

# Level 10C: The Talon of Orcus

**NOTE:** This is a large and complex location; the Referee should familiarize himself with the entire area before running it.

To support the nearby Goblin Outpost (**Level 10B**) and keep an eye on the Bloodways (**Level 9D**), a small temple to Orcus was established some years past. Over time, as the Bloodwraith's influence in the Bloodways has grown, the temple has been enlarged and expanded. This area is shown on **Map RA-10C**.

## Level 10C

**Equivalent Dungeon Level:** 12

**Entrances:** Passages from **Level 9D** in **Area 10C-1**.

**Exits:** Passage to **Levels 10B** and **12A** in **Area 10C-2**.

**Wandering Monsters:** There are no wandering monsters within the talon so long as the clerics of Orcus control it. Should the regular staff be eradicated, and not replaced, use the encounter tables for **Level 9D**: The Bloodways, with the exception that no undead are encountered unless the wards in **Area 10C-1** have been disrupted.

**Detection:** None, thanks to a continuous non-detection effect (see below).

**Shielding:** None, save for the glyphs at **Area 10C-1** which ward out undead.

**Continuous Effects:** The entire area is protected by a *protection from good* effect.

**Standard Features:** Unless noted otherwise, all doors are of stone and are lockable. All priests and acolytes possess keys as listed in the various area descriptions and stat blocks. The Talon has been hollowed out from the native limestone with both magic and tools. Ceiling height is 15 ft. throughout, except in **Areas 10C-2, 3, and 9**, where it rises to 20 ft.

6/400; Special: Rebuke/command undead, cleric spells (1st—*cause light wounds*, *protection from good*). Gear: Chainmail, shield, morningstar, unholy symbol of Orcus, prayer book, 1d6 pp, 5d10 gp, platinum ring (50 gp), small gold key to door of **Area 10C-6a, 6b** or **6c**.

**Hesperix, Cleric 13:** HP 44; AC 3 [16]; Atk *Dacris* (2d4+2); Move 9; Save 4; AL C; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: Rebuke/command undead, spells (1st—*cause light wounds* x3, *detect good*, *protection from good*; 2nd—*hold person* x3, *silence 15-ft radius*, *snake charm*; 3rd—*bestow curse*, *cause disease* x3, *prayer*; 4th—*cause serious wounds* x2, *protection from good 10-ft radius*, *sticks to snakes*; 5th—*commune*, *dispel good*, *finger of death* x2; 6th—*blade barrier*). Gear: +2 chainmail, 5 vials of unholy water, unholy symbol of Orcus, 375 gp, platinum ring (50 gp), ornate iron key to **Area 10C-9**, finely worked copper key to **Area 10C-15**, fine black robe emblazoned with the symbol of Orcus.

## Dacris

*Dacris* is a +2 *scythe*. It has a blade of smoking, inky darkness that ignores all but magical armor. *Dacris* is also imbued with two special blessings by Orcus: First, once per day when its owner calls it, it *teleports* to his hand, no matter where it is; second, it grants the wielder the ability to use *word of recall* once per day. The use of *word of recall* may be preset to activate if a specific circumstance occurs, such as death or permanent incapacitation. Hesperix currently has it set to transport him to the altar at **Area 10C-3** should he be slain or incapacitated.

## Troop Layout and Tactics

The various priests can be encountered throughout the complex. They are most often located around their quarters (**Areas 10C-4** to **6**), in the Shrouded Shrine conducting services (**Area 10C-3**), or torturing a prisoner in **Area 10C-11**. However, they can be encountered almost anywhere except the Seer's lair (**Areas 10C-9** and **10**) and Hesperix's lair (**Areas 10C-14** to **16**). They may also be encountered in the Bloodways nearby, or in the passage running between this area and the Goblin Outpost (**Level 10B**).

