

KEO5-02

Twisted Chaos

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™

Keoland Regional Adventure

Version 1.2

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Shortly after the victory at Steffenmoor, evil is unleashed from within the depths of the ruined city, wreaking havoc upon the occupying soldiers of Keoland. Hundreds are dead, while survivors have been mutilated by magic that twists both body and mind. Strange creatures now roam the flooded streets of Steffenmoor, and the burden of discovering the nature of this new magical threat has fallen to the National Academy of Wizardry – and a few heroes. A combat-intensive Keoland regional adventure for APLs 4-12, and Part Two of the *Sakatha Returns!* series.

Note: PCs with negative reputations with Keoland's National Academy of Wizardry may not participate in this adventure. This adventure is considered "Reporting for Duty" for members of the National Academy of Wizardry and the Keoish Royal Standards.

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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For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at keolandpoc@adelphia.net. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

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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 Dungeon Master (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.

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

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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 the *Appendices*.

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 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-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.

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	

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 one-round Regional adventure, set in Keoland. Characters native to Keoland pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

There is an optional encounter (Encounter 8) in this adventure. If the PCs wish to pursue it, this adventure costs one additional TU (two additional TUs for PCs not from Keoland).

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may

refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The royal armies of Keoland have recently retaken the ruins of Steffenmoor and have begun its exploration. Many items have been recovered and the armies are beginning to discover secrets that have been hidden in the area during the years when Keoland had lost its hold on the Steffenmoor.

The danger here is from cultists seeking to bring about the return of Tharizdun, waking him from his long, dreaded sleep. These cultists have taken the form of the Order of the Brazen Blade.

The Brazen Blades were not always worshippers of Tharizdun; indeed, their descent into worship of this insane god has been a recent one. The Order was originally founded response to events that began with the revolt of the Sea Princes against Keoland. When the Scarlet Brotherhood took over the Sea Princes, the Order of the Brazen Blade was founded to resist the occupation. After some initial successes, they realized that even if they dislodged the Scarlet Brotherhood, they would still have Keoland to contend with.

And so the Order hatched a diversionary scheme. A number of their members entered the Hool Marsh in Keoland and attempted to rally some of the lizardfolk tribes into attacks within the Kingdom. They were ultimately unsuccessful and their agents met their fates at the hands of Sakatha, the newly-returned vampire lizardfolk (as detailed in KEO2-05 *Royal Rescue*, KEO2-06 *Hunt in the Hool*, and KEO4-01 *Hope, Entwined*).

In the meantime, the Order was being subverted from within. Seeing in them a natural tool to be used against their mutual enemies, the Scarlet Brotherhood, an agent of the Black Brotherhood (a splinter sect of the former organization who seeks to defeat their former fellows and to wake Tharizdun from his sleep) infiltrated and corrupted the Order. This wizard's name was named Mnemnonthraxus. Those that could not be driven mad and made into proper followers of Tharizdun were sacrificed on his altars.

With the Order having been subsumed by the Black Brotherhood, Mnemnonthraxus began to have dream visions – doubtless provided by Tharizdun – that hinted at not one, but two methods by which Tharizdun might be woken. The first was hidden somewhere in Keoland, in the dragon-ruined city of Steffenmoor in the County of Linth. (Mnemnonthraxus, along with the second method, is detailed in KEO5-04 *Burning Brightly*).

Upon doing further research, they found out about an ancient archeological ruin buried beneath the city. The information spoke about a wizard who used to live in the city of Steffenmoor and worshipped Tharizdun. He discovered an ancient shrine to the god deep underneath the surface of the city and began sacrificing townsfolk in order to enhance his magical creations. Supposedly he was able to not only summon but also create items and creatures of great evil. When the black dragon came and destroyed Steffenmoor the wizard was killed and his work was left hidden and forgotten.

Upon arriving in Steffenmoor, agents of the Order were stymied at first by the presence of the Keoish Royal Standards, who had seized the city on orders of the late King of Keoland. They eventually penetrated into the city, found the ancient shrine to Tharizdun and were able to release things of horrible evil. Scores of soldiers in the Keoish army were slaughtered in the night, and the generals decided that the spirits of the city had risen to send them away. The Court of the Land decided to withdraw the army from Steffenmoor, thinking it would be best if the National Academy of Wizardry investigated the trouble.

The Black Brotherhood has made contact, and allied with, Sakatha. The lizardfolk vampire's chief rival for power in Keoland is Count Traago Von Reiklande, a powerful Suloise vampire and friend to the Scarlet Brotherhood. He views the "gift" of the vampiric condition being wasted on non-Suel (and especially non-humans) as anathema. The alliance between the chaotic and evil Sakatha and the Black Brotherhood, against the lawful and evil Count Traago and his Scarlet Brotherhood allies, is a natural one.

The Black Brotherhood intends to sell or trade some of the evil artifacts in Steffenmoor to Sakatha so as to strengthen their alliance. At the very least, the release of the evil and the attention drawn to Steffenmoor will continue to divert Keoland's attention away from the new menace in the Hool Marsh.

One high-ranking member of the National Academy of Wizardry, Beryce, is in truth, a member of the Scarlet Brotherhood. She has been in the National Academy of Wizardry for quite some time, and has done very well as a spy. Stationed in Nirole Dra, Beryce had been acting as Lashton's personal assistant for the past several years. With the late crisis at Steffenmoor, she has been asked to track down any party of PCs who either have a member of the National Academy of Wizardry or have a PC who has obtained a favor of the NAW, and will send them to go on a mission into the Steffenmoor. Despite being on an official mission for the NAW, she has also been briefed by her contacts in the Scarlet Brotherhood. Her true goal is to use the PCs to interfere with the Black Brotherhood's plans.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs find themselves in the audience of Beryce, a high-ranking member of the National Academy of Wizardry. She explains that an evil has been released in Steffenmoor that has slain most of the occupying force there, and the NAW has been called upon to figure out the origins of this magic. The PCs are asked to investigate Steffenmoor, and try to find out as much information as possible about what is going on there.

Heading towards Steffenmoor, the PCs are set upon by a fleeing band of lizardfolk. At first the PCs think they are being attacked, but soon they realize that the lizardfolk are running for their lives. Their pursuer is a creature warped by the chaotic magic released by the Brotherhood.

Kyla, a half-dragon dryad, appears after the battle and explains a bit of what has been going on in Steffenmoor. She explains that the land is being warped and twisted, and she accosts the PCs to do what they can to stop this magic from spreading. She can also provide some useful background information about an insane wizard who once lived in Steffenmoor long ago. The PCs can use Kyla to guide them to a specific area in the city of Steffenmoor.

The PCs enter Steffenmoor and are affected in different ways by Chaos Disease. They see a platoon of Keoish soldiers nearby who have been not only twisted by this magic but also killed in gruesome manner.

The heroes discover the ruined tower of the insane wizard, which is guarded by another creature of chaos. After defeating it and searching the tower, they find a journal that links him to the pastor of the nearby church of Boccob.

The church is defended by the Black Brotherhood members (Mnemnonthraxus is not among them). After, the PCs discover information about a shrine to Tharizdun that lies hidden beneath the church, as well as the Black Brotherhood's motives and how they link with Sakatha.

The PCs head through an ancient dungeon and find the hidden shrine, which was built out of an archaeological ruin that is far older than the shrine or the church, if not Steffenmoor itself. If the PCs thoroughly investigate the shrine, they realize that it is in fact a portal to a temple located on a nameless demi-plane of chaos and evil. The portal cannot be destroyed, and the PCs must decide to leave it as is or enter and defeat whatever evil lies within. If they proceed, they will encounter an Aspect of Tharizdun. (This is an optional, and dangerous, encounter)

Afterward, the PCs return to Beryce and reveal what they have learned. What they discover and accomplish, as well as what they tell Beryce, will have an important impact on events in the future.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

There is an optional encounter (Encounter 8) in this adventure. If the PCs wish to pursue it, this adventure costs one additional TU (two additional TUs for PCs not from Keoland).

Determine if any PCs are members of the National Academy of Wizardry (NAW).

PCs with negative reputations regarding Keoland's National Academy of Wizardry may not participate in this adventure. This adventure is considered "Reporting for Duty" for members of that meta-organization.

INTRODUCTION

NAW MEMBERS

You stand in the presence of Lashton, Archmage of Keoland and head-master of the National Academy of Wizardry. You are in the Academy's chapterhouse in Nirole Dra. Lashton is an older man, wearing gold spectacles, with a gruff air about him. Upon your entry, he looks up from a vellum scroll he is perusing.

"Guess what?" he asks flatly. Without bothering to wait for your answer, he snaps his fingers and an unseen hand unfurls a map of Keoland on a nearby table. As it does, you hear a throaty croak, and the parting scroll reveals a rather portly toad atop the map.

"Urk!" he snorts, but before he can reply the amphibian bounds off the map and out the door. The archmage's teeth are gnashing. "Damn it all! I'm going to have to get someone to come and clean out this chapterhouse..."

He rises and walks over to the map, beckoning you to follow. His voice is dripping with sarcasm as he notes the droppings left in the toad's wake. "How nice of him to have marked your destination." He points at the city labeled Segor. It is the capital of the blight-plagued County of Linth. "You're going there. You'll be at the disposal of Beryce. She is my personal assistant and presently in charge of our interests in Segor. She needs your help with some matter or another. Go there and give her a hand, won't you? She is staying at the Trail Inn." He glances over to a crystal ball and his face softens, but only for a moment. Turning back to you, his scowl returns. "Now get out of here."

Lashton won't entertain any questions; he tells the PCs that Beryce will explain everything they need to know about the task at hand. Assuming that the NAW members agree, (and woe to them if they defy Lashton's orders...) proceed to Encounter 1.

The journey from Nirole Dra to Segor is some fifty miles along the banks of the Sheldomar River.

NON-MEMBERS

Distribute *Player Handout #1*. Proceed to Encounter 1 once they decide to attend.

ENCOUNTER 1: MEETING BERYCE

You arrive at the Trail Inn within Segor. You arrive after dinnertime – well, what passes for dinner in Linth, which is a thin soup made of some odd-looking tubers and carrots along with a bit of bread.

Entering, you see the proprietor drying a mug as he looks at you with a curious expression. After a moment of studying you, a knowing expression fills his face. He nods and says, "Ah yes, you must be the ones she mentioned." He tilts his head towards the stairs leading up to the rooms and says, "Second floor, third door to your right, knock five times."

When the PCs head upstairs:

Of its own volition, the door opens immediately after the fifth knock, and inside you see a human female dressed in an elegant outfit of the latest designs by Laint Saurent. A cloak of white and red hangs off her shoulders, with a brooch bearing the symbol of the National Academy of Wizardry fastening it in place. Her hair is fiery red and curled about her shoulders, and her lovely features are toned and pleasant. She sits at the head of a table covered in paperwork, that has just enough seats for you, and there appear to be others that have already arrived.

Take a moment to allow the players to describe their characters to each other before continuing.

"I am Beryce, personal assistant to Lashton, the Archmage of Keoland. I have little time to squander, since I have my regular duties to perform on top of this. As you know, the ruined city of Steffenmoor, southeast of here, was retaken by Keoish forces several months ago. They have been rooting out the dragon-spawned lizardfolk there. It was slow and dangerous work, but the Standards were succeeding in the task."

"A few weeks ago, some sort of rainbow-colored mist rose up in the streets of the city. Twisted creatures emerged from that mist and began slaughtering our soldiers. It also twisted and morphed their bodies and minds in alien ways. I suspect this mist to be somehow related to those seen in the plane of Limbo, but I cannot be certain."

"The Court of the Land thought it best to withdraw the troops from the city and to allow the

National Academy of Wizardry to handle the problem. The Standards have formed a defensive perimeter around Steffenmoor. It is vital that we find out what is causing this mist and put a stop to it. I am working on the problem from an arcane perspective, but having boots on the ground to bring me back information about what's going on would be invaluable."

*"You are to travel to the ruins; I will give you a declaration that will allow you inside the Standards' perimeter. Once inside, get as much forward reconnaissance as you are able about what's going on. It is **VITAL** that you return with that information, and as quickly as possible. You will be compensated with both wealth and the favor of the Academy, commiserate with the value of your intelligence. If you have magical or mundane means to contact me during your mission, I will advise you as best I am able. Do you accept?"*

Beryce's briefing is one of military efficiency; she really has told the PCs everything she knows about the situation at hand. True to her word, she will be at the Trail Inn and will certainly offer the PCs advice should they need it (and be able to solicit it).

Any attempts by the PCs to find out what Beryce is thinking, what her alignment is, and what her motives are, will have no result. She is wearing several powerful magical items that protect her from detection. If the PCs make any hostile action towards her, a *contingency teleport* spell will whisk her away immediately. (A clue that she's a lot more competent than a simple assistant should be...) Under no circumstances can the PCs capture Beryce. The PCs can continue on to Steffenmoor if they wish, but they will from this point forward be marked as "Outlaws of Keoland." (Contact the Triad for details, but there really is no good reason for the PCs to attack Beryce at this time.)

ENCOUNTER 2: HEADING TO STEFFENMOOR

The trek from Segor to Steffenmoor takes you along the banks of the Sheldomar and eventually into marshlands filled with trees and fog. As Beryce indicated, when you reach the defensive perimeter, her missive allows you quick entry. Several of the soldiers tell you that there are a number of stone causeways that survived the dragon attack, and that they converge, like spokes on a wheel, into the city. They tell you that the causeways are the easiest way into the city, although you will need to cross the flooded terrain in order to reach them.

