bonus on Will saving throws against mind-affecting effects. Anyone who reads your thoughts or emotions must succeed at a Will saving throw or become confused for 1 round. A creature can only be affected by your fathomless psyche once every 24 hours.

Stain: The bonus from your gift becomes a –2 penalty to Will saving throws against aboleths and their kind (including those they have corrupted).

Forgettable

Your psychic wake burns away all memory of your passing.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 6th.

Gift: You gain the ability to use *hidden presence*[UI] as a quickened spell-like ability once per day. You can use this ability twice per day at corruption stage 2, and up to three times a day at corruption stage 3.

Stain: People find you creepy but can't explain why. Living creatures gain a +4 morale bonus on Perception and Sense Motive checks to notice you or to see through your Bluff checks.

Inexplicable Illusions

Your lies distort the world around you.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 5th.

Gift: Once per day, you can manifest an illusion via either *audiovisual hallucination*[UI] or *hallucinatory terrain*. At manifestation level 7th, you can also choose to create your illusion via *mirage arcana* or *persistent image*. At manifestation level 9th, you can choose *programmed image* or *veil*. Regardless of your options, you can only create one illusion per day via this ability. The save DC for these illusions is equal to 10 + your manifestation level + the spell's level.

Stain: You cannot discuss your aboleth corruption with anyone, whether verbally or by other means, unless you succeed at a Will saving throw. You can attempt this saving throw once per day. Aboleths and their kin are immune to your illusions.

Malleable Flesh

Your body twists to conform to your deceptions.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 3rd.

Gift: With 10 minutes of concentration, your flesh takes on a new arrangement, as per *alter self*. At manifestation level 5th, you can use this ability to assume the shape of a specific individual. At manifestation level 7th, this ability also functions as *monstrous physique I*[APG].

Stain: The process of shifting your flesh is painful, and you are sickened while concentrating on making the change and for 10 minutes afterward.

Porous Mind

Your mind is full of holes.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 2nd.

Gift: You can hear the thoughts of others when you listen closely. Whenever you succeed at a Sense Motive

check to get a hunch about a creature, you can attempt to read that creature's mind as if using *detect anxieties*[UI], *detect desires*[UI], *detect thoughts*, or *sense madness*[HA] as a standard action (revealing all the information from 3 rounds of concentration). At manifestation level 6th, you can communicate telepathically with anyone within 30 feet who shares a language with you.

Stain: The constant psychic noise makes it hard for you to stay focused. For 1 hour after you learn information about a creature with any divination spell or effect (including this manifestation), you take a –4 penalty on concentration and Knowledge checks.

Preternatural Persuasion

Your brainwashing is contagious.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 3rd.

Gift: Once per day, when you succeed at a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check against a target, you can weave a *suggestion*, as per the spell, into your conversation as a full-round action. At manifestation level 5th, you can instead use *modify memory*. At manifestation level 9th, you can instead use *dominate person*.

Stain: Aboleths and their kin can read your surface thoughts by concentrating; a successful Will saving throw negates this intrusion. An aboleth or related creature can issue a *suggestion* once per day at any range to anyone whose actions are currently controlled by your mind-affecting effects, automatically overriding your control if the orders conflict.

Skill Conditioning

You have skills you do not remember learning.

Gift: You speak and understand Aklo. Choose a skill. You are treated as having ranks equal to your Hit Dice in that skill and it is a class skill for you. At manifestation level 5th, you can add a second skill with ranks equal to your Hit Dice.

Stain: Your mind works in ways that are unsettlingly alien to mortals. You take a –4 penalty on Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks against nonaberrations.

Traitor to the Surface World

The world of sunlight has grown foreign to you.

Gift: You feel at home in the water, and as long as you are swimming you gain a +2 bonus on initiative checks, Reflex saving throws, and all Dexterity-based skill checks. You gain a +4 bonus on Swim checks.