When intruders are discovered, the priests raise an alarm immediately if they can, and fight defensively, using their environment as best they can to protect themselves, until help arrives. This aid arrives within 1d6 rounds from just about anywhere in the complex. When it comes, the acolytes switch to a more offensive role, while their superiors stay behind the front lines, protecting them and casting spells to weaken the enemy. The Seer does not respond to any alarms, contenting himself with *scrying* the combat from afar and casting preparation spells if he thinks his sanctum may soon be violated. Hesperix, should he be present in the complex, takes advantage of his underling's holding action to buff himself and

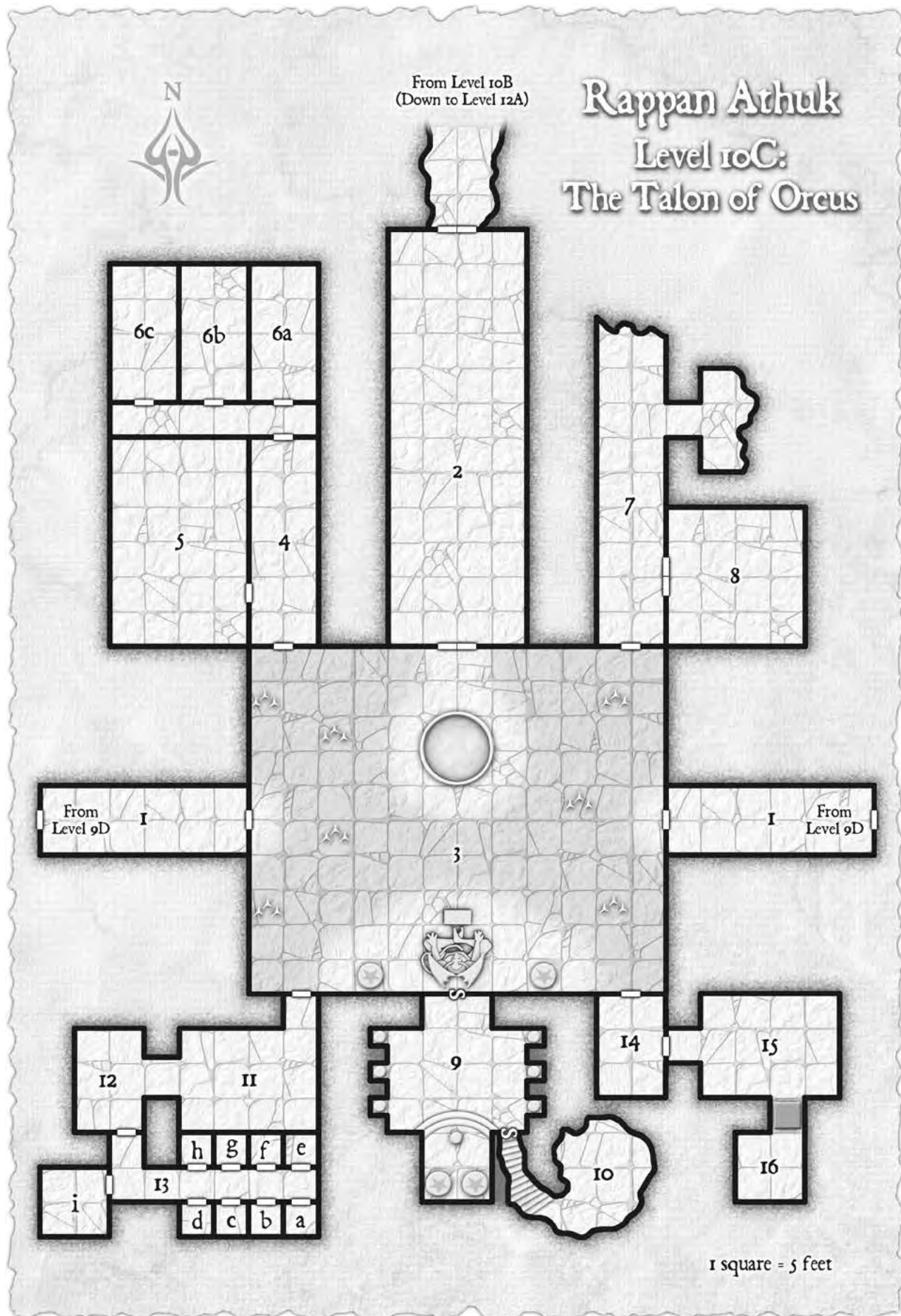
## Inhabitants

The Talon of Orcus is overseen by **Hesperix**, a cleric of Orcus. Day to day activities are overseen by **12 priests of Orcus**, and run by **20 acolytes**. In addition, the Talon is also the home of the **Seer**, a magic-user specializing in scrying magic.