Continuing along the banks of the Sheldomar, you see the enormous dams that once held the banks at bay before the dragon smashed them, flooding the city and drowning hundreds. You

finally arrive at the beginning of one of the city's causeways. As you do, you hear several pairs of heavy trampling feet making their way through the undergrowth towards you at a high rate of speed.

Setup: The clearing is fifty feet in diameter, with a relatively thick tree-line.

The PCs have two rounds to prepare however they see fit. On the third round, a pack of five blackscale lizardfolk burst out of the shadows and undergrowth and into the edge of the clearing. The lizardfolk have no intention of attacking the PCs, but have their weapons out and appear very agitated. A Spot check (DC 15) reveals that they are all heavily wounded, and that certain parts of their bodies have been morphed and twisted in some way. The lizardfolk will attempt to move around the PCs and avoid any combat, even if attacked. They appear panicked and are fleeing as fast as possible.

🦎 **Blackscale Lizardfolk** (5): hp 15 each; see Appendix 6.

On the fourth round the thing that is chasing the lizardfolk will enter the clearing and attack. These hungry undead are the tortured souls of those that were drowned by the dragon's attack on the city.

EL Calculation Note: At APL 6, the Drowned is assumed to have been heavily engaged in combat with the blackscals and so has half of its usual hit points; this reduces the EL of the Encounter by 1. At APL 8, one of the pair of Drowned is assumed to have likewise been engaged; this reduces the CR of that particular Drowned by 1 and so reduces the EL of the encounter by 1.

APL 4 (EL 6)

👁️ **Ghouls (Lacedons)** (8): hp 18 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 119.

APL 6 (EL 8)

👁️ **Drowned** (1): hp 98; see Appendix 2.

APL 8 (EL 10)

👁️ **Drowned** (1): hp 98, 195; see Appendix 3.

APL 10 (EL 12)

👁️ **Drowned Ftr1** (2): hp 235 each; see Appendix 4.

APL 12 (EL 14)

👁️ **Drowned Ftr3** (2): hp 255 each; see Appendix 5.

Treasure: At all APLs, one of the undead is carrying a divine scroll of restoration (CL 7th).

ENCOUNTER 3: KYLA THE DRYAD

Shortly after the battle, you see one of the half-drowned willows near the battlefield shift, and a

female figure steps out of its trunk. The creature that emerges is distinctly feminine, and at the same time feral. It measures each of you with bright green eyes set deep into an almost skeletal face with a black, almost scaly sheen. Two small horns curve forward from the sides of her head, poking through the vines that hang down over her shoulders like hair.

Greenish acid streams harmlessly over her iridescent, scaled skin as she wades gracefully towards you. Vicious fangs spoil what would otherwise be a warm, inviting smile. She speaks in halting, broken common. She has a serious look on her face although she certainly does not seem hostile.

“Hello, manlings. I Kyla. You go into city? City bad...”

Any PCs that participated in the interactive KEO4-IN10 *Bane of the Black Blade* at UNYCon 2004 (specifically, the mini-adventure entitled “Special Delivery”) may have met Kyla before. Assuming such PCs treated her well she will acknowledge them and for the most part speak directly to them.

◆ **Kyla, female half-dragon (black) dryad:** hp 27, see Appendix 6.

Kyla has been rather confused by the actions of the Keolandians lately, after sacking the ruins of the city, eradicating the evil lizardfolk there, and then suddenly fleeing the city afterwards, and wonders what’s going on in the city.

Kyla speaks basic, broken Common, although she is reasonably intelligent. She asks the PCs what they are doing heading back towards the city, and she is rather forceful about finding out their intentions since she considers Steffenmoor to be her home. If the PCs explain their actions, she will give them some useful information in exchange.

The strange dryad looks in the direction of the ruins and shudders. “Humans kill death druid and army take city, but then army leaves. Afraid of color fog.” She shivers. “Walk with Kyla,” she says, as she steps away from you before stopping a few yards away and nudging something with one of her foot’s talons.

“This what color fog do when wind blows and it covers animals,” she says. A single green tear drops from her cheeks before hitting a stone with the sizzle of acid. “When pretty fog comes I hid in tree, but it makes tree scream...”

Kyla is motioning to a dead swamp thrush which has lesions and tumors on its body and its skeleton seems to have ruptured and burst from inside of its body.

Kyla stiffens a scaly lip and says, “Manlings come into city ten and two dawns ago. Not army

manlings, but evil ones. They camp here, and Kyla stay inside tree, but she hear them all the same. Talk about tower of...” She pauses, frowns, and then looks up after having remembered what was said. “Del-uh-nor. Wizard. Talk about a tower? They say maybe that tower.” She points to the ruins, where you can indeed see a squat, square ruin of a tower, barely in view.

Kyla cannot accompany the PCs to the tower; she will grow ill if she strays from her willow and she is fearful of the mist. She will offer any other assistance she can render from the safety of her willow and its immediate environs, however.

Troubleshooting: Attacking Kyla causes her to flee for her tree. If she hasn’t relayed what she overheard of the conversation of the Black Brotherhood members, the PCs will have to rely on some other means (compelling her, divination spells or the like). If not, the adventure will end here for the PCs – the ruins are simply too large for the PCs to find what they’re looking for by blindly searching for it. (If they come back, they might be able to sway Kyla; she will begin as Indifferent in terms of her attitude and can be swayed by the PCs with a Diplomacy check per the rules in the *Player’s Handbook*. Normally she would be Hostile from being attacked, but she genuinely wants to help the PCs and understands that her appearance can be offsetting to others.)

If the PCs head to the tower, go to Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 4: ENTERING THE CITY

Most of the wall that used to surround the city has been torn down in ruin, and several watchtowers lay in pieces. Buildings are partially destroyed, but many of them remain fully intact if not scarred from battle. The water level here recedes to between a few inches to a foot off the ground.

A strange rainbow-colored mist hangs in the air throughout the city, and nothing can be heard from the streets. The tower that is your destination isn’t too far off.

DEALING WITH THE MIST

Review this section carefully before proceeding.

A PC making a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20) can confirm Beryce’s suspicion that this mist is similar to, or actually is, that which can be found on the Plane of Limbo. It is the essence of chaos magic. The mist presents a hazard to any that are exposed to it. The PC will also know that it can be circumvented in a number of ways.

- First, it has the physical properties of mist. That is, a strong wind will cause it to move, a rain shower will cause it to settle, and so on.
- Second, its harmful effects are chaos-related. A PC protected by *protection from chaos*, *dispel chaos*, *shield of law*, *magic circle against chaos*, or similar spells protecting from magic with the Chaos descriptor will be unaffected.
- Third, the harmful effects rely on extra-planar energies that cause a being to “drift” out of its static state. Any PC affected by a spell or item such as *dimensional anchor*, *dimensional shackles*, or wearing an item such as the *bracers of foundation* from the “Ether Threat” series of Core adventures will be unaffected.

It is up to you to decide whether similar means of defense would work using the above guidelines.

IF THE PLAYERS ASK, tell them that the mist does not extend much higher than fifteen feet above the ground, and that magical means of moving over the mist (or less likely, in the earth beneath it) could allow the PCs to avoid any exposure.

When the PCs enter the city, if they are exposed to the mist, read the following (note that protected PCs are excluded from the unpleasant effects):

The touch of the mist is unavoidable as you enter Steffenmoor and begin heading down one of the debris-filled streets. You begin to feel strange, as if something is tugging at the very essence of your being.

PCs affected by the Chaos Mist suffer a number of hit points of damage **PER MINUTE** equal to the APL of the PCs. You should describe the damage the PCs are taking as being from dreadful deformities on their bodies, and the exposure is quite painful. There is no saving throw against this effect. Have fun describing the deformities the PCs suffer, but keep it tasteful and remember that none of these will have any sort of in-game, mechanical effect (beyond simple hit point damage).

Tiny or smaller creatures in the company of the PCs (such as small animal companions, familiars, etc) can be protected from the mist if they are stowed in a backpack, sack or other covering.

Note: You should let the PCs know immediately upon entering the mist that they are beginning to take damage that will be assessed at the end of each minute, and you should inform them of the amount. Don’t tell them a minute into the mist, “you’ve just taken X hit points in damage.”

The PCs will doubtless be in a rush to get out of the mist to their destination. Use the following table below to determine how long it takes the PCs to make it from the outskirts of the city to Delanor’s Tower (remember that the city streets are mostly unfamiliar, choked with

debris, and the Chaos Mist hurts visibility). The below figures assume that the PCs are moving at a Run (x2); faster movement is not possible given the terrain and visibility; if they are proceeding more cautiously, double the below travel times (and damage):

Base Speed (feet/round)	Time to Tower	Total Damage (hp)
10	6 minutes	APL x 6
20	5 minutes	APL x 5
30	4 minutes	APL x 4
40	3 minutes	APL x 3
50	2 minutes	APL x 2
60	1 minute	APL

Continuing on, here and there you begin to see the corpses of Keoish soldiers. Pockets of such slaughter appear to spread throughout this part of the city. Their bodies are morphed and partially eaten, and their weapons are twisted and rusted.

ENCOUNTER 5: DELANOR’S TOWER

Refer to DM Aid: Map #1 for this encounter.

Having finally reached your destination, you see an overgrown courtyard covered in vines and swampy plant growth leading up to a one-story home that has a squat three-story tower attached to it. The front door has been torn off its hinges. Despite the open door, the rainbow mist does not seem to have permeated the interior.

Note: The tower has windows that are barred and closed with metal shutters (Break DC 18, hp 10, hardness 5) on all floors.

Inside the home the PCs find that most of the mundane things have melted away into twisted piles of scrap. (The map shows the items intact so you can hint what the debris might once have been – a lab table, a bookshelf, etc)

The only thing of interest – and danger – in the tower is on the top story of the place, in the wizard’s bedchamber. At APL 4, the only hazard is a trap on the chest containing Delanor’s journal (this trap appears **ONLY** at this APL). At all other APLs, one or more chaos beasts are present.

For APLs 6+ only, as soon as a PC reaches the bedchamber, read the following:

Ascending to the top story of the tower, you find a bedchamber, now brought to ruin. Roiling in the

chamber is what could best be described as a mass of twisted chaos. It continuously shifts and changes from one form to the next, until finally it becomes a blob full of eyes and tooth-filled mouths with two tentacles that reach out towards you.

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Chaos Beast:** hp 54; see *Monster Manual*, page 33.

APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Chaos Beasts (2):** hp 54 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 33.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Chaos Beasts (4):** hp 54 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 33.

APL 12 (EL 13)

➤ **Chaos Beasts, 12-HD Advanced (4):** hp 108 each; see *Appendix 5*.

After defeating the chaos beasts (or not, at APL 4), the PCs can search the chamber. Most of the place is completely destroyed, but a Search check (DC 20) will find Delanor's journal. The book was originally found on the middle story, in the library, where the Brotherhood members reviewed the notes and stowed away the journal. The chaos beast dispatched one of the Brotherhood members carrying the journal, and it was left here. (The body has since been consumed by the creature).

At APL 4 ONLY, the book was magically trapped by the Brotherhood wizard carrying it; it holds a nasty surprise for any that might open it. As a result of the enchantment the book radiates moderate evocation magic. The trap's detonation will leave the journal unharmed.

APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Fire Trap:** CR 5; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fire trap*, 7th-level wizard, 1d4+7 fire, DC 16 Reflex half); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

When the book is perused, distribute *Player Handout #2* to the players.

Reading the rest of the journal describes Delanor's fascination with the gods of the outer planes and the concepts of evil and chaos and his growing madness in vivid detail. The wizard had close religious ties to Barankin, the pastor of the nearby Church of Boccob (he describes his visits on several occasions, enough to find the church should the PCs decide to go there) with whom he often enjoyed religious debates. As Delanor became more fanatical about the theology of the outer planes, one of the arguments led him to dominating Barankin and using him as his puppet to set up a shrine to Tharizdun underneath the church. Delanor also used the pastor in this way to lure potential victims for

sacrifice in his experiments. Finally, the journal tells of how Delanor finished the shrine to Tharizdun, and then sacrificed Barankin in order to complete a device that would turn the shrine itself into a portal leading to a specific temple on Limbo, where he believed a shard of Tharizdun has been kept locked away. Delanor speaks obsessively of releasing Tharizdun, who he believes will explain all there is to know about the chaos of the multiverse. The next pages would detail more about the device and the portal itself, but the pages are missing, having been torn out.

Development: When the PCs venture outside, they will find that a welcome breeze off the river has blown the mist eastward; they have a window of opportunity to travel to the church (several minutes' walk away) without again suffering the effects of the Chaos Mist. If they choose to continue to the church, proceed to Encounter 6.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE CHURCH OF BOCCOB

Refer to *DM Aid: Map #2* for this encounter.

By following the directions alluded to in Delanor's journal, you easily find the Church of Boccob. Made of stone and relatively simple architecture, this building is roughly rectangular and two stories tall. The wind has abated, and you notice that the swirling chaos mists are beginning to drift back in. Indeed, you think that the mist seems especially strong around this church, although the stuff doesn't appear to have entered it.

The front double doors are unlocked, the long-rusted chain and padlock that held the doors closed have been hacked open.

Once the PCs enter, read the following:

The doors close of their own accord behind you. This place is dimly lit. A number of corpses litter the pews on the first floor, but their bodies – unlike others you've seen – appear intact. Near the center of the northern wall is an altar to Boccob. There are stairs in the northeast part of the church, leading up to the second floor balcony. A stout wooden railing leaves the three chambers above open for view.