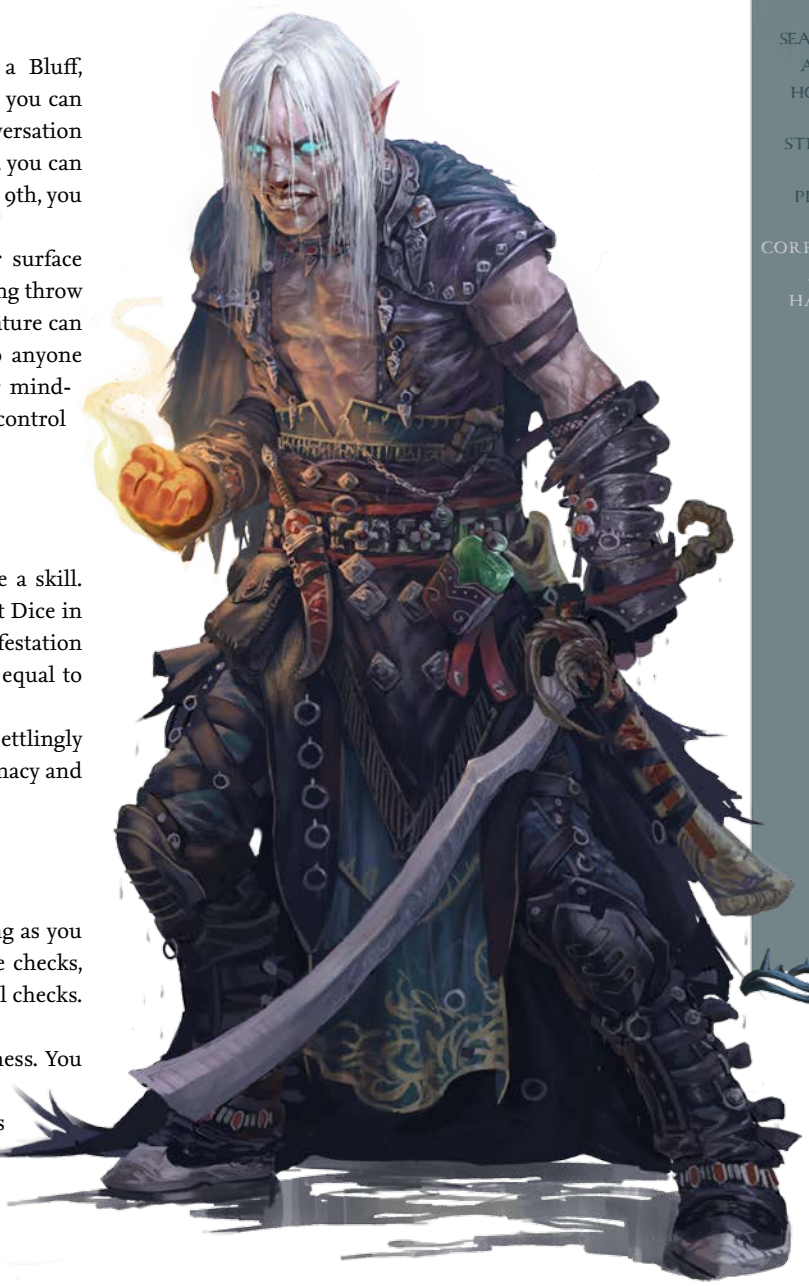
Stain: Your skin is painfully sensitive to dryness. You take a –1 penalty on attack rolls and Fortitude saving throws when you are not underwater; this penalty increases by 1 for every 24 hours you go without spending at least 1 hour underwater, to a maximum penalty of –4 after 4 days spent out of water.

Unconscious Agenda

You can suppress intrusive memories or thoughts.

Gift: As an immediate action once per day, when you are subjected to any compulsion effect that allows a saving throw, you can choose to reroll that saving throw after you roll but before you learn the results of your first roll. You can use this ability twice per day at manifestation level 4th, and three times per day at manifestation level 5th, but never more than once per saving throw attempt.

Stain: You become more vulnerable to mental influence from aberrations and take a –2 penalty on saving throws against compulsions from aberrations. You can still use your reroll ability against such saving throws, but the –2 penalty applies to all of your rolls.



Demonic Corruption

Close contact with the Abyss or demons clouds your mind and twists your body.

Catalyst

Prolonged contact with Abyssal energies or demons, whether willing or otherwise, has corrupted your soul.

Progression

Demonic corruption thrives in the presence of sin. One could become initially corrupted by demonic influence through being exposed to raw Abyssal energies in the Worldwound, accepting one too many profane gifts from a succubus, or using a *wish* granted by a glabrezu, but the progression of the corruption is often tied to the individual's most powerful sin. When an opportunity arises to carry out a significant action that matches the corruption's theme (GM's discretion), you are tempted to take it. The action might include wanton destruction and violence, or merely tempting someone to behave in a chaotic evil manner. You must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC = 15 + your manifestation level) or succumb to this temptation and perform the action. What counts as significant is up to the GM. If something prevents you from performing this act, the GM chooses a time over the next week when you're compelled to otherwise further the cause of chaotic evil.

Corruption Stage 1: The first time you perform a significant act that matches the corruption's theme, your alignment shifts one step toward chaotic evil (toward evil first, if you aren't yet evil). Any attempt to raise you from the dead requires a successful caster level check (DC = 15 + double your manifestation level).

Corruption Stage 2: The second time you perform such an act, your alignment shifts to chaotic evil.

Corruption Stage 3: The third time you perform such an act, you become a demonic entity under the GM's control.

Removing the Corruption

Redemption requires slaying the demon who corrupted you or cleansing the site where you were corrupted.

Manifestations

The following are manifestations of demonic corruption.

Abyssal Deformity

Your body mirrors the ugliness of your corruption.

Gift: You gain a +3 bonus on Intimidate checks and on Diplomacy checks to interact with demons and their cults. Your stain penalty does not apply to these checks. At manifestation level 5th, the bonuses double.

Stain: Your hideousness unsettles others. You take a –2 penalty on Diplomacy, Disguise, and Handle Animal checks. At manifestation level 5th, the penalties double.

Chaotic Mutation

Your physical form is unpredictable.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 2nd.

Gift: Permanent fleshcrafts (*Horror Adventures* 166) cost 10% less to apply to you. Once per day, you can gain any one

of the abilities listed in *alter self*, as well as an apt physical feature or body part of a typically chaotic or evil race (using that race's ability or that in *alter self*, whichever is worse). Abilities gained in this manner persist for 1 hour per manifestation level. At manifestation level 7th, the ability granted lasts until you use the ability again to gain a different feature.