**Acolytes of Orcus (20), Cleric 3:** HP 12 each; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 light mace (1d6); Move 12; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Rebuke/command undead, cleric spells (1st—*cause light wounds*, *protection from good*). Gear: Chainmail, shield, heavy mace, 3 vials of unholy water, unholy symbol of Orcus, 3 flasks of oil, flint and steel, iron key to door of **Area 10C-5**.

**Priests of Orcus (12), Cleric 5:** HP 20 each; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 morningstar (1d8); Move 12; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP

LEVEL 10C



## LEVEL 10C

summon allies, then blasts the enemy with his most potent spells.

Because of the number of clerics occupying the Talon, such a pitched battle almost certainly spells doom for the PCs. Parties should be prepared to retreat if they wish to survive.

The Talon of Orcus receives reinforcements at the rate of two acolytes and one priest per day. The Seer, his apprentice, and Hesperix are not replaced. The temple is only abandoned if the Seer and all priests over 5th level are slain.

If needed, Hesperix is also willing to use or pass out items from the trove of magic in the Vault (**Area 10C-16**).

There is a 15% chance at any given time that Hesperix is away from the lair, either patrolling **Level 9D** with 4 priests and 8 acolytes, or visiting one of the other goblin or priestly complexes in Rappan Athuk.

### 10C-1. Bloodways Entrances

The doors swing open from the Bloodways proper into each of these ten foot wide hallways. Just above the lintel inside the door, the symbol of Orcus is carved into the stone. This symbol blocks entry by the bloodmist and prevents any undead not accompanied by a priest of Orcus from passing it. Non-intelligent undead get no save against this effect; intelligent undead are allowed a saving throw to overcome the effect, but most do not bother trying unless they are pursuing prey.

The walls of the hall are decorated in frescoes, similar in style to the frescoes seen in the various Fresco Rooms of the Bloodways, but in much better repair. They depict undead of all types cowering before shadowy men wielding holy symbols of Orcus. Three wall sconces line each wall, though they are empty, and the hall is unlit.

These corridors lead directly into the Bloodways. The priests of Orcus only use them when conducting expeditions into the Bloodways (maybe only once every two to three weeks), and they are otherwise largely unused.

### 10C-2. Hall of Chains

This hall connects the passage leading to the Goblin Outpost (**Level 10B**) and Grezneck (**Level 12A**) with the Talon of Orcus. It is designed to intimidate goblin petitioners and terrify prisoners.

The hall is 20 ft. wide, and the walls are stained with layers of blood and gore, so thick that it is sometimes difficult to discern the wall frescoes beneath it depicting goblins being tortured and sacrificed on altars. Chains, many ending in barbed hooks, dangle from the 20 ft. high ceiling, reaching down as far as 15 ft. in places. The chains are coated with gore, and gobbets of flesh still adhere to some of the hooks. There are also a dozen bodies attached to chains and hooks suspended overhead, constantly writhing and moaning softly in agony. Their motions keep the chains gently swinging and clinking against one another. These are **goblin juju zombies**, and will not free themselves unless attacked or commanded by a priest of Orcus. The hallway is unlit.

These zombies serve both to intimidate visitors to the Talon, and as a means of defense. If called upon by any cleric of Orcus, they pull themselves down and attack any intruders, flanking and using sneak attack if possible.

**Goblin Juju Zombie:** HD 3; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 weapon or fists (1d6); Move 9; Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: +1 or better weapon to hit, immunity to electricity and cold, immunity to magic missile, resistance to fire (50%).

### 10C-3. Shrouded Shrine

This large square room is shrouded in perpetual gloom, save for certain key areas that are magically lit.

