

YEAR OF SCOURED STARS
STARFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO #1-11 TIER 3-6



In Pursuit of the Scoured Past

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HOW TO PLAY

Starfinder Society Scenario #1-11: In Pursuit of the Scoured Past is a Starfinder Society Scenario designed for 3rd- through 6th-level characters (Tier 3-6; Subtiers 3-4 and 5-6). This scenario is designed for play in the Starfinder Society Roleplaying Guild campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. For more information on the Roleplaying Guild, how to read the attached Chronicle sheets, and how to find games in your area, check out the campaign's home page at paizo.com/starfinderSociety.



Table of Contents

In Pursuit of the Scoured Past	3
Appendix	20
Maps	21
Chronicle Sheet	23

GM RESOURCES

In Pursuit of the Scoured Past makes use of the *Starfinder Core Rulebook*, *Starfinder Alien Archive*, and *Starfinder Pact Worlds*. This adventure assumes the GM has access to these sourcebooks. All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online Starfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/sfrd, and the relevant rules from the *Alien Archive* volumes are reprinted at the back of the adventure for the GM's convenience.

SCENARIO TAGS

Scenario tags provide additional information about an adventure's contents. For more information on scenario tags, see Chapter 1 of the *Starfinder Society Roleplaying Guild Guide*.



FACTION (SECOND SEEKERS [LUWAZI ELSEBO])



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IN PURSUIT OF THE SCoured PAST

COLE KRONWITTER



The library world of Athaeum is one of the many wonders of the known galaxy. The planet defies cosmological logic, as it constantly disappears and reappears throughout the galaxy by means of unknown magic. A sect of mysterious self-exiled axiomites, who once hailed from the lawful plane of Axis, administers the immense repositories of knowledge that cover the small world. These axiomites, known only as “the Curators,” have pledged themselves to the preservation of knowledge, albeit with one minor caveat: all knowledge stored in the archives of Athaeum must be the last copies in existence. The duty of the Curators is to ensure the validity of that promise, and they go as far as actively seeking out and destroying any copies of their stored data on other worlds.

Following the events of *Starfinder Society Scenario #1-05: The First Mandate*, several organizations in the Pact Worlds are still reeling from the announcement that the Society plans to continue investigation into the Scoured Stars, the trinary star system currently cut off from the rest of the galaxy by an immense magical golden field, although nominated First Seeker Luwazi Elsebo has remained quiet on the exact means of how the Society will carry out the investigation. Luwazi enlisted the assistance of a diligent member of the Society’s leading Forum, an elderly ysoki named **Royo** (LN male ysoki), to help solve this ongoing mystery. Royo provided information on the existence of Athaeum, and he believes it contains at least some hidden knowledge on the Scoured Stars.

Royo’s devotion to nondigital information led him to discover Athaeum’s existence, but not the exact location of the library world. As Luwazi, Royo, and a host of high-ranking Starfinders worked together to uncover Athaeum’s location, the information spread to several organizations allied with the Starfinder Society. Assistance came from an unexpected group, when Iteration-177, an android representative of the Aspis Consortium, shocked Luwazi when they indicated they already had some association with Athaeum.

Thanks to the Society’s previous efforts in working alongside the Aspis Consortium, Iteration-177 has agreed to take a select delegation from the Starfinder Society on a research trip to Athaeum. It is possible that traces of information regarding the Scoured Stars exist somewhere inside Athaeum’s ancient libraries, and it’s up to the selected Starfinders to find out.

Where in the Universe?

In Pursuit of the Scoured Past takes place on Athaeum, a mysterious library world that constantly teleports throughout the galaxy.

ATHAEUM

Home of the Curators

Diameter: $\times 1/8$; **Mass:** $\times 1/8$

Gravity: $\times 1$ (artificial); **Atmosphere:** breathable

Day: 1 day (artificial); **Year:** 1 year

Few have explored Athaeum to any great extent. Those who have report that the planet is covered entirely in stone structures that house seemingly endless libraries and repositories of hidden knowledge. Ancient beyond reckoning, the structures of Athaeum have been updated over the course of centuries. Although the libraries appear quite old, the insides of the libraries are filled with technological wonders.

SUMMARY

The PCs depart Absalom Station after a short briefing where Luwazi Elsebo and Royo bring the PCs up to speed on recent events. With Royo joining them, the PCs then meet up with Iteration-177 and board the Aspis representative’s starship. Iteration-177 requests the PCs and Royo join them for dinner during their trip to Athaeum.

At dinner, the PCs have a chance to sample unusual memory-based foods under the watchful gaze of Iteration-177. They also meet with a group of Hellknights from the Order of the Pyre, who are also traveling to Athaeum along with Iteration-177. The dinner provides a scene for the PCs to get to know the major NPCs in this adventure, as well as make a long-lasting impression on Iteration-177. Following the dinner, the PCs enjoy a night of sleep before they reach Athaeum.

Iteration-177’s various guests arrive on Athaeum by taking a shuttle down to the surface of the world. After a brief encounter

with one of the local axiomite Curators of Athaeum, the PCs travel to the Towers of Recondite Lore, where the Curators keep some of their most unusual knowledge. The PCs explore the towers and deal with several hazards, including guardian machines infected with a virus and an escaped ksarik specimen.

Eventually, the PCs find an information-storage device called a *mindmaze*, which holds the knowledge they seek. When the PCs use this device, they begin to piece together some of the long-forgotten past of the Scoured Stars and, potentially, discover a vital clue in breaching the impenetrable energy field that surrounds the system. Royo agrees to continue studying the device, but before long, the Curators arrive and request the PCs' assistance with a sudden problem: the Hellknights are setting fire to a section of the library!

GETTING STARTED

Read or paraphrase the following to get the adventure under way.

"Greetings, Starfinders,"
Nominated First Seeker

Luwazi Elsebo speaks from behind her cluttered office desk. An elderly ysoki eagerly paces behind the First Seeker, adjusting his glasses every few steps. Luwazi continues, "As I am sure you are aware, I recently announced that the Starfinder Society intends to continue its investigation into the Scoured Stars and the incident that occurred there. I have chosen you to pursue our first lead. Thanks to Royo here, we recently learned that the library world of Athaeum could contain valuable information related to the Scoured Stars—information that could prove key to disabling the shield guarding the system. Royo is our resident expert on Athaeum. I will let him explain the details."

Taking his cue, the ysoki steps forward, adjusts his glasses one final time, and continues the briefing, "Athaeum is one of the great wonders of the galaxy. It has no fixed location; rather, it disappears and reappears throughout the universe at seemingly random intervals. It's not random, of course. You see, the planet actually has a powerful magical engine tha—"

"Royo," Luwazi chides the elderly ysoki, shaking him from his tangential explanation.

Royo nods before continuing, "Ah yes, sorry. Where was I? Oh, yes! A group called the Curators controls and maintains Athaeum, along with the world's libraries that contain the rarest of knowledge. In fact, all knowledge on the planet is unique because the Curators actively ensure that every piece of information stored on their world is the last copy in existence. They have even gone so far as to destroy knowledge on other

planets to ensure that this is the case."

"For long time we were unable to secure access to Athaeum's libraries," continues Luwazi, "But recently, Iteration-177, a member of the Aspis Consortium sympathetic to the Starfinder Society, indicated that they have a relationship with the Curators. Through Iteration-177, we have secured passage for a small group to the library world. Your mission is to escort Royo to Athaeum and uncover whatever information you can on the Scoured Stars. Additionally, try to establish a good relationship with the Curators, who could prove to be useful allies in the days to come."

Luwazi explains that the PCs will travel to Athaeum aboard Iteration-177's ship, the *Diligent Forerunner*, which is set to depart from Absalom Station in just over 12 hours. This gives the PCs most of the day to prepare for the trip, including making any purchases prior to departing, if they desire.

Luwazi and Royo are happy to answer any questions the PCs have before they leave.

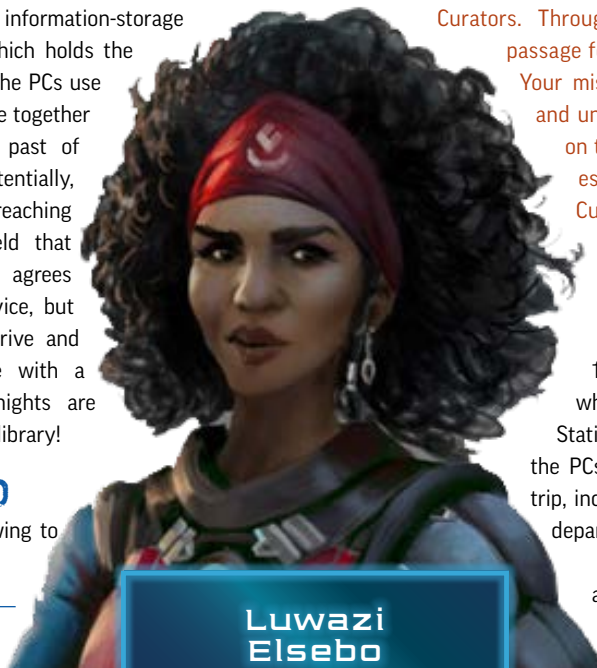
Who are the Curators? "The Curators are axiomites, outsiders made from the pure lawful essence of Axis.

They often choose to look elven in appearance, but in their true forms, they are clouds of mathematical symbols. These particular axiomites exiled themselves from their home plane so that they could better pursue their mission to preserve unique knowledge. Since then, they've maintained the immense archives on Athaeum."

How did Iteration-177 secure access to Athaeum? "Iteration-177 was not forthcoming with details about their relationship with the Curators, and we decided not to press the issue. From what I understand, the android has personal business on the planet already and is transporting another group there as well. Iteration-177 was also reticent on who the other group is and that group's mission on Athaeum."

What kind of information are we looking for on Athaeum? "It is difficult to say. All knowledge on Athaeum is unique, and much of it is stored on mediums other than books. All we know is that one of the vaults on the planet is dedicated to the Scoured Stars. What is inside the vault, we cannot say."

Have the PCs finalize their boon slots for the session after they complete their briefing with Luwazi. As Luwazi infers, this scenario is of high importance to the Second Seekers faction, so encourage the PCs to slot this faction as one of their boons. Also encourage the PCs to slot the High Society Influence (Royo) social boon from *Starfinder Society Scenario #1-05: The First Mandate* if they have it.



Luwazi
Elsebo

THOUGHT FOR FOOD

The PCs and Royo meet with **Iteration-177** (N agender android) at one of Absalom Station's many docks. The android welcomes the PCs aboard their spacecraft, a sleek, golden-hued luxury vessel called the *Diligent Forerunner*. Iteration-177 greets the PCs at the bottom of the ship's ramp and escorts them to their rooms. Once the PCs and Royo have dropped off any equipment, Iteration-177 requests their presence in the dining hall.