Standing several feet away from the edge of the balcony is an intense-looking Suloise man wearing heavy plate armor, with a weighted mace in one hand and a heavy iron shield on his arm. A woman, also Suel, with high cheekbones and platinum blonde hair, stands with him. Her plate armor is lined with metal barbs, and a wicked looking greatsword is sheathed across her back.

Setup: At this juncture, you should have the PCs make a Spot check against an opposed Hide check for the two rogues on the ground floor. (The rogues have had

time to conceal themselves, so they are assumed to have taken 10 on the roll – thus, the DC on the Spot check will be equal to [12 + APL], modified for distance.)

The cleric, Aldrea, is on the upper floor with Ballancia (their starting positions are marked on the map with “A” and “B” respectively). The rogues, Caric and Derrick, are hiding (locations “C” and “D”) on the ground floor.

APL 4 (EL 7)

➤ **Aldrea, male human Clr3 of Tharizdun:** hp 23; see *Appendix 1*.

➤ **Ballancia, female human Ftr3:** hp 30; see *Appendix 1*.

➤ **Caric, male human Rog3:** hp 18; see *Appendix 1*.

➤ **Derrick, male human Rog3:** hp 18; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 9)

➤ **Aldrea, male human Clr5 of Tharizdun:** hp 38; see *Appendix 2*.

➤ **Ballancia, female human Ftr5:** hp 49; see *Appendix 2*.

➤ **Caric, male human Rog5:** hp 30; see *Appendix 2*.

➤ **Derrick, male human Rog5:** hp 30; see *Appendix 2*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

➤ **Aldrea, male human Clr7 of Tharizdun:** hp 53; see *Appendix 3*.

➤ **Ballancia, female human Ftr7:** hp 69; see *Appendix 3*.

➤ **Caric, male human Rog5/Assassin2:** hp 42; see *Appendix 3*.

➤ **Derrick, male human Rog5/Assassin2:** hp 42; see *Appendix 3*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

➤ **Aldrea, male human Clr7/Entropomancer2 of Tharizdun:** hp 68; see *Appendix 4*.

➤ **Ballancia, female human Ftr7/Blackguard2:** hp 88; see *Appendix 4*.

➤ **Caric, male human Rog5/Assassin2/Shadowdancer2:** hp 57; see *Appendix 4*.

➤ **Derrick, male human Rog5/Assassin2/Shadowdancer2:** hp 57; see *Appendix 4*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

➤ **Aldrea, male human Clr7/Entropomancer4 of Tharizdun:** hp 83; see *Appendix 5*.

➤ **Ballancia, female human Ftr7/Blackguard4:** hp 108; see *Appendix 5*.

➤ **Caric, male human Rog7/Assassin2/Shadowdancer2:** hp 69; see *Appendix 5*.

➤ **Derrick, male human Rog7/Assassin2/Shadowdancer2:** hp 69; see *Appendix 5*.

Tactics: The quartet is on their guard for intruders, as the ruins are still inhabited by all manner of creature. When the PCs enter, Ballancia will pause only long enough to receive a spell from Aldrea (at the higher APLs, this will certainly be *greater vigor*, whereupon she will cast her own *divine sacrifice* spell) before heading into melee. The cleric will cast spells (and maneuver his *entropic shard*, if APL 10+) and generally act in a support capacity.

The hidden pair on the ground floor will react depending on whether or not they think they have been seen. If they feel they have, they will attempt to flank and quickly eliminate lightly-armored spellcasters. If not, and they have assassin levels, they spend three rounds studying their targets before closing in for the kill via their death attack ability).

You are encouraged to modify their tactics and have the four fighting to the best of their abilities. Under no circumstances will they surrender.

Development: After the battle, the PCs will discover the following items of interest (distribute *Player Handouts #3* and *#4*):

- **The missing pages from Delanor’s journal:** In Delanor’s journal, he explains that when Tharizdun was imprisoned, parts of him were divided into shards, and that each shard has been kept locked away within temples on demiplanes throughout the multiverse. Using the knowledge he obtained, he learned how to properly construct a shrine to Tharizdun (the instructions for doing so are on these pages), and then perform rituals of sacrifice where a specific number of souls are combined with chaos magic to create the *Tharizdun Portal Key*, a device that activates the shrine and creates a gateway to one of the demiplanes where a shard is locked away. Delanor, in his final entry, explains that he has stationed a guardian around the shrine, to protect it from intruders, while he will cross over into the demiplane and meet with the shard of Tharizdun, with the intention of communicating with it, studying it, or even harnessing its power. He left the Portal Key at the shrine, so that someone else could re-open the gateway in the case that he does not return from the demiplane. Using the directions in the rest of the journal, the PCs can figure out how to open the secret entrance behind the shrine of Boccob, which leads down into the dungeon where the shrine to Tharizdun can be found.

- **Letters from Mnemnonthraxus:** This is a sheet of paper with orders from another Black Brotherhood member, named Mnemnonthraxus, detailing their mission. The orders state that Delanor was a known practitioner of the dark arts, and had numerous dealings with the Scarlet Brotherhood over time. The Black Brotherhood felt that the battle for Steffenmoor would be a chance to infiltrate the city and find where Delanor lived. There is a second letter from Mnemnonthraxus congratulating them on finding the shrine of Tharizdun and giving them instructions to re-activate the shrine and open the gateway once again. The letter states that the resulting chaos and slaughter released upon the Keoish army will serve as both the diversion Sakatha requested as well as to reduce the strength of the army. It notes that Sakatha will be sending a messenger to this church with other items to trade for the Tharizdun Portal Key.
- **Tharizdun Portal Key.** Also found is a fist-sized orb of black crystal that is cold to the touch and is filled with swirling clouds of darkness. Anyone holding it hears an endless cacophony of voices in his/her head, whispering about concepts and ideas of chaos and evil in the multiverse that could easily drive someone to the edge of insanity should they be exposed to it for a long enough time. This is the *Tharizdun Portal Key*, which cannot be destroyed by any means known to the PCs.

The secret portal is really an aperture that is summoned for the traveler by means of a deliberate act; it is not a secret door in the traditional sense. (Breaching the walls where the portal is marked will only open up the wall to the outside). As this portal is a manifestation of Tharizdun's will (despite his dormancy), and as such it cannot be manipulated or otherwise affected by mortal magic.

As per Delanor's journal, anyone that places the flat of their palm on the altar of Boccob and intones the name of Tharizdun will cause the noted section of the wall to dissolve into a magic portal of some kind. A successful Knowledge (arcana or the planes) check (DC 21) will allow the PC to know that this is a fixed *teleport* spell.

If the PCs investigate further by stepping into the *teleport* portal, proceed to Encounter 7.

ENCOUNTER 7: GATEWAY TO THARIZDUN

You open the secret entrance behind the shrine of Boccob and step into it. A moment later, you find yourself in the depths of some long-forgotten dungeon. A set of natural stone steps form a rough means of descent. There is a great deal of moisture in here.

The PCs are actually fifty feet below the surface of the temple, in a natural underground pocket. The close proximity to the Sheldomar and the city's flooding has left these underground areas in a continual state of humidity. If the PCs continue:

The stairs lead down for a hundred feet or more, winding out horizontally nearly as much as they descend vertically. It finally terminates in a long narrow tunnel, this time of crudely worked stone, ten feet in width.

The tunnel runs northward ninety feet.

Eventually, the tunnel opens into a circular cavern forty feet in diameter. Against the far wall is a stone platform with two sets of stairs leading up to it, one on each side. Above this platform is an open gateway filled with strands of darkness that writhe and take random shapes. In front of the platform is a long stone table made out of obsidian, carved with hideous designs and odd markings. In front of the table is a large pile of dust and pieces clay, as if something once stood here but has since been destroyed.

Searching the pile of dust and clay reveals a few recognizable pieces with strange markings that could have been part of a construct at some point. A Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) determines that this debris is the remnants of a construct known as a rogue eidolon.

The PCs can also investigate the table and the platform where the gateway stands. Looking closer at the table reveals a half-sphere depression in its middle, as if a spherical item should be placed there. A PC can make a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana or the planes) check to determine that this seems to operate the portal in some fashion; a simple Int check (DC 15) will clue in the PCs that the recess is roughly the size to accommodate the *Portal Key*.

Inserting the key and turning it to the left closes the gateway, while turning it to the right re-opens it. At this juncture, the PCs can decide to either close the portal, to leave it open, or to step into the gateway and enter the Temple of Tharizdun, located on its own demiplane linked to the Plane of Limbo.

A FATEFUL DECISION

Any divination spells that the PCs cast will return information that a foray into the portal is a fool's errand. An augury will return a "woe" result (ignore the percentage chance for a "no reading" result - in this instance, assume the PC's deity doesn't want mortals mucking around in there and sends the guidance to the PC without fail). You should improvise the guidance given by any other sorts of divination spells, with a mind towards advising the PCs that it's a bad idea to enter.

If the PCs should have the means to communicate with their NAW patron, they will be strongly

discouraged from entering. This sort of other-planar magic is something that should be handled by the NAW, or even (admittedly grudgingly) the Silent Ones.

Finally, the term “avatar” should send up alarms with any PC that can make a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10) – such beings are shards of their god’s power and are tremendously dangerous.

However, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you advise them, out-of-game, not to enter. The players have received all of the handouts by now, and they have their orders to return with their information – not to stay and duel shards of divine power.

If the PCs show intent to enter the gateway, explain to them that this is an optional encounter. It will cost them one additional TU to undertake (two TUs for out-of-region PCs); make sure this is noted on their ARs (**Optional Encounter** effect). This cost is paid regardless of their subsequent success or failure.

Should they want to continue, proceed to Optional Encounter 8. If they make a correlation between discretion and valor and decide to withdraw, you may proceed to the Conclusion.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 8: TEMPLE OF THARIZDUN

Refer to DM Aid: Map #3 for this encounter.

Stepping through the gateway, you feel countless strands of tangible darkness writhing all around you, and a cacophony of voices whispers secrets best left unknown.

You appear a heartbeat later standing on a narrow causeway that leads to a gigantic obsidian platform with writhing walls. They resemble huge black tentacles reaching upwards and joining to form a roof. The platform and the causeway are the only solid things to stand on here, as the rest of this plane is filled with endless clouds of the rainbow-colored mist. The causeway is oddly clear of the mist. The portal through which you arrived hangs behind you.

Assuming that the PCs proceed forward:

There is no apparent opening to the walls surrounding the platform, but the tentacles that form the wall moves apart as you approach, forming an entrance.

If the PCs state that they are entering, read the following:

The tentacles begin to writhe all around the perimeter of this platform. They arch upwards nearly sixty feet before forming a parody of a vaulted ceiling. Wisps of darkness fill the air, dancing and twisting around you, and then join together in the

middle of the platform to form a spherical cloud of absolute darkness that begins to float towards you, black tendrils emerging from within this cloud as it draws near...

APL 4 (EL 7)

➤ **Aspect of Tharizdun, 10-HD Advanced Vasuthant:** hp 113; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Quasits (3):** hp 18 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 46.

APL 6 (EL 9)

➤ **Aspect of Tharizdun, 18-HD Advanced Vasuthant:** hp 203; see Appendix 2.

➤ **Babau (1):** hp 69; see *Monster Manual*, page 40.

APL 8 (EL 11)

➤ **Aspect of Tharizdun, 26-HD Advanced Vasuthant:** hp 293; see Appendix 3.

APL 10 (EL 13)

➤ **Aspect of Tharizdun, 34-HD Advanced Vasuthant:** hp 383; see Appendix 4.

APL 12 (EL 15)

➤ **Aspect of Tharizdun, 34-HD Advanced Vasuthant:** hp 383; see Appendix 5.

➤ **Hezrou (2):** hp 130 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 44.

Setup: The Aspect begins on the map in the noted position; any demons present should be placed adjacent and in front of the creature (and in the air, if they are capable of flight).

Note: As this demi-plane is not connected to the astral plane, the demons’ *teleport* powers do not work.

Tactics: Any demons present are servants of Tharizdun, rather than their usual abyssal masters, and are outcasts (much as were the other-planar creatures in KEO4-03 *Lasting Deeds*; and for similar reasons). The demons WILL NOT USE their summon abilities; any demons so summoned would attack their traitorous fellows instead of aiding them!

All APLs: At all APLs, the basic plan is for the Vasuthant to grapple as many creatures as possible and then fly up to the ceiling where it cannot be reached by fighters remaining on the ground. It is important to note that it doesn’t need to take -20 to its grapple check to threaten or attack other foes because of its enervating crush special ability, and doesn’t make further checks against people grappled with it in order to do damage - they can still attempt a grapple check on their turn in order to escape. However, it does need to take -20 to its grapple check to do other things, like be able to move in a grapple without making a grapple check. Note that it is

impossible for a vasuthant to do more than a single enervating crush on a given target in a given round.

APL 4: At APL 4, the Vasuthant can only grapple two Medium or four Small creatures, so it should begin by attempting to slam and start a grapple with anyone who has cast a spell already in this combat, giving preference to a small spellcaster it can reach over a medium sized one. Failing to find a spellcaster, it should go after someone with a ranged weapon out, and failing that, simply whoever is in front. It should not take -20 on its grapple check. The quasits should begin by casting *invisibility* and walking up to be next to non-fighter-type PCs.

In the second round, the Vasuthant should attempt to improved grab another person within reach, and the quasits should take their full attack on the target that they're next to. By the third round, the Vasuthant may no longer be able to grapple anyone due to being full, but can still slam.