Stain: Your aura detects as chaotic and evil instead of your true alignment. The aura is strong, like that of a cleric. At manifestation level 5th, whenever you activate this ability, you risk undergoing a fleshwarp mutation (*Horror Adventures* 171) unless you succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 15 + manifestation level). All fleshwarp mutations from your demonic corruption gained in the same day count as originating from the same area.

Corrupted Claws

Your hands twist into terrible claws.

Gift: You gain a claw attack as a primary natural weapon. This attack deals 1d6 points of damage (or 1d3 points of damage if you are Small). At manifestation level 6th, you gain a second claw attack.

Stain: You take a –2 penalty on attack rolls with manufactured weapons and on Disguise checks where you must hide your claws.

Demonic Enhancement

Demonic power surges within you.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 4th.

Gift: You gain a +2 profane bonus to the ability score of your choice.

Stain: You take a –2 penalty to an ability score of the GM's choice (other than the one you select as your gift).

Demonic Wings

You've grown a pair of demonic wings from your back.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 4th.

Gift: You gain a fly speed of 30 feet with poor maneuverability. At manifestation level 8th, the fly speed increases to 60 feet and your maneuverability increases to good.

Stain: Your wings cannot be hidden by magic, but you can conceal them by mundane means. Your wings periodically flap and rasp reflexively, imposing a –4 penalty on Escape Artist and Stealth checks.

Hideous Urges

Your base instincts grow stronger.

Gift: Whenever you are confused, you can roll twice and take the result of your choice to determine the actual effects of confusion. Once per day, if you become dazed, frightened, nauseated, panicked, or stunned, you can instead choose to become confused for the twice the duration of the original effect.

Stain: You become addicted to exposure to the Abyss and demonic creatures. Each week that you go without spending at least 1 hour within 30 feet of a demon or in the Abyss, you must attempt a Will saving throw to resist the urge to create a bit of the Abyss on the spot by performing a chaotic evil act (as if you had been tempted as defined in this corruption's progression). If you fail the saving throw, you are compelled to perform an act within the next week befitting the demon who corrupted you. Unless you are prevented from doing so, your corruption progresses.

Scarred by the Abyss

Your body is horrifically scarred.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 5th.

Gift: You gain damage reduction equal to half your manifestation level that can be overcome by cold iron or good weapons.

Stain: You take a –2 penalty on all saving throws against spells with the lawful or good descriptors and against spell-like abilities and supernatural abilities created by outsiders with the lawful or good subtypes.

Terrible Truths

The Abyss reveals the awful truths of reality to you.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 5th.

Gift: You can see the truth, as per *true seeing*, as a full-round action. You can use this gift for a number of rounds per day equal to your manifestation level, and the rounds need not be used consecutively.

Stain: When you cease to use this manifestation's gift, you become confused for a number of rounds equal to the number of rounds you used the gift.

Special: Upon receiving this manifestation, you must take both the gift and the stain, even with the useful corruption or vile corruption variants.

Warping Claws

Your claws carry the warping energies of the Abyss.

Prerequisites: Manifestation level 7th, corrupted claws, demonic enhancement.

Gift: The damage caused by your corrupted claws increases as if you were one size larger. The threat range for your claws becomes 19–20. On a confirmed critical hit, a targeted creature must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw to resist becoming warped by your infusion of demonic energy. This inflicts 1d4 points of damage to a randomly determined ability score and causes the creature to be staggered for 1 round.

Stain: You take a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls with manufactured weapons and on Disable Device and Sleight of Hand checks. You have 5% spell failure chance on spells with a somatic or emotion *(Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 144) component. This stacks with all other chances of spell failure.

Plagued Corruption

Disease can become a corruption when it causes long-lasting and physical changes to the body.

Catalyst

Suffering a magical disease for a prolonged period can induce the plagued corruption.

Progression

You carry the symptoms and appearance of one suffering from a disease, even if you've been cured of the illness that triggered your corruption or are otherwise normally immune to disease. Further, once you gain the plagued corruption, you lose any immunity to disease and cannot gain such immunity from magical spells or items or other effects. Only living creatures can gain this corruption.

Once per month, if you did not infect a number of creatures equal to or greater than your manifestation level with a disease you are carrying, you must attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 15 + your manifestation level). If you fail, the next time you rest, you immediately gain a new disease of the GM's choosing (without a further saving throw) and black out, losing control to the insidious delirium of the disease. You must seek out and infect any creature you can find before the next sunrise. If you succeed on your Fortitude saving throw or are prevented from infecting anyone for 1 day, the urge passes, but the DC of future saving throws to resist this temptation increases by 2. This increase is cumulative, but resets when your corruption progresses. Innocents you infect and then cure (or whose recovery you significantly assist, at the GM's discretion) do not count toward this number, nor do those infected by others who were themselves infected before your corruption reached its current stage.

Corruption Stage 1: The first time your corruption progresses, any disease you suffer from becomes more tenacious. You take a –2 penalty on all saving throws to resist contracting a new disease, and your alignment shifts one step toward evil.

