

# PATHFINDER

ADVENTURE PATH™



SERPENT'S SKULL

VAULTS OF  
MADNESS

By Greg A. Vaughan

# Mwangi Flora

## Sweet Carcass Squash

Notable for having the sickly sweet stench of a ripe corpse, the sweet carcass squash is a charan-ka delicacy. Growing to nearly the size of a halfling, a sweet carcass squash can weigh up to a hundred pounds. The inside of this slimy vegetable consists of thick coils of greasy tubers that look not unlike coils of animal entrails. The flavor of the sweet carcass squash, unfortunately, does not appeal to most civilized palates.



## Midnight Spores

Said to grow on certain ancient graves in the most remote corners of Pharama's Boneyard, the dark fungus known as midnight spores normally appears as nothing more than smears of black dust. Particularly ancient patches can grow into wispy filaments that look like hair. The spores themselves have strange effects upon the minds of those unfortunate enough to inhale them.



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## SERPENT'S SKULL

ADVENTURE PATH PART 4 of 6

# VAULTS OF MADNESS



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## ADVENTURE PATH™

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“Vaults of Madness” is a Pathfinder Adventure Path scenario designed for four 10th-level characters.  
By the end of this adventure, characters should reach 12th level.

This product makes use of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GameMastery Guide*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*, and *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*. These rules can be found online as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at [paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd](http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd).

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## WHAT LIES BETWEEN

Those of you who have been paying attention throughout the Serpent's Skull Adventure Path may have noticed a new name appearing in the development credits—yours truly, Rob McCreary. You might have seen my name pop up in other products as well, from *Pathfinder Player Companions* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting* books to *Pathfinder Modules*, first as an editor, then as a developer.

So how did I come to be here? Almost a year ago now, I was happily living in the Czech Republic, working in Prague as an expat English teacher with a dream to someday work for Paizo. I was a Top 4 Finalist in 2008's RPG Superstar competition, which led to some fun freelance work for Paizo—the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, *Dungeon Denizens Revisited*, *Cities of Golarion*, and *Classic Horrors Revisited*, as well as a couple of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* installments, "The Final Wish" and "Rivers Run Red." But I hungered for more, and at Paizocon 2009 I

talked to Lisa, Erik, James, and Wes, putting a bug in their collective ear that I was available if Paizo was looking for some new blood. I even convinced my wife to move to the States with me if Paizo ever hired me. And hire me they did, right in the middle of my honeymoon (and much to my wife's chagrin, who never thought I'd actually get a real job working on RPG games).

So we packed up and crossed an ocean and a continent to live in the Pacific Northwest, where I started working for Paizo as an Assistant Editor. Almost immediately I began taking on development work, however, especially on the *Pathfinder Module* line, and my title gradually changed to that of Developer. And so it went, until a few months ago, when we got ready to start our seventh *Pathfinder Adventure Path*, *Serpent's Skull*.

Since "Burnt Offerings," way back in *Rise of the Runelords*, James Jacobs has been the overseer of every *Pathfinder Adventure Path* adventure. But since James

wrote the first adventure of *Serpent's Skull*, "Souls for Smuggler's Shiv," someone else was needed to develop it. James and Wes turned to me, and I eagerly accepted the challenge. I've been an avid reader of *Pathfinder Adventure Paths* almost since the beginning, and a *Golarion* geek on the side as well, so working on the first adventure of *Serpent's Skull* was like a dream come true. Little did I know that meant I would be developing every adventure in the *Adventure Path*.

What exactly does a developer do, you may ask? We assign most of the writing for our products to freelancers, who then give us raw manuscripts in return. I'd like to say that these manuscripts are pure *Pathfinder* gold right out of the box, but it doesn't always work out that way. Let me be clear that this is not at all a dig at our freelancers. They work hard, and turn in great ideas and great writing, but sometimes their visions don't exactly match ours, or the writing isn't quite in line with *Pathfinder* standards, or maybe life just gets in the way and a turnover isn't the best that it can be. And that's what a developer does—he takes a freelancer's raw, uncut gem and cuts and polishes it until it's a shining jewel fit for publication.

We're four adventures into *Serpent's Skull* now, and that's what I've been doing—cutting and polishing, adding a little here, changing a little bit there, to make an *Adventure Path* that James would be proud of, but more importantly, one that you, our fans, will have fun playing and talking about on the messageboards for months or years to come.

Fortunately, this adventure was a lot of fun to work on as well. Our *Pathfinder Adventure Path* maestro, Greg A. Vaughan (the only person to have written an adventure for every *Pathfinder Adventure Path*) turned in a manuscript that was fun, scary, creepy, and dangerous to boot. The past three adventures of *Serpent's Skull* have involved finding out about a lost city, the overland journey to get there, and finally, exploring the city itself. The next two adventures involve a second lost city beneath the first one, and stopping the danger that threatens to rise and overtake all of *Golarion*.

This adventure is something between the two—the beginning of a journey from the ancient *Azlant* city of *Saventh-Yhi* to the even older serpentfolk city of *Ilmurea* below. Along the way, the PCs will find out more about the ancient history of *Saventh-Yhi* and its eventual fall, and its connection to the slumbering serpentfolk empire (of which the various serpentfolk they've already encountered are but harbingers). "Vaults of Madness" has flying apes, mysterious bat-men, extraplanar spiders, bloody undead, aquatic menaces, giant polyps, muddy genies, body thieves, and one very big, very powerful *Gorilla King*. Throw in a healthy dose of madness for all involved, and you've got an adventure that should be a blast to play!

What else have we got for you? The demon-worshipping ape-men called the *charau-ka* have had a major role to

## ON THE COVER

This volume's cover character is the sorcerer Dargan Etters, the leader of the *Aspis Consortium* faction. Arrogant and charismatic, Dargan thinks of little more than his own standing within the Consortium, and leading an expedition to *Saventh-Yhi* was just one more rung in his climb up the *Aspis Consortium's* ladder of prestige. By this point, the PCs probably already have determined their allies and rivals, and Dargan could easily fall on either side. Unfortunately, Dargan is scheduled to meet a messy end in this adventure at the hands of his replacement, though if your PCs are particularly friendly with him, he can easily survive as a prisoner to be rescued. Dargan's full statistics appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #39.

play in *Serpent's Skull* so far, and that trend continues in "Vaults of Madness." But we also take a peek into the culture, religion, and tactics of these fearsome jungle denizens in this month's "Ecology of the *Charau-Ka*" article by Gareth Hanrahan. In addition, Gareth gives us a whole bunch of *Indiana Jones*-style deathtraps both new and deadly, for use in the *Vaults of Madness* or any other dungeon of your choice in this month's "Dungeon Deathtraps" article. And as usual, the *Pathfinder Bestiary* provides a host of tough new monsters to challenge characters in dark jungles and lost cities everywhere.

## EANDO'S CONTINUING JOURNEY

As James mentioned in the foreword to "Racing to Ruin," the illustrations accompanying each foreword in the *Serpent's Skull Adventure Path* show scenes from Eando Kline's journey south from *Absalom* to the serpentfolk city of *Ilmurea*. After leaving the *Grand Lodge* in *Absalom*, we've seen Eando fighting *sahuagin* on a storm-tossed ship and battling *troglodytes* somewhere in the *Darklands*. This month, Eando has reached his goal, or so it seems from the serpentfolk he's fending off. Did he succeed, or has Eando Kline finally met his match? Stay tuned for next month's foreword to see the next stage of the famed *Pathfinder's* journey!

**ROB**

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## VAULTS OF MADNESS

I HAVE SEEN THE DOOM THAT COMES TO SAVENTH-YHI, BUT THE COUNCIL REMAINS UNCONVINCED. FOOLS, ALL OF THEM, JEALOUS OF MY WORK! FORTUNATELY, THE MIDNIGHT SPORES I INTRODUCED INTO THE RESERVOIR ARE HAVING THE DESIRED EFFECT ON THE POPULACE, AND MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE ATTENDING MY SERMONS AND HEEDING MY WORDS, FEARING THE FUTURE THAT IS TO COME. THE SEVEN VAULTS ARE ALMOST READY—I HAVE SEEDED THEM WITH EVEN GREATER CONCENTRATIONS OF THE SPORES AND MOVED THE ARGENTAL FONT INTO ONE OF THEM FOR SAFEKEEPING, BUT I KNOW THE COUNCIL IS TRYING TO INTERFERE WITH MY WORK. IF SAVENTH-YHI FALLS, IT WILL BE THEIR FAULT, NOT MINE!

—EXCERPT FROM THE JOURNAL OF URSCHLAR VOHKAVI,  
HIGH PRIEST OF PHARASMA

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The city of Saventh-Yhi had been in a slow but steady decline for years prior to the Earthfall. Many of its seers and mystics feared some great calamity was coming, and the fact that certain prognosticators within Azlant would not respond to their queries led them to believe that something was brewing about which they were not being told. With their focus looking outward at the vague warnings and inscrutable portents that preceded Earthfall, they failed to look inward at a more immediate danger that faced them in the form of a lone madman bent on “saving” the city in his own twisted way.

For many years Urschlar Vohkavi, Pharama’s high priest of prophecy in Saventh-Yhi, had served as a powerful member of the city’s Council of Seven Spears. In the years leading up to Earthfall, he became more and more troubled by strange portents of some vague destruction and catastrophe looming in the near future. His attempts to divine the nature of this gruesome fate were stymied again and again by the menacing silence coming from his superiors in Azlant and the lack of direct answers from his deity.

Like many of his peers among the high priests of prophecy and fate in Pharama’s church, Urschlar had particular sensitivities that made him none too stable and more susceptible to stresses on the psyche. He found himself consumed by a dread knowledge that he could not fully fathom and was unable to effectively communicate to those around him, and this pushed him ever deeper into his eccentricities. After several years of beseeching his goddess for answers that were not forthcoming, he resolved to present his questions to her court personally. He gathered the necessary funds and magic to journey to the Boneyard itself to seek his answers.

In Pharama’s Boneyard, Urschlar was unable to secure an audience with the Lady of Graves, for she was far too busy tending to her divine duties. Instead he found himself wandering aimlessly among the endless sepulchers of the Graveyard of Souls. There, among the bleached light and shadows of the death moon Groetus, Urschlar found a strange black flower growing within the partially unearthed bones of an ancient rib cage. When he plucked the flower, Urschlar heard a slippery, whispering voice that explained much of what he sought to know and gave him the means to make his people see it as well—the secret of midnight spores.

Shortly after Urschlar returned to Saventh-Yhi from his planar travels, Pharama’s other two high priests of birth and death died under tragic circumstances, leaving the city stunned and bewildered, and granting Urschlar much greater influence than before. Using the strange circumstances as a staging position, he began publicly preaching of the still ill-defined disaster that

## Advancement Track

Characters should be 10th level when they begin “Vaults of Madness.” By the time they are ready to enter the Vault of the Body Thief, the PCs should be near 12th level. This adventure uses the Medium advancement track for experience.

threatened to overtake the city. To bolster the effects of his harangue, he began to secretly and slowly introduce the midnight spores he had begun cultivating into the city’s reservoir.

Although Urschlar’s own concentrated exposure to them had driven him irrevocably insane with paranoia, the midnight spores were not sufficiently concentrated to have overt effects on the city’s populace. Within a few weeks, however, their maddening effects had increased the sense of foreboding already encompassing the city. Fears were heightened, but only those few who were particularly susceptible to the spores suffered actual mental breaks, exhibiting random acts of violence or sudden collapses. Because no one understood the cause of these subtle-yet-pervasive phenomena, no investigation was made into them, and the city continued to suffer.

With more and more of the masses heeding his prophecies of doom, Urschlar continued to seed the city’s water supply with the midnight spores while poisoning the people’s minds with a growing sense of panic. Once the number of people attending his sermons reached a critical mass, Urschlar declared a major disaster was coming that would destroy the city if they were not prepared. He would not say what the calamity would be, but he assured the people and the city leaders that they must prepare or else be annihilated when disaster came.

The city heeded Urschlar’s warnings and gave him free reign in the preparations for the city’s survival. First he ordered the excavation of deep vaults beneath the city’s seven districts, where the populace and their most valued possessions could be safely sequestered when disaster came. Then, into one of these he moved one of the city’s most powerful artifacts, the *Argentale Font*—a magical fountain bestowed upon the city by the gods, whose waters were said to cure any ailment and were one of the few means of curing the infection of the midnight spores.

Construction continued on the seven vaults, and Urschlar installed many hidden rooms and traps, deflecting any questions as to their purpose with ambiguous prophetic pronouncements. Urschlar began secretly cultivating major growths of the midnight spores in these rooms, creating a vast storehouse of the

mold with which he could continue the city's paranoid reliance upon him, fearing that if the spores' influence were broken, he would no longer be heeded and the city would be caught unprepared by the impending doom. In his own advanced lunacy, Urschlar could not see that his own actions in infesting the city's populace with the madness-inducing spores were only ushering in the doom he was trying to avoid.

Earthfall's sudden impacts on Golarion caused great upheaval and shifts in the earth, and as one particularly powerful tremor engulfed Saventh-Yhi, it disturbed the cultivating chambers of the midnight spore growths and vented the spores over the entire city through newly created fissures and cracks. The black cloud of deadly spores caused the city to erupt in a violent spasm of chaos, and in a single night Saventh-Yhi tore itself apart. Those few who survived the initial turmoil within the city stumbled dazedly into the surrounding jungle, consumed from within by spore-induced insanity, and died horribly among the jungle's natural dangers. With the death of these last few maddened survivors, so too died all direct knowledge of the city of triumphant Savith, deep in the heart of Garund.

Urschlar himself was not spared the calamity. The disaster had arrived much sooner than his own maddened prophecies had predicted, and proved greater than even his own fevered imaginings. When the tremors struck the city, he found himself inadvertently exposed to a toxic concentration of the purified midnight spores. His only hope lay with the enchanted waters of the *Argentale Font* that he had locked away, but the traps and wards he had erected were too potent for him to quickly navigate. Urschlar Vohkavi died in spasms of agony, a victim of the very traps that he had put in place.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

After curing the half-elf Pathfinder Juliver (rescued in "The City of Seven Spears") from her feeble-mindedness, the PCs learn that she is a companion of a Pathfinder who is in dire jeopardy in a secret subterranean city below Saventh-Yhi—a lost city of the serpentfolk called Ilmurea. Retracing Juliver's route, the PCs locate and enter an ancient vault between the two cities, only to discover the magical portal that Juliver used to reach Saventh-Yhi from the city below has been disabled and must be repaired to be of use. The PCs learn that the components for repairing the portal—six delicate focusing crystals—have been hidden in six other secret vaults beneath the city.

As the PCs begin exploring the other vaults, they become infected by insanity-inducing spores that infest all of the vaults. Meanwhile, events are unfolding in Saventh-Yhi as well. Reinforcements have arrived for one of the PCs'

rival factions, but the leader of that faction is under the domination of an intellect devourer named M'deggog from the city below. This new faction leader escalates the conflict among the factions exploring the city, culminating in an attack on the PCs' camp. The PCs must plan their own attack on their rivals' camp and rescue their comrades who were taken prisoner. When they finally confront the faction's new leader, the PCs get their first clue that something sinister may be behind the conflict.

As the PCs continue their explorations, they learn that the Gorilla King Ruthazek has come down from Usaro to see this newly discovered city and is encamped outside the entrance to the final vault. The Gorilla King invites the PCs to a grand feast, where they are subjected to a series of challenges to test their fitness to rule Saventh-Yhi. Only when the PCs have passed these trials can they enter the last vault to find the final crystal they need to activate the portal to Ilmurea. In so doing, they encounter a group of bloodthirsty bandits under the control of the strange intellect devourer M'deggog, the true mastermind behind much of the havoc in the city. Once the aberration is defeated, the PCs can finally restore the portal and gain access to the subterranean serpentfolk city of Ilmurea.

## PART ONE: INTRIGUE IN SAVENTH-YHI

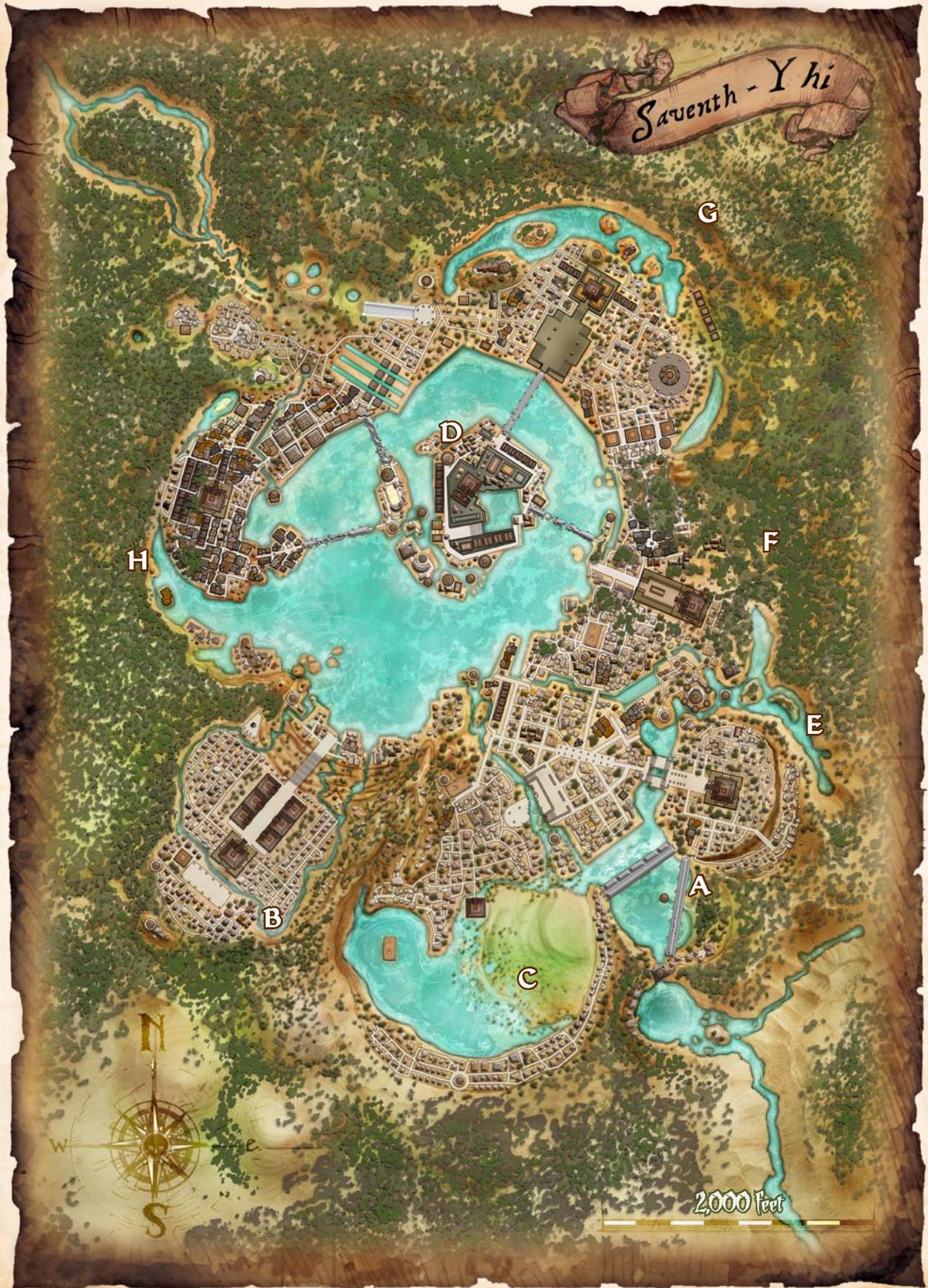
This adventure involves the exploration of several previously unknown dungeons beneath Saventh-Yhi, collectively known as the Vaults of Madness. At the same time, the PCs must deal with several events taking place in the city itself, starting with the feeble-minded Pathfinder they encountered at the end of "City of Seven Spears." Details on the Vaults of Madness and the midnight spores infesting them are given below, followed by descriptions of the events that happen during the adventure.

## THE VAULTS OF MADNESS

The Vaults of Madness are a series of seven underground vaults constructed beneath the seven districts of Saventh-Yhi. The vaults' entrances are all subterranean and fairly secluded, such that they would be easy to overlook, even if the PCs heavily explored a vault's district in the previous adventure. In fact, the PCs could be camped very near to one of the vault entrances without knowing its significance or having a need to explore it.

The First Vault (area **B**) contains the portal that leads to Ilmurea and the next adventure in the Adventure Path, but the Pathfinder Juliver destroyed the portal's focusing crystals to throw off pursuit when she escaped from the subterranean city. The other six vaults each hold a replacement focusing crystal required to operate the portal. Therefore, the PCs will need to explore each vault and obtain one of the crystals hidden within in order to repair the portal and proceed to the next adventure.





The vaults can be explored in whatever order the PCs choose, with the following exceptions. Since Juliver escaped from the First Vault (area **B**), it is the only vault that she and the PCs are aware of at the start of the adventure. In fact, the PCs will need to reach areas **B10** and **B13** to learn about the existence of the other six vaults. In addition, the Vault of the Body Thief (area **H**) should be the last vault explored, and should be explored only after the PCs have completed all of the events in Part One of this adventure. In fact, Event 6 (The Gorilla King Cometh) takes place just outside of Vault of the Body Thief, and the PCs must first deal with the Gorilla King and his minions before they can enter the final vault.

The vaults are all ancient structures created for various purposes during the heyday of Saventh-Yhi before Urschlar's rise to power, but they were commandeered as part of his master plan to "save" the city from its prophesied destruction. As such, they have all been in existence for at least 10,000 years and have survived the greatest physical calamity in Golarion's history—Earthfall. As a result, the vaults are in less-than-pristine condition. Many sections have collapsed or shifted, and many have little resemblance to their original configurations. In addition, most of their original contents have long since been lost to 10 millennia of jungle scavengers and simple deterioration.

The vaults contain a combination of masonry and hewn stone walls, though collapses have reshaped them and created walls of compressed rubble in many places, and most floors have a layer of soil built up over untold centuries of erosion. In general, a DC 15 Climb check is sufficient to scale these rough, craggy surfaces. Ceilings have collapsed in several places, leaving rooms open to the sky or at the bottom of sinkholes. These are described individually in the vault descriptions. Ceiling heights of passages average between 15 and 20 feet and are typically composed of corbeled arches. Rooms have the same general design but range from 20 to 30 feet in height. Any doors that still exist are of stone and are 4–6 inches thick with nested hinges and no locking devices. Plant life and vermin are rife throughout the ancient chambers—most halls are overgrown with pale jungle creepers growing through the cracks and seams in the walls, and a multitude of small beetles, ants, spiders, and centipedes scuttle among the floor debris. These vermin are not generally harmful, but may provide a momentary fright for unsuspecting PCs. There are no light sources unless otherwise indicated.

The seven Vaults of Madness are as follows:

**B. The First Vault:** Located in the artisan district, this is the vault through which the feebleminded Pathfinder Juliver escaped through the magical portal from Ilmurea, and from which the undead serpentfolk necromancer

Sozothala launched his attack on the surface at the end of the last adventure. This area is detailed in Part Two.

**C. The Flooded Vault:** This waterlogged vault sits beneath the farming district, and is inhabited by dangerous aquatic creatures. This area is detailed in Part Three.

**D. The Impenetrable Redoubt of Khalid-Shah:** An outcast shaitan guards this vault, located under the government district. This area is detailed in Part Four.

**E. The Vault of Silence:** Home to undead monstrosities, this vault lies beneath the temple district. This area is detailed in Part Five.

**F. The Verdant Refuge:** Dangerous fungi and plants infest this vault beneath the residential district. This area is detailed in Part Six.

**G. The Lair of Illaghri:** An extraplanar spider called a corpsespinner has taken this vault as her lair, occasionally preying upon the charau-ka of the military district. This area is detailed in Part Seven.

**H. The Vault of the Body Thief:** This vault lies hidden in the mercantile district, and has been taken over by a legendary creature known as the Kaava Bush-Devil, and its mysterious master, the intellect devourer M'deggog. This area is detailed in Part Eight.

## THE MIDNIGHT SPORES

Urschlar's ancient attempts at cultivating the mysterious midnight spores have infested all of the Vaults of Madness with the dangerous mold. The spores themselves are microscopic and only visible in large concentrations, and even then appear as nothing more than fine black dust. This black residue pervades the vaults, growing in the cracks, seams, and crevices in the walls, floors, and ceiling, and invisibly permeating the very air of the vaults. If a creature enters one of the vaults, even into only a single room, it is unavoidably exposed to the midnight spores. Once the PCs realize the danger, they find that the spores are omnipresent throughout the vaults and cannot possibly be eradicated, cleansed, or avoided. Only a *miracle* or *wish* spell can kill the spores, but each casting only removes the spores from one vault.

The midnight spores themselves are a psychotropic extraplanar substance of unknown origin. They are not a poison or a disease, and immunity to such provides no protection, nor can magic that neutralizes such remove the effects of the spores. The spores can be absorbed through the skin as well as inhaled, so simply holding one's breath provides no protection from exposure. However, the particular strain of midnight spores cultivated by Urschlar is very specific in its spores' effects—the spores only affect living humanoid creatures. The spores are harmless to all other life forms.

The midnight spores cause paranoia in those exposed to them. When a creature first enters one of the vaults,

it is exposed to the spores and must make an immediate DC 17 Will save or begin suffering paranoia. The insanity inflicted by the spores is especially virulent, and takes effect immediately.

Each time a creature enters a vault—regardless of how long it remains within—it is exposed again to the spores. If an individual leaves a vault and reenters, that creature is considered to have been exposed again, regardless of how long or short of a time has passed. Likewise, certain areas of the vaults contain higher concentrations of spores and count as new exposures—these are detailed in the text. Each exposure requires a new DC 17 Will save. Those who are not yet afflicted begin suffering from paranoia as soon as they fail a save. If a creature already suffering from paranoia is exposed again, it must make a new DC 17 Will save or the current DC of its paranoia is increased by +5 (see Curing Paranoia below). If the PCs take any sort of precautions against contact with the spores (such as wearing a *necklace of adaptation*, wrapping scarves over their noses and mouths, and so on), they gain a +2 circumstance bonus on saving throws against exposure to the spores.

A character suffering from paranoia is convinced that the world and all that dwell within it are out to get her. Paranoid characters are typically argumentative or introverted. The individual takes a –4 penalty on Will saves and Charisma-based skill checks, cannot receive benefit from or attempt the Aid Another action, and cannot willingly accept aid (including healing) from another creature unless she makes a Will save against the insanity's current DC (which starts at DC 17). If you wish to have the spores afflict creatures with other insanities beyond paranoia, pages 250–251 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* contain rules and a table for several different insanities and their effects.

## CURING PARANOIA

Recovering naturally from an insanity such as paranoia is a lengthy process—once per week, an afflicted character may make a Will save against the insanity's current DC. Paranoia starts with a DC of 17, but subsequent exposures to the midnight spores can increase this DC as described above. If the character succeeds on this save, the insanity's DC is reduced by a number of points equal to the character's Charisma bonus (minimum of 1). The character continues to suffer the full effects of the insanity until its DC is reduced to 0, at which point the character is cured and the insanity vanishes completely.

*Lesser restoration* has no effect on insanity, but *restoration* reduces the current DC of one insanity currently affecting a target by an amount equal to the caster's level. *Greater restoration*, *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* immediately cures a target of all insanity. In addition, the waters of

the *Argent Font* in area D5 will also cure a character of all insanity.

## EVENTS IN SAVENTH-YHI

As the PCs begin their explorations of the vaults beneath the city, other events are taking place in Saventh-Yhi. These events do not require any specific time period and can take place over a series of days or weeks depending how quickly the PCs explore the vaults. The events can occur at times and locations of your choosing, though they should be run in the order given. The PCs should deal with all of the events in Part One before venturing into the Vault of the Body Thief (area H), as the events of this part provide some foreshadowing for the conclusion of Part Eight and the adventure itself.

## EVENT 1: THE PATHFINDER'S COMPANION

The adventure begins once the PCs have rescued the feeble-minded half-elf Juliver and defeated the undead serpentfolk necromancer Sozothala at the end of “City of Seven Spears.” In addition to the *feeblemind*, Juliver is currently suffering from paranoia as a result of exposure to the midnight spores during her escape (see above). In order to communicate with Juliver, the PCs must cure her of both the *feeblemind* and her paranoia. It is unlikely that the PCs have access to the powerful magics required to heal *feeblemind* and insanities themselves, so they will have to find other means. If the PCs are members of the Pathfinder faction, or if they notice the tattoo of the Glyph of the Open Road on Juliver's right shoulder and recognize it as the symbol of the Pathfinder Society, they can go to the Society for aid—the Pathfinders are certainly interested in hearing her story and can provide a *scroll of heal* to cure her. Likewise, if the PCs allied with the Radiant Muse in the previous adventure, she has a *scroll of heal* that she can give to the PCs as a reward for helping to defeat the undead serpentfolk. Lastly, the PCs can purchase a *scroll of heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* from their faction themselves. Any of these magics will cure both the *feeblemind* condition and paranoia.

This adventure assumes that the PCs cure Juliver, but it is possible that they will not do so. If that is the case, you will need to provide the PCs with the information presented below. Perhaps she was able to draw a map and make some hurried notes before she succumbed to the *feeblemind*, and the PCs can piece together information from her notes and map in order to discover the next stage in their journey. If necessary, you may need to feed them additional clues to keep them on track.

Once the PCs cure Juliver of her *feeblemind* and paranoia, she is eager to speak to them.



"I thank you, friends, for your timely assistance. I don't know how long I have wandered in that dazed state, but since I am still alive and relatively unharmed I assume it cannot have been long. Which means that the source of my quest lies nearby... and I beseech you to aid me in my cause."

Further questions can reveal what brought Juliver to Saventh-Yhi in such a state. Juliver's answers to likely questions are outlined below.

**Who are you?** "My name is Juliver, and I am a member of the Pathfinder Society. I hail from the Grand Lodge of Absalom."

**What happened to you?** "My journey here has been one of many strange trials and events. More important than my story, however, is that of whom I followed on this quest—a man of renown named Eando Kline."

**Who is Eando Kline?** "Eando is a Pathfinder of rare reputation and honor, a man who has actually put the good of the civilized peoples of Golarion ahead of a personal agenda of discovery and self-aggrandizement—a rare thing indeed among my peers. Eando is in the greatest of dangers, and all of the Inner Sea Region with him. You must help me, for by doing so you help yourselves and all you hold dear."

**What is this danger you speak of?** "Eando stumbled upon a subterranean city in the far north built ages ago by a strange race of snake men. But it wasn't a dead city; it was just asleep—and it was ready to wake up. The clues that Eando had been following had been laid by the serpentfolk themselves in the hope that some explorer would unwittingly stumble upon them and rouse them from their age-long slumber to rise and conquer an unprepared world. Eando only narrowly avoided doing just that and barely escaped with his life."

"When he reported back to the Pathfinder Society, Eando refused to publish his findings and discouraged anyone from retracing his steps, knowing the dangers if others should stumble upon that city and wake those creatures. For this he was ostracized from the Society."

"But Eando continued his researches on his own, and discovered something of even more immediate danger—the underground city to the north was not the only such slumbering city. Another city slept beneath Garund as well, and was already beginning to wake on its own. Eando gathered a group of like-minded Pathfinders—such as myself—and we set out to stop this newly discovered threat before it could engulf the unsuspecting folk of Garund."

**Where is Eando Kline now?** "Following Eando's research, we entered certain deep caves in the Barrier Wall mountains south of Thuvia. For weeks we followed the byways of the Darklands until at last we came to this new subterranean city, called Ilmurea. Unfortunately,

it was much more lively than its sister city in the north and inhabited by numerous denizens. The serpentfolk there are on some sort of mission, under the leadership of a powerful priest. They ambushed us shortly after we entered the city. Eando and our companions were captured, and only I managed to escape."

**How did you get here?** "While fleeing the serpentfolk, I found an obscure tunnel that led up and assumed it to be as good as any. The tunnel led to a chamber with a magical portal on one wall. I stepped through, hoping it would take me somewhere where I could find aid to return and free my companions, and ended up in some other underground complex. My pursuers were right behind me, so to keep them from following me, I smashed several crystals surrounding the portal, hoping the damage would deactivate it for a time."

"Things are somewhat hazy after that. I don't think the serpentfolk followed me through, but I encountered what I think was an undead serpentfolk, a wizard, perhaps. It must have hit me with a spell of some kind, because as I tried to find an exit from the new chambers I had entered, I kept losing track of time and what I was doing. Eventually I remembered no more until I came to my senses in your presence."

**Where is this portal?** "I don't know exactly where the portal is, but I think it must be near here because I would be much worse for wear if I had wandered aimlessly for very far or very long. I thank you for your help, but must ask you to please help me retrace my steps and find the way back to Ilmurea. Eando and the rest are in great danger, and I have to help them. But I fear that without your aid, they're all doomed to a fate that the surface world will soon be sharing if the serpentfolk rise in force without being stopped."

**Development:** Juliver is dressed only in rags and has but 10 hit points remaining when the PCs rescue her; once healed, she is eager to begin looking immediately for the way back to the portal. The PCs can locate Juliver's trail with a DC 17 Survival check and follow it back to the base of the cliffs outside the entrance to the First Vault (area B1). If they cannot find her trail, the PCs can stumble across the entrance after 1d4 hours of searching in this area.

If the PCs want Juliver to accompany them, their faction supplies her with new equipment, as detailed in the following stat block. If the PCs don't want Juliver's company (or if you feel that they already have enough NPCs accompanying them, such as castaways, factions members, and so on), then you can have Juliver's injuries be more grievous, requiring that she remain in camp to recuperate while the PCs explore the vaults.

**Story Award:** If the PCs successfully cure Juliver of her *feeblemind* condition, award them 12,800 XP.

**JULIVER**
**CR 7**
**XP 3,200**

 Female half-elf rogue 5/Pathfinder chronicler 3  
 CN Medium humanoid (elf, human)

**Init** +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +15

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**DEFENSE**
**AC** 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 52 (8d8+16)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +3; +2 vs. enchantments

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, live to tell the tale 1/day, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

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**OFFENSE**
**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 rapier +10 (1d6+1/18–20)

**Ranged** mwk hand crossbow +10 (1d4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** bardic performance 6 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1), sneak attack +3d6

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**TACTICS**
**During Combat** Juliver uses her bardic performance to assist her allies, then tries to flank opponents to make sneak attacks.

**Morale** Juliver wants to find Eando Kline and does not want to throw her life away. If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, she tries to flee; failing that, she surrenders, hoping to be captured so she can try to escape later.

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

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Appraise +10, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +12, Escape Artist +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Linguistics +11, Perception +15, Perform (oratory) +10, Profession (scribe) +10, Sleight of Hand +10 (+14 to conceal small objects), Stealth +15, Survival +7 (+12 to avoid becoming lost), Use Magic Device +13 (+16 involving scrolls or other written magical items)

**Languages** Aklo, Azlanti, Common, Elven, Osiriani, Polyglot, Undercommon

**SQ** bardic knowledge +1, deep pockets (300 gp), elf blood, improved aid, master scribe, pathfinding, rogue talents (finesse rogue, resiliency), trapfinding +2

**Combat Gear** *dust of tracelessness*, *potions of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of darkvision*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of knock*;

**Other Gear** mithral shirt, +1 rapier, masterwork hand crossbow with 10 bolts, dagger, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, backpack, masterwork thieves' tools

**EVENT 2: A NEW BOSS IN TOWN (CR 11)**

This event involves encounters with members of two different factions exploring Saventh-Yhi. You should choose these factions based on how your campaign has developed. The first faction should be one that is friendly, or at least neutral, toward the PCs. The second faction should be the PCs' rival faction (in this adventure, it is assumed that the rival faction is the Aspis Consortium). If the PCs already defeated their rival faction in the previous adventure, this faction should be one that was allied to the rival faction, or is hostile to the PCs.



Juliver

This event occurs at any time after Event 1, preferably after the PCs have explored at least one of the Vaults of Madness. It can occur anywhere in the city, even at the PCs' own camp. If they have set up guards, they may receive warning before they see the following, so modify the description accordingly. When you're ready to begin the encounter, read the following text.

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There is a sudden thrashing in the nearby jungle, the sound of something running headlong through the undergrowth. Moments later, a woman stumbles out of the foliage and makes straight toward you at a stumbling run. Another figure follows a short distance behind, this one obviously a Mwangi scout, but his bare back is slicked with blood and two black-fletched crossbow bolts protrude from his shoulder. He does not appear to be chasing the woman but rather trying to keep up. Both people appear wounded and unarmed.

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The woman is a character from the faction most friendly to the PCs. If possible, this character should be someone the PCs have had contact with before, such as one of the NPC castaways from Smuggler's Shiv. If there are no existing NPCs that fit the bill, the woman is sunburned and dressed in explorers' garb. She stumbles to a halt before the PCs and lies on the ground panting. She identifies herself as **Karlen** (N female human expert 3) of the Sargavan expedition (or whichever faction you have chosen as the "friendly" faction). The wounded man collapses beside her, and Karlen identifies him as **Mufasan** (N male human ranger 2), one of his expedition's guides.

If questioned or given a moment to explain, Karlen and Mufasan report that the Aspis Consortium has gone crazy. Mufasan was on a scouting mission near the Aspis camp, and witnessed a battle there. Apparently, the expedition recently received reinforcements of Aspis Consortium legionnaires. Soon after they arrived, their leader, a one-eyed man with a black beard, took over the camp, executing anyone who resisted. Mufasan saw the whole thing, but some of the legionnaires spotted him and chased him back to the Sargavan camp. The legionnaires attacked the Sargavan camp as Mufasan was trying to warn his superiors of what he had seen. Mufasan was hit by crossbow bolts and Karlen took a sword stroke to the hip, but they both managed to escape during the confusion. The last thing they saw was the Aspis legionnaires rounding up the Sargavan survivors as prisoners. Karlen and Mufasan have run across the PCs by chance, but beg for sanctuary, warning that the Aspis Consortium is liable to attack anyone now that blood has been spilled.

**Creatures:** Karlen and Mufasan do not know it, but they were followed by a patrol of six legionnaires. Even as the two survivors tell their tale to the PCs, the legionnaires

use Stealth to move into positions of cover where they can catch the PCs in a crossfire. They focus their attacks on a single PC, either an archer or a lightly armored individual who appears to be an arcane caster. They then draw swords and charge in to attack, pairing up to flank opponents and finish off anyone they have wounded. Both Mufasan and Karlen are unarmed and too exhausted to fight. If three of the legionnaires are killed, the rest split up and flee into the jungle. The survivors rendezvous at a predetermined location an hour later before returning to their secret camp (area A) to report back to their leader.

#### ASPIS CONSORTIUM LEGIONNAIRES (6)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 56 each (see page 15)

**Development:** If Karlen and Mufasan are rescued, they gladly join the PCs' faction in whatever capacity the PCs wish, though they know little else of use to the PCs. If any of the legionnaires are captured and interrogated, they say only that they were following orders. It's impossible to track the legionnaires, as they are in their favored terrain. If the PCs decide to go to the Aspis Consortium's camp to confront the legionnaires directly, they discover that the Consortium forces have abandoned their previous camp. The PCs can follow their trail to a new, secret camp outside the city (area A) with three DC 13 Survival checks in succession. If the PCs wish to do so, proceed with Event 4 on page 15.

### EVENT 3: AN ACT OF WAR (CR 10)

If the PCs proceeded directly to Event 4 after Event 2, then this event does not occur. Otherwise, it happens at some point after Event 2, at a time when the PCs have been away from their expedition's base camp—likely while exploring one of the vaults.

Before running this encounter, you should make opposed Defense rolls between the PCs' faction and the Aspis Consortium (or whichever is the rival faction), as described in the "Expedition to Saventh-Yhi" article in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #39. The Aspis Consortium expedition's new leader, Ivo Haigan, has moved his faction's camp and redistributed its campsite scores—the Aspis Consortium now has a Defense score of 20. If the Aspis Consortium wins the roll, they inflict 2d6 Destruction points on the PCs' camp, and may steal some Discovery points if those are still being tracked. In addition, most members of the PCs' expedition are captured. If the PCs' faction is victorious, their camp still suffers 1d6 Destruction points, and their faction's main NPCs are captured. See Event 4 for details regarding these captured NPCs. If you're not using the campsite rules

presented in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #39, simply assume that the Aspis Consortium's forces were victorious over those of the PCs' faction.

When you're ready to begin the encounter, read the following text.

The smell of smoke greets your nose as you approach your camp, though it is not the smell of a simple cook fire—there has been a major fire. Reaching the camp, you find it devastated. All of the tents and shelters have been burned, the still-smoldering ruins suggesting the calamity occurred within the last few hours. The bodies of slain comrades and draft animals litter the ground, pierced like pin cushions with black-fletched crossbow bolts.