Read or paraphrase the following.

A long dining table, low to the ground, fills the center of the room. Dozens of colorful pillows surround the table, and two roughly human-sized individuals, each wearing black armor, sit cross-legged at the far end of the table. In the center of the table sits a strange technological device made of silver metal and curved glass.

"Everyone, please have a seat around the table. Our ship will be entering the Drift shortly," Iteration-177 announces in a calm voice. "To keep us amused on our trip, I have made arrangements for a very special dinner. As a connoisseur of unusual sensations and experiences, I recently purchased a device from a deep-space trader. It is a *pencibiter*, which you see on the table before you. This most unique machine can transmute thoughts and psychic energy into food for consumption. I ask that each of you contribute one thought or memory to our feast for this evening, and in this way, we will get to know one another a little better."

Iteration-177 goes on to introduce the two sitting individuals: Paralicor **Kelria** (LE female vesk soldier) and Maralicor **Loomarch** (LE male unique devil), of the Hellknight Order of the Pyre. The two Hellknights and their small contingent of soldiers currently stationed in the ship's quarters also have business on Athaeum. Iteration-177 explains that it's fate that both organizations had business on the world when they did and that the android is eager to assist however they can. When the PCs enter, Kelria slides back the visor of her helmet, revealing a stern-faced middle-aged vesk with dark-green scales accented by bright orange markings in swirling patterns that resemble fire. Loomarch, who sits next to Kelria, does not raise his visor, but PCs who look at the Hellknight carefully can see flames dancing behind the glass of the helmet, as if flame fills Loomarch's entire suit.

Like the Hellknight order of lost Golarion, Hellknights belonging to the Order of the Pyre focus on eliminating heretical texts from the universe. Kelria and Loomarch are

Roleplaying Royo

Royo is a member of the Forum, the elected ruling body of the Starfinder Society. He specializes in scholarly affairs and relishes reading physical documents. He is somewhat torn by his visit to Athaeum. On one hand, the trip represents an incredible chance to view truly unique lore, but on the other, Royo firmly believes that information should be made accessible and finds the philosophy of the Curators highly distasteful. The ysoki tends to remain aloof unless engaged in a topic related to his interests (which are vast), but once Royo gets excited, his enthusiasm quickly builds.

Royo wears immaculate formalwear about 20 years out of date and frequently adjusts his glasses when thinking. Nearly everything on Athaeum fascinates Royo, and he constantly moves from object to object while murmuring, "Interesting, interesting..." When pressed into a combat situation, Royo remains distant and doesn't actively participate because he has few relevant combat skills.

One of Royo's aspects that can create some memorable social moments is his distaste of the Dataphiles. He views digital data as being "too mutable" and believes that the controlled dissemination of information often associated with the Dataphiles is distasteful; as such, he frequently makes jabs at the Dataphiles' beliefs and practices. Feel free to play up this rivalry during the scenario, but remember that Royo is still a professional Starfinder and that he is willing to work with any agent to get the job done.

In addition, Royo provides additional assistance throughout the scenario if one or more of the PCs have the High Society Influence (Royo) boon from *Starfinder Society Scenario #1-05: The First Mandate*. These benefits are described in each encounter when relevant.

traveling to Athaeum to investigate rumors that the Curators have a collection of forbidden texts and to review the defenses of the world to ensure that Athaeum is a suitable storage site. Unbeknownst to Iteration-177, Kelria has secret orders to destroy these texts if the Curators will not let her take them with her off Athaeum.



Royo

The Dinner: Iteration-177 passes around a fist-sized psychic node from the *pencibiter*, asking each PC to attach the node to his or her forehead and recall a powerful memory. Once the recipient attaches the node and recalls the memory, the *pencibiter* emits a flash and creates a colored disk about 1 foot in diameter. Each wafer-like disk has a unique taste determined by the memory implanted into it. Moreover, creatures that eat some of the disc can experience the memory in a distant way, as if they were remembering it as their own memory. Once everyone has contributed, Iteration-177 breaks apart the disks so that everyone can sample each one.

At this point, go around the table and ask each PC to describe what memory they contribute to the *pencibiter* and how they think it would taste. PCs can refuse to contribute if they like, but Iteration-177 expresses clear disappointment if they do so. Allow each PC to choose which memories they would like to sample. The memories of the NPCs are described below.

Kelria: The paralictor's memory tastes of smoke and ash. In her youth, Kelria was an oddity of a vesk, as she found herself enraptured by the foreign philosophy of Sangpotshi, and she traveled the Pact Worlds attempting to gain further enlightenment. A series of events during her time in the Pact Worlds led her to renounce Sangpotshi and devote herself entirely to the Order of the Pyre.

PCs who sample Kelria's memory feel the heat of flames licking up their legs and see Kelria consumed by fire atop a spike of iron within a Hellknight fortress. A feeling of triumph and resignation fills the memory as Kelria emerges from the flames unscathed. If questioned about her memory, Kelria avoids explaining the history behind her burning, though she clearly indicates that the flames purified her heretical past. The stoic vesk has a fatalistic personality, awaiting the fate she believes was sealed long ago.

Loomarch: Loomarch's memory tastes both savory and sweet, tinged with the thrill of freedom. Years ago, a kasatha Hellknight named Hualsu attempted a complicated ritual to summon a devil, but the kasatha made a crucial mistake, causing the spell to fail. Instead, the called devil (an entity named Loomarch) and Hualsu switched places. Hualsu was transported to Hell, and Loomarch was bound to the Material Plane inside Hualsu's Hellknight armor. Ironically, Loomarch proved to be an even more fanatical adherent to the Order of the Pyre than Hualsu was. Not wanting to turn down a tool useful to their cause, the leaders of the Order of the Pyre allowed Loomarch to continue serving in Hualsu's place, which he has done with vigor.

PCs who sample Loomarch's memory see the Hellknight Hualsu performing a ritual, only for the spell to fail. The kasatha withers into flame and disappears. At the same time, a demonic fire spirit

forms in the air and then flies into the empty Hellknight armor, animating it with life. Thrilled with his existence among the Hellknights, Loomarch is happy to describe his summoning and discuss his hellish past. A PC who succeeds at DC 18 Perception check notes two sets of weld marks on Loomarch's armor that seal off where a kasatha's second set of arms would emerge from.

Royo: The ysoki's memory has a dry and earthy taste.

Instead of a momentous memory, Royo contributed his favorite feeling in the world: the contented thrill of reading ancient books. PCs who eat his memory receive a vision of sitting in a cozy library, surrounded by the smell of old paper and stacks of enormous books. While the taste is slightly off-putting, the memory's vision and artificial smell are calming.

Iteration-177: Enigmatic and bemused, Iteration-177 does not contribute any memories to the *pencibiter*. Instead the android presses the PCs and the Hellknights for details surrounding their memories, appearing to take immense pleasure in living vicariously through them. If the PCs do not question Kelria or Loomarch at all, Iteration-177 asks the Hellknights enough questions to get a summary of their unusual pasts. If the PCs question Iteration-177 as to why they do not contribute a

memory, the android replies that they enjoy maintaining an aura of mystery around themselves. If questioned further, Iteration-177 relishes in the PCs' frustration but refuses to divulge any additional details about their background.

Development: Throughout the course of the dinner, Iteration-177 is carefully judging the memories and actions of each PC. Assign each PC one of the following traits, based on the memory they contribute and their general personality. Rather than keep these a secret until the end of the scenario, be sure to discuss with the players that each of their choices conforms to one of the following four traits. Ensure that you and the specific player agree on the choice, but do not reveal the ramifications of what choosing a specific trait are:

- Choleric (PCs who chose an angry or violent memory)
- Melancholic (PCs who chose an analytical, wise, or quiet memory)
- Phlegmatic (PCs who chose a relaxed or peaceful memory)
- Sanguine (PCs who chose an active, enthusiastic, or social memory)

If a PC refuses to contribute a memory, Iteration-177 assigns them melancholic trait for their evasiveness.

Once the PCs reach their respective decisions, each PC receives the Iteration-177's Attention boon on her Chronicle sheet. Cross out the traits the PC did not select, leaving only one trait associated with this boon.



Iteration-177

Regardless of the individual memory selections or conversation topics, Iteration-177 thanks the attendees for humoring their unique dinner request. The PCs and Royo can return to their quarters to enjoy a night's rest before the *Diligent Forerunner* reaches Athaeum.

Treasure: If at least half the PCs contribute a memory during dinner, Iteration-177 thanks them for providing entertainment during their journey. To show appreciation, the android gives the PCs exotic lotions, oils, and spices from their personal collection. In total, the rare collector items are worth 1,000 credits (3,400 credits in Subtier 5-6). Two *mk 2 serums of healing* (two *mk 3 serums of healing* in Subtier 5-6) and a *mk 2 ring of resistance* are nestled in along with these offerings.

Rewards: If the PCs do not receive Iteration-177's gifts, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3-4: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 251.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 441.

Subtier 5-6: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 632.



Kelria

TOUCHING DOWN ON ATHAEUM

Following a brief stop, the *Diligent Forerunner* drops out of the Drift. Through the windows of the spacecraft, the PCs can see an empty expanse of space, into which a planet suddenly appears, crackling with arcs of ivory energy. Iteration-177 addresses the ship's occupants over the speaker system and ushers the PCs, Royo, and the Hellknights into a spacious shuttle, which departs for the planet immediately. Most of the surface of Athaeum is spotted with vine-covered stone domes and towers, creating the impression that the ship is landing in some ancient and long forgotten city. Many of the city's buildings incorporate massive gears and timekeeping devices, each slowly winding with inscrutable purpose.

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs' starship touches down on Athaeum.

A nearby cracked stone pavilion is visible from outside the shuttle windows, nestled between towering skyscrapers. A stone door slides open in one of the nearby vine-covered towers, and three clouds of glowing, crystalline dust emerge. These clouds float and form into a series of formulae and mathematical symbols in midair before suddenly coalescing into the image of three elven humanoids that patiently wait for the shuttle to land.

These are the Curators of Athaeum—creatures called axiomites who are comprised of pure mathematical law. The first Curator approaches the Starfinders and leads them away from the shuttle. The second axiomite greets Iteration-177, and the third meets with the Hellknights. The Curator greeting the Starfinder contingent, named **Albryan** (LN male axiomite), politely conveys the following information while he walks with the PCs and leads them inside.