There is a 50% chance each of 1d6 acolytes and 1d3 priests being in this

room at any given time, performing maintenance, praying before the altar, or just passing through. There's also a flat 5% chance that a ceremony is underway, involving rituals that require all the priests and acolytes in the temple to be in attendance.

The doors to **10C-1** and **2** are flooded with a faint, nauseous yellow radiance. Before the door to **Area 10C-2**, this glow extends forward into the room, and illuminates a 10 ft. diameter pit filled with a roiling deep red slime, like semi-congealed blood. At the far end of the room stands the Talon's main shrine, illuminated with a hellish red light emanating from an unseen point just over the altar, casting lurid shadows on the nearby statues, and throwing the wall behind the statues into darkness.

The unlit areas are filled with magical shadow should be considered dimly lit, providing concealment for creatures in these areas. The darkness is considered a 5th level effect at CL 16th for the purposes of countering or *dispelling* it.

There are four doorways leading out from the corners of the room, which require a find secret doors check to notice. In addition, hidden in the darkness at areas indicated on the map are patches of caltrops, designed to be a simple defense against intruders. These caltrops are moved about regularly, and always are after any assault. Finally, there is a set of three steps leading from the area of the pit up to the location of the altar, and if these steps are not noticed, a person moving past them in the gloom must make a saving throw or stumble and fall, sustaining 1d6 points of damage.

The pit near the southern end of the chamber is filled with a red gelatinous substance that is harmless, but lurking beneath the surface are **two blood golems**, whose movements cause the surface of the pool to roil. The golems are under the control of the priests of the temple, and are under orders to attack anyone who comes within 5 ft. of the edge of the pit, or emerge and attack if commanded by any of the priests. The pit itself is 20 ft. deep, filled nearly to the brim with red slime and the blood golems. There is no treasure within it.

The altar is made of obsidian, rough hewn on the side but sharpened into many razor-edged spikes on top. The top is also liberally stained with blood and other exudates from sacrificed creatures, and reeks with a foul charnel smell. Behind the altar, looming 17 ft. tall (nearly to the ceiling) is a great statue of Orcus, carved of granite. Flanking the statue of Orcus is a pair of human-sized, cowed statues bearing scythes; the faces within the cowls are skeletal. Despite their ominous appearance, neither the statues nor altar have any unusual magical properties.

Behind the statue of Orcus a cunningly hidden and locked sliding secret door allows access to the Seeing Room, **Area 10C-9**.

**Blood Golems (2):** HD 12; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 strikes (1d8 + blood consumption); Move 12; Save 3; AL N; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: Blood consumption, cell division, +1 or better weapon to hit, regenerate (2 hp/rd), immune to mindaffecting abilities, resistance to fire (50%).

### 10C-4. Hall of Victories

Running from a door in the southeast corner of the Shrouded Shrine is a five-foot wide hallway decorated with more frescoes, these depicting images of victories won by the followers of Orcus. Villages are sacked, paladins and clerics of good gods sacrificed, and exultant priests receive blasphemous blessings from Orcus. The hall is lit by three lanterns with red-tinted glass hoods hanging from hooks in the walls.

The door at the end of the hall opens onto another corridor, decorated with more of the frescoes, but these depict priests engaging in foul acts with various corpses, demons, and undead. The hall is lined with small, elegant tables carved with screaming faces, expensive gold lamps with tinted red hoods and engraved with leering demons, and other valuable but grim furnishings weighing a total of 1,000 pounds and worth 5,000 gp to a collector who would be interested in buying such dubious items.

Doors in the south side of that hall lead into the priests' quarters (**Area 10C-6**). All these doors are locked, and only the priests and Hesperix possess keys to them. The doors also bear *glyphs of warding* that are triggered if the lock is touched or the door is opened without using the

## LEVEL 10C

key. One projects a blast of cold damage (2d8 points of damage), one electricity (2d8 points of damage) and the other infects people with mummy rot per a *cause disease* spell.

