

COR4-07



FULL CIRCLE TO OBLIVION

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[™] Core Adventure by David Christ

Pride, cowardice, fear, and lack of faith have stripped bare the hearts of many a man of the cloth. Now all that remains is a boy, his broken father, and a village of the once damned on the edge of the Vale of Luna. The journey that started at the Flight of Fiends has come full circle and now all the pieces are in place. Powerful forces move in the shadows each on this night of the forsaken. Who has the best interest of the Flanaess in mind and can the heroes find the right path before the shadows step into the light once again? Part Four of Five in the "To Serve the Greater Good" series. For APLs 8-16.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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RPGA Sanctioned Play

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2005.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

Players Read No Farther

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

Preparing for Play

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in *bold italics* provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK

games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine this modified Average Party Level (APL) follow the steps below:

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLS are given in even-

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10	
7	7	9	10	11	

numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard two-round Core adventure, set in the general area of Veluna. Characters pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

SERIES BACKGROUND

This scenario is the fourth part of a five part series. It is important to be familiar with *COR2-07 Ashes of Innocence*, *COR3-03 Fury of a Cold Man's Heart*, and *COR3-08 A Man with Nothing*. If possible, review these adventure summaries of those modules to better prepare.

This series deals with the Flight of Fiends, the *Crook of Rao*, and what really happened.

The Flight of Fiends

In Coldeven 586 CY, His Venerable Reverence, The Savior of Our Lands, Canon Hazen of Mitrik, used the *Crook of Rao* to invoke the Flight of Fiends. This ritual banished thousands of demons, devils, yugoloths, and other outsiders from all parts of the Flanaess. In a single act, the entire power structure of the Flanaess changed forever. Nothing had such a widespread effect on the world since the Twin Cataclysms. All that is known to the general public about the ritual is the following:

- Canon Hazen served as the focal point of the ritual.
- It involved the College of Bishops (advisors to the Canon and made up of 21 of the most powerful priests in Veluna) and almost every priest of Rao in Mitrik (over 200 of them)
- Canon Hazen had the aid of the Archmage Bigby
- Some of the participants become sick after the ritual and some resigned their posts.
- Rumors that the Canon disappeared during the ritual abound and he has rarely made public appearances since.

The following describes what the players do not know:

- The ritual was not nearly as successful as generally believed. Hundreds of devils left voluntarily and hundreds more were betrayed by their own kind.
- Three of the bishops from the College of Bishops betrayed the Canon. They feared he lacked the strength to do what he planned and they made a deal with the evil. They falsely believed the greater good would be served by their actions.
- The ritual rendered the *Crook* nearly powerless. Nobody in the church knows what happened exactly but the *Crook's* power seems gone forever.

So exactly what was this betrayal? Canon Hazen had a dream that Rao himself visited him and laid out his plan for the ritual. The next morning, when the Canon told them of his vision, the people cheered and went about preparing the ritual as if Rao himself said it to them.

There were doubters though—three priests of *Rao*. The forces of evil seized upon this fact and started whispering dark promises into the doubters' ears. All they had to do was take an item into the ritual with them—a medallion holding the true names of 101 devils. The three priests were unaware of each other and took their medallions into the ritual. The Canon started to invoke the powers of the *Crook* and the Flight of Fiends began. As the ritual progressed each of the medallions slowly dissolved into mist. The devils whose names were in the three items (303 of them total) were pulled from wherever they were and banished back to their home planes. Hundreds more left voluntarily, making the ritual seem much more successful than it appeared.

The mist wrapped itself around the left arm of each bishop. As they watched in horror it seeped into their skin and formed tattoos on their arms and upper chest. The tattoos appeared as letters in Infernal that continually crawled around their skin, forming the true names of the 101 devils bound in the original medallion. They pulled their robes tighter around them and continued with the ritual until it ended. None knew of this betrayal until recently, when their web of deceit started to unravel around them.

Another important part of this series is a small boy named Aaront. In part One, Aaront is plagued by a beast

(called Theron) that resides within his body. In Part One of the series, the PCs managed to bottle the beast back up inside the boy. In Part Two, the PCs succeeded in removing the creature from Aaront's body. In Part Three, they managed to lock him away in Perdition with the other 302 devils from the ritual. The boy is still an enigma at this point, though his true nature becomes much clearer in this adventure.

Part One of this series dealt with the first of the three betrayers. Vadid fled Veluna ashamed of what he had done. He was followed by Aaront and tortured by the creature he contained inside of him. The PCs managed to stop the creature from killing anymore innocents but Vadid cracked from the pressure and guilt and was slain by the PC's thus passing the first curse to the players.

Part Two of this series dealt with the son of the second betrayer. Now a Knight of Veluna he was deep in the occupied lands of Iuz trying to free himself and his family of the curse. The players help his attempt but it fails. In trying he releases Theron from inside of Aaront and he fades away. The players most likely now have the second of the three curses and some hints that Iuz was involved in the betrayal and that something bigger than they thought it going on?.

Part Three of the series dealt with the demiplane of Perdition and the final priest involved with the betrayal. This priest, the father of the Aaront, took up the mantle of keeping the three curses with him in Perdition, thus trapping him and the 303 devils there. With the PC's help, they managed to get Theron, the only devil not in Perdition, trapped and the door sealed. However, this did not end the problems, as the priest trusted another to keep the curses and remain in Perdition in his place (typically one of the PCs, although this makes little difference).

This adventure, the final in the chapter, reveals the remaining secrets. Back in 586CY, the forces of Iuz learned of the planned Flight of Fiends. At first, they scrambled to find a way to stop it. When they failed to find a way, they turned to the Greater Boneheart, known as Kermin Mindbender, for anything he could think of to prevent this disaster from befalling them. Kermin devised a plan in which the Flight would go off, but perverted to serve Iuz's needs instead of those of Veluna and the rest of Old Ferrond. Thus, the Medallions of Dis were created and the names of the 303 devils were inscribed and contained within them. These 303 devils were considered risks and thought to be loyal to Iuz's father, Grazz't. Kermin believed he could banish the disloyal spies, infect the *Crook of Rao* with an evil spirit, spread a sickness to the priesthood of Rao, and prevent the Flight from working on any of Iuz's other forces. This ambitious goal was doomed from the start.

The Flight of Fiends began and the medallions were in their place to do their evil work. They dissolved as expected and delivered the true names of the 303 devils to the ritual. The medallions also released an evil spirit to the *Crook of Rao* to pervert its power, as well as creating a small demiplane where the forces of Iuz could be secreted away until the ritual concluded. Instead, the 303

devils remained in the demiplane (instead of those loyal to Iuz), the loyal ones were banished to their home planes,

Although the evil spirit was delivered to the *Crook*, the plan did not work completely. The *Crook*, sensing something amiss, secreted itself away in a small boy that was born the same night as the ritual. This evil spirit, Theron, went with the *Crook* and remained stuck in the child as well. The only thing that went exactly right was the plot to introduce a wasting sickness to the clergy of Rao (This issue is dealt with in a Veluna regional plotline).

Kermin was left wondering what went wrong, Theron was trapped, along with the *Crook*, in the boy, and unable to report on what happened. The wasting sickness would take years to show itself. Kermin chalked it up to a total failure and proceeded to make the best of it (per the history of the post Flight years in the *Living Greyhawk Gazetteer*).

The status quo continued for over a decade until Theron figured out how to escape and cause mayhem (hoping to draw the notice of somebody from Iuz so he could report). Unfortunately, the players found Vadid and Aaront first and, upon killing Vadid, took the first curse upon themselves. This set in motion the events that led to this point and many parties showed interest over the last three adventures. The PCs believe the troubles ended in Perdition but it proved a brief respite as various factions readied themselves and studied the players so to best manipulate them in the future.

This brings the adventure to the present. The door to Perdition remains open, Aaront still wanders with something (or somebody) inside of him, and forces move to take advantage of these situations and bring the story of the Flight of Fiends full circle to its conclusion. World altering events happen this night and the players may affect that shift in many ways.

The Primary Curse Bearer (PCB)

Throughout this adventure, there are times when knowing who the Primary Curse Bearer is. Though multiple people may bear curses at the table, only one serves as the primary curse bearer (referenced as PCB) in the adventure. The person who bears the most curses is the default PCB. If there is a tie, the DM should choose the PC that acts in the shadiest or greediest manner (or determine randomly).

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Introduction: There are four possible hooks to bring characters into the adventure. Each of those hooks provides slightly different information that could give the party different possible encounters.

Hook A—Curses: This hook is specifically aimed at those who betrayed the trust of Ra'ned Fillisp and left Perdition with all three curses. He tracks them down in Falsridge and gives them what for. In his ranting the players pick up some strange things happening to the north.

Hook B—Curses Removed: This is aimed at those who passed their curses on to Ra’Ned or lacked any curses to start with and let him keep all of them. They find a dying man from Perdition—his symbol magically and physically torn from his body. He informs the PC of what happened and then dies. An Intelligence check (DC 10) reveals that the boy’s father was the old priest from Perdition, Ra’Ned.

Hook C—Heroes: If the PCs have not played any adventures in this series this hook lures heroic-minded characters into the flow. They have to roll with it, as they lack crucial information.

Hook D—Greed: This hook may apply on top of any of the above three hooks. The PCs must roll a save during this handout and tell you the result (do not let the others know what it is). No matter what the player rolls he fails. Kermin does not allow his puppets to even think they possess a bit of hope.

Encounter One—Falsridge in Action: The characters enjoy their remaining day in Falsridge. Mobilization of the local militia happens all around them and the town seems very frantic. The PCs receive their hook from the introduction and may do a little digging around before they head north.

Encounter Two—Perdition in Flux: The players reach the cliff face where the entrance to Perdition one stood. The tunnel now serves as a local river and the old residents of Perdition built a small village on the shore. If a PC bears all three curses, those wanting the curses for themselves attack the adventurers. If the PCs do not possess the curses, the town is then under attack by those same forces trying to kill the residents to take each devil name one at a time. Same fight just from different angles.

Encounter Three—Who runs Bartertown?: The players get to meet the new ruler of the forsaken – Aaront. Most of the time he lives as a young boy content to play and enjoy life. When needed though, he takes on a very serious tone and dispenses information and justice with a firm hand. At this point, the nature of the curses and their connection to Theron become apparent. The players learn that the *Crook of Rao* is currently nothing more than an empty stick and that the curses are Theron. If a party member bears all three of them, they gain a new friend in their head.

Encounter Four—All Signs Point to You: The PCs learn of the various sides involved in at this point and must decide whether to support one of them or to go their own way. The possible sides include Kermin Mindbender (Loyal to Iuz—release his master’s fiends and send the 303 away), Theron (Loyal to Grazz’t—do nothing and the 303 devils are freed and the other fiends remain banished), or Rojan Arden (Loyal to himself—wants to undo Flight to be redone correctly). All three struggle to get back into the demiplane of Perdition, as what their goals can only be accomplished there.

Encounter Five—Now, About That Water Problem: The party must figure out how to get into Perdition. The portal to Perdition shifted to a portal to the Elemental Plane of Water, making it almost impossible to get near the portal to find a way to shift it back. The party learns

from Rojan that a *Medallion of Dis* is needed to shift the portal back. If the party possesses one, the task is easy. If they do not, Rojan, who does possess one, asks for a promise of their help to let them tag along with him.