"Greetings, esteemed guests from the Starfinder Society. I am Albryan, and I am tasked with guiding you to the Towers of Recondite Lore, where the information you requested resides. Before I do so, I would like to remind of the rules of research on Athaeum. All the information stored on Athaeum is unique. Visitors are welcome to read from our manuscripts, but copying or recording them in any way is forbidden. Should you choose to reproduce any acquired knowledge

after leaving Athaeum, know that you do so at your own risk. We Curators will actively punish such transgressions. Know that there is no corner of the cosmos safe from us.

"Additionally, violence against the Curators or other visitors is strictly prohibited. Finally, visitors to the libraries will be charged a substantial research fee. Fortuitously for you, during our recent shift to this corner of the universe, Athaeum passed through a dangerous energy field that has greatly damaged our systems. We are correcting the problems, but our resources are spread thin. We have flagged two issues in the specific tower you are traveling to. If you can deal with these problems, we are prepared to greatly reduce our usual fee."

Royo pipes in, excited at the possibility of lowering the overall cost of the endeavor; the Society is already putting a significant amount of resources into satisfying the demands of the Curators, and while Luwazi Elsebo has authorized the expense, the PCs would do well to lower the cost.

The PCs can interject at this point, but once they inquire about the two issues the axiomite Albryan mentions, read or paraphrase the following.

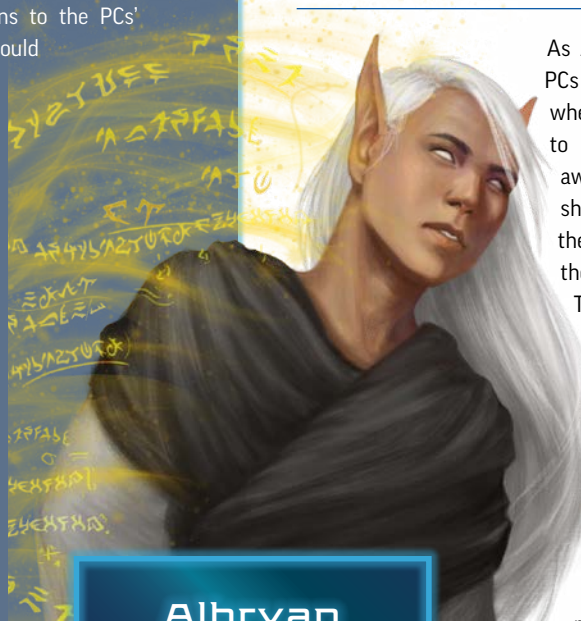
"First, our lore warden constructs in the Tower of the Oma have been infected by malicious data and are malfunctioning. Long

Other Curiosities

The Curators keep their most rare and unusual forms of knowledge in the Towers of Recondite Lore. As the PCs walk through the towers, they have the chance to see some of the other curiosities filling the towers. Use any of the following rooms to add flavorful descriptions to the PCs' exploration. These curiosities should not significantly distract from the mission; most of these items are sealed away behind thick glass or protective force shields.

- A large room with an enormous gold dragon chained to the floor and kept in a chemically induced slumber.
- A room filled with rows of obelisks carved from solid ice. Strange indecipherable formulae shift and float inside each obelisk.
- A room filled with thousands of vibrant birds. They fly and create aerial formations that spell out words and runes in a variety of languages.
- A room filled with cacophonous noise created by hundreds of instruments played all at once by miniature robots.
- A room filled with ancient books, each bound with a cover made from a different type of skin.
- A room with a dozen scrimshaw drawings, each carved into the 6-foot-long tooth of some gigantic beast.
- A room that holds six alien ghosts bound within warding circles that glow faintly.
- A room filled with hundreds of pots, each containing a different incense.

"Second, a special ksarik specimen named Vindurth has escaped from its cage in the tower. We captured an ancestor of Vindurth some years ago on the planet Castrovel because the hide of the beast was covered with indecipherable runes. Since then we have bred several generations from the beast, of which Vindurth is the most recent. Each has produced a new series of runes for us to record. Although relatively tame, Vindurth become dangerous if allowed to wander free. If possible, find a way to bring the ksarik back to its cage."



Albryan

As Albryan speaks, he escorts the PCs to the far side of the plaza, where a stone shuttle attached to magically powered stone rails awaits. He explains that the shuttle will transport the PCs to the Towers of Recondite Lore. Once there, the PCs should seek out the Tower of the Oma; the top floor of this tower holds Athaeum's information vault on the Scoured Stars. Normally Albryan would accompany the PCs on their visit, but due to the crisis with Athaeum's systems, his presence is required elsewhere.

Development: As the PCs move to enter the shuttle, they notice that Iteration-177 and the Hellknight group each board shuttles of their own on the other side of the plaza. Iteration-177 seems to be on cordial terms with their Curator emissary. Kelria is gesturing angrily and berating her emissary while flanked by a contingent of her soldiers led by Loomarch. If the PCs attempt to move to interject in Kelria's feud, Albryan instead imposes himself between the PCs and their intended target. The Curator then cordially guides the PCs back onto their shuttle, pointing out that while not all visitors agree with the methods and rules of Athaeum, the PCs should not concern themselves with other visitors.

TOWERS OF RECONDITE LORE

The shuttle whisks the PCs across the surface of Athaeum for roughly 15 minutes before stopping at the feet of the Towers of Recondite Lore. There are nearly two dozen towers in all, each named after a different magical beast and filled with individual vaults of unusual lore. Hundreds of bridges connect the towers at varying heights, meaning the PCs can move from tower to tower without ever touching the ground, if they wish.

Magic enhancements keep the stone from deteriorating, though pernicious vines and other flora creep up the sides of the towers. Glowing runes cap each tower's entryway to the individual towers of the area, with each rune representing the creature associated

ago, a group of doomsday cultist hackers created a prophetic virus, believing that once enough machines were infected, a new age would dawn throughout the universe. We eventually isolated the virus and brought it here for safekeeping. The recent damage to our systems, however, allowed part of the code to transmit to nearby devices, which happened to be a group of passing security machines. The machines are now roaming the halls of the tower, infected with delusions of grandeur. If you destroy these machines and recover a copy of the virus, we can return it to storage safely.

with the individual tower. A creature inspecting any of these runes for more than 1 round can perceive the meaning of that rune and know the name of the associated tower.

A. TOWER OF THE OMA

The Tower of the Oma lies near the center of the Towers of Recondite Lore. This soaring 40-story-tall structure is made of black, glassy stone lined with beautifully carved frescoes. Eight bridges lead to the tower, each at different heights, and four looming archways allow visitors to enter the tower.

The PCs can easily take the stairs straight to the top of the Tower of the Oma, if they desire, which is where the information they seek is stored. As such, they can tackle the three encounters within the tower in any order they please. Royo insists the PCs assist the Curators by fulfilling Albryan's two requests. Make sure the PCs complete all three encounters in the Tower of the Oma before proceeding to the Tower of the Ellicoth (area B).

Key features of the tower are noted below.

Atienus Ivy: A strange, creeping ivy fills the first floor and crawls 100 feet up the sides of the tower. This dark-red ivy feels fleshy to the touch. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Life Science check can identify the plant as Atienus, a protein-rich plant native to Castrovel that locals use to feed livestock. The first floor of the tower is a small greenhouse where the Curators cultivate Atienus to feed to various specimens, and the vines are Vindurth's favorite food. The Curators have allowed the vines to grow unimpeded, and the plants have spread up the walls of the tower.

Acid Trail: Acidic droplets left behind by the slaving Vindurth are scattered throughout the Tower of the Oma. PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Survival check (DC 23 in Subtier 5–6) can follow the trail of these droplets to the eighteenth floor of the tower, where the *ksarik* currently prowls.

Strange Sights: The Tower of the Oma is too large to fully detail. For information on other strange sights the PCs might encounter, see the Other Curiosities sidebar on page 8.

A1. THE DELUSION VIRUS (CR 6 OR CR 8)

The first encounter the PCs are likely to face is with the malfunctioning lore warden constructs that are currently patrolling the tower's twelfth floor. The PCs can enter this floor from whichever stairwell they choose. Read or paraphrase the following when they do.

Pallid green light fills this area. Ten large glass containers, each filled with translucent green slime, are arranged in a half square in the middle of the room. Scrolls of parchment float lazily inside the slime of each container.

This room holds the *Scrolls of Cizoh*, 10 strips of parchment found floating in a sea of slime on a distant moon.

Hazard: The scrolls hold terrible secrets not meant for mortal minds to bear. PCs who attempt to read a scroll must attempt a DC 15 Will save (DC 17 in Subtier 5–6) or be afflicted by these

terrible truths. If the PC succeeds at the save, the unwholesome knowledge fortifies her mind, granting her a +2 bonus to Intelligence checks for the remainder of the adventure. If the PC fails the save, she instead takes 1d3 Wisdom damage from the mind-wrenching, indescribable knowledge contained on the scrolls. The scrolls can affect a PC only once.

Creatures: Two technological constructs, referred to as lore wardens, wait in the center of this room (four lore wardens in Subtier 5–6.) These robots resemble robed humans constructed of brass and silver with visible clockwork mechanisms inside them. One of their arms ends in a vicious blade, while the other is an intricate clockwork re-creation of a hand. The lore wardens are servants of the Curators, tasked with system maintenance and artifact preservation. A virus has infected the lore wardens in this room, causing them to spout statements of their superiority and overwhelming mental intellect compared to inferior beings.

If Royo is still accompanying the PCs, then the elderly *ysoki* takes a more active role in combat than usual. He points out weaknesses in the lore wardens, granting his allies a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls against the constructs. He also grants a +2 bonus on Engineering checks to identify the constructs. If a PC slotted the High Society Influence (Royo) boon, both of the bonuses Royo grants increase by 1.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 6)

LORE WARDENS (2)

CR 4

N Medium construct (technological)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +10
Aura grandiose proclamations (120 ft., DC 15)

DEFENSE **HP** 43 EACH

EAC 15; **KAC** 16

Fort +1; **Ref** +1; **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities integrated weapons; **Immunities** construct immunities

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bladed slam +7 (1d4+5 S)

Ranged integrated tactical arc emitter +9 (1d4+4 E)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; melee +7, ranged +9)

3/day—*hurl forcedisk*, *inject nanobots* (DC 17)

6/day—*comprehend languages*, *jolting surge*, *magic missile*

At will—*energy ray*, *mending*

TACTICS

During Combat The wardens use *hurl forcedisk* and *magic missile* at range. They switch to using *jolting surge* or *inject nanobots* against creatures who close on them. The nascent vanity of the constructs makes them particularly prone to attacking creatures who succeeded at the saving throw against the lore warden's grandiose proclamations aura.