A search of the ruined camp reveals that a large group surrounded the camp and then apparently attacked with the benefit of surprise, slaying most of those on guard duty with the first volley. Disturbingly, many of the bodies of those slain—including those of pack animals—have been viciously hacked apart by a slashing weapon. If the PCs encountered the Aspis Consortium legionnaires in Event 2, the black-fletched crossbow bolts are easily identified as those used by the Consortium's hired soldiers.

If the PCs search for survivors, they find one individual at 0 hit points (this should be an NPC castaway or other person known to the PCs, or Karlen if she joined the PCs' faction). She is bleeding and will soon die if not stabilized. If healed and questioned, she will identify the attackers as the Aspis Consortium, once more led by the one-eyed newcomer. At some point during the battle, the witness reports, the man went crazy and started hacking apart people and animals alike with his scimitar.

Assuming the PCs' faction lost, a quick count of the bodies reveals that only 20% of the camp's personnel were slain in the raid—the rest are missing (if the PCs' faction won, 20% of the camp's personnel were still slain, but only the major NPCs were captured). A DC 15 Perception or Survival check is sufficient to find the trail of prisoners and pack animals that were led off into the jungle. This trail can be followed with four consecutive DC 12 Survival checks, and leads to Ivo Haigan's Camp in Event 4.

**Creatures:** Unfortunately, the slaughter has attracted more than just the PCs' attention. The smell of blood has drawn a pair of dire tigers to investigate the carnage. The smilodons lurk in the nearby undergrowth (treat as tall grass for the purpose of Stealth checks) while the PCs search the camp and talk to Karlen. Unless spotted, they leap out at an opportune moment, taking their prey by surprise with pounce attacks.

**DIRE TIGERS (2)** CR 8  
**XP 4,800 each**  
 hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 265)

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#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The dire tigers focus their attacks on the wounded NPC and any lone PCs.

**Morale** A dire tiger attempts to flee into the jungle if reduced below 15 hit points, or if the other dire tiger is slain.

### EVENT 4: IVO HAIGAN'S CAMP (CR VARIES)

Depending on the PCs' actions, this event likely takes place after either Event 2 or Event 3. Several days ago, a caravan of Aspis Consortium legionnaires led by an officer named Ivo Haigan arrived in Saventh-Yhi. Ivo is a career agent with the Aspis Consortium who has risen through the ranks and led several successful expeditions in the Mwangi Expanse and Katapesh, achieving the Silver Consortium badge. He is an investor in the Saventh-Yhi expedition and was sent with a mandate to assume control of things, if necessary, to ensure the mission's success.

Soon after arriving in the city, however, Ivo ran afoul of the intellect devourer M'deggog during his explorations and became one of its vessels (see area H for details). Under the intellect devourer's control, Ivo staged a coup of the Aspis Consortium's expedition, slaying its previous leader, the sorcerer Dargan Etters, and everyone else who resisted. The Aspis Consortium's attacks on the other expeditions have been at the behest of the intellect devourer as well. When not under M'deggog's control, however, Ivo is his normal self, and has no knowledge or memories of the intellect devourer or its actions. Ivo thinks the periods under M'deggog's control are blackouts, and though he knows something is amiss, he acts as if everything that has happened is part of some greater plan.

### THE ASPIS CONSORTIUM

Thirty Aspis Consortium legionnaires originally accompanied Ivo to Saventh-Yhi. The actual number in the camp at any one time varies. In addition to the patrol encountered in Event 2, two other patrols of five legionnaires each are usually exploring the city or out in the surrounding jungle hunting, leaving a total of 14 in the camp at one time. The rest of the expedition's members are either noncombatants, or are recovering from wounds received in Ivo's earlier attacks—these members are not threats when the PCs assault the camp.

**ASPIS CONSORTIUM LEGIONNAIRES (14)** CR 6

**XP 2,400 each**

Male or female human fighter 4/ranger 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +3 (+5 jungle); **Senses** Perception +11 (+13 jungle)

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#### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +3 Dex)

**hp** 56 each (7d10+18)

# Serpent's Skull

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

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## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *longsword* +11/+6 (1d8+3/19–20)

**Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow +12 (1d10+2/19–20)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (humans +2)

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## TACTICS

**During Combat** The legionnaires try to keep foes at range with their crossbows, focusing their attacks on humans if possible. In melee, they work together to flank opponents.

**Morale** A legionnaire flees or surrenders when reduced to 14 hit points or fewer.

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## STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Endurance, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (heavy crossbow)



Ivo Haigan

**Skills** Climb +4, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (geography) +3 (+5 jungle), Knowledge (nature) +3, Perception +11 (+13 jungle), Ride +5, Stealth +14 (+16 jungle), Survival +10 (+12 jungle), Swim +4

**Languages** Common, Polyglot

**SQ** armor training 1, track +1, wild empathy +3

**Combat Gear** *potion of blur*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potions of endure elements* (2); **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, +1 *longsword*, masterwork heavy crossbow with 30 black-fletched bolts, dagger, pouch with 1d10 pp and 2d20 gp

**Ivo Haigan:** Ivo Haigan is a gruff, no-nonsense leader, but can be a charmer when he needs to be, which explains his success in moving upward through the ranks of the Consortium. He has a short black beard and typically wears a faded gray keffiyeh, a fashion he adopted while guiding caravans through the deserts of eastern Garund. His left eye is squinted closed, as if he had sustained a wound recently, though no scarring is visible (this is a result of M'deggog's control, and may serve as a clue when the PCs later encounter more of the intellect devourer's vessels; see area H for more details).

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## IVO HAIGAN

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male human fighter 5/rogue 5

CE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +7; **Senses** Perception +13

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## DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 85 (10 HD; 5d10+5d8+35)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4; +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1, evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

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## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *keen falchion* +15/+10 (2d4+10/15–20)

**Ranged** mwk dagger +12/+7 (1d4+4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** weapon training (heavy blades +1), sneak attack +3d6

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## TACTICS

**During Combat** Ivo tries to flank with his legionnaires or other allies to make sneak attacks.

**Morale** While under M'deggog's control, Ivo fights to the death. If Ivo is slain, his skull—a brittle, hollow husk—collapses, causing a foul greenish fluid to run out of his eyes, ears, and nose. This fluid is all that occupies his cranial cavity after M'deggog removed his brain (see area H).

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## STATISTICS

**Str** 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 27



**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Stealthy, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion)

**Skills** Acrobatics +14, Bluff +7, Climb +10, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +3, Intimidate +12, Linguistics +5, Perception +13, Ride +9, Stealth +18, Survival +8

**Languages** Common, Kelish, Polyglot

**SQ** armor training 1, rogue talents (surprise attack, weapon training), trapfinding +2

**Combat Gear** *potions of endure elements* (2), *potions of invisibility*; **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, +1 keen falchion, masterwork daggers (2), *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *ring of protection* +1, silver Aspis Consortium badge (worth 50 gp), large diamond (worth 1,000 gp), keys to the war chest (area A4) and the slave pens (area A5), thieves' tools, 17 pp, 55 gp

## A. IVO HAIGAN'S CAMP

Now under the control of Ivo Haigan, the Aspis Consortium has moved its camp to a new location just south of the temple district (area A). Instead of an expeditionary camp, it is now a fortified and armed encampment set up against the base of a steep, terraced hill and surrounded by nearly impassable ruins.

Read the following when the PCs first see the camp.

A section of the ruins at the base of a steeply terraced hill ahead has been blocked off by a high wall of stone and debris. Great sharpened stakes protrude from its outer face, and guards armed with crossbows walk its top, eyeing the ruins suspiciously. The smell of cook fires, the sounds of draft animals braying, and the cries of tortured men arise from within.

The ruins around this new encampment are virtually impassable by foot. Attempting to approach from any direction other than the main entrance at area A1 requires a DC 25 Acrobatics check each round to safely move through the shifting rubble and thick stands of tangled briars. A failed check means that the creature takes 1d6 points of damage from a minor fall (60% chance) or 3d6 points of damage from a major fall, and that the creature becomes entangled in a briar patch (40% chance; treat as an *entangle* spell, caster level 5th, Reflex DC 15). In addition, anyone moving through this area alerts the guards at area A1 unless he makes repeated DC 23 Stealth checks or is magically silenced. The cliff terraces rising behind the camp are each 20 feet high and virtually sheer (DC 25 Climb check because of the crumbling stone). Moving among the ruins atop them is the same as moving through the ruins below.

**A1. Defensive Wall (CR 11):** The only path through the ruins ends at this wall made of stacked stone with a layer of earth piled against its outer face. The wall stands 15 feet high, and sharpened stakes protrude outward from the earthen face. Climbing the wall requires a DC 15 Climb check. Anyone falling from the wall down this face must make a DC 25 Reflex save to avoid being impaled on the stakes for 4d6 points of damage. A strong wooden gate, barred from the inside, leads into the camp (Break DC 25). The walkway atop the wall is 5 feet wide and has a low parapet providing cover to its defenders. A stair leads down from the walkway into the camp. Six Aspis Consortium legionnaires guard the wall at all times, keeping a watch out over the surrounding ruins. They fire at anyone who approaches while shouting the alarm to alert everyone within the camp.

**A2. Picket Line:** The Aspis Consortium's pack animals, as well as those belonging to the PCs' faction and the friendly faction from Event 2, are picketed on ropes tied to stakes driven in the ground. In all, there are 35 mules and draft horses hobbled here, along with any mounts belonging to the PCs that were captured by Ivo's forces. The animals are worth a total of 3,000 gp if sold.

**A3. Main Camp (CR 12):** Two large tents, one a massive pavilion and the other a much smaller, much lower tent have been erected in the center of this clearing. A cooking fire burns between them. There are supplies in and around the tents capable of feeding 50 troops for 2 weeks. The pavilion provides lodging for those members of the Aspis Consortium expedition that survived Haigan's coup. Haigan's legionnaires are quartered in the smaller tent—eight off-duty Aspis Consortium legionnaires may usually be found here at any time. All are terrified of Ivo Haigan and are fiercely loyal, believing his leadership to be their only chance of surviving and reaching civilization again. They respond in an orderly fashion to any alarm to set up an organized defense of the camp, the pack animals, and the prisoners.

**A4. Ivo Haigan's Quarters (CR 11):** This partially intact building has been taken over by Ivo Haigan as his headquarters. It consists of two rooms: a southern room with the only exit door, and a slightly larger northern room with a window that looks out over the camp (and that can serve as an egress with a DC 15 Climb check). Ivo Haigan occupies the northern room of the house, along with the Aspis Consortium expedition's accumulated treasure in a locked war chest (Ivo has the key, or a DC 25 Disable Device check opens it). The chest holds the Consortium's payroll of 2,200 gp and 11,000 sp, as well as assorted stone and ceramic artifacts worth a total of 1,780 gp. The southern room holds two trained girallons serving as Ivo's guards. They hoot and shriek like giant baboons as they battle the PCs, fighting to the death.

## GIRALLONS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 73 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 154)

## IVO HAIGAN

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 85 (see page 16)

**A5. Slave Pens:** Sheer, 20-foot-high cliffs surround the rear and sides of each of these small canyons (Climb DC 25), and tall, sharpened stakes planted close together in the ground form a cage wall across the front (Climb DC 30). A locked wooden gate stands in each wall (Ivo has the keys, or a DC 20 Disable Device check opens it). The number of prisoners occupying these pens depends on how the adventure has developed so far. At the very least, 34 battered survivors from the friendly faction's camp, which was attacked in Event 2, are held here. Any captured members of the PCs' faction are imprisoned here as well. If the Aspis Consortium's forces were victorious in Event 3, the remainder of the PCs' expedition (approximately 80%) are being held in these pens. If the PCs' faction was victorious, then only the major NPCs are found here—including any allied castaways and Juliver, if she was not accompanying the party. If the PCs found the camp immediately after Event 2, none of the prisoners here are of the PCs' faction.

**Story Award:** If any of the prisoners are from the PCs' faction, award the PCs 12,800 XP for rescuing them.

## EVENT 5: SCOUTS OF THE GORILLA KING (CR 10)

This event can occur anywhere in Saventh-Yhi and at any time, preferably after the PCs have explored some of the Vaults of Madness but before they enter the Vault of the Body Thief (area H). Have the PCs make DC 18 Perception checks. If they're successful, read the following.

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Through the branches and bracken ahead, you suddenly catch sight of something looking back at you. A closer look reveals four large apes crouching on the low-hanging branches of a massive tree among the ruins.

---

The knowledge of Saventh-Yhi's discovery has not been restricted to the PCs and the other factions exploring the city. A powerful denizen of the Mwangi Expanse—Ruthazek, the Gorilla King of Usaro—has also heard of the city's discovery, and has decided to see this legendary lost city for himself.

**Creatures:** The creatures watching the PCs are flying apes called derhii serving as scouts of the Gorilla King, who has not yet arrived in Saventh-Yhi. They are 100 feet away and make no initial moves as they watch the

PCs from their perch 30 feet in the air. Once the scouts have been spotted, the PCs can make additional DC 25 Perception checks to notice that the apes have large, scabbarded swords and javelins, as well as great, black-and-gray-feathered wings tucked and folded behind their backs. The derhii do nothing but observe the PCs unless attacked or followed, at which point they attack. If any are captured and questioned, they state cryptically only that the Gorilla King is coming, and that all hairless apes had best leave the city before he arrives to claim it.

**DERHII SCOUTS (4)**
**CR 6**
**XP 2,400 each**

 Derhii ranger 1 (*Crucible of Chaos* 28)

CE Large monstrous humanoid

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent;

Perception +15

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**DEFENSE**
**AC** 20, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 76 each (8d10+33)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

---

**OFFENSE**
**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

**Melee** +1 *falchion* +15/+10 (2d6+11/18-20) or 2 slams +14 (1d6+7)

**Ranged** javelin +12 (1d8+7)

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

**Special Attacks** aerial charge, favored enemy (humans +2), knockdown

---

**TACTICS**
**During Combat** The derhii throw javelins and then make aerial charges with their falchions, focusing their attacks on humans if possible.

**Morale** Loyal soldiers of the Gorilla King, the derhii fight to the death.

---

**STATISTICS**
**Str** 25, **Dex** 20, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 31

**Feats** Acrobatic, Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Climb +15, Fly +12, Perception +15, Stealth +8, Survival +10

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**SQ** booming voice, track +1, wild empathy +0

**Other Gear** +1 *falchion*, javelins (10)

---

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**
**Aerial Charge (Ex)** When airborne, a derhii can dive at twice its normal flying speed. This is the equivalent of a charge, gaining a +2 bonus on the attack roll and a -2 penalty to AC.

**Booming Voice (Ex)** A derhii can use its booming voice as a signal. The sound can be heard up to 12 miles

away as a thrumming in the air that conveys 20 words of information in 5 minutes.

**Knockdown (Ex)** When a derhii confirms a critical hit with a two-handed weapon, it can knock its opponent prone, in addition to the damage dealt by the critical hit. If the derhii's confirmation roll exceeds its opponent's CMD, the opponent is knocked prone as if from the trip combat maneuver. This does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the derhii is tripped during its own trip attack, it can drop its weapon to avoid being tripped.

**Development:** This encounter can be repeated multiple times—in these further encounters, the scouts make aerial attacks for a few rounds before fleeing in order to gauge the strength of the PCs. At the same time, the PCs should hear rumors of increased charau-ka activity, tales of more sightings of flying apes above the city, and (as the time for Event 6 draws closer) reports of a column of armed and armored apes marching through the jungle on the way to the city.


Derhii Scout

## EVENT 6: THE GORILLA KING COMETH (CR VARIES)

This final event occurs just as the PCs are preparing to explore the Vault of the Body Thief (area H). Under cover of darkness, the Gorilla King and his retinue have entered Saventh-Yhi and set up camp in the overgrown mercantile district, just outside the entrance to area H. This move has trapped the denizens of the Vault of the Body Thief within their lair, and also requires that the PCs pass through the camp of the Gorilla King in order to complete their quest.

The Gorilla King's scouts have reported to him that the PCs seem to be the most powerful force in Saventh-Yhi, and Ruthazek has decided to meet these heroes for himself. He sends a detachment of derhii scouts to "invite" the PCs to a great feast as honored guests.

**Creatures:** Eight derhii scouts fly out of the sky, landing to surround the PCs. The apes do not attack, however, but rather form up in disciplined ranks across the PCs' path. The derhii's captain steps forth and addresses the PCs in crude Common, inviting them to a feast held by the great king Ruthazek, the Gorilla King of Usaro. If the PCs agree, they are allowed to keep their weapons, and the flying apes form an "honor guard" to escort the PCs into the presence of the Gorilla King. If the PCs attack the derhii, they respond in kind, fighting to the death. In this case, Ruthazek sends no more envoys, but the PCs will probably still have to deal with the Gorilla King when they try to enter the Vault of the Body Thief.



**DERHII SCOUTS (8)**

**CR 6**

**XP 2,400 each**

**hp 76 each (see page 19)**

When the PCs enter the Gorilla King's camp, whether escorted or on their own, they find a wide clearing has been trampled flat in the thick jungle, forming a massive camp. More than a hundred charau-ka, derhii, and dire apes lounge around in the brush or the surrounding trees, some bearing armor and weapons. At the far end of the camp, a grand pavilion has been erected. Beneath it, a massive silverback gorilla in resplendent armor and crown sits upon a throne of stone, bones, and gold—this can only be Ruthazek, the Gorilla King of the lost city of Usaro. A wide table has been placed before the king's pavilion and laden with all manner of jungle foods while naked human

slaves scurry about preparing for what appears to be a feast. If the PCs have not yet slain the chimera Slycora (see page 25 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #39), the Gorilla King has done so, and her three heads (goat, lion, and black dragon) now hang above his throne.

As the PCs approach, the Gorilla King smiles broadly and hails the PCs in Common, welcoming them to his grand feast. He states that his scouts have watched Saventh-Yhi for some time, and he knows the PCs are the ones with the most right to claim rule of the city, but as king of Usaro, Ruthazek would also claim the city for his kingdom. He offers the PCs a contest between rulers to determine who shall control the ruins of Saventh-Yhi. The

winner shall lay claim to the city and its lost treasures, and the loser must depart immediately. If the PCs refuse this contest, the Gorilla King is deeply offended. He gives them one last chance to accept his challenge, threatening war if they refuse. If the PCs agree, the Gorilla King smiles again and gestures for them to take seats at the table for the feast. The human slaves immediately take positions

on all fours as benches for the PCs and a select few of the Gorilla King's advisors. The king eats from upon his throne.

The feast begins with fresh monkey brains and a bloody soup of eyeballs and wild onions. This is followed by raw hippo slab steaks with blood sweat sauce, along with a side of pan-seared botfly larvae glazed in honey. The final course is a rare treat of ice-chilled vegepygmy pulp seasoned with cinnamon and roasted coffee beans. Prodigious amounts of sour plantain wine are served throughout the feast. The ape courtiers have no problems consuming this fare, but PCs that do so must make a DC 18 Fortitude saving throw after each course or become sickened for the next 1d6x10 minutes. Failing two or more saves results in becoming nauseated for 1d6x10 minutes.

As dinner is served, the Gorilla King explains that the great Garundi kings of old settled things in a civilized manner in order to avoid undue bloodshed and destruction (a DC 21 Sense Motive reveals that the Gorilla King actually doesn't mind bloodshed and destruction, but he is relishing his role as the sage ruler at the moment). Instead, matters were settled by determining who was most worthy through contests of strength and skill. The contests that Ruthazek proposes are a test of strength, a test of storytelling, and a test of combat—the PCs must succeed at two of these contests for the Gorilla King to recognize their claim over

Saventh-Yhi. If the PCs lose at one test, they can try the others to get their two required successes.

### THE TEST OF STRENGTH

If the PCs choose this test, one of them must break a bundle of human femurs in half, using only her strength. Ruthazek demonstrates the task to show the PCs that it can be done, but a DC 25 Strength check is required to break one of the bundles. Only one PC can make the Strength check—the other PCs are not allowed to assist, although they can cast spells or use magical items to aid the PC before the contest. Remember to include the penalties for any PCs that are sickened from the feast. If the PC successfully breaks the bones on the first attempt, Ruthazek drinks to her health and names her the winner of the contest.

### THE TEST OF STORYTELLING

If the PCs choose this test, one of them must tell a tale during the feast to impress the Gorilla King and his court. One of the PCs must tell a tale on behalf of the party, making a DC 35 Perform (act, comedy, or oratory), Bluff, Diplomacy, or Charisma check. The other PCs can attempt to aid another (perhaps acting out parts or providing background singing or chants). A story about apes killing humans adds a +2 bonus on the check. If the player actually tells a story, feel free to award a +2 to +4 bonus on the roll for good roleplaying. Again, remember to include the penalties for any PCs that are sickened from the feast.

### THE TEST OF COMBAT

Should the PCs pick this test, one of them must face the Gorilla King in personal combat. No interference from either Ruthazek's subjects or the PCs' allies is allowed. The fight is to unconsciousness or surrender—while the Gorilla King is confident of his combat ability, he has no wish to sacrifice his life to a bunch of pinkskins over a silly test.

**Creature:** The Gorilla King was once human, but was slain when he touched the idol atop Usaro's palace-pyramid, and reincarnated by the demon lord Angazhan as a dire ape to rule Usaro in Angazhan's name. He retains his skills and mental abilities, but has the form and brutish strength of a great ape. As soon as the PCs are ready, Ruthazek picks up his weapons and attacks.



Ruthazek

#### RUTHAZEK, THE GORILLA KING CR 14

XP 38,400

Male dire ape fighter 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 17*)

CE Large animal

**Init** +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +18

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 29, touch 12, flat-footed 28 (+11 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 175 (14d10+98)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6; +4 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +4

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** +2 *thundering falchion* +26/+21/+16 (2d6+18/15-20) or

bite +23 (1d6+10), 2 claws +23 (1d4+10)

**Ranged** mwk spear +16 (2d6+8/x3)

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

**Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 1d4+13), weapon training (natural +3, heavy blades +2, spears +1)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** Ruthazek favors his magical falchion in combat, making Power Attacks as long as he can hit his foes.

If reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, he flies into a bestial rage, discarding his weapon in favor of his natural attacks.

**Morale** Ruthazek surrenders if reduced to 50 hit points or fewer.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 35

**Feats** Alertness, Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Greater Weapon Focus (falchion), Greater Weapon Specialization (falchion), Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion)

**Skills** Climb +22, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18

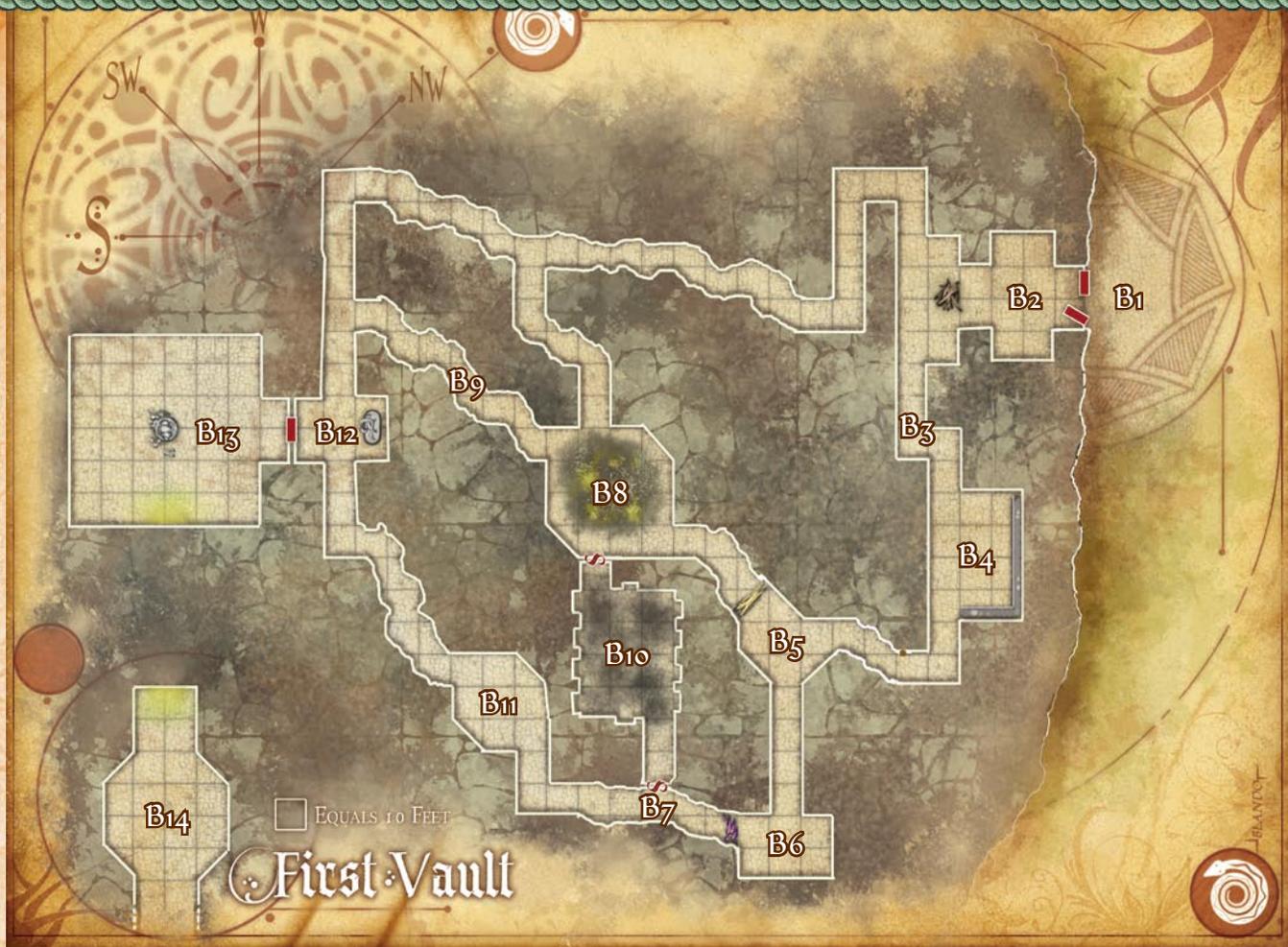
**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Polyglot

**SQ** armor training 3

**Gear** +3 *half-plate*, +2 *thundering falchion*, masterwork spear, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *ring of protection* +2, gold crown worth 1,000 gp

**Development:** If the PCs win at least two out of the three tests, the Gorilla King concedes defeat following the feast and orders his entourage to pack up, clearing the way for

# SERPENT'S SKULL



the PCs to proceed (he knows that the PCs will likely leave soon and be unable to carry more than a fraction of the city's treasures, so once they are gone he can simply move in with his forces and remove any remaining squatters). He does give them one final warning, however: "You may have won the rights to city, but jungle surrounds city... and jungle eats all who do not belong. You do not belong, little coastlanders. When jungle has finished with you, Ruthazek will add your bones to his throne!" If the PCs win all three tests, they can demand that the Gorilla King release all of his slaves to them (a total of 24—mostly humans).

If the PCs fail two tests and do not gain the right to pass, they are ushered from the camp as soon as the feast ends. They must then engineer their own way past the Gorilla King's camp to reach the vault at area H. If the PCs refuse to take the tests, or decide to fight, they will find it a difficult proposition—besides the Gorilla King himself, Ruthazek has 40 charau-ka savages (see page 50), 16 derhii scouts (see page 19), 20 dire apes, and eight girallons at his beck and call.

**Treasure:** Should the PCs find some means to overcome the camp, they can find 10,300 gp in gold and precious stones among the king's train.

**Story Award:** If the PCs successfully win two of the Gorilla King's challenges, award them 38,400 XP, as if they had defeated him in combat.

## PART TWO: THE FIRST VAULT

This vault is where Juliver emerged after her escape from Ilmurea, and where she encountered the undead serpentfolk necromancer Sozothala. It was also once the city's primary vault and where Urschlar conducted his initial experiments with the midnight spores. It suffered greatly during the destruction of Earthfall as tremors caused it to shift westward in multiple places, breaking and stretching the passages that connected the vault. Today these passageways stand as crumbling, uneven tunnels composed of partially collapsed masonry and the natural rock and earth of the surrounding strata. Despite their fragile appearance, all of these tunnels have settled into place and become stable over the intervening millennia, so there is no danger of further collapse.

A portion of the vault has been claimed by a race of humanoid bat-folk called the sabosan, but a band of kech hunters has recently begun exploring the vault's outer reaches, bringing them into conflict with the sabosan.

The vault also holds the magical portal to Ilmurea, and still contains ancient traps and guardians set to protect it.

The main entrance is easy to find for those who know where to look, as it is a large door built into a rock face in the artisan district, near the haunted manor taken as a lair by Sozothala in the previous adventure. However, anyone who climbs the rock face (DC 18 Climb check) and explores above can locate the entrance to area **B8** with a DC 12 Perception check.

## B1. MAIN ENTRANCE (CR 5)

A giant-sized, vine-wreathed stone door stands in the side of a cliff. Whatever images once decorated its face have been lost to weathering and the ages. One door still stands closed, but the other has been pushed halfway open, beckoning the brave or the foolish into its dark interior.

The entry doors to this vault are jammed in their current positions and cannot be moved without being destroyed. Jungle growth grows to within 10 feet of the cliff face, providing cover to anyone within.

**Creatures:** A kech hunter stands in the darkness behind the open door, watching the approach to the vault through that door. A DC 27 Perception check is necessary to spot it. A kech is a human-sized simian creature with long arms, greenish-brown skin, and sharp teeth. When the kech spots the PCs, it retreats to area **B2** to silently alert its fellows and prepare an ambush for anyone who enters through the doors.

**KECH HUNTER** CR 5  
 XP 1,600  
 hp 52 (see below)

## B2. KECH AMBUSH (CR 10)

A long hall punctuated by wide side alcoves delves into the hill here. Corridors exit on either side at the opposite end. Vines grow along the walls and detritus from countless jungle seasons covers the floor, but a space has been cleared in the center around the smoldering remains of a small campfire.

A stone lintel above the entrance door provides a hidden platform 10 feet high that up to two Medium creatures can occupy. A Large stone statue depicting an Azlanti farmer making a grain offering stands on the center of the lintel.

**Creatures:** This room is the beginning of the territory claimed by a band of kech hunters. There are a total of six of the creatures here. One watches the entrance from behind the door as described at area **B1**. The others lounge around the remains of their campfire, keeping an eye on the passages out of the room. If alerted, two immediately

clamber to the ledge above the door and ready an action to push the statue off the ledge onto intruders. Anyone standing in the two squares just inside the doors must make a DC 15 Reflex save or take 2d6 points of damage from the falling statue. The rest of the keches hide among the dead foliage that has collected in heaps around the room's edges (gaining their bonus to Stealth in forested areas). They poison their arrows and ready actions to fire on anyone who advances past the falling statue.

**KECH HUNTERS (6)** CR 5  
 XP 1,600 each  
 Advanced keches (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 247)  
 NE Medium monstrous humanoid  
**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +14

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**DEFENSE**  
**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)  
**hp** 52 each (8d10+8)  
**Fort** +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

---

**OFFENSE**  
**Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.  
**Melee** bite +10 (1d6+2), 2 claws +10 (1d4+2)  
**Ranged** shortbow +10/+5 (1d6/x3 plus poison)  
**Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 1d4+1)  
**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +4)  
 Constant—*pass without trace*

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**TACTICS**  
**During Combat** The keches make ranged attacks for as long as possible. Once in melee combat, they focus their attacks on single foes.  
**Morale** The keches fight to the death, although if more than half their number are slain, the surviving keches retreat to join their fellows in area **B4**.

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**STATISTICS**  
**Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12,  
**Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11



Kech Hunter

Base Atk +8; CMB +10; CMD 23

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +10 (+14 jump), Climb +21, Perception +14,  
Stealth +17 (+23 in forested areas); **Racial Modifiers**  
+2 Perception, +4 (+6 in forested areas) Stealth

**Languages** Kech

**Combat Gear** alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** shortbow with  
10 arrows, bloodroot poison (4 doses)

**Treasure:** This band is not carrying much in the way of treasure, but among them can be found a total of 5 gold nuggets (worth 20 gp each) and an uncut amethyst (worth 50 gp).

## B3. DEAD BAT

This hallway reeks with the strong odor of death. A winged humanoid form lies slumped in the center of the floor.

Lying on the floor here is the body of a sabosan that has been dead for 2 days. It is battered and broken, and numerous arrows protrude from its body. This sabosan is a casualty of the war between the bat-folk and the keches, and was slain by poisoned arrows as the keches pushed into area B4.

## B4. THE FRONT LINES (CR 11)

The passage widens into a chamber, its walls terraced in a series of shelves. Cracked and broken stone vessels sit upon these shelves, along with hides, dried plants, and other odds and ends from the jungle.

This chamber marks the front lines of the battle between the kech hunters in the outer vault and the original sabosan living in the vault. Formerly inhabited by the sabosan, this room was claimed by the keches 2 days ago, when the simian hunters invaded and pushed the bat-folk deeper into the vault.

**Creatures:** Eight kech hunters now dwell in this chamber, on guard against the sabosan in the chambers beyond; they are wary for intruders and very aggressive. Once alerted, four of the keches climb the shelves (the lower shelf is 5 feet high, and the upper shelf is 8 feet high) and fire poisoned arrows at intruders, while the other four rush forth to attack in melee. The keches try to retreat through area B2 if half their number are slain. If unable to escape in that direction, the keches fight to the death, because they know they dare not retreat further into the vault.

**KECH HUNTERS (8)** CR 5  
XP 1,600 each  
hp 52 each (see page 23)

## B5. FIRST GUARDROOM (CR 10)

This chamber appears to be used as a guardroom. A crude wicker screen has been erected across a passage leading to the southwest.

This room marks the beginning of that portion of the vault claimed by a small tribe of sabosan. They were driven from area B4 2 days ago by the keches, and since then the two groups have held an uneasy truce. The sabosan built the wicker screen here to protect their flank from the keches or other creatures inhabiting the vault. It serves as more of a psychological barrier than anything else, and can be torn down quite easily (hardness 1, hp 10, Break DC 8).

**Creatures:** Six sabosan guard this post, watching for another attack by the keches in area B4. Sabosan are emaciated humanoids with bat-like heads and large, leathery bat wings. They have lived in the outer reaches of the vault for several years, but the recent arrival of the keches has upset their society. In a very real sense, their backs are to the wall, and they aggressively attack any intruders into their diminishing territory. If more than half of the guards here are killed, the remaining sabosan retreat to area B6.

**SABOSAN (6)** CR 5  
XP 1,600 each  
hp 52 each (see page 86)

## B6. SECOND GUARDROOM (CR 9)

A short wall composed of large chunks of quartz crystal blocks the southern corridor out of this chamber. Near the far wall is a festering mound of organic matter that stinks with a sharp, acrid, carrion scent.

Like area B5, this is a sabosan guardroom, and where the bat-folk make their last stand. The half-wall is only 3 feet high and is actually built from large chunks of rock salt (identifiable with a DC 10 Knowledge [dungeoneering] check or simply by tasting it). The sabosan are aware of the giant slug in area B11 and discovered they could drive it off by throwing such rocks at it. The sabosan built the wall to prevent the slug from entering this chamber. Their trial and error did result in one casualty, however—the carrion heap near the back wall is all that is left of one of their number that was hit by the slug's acid spit a few days ago.

**Creatures:** Four sabosan stand guard here against the giant slug and anything else that might come from deeper within the vault. Trapped between the keches that hold the entrance and the other creatures deeper inside

the vault, the sabosan have nowhere else to run, and they fight to the death.

**SABOSAN (4)****CR 5****XP 1,600 each****hp 52 each** (see page 86)

**Treasure:** The collected treasure of the sabosan consists of 13 tiny diamonds (worth 20 gp each) wrapped in a bundle of banana leaves, a dried gourd holding gold dust worth 300 gp, and a wicker basket holding a half pound of a dried tobacco leaves (worth 40 gp).

**B7. SECRET DOOR**

This stretch of corridor is like the others in the vault. The secret door can be found with a DC 22 Perception check.

**B8. COLLAPSED CHAMBER**

This chamber is filled with the heady scent of jungle flora and the drone of insects. The ceiling has collapsed, creating an opening to the sky 50 feet above. Multitudes of jungle vines grow down the broken walls, and colorful orchids and ferns sprout among them. The floor is a mass of overgrown boulders and strange spires of dried mud. Three dark passages lead out of this room.

The mud spires here are long-abandoned army ant nests. The many vines make climbing out through the ceiling here a fairly easy task (DC 5 Climb check). The floor of the chamber is considered dense rubble for movement purposes. A secret door in the east wall is so overgrown with vines that a DC 37 Perception check is required to locate it.

**Treasure:** A DC 28 Perception check while digging through the ant mounds reveals the buried rib cage and arm of a humanoid skeleton near the queen's chamber. A platinum bracelet set with small diamonds in the style of the Gebbite aristocracy (worth 2,500 gp) is still on its wrist.

**B9. PATHFINDER'S ROUTE**

This broken and contorted passage was used by Juliver when she escaped from Ilmurea. Though she was feeble-minded at the time and does not remember it, she managed to climb out of the vault through area **B8**. A DC 17 (+1 for every day since Juliver was found) Perception or Survival check finds the tracks of a single shod humanoid traveling north into area **B8**. A similar Survival check can follow the tracks back to area **B12**.

**B10. URSCHLAR'S LAB**

A fine black powder covers everything in this room, and motes of the black dust dance in the air. Glass crunches underfoot around two massive, blocky objects that must once have been

tables. Shelves line the walls of the room, but the racks, vessels, and glassware they once held lie shattered on the floor beneath them.

This chamber once served as Urschlar Vohkavi's primary laboratory, where he grew and cultivated his midnight spores. Glass alembics and beakers held concentrated samples of the stuff, but they shattered in Earthfall's upheaval and poisoned Urschlar as he worked here with what he knew to be a fatal dose. The concentration of midnight spores here counts as an additional exposure to the spores when the room is first entered. The secret doors into this chamber are clearly visible from the inside.

**Treasure:** A thorough search of the alcoves with a DC 27 Perception check locates an ancient tome bound in black dragon leather under the black spores. Though over 10,000 years old, the book has been preserved by the same magics that protect Saventh-Yhi and its vaults from the ravages of time. The book is written in Azlanti and a DC 30 Linguistics check is required to decipher it if no one knows that language. This book was Urschlar's laboratory journal and relates the information found in the Adventure Background up to the events of Earthfall. Urschlar, of course, did not consider himself a madman, but it is clear from his writings that he was. Furthermore, the journal goes on to describe the effects of continued exposure to midnight spores (see page 10) and hints strongly that each of the vaults would be completely saturated with them over time. The book further reveals that other than high-level magic, the only known cure for the insanity caused by the spores is an object known as the *Argent Font*, which Urschlar removed to another hidden vault "for safekeeping." The rest of the pages are blank, as apparently doom overtook Saventh-Yhi before more could be written. The journal is an antiquities treasure providing great insights into the days before Earthfall and might be worth up to 5,000 gp to the Aspis Consortium, the Pathfinder Society, or other major collectors of antiquities around the Inner Sea region.

**B11. SLIME ROOM (CR 8)**

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this chamber glitter with a thin, slimy veneer that coats every surface.

**Creature:** A giant slug dwells in this chamber. It originally entered the vault through the collapsed ceiling of area **B8**, and regularly patrols the corridors of the vault in search of food. The slug has been stopped by the sabosan's wall of rock salt at area **B6** and was driven off by the keches in area **B2** with alchemist's fire. The slug is very hungry and spits acid at the first creature to enter this

room. The monster pursues prey throughout the vault, and even beyond it, until it catches some food or is slain.

## GIANT SLUG

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 102 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 254)

**Treasure:** A large, rough gold nugget worth 275 gp can be found hidden in a crack in the wall with a DC 18 Perception check.

## B12. SHRINE OF THE SENTINEL (CR 11)

This chamber has a wide, stone double door at one end, opposite a large statue of a man wearing archaic armor and an ornate helmet.

This chamber serves as the entry to the mural room (area B13). A DC 19 Perception or Survival check notes the clawed tracks of several creatures (serpentfolk) that have gone back and forth between the eastern passage and the door. A DC 22 (+1 for each day since Juliver was here) Perception or Survival check notices a lone set of shod humanoid footprints heading from the door to the western passage. Despite the stone doors' massive size, they open quite easily, but opening them triggers the room's guardian.

**Creature:** The statue is actually a stone golem left behind by Urschlar to protect the portal in the room beyond. It remains indistinguishable from a normal statue until a creature tries to enter area B13 through the double doors, at which point it animates and attacks. Because the golem only attacks creatures entering area B13, both Juliver and Sozothala were able to leave the room without activating it. The golem does not pursue foes beyond areas B12 and B13. If no one tries to pass through the doors after 1 hour, the golem returns to its pedestal.