Encounter Six—I’m the Devil in the Box: When the PCs get close to the portal, they find a chamber carved out of the solid stone above the portal—the result of some forces loyal to Iuz trying to get into Perdition. If for some reason the PCs decide to ally with the forces of Kermin they are asked to assist them in their efforts. In all other cases they attack to destroy the party.

Encounter Seven—Visions of the Past Present: The demiplane of Perdition shrunk since the players last visited. It now consists of the giant statue of Aaront (now 30 feet tall) standing over the room where the Flight of Fiends ritual was performed. The players enter this room and watch the ritual unfold over and over again from a rather unique perspective.

Encounter Eight—Time keeps on Shrinking: Once the players witnessed the replay of the Flight of Fiends, the demiplane of Perdition goes through another (and it’s final) shrinking period. They have 10 rounds before the plane collapses in on itself crushing anything in it into an infinitely small space. The only thing standing between them and the portal is the statue of Aaront, which seems to have other plans for the players.

Conclusion—Halfway to Somewhere: The players know where the ritual needs to be reversed, why it went wrong, and an idea on the options they possess if they manage to change the outcome of the Flight of Fiends.

INTRODUCTION

If somebody in the party bears any of the curses (and specifically if one PC bears all three of them) then give him **Player Handout 1** (Hook A).

If a PC managed to rid themselves of the curses in a previous adventure, provide them **Player Handout 4** (Hook B).

All others get **Player Handout 4** (Hook C)

If none of the PCs bear any curses, but exhibit sinister or greedy personalities that would cash in on an easy score, provide them **Player Handout 2** (Hook D).

It is possible for each in the group to have slightly different reasons for traveling and they are not required to make them known to others in the group.

ENCOUNTER 1: FALSBRIDGE IN ACTION

The wide and lazy Fals River rolls slowly along to your left as you approach Falsridge from the east. Tales of war and strife in the Baklunish west have the road heading east full of travelers. At the same time the road-heading west through Falsridge is packed with those types who seem to thrive in that kind of environment.

Mercenaries, adventures, and worse all stream towards the Thornwood gap and hopefully employment beyond.

Your group has been traveling west together since passing Veluna City a few days ago. Ahead lays Falsridge.

It's rebuilt dock area a bustle with activity. You can also notice even from this distance away a dark cloud hanging in the sky to the north. It appears some nasty weather is on the way and reaching Falsridge is fortuitous indeed.

At this point the party is probably looking for Ra'Ned. Falsridge is a bustle of activity due to large scale fighting going on in the northern parts of Veluna. Make sure to note this as the PCs travel around town asking questions and looking for Ra'Ned. A Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check (DC 14) finds him with a few hours of work.

Read or paraphrase the following:

After a bit of searching you find Ra'ned down by the dock area. You come upon him on the tail end of a discussion with a rather rough looking group of mercenaries.

"I plead with you," he says. "Please help me. I know I cannot meet your price but this truly is a danger that could make the Ket and Tusmit conflict pale in comparison. Please!"

The mercenaries just laugh and throw some copper at his head as they tromp off to the nearest tavern.

◆ **Ra'ned Fillisp:** human male Clr14; hp 115; cannot cast spells – needs *atonement*.

Development: Ra'ned tries to recruit mercenaries heading through town to take back with him to the Perdicion encampment, but with little luck. Between the problems in Veluna and the brewing war between Ket and Tusmit, the pickings prove slim and the prices are more than he can afford. If any in the party played *COR3-08 Man with Nothing*, he immediately recognizes them. His reaction depends on what they did at the end. If they kept all three curses then he becomes downright hostile and in that characters face (see Option 2 for his responses). If he kept the curses and the PCs helped out, he acts very friendly (See Option 1 for his responses). Either way he gives the following information (either screaming or pleading) to the players if the right questions are asked.

Option 1: Friendly Responses

Where are your curses?

"Another came after you. He claimed to be Rojan Arden and offered to take my place as his penance. Curse me for being fooled so easily. As soon as he had them, he left and Perdicion started coming apart at the seams."

Note: If the players played the adventure, an Intelligence check (DC 10) reveals Rojan Ardan as the paladin from *COR3-03 Fury of a Cold Man's Heart*.

"Why are you here and not in Perdicion?"

"Another took the curses and Perdicion has shrunk since then. The accursed and I were forced to leave and setup a camp outside. Shortly after we left, the river started up again and we are unable to get back in. Many have been

poking around the new village and I worry that something bad is about to happen.

"Why are you gathering help?"

"The ones who bear the marks are being hunted down and killed one by one. I find them each morning with their mark clawed or burned from their bodies. Somebody is gathering the marks and I fear what they might do once they possess them all. I need able bodies to prevent this. Rao no longer speaks with me and my church is too busy to deal with a heretic right now."

How does Aaront do what he does?

"I do not know but I count my blessings for it. He has some great force for good within him. I have seen it in action and so have you. He actually leads those who have left Perdicion right now. They follow him like some messiah. Every now and then he stands a littler taller and barks out some strange order in a voice not his own and then he goes back to playing with that ball of string. The orders make little sense (like put a hut here, or stack those stones over there) but they scurry to do it as quick as they can."

Option 2: Hostile Responses

"Why are you here and not in Perdicion?"

"Well a certain person here decided his word was worthless and left with the names <glares at that player>. Perdicion started falling apart shortly after that and we were forced to leave. The plan to keep the fiends away is unraveling my friend and it is your entire fault. When Iuz sweeps across old Ferrond I hope he makes your skull the first added to his road."

"Why are you here and not in Perdicion?"

"The shadows are moving around the town. I know they seek the bearer of the curses. For what I do not know but it cannot be good. They will eventually find you and I would rather it be here and now than in some gutter drunk after doing whatever those of you without honor do."

How does Aaront do what he does?

"None of your business! One of your ilk does not deserve to even be in his presence but I guess we have little choice in that matter right now."

Once the questions are complete, read or paraphrase the following:

"Enough idle chatter. I need you—no, the entire world needs you—to come North with me. We must travel to the cliffs of Downfall. The sooner we can get you to Aaront the sooner I think we will learn what exactly is going on."

If the PCs agree, go to "Encounter 2: Perdicion in Flux," below.

ENCOUNTER 3: PERDITION IN FLUX

Once the PCs arrive at Downfall, read or paraphrase the following:

The staggering height of the cliff known as Downfall casts its long shadow to the east as the sun sets. It is hard to believe it has been almost a year since you last set foot here but from the activity seen in the distance and the smoke rising from campfires show that much has changed since your last visit.

If none in the party bear the curses, the devils are currently attacking the village. Aaront is not currently here and they use his absence, and that of Ra'ned, to cull many of the accursed from the herd. If the party does contain the curse within its ranks the devils are waiting on the top of the cliff for them to arrive.

These devils are loyal to Kermin Mindbender and go out of their way in the first few rounds to avoid any character sporting the colored ribbon (Hook D). If that character does any hostile action or helps one not wearing the ribbon then the truce is off and they are fair game.

The village sits 200 yards away from the cliff face on the river that now flows from it. The cliff itself rises 500 feet into the air and stretches half a mile in either direction. The devils are either outside the village on the side the characters approach from (the devils are able to detect those PCs bearing curses) or they are in the village causing chaos and turn to face the players as soon as they realize they are there.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Thaskor**: hp 123; see Appendix 2.

☛ **Bearded Devils (2)**: hp 45, 45; see *Monster Manual* page 52

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Erinyes**: hp 85, 85; see *Monster Manual* page 54

☛ **Thaskor (2)**: hp 123, 123; see Appendix 2.

☛ **Hellcat**: hp 60; see *Monster Manual* page 54

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Ice Devil**: hp 147; see *Monster Manual* page 56

☛ **Thaskor (2)**: hp 123, 123; see Appendix 2.

APL 14 (EL 16)

☛ **Ice Devil**: hp 147; see *Monster Manual* page 56

☛ **Barbed Devils (2)**: hp 126, 126; see *Monster Manual* page 51

☛ **Thaskor (4)**: hp 123, 123, 123, 123; see Appendix 2.

APL 16 (EL 18)

☛ **Horned Devil**: hp 172; see *Monster Manual*, page 55.

☛ **Ice Devil**: hp 147; see *Monster Manual* page 56

☛ **Thaskor (4)**: hp 123, 123, 123, 123; see Appendix 2.

☛ **Barbed Devils (2)**: hp 126, 126; see *Monster Manual* page 51

Tactics: If they are interrupted attacking the village, the devil's plans are simple: destroy the party, toss bodies in the river, and go back to killing the accursed. If they are waiting for the party then they try to kill the bearer of the curses (PCB) and take his body away to the cliff top to do unspeakable things to. If they are capable of destroying the entire party then they do so. However, if they start to lose, and the primary curse bearer falls, they try to grab him and *teleport* away (for purposes of this encounter they *teleport* with the weight of the PC – his equipment stays behind though). If they manage to do this, they strip the curses from his body (see Appendix 3) and then toss his body off the cliff for the party to find later. The players have a faint chance of stopping this if they figure out where they went and get there quickly. They stand back from the edge of the cliff so there is no direct line of sight to them.

The devils in this encounter recently arrived themselves, and are unable to summon other devils.

Development: There is a chance that the curse bearer could have the curses unwillingly removed from him in this encounter. The process is painful and gruesome, but as long as the PC can afford a *raise dead* he recovers. Once the PCs deal with the devils they may continue into Perdition.

ENCOUNTER 3: WHO RUNS BARTERTOWN ?

Licking a few wounds you continue your journey into the village of the once accursed. You see many familiar faces from your time in Perdition. They have all grown hair now and many let it grow long enough to cover the symbols on their foreheads. They all seem very subdued and most refuse to meet your gaze and even those that do quickly turn away and look busy.

The PC may chat with those in the village if they want but they gain no useful information from them. They are happy to talk about crops, the weather, migratory patterns of ducks, but as soon as it turns towards the current problems, the curses, or anything relating they cease and point them to a small stone hut near the river and tell them to talk to the boy.

Once the PCs head over to the hut near the river they find three balls of twine. They are free to keep one if they wish. Let the player poke around for a bit if they want and when they are just about getting frustrated have Aaront tug on a characters shirt and ask what they are doing here.

☛ **Aaront**: male human (12 years old): hp 5; immune to all damage and spells. Cannot be *scryed* nor *detected* in any fashion.

Development: Aaront is happy to “play” with the characters and answer questions. Sometimes he answers them as Aaront, and sometimes it is the *Crook* talking.

Try and change the tone and inflection in your voice as you do them. The *Crook* is very serious and straightforward, and while it is an intelligent magical force, it possesses neither the concepts of sight or sound nor the passage of time on small frames of reference (such as hours or days). If any of the players have the curses Aaront will, at some point during the conversation, ask about them. Described below are some typical questions the PCs might ask Aaront (and the *Crook* when Aaront switches voices):

What are those moving marks on your body?

"I do not like them. They remind me of the bad man who was in my head. He is in yours now. I can tell."

Why do these people follow you?

"I do not know. They ask me things, then I seem to lose track of time and next thing I know they are running around doing funny things. I think my friend is telling them something but I can never tell what he is doing."

Your friend?

"Yes, my friend. He has always been around. My mother always said it was nice to have imaginary friends, but that I would have to stop talking to him one day when I grew up."

