



# MODERN

## The 7:48 from

## CENTRAL AVENUE



By Skip Williams

A Short Urban Arcana Adventure for Four 8th-Level Characters

Shadow creatures adapt to life in a modern city with remarkable speed, particularly when they don't have any scruples about how they make their livings. In this brief adventure, a few such creatures move into a mundane subway station and quickly turn it into a nasty little dungeon.

*The 7:48 from Central Avenue* is an adventure set in the modern day, but it includes fantastic creatures and magic.

### LEVELS

You, the Game Master (GM), need a copy of the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* and the *URBAN ARCANA Campaign Setting* to run this adventure. Some of the creatures used in this adventure are drawn directly from the D&D game's *Monster Manual*, so you may find that book and the *Player's Handbook* helpful when running the adventure, though complete *d20 MODERN* statistics are supplied for each such creature.

*The 7:48 from Central Avenue* is a short scenario for four 8th-level heroes. With slight modifications, you can make it suitable for heroes from 6th to 10th level (or groups as large or small as you're comfortable adjudicating). See the *Scaling the Adventure* sidebar for instructions on adapting it for other groups. The text that appears in shaded boxes should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Opponents' statistics are provided in abbreviated form.

This adventure can be set in any city that has a subway system. A map showing the major encounter areas is provided. With a little work, the locations presented in the adventure could be adapted to any locale that uses commuter trains or light rail for mass transit.

To get started, print out this adventure and read it through. Then make sure you are familiar with the new monsters presented at the end of the scenario,



the rules for illithids and arcane magic (Chapters 8 and 10, respectively, of the *d20 MODERN* rulebook), and the rules for Shadow creatures presented in the *URBAN ARCANA Campaign Setting*.

## BACKGROUND

The rising tide of Shadow brings many strange things into the world, and most of them prove unpleasant. Among these new arrivals is the illithid Maut'on, who inexplicably arrived minus his *plane shift* ability and was thus unable to leave. As resourceful as most of his kind, Maut'on quickly found a suitably dark lair (an abandoned sub-basement not far from a subway station) and took up residence there. Thus far, he has refused to become too closely involved with the modern world, preferring instead to play the role of the hunter. Maut'on preys on late-night travelers and spends hours pondering whether to attempt an escape back through the shadows or settle down here permanently. The illithid finds his inability to use his *plane shift* ability deeply disturbing, but also intellectually fascinating. He has convinced himself that the mystery of his failed *plane shift* power is connected with some profound secret that he has yet to uncover.

Since his arrival, Maut'on has encountered other refugees from Shadow, including an umber hulk, which he has kept *charmed* since their first encounter, and an ogre mage named Fek-Jiim, with whom he has forged an alliance. The two have formed a small but lucrative crime ring based largely on selling goods taken from the illithid's "meals," but also on stripping the assets from victims of the pair's *charm* powers.

A chance event near Maut'on's subway lair has just given the two an opportunity with equal potential for lucre and peril. Due to a sudden brake failure, a subway train has derailed at the height of rush hour, snarling the whole system and turning a crowd of people loose in the tunnels outside Maut'on's lair (first bewildered passengers, and later subway and utility works sent to assess the damage). The illithid considered fleeing, but chose instead to ply his *mind blast* against as many people as he could. However, he did allow the emergency medical team to take away a few injured passengers and did not interfere with the accident investigation team, since the disappearance of those people would probably be investigated quickly.

Maut'on has decided to *charm* most of his captives to gain access to their bank accounts and credit card information and make snacks out of any who resist. The illithid knows he has

### Scaling the Adventure

*The 7:48 from Central Avenue* can be adjusted for use with higher- or lower-level heroes. Use the guidelines below to adapt the scenario for use with such groups.

**6th-Level Heroes:** Replace Fek-Jiim in area 1 with two neutral evil jann (hp 33 each; see page 116 in the *Monster Manual*). Reduce the hit points for the umber hulk in area 2 to 41.

**10th-Level PCs:** Give Fek-Jiim two neutral evil jann as bodyguards (hp 33 each; see page 116 in the *Monster Manual*). Add a second umber hulk to area 2. Give Maut'on an ogre mage bodyguard in area 4.

to work quickly and will probably have to find a new lair afterward, but his greed makes him linger in the area just long enough to allow the heroes a chance to catch him.

