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Dungeon Crawl Classics #18

Citadel of the Demon Prince

by Patrick Younts

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 12-13



Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics adventures don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you remember, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

An apocalyptic cult of demon worshipers has been kidnapping farmers from the local hamlets and offering them up as sacrifices to their blasphemous idols. The heroes are called in for what appears to be a simple mission: hunt down the demon worshipers, beard them in their lair, and demolish their dark abbey, down to the last stone. But this cult is under the direct control of a demon prince with much larger ambitions. The heroes' exploration of the dark abbey soon leads them into a portal to another plane, where they discover the demon prince's hellish scheme – and learn they have only hours to save their world from being destroyed! Can they defeat the demon prince in his own evil citadel?

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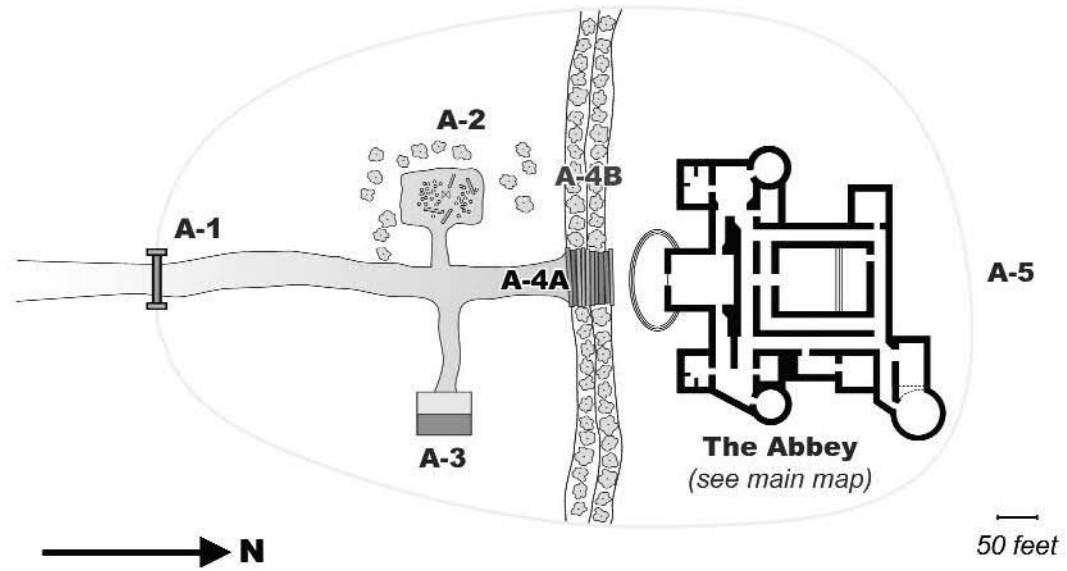
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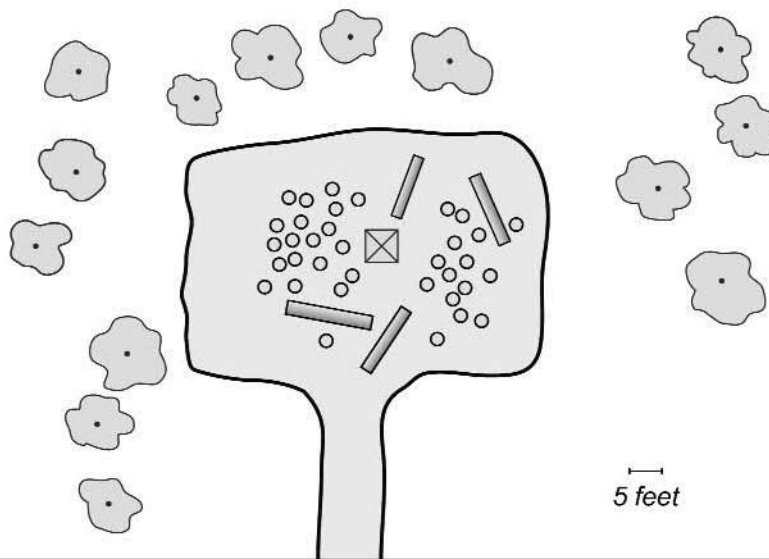
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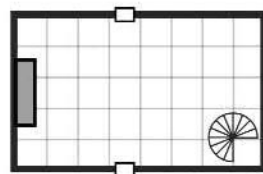
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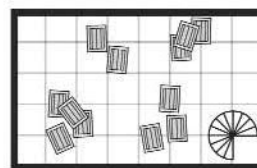
Area A-2



Area A-3



**First story
A-3A**



**Second story
A-3B**

5 feet

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Game Master's Section	3
Background Story	5
Map Key	8
Area A: Dark Abbey Outer Grounds.....	8
Level 1A: Dark Abbey Interior, Demon Grounds....	13
Level 1B: Dark Abbey Interior, Cultists' Retreat.....	27
Level 2: Dark Abbey Interior, Dimensional Echo ...	34
Level 3, Part 1: Hellscape	36
Level 3, Part 2: The Soul Engine	38
Appendix 1: Dark Abbey Environs	45
Appendix 2: New Monsters	45
Appendix 3: New Magic Items.....	57
Appendix 4: Player Handouts.....	59



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Introduction

Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you fear, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

Citadel of the Demon Prince is designed for four to six characters of 12th through 13th level. While the composition of the player character group is not dictated by the adventure, a good aligned cleric should prove invaluable, while a paladin, or a ranger who counts demons among his favored enemies, will be very helpful. Ultimately, as always, a good mix of classes is ideal. See the "Scaling Information" section for suggestions on ways to tailor the adventure to your particular party's strengths, interests, and style of play.

The setting of the first part of the module is appropriate for any isolated wilderness area, sufficiently developed to include a few farming hamlets nearby, and the second half requires only the concept that planes beyond the mortal exist in the campaign world.

This module is written to support the themes of Goodman Games' Demon Hunter's Handbook, and draws upon material first introduced in that work. It is not necessary that you own the Demon Hunter's Handbook to enjoy or run this module, as material from the Handbook is reproduced here as appropriate.

The Cult of the Broken Word

Those GMs who own the Demon Hunter's Handbook will be familiar with the various types of demon and devil worshiping cults. In this short sidebar, the Cult of the Broken Word is defined according to the rules for creating demon-worshiping cults introduced in that sourcebook.

This sidebar is useful for two purposes. First, the GM can use the information presented here to introduce other sects of the Black Son cult, so that he can use them in later adventures. Alternately, the GM can, if he chooses to replace the Cult of the Broken Word with a demon worshiping group of his own creation, use the information here as a rough guide for determining how which of his organizations will prove the best fit.

Type of Organization: Worship cult.

Secondary Goals: Apocalypse cult.

Size: Large (150 members originally). Optionally, it can be made world spanning.

Resources: Primary knowledge and magic, secondary wealth.

Adventure Summary

The PCs arrive at the gates of a dark abbey, home to an apocalyptic cult of demon worshipers that has been kidnapping farmers from the local hamlets, and offering them up as sacrifices to their blasphemous idols. Their mission is an ostensibly simple one: to hunt down the demon worshipers, beard them in their lair, and demolish the abbey, down to the last stone.

Unfortunately, what the PCs do not know is that the cult has come under the sway of a demon prince with ambitions of becoming the ruler of his own plane. The demon prince's scheme is complex in planning, but simple in execution: he has, through the use of a powerful artifact called the Soul Engine, conspired to rip his small principality from the bonds of the lower planes, and now he's sent it hurtling as an asteroid through the outer dimensions and towards the PC's world. When the mile-wide asteroid strikes, it will engulf the planet in hell-dust and fire, tainting it so completely that it will sink down into the pits and become a new plane of Hell.

As the adventure begins, the PCs have only three days to stop the prince's plot. Can they overcome the cult, find the portal to the Citadel of the Demon Prince, and slay him before his unholy ambitions bear rotten fruit? The fate of the world, and perhaps the universe, depends upon it.

Adapting the Plot

The Citadel of the Demon Prince does not specify the exact nature of the demonic cult duped into the demon prince's service, nor does it make an effort to tie the demon prince's background into the campaign's history. This is done intentionally, so that the GM can mold the module to fit the specifics of his campaign world.

It will be relatively easy for a GM using the Demon Hunter's Handbook to integrate this module into his campaign, even if the Cult of the Broken Word has not yet been encountered in the party's adventures. After all, the world is vast, and the hordes of the Abyss infinite in number, so it is not unreasonable that a cult could spring into existence and gain great power without the heroes ever having heard of them.

If the GM wishes, a demon cult that already exists in the campaign world can be substituted for the Cult of the Broken Word, most likely without requiring significant effort on his part. Since most large demon cults have several branches that spread across the campaign world like dark tentacles, the appearance of the dark abbey can be explained away as the ascendance of a hitherto unknown cult sect.



Game Master's Section

Encounter Table

To help the GM prepare, we have included a quick reference table showing all encounters at a glance. **Loc** - the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. **Pg** - the module page number that the encounter can be found on. **Type** - this indicates if the encounter is a trap (T), puzzle (P), or combat (C). **Encounter** - the key monsters, traps, or NPCs that can be found in the encounter. Names in *italics* are classed NPCs. **EL** - the encounter level.

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
A-1	8	T	Thunderstone	3
A-2	9	C	Advanced howlers (10)	10
A-3B	11	C	Bodak	9
A-4A	12	C	Fiendish dracolisks (2)	10
A-5	13	T	Poisoned door	9
1A-1	14	C	Fiendish ettin, fiendish gorgimera	11
1A-3A	16	T	Poison darts	9
1A-3B	16	C, T	Monstrous spiders, falling bell	3 or 9
1A-4	17	C, T	Vrock, poisoned needle trap	9
1A-8	20	T	Eternal dirge	9
1A-10	21	C	Advanced caryatid columns (6)	13
1A-11	21	C	Gharros demon	12
1A-12	22	D	Daraka demon	12
1A-14	23	T	Poison "seasoning"	9
1A-15A	24	C	Advanced vlocks (2)	12
1A-16	25	C	Aeshma demon	13
1B-1	27	C	Stone golems (2)	13
1B-2	28	C	Cultists	5
1B-4	29	T	Spears, freezing spheres, <i>summon monster VI</i>	10
1B-5	29	C, T	<i>Kelemen the Gentle</i> , hell moths, <i>fire trap</i>	13
1B-6	32	C	<i>Oszkar</i> , cauchemar nightmare, fiendish boars (5)	14
2-1	34	C	<i>Samuka the High Priest</i> , hellthorn	14
3-1	36	C	Angel effigies (2)	12
3-2	37	C	Vlocks (5)	12
3-3	38	C	Bebelith (2)	14
3-4	40	C	Wrack, firefiends (4)	13
3-5	42	C	<i>Black Son</i> , demon prince	16

Scaling Information

The Citadel of the Demon Prince is intended for four to six characters of 12th to 13th level, but can be modified for parties of differing sizes or levels. The adventure is much easier to scale up than down, as the powerful defenses possessed by demonic opponents will be difficult for low-level heroes to overcome. Consider the following when adapting the adventure:

Weaker Parties (level 11 or lower, or three or fewer PCs): Reduce the levels of all named NPCs by at least 2, or to a maximum of three levels above the average level of the party (whichever is lower). Reduce the DCs of all traps by 2 (from 20 to 18, for example), and strongly consider swapping the poisons found in poison traps (for example, changing the black lotus extract found in area A-5 to something less lethal, such as dark reaver powder). You should also consider lowering the DCs of most preset skill checks (such as Search checks) by 2 to 5, depending on just how much lower than the recommended level the party is. Do not alter the skill check DCs if the party contains fewer than the recommended number of adventurers, but each adventurer is of the recommended level (so, for example, do not change skill check DCs if the party contains only 3 heroes, but each is of 12th to 13th level). In terms of monsters, the following change is strongly suggested: substitute all advanced creatures, and all creatures built on the elite array within the dark abbey, for standard creatures of their type.

Stronger Parties (level 14 or higher, or seven or more PCs): Increase the character levels of each NPC's primary class by 2, or to a minimum of 3 levels above that of the average level of the party, whichever is higher. Increase the saving throw DCs of all traps by 2, and strongly consider increasing the skill check DCs of all preset skill checks by 2 to 5, depending on how much higher in level above the recommended the party is.

In terms of monsters, the easiest way to increase the encounter level is to use the rules in the MM to advance the hit die and capabilities of all the monsters in the encounter, up to double the amount listed in the module, or to the maximum advancement allowed for the monster, depending on the size and strength of the adventuring party. When altering the encounter level of encounters with the Black Son cultists, it is not recommended that you increase their character levels; instead, double the number of cultists encountered.

In terms of specific changes, strongly consider increasing the ability scores of all monsters within the dark abbey, and in the demon prince's citadel, by using the elite array. If the party is particularly strong, you might also consider advancing the HD of all monsters within the dark abbey, and within the demon prince's citadel, by enough HD to increase their challenge rating by 1. The rules for advancement of HD can be found in the MM.

Remember that changing the encounter levels in the module will raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult the relevant pages in the *DMG* to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

A Note on Preparation

This adventure includes several areas with unusual planar effects, particularly area 1B-6 and the areas that follow. There are also quite a few new monsters, some with unusual abilities (see page 45 for full details). We recommend that the GM read through the entire module before playing it.

Rated PG-13

This adventure is a little more graphic than most Dungeon Crawl Classics modules, primarily due to the theme of demons and cults. The most graphic encounters are areas 1A-14 (page 23), which has a headless body that goes splat, and area 1A-8 (page 20) with its "eternal dirge." If you can handle those, you'll be fine.

Dimensional Effects

The B section of the dark abbey includes a number of unusual dimensional effects. Area 1B-6 in particular includes a unique magical effect. The grand chapel at that area exists on two planes of reality simultaneously. In the material plane is one set of opponents; in its echo on another plane is a second set. Only by bringing the two planes of existence into alignment can the two versions of the chapel synch up. Once they are synched, the PCs can travel into the dimensional echo of the material chapel, and from there journey on to confront the demon prince in his own turf.

Anchoring the echoed grand chapel is simple. It requires nothing more than casting *dimensional anchor* on the altar in that area. The PCs can acquire a scroll of *dimensional anchor* in area 1B-5. If they read the copious notes kept by the occupant of that area, they can also gain an understanding of the *dimensional anchor* effect. But if they neglect to read these notes, they may not know what to do with the *dimensional anchor* scroll. Bardic knowledge, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (the planes), and other skills will prove useful in deciphering the situation, as described on page 32.

The only way to continue on in the adventure is if the PCs anchor the altar. Be prepared to guide your players (subtly or not) if they need a push to figure out this encounter.

Encounter Levels

The encounter levels in the keyed areas of this module run the gamut of difficulty, from encounters that should prove a cakewalk for experienced demon hunters to encounters that should prove harrowing and nerve wracking in the extreme. This is an intentional design decision, one intended to highlight both the mistake the Broken Word cultists made in attempting to bargain with forces far beyond their understanding, and the deadly perils of pitting sword and spell against the legions of the Abyss. While it is certainly possible for you to increase the danger of the low encounter level challenges in this module, by adding character levels or additional opponents, it is not recommended you do so;

being forced to carve through hordes of hapless, fanatical cultists in order to reach the true enemy will highlight the oft-times brutal truth of a demon hunter's work.

As has been said, at several points in this adventure, particularly at the climaxes of parts one and two, the characters will face challenges that will test their skills and push their resources to the limits. Don't be afraid to use these encounters as they are presented, turning the full weight of the enemy's powers against the heroes, as these encounters are both spaced far enough apart to allow the adventurers time to recover, and intended to highlight the danger the party, and the world, faces. In addition, unless the party begins the adventure just after gaining 12th level, the sheer number of encounters they will face will mandate at least one if not two level increases. So while an EL 16 encounter is a nightmare for 12th level characters, it is a winnable, though still dangerous, fight for 13th level demon hunters.

Treasure

By the time a typical party has reached the levels recommended for this module, they will have amassed a considerable store of treasure in the form of various magic items. For this reason, it is not necessary for this module to be filled with all sorts of magical devices. This is a fortunate thing, for a couple of reasons. First, the many potent defenses demons possess almost demand the assistance of powerful, magical items for those forced to combat them, at least if they wish to have a hope of defeating them. Second, because demons command so many potent abilities, they have little need of magic items of their own, and those few they possess will undoubtedly be as evil as their owners.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that since not every opponent the party will face is in possession of mighty, demonic powers, the inclusion of some powerful items must be expected. Further, because so many of the encounters in this adventure are potentially deadly pitched battles against the forces of the Abyss, it is likely that the party will burn through a great deal of their magical reserves, particularly their potions, scrolls, and charged magic items. And finally, since half the fun of an old-fashioned dungeon crawl is raking in scandalous amounts of treasure, and because filling a demon temple with gold equal to the party's expected reward is likely to snap suspension of disbelief, magic items are required to make up the difference.

To balance the conflicting need to not overstock the party with items (and thus give them power beyond their level), while also giving them rewards commensurate to the dangers they face, an effort has been made to provide the party with materials that are not gold, and not magical items, but are still very valuable. That is why there are listing for valuable gems, for artistic works, and for other unusual treasures throughout the module.

The magical items that are found in this module will usually be found either in the possession of the non-demon NPCs who face the party, or in small caches stowed away by a previous party of demon hunters who failed to stop the Cult of the Broken Word. The majority of these items will

be either evilly aligned items (in the case of NPC opponents) or single use items like potions or charged items with few remaining uses (the cached items).

Towards the conclusion of the module, however, the PCs will have the opportunity to claim a few more powerful items, treasures that may prove essential to defeat the demon prince. These items are the most precious possessions of the original band of demon hunters who assaulted the Cult of the Broken Word, and can be found in the demon prince's treasury. Should the GM feel that these items are too valuable or that the party already possesses enough magical resources, he can simply decide that they do not exist, and can replace them with other, non-magical treasures, or perhaps a chest of Abyssal-grown gems.

Getting the Players Involved

The following hooks can be used to get the PCs involved in the quest to destroy the Cult of the Broken Word. Remember that all these plots assume that the demon hunters are ignorant of the true danger; so far as anyone knows, the Cult of the Broken Word is nothing more than a band of murderers with ambitions of currying Abyssal favor, not the pawns of a dangerous prince who would be a dark king.

- The party is secretly approached by agents of the king or church, who are troubled by rumors of burgeoning cult activity on the outskirts of civilization. Scattered reports from spies have spoken of dozens of disappearances over the last few weeks, and refugees claiming to have escaped from legions of cultists kidnapping entire villages have recently turned up in court. The terrified refugees speak of demonic forces prowling the wilderness at night, and while the spies cannot confirm the appearance of otherworldly beasts, they can confirm the appearance of telltale signs of Hellish taint - such as the birth of two-headed calves and albino infants, the sight of a blood-red moon, and the sudden spoiling of entire granaries worth of crops.
- An old, demon-hunting ally of the adventurers has gone missing, his last message to the characters telling them of the existence of the Cult of the Broken Word. In his words, he has "journeyed to inves-

tigate the truth of the cult. Do not be overly concerned for my safety, friends. I do not think these cultists have any true tie to the Abyss, if they exist at all. With me is a small band of well-trained hunters. Should the rumors of this cult bear fruit, I am confident that they, and I, will be able to settle the matter appropriately."

- One of the PCs - ideally one with a connection to the divine, such as a druid, paladin or cleric - receives a missive from the Heavens, in the form of a dream. In the dream, the character sees a vast shadow slowly moving to eclipse the sun, and an army of black-shadowed forms spreading out from the shadows of a looming edifice of obsidian stone. The character feels an impending sense of doom, and the near-irresistible need to stand against the growing threat.

Background Story

The Prince Who Would Be a King

The demon prince named the Black Son was never expected to amount to much, at least not by the standards of demonkind. The 665th bastard son of a minor demon queen, it was believed by all save Black Son himself that his was to be a fate typical of his kind: namely, exile to a far principality somewhere in the wilderness of a forsaken plane, there to spend eternity as a virtual prisoner of his court, worthy only of sacrificing himself on the field of battle in some Abyssal war or another. And, indeed, that was



his fate for uncounted centuries - but Black Son knew he was born for more momentous deeds, and so worked tirelessly to plot schemes intended to bring him power, wealth, and glory, at the expense of his fellow demons. In this he was not unique, for all demons scheme and grasp for glory, and all wish it to be served to them upon the bleeding backs of their rivals.

But the Black Son considered only the demon kings - those eldritch terrors of congealed sin, who stride across their infinite planes like gods of fire and temptation - to be his rivals, and so his plans and ambitions were greater by far than the petty tyrannies of his so-called peers. Black Son set out to accomplish nothing less than the impossible, the beyond impossible, if such a concept exists: he set out to not only claim an infinite layer of the Abyss, but to engineer the birth of a completely new layer, one formed from the spirit and the flesh of what mortals dare presume to call "their" world.

The Looming Darkness

Black Son knew that in order to see his grand dream brought to fruition, he would need to conceive of a plan that was both staggering in scale, and either so subtle in design that none would recognize it or so complex and long-minded that none would be able to decipher its workings until it was too late. In his typical fashion, Black Son chose to do all three.

The exact workings of Black Son's plans are unimportant, so suffice it to say that over the course of millennia he conceived of, and carried out, many small deceits, and conspired to have many of his rivals slain or duped into focusing on other, less worthy foes. For our purposes, there are only three plans that matter:

The Soul Cauldron: The soul cauldron is a demonic artifact of dread majesty, a legendary device which all demons covet, for its power is such that a demon who sufficiently gorges itself on its liquids - the distilled essence of mortal souls - gains enough power to become as unto a god. Black Son stole the soul cauldron centuries ago, and managed to do so without drawing the eyes of man, demon or god. It rests now above a lake of fire deep beneath the desiccated surface of his small noble estate.

The Cult of the Broken Word: More recently, at least by mortal reckoning, Black Son made bargains with certain powerful and greedy mortals to found a cult. This cult, dedicated to the absolute annihilation of the mortal races and the "ascension" of the world as a cradle for the birth of a new demon race, is sponsored by a fallen demonic god of Black Son's own invention: the Broken Word, so-called lord of the faithless, liars, and those who swear vengeance against them. In this fashion, the Black Son has gained servants on the mortal world, servants who cannot betray him, for they have been duped into worshipping a god who has never existed.

The Cult of the Broken Word took as its domain a temple dedicated to a god of healing and light. They slew the

monks of the temple, and remade it in their image. Now it is known, to those few who have seen it and lived to tell the tale, as the dark abbey, a citadel of corruption on the mortal plane.

The Soul Engine: The Black Son's final plan is his most audacious. He has conspired to craft engines of unimaginable might, powered by the essence of a billion mortal souls. Known appropriately enough as the Soul Engines, these eldritch devices are powerful enough to allow the Black Son's estates to slip free from the bonds of the Abyss, and pierce the membranes between dimensions.

Recent Events

The Black Son's plan has reached its most critical and final stage. One year ago, he fired the soul engines, and tore his estate from the 529th layer of the Abyss. It now hurtles through the void between the stars, a deadly missile with but one target: the mortal plane.

To coincide with this momentous event, the Black Son directed his cultist dupes to begin harvesting souls in the "Broken Word's" honor, and storing them in gem-like vessels known as soulstones. This they did, culminating in a weeklong orgy of fear, agony and death, in which the populations of entire farming villages were stolen away, to be sacrificed on a blasphemous altar. As Black Son intended, the sacrifices made on his behalf created a thread of spirits connecting the dark abbey to his soul engine-powered estates, a thread now pulling that hurtling Abyssal rock to the world as a chain draws an anchor.

As the final step in his plan, the Black Son gave the high priest of the cult, a madman named Samuka, a powerful dagger, promising him that sacrifices he made with the dagger would fire his spirit, transforming him into a powerful demon lord. Samuka took these words to heart, and began sacrificing far more souls than even the Black Son required; his orgy of death touched even the cultists who served him. He sacrificed nearly three score cultists; as they died, their essences strengthened the ties between Black Son's estate and the mortal plane, opening a conduit between them through which demon and man alike could pass. And that was when things began to go wrong.

Roughly a week ago, several unforeseen events took place, which threatened the success of the Black Son's plan. The first of these events was an attack by a host of angels upon his citadel. The Black Son permitted the host to destroy his glorious citadel, and to slay the least trustworthy of his demons, and then he and his armies slew them to the last. This unexpected event worked in his favor, for it allowed him to continue his plotting with the luxury of knowing all believed him dead, and his power base destroyed.

Then a few days ago, a party of somewhat experienced demon hunters assaulted the dark abbey. To ensure the safety of his anchor to the mortal world, Black Son sent a small army of demons and demonic beings. Though these demons made short work of the invading hunters, their presence pushed Samuka over the edge into absolute

insanity, for he believed their arrival a harbinger of his own ascension to demonhood. In response, he attempted to work a mighty, dimension shifting ritual that would pull the dark abbey into the Abyss. The ritual failed, but it did create a dimensional echo, pulling sections of the abbey half in, and half out of phase with the material plane.

And that is where things stand as the adventure begins. If the dark abbey is not overcome, and if the Black Son is not slain, then his estate will complete its journey, slamming into the world with cataclysmic force. Should that come to pass, then Hell dust will blanket the world, and the estate shall infect the earth as rot eats at an apple. In the end, the world will be reborn as Abyssal soil, and will be pulled down into the lower planes as a new layer in the Abyss. And the Black Son will devour the last souls he needs, and become as a god...

Secrets the Characters Might Learn

Though the Black Son has taken every precaution possible to ensure that no one can uncover even the barest hint of his plans, no net is without its holes. It is possible the characters might come to learn some of the demon lord's secret machinations. There are several different methods for transmitting information to the players, and it might be a good idea to do so - particularly if your players are the sorts who detest a mysterious ending.

Bardic Lore and Knowledge Skill Checks: If the party includes a bard or a character with significant ranks in Knowledge (the planes) or Knowledge (religion), you should check to see if they begin the adventure having learned one or more pieces of the following information, all of which relate (obliquely) to the Black Son or his cult.

Remember that information relating to the Black Son and to his infernal engines is almost non-existent. You should make sure it stays that way - he's taken a long time to prepare for his ambitious gambit, and he isn't one for idle chatter. That's why the check DCs to some of the following bits of information are higher than they might otherwise be, and why the information is so vague; the goal is not to lay out the plot of the adventure before it begins, but to give the characters (and their players) some insight into the Black Son's labyrinthine deceptions.

DC Information

- 15 The Cult of the Broken Word worships a single, faceless demon lord whose symbol is unknown outside of their temples. In recent years, they have become much more fervent in their worship and in their dedication to sacrificing the souls of the innocent.
- 20 The activities of the Cult of the Broken Word are reminiscent of certain elder cults, those who sought to propel their masters toward deity status through mass, unified sacrifices. Though no cult succeeded in its horrific goal (at least, none that anyone knows of), many did succeed in boosting their master's

powers to a terrifying degree, usually by the aid of certain blasphemous artifacts that utterly consumed souls and transferred their energies into the flesh of those strong enough to command them.

- 30 The heavens are not in alignment, and the walls between the realms of the living and the damned have thinned considerably. The spiritual ether throbs as though disturbed by the breath of some great beast, and the elemental plane of fire glows hotter now than at any other time in recorded history.

Gather Information and Intimidation Checks: Demon hunters are not a close-knit group, in truth, but they do like to gossip with each other and with the clergy. They make every effort to keep their ears open for the latest rumors. Before the adventure begins, check to see if any character with the Gather Information skill has heard any of the following rumors. After the adventure begins, the characters can learn the information below by using Gather Information, Intimidation, and perhaps Diplomacy to loosen the tongues of cultists and survivors of their attacks.

The snippets of information presented below take the form of hearsay and idle rumors, not concrete fact. As a result, some of them are less than accurate. True rumors and idle hearsay are identified below, but as always, you're encouraged to change truth to fiction, or vice versa, if it suits your tastes to do so.

DC Information

- 20 The Cult of the Broken Word doesn't actually sacrifice victims to the Abyss. Instead, the high priests kill the victims and then trap their souls in fist-sized gems. Then they grind them up and use them to season their evening meal. (Partially true. Really, they capture the souls and send them to the Black Son, to serve as fuel for his ascension.)
- 22 The celestial stewards of the heavens shake with fear, for all the gods of war, justice, and good have been slain, and their souls crucified. (Mostly false, and obviously so to any divine caster who worships a god who controls one of the domains listed above. This is a wildly distorted version of the rumor listed directly below.)
- 25 A great host of angels was lost to the wrath of a powerful army of demons, and their souls spiked upon pillars of black fire. The gods do not know whom the army serves or where it came from. (True)
- 30 Madmen and seers across the realm have been stricken dead by fear, or found raving in their beds. To a one, the survivors have spoken of a terrible sun (Son) smashing down like a fist from the skies and covering all the world in a shroud of corruption. (True. This is a foretelling of the price to be paid should the demon hunters fail to thwart the Black Son).

Player Beginning

Read or paraphrase the following to the characters as they approach the abbey:

At long last, after weeks of tedious investigation and wearisome travel, all your hard work has born fruit. You stand before the gates of a dark abbey, which looms in the distance like a shadow passing before the sun. The grounds of the abbey are still and silent, the trees twisted and heavy with greasy fruit, the grass grown lush, wild and black. The chill air is permeated with the stench of terror, burnt flesh and spilled blood - the scent of demons.

You know almost nothing of the cult who claims this forsaken place as their own, but that matters little. You know that they worship the beasts of the Abyss, you know that they have claimed this place as their own, and you know that they have stolen away the men, women and children of every nearby village. You know these things, and that is enough.

Area A: Dark Abbey Outer Grounds

The first part of the adventure is the journey from the main gates of the abbey's grounds to the abbey proper. The Cult of the Broken Word's abbey commands an expansive estate, comprised of more than a square mile of rolling hills covered with lush green grass.

The grounds are divided into two areas by a tall hill; the lower level near the main gate includes a former guest-house, and a now ruined storeroom, while the upper level is home to the abbey proper. The two areas are separated by a tall hill, the front of which has been landscaped into a three-tiered garden of tall apple and peach trees, creeping vines, and bramble bushes. Both areas of the abbey grounds have been allowed to grow wild, so what was once carefully tended lawns and gardens has become a riot of tall grass, orchards filled with overripe fruit, and hedges grown malformed and wild.

There are no longer any natural animals or even insects within the walls of the abbey, as all have long since been driven away or devoured by the demons and monsters who infest the place. Non-magical animals, such as a druid's animal companions, that are brought within the abbey's walls will be on edge at all times - the DCs of all Handle Animal checks made within the boundaries of the dark abbey's grounds, or within the walls of the dark abbey itself, are increased by 10.

The abbey's grounds are separated from the outside world by a high, thick, stone wall. At one time, the wall shined ivory white in the sun, but years of blasphemous magic and the slow creep of demonic taint have turned it slate grey. The wall is 10 feet thick and 20 feet high (AC 3, hardness 8, 720 hp per 10 foot section), and is topped with embedded shards of broken glass, razor-edged seashell, and nails. The Climb check to scale the wall is 25, and a Balance check against DC 15 is necessary to pass over the top of the wall without suffering 1d6 points of slashing damage from the imbedded hazards



Areas of the Map

Area A-1 - Breached Gate (EL 3): The entrance to the dark abbey is a tall, arched stone gateway that reaches 15 feet at its highest point. Until three days ago, two heavy, wooden doors sealed the gate, but another party of adventurers destroyed them in a pitched battle against the abbey's cultists and demon guardians - the remains of one of these doomed adventurers can be found in area A-3. Read or paraphrase the following:

You stand before what appears to be the main entrance to the abbey, an arched stone gateway tall enough for a giant to pass under without stooping. At one time, the gate must have been an imposing sight, but now it lies in ruins; its doors torn from their hinges and shattered upon the ground, its stones scorched by fire and stained with dried blood and gore. Beyond the gate is a cobblestone path flanked by a poorly tended hedge, winding towards a long, wide staircase climbing a three-tiered hill covered by trees. The spires of the abbey loom in the far distance.

Because the abbey cultists have been largely decimated, and because the demons who command the abbey are too occupied with both their work and their unholy entertainment to bother, the abbey gate is unguarded and unwatched.