## STONE GOLEM

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 107 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 163)

## B13. THE PORTAL BELOW (CR 13)

This vast chamber possesses but a shadow of its former glory. The walls are of close-fitted masonry with strange, blue crystalline veins running through it and across the ceiling and floor. In the center are massive stone feet where a gigantic statue once crouched, but the rest now lies in a pile of broken rubble after some ancient catastrophe—the statue's stone hands still cling to the ceiling, which the statue once supported on its upraised palms. On each of the far walls is a beautiful floor-to-ceiling mural depicting a jungle scene, a cityscape, and an elaborate room, respectively.

This is the room Juliver found herself in when she stepped through the portal from Ilmurea. Unfortunately for Juliver, it's also where the undead serpentfolk Sozothala lay in torpor following his own journey through the portal millennia earlier, just before Earthfall. Juliver's arrival and destruction of the portal's focusing crystals awoke the necromancer from his slumber. During their confrontation, Sozothala cast *feblemind* on Juliver, but the Pathfinder managed to escape to the surface. Sozothala followed soon after, abandoning this vault for a new lair on the surface, as detailed in the previous adventure. The room has received no new visitors since.

This entire chamber is a magical power source for opening a portal between Saventh-Yhi and Ilmurea deep below, but it requires six crystals to focus the energies. The strangely veined rock is of an unknown substance, but a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft check can determine that it is highly conductive to magical energy, though experimentation produces no tangible results other than flickering light within the veins. The fallen statue was not actually load-bearing, so the room's 30-foot-high ceiling is in no danger of collapse.

The mural on the west wall depicts a scenic jungle valley with waterfalls pouring into a central lake with an island. A DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check reveals this to be the valley of Saventh-Yhi before the city was built. The south wall shows a beautiful jungle city around a lake, with seven magnificent spires marking its skyline. This is obviously Saventh-Yhi before its destruction. The mural is highly detailed, and if the PCs think to study it to identify the locations of the six other vaults, they can find the entrance to each one marked on the mural with a DC 15 Perception check. With this information, they can find the actual vault entrances in the city above with only 1d2 hours per vault of searching in the proper area.

The final mural on the east wall depicts this room as seen from the west wall looking east. The statue in the center of the room is still in one piece in this mural. Anyone making a DC 15 Perception check can notice several tiny shards of broken crystal on the floor in front of the mural. These are the remains of the focusing crystals that Juliver broke when she escaped through the portal, thus deactivating it. A DC 23 Perception check notes that the image of the eastern wall depicted in the mural includes an image of the mural, and this mural within a mural is actually a door surrounded by a stone border with six empty holes for the now-broken focusing crystals. Examining the edge of the actual mural reveals a stone border with Azlanti runes in place of the holes on the image-border, plus an additional Azlanti rune which appears in both murals' borders. These runes are recognizable as the seven Azlanti virtues of rule, which also correspond to Saventh-Yhi's spears—abundance,



eager striving, fertility, honest pride, rest, righteous anger, and wealth. These serve as a clue that the city's other districts hold the keys to the portal, which can be found in the vaults beneath each district.

**Trap:** Anyone touching the eastern mural-door without first placing the crystals in their proper slots activates an ancient magical trap that sends divine flame roaring through the chamber, possibly setting alight any creatures in the room.

**FIRE STORM TRAP** **CR 13**

**Type** magic; **Perception** DC 33; **Disable Device** DC 33

**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** none

**Effect** spell effect (*fire storm*, 18d6 fire damage, DC 23 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in room)

**Development:** If the six replacement crystals from the other vaults are placed in their correct positions in the mural, they complete a magical circuit between the floor and the ceiling. The veins of blue crystal in the room glow with magical energy, opening the portal to area **B14**. Once the portal is activated, simply touching the image of the mural on the wall instantly transports a creature to area **B14**.

**Story Award:** If the PCs successfully activate the portal, award them 19,200 XP.

## B14. ENTRANCE TO ILMUREA

Stepping through the portal in area **B13** instantly transports creatures to another chamber with an identical mural on the wall. The mural here works the same as one in area **B13**, but the six focusing crystals must be in place on both sides of the portal. This chamber lies thousands of feet below the city. A passage to the east leads deeper into the earth, ultimately culminating at a hidden byway in the lost serpentfolk city of Ilmurea. The exploration of this subterranean city is the focus of the next installment of this adventure path, "The Thousand Fangs Below." An examination of the floor with a DC 20 Perception or Survival check identifies the tracks of several different humanoids (Juliver and her serpentfolk pursuers) coming from the east and terminating at the mural.

## PART THREE: THE FLOODED VAULT

This vault, located in the farming district, experienced great destruction during Earthfall and over the intervening millennia. It shifted and sank and consequently flooded when most of the farming district turned to swamp. The vault's original entrance was buried in the upheaval, and the walls and ceilings have lost much of their masonry veneer, exposing roughly hewn stone, cracked and eroded by the ages and overgrown with all manner of indigenous aquatic flora. Its chambers are completely flooded without

air pockets (unless otherwise noted), and its floors consist of several inches of silt covering solid stone. Many kinds of aquatic life have called it home over the centuries, but now it serves as the lair for a type of rare apex predator found only in the most isolated of jungle waterways. Even though this vault is flooded, midnight spores have saturated the waters, causing the same effects as in any other vault.

The entrance to the vault resembles numerous other sinkholes throughout the city and won't be recognized as a potential vault entrance unless the mural in area **B13** has been examined.

## C1. THE JUNGLE SINK

A natural sinkhole has formed here, breaching the foundations of the city and slowly eroding the jungle floor around it. Vines and creepers are rife around this gaping wound in the earth, growing downward into its shadowed depths. A strong musk of decaying jungle foliage and moist earth rises from below.

The sinkhole descends in two layers; the initial, wider layer is 30 feet deep and ends at a steeply sloping floor of loose earth that descends to a second, smaller opening. Any debris that falls into the hole subsequently slides down this slope and disappears into the dark opening below. Climbing into this upper portion of the sinkhole is relatively easy with the vines (DC 10 Climb check), but balancing on the loose earth of the slope requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Anyone who tumbles in falls another 40 feet and lands in a pool of murky, stagnant water (area **C2**). The walls of the shaft are much steeper and fewer vines grow down the secondary sinkhole, so a DC 15 Climb check is required to descend safely to area **C2**. A DC 17 Perception check is sufficient to notice one bunch of vines that appears to have been deliberately bundled together—using these vines as a rope reduces the Climb DC to 5.

## C2. CENOTE (CR 8)

Murky, silt-laden water fills this chamber. A single, vine-covered shaft breaches the ceiling, letting in a small amount of light. The water level rises just to the base of this shaft. A dark, humanoid form bobs near the ceiling in one corner.

This chamber is 20 feet high and completely flooded except where the sinkhole shaft breaks through the ceiling. The floor of the chamber slopes steeply to the east where a 10-foot-diameter tunnel exits downward. The vines from area **C1** reach down to the surface of the water here as described in that area. No light from above penetrates beyond the top of the sloping tunnel.

The floating humanoid form proves to be a human corpse. It has obviously not been here long and is the

source of the bundled vines used to climb down here. It floats face down in the water; closer inspection reveals that the exposed flesh has been eaten away by the megapiranhas in this chamber. If magic is used to communicate with the corpse (alignment CN), he reveals that his name is Gimlet Fairweather, and he was a member of the Free Captains expedition. He admits to having descended into this cenote for a little “unaffiliated” looting but says he found nothing before the “shark demon” came out of the dark hole. He was slain by a gray nisp just when he started exploring, but has no idea what it was.

**Creatures:** Several varieties of small jungle fish swim about in this soupy cauldron, but all shy away from the two swarms of megapiranhas that call it home. They immediately smell any creatures in the water and move to attack after 3 rounds.

### MEGAPIRANHA SWARMS (2) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

N Tiny animal (aquatic, swarm) (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #39 83)

**Init** +6; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., keen scent; **Perception** +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, +2 size)

**hp** 76 each (9d8+36)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

**Defensive Abilities** swarm traits

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** swim 40 ft.

**Melee** swarm (2d6 plus bleed and distraction)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Special Attacks** bleed (2d6), distraction (DC 17)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The megapiranhas swarm around any creatures in the water, following them throughout area **C**.

**Morale** The megapiranhas fight until slain.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Stealth), Step Up, Toughness

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +18, Swim +17

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Keen Scent (Ex)** A megapiranha swarm can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius underwater and can detect blood in the water at ranges of up to a mile.

**Development:** Blood in the water here also attracts the attention of the gray nisps in area **C3**. 1d6 rounds after blood is first shed, two gray nisps swim into this chamber and join the battle.

**Treasure:** If Gimlet's body is searched, it is found to wear only mundane leather armor and a *ring of improved swimming*. In addition, many inhabitants of Saventh-Yhi over the years

have used the cenote to make sacrificial offerings to various deities and guardian spirits. Most of the valuables thrown in have rolled down into area C3, but anyone making a DC 27 Perception check can find a few bones as well as a crude gold amulet (worth 100 gp) and a finely engraved hematite mirror (worth 75 gp) half-buried in the silt and mud.

### C3. SUNKEN CHAMBER (CR 10 OR 11)

A sloping tunnel ends in an irregular chamber. Pieces of rock and debris that have fallen from the ceiling above lie among mounds of silt on the floor. The water is thick with silt here, reducing vision to just a few feet in any direction. A second tunnel leads out in another direction; a faint current from that direction disturbs the suspended particulate.

The tunnel from C2 descends 20 feet into this chamber. The heavy silt in the water here provides concealment beyond 10 feet. The chamber is 30 feet high and is completely filled with water. A secondary tunnel leads by a circuitous route to Lake Hirilaka in the center of the city.

**Creatures:** This chamber serves as the abode of a trio of gray nisps, carnivorous aquatic fey creatures that resemble tall, emaciated humanoids with slick, hairless flesh, webbed and clawed hands and feet, and an ichthyic head with blank, pupil-less black eyes and a distended jaw lined with razor-sharp teeth. These creatures hunt at night in Lake Hirilaka and among the surrounding ruins. They are fairly unintelligent but possess a base cunning that enables them to use their fey abilities to good effect while defending their lair. Two of the gray nisps are present when the PCs arrive in this room. They are aware of the presence of intruders through their keen scent ability, and bury themselves among the muck and silt of the floor (+10 bonus on Stealth checks because of the camouflage).

**GRAY NISPS (3)** **CR 8**

**XP 4,800 each**

CN Large fey (aquatic) (*Tome of Horrors III* 100)

**Init** +3; **Senses** keen scent, low-light vision; Perception +19

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 97 each (13d6+52)

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

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

**Melee** bite +12 (1d8+6), 2 claws +12 (1d6+6)

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

**Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 1d6+9)

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

At will—*confusion* (DC 16), *detect thoughts* (DC 14), *ghost sound* (DC 12), *hold monster* (DC 17), *slow* (DC 15)

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** When the PCs first arrive, one nisp targets the lead character with *hold monster* while the other targets the characters in the rear with *confusion*. The nisps then burst from concealment and attack in a blood frenzy.

**Morale** The gray nisps fight until destroyed.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 22, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 5, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Stealthy, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Escape Artist +20, Perception +19, Stealth +16, Swim +26

**Languages** Aquan

**SQ** water dependency

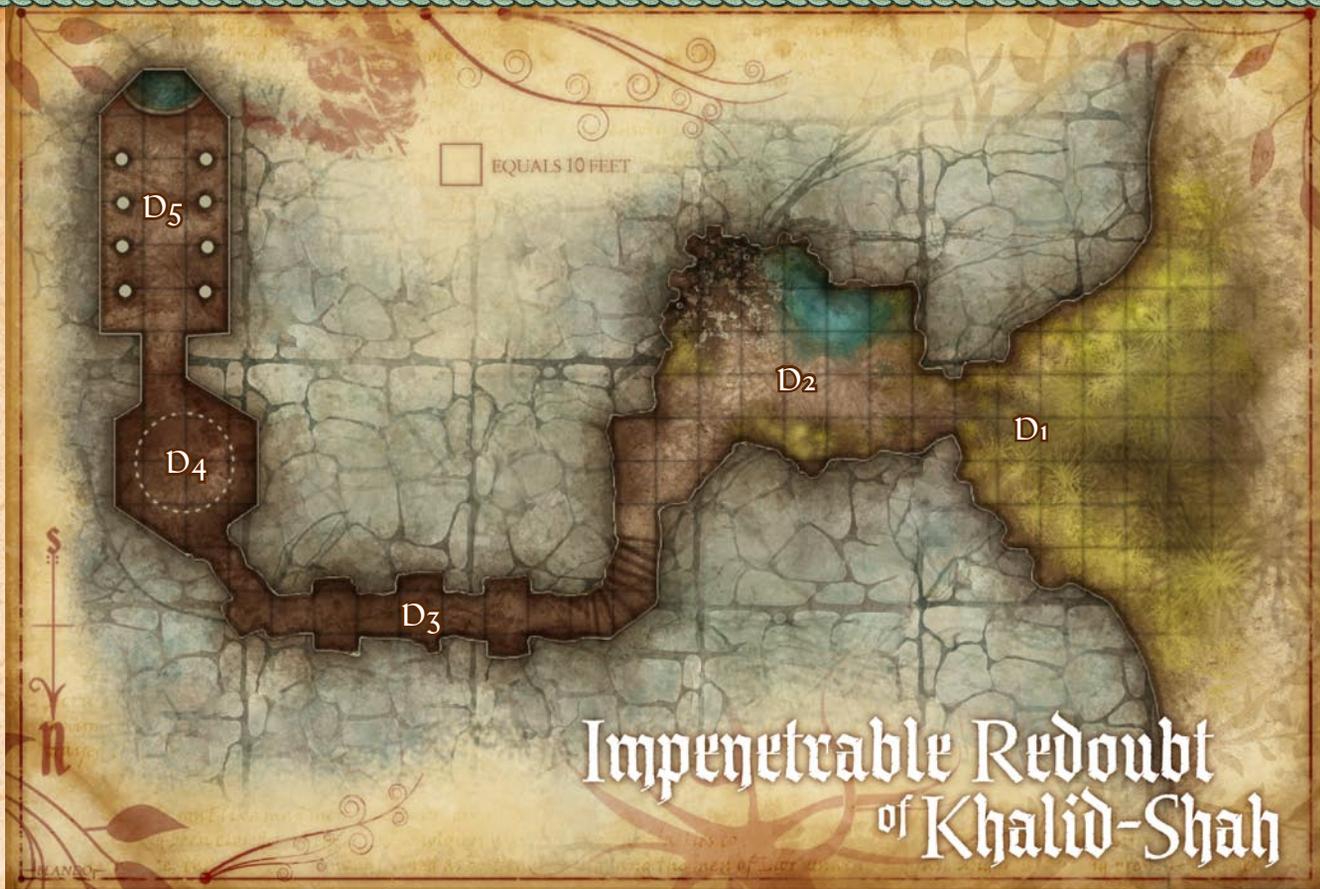
**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Keen Scent (Ex)** A gray nisp can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius underwater and can detect blood in the water at a range of up to a mile.

**Water Dependency (Ex)** Gray nisps can survive out of the water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. Beyond this limit, a gray nisp runs the risk of suffocation, as if it were drowning.



Gray Nisp



**Development:** Two minutes after the PCs arrive in this area, the third gray nisp returns from hunting in the lake through the passage at C4. It detects the PCs with its keen scent and remains out of sight in the tunnel, quietly targeting PCs with its *slow* spell-like ability. When most of the PCs have been slowed or it is discovered, this nisp rushes in to fight. If its fellows are killed or it is reduced to below 40 hit points, the nisp flees back out to the lake and lies low until it heals. It then begins hunting the PCs at night whenever they are near any body of water within the city.

**Treasure:** The floor of the room slopes to the east, and has collected many treasures thrown into the cenote over the years. These can be found with a DC 30 Perception check, and include four gold ingots (worth 75 gp each), a patinated copper statuette of an Azlanti dancer (worth 700 gp), a gold and ivory brooch in the shape of a nautilus (worth 500 gp), a pair of coral armbands (worth 250 gp each), and a *ring of protection* +3. In addition, three blue crystals inscribed with the Azlanti rune of abundance can be found here. These are one of the six types of focusing crystals needed to activate the portal in area B13.

## C4. EXIT TUNNEL

This tunnel winds for some distance following natural faults before exiting near the bottom of Lake Hirilaka,

the city's central lake. Finding this entrance without knowing about its existence requires a DC 35 Perception check while searching the lake bed in the correct general area.

## PART FOUR: THE IMPENETRABLE REDOUBT OF KHALID-SHAH

This vault, located beneath an island in the government district, has become the personal demesne of a cursed, outcast shaitan. Arriving from the depths of the jungle, he has bullied a number of mephits into his service and now considers himself to be a minor potentate and them his subjects. The shaitan calls himself Khalid-Shah and refers to his lair by the grandiose title of the Impenetrable Redoubt. Considering the sheer number of jungle denizens that have drowned within the vault over the years, the title is not wholly without merit.

The entrance to this vault is a simple cave opening like many others in the city. Without the help of the mural in area B13, it can be located after 2d4 hours of searching the islands of the government district. Anyone climbing to the top of the island (a DC 15 Climb check) can locate the crumbling hole caused by the rockslide in area D2 with a DC 15 Perception check.

## D1. CRUMBLING ISLAND

An opening gapes in the side of this rocky islet. The face of the cliff is crumbling, and any door or gate that may have once guarded the entrance is long gone.

The entrance is unguarded, and searching for tracks or other signs of passage is fruitless as the occupants seldom leave.

**Development:** Creatures that spend more than 3 rounds here attract the attention of the giant flytrap in area D2, which comes to the entrance to attack any prey it finds.

## D2. DRAGONLEAF LAIR (CR 10)

What must have once been a sizable entrance chamber has seen better days. A portion of the southern wall and ceiling have collapsed, revealing the sky above. The rays of sunlight streaming in through this collapse illuminate an old rockslide overgrown with leafy green vines next to a pool of murky rainwater. In an alcove to the north, a darkened passage leads deeper into the hillside.

Whatever purpose this chamber once served is lost to history since any furnishings it once held were buried under the rockslide years ago. The rubble itself has been stabilized by the vines and is in no further danger of collapse. A DC 5 Climb check is all that is required to climb up to the island's top 50 feet above. Searching among the vine-covered rubble (a DC 23 Perception check) reveals a number of animal and humanoid bones—victims of the cavern's dangerous inhabitant.

**Creature:** Growing among the leaves and vines on the rockslide is a carnivorous, predatory plant known locally as a dragonleaf plant—and more commonly known as a giant flytrap. The giant plant lurks in the southern portion of the room next to the pool, completely blending in with the harmless vines growing on the rockslide (count as undergrowth for purposes of the flytrap's Stealth check). Anyone investigating the rockslide or the pool comes within reach of its jaws and is subject to attack.

**GIANT FLYTRAP** CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 149 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 134)

**Treasure:** PCs making a DC 15 Perception check notice a mound of mud in the shadows of the northern alcove, at the top of the stairs. Closer examination reveals it to be of roughly humanoid shape, dried and cracked into a hard case. Chipping away at the layer of dried mud exposes bone underneath. Clearing the mud casing completely reveals the skeleton of a human adventurer, clad in a rusty but still

serviceable +2 *breastplate* and wearing the rotted remains of a backpack. This explorer fell years ago to Khalid-Shah's smother attack and died here before he could make it out of the vault. The territorial genie left the corpse here as a warning to others.

## D3. THE DRIPPING GAUNTLET (CR 10)

The stairs descend into a morass of sticky mud. A hallway stretches into darkness, with recessed alcoves opening along its length on either side. The mud is thick and black, and continually drips from oozing cracks in the walls and ceiling.

This entire hall is 3 feet deep in mud (treat as moving through a deep bog, but it only provides cover for Small creatures—Medium creatures can crouch to gain this cover). Each of the alcoves holds a 10-foot-deep pit that is likewise filled with mud. Anyone stepping into one of these alcoves is affected as if stepping into quicksand (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 427). The bottoms of these pits hold the bones of jungle animals and various other creatures that have wandered in, only to fall victim to the suffocating mud of Khalid-Shah's redoubt. The mud slowly drains through cracks in the floor of the pits, but more continually oozes in through the ceiling. Despite the many fissures in the ceiling, it is stable and in no danger of collapse. The mud in this corridor is particularly permeated with the midnight spores (giving it its black color), and moving through this area counts as an additional exposure to the spores.

In addition, any character already suffering from paranoia before entering this area must make a DC 22 Will saving throw—this is a mind-affecting effect. Those who fail the save suffer a hallucination in which dripping globs of muck suddenly seem to take on a life of their own and begin crawling up out of the mud—up the stairs, up walls, and up the legs of anyone standing in the murk. Soon the entire corridor appears to be boiling with tiny mud abominations emerging and seeking to climb out of the earthen soup—only the corridor's alcoves remain clear.

Anyone experiencing this hallucination must make a DC 16 Will saving throw or gain the shaken condition and retreat into one of the alcoves to escape the pestilential beasts. Doing so, of course, exposes them to the effects of the quicksand. Anyone entering the quicksand immediately recognizes her jeopardy and can attempt to escape the alcove, even if still under the effects of the hallucination. The hallucination lasts for 1d4+2 rounds (roll for each PC individually). This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

**Creatures:** This corridor serves as the playground of four advanced ooze mephits. They prefer to loiter in the alcove pit at the far eastern end. As soon as they detect



# SERPENT'S SKULL

anyone in the corridor, the mephits come flying out of the mud to attack.

## ADVANCED OOZE MEPHITS (4) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

N Medium outsider (extraplanar, water) (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 202)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

**hp** 67 each (9d10+18); fast healing 2 (in wet or muddy environments)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

**DR** 5/magic

### OFFENSE

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

**Melee** 2 claws +13 (1d6+3)

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (15 ft. cone, 1d4 acid damage plus sickened for 3 rounds, Reflex DC 17 half, usable every 4 rounds)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +8)

1/hour—*acid arrow*

1/day—*stinking cloud* (DC 15), *summon* (level 2, 1 ooze mephit, 25%)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The mephits initially attempt force the PCs into the alcoves, but eventually take cover in them and attack with breath weapons and spells.

**Morale** The mephits fight until destroyed.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (claws)

**Skills** Bluff +14, Fly +14, Perception +12, Stealth +14

**Languages** Aquan, Common

## D4. THE DECADENT HUJURAT OF KHALID-SHAH (CR 12)

The mud-filled hall widens into a domed chamber, also awash in the ever-present muck. Its domed stone ceiling is intact, however. Across the room, another corridor exits into darkness beyond.

The floor of this chamber is covered in a foot of mud (treat as a shallow bog), except for the center, where an ancient cistern—now filled with mud—drops to a depth of 30 feet (designated by a dotted line). It is impossible to detect this drop-off without probing ahead in the mud. Anyone who steps into it is affected as if by quicksand (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 427).

**Creatures:** The mud-filled cistern actually serves as the personal hujurat (apartment) of Khalid-Shah, a

shaitan who angered a powerful pasha of his kind and was cursed with the consistency of mud. He was banished to the Material Plane in his humiliating state and has remained ever since, burning with a passionate hate for all save his mephit servants, but most especially for other genies and their allies. Khalid-Shah looks superficially like a normal shaitan, but his skin, rather than having the finish of polished stone, has the viscous appearance of mud, and drips nauseating muck wherever he goes. He generally spends his time brooding at the bottom of the pit and does not bother to come forth unless anyone dares to enter his domain (including by falling into it).

Khalid-Shah is accompanied by two advanced ooze mephits who lurk in the shadows near the top of the room's dome, and only make their presence known once the shaitan emerges from the pit, using their breath weapons and *acid arrow* to harass foes. Khalid-Shah is unaffected by the quicksand-like conditions within the pit and is able to sense creatures through the muck thanks to his tremorsense. For everyone else, it is impossible to see below the surface, and they must fight blind while within it.

## ADVANCED OOZE MEPHITS (2) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 67 each (see above)

## KHALID-SHAH CR 11

XP 12,800

Male muck shaitan rogue 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 143, *Advanced Bestiary* 183)

CN Large outsider (earth, elemental, extraplanar, water)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Perception +21

### DEFENSE

**AC** 24, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 154 (15 HD; 9d10+6d8+75)

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +11

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge, DR 10/adamantine; **Immune** electricity, elemental traits

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 60 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 slams +21 (2d6+8/19-20 plus grab)

**Ranged** mudball +16 touch (1d8+6 nonlethal)

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

**Special Attacks** earth and water mastery, exude muck, metalmorph, mudball, smother, sneak attack +3d6, stone curse

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

At will—*meld into stone*, *plane shift* (willing targets to elemental planes, Astral Plane, or Material Plane only), *soften earth and stone*, *stone shape*, *veil* (self only)

3/day—quicken *glitterdust* (DC 13), *rusting grasp*, *stoneskin*, *stone tell*, *wall of stone*

1/day—*transmute mud to rock, transmute rock to mud*

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**TACTICS**


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**Before Combat** Khalid-Shah casts *stoneskin* on himself before engaging in combat.

**During Combat** Khalid-Shah uses *transmute mud to rock* on anyone floundering in his mud pit in order to encase the victim in a shell of hardened stone. His affinity with the magic is such that he can transform single 10-foot cubes of mud around PCs in order to trap them in the cubes' confines. The cubes of stone then sink to the bottom of the pit; entrapped characters must be freed before they drown or suffocate within the rock. If the PCs avoid his mud pit, Khalid-Shah resorts to mudballs and smother attacks to incapacitate them.

**Morale** If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, Khalid-Shah retreats to the bottom of his pit and seals it above himself with a horizontal *wall of stone*.

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**STATISTICS**


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**Str** 22, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 18, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +20 (+24 bull rush or grapple); **CMD** 35 (37 vs. bull rush)

**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*glitterdust*), Weapon Focus (slam)

**Skills** Appraise +22, Bluff +19, Climb +32, Craft (gemcutting) +16, Escape Artist +32, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +19, Knowledge (engineering) +19, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +18 (+22 in areas of mud or silt), Swim +32

**Languages** Aquan, Auran, Common, Ignan, Terran; telepathy 100 ft.

**SQ** rogue talents (slow reactions, stand up, surprise attack), stone glide, trapfinding +3

**Other Gear** *amulet of mighty fists* +1, necklace of blue crystals (see Treasure)

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**


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**Earth and Water Mastery (Ex)** Khalid-Shah gains a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls (already factored into his stats) as long as he touches earth or water (or a combination of both). He takes a –4 morale penalty on attack and damage rolls when attacking an airborne creature or attacking while airborne.

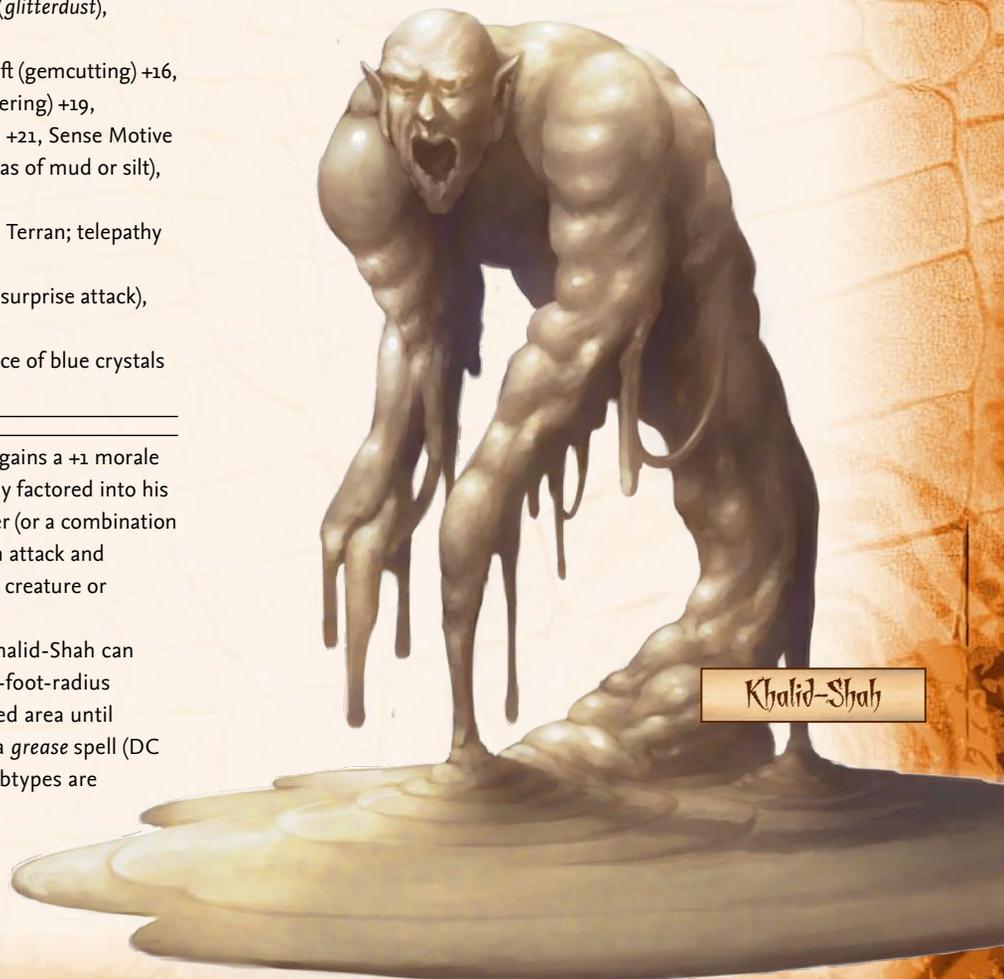
**Exude Muck (Su)** As a full-round action, Khalid-Shah can exude a puddle of slippery muck in a 10-foot-radius spread. This muck remains in the affected area until washed away. It otherwise functions as a *grease* spell (DC 15). Creatures with the earth or water subtypes are immune to this effect.

**Mudball (Su)** Khalid-Shah can hurl a mudball as a ranged touch attack with a 20-foot range increment. It deals 1d8+6 points of nonlethal damage, and covers

the target in slippery sludge, affecting the target's equipment as if by a *grease* spell, as well as granting the target fire resistance 3 for the duration. The slippery coating lasts for 1 minute or until washed off with at least 10 gallons of water. Creatures with the water subtype are immune to this effect.

**Smother (Ex)** On a successful grapple check, Khalid-Shah can fill his opponent's mouth and nose with noxious muck. The opponent must immediately hold her breath or drown (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 445) and cannot speak or cast spells with a verbal component. Furthermore, the opponent must make a DC 19 Fortitude save each round that she is unable to breathe or be nauseated until 1d4 rounds after the muck is cleared. A creature can remove this smothering muck by succeeding on a DC 15 Constitution check as a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity. This move action may be performed even while being grappled. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Treasure:** A skeleton lies preserved in the muck at the bottom of the pit—the 10,000-year-old remains of Urschlar Vohkavi, who fell victim to one of his own traps as he tried to reach the *Argental Font* in the next chamber.



Khalid-Shah

## ARGENTAL FONT

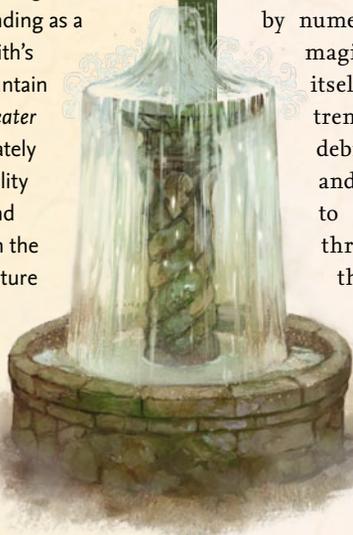
**Aura** strong conjuration (healing); **CL** 18th  
**Slot** none; **Weight** 2,000 lbs.

### DESCRIPTION

This beautifully carved stone fountain is decorated with figures of dancing fey creatures and holds pure, shimmering water that glows with silvery light. The moon-goddess Acavna gave the *Argental Font* to the city of Saventh-Yhi at its founding as a gift in gratitude for the heroine Savith's valor. Anyone drinking from the fountain enjoys the combined benefits of *greater restoration* and *heal*, and is immediately cured of all afflictions, including ability damage or drain, negative levels, and insanities. The waters cannot return the dead to life, though an undead creature immersed in the fountain is immediately destroyed (no save). The fountain never runs dry, no matter how many times it is used or how much water is taken from it, but the water retains its potency for only 1 round after being removed from the fountain, becoming normal water thereafter. The font can only be moved from its location with a *miracle* or *wish* spell. An individual creature can only benefit from the effects of the *Argental Font* once per year.

### DESTRUCTION

If a good celestial creature of at least 10 Hit Dice ever willingly commits suicide while in the font's waters, the fountain ceases to flow and its waters lose all special properties.



One hand still clutches a bronze medallion, an ancient holy symbol of Pharasma worth 2,000 gp to a collector. Also hidden in the sludge are Khalid-Shah's collected treasures, which can be found with a DC 30 Perception check by anyone who actually descends to the bottom of the pit. These treasures consist of assorted gems and jewels worth a total of 1,500 gp, and a beautifully crafted, life-sized human skull composed entirely of crystal (4,000 gp). In addition, Khalid-Shah wears a necklace of eight blue crystals. Closer inspection reveals the Azlanti rune of honest pride inscribed on each crystal. These are one of the six types of focusing crystals needed to activate the portal in area **B13**.

## D5. FOUNTAIN CHAMBER (CR 11)

Stone pillars line this long, mud-covered hall, their once-fine polished finish now spattered with many layers of hardened, dried mud. At the far end of the chamber, a glass fountain jets a silvery fluid into the air, which falls back into the basin with a light tinkling ring, like tiny chimes.

This chamber holds the *Argental Font*, hidden here by Urschlar Vohkavi thousands of years ago. Once protected by numerous magical wards, time has eroded these magical seals much as it has the walls of the vault itself, and the fountain is now easily accessible. The tremors of Earthfall and millennia of collected debris have choked the fountain's basin with rocks and mud, however, causing its magical waters to overflow and create the muddy conditions throughout this vault. Khalid-Shah has claimed the magical fountain as his own, hoping he can somehow use the font's waters to reverse his curse, but he has so far been unsuccessful.

The mud in this room is only a few inches deep and imposes no penalties on movement, but requires a DC 12 Acrobatics check to traverse it.

**Creature:** Khalid-Shah's "pet," an elder mud elemental, patrols this room and guards its master's greatest treasure, the *Argental Font*. The elemental attacks anyone entering the room except Khalid-Shah.

## ELDER MUD ELEMENTAL

CR 11

XP 12,800

N Huge outsider (earth, elemental, extraplanar, water)  
*(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 120)*

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.;  
**Perception** +19

### DEFENSE

**AC** 23, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, -2 size)

**hp** 152 (16d10+64)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +17, **Will** +5

**DR** 10/—; **Immune** elemental traits; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 10 ft., earth glide, swim 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 slams +24 (2d10+10/19-20 plus entrap)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Special Attacks** entrap (DC 22, 10 minutes, hardness 5, hp 15)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The elemental pummels its opponents with its slams, trying to entrap them and prevent them from reaching the *Argental Font*.

**Morale** The elemental fights until destroyed.


**STATISTICS**

**Str** 30, **Dex** 20, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +28; **CMD** 44

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush<sup>B</sup>, Improved Critical (slams), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

**Skills** Climb +29, Escape Artist +24, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (planes) +19, Perception +19, Stealth +16, Swim +18

**Languages** Aquan, Terran

**SQ** mudsliding

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Earth Glide (Ex)** A burrowing mud elemental can pass through dirt, gravel, or other loose or porous solid matter as easily as a fish swims through water. It cannot use this ability to pass through a solid barrier such as a stone or brick wall. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence. A *move earth* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing mud elemental flings the elemental back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.

**Entrap (Ex)** On a successful melee attack, a mud elemental can entrap an opponent in hardened mud. The target must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or become entangled. If a target is already entangled by this ability, a second entrap attack means the target must make another Fortitude save or become helpless. The save DCs are Constitution-based. A target made helpless by this ability is conscious but can

take no physical actions (except attempting to break free) until the mud is removed. The target can use spells with only verbal components or spell-like abilities if it can make a DC 20 concentration check. An entangled creature can make a DC 22 Strength check as a full-round action to break free; a helpless creature must make a DC 27 Strength check to break free. Destroying the hardened mud frees the creature, or it can be washed away in 1d3 rounds if a large amount of water is used.

**Mudsliding (Ex)** A mud elemental ignores difficult terrain unless the cause is obstacles equal to or greater than its height. It ignores obstacles that cause creatures to slip or fall (such as a *grease* spell).

**Development:** Once its guardians are defeated, the PCs may use the *Argent Font* as they see fit, particularly to cure the paranoia caused by the midnight spores. Note that an individual creature can only benefit from the effects of the fountain once per year, however, so repeated incursions into the vaults can afflict them with insanity again.

**Story Award:** Award the PCs 19,200 XP for finding the *Argent Font*.

## PART FIVE: THE VAULT OF SILENCE

This vault was originally a system of cisterns beneath the temple district designed to supply the city with water during times of drought. Later, the great cistern chambers

were capped and connected to a series of chambers used as catacombs until Urschlar converted them into one of his vaults. In recent centuries, the vault became the center of worship for a zombie cult for a short time, but eventually its living adherents fell victim to the midnight spores that still infest its chambers. Only recently has the vault become inhabited once again—this time by a strange Garundi vampire and the skinless spawn it has created from victims taken from the expeditions currently exploring the city.

The grotto that forms the entrance of this vault can be found with a simple DC 10 Perception check after searching the cliffs behind the temple district for 1d4 hours, unless its location is known from the mural in area **B13**.

## E1. GARDEN OF CONTEMPLATION (CR 10)

A series of natural terraces form the side of this hill. Once, this may have been a tended garden, and flowering vines grow thickly over the walls of the resulting grotto, filling the air with a thick and heady scent. At the back of the grotto, a carved stone bench provides a place of respite in the shade next to a stone door leading into the hillside. A feeling of peace pervades this small grotto, minimizing the sounds of the surrounding ruins with an aura of tranquil silence.

When the vault was a catacomb, this grotto served as a memorial garden. The vines are of a harmless jungle variety, and the silence of the area is merely a natural by-product of the grotto's acoustics. The stone door looks heavy and appears to have been sealed by centuries of disuse, but a DC 18 Perception check notices that it has been opened recently and requires only a DC 12 Strength check to open as a result.

**Creatures:** The grotto has become the temporary camp of a group of serpentfolk seeking the escaped Pathfinder Juliver. The serpentfolk pursued Juliver through Ilmurea but were unable to catch her before she disappeared through the portal to Saventh-Yhi and deactivated it behind her. The serpentfolk cleric Vyr-Azul, unwilling to let word of Ilmurea's reawakening reach the surface, had this group of serpentfolk teleported to the surface with instructions to recapture Juliver, find the portal's surface exit, and repair the portal so that the serpentfolk can use it to surreptitiously spy on what's happening in the city above.

So far, the serpentfolk have not had much luck. This vault is the only one they have found, and having tangled with the spectres in area **E2**, they are now reduced to three in number (out of the original six). They are desperate at this point and make for dangerous opponents. If Juliver is

with the party, the serpentfolk focus their attacks on her, trying to capture her and flee in the hope of learning from her where the portal is located and how to operate it.

### SERPENTFOLK SEEKERS (3)

CR 7

#### XP 3,200 each

Serpentfolk fighter 2/sorcerer 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 242)

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

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

#### DEFENSE

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

**hp** 83 each (9 HD; 7d10+2d6+38)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10; +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1, **Immune** mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison; **SR** 19

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *shotel* +11/+6 (1d8+2/19–20/x3), bite +4 (1d6 plus poison)

**Ranged** dart +14 (1d4+1 plus deathblade poison)

**Special Attacks** claws (1d4+1, 8 rounds/day)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +9)

At will—*disguise self* (DC 18), *ventriloquism*

1/day—*blur*, *dominate person* (DC 20), *major image* (DC 18), *mirror image*, *suggestion* (DC 20)

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 2nd; concentration +7)

1st (6/day)—*burning hands* (DC 16), *mage armor*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 15), *ray of frost*, *read magic*

**Bloodline** draconic (red)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The serpentfolk cast *blur*, *mage armor*, and *mirror image* before combat.

**During Combat** The serpentfolk try to keep opponents at bay with spells and poisoned darts. In melee, they try to single out one opponent at a time.