Corruption Stage 2: The second time your corruption progresses, diseases you suffer from become difficult to cure; the DC of a disease you are suffering from is increased by 10 for the purposes of caster level checks for spells such as *remove disease* to cure you from its effects. Your alignment shifts to evil.

Corruption Stage 3: The third time your corruption progresses, your disease saps your free will and the GM gains control of your character.

Removing the Corruption

Curing the corruption requires curing not only the underlying diseases you suffer from, but also the initial illness that triggered your corruption—this often necessitates the use of rare and elaborate treatments.

Manifestations

The following are manifestations of the plagued corruption.

Accelerated Affliction

You can quicken diseases in others.

Gift: As a swift action, once per day per 2 manifestation levels you have (minimum once per day), you can cause one creature within 30 feet suffering from any diseases to attempt a saving throw against one randomly determined disease they are suffering. On a failed saving throw, they immediately take that disease's damage. A successful save does not count toward the saving throws required to recover from the disease.

Stain: You take a –2 penalty to any one ability score of your choice.

Bodily Betrayal

Your body betrays you at the worst moments.

Prerequisite: Accelerated affliction.

Gift: Once per day per manifestation level, you can make a touch attack on a creature and expose it to any disease you are carrying.

Stain: Plague sores make injuries more acutely painful. You take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and concentration checks for 1 round after you are dealt lethal damage.

False Health

You can feign health and hide your symptoms.

Prerequisite: Accelerated affliction.

Gift: Once per day as a swift action, you can suppress the stain of your accelerated affliction for a number of hours equal to your manifestation level.

Stain: You take a –2 penalty on concentration checks while using false health.

Fevered Dreams

Disease clouds your thoughts.

Prerequisites: Manifestation level 6th, infectious thoughts, miserable company.

Gift: The dreams of victims of the diseases you spread are apparent to you. Once per day while you rest, you can cause a number of sleeping victims of your disease up to your manifestation level to suffer the effects of one of these spells of your choice: *dream*, *fear* (upon awakening), *nightmare*, or *suggestion* (upon awakening).

Stain: You sleep poorly. You must rest for 12 hours each night to gain the full benefits of rest.

Infectious Thoughts

Your thoughts spread like your disease.

Prerequisites: Manifestation level 3rd, miserable company.

Gift: You can communicate telepathically with any creature within 10 feet suffering from any disease. At

manifestation level 5th, the range increases to 30 feet. At manifestation level 7th, the range is 100 feet. At manifestation level 9th, the range is 1 mile.

Stain: Your ego becomes hard to contain. You take a –2 penalty on Will saving throws against effects with the emotion[OA] descriptor. At manifestation level 5th, the penalty doubles.

Living Breath

The stink of disease carries on your breath.

Prerequisites: Manifestation level 5th, accelerated affliction, bodily betrayal.

Gift: When you use your bodily betrayal manifestation to expose a creature to a disease you are carrying, your breath carries the disease as well, potentially infecting all creatures within a 10-foot radius. These creatures gain a +2 bonus on the saving throw to resist the disease you are attempting to inflict with your bodily betrayal.

Stain: The disease shortens your breath and stiffens your limbs. You take a –2 penalty on all Strength- and Dexterity-based checks.

Miserable Company

Your disease's symptoms become more apparent.

Gift: You gain a +2 bonus on Heal checks to recognize or treat diseases and on Charisma-based skill checks to influence creatures able to inflict disease or those suffering from a disease. At manifestation level 3rd, these bonuses double. Creatures with any diseases take a –2 penalty on any saving throws against mind-affecting effects you create.

Stain: You remain infectious for 1d4 days even after you are cured of any infectious disease (including your corruption plague), though you show no symptoms. At manifestation level 3rd, you remain infectious for 1d8 days.

Overwhelming Weakness

Disease saps your limbs of their strength.

Gift: Victims other than you who fail their initial saving throw against any disease effect you create become sickened for 24 hours.

Stain: The disease makes your limbs weak. You take a –2 penalty to Strength. This penalty stacks with the ability penalty from accelerated affliction if you chose Strength as your penalty.

Theft of Awareness

Your senses fail you, but the terrible disease you can inflict affords you access to the senses of those who suffer from it.

Prerequisites: Manifestation level 7th, infectious thoughts, miserable company.

Gift: As a move action, for as long as you concentrate, you can borrow the senses of any creature suffering from a disease effect you created, as long as the creature is within range of your infectious thoughts. Your body is effectively blind and deaf while you concentrate. The target can resist this intrusion with a successful Will saving throw. At manifestation level 9th, you can possess one such victim as per *possession*[OA] once per day as a standard action while you are already sharing its senses.