## SYNOPSIS

The adventure begins with the heroes arriving at the subway station some hours after the train has derailed. The power is out and the station is dark. Upon entering, they encounter Fek-Jiim, who poses as a utility worker. The ogre mage does his best to talk the heroes into leaving because he recognizes the threat they pose. If he cannot get rid of them, he blasts them with his *cone of cold* ability and tries to kill or capture them.

Once the heroes defeat Fek-Jiim, they're free to investigate the derailed train. Clues to the cause of the accident prove scarce, but the heroes find a mysterious hole near the tracks, and from its depths they can hear voices calling for help. The voice are genuine, but the hole is a red herring that Maut'on devised to throw any investigators off the scent.

If the heroes explore the tunnels east of the station, they encounter Maut'on's pet umber hulk. Once they defeat it, they can find the illithid's lair and confront him to secure the release of his captives.

*The 7:48 from Central Avenue* is a straightforward, site-based adventure. The action takes place entirely within the area of the abandoned subway station.

## Character Hooks

As GM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. If your heroes are affiliated with the Knights of the Silver Dragon, the Paranormal Science and Investigation Agency, Department-7, or any other organization that deals with supernatural threats, you have a built-in adventure hook. Their superiors can simply assign them to check out the derailment site, deal with any problems they find, and report back.

If the heroes have no such affiliation, they might learn about the affair in any number of other ways, as noted below. You can also use the information presented here as additional background for heroes who are making an official investigation.

- The rush-hour derailment is big news in the city where it occurs, and significant news elsewhere as well. A sizable portion of the city's subway system is out of commission, and repairs aren't going quickly. There have also been conflicting reports about how the derailment occurred. Some sources insist that two trains collided and that hundreds are dead or missing. Transit officials maintain that the derailment was minor, caused either by debris on the tracks or by the failure of an automated braking system, and that there were no injuries at the scene. The officials urge all those who were on the train to call their employers and families to assure them that everything is all right. The transit authorities are at a loss to explain why it's taking so long to clear the tracks, but they cite logistical problems at the scene.
- One or more heroes are on the train when it derails. These characters might detect Maut'on's psionics or catch a glimpse of the illithid in the accident's aftermath. In any case, the accident deals them significant nonlethal dam-





age, and emergency workers arriving on the scene insist on hustling them away from the accident site. (Alternatively, you could simply let the PCs start the adventure right there and adjust the scenario accordingly.)

- The heroes have been waiting to meet someone who was supposed to arrive on the derailed train.
- One or more heroes knows someone who has gone missing after the derailment. The missing person might be an acquaintance or relative, or it could be an important GM character they were supposed to meet.

## CHARACTER INQUIRIES

Heroes who take the time to ask a few questions can learn the following information from the indicated sources.

### Skill Checks

The characters can use Gather Information, Knowledge (current events), or Research to gain information about the incident. A single check reveals all the information provided for DCs equal to or lower than the hero's check result.

### Gather Information or Knowledge (Current Events)

The heroes can acquire the information given in the first bullet point in the Character Hooks section (above) just by picking up a newspaper, turning on TV or radio, or visiting a news website. A successful check reveals additional information, as follows.

**DC 10:** Some news sources say that the wreck (they do not call it a mere derailment) was caused by the Mindwreckers (see Organizations in the *URBAN ARCANA Campaign Setting*), who used telepathy to cause the accident. The mindwreckers deny responsibility for the incident.

**DC 15:** Derailments in the subway are fairly rare, but they do occur occasionally, thanks to operator errors and equipment failures. They're inconvenient for commuters, but rarely deadly.

This derailment, though it appears to have occurred at low speed as a train was entering a station, seems to have produced more delays in the system than most do.

**DC 20:** Local hospitals and other emergency services have not reported an influx of injured passengers. The people involved in the wreck seem to have gone missing.

The train operator has told her superiors that the train's emergency brakes suddenly slammed on, probably due to a software glitch. Even though the train was already slowing to enter a station, the sudden stop derailed the train.

### Research

The research skill can reveal everything indicated above at the same DCs, plus the following additional information.

**DC 15:** The local subway system was about due for another derailment. Current maintenance practices and budgets make such incidents inevitable.

**DC 20:** Police reports show a significant rise in the number of missing persons cases involving that particular station and the area around it. The police have been quietly on the lookout for a serial killer or gang operating in the area.

A schematic of the station is available. (Use the adventure map, minus areas 1H and 2 through 4.)