**Morale** If the serpentfolk have not found Juliver, they flee when reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, or when one of them is slain. If they have captured Juliver, they fight to the death, trying to kill her first to keep their secret safe.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 13, **Dex** 23, **Con** 19, **Int** 18, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 20

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

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers, Combat Reflexes, Eschew Materials, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*shotel*), Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (*shotel*), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (*shotel*)

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Craft (alchemy) +13, Disguise +12 (+22 with *disguise self*), Escape Artist +12, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Perception +13, Spellcraft +13, Stealth +18, Use Magic Device +14

**Languages** Aklo, Azlanti, Draconic, Nocril, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

**SQ** bloodline arcana

**Gear** +1 *shotel*\*, darts (10), deathblade poison (3 doses)

\*The shotel is a downward curving sword that provides a +1 bonus on attack rolls against opponents with light shields, heavy shields, or bucklers (*Adventurer's Armory* 5).

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 2 saves.

**Development:** At your discretion, particularly if the PCs have had trouble recovering the focus crystals from one or more of the vaults, the serpentfolk may have delved into some of these vaults themselves and begun collecting their own focusing crystals. This option should be used sparingly—the PCs should explore the majority of the vaults themselves, in order to gain the experience needed for the final vault and the next adventure.

**Treasure:** In addition to their magical swords, the serpentfolk have 220 gp in strangely minted, unrecognizable coins between them.

**E2. ANTECHAMBER (CR 11)**

Once a buried cistern, the walls of this chamber rise 40 feet to a domed ceiling where a great stone plug blocks off the former water flow. Patches of moss still grow in places on the ancient masonry of the walls. Two stone sarcophagi of ancient make occupy the room, engraved with carvings matching those found throughout the ruined city. The northern sarcophagus stands open and empty of all save centuries of dust—its lid is nowhere to be found. The southern sarcophagus, however, still has its lid and remains sealed after all this time. An eerie silence seems to reign over this chamber.

Breaking the seal and removing the lid of the southern sarcophagus requires a DC 28 Strength check or 60 points of damage (hardness 8).

**Creatures:** Ghostly remnants of the zombie cult that once inhabited this vault lurk in this chamber—four spectres murdered by their paranoid brethren before they could “ascend” to zombiehood. Three of them hide within the walls of the chamber while one of them lies inside the sealed sarcophagus. As soon as the lid is lifted, the spectre within attacks with surprise unless the PCs have readied actions. Its companions come out of the walls the following round. The spectres attack any living creature in this chamber, and pursue them throughout the vault, but will not venture outside into the harmful sunlight.

**SPECTRES (4)**

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 52 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256)

**Treasure:** The person buried in the sealed sarcophagus was a veteran of Savith's original attack on Ilmurea. Though the body has long since turned to dust, the coffin still holds the ancient Azlanti warrior's weapon, which was interred with her. This +1 *monstrous humanoid bane returning trident* is decorated with golden serpents twining up its shaft, and can be recognized as Azlanti in origin with a DC 25 Appraise check.

**E3. INTERSECTION (CR 8)**

A secret door in the southern wall here has been improperly closed and can be found with a DC 17 Perception check. It leads to the chambers that were once used by the zombie cult, who built the secret door in a false wall to hide their lair. The secret door bears a *symbol of weakness* that is triggered if someone passes through the secret door.

**SYMBOL OF WEAKNESS TRAP**

CR 8

Type magic; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

**EFFECTS**

Trigger spell; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*symbol of weakness*, 3d6 Strength damage, DC 20 Fortitude save negates); multiple targets (all targets within 60 ft.)



Serpentfolk Seeker

## E4. DARK CHAPEL (CR 9)

Burial niches still holding the remnants of old bones line the walls of this room, and similar grooves line the floor in a haphazard pattern, though these appear to have been emptied of their burial contents. In between the niches, the walls are painted black and decorated with wild, fetishistic motifs of snakes, spiders, and the walking dead. Burnt-out candles stand in the niches in pools of their own hardened blood-red wax. At the far end of the room stands a crude altar constructed of broken stones taken from the ruins outside. Its surface likewise harbors the melted remnants of ancient candles.

Centuries ago, this set of rooms was discovered and sectioned off by a Mwangi zombie cult from the jungle. It lasted for several decades before finally dying out, a victim of its own turpitude. A DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the pictographic designs as belonging to a fetishistic aspect of the cult of Orcus, demon lord of the undead, absent the trappings usually found in northern cults of Orcus.

The floor of the chamber is covered by randomly placed burial niches, 2 feet deep. As a result, the room is considered difficult terrain for movement.

**Creatures:** Standing behind the altar, visible from the entrance as ominous shadows, are guardians created by the zombie cult—three dire tiger fast zombies. They leap out to attack any creature entering the room and pursue foes throughout the vault.

DIRE TIGER FAST ZOMBIES (3)		CR 6
<b>XP 2,400 each</b>		
NE Large undead ( <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 265, 288)		
<b>Init</b> +3; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; <b>Perception</b> +0		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
<b>AC</b> 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)		
<b>hp</b> 88 each (16d8+16)		
<b>Fort</b> +5, <b>Ref</b> +8, <b>Will</b> +10		
<b>Immune</b> undead traits		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
<b>Speed</b> 50 ft.		
<b>Melee</b> bite +21 (2d6+9), 2 claws +21 (2d4+9), slam +20 (1d8+9)		
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft.		
<b>Special Attacks</b> quick strikes		
<b>TACTICS</b>		
<b>During Combat</b> The tiger zombies charge opponents and make full attacks with their quick strikes ability.		
<b>Morale</b> The zombies fight until destroyed.		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
<b>Str</b> 29, <b>Dex</b> 17, <b>Con</b> —, <b>Int</b> —, <b>Wis</b> 10, <b>Cha</b> 10		
<b>Base Atk</b> +12; <b>CMB</b> +22 (+26 grapple); <b>CMD</b> 35 (39 vs. trip)		
<b>Feats</b> Toughness <sup>B</sup>		
<b>Skills</b> Acrobatics +7 (+15 jump), Stealth +6 (+14 in tall grass)		

## E5. ABANDONED CHAMBER

This domed cistern chamber contains a single open sarcophagus lying on the floor. Its lid has been pushed aside, revealing a shriveled body lying within.

The zombie cult leader intended this chamber to serve as his abode after his transformation into a heightened undead state—lichdom, for instance—but he only succeeded in killing himself, not in returning from death. He is naked save for the leopardskin breechclout he wears, and his dried, ebony skin has been crudely marked with the bones of a human skeletal system in ash-white paint, his face a painted skull mask. He still clutches the bone dagger with which he ended his life.

**Treasure:** The bone dagger is actually a +1 *wounding dagger*. In addition, the corpse wears a circlet of hammered gold around its neck worth 200 gp.

## E6. TRAPPED CATACOMB (CR 11)

A long chamber extends to an exit at the far end of the room. The walls and floor are lined with burial niches, empty of any occupants.

This chamber was once a catacomb; the burial niches in the floor count as difficult terrain, just as in area E4.

**Trap:** An ancient trap wards this room from any who would attempt to plunder or defile the graves here. The trap is triggered when a character reaches the center of the room, at which point razor-sharp pendulum blades swing down from the ceiling accompanied by a fusillade of darts from the walls, targeting every creature in the room for 1d4 rounds. The trap resets itself 1d6 rounds after it stops. The rawbones in area E7 and the terkow in area E8 know about the trap and avoid this room as a result.

ROOM OF DARTS AND BLADES		CR 11
<b>Type</b> mechanical; <b>Perception</b> DC 25; <b>Disable Device</b> DC 20		
<b>EFFECTS</b>		
<b>Trigger</b> location; <b>Duration</b> 1d4 rounds; <b>Reset</b> automatic (1d6 rounds after trap stops)		
<b>Effect</b> darts (Atk +18 ranged, 1d4 darts per target for 1d4+1 damage each); pendulum blades (Atk +18 melee [1d12+1/x3]); multiple targets (all targets within room)		
<b>Development:</b> Sounds of the trap being triggered draw the attention of Gbala (area E8). He immediately goes to area E7 and rouses the rawbones there to circle around and attack the PCs from behind, while he circles back and tries to find opportunities to sneak attack PCs weakened by the trap. The rawbones arrives in 3 rounds and Gbala the following round.		

## E7. MOLDY CATACOMB (CR 10)

This room appears identical to area E6 with burial niches and difficult terrain. The floor, however, is covered in an inch of midnight spores, which resembles an uneven black carpet. Urschlar used the dead that had been interred here to nourish an especially fecund growth of the strange mold. Disturbing the substance causes small clouds of black dust to jet into the air, but not so much as to obscure vision or breathing.

Entering this chamber and disturbing the mold in any way count as an additional exposure to the midnight spores, though this happens only once (entering the room repeatedly does not increase the amount of exposures). In addition, any character already suffering from paranoia before entering this area who is exposed to this concentration must make a DC 25 Will saving throw. Those who fail the save experience a hallucination—the burial niches in the walls suddenly come alive with rattling bones and grinning skulls, which clamber out and begin reassembling into an army of walking dead. The black-carpeted floor also erupts with bony hands and claws reaching upward, seeking to snuff out the life of any they can reach.

For each PC experiencing this hallucination, roll on the following table at the start of each affected PC's turn each round to see what the PC does in that round.

d%	Behavior
01–25	Act normally
26–50	Attack the nearest creature (for this purpose, a familiar counts as part of the subject's self)
51–75	Cower in fear
76–100	Frightened for 1 round

A character who cannot carry out the indicated action cowers in fear instead. The hallucination lasts for 1d4+2 rounds (roll for each PC individually). This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

**Creature:** Lying in two of the floor niches, completely covered by the midnight spores, are two rawbones, undead victims of the terkow in area E8 who were slain, skinned, and transformed into servitor spawn. The rawbones resemble freshly skinned corpses with flesh and muscle still clinging to their bones, dripping gore clotted with black mold. Their entrails and organs pulse obscenely within and below their rib cages. A DC 20 Heal check identifies the rawbones as once having been a human and a half-orc, respectively, while a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check recognizes the human as a member of the Red Mantis expedition and the half-orc as a member of the Free Captains expedition. The rawbones have total concealment in their burial niches in the center of the room but rise to attack with surprise if anyone comes within 10 feet.

### RAWBONES (2)

CR 8

**XP 4,800 each**

LE Medium undead (*Tome of Horrors III* 157)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

**Aura** nauseating aura (20 ft., DC 19)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

**hp** 102 each (12d8+48)

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

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +2, **DR** 10/magic or silver; **Immune** cold, undead traits

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 slams +15 (2d6+5) or entrails lash +10 (1d6+5 plus grab)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with entrails lash)

**Special Attacks** constrict (1d6+5), strangle, vomit gore

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The rawbones vomit gore to catch as many opponents as possible in its effects, then use their entrails lash to constrict and strangle their foes.

**Morale** The rawbones fight until destroyed.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 21, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +14 (+18 grapple); **CMD** 26

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (entrails lash), Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (entrails lash), Weapon Focus (slam)

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Climb +18, Escape Artist +12, Intimidate +16, Perception +14, Stealth +15

**Languages** Common, Polyglot

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Nauseating Aura (Su)** A rawbones emanates a sickening aura that reeks of death in a 20-foot radius. Any creature that comes within that area must succeed on DC 19 Fortitude save or become nauseated for as long as it remains within the area and for 1 minute after leaving the area. A creature that makes a successful save is immune to the nauseating aura of that rawbones for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Strangle (Ex)** Rawbones have an unerring talent for seizing their victims by the neck. A creature that is grappled by a rawbones cannot speak or cast any spells that have verbal components.

**Vomit Gore (Su)** Three times per day, a rawbones can spit a blast of blood and gore in a 20-foot cone that deals 6d6 points of damage (DC 19 Reflex save for half). The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Development:** The sound of combat in this room draws the attention of Gbala (area E8). If alerted, he arrives in 1d4 rounds, and attempts to flank opponents with his rawbones to make sneak attacks.

## E8. BURIAL CHAMBER (CR 12)

This domed cistern chamber has been converted into a crypt. Three stone sarcophagi stand in the room—two of them still bear their stone lids, while the third lies askew, its lid smashed in by a massive block of stone that seems to have fallen from the domed ceiling. The strong scent of blood fills the room.

The sarcophagi contain burials from ancient Saventh-Yhi, and as such, their occupants have long since turned to dust over the past 10,000 years. However, the smashed sarcophagus in the middle is about half full of fresh, clotting blood. Removing the lids of any of the sarcophagi requires a DC 20 Strength check.

**Creature:** An outcast from the Mwangi coast currently inhabits this chamber—a Bonuwat rogue named Gbala. He is a terkow—a peculiarly Garundi form of vampire. Gbala has had all of the skin stripped from his body, revealing the musculature and skeletal structure underneath. His body, which he normally covers with skin stolen from



Gbala

his victims, constantly weeps blood. Other than the two rawbones in area E7 (whose skins have already rotted away), Gbala has not claimed many victims in Saventh-Yhi, and he is currently without a skin. He views the arrival of the PCs as an opportunity to acquire new skins to wear. If he has not already been alerted and encountered, Gbala reclines in the blood-filled sarcophagus that is his bed, the clotted gore somewhat alleviating the discomfort of his constantly bleeding body.

### GBALA CR 12

**XP 19,200**

Male human terkow rogue 12 (variant vampire, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 270, *Nyambe: African Adventures* 248)

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human)

**Init** +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +28

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 28, touch 20, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +6 Dex, +2 dodge, +4 natural)

**hp** 120 (12d8+60)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +17, **Will** +5

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +4; **DR** 10/magic or silver; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10; **SR** 23

**Weaknesses** vulnerability to salt

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 60 ft.

**Melee** 3 claws +17 (1d6+4/19–20 plus grab)

**Special Attacks** blood drain, energy drain (2 levels, DC 19), create spawn, flay skin, sneak attack +6d6

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Gbala activates his *boots of speed* before entering combat (already included in his stat block).

**During Combat** Gbala keeps moving as much as possible in combat, making use of Wind Stance and Spring Attack to make sneak attacks if possible.

**Morale** If reduced below 30 hit points, Gbala attempts to flee into the jungle.

**Base Statistics** When not under the effects of *haste*, Gbala's stats are: **AC** 27, touch 19, flat-footed 20; **Ref** +16; **Speed** 30 ft.; **Melee** 2 claws +16 (1d6+4/19–20 plus grab); **CMB** +13 (+17 grapple); **CMD** 32; **Skills** Acrobatics +21 (+31 to make high or long jumps).

#### STATISTICS

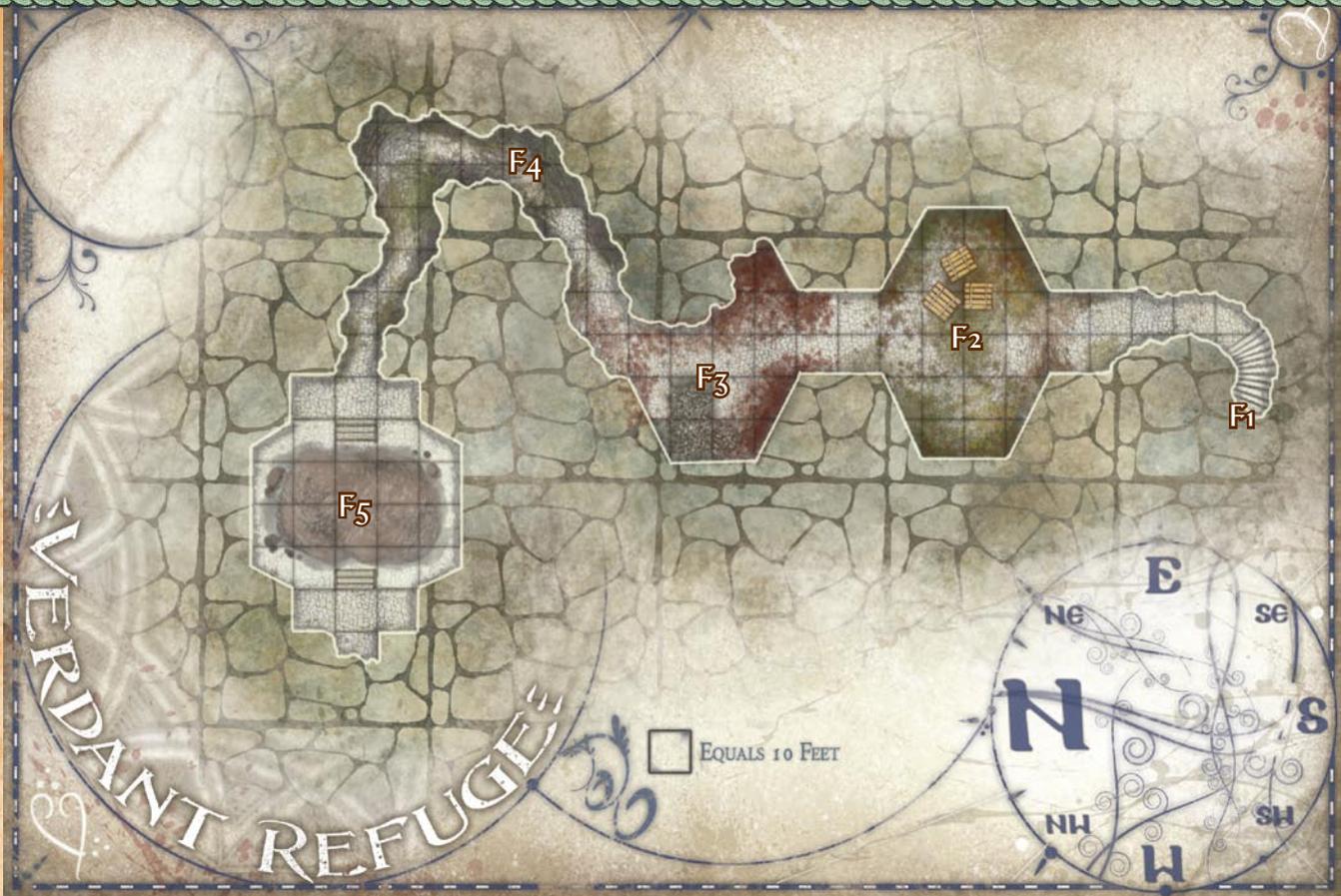
**Str** 18, **Dex** 23, **Con** —, **Int** 16, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +14 (+18 grapple); **CMD** 33

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Lightning Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Mobility, Nimble Moves, Spring Attack, Toughness<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw), Wind Stance

**Skills** Acrobatics +21 (+43 to make high or long jumps),

Appraise +18, Bluff +26, Climb +19, Disable Device +21,



Disguise +18, Escape Artist +21, Intimidate +18, Perception +28, Sense Motive +28, Sleight of Hand +21, Stealth +29;  
**Racial Modifiers** +8 Bluff, +8 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Polyglot

**SQ** rogue talents (bleeding attack +6, finesse rogue, improved evasion, slippery mind, slow reactions, surprise attack), trapfinding +6

**Gear** *bracers of armor +4, boots of speed, ring of improved jumping, ring of protection +2*

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Create Spawn (Su)** A terkow can create spawn out of those it slays with blood drain or energy drain, provided that the slain creature is of the same creature type as the terkow's base creature type. The terkow must skin its victim after slaying it. The victim then rises from death in 1d4 days, returning as a rawbones if it had 4 or fewer Hit Dice, and as a terkow if it had 5 or more Hit Dice. In either case, the new creature is under the command of the terkow that created it, and remains enslaved until its master is destroyed. A terkow may have enslaved spawn totaling no more than twice its own Hit Dice; any spawn it creates that would exceed this limit become free-willed undead.

**Flay Skin (Ex)** After a terkow drains a humanoid victim of blood, it flays the victim's skin and wears it to replace

its own (provided the terkow and the victim are of the same creature type and size). This provides the terkow with several benefits. Wearing a skin allows the terkow to disguise itself as its victim, giving it a +10 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks. While wearing a skin, the terkow also gains fast healing 5. The stolen skin only remains viable for 24 hours, after which the skin rots and sloughs off, revealing the monster beneath.

**Salt Water Vulnerability (Ex)** Terkow suffer agonizing pain from salt water. A splash of salt water deals 1d6 points of damage to a terkow, and full immersion in salt water deals 4d6 points of damage per round.

**Treasure:** Gbala has stored his treasures in the northernmost sarcophagus. These consist of a +2 *chain shirt*, a masterwork battleaxe, 85 gp, and 320 sp. The southern sarcophagus holds nine blue crystals inscribed with the Azlanti rune of fertility. These are one of the six types of focusing crystals needed to activate the portal in area **B13**.

## PART SIX: THE VERDANT REFUGE

This vault, located in the overgrown residential district, partially caved in and was sealed off after the cataclysm of Earthfall. A natural spring within, however, allowed various forms of fungus and mold—including the midnight

spores—to propagate uninhibitedly. More recently, a local earthquake reopened the vault, exposing it to the outside for the first time in centuries. This situation reigned within the vault for millennia until a dwarf explorer named Eggra Kraggorach discovered the vault some 85 years ago. Somewhat eccentric, Kraggorach was completely uninterested in the ruins of Saventh-Yhi, convinced that a larger, older city lay buried beneath the Azlanti city.

The entrance to this vault is very inconspicuous and without the guidance of the mural in area **B13**, it can only be found with a DC 30 Perception check after searching for 3d6 hours along the cliff wall.

## F1. THE DELVING

A tunnel has been dug into the side of the jungle-choked cliff here. Though the surrounding area has become overgrown and the opening is partially obscured by vines and creepers, rough steps can still be seen chiseled into the descending tunnel.

Eggra Kraggorach dug this entrance to the vault 85 years ago. While there is now no trace of her original delving other than the tunnel itself, a DC 20 Perception check finds two large, partially intact quadruped skeletons among the many creepers and vines nearby. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check identifies them as camels.

## F2. DEN OF THORNIES (CR 10)

The delving opens on a stone-walled chamber built as a hexagon, with wide tunnels exiting to the north and south. The floor is covered in drifts of dried plant matter. Stacked near one wall are three old wooden crates, their wooden planks riddled by worms and dry rot.

Kraggorach made her initial camp here as she cut back the rampant fungal growth that had overtaken the room. Since then, the fungus in this chamber has largely died off, as exposure to the outside air has broken its fragile ecosystem. The crates are marked with Dwarven runes identifying them as the property of Eggra Kraggorach. A DC 30 Knowledge (history or local) check recognizes the name as that of an infamous dwarven explorer who disappeared in 4625 AR (dwarves gain a +5 bonus on this check). Kraggorach was notorious not only for her crackpot theories about an ancient city buried beneath the Mwangi Expanse, but also for her ill-fated solo expedition into the Mwangi jungle. The crates themselves hold only the rotten, useless remains of mundane supplies and foodstuffs.

**Creatures:** This chamber is now inhabited by a pride of thorny cave lions, large feline plant creatures composed of wood, leaves, and thorns, originally bred by the vegpegyms in the residential district above. The thorny

cave lions leave their den to hunt among the ruins and surrounding jungle, but they are resting here when the PCs first enter the vault. They attack any intruders who enter their den.

### THORNY CAVE LIONS (4)

CR 6

#### XP 2,400 each

N Large plant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 193, *Tome of Horrors* III 230)

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +15

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +6 natural, –1 size)

**hp** 75 each (10d8+30)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

**Immune** plant traits

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +13 (1d8+7 plus grab), 2 claws +14 (1d6+7)

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

**Special Attacks** pounce, rake (2 claws +13, 1d6+7), thorns (1d8+7)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The lions pounce on intruders, each one attacking a different foe.

**Morale** The lions fight until destroyed.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 25, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +15 (+19 grapple); **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (claw)

**Skills** Acrobatics +9 (+17 jump), Perception +15, Stealth +8 (+12 in undergrowth, +16 in swamp or forest); **Racial Modifiers**

+4 Acrobatics, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth (+8 in undergrowth, +12 in swamp or forest)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Thorns (Ex)** A thorny cave lion's body is covered with sharp, wooden thorns. Any creature attacking a thorny cave lion with a natural attack, unarmed strike, or handheld weapon takes 1d8+7 points of damage from the thorny cave lion's sharpened thorns. A creature grappling (or grappled by) a thorny cave lion takes this same damage each round.

## F3. FUNGAL GROVE (CR 10)

Every surface in this chamber is covered with some sort of mold, lichen, or fungal growth. Pale white tendrils of root-like growths hang from the ceiling or lie on the floor, drawing nourishment from the matted compost there. Shelf fungi grow from the walls to prodigious size, and one variety of puffball fungus actually gives off a pale luminosity. The atmosphere is thick with the humid smells of rot and mold.

The abundant fungal growth has maintained its foothold in this chamber, and though at one time the

mix of spores and gases given off by the fungi would have been toxic to humanoids, fresh air from the delving at area **F1** has allowed the harmful concentration to dissipate (though the vault's midnight spores still present a hazard). The puffball mushrooms give the room dim lighting.

**Creatures:** A grove of six basidironds lives in this chamber. Uninterested in the other plant creatures inhabiting the vault, the fungal basidironds normally live on the runoff from the walls of the vault, but eagerly go after fresh blood if living creatures enter the room. When living prey is detected, the basidironds release their hallucination clouds before attacking.

**BASIDIRONDS (6)** **CR 5**  
**XP 1,600 each**  
 hp 52 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 28*)

### F4. CHOKED CORRIDOR (CR 12)

This narrow, rough corridor is choked with strange plant life. Many of the growths here on the walls, floor, and ceiling are similar to other fungi in the vault, but the predominant growth here consists of spiky black stalks as thick as arms that emerge from the loose soil of the floor and appear to grow directly into the walls and ceiling between cracks in the stone. Large black flakes continually break away from these and fall to join the mulch covering the floor.

This corridor is completely overgrown with massive midnight spore growths. The black stalks are a hypertrophied form of the mold, and the shedding flakes are the spores themselves. However, they have grown so large due to the abundance of nutrients and experiments conducted on them here that they are too large to be harmful to humanoids. While eating one of the flakes would expose an individual to its deleterious effects, exposure to these massive spores does no additional harm at all. The vault is laced with normal midnight spores just like the rest, but does not cause additional exposure. Anyone who studies these strange growths and makes a DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check recognizes that they are somehow gigantically proportioned mold spores of an otherworldly origin. Anyone connecting this knowledge with the information found in Urschlar's journal (see area **B10**) realizes that these are an enlarged version of that very substance. Anyone with this knowledge who makes a subsequent DC 20 Heal check can reduce the DC of a character's midnight spore-induced paranoia by a number of points equal to the healer's Charisma bonus (minimum of 1) after 1 hour of undisturbed care. A creature can benefit from this treatment no more than once per week.

**Creatures:** Crawling among these growths are eight giant fungal crawlers known as deathcap jumpers. These disturbing amalgamations of insect and fungus resemble wolf-sized crickets with a large, spongy fungal heads and sharp mandibles and claws.

**DEATHCAP JUMPERS (8)** **CR 6**  
**XP 2,400 each**

Advanced fungal crawlers (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 127*)  
 N Medium aberration

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

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

**hp** 67 each (9d8+27)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

**Defensive Abilities** plant defenses; **Immune** mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph effects, sleep, stunning

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +10 (1d6+4 plus poison), 2 claws +10 (1d4+4)

**Special Attacks** leap

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** The fungal crawlers use their leap ability to attack intruders en masse.

**Morale** The fungal crawlers fight to the death.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 7

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Step Up

**Skills** Acrobatics +12 (+20 jump), Climb +12, Perception +8

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Leap (Ex)** A fungal crawler can perform a special kind of pounce attack by jumping into combat. When a fungal crawler charges, it can make a DC 20 Acrobatics check to jump into the air and land next to its enemies. If it makes the Acrobatics check, it can follow up with four claw attacks against foes in reach, but it cannot make a bite attack.

**Plant Defenses (Ex)** A fungal crawler is part plant, and shares many of the immunities that plant creatures possess.

A fungal crawler is immune to mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph effects, sleep, and stunning.

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str and 1d2 Con; *cure* 1 save.

### F5. THE POOL CHAMBER (CR 12)

This chamber gives off an overpowering reek of compost and decay. Steps descend into what was once perhaps a pool or bath, but is now a pond of strangely mottled organic sludge. Rising from the center of the mass is a tree-like growth with a trunk of cracked, warty gray bark and a splay of knotty, withered branches.

# SERPENT'S SKULL



Though the sludge and decay in this room are disgusting, they are not harmful. The pool is 2 feet deep, and is considered a shallow bog for movement purposes, requiring 2 squares of movement to move into or through a square and increasing the DC of any Acrobatics checks by 2.

**Creature:** The tree-like growth in the center of the pool is actually an ancient polyp-like organism similar to a sea anemone, which mutated and has now adapted to this high-nutrient, non-aquatic environment. It feeds on the decomposing soup of the pool but is only too happy to supplement its diet with any other organisms that get within its reach (such as the occasional deathcap jumper or PC).

## ELDER POLYP

CR 12

XP 19,200

Advanced variant great sea anemone (*Tome of Horrors III* 10)

N Huge vermin

**Init** +5; **Senses** blindsight 40 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

### DEFENSE

**AC** 27, touch 9, flat-footed 26 (+1 Dex, +18 natural, -2 size)

**hp** 161 (17d8+85)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

**DR** 10/slashing or piercing; **Immune** acid, mind-affecting effects

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 10 ft.

**Melee** 4 tentacles +18 (1d8+8 plus grab and poison)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Special Attacks** acid spray, gnashing maw, swallow whole (6d8 acid damage, AC 19, 16 hp)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The elder polyp uses its acid spray on approaching foes, then strikes at multiple foes with its tentacles, attempting to draw them into its gnashing maw and swallow them whole.

**Morale** The elder polyp fights until destroyed.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 27, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** —, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 2

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +22 (+26 grapple); **CMD** 33 (can't be tripped)

**Feats** Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Lightning Reflexes<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth -3; **Racial Modifiers** +8

Perception, +4 Stealth

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Acid Spray (Ex)** Once per hour, an elder polyp can eject the contents of its stomach, including any creatures it has swallowed. This action creates a 30-foot cone of acid that deals 12d6 points of acid damage (DC 23 Reflex save for half). Once a polyp uses this attack, it must wait 1 hour before using it again. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Gnashing Maw (Ex)** As a free action, an elder polyp can transfer a creature grappled by its tentacles to its toothed mouth and attempt to swallow that creature whole. Creatures in the polyp's mouth take 2d6+12 points of damage from the polyp's bite.

**Poison (Ex)** Tentacle—injury; *save* Fort DC 23; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dexterity damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Treasure:** The skeletal remains of Eggra Kraggorach lie at the bottom of the pool, where she was slain by the elder polyp, but the polyp must be destroyed to get at them. Her treasures include a +2 *dwarven waraxe*, a *stone of good luck*, a jeweled breastplate (now little more than a rusted frame inset with nine emeralds in star pattern, worth 300 gp each), and a masterwork stone hammerhead (its haft long rotted away) that bears the image of a bearded dwarven face. This hammer was one of the treasures of the Kraggorach clan (a DC 15 Knowledge [history] or [nobility] check reveals this fact). The hammerhead would be worth 1,500 gp to a collector of antiquities, or twice that to the Kraggorach dwarves of the Shattered Range (provided they are told of the fate of Eggra so they do not assume the PCs are thieves). In addition, a DC 30 Perception check finds a single blue crystal inscribed with the Azlanti rune of rest embedded in the scum at the bottom of the pool. This is one of the six types of focusing crystals needed to activate the portal in area **B13**.

## PART SEVEN: THE LAIR OF ILLAGHRI

A legendary monster known to denizens of Saventh-Yhi as “the Illaghri” resides in this cavernous vault in the military district. No one is exactly sure what the Illaghri is, other than some sort of monstrous hunter that claims its victims when it wants to, even from sealed or guarded rooms. When it strikes, the creature either does so without alerting guards posted outside, or else leaves no guards alive to tell the tale. Its victims sometimes reappear as web-shrouded zombies that attempt to poison and kill their old compatriots. The Illaghri hunts sporadically, sometimes stopping for years or decades, but everyone in Saventh-Yhi shuns the Illaghri's lair.

“The Illaghri” is a corpsespinner—an intelligent, extraplanar spider that spends most of her time hunting on the Astral Plane. Illaghri is the creature's name, and she has taken up part-time residence in the vault within

the last century. Illaghri only visits her hunting grounds on Golarion occasionally, so her lair often lies abandoned for years at a time, but her presence has given rise to frightening fireside tales throughout the ruined city. Unfortunately for the PCs, Illaghri has recently returned to Saventh-Yhi, and her lair is no longer deserted.

The vault's vast cave mouth is easily located with 1d2 hours of searching the cliffs backing the military district, even without the guidance of the mural in **B13**. However, anyone who questions the city's denizens about the location of a lair or cave in this area (especially the charau-ka of the military district) is told of the legendary cave's precise location, so no search time is then required to locate it. The ceilings of the caverns in this vault are 40 feet high unless otherwise noted. Occasional patches of eerily glowing astral webbing provide dim light throughout the vault.

## G1. CAVERN ENTRANCE

A yawning cave mouth opens in the side of a stony bluff, revealing only inky blackness inside—with perhaps a hint of a dim light source somewhere deep within. Shreds of dirty webbing hang from the entrance, billowing slightly in the faint breeze like tattered death shrouds.

The cave entrance is 30 feet high. The webs in the entrance are old and are no longer sticky.

**Development:** If the party makes any amount of noise or lingers in the vicinity of the entrance for more than 4 rounds, the corpsespun sarcosuchus in area **G2** emerges to attack. It does not pursue fleeing creatures more than 100 feet beyond the mouth of the cave.

## G2. LARDER (CR 10)

A wide cavern opens beyond the entrance and extends deeper back into the bluff. More shrouds of tattered webbing dangle from ceiling and walls, and lie scattered among the dried bones of assorted creatures in untidy heaps upon the floor. Larger clumps of webbing hang from the walls, the shrouded forms of animals just visible within—small jungle deer, a large river turtle, a feral pig, and occasionally the more ominous shape of a humanoid form.

Illaghri stores choice meals in this cavern to let them age before consumption. If examined, the humanoid shapes prove to be baboons. All of the animals here are dead, having succumbed to dehydration while awaiting Illaghri's ministrations.

**Creature:** Illaghri slew a massive sarcosuchus she encountered while hunting in the jungle and brought it back here to guard her larder. Animated by Illaghri's poison, the corpsespun dire crocodile is similar to a

# SERPENT'S SKULL



zombie, its internal organs replaced by thousands of tiny spiders. The sarcosuchus has the normal long, narrow snout of its kind, but its olive scales are dulled and faded in undeath, and layers of thick webs shroud its body.

## CORPSESPUN SARCOSUCHUS CR 10

XP 9,600

Corpsepun dire crocodile (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 51, Tome of Horrors II 202*)

NE Gargantuan undead (augmented animal)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

### DEFENSE

**AC** 24, touch 5, flat-footed 24 (–1 Dex, +19 natural, –4 size)

**hp** 138 (12d8+84)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +3, **Will** +12

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +2, **DR** 10/magic;

**Immune** undead traits

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft., sprint

**Melee** bite +19 (3d6+14/19–20 plus grab and spider transfer), tail slap +14 (4d8+7 plus spider transfer)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Special Attacks** death roll (3d6+19 plus trip), spider spray (20-ft. cone, 3d6 swarm damage plus distraction and poison, Reflex DC 23 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), spider transfer, swallow whole (3d6+21 acid damage, AC 19, 13 hp)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The corpsepun sarcosuchus sprays opponents with its spider spray as often as possible, then attempts to bite and grab the nearest enemy to use its death roll. It uses its tail slap on any other creatures who come within its reach.

**Morale** The sarcosuchus fights until destroyed.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 39, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** 1, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 25

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +27 (+31 grapple); **CMD** 36 (40 vs. trip)

**Feats** Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Perception +14, Stealth –1 (+7 in water), Swim +22

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Swarm—injury; *save* Fort DC 23; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Str; *cure* 1 save.

**Spider Spray (Ex)** Every 1d4 rounds as a standard action, a corpsepun can spray a hail of spiders from its mouth in a 20-foot cone. Each creature in the area takes 3d6 points of swarm damage (DC 23 Reflex save for half) and is distracted (DC 23 Fortitude save negates). The spiders quickly spread across the opponent's body in the same round they contact it and automatically bite, delivering a highly debilitating poison. The spiders cause swarm damage and distraction each round for 1d4 rounds, at which point they fall off and die. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

**Spider Transfer (Ex)** Whenever a corpsespun successfully hits an opponent with a natural attack, or whenever the corpsespun is successfully hit with a natural attack or unarmed strike, a number of spiders are automatically transferred to the opponent. The spiders quickly spread and swarm over the opponent (as detailed in the spider spray ability). These spiders fall off and die after 1 round.

**Development:** If combat occurs in this chamber, there is a 50% chance each round that the corpsespun boggards from area G3 come to investigate.

### G3. WEBBED GUARDIANS (CR 12)

The wide passage continues through here with the same debris and webbing as found in area G2, as well as more patches of webs holding the desiccated carcasses of more of Illaghri's previous victims.

**Creatures:** If they have not already been encountered in area G2, four corpsespun boggard thugs hide among the draped folds of the webbing. Unrelated to the boggards of the farming district, these are deserters from the Maka-Yika (see area H) who had the misfortune to run afoul of Illaghri. They resemble normal boggards but are shrouded in webbing like the crocodile in area G2. In addition, their bulging eyes have been eaten away and are now crawling with the tiny spiders that swarm within their bodies. This does not affect their vision because of their undead state. The boggards gain a +8 circumstance bonus on their Stealth checks because of the concealing webs, and attack if anyone comes within 5 feet or attempts to enter area G4.

#### CORPSPUN BOGGARD THUGS (4) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

Corpsespun boggard fighter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 37, Tome of Horrors II 202*)

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, boggard)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 79 each (8 HD; 3d8+5d10+37)

Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +3; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1, channel resistance +2, DR 5/magic; Immune undead traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee mwk flail +14/+9 (1d8+7), tongue +6 touch (sticky tongue plus spider transfer) or

slam +11 (1d6+6 plus spider transfer), tongue +6 touch (sticky tongue plus spider transfer)

**Special Attacks** spider spray (20-ft. cone, 3d6 swarm damage plus distraction plus poison, Reflex DC 14 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), spider transfer, terrifying croak, weapon training (flails +1)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The corpsespun boggards use their spider sprays and terrifying croaks before entering melee combat with their morningstars. They have no strategy other than attacking the nearest foe.

**Morale** The boggards fight until destroyed.

#### STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 12, Con —, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 16

Base Atk +7; CMB +11; CMD 22

Feats Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Stealthy, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (flail), Weapon Specialization (flail)

Skills Acrobatics +3 (+15 when jumping), Escape Artist +1, Perception +7, Stealth +3 (+11 in swamps or webs), Swim +10

SQ armor training 1, swamp stride



Corpsespun Boggard

**Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, masterwork flail, copper armband (worth 30 gp)

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Swarm—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Strength damage; *cure* 1 save.

**Spider Spray (Ex)** As the corpsespun sarcosuchus above, except the *save* DC is 14. In addition, if the corpsespun boggard has not yet used its terrifying croak in the last hour, it can do so as a free action while using its spider spray ability.

**Spider Transfer (Ex)** As the corpsespun sarcosuchus above. Anyone hit by the boggard's sticky tongue is subject to this ability each round as long as it is attached to the boggard's tongue.

**Treasure:** Each of the boggards wears a copper armband (worth 30 gp each) stamped with the image of a toothed fish, identifying them as members of the Maka-Yika (see area H). In addition, concealed behind the webs hiding the boggards is a niche in the wall that can be found with a DC 25 Perception check by anyone searching the webs. Four blue crystals inscribed with the Azlanti rune of righteous anger lie inside the niche. These are one of the six types of focusing crystals needed to activate the portal in area B13.



Illaghri

## G4. SPIDER LAIR (CR 14)

This vast chamber rises to a height of 80 feet, its ceiling supported by two massive columns. Fluttering draperies of old webbing cover the walls and columns in tattered, dusty brown sheets. A massive formation of ghostly gray webs, woven together to form a gargantuan nest, fills the entire western portion of the room. This webbing rises all the way to the ceiling and continues across the ceiling of the entire chamber. The floor is awash in old bones and bits of rancid debris from living creatures that apparently met their demise here.

This chamber serves as the seasonal lair of Illaghri, and the spider has spun her webs throughout the room's western portion and across the ceiling. Illaghri is able to move through these webs with ease to access nearly any portion of the room, while other climbers must contend with the webs' normal entangling effect.

**Creature:** Illaghri is a cantankerous old corpsespinner, a giant spider from the Astral Plane that resembles a gigantic tarantula with bone-white fur and bands of gray and silver around her legs. She also bears a skull-like mark on her thorax. Her eight eyes are stark white globes. Illaghri is not particularly hungry at the moment, but she is highly aggressive and territorial, and her first inclination is to attack any intruders. The ground level entrance to her nest has a sheet of nearly invisible webbing stretched across it (DC 20 Perception check to spot), just waiting to entrap intruders (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 305).