Morale The lore wardens believe they are superior to all other life-forms in the universe, so they fight to the death to attempt to prove it.

Scaling Encounter A1

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Subtier 3-4: Seized by the virus, the lore wardens are staggered for the first round of combat. They also take a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, and the virus reduces the DC of their spell-like abilities by 2.

Subtier 5-6: Remove one lore warden.

STATISTICS

Str +1; **Dex** +3; **Con** -; **Int** +5; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Computers +15, Mysticism +10, Profession (librarian) +15

Languages Common

Other Abilities unliving

Gear tactical arc emitter with 1 battery (20 charges)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grandiose Proclamations (Su) The lore warden shouts an unnerving constant stream of delusional grandeur. Each creature within 120 feet of the lore warden that can hear it must succeed at a DC 15 Will saving throw at the start of their turn or become off-target for one round. This is a mind-affecting, sense-dependent effect.

Integrated Weapons (Ex) A lore warden's weapons are integrated into its frame and can't be disarmed.

SUBTIER 5-6 (CR 8)

LORE WARDENS (4)

CR 4

hp 43 each (see page 9)

TACTICS

Use the tactics from Subtier 3-4.

Development: After the lore wardens are destroyed, the PCs can attempt to extract the virus from their memory-storage systems. A PC can remove the memory-storage system of a destroyed lore warden but must quickly download the data before the device's internal generator shuts down. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Computers check (DC 21 in Subtier 5-6) can transfer a copy of the virus onto another technological device (such as a computer, comm unit, or non-analog weapon). This disables the item until the virus is removed. Alternatively, a PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Engineering check (DC 21 in Subtier 5-6) can remove the memory-storage system of a lore warden entirely and attach it to a battery that has at least four charges remaining; the Curators can later extract a copy of the virus from the memory system. Finally, a PC can attempt to carefully remove the memory-storage system and the lore warden's attached power supply by succeeding at a DC 18 Sleight of Hand check

(DC 21 in Subtier 5-6) to keep the two devices connected and withdraw them from the interior of the construct.

Treasure: Much of the circuitry inside each lore warden construct is crafted from precious metals, which can be sold for 900 credits. In addition, the bladed arm of one destroyed lore warden can be salvaged, acting as a sintered longsword. In Subtier 5-6, the metals harvested from the lore wardens are more rare, worth 2,400 credits in total, and the PCs can salvage a second sintered longsword.

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat the lore wardens, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3-4: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 290 credits.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 486 credits.

Subtier 5-6: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 681 credits.

A2. THE SLAVERING BEAST (CR 4 OR CR 6)

The acid trails scattered throughout the Tower of the Oma lead to the eighteenth floor, where Vindurth the ksarik prowls. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs reach this floor.

On the eighteenth floor, glowing runes line the walls of the winding corridors, filling the hallways with orange light.

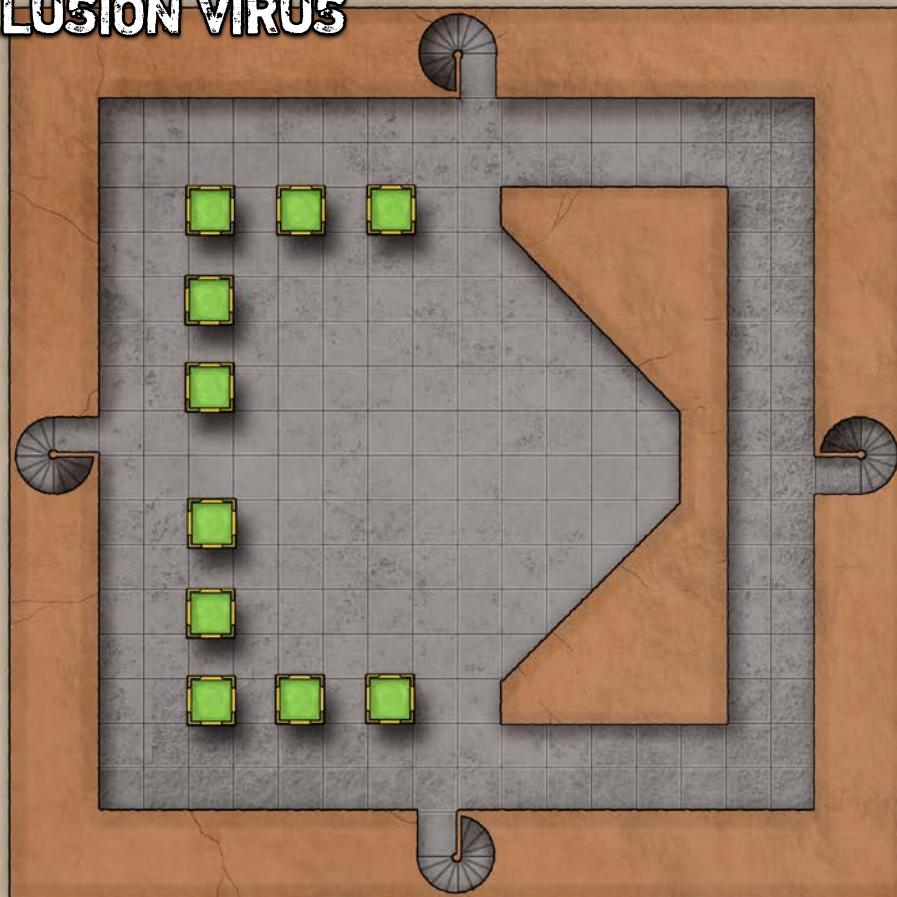
The eighteenth floor of the tower is a winding maze of corridors, though the majority of the encounter takes place in a vault that Vindurth meandered into. Alcoves, each about a square foot in size, cover the walls of this side vault; these alcoves are empty, as the Curators have yet to fill this vault.

It is likely that the PCs hear Vindurth before they see it. The ksarik roams the halls of this floor intermittently growling and humming lilting melodies. The PCs can follow these sounds into this area, arriving along the southern entry hall.

Hazard: The runes on the walls between the side vault's alcoves describe a powerful spell recovered from the notes of a mad spellcaster who lived in an asteroid cave in the Vast. Fully deciphering the spell would require days or even months of work, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 21 Mysticism check can determine that the runes are part of a powerful divination spell. The runes have caused the walls to become extremely volatile. A creature that briefly brushes a wall takes 1 fire damage. A creature that comes into full contact with a wall (by being bull rushed into it, for example) takes 2d6 fire damage (4d6 fire damage in Subtier 5-6).

Creatures: Tamed by years of captivity, Vindurth is friendlier than a typical ksarik. Its initial attitude is indifferent, but PCs can attempt a DC 21 Survival check (DC 24 in Subtier 5-6) to improve its attitude by one step. If their check's result exceeds the DC by 5 or more, the PCs can spend 10 more minutes with Vindurth and improve its attitude by two steps. If they fail the check by 5 or more, Vindurth's attitude instead worsens by one category. PCs who offer Vindurth some Atienus vine (the ksarik's favorite food) receive a +4 bonus to these checks. Similarly, if the PCs think of other clever ways to placate the beast, consider giving them a +2 bonus to their checks.

A1. THE DELUSION VIRUS



1 square = 5 feet

Vindurth reacts to the PCs based upon its attitude.

Helpful—Vindurth playfully hops around and follows the PCs back to its cage. It obeys simple visual commands and avoids licking PCs if they object.

Friendly—Vindurth attempts to play with the PCs for a bit but quickly loses interest. If offered food, Vindurth greedily devours it and vigorously licks the PC who offered it, dealing 1d6 acid damage. The ksarik is willing to follow the PCs back to its cage, provided they offer it food at least three times.

Indifferent—After sniffing the PCs for a few moments, Vindurth wanders off.

Unfriendly—Vindurth backs away from the PCs whenever they come close, letting out a burbling hiss each time. If they attempt to touch it, the ksarik lashes out with a single tentacle attack.

Hostile—Vindurth flies into a rage and attacks.

If one or more PCs slotted the High Society Influence (Royo) boon, and assuming Royo is still accompanying the PCs, then the elderly ysoki produces some Atienus vines to feed Vindurth. Royo performs this if none of the other PCs come up with the idea on their own. Otherwise, Royo's added interest in seeing the PCs succeed allows the ysoki to step in and assist in mediation, allowing any PC with the boon slotted to reroll any one skill check made to influence Vindurth.

SUBTIER 3-4 (CR 4)

VINDURTH CR 4

Ksarik (*Starfinder Alien Archive 70*, see page 20)

hp 52

TACTICS

During Combat Vindurth alternates between attacking with its tentacles and thorn darts. It attempts to bull rush particularly small or weak-looking foes into the explosive runes on the walls.

Morale If reduced to 10 Hit Points or fewer, Vindurth quits fighting, backs away from the PCs, and begins submissively cowering to avoid further conflict.

STATISTICS

Languages Common (can't speak any language)

SUBTIER 5-6 (CR 6)

VINDURTH CR 6

Unique ksarik

N Large plant

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense (scent) 30 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +13

Scaling Encounter A2

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Subtier 3-4: Reduce Vindurth's Hit Points by 10. Vindurth takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws.

Subtier 5-6: Reduce Vindurth's Hit Points by 20. Vindurth takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws.

DEFENSE

EAC 18; **KAC** 20

Fort +10; **Ref** +8; **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities fast healing 2; **Immunities** plant immunities

HP 90 **RP** 3



Vindurth

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.; climb 40 ft.

Melee tentacle +16 (1d8+11 B plus ingested adaptation)

Ranged acid spit +13 (1d10+6 A) or
thorn dart +13 (2d6+6 P plus carrion spores)

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

Offensive Abilities ingested adaptation

TACTICS

Use the tactics from Subtier 3-4.

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +2; **Con** +3; **Int** -3; **Wis** +1; **Cha** -1

Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +18 (+26 when climbing),
Survival +13

Languages Common (can't speak any language)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid Spit (Ex) As a standard action once every 1d4 rounds, a ksarik can spit a glob of acid at a target within 60 feet.

Ingested Adaptation (Su) Whenever a ksarik deals damage to a living creature with its tentacles, it siphons off a portion of the target's genetic code and psychic resonance, temporarily reshaping its own physiology and psychology to match its victim's. This grants the ksarik one of the following abilities (provided the target has it) for 1 minute: blindsense (up to 60 feet), blindsight (up to 60 feet), darkvision (up to 60 feet), damage reduction (up to 5/-), resistance to one type of energy damage (up to 20 points), burrow (up to 40 feet), fly (up to 40 feet, with maximum average maneuverability), swim (up to 40 feet), or water breathing. Alternatively, the ksarik can gain the ability to understand (but not speak) up to three languages that the target knows, gain the target's weapon proficiencies (its tentacles can operate two-handed weapons in this state), or change the damage dealt by its acid spit ability to any one energy type dealt by one of the target's supernatural attacks. A ksarik can maintain only one adaptation at a time, and gaining a new adaptation ends the previous one. A ksarik can spend 1 Resolve Point to extend the duration of an ongoing benefit by 8 hours. It can also spend 1 Resolve Point to gain a second adaptation and sustain them both simultaneously.