Note: After Aaront finishes the *Crook* takes over for a moment. Read or paraphrase the following: *The boy's demeanor suddenly changes. When he speaks, the voice is not his own—it is deeper and more ancient sounding. "The boy is under my protection. Do not seek to do him harm."*

How do you do all the amazing things?

"I do not know. It's great fun, but often scares people. I just think something and sometimes it happens. I think it is my friend just trying to make me happy."

Why do you talk differently?

"Who was who? Oh my friend spoke again, didn't he? Let me see if he wants to talk some more. Again, the boy's voice changes completely. "I am the voice of the will of the righteous. Want do you want of the boy?"

At this point the *Crook* can be asked some more questions and the players might figure out what it is.

Who or what are you?

"I am not anybody. I am the creation of my masters will set to form to guide the faithful of the Vale. While I may not look as I have for the past 500 hundred years I am the same."

Master?

"The enlightened one gave me shape and form. It is for he that I exist."

Note: A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 14) to know that is Rao.

So you are the boy?

"No. The boy is merely the container I have been forced to inhabit for the short term. Ever since the ritual years ago I have not been able to inhabit my original vessel. Though I do not think its bearer realizes I am gone."

Are you the Crook of Rao?

"Yes, that name does seem familiar to me. I have not heard that name in a long time. Not since that wizard called me by it and stuck that tainted fiend and me into this space."

Wizard?

"You're all the same to me. Slightly brighter or darker voices are all I sense."

Did the Flight of Fiends work?

"Yes and no. Fiends were locked away, but not as hoped...or where we thought. Over the years, some escaped, and turned to the service of the One. Beware their wicked betrayals."

Why are the clerics of Rao dying from the wasting disease?

"It is part of the corruption of the ceremony. Until the ceremony is fixed the sickness will continue."

How do we get rid of the symbols?

"You cannot. Only a devil whose symbol is upon you, or the ceremony itself, can remove them."

Once the *Crook* finishes the conversation, Aaront seemingly returns to normal and laughs a bit. Says he hopes his friend was helpful. He then points to the distance (beyond what the players can see) and asks why more men are coming from that direction.

The players may prepare as they wish, but those coming only wish to talk to the boy and ask some of the same questions the players did. The *Crook* wants this to happen and the players find it hard to even attempt hostile actions during the next encounter.

ENCOUNTER 4: ALL SIGNS POINT TO YOU

At this point the characters should realize the *Crook of Rao* inhabits the boy Aaront, and that fiends are after the symbols/curses. They know some people are coming and may prepare if they want but this is not a combat encounter. The players should realize it is another chance for them to learn about those moving in the shadows around them.

From over the hill in the distance comes a small group of three on horseback. Another rider appears from the south. They both ride straight for the village, and while they do not appear hostile, they wear armor and carry weapons. They appear to be independent of each other.

The first group consists of Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz,—a lesser Boneheart in the service of Kermin

Mindbender, and her two guards. Some players may recognize her from *COR3-03 Fury of a Cold Man's Heart* and perhaps even killed her in it. Just like the heroes often do, she has been *raised* from the dead to serve her master once again. She is very cocky and confident and at no time tries to start something with the characters. She knows she must keep her hatred buried deep in order for the boy to tell her what she wants.

The lone man is Rojan Arden (from *COR3-08 Man with Nothing*). He has fallen far since the players last met him. If none of the PCs bear the curse, then he possesses all three, having tricked Ra'ned into giving them to him. If a player bears the curses then the PCB fills that position in the following dialogue.

☞ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** human female Cleric [Varies (Iuz)], see Appendix 1.

☞ **Temple Guards (2):** human male Ftr8, hp 66, 61, see Appendix 1.

☞ **Rojan Arden:** human male Pal 14 (Rao—Fallen); hp 154, see Appendix 1.

Development: The *Crook* acts like a neutral party in this encounter, letting all sides share the information to see how they interact with each other so it may choose its actions better down the road. To help facilitate this, the *Crook* generates a very powerful *calm emotions* effect centered on Aaront (200-foot radius. Will save [DC 42]). While possible that a player could make this save or go beyond the radius, encourage them to take the hint and gain as much information as possible from this encounter.

This plays out in three parts. First Alijah asks a few questions on behalf of her master. She remains close by, curious about what the others want. Next, Rojan asks his questions. Finally, Theron asks his. If Rojan bears the curses, his voice shifts (Intelligence check [DC 16] for a character to recognize it as Theron's) and he asks the questions. If a player bears the curses, they may be surprised when his voice changes as he asks the questions.

Change or paraphrase the following text as required when the players ask questions. Each of those asking may interrupt each other to ask questions as well.

Alijah:

"So you're looking good for a five-century-old piece of wood," chuckles Alijah. "I want to know—can the Flight of Fiends be completely undone?"

"Yes," says the Crook.

"Excellent. My master will surely love to hear that answer. Can you tell me how?"

"No."

"Oh?" says Alijah, clearly disappointed. "Too bad. Do you know how I can find out?"

"Enter Perdition and watch time unfold," says the Crook. Alijah turns to face the primary curse bearer. "Soon you and your scum brethren will be locked away where you should have ended up twelve years ago. Betraying the master is not wise. I will be entering Perdition soon. You'd best not stand in my way."

Rojan:

"You are looking well old friend, says Rojan. "The child suits your nature well. If the Flight of Fiends can be undone then I assume it could be redone immediately and lock all of these fiends away for good?" "Yes," says the voice of the Crook. But timing is everything. If it fails all the fiends will become free."

"How do I find out what I need to do?" asks Rojan. "Enter Perdition," responds the Crook, "and watch time unfold. Rojan seems satisfied. "That is all I needed to know. I already know where to find the information and as my path is righteous I know I shall win through in the end."

Theron:

"I enjoy the status quo," says Theron. "I am free and all those who would have imprisoned me are locked away." He turns to face you. "Let us be honest here. Would you rather undo the entire Flight and free thousands or would you rather have things be as they are now with a few hundred released. "If nothing is done will I and all of my brethren eventually be free?" he says to the "boy."

"Yes," replies the Crook, "and at that point, nothing can change what has been done. See, a simple answer for doing nothing."

As each finishes their question they hang around for a short bit (as long as they are learning something from somebody) but when things get dull they are gone (or just stop talking in Theron's case).

The PCs have a choice. The best outcome is what Rojan proposes but he betrayed the trust of another already and if he fails his outcome is the worst possible one. They may help Theron by doing nothing and in doing so they free even more of the 303 but that thousands remain locked away. Even those who are greedy might even think about helping Alijah for the reward. The choices are many but finding a way into Perdition is the key.

If the PCs try to follow Alijah and her minions, or attempt to track them down later, they cannot be found, having used *dimension door* to begin working on their entrance to Perdition.

Aaront goes back to playing as if nothing happened. The *Crook* does not make itself known again and Aaront ceases to be a source of information in this adventure.

The PCs are now free to travel to Downfall. Go to "Encounter 5," below.

ENCOUNTER 5: NOW ABOUT THAT WATER PROBLEM

The sheer cliff face of Downfall rises up before you. Shrouded in eternal shadow at the base of the cliff lies the opening that once led to the gate to Perdition. Forty feet wide and thirty feet tall, the opening water now pours out at a furious rate, feeding the river that snakes through the village to the east. From memory, you know it goes back about fifty feet before angling up for a couple hundred feet to the gate area.

Development: This is a very free-form encounter. The PCs are free to come up with their own method of getting to the gate. As long as they come up with a sound way to get around it, you should allow it. Some methods include casting water breathing and moving through the water, freezing the water and chopping through it, or simply teleporting into the area.

The PCs may realize that if water is coming out of the portal, then it's unlikely to lead them to Perdition. The only person who knows the answer to that is Rojan.

Rojan agrees to tell the party how to change the gate's attunement in exchange for being allowed to go through with them and view what happens on the other side. If they agree, he tells them that a *Medallion of Dis* is needed to change the gate back to Perdition. If they lack one, he provides one and allows them to tag along with him in exchange for a favor to be named later. Unless the party physically forces Rojan to stay behind, he goes to Perdition and witnesses everything that party does.

Once they reach the portal, and before they can cross into it, the PCs notice a large carved-out area above the portal and behind it. This is the staging area for the forces of Alijah, who attack the party without mercy the moment they are sighted.

ENCOUNTER 6: I'M THE DEVIL IN THE BOX

Adjust the following text as needed, based on the PCs' mode of arrival:

Arriving in the gate area, you see a circular blue portal 10 feet in diameter. It spews water out at a furious rate. Just behind the portal is a semi-dry area, seemingly kept clear of water due to the pressure of the water flow in the other direction. It appears somebody excavated a large area behind it and you spot lights wavering from there.

The portal room is 30 feet wide, 60 feet long and 20 feet high. The portal sits in the middle and thus half the room is totally underwater. The back half has only 2 to 3 feet of water in it.

Allow the PCs to make Spot and Listen checks to see or hear Alijah and her minions. Alijah is expecting trouble, although she does not know from where or when. If caught off guard, adjust their tactics and precast spells accordingly. A guard stands by the opening to watch the portal area.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Temple Guard:** Male human; hp 44; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** Female human Clr6 (Iuz); hp 47; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Hanrit Onwager:** Male human Wiz6, hp 48; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Temple Guards (3):** Male humans; hp 44; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** Female human; Clr8 (Iuz), hp 90; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Hanrit Onwager:** Male human Wiz8; hp 57; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 14)

➤ **Temple Guards (2):** Male humans; hp 66, 66; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Temple Wizard:** Male human; hp 59; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** Female human; hp 94; see Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 16)

➤ **Temple Guards (4):** Male humans, hp 66, 61, 63, 62; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Temple Wizards (2):** Male and female humans, hp 59, 58; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** Female human; hp 94; see Appendix 1

➤ **Ice Devil:** hp 147; see *Monster Manual* page 56

➤ **Barbed Devil:** hp 126; see *Monster Manual* page 51.

APL 16 (EL 18)

➤ **Temple Guards (4):** Male humans; hp 66, 61, 63, 62; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** Female human Clr16 (Iuz); hp 151; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Hanrit Onwager:** Male human Wiz16; hp 113; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: The portal room is 30 feet wide, 60 feet long and 20 feet high. The portal sits in the middle and thus half the room is totally underwater. The back half has only 2-3 feet of water in it. In the back of this area, a 20-foot wide opening, appears 10 feet up on the back wall. This opens up into a 90-foot spherical space that Alijah and her troops' camp sits. As long as the party takes precautions they should be able to sneak up on them without too much trouble. At all APLs the devils are not present to start. They show up after combat starts when Alijah contacts them telepathically (at the start of 2nd round of combat).

These troops are loyal to Kermin Mindbender and go out of their way in the first few rounds to avoid any character sporting the colored ribbon (Hook D). However, if a PC wearing a ribbon attacks or does anything hostile, the truce is rendered null and the troops attack.

Treasure: Loot the bodies of the fallen.