APL 6: At APL 6, the Vasuthant can grapple up to its maximum of both medium and small sized creatures, so it should have no problem getting four people grappled. It should start with spellcasters, take ranged attackers second, and take fighter types last. It should not take -20 to its grapple check at this APL. Its 15-foot reach means that it can stay somewhat above the group below, ideally outside of the range of melee attacks by fighters below.

APL 8: The vasuthant should use attempt to slam and grapple a spellcaster if possible, and the fighter in front if not. In future rounds, it should continue to keep trying to do this.

APL 10: The vasuthant should slam and then grapple whoever is in front, taking -20 on its grapple check (so it has a +23). It should continue to slam people each round, taking -20 until it either has four people, at which point it should fly up to the ceiling. Once it kills someone, it can fly back down and grab someone else using fly-by attack.

APL 12: The vasuthant should slam and then grapple whoever is in front, taking -20 on its grapple check (so it has a +23). It should continue to slam people each round, taking -20 until it either has four people, at which point it should fly up to the ceiling. Once it kills someone, it can fly back down and grab someone else using fly-by attack. The hezrou should cast *unholy blight* and wade in so they can melee in future rounds. If someone is using *dimension door* to get out of the grappling with the vasuthant, have the hezrou beat it up. If anyone survives the first few rounds and isn't grappled, the vasuthant should just fly up next to it and start beating it up. **Note:** This plane is sufficiently close to the Prime Material that the hezrou's *blasphemy* ability will **NOT** send the PCs back to the Prime Material Plane.

Development: Any PCs left behind in this place must be considered unrecoverable deaths, as their very essences are broken down into the stuff of chaos.

Especially potent magic (a *miracle*, *true resurrection* or *wish*) is required to revivify a PC so lost. Mark the note sections of the AR of such PCs accordingly.

If the PCs manage to defeat this being, they will have to flee back through the gateway immediately, as the platform begins to shake and pieces of the floor begin to fall into oblivion. As long as the PCs voice their intent to leave, they can go back through the gateway with the platform and then the causeway falling apart right behind their heels. As they step through the gateway, read the following:

Stepping back through the gateway you see the platform and causeway behind you falling into nothingness, and then the gateway itself closes with a loud thunderclap. The key dissolves into a vile-looking tar before vanishing. At the same time, the obsidian table that served as the lock to the shrine to Tharizdun crumbles to dust, leaving behind a number of items that seem to have been embedded in the rock itself. When you emerge into Steffenmoor a short time later, you find that the rainbow mist has disappeared.

Treasure: The destruction of the obsidian table has left behind some valuable items for the PCs to recover.

CONCLUSION

Assuming the PCs did not alienate Beryce in the beginning, they will return to her at the original tavern for a debriefing. She asks them to state all that they learned and found, and will sit back as they tell their tale.

- If the PCs managed to obtain the *Tharizdun Portal Key*, but do not reveal that they have it, Beryce frowns and points directly at the PC who has it, asking once more to hand it over. She easily has the magic to detect the location of such an object, and insists that they turn it in to the National Academy of Wizardry. She states that they will be rewarded for turning in such a powerful item of evil. If they refuse to turn it over, she states that they can expect no aid from the National Academy in the future. Such PCs earn the **Disfavor of the National Academy of Wizardry** and **Enmity of the Black Brotherhood** AR effects. As for the key, it will dissolve into a tar-like substance a few days later before vanishing altogether. A subsequent check on the shrine (by the PCs or other concerned parties) will find that the portal has been sealed. The PCs earn no monetary reward.
- If they reveal that they were able to enter the actual temple of Tharizdun and rid the place of its evil entirely by defeating the Avatar, she will actually seem slightly disappointed for a moment, but then try to cover it up with a shrug and state that they did an excellent job, give them their reward, and leave as soon as possible. The PCs earn the **Favor of the**

National Academy of Wizardry, Enmity of the Black Brotherhood and the **Touched by Chaos** AR effects. Each PC earns a 500 gp reward.

- If they state that they did not enter the demiplane but closed the gateway, she will nod curtly and state that she feels that was the best course of action, for there is no way of knowing what might have been on the other side. The National Academy of Wizardry will go there later and ensure that the gateway never gets opened again. The PCs earn the **Favor of the National Academy of Wizardry** and **Enmity of the Black Brotherhood** AR effects. Each PC earns a 500 gp reward.
- If they state that they found the gateway, but did not close it, she merely nods and states with arrogance that the right personnel in the National Academy of Wizardry will know how to properly close the gateway, and that it will be taken care of immediately. The PCs earn only the **Enmity of the Black Brotherhood** AR effect. Each PC earns a 250 gp reward.
- If the PCs reveal the information about the Black Brotherhood and their link to Sakatha, Beryce will frown darkly but will thank them for such vital information.
- Finally, if the PCs turn over the *Tharizdun Portal Key*, tell the PCs that they later hear of Beryce's sudden disappearance, and that no one knows what happened to her. A later investigation of the portal, however, will reveal that it was closed, but the key is missing. Regardless, the PCs earn the **Favor of the National Academy of Wizardry**.

THE FALLOUT

If the PCs hand over the *Tharizdun Portal Key*, Beryce will deliver it to the Scarlet Brotherhood and go into hiding, for the National Academy of Wizardry will want to know what happened to such an item of evil power and why it was not turned over to them.

When the NAW finds out that one of their outstanding members has betrayed them, heads roll at the Academy and even Lashon himself suffers from some of the fallout. The NAW is fearful that, should the key again fall into the hands of the Brotherhood, they might create and open countless shrines to Tharizdun, which would possibly lead to the dark god's release.

When you have role-played the Conclusion of the adventure, proceed to the Epilogue.

EPILOGUE

Thomlin Sellark strode calmly down the massive hallway. His booted footsteps seemed to echo forever in this empty wing of the fortress known as

Goarada. Back before Watcher Narthistle ordered the transfer of all the unreliable, cowardly Dispatchers to Ravonnar, they'd called this wing of the fortress home. Now, it sat empty. Just as the Watchers said, if they wouldn't follow orders, they were just in the way.

The squire continued his rounds. A mystical flame, cool to the touch, burned at the end of his torch; his sword dangled from his hip. He rounded a corner, and his jaw dropped.

Watcher Narthistle stood in the hallway, at the top of the grand staircase leading to his personal chambers. At the bottom, a woman who could only be his wife lay in a heap, her neck and back at angles that could only be fatal.

The Truthful Banshee's voice boomed down at the sentry.

"Squire. Wake Watcher Klailan. My wife has fallen down the stairs, and I believe she is dead."

Thomlin glanced down at the broken body of his commander's wife. She was beautiful, thought Sellark, for an Oeridian. Her head was barely intact and both her dark hair and nightclothes were drenched in blood. The dark crimson stain spread rapidly across the granite floor. He snapped his heels together, spun sharply on one and jogged off into towards the wing that most of the Watchers still occupied.

Several minutes later, he knocked on the heavy, iron-shod door of the Arch-Prelate of the Church of the Invincible in Linth.

"Watcher Klailan... Watcher Narthistle requests your presence. Lady Narthistle has had an accident."

The shuffle of activity from behind the door indicated that the war priest had been awake, most likely communing with the Lord of War.

The reply was immediate, and harsh. "Who dares interrupt my contemplations?"

"Junior Obedient Master Thomlin Sellark."

"Since Narthistle sent you, you will only be cleaning the stables for the fortnight as penance for disturbing me. I will be out briefly."

The squire grumbled silently. His second uncle was the Duke Admiral Luschan Sellark III, lord of Gradsul, and head of House Rhola. Cleaning stables was work for those filthy Keogh animals that infested his family's lands. Klailan had always been quick to punish squires for even the slightest of infractions. Thomlin resolved to find a younger squire to disturb the priest in the future.

After several minutes, the priest threw the door open and strode out, clad only in his bed clothes,

clenched fist amulet hanging about his neck. He neither addressed, nor looked at the squire as he passed, headed for the commander of Goarada's personal sanctum. Had Thomlin thought to look back, he'd have seen a pale, delicate, ruby nailed hand press the door shut behind the departing cleric.

When he returned with the priest, things were as they'd been when he left. Narthistle stood motionless at the top of the granite and black marble staircase, arms crossed. The stain of blood and the gore of brains coated most of the base of the stairs.

Watcher Klailan approached, gave her body a cursory glance, then met his commander's gaze. Thomlin took a halting step backwards, waiting for one of them to speak, to acknowledge what was obvious even to him. The two Watchers had known each other for decades, fought together in the Greyhawk Wars, and in countless other conflicts across the Flanaess, angels of death bringing woe and righteousness to the enemies of the Lion Throne. They needed no words to understand each other.

Narthistle turned on his heel and strode back through the massive double doors to his chambers before they closed with an echoing and final thump.

Klailan took another step towards the dead Oeridian woman, and looked over her corpse.

"Squire, dispose of this and then clean the stones. Lady Narthistle does not wish to be raised from the dead."

The next morning, Thomlin stood atop the stairs, bucket and sponge in hand. He'd finally finished scrubbing the blood from the stones of the staircase when something caught his eye.

Just above the torch sconce to the left of Watcher Narthistle's door, about eight feet off the ground, was a deep crimson smear with several dark brown hairs stuck in it.

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

Defeat the undead.

APL 4: 180 xp.
APL 6: 240 xp.
APL 8: 300 xp.
APL 10: 360 xp.
APL 12: 420 xp.

Encounter 5

Survive or disarm the trap.

APL 4: 150 xp.

Defeat the chaos beasts.

APL 6: 210 xp.
APL 8: 270 xp.
APL 10: 330 xp.
APL 12: 390 xp.

Encounter 6

Defeat the Black Brotherhood members.

APL 4: 210 xp.
APL 6: 270 xp.
APL 8: 330 xp.
APL 10: 390 xp.
APL 12: 450 xp.

Story Award

Close the portal to the Shrine of the Avatar.

APL 4: 135 xp.
APL 6: 180 xp.
APL 8: 225 xp.
APL 10: 270 xp.
APL 12: 315 xp.

Total possible experience without optional encounter

APL 4: 675 xp.
APL 6: 900 xp.
APL 8: 1,125 xp.
APL 10: 1,350 xp.
APL 12: 1,575 xp.

Optional Encounter 8

Defeat the Aspect.

APL 4: 337 xp.
APL 6: 450 xp.
APL 8: 562 xp.
APL 10: 675 xp.
APL 12: 787 xp.

Total possible experience with optional encounter

APL 4: 1,012 xp.
APL 6: 1,350 xp.
APL 8: 1,687 xp.
APL 10: 2,025 xp.
APL 12: 2,362 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 adventure, 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.

Encounter 2:

All APLs: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *divine scroll of restoration* (CL 7th) (67 gp).

Encounter 6:

APL 4: L: 433 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *universal solvent* (4 gp), *potion of blur* (25 gp), 2 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 2 *potions of protection from law* (4 gp each), 2 *necklaces of fireballs type I* (138 gp each).

APL 6: L: 362 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *universal solvent* (4 gp), *potion of blur* (25 gp), 2 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 2 *potions of protection from law* (4 gp each), 2 *necklaces of fireballs type I* (138 gp each), 2 +1 *chain shirts* (104 gp), +1 *greatsword* (196 gp), 2 *elixirs of fire breath* (92 gp each gp), 2 *potions of displacement* (63 gp each).

APL 8: L: 167 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *universal solvent* (4 gp), *potion of blur* (25 gp), 2 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 2 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2 *potions of protection from law* (4 gp each), 2 *necklaces of fireballs type II* (225 gp each), 2 +1 *chain shirts* (104 gp), +1 *greatsword* (196 gp), 2 *elixirs of fire breath* (92 gp each gp), 2 *potions of displacement* (63 gp each), 2 *rings of protection +1* (167 gp each), *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp), +1 *spiked full plate* (225 gp), 2 +1 *rapiers* (193 gp), 2 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 10: L: 29 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *universal solvent* (4 gp), *potion of blur* (25 gp), 2 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 2 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2 *potions of protection from law* (4 gp each), 2 *necklaces of fireballs type II* (225 gp each), 2 +1 *chain shirts* (104 gp), +1 *greatsword* (196 gp), 2 *elixirs of fire breath* (92 gp each gp), 2 *potions of displacement* (63 gp each), 2 *rings of protection +1* (167 gp each), 3 *cloaks of resistance +1* (83 gp each), +1 *full plate* (221 gp), +1 *spiked full plate* (225 gp), 2 +1 *harmony rapiers* (693 gp), 2 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each), *periapt of wisdom +2* (333 gp), *profane scabbard* (367 gp).

APL 12: L: 28 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *universal solvent* (4 gp), *potion of blur* (25 gp), 2 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 2 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2 *potions of protection from law* (4 gp each), 2 *necklaces of fireballs type II* (225 gp each), 2 +1 *chain shirts* (104 gp), +1 *anarchic greatsword* (696 gp), 2 *elixirs of fire breath* (92 gp each gp), 2 *potions of displacement* (63 gp each), 2 *rings of protection +1* (167 gp each), 3 *cloaks of resistance +1* (83 gp each), +1 *full plate* (221 gp), +1 *spiked full plate* (225 gp), 2 +1 *keen harmony rapiers* (1,527 gp), 3 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each), *periapt of wisdom +2* (333 gp), *profane scabbard* (367 gp), +1 *light steel shield* (97 gp), *necklace of fireballs type V* (488 gp), 2 *beads of force* (250 gp each).