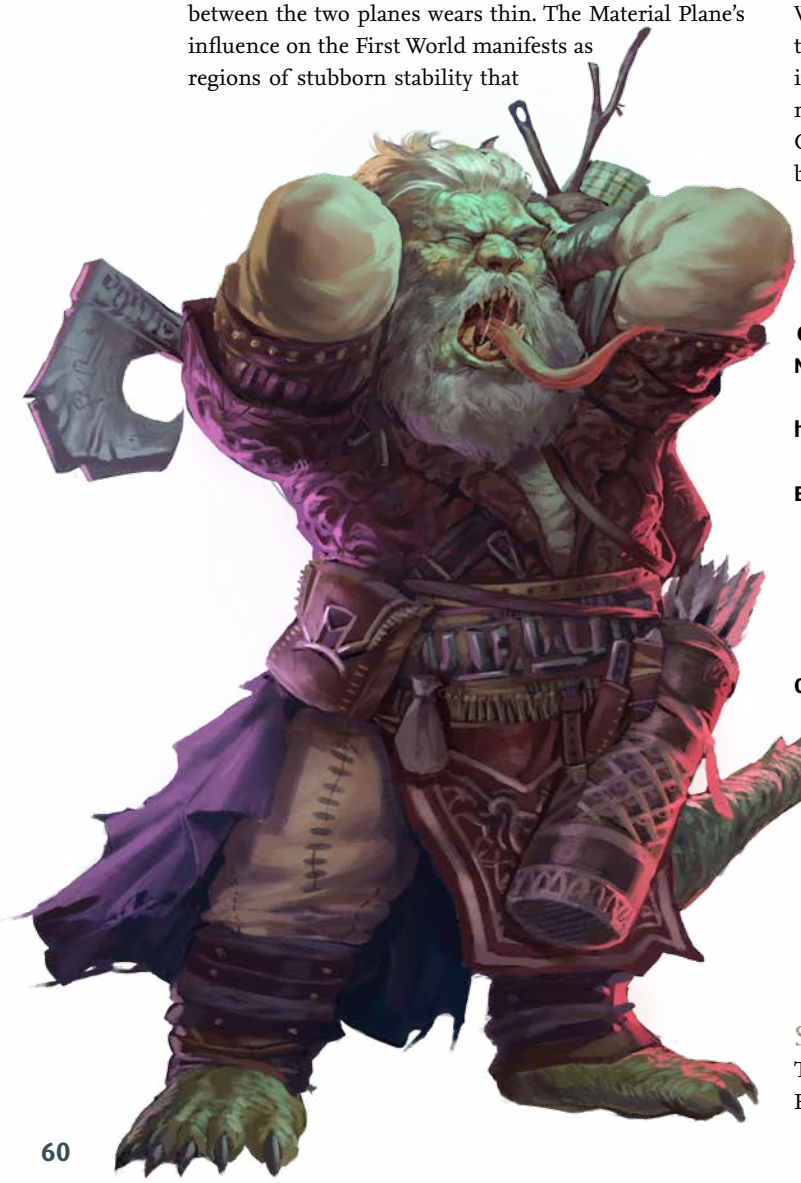
Stain: Your senses falter. You take a –4 penalty on Perception checks and Sense Motive checks while you are not using theft of awareness.

VARIANT HAUNTS

Haunts are typically the remnants of unquiet spirits. However, these sudden and dramatic manifestations are not always tied to areas where living souls suffered and died. The rules for haunts were introduced in the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* and expanded upon in *Occult Adventures* and *Horror Adventures*. This section provides rules for haunts that arise when the First World intrudes upon the Material Plane, when a deity's actions leaves an echo of godly power as an enduring testament, or when abandoned technology whirs back to life.

Echoes of the First World

The boundless and ever-shifting First World is home to fey and all manner of strange, otherworldly creatures caught in a constant flux of life-giving energies. Ancient beyond measure, the realm is a vibrant "first draft of reality," according to legend. It shares its place in existence with the Material Plane, and in some places, the boundary between the two planes wears thin. The Material Plane's influence on the First World manifests as regions of stubborn stability that the First World's denizens regard with disgust. On the Material Plane, the fey realm's pull erodes the laws of time and space and transforms reality in its wake.



Unlike a typical haunt, an echo of the First World is healed by positive energy. In fact, when these manifestations interact with positive energy, they typically become stronger. When an echo of the First World is healed beyond its normal maximum hit points, any excess hit points persist for 1 minute as temporary hit points. As long as it has any temporary hit points, it gains the effects listed in the overcharge section of its stat block.

While positive energy is a boon for these unusual haunts, negative energy damages them as if they were living creatures. Damaging spells with the death descriptor also harm them. Echoes of the First World are almost always chaotic neutral.

Breach to the Quickening

The Quickening is the most chaotic portion of the First World, a region so unstable that most of the denizens of the First World give it a wide berth. Even a brief journey into the Quickening is enough to transform body and mind in unforeseeable ways. Connections between the Quickening and the Material Plane are rare and fleeting, but their effects persist.

BREACH TO THE QUICKENING **CR 12**

XP 19,200

CN persistent variant haunt (30-ft. radius)

Caster Level 12th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice nearby plant and animal life beginning to twist and deform)

hp 54; **Weakness** negative energy (immune to positive energy); **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1d20 days

Effect Colorful light and raw chaotic energy lash out in a dizzying display. All living creatures become the target of a random quickening effect (see table on page 61; DC 21 Fortitude saving throw negates). A creature that remains in the breach's area of effect must attempt an additional saving throw each round against a new random effect.