Aside from the shattered doors, the scorches, and the bloodstains, no visible signs of the battle at the gate remain. Those who take the time to search, however, may find several interesting objects.

Treasure: With a successful Search check, the PCs find the following:

DC Result

- 15 A torn quiver containing a dozen non-magical arrows, and a single +2 arrow half buried in the dirt just outside the gate.
- 20 A gnawed-off finger bearing a fine opal ring set in silver (500 gp).

- 30 A thunderstone hidden beneath a jagged chunk of gate door is found, circumventing the hazard described below.

Thunderstone Hazard: Those who do not take the time to search the rubble before treading upon it, or who don't do a thorough enough job, risk detonating a thunderstone hidden just inside the gate. The thunderstone is mostly buried in mud beneath one of the gate doors, and is jammed against the jagged edge of what remains of the gate's lock. If the thunderstone is not found, the first being of 50 lbs. or more who steps through the rubble in the gate detonates the thunderstone. When the thunderstone explodes, all beings within a 10 ft. radius must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid being deafened for 1 hour; the DC of the save is reduced because the rubble partly muffles the concussive noise.

The detonation of the thunderstone is so loud that it automatically awakens the howler pack in area A-2, and alerts them to the presence of fresh meat. From their vantage point, the howlers can see the gate area easily, and so their reaction depends upon the adventurers' actions after the detonation. If they immediately flee towards the ruined storehouse, then the encounter will play out as described in that location. If they instead flee towards area A-3, then the howlers give immediate chase at best possible speed, with the intent of cutting them off before they reach the relative safety of that location (the howlers fear the spirit within); should the howlers fail to catch the adventurers before they reach the guest house, they will pace a wide circle around the building, counting upon their eerie howling to drive their prey mad. If the adventurers immediately head towards the far staircase, then the pack will split up, with half the pack racing up the hill through the trees to create an ambush, and the other half stalking the party from the rear, to catch

them if they flee, or flank them if they don't. Finally, should the adventurers decide to remain at the gate, the howler pack arrives 2 rounds later, and immediately attacks.

Thunderstone "Trap": CR 1/2; mechanical, location trigger, no reset; Search DC 30; Disable Device DC N/A (after a successful Search check, the searcher can simply move the thunderstone); Market price: 30 gp (the thunderstone).

Area A-2 - Ruined Storehouse (EL 10): Until 3 days ago, the ruins found here were a storehouse, used by the cultists of the Black Sun Brotherhood to store bulk foodstuffs, barrels of sacramental wine, bolts of cloth, and other such items. Now, the storehouse is a smoldering ruin, and the lair of a pack of howlers. Read or paraphrase the following:

From the remains of splintered boxes, burst barrels, and scorched bolts of cloth scattered about, you can guess that this might have been a storehouse at one time. Now it is nothing but a heap of still smoldering ruins, with only a few fire-gutted timbers still jutting upright from its stone foundation. The air reeks of burned wood and spoiled wine, almost strongly enough to mask the copper tang of blood, and the sickening sweetness of overripe flesh.

When it was intact, the storehouse was a single story, wooden building with a deep wine cellar located beneath. A successful DC 23 Spellcraft check reveals that the storehouse was destroyed from within by a fireball spell.

Development: When the storehouse collapsed, the roof heavily damaged the center of the wooden floor, leaving it highly unstable. Each round that someone walks across, or stands on, the unstable section

Traversing the Abbey Grounds with High Level Adventurers

There are, of course, many ways in which the demon hunters can approach the task of crossing the abbey grounds to the dark abbey itself. The simplest method is walking, and should the adventurers choose this method, they will likely come upon the encounters below in order.

Flying is also a viable method of travel for adventures of 11th level and higher, so it is very possible that the party will choose to take to the air, bypassing any danger on the abbey grounds and moving directly towards the dark abbey itself. Should the adventures choose to travel via this method, they will likely avoid the encounters with the howlers and with the bodak in the former guesthouse, and that is fine, though the loss of the experience each encounter provides may increase the difficulty of the latter half of the adventure considerably. Should the party choose to fly, then as they pass over area A-4, the mated pair of fiendish dracolisks will take flight and pursue them, as described in that encounter, below.

The final common method of travel for bypassing the abbey grounds is *teleportation*. A well-equipped party might choose to simply *teleport* to the abbey gates, so as to gain the element of surprise over the cultists. While this is a valid tactic, it can be frustrating for a GM who is looking forward to playing out the adventure in its entirety. But don't worry, as there are downsides to skipping past the encounters in the abbey grounds. More specifically, heroes who bypass the dracolisks in area A-4 may find themselves facing them at area 1A-1, much to their regret. Exact details on how to deal with this situation are provided with that encounter's description, below.



(marked as an X on the map), there is a chance it collapses: 1 in 6 for Small creatures, 2 in 6 for Medium creatures, and 3 in 6 for Large creatures. If it collapses, a DC 20 Reflex save is required to avoid falling into the basement and suffering 1d6 points of damage from impact, and another 1d6 points of damage from landing on dagger-sharp rubble. Those in medium or heavier armor do not suffer damage from the rubble, nor do those beings with a natural armor bonus of +3 or greater.

Monsters: A pack of 10 howlers, brought by the demons to serve as guards, have taken up residence within the ruins of the storehouse, nestling themselves amongst the rubble, and leaving only to hunt for prey within the abbey's grounds and the nearby forests. Whether or not the howlers will be found at this location depends upon the adventurer's actions to this point, as described in the overview for the dark abbey grounds, and in area A-1.

- **Alert:** If the adventurers accidentally detonated the thunderstone in area A-1 and then immediately came to this area, then the howlers are awake and hiding with the ruins of the storehouse; having taken 20 with their Hide checks, the Spot DC to discover them hiding is 28. If the howlers are spotted, they move to attack immediately, but if they are not seen, they wait to attack until the party turns to leave or, preferably, until one or more victims steps within the circle of rubble.

Once the battle is joined, the howlers will use pack tactics and grappling to drag down their prey. If faced with a particularly dangerous opponent, particularly a spellcaster, they will attempt to drive them towards the center of the storehouse ruins, and onto the unstable portion of the floor. The howlers are not afraid to move onto the weakened floor, but will only do so if one or more of their prey is already there.

- **Unaware:** If the adventurers successfully avoid the thunderstone trap in area A-1, or if they bypass the main gate altogether, and if they approach the ruined storehouse quietly, then there is a chance that the howler pack will be sleeping, and caught unawares. Make a Listen check for the howlers at a -15 penalty when the adventurers come within 50 ft (-10 for sleeping, -5 for distance). Continue making Listen checks each round as the adventurers draw closer. If a Listen check is successful, then the howlers are awake when the adventurers arrive, and will rapidly attempt to hide, so that they can attack from ambush as outlined above. If, however, the howlers fail to hear the adventurers approaching, then they are asleep, and the adventurers gain the advantage of surprise.

Treasure: Nothing of value remains on the ground level of the storeroom, but if a character investigates the basement, they can find a small, unbroken cask of wine with a successful DC 17 Search check. The wine is labeled as "The Abbot's Rosy Red Tears" and is worth 500 gp to a collector.

Howlers (10): CR 3; Large outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 6d8+12; hp 39; Init +7; Spd 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk bite +10 (2d8+5); Full Atk bite +10 (2d8+5), 1d4 quills +5 melee (1d6+2); SA Quills, howl (DC 12 Will save after 1 hour or take 1 point Wisdom damage); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 21, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 8;

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Hide +8, Listen +13, Move Silently +12, Search +7, Spot +13, Survival +2 (+4 following traps); Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

Area A-3 – The Guesthouse: Before the Black Son Brotherhood took over the abbey, this building served as a guesthouse for visiting religious pilgrims. When the cult took control, they converted the guesthouse to a small barracks. Read or paraphrase the following as the party approaches the guesthouse:

The years have not been kind to this squat two-story building. Though its many windows remain intact, they are covered in years of grime, making it difficult to see inside. The sloped roof of the building is shrouded in slick-looking moss, and its narrow brick chimney leans precariously to one

side, as though it might collapse at any moment. The front door of the building is ajar, and swaying on its hinges as though moved by an unseen wind. You can see nothing but shadow through the crack in the door.

There are two doors leading into the first floor of the guesthouse, one at the front and one directly opposite, and 8 windows set evenly around the building on each story. Both doors open onto the converted common room (area A-3A). Those who attempt to look through the windows to get a glimpse of the guesthouse's interior see only the tops of tables and cots that have been shoved against the windows.

In addition to entering through the doors, characters can attempt to enter through the windows; the glass windows shatter easily, but pushing aside the table or cot blocking access to the interior requires a DC 17 Strength check. Shattering a window automatically alerts the spirit of Katakhek the bodak, which is located in area A-3B, to the presence of intruders in "his" domain.

Area A-3A – Guesthouse First Floor (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

From the way the support beams of this room are arranged, you can tell that at one time it was actually split into multiple rooms. There are cots and tables propped against every window, all braced by stacks of splintered furniture or heavy iron chests. A wide stone fireplace dominates the south side of the room, and an iron spiral staircase is set against the room's north wall.

Unless the adventurers are carrying light sources, the first floor of the guesthouse is shrouded in darkness equal to a moonless night.

This is the room in which the adventurers who destroyed the abbey's front gate established their temporary stronghold, and it is they who braced the bunks and tables against the windows. They did not remain here long, staying just long enough to ransack the iron chests, place their wounded ally Katakhek upstairs (area A-3B), and then hide a few items away under the ashes of the fireplace.

Development: If the adventurers remain on the first floor for two rounds or more, and if they have obvious light sources or have not taken pains to remain silent, then Katakhek's spirit awakens. Read or paraphrase the following:

The room has grown darker, and the flames of your torches dimmed to a sallow yellow flicker. A sudden chill passes through your body, and your breath hisses out in clouds of vapor. The room feels suddenly oppressive, and you are overcome by an ache of dread.

There is no other effect from Katakhek's awakening, at

least until one of the adventurers attempts to climb the stairs to the upper floor.

Treasure: A DC 30 Search check uncovers the secret cache of items stowed within the fireplace. Buried beneath the ashes is a small strongbox protected by a well-made lock. Inside the box is a *potion of remove curse*, *potion of remove disease*, *potion of remove blindness/deafness*, and a *wand of cure moderate wounds* with 5 charges.

Strongbox: hardness 5; 15 hp; Open Lock DC 30; Break DC 23.

Area A-3B – Guesthouse Second Floor (EL 9): The second floor of the guesthouse is home to the unquiet spirit of Katakhek, demon-hunting fighter and the first casualty of the doomed adventuring band which preceded the heroes. Critically injured in the battle at the gate, he was hidden away here, to wait until his friends returned from battle. Unfortunately, they never did, and he bled to death here, frightened and alone. Now he has risen as a deadly bodak, hungry for vengeance against all living things. As the first adventurer climbs the stairs from the guesthouse's first floor, read or paraphrase the following:

The second story is even darker than the first, if such a thing is possible. As you reach the top of the stairs, you see a room filled to bursting with piles of boxes, barrels, and crates. Long shadows and cobwebs hang from every corner, and the air is noticeably colder than it was below.

Monster: The upper level of the guesthouse is home to a bodak, the foully resurrected spirit of the ill-fated demon hunter Katakhek.

Tactics: The bodak attacks as soon as the first adventurer reaches the top step, hoping to catch their eye with his death gaze. If his attack is successful, then he will retreat back into the cover of the shadows, hoping to attack from surprise again. If his first death gaze fails, then he will move to grapple with his target, immobilizing them for further death gaze attacks. The bodak will fight without thought of retreat, as the lingering remnants of Katakhek's soul wishes only for death. Show player handout A to the player whose character is first attacked by the bodak.

Treasure: After his reawakening, Katakhek divested himself of what equipment his allies did not take with them. It can be found piled in the back left corner of the room, hidden only by shadow. His chain mail armor is ruined beyond thought of repair, but his +1 dagger and javelin of lightning are in perfect condition.

If the party destroys the bodak, and then blesses his remains, they gain a story bonus as described at the conclusion of the adventure.

Katakhek the Bodak: CR 8; Medium undead (extraplanar); HD 9d12, hp 58; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20,

touch 12, flat footed 18; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk slam +6 melee (1d8+1); Full Atk slam +6 melee (1d8+1); SA Death gaze (30 ft., Will save DC 15 or die); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/cold iron, immunity (electricity), resistance 10 (acid, fire), undead traits, vulnerable to sunlight (each round of exposure deals 1 dmg); AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 13, Dex 15, Con -, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Spot +11; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (slam).

Area A-4A – The Abbey Stairs (EL 10): The only two mundane ways for those entering from the front gate to gain access to the abbey is by pushing through the overgrown foliage on each of the three tiers located here or by climbing the stairs. Read or paraphrase the following if the party chooses to climb the stairs:

These wide stairs bisect a three tiered orchard filled to bursting with apple trees and shrubbery grown tall and wild. The stairs are very steep, and taller and more shallow than would seem practical; each step is easily as high as a grown man's knees, and no more than a hand's breadth deep. The stairs seem to be in good condition, but the deep crimson stains splattered on every step are ominous, to say the least.

Branches from the orchard's apple trees hang over the stairs on each side, casting deep shadows, occasionally dropping rotting apples that roll down the stairs or splatter wetly where they land. Climbing the stairs is not easy, but can be done without incident if the party moves at normal walking speed. Should a character choose to run up or down the stairs, or should they be forced to fight while on the stairs, then a DC 17 Balance check is required each round to avoid tumbling down the stairs. A character that tumbles down the stairs suffers 1d4 points of damage per each 10 feet, or portion thereof, they fall.

Monsters: The orchards on either side of the stairs are home to a mated pair of fiendish black dracolisks. The dracolisks are pets of the demon prince, set here to safeguard his foothold on the mortal plane. Each is bound to the orchards, and to the stairs, by a magical device called a *leashstone* (see page 57 for details of the *leashstone*), which prevents them from travelling more than 500 feet from the stairs.

At any given time, one of the dracolisks will be found on each side of the stairs, curled up and sunning themselves among the apple trees on the orchard's second tier.

Tactics: Unless the party is especially noisy in approaching the stairs, the male dracolisk is asleep. Each dracolisk receives a Listen check each round, with the male suffering a –10 penalty to his check if he is asleep.

If the dracolisks hear the party approach, they move to within 10 feet of each side of the stairs and hide. While

within the orchard, each dracolisk is considered to have both cover and concealment (gaining a +4 bonus to armor class and a +2 bonus to Reflex saves, and a 20% chance of avoiding being struck, respectively). They wait until the first member of the party is directly between them on the stairs, then use their breath weapon. They roar ferociously with this first attack, alerting the guards in area A-6. After that initial attack, the male dracolisk takes to the air, while the female remains on the ground, turning its petrifying gaze upon the characters at every opportunity.

If the party forgoes the stairs in favor of one side of the orchard or the other, then the dracolisk in that area attempts to use the area's cover and concealment to its advantage, as its petrifying gaze is not stymied by either. The other dracolisk, meanwhile, takes to the air, and moves to destroy any demon hunters who leave the cover of the forest.

Aerial Encounter: If the party chooses to bypass the abbey grounds by flying, then the dracolisks will become aware of their presence as they come within 100 feet of the orchard, and will fly up to attack them immediately, using first their breath weapon and then their petrifying gaze. They will pursue flying opponents as far as they can, to the 500 foot limit established by the *leashstone* each wears.

Fiendish Black Dracolisks (2): CR 9; Medium dragon; HD 6d12; hp 57; Init –1; Spd 20ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +6; Grp +12; Atk bite +12 (1d8+6); Full Atk bite +12 (1d8+6), two claws +7 (1d4+3); SA Petrifying gaze (30 ft., Fort save DC 14 or turned to stone permanently), acid breath (60 ft. line, 6d4, Ref save DC 17 for 1/2, 1/day), smite good (1/day, +6 damage to melee attack); SQ Acid immunity, damage reduction 5/magic, cold and fire resistance 5, spell resistance 11, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 23; Dex 8, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +9, Spot +9; Alertness, Great Fortitude.

Area A-4B – The Tiered Orchard: The three-tiered orchards on either side of the stairs are essentially identical in design and layout. Each is filled with mature apple trees – which are currently choked with overripe fruit – and covered in tall grass and thick bramble bushes. The heavy underbrush hampers movement considerably, reducing speeds to half normal. Characters fighting within the orchard are considered to have both cover and concealment.

The west side of the orchard (area A-4A) is the chosen home of the male dracolisk, who has established his lair in the center of the orchard's second tier. It is empty of items of note, save for the anchored *leashstone* that holds him in place – a Search check against DC 35 is required to find the anchored *stone*, which is almost entirely covered by apple slop, nettles, and offal.

The orchard's east side (area A-4B) is the lair of the female dracolisk, and also the place where both come to feed on the bodies of cultists and villagers given them by the demons in the dark abbey. Like the male, the female sleeps in the center of the orchard's second tier, directly on top of her *leashstone* (DC 35 Search check to find it). The dracolisk's feeding area is directly above her lair, on the edge of the third tier. There are currently four half-eaten bodies rotting there, all missing their heads and most of their chests.

Treasure: If any characters works up the courage to actually sift through the four rotting, ruined bodies piled in the orchard, a DC 30 Search check will turn up a pouch containing a small key and a diamond worth 100 gold pieces. The key can be used to unlock the trapped cupboard in area 1A-4.

Area A-5 – The Abbey's Rear Entrance (EL 9): This small, well-hidden door is located at the rear of the abbey grounds, well out of view from the casual observer and disguised as a featureless section of stone wall. The monks who originally inhabited the abbey built it as a hidden bolthole, but neither the cultists of the Black Son, or the demons that now prey upon them, know of its existence.

A successful DC 27 Search check is necessary to find the hidden rear entrance. To open the door, a small stone on the lower left hand side must be pulled and turned; the stone handle on the exterior wall is smeared with black lotus extract.

Poisoned Door Handle: CR 9; mechanical, touch trigger (attached); manual reset; poison (black lotus extract, DC 20 Fortitude save resists, 3d6 Con/3d6 Con); Search DC 18; Disable Device DC 26.

Level 1A: Dark Abbey Interior, Demon Grounds

The dark abbey is a massive structure built out and around a central chapel, which has a roof sloped steeply enough that a DC 10 Balance check is required to cross it. The abbey stands 40 feet tall at its highest point, not counting the right bell tower, which reaches a height of 75 feet.

Walls: The exterior walls of the abbey are made of black marble, reinforced with iron bars. They are 5 feet thick at every point (AC 3; hardness 8; 450 hp). Covered in a thin layer of slime and mold, the walls are somewhat difficult to climb; the Climb DC to scale the abbey's exterior is 25. The Climb DC to scale the bell tower (area 1-2B) is even more difficult, owing to occasional stiff winds; the DC to climb the walls of the bell tower is 28.

Doors: Unless otherwise noted, all doors within the abbey's interior are locked with good quality locks (DC 30) and are made of good quality wood (hardness 5; 15 hp; break DC 18). The doors within the dark abbey are somewhat larger than normal, having been built to the scale of the hallways and rooms; they are 7 feet tall and 4 feet wide.

Entrances: There are two ways to gain access to the abbey's interior, through the main door (area 1A-1), or through the east bell tower (area 1A-3B). The other bell tower (area 1A-3A) was recently destroyed and is now merely rubble. There were more doors when the abbey was originally constructed, but these have been filled in completely by the Cult of the Broken Word.

At one time, there were also windows spaced all along the abbey, but these have all either been sealed over (with marble identical to that of the rest of the wall) or disappeared. A DC 10 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) or Search check will allow a character to find the spots where the windows and the doors used to be. A dwarf char-

acter gains a +2 bonus to the check.

General Interior Description: The dark abbey is built in a gothic style, and is heavily decorated with arches, with small gargoyle heads in every corner, and with iron wall sconces shaped like candelabras. The wall sconces are placed every 20 feet, and are uniformly unlit – between the unlit sconces and blocked windows, the corridors of the abbey are eternally dark.

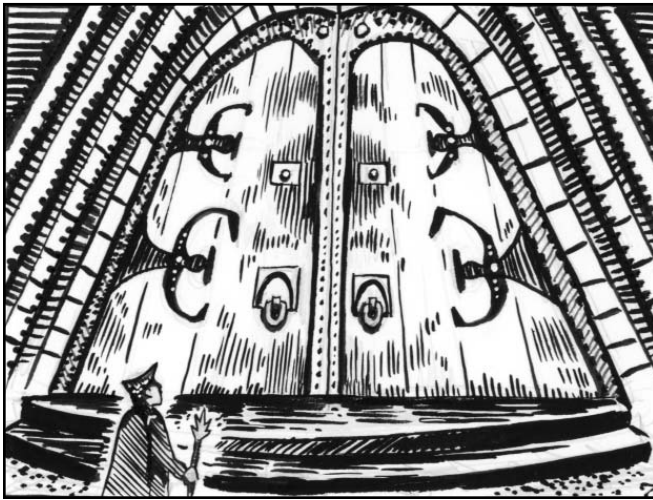
The corridors of the dark abbey are impressive in their scale, fully 15 feet wide and 15 feet high. The majority of the rooms on the first floor are 15 feet high as well, with exceptions noted in the text of the room.

Every corridor and room in the dark abbey is home to at least two statues. These 400 lb. statues are made of well-worked stone (hardness 8; 100 hp), and depict chainmail-armored warriors bearing sword and shield. There are both male and female statues, spaced one after another within the abbey's corridors.

Dimensional Effects: Three days ago, portions of the dark abbey were sheared away from the mortal plane by an unexpected surge of dimensional energy that poured from the demon gate (see area 2-1). While the effects of this shearing are felt most strongly in the areas immediately surrounding the grand chapel, there have been minor effects felt in the portions of the abbey controlled by the demon. When a dimensional effect is found in abbey section A, the effects will be described in the appropriate area.

Current State of Affairs: Currently, there are two distinct power groups controlling different areas of the abbey, with each in control of different sections of the abbey's first floor.

The first group is holed up in the chapel, and in the abbey's west rear side (level 1B). Led by the huntsman Oszkar the



Black, this group comprises the majority of the surviving members of the Cult of the Broken Word. Oszkar is a savvy warrior and hunter, and knows very well that the demons who control the remainder of the temple will devour he and his followers if given the chance, and so he has taken steps to destroy most access routes to the chapel, and to heavily trap the only corridor that remains intact. His goal is to re-establish contact with high priest Dornholme – a man who has, though Oszkar does not know it, gone completely insane – and find a way to escape the mortal plane. At this point, Oszkar has become a bit desperate; the cult's food stores have run out, and they have resorted to killing and eating wounded members of the cult. It is only a matter of time before Oszkar must either break out or start cutting his healthy allies into steaks.

The second group, the demon servants of the Prince, have taken control of the rest of the abbey (level 1A). They are nominally led by the aeshma demon Red Wisdom, but in true demonic fashion, have begun to rebel against his control and do as they wish. A few surviving cultists remain with the demons, but they are prisoners and playthings, and their days are numbered. The demons also hold the few surviving townsfolk, those who have not already been sacrificed, and are using them as food. Most of the demons have no real plan, and are content to wait for their master's arrival, but Red Wisdom would like nothing better than to tear Oszkar the Black's head off and suck out his brains. In fact, his hatred is so strong that he might just offer to help the party strike against him...

Though it is within the power of the demons to flee the dark abbey, they will not do so. Though not especially loyal to the Black Son, they are confident in his ability to see his plans through to fruition, and so fear his enormous wrath should it be discovered they completely abandoned their posts.

Unhallowed Ground: The interior of the dark abbey is a site touched by the most profane of energies: the emanations of the Abyss. As a result, all turn checks to turn undead or demons (as per the planar cleric ability in the Demon Hunter's Handbook) within the dark abbey are made with a –4 penalty, as though by the *unhallow* spell.

Areas of the Map

Area 1A-1 – The Abbey Doors (EL 11): The front doors of the dark abbey are the final obstacle that must be passed before the demon hunters can truly come to grips with their foes. Read or paraphrase the following:

The front doors of the abbey loom before you, set on a raised dais at the top of a short flight of black marble stairs. The twin doors are enormous, tall as a giant, wide enough for two wagons to pass through abreast with room to spare, and adorned with two brass knockers as large as a man's head.

The twin doors of the abbey are made of wood planks that have been placed over a solid iron core, and then reinforced with powerful divine magics. The doors are incredibly durable: the magically reinforced wooden planks on the outside and inside of the door are 2" thick (hardness 8; 40 hp), the iron core is 3" thick (hardness 12; 100 hp), and thanks to the magic that strengthens them, both the wooden planks and the iron core gain a +2 bonus to saving throws to resist spell effects. The doors open outward, but are barred from the inside with a wooden plank thick as a tree trunk (Break DC 30 to force the door).

Monsters: Hidden from view on the inside of the abbey's doors are its twin guardians: a fiendish gorgimera and its half-fiend ettin tender. Both the ettin and the gorgimera are "pets" of the dark prince, and have been sent to the dark abbey to ensure its safety from both meddlesome adventurers and rival cultists.

Whether or not either the gorgimera or the ettin is aware of the party's presence depends on the events in area A-4. If the female dracolisk roared to awaken its mate, then both are prepared for the party's arrival. If the female dracolisk did not roar, however, then either the ettin or the gorgimera must succeed at a Listen check against DC 17 to be considered aware of the party's presence. Finally, if the party bypasses area A-4 entirely (via *teleport* or other similar magics), then neither the gorgimera nor the ettin become aware of the party until they attempt to break down the door or take another, similar action.

Tactics: When the encounter begins, the gorgimera is tethered to the floor with a heavy, 20 ft. long iron chain (hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 25), and the ettin is slouched on an oversized stool just out of the reach of its claws.

- **Aware:** If the guardians are aware of the party's presence, then the ettin's first action in the encounter is to quietly lift the bar from the door. In the following round, he takes a full round action to release the gorgimera from its chain, using the key chained around its waist. In the third round, he will pick up his club and ready himself, while the gorgimera will charge the door, bursting it open from the inside. Any adventurers within 10 feet of

the door when this occurs is subject to an automatic bull rush attack; the attack does not provoke attacks of opportunity, and the gorgimera gains a +2 bonus to its check due to charging, and a +2 circumstance bonus to the check because of the weight of the door. From that point on, the ettin and the gorgimera will fight independently, making little effort to use flanking tactics, though the ettin will at all times fight to keep the party from gaining access to the abbey's interior.

- **Unaware:** If the ettin and gorgimera are caught completely by surprise, then the ettin will not bother to attempt to free the gorgimera, letting it attack while still tethered. Instead, in the first round of combat, the ettin will use a move action to attempt to blow an enormous whistle it carries around its neck; this whistle is intended to both alert the demons inside the temple, and to summon the dracolisks from the orchard (area A-4), who will arrive 2 rounds later, assuming they have not been previously slain. After that, the ettin and the gorgimera will fight as outlined above, though both will focus their efforts on forcing the party back outside the abbey as quickly as possible.

While the gorgimera is as loyal as the most devoted dog, and so will fight to the death, the ettin has grown bored with the monotony of his job, and has no vested interest in sacrificing his life to the cult or even to the dark prince. In fact, the only reason he has not already abandoned the dark abbey is because he fears the huntsman Oszkar the Black, whom he assumes (correctly) would hunt him down if he left. This means that, given the opportunity, he will attempt to flee the battle, and the abbey, if reduced to fewer than 25% of his hp.

Fiendish Gorgimera: CR 10; Large magical beast; HD 10d10+40; hp 95; Init +1; Spd 40 ft., fly 50 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +10; Grp +18; Atk Bite +13 (2d6+4); Full Atk bite +13 (2d6+4), bite (1d8+4), butt +11 (1d8+4), 2 claws +11 (1d6+2); SA fire breath (20 ft. cone, 3d8 dmg, Ref 19 for half, 1/d4 rounds), petrifying breath (30 ft. cone, Fort save DC 19 or turned to stone, 1/d4 rounds, 2/day), smite good (+10 dmg to melee attack); SQ Scent, cold and fire resistance 10, darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, spell resistance 15; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +7, Spot +7; Alertness, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Half-Fiend Ettin: CR 8; Large giant; HD 10d8; hp 75; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +7; Grp +19; Atk morningstar +14 (2d6+8) or claw +14 (1d6+8) or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+8); Full Atk 2 morningstars +14/+9 (2d6+8) or two claws +14 (1d6+8) and bite +7 (1d8+4), or two javelins +5 ranged (1d8+8); SA Smite good (+10 dmg 1/day), spell-like abilities (*darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day, *unholy blight* 1/day, *poison* 3/day, *contagion* 1/day); SQ

Resistance 10 (acid, cold, electricity, fire), damage reduction 5/magic, immunity to poison, spell resistance 20, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft., superior two weapon fighting; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 27; Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Climb +21, Handle Animal +14, Intimidate +14, Jump +21, Listen +13, Search +13, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Possessions: 2 morningstars, 2 javelins, *ring of the ram* (14 charges).

Treasure: The ettin wears a *ring of the ram* with 14 charges on his left hand. He will quite happily use every charge in the ring if pressed in combat.

Area 1A-2 – Grand Entrance Hall: The grand hall sits just on the opposite sides of the abbey doors, a grand chamber used in the abbey's glory days to welcome visitors and conduct business. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you step through the abbey's doors, you are assaulted by a foul wind stinking of brimstone, sweat, and animal droppings. The air here is hot and thick, and the shadows that wreath the interior only add to the oppressive feeling.

You stand at the entrance to a grand chamber that is impressive by any standard. Fully 40 feet to a side, with a high vaulted ceiling reaching at least 30 feet above your heads and walls covered with stained frescoes, the chamber must have been beautiful once, but now it feels like nothing so much as a despoiled tomb.

Directly across from you is a raised platform upon which a tall, golden throne sits. Even from here, you can see that the throne is in dire need of repair; its legs are buckled, and both arms are bent outward severely, as though it had been squashed down by a great weight.

Open doorways stand directly opposite one another to either side of you. Both are sealed with what appears to be sturdy wooden doors. Man-sized stone statues are set in alcoves on either side of each door, marble sentinels standing a grim vigil.

Give the players handout B. The grand entrance hall is 40 feet by 40 feet square, with a vaulted ceiling that reaches 30 feet above the floor at its highest point. If the front doors of the abbey have been destroyed, or if they have been left open, then the room is lit to twilight conditions. If, however, the adventurers have closed the temple doors, the room is dark as midnight.

The bent throne near the back wall of the room is where the ettin sat, slumbering his days away. The thick cushions that cover the throne are heavily soiled, and stink of ettin sweat. The throne itself is made of iron covered in a thin veneer of golden paint, and is worth nothing.

The walls of the grand entrance hall are covered in grime-covered frescoes. These frescoes were put in place by the monks who constructed the abbey, and portray events of religious significance to their order. The frescoes are almost destroyed now, having suffered years of abuse from cultists, and later, from the demons who now infest the temple. If the party spends at least 3 rounds cleaning a section of frescoed wall, then a Knowledge (religion) check will identify the event being portrayed. The events shown are as followed:

- **West wall:** the martyrdom of the first abbot. This fresco depicts the abbey's darkest hour, when the first abbot was burned at the stake by a mob of villagers led by a witch hunter.
- **North wall:** The great ceremony. This fresco depicts the performance of the great ceremony, a prayer vigil the abbots of the order held each year on the first day of winter. The fresco recreates the interior of the main chapel in perfect detail.
- **East wall:** The ascension. This fresco depicts the ascension of a minor brother of the abbey, who rose to take his place among the angelic hosts more than two centuries ago. A DC 25 Search check reveals a small, hidden compartment built into the wall right under the painted chest of the ascending brother, exactly where his heart would be. Inside the hidden compartment is the ascended brother's rosary, a small pearl mounted on a golden chain, which has become a powerful magical item. The rosary is now a *pearl of power* (2nd level).

The doors here are more strongly reinforced than others in the dark abbey (hardness 5, 20 hp, Break DC 25), and are currently locked (Open Lock DC 30).

The statues guarding the doors on the left and right side of the grand entrance are well made, and depict vigorous-looking warriors with placid, peaceful looks on their faces. Each warrior carries a sword pointed towards the ground in his right hand, and holds an open prayer book in his raised and outstretched left hand.