APL 8: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: *peripart of wisdom* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of counterspells* (333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character),

amulet of health +2 (333 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: *periapt of wisdom* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of counterspells* (333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +3 (750 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *amulet of health* +2 (333 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character)

APL 12: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: +2 *full plate* (471 gp per character), +2 *large steel shield* (348 gp per character), +2 *heavy mace* (693 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *pearl of power 2nd* (333 gp per character), *periapt of wisdom* +4 (1,333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (83 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character)

APL 14: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: +3 *full plate* (887 gp per character), +2 *large steel shield* (348 gp per character), +2 *heavy mace* (693 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +3 (750 gp per character), *pearl of power 3rd* (750 gp per character), *periapt of wisdom* +4 (1,333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (83 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character)

APL 16: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: *periapt of wisdom* +6 (3,000 gp per character), *ring of counterspells* [3] (333 gp per character), *strand of prayer beads* (3,816 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +3 [2] (750 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 [2] (333 gp per character), *pale blue rhomboid ioun stone* (667 gp per character), *pink rhomboid ioun stone* (667 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +6 (3,000 gp per character), *orange prism ioun stone* (667 gp per character), *amulet of health* +2 (333 gp per character), *incandescent blue sphere ioun stone* (667 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character)

Development: Once a *Medallion of Dis* is brought within 5 feet of the portal it shifts to red, the water stops,

and those passing through it find themselves in Perdition. Go to “Encounter 7,” below.

ENCOUNTER 7: VISIONS OF THE PAST PRESENT

Stepping through the portal, you are once again whisked away to the demiplane of Perdition. Upon arrival, it's immediately apparent that things have changed since you last visited. What was once a vast replica of Mitrik has now shrunk down to a 100-foot diameter cubby-hole. Behind you, the statue of Aaront that once dominated the landscape now stands a mere 30 feet tall. Down a small slope in front of you sits a vision of the central chamber of the Grand Temple of Rao in Mitrik. A soft blue light emanates from somewhere within.

The players may remember the scene before them from previous dreams, either in *COR2-06 Ashes of Innocence* or *COR3-08 A Man with Nothing*.

Inside the temple room, an illusion of what happened during the flight of fiends plays over and over again. The players may walk within the playback and see things from different angles but they cannot stop or change what is going on in any fashion.

The playback fills in a lot of clues as to what is going on, although it takes place over a large space with many people doing a many things. Give the players the impression that they must focus on given aspects of the playback at one time. There are four important scenes (DC 26 Spot check to notice the shadow in the mix) that a character may focus on (multiple PCs could watch different things during the same playback if they wish). Once the PCs viewed all four scenes, they should be able to piece together the events and realize the way to fix the problem.

As you enter the temple room, things obviously are not the same as they did last time you were here. You stand in a large domed room approximately 200 feet in diameter. The center area is a 80-foot circular area, surround by a raised seating area that runs the diameter of the room. The floor in the center sits 15- feet below this seating area. The place is full of noise and illusionary bluish figures in motion. Over two hundred images reenact some kind of ritual over and over again.

In the center of the room stands an old priest of Rao, holding a large shepherds staff over his head. To his left, partially shrouded in shadow, stands a robed wizard who seems busy in completing a casting. Twenty-one priests of Rao stand opposite the figures, their hoods pulled back and arms raised in song. The rest of the priests sit in the seats surrounding the central area. Whatever they are reenacting it is moving very fast and repeats itself every couple of minutes.

The scenes being played over and over again are images of the Flight of Fiends ritual. A Knowledge (religion), Knowledge (history), or bardic knowledge check (DC 16) reveals this fact. This is made immediately apparent to anyone that played *COR2-06 Ashes of Innocence*, as they saw it reacted during that adventure as well.

If the players are familiar with the people in the images, see below. If not, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (history) check (DC 20) reveals the figures for who they are,

When a PC focuses on a specific person during the reenactment, read the following.

Canon Hazen:

The old man in the middle raises his hands into the air and starts his psalms of praise to the Reasoned One. The priests surrounding him sway in motion as they join in the glorious song. A flash blue light bursts out from the staff he holds over his head and the dark black spirits of the fiends are sucked into it.

Unnoticed by the old priest, a black wisp of dark smoke begins winding its way towards the staff from the circle of priests that surround him. When it touches the staff, black streaks form on the wooden exterior, appearing to age before your very eyes. The poison continues to spread as more dark shapes are sucked into it. With a final flash, the ritual ends and the staff once again looks as it did before. Out of the corner of your eye, you see an almost solid looking shadow made of white and black smoke slowly fading into the floor.

Suddenly, the old priest collapses to one knee and the robed man moves forward to help. The scene pauses a moment, then begins again.

Bigby:

As the ritual progresses, the robed man keeps a focused eye on the old priest in the middle. At various times, he moves his hands in an arcane fashion as if casting something in support. You cannot make out his voice. A blue light flashes out from the room and the screech of fiendish creatures echoes through the room, their forms are sucked into the room and disappear into the staff of wood. This punishment of the fiends continues for nearly a minute.

Strangely, the scene slows down to a normal speed. The man finishes casting a spell, creating a small "rip" in the air beside him. Some of the dark shadows disappear into this rift instead of being sucked into the wooden staff.

Suddenly, the old priest collapses to one knee and the robed man moves forward to help. The scene pauses a moment, then begins again.

Traitor Priests (Vadid, Thelton, Ra'Ned):

The ritual beings and the robed masses of Raoan priests begin signing psalms to the glory of Rao. Twenty-one priests stand on the floor, raising their hands to channel their power towards the old priest as he raises a wooden staff over his head. A blue light bursts outward and a shriek echoes through the room as shadowy visages of

horror are sucked into the room and disappear into the wooden staff. You see three of the priests pull out medallions from beneath their robes. Surprisingly, the medallions immediately turn to dust and fade away into the mass flowing into the staff. The robed man seems to acknowledge this, but says and does nothing.

Finally, after what seems like an eternity the old priest collapses and those around him move forward to help. The scene pauses a moment, then begins again.

Shadow (Spot Check [DC 26] to notice):

The ritual beings and the robed masses of Raoan priests begin signing psalms to the glory of Rao. At first you thought the moving shadows were from the swaying priests and flickering torches, but after a few moments you realize one shadow moves with a bit too much purpose to simply be normal. As you watch, the shadow moves behind three of the priests in the circle on the floor, each in turn. It seems to whisper something to each priest before moving on to the next. As you focus on the shadow, the voices from the surrounding priests seem to fade into the background and you hear what the shadow says with perfect clarity"

"Circles have no start nor end. This one shall spin till it mends. Each year, at this precise time and place, the rift will open to unknown space.

Speak the word and judge those there. Yea or Nay to walk in fresh air.

Only one may judge and speak the word. Or until time collapses they will never be heard"

Development: At this point the players should have a general idea that something happens at a specific time and place in the future, as well as the fact that they must take action. Allow the PCs to make Knowledge checks to realize some of these facts, as described below:

Knowledge (history) (DC 18): The Flight of Fiends happened in Coldeven (about 3 months from now) back in 586 CY.

Knowledge (history) (DC 20): The Flight ritual took place in the main chamber of the Grand Temple of Rao in Mitrik (Veluna).

Once the PCs gather enough info and start thinking about where to go or what to do next continue to Encounter Eight.

ENCOUNTER 8: TIME KEEPS ON SHRINKING

As the scene of the Flight disappears the ground underneath your feet begins to vibrate and groan. The room appears to be shrinking. In fact everything other than yourself appears to be shrinking.

Players should make haste to exit the demiplane before it collapses in on them. As they get near the portal, they find Theron has one last surprise for them. The statue of Aaront gained some new intelligence (it now has an effective Int 4, although it is still immune to mind-

affecting magic) and does what it can to keep the players from escaping. When Theron speaks, his voice comes from either Rojan or the PCB. Read or paraphrase the following text, replacing Rojan with the PCB if applicable:

As you top the rise to the portal you notice the statue of Aaront has shifted and now blocks the way to the portal. Rojan pauses and shudders for a moment, before pointing to the statue. "I told you I wanted things left alone," he says in a deep, infernal voice. "Only you know what must be done and thus you cannot leave here alive."

APL 8 (EL 9)

➔ **Earth Elemental, Greater:** hp 199; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➔ **Stone Golem:** hp 107; see *Monster Manual* page 137.

APL 12 (EL 13)

➔ **Advanced Stone Golem:** hp 155; see Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 16)

➔ **Greater Stone Golem:** hp 271; see *Monster Manual* page 136.

APL 16 (EL 18)

➔ **Greater Stone Golem (2):** hp 271 each; see *Monster Manual* page 136.

Tactics: The animated statue is not very bright (Int 4, regardless of creature type), but attacks with remarkable ferocity. Due to its empowered nature, an *amulet of golembane* has no effect on the statue. The portal is a 10 feet circular opening, sitting at the back of a 30-foot by 40-foot flat space on the top of the hill. Entering the portal from any direction takes the character out of Perdition.

Each round the demiplane of Perdition shrinks by 10 feet. This includes everything in Perdition other than the PCs, the statue, and the portal. The plane shrinks to nothingness in 10 rounds, killing the PCs inside with no chance of returning from the dead.

CONCLUSION: HALFWAY TO SOMEWHERE

If the PCs manage to escape the rapidly shrinking demiplane of Perdition, they are victorious. Read or paraphrase the following:

With a gasp, you tumble through the portal into the wet floored tunnel. The portal crackles with electricity behind you for a second before collapsing with a flash of light. It is gone.

The knowledge of what truly happened at the ritual could change everything. Knowledge of this type is

dangerous to possess and has a way of getting out into the world, causing untold damage.

You are now armed with this knowledge. Now you just need to stay alive, decide which side actually serves the greater good, and wait. The day of reconciling approaches.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 2: Perdition in Flux

Defeat the Devils.

APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

Encounter 6: I'm the Devil in the Box

Defeat or neutralize the forces of Iuz.

APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

Encounter 8: Time Keeps on Shrinking

Escape Perdition and/or defeat portal guardian.

APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 8	225 XP
APL 10	270 XP
APL 12	315 XP
APL 14	360 XP
APL 16	405 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP
APL 12	1,575 XP
APL 14	1,800 XP
APL 16	2,025 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section

within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter 6: I'm the Devil in the Box

Loot the forces of Iuz.

APL 8: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: *peripat of wisdom* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of counterspells* (333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *amulet of health* +2 (333 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character)

APL 10: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: *peripat of wisdom* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of counterspells* (333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp per character), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +3 (750 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp per character), *amulet of health* +2 (333 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: +2 *full plate* (471 gp per character), +2 *large steel shield* (348 gp per character), +2 *heavy mace* (693 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp per character), *pearl of power 2nd* (333 gp per character), *peripat of wisdom* +4 (1,333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (83 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character).

APL 14: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: +3 *full plate* (887 gp per character), +2 *large steel shield* (348 gp per character), +2 *heavy mace* (693 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 per character), *cloak of resistance* +3 (750 gp per character), *pearl of power 3rd* (750 gp per character), *peripat of wisdom* +4 (1,333 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +2 (83 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character).