Overcharge Each affected target rolls twice on the quickening effect table if they fail to resist this haunt's effects.

Destruction Breaches to the Quickening spontaneously close or move on their own as unpredictably as they appear. A *forbiddance* or *dimensional lock* cast on the area of a breach prevents the breach from exerting influence on the Material Plane until it moves to a different location. A *wish* or *miracle* spell permanently closes a breach.

Shifting Seasons

The most powerful beings in the First World are the Eldest, divine creatures who can transform large swaths

Quickening Effects

d%	Effect
1–25	The target transforms into a Tiny animal that is not native to the local region (as per *baleful polymorph*). As typical for *baleful polymorph*, a creature that fails the initial Fortitude saving throw must succeed at a secondary Will saving throw or lose significant mental abilities.
26–40	The target gains a random mutation from the mutant creature template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 180), with the exception of radiation affinity. Roll 1d20 to select the mutation.
41–75	The target gains a random deformity from the mutant creature template (*Bestiary 5* 180). Roll 1d12 to select the specific deformity.
76–95	The First World lashes out at the target vindictively, bestowing the accursed corruption (*Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures* 16).
96–99	The target gains a new form. This effect functions as per *reincarnate*, with a few exceptions. It takes full effect when the breach triggers, rather than taking 1 hour to activate. Additionally, it works only on living creatures, it does not impose any negative levels, and it does not cause a spellcaster to lose spells. Restoring the target to its original form requires a *miracle* or *wish* spell.
100	The target gains the fey creature template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 116), and its alignment changes to chaotic neutral. Restoring the target's original form requires a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

of the plane to suit their interests. Mortal scholars know little about the Eldest, with Ng the Hooded, who is connected to the shifting seasons, proving particularly inscrutable. Seasonal haunts manifest at crossroads in the Material Plane connected to the paths Ng treads in the First World.

SHIFTING SEASONS **CR 9**

XP 6,400

CN persistent variant haunt (40-ft. radius)

Caster Level 9th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to smell a faint floral odor)

hp 40; **Weakness** negative energy (immune to positive energy); **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The surrounding area begins to rapidly cycle through manifestations of the season. Each season lasts 1 round, and the haunt cycles through the seasons three times (lasting 12 rounds total). On the spring round, flowers bloom, spreading a thick cloud of pollen that blocks sight (as per *obscuring mist)* and requires each creature within the area to succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude saving throw or sneeze violently, gaining the staggered condition for 1 round. On the summer round, the pollen falls out of the air as the atmosphere becomes unbearably hot and dry, dealing 8d6 points of damage (Fortitude DC 18 half). Half of this damage is fire damage, and the other half is untyped damage from desiccation. On the autumn round, ropes of decaying leaves grasp at all creatures in the area, as per *black tentacles*. Finally, on the winter round, a heavy hailstorm strikes, as per *ice storm*.

Overcharge During a spring round, seeds join the pollen spray, implanting themselves in the flesh of all living creatures that fail a DC 18 Fortitude saving throw. These seeds deal 1d4 points of Strength damage. A summer round becomes hotter, dealing 12d6 points of fire and untyped damage instead of 8d6. On an autumn round, the leaves become razor sharp, dealing 1d6 points of bleed damage to any foe they grapple. A winter round produces a more bitter chill and causes any creature that fails a DC 18 Fortitude saving throw to become staggered and move at half speed for 1 minute.

Destruction To destroy the haunt, a character must use a spell or effect that counters a seasonal effect with one associated with the opposite season (for example, a fire effect during the winter round, or an *entangle* spell during the autumn round) for 4 consecutive rounds.

Miraculous Resonances

When deities interact with the world directly, their influence can persist in the form of miraculous resonances. These regions often become pilgrimage sites for the deity's worshipers.

The resonances sense the presence of their creator's influence and react differently to their creator's followers than to all others they encounter. Typically, they grant the faithful a benefit for 24 hours, though a single pilgrim can receive a manifestation's blessing only once. A miraculous resonance haunt has an alignment identical to the deity with which it resonates. These resonances typically manifest in areas where the associated deity's worship has traditionally been strong, but they can appear anywhere where such worship is particularly potent or where the deity has brushed against the Material Plane at some point in the past.

Miraculous resonances are vulnerable to forces connected to other deities, as well as spells that oppose their deity's nature. Spells with an alignment descriptor that does not match the haunt's alignment deal 1d6 points of damage per spell level (or the spell's damage against an aligned outsider, whichever is higher). While weapon

attacks cannot normally harm miraculous resonances, these haunts take any extra damage that specifically affects creatures of their alignment, such as the 2d6 points of extra damage from a *holy* weapon or the extra damage from a paladin's smite evil. Such attacks target an AC of 5. Channeled energy can damage a resonance, so long as the creature channeling the energy has a patron deity of a different alignment than the haunt.

Death of Curchanus

Long ago, the god Curchanus was the patron of beasts and travel. The demon lord Lamashtu envied Curchanus's power and seized an opportunity to lead Curchanus into a trap. With the god in her clutches, Lamashtu wrenched away his dominion over beasts and claimed it for herself by murdering Curchanus. Although Lamashtu was unable to stop Curchanus from granting his dominion over travel to his friend Desna, she siphoned enough power from the god to fuel her own ascent into divinity over his withered husk.