**ILLAGHRI** CR 14  
XP 38,400

Female advanced corpsespinner (*Tome of Horrors II* 32)

N Huge magical beast (extraplanar)

**Init** +8; **Senses** astralsense, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12

### DEFENSE

**AC** 29, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+4 Dex, +17 natural, -2 size)

**hp** 190 (20d10+80)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +16, **Will** +8

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** bite +23 (2d8+7/19–20 plus poison)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Special Attacks** create corpsespun, web (+24 ranged, DC 27, 20 hp)

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

3/day—quicken *dimension door*

1/day—*plane shift* (self only, to Astral Plane or Material Plane only)

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**TACTICS**


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**During Combat** Illaghri prefers to climb to a point above intruders and then fire her webs to entangle as many opponents as possible. She uses quickened *dimension door* to attack entangled foes and avoid counterattacks.

**Morale** If Illaghri is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, she uses *plane shift* to retreat to the Astral Plane.

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**STATISTICS**


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**Str** 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 7, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +20; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 41 (53 vs. trip)

**Feats** Ability Focus (poison), Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (dimension door), Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness

**Skills** Climb +17, Perception +12, Stealth +20

**Languages** Aklo

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**


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**Astralsense (Su)** A corpsespinner can automatically detect the location of anything within 200 feet of it on the Astral Plane.

**Create Corpsepun (Su)** Creatures that are slain by a corpsespinner's poison but not devoured rise as a corpsepun creature in 1 hour (*Tome of Horrors II* 202).

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 25; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Intelligence damage; if this damage equals or exceeds the creature's actual Intelligence score, the creature goes comatose and dies 1 hour later, rising as a corpsepun; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Web (Ex)** As the standard ability, but with a range of 80 ft. In addition, the DC to escape or burst the webs includes a +4 racial bonus because the webs are constructed of astral material.

**Development:** If the PCs find a way to make contact with the corpsespinner before she attacks and can change her attitude from unfriendly to indifferent, she will hear them out before attacking. If made friendly, Illaghri will allow the PCs to take the focusing crystals from area **G3** without a fight. If made helpful, Illaghri can tell the PCs that something new and dangerous lurks within the city—not the usual creatures or the newly arrived explorers, but “something from somewhere else that should not be and that is not what it seems.” She is referring to the intellect devourer M'deggog in area **H**, but she is not sure of what she has sensed during her astral jaunts. For each failed Diplomacy check, Illaghri's attitude changes one more step toward hostile. If made unfriendly again, Illaghri attacks, deciding that she is a bit hungry after all.

**Treasure:** Most of Illaghri's treasure is kept in a lair on the Astral Plane. However, a DC 20 Perception

check discovers what at first appears to be a gnarled old branch among the astral webbing, but is actually a *staff of necromancy* (10 charges).

## PART EIGHT: THE VAULT OF THE BODY THIEF

Concealed in the beast-infested mercantile district is the last of the city's seven vaults; it should be the last one explored by the PCs. Access to the vault is also blocked by the Gorilla King's encampment, so make sure the PCs have been through both Events 5 and 6 before they reach this point. Ideally, the PCs should just be leaving the Gorilla King's feast (see Event 6) when they arrive at this vault, but allow them to rest or recover before delving inside, if needed.

This vault has become the camp of a band of bandits, brigands, and outcasts from across the Mwangi Expanse. Calling themselves the Maka-Yika, after the crimson piranha-like fish that swarm in the waters of the Oubinga River, this group has fallen under the sway of a near-legendary monster called the Kaava Bush-Devil. Under his leadership, they left a trail of destruction, rape, and pillage across the southwestern Mwangi Expanse. Only when organized armed companies raised from among the local villages, supported by troops from both Bloodcove and Senghor, ambushed and slaughtered a portion of their band did they decide the heat was too much and flee the Kaava Lands to lie low in the hidden places of the larger Mwangi Jungle. Some among their number knew of an abandoned ruin in the jungle and brought them to Saventh-Yhi several weeks ago, where they soon stumbled upon this vault as an ideal lair.

Since coming to Saventh-Yhi, the Maka-Yika have experienced attrition from both the natural dangers of the ruins and from the midnight spores that infest their lair. Most of the humanoid brigands are suffering from paranoia as a result. Now the survivors lurk in the vault, mustering their strength and warily keeping an eye on all the outsiders that have recently come to their sanctuary city. These newcomers do not look like pursuing vigilantes, but the Maka-Yika feel that they cannot be too careful. In addition, the Kaava Bush-Devil has recently begun acting strangely, sequestering himself in his personal quarters for long periods of time, and seemingly giving orders to certain bandits without even exchanging words. Though the Maka-Yika don't know it, the Kaava Bush-Devil has become a vessel for the intellect devourer M'deggog (see area **H8**).

Each of the brigands wears a distinctive copper armband stamped with the image of a toothed fish, identifying them as members of the Maka-Yika. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals that if these armbands are shown in Bloodcove, Senghor, or the villages of the

## Vault of the Body Thief



Kaava Lands, a 1,000 gp bounty can be claimed for the destruction of the brigands.

### H1. PRECIPITOUS APPROACH (CR 13)

A narrow dirt trail winds along the side of a cliff. Vines grow down the nearly sheer wall from the top of the escarpment twenty feet above. An untamed tangle of thorny brush lies thirty feet below, while ahead the path continues to climb the eroded dirt wall. The trail rounds a corner and abruptly ends in a short, shadowed draw. A tracery of vines grows along the ravine's walls and across the space between them like a canopy. A pair of closed stone portals, recessed several feet, stands in the face of the cliff.

Anyone falling into the briars and tangles below takes 3d6 points of falling damage and 1d6 points of damage from the many jagged thorns. In addition, that individual is entangled until she makes a DC 15 Escape Artist or Strength check to pull free from the grasping vines. A DC 25 Climb check is required to climb the crumbling wall from the floor of the ravine to the trail, but only a DC 10 Climb check is needed to climb from the trail to the cliff above because of the many vines that grow along the wall. The doors are heavy and difficult to open but are not locked.

**Creatures:** Suffering from paranoia brought on by the midnight spores inside the vault, eight charau-ka savages keep a watch on the trail from the cliff top across the trail to the north. These ape-men are full members of the Maka-Yika and are not affiliated with the charau-ka of the military district or with the Gorilla King. They crouch among the foliage atop the cliff and can only be spotted with a DC 25 Perception check. They hold vines that grow from the south side of the ravine and stretch across to the north side. Each of these vines has a heavy, spiked log tied to its end; these swing down and smash into anyone on the trail when released by the charau-ka.

#### CHARAU-KA SAVAGES (8)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Charau-ka barbarian 5 (*World Guide: The Inner Sea* 308)

CE Small humanoid (charau-ka)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural, -2 rage, +1 size)

**hp** 90 each (8 HD; 3d8+5d12+45)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +1

**Weaknesses** paranoid

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**OFFENSE**

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**Speed** 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk greatclub +17/+12 (1d8+10), bite +10 (1d3+3)

**Ranged** javelin +12/+7 (1d4+7/19–20) or spiked log +11 (2d10+7)

**Special Attacks** rage (15 rounds/day), rage powers (strength surge +5, surprise accuracy +2), shrieking frenzy, thrown weapon mastery

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**TACTICS**

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**During Combat** The charau-ka rage and swing their spiked logs at intruders on the trail below. If a log hits one of the PCs, the charau-ka may make an immediate bull rush combat maneuver check against that PC (using the charau-ka's strength surge rage power). If the check is successful, the PC is knocked from the trail and falls into the brambles below. Four of the charau-ka follow this attack with thrown javelins while the other four quickly climb down the ravine wall. These four enter a shrieking frenzy and attack any PCs left on the trail. If their fellows below are killed or when they run out of javelins, the four charau-ka still atop the cliff enter shrieking frenzies and climb down to attack as well.

**Morale** Enraged and paranoid, the charau-ka fight to the death.

**Base Statistics** When not raging, the charau-ka's statistics are: **AC** 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17; **hp** 74; **Fort** +8, **Will** +0; **Melee** mwk greatclub +15/+10 (1d8+7), bite +8 (1d3+2); **Ranged** javelin +12/+7 (1d4+5/19–20) or spiked log +11 (2d10+5); **Str** 20, **Con** 17; **CMB** +11, **Skills** Climb +19.

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**STATISTICS**

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**Str** 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 21, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

**Feats** Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Throw Anything<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

**Skills** Climb +21, Perception +10, Stealth +15, Survival +7

**Languages** Abyssal, Polyglot

**SQ** fast movement

**Other Gear** masterwork hide armor, masterwork greatclub, javelins (6), copper armband (worth 30 gp)

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

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**Paranoid (Ex)** The charau-ka all suffer from paranoia caused by the vault's midnight spores. A paranoid charau-ka takes a –4 penalty on Will saves and Charisma-based skill checks, cannot receive benefit from or attempt the Aid Another action, and cannot willingly accept aid (including healing) from another creature unless it makes a DC 22 Will save.

**Shrieking Frenzy (Su)** Once per day, a charau-ka can enter a state of shrieking frenzy as a free action. While in this state, the charau-ka automatically fails Stealth checks and cannot speak or cast spells that use verbal components (or use items that require command words to activate), but functions as if under the effects of a *haste* spell. The charau-ka can continue shrieking for up to 3 rounds, after which it is staggered for 1 round.

**Thrown-Weapon Mastery (Ex)** Charau-ka are masters of thrown weapons. All charau-ka gain Throw Anything as a bonus feat. In addition, a charau-ka gains a +1 racial bonus on all thrown weapons, and the threat range for thrown weapons is doubled, as if the charau-ka possessed the Improved Critical feat for all thrown weapons. This effect doesn't stack with any other effect that expands the threat range of a weapon.

**Development:** One of the charau-ka atop the cliff has a squinting left eye, as if from an old injury. This bandit does not retreat under any circumstances, and leaks a greenish fluid from its eyes, ears, nose, and mouth when slain. An examination of the creature easily reveals its brittle skull, with a cranial cavity empty save for the greenish gel-like fluid, similar to that of Ivo Haigan (see page 16). Like Ivo, the charau-ka was serving as a vessel for M'deggog (see area H9).

## H2. DOORKEEPERS (CR 12)

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The outer doors open onto a large irregular chamber that has been fastidiously cleaned. Every bit of debris and dust has been removed, and the stone floor has been buffed to a dull shine. Two pallets of dried grass lie in the center of the room, each with a smooth, flat stone for a pillow.

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This chamber is the outer guardroom of the brigands' lair and where the Kaava Bush-Devil keeps two of his most loyal and effective followers in order to prevent desertions. The ceiling in this chamber is 30 feet high.

**Creatures:** Dwelling in this room are two ogre mage monks named Makko and Chiyo-hai, twins from far-off Minkai who arrived in Bloodcove and joined the Maka-Yika shortly after, having proven themselves quite capable in battle against Aspis Consortium troops there. The two ogre mages are actually members of an ancient monastic order that teaches the pursuit of personal power through stealing energy and life force from other creatures. Makko and Chiyo-hai care nothing for the brigands' goals, but realized a partnership with the Maka-Yika would help both parties. So far, they haven't been disappointed, but hiding in this vault and doing nothing are beginning to become tedious for the two oni. They have sworn to the Kaava Bush-Devil to let no one pass without his permission and fight to keep this oath, but their oath is not worth their lives (see Tactics on page 52).

**MAKKO AND CHIYO-HAI (2)**

**CR 10**

**XP 9,600 each**

Male and female ogre mage monk 4 (hungry ghost monk)  
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 221, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 110)

LE Large outsider (giant, native, oni, shapechanger)

# SERPENT'S SKULL

**Init** +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

## DEFENSE

**AC** 25, touch 20, flat-footed 19 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 monk, +5 natural, -1 size, +4 Wis)

**hp** 152 each (12 HD; 8d10+4d8+88); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

**Fort** +17, **Ref** +11, **Will** +16; +2 vs. enchantment

**Defensive Abilities** evasion; **SR** 19

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

**Melee** unarmed strike +19/+14/+9 (2d6+9) or  
unarmed strike flurry of blows +18/+18/+13/+8 (2d6+9)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +16/+11/+6 (2d6+8/x3)

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

**Special Attacks** flurry of blows, punishing kick\* (6/day, DC 16)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th; concentration +12)

Constant—fly

At will—darkness, invisibility

1/day—charm monster (DC 21), cone of cold (DC 22), deep slumber (DC 20), gaseous form

## TACTICS

**Before Combat** If they hear the sounds of combat in area **H1**, Makko and Chiyo-hai turn invisible and fly, hovering near the ceiling to await intruders.

**During Combat** If the intruders are bunched together, the ogre mages begin combat by casting *cones of cold* to catch as many foes as possible. They use *invisibility* and *darkness* to confuse opponents, striking with surprise and using Spring Attack to avoid counterattacks. They use flurry of blows against single foes to take them out of combat as soon as possible. If surrounded or cornered, they use Whirlwind Attack to strike as many opponents as possible.

**Morale** The ogre mages' goal of personal aggrandizement is far more important to them than any loyalty to the Maka-Yika. If brought below 50 hit points, they cast *gaseous form* and flee into the ruins. But if one of them is slain, the surviving sibling howls in rage and fights to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 26, **Dex** 21, **Con** 25, **Int** 14, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 41

**Feats** Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Mobility, Punishing Kick\*, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +20 (+24 jump), Bluff +14, Disguise +14, Fly +10, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Perception +17, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +12, Use Magic Device +12

**Languages** Common, Giant, Polyglot

**SQ** change shape (Small, Medium, or Large humanoid; *alter self* or *giant form I*), fast movement, flight, ki pool (6 points, magic), maneuver training, slow fall 20 ft., still mind

**Other Gear** masterwork composite longbow (+8 Str) with 20 arrows, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, copper armband (worth 30 gp)

\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*.

## H3. MURKY CORRIDOR (CR 12)

The tunnel descends into a puddle of muck that extends around the corner.

The mud puddle is only a foot deep, but it is slippery and requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check to move through at full speed.

**Trap:** Hidden in this mud, halfway along its length, are a series of small punji pits stretching across the entire width of the tunnel. These pits are only 1 foot deep, but are set with both upward-facing and downward-angled spikes that impale and entrap anyone stepping in them. Pulling a trapped foot free requires either a DC 20 Escape Artist check Reflex save as a full-round action, or a DC 16 Strength check and deals an additional 2d6 points of damage (whether a success or failure).

### FOOTGRABBER PUNJI PIT

CR 12

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 27; **Disable Device** DC 25

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** punji sticks (Atk +15 melee, 1d4+2 spikes for 1d6+1 damage each plus entangle and poison [purple worm poison]); an entangled creature cannot move from its square (DC 20 Escape Artist check as a full-round action to escape, or DC 20 Strength check as a full-round action to escape, but deals 2d6 additional damage whether check is successful or not); DC 25 Reflex save avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-long by 5-ft.-wide area)

**Development:** Anyone struggling with the trap attracts the attention of the inhabitants of area **H4**, who arrive to attack in 1d3 rounds.

## H4. COMMON CHAMBERS (CR 13)

The mud slick ends in an oddly shaped chamber. Three side rooms extend from a central sitting area holding a crudely cobbled together table and chairs. The mud pool and entry corridor occupy one of these side chambers. Opposite these is an exit corridor. On one side is a room stacked with bags and casks of supplies, and freshly dressed game hanging from hooks on the wall. On the other side, the third chamber holds a number of bedrolls and bundles of personal possessions.

This is the main living quarters of the Maka-Yika, though very few of the brigands are here at any one time. The mud in the southern portion of this chamber is the same as that in area **H3**. The supplies are still semi-fresh and consist of enough foodstuffs to feed two dozen individuals for 2 weeks.

**Creatures:** The Kaava Bush-Devil's de facto second-in-command, the charau-ka priest Teka, occupies this chamber. Teka wears crocodile hide armor and carries a club fashioned from a gnarled tree root. He is accompanied by five boggard thugs. If they hear the sounds of anyone in the area **H3**, the boggards move to attack, ganging up on anyone caught in the foot trap. They are unaffected by the slippery mud because of their swamp stride ability. Teka remains in the rear and casts spells to assist the boggards.

**BOGGARD THUGS (5) CR 7**

**XP 3,200 each**

Boggard fighter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 37*)

CE Medium humanoid (boggard)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +7

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +3 natural, +2 shield)

**hp** 63 each (8 HD; 3d8+5d10+21)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +1; +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

**Weaknesses** paranoid

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *morningstar* +15/+10 (1d8+7), tongue +7 touch (sticky tongue)

**Ranged** javelin +11 (1d6+3)

**Special Attacks** terrifying croak (DC 15), weapon training (flails +1)

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** The boggards drink their *potions of heroism* before combat.

**During Combat** The boggards take turns using their terrifying croaks to scare opponents. They gang up on single, weak-looking foes if possible, looking for flanking opportunities.

**Morale** Afraid of Teka, the boggards fight to the death as long as the priest is alive. If Teka is slain, they try to flee the vault. If they cannot escape through area **H3**, they retreat to join the girallons in area **H6**. If cornered there, the boggards fight to the death.

**Base Statistics** Without their potions, the boggards have: **Fort** +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** -1; **Melee** +1 *morningstar* +13/+8 (1d8+7), tongue +5 touch (sticky tongue); **Ranged** javelin +9 (1d6+3); **Skills** Acrobatics +3 (+15 when jumping), Escape Artist +1, Perception +7, Stealth +3 (+11 in swamps), Swim +8.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Stealthy, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*morningstar*),

Weapon Specialization (*morningstar*)

**Skills** Acrobatics +5 (+17 when jumping), Escape Artist +3, Perception +9, Stealth +5 (+13 in swamps), Swim +10

**Languages** Boggard, Polyglot

**SQ** armor training 1, hold breath, swamp stride

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of heroism*; **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, masterwork heavy wooden shield, +1 *morningstar*, javelins (3), copper armband (worth 30 gp)

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Paranoid (Ex)** The boggards suffer from paranoia as a result of the vault's midnight spores. A paranoid boggard takes a -4 penalty on Will saves and Charisma-based skill checks, cannot receive benefit from or attempt the aid another action, and cannot willingly accept aid (including healing) from another creature unless it makes a DC 22 Will save.

**TEKA CR 10**

**XP 9,600**

Male charau-ka cleric of Lamashtu 9 (*World Guide: The Inner Sea 308*)

CE Small humanoid (charau-ka)

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



Teka

# SERPENT'S SKULL

**Aura** aura of madness (30 ft., DC 18, 9 rounds/day)

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 28, touch 18, flat-footed 24 (+6 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +2 shield, +1 size)

**hp** 74 (12d8+21)

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

**Weaknesses** paranoid

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 20 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *flaming club* +13/+8 (1d4+4 plus 1d6 fire), bite +7 (1d3+1)

**Ranged** *magic stone* +14/+8 (1d6+4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy 5/day (DC 18, 5d6), might of the gods (+9, 9 rounds/day), shrieking frenzy (see page 51), thrown weapon mastery (see page 51)

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th; concentration +13)

7/day—vision of madness (+/–4)

7/day—strength surge (+4)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 9th; concentration +13)

5th—*mass cure light wounds*, *righteous might*<sup>D</sup>

4th—*confusion*<sup>D</sup> (DC 18), *cure critical wounds*, *freedom of movement*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *rage*<sup>D</sup>, *searing light*

2nd—*death knell* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *silence* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*, *touch of idiocy*<sup>D</sup>

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *doom* (DC 15), *enlarge person*<sup>D</sup>, *magic stone*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect poison*, *read magic*, *resistance*

**D** Domain spell; **Domains** Madness, Strength

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## TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Teka casts *magic stone* and *shield of faith* before combat.

**During Combat** Teka casts spells and makes ranged attacks while his boggards engage foes in melee. He casts *silence* on any obvious spellcasters. He channels negative energy (using Selective Channeling on the boggards) and activates his aura of madness if enemies break through the boggards' line. If pressed into melee combat himself, Teka casts *righteous might*.

**Morale** If reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, or if all of the boggards are killed, Teka flees to area **H8** to join the Kaava Bush-Devil.

**Base Statistics** Without his spells, Teka has: **AC** 25, touch 15, flat-footed 21; **Ranged** rock +13 (1d4+3/19–20).

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 28

**Feats** Combat Casting, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Improved Channel, Scribe Scroll, Selective Channeling, Throw Anything<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Climb +12, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +12

**Languages** Abyssal, Polyglot

**Combat Gear** *scroll of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of flame strike*; **Other Gear** +2 *hide armor*, masterwork heavy wooden shield, +1 *flaming club*, copper armband (worth 30 gp), spell component pouch, bone holy symbol of Lamashtu

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Paranoid (Ex)** Teka suffers from paranoia as a result of the vault's midnight spores. Teka takes a –4 penalty on Will saves and Charisma-based skill checks, cannot receive benefit from or attempt the Aid Another action, and cannot willingly accept aid (including healing) from another creature unless he makes a DC 22 Will save.

**Development:** One of the boggards is missing its left eye, leaving only a recently healed puckered scar in its place. If this boggard is slain, green fluid runs from its orifices, as it too serves as one of M'deggog's vessels (see area **H9**).

**Treasure:** Among the many bedrolls and packs can be found 10 gold ingots stamped with the arms of Bloodcove and the symbol of the Aspis Consortium (worth 50 gp each), a well-preserved toucan feather fan from ancient Saventh-Yhi (worth 500 gp, though it is extremely delicate), and assorted low-grade gemstones worth a total of 110 gp.

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## H5. ANCIENT STATUE (CR 12)

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The corridor turns abruptly to the south here, next to a shallow alcove to the north. A large marble statue of stunning design stands in the alcove, depicting a female Azlanti warrior poised with spear raised. Rarely are such works of art found, and even more rarely in such pristine condition.

The statue depicts the city's founder and namesake, the legendary warrior Savith. Stored in this vault for safekeeping, the statue has escaped harm for the last 10,000 years. Unfortunately, the Maka-Yika are not appreciators of fine art and one of their members (who later succumbed to paranoia and was killed by the Kaava Bush-Devil) converted the statue into a trap. Anyone crossing in front of the statue to continue down the corridor risks hitting a tripwire, causing the statue's spear to suddenly fall and sweep across the hall, potentially striking anyone in the four squares in front of it. To add insult to injury, Teka placed a sonic blast *glyph of warding* on the statue's spear that is triggered if the spear hits a target, affecting everyone in the same area. Even if the spear misses everyone, the glyph will detonate if anyone touches the spear without first searching for traps again.

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### STATUE AND GLYPH TRAP

**CR 12**

**Type** mechanical and magic; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28



**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** location; **Reset** none

**Effect** Atk +15 melee (6d6) plus spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 4d8 sonic damage, DC 17 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft. line)

**Treasure:** The trap works have damaged the incomparable statue, and if the glyph is activated, the spear and the arm that holds it are reduced to splinters of stone. Even without the arm, the 1,000-pound statue is worth 1,500 gp. If the glyph is disabled without destroying the arm, the statue is worth 5,000 gp.

**H6. APE ROOM (CR 12)**

The corridor widens to form a small cave here. The floors and walls are marred by numerous scratches, and the well-gnawed bones of various animals are scattered across the floor. The air is heavy with a thick, animal stench.

The Kaava Bush-Devil keeps two beasts in this chamber to guard the final door into his inner sanctum. The secret door to area **H7** can be found with a DC 27 Perception check.

**Creatures:** Two trained advanced girallons dwell here, captured, trained, and kept as favored pets by the Kaava Bush-Devil. They are smart enough to recognize members of the Maka-Yika and to know to avoid the statue trap to the north, but not intelligent enough to manipulate the secret door. The girallons attack anyone entering the room. If the PCs are wearing the copper armbands of the Maka-Yika, they may attempt to pass as bandits with a successful Bluff check. If one of the girallons is killed and the other is brought below 35 hit points, it retreats and begins scratching desperately at a certain point on the south wall. This is the secret door, and though the girallon cannot activate the mechanism to open it, anyone witnessing this display gains a +5 circumstance bonus on the Perception check to locate the secret door.

**ADVANCED GIRALLONS (2)****CR 10****XP 9,600 each**

N Large magical beast (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 154)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +13

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 22, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 136 each (13d10+65)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +18 (1d6+5), 4 claws +18 (1d4+5 plus rend)

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

**Special Attacks** rend (4 claws, 1d4+7)

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 7

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 32

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claws)

**Skills** Climb +17, Perception +13, Stealth +8

**H7. ANTECHAMBER (CR 12)**

Some effort has been made to dress and smooth the walls in this series of chambers. A couple of rough benches lie along the walls, and a lantern sits atop a barrel, giving off a smoky glow. A darkened opening lies to the south, but to the southwest another chamber flickers with lamplight.

**Creature:** This antechamber serves as the domain of a roper whom the intellect devourer M'deggog has made into one of its vessels (see area **H9**). While its single eye is not squinted shut like M'deggog's other vessels, it does constantly squint and blink, and when killed, the green fluid leaks from its otherwise empty brain cavity. The roper lurks in the center of the room's southern opening, appearing as a stone pillar, and it attacks anyone entering the room with its strands. If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, M'deggog forces the roper to overturn the barrel and lantern with one of its strands. The barrel is filled with lamp oil, and when the lantern falls and shatters in the spilled oil, it explodes in a ball of fire, dealing 5d6 points of fire damage to anyone within 10 feet (DC 18 Reflex save for half). The oil continues to burn for 6 rounds, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage to anyone occupying or moving through those squares (no save). The southern opening leads only to the roper's lair and is otherwise empty.

**ROPER****CR 12****XP 19,200**

**hp** 162 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 237)

**H8. THE DEVIL'S LAIR (CR 14)**

Dozens of candles stand on recessed stone shelves lining the walls of this chamber, many of them burnt down to puddles of dried wax, the rest providing a dim, flickering illumination. An opulent bedchamber and sitting area have been created here on a grand scale out of stolen furniture, crates, and camp gear; the room contains a huge bed draped with netting, a large table cobbled together from crates, and shields and pieces of armor set out as dishes and serving platters.

The Kaava Bush-Devil brought his band to this vault and set up his lair, never dreaming of the true danger he faced within. Unfortunately, the vault he chose was already

claimed by another inhabitant—a strange explorer and outcast from the city of Ilmurea below, the intellect devourer called M'deggog. M'deggog was experimenting with ancient, eldritch magic and strange technologies, and when the Kaava Bush-Devil wandered into its grasp, it finally had the means to put its experiments into practice.

A DC 25 Perception check discovers the secret door to area H9, but it can only be accessed by moving the Bush-Devil's massive canopied bed, which weighs over 500 pounds.

**Creature:** This chamber serves as the abode of the Kaava Bush-Devil, though he spends most of his time serving as M'deggog's vessel. Originally a simple flesh golem created by one of the dark magic practitioners of the Mwangi, the Kaava Bush-Devil went berserk one day, and through some unknown twist of fate, became intelligent. The unnamed awakened flesh golem decided then and there that he would serve no master. He slew his sorcerous creator and fled into the wilds of the Kaava Lands, where he preyed upon man and beast alike in wanton slaughter. After single-handedly destroying several villages and then disappearing back into the wilds of the bush country, eluding all pursuers and quests for vengeance, he became known as the Kaava Bush-Devil. As his sophistication grew, he gathered about him the outlaws of the Maka-Yika and led the murderous brigands on ever-greater rampages. In the end, it took the concerted efforts of multiple villages, cities, and

governments to bring his reign of terror to a close, finally forcing the Maka-Yika to retreat and lie low in the Mwangi jungles, where he fell victim to the intellect devourer.

The Kaava Bush-Devil is here when the party arrives, alerted by M'deggog's inhabitation of the roper in area H7. The Bush-Devil resembles a standard flesh golem except that he is sewn together from the corpses of baboons, gorillas, and other primates. He patches together clothing for himself out of stolen goods, and wears armor crafted from rhinoceros hide. In addition, he has modified his body to accommodate M'deggog's peculiar physiological traits, extracting his own left eye and crudely sewing up the wound. When the Kaava Bush-Devil is slain, his head too proves to hold only the strange green fluid. Now awakened, the Kaava Bush-Devil normally loses his immunity to mind-affecting effects. When serving as M'deggog's vessel, however, the Bush-Devil does gain this immunity. Likewise, the Bush-Devil does not have the ordinary chance of going berserk when under M'deggog's control.

Kaava Bush-Devil



## KAAVA BUSH-DEVIL

CR 14

XP 38,400

Advanced awakened flesh golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 160, *Classic Horrors Revisited* 12)

NE Large construct

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10

### DEFENSE

**AC** 30, touch 8, flat-footed 30 (+6 armor, -1 Dex, +16 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 160 (20d10+50)

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

**DR** 10/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +25 (1d8+6), 2 slams +25 (3d8+6/19–20)

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

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The Kaava Bush-Devil charges the first enemy to enter, using his *rhino hide armor*.

**Morale** Completely dominated by M'deggog, the Kaava Bush-Devil fights until destroyed.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 22, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +20; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 36

**Feats** Cleave, Critical Focus, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Stunning Critical, Toughness

**Skills** Acrobatics +8 (+13 jumping), Intimidate +12, Perception +10, Stealth +14, Survival +8

**Languages** Common, Polyglot

**Combat Gear** *potion of inflict serious wounds* (labeled as “cure”), *potion of invisibility*; **Other Gear** *rhino hide armor*, *amulet of natural armor +4*, *boots of striding and springing*, 2 copper armbands (worth 30 gp each)

**Treasure:** The collected treasures of the Maka-Yika are stored in this chamber. They consist of a chest holding 25 gold ingots (worth 100 gp each), a large leather sack of gold dust panned from the jungle rivers (worth 850 gp), two matching silver-and-moonstone bracelets (worth 300 gp each), a small chest holding 150 gp in assorted silver and copper coins from the Mwangi coast, and a cracked brass war horn that is actually a fully functional *horn of Valhalla*.

## H9. THE BODY THIEF'S LABORATORY (CR 15)

This room almost defies description. A large stone block stands in the middle of the room, and upon it stand a total of seven rough crystal prisms, each approximately three feet tall. Disembodied brains of various sizes hang suspended in the center of six of the crystals. Copper coils and wires run from lead caps atop these prisms to a large copper vat full of a bubbling green liquid. Additional copper leads extend from this vat to a nearby box of strange, oily metal, humming with energy and capped with two short pillars coiled tightly with copper strands. A small gold platform sits between the two pillars.

This strange room is the laboratory of the Ilmurean intellect devourer M'deggog. M'deggog was exiled by the intellect devourers of the Darklands for its unorthodox experiments and methods. However, in the strange and alien ways of the intellect devourer race, M'deggog is an outcast only so far as it is unable to prove its theories and demonstrate its power. Should M'deggog's outlandish theories prove successful, its kindred would welcome it back as a powerful leader, so M'deggog's sojourn away from its race is as much an experiment as an exile.

M'deggog's experiments involve using its body thief ability remotely while leaving the host creature alive, functioning normally when not under the control of the intellect devourer. This is accomplished by extracting the brain of a victim and magically encasing it in the center of a special crystal prism mined in the Darklands. A psychically receptive green fluid is then pumped into the brain cavity in place of the removed brain to serve as an antenna and focus for the intellect devourer's mental commands, delivered through a magical engine M'deggog has created (the oily metal box). When M'deggog sits atop this engine on the gold plate between the copper electrodes, it can use its latent psychic energy to assume control of any creature whose brain is suspended in one of the prisms as a full-round action. This allows the intellect devourer

### M'deggog's Vessels

Creatures that have had their brains extracted and become vessels for M'deggog have certain traits in common. They have no memory of being controlled and experience M'deggog's domination as blackouts. They do not bear any magical aura, and the effect cannot be dispelled, though a *protection from evil* spell will break M'deggog's mental control if it is in effect at that moment, requiring the intellect devourer to use another full-round action to reestablish direct control. In addition, an *antimagic field* causes a vessel's body to fall catatonic (effectively unconscious) until removed from the field.

As a side effect of the process, a final peculiarity of M'deggog's vessels is that they have all lost sight in their left eyes, causing their facial muscles to involuntarily tighten into a perpetual squint. This has no game effect other than that it creates a distinctive visible trait for the intellect devourer's vessels.

to control the creature's body (a “vessel”) just as if it were using its body thief ability, although the intellect devourer cannot use its own spell-like abilities when using this ability. The intellect devourer can break the connection as a move action. When M'deggog is not controlling a specific vessel, the creature's brain continues to control its own body (from within the crystal) with no knowledge of M'deggog's interference or control (i.e., the brains are not aware that they are not in their bodies). Killing a vessel's body also causes the vessel's brain to die, and vice versa.

The brains currently stored in the crystal prisms are those of Ivo Haigan from Event 4, the charau-ka savage at area H1, the boggard thug in area H4, the roper in area H7, the Kaava Bush-Devil in area H8, and one other humanoid. It is likely that the first five brains are all now dead thanks to the PCs having slain their bodies. The sixth brain is left for you to develop for the purposes of your own campaign. It may be the brain of an important NPC from earlier in the Adventure Path, someone who may become important at a later date, or someone the PCs never encounter. Leaving the final brain's identity a mystery can be as much fun as revealing whose it is.

**Creatures:** The intellect devourer M'deggog occupies this room, currently inhabiting the body of one of the Gorilla King's derhii scouts. Since it is physically inhabiting the derhii's body, M'deggog can use all of its spell-like abilities. M'deggog is an atypical intellect devourer in many ways. Its peers believe its unusual intelligence and strangely abnormal focus of study are the result of a traumatic injury it suffered early in its life

## Using the Faction Guide

If you have *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Faction Guide*, your PCs can also gain prestige from their faction for meeting certain milestones in the adventure. This Prestige Award (PA) can then be spent on special resources and rewards offered by that faction. The Sargavan Government is not covered in the *Faction Guide*, but PCs working for that faction can still spend PA on the standard boons available to all factions, as outlined on pages 54–55 of the *Faction Guide*. The PCs can earn PA for completing the following tasks:

- Defeating Ivo Haigan (Event 4): 1 PA
- Rescuing their faction's prisoners from Ivo Haigan's camp (area A5): 1 PA
- Defeating the Gorilla King or successfully completing two of his challenges (Event 6): 1 PA
- Finding Urschlar Vohkavi's journal (area B10): 1 PA
- Repairing and activating the portal to Ilmurea (area B13): 2 PA
- Finding the Argental Font (area D5): 2 PA
- Finding the ancient Azlanti trident (area E2): 1 PA
- Recovering the hammerhead of the Kraggorach clan (area F5): 1 PA
- Defeating the corpsespinner Illaghri (area G4): 1 PA
- Salvaging the statue of Savith (area H5): 1 PA
- Killing the Kaava Bush-Devil (area H8): 1 PA
- Defeating M'deggog (area H9): 1 PA

cycle, which left a large patch of puckered scar tissue on its underside that inhibits some of the lesser subfunctions of its brain. M'deggog has learned to adapt to this deformity, but the effects have set it apart from its peers.

### DERHII SCOUT VESSEL

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 76 (see page 19)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** When the Kaava Bush-Devil is slain, M'deggog casts *invisibility* on its derhii body and a *globe of invulnerability* that encompasses both the derhii and all of the intellect devourer's strange equipment.

**During Combat** M'deggog casts spells from within its derhii body, particularly the 5th-level spells that it is unable to cast on its own (see M'deggog's tactics on page 59). M'deggog casts *black tentacles* in front of the chamber's door and targets spellcasters with *feblemind* and warriors with *confusion* or *daze monster*. In melee, it casts *true strike* before attacking with the derhii's falchion.

**Morale** When the derhii is slain, M'deggog emerges from its cranium and is dazed for 1 round.

### M'DEGGOG

CR 15

XP 51,200

Intellect devourer sorcerer 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 180)

CE Small aberration

**Init** +12; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., *detect magic*; **Perception** +31

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 33, touch 20, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, +8 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, +4 shield, +1 size)

**hp** 208 (19 HD; 8d8+11d6+129)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16

**Defensive Abilities** unusual anatomy (25%); **DR** 10/adamantine and magic; **Immune** fire, mind-affecting effects; **Resist** cold 20, electricity 20, sonic 20; **SR** 23

**Weaknesses** vulnerability to *protection from evil*

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** 4 claws +20 (1d4)

**Special Attacks** body thief, long limbs (+10 ft.), sneak attack +3d6

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +14)

Constant—*detect magic*

At will—*confusion* (DC 20, single target only), *daze monster* (DC 18, no HD limit), *inflict serious wounds* (DC 19), *invisibility*, *reduce size* (as *reduce person* but self only)

3/day—*cure moderate wounds*, *globe of invulnerability*

**Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 11th; concentration +17)

9/day—acidic ray (1d6+5 acid)

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 11th; concentration +17)

5th (5/day)—*dominate person* (DC 21), *feblemind* (DC 21), *telekinesis*

4th (7/day)—*black tentacles*, *charm monster* (DC 20), *dimension door*, *wall of fire*

3rd (7/day)—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 19), *suggestion* (DC 19), *tongues*

2nd (8/day)—*blur*, *detect thoughts* (DC 18), *false life*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*, *spider climb*

1st (8/day)—*alarm*, *enlarge person* (DC 17), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *open/close*, *read magic*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 16)

#### Bloodline Aberrant

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** M'deggog casts *false life* and *mage armor* every day. Once the Kaava Bush-Devil is slain, M'deggog prepares for combat by casting *blur*, *shield*, and *see invisibility*.

**During Combat** When not inhabiting a body, M'deggog must cast all of its sorcerer spells using the Silent Spell metamagic feat. As a result, it cannot cast any of its 5th-level spells when it is outside a vessel. Once out of the derhii's body, M'deggog uses *invisibility* to avoid attacks and move around the room casting spells. If forced into melee combat, M'deggog uses *invisibility* to make sneak attacks or casts *inflict serious wounds* using the extended reach of its long limbs.



**Morale** Although a genius, M'deggog does not recognize its fallibility and fights to the death, confident that it will triumph in the end.

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#### STATISTICS

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**Str** 10, **Dex** 26, **Con** 21, **Int** 20, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 22

**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 29 (33 vs. trip)

**Feats** Combat Casting, Craft Construct, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Silent Spell, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Bluff +36, Craft (alchemy) +27, Disguise +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +27, Knowledge (local) +27, Perception +31, Sense Motive +20, Stealth +42, Use Magic Device +28

**Languages** Undercommon (cannot speak); telepathy 100 ft.

**SQ** bloodline arcana

**Treasure:** Operating the eldritch equipment in the lab requires an intellect devourer of M'deggog's specific genius, so the PCs will be unable to reproduce M'deggog's results themselves. Any attempts to move or tamper with it will likely result in irreparable damage. However, the various precious metals comprising its parts can be salvaged for a total value of 5,000 gp. The crystal prisms as rare mineral formations

worth 1,000 gp each. However, the ones holding embedded brains cannot be sold except to certain practitioners of the dark arts. The only way to remove a brain is to break the crystal in half, reducing its value to 500 gp (and incidentally killing both the brain and the vessel body).

Finally, a DC 20 Perception check discovers a *portable hole* in the lab, used by M'deggog to transport his equipment, brain crystals, and occasionally, spare vessels. Currently, the *portable hole* holds a complete alchemist's lab, as well as four blue crystals inscribed with the Azlanti rune of wealth that M'deggog found in the vault. These are one of the six types of focusing crystals needed to activate the portal in area **B13**.

### CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have recovered all six of the focusing crystals, it is a simple matter to repair the portal in area **B13**. With the circuit complete, the mural becomes a fully functional two-way portal between that chamber and area **B14**. From there, the PCs can finally venture into the lost city of Ilmurea, where Pathfinder Eando Kline and the secrets of a prehistoric serpent kingdom await in "The Thousand Fangs Below."



## ECOLOGY OF THE Charau-Ka

“IN THE TRADER’S TONGUE OF CERTAIN MWANGI TRIBES, ‘CHARAU’ LITERALLY TRANSLATES AS ‘BEWARE.’ IT IS A CRY OF ALARM, A SHOUT RAISED WHEN A VILLAGE CATCHES FIRE OR A FLASH FLOOD STRIKES, A WORD SHOUTED BY GUARDS WHEN THEY SPOT THE ENEMY. THE ‘CHARAU-KA,’ THEN, ARE THE WATCH-OUT PEOPLE, THE FOES WHO LURK ALWAYS IN THE FOREST. CHARAU-KA! BEWARE THEM!

“BUT DID THE CHARAU-KA GET THEIR NAME FROM THE WORD FOR DANGER? OR IS THE APE-MEN’S NAME FOR THEMSELVES INSTEAD THE ROOT OF THE WORD? ONLY THE JUNGLE KNOWS. AND THE JUNGLE KEEPS ITS SECRETS.”