Area 1A-3A – The Abbey's West Bell Tower (EL 8): The west bell tower was recently destroyed, when the previous party of demon hunters attempted to circumvent the main entrance by stealth. Unfortunately, the scout they sent to investigate the bell tower, a roguish halfling named Terazelda, ran afoul of an explosive trap placed there by the Huntsman (area 1B-6). The explosion claimed Terazelda's life, and also collapsed a large portion of the bell tower. The door is currently locked, and has been trapped with a simple, and intentionally obvious, needle trap.

Poison Needle Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids, Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 25.

The Real Trap: Those who open the door trigger Oszkar's second, much more dangerous trap, a fusillade of greenblood oil darts

Greenblood Darts: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (greenblood oil, DC 13 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con/1d2 Con); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 16.

Treasure: Those who take the time to clear out the rubble (requiring at least an hour's work) will find Terazelda's crushed body. All the equipment on her person is torn, crushed and blasted beyond recognition, but with a DC 30 Search check, a character will discover her +1 *short sword of wounding*, which fell from her hand when the tower exploded.

Area 1A-3B – The Abbey's East Bell Tower (EL 3 or 9):

The east bell tower of the abbey is still intact, but is currently in the possession of a veritable army of spiders, both normal and monstrous.

Entering the Abbey via the Bell Tower: Climbing down the east bell tower is the second method by which the party can gain access to the abbey's interior. Should they choose to enter via this method, read or paraphrase the following:

The climb up the abbey's roof was a treacherous one, and the climb up the side of the bell tower even more precarious, but you have finally won through to its top. From here, you can see for miles in all directions, and if it weren't for the stiff winds, it might actually be pleasant up here.

The tower bell is massive and obviously very heavy. It appears to be made entirely of bronze, and is anchored to the roof of the tower by a very thick, sturdy-looking chain. A long rope stretches from the bell down into the darkness of the tower's interior.

The bell tower is a total of 60 feet in height, 30 feet of which stretches above the abbey towards the sky. The interior of the bell tower is 10 feet x 10 feet square, meaning four Medium-sized characters can descend it simultaneously.

Shimmying down the rope is the easiest way to climb down the bell tower, requiring only a Climb check against DC 5. It is also possible to scale down the inside walls of the tower with a fairly simple DC 15 Climb check.

As might be expected, the inside of the bell tower is pitch black. Those who look inside the bronze bell can see that it is filled with spider webs (no Spot check required).

Monsters: As soon as a member of the party steps within the room or first begins to descend the tower, all

the monstrous spiders and spider swarms move to attack. Currently, one of the two monstrous spiders is squatting on his web 30 feet up the bell tower, his body covered with one of the spider swarms. The other monstrous spider, and the other spider swarm, is on the webbing on the first floor.

The true danger of a battle here comes not from the spiders, which are still a potentially dangerous nuisance, but from Hezrozet the vrock in the lesser reliquary (area 1A-4); a battle here allows it a Listen check, and with a successful check, it will come forward to investigate.

Development: The chain supporting the bell is not so sturdy as it appears. Or, rather, the chain is sturdy but the support beams to which it is attached are not. If 200 lbs. of weight are put upon the rope or the bell (such as when adventurers begin climbing the rope), the support beams begin to give way. In the first round, the support beams shift and give out an audible groan; those on the rope, or on the interior walls of the bell tower feel the obvious shift, which is their only warning. One round later, if the weight is not eased, the supports give way entirely, and the 1,600 lb. bell topples down into the open shaft, inflicting 8d6 points of damage + 1d6 for every 10 feet it falls to everyone within the shaft, and then hits the floor of the bell tower with a resounding explosion of noise that can be heard in areas 1A-4 and 1A-5. In addition, the colossal explosion of noise rockets up the bell tower; everyone within the bell tower must succeed at a DC 21 Fort save or be deafened permanently.

Those climbing down the walls of the bell tower can attempt a Reflex save against DC 21 to suffer only half damage from a grazing blow as the bell descends, but those on the rope itself receive no save.

If the weight is eased from the rope in the first round, then the support beam does not give way. Characters who choose to drop to the ground from the rope suffer 1d6 points of damage for each 10 feet they fall, if the monstrous spider in the bell tower is already dead. If the spider is not, then the character lands in the spider's webbing (Escape Artist DC 10 or break DC 16 to escape; 5 hp). If the bell drops before the spiders are reached, then it smashes the webbing and destroys both the monstrous spider and the swarm within the tower.

A DC 20 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check reveals that the support beams are unstable, but not the maximum weight they will support without falling.

Collapsing Bell: 1,600 lbs.; 8d6 + 1d6 per 10 feet fall-en; Reflex save DC 21 for half damage.

Entering the Bell Tower from the Abbey's Interior: To enter the bell tower room via the interior of the abbey, the party must first get through a standard

locked door. If they do, read or paraphrase the following:

This small, square room is filled to bursting with thick spider webs. They hang from every corner, cover every surface, and choke the center of the room in a tangle of sticky, white silk. In the very center of the room, you can just make out a man-sized bundle suspended in the webbing.

This 25 foot x 25 foot room is currently occupied by a brood of monstrous spiders, and two swarms of tiny, poisonous spiders.

Tactics: The spiders know nothing of tactics, and will attack mindlessly until they or their prey is slain.

Treasure: The bundle in the center of the webbing is the corpse of a low-ranking cultist, who tried to escape from the demons controlling this section of the abbey by scaling the bell tower – he was unaware of the spiders, and paid for his ignorance with an agonizing death. Before he ran away, the cultist stole a handful of gems from the treasury, and a character who searches his pockets will find small opals, sapphires, and rubies worth a total of 3,000 gp.

Spider Swarms (2): CR 1; Diminutive vermin (swarm); HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp –; Atk swarm (1d6 + DC 11 Fort save or suffer 1d3 Str dmg); Full Atk Bite (1d6 + DC 11 Fort save or suffer 1d3 Str dmg); SA Distraction (creatures within the swarm must succeed at DC 11 Fort save or be nauseated 1 round), poison; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., swarm traits, tremorsense 30 ft., vermin traits; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 1, Dex 17, Con 10, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +11, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Monstrous Spiders (2): CR 1; Medium vermin; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk bite +4 melee (1d6 + DC 14 Fort save or suffer 1d4 Str dmg); Full Atk Bite +4 melee (1d6 + DC 14 Fort save or suffer 1d4 Str dmg); SA Poison, web (50 ft. range, 10 ft. range increment, attacks as by net with DC 10 Escape Artist check or DC 16 Str to escape, 6 hp); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., vermin traits; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +7 (+15 when moving on webs), Move Silently +8, Spot +4

Area 1A-4 – Lesser Reliquary (EL 10): The door to this room is locked (Open Locks DC 30), and is sturdier than other rooms in the dark abbey (hardness 5, 20 hp, Break DC 25). When opened, read or paraphrase the following:

A tall stone altar squats in the center of this round room. The altar, indeed the entire room, is covered with all manner of occult symbols and trinkets; there are piles of small, black-painted rat



skulls heaped against the walls; half-melted black candles in the sconces; skeletal hands piled on the altar; and tiny stones carved in the shape of leering demons' faces hanging on chains from the ceiling, among other things.

But your eyes are drawn to something else: the skeletally thin beast squatting like a plucked vulture on the rafters above you.

At one time, this large, 20-foot-diameter, 15-foot-high round room was home to the minor artifacts of the brotherhood that founded the temple. When the Cult of the Broken Word took control, they used it for the same purpose, stuffing it full of minor trinkets, few if any of which had any real power. Most of these items are still on display, and are now being lovingly cared for by the room's current occupant, the vrock Hezrozet. Hezrozet fled to this area after his larger, stronger brothers in area 1A-15A drove him out after a battle for dominance.

The 5 foot high altar in the center of the room is made of stone, and is built into the floor, meaning it cannot be moved.

There is a cupboard placed against the side of the altar on the opposite side from the door. The cupboard is locked, and trapped with a simple needle trap. If the party found the key in the abbey orchard (area A-4B), then they can unlock the cupboard, bypassing the trap entirely.

Cupboard: Hardness 2; 8 hp; Break DC 15.

Poisoned Needle Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; lock bypass (Open Locks 30); Atk +17 melee (1 + poison, needle); poison (blue whinnies, DC 14 Fort save resist poison only, 1 Con/unconsciousness); Search DC 22; Disable Device 17.

Development: The items in the lesser reliquary are powerless, but the belief the cultists had in them is not. Demons are creatures of soul and spirit, and the veneration shown to the artifacts here has filled the room with potent energies that bolster demonkind. While within the lesser reliquary, a demon is protected as by the spell *dispel good* cast by a 12th level cleric.

Monster: Hezrozet can be found here most times of the day. He occasionally leaves to pick at the leavings his brothers leave behind in the larder, but will begin the adventure here.

Tactics: If the party has already engaged in battle with the monstrous spiders in area 1A-3B, then it is likely Hezrozet is already aware of their presence. If he is, then he will spend one round increasing his power with his *heroism* spell-like ability, and then use his Move Silently and Hide skills to sneak around the corner and observe the battle. If the party is making quick work of the spiders, then he will retreat to this location, as he believes it offers him the best chance of besting the party. If, however, the party is having difficulty with the spiders, then he will attack using his stunning screech, using his *greater teleport* ability to retreat here if wounded. He will then cast *mirror image* upon himself.

If Hezrozet is not aware of the party's presence when they enter his chamber, then he is squatting, asleep, among the rafters 10 feet above the floor. When he wakes, his first action will be to unleash his stunning screech. In the second round, he will cast *mirror image* upon himself, and then leap down to the attack. Hezrozet will only cast *heroism* upon himself if the party proves exceptionally tough, and only then if he can do so without provoking attacks of opportunity.

If truly pressed by the heroes, Hezrozet will use *greater teleport* to retreat to area 1A-15A, where his brothers are currently tormenting townsfolk for fun.

Hezrozet the Vrock: CR 9; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 10d8+70; hp 115; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +20; Atk Claw +15 melee (2d6+6); Full Atk 2 claws +15 melee (2d6+6) and bite +13 (1d8+3) and 2 talons +13 (1d6+3); SA Dance of ruin (requires 3 vocks, after 3 rounds 20d6 dmg to 100 foot radius, Ref save DC 18 half), spell-like abilities (*mirror image*, *telekinesis* (DC 18), *greater teleport*, *heroism*, caster level 12th), spores (1/3 rnds, 1d8 dmg to all adjacent creatures, then 1d4 dmg for 10 rounds), stunning screech, *summon demon* (2d10 dretches or

1 vrock, 35% chance); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/good, immunity to electricity and poison, resistance 10 (acid, cold, fire) spell resistance 17, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +20, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +24, Move Silently +15, Search +15, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +15, Spot +24, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Treasure: The occult “artifacts” in this room are essentially valueless, though a sage will pay up to 10 gold pieces for them if the party explains their origin. The locked, trapped chest contains a *summon monster III* scroll that can only summon a fiendish creature.

Area 1A-5 – Bell Keeper’s Chambers: Long ago, this 15 foot x 20 foot chamber was home to the abbey’s bell keeper, whose job it was to ring the bell to signal morning and evening prayers. When the Cult of the Broken Word took over, it was converted to the personal chambers of the headman of the cult’s lesser brethren. The headman was slain in a pitched battle with the last 3 heroes who assaulted the abbey a few days ago, who then chose this room to make their final stand against the temple’s demons and cultists. Before they were captured, they hid a few items of value in this room. Read or paraphrase the following:

This wide, narrow room shows signs of recent battle. There are bloodstains splattered on the floor and walls, and what appears to be deep claw marks scored into the doorframe. The remains of a bed lie shattered against the west wall; the mattress is torn in half, and scorched as if by fire.

While alive, the headman was an avid collector of art, whose tastes ran to the macabre and the blasphemous. There are four intact paintings hanging on the left and back walls of the room, all depicting various scenes of devilish torment, and the remains of several statues shattered on the floor.

Development: By the time they reached this room, the last three survivors of God’s Hand knew their cause was doomed. Before the demons and cultists came for them, they managed to stow a few, precious items here, in the hopes that someone else would be able to make use of them in the battle against the cult. The items are secreted away in the hollow base of one of the statues, and will be found with a successful DC 30 Search check.

Treasures: A DC 20 Appraise check reveals that the four paintings are worth 500 gp each. A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (religion) gains a +2 circumstance bonus to the Appraise check.

A character who finds the cache of hidden items finds 3 *potions of cure serious wounds*, 4 vials of holy water, and 2 *beads of force*.

Area 1A-6 – Smashed Caryatid Columns: Read or paraphrase the following:

You stand at an intersection of hallways, with passages to the east, west, and north. Rubble litters the floor; it appears to be bits and pieces of alcove statues that have been knocked over and smashed to bits.

The remains of 6 statues litter this hallway, leaving 6 empty alcoves along the wall. The statues were at one time large caryatid columns (area 1A-10), programmed to destroy any intruders, but they were smashed by the demons that now control this section of the abbey.

Development: With a successful DC 15 Intelligence check (or if a player asks), the characters notice that only female statues have been smashed, and that the alcoves that contained them are much closer together, and larger than normal.

There is nothing of real interest here, though astute characters may recall this corridor when they come upon area 1A-10, helping them to avoid the caryatid ambush there.

Area 1A-7 – Faint Echoes: Read or paraphrase the following as the characters enter the corridor leading to area 1A-8, regardless of which direction they come from:

The walls of this long, shadowy corridor are inset with small alcoves, spaced across from one another between the ever-present statues. Each alcove is perhaps 5 feet deep, and holds a small bench.

As you pause to take in the corridor, a sound comes to your ears, echoing down the corridor, and raising goose flesh on your arms. As you listen, the sound flows up and down, the pitch changing again and again in a complex pattern.

The alcoves in this corridor are contemplation cells. The contemplation cells are 5 feet deep and 10 feet in height, and were used by the members of the Cult of the Broken Word as personal sleeping chambers. They are uniformly filled with blasphemous scriptures, most concerned with demonology, and 3 of them contain folded robes that belonged to members of the cult. The robes are purple, sized for a human male, and bear an embroidered insignia of a black sun upon the chest. Characters who don these robes will not be attacked by the caryatid columns in area 1A-10, though their allies will be.

The sound echoing down the corridor is the eternal dirge, from area 1A-8.

Area 1A-8 – Contemplations of the Damned (EL 9): This relatively short section of hallway has been claimed by the demon Dread Chathless (area 1A-12). Dread Chathless considers himself somewhat of an artist, though his work might be considered... avant-garde at best. Currently, he has 6 of the surviving cultists of the Black Son trapped within these contemplation cells, and has subjected them to unspeakable tortures in the name of his art.

Each of the 6 cultists is suspended from the ground with a complex weave of chains, which are attached via blunt hooks that have been thrust through specific points in their flesh, and twined around their bones. Each group of 3 cultists is chained together, their bonds threaded through the cell walls and attached to a complex series of pulleys set against the left wall of the first cultist's cell, and the right wall of the third. These magically animated pulleys twist and contort the chains in a repeating pattern, putting pressure on specific hooks and forcing the cultists to scream in a tone determined by the hooks plucked. The effect is to create a never-ending song, a keening, eternal dirge that is both awful and magnificent in its beauty. Read or paraphrase the following:

The sight before you is horrifying, enough to sicken even hardened adventurers like yourselves. Five men and one woman hang suspended in the alcoves all around you, their scabbed flesh pierced through and through with uncounted numbers of chains. As you watch, the chains shudder, moving under skin like worms, and the men and woman shriek, six voices blending together in perfect, terrible harmony.

Eternal Dirge: Though the eternal dirge can be heard as soon as a character steps into the hallway area 1A-7, it causes no harmful effects at that time. The first character to see the tortured cultists, and thus discover the awful truth of the music, however, must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or be so overcome by fear that he loses his mental faculties, as by the spell *feeblemind*, for 1d4+1 hours. Other characters who see the cultists for the first time must instead succeed at a DC 19 Will save or be nauseated for 1d4+1 hours.

While the eternal dirge plays havoc with mortals who bear witness to it, it emboldens any demon that hears its melodies. On the small chance that a demon is in this corridor when the eternal dirge is intact, then it benefits as though by the *bless* spell while within 30 feet of the pierced cultists.

A quick-thinking bard can use his *countersong* ability to counteract the effects of the eternal dirge, but this will not counteract any negative effects that have already occurred. The eternal dirge is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect.

There are three ways for characters to end the torture, and the eternal dirge. First, they can kill the tortured

cultists; the cultists are considered to be helpless for the purposes of coup de grace attacks, and currently have only 1 hp each. The second way to end the torture is to attempt to disconnect the cultists from the hooks that bind them. Disconnecting a cultist requires a DC 20 Heal check, and takes 10 minutes per cultist; with a failed Heal check, the hooks slice deeply into the cultist, and he is reduced to -1 hp. The third method of silencing the song and ending the torture is shutting down the magical pulleys. Shutting down each of the pulleys requires a successful DC 32 Disable Device check. Once the first pulley is disabled successfully, the character gains a +2 circumstance bonus to other Disable Device checks made to shut down the other pulleys.

Killing or freeing a cultist, or shutting down one of the pulleys, is enough to end the eternal dirge's *feeblemind* and nauseating effects, though it does not reverse any effects that have already occurred.

If the cultists are freed and first aid or *healing* magic is applied, the party discovers that the cultists are all quite insane. They are largely catatonic, as though affected by the spell *feeblemind*. If not restored to their mental faculties, they will remain where they are left.

Development: Dread Chathless always has one ear tuned towards his music, and is quite protective of his creation. If the eternal dirge stops or is altered by any means, and if Chathless has not already been dealt with, then he is instantly aware of any changes to the dirge. He will use *invisibility* and *teleport without error* to investigate. He will then *teleport without error* to his room after one round, to prepare for combat, as described in area 1A-12.

Feeblemind Trap: CR 9; mechanical device; proximity trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (first viewer *feeble-minded* as by 9th level caster for 1d4+1 hours, DC 19 Will save for no effect; all others DC 19 Will save or nauseated 1d4+1 hours); multiple targets (all within 30'); Disable Device DC 32.

Black Son Adepts (6): CR3; Medium humanoid; HD3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk Slam melee +1 (1d3, non-lethal); Full Atk Slam melee +1 (1d3, non-lethal); SA Spells (currently unavailable); SQ Spells (currently unavailable), *feeble-minded* (currently 1 Int and 1 Charisma); AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10 (currently 1), Wis 14, Cha 10 (currently 1).

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6*, Spellcraft +6*; Spell Focus (conjunction), Skill Focus (Knowledge (arcana)), Skill Focus (Spellcraft)

Spells: 0 – *detect magic*, *guidance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st-level – *burning hands*, *command*, *protection from chaos*.*

* Currently unavailable due to *feeblemind* effect.

Area 1A-9 – Blocked Doorway: Read or paraphrase the following:

A large arch marks the spot where a doorway should be, but instead of a door, a rough stone wall seals the passage.

Until a few weeks ago, this archway led directly to the dark abbey's grand chapel (area 1B-6), but at the suggestion of Oszkar the Black, the high priest Samuka sealed it with a *wall of stone* spell read from a powerful scroll (caster level 12). A DC 25 Spellcraft check reveals the stone wall as the product of a *wall of stone* spell. Breaking through the stone wall leads to section B of the Dark Abbey, right outside the door to area 1B-6 – The Grand Chapel.

Stone Wall: 3" thick; composed of three 5-foot squares; hardness 8; 45 hp per 5-foot square; Break DC 26.

Area 1A-10 – Caryatid Ambush (EL 13): This seemingly normal section of hallway is actually the home of some of the abbey's most dangerous guardians, 4 advanced caryatid columns and a stone golem. Read or paraphrase the following:

Rounding the corner, you discover that this hallway ends abruptly at a solid wall. As you stop to assess the situation, you notice that the statues in this intersection are larger than normal, and much more imposing. To your sudden horror, the statues come rumbling to life and thunder towards you, swords raised!

In his efforts to protect himself and what remains of the Cult of the Broken Word from the demons controlling the rest of the temple, Oszkar the Black commanded Kelemen the Gentle to block this section of hallway, which provided direct access to the areas of the temple he controlled. Oszkar knows full well the true nature of the statues in this area, and left them intact, that they might offer an additional layer of protection from both demons and any other demon hunters who might come.

The stone wall that blocks access is identical to the one at area 1A-9. As before, a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check will reveal the magical nature of the wall.

Stone Wall: 3" thick; composed of three 5-foot squares; hardness 8; 45 hp per 5-foot square; Break DC 26.

Development: The 6 statues in this intersection are actually advanced caryatid columns, sword-armed statues in the shape of beautiful women "dressed" identically to those in the other areas of the abbey. The caryatid columns have been programmed to attack anyone not wearing the insignia of the Cult of the Broken Word, and do so without mercy or hesitation.

Before he collapsed the hallway, Oszkar commanded the wizard Kelemen the Gentle to smear the swords of each caryatid column with deadly poison. Kelemen chose to use purple worm poison for the task. As a result, the first person struck by each caryatid column's sword must succeed at DC 20 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of initial, temporary Strength damage, and 2d6 points of secondary, temporary Strength damage.

Tactics: The 6 statues close to attack, moving relentlessly forward regardless of the danger. They move to block escape from the corridor, but know nothing of tactics otherwise.

Should the party blunder into the caryatid's area while being pursued by a demon, then the caryatids will attack the demons as readily as they attack the party.

Advanced Caryatid Columns (6): CR 7; Large construct; HD 15d8+30; hp 101; Init -2; Spd 20 ft. (cannot run); AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Grp +19; Atk/Full Atk Longsword +15 melee (2d6+5); SQ Shatter weapons (any weapon that strikes a caryatid must succeed at a DC 12 Fort save or shatter), construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., magic immunity (immune to all spells save those against which it is especially vulnerable), magic vulnerability (*transmute rock to mud*, *stone to flesh*, *stone shape* instantly slay it), resistance (+4 bonus to all saves against spells that affect it), damage reduction 10/magic and bludgeoning; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 21, Dex 7, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1

Area 1A-11 – Sun Room (EL 12): Read or paraphrase the following:

In stark contrast to the rest of this thrice-damned abbey, this round room is well lit and pleasantly warm, as though it held the very essence of spring. A gentle breeze, which seems to flow from the walls, caresses your skin.

An immense golden disk in the shape of a stylized sun sways gently on a chain high above your heads. There are a few piles of something that appears to be shimmering copper shells lying about the room, but it is otherwise empty.

This large, round room is 20 feet in diameter. At one time, this room was covered in stain glass windows, depicting the sun rising above the abbey. When the Cult of the Broken Word took control, they shattered the windows, and enclosed the room entirely with black marble bricks. They left the sundisk, however, which is why the room still hosts a few minor, magical effects.

The sundisk is made of a single piece of copper 6 feet in diameter, with a corona of stylized, 1-foot-long bronze rays radiating around it. It hangs from three 5-foot-long gold plated iron chains, and weighs just over

200 lbs. The sundisk is enchanted with both a permanent *daylight* effect, and a permanent *minor conjuration* that causes a gentle breeze (3 mph) to continuously swirl about the room.

Sundisk: 200 lbs.; chain harness 6; 15 hp; Break DC 24; permanent *daylight* (caster level 18).

Monster: The bits of shell-looking material are actually flakes of carapace from the gharros' scorpion body. This room has been claimed as a lair by a powerful gharros demon, a half-man, half-two tailed scorpion. The gharros demon is the slave of the daraka demon in area 1A-12, and has been dragged to the dark abbey against its will. It has taken this room as its own, as it enjoys the caress of hot sunlight against its skin, and when the party arrives, it will be curled up within the sundisk, basking in the warmth. Because of its incredible flexibility, the gharros can curl its entire body within the sundisk, and so gain the benefits of total cover. Should the party enter the room while the gharros is unaware of their presence, then it will be found here.

Tactics: Unless the party is exceptionally quiet, the gharros will hear them attempting to open the door to its lair. It will prepare itself for battle by drinking a *potion of haste* (caster level 9) in the first round, and in the second it will guzzle a *potion of spider climb* (caster level 9), and then move silently to a position directly above the door. If it has a third round to prepare, it will drink a vial of *oil of greater magic fang* +5 (caster level 11).

When the first member of the party steps through the door, the gharros will attack, using its *haste* action to attack twice with its battle axe, and once each with its two scorpion tails. It will focus all attacks in the first round on the same target, and will most likely attack from surprise; the gharros gains a +4 circumstance bonus to its initiative check due to the unexpected direction of its attack, and retains this bonus even if the party is, due to a Listen check, aware of the presence of someone in the room.

In subsequent rounds, the gharros will continue to focus each attack on one target at a time, favoring spellcasters over warriors. If pressed, it will scuttle back up to the cover of the sundisk, and then will use *greater teleport* to escape to area 1A-12, where it can gain the assistance of its "master."

Gharros Demon: CR 10; Large outsider (chaotic, evil); HD 9d8+44; hp 84; Init +3; Spd 30 ft. (60 ft. with *haste*); AC 29, touch 12, flat-footed 26) (30 AC with *haste*); Base Atk +9; Grp +19; Atk Battleaxe melee +14 (1d10+6) (+15 with *haste*); Full Atk Battleaxe melee +14(1d10+6) (2 attacks at +15 with *haste*), and 2 tail stings +12 (1d6+3 + Fort save DC 18 or 1d6 initial and secondary Str dmg) (+18 to attack with *haste* and *greater magic fang* +5, 1d6+9 dmg with *greater magic fang* +5); SA Spell-like abilities (at will – *darkness*, *des-*

ecrate, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *mirror image*, *telekinesis* (DC 17), *teleport without error*, caster level 12), poison (Fort save DC 18 or 1d6 initial and secondary Str dmg), *summon demon* (1/day, 35% chance, 2d10 dretches or 1 gharros); SQ Damage reduction 10/magic and good, spell resistance 22, demon qualities; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 23, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Concentration +13, Jump +17, Listen +22, Move Silently +12, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +22; Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Treasure: If the party manages to catch the gharros completely by surprise, then they can claim its *potion of haste*, *potion of spider climb*, and *oil of greater magic fang* +5. Otherwise, the sundisk itself is worth 8,000 gold pieces, though it may prove difficult to remove and carry it.

Area 1A-12 – Royal Guesthouse (EL 12): Read or paraphrase the following:

This opulently decorated chamber must have been truly grand once, a sitting room fit for a king. But time has not been kind to it; the lush carpet beneath your feet stinks of mold, and the fresco that covers all four walls is cracked and covered with grime.

This 15 feet x 20 feet room was, in olden days, a guesthouse for the abbey's most important visitors. It still retains much of the grandeur it possessed then; all four walls are decorated with a fresco of a vibrant forest teeming with life; the floor is covered in a lush, crimson carpet; and the floor and ceiling are lined with chipped gold paint.

Monster: The royal guesthouse is now the home of a powerful demon, Dread Chathless, who considers himself a warrior without equal. Arrogant in the extreme, Dread Chathless refuses to bow to the whims of Red Wisdom, and so he has exiled himself to this side of the abbey, refusing to interact with any other demons except the gharros demon in the sun room, whom he considers to be his servant and slave.

A daraka demon is an immense, goat-headed and goat-hoofed demon whose body is eternally covered in a thick layer of living, highly poisonous scorpions. Daraka are powerful warriors, assassins, and leaders of demon bands.

Development: Dread Chathless is so despised by the gharros demon in the sun room that it will not willingly come to his aid, no matter the fact that doing so would greatly increase its own chances of survival. In fact, if Dread Chathless is severely wounded, the gharros will attempt to slay him if and when he *teleports* to the sun room for aid.

Tactics: If Dread Chathless is aware of the party's imminent arrival, as he almost certainly will be if they

approach from area 1A-8 or first battle the gharros at area 1A-11, then he will spend one round casting *unholy aura* upon himself, then a second casting *mirror image*. If he has time, he will also cast *invisibility* upon himself, hoping to gain the advantage of surprise.

Dread Chathless' tactics from that point depend upon the party's actions. Should they be engaged in battle with the caryatid columns in area 1A-10, then he will wait until the battle is concluded, and attack the weakened survivors of the party – he fears the power of the caryatid columns, and is content to let the party and the columns destroy each other. If, instead, the party moves to area 1A-11, then he will allow the gharros demon to bear the brunt of the fighting, and will move to attack the party only when they or the gharros are near death, casting *deeper darkness* as he does. Finally, if the party moves to attack him, then he will cast *deeper darkness* and confront them directly, *teleporting* to area 1A-11 once reduced to half hp or less.

Regardless of the circumstances of battle, Dread Chathless prefers to use his spell-like abilities in combat, relying particularly on *chaos hammer* and *telekinesis*.

Dread Chathless, the Daraka Demon: CR 11; Large outsider (chaotic, evil); HD 11d8+44; hp 93; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +11; Grp +21; Atk Claw +16 melee (1d6+6); Full Atk 2 claws +16 melee (1d6+6), and bite +11 melee (1d8+3), or 1d4 scorpions +11 ranged (10 ft. range, creature hit is bitten by 1d4 scorpions with +16 attack bonus, 1 dmg + Fort save DC 19 or 1d2 initial and secondary Str dmg); SA Spell-like abilities (*chaos hammer* (DC 17), *chill touch* (DC 14), *deeper darkness*, *deseccate*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility*, *magic circle against good* (DC 16), *mirror image*, *shatter* (DC 15), *teleport without error*, *unholy aura* (DC 21), *unholy blight* (DC 17)), scorpions (creatures attacking unarmed or with natural weapons are bitten by 1d6 scorpions with +16 attack bonus, 1 dmg + Fort save DC 19 or 1d2 initial and secondary Str dmg), summon demons (1/day, 50% of summoning 4d10

dretch or 1d4 vrock, 35% of summoning one glabrezu, marilith, or daraka); SQ Damage reduction 15/magic and good, spell resistance 22, demon qualities, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 23, Dex 11, Con 19, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Climb +18, Concentration +12, Gather Information +15, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +24, Move Silently +11, Search +16, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +15, Spot +24; Blind-fight, Cleave, Power Attack

Area 1A-13 – Contemplation Cells: Read or paraphrase the following:

This long hallway is inset with small alcoves all along its length. Each alcove is perhaps 5 feet deep, and holds a small bench. The air here is thick with the reek of the slaughterhouse.

Treasure: The third alcove from the left holds a folded robe discarded by a member of the Cult of the Broken Word. It is sized to fit a rather fat human male, and has a suspicious and disquieting bloodstain on the back.

Area 1A-14 – The Kitchen (EL 8): Read or paraphrase the following:

The air in this room is heavy with the stink of sweat and blood, but it is the putrid odor of rotting flesh that brings tears to your eyes.

This room is obviously a kitchen, as it is filled with stacks upon stacks of pots, pans, and cauldrons. A long fire pit and a tall, wooden pantry dominate the east wall, and there are several tables stacked one upon the other by the south wall. A closed door on the north side of the kitchen is the room's only other exit.

This 15-foot-wide x 30-foot-long room is indeed the dark abbey's kitchen, and is still well stocked with cooking utensils. Both the kitchen and the larder (area 1A-15) have been claimed as the roost of a contentious pair of vrock, the brothers Hezrozot and Hezrozat, kin to the vrock in area 1A-4. The brothers spend very little of their time here, preferring to argue with one another and to torment the prisoners in the larder. They do, however, keep their food here. Currently, they have a body "ripening" in the pantry, which sits along the east wall exactly at the room's midpoint.

Development: The headless body of one of the ill-fated adventurers who raided the abbey is putrefying in the pantry, having been stuffed there three days ago by Hezrozot (the other two adventurers are in area 1A-16). The body is leaning precariously against the door, and a character who opens the pantry must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity check to catch the body as it falls. Alternately, the character can just let the body fall, with two unfortunate consequences:

- When the body strikes the ground, it makes an audible splat, granting Hezrozot and Hezrozat a Listen check. The check is, however, made with a



–10 penalty, as the two are arguing quite vehemently. If they hear the splat, then Hezrozot opens the north door in the following round.