DEATH OF CURCHANUS **CR 6**

XP 2,400

CE persistent variant haunt (20-ft. radius)

Caster Level 6th; **Deity** Lamashtu

Notice Perception DC 0 (to hear the sound of howling and screeching beasts)

hp 27; **Weaknesses** good or lawful spells or effects; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect Remnants of Lamashtu's power awaken bestial ferocity within those who walk upon this unholy ground. All creatures must succeed at a DC 16 Will saving throw or experience the effects of the *moonstruck* spell (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 232). Additionally, worshipers of Desna who fail the saving throw take 2d6 points of slashing, bludgeoning, and piercing damage each round for the next 5 rounds as deep gashes and bite marks appear all over their bodies. These bites do not count as an attacker for the purposes of determining a Desnan's actions. Creatures that worship Lamashtu gain the bite and claw attacks that *moonstruck* grants for 24 hours without any ill effects. If they already have claws or a bite attack, these attacks deal damage as if they were two size categories larger.

Destruction If a cleric of Desna with the Travel domain casts *find the path* on the resonance, it is permanently destroyed. When the spell is cast in this way, it has no other effect.

Drought's End

The dualistic deity Gozreh, as ancient as the sky and the sea themselves, rarely interferes directly in mortal affairs. He is a gentle breeze and a fierce hurricane, speaking in the whisper of wind through rustling leaves and the ground-shaking rumble of thunder. When Gozreh answered the prayers of a coastal village shriveling under a drought, she unleashed a mighty thunderstorm over the entire region. A small portion of the storm still rages centuries later, granting boons to the faithful who prove themselves against its fury.

DROUGHT'S END **CR 7**

XP 3,200

N persistent variant haunt (30-ft. radius)

Caster Level 7th; **Deity** Gozreh

Notice Perception DC 0 (to hear a rumbling thunderstorm)

hp 31; **Weakness** chaotic, evil, good, or lawful effects; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect A fierce storm rages, bringing windstorm-strength winds and pouring rain (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 438). Each round for 6 rounds, a bolt of lightning strikes a random creature within the area, dealing 5d10 points of damage (Reflex DC 17 half). A worshiper of Gozreh who stays in the area of the resonance for its entire 6-round duration gains the ability to cast each of the following spells once, with a caster level equal to her Hit Dice: *alter winds*, *resist energy* (electricity only), and *water breathing*. The ability to cast these spells persists until it is expended.

Destruction *Control weather* immediately destroys this haunt. When the spell is cast to destroy a drought's end, the spell has no other effect on the surrounding weather.

Technological Surges

Advanced technology remains a mystery to most denizens of Golarion. In places where these wonders lie abandoned, such as the wrecks of the starships that crashed on Numerian soil or the mysterious halls of the Empty Lands of Apostae, strange interactions with unstable power sources can coax circuits back to life. GMs might consider using these same rules to handle other advanced magic and technology, such as a malfunctioning Shory sky city or a newly uncovered marvel of Azlanti electro-thaumaturgy.

The animating force behind technological surges is not life energy, but electricity. As such, technological surges cannot be harmed with positive or negative energy. Instead, stopping them requires shutting down their function. Anyone trained in Disable Device can use the skill to attempt to disrupt the surge, and characters with the Technologist feat (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Technology Guide* 7) can use Knowledge (engineering) instead and gain a +5 bonus on either skill check. The DC of the skill check is equal to 15 + the haunt's CR. Each successful check deals 5 points of damage plus 1 additional point of damage per point by which the result exceeds the DC. A *discharge* or *greater discharge* spell (*Technology Guide* 9) that targets a technological surge inflicts damage equal to the spell's caster level (for *discharge*) or 1d4 points per

caster level (for *greater discharge*). Electromagnetic effects, such as those caused by an EMP pistol or rifle (*Technology Guide* 23), inflict normal damage to a technological surge. Other similar effects may well have an impact on a surge at the GM's discretion.

A technological surge's caster level represents its strength. Technological surges are completely nonmagical. Their effects cannot be disrupted with *antimagic field*, *dispel magic*, or similar abilities, even when they replicate spell effects. All technological surges are neutral aligned.

Network of Lasers

The wards guarding priceless artifacts can persist long after the treasures they protect have faded into obscurity. Whatever safety measures once kept these ancient wards in check are long forgotten, and those foolhardy enough to explore the ruins of technologically advanced civilizations face the remnants of their defenses.

NETWORK OF LASERS **CR 9**

XP 6,400

N persistent variant haunt (up to 45-ft.-square room)

Caster Level 9th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to hear a faint humming)

hp 40; **Weakness** harmed by Disable Device DC 24 (immune to positive energy); **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect On the first round, a network of lasers detects all corporeal Diminutive or larger creatures in the area, excluding invisible creatures. Heavy blast doors drop to bar creatures from exiting the room (break DC 35). On the second round, one laser activates for each creature detected and fires concentrated beams at its targets (+12 touch, 5d6 points of fire damage). The lasers fire each round for 5 rounds unless disabled or destroyed. Destroying the lasers without disabling the surge is difficult—each laser has 10 hardness and 20 hp. The blast doors reopen if the surge is disabled or if all of the laser guns are destroyed.