Thorn Dart (Ex) A ksarik can fire one of its thorns as a ranged attack. The dart has a range of 100 feet, deals piercing damage, and exposes the target to carrion spores.

Development: If the PCs injure Vindurth enough to cause it to cower, the ksarik becomes submissive. Vindurth obeys any further orders, and the PCs can herd the ksarik back into its cage with relative ease.

Treasure: If the PCs return Vindurth to its cage without killing the ksarik, Albryan personally rewards them with 1,000 credits

A2. THE SLAVERING BEAST



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Secret Rooms

(3,400 credits in Subtier 5–6). Similarly, the axiomite later provides the Society with some of the *adaptive serum* known to come from ksarik excretions; the *adaptive serums* that show up on the Chronicle sheet represent this additional treasure.

Rewards: If the PCs do not return Vindurth to its cage or if they kill the beast, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 190 credits.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 403 credits.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 617 credits.

A3. THE MIND MAZE

The top floor of the tower is a single open chamber. A lone pedestal rests in the center of this space, with a small cube floating atop it. Complicated ridges cover the surface of the cube, forming a maze that somehow moves in on itself. The object glows with a faint blue aura.

The top floor of the Tower of the Oma contains the information that the Starfinders seek. Excited to be so near the discovery, Royo scurries over to the pedestal to examine the cube and lets out a gasp. The cube, he explains, is a *mindmaze*. Made by the chitakin, a now-extinct race from a distant corner of the galaxy, the nearly

indestructible *mindmazes* are the last remainder of that civilization. The chitakin used these devices to store valuable information.

Royo can recall only the most basic details of how *mindmazes* work but remembers that they send people into a trance and can be quite dangerous. A PC who succeeds at a DC 21 Mysticism or Physical science check can remember more about the underlying mechanisms of the device. In this case, briefly summarize the maze mechanics detailed below in Navigating the Maze, and allow the PCs to plan accordingly.

Navigating the Maze: Creatures that touch the *mindmaze* fall into a trance. In their minds, these creatures find themselves suddenly standing atop the surface of the *mindmaze*. Any creatures that touch the cube appear at the same location in the maze, allowing the PCs to traverse it together. Go around the table and have each PC inside the maze attempt a DC 10 Intelligence check. With each success, the PCs make progress toward the center of the maze. With each failure, the *mindmaze* draws on the psychic energy of the PCs, fogging their minds; this deals 1 Wisdom damage to each PC and causes the surface of the cube to shift, further complicating the maze and increasing the DC of all subsequent checks by 1. The PCs must continue taking turns rolling checks until they succeed six times, reaching the center of the maze. Once inside, PCs can escape the maze only

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by reaching its center or by falling unconscious from Wisdom damage. Although PCs inside the *mindmaze* cannot voluntarily leave the trance, PCs outside the cube can shake them awake.

PCs who do not touch the cube can observe that illusory duplicates of their companions appear on its surface after touching the *mindmaze*. They can follow the progress of entranced PCs across the cube and can even provide aid by whispering directions. This functions as aid another, allowing PCs on the outside to attempt Intelligence checks to assist a primary navigator.

If one or more PCs slotted the High Society Influence (Royo) boon, then Royo actively coaches his allies as they navigate the maze. He points ideal paths in the *mindmaze*, granting PCs with the boon slotted a +2 insight bonus to their Intelligence checks to discover the center.

Center of the Maze: When the PCs reach the center of the maze, read or paraphrase the following.

A trinary star system—a place you instinctively know to be the Scoured Stars—floats in the center of the maze. Many of the planets around the three stars grow green, representing an abundance of life. Suddenly a dark presence, felt more than seen, descends on the room and hungrily encircles the stars. One of the worlds pulsates with a golden aura that continues to grow. Eventually, this vast golden shield covers all the worlds of the region. The clawing darkness recedes.

Time passes, generations come and go in the blink of an eye. Gradually, the golden shield lowers. Soon after, eight groups of ships, their shapes too intangible to make out, depart into the cosmos beyond. Each fleet travels through the void on a different path. The home of these eight fleets soon goes dark, and over the coming generations the last vestiges of life in the Scoured Stars disappears.

Sometime later, eight small objects hurtle out from the lifeless planet that summoned the shield. Each object, a relic of immense magical power, follows the course of one of the previously departed groups. The objects disappear along their trajectories, and the vision abruptly ends as the worlds of the Scoured Stars fade to black.

Royo recognizes that the relics sent out at the end of the experience are reminiscent of the object found by the Society's previous First Seeker, Jadnura. That object kindled the former First Seeker's desire to enter the Scoured Stars, and it ultimately led to the incident that crippled the Society. Excited, Royo explains that with additional research using the star charts available on Athaeum, he may be able to track the path of the relics, which could be a key to returning to the Scoured Stars.

Development: If the PCs struggle to reach the center of the maze, Royo rouses them from their trance and enters the maze. In this case, Royo remains unavailable for the remainder of the adventure; after much wandering, he reaches the center of the maze, and he relates what he's discovered to the PCs as part of the conclusion.

PCs who uncover the hidden truths within the *mindmaze* receive the Journey to the Scoured Stars: Segment 2 boon on their Chronicle sheets.

Treasure: A dozen precious green gemstones line the walls in the center of the *mindmaze*. The gems gently glide off the walls as the vision ends. The PCs find these same gems in their hands after they wake from their trance. In total, the gems are worth 1,600 credits (4,500 credits in Subtier 5–6). In Subtier 5–6, two additional gems appear: a *spell gem of hologram memory* and a *spell gem of synaptic pulse*.

Rewards: If the PCs do not reach the center of the maze, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 250.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 482.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 713.

THE FLAMES OF HERESY

After the PCs have completed all three encounters in the Tower of the Oma, read or paraphrase the following.

Suddenly a small flying clockwork drone, roughly a foot wide, whizzes into view and rapidly approaches. A holographic projection of Albryan the Curator emerges from the top of the drone and begins to speak.

"Starfinders, I am glad that I have reached you. The Order of the Pyre Hellknights who accompanied you to Athaeum have destroyed the lore wardens in a nearby tower and are burning one of our most ancient book collections! We have more wardens on the way, but they will arrive too late to save our books. Please, hurry to the Tower of the Ellicoth and stop the Hellknights from causing further harm! If you do so, the Curators will waive your research fee entirely and offer whatever assistance we can!"

Royo, if present and not engaged in the *mindmaze*, explains that avoiding the exorbitant research fee is too great an opportunity to pass up. He proposes that he head back to the main libraries of Athaeum to further research the location of the mysterious Scoured Star objects while the PCs travel to the Tower of the Ellicoth to confront the Hellknights.

B. THE TOWER OF THE ELlicOTH

The Tower of the Ellicoth is roughly 10 minutes away from the Tower of the Oma via the connecting bridge, which allows the PCs some time to prepare on their way to confront the Hellknights and to take a rest to recover Stamina Points if they need it.

A series of bridges connects each of the Towers of Recondite Lore, allowing the PCs to reach the Tower of the Ellicoth without climbing or descending too many stairs. The PCs arrive at the tower by crossing the bridge in the northwest corner of the map. Areas **B2** and **B3** feature complicated and interactive terrain, so be sure to read both sections carefully before beginning combat.

B1. OUTER HALLWAY

A narrow hallway circles the entire tower. In the northeast,

southeast, and southwest corners of the tower, steep stairs descend 10 feet to area **B3**. In the northwest corner, a stone double door leads into area **B2**. The circular stairs in the corners of the tower lead up and down to other floors.

B2. TOWER CONTROL ROOM (CR 4 OR CR 6)

The smell of petrol and smoke fills the air here. Cracks and blast marks pit the floor, all of which surround a gaping hole in the wall. A stone control console covered with metal dials rests in the center of the room. The floor-to-ceiling glass windows to the southwest overlook a library filled with shelves, flames, and billowing smoke.

This is the control room for this floor of the tower, where the Curators can monitor temperature and moisture conditions. The central console also has control over the fire-suppression systems in the tower, including the cryo-nozzles in the library. The control room overlooks the library in area **B3**. Metal columns located in the library support the floor of the control room. During their recent attack, the Hellknights blew a minor hole in the northeast wall of the room. A Small creature that succeeds a DC 21 Acrobatics check can squeeze through this hole and descend a pile of rubble into area **B3**.

Control Console: The console's stone buttons control hundreds of variables in the library below, ensuring that all items stored there are perfectly preserved. The Hellknights deactivated and destroyed the automatic fire-suppression systems in area **B3**, but a PC who spends a full action and succeeds at a DC 21 Computers or Mysticism check (DC 24 in Subtier 5–6) can reactivate and assume manual control of the three cryo-nozzles located there. Once the cryo-nozzles are reactivated, a PC standing at the control console can spend a full action to aim one cryo-nozzle and fire a line (40 feet long, 5 feet wide) of freezing foam. This freezing foam automatically extinguishes any flames it encounters and deals 3d6 cold damage to all creatures in the line of effect (Reflex DC 16 for half).

Hazard: The Hellknights threw several grenades during their combat with the lore wardens. The resulting explosions blew a hole in the wall and greatly weakened the supports under the control room. It is obvious with a cursory glance that the floor of the room is damaged and unstable, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Engineering check can determine that one more explosion (caused by a grenade or similar device) will cause the floor to collapse. In this event, all creatures in the control room fall 10 feet into area **B3** below and take 2d6 bludgeoning damage from flying rubble (Reflex DC 16 half). This destroys the control console in the room and permanently deactivates the cryo-nozzles in area **B3**.

Creatures: Loomarch sent two Hellknights (three in Subtier 5–6) to this room to disable the fire-suppression system. Having accomplished this task, the Hellknights are preparing to head back to area **B3** to join in the book burning. These Hellknights have orders

to attack anyone who interferes with their mission. Like Loomarch, the Hellknights have no knowledge of what they've been tasked with burning, only that Kelria's orders must be followed and this section of the library must be expunged.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 4)

PYRE HELLKNIGHT FANATICS (2) CR 3

Human soldier

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE HP 40 EACH

EAC 14; **KAC** 16

Fort +5; **Ref** +3; **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee tactical pike +8 (1d8+4 P)

Ranged ifrit-class flamethrower +11 (1d6 F; critical burn 1d6) or incendiary grenade I +11 (explode [5 ft., 1d6 F, 1d4 burn, DC 12])

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tactical pike)

Offensive Abilities gear boosts (brutal blast)

TACTICS

Before Combat One Hellknight sustained serious injuries during the previous combat with the lore wardens stationed here; his Hit Points are reduced to 10, and he has the sickened condition.