- The body is stuffed from the neck down with a seasoning of Hezrozot's own invention, to give it a tangy flavor. This seasoning is as lethal to mortals as it is delicious to demons. Upon impact with ground, the body ruptures, filling a 10-foot cube with a cloud of sparkling green toxic fumes. Any characters within the cube must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of temporary initial Constitution damage, and 2d6 points of secondary Constitution damage. The glittering cloud remains in the air for 3 rounds, with the Fortitude DC decreasing by 2 each round, and then dissipates on the fourth round.

Spirit Seasoning: inhaled poison, Fort DC 18, initial dmg 1d6 Con, secondary dmg 2d6 Con.

Characters who come within 10 feet of the north door will very clearly hear the two vrock arguing in Abyssal, the language of demons, as well as the anguished whimpering of the last living cultist of the Black Son in this section of the dark abbey. Read or paraphrase the following, but only if Hezrozot and Hezrozot have not heard the party:

Through the door you can clearly hear two people arguing, their voices high and chirping, a mix of words and noisome squawks, like birds given the gift of speech. You cannot make out the words, but the anger in the voices is obvious.

You can also make out another sound, a desperate, pained sobbing that grows weaker by the moment.

The door leading to the larder, area 1A-15, is unlocked.

Treasure: The body in the pantry is the corpse of Telson Amunsun. In life, Telson was a paladin, and wore the vestments of his faith with pride. Since the vrock haven't bothered to strip him of his clothing, Telson wears them still. A *phylactery of faithfulness* is strung around the stump of Telson's neck, hidden in his shirt, and his gauntlets are *gauntlets of ogre power*.

Area 1A-15A – The Larder (EL 12): This area is composed of two separate rooms, a ground-level storeroom filled with barrels of flour and other dried goods, and a cellar which is currently serving as a prison for the last surviving townsfolk kidnapped by the Cult of the Broken Word.

There are currently two vrock in this room, arguing over the best way to devour a Black Son cultist. The two are arguing quite loudly, and unless the party has allowed the body in the kitchen pantry to fall or has otherwise made a great deal of noise, then they will be unaware

of the party's presence, and will not notice the larder door opening. Show the players handout C, and read or paraphrase the following if the vrock here have not already been made aware of the party's presence:

This large pantry is currently filled to bursting with two things: stacks and stacks of barrels, crates of vegetables, and canvas bags, and a pair of enormous, winged vulture men who are screeching at one another, and tugging back and forth on a sobbing, robed man.

The larder is 25 feet square, with 10-foot-high shelves stocked with produce and other dry goods on every wall. If the party has been silent to this point, then the two vrock, Hezrozot and Hezrozot, are automatically surprised. The man held between them is a cultist of the Black Son, and the vrock's next meal.

Tactics: The tactics used by the two vrock depend upon whether or not they have been caught by surprise, as noted below:

- **Surprised:** If the vrock are caught by surprise, then Hezrozot's first action is to use his *greater teleport* ability to move to the kitchen, both to give he and his brother more room to fight, and to prevent the party's escape. Hezrozot's first action is to unleash his stunning screech.
- **Aware:** If the two vrock are aware of the party, then Hezrozot has already opened the larder door, and moved to investigate. Hezrozot's first action under these circumstances is to use his *heroism* ability to enhance the fighting skills. In the next round, Hezrozot uses his stunning screech, followed by Hezrozot doing the same in the next.

Hezrozot and Hezrozot fight intelligently, playing to their demonic strengths. They alternate using their spore ability to maximize the amount of time their opponents suffer damage, use Power Attacks to kill spell-casting characters, and work to perform flank attacks whenever possible. Because they are fighting in cramped conditions, both are loathe to use their *greater teleport* abilities, and will do so only if reduced to half their hp or less. As soon as one of the vrock *teleports*, the second will follow, with both fleeing to area 1A-16.

The 10-foot-high shelves of dry goods can be tipped over with a DC 22 Strength check. If they are toppled, all within the squares adjacent to the toppled shelf must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or be knocked prone; those knocked prone suffer a –4 penalty to AC against melee attacks, and must succeed at a DC 20 Strength check to pull themselves free. Once freed, they can stand from prone as normal.

The piles of dry goods in the larder create a baffling effect that dampens sound, and as a result, the demon Red Wisdom will not hear sounds of battle from this room.

Finally, the door to the cellar is in the exact center of the room. The door is 5 feet square, and opens upward. It has 5 hp, a hardness of 2, a Break DC of 18, and is locked with a poor quality lock (Open Lock DC 15). A character struck by a bludgeoning melee attack risks crashing through the door to the cellar below; the attacker makes a Strength check as a free action, and on a successful check, the door splinters inward, causing the victim to suffer 1d6 points of damage as he falls down into cellar.

Hezrozot and Hezrozat, Vrocks: CR 10; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 10d8+110; hp 145; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +22; Atk Claw +17 melee (2d6+8); Full Atk 2 claws +17 melee (2d6+8) and bite +15 (1d8+4) and 2 talons +15 (1d6+4); SA Dance of ruin (requires 3 vrocks, after 3 rounds 20d6 dmg to 100 foot radius, Ref save DC 18 half), spell-like abilities (*mirror image*, *telekinesis* (DC 18), *greater teleport*, *heroism*, caster level 12th), spores (1/3 rnds, 1d8 dmg to all adjacent creatures, then 1d4 dmg for 10 rounds), *summon demon* (2d10 dretches or 1 vrock, 35% chance) ; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/good, immunity to electricity and poison, resistance 10 (acid, cold, fire) spell resistance 17, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 27, Dex 17, Con 29, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Diplomacy +4, Hide +12, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +25, Move Silently +16, Search +15, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +15, Spot +24, Survival +4 (+6 following tracks); Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Note: Hezrozat and Hezrozot use the elite array of ability scores, increasing their CR by 1.

Area 1A-15B – Cellar (EL 10): As has been stated earlier, there is a small door in the middle of the pantry leading down into a 10 foot deep cellar that currently serves as a prison for 10 very hungry, very frightened men, women, and children, the last survivors of those kidnapped to make the Black Son's ascension possible. Read or paraphrase the following:

Below the trapdoor is a set of stairs leading down into a pitch-black room. The smell of damp earth mixed with the stink of stale sweat flows up from below. You can see vague shapes moving in the darkness, and hear quiet sobs, sniffles, and excited murmurs.

The cellar is a square room 20 feet to a side, and 10 feet in height. There are wine racks along each wall, and a cluster of small barrels standing in the room's right rear corner; most of the wine racks are empty, the bottles having been guzzled down by first the greedy cultists, and then the starving, dehydrated townsfolk.

There are currently 10 living villagers here: 3 men, 3

women, and 4 children, all Com1. All are starving and dehydrated, and have 1 hp each. There are no dead villagers in the cellar, though many have died during their captivity, as the demons removed and then devoured every corpse.

The villagers are frightened, and will shrink away from the adventurers until they are assured of their safety. Once they have been so assured, they will cluster around the characters, begging to be taken from the abbey and returned to their homes (see page 45 for details on the nearest safe towns). They will absolutely refuse to accompany the characters deeper into the abbey, and must be convinced with a DC 50 Diplomacy check to remain within the cellar until such time as the party is able to return; in essence, the villagers are so frightened as to be considered hostile for the purposes of the check, and their attitude must be changed to helpful. Characters who actually manage to achieve this Herculean task gain experience as though overcoming an EL 10 encounter, but do not gain the story bonus for returning the villagers to their home (see details at the end of the adventure) .

Area 1A-16 – Library and Common Room (EL 13): This area, comprised of the abbey's library and the common room, is likely the first area in which the characters will come into contact with the strange dimensional energies unleashed when the portal to the Black Son's estate was opened. The energies have not claimed this area entirely, though they would if given enough time, and so the effects here are mostly cosmetic. Read or paraphrase the following as the characters enter through either the double doors of the common room or through the library door, changing the order of descriptive paragraphs as appropriate:

Poking your head through the double doors, you see an expansive room filled with row upon row of rough-hewn oak tables and benches. The center of the room is dominated by an enormous iron chandelier fully 15 feet in diameter, upon which hundreds of small candles burn merrily, throwing spider arm shadows across every corner of the room.

To your great surprise, you see that the west wall of the room appears to be completely insubstantial, a hazy mirage flickering, stuttering and pulsing in and out of sight right before your eyes.

Beyond that illusory veil, you can clearly see a round room, perhaps a tower, lined floor to ceiling with bookshelves, crammed with mahogany reading desks, and sumptuously appointed with a thick green rug. Obviously, it must be a library of some sort.

The common room is 20 feet wide and 35 feet long, with an arched ceiling that reaches 25 feet at its highest point. The chandelier weighs 400 pounds, and is suspended 15 feet above the floor by an extremely thick

iron chain (hardness 8, 100 hp, Break DC 30). Five-foot-wide rafters are spaced every 5 feet both vertically and horizontally along the ceiling, 25 feet from the floor. The tables within the common room are 3 feet in height, and weigh 200 pounds each.

The fat tallow candles on the chandelier are magical, in that they burn eternally, and replenish themselves instantly as they burn, but they still shed melted drippings. Normally, one of the Black Son cultists was assigned to clear the candle wax from the floor, but since there is no one left alive to perform this duty, the drippings have become a 15-foot-diameter puddle of grease in the middle of the common room. Characters walking across the puddle at their normal movement rate must succeed at a DC 12 Balance check to avoid falling prone, while characters running across or fighting atop the puddle must succeed at a DC 15 Balance check to avoid falling prone.

The library is a wide, squat tower, 30 feet in diameter and 35 feet tall. The tower is open to the ceiling, but 10-foot-wide catwalks that circle the tower's interior are set 10 feet and 20 feet up the tower. A spiral, iron staircase braced against the northern side of the library grants access to each catwalk. Seven-foot-high bookshelves line the library walls, both on the floor and on the catwalks; all are crammed full of books, scrolls, and maps. The carpet on the library floor is 1" thick, granting a +2 circumstance bonus to all Move Silently skill checks made while moving across it. Conversely, the iron staircase squeaks terribly whenever 50 pounds of weight is put upon it, imposing a -2 circumstance penalty to all Move Silently checks made while moving upon it.

Development: The wall between the common room and the library is out of phase with the mortal dimension, and as a result, characters can pass sometimes pass through the wall as though it did not exist. There is a 50% chance each round that the wall moves out of phase with the material plane, allowing unhindered movement through it. Red Wisdom is well aware of this effect, and will use it to his advantage in combat.

Monster: The library is the home of the nominal leader of the demon forces in the dark abbey, Red Wisdom. One of the chief lieutenants of the Black Son, Red Wisdom was sent here to oversee the performance of the sacrifices that opened the guiding portal to the Black Son's estate. This duty was performed successfully, but Red Wisdom has enjoyed notably less success since then. Once the portal was opened, the demons in the abbey grew bored and resentful of Red Wisdom's authority. Now, Red Wisdom sits alone in the library, contemplating the corpses of the adventurers who dared assault the dark abbey.

Red Wisdom nurses an incredible hatred for Oszkar the Black, whom he feels has outwitted and stymied

him at every turn. His hatred is so strong that he will attempt to strike a bargain with those he feels might be amenable to the idea of working with a demon, offering to help them destroy the stone golems in the hallway leading to the cult controlled areas of the dark abbey (area 1B-1). Of course, Red Wisdom is not to be trusted, and will turn on the characters as soon as he feels the stone golems are sufficiently weakened to allow him to destroy them later, at his leisure.

Tactics: Unless the party has allowed Hezrozot and/or Hezrozat to escape, then Red Wisdom will be sitting cross legged on the second catwalk in the library, staring at the rotting bodies of the ill-fated demon hunters Anselina Devilsbane and Tribius the Younger. If the party attempts to unlock the library door, then Red Wisdom can make a Listen check to hear their entrance, with the DC of the check increased by 2 because of his distance from the characters. He can also make a Listen check to hear them approach should they enter through the common room's double doors, but the DC of the check is increased by +4 due to the distance, and if the wall between the library and common room is on the material plane (a 50% chance) it is increased by another +15.

If Red Wisdom becomes aware of the characters before they are in a position to attack, then he uses his *unholy aura* spell-like ability to protect himself, then turns *invisible*. He then waits, observing the party's actions. If possible, he will wait to attack until at least one character is climbing the iron staircase, then will use *telekinesis* to hurl a full bookcase (250 pounds, 10d6 dmg) at that character as soon as they reach the catwalk upon which he is standing. From there, he will swoop down onto the rest of the party, attacking with his *wounding spear*, and then flying back up to hurl more bookcases. If pressed, he will move out into the common room, this time using *telekinesis* to hurl tables (200 pounds, 8d6 damage). Red Wisdom will not retreat from battle, but may attempt to parlay; if he is rebuffed, he will attack until he, or the party, are slain.

Red Wisdom, Aeshma Demon: CR 12; Large outsider; HD 13d8+65; hp 105; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 29, touch 11, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +13; Grp +24; Atk +1 *wounding longspears* +21 melee (1d8+8); Full Atk +1 *wounding longspears* +21/+16 melee (1d8+8), or 2 claws +19 (1d6+7); SA Spell-like abilities (at will – *alter self*, *death knell* (DC 14), *deeper darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility*, *magic circle against good* (DC 15), *shatter* (DC 14), *slow* (DC 15), *telekinesis* (DC 17), *teleport without error*, *unholy blight* (DC 16), *web* (DC 14), all as 12th level sorcerer), rage (if an aeshma is reduced to 50% hp or less, it gains a +4 bonus to

Strength, and suffers a -2 penalty to AC), summon demons (1/day, 50% of summoning 4d10 dretch or 1d2 vrock, 20% of summoning another aeshma); SQ Damage reduction 15/magic and good, spell resistance 22, demon qualities, *telepathy* 100 ft., *see invisibility* (as the spell cast by a 12th level wizard); AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +14, Concentration +17, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +21, Move Silently +12, Search +15, Spellcraft +13, Spot +20; Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Notes: An aeshma demon is a lieutenant to the demon princes, appearing as winged, incredibly

handsome man, with basalt skin and clawed hands and feet. The aeshma is adapted from Necromancer Game's *Tome of Horrors* and has been updated to reflect changes in the 3.5 rules set. *Telekinesis* has been added to its spell-like abilities. Red Wisdom has been built using the elite ability score array.

Treasure: The mostly intact bodies of Anselina Devilsbane and Tribius the Younger have no items of value. In addition to Red Wisdom's +1 *longspear of wounding*, there is a scroll containing the *feeblemind* spell (caster level 13) on a shelf on the top floor of the library (DC 25 Search check). If collected and sold, the expansive library of books will fetch a total of 10,000 gold pieces.

Level 1B: Dark Abbey Interior, Cultists' Retreat

The second section of the abbey remains under the nominal control of the Cult of the Broken Word, and more specifically the iron fist of Oszkar the Black – but only because the demons in the remainder of the dark abbey fear the strange dimensional energies that haunts the area.

The corridors and doors of this area are identical to those found in abbey section A, unless otherwise noted. Unlike the rest of the abbey, however, all the wall sconces in section B are lit, meaning characters will not have to provide their own light sources while adventuring here.

Dimensional Effect: Three days ago, portions of the dark abbey, most notably the grand chapel and surrounding rooms and corridors, were sheared away from the mortal plane by an unexpected surge of dimensional energy that poured from the demon gate (see area 2-1). This dimensional energy has two effects:

- **Dimensional Anchor:** The grand chapel, the surrounding corridors, and the high priest's quarters (area 1B-4) are permanently under the effects of a *dimensional anchor* spell that cannot be dispelled. As a result, forms of movement that cannot be used in this area of the abbey include: *astral projection*, *blink*, *dimension door*, *ethereal jaunt*, *etherealness*, *gate*, *maze*, *plane shift*, *shadow walk*, *teleport* and other similar spells, spell-like effects or psionic abilities.
- **Semi-solid Walls:** The walls and floors of this section of the temple are semi-solid and liquid, like thick stew covered in a thin layer of skin. As a result, any object weighing more than 5 pounds that touches the floor sinks 6" into the stone. Movement along the floor is somewhat hampered by this effect; beings walking through these hallways have their movement rate reduced by 5 ft. per round.

The walls of this section of the abbey are likewise affected, and any pressure exerted upon them, or the doors set within them, causes the object to sink 1" into the surface. This alien malleability makes it much more difficult to damage the abbey's walls and doors; the hardness of all walls and doors within this section of the abbey is increased by 2, and their break DC is likewise increased by 2. It is not possible to push completely through the floors, walls or doors here, as they coagulate and become as solid as dried glue beyond 1" depth.

PCs can make skill checks to understand the dimensional effects. Allow a DC 24 Knowledge (the planes) check, or DC 28 Knowledge (arcana), Spellcraft, or bardic knowledge check when they first encounter the semi-solid walls. When they become aware of the *dimensional anchor* effect, allow a second check at the same DC for all skills except Spellcraft, which has the DC reduced to 24 once the effects of *dimensional anchor* are clear.

Areas of the Map

Area 1B-1 – Stone Golem Sentinels (EL 13): At the intersection of these two hallways, the only way to reliably gain access to the cult controlled sections of the dark abbey, Oszkar has placed the most powerful servants of the temple as sentinels. Read or paraphrase the following:

You have come to an intersection. The hallway continues straight ahead, but also branches off to the south. Thanks to the flickering light of the sconces burning along the walls, you see that both directions are blocked by what appears to be massive stone statues. Both are identical stylized warriors standing nearly as tall as the ceiling, with shoulders wide enough to almost scrape the cor-

ridor walls. As you watch, one of them flexes the fingers of its right hand.

Monsters: These two statues are, of course, stone golems, placed here a few days ago when Oszkar and the last of the Cult of the Broken Word retreated from the demons. The prized creations of the high priest, the golems are the cultist's greatest defense against the demons, who cannot simply *teleport* past them because of the dimensional energies permeating this area of the temple. The stone golems have been commanded to attack any non-humans, and anyone not wearing robes that bear the cult's symbol, the black sun. As non-intelligent creatures, however, the golems lack the ability to recognize non-humans, meaning a dwarf or halfling who wears the appropriate robes can pass without issues. The golems will move to attack those who come within 10 feet of their location or those who attack them. They have been commanded to stay within 60 feet of their assigned stations, however, and will not pursue intruders beyond that point.

Tactics: The golems located here have been commanded to protect the hallway at all costs, and will do so. Their first priority is stopping intruders from slipping past them into the corridors, and they will pursue those who do. They will not move into the trapped hallway, unless moving in pursuit of others, and will quite unintentionally set off any traps those they pursue have somehow managed to avoid. Both golems fight to their destruction.

Development: If the guards in area 1B-2 hear the party battling the stone golems, they will come forward to join the battle, as described in their keyed location. The golems will not harm the cultists in any intentional way.

Stone Golems (2): CR 11; Large construct; HD 14d10+30; hp 107; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +10; Grp +23; Atk Slam +18 melee (2d10+9); Full Atk 2 Slams +18 melee (2d10+9); SA Slow (once per 2 rounds, 10 ft. range, Will save DC 17 to negate, 7 rounds duration); SQ Construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic (immune to all spells allowing spell resistance, *transmute rock to mud* slows for 2d6 rounds, *stone to flesh* negates damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 round), lowlight

vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Area 1B-2 – Cultist Guards (EL 5): Oszkar the Black has established two watch stations, one in the hallway near area 1A-9 and area 1A-10, the other just beyond the location of the stone golem sentinels.

Monsters: Each watch station is comprised of two guards and a single adept. It is their job to watch for intruders, and to warn Oszkar and Kelemen the Gentle, so that they might be ready to deal with them. The cultists never leave their posts; they sleep curled up in statue alcoves, taking shifts being awake – that is, when they are not all asleep. At any given time, each guard has a 33% chance of being asleep. If the party engages in battle with the stone golems in area 1B-1, however, then every member of the guard party near that location will be awake.

Tactics: When the cultists detect the party's presence, one of the two guards will attempt to run; the guard near the stone golem sentinels will run to area 1B-4, to alert Kelemen the Gentle, while the guard near area 1A-9 and area 1A-10 will run to area 1B-5 to alert Oszkar the Black. After the warning is delivered, the guard will attempt to reach the other location, and then will return to engage the intruders in battle. The other guard, meanwhile, will light a censer filled with *oblivion incense* (see sidebar) if the intruders include obvious spellcasters, or fire his crossbow if they do not. The adept will attempt to use the *command* spell to force one of the intruders to drop prone to the ground, so that his fellow guard can target him more easily. All guards will fight to the death, knowing they have no hope of escape whether or not they flee.

Black Son Adept: CR3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk Dagger +1 melee (1d4); Full Atk Dagger +1 melee (1d4); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Spellcraft +6; Spell Focus (conjunction), Skill Focus (Knowledge (arcana)), Skill Focus (Spellcraft).

Spells: 0 – *detect magic*, *guidance*, *touch of*

Oblivion Incense

Oblivion incense was first introduced in the Demon Hunter's Handbook from Goodman Games.

Incense, Oblivion: *Oblivion incense* is a powerful, demonic narcotic which has the ability to erase the memories of all good beings who inhale its vapors. Those of good alignment who enter its 20 ft. radius of effect must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or lose all memory of the previous 24 hours, including all spells prepared during that time. In addition, those who fail to save will not remember any events that occur during the next 24 hours, meaning they cannot prepare spells during this time. Oblivion incense is a common item in wealthy, demon-dedicated temples, and is used to both protect against demon hunters, and erase the minds of the cult's victims.

Moderate enchantment; CL 9th; Create Wondrous Item, *mindfog*; Price 800 gp

fatigue; 1st-level – *burning hands*, *command*, *protection from chaos*.

Possessions: dagger.

Cultist Soldiers (2): CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4; hp 27; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk Longsword +7 melee (1d8+2), or heavy crossbow +5 (1d10), or dagger +6 melee (1d4+2); Full Atk Longsword +7 melee (1d8+2), or heavy crossbow +5 (1d10), or dagger +6 melee (1d4+2); SA None; SQ None; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Intimidate +6, Ride +8; Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Possessions: Studded leather, buckler shield, long sword, crossbow, 4 quarrels.

Area 1B-3 – Secret Door: Located here is a secret door (marked on the map) leading into the grand chapel. The secret door was placed there by the order that founded the abbey, and was used by its abbots to pass from their quarters in area 1-4 to the grand chapel. None of the cultists know of its existence.

Secret Door: Search DC 30, 15 hp, Break DC 18.

Area 1B-4 – Thrice-Trapped Hallway (EL 10): This hallway is a true gauntlet of peril, home to no less than three dangerous traps set by Oszkar the Black, and his ally Kelemen the Gentle. The traps are primarily meant to dissuade the demons that infest the rest of the dark abbey from striking out against what remains of the cult, but will maim or kill the party just as easily. Unlike the rest of this area, the wall sconces in the trapped section of hallway are not lit.

The traps are staggered along the length of the hallway, in the spaces marked A, B, and C on the dark abbey map.

Trap A, Fusillade of Spears: The first trap the heroes will likely encounter is a fusillade of spears tripped by a tripwire that runs 6" above the ground, and stretches from one side of the hallway to the other. The tripwire has been painted black, to match the floor of the abbey, and so is difficult to find.

Fusillade of Spears: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger (when a being trips the wire across either square); repair reset; Atk +21 ranged (1d6+5 javelin); multiple targets (1d8 javelins per target in a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 24.

Trap B, Freezing Sphere Trap: The second trap the heroes will encounter is a *freezing sphere* trap. The trap is set to go off immediately after a being crosses into the 10-foot section of hallway just beyond the tripwire that triggers the fusillade of spears. Oszkar hopes that those who are struck by or bypass the first trap will be caught napping when they reach the second trap.

Freezing Sphere trap: CR 7; magic device; visual trigger (*clairvoyance*) within 10 ft. x 10 ft. cube; auto-

matic reset; spell effect (*freezing sphere*, 11th-level wizard, 11d6 cold damage to all within a 10 ft. radius burst, freezes all liquids, DC 19 Reflex save for half damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Trap C, Summon Monster VI Trap: The third and final trap is just before the hallway turns right, on its way to the grand chapel, and is set to go off as soon as a being comes within 20 ft. of the corner. When triggered by the approach of a living being, it summons a powerful monstrosity of the far planes, a deadly chaos beast. The chaos beast instantly moves to attack the nearest creature, and remains for 11 rounds or until slain.

Summon Monster VI Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (*summon monster VI*, 11th level wizard); Search DC 31; Disable Device 31.

Summoned Chaos Beast: CR 9; Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 12d8+36; hp 96; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +12; Grp +16; Atk Claw +12 melee (1d3+4 + Fort save DC 16 or become unstable); Full Atk 2 claws +12 melee (1d3+4 + Fort save DC 16 or become unstable); SA Corporeal instability (Fort save DC 16 or become unstable: cannot cast spells, -4 to attacks and 50% miss chance, cannot distinguish friend from foe, 1 point Wis drain each round, *restoration*, *heal* or *greater restoration* to remove effect); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to critical hits and transformation, spell resistance 15; AL CN; SV Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Escape Artist +15, Hide +15, Jump +13, Listen +14, Search +13, Spot +13, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks), Tumble +17, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings); Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Area 1B-5 – High Priest's Quarters (EL 12): Read or paraphrase the following:

This expansive chamber is obviously an opulently appointed bedroom, with a massive four poster bed, fully 10 feet long, pushed against the room's southwest corner, and a plush, claw footed sitting chair set near a large fireplace, in which a fire crackles merrily. There are three large, empty gilded cages set on stands directly in front of the fire.

The center of the room holds a mahogany desk covered with scattered papers and open books. A tall, silver-rimmed mirror is set just behind the desk. The mirror's glass flickers and sparks before your eyes, the image ever changing; one moment, you see yourself reflected in the glass, standing in the room's open doorway, and the next you see only the door, and an empty, shadowed hallway stretching out into infinity.

Before his disappearance, this comfortable room was the personal chamber of the high priest of the Cult of



the Broken Word, Samuka. After he vanished in the dimensional shift that now infects the dark abbey, it was claimed by Kelemen the Gentle, chief mage of the cult. Kelemen spends every moment within this chamber, researching a way to overcome the dimensional affect, and reunite the cult with its high priest.

The high priest's quarters are 25 feet wide x 20 feet deep, with a vaulted ceiling that sits 20 feet above the floor at its highest point. The ceiling is painted to resemble a beautiful blue sky filled with demons; originally, the painting depicted angels in glorious flight, but Samuka commanded the angels be covered over with repugnant lower planar beasts. The desk in the center of the room is where Kelemen spends his days studying, and the three cages are where he keeps his hell moth pets.

Monster: This room belongs to Kelemen the Gentle, high mage of the Cult of the Broken Word. A middle-aged, pot bellied man in filthy robes, Kelemen looks like nothing so much as a madman. Normally, Kelemen is absolutely fastidious about his appearance, but has spent every waking moment poring over arcane tomes and reading the rambling works of Samuka, and so he has had no time to bother with basic cleanliness.

The high priest's quarters are also the home of 3 hell moths, enormous insects with the ability to immolate

themselves. Kelemen considers the 3 to be his pets, but will not hesitate to sacrifice them if it means victory.

Tactics: It is extremely likely that Kelemen is aware of the party's presence long before they reach his door. If he is, then he enhances himself with the following spells, in order: *mage armor*, *bear's endurance*, *fly*, *greater invisibility*, and *globe of invulnerability*. He then picks up his *staff of fire* and releases the 3 hell moths he keeps caged here.

Once the 3 hell moths are released, they immediately fly out of the room and attack the nearest living beings. They are intelligent enough to recognize the surviving Black Son guards, and the stone golems, and will not attack either.

Kelemen himself will follow the moths out of the room 1 round later. Ideally, he hopes that any intruders are still fighting the stone golem guards, as that will give him the opportunity to attack without fear of concentrated counterattacks. Kelemen's first action is to cast an area dispel against the intruders with his prepared *greater dispel magic*. From there, his actions depend upon his opponent's actions. If they do not seem aware of his presence, or if they cannot break free of the stone golems, then he begins throwing *fireballs* from his staff; Kelemen knows that his moths will likely survive any flame-based attack, is aware that the golems are immune to fire, and doesn't care if the

Black Son guards live or die, and so he will not hesitate to fire into a mixed crowd of combatants. If and when opponents begin to move towards him to engage in melee combat, he will use his staff to place a *wall of fire* staff midway down the hall. If truly pressed, he will retreat around the corner near his chambers, and will make a final stand there; Kelemen is desperate to keep possession of his research, and to protect it, and so under no circumstances will he allow the battle to be carried into the high priest's quarters. Kelemen fights to the death, believing that a great reward will await him in the infernal afterlife.

Treasure: In addition to the items Kelemen carries, his spellbook can be found inside a locked drawer in the desk (see below for details). The drawer is trapped with a *fire trap* spell. There is also a scroll of *dimensional anchor* (caster level 11) on the table, currently being used to mark an important passage in one of Kelemen's books.

Fire Trap: CR 6; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fire trap*, 11th level wizard), 1d4+11, DC 20 Reflex save half damage; Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Development: In truth, the most valuable treasures in the high priest's chambers are the mirror, and the books upon the desk. The books contain Kelemen's copious notes on the nature and origin of the dimensional effect that has fallen over the dark abbey. If the PCs spend 30 minutes reading his notes, they gain the knowledge that they must cast *dimensional anchor* on the altar in area 1B-6. If they spend less than 30 minutes but still read the note thoroughly, they receive a +4 bonus to any skill checks to understand area 1B-6.

The 6-foot-tall gilded mirror behind the desk is non-magical, but has been touched by the dimensional effect. As a result, the mirror's image shows both the reflection of any room it is in as it exists on the material plane, and also shows the echo of the room trapped in the dimensional shift. A DC 20 Spot or Search check notices that the mirror's reflection includes subtly different details than what actually is present, and a DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check recognizes these as planar emanations. Because the mirror exists on both the material plane and the dimensional shift simultaneously, it can serve as a window of sorts into the dimensional echo of the grand chapel. If the PCs carry it into the grand chapel, it may allow them to better prepare for battle against Samuka, the high priest. The mirror weighs 70 pounds.

Kelemen's Spellbook: 0 level – *arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, flare, mage hand, message, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st-level – *burning hands, charm person, chill touch, comprehend languages, mage armor, magic missile, protection from good, protection from evil, protection from chaos, protection from law, ray of enfeeblement, summon monster I, true strike*; 2nd-level –

arcane lock, bear's endurance, blindness/deafness, false life, hideous laughter, resist energy, scorching ray, summon monster II, touch of idiocy; 3rd-level – *clairaudience/clairvoyance, daylight, dispel magic, fireball, fly, greater magic weapon, hold person, lightning bolt, magic circle (chaos, evil, good, law), ray of exhaustion, summon monster III, vampiric touch*; 4th-level – *charm monster, detect scrying, dimensional anchor, enervation, fear, greater invisibility, ice storm, suggestion, summon monster IV, vampiric touch, wall of fire*; 5th-level – *baleful polymorph, cloudkill, cone of cold, dismissal, dominate person, lesser planar binding, telekinesis, waves of fatigue*; 6th-level – *guards and wards, globe of invulnerability, greater dispel, legend lore, mass suggestion, planar binding*.

Kelemen the Gentle, Wiz11: CR 11; Medium humanoid (human); HD 11d4+11; hp 37; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk Dagger +5 melee (1d4); SA Spells; SQ Spells; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 22, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy) +20, Craft (trap-making) +20, Concentration +15, Decipher Script +20, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (the planes) +20, Knowledge (religion) +20, Profession (herbalist) +20, Spellcraft +20; Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Focus (necromancy), Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (4/6/6/5/4/3/2): 0 – *resistance, detect magic, flare, touch of fatigue*; 1st-level – *mage armor, magic missile (x2), burning hands, chill touch, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd-level – *bear's endurance, hideous laughter, scorching ray (x2), blindness/deafness, false life*; 3rd-level – *dispel magic, fly, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch*; 4th-level – *greater invisibility, ice storm, enervation, fear*; 5th-level – *dismissal, cone of cold, waves of fatigue*; 6th-level – *globe of invulnerability, greater dispel*.

Possessions: Staff of fire (17 charges), ring of protection +2, headband of intellect +2, dagger.