**DC 25:** People missing from the area where the derailment occurred include transients and drug users who have later been found beheaded in various parts of the city. Most, however, have been professionals who abandoned their normal lives, emptied their bank accounts, and ran up enormous credit card debt, then disappeared altogether once their money ran out. Police suspect a cult at work.

## Department-7

Heroes with access to the resources of Department-7 can get the following information about the derailment site.

- The derailment occurred at 7:46:30 AM, or about a minute and half before the train's scheduled departure time from the station involved.
- Eighteen commuters, including some from the train and some waiting to board, have disappeared. Three workers (one from a newsstand at the station, and two others from a nearby food stand) also appear to be missing.
- Six more workers, two from the transit company and four from the electric company, also vanished after entering the area.
- A schematic of the station is available. (Use the adventure map, minus areas 1H and 2 through 4.)

## ENCOUNTER AREAS

Though Maut'on and Fek-Jiim operate throughout the city, all the action in this adventure takes place in and around the subway station where the derailment occurred.

### Area 1: Main Subway Platform

This subway stop serves a major downtown business and retail area. It is unremarkable as subway platforms go. The floor and walls are done in tile laid over concrete, and the ceiling is about 40 feet high. Passengers can board trains all along the north side.

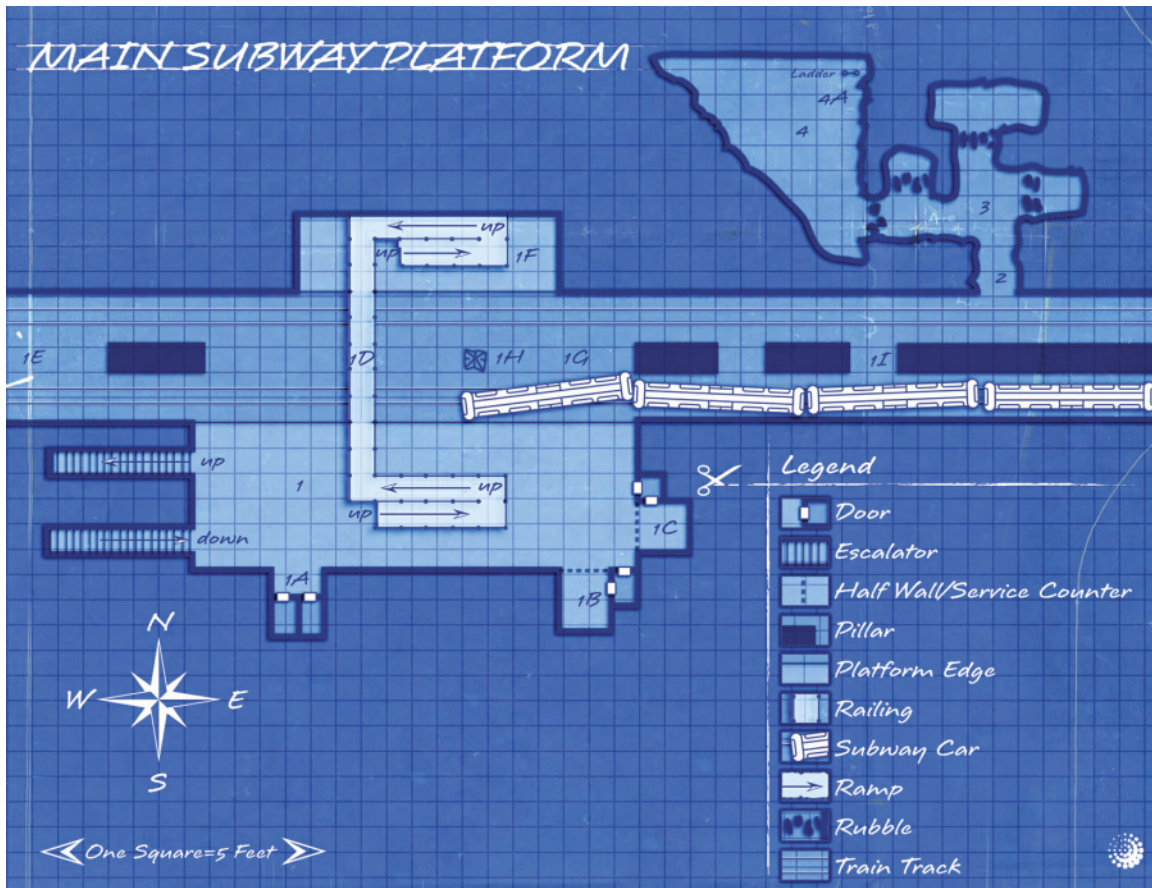
The main power to the platform has been shut off, but emergency lighting illuminates the chamber dimly. The heroes can see normally, but there are plenty of deep shadows, where almost anything could hide.