During Combat If the PCs are clustered together, the Hellknights overlap their flamethrower blasts to concentrate damage on as many enemies as possible. They coordinate in combat by speaking Infernal. Knowing the floor is unstable, they throw grenades at foes outside the room, hoping to ignite ranged attackers. They switch to their melee weapons only if their flamethrowers are somehow disabled.

Morale The fanatics fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +1; **Dex** +4; **Con** +2; **Int** +0; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Intimidate +13, Piloting +8, Sense Motive +8, Survival +8

Languages Common, Infernal

Gear armiger hellknight plate^{pw}, ifrit-class flamethrower with 1 standard petrol tank (20 petrol), tactical pike, incendiary grenade I (2)

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 6)

PYRE HELLKNIGHT FANATICS (3) CR 3

HP 40 each (see above)

TACTICS

Before Combat All three Hellknights are uninjured.

During Combat If the PCs are clustered together, the Hellknights overlap their flamethrower blasts to concentrate damage on as many enemies as possible. They coordinate in combat by speaking Infernal. Knowing the floor is unstable,

Optional Encounter

The Tower Control Room is an optional encounter. If less than 60 minutes remain to finish the scenario, the PCs find no Hellknights here; Loomarch previously deactivated the control panel before returning to the library below.

Scaling Encounter B2

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Subtier 3–4: Remove the injured Hellknight.

Subtier 5–6: Remove one Hellknight.

they throw grenades at foes outside the room, hoping to ignite ranged attackers. They switch to their melee weapons only if their flamethrowers are somehow disabled.

Morale The fanatics fight to the death.

Development: If the PCs defeat the Hellknights in two rounds or less, the combat in this room goes unnoticed by the Hellknights below, who are preoccupied with burning the library. If any explosions cause the floor to collapse, the Hellknights below are immediately alerted to danger and take defensive positions behind cover.

Treasure: The Hellknights are carrying a total of 600 credits (3,000 credits in Subtier 5–6) across two credsticks.

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat the Hellknights, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount. If you skip this encounter for lack of time, ignore these reductions.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 199 credits.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 424 credits.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 649 credits.

B3. THE BURNING LIBRARY (CR 7 OR CR 9)

Fire and smoke fill this immense room. A long and mazelike trench is carved into the floor of the room, brimming with gray mist. Shelves line the walls of the trench, filled with rows of ancient parchments and tomes. The trench forms into a rough circle in the room's center, creating a small island with three bookshelves standing atop it. The twenty-foot-high ceiling of the room mounts large spray nozzles, each attached to a canister of blue foam.

The Curators keep many ancient and forbidden texts in this room. Key features of the room are outlined below.

The Trench: The trench contains the most delicate books. A magical gray mist that greatly diminishes decay and aids in preservation fills the trench (hardier tomes are kept above the mist on the bookshelves on the island in the middle of the room). Five sets of stairs lead down into the trench, which is 5 feet deep. Although not thick enough to provide concealment, the mist in the trench has a strange languid quality to it, causing the fire there to move with hypnotic grace. Blood spilled in the trench tends to float and pool in the mist, while dead bodies drift and spin lazily instead of falling to the ground.

Fire Hazards: Piles of burning books other texts are scattered throughout the room, creating fire hazards that are marked on the map. PCs who move through a fire hazard take 1d6 fire damage and must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex saving throw or gain the burning condition.

Cryo-Nozzles: The ceiling mounts three turrets, each of which is 20 feet above the floor and has an attached fuel canister of blue foam. When functioning properly, they spray freezing foam to put out fires. Loomarch and his Hellknights recently deactivated the cryo-nozzles using the console in area B2. While deactivated, the cryo-nozzles are inert, although the foam canisters attached to them are still volatile. Clever PCs can shoot a canister (EAC 15, KAC 19, hp 4). If destroyed, the canister detonates, dealing 1d6 cold damage (Reflex DC 15 half) to all creatures within 30 feet and extinguishing all flames in the area.

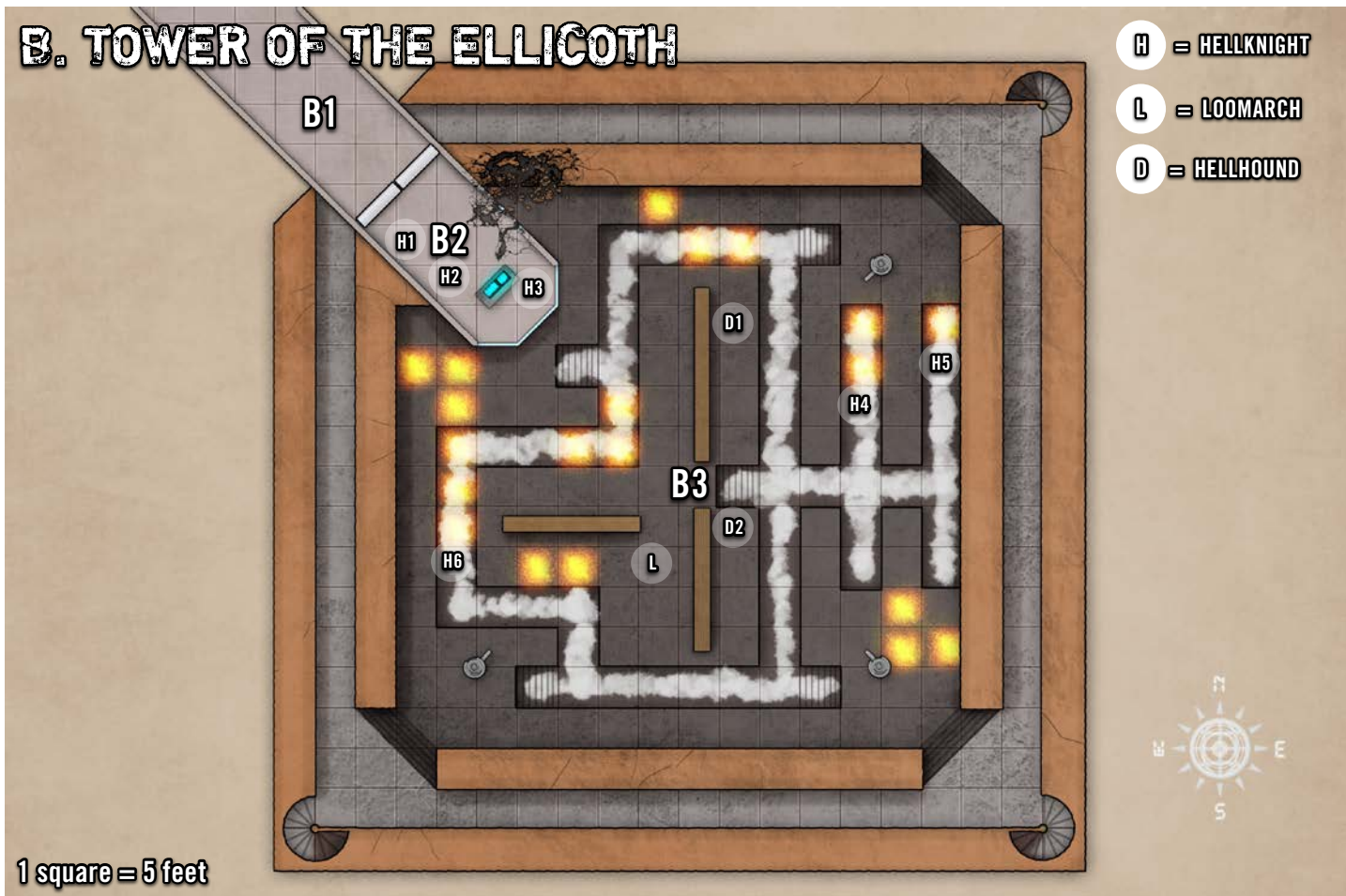
It is possible to reactivate and manually control the cryo-nozzles using the control console in area B2.

Creatures: Although the Hellknights claimed to come Athaeum for research, their true mission was to destroy a set of heretical texts kept in this tower. Once Kelria located the tomes, she boarded a hidden shuttle off Athaeum, leaving Loomarch and his fanatics behind to destroy the library. In Subtier 3–4, two Pyre Hellknight fanatics accompany Loomarch. In Subtier 5–6, three Pyre Hellknight fanatics and two summoned hellhounds with back-mounted machine guns accompany Loomarch.

The Hellknights have already burned most of the books in the room, and if left uninterrupted for another 10 rounds after the PCs arrive, they finish burning the rest. Currently Loomarch is pulling books off the shelves on the island and feeding them into his burning maw, while the fanatics have fanned out into the trench and are burning books there. The hellhounds in Subtier 5–6 stay near Loomarch on the island, pulling books off the shelves and ripping them apart with their jaws. Throughout the fight, Loomarch and the Hellknights attempt to convince the PCs that they should not impede the burning, claiming, "If you knew the truths this place kept in existence, you would be helping us!" Conversely, the Hellknights have no actual knowledge of the texts they're in the process of burning, only that their superiors have marked them for destruction.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 7)

B. TOWER OF THE ELLICOTH



- H** = HELLKNIGHT
- L** = LOOMARCH
- D** = HELLHOUND

1 square = 5 feet

LOOMARCH DEVILBOUND **CR 5**

Male unique devil
 LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; **Perception** +11
DEFENSE **HP 70**

EAC 17; **KAC** 19
Fort +7; **Ref** +7; **Will** +6
Immunities fire, poison; **Resistances** acid 10, cold 10
OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee armored claw +12 (1d6+10 S plus grab)
Ranged pyre-class flamethrower +15 (1d10+4 F; critical burn 1d8) or incendiary grenade II +15 (explode [10 ft., 2d6 F, 1d6 burn, DC 13])

Offensive Abilities incinerate
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)
 1/day—summon allies (1d2 hellhounds 35%)

TACTICS
Before Combat Loomarch failed to use his summon allies ability.
During Combat Loomarch takes cover behind the bookshelves or dives into the trench, depending on where enemy fire is coming from. If uninterrupted, he continues

burning books while using grenades to harass distant enemies. If the PCs close for melee, Loomarch uses his armored claw or flamethrower depending on what makes most tactical sense. Against lone foes, he prefers to use his armored claw, following up such attacks with a grapple and then an attempt to incinerate a target's limb. If multiple PCs visibly gather in the control room at B2, or if the PCs use the cryo-nozzles to any major effect against the burning, Loomarch hurls a grenade at the control room to collapse the floor.