Hell Moths (3): CR; 6; HD 9d8+27; hp 67; Init +7; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk Bite +10 melee (1d6+7); Full Atk Bite +10 melee (1d6+7); SA Engulf, immolation; SQ Resistance 20 (fire), scent, darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 21, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +9, Move Silently +13, Spot +9; Improved Initiative.

SA – Engulf (Ex): Grapple without provoking attack of opportunity. If successful, hell moth attacks engulfed target with +4 bonus. Attacks striking hell moth deal half damage to engulfed victim.

SA – Immolation (Su): 20 minutes after a successful grapple, the hell moth explodes for 6d10 damage to itself and to engulfed victim. Those within 10 ft. must succeed at a DC 17 Reflex save or suffer 1d8 points of damage for 1d4+4 rounds.



Area 1B-6 – The Grand Chapel (EL 14): Read or paraphrase the following:

You stand within a grand cathedral, as beautiful as it is sinister in aspect. Five rows of benches are set in front of you, leading up to a raised platform, upon which squats a blasphemous altar. The altar is covered in dry blood and glowing with dark sorceries. Behind the altar is an enormous, red marble statue; the statue depicts a skeletal demon with a face like melted wax, its clawed hands clutching the stylized symbol of a black sun against its chest.

The air in the chapel hums with infernal energies, catching your breath in your throat, and raising the hairs on the back of your neck. There is a foul reek of animal droppings here, and the sweet tang of putrid flesh, and you swear you can hear the ghostly echo of anguished screams.

Give the players handout D. The grand chapel is 70 feet long, 35 feet wide, with an arched ceiling that reaches 35 feet above the floor at its apex. There are two rows of five 10-foot-long, 200-pound benches sitting side by side down the center of the chapel, with a 10-foot-wide aisle between them, beginning 10 feet from the double doors to the south.

The blasphemous altar sits 20 feet from the north wall of the chapel, 10 feet in front of the enormous demon statue. The northern 20-foot section of the chapel is set 3 feet above the rest, with two stone steps granting access to it. The enormous demon statue set against the northern wall is 25 feet tall, and weighs 12,000 pounds. If its legs are destroyed, as if by a *disintegrate* spell (the legs are considered to be a single 10-foot cube for the purposes of this spell), the demon statue topples directly

forward 1 round later; the statue impacts every being or object in an area 10 feet wide and 20 feet long, inflicting 20d6 points of damage, with a Reflex save allowed for half damage. Though the statue strikes the altar, it does not destroy it. Instead, the head explodes upon impact, filling a 20-foot diameter radius around it with choking dust; the dust dissipates after 1d4 rounds, but functions as a *fog cloud* while it remains.

There are two balconies set 20 feet above the ground directly to the sides of the demonic statue. Each is accessible from a set of sweeping stairs.

Development: The grand chapel exists in two realities simultaneously: in the material world, and in the dimensional echo. The lynchpin that both separates and anchors the two versions of the grand chapel is the demonic altar. The altar is entirely made of a single block of black marble, 5 feet wide, 3 feet across, and 4 feet tall, and is set 5 feet above the north side floor on a raised, three step dais.

In order to bring the echo version of the grand chapel back into synch with the material plane version, the party need only cast a *dimensional anchor* on the altar. There is no need to make a ranged attack roll to strike the altar. In the round immediately following the casting, the grand chapel begins to flicker and pulse, the walls turning first crimson, then black, then purest white, in a riot of flashing colors. 1d3 rounds after that, the echo overlays itself exactly upon the material plane version of the grand chapel. See area 2-1 for the positions of Samuka the high priest, and his guardian beast, the hellthorn. The characters need not have defeated Oszkar before anchoring the twin chapels, but may well regret it if they do not; when the echo anchors itself to the material chapel, both Samuka and the hellthorn will immediately move to attack every living thing in the chapel, including Oszkar, his nightmare, and the fiendish boars.

The PCs may learn about the use of *dimensional anchor* on the altar in a number of ways. Reading Kelemen's notes in area 1B-5 is the most direct. Skill checks made to discern the general nature of the dimensional effects in this area of the abbey will provide an awareness that something unusual is afoot. Additional skill checks may be made in this area to understand how to anchor the room, with a +4 bonus applied if the PCs already understand the general dimensional effects of the abbey. A DC 24 Spellcraft or Knowledge (the planes) check, or a DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) or bardic knowledge check, will reveal that *dimensional anchor* must be cast on the altar to anchor the dimensional energies affecting this location.

Monsters: The grand chapel has been claimed by the huntsman Oszkar the Black, who is the default leader of the Cult of the Broken Word now that Samuka has disappeared. Oszkar is a savvy hunter, and psychopathic killer, who joined the cult because he admires

the absolute amorality of demons. He commands the allegiance of a cauchemar nightmare, a gift given to him by the Black Son in recognition of his absolute devotion, and a pack of fiendish boars that he captured and trained himself.

Currently, Oszkar and his beastly servants are growing desperate. Oszkar knows that if he does not find a way to escape soon, that he and the rest of the cultists will either starve to death, or be devoured by the demons, who cannot be held at bay forever. Already, he has resorted to cannibalism, having fed the corpses of three cultists to his troops, and to his beasts.

Oszkar is a middle-aged man dressed in ebony-black, studded leather armor. His face is permanently tanned, weather beaten, and reddened by both exposure to the elements, and a lifetime of heavy drinking. He wears his greyish-red hair in a long ponytail, the bottom of which is weighted down with a stone disk carved into the likeness of a leering demon's head.

Tactics: When the characters enter the grand chapel, Oszkar will be in the left balcony behind the demonic statue on the chapel's north wall, kneeling behind the balcony's protective railing; while here, he benefits from cover from anyone on ground level. When Oszkar first becomes aware of the party, he will enhance himself with *bear's endurance* and *cat's grace*, in that order. He will then cast *greater magic fang* upon his cauchemar nightmare, granting it a +2 enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls. Once Oszkar is prepared, he will wait for the party to enter the grand chapel.

When the first character in the adventuring party moves into the chapel, the fiendish boars will charge, as Oszkar has trained them to do. The boars will fight to the death, with no thought of retreat, and will attempt to surround the party, or at least prevent them from gaining access to the rear half of the chapel. Though stupid, they are intelligent enough to make good use of the obstacles provided by the rows of benches, and will attempt to channel the adventurers into a small area, where they can be overwhelmed.

The cauchemar nightmare will likewise charge to the attack, using its smoke breath to disorient powerful foes. Highly intelligent, it will lash out against spellcasters first, knowing that their spells are the greatest danger. It will attack in this fashion for a maximum of 2 rounds, and then will take flight to Oszkar's balcony, pausing long enough to allow him to mount.

Oszkar will attack using his enchanted bow, favoring flying targets and spellcasters, in that order. After a maximum of 2 rounds attacking in this fashion, he will mount the cauchemar nightmare, and then both will take flight, circling the battlefield at ceiling height and raining down arrows.

Oszkar, the cauchemar nightmare, and the fiendish boars fight to the death.

Treasure: The only treasure within the grand chapel is the equipment carried by Oszkar the Black.

Oszkar the Black, Rgr11: CR 11; Medium humanoid (human); HD 11d8+33; hp 86; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 18, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +11; Grp +13; Atk Longbow +16 ranged (1d8+2) or longspear +13 melee (1d8+2); Full Atk Longbow +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+2) or Rapid Shot longbow +14/+14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+2) or longspear +13/+8/+3 melee (1d8+2); SA Favored enemy (+6 versus humanoids (human), +2 versus humanoids (elf), +2 versus humanoids (dwarf)), combat style (archery); SQ Wild empathy, spells, woodland stride, swift tracker, evasion; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +14, Handle Animal +8, Hide +14, Knowledge (nature) +14, Listen +14, Move Silently +14, Ride +6, Search +14, Spot +14, Survival +14; Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Precise Shot, Iron Will, Many Shot, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Track.

Spells Prepared (2/2/1): 1st-level – *longstrider*, *magic fang*; 2nd-level – *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*; 3rd-level – *greater magic fang*, *cure moderate wounds*.

Possessions: +1 bane (humans) *strength* longbow of shock, +2 studded leather armor of light fortification, cloak of resistance +2, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, longspear, tanglefoot bags (x3)

Cauchemar Nightmare: CR 11; Large outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 15d8+105; hp 172; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +15; Grp +33; Atk Hoof +23 melee (2d6+10 + 1d4 fire); Full Atk 2 Hooves +23 melee (2d6+10 + 1d4 fire) and bite +18 melee (2d6+5); SA Flaming hooves (sets combustible materials alight), smoke (1/round as free action, 15 ft. cone, DC 16 Fort save or take –2 penalty to attack and dmg for 1d6 minutes); SQ Astral projection and etherealness (as the spells by 20th level wizard), darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 31, Dex 14, Con 24, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +19, Concentration +25, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +1 (+3 acting), Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +21, Move Silently +20, Search +21, Sense Motive +19, Spot +21, Survival +19 (+21 on other planes, and when following tracks); Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Run, Track.

Fiendish Advanced Boars (6): CR 4; Medium magical beast (extraplanar); HD 5d8+28; hp 49; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk Gore +6 melee (1d8+5); Full Atk Gore +6 melee (1d8+5); SA Ferocity (fights without penalty while disabled or dying), smite good (1/day, +5 dmg); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., lowlight vision, scent, damage reduction 5/magic, resistance 5 (cold, fire), spell resistance 10; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 3, Wis 15, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Listen +8, Spot +5; Alertness, Toughness.

Level 2: Dark Abbey Interior, Dimensional Echo

The dimensional echo version of the grand chapel can only be accessed once the characters have successfully anchored the altar. As such, it is not so much its own area as it is a template to be placed over areas of the dark abbey the characters have already explored.

With the exception of the second battle in the grand chapel, there are no new encounters in the abbey once the dimensional echo effects ends.

Dimensional effect: Once the altar is anchored, the dimensional effects that plague the rest of the dark abbey are ended. This means that the walls and floors of abbey section B return to normal, with statistics identical to those in abbey section A. In addition, the permanent *dimensional anchor* effect ends, meaning any surviving demons can *teleport* into abbey section B. Finally, when the dimensional echo is stopped, the wall between the common room and the library (areas 1A-15 and 16) is rendered fully solid.

Areas of the Map

Area 2-1 – The Grand Chapel (EL 14): Read or paraphrase the following as soon as the altar is subject to a *dimension anchor* spell:

The chapel shakes beneath your feet, toppling sconces and benches, and sending you crashing down to the ground with a painful thud. The very walls of the abbey seem to melt, and a dreadful sound like the ripping of flesh assaults your ears.

And then the world folds in two, shadows flowing and lacing together like stitches as tortured stone shrieks and grinds in its moorings. Then your senses fail.

When they return, the chapel is as it was, save for three things. An immense, writhing tangle of thick greenish-red rose vines now sprawls across the eastern and northern chapel walls; its blossoms are man-sized and crimson as fresh blood, and filled with row upon row of dagger length teeth.

Behind it, where the demon statue once stood, there is now a portal of absolute darkness. It floats in the air perhaps five feet above the ground, and in its obsidian depths you can see glimpses of a landscape inspired by the dreams of the damned. Crimson flares of light tear at the air above a blasted land of craters and precariously balanced columns of rock. All these images come to you as segmented, fractured impressions, stained glass panels against a starless sky, a mosaic of despair and madness.

And there is a man now standing on the blasphemous altar. He is dressed in flowing purple robes, which dance and contort to the rhythm of an

unseen wind. The man's face is crazed, his skin pulled so tight against his skull that his skin is blanched white. His scalp is raw and bleeding, as though he had torn his hair free in a fit of rage. He carries a long, wickedly curved dagger in his right hand, and holds a fist-sized crimson gem in his left.

Show the players handout E. The grand chapel is now restored to reality in full. It remains as it did when the party battled Oszkar the Black, save for the return of the priest, and the appearance of the hellthorn and the black portal.

Development: The black portal leads directly to a sister portal on the Black Son's estate, and characters who step forward into the grand chapel portal are instantly transported to the other, appearing there 1 round later. Once a character has passed through the portal, he cannot return through the portal for a full day, meaning they will not be able to participate in this encounter.

Monsters: The high priest Samuka is quite thoroughly insane. He believed completely that the sacrifices he made in the name of the Black Son would transform his body into that of a powerful demon, and he now believes the transformation has been carried out. As a result, he will roar and howl about the power of his "new body," and will invite the characters to "marvel at the strength of my limbs, and tremble at the foul glory that is mine alone!"

Underneath his robes, Samuka wears a heavy suit of magical plate armor. He is armed only with his gem, and with his dagger.

The hellthorn plant was sent by the demon prince the Black Son, to watch over the dark abbey and to serve as a final line of defense against reprisals from demon hunters, or other warriors of good. When the dimensional echo split the abbey, it was caught along with the high priest. The hellthorn considers the high priest to be its master, and will fight to protect him, but its priority is keeping the portal safe from intruders. The hellthorn plant fills the entire northern 40 feet of the temple, with its central bloom set directly in front of the portal, and its lashing vines set in squares adjacent to the central bloom.

Tactics: The hellthorn mindlessly attacks any being that is not Samuka, attempting to grapple with its lashing vines, so that it might bring victims to its mouth and swallow them. It is large enough to have a total of two Medium-sized beings in its gullet at any one time. If reduced to 11 hp, its central bloom will explode on its next turn, so that its spore eruption might allow it to live again.



High priest Samuka is completely insane, but his insanity is not so overwhelming that he cannot defend himself. As the combat begins, he is standing just in front of the central bloom, where it rests atop the altar. Samuka has no protective spells in place at the beginning of the encounter, and so he will concentrate on using offensive spells. If forced into melee, he will lash out with the magical dagger, the gemstone he holds in his left hand, and the *iron bands* he carries in a pouch around his waist.

The dagger Samuka carries is called the *dagger of souls*, and it is the weapon he used to offer sacrifice to the Black Son. The gem he carries is a *soulstone*, a powerful gem that can trap the spirit of a living being within its depths. Samuka will use the *soulstone* to devour the spirit of a warrior if he can, as he knows they have little chance of resisting its effects.

Treasure: Samuka has magical items worth far more than is typical for a character of his level. Primarily, this is because he possesses the *dagger of souls*, a powerful weapon of evil. The market price of the dagger artificially enhances the value of his treasure, because its most powerful ability is of no use in combat. The only treasure to be found in this encounter is the equipment Samuka carries and uses.

High Priest Samuka, Clr13: CR 13; Medium humanoid; HD 13d8+26; hp 94; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk *Dagger of souls* +11 melee (1d4+4); Full Atk *Dagger of souls* +11/+6 melee (1d4+4); SA Spells; SQ Spells, rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +16; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 22, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (religion) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16; Augment Summoning, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

Spells Prepared (6/7+1/7+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1): 0 – *detect magic*, *guidance* (x4), *resistance*; 1st-

level – *bane*, *cause fear*, *command*, *divine favor*, *doom*, *inflict light wounds*, *shield of faith*, *protection from good*; 2nd-level – *align weapon*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *death knell* (x2), *hold person* (x2), *spiritual weapon*, *desecrate*; 3rd-level – *bestow curse*, *blindness/deafness*, *cure serious wounds*, *inflict serious wounds*, *magic vestment*, *magic circle against good*; 4th-level – *dismissal*, *divine power*, *inflict critical wounds*, *planar ally*, *poison*, *unholy blight*; 5th-level – *greater command*, *righteous might*, *slay living* (x2), *dispel good*; 6th-level – *blade barrier*, *harm*, *heal*, *animate objects*; 7th-level – *blasphemy* (x2).

Domains: Chaos, Evil.

Possessions: *Dagger of souls*, +1 full plate of light fortification, *soulstone*, *iron bands*.

Hellthorn: CR 11; Huge plant; HD 12d8+60; hp 112; Init +0; Spd 0; AC 19, touch 7, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +9; Grp +23; Atk slam +15 (2d6+6) or bite (3d6+3); Full Atk 5 slams +15 (2d6+6) and bite (3d6+3); SA Constrict 2d6, improved grab, seeping poison, spore eruption, swallow whole; SQ Lowlight vision, bramble, plant traits; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 23, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +16, Spot +15; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Power Attack.

SA – Seeping poison (Ex): When the hellthorn is struck by piercing or slashing attack, attacker must save against Fort DC 21 or suffer 1d3 initial and 1d4 secondary Con damage.

SA – Spore eruption (Ex): When reduced to 10% hp, the hellthorn explodes and releases its spores. All creatures within a 30 foot radius must make a DC 21 Fort save or suffer 1d4 points of Con drain after 1 minute, and 1 more point per hour until dead.

SA – Swallow hole (Ex): The hellthorn can swallow whole creatures of size Huge or smaller, dealing 2d8 crushing damage + 2d8 acid damage each round. Swallowed creatures can escape after inflicting 30 damage against AC 16.

Level 3, Part 1: Hellscape

Abyssal Traits: The demon prince's estate is a literal chunk of the Abyss, with traits as described in the *DMG*.

Crossing the Demon Prince's Estate: The portal to the demon prince's Abyssal-asteroid is located over four miles from the remains of his estate, where the soul engines and the conclusion of the adventure are located. Characters can walk to the citadel if they choose, and risk only encounters with flights of vrock guards, as outlined in the wandering monster section, below. The ground is considered to be trackless desert terrain for the purposes of overland movement, meaning the characters will move at half speed.

Temperature: Severe heat; 115 degrees; Fort save every 10 minutes, DC 15 + 1 per consecutive check, on a failed save character takes 1d4 points of non-lethal damage and is fatigued; characters wearing heavy armor or clothing suffer –4 penalty to their save.

Wandering Monsters

The Black Son's estates are home to a great many demons and Abyssal beings of consummate powers. What remains of the prince's armies are currently camped upon the fields between the portal and the blasted ruins of the Black Son's citadel. As a result, as long as the party stays upon the surface of the estates, there is a 20% chance every 30 minutes that a flight of vrock stumbles upon the party. There is no effective limit to the number of vrock flights that the party might encounter.

Vrock Flight (1d4+1): CR 9; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 10d8+70; hp 115; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +20; Atk Claw +15 melee (2d6+6); Full Atk 2 claws +15 melee (2d6+6) and bite +13 (1d8+3) and 2 talons +13 (1d6+3); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Dance of ruin (requires 3 vrock, after 3 rounds 20d6 dmg to 100 foot radius, Ref save DC 18 fi), spell-like abilities (*mirror image*, *telekinesis* (DC 18), *greater teleport*, *heroism*, caster level 12th), spores (1/3 rnds, 1d8 dmg to all adjacent creatures, then 1d4 dmg for 10 rounds), *summon demon* (2d10 dretches or 1 vrock, 35% chance); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/good, immunity to electricity and poison, resistance 10 (acid, cold, fire) spell resistance 17, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +20, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +24, Move Silently +15, Search +15, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +15, Spot +24, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Areas of the Map

Area 3-1 – Blasted Hellscape (EL 12): Read or paraphrase a following:

As you step into the portal, your senses are assaulted by horrors and wonders beyond the ability of mortals to conceive; an endless forest of mile high trees set beneath a sky of crystal blue ocean; immense sharks, their fins made of clam shell and corral, swimming through a bottomless sea of pus; a world of living rock, with a mouth large enough to swallow the sky; a land of rainbows made flesh, where color wars with color, and shades of crimson twine, impassioned, with jade and ivory; all these and a million other sights, smells, and tastes fill you, and overwhelm you.

When at last this journey of a thousand instants is complete, you find yourself unceremoniously dumped upon hard earth. Rising shakily to your feet, your stomach lurching, you find yourself on a plane of blasted dirt, pockmarked by craters, and dotted with jumbled rock outcroppings rising like crooked fingers towards a sky of fire.

The sulfur-reeking air is hot, so hot that you feel dizzy and begin to sweat with the effort of merely breathing. At your feet is a path, well trod by cloven hooves and clawed feet. It stretches out before you like a snake, winding down and across miles of bleak badlands, towards a thick column of smoke billowing up against the far horizon.

The portal opens upon a flat plane, the land blasted by heat and pockmarked with 5-foot-deep craters. There are jumbled piles of rock scattered about the nearby area, each 20 feet tall at their highest point, and covering a 20-foot radius area. A character can jam himself into the spaces between the rocks, gaining total cover from airborne opponents, and cover from opponents on the ground.

Development: When the party arrives, they will be instantly subjected to the negative effects of the citadel's atmosphere. Passing through the portal nauseates living beings for 1d4 rounds.

A DC 16 Knowledge (the planes) or DC 24 bardic knowledge check reveals that the PCs are now in the Abyss.

One round after the party appears, the guardians of the portal, a pair of blasphemous constructs known as angel effigies, will attack them. As the encounter begins, the angel effigies are flying 30 feet above the ground, separated by a distance of 10 feet, which is close enough that each benefits from the other's unholy shroud ability.

Monsters: The area near the portal is guarded by two angel effigies, who were woven together from the remains of two angels that assaulted Black Son's citadel a few weeks past. Black Son set them to guard the portal, and to strike against any being who passes through it, whether man or demon.

Tactics: The angel effigies have little intelligence, but are cunning enough to recognize that the best tactic against a powerful group of adventures is to stay airborne. They will circle the party from the air, unleashing their spell-like attacks whenever possible. They will unleash their unholy fire as soon as it becomes available to them, and will attempt to remain close enough to one another that each can benefit from the other's unholy shroud ability.

If the party flees the battle, the angel effigies will pursue as best as they are able, heading at full speed towards the shattered remains of the Black Son's citadel.

Angel Effigy (2): CR 10; Large construct (evil); HD 10d10+30; hp 85; Init +8; Spd 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (good); AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +7; Grp +17; Atk Slam +14 melee (2d10+8); Full Atk +2 slams +14 melee (2d10+9); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Frightful presence, trample, unholy fire, spell-like abilities; SQ Construct traits, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/good and bludgeoning, spell resistance 23; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 27, Dex 19, Con -, Int 5, Wis 17, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +8, Spot +5; Hover, Improved Bull's Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

SA – Frightful presence (Ex): Will save DC 18, or shaken for 5d6 rounds.

SA – Trample (Ex): Medium-sized beings or smaller, 2d6+8 damage.

SA – Unholy fire (Su): Once every three rounds, five 10-foot-radius columns for 10d6 damage, half fire and half unholy, Reflex DC 18 for half damage.

SA – Spell-like abilities: 3/day – *blasphemy* (DC 20); at will – *call lightning* (DC 16), *feeblemind* (DC 18), *greater dispel magic*, *slow* (DC 16), *telekinesis* (DC 18), all as a 12th level caster

Area 3-2 – The Shattered Citadel (EL 12): This is the ruin of the Black Son's above ground manse. The smoke column the party saw from the portal in area 3-1 has its origin here. Read or paraphrase the following:

The immense column of smoke you saw from the portal has its birth here, in the ruins of what must have once been a truly awe-inspiring mansion, of a size to beggar the imaginations of the greatest mortal architects. Now nothing but rubble remains, a jumble of dust and dirt, of little value to anyone.

Looking around, your trained eyes pick out the evidence of a battle of staggering ferocity. Here



you see a shattered golden spear, its point buried in a pile of red ash, and there a barbed war-fork, its tines covered in bloody feathers more perfect and white than any swan's.

In the heart of the rubble, you can see a flight of winged vulture-demons, spiraling and circling perhaps 30 feet above the ground.

This blasted pile of rubble is all that remains of the Black Son's grand manse, destroyed in a cataclysmic battle with an angelic host. The manse was razed to its foundation, and little to nothing of value remains. If the party encounters a flight of vrock here, they can gain total cover from aerial opponents by hiding among the enormous chunks of rubble. The terrain is so blasted here that ground movement is reduced to half normal while moving over the rubble. The manse, when it existed, was 500 feet long, 150 feet wide, and surrounded by a fence carved of a single piece of immense bone. Now, nothing but traces of the foundation can be seen.

Door: Knowing that the angels who attacked his citadel believe him destroyed, Black Son has allowed his citadel to remain a smoking ruin, the better to hide his below-ground activities. The only passage into the chambers below the earth is through an immense bronze double-door, 15 feet wide and tall, and one foot thick, upon which an exact representation of Black Son's face has been carved. The door is buried under rubble in the exact center of the

citadel ruins, set against the foundation of what were once the Black Son's personal chambers. The door is locked with an immense bronze lock of cunning design, and at one time was also protected by an exceptionally lethal trap, but the trap detonated when the citadel exploded.

Secret Door: Search DC 15; Hardness 20; 500 hp; Break DC 36.

Mighty Lock: Open Lock DC 35; Hardness 10; 100 hp; Break DC 30.

Monsters: A flight of 5 vrock guards the remains of the citadel at all times. In addition, there is a 50% chance every 20 minutes that a flight of vrock comes to patrol the ruined citadel, rather than the standard 20%.

Tactics: The vrock here fight to the death, as they have been commanded to do by the Black Son. Because the rubble is difficult to navigate, they prefer to fight from the air, swooping down to strike with beak and claws as the opportunity presents itself. If possible, 2 of the vrock will work to keep the party pinned down, while the other 3 perform a dance of ruin.

Treasure: With a successful DC 30 Search check, the characters find a +2 *longspear* that is *bane against evil outsiders*. The spear belonged to a war-

rior of the celestial host, and was lost here when the citadel exploded. Of its original owner, there is no sign.

Vrock Flight (5): CR 9; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 10d8+70; hp 115; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +20; Atk Claw +15 melee (2d6+6); Full Atk 2 claws +15 melee (2d6+6) and bite +13 (1d8+3) and 2 talons +13 (1d6+3); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Dance of ruin (requires 3 vrock, after 3 rounds 20d6 dmg to 100 foot radius, Ref save DC 18 half), spell-like abilities (*mirror image*, *telekinesis* (DC 18), *greater teleport*, *heroism*, caster level 12th), spores (1/3 rnds, 1d8 dmg to all adjacent creatures, then 1d4 dmg for 10 rounds), *summon demon* (2d10 dretches or 1 vrock, 35% chance) ; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/good, immunity to electricity and poison, resistance 10 (acid, cold, fire) spell resistance 17, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +20, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +24, Move Silently +15, Search +15, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +15, Spot +24, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Level 3, Part 2: The Soul Engine

Descending Into the Soul Engine: The chambers below the citadel are built with the abilities of demons in mind. As such, there are no stairs leading down into the below-ground chambers, and the passageways are almost sheer vertical drops. As a result, the party will either have to fly from one encounter to the next, *teleport*, or attempt to scale the walls of the passage, a daunting prospect that will be slow going indeed.

Cavern Walls: The caverns and passages within this area are all rough-hewn stone. The DC of Climb checks within this area is 15.

The chambers and passages within this area are all built to demon scale. The passages that connect encounters are 20 feet in diameter.

Temperature: Extreme heat; 150 degrees; 1d6 points of damage per minute, with no save allowed; Fort save every 5 minutes, DC 15 + 1 per consecutive check, on a failed save character takes 1d4 points of non-lethal damage and is fatigued; characters wearing heavy armor or clothing suffer -4 penalty to their save.

Teleportation, Scrying and Similar Spell Effects: Black Son has been extremely diligent in ensuring that no one but he, and the guardians placed within the caverns know this area exists. In addition, the characters have no way of knowing the Black Son even exists; the demon prince's

part in this drama has been hidden from even the gods, who believe this plan to have been hatched by one of the great kings of the Abyss. As a result, most forms of divination are stymied, and the characters will have no way of scrying upon the Black Son, nor *teleporting* directly to him in area 3-5. They are not prevented, however, from *teleporting* within the caverns, save within the cat's cradle (area 3-3).

Areas of the Map

Area 3-3 – Cat's Cradle (EL 14): Read or paraphrase the following:

You stand on an enormous copper grate, perhaps 15 feet in diameter. Through the grate, you see a vast circular cavern, into the walls of which are set grates much like the one you stand upon, though considerably larger.

Just then, the ground shakes, and an enormous jet of magma, obsidian and red in equal measure, vomits from one of the grates and pours itself into another. The eruption lasts only an instant.

Show the players handout F. This 150-foot circular cavern is an exhaust vent for the soul engines. The walls of the cavern are covered with jagged outcroppings that are not large enough to stand on, but offer enough

handholds to make the climb a relatively easy one. The cavern is not a perfectly flat circle; there is a 10-foot-wide lip of flat ground on the very top and bottom of the cavern; each lip circles a 15-foot-wide diameter grate that prevents access to and escape from the cat's cradle.

The encounter begins when the characters arrive at the upper grate sealing the way into the cat's cradle. The grates that seal the entrance and exit of the exhaust port cavern are very heavy (4,500 pounds), and very sturdy. Fortunately, they are sized to prevent the comings and goings of large creatures like demons and devils, and so Medium-sized characters can pass through the grate with a DC 20 Escape Artist or Dexterity check. Creatures of Small size or smaller can pass through the grate without need of a check.

Grates: Hardness 12; 250 hp; Break DC 28.

Development: There are 10 enormous vents located here, spaced at various points along the walls and floor of the cavern (the areas marked A, B, C, D, and E). The vents are paired, with 2 vents set directly across from one another. Every round, 1 set of vents releases a geyser of Abyssal energy-charged magma, a stream of glowing molten rock that flows from one vent to its mate in the space of a breath. As the encounter begins, roll a d10, using the table below to determine which vent is exhausting as the encounter begins.

d10	Vent
1-2	Vent A
3-4	Vent B
5-6	Vent C
7-8	Vent D
9-10	Vent E

The vents run in alphabetical order, so once you have determined which of the vents is exhausting as the characters enter the cat's cradle, you can simply cycle through the vents in subsequent rounds.

Each exhaust port is 20 feet in radius, and projects 5 feet out from the cavern wall, meaning a character can stand and fight upon an exhaust port. The magma jet each port vents is a 20-foot-wide cylinder that reaches to the corresponding port on the opposite side of the cavern.

Exhaust Port: AC 3; hardness 10; 500 hp; Break DC 36.

Abyssal Magma Jet: Those caught within the 20-foot-wide radius column suffer 20d6 points of damage, half of which is fire, and half of which is corrupt, typeless energy. A DC 21 Reflex save is allowed for half damage. Those within 10 feet of a magma column suffer 5d6 points of splash damage, half fire and half typeless energy, but can attempt a DC 19 Reflex save for half damage.

Dimensional Anchor: In order to ensure that his enemies cannot bypass this location via *greater teleport*, the Black Son has conspired to seed this location with powerful dimensional energies similar to those that infected the dark abbey. As a result, the cat's cradle, and a 200-foot radius all around it, are affected as by a *dimensional anchor* spell that cannot be dispelled. Creatures that have used *teleport* or other, similar spells to travel to the upper grate appear there without harm, but cannot *teleport* beyond it, or *teleport* from it to another location.

Monsters: Two bebeliths have been captured by Black Son and trapped here, so that he might defend his *soul cauldron* and soul engines from the grasping hands of other demons, devils, and powerful celestial beings. The two bebeliths are eternally hungry, and scuttle to attack the party as soon as they enter the chamber. The bebeliths begin the encounter resting upon the bottom grate of the cavern.

Tactics: The bebeliths are highly intelligent, and have dwelled in this area long enough to have learned the pattern of deadly Abyssal energy emanations by heart. In combat, they will attempt to lure opponents over to the enormous exhaust vents, so that they will be incinerated. If necessary, they will attempt to grapple their opponents and pin them over the exhaust vents, releasing them in the round before an emanation. The bebeliths keep to themselves in combat; they have been trapped here by the Black Son's design, and are more like two tarantulas in a cage fighting over scraps than allies.

The bebeliths fight to the death; Black Son has chained them to the cavern by means of *leashstones*, and so they cannot travel more than 500 feet from the cavern.

Treasure: The only treasures within the cat's cradle are the *leashstones* that anchor the bebeliths to this cavern.

Bebelith (2): CR 10; Huge outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 12d8+96; hp 150; Init +5; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +12; Grp +29; Atk Bite +19 melee (2d6+9 + Fort save DC 24 or initial dmg 1d6 Con, secondary 2d6 dmg) or web +11 ranged; Full Atk Bite +19 melee (2d6+9 + Fort save DC 24 or initial dmg 1d6 Con, secondary 2d6 dmg), and 2 claws +14 melee (2d4+4), or web +11 ranged; Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Poison (Fort save DC 24 or initial dmg 1d6 Con, secondary 2d6 dmg), rend armor (if it hits with both claws, 4d6+18 dmg dealt to opponent's armor), web (4/day, 30 ft. max range, 10 ft. range increment, DC 24 Str or Escape Artist check to escape, 14 hp and 0 hardness); SQ Damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., *plane shift* (as the spell, 12th level caster), scent, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 28, Dex 12, Con 26, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Climb +24, Diplomacy +3, Hide +16, Jump +28, Listen +16, Move Silently +16, Search +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks); Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Grapple, Power Attack, Track.