The main access to the platform is via two escalators on the west side. The more southern escalator goes down, and the more northern one generally carries people up. Both are currently shut down, but heroes can simply walk down either one. The station lies about 70 feet below the surface, so a trip up a stationary escalator is quite a hike. Elevators in area 1A are normally in operation 24 hours a day, but they too are shut down now.

The nearest service entrance to the station lies about a quarter mile to the west. The party can take a service elevator down to the tracks and trudge along the south tunnel, eventually emerging at area 1E.

**Creatures:** Fek-Jiim currently keeps watch over the platform from area 1D.

**Fek-Jiim (Ogre Mage):** CR 8; Large giant; HD 5d8+15; hp 37; Mas 17; Init +6; Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); Defense 21, touch 11,



flat-footed 19 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural, +5 chainmail shirt); BAB +3; Grap +12; Atk +7 melee (2d8+7/19-20, Huge greatsword) or +5 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3 Huge masterwork mighty [+5 Str bonus] composite longbow) or +0 ranged (2d8, S&W M29 .44 Magnum revolver); Full Atk +7 melee (2d8+7/19-20, Huge greatsword) or +5 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3 Huge masterwork [+5 Str bonus] composite longbow) or +0 ranged (2d8, S&W M29 .44 Magnum revolver); SQ darkvision 90 feet, low-light vision, regeneration 5, spell resistance 19, spell-like abilities; FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; AL evil; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 21, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 17.

**Skills:** Concentration +7, Hide -7, Listen +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +6.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*darkness*, *invisibility*; 1/day—*charm person* (DC 14), *cone of cold* (DC 18), *gaseous form*, *polymorph*, *sleep* (DC 14). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 9th-level mage, except for *polymorph*, which is as the incantation (see *URBAN ARCANA Campaign Setting*).

**Possessions:** Chainmail shirt, Huge greatsword, Huge masterwork (+5 Str bonus) composite longbow (see *D&D Player's Handbook*), S&W M29 .44 Magnum revolver, 24 rounds of ammunition (6 in the revolver), cellular phone, wallet stuffed with cash (+2 wealth bonus), 3 fake IDs (for various personas).

**Tactics:** Fek-Jiim begins the encounter invisible. When he sees or hears anyone arriving at the platform, he flies to some locale that is out of the intruder's line of sight and assumes the guise of a utility worker, complete with giant flashlight, orange vest, and hardhat. Upon re-emerging, he

imperiously orders the intruders to clear the area because it is unsafe for the public.

If the heroes insist on entering, Fek-Jiim demands to see their IDs. If any hero produces one, Fek-Jiim makes a show of studying it, then orders the intruders to stay put while he "calls this in." The ogre mage then walks back to his hiding place, resumes his normal form, and blasts the group with his *cone of cold*. If the ogre mage has played his role correctly, the heroes should be nicely grouped to receive the blast.

After using his *cone of cold*, the ogre mage takes to the air, firing his bow. He has a sidearm, but he cannot use it as effectively as he can his bow and sword. He keeps shooting as long as the heroes are bunched fairly close together, but if they scatter, he picks out a weak-looking character and bores in for a melee attack. If Fek-Jiim loses more than half his hit points, he becomes invisible and tries to hide somewhere until his regeneration ability restores him to at least 30 hit points, then resumes the attack. If reduced to 5 or fewer hit points, he assumes gaseous form and tries to escape through a ventilation shaft.

**Development:** The PCs are free to examine the area once they have dealt with Fek-Jiim, but there are no clues here. Any firing of weapons or other loud noises here alert the umber hulk in area 2 to the party's presence, and the creature hides to wait for them.

### 1A: Elevators

These two cramped elevators normally give access to the street above. They are currently shut down, and the cars are at street level.



**1B: Newsstand**

This niche is stuffed with newspapers, magazines, candy, and tobacco. Both the cash register and a small safe have been forced open and emptied.