### 10C-5. Acolytes' Quarters

Tiers of bunks line the eastern wall of this room, and the center is taken up by several tables and chairs. Oil lanterns on the north and south walls produce a steady light. Near the southwest corner lies a small, covered circular well; the key to the lid hangs on a hook on the wall next to it.

In front of the bunks stand a total of 20 wooden chests. The chests are all unlocked, and contain garments and other relatively valueless items.

Unless a ceremony or a pitched battle is taking place in the temple complex, there are always at least 2d4 off duty acolytes in here, sleeping, studying chapbooks of occult lore, or engaging in discussion with one another.

### 10C-6. Priests' Quarters

The doors to these rooms are locked and warded with magical glyphs (see **Area 10C-4** for details). Within, each chamber holds two sets of bunk beds, a table, chest of drawers, and a small scroll rack cluttered with writings on Orcus, occult lore, and other unsavory topics. Each room is lit by a standard oil lamp hanging from a hook by the doorway. There is a 70% chance each room contains 1d4 priests, unless an alarm has been sounded elsewhere or a ceremony is taking place. A scroll in the rack in the western chamber contains a *scroll of raise dead*, while the rack in the eastern chamber holds a *curse scroll* that steals the voice of whoever opens it. The rooms otherwise contain little of value.

### 10C-7. Maintenance Wing

This area has been undergoing recent expansion. The door from the Shrouded Shrine opens into a ten foot wide hallway that runs about 45 to 50 ft. before ending at an area of construction. There is a door on the western wall, and an opening further south that leads to another room undergoing construction.

In the southern end of this corridor, a total of 7 skeletons and 8 zombies stand side by side, awaiting orders from the priests or acolytes. The zombies hold mining picks (1d8 damage), while the skeletons wield large hammers (1d10 damage). None attack unless commanded by a priest of Orcus, or unless attacked themselves.

**Skeletons (7):** HD 1; AC 8 [11]; Atk 1 hammer (1d4+1); Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

**Zombies (8):** HD 2; AC 8 [11]; Atk 1 pick (1d6); Move 6; Save 16; AL N; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

### 10C-8. Storeroom

This 20-ft. square room is lined with shelves, and a cluster of barrels stands in the northwest corner. The shelves contain jars and crates of food, construction and maintenance equipment, 28 flasks of lamp oil, 4 extra lamps, and any other mundane supplies you may wish to include here. In the center of the southern wall stands a half-finished stone statue of what appears to be a skeletal figure, being carved from red marble.

### 10C-9. The Seeing Room

This room is well-lit thanks to continual flame-lit torches lining the east and west walls. The room is divided into two portions. The entire area is shrouded with a permanent effect that prevents magical detection into or

within the room, but does not prevent scrying out of the room.

The southern part of the room is 15-ft. deep and 20-ft. wide. The east and west walls hold three niches, each containing a mummified body with gems where its eyes should be. At the center of the northern wall, a series of three stone steps lead up into a 10-ft. square alcove, holding a basin resting atop a stone altar draped with gold cloth. Behind the altar loom two fat statues of Orcus, each clutching a wand in one hand and a humanoid skull in the other.

Hesperix, the priests, and the Seer use this room for scrying, as the unholy water font can also be used as a *crystal ball* by worshippers of Orcus. The room is well defended, however, by both the **two Orcus golems** (Stone Guardian golems carved to look like Orus) and by **the Seer**, who resides in this area. Though he does not take part in conflicts in the main temple, any intruders here must face him, and suffer his wrath if they prove hostile.

**Orcus Golems (2):** HD 4 (20 hp); AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 slams (2d6); Move 9; Save 13; AL N; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Resistance to cold, electricity and fire (50%), ring link, see invisibility, *dimension door* at will.