—JALUS EBINCOTT, PROFESSOR OF MWANGI STUDIES, ALMAS UNIVERSITY

The feral charau-ka are the legendary ape-men of the Mwangi jungles. Savage and remorseless hunters, they are feared and hated by virtually every civilization that comes in contact with them. They build no cities, have next to no concept of trade, and make war on everyone that they encounter. They are thieves and murderers, killers in the dark. Most are servants of the dread Gorilla King and his demon patron, Angazhan, but even those tribes not under the sway of Usaro are considered monstrous. From Senghor to the mouth of the Black Flow, all wise folk agree that the charau-ka must be driven back into the deepest jungles, lest they overrun civilization and leave it as a burning sacrifice to their howling god.

## OVERVIEW

The charau-ka are ape-men, somewhere between monkeys and chimpanzees in shape. When standing upright, an average specimen is approximately 3 feet tall, but most go hunched over in a simian fashion as they leap and brachiate through the trees. There is little difference between male and female charau-ka in terms of strength or size, although the males tend to be somewhat more aggressive. All charau-ka are covered in thick hair, and most see no need for clothing, although they may wear armor or belts and bandoliers to carry their few possessions.

While charau-ka are vicious pack predators, the tribe is usually the largest collective they can reliably organize and manage. Tribes may live in villages that sprawl from the canopy down onto the ground, or may be nomadic. When a group gets too large, feuding and jostling for position inevitably becomes so disruptive that smaller groups splinter off. For this reason, charau-ka never form cities, and those charau-ka tribes that take up residence in ruined jungle cities generally make small nests for themselves in derelict buildings rather than attempting to reclaim or match other civilizations' works. The exceptions to this rule are the charau-ka living in Usaro. Though most charau-ka tribes found anywhere in Garund hold at least nominal allegiance to the Gorilla King, those who live in his immediate vicinity are significantly more organized, and often watched over by high girallons and other, more strategically minded servants of the Gorilla King.

Most charau-ka venerate Angazhan, the demon lord of apes, and worship him with blasphemous and cruel rites, often mating in the shadow of brooding totems to the Ravener King. As with all things in charau-ka society, the more organized charau-ka who directly serve the Gorilla King are generally more powerful and effective than their feral kin, and hence often able to dominate the lesser tribes when the two come into conflict in the jungle.

## ECOLOGY

The charau-ka are hunters and gatherers, regardless of whether they are nomadic or living in small villages. Although tales insist that the charau-ka eat only the flesh of humans, they are actually omnivorous, subsisting on fruit, roots, and insects such as grubs, as well as hunting animals large and small. When they do attack settlements, however, the charau-ka never fail to consume some of the dead, and often take prisoners to eat later. These unfortunate victims are carried off by the tribe, passed from paw to paw and dragged along if they cannot keep up. Local legends hold that the charau-ka were created by the demon lord Angazhan, who transformed the bodies of the first humans who tried to wage war against his cult, causing the dead to rise as the first ape-men. Rumors also abound that charau-ka clerics have perfected a hideous ritual to force those slain or taken prisoner by the charau-ka to reincarnate as new ape-men, yet so far proof of such a magic has yet to reach civilization, and most prisoners who are taken are simply eaten later.

Tribes consist of up to a few dozen adult individuals, as well as perhaps a dozen more children and a scattering of elders too valuable to slay. A charau-ka can naturally live up to 50 years, although few survive longer than 20 or 30—life as a charau-ka is bloody and savage, and conflicts can erupt into violence with little provocation. Charau-ka are sexually mature by the age of 8, and mate with those individuals who seem strongest or most fertile, producing litters of three or more infants at a time. Thanks to the creatures' innate toughness and a strong cultural taboo against directly attacking charau-ka young, a surprisingly high percentage of infants survive to reach sexual maturity—after which any protective instinct ends, so the new adults must be ready to fight tooth and claw for their place in the tribe. A charau-ka infant clings to its parent's torso while traveling, and this grip is the child's first test of strength, for if an infant falls, it is left behind unless it is able to keep up under its own power.

From the age of 3, young charau-ka learn to be part of the tribe. Young charau-ka serve as scouts and foragers; they also learn to fight among themselves by imitating their elders. A charau-ka youth may lack the brute strength of an adult, but it can still hurl a sharp rock or club a victim from behind. At 8, a charau-ka is considered an adult. Traditionally, the new adult marks its coming of age by killing a suitably impressive prize, such as a jungle cat, one of the beasts of the savanna, or a human. Especially ambitious youngsters might turn on one of their parents or another member of the tribe, as adulthood brings with it the right to challenge for a higher rank in the community.

Charau-ka encountered outside of the jungle or who actively attack human farms and settlements are generally of the nomadic variety, traveling through the jungle canopy at a rate of up to 20 miles a day, hunting and foraging on the march. Yet these wandering tribes are actually in the minority. Most tribes instead build small villages, often within preexisting ruins of jungle temples or on the foundations of fallen cities reclaimed by the land. A typical charau-ka village is an arboreal construction, beginning with a few structures on the jungle floor or within still-standing structures from other races, then extending up along tree trunks and into the canopy above, often with several tree-house-style structures connected by vines or rope bridges.

Whether nomadic or based out of villages, most tribes have numerous sacred sites that they return to regularly. Among the most important of these is the birthing grounds, a secret sanctum—usually dedicated to Angazhan or whatever god the ape-men serve—where

pregnant females live for the latter half of their children's gestation and then remain after the birth while nursing their newborns, praying for the demon lord's favor and thus ensuring the tribe's continued fertility. These caves and camps are invariably in easily defended or inaccessible locations, and pregnant females who dwell in these caves are protected by a few warriors. Honored elders—usually meaning those with magic or political connections strong enough to save them from their ambitious younger kin, but too old to seek dominance themselves—are likewise permitted to live in the birthing camps or at other ceremonial sites, watching over the new mothers; other elderly charau-ka are at risk as they age. Unless elders have some skill or power that makes them useful to the tribe, such as deadly magic, a druid's communion with great beasts, or a shamanistic connection to the tribe's patron god, they are killed or forced to flee as soon as they start to slow the tribe down. There are no dead weights among the ape-men.

While charau-ka make do with berries, nuts, fruit, and other scavenged food when necessary, they switch to a more carnivorous diet whenever the opportunity arises, with solitary scouts often reporting potential prey back to the main group so that the whole tribe can descend on the unfortunate animal—or person—in a ravenous, chattering mob. Given their feral instincts, charau-ka attackers gorge themselves on meat, steal weapons, and leave anything else to rot, with only the strong leadership of a brutal chieftain organizing them enough to take prisoners or press a non-obvious advantage. Though the charau-ka sometimes pass by large humanoid settlements and other groups of creatures too numerous or powerful for the ape-men to safely slaughter, this same scorched-earth policy is applied to civilized holdings too weak to defend themselves. If a group of charau-ka capture travelers or a village, they strip what items they can use, devour most of the victims, and carry the rest off as sacrifices or tributes. Anything that cannot be carried away by the tribe is useless to them, and must be destroyed.

The charau-ka are not ignorant of crafted goods. When not howling their way through the trees on murderous rampages, they make clubs of bone or hardwood, as well as spears, throwing sticks, slings, bows, and even blowpipes. They can tan leather, and often create strange and ragged armor out of the hides of their sturdier victims. They can also make fire with sticks and friction, though they generally only bother cooking their food on special occasions, in great orgiastic feasts and sacrifices in which the main course is generally alive and screaming above the flames. More often, they use fire as a weapon, torching village thatching or setting ablaze a chunk of enemy territory to drive their foes into an ambush.



Their familiarity with the jungle means charau-ka know a great deal about poisons, and sometimes smear their weapons with venom drawn from animals or distilled from certain plants. They are also quite willing to temporarily poison wells or dump diseased animal corpses in a watering hole to weaken settled foes. They hurl feces and body parts over the walls into villages to spread chaos and sickness, and have even been known to deliberately infect their hunting apes with diseases like rabies, venerating the beasts' diseased rage as a manifestation of Angazhan's eternal fury and their own frenzied battle-stupor.

The charau-ka consider metalworking to be a form of magic, and rarely have the patience for it themselves, though metal weapons are always one of the first things stolen in a raid. They also occasionally trade for metal goods with certain other races, notably the Bekyar. The ape-men offer slaves, stolen goods, and rare plants from the jungle in exchange for weapons.

In combat, the charau-ka are notoriously vicious, savages who fight without honor or pity, frequently descending into bloodlusts so all-consuming that they can no longer speak, simply lashing out at their enemies with tremendous speed. There is nothing a charau-ka will not do in order to win when its blood is up. Charau-ka generally target weak foes to distract strong ones—why fight an armed warrior, when you can sneak around him and attack his children instead? They use pack tactics to bring down foes, and attack when an enemy is weakest. Where possible, they throw enemies off balance, and take advantage of natural disasters. A torrential rainstorm, a bad harvest, a plague, an attack by another monster... all of these are times when a charau-ka attack grows more likely, because of both the lack of natural food and their knowledge that the enemy will be distracted. They use the forest for cover where possible, generally storming through an enemy's position in a sweeping horde and then continuing on into the jungle on the other side, killing and taking what they can before the victims have time to organize a response.

For powerful foes, charau-ka prefer to stalk and wait until an opportunity arises. The ape-men have been known to lure foes into traps or dangers, set fires in fields to distract settled defenders, and keep harassing foes until the victims drop from fatigue. They rarely attack except when they have the weight of numbers on their side.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

The charau-ka dwell throughout the jungles of central Garund, particularly the Mwangi Expanse, Sargava, and the Sudden Lands. They are most commonly encountered in the jungles, but roving tribes or those driven out by monsters or natural phenomena sometimes extend

### HUNTING APES & MONKEYS

The charau-ka keep lesser apes and monkeys as pets and servants. Over the centuries, these creatures have been specially selected for strength and aggression. The charau-ka tribes that live close to the edges of the jungle keep baboons, while smaller apes such as orangutans and gibbons are used by those that dwell in the deep woods. The average charau-ka tribe is accompanied by a pack of apes ranging from a few to as many as a score, all trained to attack on command. The apes usually fight by bowling over their enemies, then pulling them apart limb by limb.

their murderous marauding to the fields and beaches as well—though rarely for long. While a few tribes are truly nomadic, most have their own rough territories centered on their villages. These hunting ranges can be anywhere from a single narrow valley to a hundred-mile swath of prime jungle; there are often overlaps between various tribes, and tense trading and violent territorial disputes are common when two tribes' paths intersect.

Tribes or hunting parties on the move travel in a rough horseshoe shape, with the leader and the biggest warriors at the back and scouts at either end of the horseshoe leading the way. Members jump from branch to branch and tree to tree. As the tribe travels, the apes communicate by howling and whooping to each other. This bestial cacophony rarely ceases while the group is in motion, and serves several purposes. Firstly, the sound lets the charau-ka stay together even when they cannot see each other through the jungle canopy—if the shouts of the lead apes grow too distant or quiet, the chieftain knows to draw the tribe closer together. Secondly, the rhythm of the screaming song also helps the tribe pace itself, just as the pounding of a drum on a slave galley helps the rowers keep time. Thirdly, the chants and songs of the charau-ka are their primary cultural medium. As they travel, they shout tales of great heroes, prayers to Angazhan, and teaching songs for the young. Many of these chants have a challenge/response format, where the chieftain bellows out a cry and his followers call out the response. Finally, of course, the chant serves to terrify and intimidate the charau-ka's prey, disheartening them and driving them in whatever direction the charau-ka wish. The cacophony of 30 frenzied apes whooping and screaming from all directions is enough to shatter almost any creature's nerve. At a command from the chieftain or hunting pack leader, though, the whole tribe can go

## DEFENDING AGAINST CHARAU-KA

The dangers presented by the charau-ka are an unfortunate fact of life for many residents of southern Garund. Possessing little reason and even less mercy, packs of roving charau-ka are rare, but when they descend upon a settlement, the results are catastrophic. As a result, many different tactics have been created to meet the maniacal monkey-men's threat, often varying by culture and settlement.

Perhaps the most effective tactics are those employed by the jungle-dwelling Zenj people of the deep jungles in the Mwangi Expanse, who come into contact with the aggressive bands most often. For these scattered tribes, with rarely more than a few dozen people in a given settlement, the simplest option is often the most effective: to move. When scouts detect a chattering tribe of charau-ka headed in the direction of the village, the villagers quickly and efficiently pack up those possessions that can't be spared and flee, returning later after the ape-men have vented their rage on the uninhabited village. In some cases, sacrifices of livestock or prisoners prove useful, either as a distraction to give the villagers more time to flee, or as decoys and diversions. The infamous Kaava musk concoction is particularly useful in this regard, and some anti-colonial tribes have been known to direct the charau-ka toward outsiders' settlements, killing two birds with one stone.

When forced into direct combat with charau-ka, jungle warriors make good use of shields to protect against the ape-men's love of thrown weapons, and spells like *warp wood* can also be useful in this regard. Since charau-ka attack in a mob, fortifications and other structures that can help avoid flanking (including from above) are crucial—colonials tend to excel in this regard, as a single archer in a stone bunker or tower is next to impervious. For spellcasters, charm spells directed at a tribe's leader can create significant confusion, though this alone is rarely enough to stop an attack.

silent in an instant. When silent travel is commanded, the tribe bunches together into a tighter pack so no members are lost.

A traveling or hunting band rarely moves in a straight line; instead, they weave through the jungle, chasing after prey, visiting stands of fruit trees, or just taking the easiest routes around obstacles. Charau-ka on the move travel from sunrise to sunset, stopping only to

fight or feed. Even when they find some tempting prey that requires the whole tribe's focus, they rarely stop for long. Great dinosaurs and other jungle behemoths can fall to the thrown stones and spears of the circling, leaping ape-men, and when they do, the whole tribe descends from the trees in a rush, swiftly dismembered the prey with bone knives and teeth, cutting off the choice bits and either abandoning the rest or hauling it back to the village.

Charau-ka social order is defined by brutality. The leader of the tribe is the most dangerous warrior—not necessarily the strongest, but the one who defeats all the rest of the challengers. The rest of the hierarchy is determined in the same way: if you can defeat another tribe member, whether with claws, weapons, or powerful magic, your standing within the tribe eclipses your opponent's. On those occasions when the strongest and most dangerous individual does not head the tribe, the leader is usually a shaman or spokesman of some greater power, like the Gorilla King—these individuals are obeyed for the power their masters can bring to bear, but the respect does not run as deep. This emphasis on ability above all means that it is possible for other powerful creatures to recruit charau-ka for their own ends, and many charau-ka tribes are commanded by angazhani, girallons, or stranger creatures, especially those tribes closest to Usaro.

While some tribes are as chaotic in their politics as in their frenzied battlefield charges, some of the more settled (and devout) tribes devoted to Angazhan observe a tradition of challenge known as the Rite of the Blood Totem. Under this system, encouraged by the Gorilla King (who finds greater utility in the more organized tribes), a chieftain may only be challenged by his subordinates when within sight of a totem sacred to Angazhan, often known as a blood tree or blood totem. When the tribe is away from such a place, the chieftain's rule is absolute, and any warrior who is foolish enough to try attacking the chieftain is attacked not only by the ruler, but by all of the tribe. Yet a leader who refuses to immediately set a course for a blood totem when challenged is also seen as breaking the tradition, making him fair game for the rest of the tribe. In practical use, most chieftains reserve the blood totem for fights they expect to lose, and use the time it takes them to reach it to try to come up with some scheme to retain their status. If a chieftain thinks he can win, he's more likely to waive the tradition and simply kill his would-be usurper on the spot in single combat, as is his right as chieftain.

At the blood totem, fights are conducted in a chaotic fashion that follows few rules, degenerating into an open brawl in which a warrior is eliminated as soon as he or she is decisively defeated. Most charau-ka in

this situation are content to seek out those others they hold grudges against, or whose respect and position they desire, dueling for small stakes of honor before standing aside. After a few minutes of vicious fighting, a few contenders for the chieftain's title become obvious, and the rest of the tribe forms a circle around them. The contenders, including the current chieftain, fight until only one is left alive.

According to charau-ka belief, Angazhan is utterly without mercy, and all should strive to emulate him. Yet for the entire tribe to engage in battles to the death, rather than just the chieftain and his direct challengers, would destroy their society (and limit their use to the Gorilla King or any other lords the charau-ka are bound to). As a result, those who propagate the tradition emphasize the belief that sparing the life of a defeated foe and then ritually sacrificing an animal or prisoner allows the sacrifice to "take the death" that was destined for the loser. As such, mass intratribal brawls of this nature are followed by an orgy of butchery, sacrifice, and bloodletting that's often as anticipated as the fight itself. "Holding the death," as this practice is called, is reserved only for members of one's own tribe or especially impressive foes who might make good recruits.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Charau-ka make great low-level enemies for campaigns set in the Mwangi Expanse or other jungle-heavy nations. Fighting fast-moving ape-men can be a nice change from the usual rogue's gallery of goblins and orcs, and the jungle environment gives the GM a chance to highlight abilities like tracking, climbing, and survival. What's more, charau-ka druids provide an opportunity to unleash packs of vicious trained apes, or even more frightening minions, such as befriended dinosaurs.

Raiding charau-ka are perfect enemies to attack villages and waylay travelers, forcing the player characters to drive the ape-men back into the jungle and chase after them to rescue captured victims. The whooping and chanting of charau-ka in the distance is a great way to create ambiance and preview the terrors of the jungle, as are dismembered, flayed, and half-eaten bodies abandoned in the treetops.

When the charau-ka attack, it should be in a rush that threatens to overwhelm the PCs. Make the fight a mobile one—drag characters off into the trees, have apes leap on them from the treetops, barrage the party with thrown weapons, and be sure to describe the berserker frenzy of the charau-ka as they slash and cling to the enemy with merciless ferocity.

A whole campaign can be based around the ape city of Usaro. At low levels, the characters can battle charau-ka and their beast minions as they approach the city's legendary outskirts, then move up to bigger, nastier apes like dire apes, girallons, angazhani, and more fiendish enemies until they finally confront the current Gorilla King himself in the heart of the ruined city. And what happens if, at the fight's end atop the temple of the High Throne of Usaro, one of the PCs is chosen by Angazhan's magic as the next creature to be reincarnated as the Gorilla King?

## TREASURE

The charau-ka carry little treasure. They have no interest in silver or gold; only the tribes in regular contact with the Bekyar people even understand the concept of "precious metals." To the rest, metal has value only in the form of weaponry—and then it becomes very valuable indeed. Most individual charau-ka own little more than a few crude weapons—most often spears and throwing clubs of wood, stone, and bone—combined with some cured hide armor, and perhaps a few shiny pebbles or small relics from lost temples as curios and tokens used for courting.





## Dungeon Deathtraps

“‘Oops.’ THAT’S THE LAST WORD I WANT TO HEAR INSIDE ONE OF THESE DEATHTRAPS. ‘OOPS’ IMPLIES THAT SOMETHING HAS JUST GONE HORRIBLY, PROBABLY LETHALLY, WRONG. THERE ARE A THOUSAND DIFFERENT WAYS TO DIE IN ANY ONE OF THESE GODS-FORSAKEN PITS, AND WHEN IT COMES TO RISKING OUR NECKS FOR A GRAB AT SOME OF THE MOST FANTASTIC TREASURES THESE JUNGLES HAVE TO HIDE, I’M TELLING YOU NOW, THERE AIN’T NO ROOM ON MY EXPEDITION FOR ‘OOPS.’ AND YOU CAN ALL BET YOUR SHARES ON ONE THING: IF YOUR ‘OOPS’ DOESN’T KILL YOU, I SURE AS HELL WILL.”

—PATHFINDER VENTURE-CAPTAIN IMRIN VANKS

There's nothing wrong with pit traps, poisoned darts, or scything blades. Yet the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook's* staple traps only scratch the surface of the nefarious machinations and deathtraps imagined in fiction and film. The best traps prove to be more than mere hindrances or cheap "save-or-take-damage" annoyances. Whether they're elaborate puzzles testing their victims' cunning or multipart murderers forcing their prey to think quickly to escape certain doom, well-crafted traps can produce encounters just as memorable as any narrowly won combat.

Presented herein are a host of new traps ready for use as part of the Serpent Skull Adventure Path or in any campaign. While those on this page expand on the list of sample traps found in Chapter 13 of the *Core Rulebook*, the pages that follow expand upon the works of kobold trapsmiths, ancient tomb guardians, and madmen with a knack for mechanical engineering, providing maniacal masterworks sure to test even the wariest adventurers. In the descriptions of these traps, elements with specific trap stat blocks are listed in quotation marks, such as with the "pendulous staircase" or "ignited philosopher's stone."

## BEYOND THE BASICS

Both versatile and lethal, these simple traps expand upon the low-level traps in the *Core Rulebook* and can be utilized in any manner of adventure, from wilderness explorations to high-stakes tomb robberies. The rules for the drag and dirty trick combat maneuvers are presented on pages 320–321 of the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*. GMs seeking even greater variety might choose to alter the types of damage their traps deal or customize cosmetic elements to tie their effects more closely to the traps' surroundings. A poison dart trap that shoots miniature fangs or a *summon monster VI* trap that conjures dozens of snakes proves much more thematically appropriate to adventures like those found in the Serpent Skull Adventure Path than the generic standbys.

### NOISEMAKER CR 1

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 16; **Disable Device** DC 15

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** cacophony (1 Atk + 8 CMB against targets' CMD to perform a dirty trick causing the deafened condition); multiple targets (all targets in area); trap activates every round for 5 minutes, though deafened creatures are immune. The sound fills the entire chamber and grants a +4 circumstance bonus on all Stealth checks.

### STROBE CR 2

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 18; **Disable Device** DC 17

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** burst of intense light (1 Atk + 8 CMB against targets' CMD to perform a dirty trick causing the dazzle condition); multiple targets (all targets in a 15-ft.-radius burst)

### SPRING TILE CR 3

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** tile springs from floor (1 Atk melee + 15 CMB against the target's CMD to bull rush Large or smaller targets straight up). If the bull rush moves the target high enough to strike the ceiling, the target takes 1d6 points of damage. The target takes 1d6 falling damage for every 10 feet bull rushed. The bull rushed target lands in a square adjacent to the spring tile and must make a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid falling prone.

### MAGNETIZED PANEL CR 4

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 22

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** 10-ft.-square magnetic plate (1 Atk + 16 CMB against the targets' CMD to disarm all held metal items); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. square). Disarmed items fly to the plate and stick there. Disarmed items can be removed from plate with a DC 20 Strength check.

### CALTROP BURST CR 5

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** none

**Effect** explosive burst of caltrops (4d6 damage; DC 17 Reflex save for half); multiple targets (all targets in a 15-ft.-radius burst). After the trap is activated, the floor of the affected area is covered in caltrops.

### DRAGGING HOOK CR 6

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 24; **Disable Device** DC 22

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** hooked harpoon on pull cord (Atk +20 ranged, 1d8+6 damage). On subsequent rounds, if the harpoon hits, the trap makes additional attacks with a +20 CMB against the target's CMD, using the drag combat maneuver to pull Large or smaller targets toward its originating point. Removing the harpoon or severing the pull cord is a standard action and deals 1d6 damage to the target.

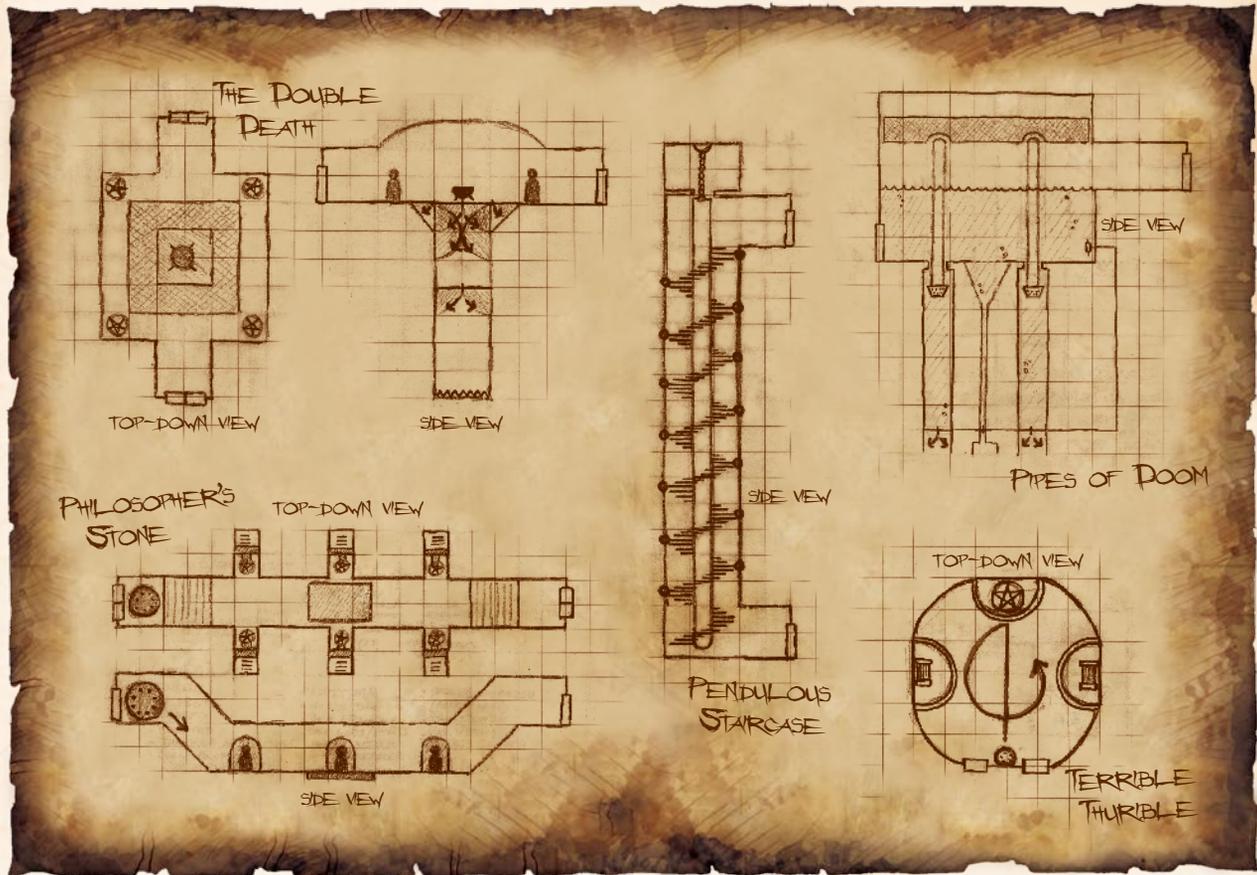
### PULVERIZERS CR 7

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** spring-loaded walls slam together (2 Atk +18 melee, 4d6 damage each; 12d6 damage if both hit the target)



## THE DOUBLE DEATH

A new take on an old trap, the double death is, at its most basic level, a wide pit trap. Yet those who fall prey to the trap not only find themselves victims, but also bait that attracts their companions to an even deadlier doom. This trap is best suited to characters of levels 8 to 10.

**The Trap:** A two-level pit trap surrounded by tiles that collapse into a slide. After the first pit trap is triggered, the second gives way a moment later, spilling those trapped down to a spiked doom.

**How It Works:** As creatures near the brazier, the first part of the trap is sprung, with the floor dropping away as soon as 150 pounds of weight enter the squares immediately surrounding the fixture. This functions just as a standard pit trap, dropping victims 15 feet, as described in the “upper pit.” Unseen from the surface, the collapse of the first pit trap sets off a secondary mechanism that requires 2 rounds to activate. At the end of these rounds, the edges of the open pit collapse into steep slides, potentially spilling anyone at the pit’s lip into the pit. At the same time, the floor of the upper pit collapses, spilling its contents another 20 feet into the spear-lined depths. The dropping away of the false floor creates a slight lip that the most agile victims might be able to cling onto to prevent themselves from falling, but such a miraculous save proves difficult at best.

### UPPER PIT CR 4

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** 15-ft.-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all within a 20-ft.-square area)

### LOWER PIT CR 12

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** 20-ft.-deep pit from upper pit (2d6 falling damage) or 35-ft.-deep pit from top (3d6); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage each); DC 24 Reflex from upper pit or 22 Reflex from top; multiple targets (all in pit and within 5 feet of its edge)

## PENDULOUS STAIRCASE

A sort of double trap, the pendulous staircase menaces those who tread too heavily upon its fragile steps, threatening to crush climbers like a gigantic pendulum, but also leaving them stranded amid whatever dungeon depth they seek to escape.

**The Trap:** A huge but loose length of chain supports this stairway. While it is strong enough to support the stairs

and considerable additional burdens, the stairs maintain their position by relying upon fragile moorings fastened into the cylindrical well. As passersby tread upon the stairs, they potentially break these moorings, causing the stairs to sway. As the central column becomes less fixed in place, it crashes against the walls, crushing climbers or sending them careening into the depths.

**How It Works:** This spiral staircase consists of a central pillar in a 90-foot-deep shaft. Stone steps connect the central pillar to the walls of the shaft. These steps fit into shallow slots cut into the wall. Characters who descend the staircase to the bottom discover a gap between the last step and the floor of the lower chamber.

Among these stairs, spaced approximately 15 feet apart, are several steps deliberately designed to break. These false steps appear nearly identical to the solid steps, though a DC 25 Perception check notices the almost imperceptible cracks. A character who steps on a “breakaway stair” risks falling through the broken tread and falling down to the next twist of the spiral staircase.

Once a step had broken away, any contact with the stairs sets the whole central column swinging. Each round, all characters on the steps must make a Reflex save to avoid the “pendulous staircase.” The DC of this Reflex save increases by 1 for every one of the 14 breakaway stairs that is broken. If a character fails her Reflex save, roll 1d20 and add the number of stairs broken, then reference the Pendulous Staircase Effects chart to determine how the stairs’ movement imperils the character.

**BREAKAWAY STAIR** **CR 3**  
**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25  
**EFFECTS**  
**Trigger** location **Reset** none  
**Effect** 15-ft. fall to steps below (1d6 falling damage); DC 20  
 Reflex avoids

**PENDULOUS STAIRCASE** **CR 10**

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 30

**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** location **Reset** none

**Effect** swinging stairs (roll 1d20 + number of broken stairs; reference swinging stairs effect chart); DC (15 + number of broken stairs) Reflex avoids; multiple targets

**PHILOSOPHER’S STONE**

Alchemy is the art of turning lead into gold, the base into the sublime, the physical into the spiritual. Also, it is the art of making things explode.

**The Trap:** A giant metal boulder filled with volatile chemicals careens down a hall, then back again, possibly lodging in the narrow passage. Alcoves line the hall, potentially giving those in the boulder’s path shelter, but interconnected spring systems behind the statues within mean that pushing a sculpture in on one side of the hall pushes those on the other side out, forcing those seeking refuge in the alcoves across the hall into the path of the thundering boulder.

**How It Works:** Two components make up this trap: a giant metal boulder filled with volatile chemicals (the philosopher’s stone); and twin sets of “tethered statues” lining each side of the hall.

*Philosopher’s Stone:* The philosopher’s stone reprises the classic runaway boulder trap with an alchemical spin. A 15-by-10-foot pressure plate fills the centermost length of a lengthy corridor. After the trap is set off with an audible click, the philosopher’s stone begins rolling. The PCs have 1 round to react to the boulder rolling down the ramp. After the first round, the jostling of chemicals within the stone causes it to light, propelling the “ignited philosopher’s stone” by its internal explosions like a Catherine wheel firework. Sparks shoot out of the boulder, sending it spinning forward. Creatures that didn’t manage to escape the lower hall in

**PENDULOUS STAIRCASE EFFECTS**

Steps Broken	Effect
2–4	The stairs wobble, but create no hazardous effect.
5–8	The PCs are bounced against the wall, taking 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage.
9–12	A DC 12 Acrobatics check is required to move. More steps become unstable, and 1d4–2 breakaway stairs snap out of place.
13–16	The PCs are struck by the pillar or slammed against the wall, taking 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage.
17–20	The PCs are thrown from the stairs, taking 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen.
21–24	The PCs are struck violently by the pillar or smashed against the wall, taking 4d6 points of bludgeoning damage.
25–28	A DC 20 Acrobatics check is required to move. More steps become unstable, and 1d4 breakaway stairs snap out of place.
29–32	The PCs are clobbered by the pillar, taking 8d6 points of bludgeoning damage.
33–34	The stairs collapse. The PCs fall from the stairs, taking 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen. In addition, falling debris causes all PCs to take 8d6 points of damage (DC 15 Reflex save for half).

the round before the philosopher's stone ignites must save versus the "ignited philosopher's stone." The stone bowls over any creatures of Medium size or smaller that it strikes and continues moving. Creature of Large size or greater halt the movement of the stone, but take double damage from the trap. Magic that creates solid barriers—like *interposing hand* or the various wall spells—can halt the stone, though the violent thrust of *telekinesis* or a *ring of the ram* merely jars the boulder. A creature can attempt to halt the philosopher's stone by physical force, but it must make a DC 30 Strength check and is struck by the trap without receiving a saving throw. Those who succeed at this Strength check halt the boulder, while those who fail are bowled over as normal.

The philosopher's stone has enough momentum to roll down the hall once, ascend halfway up the ramp on the far side of the passage, and—1 round after its initial roll through the hall—barrel back through the passage before coming to a rest not far from the bottom of the ramp it initially hurtled down. After losing its momentum, the stone stops expelling chemical fire but still blocks the hall. Creatures of Medium size or smaller can squeeze past, though the "blocking boulder" is still covered in caustic chemicals and might roll to crush those who try to slip around it. The boulder can be moved with a DC 24 Strength check, though any creature that voluntarily touches it takes 1d6 points of acid damage. It can also be destroyed, though this requires some effort (the thick steel ball has hardness 10 and 1,800 hit points).

**Statues:** The PCs have 1 round of warning before the philosopher's stone bowls down the hall, and a second round in which to react before it makes its second pass. Those in the corridor who make a DC 26 Perception check notice that the statues in the hall's alcoves are on plates with small rollers and have spring mechanisms affixed to their backs. Any creature that makes a DC 20 Strength check can force a statue deeper into its alcove, creating a spot for a Medium or smaller creature to stand that is safe from the philosopher's stone's burning rampage. The mechanisms attached to the "tethered statues" are more than mere springs, though. Any creature that pushes a statue deeper into a wall causes all three statues on that side of the hall to slide back, thus opening not one, but three 5-foot-square alcoves on that side of the hall. At the same time, with the same amount of Strength that the creature pushing back a statue exerted, the three statues on the other side of the hall slide out. If two creatures on opposite sides of the hall attempt to push statues into the alcoves in the same round, both must make opposed Strength checks to see who succeeds in pushing back the statues—the victor pushes his way to safe shelter, while the loser is forced into the hall. The shapes of the "tethered statues" are such that they never slide fully into the hallway—or into the path of the philosopher's stone. If multiple creatures seek shelter by pushing back statues on the same side of the hall, the boulder can pass them by

without harm, while those who seek opposing shelters face a startling tug-of-war with a swift and deadly result.

## IGNITED PHILOSOPHER'S STONE CR 10

Type mechanical; Perception DC 24; Disable Device DC 24

### EFFECTS

Trigger location Reset manual

Effect after 1 round, a 10-foot-tall, flame-spewing boulder rolls down the passage (6d6 plus 3d6 fire damage); multiple targets (all targets in passage); DC 26 Reflex for half

## BLOCKING BOULDER CR 2

Type mechanical; Perception DC 10; Disable Device DC 28

### EFFECTS

Trigger location Reset none

Effect 10-foot-tall metal boulder leaking volatile chemicals (1d6 plus 1d6 acid damage); targets any creature attempting to squeeze past; DC 20 Reflex save

## TETHERED STATUES CR 4

Type mechanical; Perception DC 26; Disable Device DC 26

### EFFECTS

Trigger location Reset automatic

Effect Statues can be pressed deeper into their alcoves with a DC 20 Strength check. Pressing a statue deeper into its alcove forces any creatures attempting to do the same on the opposite side to succeed at an opposed Strength check or be forced back into the hall.

## PIPES OF DOOM

Water is the bane of many adventuring parties, typically for the tentacled terrors and coiling serpents found within. But sometimes, water proves deadly enough by itself.

**The Trap:** Water pressure prevents a rusted iron door from opening while the pool it rests within stands full. Two pillars support the ceiling directly over the water, their foundations composed of highly buoyant material forced into a stationary position at the tops of water-filled pipes beneath the pool's floor. A valve opposite the door opens drains beneath the room. As the water in the room and the pipes drains out, the speed of the drainage causes the pillars to descend at a rate faster than the water in the pool, potentially trapping and crushing creatures in the pool.

**How It Works:** A rusted iron door stands at the bottom of a 15-foot-deep pool of water. The door has hardness 10, 120 hit points, and a break DC of 35 due to the water pressure aiding in holding it closed. The added hindrances of moving and attacking underwater make reaching or destroying the door difficult (see page 432 of the *Core Rulebook*). Fortunately, a valve opposite the door opens drains in the floor, allowing the water to flow out—with deadly side effects.

Those who succeed on a DC 22 Perception check notice the floor of the pool contains a circular pattern of holes at its

center, as if it were the subtle opening to a large drain. A DC 28 Perception check also notices very tight gaps around the bases of the twin pillars rising between the pool and ceiling. Any creature that succeeds on a DC 16 Perception check also notices a wheel-shaped valve at the pool's bottom, and upon reaching it can employ it with a DC 20 Strength check. The valve only works in one direction, opening drains hidden in the pool's floor, but possessing no ability to close them. Once these drains are open, three pipes begin draining water out of the room: two steadily lowering the water beneath the pillars and one slowly draining the pool itself.

As the pillars are affixed to a buoyant material held aloft by the water in the room, and those pillars in turn support the ceiling, draining the water below them causes the ceiling to begin lowering at a rate of 5 feet per round. The slow drainage of the pool also causes the water level to drop at a rate of 5 feet every 2 rounds. Creatures in the pool thus have 2 rounds to escape the pool before the ceiling reaches a point that it traps them in the pool's basin, and another 3 rounds after that before the ceiling of the "crushing pool" slams down upon them. The ceiling could potentially be destroyed, but it has hardness 8 and 760 hit points. Creatures trapped beneath the ceiling after it collapses fully take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage every round as if they were buried by a cave-in (*Core Rulebook* 415).

The door is recessed enough that it can be manipulated after the ceiling descends and the water drains out of the room—reducing its Break DC to 25.

**CRUSHING POOL** **CR 16**

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** touch **Reset** none

**Effect** ceiling crushes creatures below it after 5 rounds (1d6); multiple targets (all targets in pool); no save

## TERRIBLE THURIBLE

Bane of overzealous thieves, this trap grows worse by the moment, though a simple sacrifice at the right moment might save others from choking death and whirling flames. This trap is best suited for characters of levels 6 to 8.

**The Trap:** Tampering with the chests releases the thurible hanging against the wall, a container filled with black powder and poison. If allowed to swing across the room, it ignites upon coming in contact with the statue's firepot. The shape of the thurible, the flexible cord, and the exploding powders within the heavy container inside send the thurible reeling around the room, striking those within as it spreads flame and toxic dust.

**How It Works:** The lids of the chests in this room are connected to mechanisms in the floors and walls connecting to the hanging thurible. Those who investigate the chests can discover a simple switch in either with a DC

26 Perception check, though the device obviously doesn't connect to anything deadly within the chest. Those who investigate the hanging deadly thurible can make Perception checks at the same DC to detect an equally simple clasping device attaching it to the wall.

Should the chest lids be lifted, the switches are triggered, causing the heavy thurible hanging on the wall to unclasp and swing down. Any creature in the 10 squares directly between the "swinging thurible" and the statue are attacked as noted below. The attack is slow and easy to avoid, but still packs something of a punch. If it strikes a creature in its flight, it deals damage as noted and the impact causes it to stop moving, circumventing the trap's other dangers.

If no creatures block the way between the thurible and the statue, or if it misses them, the thurible swings to the extent of its cord, pausing over the open flame. This causes the alchemical mixture within the container to erupt violently into flames, turning the metal pendulum into a "lit thurible" that begins spinning about the room. The cord holding the flaming sphere is elastic enough to erratically bounce and swing the thurible with the force of a bludgeon, making any creature in the room a target for its bounding flight. At the same time, the flaming thurible expels doses of deadly ungol dust, exposing everyone in the room.

The thurible has enough explosive powder and ungol dust to be a threat for 3 rounds, after which its swinging slows and it gradually comes to rest at the room's center. The chests can be investigated in safety at this point; their contents are left to the GM to decide.

**SWINGING THURIBLE** **CR 2**

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 16; **Disable Device** DC 16

**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** location

**Reset** manual

**Effect** Atk +6 melee (1d6+3 bludgeoning damage)

**LIT THURIBLE** **CR 8**

**Type** mechanical;

**Perception**

DC 10; **Disable**

**Device** DC 22

**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** location **Reset** manual

**Effect** Atk +18 melee (1d6+9 bludgeoning damage plus 1d6 fire damage) and ungol dust (1 Cha drain/1d4 Cha damage; *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 560); DC 15 Fort versus poison; multiple targets (all targets in room)





## PLAGUE OF LIGHT: 4 OF 6

### I Must Die

The boy stands before the Latari, who seek his death. He unlaces the northern-style tunic given him by the Aspis Consortium. Marked on his chest is the firefly birthmark that heralds his curse—the curse that has claimed the lives of these plainsland tribesfolk.