APL 16: L: 165 gp; C: 15 gp; M: *peripat of wisdom* +6 (3,000 gp per character), *ring of counterspells* [3] (333 gp per character), *strand of prayer beads* (3,816 gp per character), *cloak of resistance* +3 [2] (750 gp per character), *gloves of dexterity* +2 [2] (333 gp per character), *pale blue rhomboid ioun stone* (667 gp per character), *pink rhomboid ioun stone* (667 gp per character), *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +6 (3,000 gp per character), *orange prism ioun stone* (667 gp per character), *amulet of health* +2 (333 gp per character), *incandescent blue sphere ioun stone* (667 gp per character), +1 *half-plate* (145 gp per character), +1 *large steel shield* (100 gp per character), +1 *longsword* (192 gp per character), +1 *amulet of natural armor* (167 gp per character), +1 *ring of protection* (167 gp per character).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 8: 1,300 gp
APL 10: 2,300 gp
APL 12: 3,300 gp
APL 14: 6,600 gp
APL 16: 9,900 gp

Special

● **Favor of Ra'Ned:** For coming to his and the village of Perditions aid, the ex-priest of Veluna has made peace with his god. He agrees to cast a *raise dead* or *resurrection* spell at a future date for only half the material components cost. The deceased character and one other at the table must spend 2 TU's to account for tracking him down for this favor when used.

● **Touched by Theron:** This character has been the unknowing bearer of the devil Theron for months. He has decided to revoke the protection he granted his vessel (the player) and the following now apply. These runes appear as tattoos on the left arm and chest of the person cursed with them. The runes are in infernal and spell out the true names of 101 devils (or 202/303 depending on Mark). The runes crawl over the afflicted person's skin forming new names constantly. The character is now vulnerable to fire and cold, taking an extra point of damage per die from these types of energy. The character also does not heal naturally and is immune to any magical healing from a caster less than 8th level. Theron has restored the player's natural skin color, and while the character no longer suffers negative social interaction effects, he the runes still crawl over his skin causing strange looks from those that can see them. Theron talks to the character constantly which sounds like a constant buzzing or tickling in the back of the character's head. This distraction causes the character to take a -4 penalty on initiative as well as a -6 penalty on all Spot and Listen checks.

● **Scars of the Betrayer:** This removes the Curse of Theron from this character. When you receive the AR at the end make sure to circle then cross off the curse to show you had it at one time but it is now gone. The act of removing the curses has left large burn scars all over this character's body. These scars give the character a -2 reaction penalty on all social skills and interactions unless extraordinary means are used to hide them. The scars can only be healed by a *heal* spell cast by a Lawful Good cleric who succeeds at a caster level check of DC 30. Otherwise the spell works as normal but the scars are not removed.

APPENDIX I: NPCs AND MONSTERS

Encounter Six: I'm the Devil in the Box

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess, female Suel human Cleric 6 (Iuz):** CR 6; Large* humanoid (human); HD 6d8+12 plus 4 temporary; hp 47; Init +6; Spd 20 ft; AC 25, touch 13, flatfooted 23; Base attack; Grp +8; Atk +12/+12 (2d6+7, morningstar), Ranged +9 (spells); SQ: Channel negative, rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 8.

* Statistics reflect Alijah's Large size due to the *enlarge person* spell.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Spellcraft +11, Knowledge (religion) +5, Heal +5, Knowledge (Local-VTF) +2, Knowledge: Planes +2, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus: Evocation, Still Spell, Silent Spell.

Cleric Spells Prepared: 5/5/5/4; Caster level 6th, Evil and Chaotic spells Caster level 7th, DC 17 or 18 to *dispel*; Base DC = 14+spell level, (DC=15+Spell level if Evocation): 0—*detect magic, detect magic, detect magic, read magic, guidance; 1st—protection from good, magic weapon, cure light wounds, divine favor, entropic shield; 2nd—shatter, aid, bull's strength, delay poison, cure moderate wounds; 3rd—magic circle versus law, dispel magic, magic vestment, magic vestment.*

D: Domain spell. Domains: Chaos (Chaos spells at +1 caster level); Evil (Chaos spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Masteringstar, morningstar, masterwork full plate, large steel shield, *Periapt of wisdom +2, ring of counterspells (dispel magic), cloak of resistance +2, gloves of dexterity +2, ring of protection +2, wand of hold person* (2 charges).

Previously Cast Spells: *Protection from good, delay poison* (self), *magic circle vs. law* (self), *magic vestment* (self), *magic vestment* (self), *magic weapon* (self), *entropic shield, divine favor, aid, bull's strength*

Spells from Wizard: (See Wizard for Level): *haste, enlarge person.*

➤ **Hanrit Onwager, male Suel Human Wizard 6 (diviner):** CR 6; HD 6d4+24; Hp 48; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 19; BAB +3; Grp +5; Atk +2 (1d4, dagger), Ranged +5 (spells); SA Spells; SQ: Familiar; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Spellcraft +13, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge: (the planes) +13, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Tumble +3, Scribe Scroll, Extend Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Empower Spell, Craft Wondrous Item.

Cleric Spells Prepared: All spells cast at 6th level (DC 17 to *Dispel*) 5/5/5/4 Base DC = 14+spell level: 0—*flare, detect magic, detect magic, read magic, read magic; 1st true strike, magic missile, magic missile, magic missile, enlarge person, shield; 2nd see*

invisibility, mage armor (extended), rope trick, scorching ray, scorching ray; 3rd—arcane sight, haste, rage, lightning bolt.

Possessions: *Headband of intellect +2, ring of protection +1, potion of invisibility, cloak of resistance +2, gloves of dexterity +2, amulet of health +2, wand of summon monster iii (5 charges), wand of haste (1) charge*

Previously Cast Spells: *Shield* (self), *mage armor* (self), *see invisibility* (self), *haste* (self/cleric).

➤ **Temple Guard, male human Fighter 7:** CR 7; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14, hp varies; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 23 (Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Ride +5, Spot +6; Cleave, Great Fortitude. Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Possessions: *+1 half-plate, +1 large steel shield, +1 longsword, +1 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection, 12 gp, waterskin.*

Tactics:

Round 0: Wizard uses *wand of monster summoning* each round until expended (using the wand/directing monsters to attack do not drop the invisibility spell). If he feels that he is being noticed, he stops for a round and use a double move (120') to adjust his position. The *summoned* monsters are directed to flank for the cleric or attack archers/casters. The cleric wades directly into melee knowing that monsters are on the way to help soak up the damage and provide more targets.

Round 1: Wizard uses *wand of monster summoning* again, placing the creature as close as possible to the opponent the cleric is fighting. The cleric continues fighting in melee.

Round 2: Wizard assesses the situation and cast *rage* on previously *summoned* creatures (if still present). If they are dead, he uses the wand again or move for a better position. If the cleric has taken 15 or more points of damage he steps back 5' and cast *cure moderate wounds* on himself. If his opponent looks badly damaged, he attempts to combat cast the *cure moderate wounds* as an *inflict moderate wounds* spell on his opponent instead.

Round 3: Wizard checks his previous summons, if they are still aiding the cleric, he then casts *haste* on all of his allies within range. He then moves again (60 feet). The cleric steps back and casts *hold person* (from wand), allowing the summoned creatures tear into them if they fail the save.

Round 4: If the *summoned* monsters are still fighting, the wizard finally break his *invisibility* potion by casting a *lightning bolt* at anyone he notices casting arcane spells. He then moves again. The Cleric hits his opponent (if he made the save last round) with the last *hold person* from the wand. If his previous opponent is

down/held he picks a new opponent and uses the *hold person* on them.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess, female Suel human Cleric 8 (Iuz):** Large* humanoid (human); HD 8d8+32 plus 18 temporary; hp 90; Init +6; Spd 20 ft; AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 23; Base attack +6/+1; Grp +14; Atk +20/+20/+15 (2d6+11, Large morningstar); Ranged +9 (spells); SA Spells; SQ: Channel negative, rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +12; Str 22, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Spellcraft +13, Knowledge (religion) +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge: Planes +2, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus: Evocation, Still Spell, Silent Spell

Spells Prepared: (All spells cast at 8th level unless Evil/Chaotic, those are at 10th level, DC 20 or 21 to Dispel) 6/7/5/5/4 Base DC=15+spell level, DC=16+Spell level if Evocation): 0—*detect magic* x3, *read magic, guidance*; 1st—*protection from good, bane, cure light wounds, cure light wounds, divine favor, entropic shield*; 2nd—*shatter, aid, bear's endurance, delay poison, cure moderate wounds*; 3rd—*magic circle versus law, dispel magic, magic vestment, magic vestment, death knell*; 4th—*chaos hammer, divine power, greater magical weapon, spell immunity*.

D: Domain spell. Domains: Chaos (Chaos spells at +1 caster level); Evil (Chaos spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *periapt of wisdom +2, ring of counterspells (dispel magic), cloak of resistance +2, gloves of dexterity +2, ring of protection +2, masterwork full plate, large steel shield, masterwork morning star, wand of hold person* (Heighten 3rd)(2 charges)

Previously Cast Spells: *protection from good, delay poison (self), magic circle versus law (self), magic vestment (self), magic vestment (self), greater magical weapon (self), entropic shield, divine favor, aid, death knell* (used on a dying slave lasts 20 minutes), *spell immunity (fireball, lightning bolt)*

Spells from Wizard: (See Wizard above for level): *haste, enlarge person, stonesskin* (80 points)

➤ **Hanrit Onwager, male Suel Human Wizard 8 (diviner):** CR 8; HD 8d4+32; hp 57; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 19; BAB +4; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +3 (1d4-1, dagger), Ranged +6 (spells); SA Spells; SQ: Familiar; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge: Planes +16, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (religion) +16, Spellcraft +16, Tumble +5, Scribe Scroll, Extend Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Empower Spell, Craft Wondrous Item.

Spells Prepared: All spells cast at 8th level (DC 19 to Dispel) 5/7/5/5/4 Base DC= 15+spell level (*0th-flare, detect magic, detect magic, read magic, read magic; 1st-true strike, magic missile, magic missile, magic missile, magic missile, enlarge person, shield; 2nd-see invisibility, mage armor (Extended), rope trick,*

scorching ray, scorching ray; 3rd-arcane sight, haste, rage, lightning bolt, fireball; 4th detect scrying, fire shield, stonesskin, scorching ray (Empowered))

Possessions: *headband of intellect +2, ring of protection +1, potion of invisibility, cloak of resistance +2, gloves of dexterity +2, amulet of health +2, wand of summon monster iv (5 charges), wand of haste (1) charge*

Previously Cast Spells: *Shield (self), mage armor (self), see invisibility (self), haste (self/cleric), fire shield (self), stonesskin (cleric).*

➤ **Temple Guard, male human Fighter 7:** CR 7; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14, hp varies; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 23 (Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Ride +5, Spot +6; Cleave, Great Fortitude. Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Possessions: *+1 half-plate, +1 large steel shield, +1 longsword, +1 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection, 12 gp, waterskin.*

Tactics:

Round 0: Wizard uses *wand of monster summoning* each round until expended (using the wand/directing monsters to attack do not drop the invisibility spell). If he feels that he is being noticed, he stops for a round and use a double move (120') to adjust his position. The *summoned* monsters are directed to flank for the cleric or attack archers/casters. The cleric wades directly into melee knowing that monsters are on the way to help soak up the damage and provide more targets.

Round 1: Wizard uses *wand of monster summoning* again, placing the creature as close as possible to the opponent the cleric is fighting. The cleric continues fighting in melee.

Round 2: Wizard assesses the situation and cast *rage* on previously *summoned* creatures (if still present). If they are dead, he uses the wand again or moves for a better position. If the cleric has taken 15 or more points of damage he steps back 5' and cast *cure moderate* wounds on himself. If his opponent looks badly damaged, he attempts to combat cast the *cure moderate* wounds as an *inflict moderate* wounds spell on his opponent instead.