Destruction Disabling the surge is sufficient to stop the network from reactivating.

Robotic Reactivation

When an ancient starship crashed on Numerian soil millennia ago, countless robots emerged, terrorizing anyone unfortunate enough to cross their paths. Some robots still lie dormant within the scattered wreckage, waiting for a signal or a stray surge of power to reactivate.

ROBOTIC REACTIVATION **CR 8**

XP 4,800

N chained[0A] persistent variant haunt (20-ft. radius centered around the activated robot)

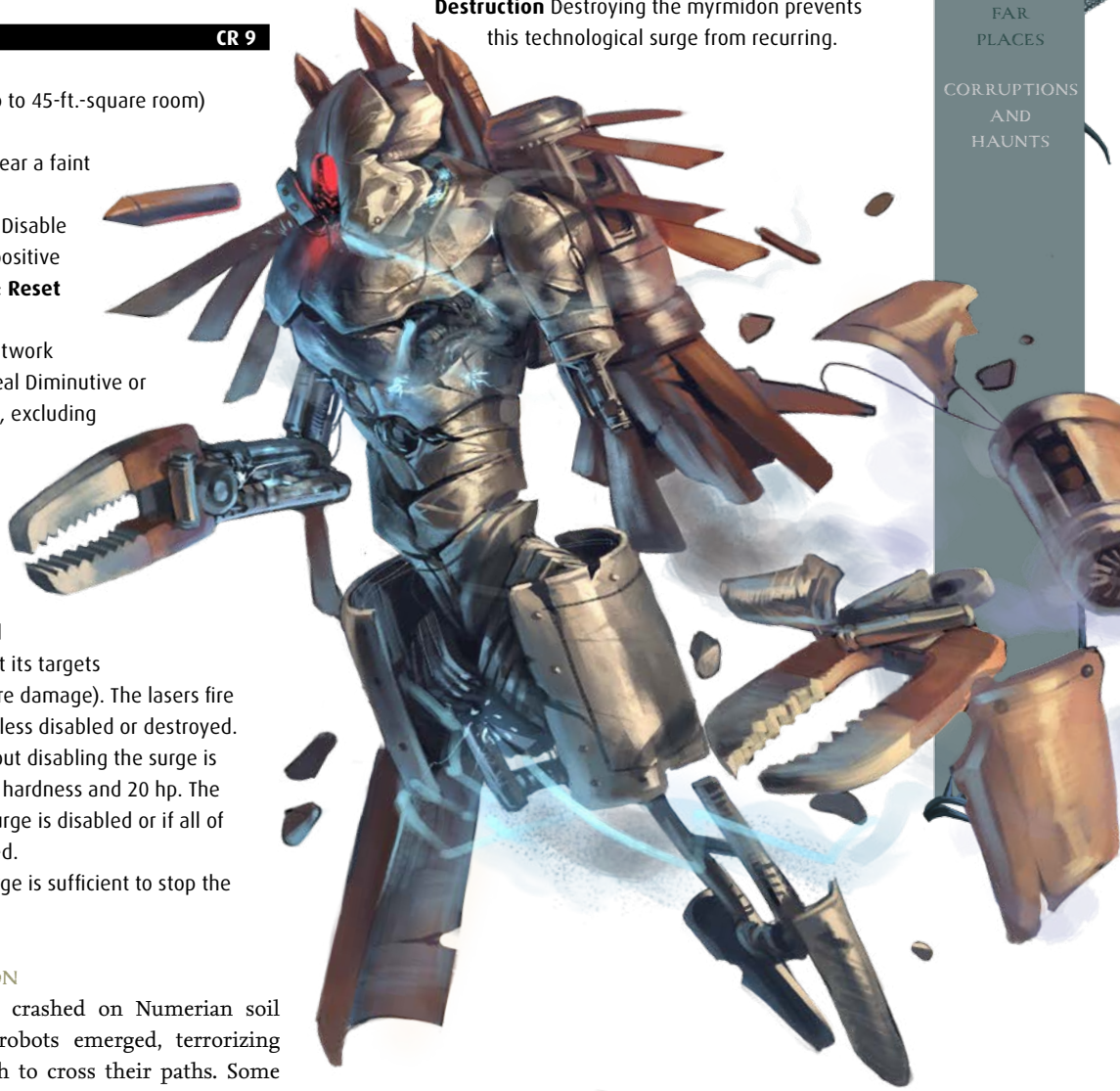
Caster Level 8th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear whirring mechanisms springing to life)

hp 36; **Weakness** harmed by Disable Device DC 23 and electricity effects (immune to positive energy); **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 hour

Effect A whirling cloud of miniature repair robots animates and reactivates a dormant myrmidon robot (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 208). The repair robots follow the myrmidon and augment its defenses. The myrmidon's force field improves to 75 hit points with fast healing of 15, and the myrmidon gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws and to AC.

Destruction Destroying the myrmidon prevents this technological surge from recurring.



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