“I am called Mwonduk, and I am the one you want. Kill me if you want, but don’t hurt my guardians. They mean only to prevent harm.”

This is the first time I have heard the boy speak above a whisper. His head is no longer bowed, his shoulders now straight. He stands with his chest thrust out, as if daring a Latari warrior to throw a spear through it. Some appear to be contemplating it. I envision the boy impaled on the spot, the sharp edge of the spear obliterating and penetrating the birthmark.

Verkusht, crouching, catches my eye, silently asking if we shouldn’t leap on the boy, clap hands over his mouth, let Obai resume her role as talker. With a twitch of my head, I warn the Bekyar to stand down.

A leather-skinned, white-haired woman stands. Her crown is fashioned from a gourd, the goddess object of her tribe. “Harm has already been done. Your insect minions descended last night. My husband, my children, murdered. There are none of us standing here who did not lose kin. In agony they shrieked, torn to shreds before our eyes. Kill you we shall, young demon. Your death is ours by right of blood.”

Mwonduk gets down on his bony knees to bow his head before the Latari queen. “I didn’t send the fireflies. I would never hurt anyone. The fireflies are sent by a goddess—the

one who put her mark on me. I don't know why. Long before I was born, my ancestors did something wrong. Or maybe they didn't. Maybe there's no fairness in it."

"There is no fairness in our kin being killed."

The boy prostrates himself, touching his forehead to the dirt. "No, there isn't. This goddess is not fair. She is hungry. She hungers for me. So I must be sacrificed, and die."

The queen retreats to confer with her spirit-women. When she returns her attention to the boy, he continues:

"I don't know anything about this goddess. I am ignorant. My whole life has been fear and an empty stomach. I have no kinsmen to mourn me when I die. So please let me die the right way."

The spirit women break away to argue among themselves. Annoyed by their harsh whispering, the queen calls a halt to it with a shrill whistle.

The queen's manner has softened. "We know our own goddess well, child. She is benevolent, but demands that we avenge wrongs against us."

Mwonduk rises, steps toward them. "So whatever you do, you will anger a goddess."

The queen steps back. The spirit women step back. The Latari warriors, too.

"Is the gourd goddess forgiving?"

"All life springs from Chuaka."

The boy rubs at his dripping nose. "Kitumu, the firefly goddess—I don't think she is forgiving. Without a reason, she hurt you bad. What would she do if you gave her a reason?"

The eldest of the spirit-women shakes her rattle, to get the queen's attention. Anger rises in her face as the queen ignores the gesture.

"Please, Latari queen." Mwonduk clasps his hands together and shakes them toward her, the gesture of a child beggar. "Let my death mean the end of the plague, and not the worsening of it."

The queen brandishes her royal staff, both at us and at her quivering spirit-talkers. "Go then. Move quickly through our lands. Do not stop to sleep or rest or drink."

The boy bows again.

"But boy, if we hear that you live, that you escaped your sacrifice, my warriors will track you down and cut out your heart. They will find and kill all of your companions. They will hunt you until the last Latari is dead."

She sweeps into the nearby grass. We stand still as her people follow her.

When they are gone, Sunasuka, whose leg has been badly speared, lets herself moan. She performs a healing spell on herself, and separated flesh folds back together. The skin crawls over the gash and seals itself, leaving a tear in the halfling's hide breeches as the only sign of her injury.

Mwonduk goes to her and extends a hand to help her up. "You worry about me," he says to her. "But don't. I understand what you all must do."

The Latari lands are the last we pass through on the savanna before reaching the jungle. Once under the canopy, I find a stream. We drink, fill skins with water, and rest. From here, we will head north, skirting the Aerie of Bloodletting Songs. I describe the route to the others. Were there any point in it, I would draw them a map. If I fall, Arok can take them the rest of the way. Should the group lose both of us, no sketch or scribble will help them.

Verkusht now feels free to complain. "Who was it who said we should tramp through the lands of these mad plainmen, instead of boating up the river and across the jungle?"

Everyone remembers, including Verkusht. It was him. Whitebridge Station, where the river meets the jungle, crawls with Bekyar. Tarood would have ambushers on the river route. Verkusht wants us to tell him that, as difficult as the plains walk was, we were still better off, and he still indispensably right. None of us have the energy to humor him.

We lie on flat rocks and Sunasuka, exhausted by her wound, lapses immediately into a snoring slumber. Arok and I collect fruit as the others take shifts and nap.

As we lope silently through the jungle shade, I sense the gorilla's disquiet. It is a worry I should share, this close to the Aerie. Concern for the boy has distracted me. Now that Mwonduk has spoken of his willingness to die, I somehow feel worse for it.

But I must clear my thoughts. The Aerie.

Arok freezes. A litter of bush pigs springs from a nest of brush near our feet. He sniffs the air. Its mother will be near. A meat-feast will nourish us well for the hard trekking to come.

A snuffling snort and the fast rustle of hooves announces her charge. Arok frowns. I ready my spear and pierce the beast as it comes at me, tusks outthrust. It falls and slides.

Arok hangs back. Game taken so close to the Aerie must be carefully checked. It falls to me to do it. I open its dead mouth, check its tongue and teeth. Its eyes are the proper color—no pulsing flakes of red or green. The boar's feet are cloven as they should be, in two parts, free of extra toes or protuberances.

These tests are made necessary by the actions of a forgotten people, taken back in the vague Beyond Time. In the jungle to the east of here, they summoned demons and ate the flesh of men. Heroes unknown wiped them out, but even now the lingering residue of their grisly rituals remains. Madness rolls across the Aerie like mist. Men cannot live there without losing their minds. Beasts dwell within the Aerie, their forms warped and corrupted. There, nature has been reduced to one law—predation.

# SERPENT'S SKULL

If this boar wandered for too long into the Aerie, its blood will be poison. Those who eat its meat will succumb to visions of torture and depravity.

Judging the boar edible, I nod to Arok. Though he will eat only the fruit we have gathered, he hoists it on his mighty shoulder without complaint.

Seeing us approach with our game, Katiwa removes spades from her pack. She and Sunasuka dig the pit, while I gather wood for the fire. The boy comes with me, finding dried branches. We do not speak. There is nothing to say.

Rested and fed, I lead the party north into the jungle. When the music of the trees changes, I slow our pace. The barks of gibbons and trillings of finches give way to discordant shrieking. It is birdsong, deformed into a keening, clattering wail. The fur on the back of Arok's neck stands up. Unseen parrots chorus together to produce a groaning chant. They are imitating a language, but not a human one. It clicks and chitters and scratches.

***"The Bekyar have perverted nature itself."***



Obai tenses. "Those are the names of demons," she whispers.

"I thought you said we'd be safe here," says Verkusht.

"I've never seen the creatures so far from the Aerie before," I reply.

"Unnatural creatures gain in strength when balance is disrupted," says Obai.

Then they dive at us from everywhere, the blackened, gnarled birds of the Aerie. In their forms are hidden the recognizable shapes of wild creatures: parrots, swallows, vultures, hawks. They are striking us, raking exposed flesh with razor beaks. With a thump, I am knocked to the ground. I sense only a swoop of feathers, and a bird heavier than any flying animal ought to be. My spear lies on the ground, out of reach. I withdraw a knife from my belt as another of the creatures dives at my face. The bird swoops sideways to avoid the waiting blade.

I regain my footing, swiping at the air with my knife. Wherever I strike, there is a distorted bird to hit, but for each one that falls another flies in to replace it.

Arok grabs at the swooping horde, plucking one of the birds after another out of the air. Each he crushes, then tosses aside.

Chanting a nature spell, Sunasuka attempts to quell the creatures. Stripped of their animal instincts, they ignore her commands.

Verkusht watches the rhythm of the swooping birds, matches it, evades them as they drop dizzily toward him. His dagger remains in his belt; there is no more point in killing these things than in exterminating raindrops in a storm.

From Katiwa's sigil-incised harpoon leaps a cone of frigid air. The birds caught in the blast plummet, frozen, to the ground. Each makes a tiny thump as it lands. Then more sweep in, and the space cleared by the Bonuwat's magic is filled again.

I look for the boy. A funnel cloud of dark birds sweeps down toward him, and he gasps in pain as beaks bore into him. They seem drawn to him most of all. Seizing my shield, I leap, diving into the stream of feathered beasts. They rattle against my shield, nearly knocking it from my grasp.

"Gather together!" Obai shouts. With shield held uncertainly overhead, I wrap an arm around Mwenduk and carry his underfed body toward her. The attacking birds grow denser as the others converge on Obai's position.

The balance priestess chants to Nethys. A half-globe of blinding white light appears around us, but the birds smash through it, pelting against us. Mwenduk yelps as they dart beneath my shield to slash at him. Obai's chant, first airily beautiful, shifts to a grinding dirge. A second half-globe of swirling darkness appears. It settles into the white

light. Light and darkness battle, then settle into an accommodation, blinking and ever-shifting.

Inside the globe are a few of the carnivorous birds. Arok catches them as he can. The remaining birds batter against the inside of the doubled globes, knocking themselves out. We stomp them until they no longer move.

Demon birds outside the sphere rattle a thundering percussion against it. Necks break and thin bones fragment as the creatures hurl themselves at our shield. After a few thundering instants, the creatures relent and the onslaught subsides. Obai leaves the spheres in place for a good long time. When she allows them to fade, I prepare for the birds to resume their attack, but there is no sign of them. Even the dead ones have resolved themselves into a sick-smelling paste. These remnants leach into the soil, leaving behind black smudges.

Katiiwa casts an admiring glance over the decaying fruits of Obai's handiwork. "You twinned a circle of destruction with one of protection," she says.

The priestess tilts her head, acknowledging the sorceress's admiration. "Only in combination do they evoke and restore the balance that is double-faced Nethys."

"As beasts cut off from their essential natures, you reckoned that they could not abide the contradiction."

"That is broadly correct." She turns the side of her face with the tattooed smile to Katiiwa.

Their talk of spells and spellcasting grows impenetrable. Sunasuka heals the deep cuts crisscrossing Mwonduk's head and arms.

"Were the birds trying to kill me?" the boy asks.

"They were hungry for us all," Sunasuka answers.

"But more of them came at me," Mwonduk says.

Sunasuka shrugs. "They weren't really birds, but had turned into something else. So their actions are beyond me."

Unsatisfied by this reply, the boy turns to me. "Will everything in the jungle try to kill me?"

I don't know what to say, so I say this: "You must be brave. Like you were with the Latari."

"But the birds did try to get me, more than anyone else."

"It happened very fast. There will be more dangers."

Frustrated, he kicks at one of the greasy spots left by a decaying demon bird. "They felt the curse in me, and wanted to rip me apart." His strange dignity has deserted him. For the first time, he seems like an ordinary child. "I already agreed to die. Why can't I be let alone till then?"

I look to the others. They are the talkers, not me. None come forward.

"You must be brave," I stupidly repeat.

Finally Verkusht rescues me, by clapping his hands together and saying that we must be on our way. "We can't stay around here waiting for those things to come back," he chatters. He ducks down to mutter into Mwonduk's ear.

I am not meant to overhear, but my senses are keen. The ex-slaver says this: "Nothing shameful in being scared. I'm scared all the time."

We move deeper into the jungle, the air growing hotter and wetter as we go. Our movements are quiet, and that is good. The boy, used to going unheard, is better at creeping than the priestess or the sorceress. He watches his steps carefully, never stepping on a crackling leaf or snap-ready twig.

Hours pass. We stop by a stream to drink and rest.

Murmuring voices echo from the tall trees. Our weapons leap to our hands. We array ourselves around the boy.

Zenj hunters appear at the edge of the hollow. They halt as they see us. There are eight of them, bruised and bloodied. Quilled headdresses mark them as Indta, a wandering tribe. Over their shoulders they carry the carcasses of rat-like porcupines. There are more of the brush-tailed beasts than they can eat themselves. The main group must be nearby.

The Stranger Greeting of the forests differs from that of the plains. No one owns the jungle. When parties meet, each must show his peacefulness, or be ready for war.

In our clicking language, the Indta hunt leader signals that he is neither predator nor willing to be preyed upon. I step forward to do the same, identifying myself as tribeless.

"We are—" I begin.

"We know who you are," says the hunt leader, who has introduced himself as Antemba.

The Indta fear us.

"We will not harm you." In saying so, I am repeating myself. By giving the Jungle Greeting, I already promised not to prey upon them.

Their weapons are down, as called for by the protocol of the greeting, but their muscles remain tight, prepared for flight or for battle.

"You are hurt." The slashes on their bodies come not from the teeth or claws of jungle beasts but from blades. "Who did you fight?" Although they bear the injuries of defeated men, I do not shame them by implying they lost.

"They were as him," Antemba says, pointing to Verkusht. He means that they were Bekyar.

"Slavers?"

"Garbed as slavers, yet they took none of us prisoner, even when we were helpless."

"They attacked you?"

"They did not give the proper greeting, and so we were justified in falling upon them. They were greater in number than we first knew."

"How many were there?"

"More than ten, less than twenty."

"These men you fought are our foes."

"We wish you good fortune against them."

"What more can you tell us?"

"There was a pale man with them—an outlander. And they carried strange cauldrons that reeked of bad magic."

"Cauldrons?"

"They were of a copper metal. Inside bubbled some terrible liquid. As if they were heated by flame, yet no flame could be seen."

Further questions yield little. I offer them healing. Antemba takes time to weigh his fear of us against the condition of his men. He nods. Sunasuka and Obai move slowly up the rise toward them. They lay on hands and chant their flesh-mending chants. The Indta nod their thanks and melt into the forest.

"Could it be anyone other than Tarood and Brachantes?" Katiwa asks.

It is not really a question, but Verkusht answers anyway: "What other Bekyar would win a fight and take no cargo?"

"How did they know to come here?" says Sunasuka.

"Brachantes claimed to have seers," I say. "Perhaps he knows where Kitumu's temple lies. Perhaps he has magic that lets him find the boy."

Mwonduk reads our concern. "This is bad?"

"The men who tried to capture you before in the village, they are nearby."

"They want me dead, like everyone else?"

The answer catches in my throat. Brachantes wants to put the boy in a golden cage. He may be the only person who does not want him dead. I want to give the boy a choice—go with us and perish, or accept imprisonment in Brachantes' menagerie, and live. But I cannot. The plague must end.

Obai lies, so that I don't have to: "I'm afraid so, my boy." She turns the frowning side of her tattooed face toward us. "Shall we take the hunt to our hunters?"

Katiwa hefts her arcane harpoon. "I'd be willing."

Verkusht massages cramped fingers. "Tarood's tough, and a seasoned slave-taker. These woods are his hunting grounds; he knows them as well as Xhasi or Arok. If there's a chance of not meeting up with him, I say we take it."

Sunasuka says, "I'm with the Bekyar. I get into enough fights by accident. No point courting them on purpose."

I am unsure. We will meet Brachantes again, of that I am certain. And it is tempting to put the battle on our terms. But then, fighting men often overrate the benefits of surprise. In such matters I have come to rely on Arok's animal wisdom.

The ape shuffles uncomfortably. He folds his upper lip up over his yellow fangs. "Fight and kill only if you have to. Better to sneak."

It is decided. Sneak we will.

I plot a twisting course. We avoid the best streams, the flattest approaches, and any place with good forage. Along rocks we drag ourselves. We move when the air is hottest and rest when it cools.

Still, after two days of stealthy trekking, they find us.

Arrows snick through the air behind us. We turn, drop prone, look for better cover. Sunasuka has pushed the boy down and now lies half on top of him.

A searing flash burns in my left calf. Then the leg goes numb. An arrow protrudes through the flesh. I reach down, snap off the feathered end and bloody head. The shaft will have to wait.

The archers are Bekyar. They've abandoned their usual robes for those better suited to jungle hunting. Flowing whites give way to a mottle of greens and browns. Metal clips secure their sleeves and headdresses.

A second volley of arrows falls ahead of us. The archers have compensated too heavily for our prone positions, cutting off their range.

Katiwa, Verkusht, and Obai crouch-walk upward, skitter behind thick-trunked trees, and return fire. Verkusht releases flying daggers; they fly, tumbling through the air, toward their targets. One lodges in a trunk, sending shards of bark into the air and forcing the archer behind it out of sight. Another strikes an archer's hand, pinning it to the bow it held. The man drops, shrieking. A third dagger, hanging behind the first pair as if waiting for the opportunity, then seeks and finds his neck. He dies gurgling.

To the dead man's left, demonic black tentacles, conjured from the void by Katiwa, seize his fellow archers. As Obai summons a wasp swarm to drive off the rest, the tentacles hold their trapped archers out for Verkusht. His second round of flying daggers easily finishes them.

Having proved our superiority from a distance, I expect a second wave of close attackers to charge us. I ready my spear.

The wind shifts, bringing a terrible stench upon us. At first I fear the stinking cloud spell I have seen Katiwa cast, but the source is behind me. Arok booms out anxious ape-talk. I turn on my heels.

Another dozen Bekyar huddle in a grove of trees, just out of thrown-spear range. Strapped to their bodies, as if pregnant with metal bulges, they carry the cauldrons the Indta described. Though clearly cool to the touch—or else the slavers would be burned by them—a boiling black liquid bubbles from their ornate rims. The Bekyar each pour the contents of their cauldrons onto the base of a separate tree. They've chosen the tallest of them.

The tarry liquid sinks immediately into the trees. From the roots up, the trees tremble. Beneath their layers of bark, they writhe. The ripple of movement starts at the roots, making its way up to the canopy leaves a hundred feet up.

The roots wrench themselves from hard-packed soil. They resolve themselves into wide, clawed legs. Corrupted and oily, the trees thunder toward us.

The air is filled by Arok's mournful howls.

The trees bend down, lashing us with branches turned sharp and scaly.

Sunasuka bellows as a tree seizes her and hurls her through the air into the whip-sharp limbs of another.

A distorted obeche tree charges me on wide-rooted feet. I leap to avoid it, jabbing uselessly upward with my spear. I dive and roll, narrowly avoiding a stomp that would have crushed my bones. Regaining my footing, wobbling on my wounded leg, I hop to find shelter behind a closer tree, one not despoiled by the Bekyar cauldrons. The monster tree produces a furious rattle, shaking what remains of its leafy top. Already its leaves, exquisitely shaped to capture and funnel the jungle rains, have dried to brown, dead curls. The corrupted tree wraps its branches around the one sheltering me and uproots it with a savage tug. I fall back, loosed dirt spraying in my face. Wiping frantically to clear my eyes, I barely evade another stomp.

Near the point where its trunk sprouts into a vast head of branches, I see a bulbous, heart-like shape pulsing under the bark, and make a choice. As the next stomping root-foot comes toward me, I reach out and grab hold. The obeche tries to shake me off. I clamber up its monstrous leg and onto the trunk. It lashes down at me with its branches, attempting to dislodge me. I wince at each hit, but its angle is wrong, and it strikes with only a fraction of the force it could otherwise muster. I've dropped my spear—there the closeness works against me—but have my dagger in my belt. Shimming up, I see brief flashes of the others as they struggle against the monster trees. Sunasuka, with her nature powers, seems to have turned her tree on its makers. Obai has ignited the dead leaves of another with divine fire; these flames now spread to the trees threatening Arok and Verkusht.

I have reached the throbbing knot-heart, and now draw my dagger to stab into it. Before I can aim and land my blow, the tree shudders. Its greasy bark turns to slime.

The magic of the cauldrons has expired. The tree falls apart, rotted to sludge from the inside out. I leap out of it as it collapses, into the waiting branches of an untouched tree.

We sprawl amid piles of smoking mire, which moments ago were majestic, healthy trees, towering high above the jungle floor. A dozen others lie uprooted by the onslaught.

Arok gazes at the holes left by their absence.

He looks at the slavers, who now regroup, scimitars in hand, braced for the next engagement.

What he growls next in the ape tongue can't be rendered for a scribe to write. It speaks of nature despoiled, of the righteous guardian, of surrender to berserk wrath.

Before any of us can move, Arok is upon them, leaping in sudden, shocking bounds. Shielded by anger, he shrugs scimitars aside. The ape-man hits the formation of Bekyar like a flash flood. Those not caught in his grasp stand stupidly staring, until he reaches them. When he does, they are disassembled.

With bare hands, with terrible strength, he tears

through them. In seconds, each man becomes a mangled corpse. He tears limbs from sockets. Twists necks from torsos. He bites his fangs down into skulls and tears open rib cages as if flinging open pairs of shutters. He feeds the forest on the blood of its enemies. No longer is he merely Arok, awakened ape. Nature has entered him, made him an extension of its wrath.

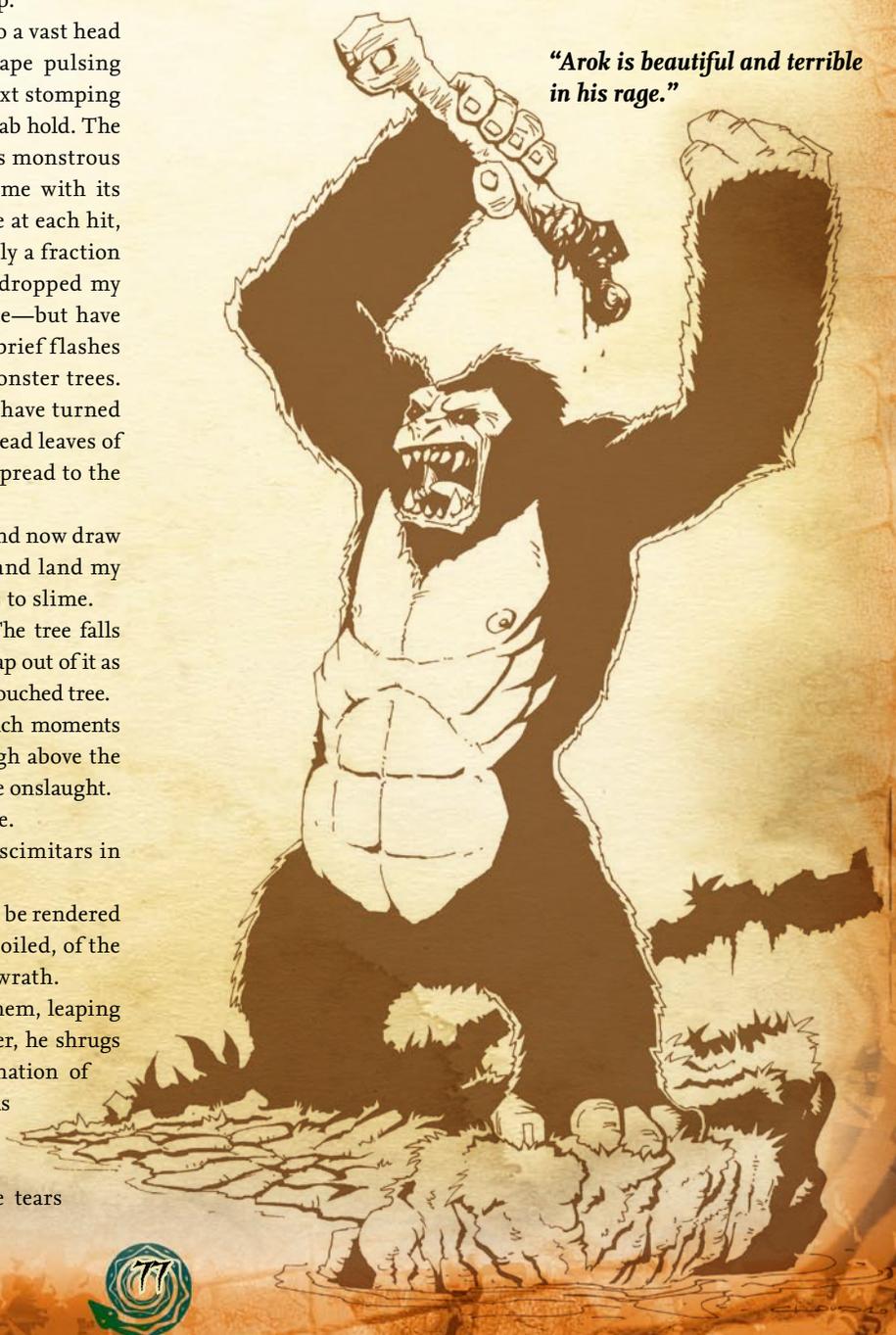
Moments later, there is not a living Bekyar in sight.

As the ape's rage crests, as he dances with the entrails of the slain wrapped around his neck and arms, I look to the boy, to ensure that someone shields him from this sight.

He is gone.

Their slavers may now all lie dead, but Brachantes and Tarood have what they came for. They have taken Mwonduk.

*"Arok is beautiful and terrible in his rage."*





## BESTIARY

YOU HEAR THEM ALL THE TIME AROUND HERE, THE LITTLE SAYINGS THAT COME BACK FROM OUT THERE. "THE JUNGLE TELLS STORIES," "THE JUNGLE GUARDS ITS OWN," "THE JUNGLE HAS FANGS," AND ON AND ON—SEEMS EVERY OTHER EXPLORER FANCIES HIMSELF A POET. FOR MY COIN, THE JUNGLE HAS A VOICE, AND BOY CAN IT SCREAM. YOU CAN'T DENY IT. GET TO GROUND HIGH ENOUGH SOME NIGHT AND LOOK OUT OVER THE EXPANSE AND YOU'LL SEE THE SHADOWS. THOSE AREN'T JUST BATS—THEY'RE THE JUNGLE'S SCREAMS, AND A HUNGRIER, MORE SOUL-SHAKING HOWLING YOU'LL HOPE TO DESNA YOU'LL NEVER HEAR.

—BRELUM GAANTS, SARGAVAN EXPLORER

Untold mysteries lurk in the jungle shadows, creatures rarely seen by even the most experienced explorer or denizen of those deadly depths. Monsters that hide amid the grasping underbrush, the dense canopies, and languid rivers dart forth with grasping limbs or on nighted wings to claim the lives of those who intrude upon their savage dominions. This month's entry into the Pathfinder Bestiary uncovers a few of these creatures of rumor and fireside legends. Whether ambushing jungle-delving adventurers or the denizens of darkened ruins, these elusive foes number among the wilds' deadliest fangs.

## AMBUSHES IN SAVENTH-YHI

In "Vaults of Madness," the PCs find themselves thrust into the dungeon depths of Saventh-Yhi. In the darkness lurk a varied host of terrors, all too willing to claim the PCs' lives along with their riches. Aside from the dangers within the vaults themselves, the PCs' presence has not gone unnoticed within the city, and numerous hunters—either at the orders of rival explorers, by the will of territorial jungle lords, in the hope of proving their prowess, or merely trying to sate their bestial hunger—stalk the intruders, seeking to claim their discoveries or their lives.

Presented here are a variety of ambush encounters the PCs might face as they journey across Saventh-Yhi or delve into the darkness of varied dungeons. GMs looking for more general encounters suited to the lost city should look to the Bestiary of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #39.

### ASPIS CONSORTIUM LEGIONNAIRES (CR 10)

Greedy agents in the service of the Aspis Consortium patrol Saventh-Yhi, guarding their companions but also hunting for easy treasure and strange creatures they might poach and sell. Not appreciating rivals, upon encountering the PCs, these legionnaires do their best to take out the competition.

**ASPIS CONSORTIUM LEGIONNAIRES (5)** CR 6  
**XP 2,400 each**  
 hp 56 each (see page 15)

### CHARAU-KA HUNTERS

Deadly charau-ka savages prowl Saventh-Yhi, hunting for food and sport. While they likely bear the PCs no specific ill will—unless the explorers trespass upon territories they consider theirs—these mighty warriors and their hunting apes are quick to seek opportunities to prove their prowess. A group of three charau-ka and four dire apes is CR 11, while a group of eight charau-ka is CR 13.

**CHARAU-KA SAVAGES (3)** CR 7  
**XP 3,200 each**  
 hp 90 each (see page 50)

## Ambushes in Saventh-Yhi

d% roll	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–8	1 tyrannosaurus	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 86
9–18	Aspis Consortium Legionnaires	10	see text
19–28	Wings of the Gorilla King	10	see text
29–35	Charau-Ka Savages	11	see text
36–43	1d4 dire crocodiles	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 51
44–47	Serpentfolk Seekers	11	see text
48–55	1d4 brachiosaurus	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 83
56–65	Wings of the Gorilla King	12	see text
66–73	Charau-Ka Hunters	13	see text
74–77	1 froghe moth	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 136
78–82	1 obambo	13	see page 82
83–87	Serpentfolk Seekers	13	see text
88–93	1d4 stone golems	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 163
94–97	Serpentfolk Seekers	14	see text
98–100	1 popobala	15	see page 84

**DIRE APES (4)** CR 3  
**XP 800 each**  
 hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 17)

### SERPENTFOLK SEEKERS

Hunting for both the Pathfinder Juliver and the adventurers who have slaughtered their brethren, several groups of serpentfolk slink through the shadowed streets. Wary of the PCs' prowess, these stalkers would prefer to follow and attack when their quarry seems most vulnerable. A group of four serpentfolk scouts is CR 11, a group of eight is CR 13, and a group of 12 is CR 14.

**SERPENTFOLK SEEKERS (4, 8, OR 12)** CR 7  
**XP 3,200 each**  
 hp 83 each (see page 36)

### WINGS OF THE GORILLA KING

Agents of the Gorilla King, mighty winged apes with ferocious disposition, herald his coming to Saventh-Yhi. While initially only scouting the land in preparation for their lord's coming, should they be attacked or insulted, these vicious hunters and other patrols of their kin prove deadly combatants both on the ground and in the air. A group of four derhii scouts is CR 10, while a group of eight is CR 12.

**DERHII SCOUTS (4 OR 8)** CR 6  
**XP 2,400 each**  
 hp 76 each (see page 19)





## IMPUNDULU

A dark shadow moves rapidly across the ground. In the skies high above, silhouetted by the sun, a monstrous, black-feathered avian creature circles. Slowly, a supernatural wind begins to swirl about the creature, and crackling sparks erupt from its body. Screeching wildly, it descends as if falling from the sky, its blood-flecked wings tipped with cruel curved hooks, and its protruding lower beak scalloped with vicious, jagged barbs.

### IMPUNDULU

CR 11



XP 12,800

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, shapechanger)

Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +21

### DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+5 Dex, +10 natural)

hp 133 (14d10+56)

Fort +13, Ref +14, Will +10

DR 10/magic and cold iron; Immune electricity, Resist cold 10, fire 10; SR 22

### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (30 ft. in humanoid form), fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee bite +19 (1d6+4 plus 1d6 bleed and 1d6 electricity), 2 talons +19 (1d4+4 plus 1d6 electricity and grab), 2 hook +13 (1d4+2 plus 1d6 electricity)

Special Attacks bleed (1d6), breath weapon (60-ft. line, 8d6 electricity, Reflex DC 21 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), electrical discharge

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +19)

3/day—call lightning, charm person, gust of wind

### STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 21, Con 19, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 20

Base Atk +14; CMB +18 (+22 grapple); CMD 33

Feats Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (talons)

Skills Bluff +22, Diplomacy +19, Fly +9, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +22

Languages Abyssal, Common, Fey, Infernal, Polyglot; speak with animals, telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (one humanoid), shaman form

### ECOLOGY

Environment temperate or warm forest

Organization solitary, pair, or flock (2d6)

Treasure standard (and impundulu fat, see sidebar)

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blood Drain (Ex)** If it grapples a foe, an impundulu drains blood at the end of its turn, dealing Constitution damage.

**Electrical Discharge (Su)** An impundulu builds substantial electrical charges in its body—electrical charges visibly crackle about its form. If the impundulu hits a creature with two talons in the same round, this charge releases into that creature, dealing 4d6 points of electricity damage (this damage is in addition to the electricity damage from its talon attacks). The target may attempt a DC 21 Fortitude save for half damage. If one or both of the talon attacks is a critical hit, the jolt is so potent that the target is stunned for 1d4 rounds (creatures that are immune to electricity are immune to this stunning effect). The save DC is Constitution-based. Once the creature releases this charge, it cannot use this ability again for 1d4 rounds while it waits for the energy to build again (though this energy buildup does not affect the electrical damage from its regular talon attacks).

**Familiar Service** A mortal of 7th level or higher with the Improved Familiar feat can summon an impundulu to serve as her familiar; an impundulu familiar appears as a bird-like imp or quasit, has the normal statistics of an imp or quasit, and loses all of its own abilities except its subtypes, alignment, and damage reduction. If its master is slain, the impundulu seizes its former master's soul, retreats to a hidden place, and consumes the soul, after which it metamorphoses over the next 24 hours into its natural form, regains all of its normal abilities, and becomes free; most aging masters pass on their impundulu familiars to younger family members rather than let the creatures turn on them.

**Shaman Form (Su)** An impundulu using its change shape special quality can take on one specific humanoid form as if it had the change shape ability. This form usually resembles that of a jungle shaman, except it has claw-like fingernails and its feet end in talons. In this form, it cannot fly or use its breath weapon, electrical discharge, or hook attacks. An impundulu can remain in this form indefinitely. Its natural

form is its bird form. If killed, it reverts to its true form.

**Witchcraft** An impundulu serving as a witch's familiar gives its master additional spells known, just like a witch's patron.

The master must choose from one of the following patron themes when binding the impundulu, and this choice cannot be changed without dismissing and re-summoning the impundulu: Agility, Elements, or Transformation. These patron spells known are in addition to any granted by the witch's actual patron.

The tribesfolk of southern Garund tell tales of a ruthless winged shapeshifter, a bloodthirsty demon and hunter of men. They call this being impundulu, a name that loosely translates to "lightning-bird" after its savage avian form. Legend describes this creature as a huge, stork-like bird that rides upon fierce storms and whose dark feathers crackle with lightning. It is believed that an evil shaman summoned the first impundulu and that using an ancient, taboo ritual, the two formed a blood pact. The shaman offered the impundulu the ability to wear his mortal flesh in exchange for mastery over the demon's significant occult powers. As soon as the impundulu seized control of the shaman's body, it broke the pact—however, the ancient ritual bound the fiend to the mortal form, and even after the shaman perished, it could not shed its flesh. Thus despite its own immortality, the impundulu became forever tied to the realm of mortals. For this reason, it is said, the creature continues to forge pacts with mortal spellcasters in the hope that one day it will unbind the secrets of its cursed existence.

## ECOLOGY

Driven by dark and murderous desires, the impundulu stalks the fringes of the Mwangi's civilized areas, seeking out small villages and well-traveled rivers where prey is plentiful. Most of the time, the fiend hunts in its avian form. A hideous thing of similar appearance to a tremendous stork or vulture, it's readily identified by its distinctive long, jagged beak and its slender wings that each bear a hidden, hooked claw. Despite the creature's intelligence, it behaves barbarically and delights in gory slaughter. It precedes physical attacks by conjuring fierce, wrathful blasts of lightning to confuse and injure prey, then swoops in to rend its prey to pieces.

In its humanoid form, the impundulu manifests as a strikingly handsome man with glistening, coal-black skin, whose eyes burn a pale, otherworldly green. His legs end in monstrous raptor's talons, and his black fingernails hang long and curved. Using this form, an impundulu can wander through villages, stalking and seducing women with lies and magic, and preying upon them by draining their blood. The creature rarely uses its humanoid form, reserving it for times it wishes to engage in subtle cruelties.

## Impundulu Fat

The impundulu's fat possesses magical properties and is a highly sought reagent among tribal witchdoctors throughout the Mwangi Expanse. When properly rendered with a DC 28 Craft (alchemy) check, the fat becomes approximately 1 cup of sticky, highly combustible oil. Weapons dipped in the oil gain the flaming property for 10 minutes; 1 cup of this oil can coat up to five weapons or 50 pieces of ammunition.

Similarly, the oil dilutes healing potions while maintaining their strength at the original concentration. One cup of oil can dilute one *potion of cure serious wounds*, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, or 20 *potions of cure light wounds*, doubling the number of potions as a result (one potion becomes two, two become four, and so on). These potions cannot be diluted further without losing their potency.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Impundulus remain unknown outside of Garund, and have adapted to life within its pristine and primal jungles. Usually solitary in regard to their own kind, impundulus are rarely encountered apart from the influences of evil spellcasters. The association between witch doctors and impundulus is well known throughout the southern continent.

The two often form nefarious pacts that bind the beasts for several generations, and the demons frequently outlive their mortal cohorts, collecting their corrupted souls upon their deaths. Those foolish enough to summon an impundulu soon discover the extent of the creatures' guile and violence. Furthermore, many of these wily demons loathe mortals, and turn on their summoners the moment they complete their pacts.

## REAL-WORLD MYTHOS

The impundulu's real-world origins trace back to Xhosa and Zulu tribes of Southern Africa. Tribal folklore describes the beast as a great bird whose wings crackle with lightning. Tales depict it as a shape-shifting vampire able to take the form of a beautiful man in order to seduce its victims. Most consider the impundulu to be an otherworldly demon, though others believe it to be a supernatural creature which hatches from eggs buried in lightning-struck soil. It is oft depicted as the summoned familiar of a powerful witch-man who commands it to plague victims with illness or commit violent, evil acts.

# SERPENT'S SKULL

## OBAMBO

This spectral creature looks like a scarred and shriveled ruin of an ancient tribal elder, with skin caked with dirt and moss, and long white hair tangled with sticks. Sharp teeth fill its cackling mouth, and its eyes are tiny but bright and piercing. Jungle vines weave through its ghostly body, which appears stuffed with decaying leaves and other plant matter.

**OBAMBO**

**CR 13**



**XP 25,600**

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +21

### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 21, flat-footed 17 (+7 deflection, +4 Dex)

**hp** 175 (14d8+112)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +15

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, rejuvenation, incorporeal; **Immune** undead traits

### OFFENSE

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

**Melee** incorporeal touch +16 (1d6 Int drain plus daze)

**Special Attacks** jungle animus, thought eater

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 14th; concentration +21)

At will—*entangle* (DC 18), *enthrall* (DC 19), *goodberry*, *mage hand*, *obscuring mist*

3/day—*command plants* (DC 21), *giant vermin*, *hallucinatory terrain* (DC 21), *helping hand*, *move earth*, *rainbow pattern* (DC 21), *soften earth and stone* (DC 19), *spike growth* (DC 20), *tree stride*

1/day—*animate plants*, *creeping doom* (DC 24), *find the path*, *legend lore*, *mage's magnificent mansion*, *reincarnate*

### STATISTICS

**Str** —, **Dex** 23, **Con** —, **Int** 19, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 25

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 33 (can't be tripped)

**Feats** Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Iron Will, Lunge, Skill Focus (Perform [oratory]), Step Up, Toughness

**Skills** Appraise +21, Bluff +24, Craft (alchemy) +10, Diplomacy +15, Fly +18, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (nature) +15, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +21, Perform (oratory) +30, Sense Motive +24

**Languages** Common, Polyglot, Sylvan; *Speak with animals*, *Speak with vermin*

**SQ** unnatural aura

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** warm forests

**Organization** solitary or tribe (1 plus 1–2 giant flytraps or 1–3 shambling mounds)

**Treasure** standard

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Jungle Animus (Su)** As a full-round action, an obambo can invest its spirit into the land itself and cause the ground to rise up as a Huge mass of soil, mud, vines, roots, and

vermin. In this form, it has the statistics of an advanced giant shambling mound, except it keeps its own hit points.

**Rejuvenation (Su)** In most cases, it's difficult to destroy an obambo through simple combat, as the "destroyed" spirit restores itself in 2d4 days. Only after its remains or place of death is found and appropriate funeral rites are performed does it rest in peace and not return.

**Speak with Vermin (Su)** An obambo can communicate with vermin, similar to using *Speak with animals*. Vermin can only communicate with instinct-level information.

**Thought Eater (Su)** An obambo's touch drains 1d6 points of Intelligence and dazes the target for 1 round; a successful DC 24 Fortitude save negates the daze effect and halves the ability drain. The obambo gains 5 temporary hit points and a +1 bonus on all Intelligence-based skill checks for 24 hours with each successful Intelligence drain; these benefits stack. A creature reduced to 0 Intelligence by this attack is polymorphed into a Diminutive vermin (Fortitude DC 24 negates; otherwise treat as *baleful polymorph*).

**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals, both wild and domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of an obambo at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so unless their master succeeds at a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride, or wild empathy check. A panicked animal remains so while within 30 feet of the obambo.

When a person wise in the lore of the jungle dies and is not buried or given a funeral, the jungle itself may embrace her spirit, creating an obambo ("forsaken one"). The embittered spirit seeps into the ground, the roots of plants, and the crawling things beneath, becoming one with the jungle itself. An obambo is cunning, spiteful, and treacherous, but it remembers its old role of teacher and storyteller, a duty and an obligation it both loves and loathes. While dealing with an obambo is dangerous, they are known to assist those in need, if supplicants can meet the obambo's price.