Fek-Jiim and Maut'on stole the contents of the cash register and safe, then split the cash between them.

**1C: Food Stand**

This area is similar to area 1B, but slightly larger. The food stand features a microwave, a warming self, and two big glass-fronted coolers, all of which have been shut down. The cash register and safe here have also been rifled, but plenty of junk food remains, all at about room temperature.

**1D: Crossover**

This raised bridge allows passengers to cross from the main platform to area 1F to switch trains. The main portion of the bridge is 20 feet above the platforms and about 25 feet above the tracks. Ramps at each end provide access to the bridge. The bridge and ramps have sides about 3 feet high, equipped with handrails.

**1E: West Tunnel**

Two subway lines run from here to the rest of the city. The north and south tracks follow separate tunnels. As noted earlier, there is a service entrance about a quarter mile to the west along this tunnel. If the heroes use it, they enter the station at this point, along the south track.

**1F: North Platform**

This smaller platform is used primarily for transfers between the two tracks. Except for its size, it is identical to the main platform.

**1G: Tracks and Wrecked Train**

This area is about 5 feet lower than the two subway platforms. It has two sets of tracks running east and west, each with three rails. The two outer rails of each track carry trains, and the center rail carries electrical power for them. When the line is in operation, the center rail could deal anyone who touches it a lethal shock, but the power has been shut off from a control station several miles away.

The derailed subway train has three cars, each about 40 feet long. The front and rear cars are equipped with control cabs and power plants. A quick search of the cars (Search DC 5) reveals several doors and broken windows that could provide access to the train's interior. All three cars lie well off the tracks, and all look badly crumpled. (The train wasn't going very fast when it derailed, but the cars are built light for efficiency and safety, and they buckled like cardboard during the accident. Most of the damage, however, occurred in designated "crumple zones," so no one was seriously hurt during the accident.)

A look through the passenger sections reveals much broken safety glass and all manner of small personal items, such as umbrellas, shopping bags, raincoats, and sunglasses. Anyone who spends at least 10 minutes looking around can make a Spot or Search check (DC 15) to note that there are no

high value items (such as wallets, cellular phones, or notebook computers) in evidence. (Fek-Jiim and Maut'on have removed these items and taken them to area 4A.)

The two control cabs are mostly intact, and all the controls are set to their "off" positions. (The operator shut everything down before leaving the train.) Each control console has a hole that apparently once held some sort of electronic device. Loose wires with quick-release connectors are plainly visible. (These openings once held small computers and recorders that controlled and monitored the train. Accident investigators have already removed all such devices.)

There are no obvious clues about what made the train derail. A character with the Craft (mechanical) skill can examine the wheels and note with a successful check (DC 20) that the train's emergency brakes are clamped tight, and several show scorch marks, as though they had been slammed on while there still was power to the drive wheels. This fact supports the theory that the derailment was caused by a failure of the automatic braking system.

**1H: Mysterious Hole**

Maut'on had his umber hulk servant dig this hole, which leads down about 60 feet to a deep storm sewer. The illithid has imprisoned six emergency workers, three station workers (the ones mentioned in the Department-7 section, above), and six passengers from the train down here, after first stunning them with his *mind blast*. He and the ogre mage ferried the people down into the hole with their flying and levitation abilities, but let them drop the last few feet into some stagnant water at the bottom the sewer. Thus, all fifteen people have taken some nonlethal damage.

The only immediately visible exit from the sewer is through the hole. Some of the more intrepid among the prisoners have explored the sewer, but they have found no other exits. Since none of them can climb the sewer's smooth concrete walls, they have been waiting, with varying degrees of patience, for a rescue. If they see or hear anyone at the top of the hole, they shout loudly for help, and they're not above pointing out details of their situation. ("There's *water* down here! We're very cold, and we're *hurt!*")

If rescued, the people are grateful, but they can't provide much useful information. The train passengers among them can, however, describe the derailment. A typical story goes as follows.

"We were slowing down as we came into the station, like normal, when the lights flickered and the brakes slammed on. We all shot out of our seats, like when someone slams on the brakes in a car, you know? Before we landed, the cars slid off the tracks, and it was like being in a blender! The last thing I remember is crawling out of the wreckage and then suddenly feeling really dizzy and falling down, unable to move a muscle. Some of the people around me were gasping or screaming. Then someone blinded me with a blanket or a bag or something, and the next thing I knew I was falling through darkness, only to splash into water."