Area 3-4 – The Soul Cauldron (EL 13): This is the last obstacle the party must overcome before gaining access to the soul engines, and facing the final battle against the demon prince Black Son. Read or paraphrase the following, and show the players handout G:

Dropping down, you find yourself near the ceiling of a massive cavern, perhaps 100 feet above a sea of boiling magma. The magma churns as though alive, spitting greasy chunks of ebony fire up and over a concentric circle of pathways set perhaps 20 feet above the lava sea. A large cavern, sealed by a portcullis, is set against the west wall of the cavern. It is accessible from the pathways.

In the exact center of the room squats an enormous black cauldron. Even from here, you can see its contents, a sickly green soup that bubbles as savagely as the lava that heats it. Four beings of living fire stand sentinel around the cauldron, their flames reflecting brightly off a clutch of crimson gems set at the cauldron's base.

The soul cauldron chamber is a massive cavern, 200 feet across, with a ceiling that stretches 100 feet above the surface of a deep lake of boiling magma. Three 10-foot-wide catwalks radiate out in concentric circles from the center of the room; the circular catwalks are connected to one another by three 10-foot-wide catwalks spaced equidistant from one another. The web of catwalks sits 20 feet above the lava sea, supported by thick stone columns.

The exit to the soul engines is a wide mouthed cavern set into the wall of the cavern at the same height as

Recognizing the Soul Cauldron

The *soul cauldron* is an artifact of monumental power, and though the Black Son has done all he can to erase its existence from the litany of history, its legacy is not so easily destroyed. Those who are knowledgeable in the occult (for example, demon hunting adventurers) have a good chance of recognizing the *soul cauldron* for what it is, or at least puzzling out its nature through careful investigation.

Lore of the Soul Cauldron: The *soul cauldron* is an infamous device, one which many ancient legends make oblique reference to. A character with bardic knowledge or ranks in Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (the planes) can learn the following about the artifact by spending a few moments studying it:

DC Information

- 20 In the long-lost fourth volume of his history of the Abyss, Beyond the Gate of Endless Stars, the dragon sage Monvoldunmuth speaks of “a cauldron of pitiless night, old as three cycles of time... the greatest treasure of the lords of the damned, and the darkest fear of the stewards of glory.” According to Monvoldunmuth, this “greatest treasure” is rumored to have the power to grant a demon his greatest desire.
- 25 According to legend, the god of love and peace was driven to make war only once, when a demon king used a device of unimaginable power to drain and devour the soul of the god's consort. This most blasphemous of weapons was said to be “of hell-spawned iron, tempered in the fires of Hell's heart, and filled with the shrieking spirits of the thrice-damned.”
- 35 In the 666th stanza of the Lament of Amund, the Bard of Golden Harmony writes of the fall of the paladin Malicence, who damns herself to an eternity ruling a layer of the Abyss when she drinks of “the Cauldron of Souls' screaming waters” in a misguided attempt to absorb the souls of her husband and child, who have been drowned in the cauldron by her greatest enemy, and brother, the blackguard Rombul. Though the Bard of Golden Harmony's description of the “Cauldron of Souls” is typically flowery, it matches that of the Soul Cauldron exactly.

Mechanics of the Soul Cauldron: In addition to learning the lore of the *soul cauldron*, the characters can also puzzle out its abilities by studying the cauldron's viscous soul-fluid for at least 1 round and succeeding at a DC 20 Spellcraft check. With a successful check, the character will recognize that the fluid is the melted remains of the red *soul crystals* found throughout the Dark Abbey. With a DC 25 check, they learn the above fact and also learn that the fluid contains the distilled essences of mortal souls reduced to their base components. With a successful DC 30 check and at least 3 rounds of study, the characters learn all of the above, and also understand that the cauldron's magic changes distilled souls into a powerful elixir that can supercharge the spirits of those insane or corrupt enough to drink it.

Spells: In addition to using their knowledge to gain understanding of the *Soul Cauldron*, the characters can also use divination spells like *legend lore* to learn about the artifact. In addition to this most useful of spells, the characters can also learn the above information by communing with their deities, or with powerful otherworldly beings.

the catwalks. The cavern is sealed with a portcullis of staggering weight and durability.

Forbidding Portcullis: 4" thick; hardness 15; 120 hp; Break DC 28; Str check to lift 25; Open Lock DC 35.

Development: The enormous cauldron in the exact heart of the room is the *soul cauldron*, an ancient and powerful artifact of demonic origin that Black Son keeps here so the heat of the infernal hellfire sea will keep it eternally bubbling. Scattered about the soul engine are seven *soulstones* that have been left behind by Black Son, to be used in the moments after his estate makes impact with the mortal world.

A DC 25 bardic knowledge check identifies the *soul cauldron* and *soulstones*. A DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check does not identify the object per se but reveals the function of the room.

The *soul cauldron* stands on a hellstone dais, which itself rests upon a 20-foot-radius circle of iron. Both the Hellstone dais and the *soul cauldron* are completely resistant to magic, but the iron circle is not, nor is the 10-foot-wide stone column that sits directly below them and supports the iron catwalks. A *disintegrate* spell cast upon the stone column will instantly destroy it; 1 round after the column falls, the iron circle shears loose from the surrounding catwalks and falls into the lava. Eventually, over a period of three to four centuries, the *soul cauldron* will be reduced to its component elements, and its essence returned to the mortal plane.

Alternately, the characters can destroy a section of the iron circle. Should they do so, they then must find a way to tip the 1,000-pound soul cauldron, which should prove no easy task.

Iron Circle: AC 3; 4" thick; hardness 8; 300 hp per 5-foot section; Break DC 28 per 5-foot section.

Stone Support: AC 3; 10' radius; hardness 6; hp 1,500 hp per 5-foot cube; Break DC 30.

The *soulstones* scattered around the cauldron all contain a living soul taken from one of the villagers kidnapped by the Cult of the Broken Word. Characters who look at a *soulstone* can see a screaming, vaporous image of the trapped soul, which claws at the gem as though desperate to escape.

Monsters: The *soul cauldron*, and the tunnel leading to the soul engines, are guarded by a powerful wrack elemental (see page 56) and 4 firefiends, three-headed, three-legged, and three-armed beings made of living fire and armed with blazing swords.

Tactics: The wrack, and the firefiends that serve it, move to attack the party as soon as they enter the chamber. They work to keep the party from escaping down the path that leads to the soul engines, and will give chase if necessary, but will stop pursuit to prevent their enemies gaining access to the *soul cauldron*. The wrack attempts to grapple any opponent foolish enough to come near it, while the firefiends work in pairs to surround and flank opponents. If possible, they will attempt to push opponents into the magma pool below the catwalks, knowing that little can survive immersion in lava.

Abyssal Lava: Those who come into contact with the lava suffer 5d6 points of damage, half of which is fire, and half of which is corrupt, typeless energy. Beings that are immersed in the magma suffer 20d6 points of damage, half of which is fire, and half of which is corrupt.

Recognizing the Soul Engines

Unlike the *soul cauldron*, the Black Son's *soul engines* do not have a long and storied history. Or rather, they do, but it's so well hidden as to be unknown to anyone but the would-be demon king. For this reason, the information the characters will learn about the *Soul Engines* will mainly be related to their function and to their construction.

With 2 rounds of study and a DC 20 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check or a DC 22 Knowledge (arcana) check, the characters understand that the vast mechanisms in the Black Son's fortress are powerful engines powered by eldritch magic.

If their Knowledge (arcana) check result is 25 or higher, they recognize that the green energy coursing through the engine columns is soul energy, the spiritual remains of uncounted millions of damned mortals.

There is no check needed to determine that the *soul engines* ceased to function the moment the Black Son was slain.

Characters with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (religion) gain a +2 synergy bonus to their skill checks to determine the function of the *soul engines*.

There is one bit of information a character with Bardic Knowledge or the Knowledge (religion) skill might remember upon seeing the *soul engines*: an obscure legend known only to the most learned and wise. With a DC 30 check, he remembers the following anecdote: "In ancient days, ten times ten thousand demons slaved for an eon in the construction of a great engine of consummate blasphemy, though in whose name they toiled no one can claim for certainty. When at last their labors were complete, the demons were slain to the last, their festering spirits thrown into the nothingness of the oblivion winds."

rupt, typeless energy. Lava damage continues for 1d3 rounds after contact, inflicting half damage in subsequent rounds.

Treasure: If the characters destroy the powerful artifact, the *soul cauldron*, and the 7 *soulstones*, then they gain a significant story bonus. Alternately, they can keep the *soulstones*, gaining many useful magical items, but losing out on the story bonus.

Wrack: CR 12; Large elemental (fire, evil); HD 20d8+100; hp 198; Init +11; Spd 50 ft. fly 60 ft. (good) (up to one hour per day); AC 26, touch 18, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +15; Grp +26; Atk Slam +24 melee (2d6+7 plus 1d8 fire plus 1d8 corrupt energy); Full Atk 2 slams +24 melee (2d6+7 plus 1d8 fire plus 1d8 corrupt energy); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Abyssal breath, Abyssal flare, improved grab, soul kindle; SQ Abyssal corona, fiery wings, damage reduction 10/—, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immune to fire, vulnerability to cold; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +21, Will +9; Str 24, Dex 29, Con 20, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Listen +14, Spot +13; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse.

SA – Abyssal breath (Su): Once every 3 rounds, 8d8 damage, half fire/half corrupt typeless energy, DC 25 for half damage, heals 5 points of damage to wrack each time it kills a victim.

SA – Abyssal flare (Su): At half hp or less the wrack can explode, inflicting damage equal to its current hp to all within 30 foot radius, with no save.

SA – Soul kindle (Su): Each time the wrack succeeds at a grapple check, its opponent is drained of 1 Con, and the wrack gains 5 hp.

SQ – Abyssal corona (Su): Adjacent beings and those attacking unarmed or with melee attacks suffer 1d8 fire damage and 1d8 typeless energy damage, with DC 25 Fort save for half.

Firefiends (4): CR 7; Medium-size elemental (fire); HD 8d8+24; hp 60; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk Longsword +11 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 fire); Full Atk 3 longswords +11 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 fire); SA Spit (once every 2 rounds, 10 ft. range, DC 14 Reflex or suffer 1 damage and catch fire), superior multi-weapon fighting; SQ Elemental traits, all-around vision (can't be flanked), darkvision 60 ft., fire subtype; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +14, Move Silently +14, Spot +14; Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Area 3-5 – The Soul Engines (EL 16): This is the final encounter of the Citadel of the Demon Prince, a life-or-death struggle with the architect behind this dimension-spanning plot, the demon prince Black Son. Read or paraphrase the following, and show the players handout H:

You sense that you have come now to the end of your journey. You stand before a sight you have

never seen the equal of in all your adventuring: an immense chamber, fully 500 feet high and at least as far across, choked with a jungle of ivory wires that wind and flow across every possible surface. The wires all converge on the center of the cavern, where four massive edifices of copper and bronze stand like pillars of darkest creation, like the fingers of some elemental god, their hollow cores filled with columns of jade-green fire. Within the fire you behold the legions of the damned, a billion faces shrieking for release from torments you dare not imagine.

A three-tiered set of spindly pathways, all connected by stairs but unprotected by railings, criss-cross the cavern. Your feet stand at the edge of the lowest catwalk, and below you is an assuredly lethal fall.

This is the heart of the dark prince's citadel, and the literal engine that powers his grand ambitions. The soul engine chamber is massive, fully 500 feet from floor to ceiling, and just as long and wide, but the cavern leading into this chamber is set just 150 feet from the vaulted ceiling. A three-tiered set of 5-foot-wide catwalks spans this chamber, each set 20 feet above the other; each tier is connected by multiple flights of stairs, but neither the stairs nor the catwalks have guard railings. The cavern opens onto the bottom most catwalk.

Four massive pillars, each a monstrosity of brass and copper, bound and surrounded by miles and miles of thin, flexible ivory tubing, dominate the room. Each pillar binds a roaring column of jade fire, in which the writhing, shrieking faces of uncounted tortured souls can be seen. These are the soul engines, machines of terrible power that propel the dark prince's estate across the void of dimensions. The pillars are 75 feet in diameter, and reach from the floor to the ceiling. Any living being who dares pass into the jet of flame is instantly and irrevocably destroyed, their body atomized and their soul sucked down into the soul engine.

Monsters: The cambion demon prince the Black Son spends almost all his time here, and will be here when the characters arrive. The demon prince is a 7-foot-tall, strikingly handsome man with obsidian skin. Long ram's horns curl up from his long hair, and he has 1" long jagged fangs and carefully trimmed clawed hands and feet. He is dressed in deep purple armor studded with rivets of obsidian, and wears a long black hooded cloak at all times.

Tactics: As soon as Black Son becomes aware of the party's arrival, he casts *cat's grace*, *fox's cunning*, *magic circle against good*, and *freedom of movement* upon himself, in that order. If he has time, he also casts *nondetection*.

Black Son is a deadly, ruthless opponent who takes full advantage of his magical items, and the unique terrain of this encounter. His favored tactic is to run along

the bottom of the soul engine's many catwalks, using his *ring of invisibility* and *boots of spider climb*, attacking characters from ambush. He uses sneak attack whenever possible, and will attempt to study an opponent long enough to perform a death attack. As the encounter begins, he will attempt to hide *invisibly* and follow the characters, using a death attack to strike the most vulnerable member of the party. Ideally, this will be a spellcaster, as he fears their abilities more than he does a warrior's.

If pressed, Black Son will use *dimension door* to flee to a safe area, and then attempt to use his Use Magic Device skill to heal himself with his *wand of cure serious wounds*. He will fight to the death, as his destiny depends upon the outcome of this battle.

Treasures: The only treasures within this room are the magical items carried by the Black Son.

Black Son, Cambion Demon Rog1/Assassin9: CR 17; Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 8d8 +10d6+71; hp 184; Init +11; Spd 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 29, touch 20, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +15; Grp +19; Atk shortsword +25 melee (1d6+7); Full Atk shortsword +25/+20/+15 melee (1d6+7); SA Sneak attack +6d6, spells, spell-like abilities (*detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *fear* (DC 18), *levitate*, *polymorph self*, caster level 10); SQ Spells, poison use, improved uncanny dodge, hide in plain sight, damage reduction 10/good, spell resistance 15, demon qualities, darkvision 60 ft., telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +18, Will +12; Str 20, Dex 24, Con 20, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Balance +27, Bluff +24, Concentration +16, Escape Artist +15, Hide +27, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +24, Move Silently +26, Search +16, Sense Motive +17, Spot +24, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +24; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (shortsword).

Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3): 1st-level – *ghost sound*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike* (x3); 2nd-level – *cat's grace*, *darkness*, *fox's cunning*; 3rd-level – *deeper darkness*, *magic circle against good*, *misdirection*, *nondetection*; 4th-level – *dimension door*, *freedom of movement*, *poison*.

Possessions: +3 studded leather armor of shadow and silent moves, +2 keen short sword of throwing and returning, wings of flying, boots of spider climb, ring of invisibility, wand of cure serious wounds (10th level, 23 charges).



Concluding the Adventure

When the heroes have defeated the dark prince Black Son, read or paraphrase the following:

As the demon prince falls, the massive columns of brass and wire-bound fire flare up, and then gutter out, as though snuffed by the hand of an unseen god. The ground quakes beneath your feet, once, and then again, and then slowly pulses to stillness, a heart giving up its last moments of life.

You have bearded the great beast in his lair, and lived to tell the tale.

This concludes the adventure Citadel of the Demon Prince.

With the destruction of the cult, and the death of the Black Son, the characters have successfully saved the world from guaranteed spiritual annihilation. But this does not necessarily mean their task is complete. At the least, the characters must still escape from the demon prince's citadel, which can be as simple or complex a task as you wish it to be.

Should you wish to quickly wrap up the adventure, then the characters can simply retrace their steps and escape via the same portal they gained access to the citadel from. Getting back to the portal should be a relatively simple matter, particularly if the characters have access to *teleport* or other travel magics. If you want, you can spice up their escape in the following ways:

Circling Vultures: Though the demon prince and his most dangerous servants are dead, there is still a vast army of demons infesting the surface of the citadel. Unless the characters advertise what they have done, there is no chance that the demons will understand that their leader is dead and his plan foiled. Therefore, there is a good chance that patrols of demons will accost the players upon their exit from the ruined fortress, particularly if the heroes choose not to simply *teleport* back to the gateway. Be careful if choosing to use this option – since the characters have already defeated the Black Son, random fights against vrock patrols will likely seem very anti-climactic, and may well lead to player frustration, particularly if the party is heavily wounded and resource-depleted (as they are likely to be).

Dangerous Rumbings: Instead of having the Soul Engines simply fall silent with the Black Son's death, you might choose to have them (and the citadel they power) begin to crumble immediately after the final battle. If you choose this option, then it is advisable that you handle the destruction of the citadel in a narrative fashion, rather than as a prescribed round by round event. The goal here is to impress upon the players the *risk* of character death, without actually killing the characters (barring acts of deliberate stupidity) – the conclusion should play out like a classic escape sequence in an action adventure, with the characters racing one step ahead of explosions, crumbling cavern walls, and jets of Abyssal lava.

Rewards

When rewarding experience for completing this adventure, make sure to include the following values for successfully accomplishing each of the goals listed below. Note that these awards are given to each member of the party who took an active part in achieving the objective. These awards are not divided amongst the party as part of the group experience pool – instead, each adventurer who participates gains the full amount listed with each reward.

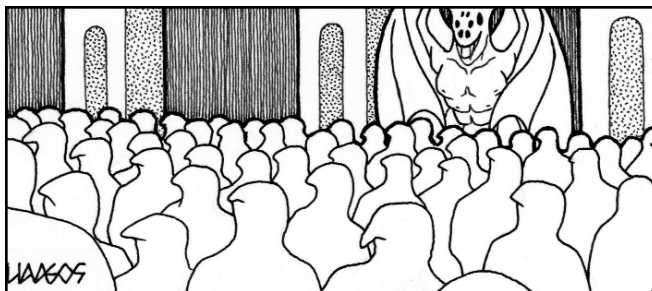
- For freeing the adventurer Katachek from eternal unlife as a bodak: 500 XP.
- For freeing the cultists from the eternal dirge: 700 XP.
- For rescuing all the captured villagers: 500 XP (+250 XP if the party shepherds them beyond the main gate).
- For interring and consecrating the remains of the angel effigies: 1,000 XP for paladins and clerics, 750 XP for other characters.
- For destroying the *soul cauldron* and smashing all the *soul stones*: 3,000 XP.

Further Adventures

The events of Citadel of the Demon Prince can easily spawn any number of follow-up adventures, tales that will build upon the heroes' exploits and take the story into new and exciting directions. The GM is encouraged to consider the after effects of the demon prince's ambitions, always with the needs of his campaign world, and the interests of the players in mind. Here are a few suggestions for adventures continuing where the Citadel of the Demon Prince leaves off:

- The destruction of a demon cult does not automatically remove the stench of the Abyss. The land around the black abbey is tainted with the essence of the lower planes, serving as a powerful lure to draw the attentions of those who worship evil. It is very likely that one or more powerful groups or evil beings will attempt to claim the black abbey for their own, setting themselves up as de facto rulers of the land. Possible interested parties include: necromancers and clerics dedicated to gods of evil, a powerful half-fiend warlord and his cult-like band of followers, an ambitious demon previously summoned to the mortal plane, or an elder dragon born from the union of a red drake and a balor.
- If you decide that the Cult of the Broken Word is not restricted to the dark abbey, then it is almost certain that at least one other cell of the organization will attempt to take control of the abbey. In lieu of the horrendous defeat already suffered, it is likely the Cult will send only its most powerful members to the abbey. The same scenario is likely to occur if one or more cultists within the abbey survives the adventure – Oszkar the Black, for example, would like nothing better than to claim the abbey, and then the entirety of the cult, for his own.

- Conversely, the black abbey could become a battleground between rival organizations that are nominally good hearted. One of the sad truths of being a demon hunter is recognizing that even good beings can succumb to pride and ambition, and thus come to serve the cause of darkness. It is not unlikely that in the aftermath of the battle against the black prince and his dark abbey, multiple churches and kingdoms may take steps to seize control of the abbey and the nearby lands, the better to ensure that evil cannot take hold there again. Of course, each group will believe itself the best suited to oversee the dark abbey, and will refuse to relinquish control to a "rival" group. The heroes may be required to intervene before blood is spilled on the abbey grounds... again.
- The destruction of a demon prince, even one as disliked and overly ambitious as the Black Son, will not go unnoticed or unavenged. It is very likely that more than one demon lord will choose to strike back at the upstart adventurers who presumed to slay demon royalty. Their responses may include sending cult assassins to murder the heroes in their sleep, bribing spellcasters to banish the heroes to the Abyss, where they can be slain in open battle, or most insidiously of all, working quietly to corrupt the heroes into a life of blasphemy and demonic servitude.
- Without the Black Son to keep them in line, the more powerful demons he once controlled will quickly move to claim power for themselves. Within the space of a few days, the demons will organize themselves into factions, and declare open war upon one another. After perhaps a week's worth of vicious conflict, demons will begin to flee the Citadel in droves, submerging themselves into the cosmic ether and sinking back down into the Abyssal depths.
- The hosts of heaven do not take the destruction of their armies lightly. With the death of the Black Son, it is very likely the angels will attempt to swoop down and annihilate the demon citadel entirely. A great, cosmic-scale adventure can be had if the demon hunters are enlisted to join, or even lead a host of angels against the remaining forces of the Black Son. As a complication, you might choose to have the Citadel reabsorbed into the layer of the Abyss from which it was torn – of course, this should occur at the exact moment the angels and demon hunters are making their assault.



Appendix One: Dark Abbey Environs

The lands around the black abbey are a mix of heavy deciduous forests and cultivated farmland, dotted with small farming hamlets and a few roadside shrines. While there is no real need for the adventurers to travel to any of these locations, it is possible that they might wish to seek shelter in a shrine or choose to escort the surviving villagers rescued from the temple to the safety of the nearest hamlet. Of course, if you have chosen to place this adventure within a kingdom in your own campaign setting, you might wish to substitute existing locations for those described below.

Mother Green's Rest: Located just a mile from the dark abbey, this small shrine has borne the brunt of the Cult of the Broken Word's ire, having been desecrated no less than three times in the last three years. The last attack, which occurred just two months ago, was by far the worst: a small force of cultists, led by the huntsman Oszkar the Black, burned the shrine almost down to the ground. Now, all that remains of the small shrine is a burnt-out shell standing over a small, crude table of pitted wood. A few small offerings have been heaped upon the table, mostly overripe fruit, a few green pinecones, and handfuls of grass seed, all placed there by the shrine's nominal caretaker, Holst Stoltzfad.

Holst (male gnome Adpt3) is an old man now, even by gnomish standards, having tended the shrine for more than two centuries. Driven nearly mad with fear, but determined to rebuild the shrine no matter how many times it is destroyed, Holst could prove a valuable ally to the demon hunters. He is more than willing to accept the burden of caring for what villagers the party rescues, and will gladly feed them, tend their wounds, and then lead them to the relative safety of their home villages. Holst is deeply superstitious, and fearful of violence – a fear that has only grown stronger since the day the Cult of the Broken Word appeared – but is brave enough to approach the party should they appear in need of aid.

Holst knows one piece of information that may prove of value to the party, though he will not volunteer it, owing to his superstitious fear of retribution from the armies of the damned. Holst saw Oszkar the Black mounted on his nightmare steed the night of the final attack, though he did not recognize him as a human. Instead, Holst will describe Oszkar as “a dark demon from the bowels of Hell, half man and half horse, big as a giant and wrapped in a cloak made of the midnight sky. His hooves were red and fiery as coals, and he pissed fire as a man might shed water.” Holst absolutely believes the above description to be true, and cannot be dissuaded from his story.

Woodroe (small thorp): Woodroe is the thorp nearest to the dark abbey, and was the first to be completely emptied by cult slavers. Now it is nothing but a ghost town, completely uninhabited except for a family of brown bears that

has claimed the inn (and its food stores) as its own. At its peak, the thorp was home to no more than 40 farmers, and so it is tiny by any standards, with only seven buildings total lining the sides of a single, woefully bumpy dirt track. Now-neglected fields of wheat and apples surround Woodroe, and the sickly-sweet stench of rotten grains and fruit hangs heavy in the air.

When it was populated, Woodroe was home to only a single, small inn that doubled as a general store. Most of the inn's items still remain, as thieves fear to approach the “cursed” town – most items of up to 30 gold pieces are available for purchase within the inn, though if the heroes escort the refugees of the dark abbey back to Woodroe, they will not be charged for any equipment they may take.

Appendix Two: New Monsters

There are a variety of new monsters used in this adventure. The angel effigy, hellthorn, and wrack are brand new. The aeshma demon, cambion demon, caryatid column, daraka demon, dracolisk, firefiend, gharros demon, gorgimera, and hell moth and are all from Tome of Horrors, an excellent monster resource published by Necromancer Games. They are reprinted below in summary form for reference. For full details, pick up a copy of the Tome of Horrors.

ANGEL EFFIGY

Large Construct (evil)

Hit Dice:	10d10+30 (85 hp)
Initiative:	+8
Speed:	40 ft., fly 80 ft (good)
Armor Class:	25 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +12 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 21
BAB/Grapple:	+7/+17
Attack:	Slam +14 (2d10+8)
Full Attack:	2 slams +14 (2d10+9)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Frightful presence, trample, unholy fire, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/good and bludgeoning, spell resistance 23
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 27, Dex 19, Con -, Int 5, Wis 17, Cha 17
Skills:	Intimidate +8, Spot +5
Feats:	Hover, Improved Bull's Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Environment:	Any, usually extraplanar
Organization:	Solitary, or 1d4 (flight)
Challenge Rating:	10
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	11-19 HD (Large), 20-30 (Huge)



This strange creature looks like a deranged child's sculpture of an angel. Formed of twigs and bones twined together with cured leather adorned with flecks of skin and tufts of golden hair, this tall, bandy-legged effigy seems both fragile and awkward. It has enormous, tattered wings made of a wooden and bone frame across which cured flesh, secured with bits of fingernail and teeth, has been stretched.

The true enemies of the Abyss are not the devils of Hell, or the mortals of the material plane. These are rivals and victims respectively, worthy of scorn and contempt, but not worthy of the true depths of a demon's hate. No, the true enemies of the legions of the endless depths are the protectors of mortal souls, the guardians of light and goodness: the angels of the heavens above.

The war between the demons and the angels has raged for eternity, with neither side asking nor offering quarter. Demons hate angels with a depth of passion that cannot be understood or imagined by those who are not composed of pure malice, and darkest evil. For the demons, it is not enough to slay angels. Instead, they must be desecrated, their souls splintered and tainted.

An angel effigy is made from the remains of an angelic being slain in direct combat with a demon. Though it still possesses much of the angel's Heaven-borne power, that power is twisted and corrupted, so that it serves only the Abyss.

An angel effigy appears as a crudely made mockery of an angel, formed of twigs and bones twined together with the cured intestines of an angel's corpse, and adorned with flecks of skin and tufts of golden hair. Tall and bandy

legged, an angel effigy seems at first glance to be both fragile and awkward, but is possessed of surprising durability, strength, and grace. An angel effigy has enormous, tattered wings made of a wooden and bone frame across which cured flesh, secured with bits of fingernail and teeth, has been stretched. Though feathers are glued to the wings with dried angel's blood, the effigy flies by means of potent, Abyssal magic, instead of under its own power.

COMBAT

An angel effigy is a near-mindless killing machine, one that knows nothing of fear or remorse. It attacks primarily with its potent spell-like abilities, and with its unholy fire ability, flying high above the battlefield and raining down corruption-fueled destruction on its enemies. If faced with magic resistant enemies, or if its wings are destroyed, it closes to melee range and lashes out with mighty blows of its immense fists. If more than one angel effigy is engaged in battle, then each remains within range of the other's unholy aura, so as to take advantage of the aura's potent enhancement magic.

An angel effigy's slam attacks are considered to be evil and chaos-aligned weapons for the purposes of defeating damage reduction.

Fast Healing (Ex): The magic that animates an angel effigy strengthens its body, repairing any damage it suffers near instantaneously. An angel effigy heals damage at a rate of 3 hp a round.

Frightful Presence (Ex): An angel effigy is a mockery of all that is holy and good, and its very presence is unsettling to those who understand the concept of the divine good. When an angel effigy first spreads its wings, attacks using its fists, or uses its unholy fire ability for the first time, all non-evil opponents within a 60 ft. radius must succeed at a Will save against DC 18 or become shaken for 5d6 rounds. Frightful presence is a mind-affecting, fear effect, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): 3/day – *blasphemy* (DC 20); at will – *call lightning* (DC 16), *feeblemind* (DC 18), *greater dispel magic*, *slow* (DC 16), *telekinesis* (DC 18), all as a 12th level caster.

Trample (Ex): An angel effigy can trample beings of Medium-size or smaller, inflicting 2d6+8 damage.

Unholy Shroud (Su): An angel effigy is suffused and surrounded with an unholy shroud that bolsters the power of all nearby evil creatures. All beings of evil alignment within a 20 ft. radius of angel effigy gain a +2 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls, to saving throws, and to skill checks. In addition, all undead and evil outsiders gain +2 turn resistance while within the radius of effect. An angel effigy does not benefit from its own unholy shroud, but can benefit from the unholy shroud of another angel effigy.

Unholy Fire (Su): Once every 3 rounds an angel effigy can, as a free action, unleash geysers of unholy fire. Unholy fire manifests as five 10 ft. radius columns of pus-

white fire that reach 100 feet in the air. Each of the columns is connected by a shimmering thread of light, so that the five points link to form a star like that of a pentagram. Each column of light inflicts 10d6 points of unholy damage, half of which is fire and half of which is raw corruption, with a Reflex save against DC 18 allowed for half damage.

The angel effigy can control the size of its unholy, energy pentagram, making it larger or smaller as desired. The minimum space between each column's area of effect is 5 feet, and the maximum difference between columns is 30 feet. The effigy cannot, however, alter the shape of the unholy aura effect. The save DC is Charisma based.

CARYATID COLUMN

Medium Construct

Hit Dice: 5d10+20 (47 hp)
Initiative: -1
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class: 14 (-1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 14
BAB/Grapple: +3/+4
Attack: Longsword +4 melee (1d8+1)
Full Attack: Longsword +4 melee (1d8+1)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: —
Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 5/—, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, shatter weapons
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1
Skills: —
Feats: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, pair, or troupe (6-11)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 6-10 HD (Medium); 11-15 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: —

An exquisitely sculpted and chiseled statue of a beautiful female warrior adorns the area, longsword in her hand.

A caryatid column is akin to the stone golem in that it is a magical construct created by a spellcaster. Caryatid columns are always created for a specific defensive function. The caryatid column stands 7 feet tall and weighs around 1,500 pounds. The column always wields a weapon (usually a longsword) in its left hand. The weapon itself is constructed of steel, but is melded with the column and made of stone until the column animates. When melded, the sword is likely to be overlooked (Spot check DC 20 to see it).

COMBAT

Caryatid columns are programmed as guardians and activate when certain conditions or stipulations are met or bro-

ken (such as when a living creature enters a chamber guarded by a caryatid column). A caryatid column attacks its opponents with its longsword. It does not move more than 50 feet from the area it is guarding or protecting.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A caryatid column is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *transmute rock to mud* spell deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level to a caryatid column, with no saving throw, while *transmute mud to rock* heals all of its lost hit points.

A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the column's structure but negates its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round.

Shatter Weapons (Ex): Whenever a character strikes a caryatid column with a weapon (magical or nonmagical), the weapon must succeed on a DC 12 Fortitude save or shatter into pieces. A magic weapon uses its own save bonus or that of the wielder, whichever is higher. If the weapon breaks, the caryatid column takes no damage from the attack. The save DC is Constitution-based.