Conclusion:

All APLs: L: 0 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed) without Optional Encounter

APL 4: L: 433 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 422 gp – Total: 1,355 gp (650 gp).

APL 6: L: 362 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 1,136 gp – Total: 1,998 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 167 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 2,430 gp – Total: 3097 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 29 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 4,517 gp – Total: 5,046 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 28 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 7,795 gp – Total: 8,323 gp (3,300 gp).

Optional Encounter 8:

APL 4: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *moonsilver shard* (4 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *moonsilver shard* (4 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *ghost net* (667 gp), *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *moonsilver shard* (4 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *dimensional prism* (1,467 gp), *ghost net* (667 gp), *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *moonsilver shard* (4 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *vestments of steadfast spellcasting* (2,083 gp), *dimensional prism* (1,467 gp), *ghost net* (667 gp), *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *moonsilver shard* (4 gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 4: L: 433 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 426 gp – Total: 1,359 gp (975 gp).

APL 6: L: 362 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 1,848 gp – Total: 2,710 gp (1,350 gp).

APL 8: L: 167 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 3,809 gp – Total: 4,476 gp (1,950 gp).

APL 10: L: 29 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 7,363 gp – Total: 7,892 gp (3,450 gp).

APL 12: L: 28 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 12,724 gp – Total: 13,252 gp (4,950 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

✦ **Disfavor of the National Academy of Wizardry:** You have angered the powerful National Academy of Wizardry (NAW) of the Kingdom of Keoland. This disfavor may preclude you from receiving employment in certain adventures. If you are a member of the NAW, you are immediately demoted one rank. If this would

place you below the lowest rank in the metaorganization, you are dismissed from the metaorganization, never to be readmitted.

☛ **Influence Point with the National Academy of Wizardry:** The wizards of this powerful organization are pleased with your efforts. You may find that being in their good graces is useful in the future.

You may spend this Influence Point during any Keoland Regional or Sheldomar Valley Metaregional adventure to gain access (Frequency: Adventure) to purchase a single upgrade to any armor, shield, or weapon you possess; the upgrade is limited to an increase of one in the enhancement bonus of the item (including moving from masterwork to +1). Pay the difference between the old and new price, but with a one-time 20% discount.

Alternatively, you may spend this Influence Point during any Keoland Regional or Sheldomar Valley Metaregional adventure to gain access (Frequency: Adventure) to purchase a single staff or wand listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and whose market price is listed at 65,000 gp or less. Only staves and wands whose prerequisite spells can be cast by a sorcerer or wizard may be purchased.

✦ **Enmity of the Black Brotherhood:** For foiling a plan to rouse an aspect of their deity, you have earned the ire of the Black Brotherhood and their mysterious patron, Mnemnonthraxus.

☛ **Optional Encounter:** PCs who participated in the optional encounter are subject to Touched by Chaos below. They also must expend 1 additional TU for participating in this optional encounter (2 TUs for out-of-region PCs).

Raise the maximum xp and gp caps on this Adventure Record to the following amounts: APL 4 – 1,012 xp, 975 gp; APL 6 – 1,350 xp, 1,350 gp; APL 8 – 1,687 xp, 1,950 gp; APL 10 – 2,025 xp, 3,450 gp; APL 12 – 2,362 xp, 4,950 gp.

If the PCs defeat the aspect of Tharizdun, they discover additional treasure in the dust remains of the obsidian table. The items marked with an * on the Items Found During the Adventure list below are only available to PCs who successfully complete the optional encounter.

☛ **Touched by Chaos:** You have been in the presence of an aspect of Tharizdun. You heard whispers in your mind and soul secrets you were not willing to hear. You radiate chaos just as if you were chaotic in alignment; if you were already chaotic, the strength of your aura increased by one step (for purposes of a *detect chaos* spell). Furthermore, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to all saving throws against spells with the chaos descriptor. Touched by Chaos has no other in-game effects and lasts for one year from the date on this Adventure Record.

Item Access

APL 4:

- *Divine Scroll of Restoration* (7th level caster; *Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- *Elixir of Hiding* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- *Necklace of Fireballs, Type I* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- *Universal Solvent* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- **Moonsilver Shard* (*Adventure; Arms & Equipment Guide; Limit Five*)

APL 6 (all of APL 4 plus the following):

- *Elixir of Fire Breath* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- **Ring of Force Shield* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide; Limit One*)

APL 8 (all of APLs 4, 6 plus the following):

- *Elixir of Sneaking* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- *Necklace of Fireballs, Type II* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- **Ghost Net* (*Adventure; Libris Mortis; Limit One*)

APL 10 (all of APLs 4, 6, 8 plus the following):

- *+1 Harmony Rapier* (*Adventure; Arms & Equipment Guide*)
- *Profane Scabbard* (*as per sacred scabbard but corrupt weapon (Dungeon Master's Guide page 182) instead of bless weapon; Adventure; Complete Warrior*)
- **Dimensional Prism* (*Adventure; Arms & Equipment Guide; Limit One*)

APL 12 (all of APLs 4, 6, 8, 10 plus the following):

- *+1 Anarchic Greatsword* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- *+1 Keen Harmony Rapier* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide / Arms & Equipment Guide*)
- *Bead of Force* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- *Necklace of Fireballs, Type V* (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- **Vestments of Steadfast Spellcasting* (*Adventure; Planar Handbook; Limit One*)

APPENDIX 1 – APL 4

ENCOUNTER 6

Aldrea, male human Clr3 of Tharizdun: CR 3; medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6; hp 23; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+8 armor, +1 shield, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grapple +2/+3; Full Atk heavy mace +4 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2); SA rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ spontaneous casting, aura; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Spellcraft +6. Great Fortitude, Magical Aptitude, Improved Toughness^{CW}. ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; DC 12 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, guidance, light, read magic; 1st – bless, bane, lesser confusion*, protection from good; 2nd – magic missile*, sound burst, spiritual weapon.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Force (Su, 1/day, reroll any damage roll and take the better of the two rolls), Madness (subtract one from all Wis-based skill checks and all Will saves; once per day add ½ your level to a single Wis-based skill check or Will save).

Possessions: masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy mace, universal solvent, light steel shield, holy symbol of Tharizdun, spell component pouches, Tharizdun portal key (acts as item of power tied to Tharizdun, allowing divine spell-casting).

Ballancia, female human Ftr3: CR 3; medium humanoid (human); HD 3d10+9; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +3/+6; Full Atk greatsword +8 melee (2d6+3; 19-20/x2); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Hide -2, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +2. Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Weapon Focus (Greatsword). ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: masterwork spiked full plate, masterwork greatsword, potion of blur.

Caric and Derrick, male human Rog3: CR 3; medium humanoid (human); HD 3d6+6; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +2/+4; Full Atk rapier +5 melee (1d6+2; 18-20/x2); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Balance +8, Climb +6, Disguise +3, Hide +7, Jump +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +9, Perform (dance) +4, Search +8, Spot +6, Tumble +9. Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Keolandish.

Possessions: masterwork chain shirt, masterwork rapier, elixir of hiding, potion of protection from law, necklace of fireballs type I.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 8

Aspect of Tharizdun, 10-HD Advanced Vasuthant: CR 5, Large Undead; HD 10d12+30; hp 113; Init +1; Spd Fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural); BAB/Grp +5/+15; Atk Slam +11 melee (1d6+6); Full Atk Slam +11 melee (1d6+6) and up to 4 enervating crushes (1d6+6 plus 1d4 Str); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +6 turn resistance, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, fire and electricity resistance 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 22, Dex 12, Con -, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 14. *Monster Manual III*, page 182.

Skills & Feats: Hide +1*, Knowledge (the planes) +1, Listen +8, Spot +9; Flyby Attack, Improved Grapple, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Improved Turn Resistance^{LM}, Weapon Focus (Slam). ^{CW}Complete Warrior, ^{LM}Libris Mortis.

Skills: *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 1d6 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a

free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to Light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as *daylight*) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearly magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Description: A spherical cloud of impenetrable darkness floats towards you. As it draws near, black tendrils reach out from the cloud's opaque core.

ENCOUNTER 2

Drowned: Medium Undead; CR 9; HD 20d12+20; hp 195; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 Natural); Base Atk/Grp: +10/+17; Atk Slam +12 melee (1d8+12)*; Full Atk 2 Slams +12 melee (1d8+12)*; SA drowning aura; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 25, Dex 13, Con –, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 12. *Monster Manual III*, page 46.

*Includes -5 penalty on attack and +5 bonus on damage from Power Attack feat.

Skills & Feats: Hide +20, Listen +14, Move Silently +20, Spot +18, Swim +18; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack.

Drowning Aura (Su): A Drowned gives off a 30-ft. radius emanation of suffocating drowning, imbuing its surroundings with a watery glint and deadly threat for creatures that breathe. All breathing creatures within 30 feet of a drowned are treated as if beneath water in terms of being able to breathe. The drowning aura accelerates the process of drowning.

Normally, a creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score before it begins to drown. Within the drowning aura, a creature can only hold its breath if it makes a DC 10 Constitution check every round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the character finally fails its Constitution check, it begins to drown. In the first round, it falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, it drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, if still in the drowning aura, it drowns.

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A Drowned gains its bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Skills: A Drowned has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Languages: Common, Abyssal.

Description: This animated corpse is sapping wet, as if it just crawled from the water. The air around it is thick and cloying, exuding the essences of the corpse's watery grave. The drowned lost their lives in the watery deep. The evidence of their gasping death always saturates their clothing and flesh, and fills the air around them. Many drowned came to their current circumstances when their ships went down at sea with all hands. Other, more ancient, first arose when their island homes sank beneath the waves ages ago, drowning all.

ENCOUNTER 6

Aldrea, male human Clr5 of Tharizdun: CR 5; medium humanoid (human); HD 5d8+10; hp 38; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+8 armor, +1 shield, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grapple +3/+4; Full Atk heavy mace +5 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2); SA rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ spontaneous casting, aura; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (religion) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Spellcraft +8. Great Fortitude, Magical Aptitude, Improved Toughness^{CW}. ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1/2+1; DC 13 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, guidance, light, read magic, resistance; 1st – bless, bane, cure light wounds, lesser confusion*, protection from good; 2nd – cure moderate wounds, magic missile*, sound burst, spiritual weapon; 3rd – blast of force*^{SC}, dispel magic, prayer. ^{SC}Spell Compendium.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Force (Su, 1/day, reroll any damage roll and take the better of the two rolls), Madness (subtract one from all Wis-based skill checks and all Will saves; once per day add ½ your level to a single Wis-based skill check or Will save).

Possessions: masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy mace, universal solvent, light steel shield, holy symbol of Tharizdun, spell component pouches, Tharizdun portal key (acts as item of power tied to Tharizdun, allowing divine spell-casting), 2 elixirs of fire breath.

Ballancia, female human Ftr5: CR 5; medium humanoid (human); HD 5d10+15; hp 49; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +5/+8; Full Atk +1 greatsword +10 melee (2d6+6; 19-20/x2); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Hide -1, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +3. Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword). ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: masterwork spiked full plate, +1 greatsword, potion of blur.

Caric and Derrick, male human Rog5: CR 5; medium humanoid (human); HD 5d6+10; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +3/+6; Full Atk rapier +7 melee (1d6+3; 18-20/x2); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Balance +8, Climb +6, Disguise +3, Hide +9, Jump +8, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley

metaregion) +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +11, Perform (dance) +4, Search +10, Spot +8, Tumble +11. Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility.

Languages: Common, Ancient Sulioise, Keolandish.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, masterwork rapier, elixir of hiding, potion of protection from law, necklace of fireballs type I, potion of displacement.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 8

Aspect of Tharizdun, 18-HD Advanced Vasuthant: CR 8, Huge Undead; HD 18d12+54; hp 203; Init +0; Spd Fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16 (-2 size, +8 natural); BAB/Grp +9/+27; Atk Slam +17 melee (1d8+10); Full Atk Slam +17 melee (1d8+10) and up to 4 enervating crushes (1d8+10 plus 1d4 Str); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +6 turn resistance, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, fire and electricity resistance 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +16; Str 30, Dex 10, Con -, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 14. *Monster Manual* III, page 182.

Skills & Feats: Hide +0*, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Listen +11, Spot +11; Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Improved Turn Resistance^{LM}, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (Slam). ^{CW}Complete Warrior, ^{LM}Libris Mortis.

Skills: *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 1d8 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a

free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to Light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as *daylight*) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearly magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Description: A spherical cloud of impenetrable darkness floats towards you. As it draws near, black tendrils reach out from the cloud's opaque core.

ENCOUNTER 2

Drowned: Medium Undead; CR 9; HD 20d12+20; hp 195; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 Natural); Base Atk/Grp: +10/+17; Atk Slam +12 melee (1d8+12)*; Full Atk 2 Slams +12 melee (1d8+12)*; SA drowning aura; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 25, Dex 13, Con –, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 12. *Monster Manual III*, page 46.

*Includes -5 penalty on attack and +5 bonus on damage from Power Attack feat.

Skills & Feats: Hide +20, Listen +14, Move Silently +20, Spot +18, Swim +18; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack.

Drowning Aura (Su): A Drowned gives off a 30-ft. radius emanation of suffocating drowning, imbuing its surroundings with a watery glint and deadly threat for creatures that breathe. All breathing creatures within 30 feet of a drowned are treated as if beneath water in terms of being able to breathe. The drowning aura accelerates the process of drowning.