Morale Loomarch fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +3; **Con** +2; **Int** +0; **Wis** +1; **Cha** +2
Skills Intimidate +16, Mysticism +11, Piloting +11
Languages Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.
Gear pyre-class flamethrower with 1 standard petrol tank (20 petrol), incendiary grenade II (2)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Incinerate (Ex) As a standard action on Loomarch's next turn after he grapples or pins a target, if the target has not escaped the grapple or pin, Loomarch can pull one of the target's limbs into his furnace mouth. This deals 5d6 fire damage to the target, who must then succeed at a DC

Scaling Encounter B3

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Subtier 3–4: Remove one Pyre Hellknight fanatic.

Subtier 5–6: Remove one hellhound.

Pyre-Class Flamethrower

The Hellknight Order of the Pyre is notorious for its dedication to the destruction of perceived heretical texts. The order employs numerous flame weapons in their iconoclastic purges, but perhaps none are more ubiquitous than the pyre-class flamethrowers developed specifically by and for the Order of the Pyre. In Loomarch's case, the flamethrower is incorporated into his armor and emerges from his palm.

PYRE-CLASS FLAMETHROWER

A pyre-class flamethrower is a 6th-level flame heavy weapon that deals 1d10 fire damage and has the burn 1d8 critical hit effect. It has a range of 30 feet and holds 20 petrol with a usage of 4. It has the analog, blast, and unwieldy special properties, has 2 bulk, and costs 4,200 credits.

13 Fortitude save. If the target fails this save, Loomarch's flames incinerate the limb, along with any items carried or worn by the limb. Targets with an incinerated arm lose a hand, while targets with an incinerated leg lose a foot (-10 land speed). Targets that are immune to fire damage ignore this effect.

PYRE HELLKNIGHT FANATICS (2) CR 3

HP 40 each (see page 15)

TACTICS

During Combat If the PCs stay at range, the fanatics remain in the trench to gain improved cover while standing. If uninterrupted, they continue burning books while using grenades to harass distant enemies. If the PCs close for melee, the fanatics gather near the center of the trenches and attempt to hit PCs with overlapping blasts of flamethrower fire.

Morale The fanatics all fight to the death.

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 9)

HELLHOUNDS (2) CR 4

LE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; **Perception** +10

DEFENSE HP 50 EACH

EAC 16; **KAC** 18

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Will** +3

Immunities fire

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d6+7 P plus 1d6 F)

Ranged integrated squad machine gun +12 (1d10 P)

Offensive Abilities breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 5d6 F, Reflex DC 13 half, once every 1d4 rounds)

TACTICS

During Combat If the PCs stay at range, the hellhounds make attacks with their shoulder-mounted machine guns or provide covering fire while the Hellknights burn books. At close range, the hellhounds bite and breathe fire.

Morale The hellhounds fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +3; **Dex** +5; **Con** +1; **Int** -2; **Wis** +0; **Cha** -2

Skills Acrobatics +10, Stealth +15, Survival +10

Languages Infernal (can't speak any language)

Gear squad machine gun with 40 heavy rounds

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Integrated Weapons (Ex) A hellhound's weapons are integrated into its frame and can't be disarmed.

LOOMARCH DEVILBOUND CR 5

hp 70 (see page 17)

TACTICS

Use the tactics from Subtier 3–4.

PYRE HELLKNIGHT FANATICS (3) CR 3

hp 40 each (see page 15)

TACTICS

Use the tactics from Subtier 3–4.

Development: If the PCs manage to stop Loomarch and his Hellknights from destroying all the books in the tower, then they're successful in the eyes of the Curators. If curious PCs want to read the texts, they find that Loomarch destroyed many relevant texts in the initial purges. The surviving texts appear to be old planetary surveys, and a PC who reads these texts and succeeds at a DC 16 Physical Science check recognizes that the surveys describe star systems close to the Veskarium. The surviving notes provide nothing else of import or any clues as to why the Order of the Pyre wanted them destroyed.

If the PCs capture one or more Hellknights, the soldiers are unwilling to speak openly about their motives. Should a PC make an exceptional effort to interrogate a captive, the Hellknight can convey only that Kelria found something especially troubling

here, departed with it, and ordered the rest destroyed to protect the multiverse against the dangerous secrets here. The axiomites take any captives into custody for further questioning.

Should the PCs fail to stop the Hellknights, a squad of lore wardens arrives to forcibly put down Loomarch and any surviving Hellknights and summoned hellhounds. In this circumstance, the Curators provide medical treatment to any severely injured PCs, noting that they appreciate the PCs' attempt to stop the Order of the Pyre.

If the PCs defeated the Hellknights and saving the lore stored in the Tower of the Ellicoth, they receive the Athaeum Insight boon on their Chronicle sheets.

Treasure: In addition to their equipment, the Hellknights carry credsticks and hard currency that total 1,000 credits in value (2,500 credits in Subtier 5-6). In Subtier 5-6, the PCs can also salvage Loomarch's armor, which the Starfinder Society can later repurpose into a maralictor Hellknight plate (*Starfinder Pact Worlds* 196)—this is represented by the availability of this item on the Chronicle sheet.

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat the Hellknights, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3-4:
Reduce each PC's credits earned by 321.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 557.

Subtier 5-6: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 794.

CONCLUSION

Several minutes after the battle, Albryan brings Royo to meet with the PCs. While researching more information in the Tower of the Oma, Royo discovered that one of the dispatched relics would have entered the system where First Seeker Jadnura first discovered it. Royo believes he's traced the another object that hurtled into a distant star system in the Vast. He apologizes that any other objects of a similar design appear to be untraceable based on the available records. Still, this is a major find for the Society and a huge leap for uncovering the mystery of the Scoured Stars. Royo posits

that finding another of these objects could help the Society enter the currently inaccessible system.

Albryan thanks the PCs for their assistance in defeating the Order of the Pyre a. As a token of appreciation, he waives the entire fee for the research mission and provides Royo with a sealed tome containing instructions on how to visit the Athaeum in the future. Similarly, the Curators recognize the Society's likely need to reproduce this information to rescue their lost agents, and grants the Society a measure of immunity in replicating the key data they need in order to complete their ongoing mission.

As a final, somewhat cryptic statement, Albryan confides that Athaeum hasn't seen Starfinders in many years and that the Curators hope to continue working with the Society now that they've decided to return from their long silence. If the PCs question Albryan about previous Starfinder Society visits, the axiomite declines to answer, indicating that sharing such information would require payment well beyond the Society's current means.

PRIMARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

The PCs complete their primary mission if they successfully navigate the *mindmaze* (or Royo does so on their behalf) and defeat the Hellknights. Doing so earns each PC 1 Fame and 1 Reputation for any factions associated with their currently slotted Faction boon.

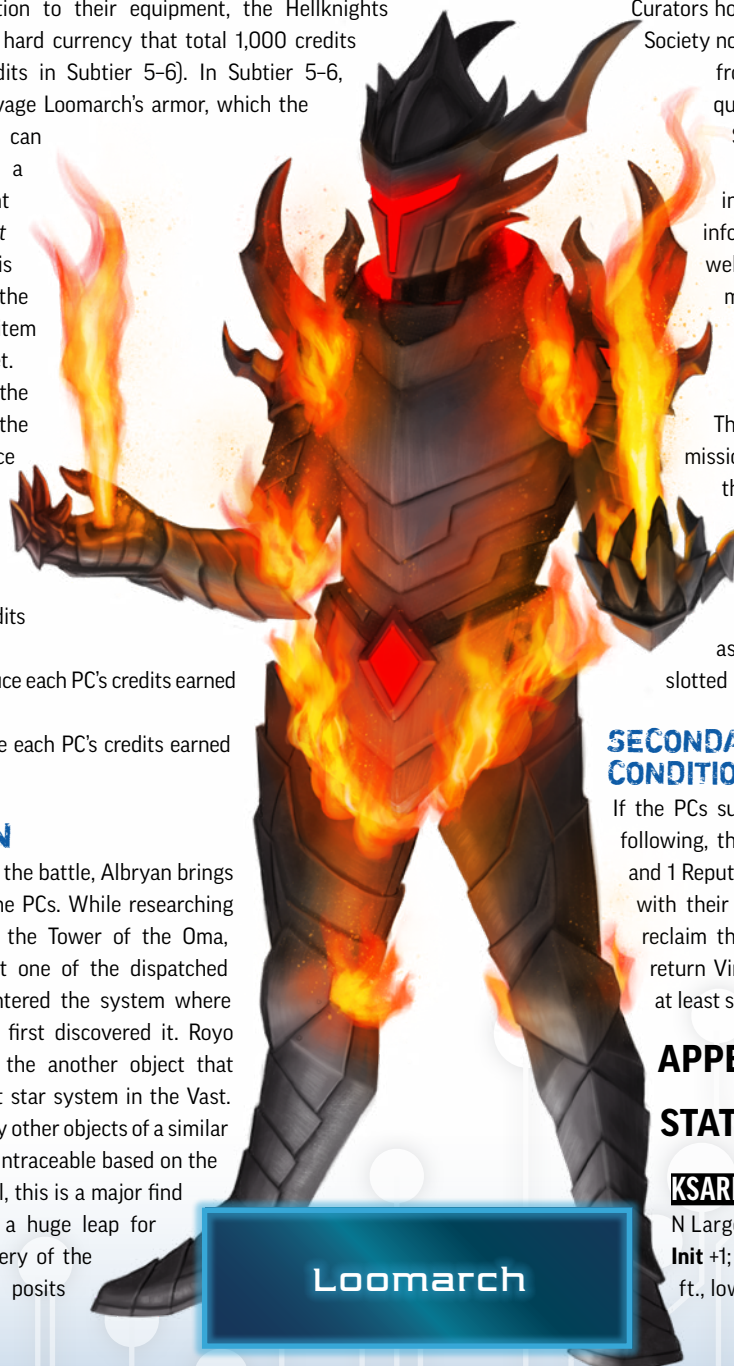
SECONDARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

If the PCs successfully complete two of the following, then they earn 1 additional Fame and 1 Reputation for any factions associated with their currently slotted Faction boon: reclaim the virus from the lore wardens, return Vindurth to its cage alive, or save at least some books in the burning library.