**The Seer, Magic-User 13:** HP 30; AC7 [12]; Atk +2 dagger (1d4+2); Move 12; Save 5; AL C; CL/XP 9/700; Special: Spells (1st—*detect magic, light, magic missile, protection from good, shield*; 2nd—*ESP, invisibility, mirror image, phantasmal force, stinking cloud*; 3rd—*clairvoyance, dispel magic, fly, hold person, slow*; 4th—*confusion, dimension door, ice storm, wall of ice*; 5th—*cloudkill, feeblemind, teleport, wall of iron*; 6th—*death spell, monster summoning IV*). Gear: +2 dagger, cloak of protection +2, headband of spiritual focus, potion of extra healing, two magical copper rings (tied to the Orcus golems) in **Area 10C-9**, wizard's robes (100 gp), three 1,500 gp diamonds, long, thin golden key to secret door in **Area 10C-10**.

**Tactics:** If the Seer is attacked, or feels an attack is a foregone conclusion, he immediately calls the Orcus golems to his aid and positions himself behind the holy water font, using it as cover while he casts spells at the party. The golems attack spell casters first, though if the Seer is reduced to half his hit points he commands them to return and move between any melee attackers and himself. If reduced to less than 10 hit points, he uses his *mirror image*, he then *dimension doors* to travel to **Area 10C-20J**, gathers his possessions as quickly as possible, murders his apprentice, and uses his *teleport* spell to escape.

### Headband of Spiritual Focus

The *headband of spiritual focus* is a heavy iron headpiece that grants the wearer a +2 bonus to intelligence, a +1 bonus to charisma, and a +15% bonus on *dispel magic* checks.

The mummified bodies are simply corpses, not undead. The gems can be pried from their eyes; each is a black opal worth 50 gp, and there are 12 in all.

In the northwest corner of the room there is a cunningly concealed secret door that leads to the Seer's personal quarters. The secret door is locked but untrapped, and only the Seer has the key.

### 10C-10. The Seer's Retreat

Past the locked secret door in **Area 10C-9** a crude passage descends via rough stone steps down to a roughly 15 ft. diameter cave. The cave contains a large, iron-framed bed, a table, several shelves of books with a fresh skull resting atop it, a small lab table, and a woman in a torn smock chained to the foot of the bed.

## LEVEL 10C

The chained woman is **Zatalya**, the Seer's current apprentice, whom he is still in the process of breaking and molding to suit his needs. She has considerable native talent, but has been reduced to a fearful, cringing wretch, and does little to protect herself other than curl into a fetal ball. Killing her should earn Lawful PCs an XP penalty, and freeing her should earn them a reward.

If Zatalya is freed and calmed, a charismatic character may be able to get some information from her about the Seer. She does not know his name, but does know that he has only come here within the last month or so, muttering something about a finding a staff.

**Zatalya, Magic-User 1:** HP 5; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 slam (1d2); Move 12; Save 15; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Memorized sleep spell.

**Treasure:** The books on the shelves deal primarily with scrying, divination, and prophecy. They would be worth 2,000 gp to a collector. The Seer's spellbooks are also on one of the shelves, and contains all the spells listed in his repertoire, along with any others the Referee sees fit to provide. The skull atop the bookcase is that of Azarthraine, former leader of the adventurer band the Fire Hawks. In addition, the lab table contains 1,000 gp worth of chemicals and reagents, though these are in fragile containers and weigh 20 pounds.

## 10C-II. Torture Room

The rack, dangling chains, straps, and racks of sharpened blades, pokers, clamps, and other devices all attest to this room's purpose as a torture chamber. Four continual flame-lit torches set in sconces on the walls produce a blood-red flame, lending the chamber an infernal look. In the north wall four small, barred windows open into cells in **Area 10C-13**, and the sounds of screaming, sobbing, or insane laughter may be heard from beyond.

The priests of Orcus use this room daily, both for religious observances and for pleasure. Prisoners that enter this room and the prison beyond do not leave the area alive.

## 10C-12. Vestry

Accessed from the western wall of the torture chamber, this room holds religious paraphernalia, including incense, ceremonial knives, candles, candleholders, and similar regalia. A locked ironbound door to the north opens into the prison block; the steel keys to this door and the cells beyond are attached to a key ring hanging from a hook just east of the door.

## 10C-13. Prison

This prison block is rank with the stench of voided bowels and despair. There are a total of nine cells. The first eight are ten foot cube stone rooms accessed by locked iron doors; the ninth is used for special prisoners, and is 20 ft. square with a steel door.