Normally, a creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score before it begins to drown. Within the drowning aura, a creature can only hold its breath if it makes a DC 10 Constitution check every round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the character finally fails its Constitution check, it begins to drown. In the first round, it falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, it drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, if still in the drowning aura, it drowns.

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A Drowned gains its bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Skills: A Drowned has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Languages: Common, Abyssal.

Description: This animated corpse is sapping wet, as if it just crawled from the water. The air around it is thick and cloying, exuding the essences of the corpse's watery grave. The drowned lost their lives in the watery deep. The evidence of their gasping death always saturates their clothing and flesh, and fills the air around them. Many drowned came to their current circumstances when their ships went down at sea with all hands. Other, more ancient, first arose when their island homes sank beneath the waves ages ago, drowning all.

ENCOUNTER 6

Aldrea, male human Clr7 of Tharizdun: CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d8+14; hp 53; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 shield, +1 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk/Grp +5/+6; Full Atk heavy mace +7 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2); SA rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ spontaneous casting, aura; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Spellcraft +10. Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Magical Aptitude, Improved Toughness^{cw}. ^{cw}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; DC 13 + spell level): 0 – detect magic x2, guidance, light, read magic, resistance; 1st – bless, bane, cure light wounds, entropic shield, lesser confusion*, protection from good; 2nd – cure moderate wounds, hold person, magic missile*, sound burst, spiritual weapon; 3rd – blast of force^{ssc}, dispel magic, magic circle against good, prayer; 4th – confusion*, summon monster IV. ^{sc}Spell Compendium.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Force (Su, 1/day, reroll any damage roll and take the better of the two rolls), Madness (subtract one from all Wis-based skill checks and all Will saves; once per day add ½ your level to a single Wis-based skill check or Will save).

Possessions: masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy mace, *universal solvent*, light steel shield, holy symbol of Tharizdun, spell component pouches, *Tharizdun portal key* (acts as item of power tied to Tharizdun, allowing divine spell-casting), 2 *elixirs of fire breath*, *ring of protection +1*, *cloak of resistance +1*.

Ballancia, female human Ftr7: CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d10+21; hp 69; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk/Grp +7/+10; Atk +1 *greatsword* +12 melee (2d6+6; 19-20/x2); Full Atk +1 *greatsword* +12/+7 melee (2d6+6; 19-20/x2); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Hide +0, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +4. Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness^{cw}, Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will. ^{cw}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: +1 *spiked full plate*, +1 *greatsword*, *ring of protection +1*, *potion of blur*.

Caric and Derrick, male human Rog5/Assassin2: CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d6+14; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +4/+7; Full Atk +1 *rapier* +8 melee

(1d6+4; 18-20/x2); SA sneak attack +4d6, death attack (Fort DC 14); SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, poison use, +1 save against poison; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Balance +8, Climb +6, Disguise +3, Hide +11, Jump +8, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +13, Perform (dance) +4, Search +12, Spot +10, Tumble +13; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Keolandish.

Assassin Spells Known (2; DC 12 + spell level): 1st – feather fall, obscuring mist, true strike.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 rapier, elixir of hiding, elixir of sneaking, potion of protection from law, necklace of fireballs type II, potion of invisibility, potion of displacement.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 8

Aspect of Tharizdun, 26-HD Advanced Vasuthant: CR 11, Gargantuan Undead; HD 26d12+78; hp 293; Init +0; Spd Fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 18, touch 6, flat-footed 18 (-4 size, +12 natural); BAB/Grp +13/+39; Atk Slam +24 melee (2d6+14); Full Atk Slam +24 melee (2d6+14) and up to 4 enervating crushes (2d6+14 plus 1d4 Str); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +6 turn resistance, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, fire and electricity resistance 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +19; Str 38, Dex 10, Con –, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14. *Monster Manual III*, page 182.

Skills & Feats: Hide -1*, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +13, Spot +13; Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Improved Turn Resistance^{LM}, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam).
^{CW}Complete Warrior, ^{LM}Libris Mortis.

Skills: *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 2d6 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to Light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as *daylight*) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearly magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Description: A spherical cloud of impenetrable darkness floats towards you. As it draws near, black tendrils reach out from the cloud's opaque core.

ENCOUNTER 2

Drowned Ftr1: Medium Undead; CR 10; HD 20d12+1d10+63; hp 235; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +8 Natural); Base Atk/Grp: +11/+20; Atk Slam +16 melee (1d8+14)*; Full Atk 2 Slams +16 melee (1d8+14)*; SA drowning aura; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 29, Dex 16, Con –, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 14. *Monster Manual III*, page 46.

*Includes -5 penalty on attack and +5 bonus on damage from Power Attack feat.

Skills & Feats: Hide +22, Listen +14, Move Silently +22, Spot +18, Swim +22; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Improved Toughness^{CW}, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam). ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Drowning Aura (Su): A Drowned gives off a 30-ft. radius emanation of suffocating drowning, imbuing its surroundings with a watery glint and deadly threat for creatures that breathe. All breathing creatures within 30 feet of a drowned are treated as if beneath water in terms of being able to breathe. The drowning aura accelerates the process of drowning.

Normally, a creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score before it begins to drown. Within the drowning aura, a creature can only hold its breath if it makes a DC 10 Constitution check every round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the character finally fails its Constitution check, it begins to drown. In the first round, it falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, it drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, if still in the drowning aura, it drowns.

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A Drowned gains its bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Skills: A Drowned has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Languages: Common, Abyssal.

Description: This animated corpse is sapping wet, as if it just crawled from the water. The air around it is thick and cloying, exuding the essences of the corpse's watery grave. The drowned lost their lives in the watery deep. The evidence of their gasping death always saturates their clothing and flesh, and fills the air around them. Many drowned came to their current circumstances when their ships went down at sea with all hands. Other, more ancient, first arose when their island homes sank beneath the waves ages ago, drowning all.

ENCOUNTER 6

Aldrea, male human Clr7/Entropomancer2 of Tharizdun: CR 9; medium humanoid (human); HD 9d8+18; hp 68; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +1 shield, +1 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk/Grp +6/+7; Atk heavy mace +8 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2) or +8 ranged touch (shard of entropy); Full Atk heavy mace +8/+3 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2) or +8 ranged touch (shard of entropy); SA shard of entropy, rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ spontaneous casting, aura; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 17 (19), Cha 12. *Complete Divine*, page 36.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Spellcraft +12. Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Magical Aptitude, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Weapon Focus (shard of entropy). ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise.

Shard of Entropy (Su): Twice per day, for a maximum of one round per entropomancer level, the character can create a miniature shard of entropy. The shard is a chunk of absolute blackness, 2 inches across, and can be moved up to 30 feet by the entropomancer as a standard action. Against objects, the shard deals 3d6 points of damage, bypassing the object's hardness. Against creatures, the entropomancer must make a ranged touch attack to hit, and if successful the shard does 3d6 points of damage to the target (Fortitude half, DC 12 + the entropomancer's Wisdom modifier). The shard appears in any square adjacent to the entropomancer when it is created, and it can be used to attack on the round it is formed.

The shard of entropy lurches, jumps and bounces around the square it is in. Any creature who passes through the shard's square takes damage as if the shard had struck him (Fortitude half), as does any creature that's in the same square as the shard at the beginning of the entropomancer's turn. The entropomancer can move the shard into another square with a move action or aim it at a specific creature (dealing damage immediately) as a standard action.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1; DC 14 + spell level; CL 8th): 0 – detect magic x2, guidance, light, read magic, resistance; 1st – bless, bane, cure light wounds, entropic shield, lesser confusion*, protection from good; 2nd – cure moderate wounds, hold person, magic missile*, sound burst, spiritual weapon; 3rd – blast of force*^{SC}, dispel magic, magic circle against good, prayer, searing light; 4th – confusion*, cure critical wounds, poison, summon monster IV. ^{SC}Spell Compendium.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Force (Su, 1/day, reroll any damage roll and take the better of the two rolls), Madness (subtract one from all Wis-based skill checks and all Will

saves; once per day add ½ your level to a single Wis-based skill check or Will save).

Possessions: +1 full plate, masterwork heavy mace, universal solvent, light steel shield, holy symbol of Tharizdun, spell component pouches, *Tharizdun portal key* (acts as item of power tied to Tharizdun, allowing divine spell-casting), 2 elixirs of fire breath, ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +1, periapt of wisdom +2.

Ballancia, female human Ftr7/Blackguard2: CR 9; medium humanoid (human); HD 9d10+27; hp 88; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk/Grp +9/+13; Atk +1 greatsword +15 melee (2d6+7; 17-20/x2); Full Atk +1 greatsword +15/+10 melee (2d6+7; 17-20/x2); SA smite good 1/day, spells; SQ aura of evil, detect good, dark blessing, poison use; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +8, Hide +0, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +4. Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Improved Critical (Greatsword). ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Languages: Common.

Blackguard Spells Prepared (2; DC 11 + spell level): 1st – *inflict light wounds, divine sacrifice*^{SC}. ^{SC}Spell Compendium.

Possessions: +1 spiked full plate, +1 greatsword, ring of protection +1, potion of blur, holy symbol of Tharizdun, profane scabbard^{CW}. ^{CW}Complete Warrior.

Caric and Derrick, male human Rog5/Assassin2/Shadowdancer2: CR 9; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d6+2d8+18; hp 57; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +5/+8; Full Atk +1 harmony rapier +10 melee (1d6+4; 18-20/x2); SA sneak attack +4d6, death attack (Fort DC 14); SQ darkvision, hide in plain sight, evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, poison use, +1 save against poison; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +13, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Balance +12, Climb +6, Disguise +3, Hide +13, Jump +8, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +14, Perform (dance) +4, Search +14, Spot +12, Tumble +15; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Keolandish.

Assassin Spells Known (2; DC 12 + spell level): 1st – *feather fall, obscuring mist, true strike*.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 harmony^{A&EG} rapier, elixir of hiding, elixir of sneaking, potion of protection from law, necklace of fireballs type II, potion of invisibility, potion of displacement, cloak of resistance +1. ^{A&EG}Arms & Equipment Guide.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 8

Aspect of Tharizdun, 34-HD Advanced Vasuthant: CR 13, Gargantuan Undead; HD 34d12+102; hp 383; Init

+0; Spd Fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 18, touch 6, flat-footed 18 (-4 size, +12 natural); BAB/Grp +17/+43; Atk Slam +28 melee (2d6+14); Full Atk Slam +28 melee (2d6+14) and up to 4 enervating crushes (2d6+14 plus 1d4 Str); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +6 turn resistance, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, fire and electricity resistance 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +23; Str 38, Dex 10, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14. *Monster Manual III*, page 182.

Skills & Feats: Hide +2*, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +15, Spot +15; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Grapple, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Improved Turn Resistance^{LM}, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam). ^{CW}Complete Warrior, ^{LM}Libris Mortis.

Skills: *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 2d6 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to Light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as *daylight*) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearly magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Description: A spherical cloud of impenetrable darkness floats towards you. As it draws near, black tendrils reach out from the cloud's opaque core.

ENCOUNTER 2

Drowned Ftr3: Medium Undead; CR 12; HD 20d12+3d10+69; hp 255; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +8 Natural); Base Atk/Grp: +13/+22; Atk Slam +18 melee (1d8+14)*; Full Atk 2 Slams +18 melee (1d8+14)*; SA drowning aura; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 29, Dex 16, Con –, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 14. *Monster Manual III*, page 46.

*Includes -5 penalty on attack and +5 bonus on damage from Power Attack feat.

Skills & Feats: Hide +22, Listen +14, Move Silently +22, Spot +18, Swim +26; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Improved Toughness^{cw}, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam). ^{cw}*Complete Warrior*.

Drowning Aura (Su): A Drowned gives off a 30-ft. radius emanation of suffocating drowning, imbuing its surroundings with a watery glint and deadly threat for creatures that breathe. All breathing creatures within 30 feet of a drowned are treated as if beneath water in terms of being able to breathe. The drowning aura accelerates the process of drowning.

Normally, a creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score before it begins to drown. Within the drowning aura, a creature can only hold its breath if it makes a DC 10 Constitution check every round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the character finally fails its Constitution check, it begins to drown. In the first round, it falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, it drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, if still in the drowning aura, it drowns.

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A Drowned gains its bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Skills: A Drowned has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Languages: Common, Abyssal.

Description: This animated corpse is sapping wet, as if it just crawled from the water. The air around it is thick and cloying, exuding the essences of the corpse's watery grave. The drowned lost their lives in the watery deep. The evidence of their gasping death always saturates their clothing and flesh, and fills the air around them. Many drowned came to their current circumstances when their ships went down at sea with all hands. Other, more ancient, first arose when their island homes sank beneath the waves ages ago, drowning all.

ENCOUNTER 5

Chaos Beast, 12-HD Advanced: CR 10; Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 12d8+48; hp 108; Init +7 Spd: 20 ft. AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Attack/Grapple +12/+16; Atk claw +14 melee (1d3+4 plus corporeal instability); Full Atk 2 claws +13 melee (1d3+4 plus corporeal instability); SA: Corporeal instability; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to critical hits and transformation, SR 15; AL CN; SV: Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +18, Escape Artist +18, Hide +18, Jump +15, Listen +16, Search +15, Spot +16, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks), Tumble +20, Use Rope +3 (+5 with bindings); Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Corporeal Instability (Su): A blow from a chaos beast against a living creature can cause a terrible transformation. The creature must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or become a spongy, amorphous mass. Unless the victim manages to control the effect (see below), its shape melts, flows, writhes and boils. The save DC is Constitution-based.