CONSTRUCTION

A caryatid column's body is chiseled from a single block of hard stone, such as granite, weighing at least 1,500 pounds. The stone must be of exceptional quality, and costs 2,000 gp. Assembling the body requires a DC 15 Craft (sculpting) check or a DC 15 Craft (stonemasonry) check.

CL 12th; Craft Construct, *lesser geas*, *limited wish*, *polymorph any object*, *shatter*, caster must be at least 12th level; Price 22,000 gp; Cost 12,000 gp +800 XP.

DEMON, AESHMA (RAGE DEMON)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 12d8+96 (150 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)
Armor Class: 25 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +12 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 21
BAB/Grapple: +12/+22
Attack: +1 *wounding longspear* +20 melee (2d6+10/x3)
Full Attack: +1 *wounding longspear* +20/+15 melee (2d6+10/x3) or 2 claws +17 melee (1d6+6)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with longspear)
Special Attacks: Rage, spell-like abilities, *summon demons*
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/good, dark vision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, outsider traits, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, see invisibility, SR 19, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves: Fort +16, Ref +12, Will +13
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 18, Con 27,

	Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 17
Skills:	Diplomacy +18, Concentration +23, Escape Artist +19, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +26, Move Silently +19, Search +17, Spellcraft +17, Spot +26, Survival +18 (+20 following tracks)
Feats:	Blind-Fight, Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longspear)
Environment:	The Abyss
Organization:	Solitary or troupe (1 aeshma and 1-4 vrockes)
Challenge Rating:	11
Treasure:	Standard, plus +1 <i>wounding longspear</i>
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	13-16 HD (Large); 17-36 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

This creature appears to be an 8-foot tall humanoid with basalt-colored skin. Dark hair covers its head and its hair is long and braided. Its arms are well-muscled and its hands end in powerful claws. Its head is human-like and its eyes are sapphire blue. Large leathery, bat-like wings protrude from its shoulders.

Aeshma are the demons of rage and anger. An aeshma is sometimes referred to as “the fiend of the wounding spear.” Aeshma are thoroughly malign and evil and care little for anything or anyone else. They are actively recruited into the Abyssal armies of the demon lords and princes for their skill and combat prowess. Often, an aeshma is given the rank of commander or lieutenant and granted control over a retinue or battalion of lesser demons (usually vrockes or dretches).

The typical aeshma stands 8 feet tall and weighs about 500 pounds. Most aeshma disdain the use of armor, but occasionally don chainmail.

Aeshma speak Abyssal, Common, and at least one other language.

COMBAT

Aeshma are very potent fighters and prefer a straight fight to subterfuge. They fight aggressively against any foe, relying on their claws only if they are unarmed.

An aeshma’s natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Rage (Su): An aeshma that takes 50% or more of its total hit points in damage in combat flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, swinging madly with its longspear. A raging aeshma fights until either it or its opponent is dead. An enraged aeshma gains +4 Strength and -2 AC. The aeshma can end its rage voluntarily.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy blight* (DC 17); 2/day—*blasphemy* (DC 20), *web* (DC 15). Caster level

12th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Summon Demons (Sp): Once per day, an aeshma can attempt to summon 4d10 dretches or another aeshma with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th-level spell.

See Invisibility (Su): Aeshma can continuously *see invisibility*, as the spell (caster level 12th).

Skills: Aeshma have a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

Wounding Longspear: An aeshma’s Large +1 *longspear* is imbued with the *wounding* special ability. This weapon deals 1 point of Constitution damage from blood loss when it hits a creature. A critical hit does not multiply the Constitution damage. Creatures immune to critical hits (such as plants and constructs) are immune to the Constitution damage dealt by this weapon.

DEMON, CAMBION

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice:	8d8+24 (60 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares)
Armor Class:	18 (+2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16
BAB/Grapple:	+8/+12
Attack:	Longsword +12 melee (1d8+4, 19-20/x2) or claw +12 melee (1d6+4)
Full Attack:	Longsword +12/+7 melee (1d8+4, 19-20/x2) or 2 claws +12 melee (1d6+4)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, outsider traits, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, SR 14, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves:	Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +9
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 14
Skills:	Bluff +13, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +15, Escape Artist +13 (+15 escaping rope bonds), Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +18, Move Silently +13, Search +14, Spot +18, Survival +14 (+16 on other planes, +16 following tracks), Use Rope +13 (+15 with bindings)
Feats:	Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack
Environment:	The Abyss
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	6
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+6



This demonic-looking creature resembles a somewhat stocky humanoid with scaly blue skin, small fangs, and tiny dark horns that protrude above its crimson-colored eyes.

When an incubus mates with a human female, the offspring is a cambion. Cambions, unlike their “sisters” the alu-demons, are always chaotic evil and care little for anyone or anything but their own well-being. They are selfish, self-centered, and egotistical. Cambions hate humans and are often employed as assassins. Cambions are always male.

Much like alu-demons, cambions are often sent to the Material Plane to seduce mortals or tempt them in some way.

The typical cambion stands 6 or 7 feet tall and weighs 300 pounds or more. It speaks Abyssal, Common, and at least one other language.

COMBAT

Cambions are deadly in combat, attacking relentlessly until their opponents are dead, often employing various poisons in battle to end the fight quickly. If combat goes against it, a cambion retreats, but never forgets the opponent that bested him. The cambion waits for the next opportunity to present itself so it might exact revenge.

A cambion’s natural weapons, as well as any weapons he wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic*, *detect thoughts* (DC 14), *fear* (DC 16), *levitate*, *polymorph* (self only). Caster level 10th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Skills: Cambions have a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

DEMON, DARAKA

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 12d8+96 (150 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 27 (-1 size, +18 natural), touch 9
flat-footed 27

BAB/Grapple: +12/+25

Attack: Claw +20 melee (1d8+9)

Full Attack: 2 claws +20 melee (1d8+9) and bite +18 melee (2d6+4) or scorpions +11 ranged (1d6 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, spell-like abilities, scorpions, summon demons

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, outsider traits, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, SR 20, telepathy 100 ft.

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +8, Will +12

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 11, Con 27,
Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 20

Skills: Climb +24, Concentration +23, Hide +11, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (any one) +19, Listen +27, Move Silently +10, Search +19, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +19, Spot +27, Survival +14 (+16 following tracks)

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack

Environment: The Abyss

Organization: Solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 12

Treasure: Standard coins; double goods; standard items

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 13-20 HD (Large); 21-36 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature is a tall black-skinned humanoid. Its head is that of a black-furred ram with downward curving horns. Its body appears to be a mass of writhing flesh.

Darakas act as guards to the greater demons or as shock troops in the demonic armies of the Abyss. Being intelligent, they are often used as commanders or leaders, with each daraka having a battalion of minor demons at its command.

A daraka’s skin is leathery and oily. From a distance greater than 10 feet, its body appears to be a mass of writhing flesh. Closer inspection reveals thousands of tiny scorpions swarming its flesh. They constantly skitter across the daraka’s body—into and out of its mouth, ears, and nose. The daraka doesn’t even seem to notice them.

Darakas stand 9 feet tall and weigh 700 pounds. They speak Abyssal, Common, and at least three other languages.

COMBAT

Darakas aggressively assault any creature that stands in their way. They usually open combat by slinging scorpions at their opponents and using *chaos hammer* against lawful-aligned opponents. Against an enemy wizard, a daraka uses its *feeblemind* ability as soon as it can. The remainder of the combat sees the daraka slash with its claws and bite with its terrible fangs. If it can, a daraka likes to grapple a foe and let the scorpions on its body bite the grabbed opponent.

A daraka's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*chaos hammer* (DC 19), *deeper darkness*, *detect good*, *dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *invisibility* (self only), *unholy aura* (DC 21); 3/day—*chill touch* (DC 16); 1/day—*feeblemind* (DC 20), *shatter* (DC 17). Caster level 12th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Poison (Ex): The body of a daraka is swarming with thousands of scorpions that deliver a debilitating poison each time they bite. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Daraka Scorpion Poison: Injury, Fortitude DC 24, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Strength.

Scorpions (Ex): A daraka's body is swarming with thousands of tiny scorpions. Creatures attacking a daraka unarmed or with natural weapons are automatically bitten for 1d6 points of damage and suffer the effects of the scorpion's poison (see above).

Alternately, a daraka can sling scorpions from its body to a range of 20 feet. This is a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. A creature hit takes 1d6 points of damage from the biting and stinging scorpions and is subjected to their poison.

A grappled creature is likewise subjected to the biting of a daraka's scorpions just as if it had attacked the daraka unarmed (see above).

A daraka has an unlimited supply of scorpions. As fast as it uses them, its body generates more.

Summon Demons (Sp): Once per day, a daraka can attempt to summon 4d10 dretches or 1d2 vrocks with a 50% chance of success, or another daraka with a 20% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 5th-level spell.

Skills: Darakas have a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.



DEMON, GHARROS (SCORPION DEMON)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice:	16d8+160 (232 hp)
Initiative:	+8
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class:	28 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +15 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 24
BAB/Grapple:	+16/+30
Attack:	Battleaxe +25 melee (2d6+10)
Full Attack:	Battleaxe +25 melee (2d6+10) and 2 tail stings +21 melee (1d8+5 plus poison)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Poison, spell-like abilities, <i>summon demons</i>
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 15/cold iron and good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, outsider traits, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, SR 22, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves:	Fort +20, Ref +14, Will +14
Abilities:	Str 31, Dex 18, Con 30, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 20
Skills:	Balance +15, Bluff +17, Climb +29, Concentration +25, Escape Artist +20, Intimidate +26, Jump +26, Knowledge (the planes) +20, Listen +30, Move Silently +14, Search +19, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +13, Spot +30, Survival +20 (+22 following tracks, +22 on other planes)
Feats:	Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tail sting)
Environment:	The Abyss
Organization:	Solitary or pack (2-4)
Challenge Rating:	14
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	17-25 HD (Large); 26-48 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

This hideous creature appears to be half-scorpion and half-human. Its upper torso is that of a greenish-silver humanoid with long, flowing dark hair and stark white eyes while its lower torso is that of a reddish-brown scorpion. Its tail splits into two separate stingers and the creature's mouth is filled with razor-sharp teeth.

A gharros looks like a cross between a large human and an even larger scorpion. They serve as guards, soldiers, shock troops (and even assassins sometimes) to some of the minor nobles and lesser demon lords of the Abyss. They hate all goodness and seek to destroy it at any opportunity, through whatever means available.

A gharros is about 8 feet tall and 10 feet long and weighs around 1,500 pounds. The typical gharros speaks Abyssal, Common, and three other languages.

COMBAT

Gharros are very aggressive in battle and seek to kill the strongest opponent first. They wield their battleaxes in combat and sting with their deadly tails, all the while sprinkling the fight with their spell-like abilities. Unless ordered to do so, a gharros never takes prisoners in battle. They fight to the death.

A gharros' natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *mirror image*, *telekinesis* (DC 20), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only). Caster level 12th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Poison (Ex): A gharros delivers a virulent poison with a successful tail sting. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Gharros Poison: Injury, Fortitude DC 28, initial and secondary damage 2d6 Constitution.

Summon Demons (Sp): Once per day, a gharros can attempt to summon 4d10 dretches, 1d4 vrocks, or 1d2 glabrezus with a 50% chance of success or another gharros with a 20% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 6th-level spell.

Skills: Gharros demons have a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

DRACOLISK

Large Dragon

Hit Dice:	11d12+44 (115 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (poor)
Armor Class:	24 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +13 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 22
BAB/Grapple:	+11/+21
Attack:	Bite +16 melee (2d6+6)
Full Attack:	Bite +16 melee (2d6+6) and 2 claws +14 melee (1d6+3)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Breath weapon, petrifying gaze
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to <i>sleep</i> and paralysis, immunity to energy, low-light vision
Saves:	Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +8
Abilities:	Str 23, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13
Skills:	Hide +6, Intimidate +9, Jump +14, Listen +13, Move Silently +10, Search +6, Spot +13
Feats:	Alertness, Blind-Fight, Multiattack Power Attack
Environment:	See text
Organization:	Solitary or colony (3-6)
Challenge Rating:	9
Treasure:	None

Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 12-18 HD (Large); 19-33 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

This creature resembles a young six-legged dragon with glistening scales and gleaming eyes.

The vicious dracolisk is a rare crossbreed of dragon and basilisk. No one is quite sure how the dracolisk species came to be, but all who have encountered it are well aware of its lethality. There is believed to be one species of dracolisk for every species of dragon. Thus far, however, most dracolisks encountered have been of the black variety. At first glance, a dracolisk appears to be a juvenile dragon of whatever color its dragon parent was—but thanks to the petrifying gaze it inherited from its basilisk parent, most who encounter a dracolisk never get a second glance.

A dracolisk has a scaled body the same color as its dragon parent that fades to a lighter shade on its underside. A short, curved horn, similar to a rhino's, juts from its nose. Its dragon-like wings match its body color but fade to a slightly darker shade near the tips. A dracolisk's eyes are pale green with sparkles that match its dragon-parent color.

A typical dracolisk is 15 feet long and weighs about 3,000 pounds.

Dracolisks speak a crude and broken form of Draconic.

A dracolisk's environment varies based on its dragon heritage: black dracolisks can be found in warm marshes, deserts, or underground; blue dracolisks favor warm hills and mountains, rarely being found underground; green dracolisks favor temperate or warm forests and underground settings; red dracolisks favor warm mountains and underground settings; and white dracolisks favor cold mountains, cold deserts, and underground.

COMBAT

The dracolisk attacks first with its breath weapon and gaze attack. After this, it attacks with its bite and clawed forelegs.

Breath Weapon (Su): A dracolisk's breath weapon depends on what type of dragon parent it had, as summarized below. Regardless of its type, a dracolisk's breath weapon is usable once every 1d4 rounds (and no more than three times per day), deals 4d8 points of damage, and allows a DC 19 Reflex save for half damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Dracolisk Color	Breath Weapon
Black	60-foot line of acid
Blue	60-foot line
Green	30-foot cone of gas (acid)
Red	30-foot cone of fire
White	30-foot cone of cold

Petrifying Gaze (Su): Turn to stone permanently, range 30 feet, Fortitude DC 16 negates. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Immunity to Energy (Ex): A dracolisk is immune to one type of energy based on its dragon parent and variety.

Dracolisk Color	Immunity
Black	Acid
Blue	Electricity
Green	Acid
Red	Fire
White	Cold

Skills: Dracolisks have a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

FIREFIEND

Medium Elemental (Extraplanar, Fire)

Hit Dice:	8d8+24 (60 hp)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class:	14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 13
BAB/Grapple:	+6/+10
Attack:	Longsword +11 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 fire, 19-20/x2)
Full Attack:	Longsword +11/+6 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 fire, 19-20/x2) and 2 longswords +11 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 fire, 19-20/x2)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Spit
Special Qualities:	All-around vision, damage reduction 5/—, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immunity to fire, vulnerability to cold
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8
Skills:	Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4
Feats:	Multiweapon Fighting, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Environment:	Elemental Plane of Fire
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	7
Treasure:	None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 9-16 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: —

A three-sided column of yellow-orange fire sports a single arm, leg, and face on each side. In each arm, the creature carries a flaming longsword. Each face seems to be identical and all are twisted in terrifying grimaces and constantly spout obscenities in a strange language. Each face has glowing red eyes.

A firefiend is a rare creature from the Elemental Plane of Fire that takes the form of a roughly human-sized pillar of flame. Upon first glance, a firefiend strongly resembles a fire elemental of the same size, but beyond that the resemblance ends. Its three faces constantly scowl and scream at opponents, cursing them in Ignan. If an opponent understands this language, he will comprehend only incoherent babbling and cursing.

COMBAT

A firefiend attacks primarily with its longswords, positioning itself in such a way as to bring as many swords to bear on a single opponent as it can. Even with two of its swords engaged on a single foe, the firefiend can still attack to its rear with its remaining longsword. Likewise, a firefiend can battle three different opponents. A firefiend cannot, however, battle a single opponent with more than two of its swords.

Spit (Su): Once every other round, each of the firefiend's faces can spit a fiery cinder to a range of 10 feet at one opponent directly in front of it. A target takes 1 point of fire damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save or catch on fire (see the *DMG* for catching on fire).

All-Around Vision: A firefiend has a +4 racial bonus to Spot and Search checks.

Feats: In combination with its natural abilities, a firefiend's Multiweapon Fighting feat allows it to attack with all its arms at no penalty.



GORGIMERA

Large Magical Beast

Hit Dice:	10d10+40 (85 hp)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), fly 50 ft. (poor)
Armor Class:	17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 16
BAB/Grapple:	+10/+18
Attack:	Bite +13 melee (2d6+4)
Full Attack:	Bite +13 melee (2d6+4) and bite +11 melee (1d8+4) and butt +11 melee (1d8+4) and 2 claws +11 melee (1d6+2)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Breath weapon
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent
Saves:	Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 19, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +2, Listen +9, Spot +9
Feats:	Alertness, Hover, Multiattack, Power Attack
Environment:	Temperate hills and mountains
Organization:	Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating:	8
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Usually neutral
Advancement:	11-14 HD (Large); 15-30 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

This hideous creature has leathery dragon wings and three heads: a lion, a dragon, and a gorgon. Its hindquarters are that of a gorgon and its forequarters are that of a great lion.

A gorgimera is a chimerical creature with the heads of a lion, dragon, and gorgon. It has the hindquarters of a gorgon and the forequarters of lion. It is a highly territorial predator whose hunting range often covers several square miles around its lair. The creature makes its home inside caves high atop mountains or deep inside caverns. A typical lair contains a mated pair and one or two young.

A gorgimera's dragon head can be that of any of the evil dragons (see below). The lion head has no mane, and the scaled gorgon head is a deep navy blue with glowing red eyes. Gorgimeras can speak Draconic, but seldom do.

COMBAT

A gorgimera prefers to attack from ambush. It usually attacks by biting with its lion head and dragon head, butting with its gorgon head, and slashing with its front leonine paws. In lieu of biting, the dragon head and gorgon head can loose their respective breath weapons.

Breath Weapon (Su): A gorgimera has two breath weapons, each of which can be used independently of the other (thus it can breathe twice in a given round as a standard action).

Dragon: A gorgimera's dragon head breath weapon depends on the color of its dragon head, as summarized on the table below. Regardless of its type, a gorgimera's breath weapon is usable once every 1d4 rounds, deals 3d8 points of damage, and allows a DC 19 Reflex save for half damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Head Color	Breath Weapon
Black	40-foot line of acid
Blue	40-foot line of lightning
Green	20-foot cone of gas (acid)
Red	20-foot cone of fire
White	20-foot cone of cold

Gorgon: A gorgimera's gorgon head breath weapon is usable once every 1d4 rounds (no more than twice per day), turns a creature to stone permanently, and allows a DC 19 Fortitude save to avoid. The save DC is Constitution-based. The breath weapon is a 30-foot cone.

Skills: The gorgimera's three heads grant it a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

HELL MOTH

Large Aberration (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice:	9d8+27 (67 hp)
Initiative:	+7
Speed:	10 ft. (2 squares), fly 40 ft. (average)
Armor Class:	19 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +7 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16
BAB/Grapple:	+6/+15
Attack:	Bite +10 melee (1d6+7)
Full Attack:	Bite +10 melee (1d6+7)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Engulf, immolation
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to fire 20, scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +7
Abilities:	Str 21, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6
Feats:	Alertness, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative
Environment:	Any
Organization:	Solitary or flock (3-6)
Challenge Rating:	6
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral (evil tendencies)
Advancement:	10-15 HD (Large); 16-27 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

This creature looks like a giant gray moth with spiraling bands of red and black on its body. It has large, thin, reddish-hued wings.

The hell moth is thought to have come from another plane, although sages are not quite sure of its exact origin. The hell moth attacks living creatures that wander too close to its lair. It otherwise resembles a large moth with an 8-foot wingspan.



COMBAT

Hell moths wait for their prey to pass nearby before attacking. If facing multiple opponents, they attempt to bite and usually do not employ their engulfing ability. Multiple hell moths work in concert with one another against opponents. When a hell moth has successfully engulfed a foe, it sets its own body on fire in a display of self-immolation that consumes both it and its engulfed opponent.

Engulf (Ex): A hell moth can try to wrap a Medium or smaller creature in its body as a standard action. The hell moth attempts a grapple that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and bites the engulfed victim with a +4 bonus on its attack roll.

Attacks that hit an engulfing hell moth deal half their damage to the monster and half to the trapped victim.

Immolation (Su): A hell moth that has engulfed an opponent can detonate its body in a blast of hellish fire that deals 6d10 points of fire damage to itself and the engulfed opponent (no save). (Reduce the damage dealt to the hell moth by its fire resistance.) A hell moth can immolate itself once every 3 hours (providing it survives the immolation).

Creatures within 10 feet of the hell moth when it uses this ability must succeed on a DC 17 Reflex save or take 1d8 points of fire damage as clothes and combustibles ignite. The damage continues for another 1d4+4 rounds after the hell moth uses this ability or until the fire is extinguished. The save DC is Constitution-based.

HELLTHORN

Huge Plant	
Hit Dice:	12d8+60 (112 hp)
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	0 (see text)
Armor Class:	19 (-1 Dex, -2 size, +12 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 19
BAB/Grapple:	+9/+23
Attack:	5 slams +15 (2d6+6) or bite (3d6+3)
Full Attack:	5 slams +15 (2d6+6) and bite (3d6+3)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./15 ft. central bloom; 5 ft./25 ft. (see description)
Special Attacks:	Constrict, improved grab, seeping poison, spore eruption, swallow whole
Special Qualities:	Lowlight vision, bramble, plant traits
Saves:	Fort +15, Ref +3, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 23, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills:	Listen +16, Spot +15
Feats:	Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Power Attack
Environment:	Lower planes or any
Organization:	Solitary or garden (1d4+1)
Challenge Rating:	11
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	13-24 HD (Huge), 25-36 (Gargantuan), 37-48 (Colossal)

This immense plant vaguely resembles a rose, though its crimson blooms are adorned with rows of vicious teeth. It has long vines studded with sharp-looking thorns, and the air smells sweet around it.

Hellthorns are immense plants grown from seeds woven from the souls of the tortured damned. Native only to the Abyss, they are a valuable commodity, one cultivated by the more urbane demon princes and kings, who often sculpt hellthorns groves into city-sized gardens filled with all manner of torment and sin.

Hellthorns are also highly valued for their ferocity, and for their absolute loyalty to their tenders. Though possessed of only minimal intelligence, akin to that of a smart dog or cat, they are very cunning, and make exceptional guards - many demon princes plant hellthorn groves on the borders of their manses, in order to safeguard against the armies and assassins of their rivals.

A hellthorn is an immense plant vaguely reminiscent of a rose, complete with crimson blooms (albeit ones equipped with mouths full of teeth), and long vines studded with razor-sharp, nigh-unbreakable thorns. The hellthorn's intelligence is housed in a central vine topped with an enormous bloom capable of swallowing an ogre whole. A hellthorn constantly oozes a heavy, sickly-sweet sap that is highly toxic to beings with souls, but is prized as a highly potent hallucinogenic by demons, who distill it into a wine

so valuable that a single barrel is worth the ransom of a king's soul.

When first grown, a hellthorn is no larger than a rose bush, but as it is fed a steady diet of flesh and souls, it begins to grow. There is no upper limit to how large a hellthorn can become, though most never reach more than Huge size - there are millennia-old hellthorns in the Abyss, however, that are tall as mountains, and whose roots extend across a distance equal to the surface area of a planet.

A hellthorn's attacks are considered to be both evil-aligned and chaos-aligned for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

COMBAT

A hellthorn cannot move under its own power, and so it depends entirely upon its long, sinuous branches to defend itself and to capture food. In combat, the hellthorn attacks any opponent who comes within range, attempting to initiate grapples, so that it can constrict its foes and then bring them within range of its immense teeth. A hellthorn will swallow smaller opponents if it can, understanding nothing of the dangers of attempting to eat an armed and armored being. Because a hellthorn grows only by devouring living or recently slain flesh, it will not willingly allow an opponent to retreat - this means that a hellthorn will use its vines to cut off retreat, and attempt to surround foes and herd them near its massive body.

If truly pressed by an opponent, to the point where destruction seems imminent, the hellthorn will purposefully detonate itself, so as to have the highest possible chance of spreading its spores. Because it cannot retreat from battle, it will fight to the death.

Bramble: The central bloom of a Huge-sized hellthorn occupies a 10 ft. by 10 ft. square, and stands 25 feet tall, growing by 5 feet in width and height for every 3 additional hit die it possesses. The sprawling body of a hellthorn, composed of a tangle of uncounted numbers of thin rose-vines and blood colored blossoms, reaches far beyond that point, filling a 10 ft. radius + 10 ft. per every 3 hit dice the hellthorn possesses.

A hellthorn possesses 1 lashing vine + 1 lashing vine per 3 hit dice it possesses. Lashing vines are 30 feet long and thick as a man's leg, and are used by the hellthorn to defend itself and to seize prey. Each lashing vine possesses hp equal to 25% of the central bloom. Destroying a lashing vine does no damage to the central bloom, and a new vine emerges fully-grown one day after a vine is destroyed.

Constrict (Ex): After a successful grapple check with one of its vines, a hellthorn inflicts 2d6 points of crushing damage. This is in addition to the normal damage inflicted by the vine.

Improved Grab (Ex): A hellthorn can initiate a grapple as a free action with both its vines and with its bite, without provoking an attack of opportunity, and without the need to

perform a touch attack.

Seeping Poison (Ex): The sap of a hellthorn is highly toxic to beings who are not evil outsiders, equivalent to the strongest mortal poisons. When a piercing or slashing melee attack strikes a hellthorn, the attacker is splattered. He must succeed at a Fortitude save against DC 21 or suffer 1d3 points of initial Constitution damage, and 1d4 points of secondary Constitution damage 1 minute later. The saving throw is Constitution based.

Spore Eruption (Ex): When a hellthorn is reduced to 10% of its hp or less, it can explode its central bloom, filling a 30 ft. radius area with Abyssal spores. All within range must succeed at a Fortitude save against DC 21 or become infected by these spores, which take root in their soul and begin to consume it from the inside. Those who succeed at their save suffer no ill effect from the spores, but those who fail suffer 1d4 points of Constitution drain after 1 minute, and an additional 1 point of Constitution drain each hour after that. When a victim is drained of his last Constitution point, he dies, and his body instantly erupts with vines, thorns, and blooms, becoming a 1 HD hellthorn. The spirit of a victim that has become host to a new hellthorn is irrevocably destroyed, and cannot be *raised*, *resurrected* or otherwise returned to life. The save is Constitution based.

A victim infected by hellthorn spores can be cured by the application of *remove disease*, *neutralize poison*, or a *heal* spell. *Delay poison* will prevent the spread of the spores for as long as the spell's duration, but will not remove the spores.

Swallow Whole (Ex): If a hellthorn successfully initiates a vine grapple against a creature at least one size category smaller than itself, it can, in the following round, bring its victim within range of its central bloom. With a successful bite attack and grapple check (see improved grab for details), the hellthorn can hold the victim in its mouth. At the beginning of its turn it can attempt a new grapple check, as though attempting to pin its opponent. If it succeeds, it swallows its prey, and the opponent takes bite damage.

Once swallowed, the victim suffers 2d8 points of crushing damage + 2d8 points of acid damage from the hellthorn's digestive juices. A swallowed creature can free itself by inflicting 30 points of damage to the hellthorn's innards, striking against AC 16. The hellthorn can swallow a maximum of 1 creature one size category smaller than itself, 2 of two size categories smaller, and so on.

Skills: A hellthorn gains a +8 racial bonus to Listen and Spot checks.





WRACK

Large Elemental (fire, evil)

Hit Dice:	20d8+100 (198hp)
Initiative:	+11
Speed:	50 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)
Armor Class:	26 (-1 size, +9 Dex, +10 natural), touch 18, flat-footed 19
BAB/Grapple:	+15/+26
Attack:	Slam +24 melee (2d6+7 plus 1d8 fire plus 1d8 corrupt energy)
Full Attack:	2 slams +24 melee (2d6+7 plus 1d8 fire plus 1d8 corrupt energy)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Abyssal breath, Abyssal flare, improved grab, soul kindle
Special Qualities:	Abyssal corona, fiery wings, damage reduction 10/-, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immune to fire, vulnerability to cold
Saves:	Fort +11, Ref +21, Will +9
Abilities:	Str 24, Dex 29, Con 20, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 11
Skills:	Listen +14, Spot +13
Feats:	Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse
Environment:	Elemental plane of fire
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	12
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Chaotic Evil
Advancement:	—

This creature looks like a man of living flame, standing roughly 12 feet in height. Its flames are deep crimson and ebony, shot through with streaks of sickly green. Some miasma of energy seems to float in its torso.

The wrack is a being of Abyssal fire that has been tainted by the caress of the lower planes. It is a being of eternal flame, fueled by a core of desiccated, agonized souls sentenced to burn until the end of time.

Wracks are created at the whim of the princes of the Abyss, who favor them both as bodyguards and as sentinels placed to guard the most valuable treasures on the mortal plane. Wracks are absolutely loyal to their creators – a rare and precious trait in the Abyss – and instinctively recognize threats to their masters, moving to stop them with little to no thought for their own safety.

A wrack appears as a man of living flame, standing roughly 12 feet in height. Its flames are deep crimson and ebony, shot through with streaks of sickly green, and a visible miasma of soul energy floats at its heart. The torment of these souls rolls off the wrack in a palpable wave, and when the wrack uses its powers in battle, they shriek in unimaginable agony, a chorus of despair begging for redemption.

COMBAT

The wrack attacks fearlessly, using its fiery breath to open up battle, and then closing to burn its enemies at melee range. It depends heavily upon its fiery embrace ability, pulling its foes close with a grapple and then reveling in the smell and sound of flesh sizzling and falling off blackened bone. If pressed, the wrack will erupt with an abyssal flare, and then attempt to flee, to recover before attacking again.

Abyssal Breath (Su): Once every 3 rounds, a wrack can unleash a 40-foot cone of black and crimson flames. These Abyssal breaths inflict 8d8 points of damage, half of which is fire damage, and half of which is corrupt energy. The spirit of a being slain by Abyssal breath is consumed utterly, meaning they cannot be raised from the dead or returned to life by any means. A Reflex save against DC 25 is allowed for half damage. The save DC of Abyssal breath is Constitution based.

Each time a wrack slays an opponent with Abyssal breath, it automatically heals itself of 5 points of damage. Excess points above its normal hp total are instead gained as temporary hp, which fade at the rate of 1 hp per minute.

Abyssal Corona (Ex): A wrack's body is drenched with a heat so intense that it can cause cloth and flesh to burn simply by passing near them. Those adjacent to the wrack suffer 1d8 points of fire damage and 1d8 points of raw corrupt energy damage each round, with a Fortitude save allowed for half damage. When a wrack strikes using its slam attack, it inflicts 1d8 points of fire damage and 1d8 points of raw corrupt energy damage with each attack, with no save allowed.

In addition, those who attempt to strike the wrack with

melee or unarmed attacks suffer damage as listed above each time they strike, with a Fortitude save against DC 25 allowed for half damage. The save DC for Abyssal corona is Constitution based.

Abyssal Flare (Su): If reduced to half its hp or less, the wrack can cause its body to explode, inflicting massive damage but temporarily snuffing its eternal flames. The explosion causes damage equal to the wrack's current hp to all beings within a 30-foot radius, half of which is fire damage, and half of which is corrupt energy. There is no save allowed to reduce the damage inflicted by Abyssal flare.

Upon detonating an Abyssal flare, the wrack is reduced to 1 hp, and loses all access to its supernatural attacks until it has regained at least half its hp. The wrack retains its ability to attack using slams, but the damage is reduced to half. In addition, until the wrack regains half its hp, it suffers a –10 penalty to Strength, and loses its natural armor class bonus.