Round 3: Wizard checks his previous summons, if they are still aiding the cleric, he then casts *haste* on all of his allies within range. He then moves again (60 feet). The cleric steps back and casts *hold person* (from wand), allowing the summoned creatures tear into them if they fail the save.

Round 4: If the *summoned* monsters are still fighting, the wizard finally break his *invisibility* potion by casting a *lightning bolt* at anyone he notices casting arcane spells. He then moves again. The Cleric hits his opponent (if he made the save last round) with the last

hold person from the wand. If his previous opponent is down/held he picks a new opponent and uses the *hold person* on them.

Both NPCs have worked together for years as a team for Iuz, and plan their tactics accordingly. Note that the wizard knows his ally is protected from *fireballs* and *lightning bolts* and includes the cleric in the area of effect if that aids the cleric in his battle.

APL 12 (EL 14)

➤ **Alijah, High Priestess of Iuz:** Female Human Clr13 (Iuz); CR 13; Medium-sized Humanoid (Human); HD 13d8+26, hp 94; Init +5; Spd 20; AC 28, touch 13, flat-footed 27; Atk +13 melee (1d8+3, +2 heavy mace); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+3, +2 heavy mace); AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +15; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 23, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Concentration +19, Diplomacy +9, Heal +13, Knowledge (Arcana) +11, Knowledge (History) +6, Knowledge (Local) +5, Knowledge (Religion) +13, Spellcraft +10; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (heavy mace), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Religion)

Spells Prepared (6/7+1/7+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; Base DC 16 + spell level): 0—*create water, detect magic (2), detect poison, light (2), read magic* 1st—*bane, cause fear (2), cure light wounds, protection from good, sanctuary, summon monster 1, protection from law**; 2nd—*bull strength (2), endurance, hold person (2), shield other, invisibility (2)**; 3rd—*deeper darkness, dispel magic (2), prayer, searing light (2), magic circle against law**; 4th—*cure critical wounds, divine power, spell immunity, summon monster iv (2), chaos hammer**; 5th—*flame strike (2), plane shift, slay living, spell resistance, dispel law**; 6th—*blade barrier, harm, summon monster (vi), mislead**; 7th—*blasphemy, word of chaos**

* Domain Spell. Domains: Chaos (Cast chaos spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills.)

Possessions: +2 full plate, +2 large steel shield, +2 heavy mace, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +2, 3 potions of cure moderate wounds, pearl of power (2nd), periapt of wisdom +4, Medallion of Dis, scroll of slay living, scroll of hold person, scroll of plane shift, potion of haste, potion of gaseous form, 124 gp.

➤ **Temple Wizard, male Human Wizard 5/Palemaster 5:** CR 10; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 5d4+10 plus 5d6+10; hp 59; Init +6; Spd 60; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +6 ranged (1d8, 19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; SQ Bonemail +4, *animate dead*, darkvision, *summon undead*, deathless vigor; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +17, Knowledge (Arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (Planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +13, Tumble +8; Scribe Scroll, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Knowledge (religion)), Spell Focus

(Invoke/Evoke), Lightning Reflexes, Brew Potion, Iron Will

Spells Prepared (4/6/4/4/3; Base DC 14 + spell level; +2 DC Invoke/Evoke; 8th level caster): 0—*read magic, detect magic, ray of frost, daze*; 1st—*shield, magic missile, mage armor, cause fear x2, change self*; 2nd—*resist elements x2, scare, web*; 3rd—*fireball x2, haste, dispel magic*; 4th—*ice storm, phantasmal killer, minor globe of invulnerability*.

Spellbook: 0—all cantrips; 1st—*cause fear, change self, charm person, endure elements, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*cat's grace, flaming sphere, resist elements, scare, web*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, haste, lightning bolt, vampiric touch*; 4th—*ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer*.

Possessions: Toad (familiar), cloak of resistance +1, wand of magic missiles (5th level caster) 10 charges, potion of cure light wounds x 3, quarterstaff, light crossbow, 2 flasks of oil, 182 gp.

Bonemail: The pale master has an instinctive feel for bone and can craft necromantic armor composed of interlocking bones. His appreciation for all things deal allows him to wear the bonemail like a second skin—that is, natural armor, which does not interfere with arcane spellcasting. Only pale masters gain any benefit to Armor Class from wearing bonemail. At 1st level, the bonemail grants a +2 natural armor bonus to its wearer. At 4th level this increases to +4.

Animate Dead (Sp): At 2nd level, the pale master begins to exercise control over the undead. Once per day as a spell-like ability, he can use *animate dead* without need of a material component. Levels of this prestige class count as caster levels for this purpose. All other level restrictions of *animate dead* still apply. For example, a 6th level sorcerer/2nd level pale master can only animate up to 9 HD of undead with a single use of this ability. Likewise, he can only control up to 16 HD of undead created using this ability at one time.

Darkvision (Ex): At 3rd level, the dark begins to lose its mysteries to the pale master, who gains darkvision with a 60-foot range. This is an extraordinary ability. If he already has darkvision, its range increases by 60 feet.

Summon Undead (Su): On reaching 4th level, the pale master can summon two undead creatures twice per day as a supernatural ability. This is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. The undead appear at the beginning of the pale master's next action, at a point he designates (and can see) with 60 feet, and they act immediately. The pale master may verbally direct the undead to attack, not attack, attack particular enemies, or perform other actions. Summoned undead remain for round per caster level, after which time they disappear (sooner if destroyed in combat). Summoned undead do not count against the pale master's HD total for controlling undead with his *animate dead* ability (see above). At this APL the pale master can summon two Wights. All summoned undead have +4 turn resistance, in addition

to any turn resistance they already possess, for the duration of their stay.

Deathless Vigor: At 5th level, the pale master's body becomes more akin to the undying flesh of those creatures he associates with. The character gains +3 hit points as though from the Toughness feat.

☛**Temple Guards:** Male human Fighter 7; CR 7; Medium-Sized Humanoid (Human); HD 7d10+14, hp varies; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 23 (Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23); Atk +12 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Ride +5, Spot +6; Cleave, Great Fortitude. Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Weapon Specialization (Longsword)

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 half-plate, +1 large steel shield, +1 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection, 12 gp, waterskin.

APL 14 (EL 16)

☛**Temple Guards:** Male human Fighter 7; CR 7; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14, hp see encounters; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 23 (Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23); Atk +12 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Ride +5, Spot +6; Cleave, Great Fortitude. Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 half-plate, +1 large steel shield, +1 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection, 12 gp, waterskin.

☛**Temple Wizard, male human Wizard 5/Palemaster:** CR 10; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 5d4+10 + 5d6+10; hp 59; Init +6; Spd 60; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +6 ranged (1d8, 19-20/x2 light crossbow); SA Spells; SQ Bonemail +4, Animate Dead, Darkvision, summon undead, deathless vigor; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +17, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +13, Tumble +8; Scribe Scroll, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Spell Focus (Invoke/Evoke), Lightning Reflexes, Brew Potion, Iron Will.

Spells Prepared (4/6/4/4/3; Base DC 14 + spell level; +2 DC Invoke/Evoke; 8th level caster): 0—read magic, detect magic, ray of frost, daze; 1st—shield, magic missile, mage armor, cause fear x2, change self; 2nd—resist elements x2, scare, web; 3rd—fireball x2, haste, dispel magic; 4th—ice storm, phantasmal killer, minor globe of invulnerability.

Spellbook: 0—all cantrips; 1st—cause fear, change self, charm person, endure elements, mage armor, magic missile, shield; 2nd—cat's grace, flaming sphere, resist elements, scare, web; 3rd—dispel magic, fireball, haste, lightning bolt, vampiric touch; 4th—ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer.

Possessions: Toad (familiar), cloak of resistance +1, wand of magic missiles (5th level caster, 10 charges), 3 potion of cure light wounds, quarterstaff, light crossbow, 2 flasks of oil, 182 gp.

Bonemail: The pale master has an instinctive feel for bone and can craft necromantic armor composed of interlocking bones. His appreciation for all things dead allows him to wear the bonemail like a second skin—that is, natural armor, which does not interfere with arcane spellcasting. Only pale masters gain any benefit to Armor Class from wearing bonemail. At 1st level, the bonemail grants a +2 natural armor bonus to its wearer. At 4th level this increases to +4.

Animate Dead (Sp): At 2nd level, the pale master begins to exercise control over the undead. Once per day as a spell-like ability, he can use animate dead without need of a material component. Levels of this prestige class count as caster levels for this purpose. All other level restrictions of animate dead still apply. For example, a 6th level sorcerer/2nd level pale master can only animate up to 9 HD of undead with a single use of this ability. Likewise, he can only control up to 16 HD of undead created using this ability at one time.

Darkvision (Ex): At 3rd level, the dark begins to lose its mysteries to the pale master, who gains darkvision with a 60-foot range. This is an extraordinary ability. If he already has darkvision, its range increases by 60 feet.

Summon Undead (Su): On reaching 4th level, the pale master can summon two undead creatures twice per day as a supernatural ability. This is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. The undead appear at the beginning of the pale master's next action, at a point he designates (and can see) with 60 feet, and they act immediately. The pale master may verbally direct the undead to attack, not attack, attack particular enemies, or perform other actions. Summoned undead remain for round per caster level, after which time they disappear (sooner if destroyed in combat). Summoned undead do not count against the pale master's HD total for controlling undead with his animate dead ability (see above). At this APL the pale master can summon two Wights. All summoned undead have +4 turn resistance, in addition to any turn resistance they already possess, for the duration of their stay.

Deathless Vigor: At 5th level, the pale master's body becomes more akin to the undying flesh of those creatures he associates with. The character gains +3 hit points as though from the Toughness feat.

☛**Alijah, High Priestess, female human Cleric 13 (Iuz):** CR 13; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD

13d8+26, hp 94; Init +5; Spd 20; AC 28 (touch 13, flat-footed 27); Atk +13 melee (1d8+3, +2 heavy mace); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+3, +2 heavy mace); AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +15; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 23, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +19, Diplomacy +9, Heal +13, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +10; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (heavy mace), Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]).

Cleric Spells Prepared: (6/7+1/7+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; Base DC 16 + spell level): 0—create water, detect magic (2), detect poison, light (2), read magic; 1st—bane, cause fear (2), cure light wounds, protection from good, sanctuary, summon monster 1, protection from law*; 2nd—bull's strength (2), endurance, hold person (2), shield other, invisibility (2); 3rd—deeper darkness, dispel magic (2), prayer, searing light (2), magic circle against law*; 4th—cure critical wounds, divine power, spell immunity, summon monster iv (2), chaos hammer*; 5th—flame strike (2), plane shift, slay living, spell resistance, dispel law*; 6th—blade barrier, harm, summon monster (vi), mislead*; 7th—blasphemy, word of chaos*.

* Domain Spell. Domains: Chaos (Cast chaos spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills.)