An affected creature is unable to hold or use any item. Clothing, armor, rings, and helmets become useless. Large items worn or carried—armor, backpacks, even shirts—hamper more than help, reducing the victim's Dexterity score by 4. Soft or misshapen feet and legs reduce speed to 10 feet or one-quarter normal, whichever is less. Searing pain courses along the nerves, so strong that the victim cannot act coherently. The victim cannot cast spells or use magic items, and it attacks blindly, unable to distinguish friend from foe (-4 penalty on attack rolls and a 50% miss chance, regardless of the attack roll).

Each round the victim spends in an amorphous state causes 1 point of Wisdom drain from mental shock. If the victim's Wisdom score falls to 0, it becomes a chaos beast.

A victim can regain its own shape by taking a standard action to attempt a DC 15 Charisma check (this check DC does not vary for a chaos beast with different Hit Dice or ability scores). A success reestablishes the creature's normal form for 1 minute. On a failure, the victim can still repeat this check each round until successful.

Corporeal instability is not a disease or a curse and so is hard to remove. A *shapechange* or *stoneskin* spell does not cure an afflicted creature but fixes its form for the duration of the spell. A *restoration*, *heal*, or *greater restoration* spell removes the affliction (a separate *restoration* is necessary to restore any drained points of Wisdom).

Immunity to Transformation (Ex): No mortal magic can permanently affect or fix a chaos beast's form.

Effects such as polymorphing or petrification force the creature into a new shape, but at the start of its next turn it immediately returns to its mutable form as a free action.

ENCOUNTER 6

Aldrea, male human Clr7/Entropomancer4 of Tharizdun: CR 11; medium humanoid (human); HD 11d8+22; hp 83; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 22 (+9 armor, +2 shield, +1 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk/Grp +8/+9; Atk heavy mace +10 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2) or +10 ranged touch (shard of entropy); Full Atk heavy mace +10/+5 melee (1d8+1; 20/x2) or +10 ranged touch (shard of entropy); SA shard of entropy, rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ spontaneous casting, aura, entropic field 2/day; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 17 (19), Cha 12. *Complete Divine*, page 36.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (religion) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Spellcraft +14. Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Magical Aptitude, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Weapon Focus (shard of entropy). ^{CW}*Complete Warrior*.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise.

Entropic Field (Su): As a standard action, an entropomancer can surround herself with a field of invisible, entropic energy that lasts for one round per entropomancer level. The field extends in a 5-foot per level of the entropomancer radius, centered on the entropomancer. All magical healing automatically fails within the entropic field. It takes the entropomancer a standard action to dismiss the field.

Shard of Entropy (Su): Twice per day, for a maximum of one round per entropomancer level, the character can create a miniature shard of entropy. The shard is a chunk of absolute blackness, 2 inches across, and can be moved up to 30 feet by the entropomancer as a standard action. Against objects, the shard deals 3d6 points of damage, bypassing the object's hardness. Against creatures, the entropomancer must make a ranged touch attack to hit, and if successful the shard does 3d6 points of damage to the target (Fortitude half, DC 12 + the entropomancer's Wisdom modifier). The shard appears in any square adjacent to the entropomancer when it is created, and it can be used to attack on the round it is formed.

The shard of entropy lurches, jumps and bounces around the square it is in. Any creature who passes through the shard's square takes damage as if the shard had struck him (Fortitude half), as does any creature that's in the same square as the shard at the beginning of the entropomancer's turn. The entropomancer can move the shard into another square with a move action or aim it at a specific creature (dealing damage immediately) as a standard action.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; DC 14 + spell level; CL 9th): 0 – *detect magic* x2, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st – *bless*, *bane*, *cure light wounds*, *entropic shield*, *lesser confusion**, *protection from good*; 2nd – *cure*

moderate wounds, *hold person*, *magic missile**, *sound burst*, *spiritual weapon* x2; 3rd – *blast of force*^{SC}, *dispel magic*, *magic circle against good*, *prayer*, *searing light*; 4th – *confusion**, *cure critical wounds*, *poison*, *summon monster IV*; 5th – *greater vigor*^{SC} *wall of force**. ^{SC}*Spell Compendium*.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Force (Su, 1/day, reroll any damage roll and take the better of the two rolls), Madness (subtract one from all Wis-based skill checks and all Will saves; once per day add ½ your level to a single Wis-based skill check or Will save).

Possessions: +1 *full plate*, *masterwork heavy mace*, *universal solvent*, +1 *light steel shield*, *holy symbol of Tharizdun*, *spell component pouches*, *Tharizdun portal key* (acts as item of power tied to Tharizdun, allowing divine spell-casting), 2 *elixirs of fire breath*, *ring of protection* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *necklace of fireballs* type V, *potion of invisibility*, 2 *beads of force*.

Ballancia, female human Ftr7/Blackguard4: CR 11; medium humanoid (human); HD 11d10+33; hp 108; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk/Grp +11/+15; Atk +1 *anarchic greatsword* +17 melee (2d6+7; 17-20/x2); Full Atk +1 *anarchic greatsword* +17/+12/+7 melee (2d6+7; 17-20/x2); SA *smite good* 1/day, spells; SQ *aura of evil*, *detect good*, *dark blessing*, *poison use*; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +14, Hide +0, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +4. Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Improved Critical (Greatsword). ^{CW}*Complete Warrior*.

Languages: Common.

Blackguard Spells Prepared (2/1; DC 11 + spell level): 1st – *inflict light wounds*, *divine sacrifice*^{SC}; 2nd – *bull's strength*. ^{SC}*Spell Compendium*.

Possessions: +1 *spiked full plate*, +1 *anarchic greatsword*, *ring of protection* +1, *potion of blur*, *holy symbol of Tharizdun*, *profane scabbard*^{CW}. ^{CW}*Complete Warrior*.

Caric and Derrick, male human Rog7/Assassin2/Shadowdancer2: CR 11; medium humanoid (human); HD 9d6+2d8+22; hp 69; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp +7/+10; Atk +1 *keen harmony rapier* +12 melee (1d6+4; 15-20/x2); Full Atk +1 *keen harmony rapier* +12/+7 melee (1d6+4; 15-20/x2); SA *sneak attack* +5d6, *death attack* (Fort DC 14); SQ *darkvision*, *hide in plain sight*, *evasion*, *trapfinding*, *trap sense* +2, *uncanny dodge*, *improved uncanny dodge*, *poison use*, +1 *save against poison*; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Balance +14, Climb +8, Disguise +3, Hide +15, Jump +8, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +10, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +16, Perform (dance) +4, Search +16, Spot +14,

Tumble +17; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Keolandish.

Assassin Spells Known (2; DC 12 + spell level): 1st – feather fall, obscuring mist, true strike.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 keen harmony^{AE&EG} rapier, elixir of hiding, elixir of sneaking, potion of protection from law, necklace of fireballs type II, potion of invisibility, potion of displacement, cloak of resistance +1. ^{AE&EG}Arms & Equipment Guide.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 8

Aspect of Tharizdun, 34-HD Advanced Vasuthant: CR 13, Gargantuan Undead; HD 34d12+102; hp 383; Init +0; Spd Fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 18, touch 6, flat-footed 18 (-4 size, +12 natural); BAB/Grp +17/+43; Atk Slam +28 melee (2d6+14); Full Atk Slam +28 melee (2d6+14) and up to 4 enervating crushes (2d6+14 plus 1d4 Str); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +6 turn resistance, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, fire and electricity resistance 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +23; Str 38, Dex 10, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14. *Monster Manual III*, page 182.

Skills & Feats: Hide +2*, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +15, Spot +15; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Grapple, Improved Toughness^{CW}, Improved Turn Resistance^{LM}, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam). ^{CW}Complete Warrior, ^{LM}Libris Mortis.

Skills: *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 2d6 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks

of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to Light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as *daylight*) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearly magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier x its Hit Dice.

Description: A spherical cloud of impenetrable darkness floats towards you. As it draws near, black tendrils reach out from the cloud's opaque core.

APPENDIX 6 – ALL APLS

ENCOUNTER 2

Blackscale Lizardfolk: Large Monstrous Humanoid (Reptilian); CR 3; HD 4d8+8; hp 30; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (-1 size, +7 natural); Base Atk/Grp: +4/+12; Atk Claw +7 melee (1d6+4) or greatclub +7 melee (2d8+6) or javelin +3 ranged (1d8+4); Full Atk 2 claws +7 melee (1d6+4) and bite +5 melee (1d6+2) or greatclub +7 melee (2d8+6) and bite +5 melee (1d6+2) or javelin +3 ranged (1d8+4); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ darkvision 60 ft., hold breath, resistance to acid 5; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 7. *Monster Manual III*, page 95.

Skills & Feats: Balance +5, Jump +12, Spot +4, Swim +10; Multiattack, Power Attack.

Hold Breath (Ex): A blackscale lizardfolk can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 x its Constitution score before it risks drowning (see page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Skills: Because of their tails, blackscale lizardfolk have a +4 racial bonus on Balance, Jump and Swim checks.

Languages: Draconic.

Possessions: 3 large javelins, large greatclub.

Description: This stocky, heavily-muscled reptilian humanoid stands almost nine feet in height. Deep-socketed eyes and flat nasal openings give its face the appearance of a skull. Its scales are black, and a leathery crest running down from the top of its head to the middle of its back rises up as it sees you. It flexes talon-tipped fingers and snarls, revealing a row of vicious fangs.

ENCOUNTER 3

Kyla: Half-dragon (black) dryad; CR 5; Medium dragon (acid); HD 4d8+4; hp 27; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +7 Natural); Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk +7 ranged (1d8+4/x3, mighty masterwork longbow, Str+4) or +6 melee (1d4+4, claw); Full Atk 2 +6 melee (1d4+4, claw) or +7 ranged (1d8+/x3, mighty masterwork longbow, Str+4) and +4 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA Spell-like Abilities, Breath Weapon; SQ Damage reduction 5/cold iron, tree dependent, wild empathy, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft., immune to sleep and paralysis effects, immune to acid; AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +8 Will +6; Str 18, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +11, Handle Animal +12, Hide +11, Knowledge (nature) +12, Listen +9, Move Silently +11, Ride +6, Spot +9, Survival +9, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings), Speak Language (Sylvan, Druidic, broken Common), Swim +11, Multiattack, Track.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*entangle* (DC 13), *speak with plants, tree shape*; 3/day—*charm person* (DC 13), *deep slumber* (DC 15), *tree stride*; 1/day—*suggestion* (DC 15). Caster level 6th. The save DCs are Wis-based.

Breath Weapon (Ex): Once per day Kyla may breathe a 60' line of acid that deals 6d8 damage (Reflex DC 13 for half damage).

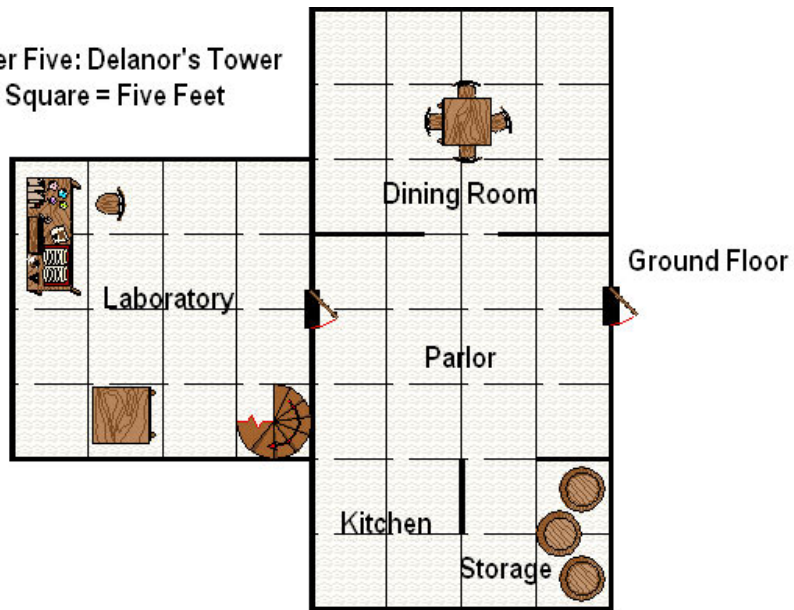
Tree Dependent (Su): Each dryad is mystically bound to a single, enormous willow tree and must never stray more than 300 yards from it. Any who do become ill and die within 4d6 hours. A dryad's willow does not radiate magic.

Wild Empathy (Ex): This power works like the druid's wild empathy class feature, except that the dryad has a +6 racial bonus on the check.

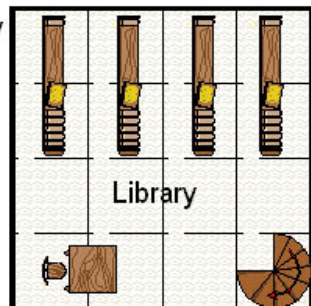
Possessions: masterwork composite longbow (+4 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows.