The workers tell similar stories of capture, though they weren't present for the derailment.

## 16: East Tunnel

This area is just like area 1E, except that the twin tunnels run west. Anyone who comes this far east can see the tunnel at area 2. This area is well within range of the creature's gaze attack.

## 11: Vantage Point (11)

Anyone standing in this area can see partway into the tunnel at area 2. It is dark inside the tunnel, but anyone who shines a light inside or can see in the dark has a chance to spot the umber hulk hiding inside if noise in area 1 has not caused it to back farther down the tunnel. (See area 2 for the umber hulk's Hide bonus.)

## Area 2: Guardpost

Maut'on ordered his *charmed* umber hulk servant to dig out this crude tunnel entrance and stand guard just west of it. If the heroes used any firearms or explosives (or made any other loud noises) while fighting the ogre mage in area 1, the umber hulk has backed up the tunnel to the north until it isn't in line of sight from area 11. It remains there and counts on its tremorsense ability to notice approaching foes.

The following read-aloud text assumes that the umber hulk is not in sight. If it is, adjust it accordingly.

The smooth concrete of the subway tunnel's north wall has a hole in it—a ragged, irregular cavity with a strangely organic look about it, like a termite tunnel in a wooden beam. Stone shards and rock dust litter the opening like sawdust. An equally irregular tunnel leads away from the opening, into the wall.

The rock litter is debris that the umber hulk left behind when digging out its hiding niche.

**Creature:** Maut'on's umber hulk servant stands guard in the tunnel. It has orders to let no one pass into the tunnel (area 3).

**Umbur Hulk:** CR 8; Large aberration; HD 8d8+32; hp 68; Mas 19; Init +1; Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.; Defense 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural); BAB +6; Grap +16; Atk +11 melee (2d4+6, claw); Full Atk +11 melee (2d4+6, 2 claws) and +9 melee (2d8+3, bite); SQ confusion gaze, darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; AL evil; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +6; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 13.

**Skills:** Climb +17, Hide –3, Jump +16, Listen +11.

**Feats:** Multiattack.

**Tactics:** If the umber hulk knows someone is coming, it stays out of sight in the tunnel until it's ready to attack. Otherwise, it hunkers down in the tunnel mouth and keeps its eyes peeled for intruders. The heroes have a chance to spot it in the tunnel mouth before it attacks. The creature has a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks while hunkered down in the tunnel.

In any case, the umber hulk tries to stay out of sight until someone comes within 30 feet of the tunnel mouth (area 11). When that occurs, Maut'on's pet steps into full view, so as to expose the foe to its gaze attack. Thereafter, it backs into the tunnel to avoid being flanked. Once engaged in combat, it fights to the death.

## Area 3: Umbur Hulk Tunnels

The umber hulk dug these tunnels at Maut'on's behest. The areas of rubble on the map indicate sections that the umber hulk has blocked by piling up stone shards from its digging. These barriers look like dead ends. Read or paraphrase the following when the heroes see one.

A near vertical pile of stone shards and rocks blocks the way here. It's hard to tell what might lie behind the pile.

The stone is packed well enough that the heroes can tap on it and discern with a successful Listen check (DC 15) that there's some empty space behind it. Digging for 10 minutes clears away the pile, but a character can simply knock it down with a successful Strength check (DC 15).

**Development:** This area serves mostly to delay the party's entry into area 4. It is likely that Maut'on will hear them approaching as they knock down the rock barriers.

## Area 4: Old Subbasement

Maut'on has made his lair in this abandoned chamber. This sub-basement was supposed to be completely filled in when the subway was built, but one corner still remains intact. Currently, the illithid has some unfortunate passengers from the derailed train chained up in this room. Read or paraphrase the following when the heroes enter.

This chamber is shaped like a crude right triangle. Ahead, a wall of packed, rocky earth forms the hypotenuse of the triangle, and damp concrete walls form the two shorter sides. Lying against the dirt wall is a row of utterly miserable and terrified civilians, all bound with chains and manacles.

An old, rusty steel ladder stands in the corner where the concrete walls meet.