## ECOLOGY

An obambo may rise when a tribal elder or shaman perishes in the wild and is never properly laid to rest. Without the proper rites to lead the spirit into the afterlife, the obambo is lost and sundered from its community and tribe, cursed to wander the wild. If the obambo's place of death can be discovered and its remains returned for proper burial (usually in a small house-like shrine on the land of a blood relative), its spirit is laid to rest forever, but few obambos ever find such peace. Instead, whispered memories drive the obambo to meander endlessly between jungle villages, all vaguely familiar but none ever seeming right. An obambo may be male or female.

Obambos are solitary wanderers of the bush and veldt. Animals shy away from them, but obambos share a keen spiritual symbiosis with vermin and plants. Through

an obambo's journeys, these are its audience, attending faithfully to the obambo's endless tales and treating it as a wise mentor and leader. Their obeisance, however, can never satisfy the obambo's yearning for the rapt attention of its former humanoid kind to its riddles, stories, and lessons. An obambo is easily angered by the foolish, however, and its stern reproofs often leave its pupils as drooling husks or mindless insectile drones. An obambo's plant or vermin sycophants have been known to devour such hapless wretches, or even to ravage entire villages as they sit enthralled by the obambo's tales. As long as a few survivors remain and learn from the obambo's teaching, it is satisfied. In any case, an angry obambo hardly needs assistance in the act of destruction, as an obambo's spiritual communion with the land enables it to merge itself into the land, rising up as a roaring titan melded of soil, mud, vegetation, and crawling vermin.

## HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Obambos often establish a reputation as darkling oracles, wise and knowledgeable about the jungle, its creatures, and its people. They create small shrines to themselves called *akinfa*, usually in hollow trees where supplicants may bring gifts and the obambo may sit within. These gifts may be of material wealth, but as a teacher, the obambo prefers gifts that show the talents of the supplicant, be it a crafted item, a song, a story, a riddle, or some other performance.

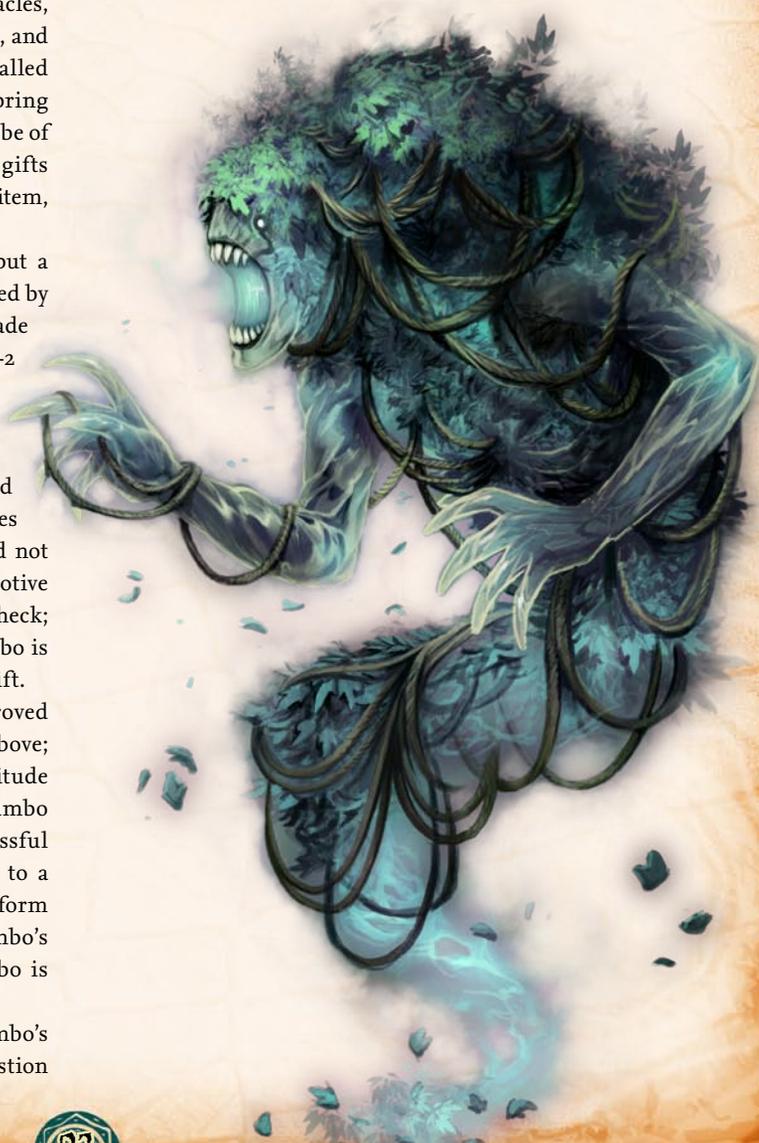
An obambo begins any meeting as unfriendly, but a supplicant may make a Craft or Perform check opposed by the obambo's Appraise skill to offer a gift he has made (offering a magical or masterwork item grants a +2 circumstance bonus on this check). If the supplicant succeeds, the obambo is impressed with his skill and its attitude becomes indifferent. If the check fails, the obambo remains unfriendly, and if failed by 10 or more, the obambo is insulted and becomes hostile. If a creature offers an item the creature did not personally create, the obambo is entitled to a Sense Motive check opposed by the supplicant's Craft or Perform check; if it succeeds, the obambo becomes hostile. An obambo is unaffected by Diplomacy until it receives a suitable gift.

An indifferent obambo's attitude may be improved with Diplomacy or by offering additional gifts as above; each gift that pleases the obambo improves its attitude by one step. Using Intimidate against the obambo makes it immediately hostile, as does any unsuccessful Bluff attempt. An obambo can also be challenged to a storytelling contest. The contest is resolved by a Perform (oratory) or Perform (sing) check opposed by the obambo's Perform (oratory) check; if the PC wins, the obambo is truly impressed and immediately becomes helpful.

Each time a supplicant tries to influence the obambo's attitude beyond indifferent, it responds with a question

or riddle, using its Bluff skill or one of its Knowledge skills; the supplicant must oppose the check with the same skill. Each time a supplicant fails this opposed check, the obambo becomes annoyed and all skill checks to influence him take a -2 circumstance penalty for 1 hour.

An indifferent obambo answers questions in riddles, requiring a Sense Motive check opposed by the obambo's Bluff check for the PC to understand what the creature means. A friendly obambo speaks more plainly, and visitors generally do not need to make opposed checks to determine its meaning. It may offer goodberries to supplicants who have offered it additional gifts. A helpful obambo answers questions clearly, and may also agree to use one of its spell-like abilities to aid the supplicant. However, an obambo expects gratitude and an additional gift after it lends its aid. If no gift is forthcoming, or the supplicant requests another favor, the obambo flies into a rage at the ingratitude and attacks.



## POPOBALA

A brawny, scallow-skinned figure looms, muscular but lean, dressed in a ragged loincloth and exuding a pungent stench. Wide, brown, bat-like wings replace its arms, and its feet end in taloned claws, while a single bulging eye leers out of its diabolical, bat-like face above a grinning, toothy maw.

### POPOBALA

CR 15



XP 51,200

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +10; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

**Aura** frightful presence (30 ft., DC 26), stench (DC 26, 1d6 minutes)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 29, touch 17, flat-footed 22 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural)

**hp** 225 (18d10+126); fast healing (see harvester of sorrow)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +17, **Will** +14

**DR** 10/magic; **Immune** disease, nauseated, poison, sickened, stunned

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

**Melee** bite +25 (2d6+6 plus 1d4 Cha drain), 2 talons +25 (1d4+6 plus grab and popobala fever)

**Special Attacks** rend (2 talons, 2d6+10)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 16th; concentration +22)

At will—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*

3/day—*dominate person* (DC 21, can only dominate and control person at a time), *eyebite* (DC 22), *feeblemind* (DC 21), *ghost sound* (DC 16), *spell turning*, *suggestion* (DC 19), *telekinesis* (DC 21), *ventriloquism* (DC 17)

1/day—*animate objects*

### STATISTICS

**Str** 23, **Dex** 22, **Con** 22, **Int** 17, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 22

**Base Atk** +18; **CMB** +24 (+28 grapple); **CMD** 41

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (talons)

**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Bluff +27, Climb +14, Disguise +18, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (local) +24, Perception +24, Perform (act) +18, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +27

**Languages** Common, Polyglot

**SQ** horrid haunting, change shape (bat, dire bat, or humanoid; *alter self* or *beast shape III*)

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** warm coasts or forests

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** standard

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Change Shape (Su)** A popobala loses its frightful presence, stench, and popobala fever abilities when not in its true (hybrid) form.

**Harvester of Sorrow (Su)** A popobala heals as a result of the

suffering of others. It gains fast healing if at least one creature within 15 feet has one or more of the following conditions: confused, cowering, dying, exhausted, fatigued, frightened, nauseated, panicked, shaken, sickened, staggered, or stunned. The amount of fast healing is equal to the number of appropriate creatures in the area (maximum fast healing 10).

**Horrid Haunting (Su)** A popobala may use *ghost sound* or *ventriloquism* as a free action whenever it is controlling a creature or object with *animate objects*, *dominate person*, or *telekinesis*. The ghost sound or ventriloquism originates from the controlled object or creature.

**Popobala Fever (Su)** A creature wounded by a popobala's talons is sickened for 1d6 minutes unless it makes a DC 25 Fortitude save. A creature already sickened by the fever becomes nauseated for 1d6 rounds. One already nauseated by the fever is helpless for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based. Resistance or immunity to disease applies to this ability.

The popobala is a much-feared shapeshifter that haunts and hunts warm coastal lands, roaming night and by day to terrorize and spread anarchy and unrest while slaking its insatiable twin urges for violence and prurience. Shifting freely between bat, human, and its natural form resembling a bat-human hybrid, the popobala is most dreaded for its mesmeric charms, but it is well able to engage in savage bloodletting against those who anger it. Popobalas are attracted to chaos, anarchy, and unrest, as the intensity of emotions and uncertainty inflames its already insatiable urges. War, changes of government, and religious or ethnic strife or persecution—all of these excite the popobala, and if society remains too settled and stable, it is never above fomenting unrest through its own predations.

A typical popobala in its natural form stands just over 5 feet tall, with a wingspan nearing 12 feet wide. Light of frame despite their considerable strength, most weigh little more than 100 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Popobalas are carnivores and blood-drinkers, preferring humanoid prey but able to subsist on any living flesh and fluids. As hunters, however, they do not necessarily kill their victims outright, as they are sensitive to emotional energies and psychic residues. Intense and powerful emotions are almost intoxicating to the popobala, and negative emotions rooted in fear, despair, anguish, and suffering have the sweetest savor to its palate. As the dead are incapable of offering up such delectable emanations, a popobala prefers to maim and disfigure, its molestation tearing away at the psyche and self-worth as well as the flesh of its victims. If threatened or resisted, however, a

popobala has no compunctions about meting out death, generally after it has flayed, beheaded, or otherwise made a trophy of the remains. If a victim does not feel the fear the monster wants to taste, its grisly remains can still be used as a tool to inspire terror in others.

A popobala is a master of disguise, though in its humanoid form the creature often has long, thin fingers, and unfortunate individuals who happen to have this innocuous feature risk persecution or even death in areas where a popobala is known to lurk. Popobalas can easily pretend to be strangers and travelers, but their proficiency at acting and bluffing is sufficient to allow them to impersonate people they have kidnapped or murdered. In humanoid form, they can eat and drink as they wish, though they gain no nourishment from any food but meat or any drink but blood, and their psychic hunger for suffering must still be satisfied. They have no need for sleep and often spend their nights lurking and watching in bat form, considering their next victims and periodically revisiting those they have previously attacked in order to bask in the suffering they have inflicted. A popobala has no fear of daylight, but it prefers to attack by night.

## HABITAT AND SOCIETY

A popobala typically lives among the communities in which it hunts. Being able to assume a humanoid guise, it may wander from village to village or linger in one place, seeking out the choicest targets to prey upon. It may even offer gifts to its intended victims to inveigle them into a secret rendezvous, or show them kindness and affection to make the victims' suffering all the deeper (and sweeter, to the popobala's monstrous appetite for anguish) once the popobala reveals its true form and intentions. A popobala is not always so patient, however, and will sometimes engage in nightly rampages of destruction and abuse of any that cross its path, rich or poor, male or female, from the youngest child to the oldest crone, eschewing subtle seduction for raw psychic violence and brutal compulsion.

A popobala prefers to indulge itself in private seclusion rather than revealing itself openly. When villagers believe a popobala is on the prowl, they often sleep outdoors, gathered around fires stoked bright all night long. In plain view of neighbors and friends, a popobala is less likely to strike, though it may speak through creatures or objects under its control to threaten and intimidate, or use its charms and trickery to break up a crowd and get its victim alone.

A popobala is extraordinarily vain and takes perverse pride in its reputation for cruelty and

abuse, and it insists that its victims spread the tales of what the popobala has done to them. Those who comply are usually left alone once the popobala has had its way with them, with only the physical and psychic trauma to deal with; those few who refuse are often visited again and again until the popobala is satisfied.

Local heroes and prominent figures often attract a popobala's attentions, out of jealousy for creatures receiving greater attention than it, with the popobala making sure that ruining such a celebrity brings woe not just to an individual, but to the entire community. Stealing items special or sacred to a community, vandalizing important structures (especially with embarrassingly true graffiti), and despoiling livestock also number among popobalas' favorite forms of recreational devastation.

Popobalas are solitary, as their egos and vanity can brook no rivals, especially among other popobalas. It is not merely that they do not wish to share their prey; they cannot abide the thought of another creature being more hated and feared than they. Paradoxically, a popobala might act to protect a community it preys on from external threats that might divert attention and terror from the popobala itself, rarely acting directly but more likely using its cunning and magical charms to hire or enslave others to fight on the community's behalf. Once the outside threat has been dealt with, the popobala resumes its reign of terror.



## SABOSAN

A high-pitched sound like the opening of a rusty hinge cuts through the air as a grotesquely thin humanoid creature glides to the ground on broad, leathery wings. A bat-like head crowned in brown and black fur darts from side to side. Despite the creature's feral appearance, its eyes peer forward with keen and penetrating intelligence.

<b>SABOSAN</b>	<b>CR 5</b>	  
<b>XP 1,600</b>		
NE Medium monstrous humanoid		
<b>Init</b> +4; <b>Senses</b> blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +14		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
<b>AC</b> 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)		
<b>hp</b> 52 (7d10+14)		
<b>Fort</b> +4, <b>Ref</b> +9, <b>Will</b> +6		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)		
<b>Melee</b> bite +10 (1d6+3 plus bleed 3), 2 claws +10 (1d6+3) or shortspear +10 (1d6+3), bite +5 (1d6+1 plus bleed 3), claw +5 (1d6+1)		
<b>Special Attacks</b> blood drain (1 Con), dread flight, fell shriek, powerful charge (bite, claw, or shortspear; 2d6+6)		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
<b>Str</b> 16, <b>Dex</b> 18, <b>Con</b> 15, <b>Int</b> 9, <b>Wis</b> 13, <b>Cha</b> 10		
<b>Base Atk</b> +7; <b>CMB</b> +10; <b>CMD</b> 24		
<b>Feats</b> Flyby Attack, Hover, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception)		
<b>Skills</b> Acrobatics +11, Fly +8, Perception +14, Stealth +14		
<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Polyglot		
<b>ECOLOGY</b>		
<b>Environment</b> warm forests or underground		
<b>Organization</b> solitary, hunting party (2–6), or clan (7–12)		
<b>Treasure</b> standard		
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
<b>Blood Drain (Ex)</b> A sabosan drains blood at the end of its turn if it grapples a foe, inflicting 1 Constitution damage. The sabosan prefer to drain helpless foes.		
<b>Dread Flight (Ex)</b> A sabosan can use its Hover feat to create a dust cloud as if it were a Large creature, except the dust cloud only has a 30-foot radius.		
<b>Fell Shriek (Ex)</b> As a standard action, a sabosan can emit a deafening cry in a 30-foot cone. Creatures in this area must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be deafened for 1 minute. The sabosan are immune to this ability. The save DC is Constitution-based.		
<b>Powerful Charge (Ex)</b> When a sabosan makes a charge, its attack deals extra damage (listed above) in addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge.		

Sabosan (singular and plural) are an intelligent and evil race of bat-like humanoids that dwell in warm and isolated

locations. A sabosan's emaciated frame belies a strength and agility not apparent from its gaunt appearance. Its giant, leathery wings can reach a span of almost 20 feet. Both males and females have red or dark brown fur on their heads, necks, chests, and backs. Male and female sabosan stand just under 6 feet and weigh only 150 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Sabosan are vicious predators, combining human intelligence with a bat's natural adaptations for hunting. They favor warm climates, preferring to make their lairs in places that are inaccessible to most intruders, such as mountaintop crags, abandoned ruins, subterranean caverns near hidden hot springs, and the dense canopy of jungle trees. With wingspans almost three times their height, sabosan are agile and graceful fliers, capable of traveling miles on a single current of air in their dauntless search for prey.

Although they can see as well as any human in daylight, sabosan hunt at twilight or after dark when their echolocation-based blindsense ability gives them a great advantage. Sabosan can also use their voices offensively, funneling their screeches into blasts of high-pitched sound capable of deafening other creatures. When hunting en masse or attacking foes, a sabosan employs its fell shriek on adversaries while other sabosan use their massive wings to churn up great clouds of dust and debris, rendering foes deaf and blind.

Despite such effective hunting and combat techniques, all sabosan appear gaunt and emaciated, as if constantly on the brink of starvation. Cursed with a fast metabolism, they must eat approximately three times as much as a human and supplement their diet with frequent blood-drinking in order to survive. Although they can feed on almost any creatures, sabosan take perverse glee in devouring other intelligent humanoids, seeing the blood of still-living humans or elves as a divine offering to their dead demon lord.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Sages debate the sabosan's origins. Some theorize that they are descendents of humans afflicted with vampirism whose bodies did not succumb to undeath, but still craved blood. Others contend that they were a tribe of humans who yearned for flight and were transformed in a corrupt mockery of their desire by a malevolent trickster god. Whatever their origins, the sabosan were once a great and populous race, living in the massive white-stone city of Jaytirian in the heart of the Mwangi Jungle. Here, the "dark-wings," as they were then called, worshiped the foul demon lord Vyriavaxus and the now forgotten sun god Easivra. When the Gorilla King and his angazhani followers marched on Jaytirian, the sabosan defended

their city and drove the high girallons back, but the siege nearly destroyed them. Those that survived were forced to quit their home and spread to the far reaches of the Mwangi Expanse.

In the centuries after the abandonment of Jaytirian, the other humanoid races of the Mwangi jungles came to know and fear the sabosan's shriek and thirst. Zenj tribesmen, jungle elves, and even the mysterious Umasi formed hunting parties to stalk and kill the blood-drinkers at the first sign of sabosan in their lands. Today, the sabosan live in small and isolated clans, having been hunted to the very precipice of extinction. Normally such groups consist of up to a dozen members, usually made up of some mated pairs and offspring of varied ages, invariably led by the best male hunter. Most sabosan still revere the demon lord Vyriavaxus, and thus chieftains also act as religious leaders, coordinating their tribe's attacks on other humanoids to appease the sabosan's bloodthirsty deity—usually these “priests” have no spellcasting ability, but a few have tapped into a source of arcane power or are granted spells by Zura, demon lord of blood and vampires. If outnumbered or overwhelmed, some clans will band together to defeat mutual enemies, but such alliances are always short-lived, as few regions are capable of supporting the dread hunger of more than one sabosan clan.

Females usually have one breeding season per year, and after an 8-month gestation produce a single, flightless pup. Sabosan young achieve full use of their wings relatively quickly but spend the first months of their life clinging to the chest of either parent, where they can experience flight and taste the fresh blood of their parents' victims. Children achieve reproductive maturity in just under 10 years, at which time females and males alike take an unrelated clan member as a mate if the clan's territory can support them. Otherwise, the new adults leave the roost and search for smaller clans or—in the case of some males—for territories that can support the creation of a new clan. Upon reaching maturity, some brave—or foolish—sabosan challenge their clan's chieftain for leadership. If the challenge is accepted, the two sabosan engage in a bloody melee, eschewing all weapons to fight with their claws and savage fangs. The Bout of Challenge, as it is known, lasts until death or surrender. Most sabosan choose death above surrender,

as losing the Bout of Challenge is to lose Vyriavaxus' favor and to no longer be considered a sabosan—and therefore not subject to the taboo against cannibalism.

## VAMPIRE SABOSAN

A small number of sabosan leaders have the vampire spawn template, and are easily recognized by their graying hair and red eyes. These undead still thirst for blood like their living kin, but do not need to eat solid food, and thus the rest of a spawn's clan have a slightly better chance at survival. Because of their powers, these spawn usually lead their clans. Due to a quirk of how the vampire corruption interacts with sabosan bodies, most sabosan cannot be made into full vampires, and any attempt just results in a vampire spawn sabosan. Among the sabosan spawn, there is a legend of the “Night King,” a true vampire of their kind who is destined to bring together the clans and break the back of the Gorilla King, seizing his lands for the sabosan and using his minions as food and slaves.



## TIKOLOSHE

The water churns and splashes as a small, stocky humanoid surges forth, gnashing rows of needle-like teeth, its eye sockets merely deep gouges. As if it were one with the water itself, it darts quickly forward, shouting curses and swinging its fists.

**TIKOLOSHE** CR 3   

XP 800

CE Small undead (aquatic)

**Init** +2; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., blindsight 30 ft.;

Perception +12

### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 26 (4d8+8)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +2, water diffusion; **DR**

5/slashing; **Immune** undead traits, **Resist** fire 10

**Weaknesses** blind

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft., waverider

**Melee** bite +6 (1d4+2), 2 slams +6 (1d3+2)

**Special Attacks** trickster's torment

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +5)

3/day—*invisibility*

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

**Skills** Climb +9, Perception +12, Stealth +13, Swim +10

**Languages** Common, Polyglot

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** warm forests, oceans, or rivers

**Organization** solitary, gang (2–8), or clan (9–20)

**Treasure** standard

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blind** A tikoloshe has no eyes and is blind. All creatures beyond the range of its hearing-based blindsense and blindsight abilities have total concealment against it.

**Trickster's Torment (Su)** Once per day, a tikoloshe can curse another living creature. As a standard action, the tikoloshe makes a melee touch attack and unless the target makes a DC 15 Will save, the target is treated as if under the effect of bestow curse, except that the curse's duration is only 24 hours. A creature can only suffer from one tikoloshe's curse at a time. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Water Diffusion (Ex)** When in water at least 2 feet deep, a tikoloshe's body seems to diffuse into and become part of the water, granting it concealment (20% miss chance) as if under the effect of *blur*. This effect ends immediately upon entering shallower water or setting foot on land.

**Waverider (Ex)** Up to 3 times per day, a tikoloshe can swim up to 30 feet as a swift action. It does not provoke an attack of opportunity for this movement.

Cruel and spiteful, tikoloshe (singular and plural) are small undead that haunt tropical waterways and jungles, preying on travelers and villagers alike with their magical abilities and appetite for harm. Tikoloshe stand no higher than a gnome or a human child, but their bodies are dense and muscular; many have large potbellies and arms long enough for their knuckles to score the dirt as they walk. Their creation leaves them with blackened, eyeless sockets, but tikoloshe can “see” using their giant, bat-like ears. Their skin is smooth and shines whether wet or dry. Tikoloshe are genderless; they stand about 4 feet tall and weigh almost 150 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Tikoloshe are created from the corpses of the dead, but are not mindless like some zombies or skeletons. Creating a tikoloshe requires a ritual wherein a spellcaster places a newly dead humanoid body in a specially crafted clay basin of shallow water and then bores a hole through the corpse's eyes with a red-hot poker. As the creator casts magical fire through this aperture, the surrounding water is rapidly drawn into the body. As it does, the corpse shrinks and changes, casting off all vestiges of its former features and replacing them with those of all tikoloshe. The conflicting forces of fire and water animate the tikoloshe and instill it with its well-known hostility. The tikoloshe's creator can exact one service from its new creation, but afterward has no control over the creature. A tikoloshe's undead traits and resistance to fire make it an ideal servant for many tasks. Some are forced to mine rare minerals deep underwater or to capture exotic elemental creatures on fiery planes. Other creators use tikoloshe as sinister pawns to curse or even kill hated adversaries.

Once released from servitude, tikoloshe prefer to inhabit waterways and shallow seabeds where they can rest undisturbed and where they can surprise travelers, fisherfolk, and swimmers. When partially submerged, a tikoloshe's body merges with the surrounding water, making it difficult to see and battle.

When not near water, tikoloshe dwell in shallow holes under rocks and large trees, and even under porches and raised buildings in small villages. While their bodies do not require food to sustain themselves, tikoloshe enjoy stalking and eating smaller creatures like birds, frogs, and rabbits. They particularly relish killing monkeys, as they enjoy the nearly human screams the unfortunate animals make. Tikoloshe will sometimes make ghastly fetishes of their kills and leave them on the fences or doorsteps of local settlements to hint at their presence and cause fear among those they seek to torment. As a result, many jungle tribes place rare or semiprecious stones on the thresholds of their homes as an offering

for tikoloshe to eat, claiming that doing so protects that home against the creature's wrath. Although some scholars dismiss such practices as abject superstition, druids and clerics of the Mwangi Expanse assert that by ingesting a potent fragment of earth, tikoloshe are able to soothe the opposing elemental forces within them and thus still their malevolent nature.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Tikoloshe form gangs and clans whenever possible, knowing that their ability to cause mayhem is greater in numbers. Individually, they haunt inhabited areas using their *invisibility* to cause strange, uncanny incidents like unlocking doors to animal pens, moving and breaking household objects, and spoiling food. Tikoloshe often use their curse to bestow bad luck on those that they haunt. Watching from their invisible perches, from beneath beds, and even from inside closets and cupboards, the tikoloshe take spiteful glee in observing those whom they have rendered suddenly clumsy, weak, or otherwise inept as they fumble even the simplest of tasks.

Many tikoloshe use their powers for more than mischief, however, and can prove a serious threat to both residents and travelers of the Mwangi Expanse. When fighting as a pack or clan, tikoloshe use their rapid swimming to close with foes, quickly swarming a single target and dragging it underwater. On land, groups of tikoloshe use invisibility to get close to opponents, seeking to curse as many enemies as possible before losing the element of surprise. They are cunning enough to use physically debilitating curses on heavily armed folk and mind-harming curses on those who they think might be spellcasters.

Individual tikoloshe always try to flee when faced with organized resistance. If tracked or cornered, tikoloshe plead for their lives by offering a service to their captors, usually the same one that was exacted from them upon their creation. Those who accept a tikoloshe's offer may indeed benefit from the creature's service, but they must also be very cautious, as tikoloshe are not bound by any promises they make once their original commitment to their creator has

been fulfilled. Cunning tikoloshe are known to barter their services for their lives, but only to buy enough time for their new masters to turn their backs.

## VARIANT TIKOLOSHE

Depending on the ritual used and the quality of the materials, some tikoloshe look different than the standard dwarf-gremlin variety. Some look like horrid Small werebears in hybrid form, or like a worm-like creature with a dog's head and golden tongue. These variants may or may not have the burned-out eyeholes of the "standard" tikoloshe.

## CREATING TIKOLOSHE

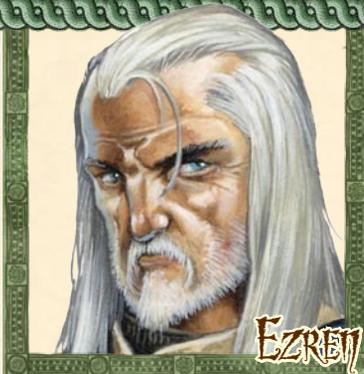
The process of creating a tikoloshe is more complex than for animating most undead creatures, but requires the same fundamental magic. Ultimately, the creation process culminates in the casting of the spell *create undead*. In addition to the normal components of the spell, creating a tikoloshe requires the equipment and process previously noted, adding 1 day of effort and 100 gold pieces to the typical requirements of the spell. Typically, a caster loses control over a tikoloshe after the undead performs one service for him, though creators of level 15 or higher retain control.

## TIKOLOSHE IN MYTHOLOGY

The tikoloshe is an evil zombie or water spirit depicted as a trickster in tales throughout Southern Africa. Able to hurl curses and turn invisible by swallowing pebbles, tikoloshe are described as playing all manner of poltergeist-like tricks on people, although some tales depict them assaulting sleeping women or biting off toes during the night, giving the creatures a more sinister quality. Descriptions of the tikoloshe vary from myth to myth, but most emphasize its gremlin-like features, small stature, and the burned-out holes where its eyes should be. Cultural historians claim that the latter links the creature definitively to Zulu mythology because of the importance of fire in most Zulu legends. To this day, the tikoloshe is synonymous with misfortune, and the creature's name is invoked whenever a person suffers bad luck.



# SERPENT'S SKULL



EZREN

## MALE HUMAN

DEITY Atheist  
HOMELAND Absalom

## CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Wizard 10  
ALIGNMENT Neutral Good  
INITIATIVE +3  
SPEED 30 ft.

## ABILITIES

STRENGTH 11  
DEXTERITY 9  
CONSTITUTION 12  
INTELLIGENCE 24  
WISDOM 15  
CHARISMA 9

## DEFENSE

HP 47  
AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+5 armor, -1 Dex)  
Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +13

## SKILLS

Appraise +13, Diplomacy +2, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (geography) +18, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (planes) +18, Linguistics +18, Perception +12, Spellcraft +18, Swim +5

## FEATS

Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Penetration, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration

## OFFENSE

Melee mwk cane +6 (1d6)  
Ranged +1 light crossbow +6 (1d8+1/19-20)  
Base Atk +5; CMB +5; CMD 14  
Special Abilities arcane bond, hand of the apprentice (10/day), metamagic master

Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +17)  
5th—*cone of cold* (DC 22), *prying eyes*, *wall of force*  
4th—*ice storm* (2), *stoneskin*, *wall of fire*  
3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (2; DC 20), *fly*  
2nd—*bull's strength*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray* (2), *web* (2; DC 19)  
1st—*alarm*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* (2), *shield*, *unseen servant*  
o (at will)—*daze* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*

Familiar weasel named Sneak

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 3rd, 50 charges), *alchemist's fire* (2); **Other Gear** +1 light crossbow with 20 bolts, masterwork cane (as club), dagger, bracers of armor +5, cloak of resistance +4, headband of vast intelligence +4 (Knowledge [planes]), backpack, rations (4), scroll case, spell component pouch, spellbook, 113 gp

Born to a successful spice merchant in one of Absalom's more affluent districts, Ezren's childhood was pleasantly safe. This changed when his father was charged with heresy. Ezren spent much of his adult life attempting to prove his father's innocence, only to discover his father was guilty. The revelation shook to the core Ezren's faith in family and church, and he abandoned both, setting out into the world to find a new life. Ezren fell naturally into the ways of wizardry, and swiftly became a gifted spellcaster.



KYRA

## FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY Sarenrae  
HOMELAND Qadira

## CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Cleric 10  
ALIGNMENT Neutral Good  
INITIATIVE -1  
SPEED 20 ft.

## ABILITIES

STRENGTH 13  
DEXTERITY 8  
CONSTITUTION 14  
INTELLIGENCE 10  
WISDOM 23  
CHARISMA 12

## DEFENSE

HP 68  
AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (+9 armor, +2 deflection, -1 Dex, +4 shield)  
Fort +13, Ref +6, Will +18

## SKILLS

Diplomacy +13, Heal +18, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +13, Swim -3

## FEATS

Channel Smite, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Iron Will, Selective Channel, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

## OFFENSE

Melee +2 scimitar +11/+6 (1d6+3/18-20)  
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20)  
Base Atk +7; CMB +8; CMD 18  
Special Abilities channel positive energy 6/day (DC 16, 5d6 [+7 vs. undead]), healer's blessing, nimbus of light (10 rds), sun's blessing  
Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; conc. +16) 9/day—rebuke death (1d4+5)  
Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +16)  
5th—*cure crit. wounds* (2), *flame strike*<sup>P</sup> (DC 21), *neutralize poison*  
4th—*div. power*, *fire shield*<sup>P</sup>, *freedom of move.* (2)  
3rd—*dispel m.* (2), *prayer*, *searing light*<sup>P</sup> (2)  
2nd—*aid* (2), *bull's strength* (2), *heat metal*<sup>P</sup> (DC 18), *resist energy*, *spiritual weapon*  
1st—*bless*, *e. elements*<sup>P</sup> (3), *s. of faith* (3)  
o (at will)—*c. water*, *d. magic*, *light*, *mending*  
D Domain spell; Domains Healing, Sun

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *wand of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3rd, 50 charges); **Gear** +3 chainmail, +2 heavy wooden shield, +2 scimitar, light crossbow with 20 bolts, cloak of resistance +1, headband of inspired wisdom +4, ring of protection +2, backpack, silver holy symbol, rations (6)

Kyra was one of the few survivors of a brutal raid on her hometown, and on the smoking ruins of her village, she swore her life and sword arm to Sarenrae. Possessed of a fierce will, pride in her faith, and skill with the scimitar, Kyra has traveled far since her trial by fire. She lost her family and home that fateful day, yet where another might be consumed by anger and a thirst for revenge, Kyra has found peace in the Dawnflower, and in the belief that if she can prevent even one death at evil hands, her own losses will not have been in vain.



**FEMALE ELF**

DEITY Calistria  
HOMELAND Varisia

**CHARACTER TRAITS**

CLASS/LEVEL Rogue 10  
ALIGNMENT Chaotic Neutral  
INITIATIVE +9  
SPEED 30 ft.

**ABILITIES**

STRENGTH 14  
DEXTERITY 21  
CONSTITUTION 14  
INTELLIGENCE 10  
WISDOM 13  
CHARISMA 10

**DEFENSE**

HP 83  
AC 24, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)  
Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +5; +2 vs. enchantments  
Senses low-light vision  
Defensive Abilities improved evasion, uncanny dodge

**SKILLS**

Acrobatics +23 (+28 on jumps), Bluff +13, Climb +15, Disable Device +18, Perception +16, Sleight of Hand +18, Stealth +23, Swim +15

**FEATS**

Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse

**OFFENSE**

Melee +2 keen rapier +14/+9 (1d6+4/15-20)  
Ranged mwk dagger +13/+8 (1d4+2/19-20)  
Base Atk +7; CMB +9; CMD 27  
Special Abilities sneak attack +5d6, trapfinding +5, trap sense +3

Rogue Talents bleeding attack, combat trick, fast stealth, improved evasion, trap spotter

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of invisibility*, acid, alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** +2 shadow studded leather armor, +2 keen rapier, masterwork daggers (8), amulet of natural armor +1, belt of physical perfection +2, boots of elvenkind, cloak of resistance +1, ring of jumping, ring of protection +2, backpack, grappling hook, hooded lantern, oil (5), rations (3), silk rope, thieves' tools, 25 gp

Merisiel's life experiences have taught her to enjoy things to their fullest as they occur, since it's impossible to tell when the good times might end. Never the sharpest knife in the drawer, Merisiel makes up for this by carrying at least a dozen of them on her person. She hasn't met a problem yet that can't, in one way or another, be solved with things that slice. While she's always on the move and working on her latest batch of plots for easy money, in the end it comes down to being faster than everyone else—either on her feet, or with her beloved blades. She wouldn't have it any other way.



**MALE HUMAN**

DEITY Cayden Cailean  
HOMELAND Andoran

**CHARACTER TRAITS**

CLASS/LEVEL Fighter 10  
ALIGNMENT Neutral Good  
INITIATIVE +7  
SPEED 30 ft.

**ABILITIES**

STRENGTH 18  
DEXTERITY 17  
CONSTITUTION 14  
INTELLIGENCE 13  
WISDOM 8  
CHARISMA 10

**DEFENSE**

HP 94  
AC 24, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 Dodge, +1 shield)  
Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +3; +3 vs. fear

**SKILLS**

Climb +16, Intimidate +13, Perception -1, Survival +12, Swim +16

**FEATS**

Combat Expertise, Disruptive, Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Step Up, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

**OFFENSE**

Melee +2 icy burst longsword +19/+14 (1d8+12 plus 1d6 cold/17-20) or  
Dual Wielding +2 icy burst longsword +17/+12 (1d8+10 plus 1d6 cold/17-20) and +1 short sword +13/+8 (1d6+4/19-20)  
Ranged +1 composite longbow +14/+9 (1d8+5/x3)  
Base Atk +10; CMB +14; CMD 29  
Special Abilities armor training 2, bravery +3, weapon training (heavy blades +2, light blades +1)

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), alchemist's fire; **Other Gear** +2 breastplate, +2 icy burst longsword, +1 short sword, +1 composite longbow (+4 Str) with 20 arrows, belt of physical might (Str and Con) +2, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, backpack, rations (2), silk rope, 14 gp

Born a farmer's son in the quiet Andoran countryside, Valeros spent his youth dreaming of adventure and exploring the world. For the past several years, he's been a mercenary with the Band of the Mauler, a guard for the Aspis Consortium, a freelance bounty hunter, and hired muscle for a dozen different employers. Gone is his youthful naivete, replaced by scars and the resolve of a veteran warrior. While noble at heart, Valeros hides this virtue beneath a jaded, sometimes crass demeanor, often claiming that there's no better way to end a day's adventuring than with "an evening of hard drinking and soft company."

## THE THOUSAND FANGS BELOW

by Graeme Davis

The PCs arrive in the Darklands ruin of Ilmurea to find it far from deserted. Tribes of deformed morlocks, daemon-worshipping monstrosities, and body-stealing intellect devourers control much of the ruins, along with a growing population of serpentfolk. After rescuing former Pathfinder Eando Kline, the PCs learn that the serpentfolk have recovered Ydersius's head and intend to reunite their god's mind with his body, thus restoring the glory of their empire and beginning a return to their ancient dominion over humanity. As they continue to explore, battling innumerable subterranean horrors, the PCs quickly learn that Saventh-Yhi is not just an Azlanti city—it's a weapon the ancients built to use against Ilmurea should the serpentfolk ever return.

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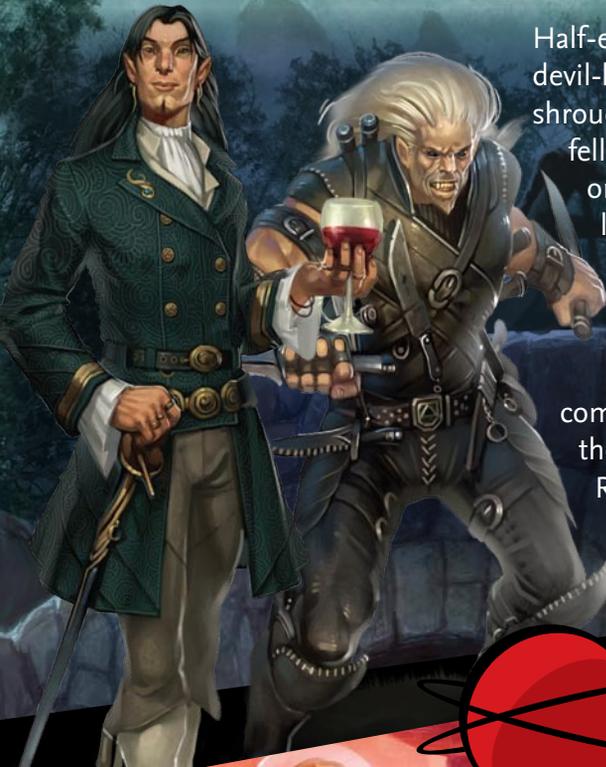


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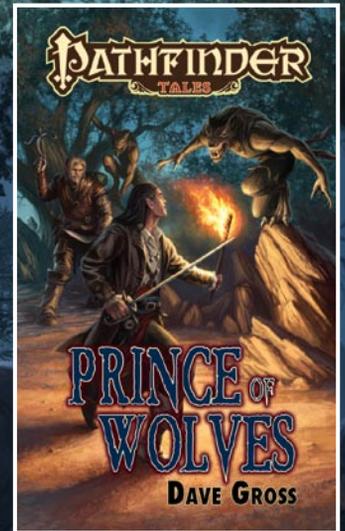
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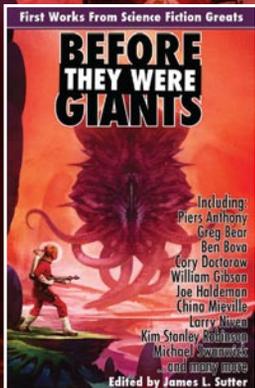
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# Mwangi Fauna

## Bluering Gecko

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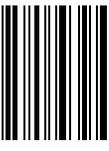
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