DM AID: MAP #1

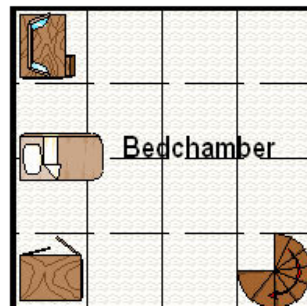
Encounter Five: Delanor's Tower
One Square = Five Feet



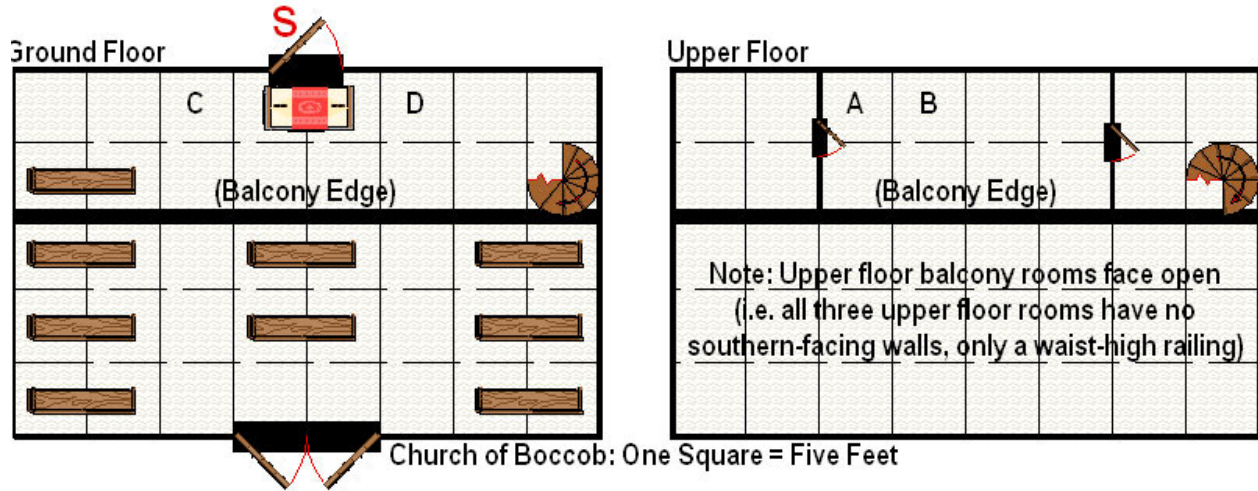
Middle Story



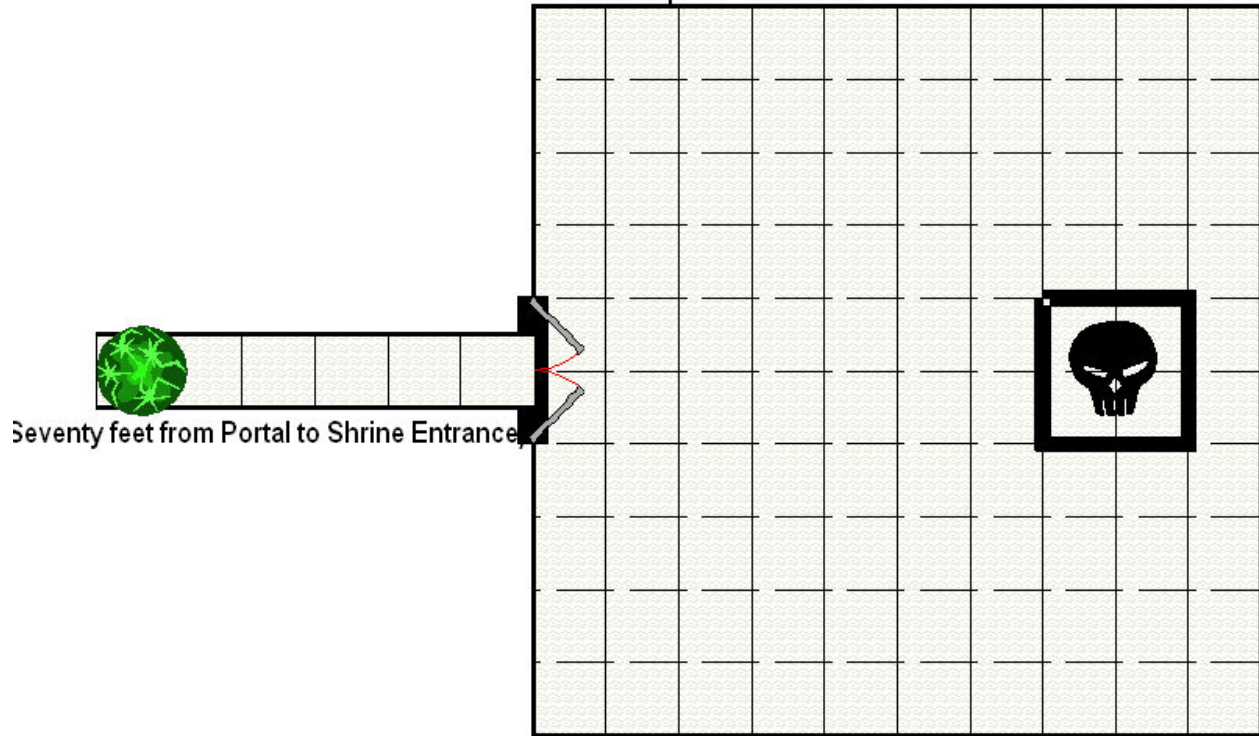
Upper Story



DM AID: MAP #2



Shrine of the Avatar of Tharizdun
One Square = Five Feet



Seventy feet from Portal to Shrine Entrance

Note: Size of Aspect of Tharizdun will vary by APL;
the edge of the Aspect's base should always be
five feet from the eastern wall.

DM AID: NEW RULES

NEW FEATS

Improved Toughness (*Complete Warrior*)

You are significantly tougher than normal.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save bonus +2.

Benefit: You gain a number of hit points equal to your current Hit Dice. Each time you gain a HD (such as by gaining a level), you gain 1 additional hit point. If you lose a HD (such as by losing a level), you lose 1 hit point permanently.

Special: A fighter may select Improved Toughness as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Improved Turn Resistance (*Libris Mortis*)

You have a better than normal chance to resist turning.

Prerequisite: Undead type.

Benefit: You are less easily affected by clerics or paladins than you normally would be (see Turn or Rebuke Undead, page 159 of the *Player's Handbook*). When resolving a turn, rebuke, command, or bolster attempt, add +4 to your character level (monster HD plus class levels) to determine your HD for turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts. For example, a 4 HD wight with this feat is treated as an 8 HD undead for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts, even though it is a 4 HD creature for any other purpose. A vampire that already has a +4 turn resistance adds an additional +4 with this feat, for a total of +8.

NEW ITEMS

Harmony Weapon Special Ability (*Arms & Equipment Guide*)

A *harmony* weapon helps its wielder press the advantage against a flanked opponent. When flanking an opponent, the wielder of this weapon gains a +4 bonus on attacks rather than the normal +2 bonus for flanking. Only melee weapons can have this ability. Moderate Divination; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *detect thoughts*; Market Price: +1 bonus.

Profane Scabbard (*Complete Warrior*)

This item has a variable appearance. When first found, there is a 25% chance it looks like a dagger sheath, a 25% chance it looks like an axe case, and a 50% chance it looks like a sword sheath. A user quickly discovers, however, that it can change shape to fit whatever dagger, sword, or axe is touched to it, even making allowances for double weapons. This scabbard keeps any weapon carried in it clean and sharp. In addition, up to three times per day, the user may place a weapon in the scabbard, utter a command word, and invoke *corrupt weapon* on the weapon inside.

Faint transmutation; CL 4th; Craft Wondrous Item, *corrupt weapon*; Price 4,400 gp; Weight: 1 lb.

NEW SPELLS

Blast of Force (*Spell Compendium*)

Evocation [Force]

Level: Force 3, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Ray

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fort partial

Spell Resistance: Yes

Drawing upon magic in its purest form, you send invisible energy whistling through the air to batter your foe.

You must succeed on a ranged touch attack with the way to strike a target. A *blast of force* deals 1d6 damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d6). In addition, a successful hit forces the subject to make a Fort save or be knocked prone (size and stability modifiers apply to the saving throw as if the spell were a bull rush).

Divine Sacrifice (*Spell Compendium*)

Evocation

Level: Blackguard 1, Pal 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level

Giving up some of your life force to win the battle, you empower your next blow against your foe.

Your first attack each round for the duration of the spell deals an extra 5d6 points of damage if it hits, and you take 10 points of damage each time you make such an attack, whether or not the attack is successful.

Vigor, Greater (Spell Compendium)

Conjuration (Healing)

Level: Clr 5, Drd 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Living creature touched

Duration: 10 rounds + 1 round/level (max 35 rounds)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The sounds of battle ring in your ears as you lay hands on your fallen comrade. You can spare neither time nor magic to do more right now, but the blood flow slows to a trickle and her breathing becomes less labored, even as you are called to the aid of another.

The subject gains fast healing 4, enabling it to heal 4 hit point per round until the spells ends and automatically becoming stabilized if he or she begins dying from hit point loss during that time. *Greater vigor* does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, suffocation, nor does it allow a creature to regrow or attach lost body parts. The effects of multiple *vigor* spells do not stack; only the highest-level effect applies.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1

Fine vellum upon which is written flowing script of exacting detail.

Adventurer,

I must be brief. My name is Beryce, personal assistant to Lashton, Archmage of Keoland and headmaster of the National Academy of Wizardry. I have discovered a crisis, one that threatens the Kingdom of Keoland, and I ask for your aid in putting a stop to it. I have cast several spells of divination. All of them point to you as being one who holds the favor of the Fate as having the best chance to end this threat to my nation. Please come to me at the Trail Inn, in the city of Segor, capital of the County of Linth. Please make haste as my need is urgent.

B

Beryce

PLAYER HANDOUT #2

(A summary of the contents of the journal of Delanor the Wizard. Several pages are missing, appearing to have been torn out)

Reading the rest of the journal describes Delanor's fascination with the gods of the outer planes and the concepts of evil and chaos and his growing madness in vivid detail. The wizard had close religious ties to Barankin, the pastor of the nearby Church of Boccob (he describes his visits on several occasions, enough to find the church within the ruins if need be) with whom he often enjoyed religious debates.

As Delanor became more fanatical about the theology of the outer planes, one of the arguments led him to *dominating* Barankin and using him as his puppet to set up a shrine to Tharizdun underneath the church. Delanor also used the pastor in this way to lure potential victims for sacrifice in his experiments. Finally, the journal tells of how Delanor finished the shrine to Tharizdun, and then sacrificed Barankin in order to complete a device that would turn the shrine itself into a portal leading to a specific temple on Limbo, where he believed a shard of Tharizdun has been kept locked away. Delanor speaks obsessively of releasing Tharizdun, who he believes will explain all there is to know about the chaos of the multiverse.

PLAYER HANDOUT #3

(The missing pages from the journal of Delanor the Wizard)

In Delanor's journal, he explains that when Tharizdun was imprisoned, parts of him were divided into shards, and that each shard has been kept locked away within temples on demiplanes throughout the multiverse. Using the knowledge he obtained, he learned how to properly construct a shrine to Tharizdun (the instructions for doing so are on these pages), and then perform rituals of sacrifice where a specific number of souls are combined with chaos magic to create the *Tharizdun Portal Key*, a device that activates the shrine and creates a gateway to one of the demiplanes where a shard is locked away.

Delanor, in his final entry, explains that he has stationed a guardian around the shrine, to protect it from intruders, while he will cross over into the demiplane and meet with the shard of Tharizdun, with the intention of communicating with it, studying it, or even harnessing its power. He left the Portal Key at the shrine, so that someone else could re-open the gateway in the case that he does not return from the demiplane. The journal indicates that there is a secret entrance behind the shrine of Boccob, which leads down into the dungeon where the shrine to Tharizdun can be found. The pages explain that by pressing the flat of one's palm on the shrine of Boccob, and saying Tharizdun's name, the stones will part, allowing entry for "the fools who would dare commune in the presence of the *avatar* of All-Knowing Tharizdun!"

PLAYER HANDOUT #4

(Two documents, written by the same hand)

Fellow Adherents of the All-Knowing God,

The battle at Steffenmoor is a welcome chance to you to enter the city. I cannot overstress the importance of your task. Yours is one prong of a two-part plan to awaken Him from His slumber, so He can take revenge against those lesser deities who so treacherously imprisoned Him. You are seeking the abode of a wizard who was once a follower of our god, one who was said to have made great strides in our noble quest ere he met his doom with so many others upon the black dragon's razing of the city. Enter the city, find his notes and research if they still exist, and report back to me on your progress. Have Caric and Derrick deliver your report to me personally. I will return them with my further orders.

For the glory of Tharizdun, and may our wayward Brothers in Scarlet boil in seas of our god's bile,
Mnemnonthraxus

Fellow Adherents of the All-Knowing God,

I am elated by the reports of your discovery and have dispatched Caric and Derrick back as fast as possible. Congratulations on finding the shrine of Tharizdun and of locating the existence of an avatar of our god. The first part of our plan proceeds better than I had dared to hope. I am nearing the execution of a second method by which we may rouse Him – do we dare to think that such a pair of jolts, delivered so closely to one another, might finally break His comatose bonds?

I have communicated our discovery with Sakatha and the great Lizard King is eager to work with us. This alliance is beginning to bear fruit. He is a mighty ally, though he must be watched closely. His hatred of Count Traago von Reiklande, and by extension our Kinsmen in Red, is considerable.

You are to re-activate the shrine and open the gateway to the Place of the Avatar. This will release Tharizdun's Breath upon the city. The resultant chaos this causes will reduce the numbers of the Keoish army, and provide the distraction for which Sakatha longs. I have assured Sakatha that we will share with him any items of power we discover in the ruins, in exchange for his help with our efforts.

For the glory of Tharizdun, and may our wayward Brothers in Scarlet be buried alive beneath the offal of our risen god,

Mnemnonthraxus