Fiery Wings (Ex): The wrack can, as a full round action, sprout 20-foot-wide wings of fire, allowing it to fly for up to 1 hour each day.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a wrack successfully strikes with a slam attack, it can attempt to initiate a grapple as a free action, without need of a touch attack, and without initiating attacks of opportunity.

Soul Kindle (Ex): Each time a wrack succeeds at a grapple check against a living, souled being, it drains its victim of 1 point of Constitution. Each time it successfully drains an opponent, the wrack heals itself of 5 points of damage, gaining the excess as temporary hp that fade at the rate of 1 point per round.

Appendix Three: New Magic Items

Dagger of Souls: The *dagger of souls* is a +2 *keen, human bane* dagger. Forged out of a single piece of obsidian demon bone, the dagger is a weapon of utmost evil, with the power to damn souls, and to tear open a portal to the Abyss.

To open a doorway to the Abyss, the *dagger of souls* must be used to ritually slay 100 hit dice worth of good-aligned humanoids. In order to perform the ceremony, the victim must be bound upon an altar and then killed through the performance of a coup de grace attack. Once 100 hit dice worth of victims are slain, a temporary, two-way portal to the Abyss is opened; the portal opens onto a random plane on the Abyss, and remains open for 1 hour per hit die of being ritually slain.

The souls of beings ritually slain by the *dagger of souls* are instantly and permanently banished to the Abyss, meaning a victim of the dagger cannot be returned to life by any means.

Strong conjuration and necromancy; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *dimension door, enervation*; Market Price 50,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

Leashstone: A *leashstone* is a set of two small, black stones onto which stylized lengths of chain have been carved. To use a *leashstone* properly, one of the two stones must be placed upon a chain or collar and then attached around the neck or limb of a creature. When that is done, the second *leashstone* is placed upon the ground while the command word is spoken. The chained creature is anchored to the second stone, and is forced to remain within a radius of 500 feet of it.

The magic of a *leashstone* is such that it cannot be removed by the leashed creature; once attached to a living creature, the chained stone can only be removed by a *remove curse, break enchantment, greater dispel, limited wish, disjunction, miracle, or wish*. Likewise, once placed upon the ground, no force other than the above magics can remove the second stone; it protects itself, and the ground in a 5 ft. radius around itself, from all other magic spells, spell-like effects or supernatural abilities. Raw physical force is also ineffective, no matter the strength of the one trying to lift the stone, or break it loose from the chained being. The one who spoke the command word to leash a victim can, however, speak the command word again to instantly end the effect. Likewise, if the leashed creature is slain, then both *leashstones* instantly become dormant, and can be removed without effort.

Should a leashed being be forcibly moved more than 500 feet from its anchored stone, it immediately suffers 1d6 points of damage, and suffers an additional 1d6 points of damage at the beginning of each day it remains separated from its anchor. Damage inflicted in this fashion cannot be healed naturally or with magic, at least until such time as the creature remains within 500 feet of its anchored *leashstone* for a full day's time.

A *leashstone* can only be used if one of the stones is anchored to an immovable object, meaning a being cannot be leashed to a stone carried in a pocket or on a wagon, for example. A *leashstone* can only be used to collar an animal, dragon, magical beast or plant with an Intelligence score of 4 or less.

Moderate conjuration (summoning); CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *summon nature's ally III, dominate animal*; Market Price 3,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Soul Cauldron: The *soul cauldron* is a malevolent, eons-old, demon-created artifact of sinister aspect – an enormous, rusted iron cauldron eternally brimming with a glowing red, viscous fluid made from the distilled essence of a million damned souls. The cauldron is enormous, standing fully 10 feet from the tips of its clawed feet to its rim, and weighing more than 1,000 pounds.

The *soul cauldron* has but one power, but it is a potent one. When a *soulstone* is immersed in the cauldron's fluid and allowed to dissolve (a process which requires three hours),

the fluid absorbs the essence of the spirit trapped within, storing and empowering it so that it can be consumed by the *soul cauldron's* owner.

If a living being consumes a full cup's worth of cauldron fluid after a *soulstone* is dissolved within, he absorbs the stored essence. This has two effects. First, the drinker is revitalized as by the spells *greater restoration*, *regenerate* and *heal*, and second, he permanently absorbs the souls used to fuel the cauldron, with effects as described below.

When a living, evil, non-outsider has absorbed enough points of spirit essence to equal 10 times his current hit dice (see below for more on these points), he instantly and irrevocably gains the half-fiend template. When a half-fiend (including one created by the *soul cauldron*) absorbs essence equal to 10 times his current hit dice, he permanently ascends to become a true demon of the form of his choosing, so long as that form does not exceed his current hit dice. So, for example, a half-fiend with 15 hit dice could become a nalfeshnee, but could not choose to become a balor. Only beings of evil alignment can ascend to the status of a half-fiend or demon in this fashion.

Conversely, when a demon drinks enough spirit essence to equal 1,000 times his current hit die, he gains enough unholy power to seize control of an Abyssal plane. In essence, he becomes a minor deity, equal in power to the greatest demon kings, and his consciousness merges with that of his chosen plane. For this reason, the *soul cauldron* is one of the most coveted artifacts among demon kind, for who among them would not wish the power of a god, and dominion over an infinite plane of torment?

The *soul cauldron's* fluids are anathema to good aligned beings. A being who willingly sips from the cauldron is instantly slain, their body consumed by fire and their soul

permanently dissipated into the liquid in the same manner as a *soulstone* is.

Strong necromancy and transmutation.

Soulstone: A *soulstone* is a night-black jewel found only in the most ancient mountains in the Abyss. Engorged by corrupt, blasphemous energies, the *soulstone* has the power to absorb souls, storing their energy for use as food and fuel by mighty demon princes and kings.

In order to use the *soulstone's* power, the wielder must hold it in hand, and speak a command word while brandishing it at a living target within 30 feet. If that is done, the victim must succeed at a Will save against DC 19 or lose his soul to the gem, as though by the spell *trap the soul*.

A *soulstone* gains one point of spirit essence per hit dice of the soul trapped within. The holder of the stone can tap this essence once a day as a full round action; when the essence is tapped, the wielder gains a +2 sacred or profane bonus (depending on the alignment of the soul within, with purely neutral souls offering a bonus of the holder's choice) to attack and damage rolls, to saving throws, and to skill checks for a number of rounds equal to the current hit dice of the soul trapped within. Each time a *soulstone* is tapped, the soul within permanently loses a level or a hit die.

A *soulstone* has 5 hp and a hardness of 5 when it does not contain a soul, and 1 hp and point of hardness per hit die of the soul within when it does. When a *soulstone* is smashed, the soul it contains is instantly freed and returned to its original body if it still exists, or freed to go to its final reward if it does not.

Strong Necromancy; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *trap the soul*, *bless*; Market Price 20,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

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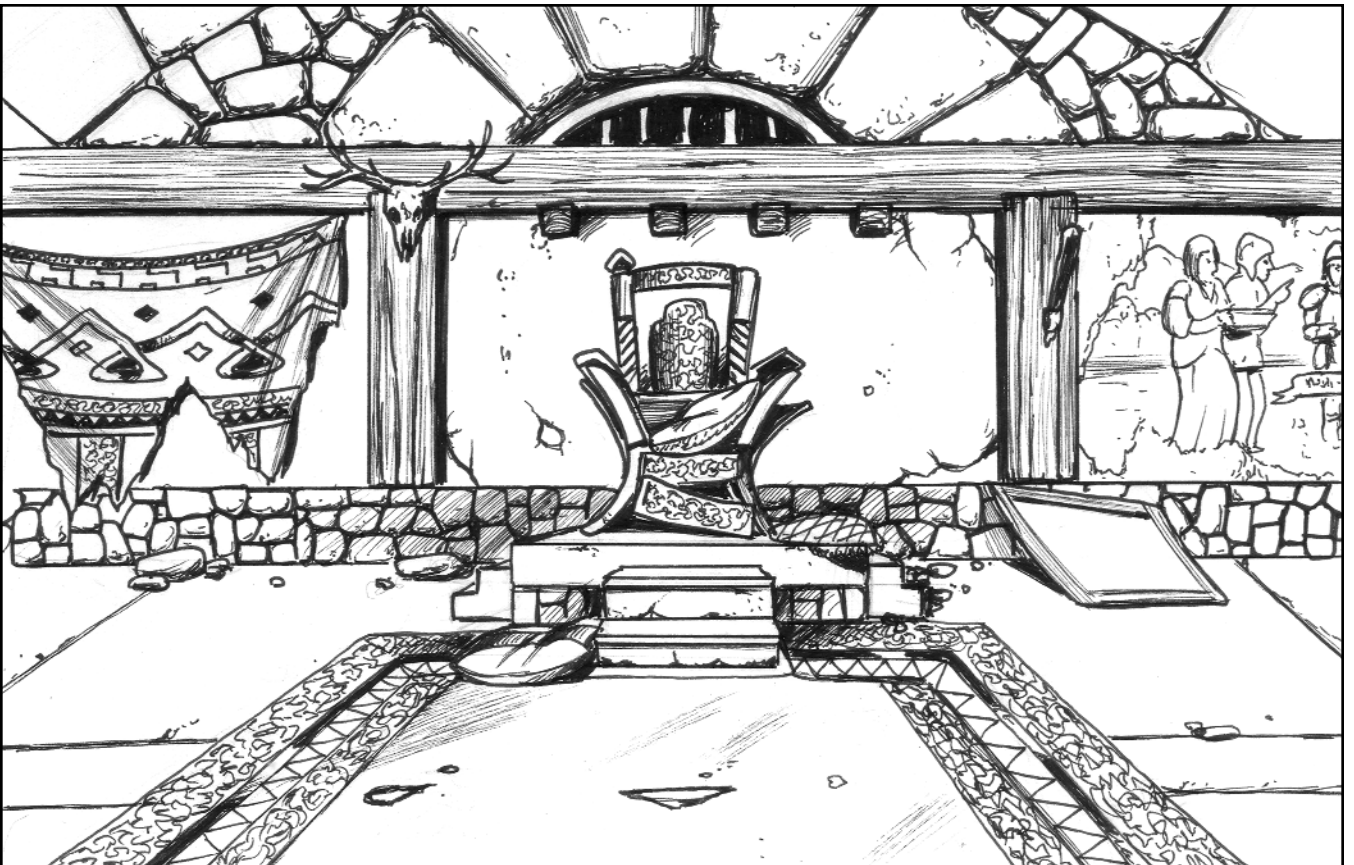
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Players' Handout A



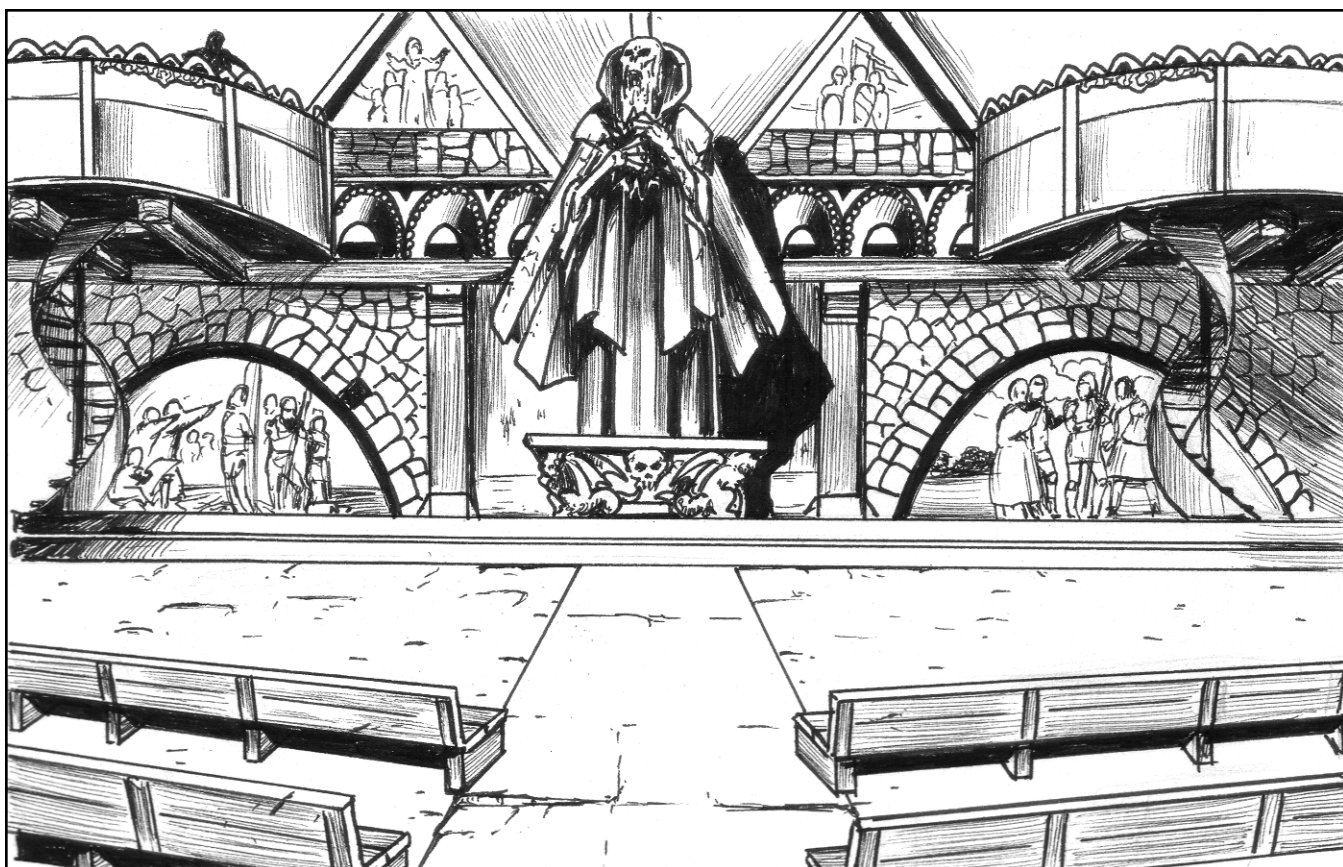
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Players' Handout C



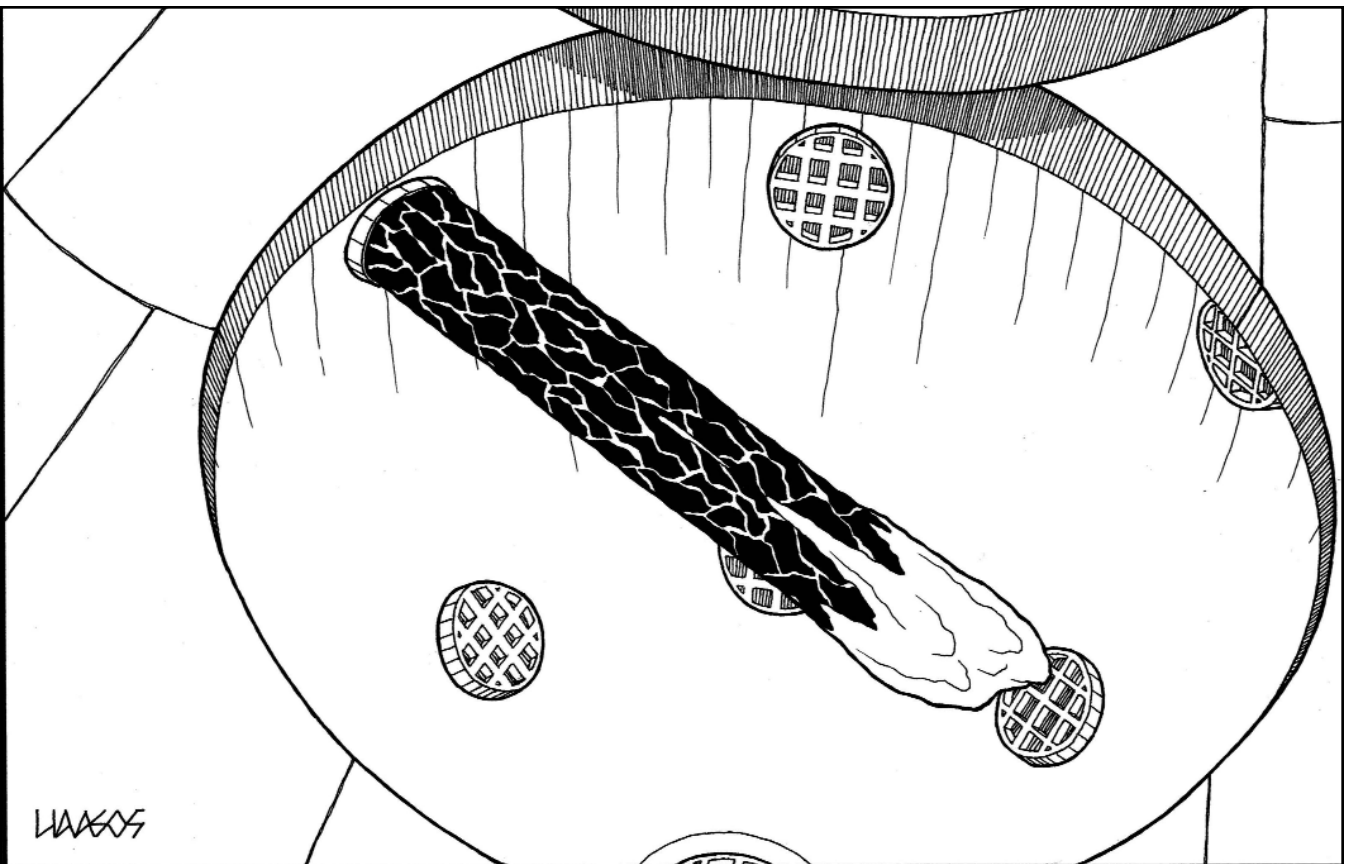
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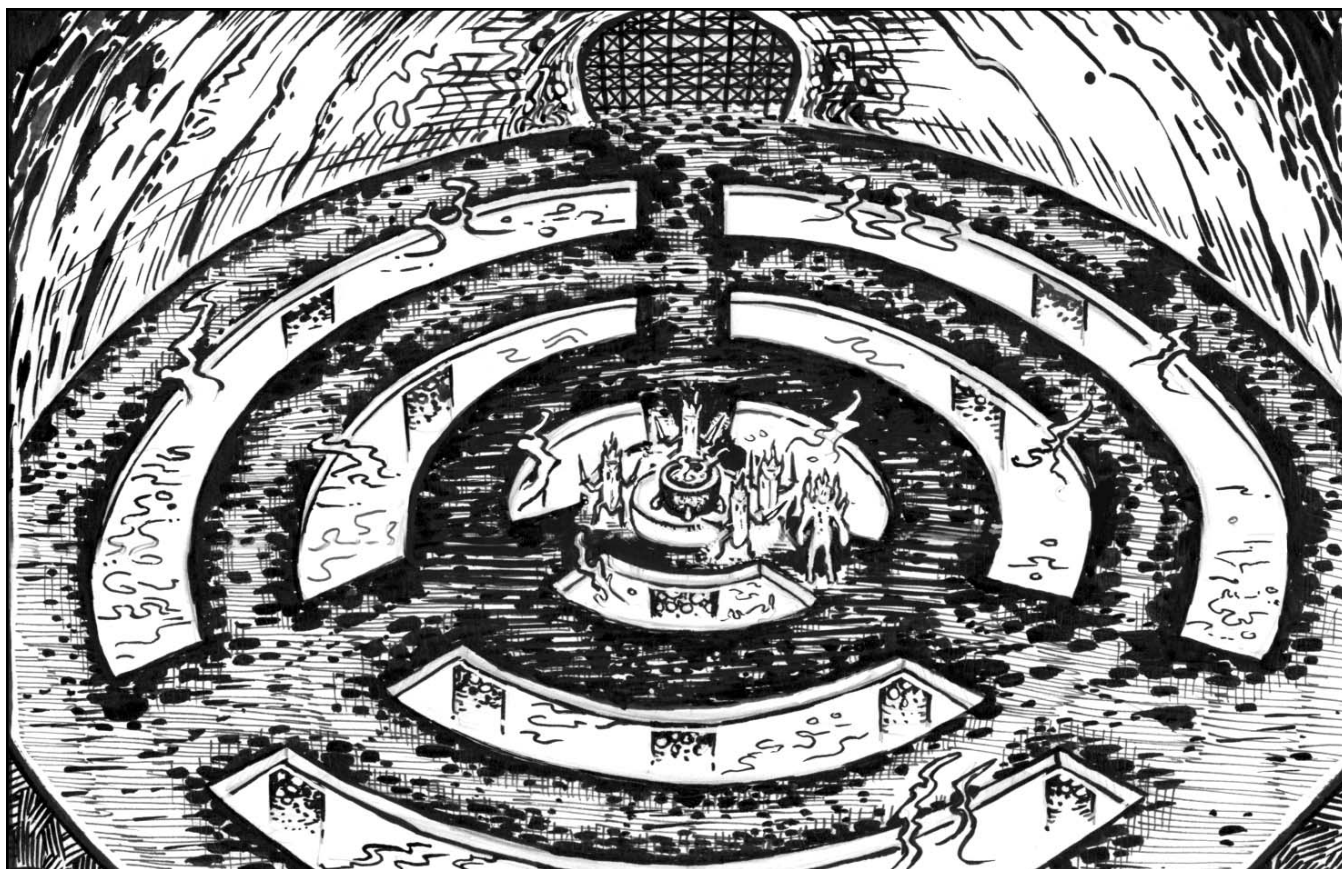
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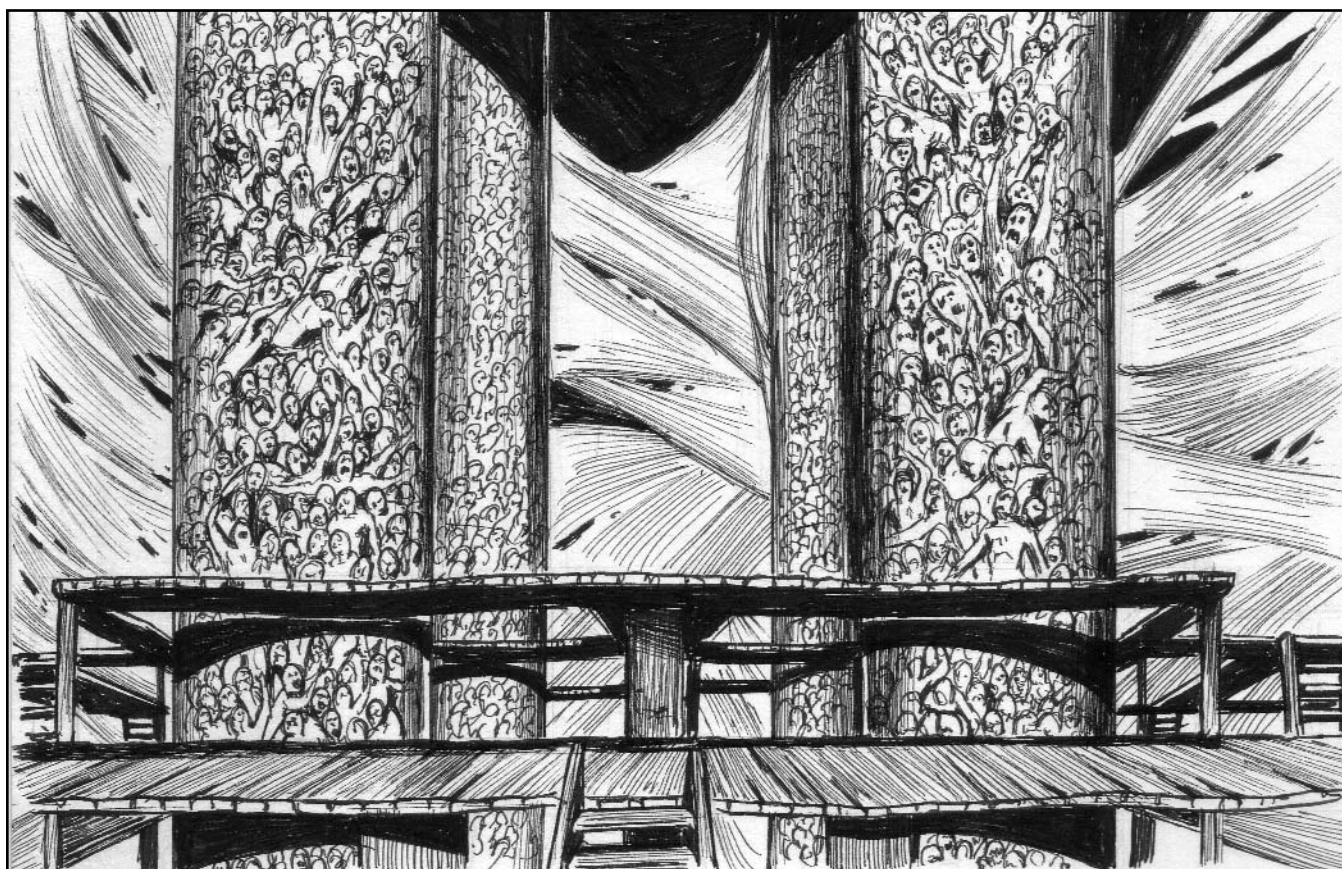
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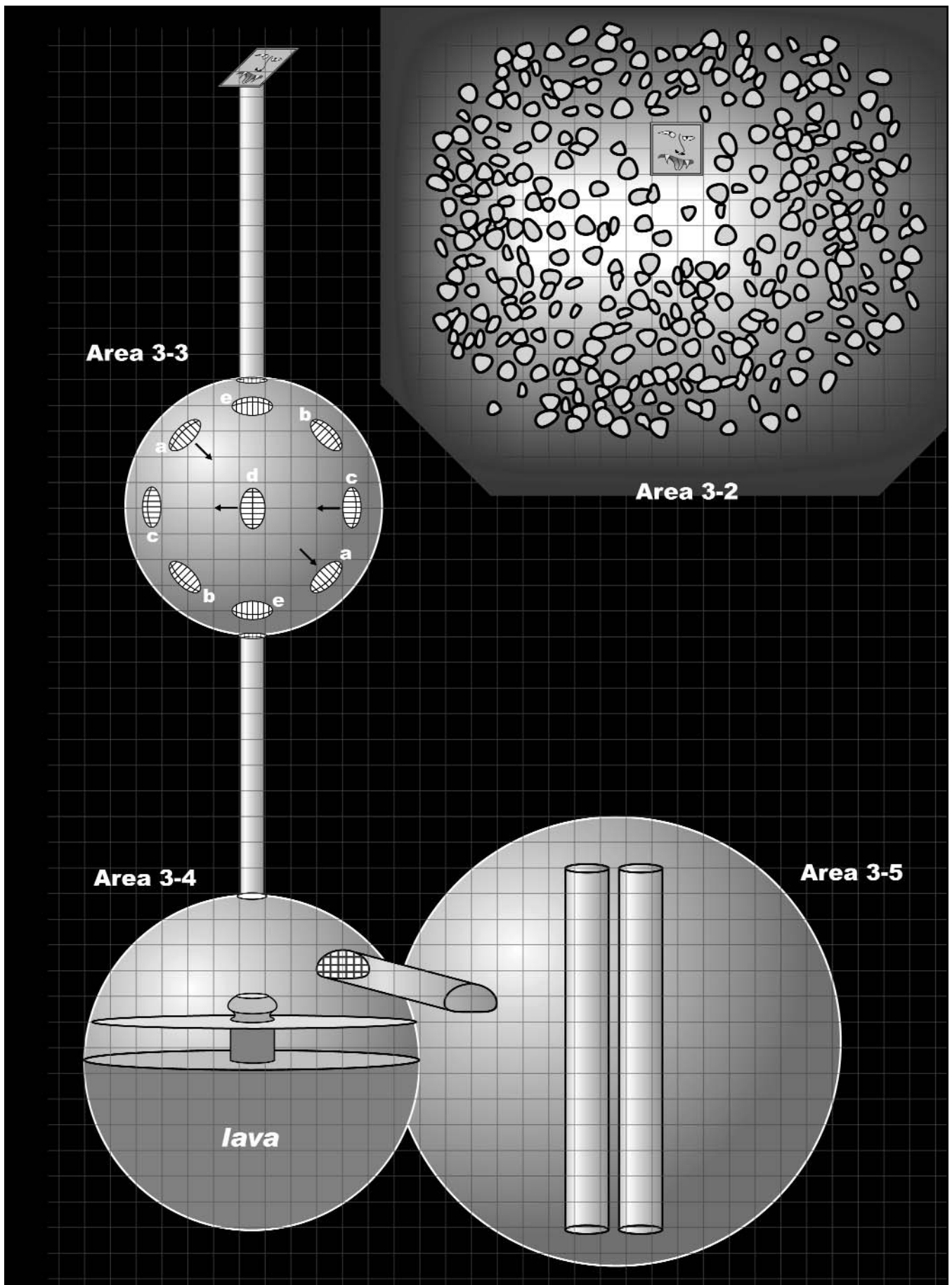


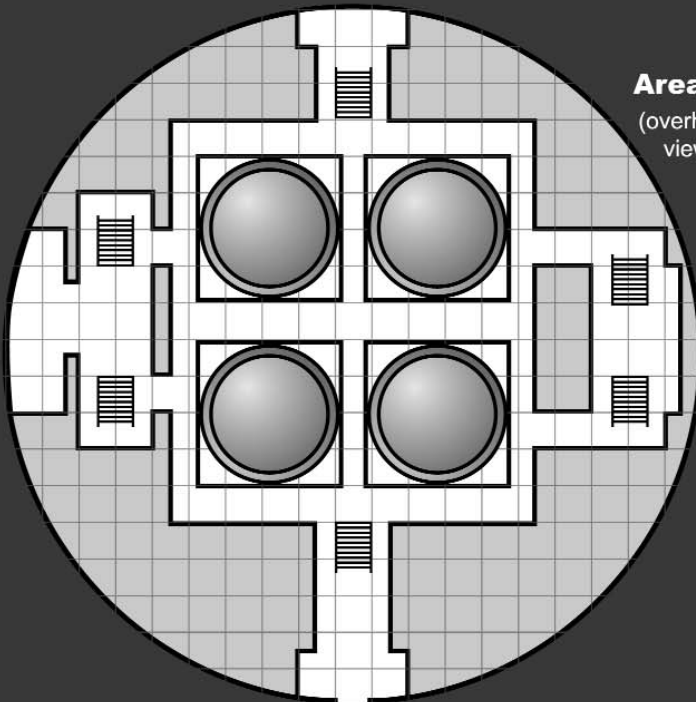
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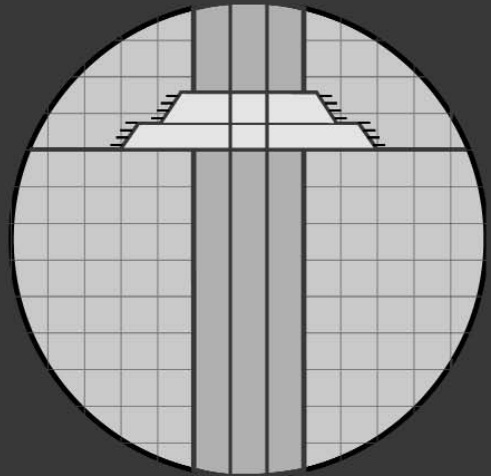
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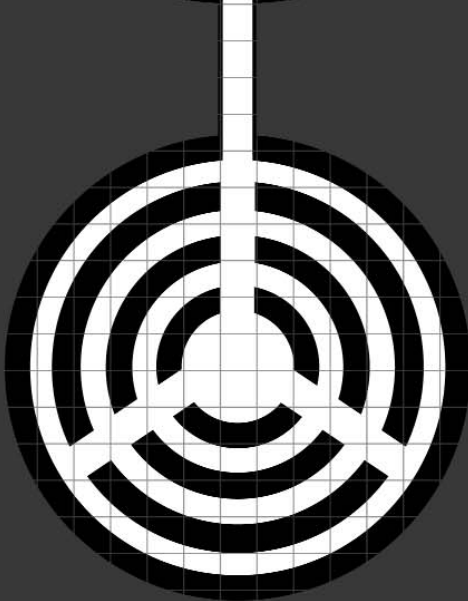




Area 3-5
(overhead
view)



Area 3-5: view from side



Area 3-4
(overhead view)