Possessions. +2 full plate, +2 large steel shield, +2 heavy mace, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +2, 3 potions of cure moderate wounds, pearl of power (2nd), periapt of wisdom +4, Medallion of Dis, scroll of slay living, scroll of hold person, scroll of plane shift, potion of haste, potion of gaseous form, 124 gp

APL 16 (EL 18)

☛ **Alijah, High Priestess, female Suel human Cleric 16 (Iuz):** CR 16; HD 16d8+48 plus 20 temporary; hp 151; Init +6; Spd 20 ft; AC 39, touch 14, flat-footed 37; BAB +12; Grp +21; Atk +28 (1d8+16, masterwork morningstar); Full Atk +28/+28/+23/+18/+13 (1d8+16, masterwork morningstar); Ranged +25 (spells); SA Spells; SQ Channel negative, rebuke Undead; AL CE; SV Fort +21, Ref +16, Will +26; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 26, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Spellcraft +19, Knowledge (religion) +19, Heal +27, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (planes) +5, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus: Evocation, Still Spell, Silent Spell, Chain Spell, Energy Affinity (acid), Energy Admixture (acid).

Cleric Spells Prepared: (All spells cast at 20th level unless Evil/Chaotic, those are at 21st level, DC 31 or 32 to Dispel) 6/8/8/8/7/6/5/5/4 Base DC=18+spell level, DC=19+Spell level if Evocation): 0—detect magic, detect magic, detect magic, read magic, create water, guidance; 1st—protection from good, cure light wounds, cure light wounds, divine favor, divine favor, bane, entropic shield, doom; 2nd—shatter, aid, aid, align weapon, delay poison, delay poison, cure moderate wounds, status; 3rd—magic circle versus law,

cure light wounds (Silent, Stilled), bestow curse, dispel magic, dispel magic, magic vestment, magic vestment, magic vestment; 4th—chaos hammer, cure critical wounds, death ward, death ward, greater magic weapon, divine power, spell immunity; 5th—dispel good, silence (Chained), true seeing, spell resistance, spell resistance, flame strike (Acid); 6th—unholy blight (Silent, Still), blade barrier, blade barrier, greater dispel, heal; 7th—blasphemy, word of chaos, flame strike (Acid, Silent, Still), flame strike (Acid, Silent, Still), flame strike (Acid, Silent, Still); 8th—dispel good (Silent, Still), greater spell immunity, flame strike (Energy Admixture: Acid), flame strike (Energy Admixture: Acid)

Possessions. Masterwork morningstar, masterwork full plate, large steel shield, periapt of wisdom +6, ring of counterspells (greater dispel), dust of disappearance, strand of prayer beads (bead of karma, heal, smite (unholy blight)), cloak of resistance +3, gloves of dexterity +2, pale blue rhomboid ioun stone, pink rhomboid ioun stone, ring of protection +2.

Previously Cast Spells and Activated Magic Items: protection from good, align weapon (evil), delay poison (self), delay poison (Wizard), death ward (self), death ward (Wizard), status (self), magic circle versus law (self), true seeing, magic vestment (self), magic vestment (self), magic vestment (Wizard), greater magic weapon (self), Greater spell immunity (Spells: flame strike, fireball, prismatic spray, blade barrier, disintegration), spell resistance (Self, SR 32), spell resistance (Wizard, SR 32), entropic shield, divine favor, divine power, dust of disappearance.

Spells Received from Wizard: (See Wizard for level): stonewall (150), haste, mind blank, protection from spells.

☛ **Hanrit Onwager, male Suel human Wizard 16 (Diviner):** CR 16; HD 16d4+64; hp 113; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 22, touch 13, flatfooted 19; BAB +8; Grp +9; Atk +8 (1d4+1, dagger); Full Atk +8/+3 (1d4+1, dagger), Ranged +11 (spells); SQ: Familiar; AL CE; SV Fort +17, Ref +16, Will +19; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 26, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +23, Spellcraft +27, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (the planes) +27, Knowledge (local) +27, Knowledge (religion) +25, Tumble +3, Scribe Scroll, Extend Spell, Craft Wondrous Item, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Empower Spell, Quicken Spell, Maximize Spell, Eschew Material, Spell Focus: Evocation, Chain Spell.

Spells Prepared: All spells cast at 17th level (DC 28 to Dispel) 5/7/7/7/7/6/5/4/4 Base DC= 18+Spell Level, DC=19+Spell Level for Evocation): 0—flare, detect magic, detect magic, read magic, read magic; 1st—true strike, magic missile, magic missile, magic missile, enlarge person, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd—see invisibility, mage armor (extended), rope trick, scorching ray, scorching ray, scorching ray, scorching ray; 3rd—arcane sight, haste, haste, rage, dispel magic, fireball, vampiric touch; 4th—scream, fire shield, stonewall,

stoneskin, scorching ray (silent, still), scorching ray (silent, still), scorching ray (silent, still); 5th—contact other plane, magic missile (Quickened), magic missile (Quickened), magic missile (Quickened), fireball (Silent, Still), fireball (Silent, Still); 6th—prying eyes (Maximized), Chain lightning, teleport (Silent), fireball (Maximized), lightning bolt (Maximized); 7th—greater arcane sight, feeblemind (Chained), fireball (Quickened), limited wish; 8th—moment of prescience, cone of cold (maximized), Bigby's clenched fist, chain lightning (Silent, Stilled).

Possessions: headband of intellect +6, ring of counterspells (disintegrate), ring of counterspells (greater dispel), dust of disappearance, cloak of resistance +3, orange prism ioun stone, gloves of dexterity +2, amulet of health +2, incandescent blue sphere, scroll of protection from spells, scroll of mind blank, scroll of mind blank, scroll of moment of prescience, scroll of spell turning, scroll of minor globe of invulnerability (silent), scroll of limited wish

Previously Cast Spells and Activated Magic Items: Shield (self), mage armor (self), see invisibility (self), haste (Self/Cleric), stoneskin (self, 150), stoneskin (Cleric, 150), moment of prescience, mind blank (self), mind blank (Cleric), spell turning, protection from spells (Self and Cleric, +8 vs spells/spell-like effects), greater arcane sight, limited wish-spell immunity (fireball, lightning bolt, feeblemind, enervation), prying eyes, contingency (ghostform, activates when he casts feeblemind (Chained)), limited wish: barkskin (cleric), fireshield, dust of disappearance.

Spells Received from Cleric: (See Cleric for level): delay poison, death ward, magic vestment, spell resistance (SR 32).

☛**Temple Guards:** Male human Fighter 7; CR 7; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14, hp see encounters; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 23 (Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23); Atk +12 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, +1 longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Ride +5, Spot +6; Cleave, Great Fortitude. Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 half-plate, +1 large steel shield, +1 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection, 12 gp, waterskin.

Tactics:

Round 0: Wizard activates *moment of prescience* for +17 to Initiative, casts *Bigby's clenched fist* on rogue-like PC first, then archers PCs (order of preference). Cleric casts *silence* (Chained) on every possible target (1+20 more) to blanket the area in silence, (making sure not to include himself or the wizard standing right next to him in the Silenced area (yet).

Round 1: Wizard casts *feeblemind* (Chain), follows it up with *fireball* (Quickened), orders the cleric to *flame strike* anyone in armor, then moves into the silenced area (contingency activates), Cleric drops *flame strike* (Energy Admixture: Acid) onto someone in armor (any fighter type if no armor visible) and then moves into the silenced area.

Round 2: Wizard uses *scorching ray* (Silent, Still) on any obvious divine caster, then moves out of the silent area then casts *magic missile* (Quickened) random target. Cleric casts *flame strike* (Silent, Still, Acid) on the target the wizard hit with the *scorching ray* and then moves out of the silenced area.

Round 3: Wizard casts *magic missile* (Quickened) at a Wizard-like PC, then moves back into the silenced area and casts *chain lightning* (Silent, Still) using any obvious caster as the main point. Cleric casts *blade barrier* targeting the strongest fighter then moves into the silence again.

Round 4: Wizard moves again out of the silence, then uses *fireball* (Maximized) on the most damaged PC, Cleric follows up with *flamestrike* (Silent, Still, Acid) on the same PC.

Round 5: Wizard uses *lightning bolt* (maximized on strongest fighter), switches the *Bigby's clenched fist* to any spellcaster still up (free action), and *magic missile* (quicken) most damaged PC. The Cleric will move out of the silenced area and then *flame strike* (Energy Admixture: Acid) any of the three people the wizard just attack, preference is for the most damaged.

Both NPCs have worked together for years as a team for Iuz, and protect each other. In fact they both prepare spells just for that possibility.

ENCOUNTER EIGHT: TIME KEEPS ON SHRINKING

APL 12 (EL 13)

☛**Advanced Stone Golem:** Large construct; CR 13; HD 22d10+30; hp 155; Init -1; Spd 20 ft. (4 squares); AC 28 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +20 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 28; Base Attack/Grapple +15/+28; Atk +23 melee (2d10+10, slam); Full Atk +23/+23 melee (2d10+10, 2 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA *slow*; SQ Construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 30, Dex 9, Con —, Int 4*, Wis 11, Cha 1.

*This golem has gained intelligence, but is still immune to mind-affecting effects.

Skills and Feats: None.

Slow (Su): A stone golem can use a *slow* effect, as the spell, as a free action once every 2 rounds. The effect has a range of 10 feet and a duration of 7 rounds, requiring a DC 19 Will save to negate. The save DC is Constitution-based.

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

A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows a stone golem (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw, while *transmute mud to rock* heals all of its lost hit points. A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the golem's structure but negates its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round.

APPENDIX 2: NEW MATERIAL NEW FEAT

Powerful Charge [General]

Excerpted from *Miniatures Handbook*.

You can charge with extra force.

Prerequisites: Medium or larger; base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When you charge, if your melee attack hits, it deals an extra 1d8 points of damage (if you're medium). For Large creatures, the extra damage is 2d6; for Huge 3d6; for Gargantuan 4d6; and for Colossal, 6d6.

This feat works only when you make a charge. It does not work when you're mounted. If you have the ability to make multiple attacks on a charge, you may apply this extra damage to only one of those attacks in a round.

Special: A fighter may select Powerful Charge as one of his bonus feats.

New Creature

THASKOR

Excerpted from *Miniatures Handbook*.

Large Outsider (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 13d8+65 (123 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

AC: 28 (-1 size, +19 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 28

Base Attack/Grapple: +13/+27

Attack: Slam +22 melee (2d8+15)

Full Attack: Slam +22 melee (2d8+15)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Trumpeting blast

Special Qualities: DR 5/-, darkvision 60, immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 18

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +11

Abilities: Str 31, Dex 10, Con 21,

Int 12, Wis 13 Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +19, Concentration +21, Diplomacy +23, Disguise +3 (+5 acting), Intimidate +21, Listen +17, Search +17, Sense Motive +17, Spot +17, Survival +17 (+19 following tracks)

Feats: Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Powerful Charge, Cleave

Climate/Terrain: Plane of Shadow

Organization: Solitary, squad (2-4), company (5-20)

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: No coins; 50% goods; standard items

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: 14-20 HD (Large); 21-40 HD (Huge)

Pale Master

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day

A hulking brute of a creature, this thing resembles an elephant formed of solid muscle. Its long head is contorted into a look of pure fury. Two long, curving tusks extend from its mouth, and a short trunk twists between them. Its ears are small, while its forelimbs are long and powerful. Its hide looks nearly impenetrable.