APPENDIX: KSARIK

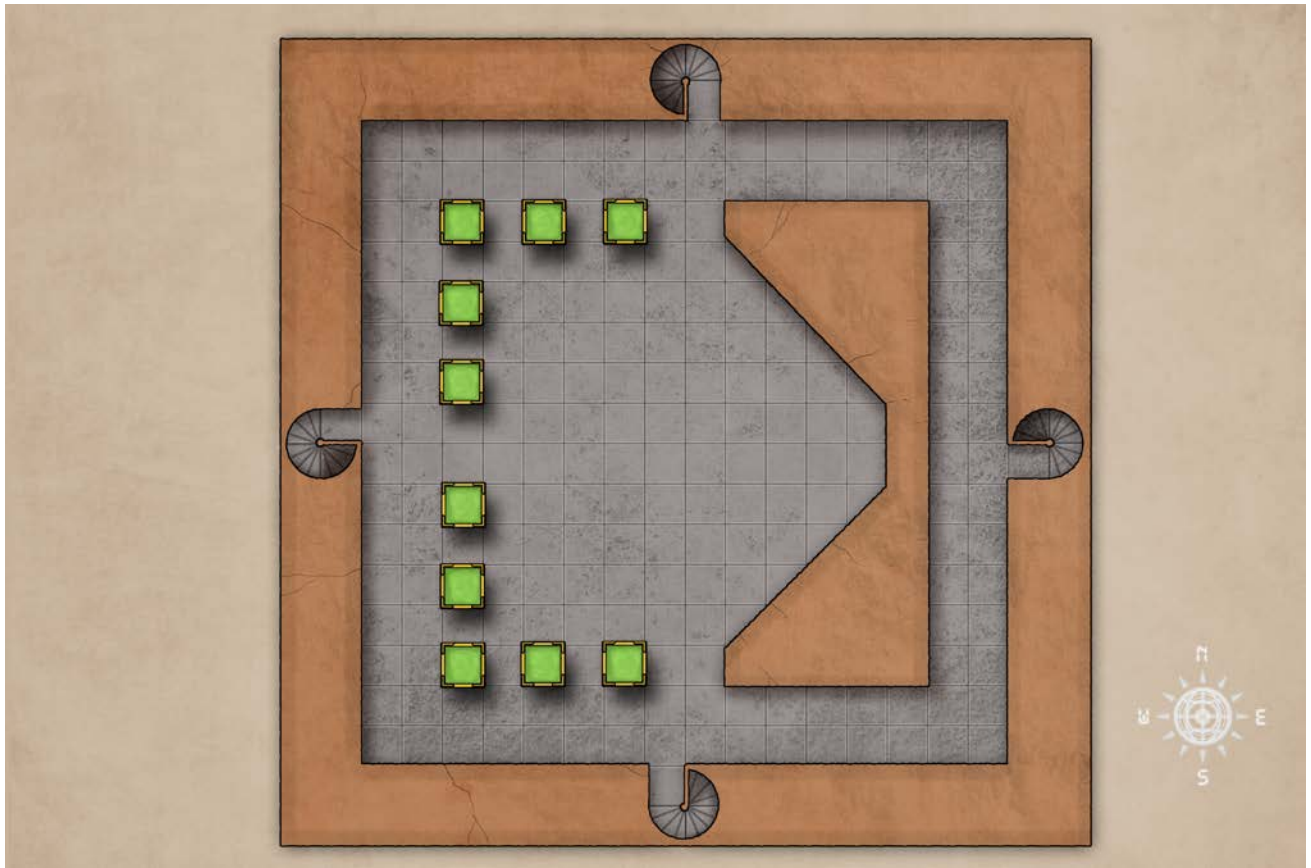
STAT BLOCK

KSARIK **CR 4**
N Large plant
Init +1; **Senses** blindsense (scent) 30 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +10



Loomarch

DEFENSE **HP 52 RP 3****EAC** 16; **KAC** 18**Fort** +8; **Ref** +6; **Will** +3**Defensive Abilities** fast healing 2; **Immunities** plant immunities**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.; climb 40 ft.**Melee** tentacle +12 (1d6+9 B plus ingested adaptation)**Ranged** acid spit +9 (1d4+4 A) or
thorn dart +9 (1d6+4 P plus carrion spores)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Offensive Abilities** ingested adaptation**STATISTICS****Str** +5; **Dex** +1; **Con** +3; **Int** -3; **Wis** +1; **Cha** -1**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Athletics +15 (+23 when climbing),
Survival +10**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Acid Spit (Ex)** As a standard action once every 1d4 rounds, a
ksarik can spit a glob of acid at a target within 60 feet.**Ingested Adaptation (Su)** Whenever a kсарik deals damage to a
living creature with its tentacles, it siphons off a portion of
the target's genetic code and psychic resonance, temporarily
reshaping its own physiology and psychology to match its
victim's. This grants the kсарik one of the following abilities
(provided the target has it) for 1 minute: blindsense (up to
60 feet), blindsight (up to 60 feet), darkvision (up to 60
feet), damage reduction (up to 5/-), resistance to one type
of energy damage (up to 20 points), burrow (up to 40 feet),
fly (up to 40 feet, with maximum average maneuverability),
swim (up to 40 feet), or water breathing. Alternatively, the
ksarik can gain the ability to understand (but not speak) up
to three languages that the target knows, gain the target's
weapon proficiencies (its tentacles can operate two-handed
weapons in this state), or change the damage dealt by its
acid spit ability to any one energy type dealt by one of the
target's supernatural attacks. A kсарik can maintain only
one adaptation at a time, and gaining a new adaptation ends
the previous one. A kсарik can spend 1 Resolve Point to
extend the duration of an ongoing benefit by 8 hours. It can
also spend 1 Resolve Point to gain a second adaptation and
sustain them both simultaneously.**Thorn Dart (Ex)** A kсарik can fire one of its thorns as a ranged
attack. The dart has a range of 100 feet, deals piercing
damage, and exposes the target to carrion spores.**CARRION SPORES****Type** disease (injury); **Save** Fortitude DC 13**Track** physical; **Frequency** 1/day**Effect** When an infected creature reaches the comatose state,
1d10+10 Diminutive kсарik seedlings burrow out of its flesh and
wiggle away. This ends the disease and deals 1 piercing damage
for each kсарik seedling.**Cure** 2 consecutive saves



Starfinder Society Scenario #1-11: In Pursuit of the Scoured Past

Event _____ Date _____

GM # _____ GM Character # _____

GM Name _____ GM Fame Earned _____

Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders
 A B C D

Character # _____ Fame Faction Boons

Character Name _____

Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

Character # _____ Fame Faction Boons

Character Name _____

Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

Character # _____ Fame Faction Boons

Character Name _____

Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

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Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

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Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

Character # _____ Fame Faction Boons

Character Name _____

Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

Character # _____ Fame Faction Boons

Character Name _____

Acquisitives Exo-Guardians Dataphiles
 Second Seekers () Faction _____ Wayfinders

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Starfinder Society Scenario #1-11: In Pursuit of the Scoured Past

Character Chronicle #

A.K.A. _____ - 7

Player Name _____ Character Name _____ Organized Play # _____ Character # _____ Faction _____

This Chronicle sheet grants access to the following:

Athaeum Insight (Social Boon): By spending some time on the library world Athaeum, you've gained a small sliver of magical insight to carry with you on your journeys. When you slot this boon, you always count as being trained in the Culture skill, even if you do not have a skill rank in it. This does not grant any bonuses to Culture skill checks but does allow you to attempt those skill checks untrained while the boon is slotted. In addition, once per session, you can reroll the result of any skill check to recall knowledge.

Iteration-177's Attention (Ally Boon): During your journey to Athaeum, you attended a unique dinner hosted by the android known as Iteration-177. They came to a decision about your personality based on a memory you provided (or refused to provide). How this decision will play out in the future is not yet clear, but you have nevertheless made an impression on the mysterious android. You will be told if this boon is important to a future scenario prior to slotting your boons. Your GM will cross out all results save that which you earned from the dinner.

- Choleric (PCs who chose an angry or violent memory)
- Melancholic (PCs who chose an analytical, wise, or quiet memory)
- Phlegmatic (PCs who chose a relaxed or peaceful memory)
- Sanguine (PCs who chose an active, enthusiastic, or social memory)

Journey to the Scoured Stars: Segment 2 (Unidentified Boon): You uncovered hidden truths about the history of the Scoured Stars by journeying to the library world of Athaeum. This boon represents your character's involvement in this critical step toward solving the Scoured Stars mystery. Other boons representing future steps toward unraveling the mystery of the Scoured Stars will appear in future scenarios, and collecting these boons will result in a unique bonus, to be detailed on a future Chronicle sheet.

PYRE-CLASS FLAMETHROWER

A pyre-class flamethrower is a 6th-level flame heavy weapon that deals 1d10 fire damage and has the burn 1d8 critical hit effect. It has a range of 30 feet and holds 20 petrol with a usage of 4. It has the analog, blast, and unwieldy special properties, has 2 bulk and costs 4,200 credits.

All Subtiers	Subtier 5-6
armiger Hellknight plate (980; item level 2; <i>Starfinder Pact Worlds</i> 196)	maralictor Hellknight plate (14,500; item level 9; <i>Starfinder Pact Worlds</i> 196)
incendiary grenade I (375; item level 2; limit 6)	mk 2 adaptive serum (1,500; item level 8; <i>Starfinder Alien Archive</i> 71; limit 2)
mk 1 adaptive serum (350; item level 4; <i>Starfinder Alien Archive</i> 71; limit 4)	mk 3 serum of healing (1,950; item level 9; limit 2)
mk 2 ring of resistance (4,200; item level 6)	spell gem of hologram memory (1,400; item level 8; limit 1)
mk 2 serum of healing (425; item level 5; limit 2)	spell gem of synaptic pulse (1,400; item level 8; limit 1)
pyre-class flamethrower (4,200; item level 6)	
sintered longsword (8,420; item level 7)	

Reputation

Faction _____ Reputation _____	Faction _____ Reputation _____
Faction _____ Reputation _____	Infamy _____

MAX CREDITS	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Normal Max Credits	3-4	1,501
	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Normal	Out of Subtier	2,793
	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Normal	5-6	4,086
	SUBTIER <input type="checkbox"/> Normal	-	-
EXPERIENCE	Starting XP		
	+	XP Gained (GM ONLY)	
	=	Final XP Total	
	Initial Fame		
FAME	+	Fame Gained (GM ONLY)	
	-	Fame Spent	
	Final Fame		
	Starting Credits		
CREDITS	+	Credits Garnered (GM ONLY)	
	+	Day Job (GM ONLY)	
	-	Credits Spent	
	=	Total	

For GM Only

EVENT _____	EVENT CODE _____	DATE _____	Game Master's Signature _____	GM Organized Play # _____
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