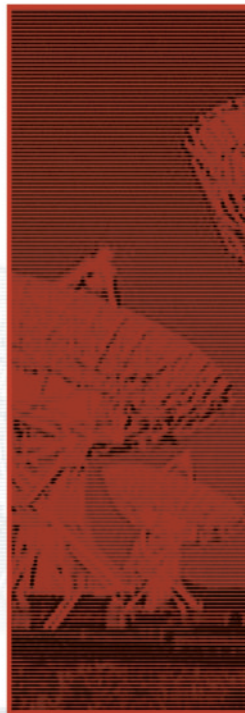
**Creatures:** Maut'on's captives are all passengers that he took from the wrecked train (an assortment of office workers and shoppers). They are all but helpless in their chains and somewhat muzzy-headed from the illithid's *mind blast* and *charm* powers. When the heroes arrive, eleven of the prisoners lie chained here. The twelfth captive is in area 4A, which lies above the ladder.

Maut'on himself lurks at the top of the ladder, waiting to attack the heroes (see below). He has been taking his captives, one by one, up to area 4A to interrogate them. The illithid wants to get the passwords and pin numbers for the credit and debit cards, laptop computers, PDAs, and other items of value that he and the ogre mage stole from the train before he extracts the captives' brains.

**Maut'on (Illithid):** hp 44. See *d20 MODERN Core Rulebook*, page 240.

**Possessions:** Maut'on carries a Glock 20 with 2 extra clips. His attack bonus with this weapon is +5. He also has assorted belongings stashed in area 4A.

**Tactics:** The illithid is likely to hear the heroes breaking through the last stone barrier in area 3. If they make a lot of noise getting to this point, he is waiting 15 feet in the air at the top of the ladder (using his *levitate* ability) when the





party enters the chamber. He looses a *mind blast* at the first opportunity. After that, he uses his *charm* power on anyone still standing. Maut'on directs those who succumb to his *charm* to restrain anyone who tries to attack him.

If reduced to one-half his original hit points, Maut'on retreats to area 4A and closes an old trapdoor above the ladder. There he waits for someone to climb up and enter. As soon as anyone opens the trapdoor, the illithid attacks with his tentacles. Should the heroes manage to force their way into area 4A, Maut'on tries to flee by levitating up an old utility shaft at the rear of the chamber.

**Development:** If freed, five of the captives bolt out of the chamber, and the others stand around in a near-catatonic state. If a fight is in progress in area 4, they manage to be in the heroes' way.

#### 4A: Maut'on's Chamber

This cubbyhole at the top of the ladder that leads up from area 4 was once part of an old storage area. Maut'on has installed a bed and a desktop computer in here, as well as some shelves that hold a variety of books and manuscripts dealing with the occult. This material is all part of the illithid's efforts to understand the nature of Shadow and exactly how he came to be here, as well as the loss of his *plane shift* ability. The computer contains file after file filled with notes and formulas that deal with interdimensional travel. Most of it is sheer rubbish, but if you wish to let the heroes pursue this angle, it could also contain some genuine insights.

This chamber also contains all the cellular phones, notebook computers, credit cards, debit cards, PDAs, and other items of value that Maut'on and Fek-Jiim took from the derailed train.

A second shaft leads upward from the back of this room. As noted earlier, this passage is an old utility shaft that Maut'on can use as an escape route. Another chamber piled deep with old construction debris lies 20 feet above this one. If pursued, Maut'on flees there and then dumps debris down the shaft to discourage pursuit.

### REWARDS

If the heroes turn over all the goods they find in area 4A, they can claim a +3 wealth bonus in the form of reward money and goods that cannot be traced back to their owners.

### FURTHER ADVENTURES

At the DM's option, Maut'on's personal computer can hold notes on some of the contacts the illithid has made with other creatures of Shadow. (For example, if Fek-Jiim escaped from area 1, the heroes might get a lead on his whereabouts here.) Though the background for this adventure assumes that Maut'on is something of a loner, there's no reason he could not be connected with some large, criminal organization that's ripe for investigation.

### NEW MONSTERS

This adventure introduces the ogre mage and the umber hulk, both adaptations from the D&D game.

## Ogre Mage

An ogre mage is about 10 feet tall and very broad. It has dark hair, green or blue skin, short ivory horns, and large, dark eyes with white pupils. Its teeth and claws are black as coal.

Ogre mages are natural criminals—greedy, cruel, and shrewd. They hunger after wealth and power, and they enjoy participating in almost any organized felonious activity. Their ability to alter their forms and to cloud others' minds makes them difficult to catch, even after the most blatant crime. Ogre mages enjoy power nearly as much as they do wealth, so they often head gangs of lesser creatures.