A thaskor is 16 feet long and weighs fully 4,000 pounds. Though it appears quadrupedal, like an elephant it can rear up on its short hind legs to gain better reach with its forelegs. Opponents who misjudge the thaskor as a stupid brute rarely survive to regret their mistake. Despite their fearsome appearance, thaskors can be subtle, deceptive, and fiendishly clever.

Combat

Thaskors delight in charging into combat and slamming their opponents with the full weight of their massive bodies. A thaskor considers it a point of personal pride never to use its tusk in battle, and it upholds this pride to the death.

Trumpeting Blast (Su): Once every 1d4 rounds as a free action, a thaskor can blow a trumpeting blast with its trunk. The blast fills a 10-foot cone; any creature within that area must make a DC 21 Fortitude save or be stunned for one round. This is a sonic attack. The save DC is Constitution-based.

New Prestige Class

PALE MASTER

Excerpted from *Tome and Blood*.

"The dead aren't so bad once you get to know them."

Necromancy is usually a poor choice for arcane spellcasters—those who really want to master the deathless arts almost always pursue divine means. However, an alternative exists for those who desire power over undead but refuse to give up their arcane craft completely. Enter the pale master, who draws on a font of special lore that provides a macabre power all its own.

Many pale master still end up supplementing their arcane power with levels of divine magic. The mixture of 'pale lore' and clerical abilities to sway, create, command, and destroy undead can be a potent one.

NPC pale master head special strike groups comprising lesser undead, supplemented as needed with more powerful summoned undead. Sometimes they serve or act in collusion with powerful evil characters, such as true necromancers or divine spellcaster with Death as one of their domains. Wherever pale master go, undead follow. Often it is difficult to tell a pale master from the undead that he surrounds himself with.

Hit Die: d6.

1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Bonemail +2	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Animate Undead	
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+3	Darkvision	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+4	+1	+4	Summon Undead, Bonemail +4	
5th	+2	+4	+1	+4	Deathless Vigor	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+5	+2	+5	Undead Graft	
7th	+3	+5	+2	+5	Tough as Bone	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+6	+2	+6	Graf upgrade, Bonemail +6	
9th	+4	+6	+3	+6	Summon Greater Undead	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+7	+3	+7	Deathless Mastery	

Requirements

To qualify to become a pale master, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nongood

Skills: 8 ranks Knowledge (religion)

Feat: Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion])

Spells: Ability to cast arcane spells of 3rd level or higher.

Special: The candidate must have spent three or more days locked in a tomb with animate undead. This contact may be peaceful or violent. A character that is slain by the undead and later raised still meets the requirement, although the result level loss may delay compliance with other prerequisites.

Class skills

The pale master's class skills (and the ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int, exclusive skill), and Spellcraft (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Players Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

Spells per Day: At every second level gained in the pale master class, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, hit points beyond those he receives from the prestige class, and so on), except for an increased effective level of spellcasting. If a character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a pale master, he must decide to which class he adds the new level for purposes of determining spells per day.

Bonemail: The pale master has an instinctive feel for bone and can craft necromantic armor composed of interlocking bones. His appreciation for all things dead allow him to wear the bonemail like a second skin – that is, natural armor, which does not interfere with arcane spellcasting. Only pale masters gain any benefit to Armor Class from wearing bonemail.

At 1st level, the bonemail grants a +2 natural armor bonus to its wearer. At 4th level, the pale master's mastery over this unusual medium allows him to move more natural with the armor, granting him a +4 natural armor bonus. Finally, at 8th level, the pale master becomes a true bone artisan, receiving a +6 natural armor bonus from his bonemail. These increased bonuses are the result of greater expertise in wearing the armor, so bonemail created by a higher-level pale master confers only the natural armor bonus appropriate to the wearer's level.

Animate Dead (Sp): At 2nd level, the pale master begins to exercise control over the undead. Once per day as a spell-like ability, he can use animate dead without need of a material component. Levels of this prestige class count as caster levels for this purpose. All other level restrictions of animate dead still apply. For example, a 6th-level sorcerer/2nd-level pale master can only animate up to 8 HD of undead with a single use of this ability. Likewise, he can only control up to 16 total HD of undead created using this ability at one time.

Darkvision (Ex): At 3rd level, the dark begins to lose its mysteries to the pale master, who gains darkvision with a 60-foot range. This is an extraordinary ability. If he already has darkvision, its range increases by 60 feet.

Summon Undead (Su): On reaching 4th level, the pale master can summon two undead creatures twice per day as a supernatural ability. This is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. The undead appear at the beginning of the pale master's next action, at a point he designates (and can see) within 60 feet, and they act immediately. The pale master may verbally direct the undead to attack, not attack, attack particular enemies, or perform other actions. Summoned undead remain for 1 round per caster level, after which time they disappear (sooner if destroyed in combat). Summoned undead do not count against the pale master's HD total for controlling undead with his animate dead ability (see above).

Caster Level Undead Summoned

5th	Ghoul
6th	Shadow
7th	Ghast
8th	Wight
9th	Wraith

Deathless Vigor: At 5th level, the pale master's body becomes more akin to the undying flesh of those creatures he associates with. The character gains +3 hit points as though from the Toughness feat.

APPENDIX 3: REMOVING THE CURSED TATTOOS

If character bears the curses and is killed in Encounter Two, he is taken away by the devils to the top of the cliff. Once there, they magically rip the cursed tattoos from the characters body before tossing his corpse over the edge for his party members to find. This has the following effects:

- This removes the Curse of Theron from this character. When you receive the AR at the end make sure to circle then cross off the curse to show you had it at one time but it is now gone.
- The act of removing the curses leaves large burn scars all over this characters body. These scars give the character a -2 reaction penalty on all social skills and interactions unless extraordinary means are used to hide them. Make sure to leave the 'Scars of the Betrayer' on the AR.
- The scars can only be healed by a *heal* spell cast by a Lawful Good cleric who succeeds at a caster level check of DC 30. If the cleric fails this caster level check, the spell works as normal, but the scars remain in place.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

Give this handout to anybody at the table who bears any of the Curses from this series (Mark of Avernus, Mark of Cania, Mark of Stygia, Curse of Nessus).

The chill spring air rolls in through your window as clouds once again cover the moon above shrouding your room in darkness. Finally sleep comes but the sweet slumber you were expecting is not yours this night. A shadowy shape creeps from the deep shadows in the corner of your room. "Wake up vessel. Wake up I said NOW!"

With a jolt you sit up and see yourself sitting on a chair next to your bed. The figure appears identical in every way except the curses that cover your body are not on his.

"I am done with you. You have served your purpose in hiding me and now it is time to take me home.", as you watch the image of yourself shifts until you are staring at Theron. "Oh yes. The symbols on you not only represent my kind but they represent me. The protections I have granted you these past months have been revoked. You will gather your friends and take me back to Perdition. That old foolish priest you betrayed is in Falsridge and can guide you there. Do not bother fighting. In the end you will succumb or die. Either way I am happy. Now wake up and feel my sweet kiss for the last time"

With a jolt you sit up out of bed. The room is empty as sounds of the street cleaners waft in through the window. Was it a dream? As if to answer it you feel a tingle on your cheek as if somebody was close to you breathing on your face. Then the curses on your arm start burning with a fire you have not felt since they first blessed you with their resistance to heat. Then, as quickly as it started, it stops and the room plunges into cold as the wind fills your room with its chill air.

"Give me what I want and I will go away" the voice says once more and then the room is silent once again.

Theron has revoked his blessing and thus the curses (marks) from this series have changed in their effects. The following text **replaces** the following curses: Mark of Avernus, Mark of Cania, Mark of Stygia, Curse of Nessus. Cross the old curses off their respective AR's.

● **Touched by Theron:** This character has been the unknowing bearer of the devil Theron for months. He has decided to revoke the protection he granted his vessel (the player) and the following now apply. These runes appear as tattoos on the left arm and chest of the person cursed with them. The runes are in infernal and spell out the true names of 101 devils (or 202/303 depending on Mark). The runes crawl over the afflicted person's skin forming new names constantly. The character is now vulnerable to heat and cold and take an extra point of damage per die vs. these types of energy. The character also does not heal naturally and is immune to any magical healing from a caster less than 8th level. Theron has restored the player's natural skin color and while the character no longer suffers negative social interaction effects, he still has the runes crawling over his skin that causes strange looks unless covered. Theron talks to the character constantly which sounds like a constant buzzing or tickling in the back of the character's head. This distraction, causes the character to take a -4 penalty on initiative as well as a -6 penalty on all Spot and Listen checks.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2

Another day passes without event on the road. Many miles behind you but many miles are ahead of you.

<NOTE TO PLAYER: Roll a Will save. Tell the DM the number but do not tell others what it is for.>

Suddenly you stop. You do not want to stop but your body refuses to listen to you. You climb down from your horse and walk out into the field next to the road a hundred feet or so. Sitting on the ground in front of you is a letter with a red blood wax seal and a small vial. You sit down and open the letter. Your arms bring it up in front of your face and a voice that slithers like a knife being sharpened says "Read it chattel. "

"You have been honored with being chosen. Enact my will in this matter and you will be rewarded very well. Refuse to and you cast your fate with those you will travel with and fight side-by-side for survival with. I only give you a choice in this matter, as I must to not tip my hand. Otherwise you would do what I want and thank me later. Choose wisely my little lemming. You will find a colored ribbon three steps behind you. Wear it if you have chosen to help me. If others wish to join you they may also wear it. If my forces do not see it they will assume you chose poorly. Now destroy the letter." Once again, without you willing it, you reach down and set the letter on the ground. You uncork the vial and pour some kind of acid onto the letter destroying it.

Suddenly you fall to the side as if you were made of rubber. It takes a few seconds but you manage to gather yourself and stand up again. Whatever it was is gone. Behind you flapping in the breeze is a blood red ribbon.

PLAYER HANDOUT 3

Another warm spring day passes as the road rolls along beneath your feet. Ahead, you see the road crosses a small stream. Next to it is a large pile of rocks. With a flash a man appears in the air and falls six feet or so down upon the rocks. He does not appear to be moving.

An unknown man now lies dying before you. With much effort he rolls to one side and you can see the extent of the damage to him. On his head you can see claw marks along with singed skin. With much effort he coughs up some blood and speaks, "The boy sent me. Dying us all. Betrayed... the curses are out. You must find the boy's father, Ra'Ned, in Falsridge. He will know what to do."

With that a spout of fire bursts from the wound on his head and he crumbles into dust. A screech like a devil enraged rings out across the fields and for a moment a winged shadow passed over you and then is gone.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4

Another warm spring day passes as the road rolls along beneath your feet. Ahead, you see the road crosses a small stream. Next to it is a large pile of rocks. With a flash a man appears in the air and falls six feet or so down upon the rocks. He does not appear to be moving.

As you get closer you are surprised to see a familiar face. One of the men who first met you upon your arrival in Perdition a year ago now lies dying before you. With much effort he rolls to one side and you can see the extent of the damage to him. The symbol that once adorned his head is gone. Claw marks along with singed skin ring where it once was. With much effort he coughs up some blood and speaks, "The boy sent me. Dying us all. Betrayed... the curses are out. You must find the boys father in Falsridge. He will know what to do."

With that a spout of fire bursts from where the symbol once adorned his head and he crumbles into dust. A screech like a devil enraged rings out across the fields and for a moment a winged shadow passed over you and then is gone.