### Species Traits

**Regeneration (Ex):** An ogre mage regenerates 5 points of damage each round but cannot regenerate acid or fire damage. An ogre mage that loses a limb or body part can reattach it by holding the severed member to the stump. Reattachment takes 1 minute. If the head or some other vital organ is severed, it must be reattached within 10 minutes or the creature dies. An ogre mage cannot regrow lost body parts.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*darkness*, *invisibility*, 1/day—*charm person* (DC 14), *cone of cold* (DC 18), *gaseous form*, *polymorph*, *sleep* (DC 14). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 9th-level mage, except for *polymorph*, which is as the incantation (see *URBAN ARCANA Campaign Setting*). The save DCs are Charisma-based.

**Ogre Mage:** CR 8; Large giant; HD 5d8+15; hp 37; Mas 17; Init +6; Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); Defense 21, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural, +5 chainmail shirt); BAB +3; Grap +12; Atk +7 melee (2d8+7/19–20, greatsword) or +5 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3 masterwork [+5 Str bonus] composite longbow) or +0 ranged (2d8, S&W M29 .44 Magnum revolver); Full Atk +7 melee (2d8+7/19–20, greatsword) or +5 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3 masterwork [+5 Str bonus] composite longbow) or +0 ranged (2d8, S&W M29 .44 Magnum revolver); SQ darkvision 90 ft., low-light vision, regeneration 5, spell resistance 19, spell-like abilities; FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; AL evil; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 21, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 17.

**Skills:** Concentration +7, Hide –7, Listen +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +6.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative.

**Possessions:** Chainmail shirt, greatsword (see the *D&D Player's Handbook*), masterwork (+5 Str bonus) composite longbow (see the *D&D Player's Handbook*), S&W M29 .44 Magnum revolver, 24 rounds of ammunition (6 in the revolver).

**Advancement:** By character class.

## Umbur Hulk

An umber hulk looks like a bizarre cross between a great ape and a massive beetle. It possesses formidable natural armament, including claws powerful enough to tear through solid rock and mandibles that can literally bite a human in two. Anyone looking squarely into its four eyes risks falling into deep mental confusion.

Umbur hulks prefer to dwell deep underground, far from sunlight and open air, though hunger sometimes drives them

closer to the surface, where they can more readily find prey. Umber hulks aren't deep thinkers, but they usually exhibit deadly cunning in a fight.

### Species Traits

**Confusion Gaze (Su):** This ability functions like the *confusion* spell (caster level 8th; Will DC 15 negates), except that the range is 30 feet. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Tremorsense (Ex):** An umber hulk is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

**Umbur Hulk:** CR 8; Large aberration; HD 8d8+32; hp 68; Mas 19; Init +1; Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.; Defense 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural); BAB +6; Grap +16; Atk +11 melee (2d4+6, claw); Full Atk +11 melee (2d4+6, 2 claws) and +9 melee (2d8+3, bite); SQ confusion gaze, darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; AL evil; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +6; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 13.

**Skills:** Climb +17, Hide -3, Jump +16, Listen +11.

**Feats:** Multiattack.

**Advancement:** 9–12 HD (Large); 13–24 HD (Huge).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Skip Williams is a codesigner of the D&D 3rd Edition game and the chief architect of the *Monster Manual*. Currently a freelancer, Skip keeps busy with projects for various companies. He has been *Dragon*® Magazine's Sage since 1986. After years of "exile" in the Seattle area, Skip has moved back to his native Wisconsin, where he enjoys the rural life with his wife Penny.

## Credits

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Design:</b>             | Skip Williams              |
| <b>Editing:</b>            | Penny Williams             |
| <b>Typesetting:</b>        | Nancy Walker               |
| <b>Cartography:</b>        | Rob Lazzaretti             |
| <b>Creative Direction:</b> | Christopher Perkins        |
| <b>Web Production:</b>     | Julia Martin               |
| <b>Web Development:</b>    | Mark A. Jindra             |
| <b>Graphic Design:</b>     | Cynthia Fliege, Sean Glenn |

This d20™ System game uses mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison. This game also uses mechanics developed for the *Pionics Handbook* by Bruce R. Cordell, the *Call of Cthulhu® Roleplaying Game* by Monte Cook and John Tynes, and the *Star Wars® Roleplaying Game* by Bill Slavicsek, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

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