The contents of the cells are as follows:

**10C-13a: Mezuryk**, a master thief and once a member of an adventuring group called the Fire Hawks, sits huddled in the corner of this cell, naked save for a thin flea-infested blanket. His body is crisscrossed with lesions and scars, both fresh and old, from his time as a prisoner. Mezuryk immediately rushes over and begs for freedom once he realizes it is not priests of Orcus at the door. He is as informative and helpful as possible, and if healed and equipped, offers to aid the party as best he can.

Mezuryk has been tortured and broken by the priests of Orcus, resulting in a split personality. The following are some of the initial personalities he may exhibit:

- **Helpful Mezuryk:** This is his initial personality; it is lawful in alignment, and endeavors to be as helpful and useful as possible. As time goes on, this personality is increasingly eager to please, until it is little more than a cringing sycophant, fawningly obeying any order given.

- **Demented Mezuryk:** In this state, Mezuryk initially behaves with the intellect of a five-year-old child; he has an alignment of neutral, and an effective intelligence of 3. Over time the mental deterioration continues, his intellect drops, until finally he is a drooling vegetable.

- **Berserk Mezuryk:** This personality is most likely to manifest in battle. He flies into a berserk frenzy that lasts until there are no more enemies within view. Unfortunately, he has trouble distinguishing friend from foe in this state, and needs to roll a saving throw to pick the correct target once his current opponent drops. Once all enemies have died, a final saving throw is required to avoid continuing to attack allies, and coming out of the rage. Over time, the saving throw increases as Mezuryk's mind continues to disintegrate. Mezuryk the berserk is chaotic in alignment.

- **Gretalla the Great, Bard to Kings:** Mezuryk always had a fondness for music, and with this personality his love for music has been twisted so that he believes he is a world-famous elven songstress; he speaks grandiloquently, affecting a husky voice, and flirts outrageously with charismatic male PCs. As the mental deterioration continues, the Gretalla personality becomes less coherent, with songs blending one into another or being sung with nonsense words. Gretalla has a neutral alignment.

- **Mezuryk the psychopath:** Hidden beneath all the other personalities is this one, a lurking monster that maintains a low-grade awareness even when other personalities manifest. It possesses a hatred for everyone, and delights in slaying anyone it can get a drop on. Due to Mezuryk's thief abilities, this makes him very dangerous when the psychopathic personality comes to the fore. Over time, this personality becomes stronger, able to seize control from another personality. Mezuryk must make a saving throw initially, dropping over time, or the psychopath comes to the fore. The psychopath is chaotic.

Other personalities may appear or disappear, but the above represents the dominant personalities contained within his skull.

**Mezuryk, Thief 12:** HP 36; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 fist (1d2); Move 12; Save 5; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Back stab x4 damage, climb walls 96%, delicate tasks 90%, hear sounds (6 in 6), hide in shadows 95%, move silently 100%, open locks 95%.

**10C-13b:** Empty.

**10C-13c:** Holds the corpse of a goblin prisoner. After being tortured for information on nonexistent conspiracies by the goblin Morask (see **Level 10B**) against Hesperix, he was locked in this cell and forgotten. The body has not risen as an undead—yet.

**10C-13d:** Empty.

**10C-13e:** Empty.

**10C-13f:** Contains a goblin scout that has only begun to be tortured. Nonetheless, the fear of pain has driven him insane, and he now spends most of his waking time shrieking in terror.

**Goblin Scout:** HD 2; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 strike (1d2); Move 9; Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: -1 to hit in sunlight.

**10C-13g:** Empty.

**10C-13h:** A dark-skinned humanoid lies huddled against the far wall of this room, sobbing in fear and pain. The floor of the cell is thick with dirt and debris. This is a **vampire**, captured by the priests in the Bloodways, who have stored it here to keep it out of trouble. The cell serves as the vampire's coffin.

**Vampire:** HD 7 (26 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 bite (1d10 + level drain); Move 12 (Fly 18); Save 9; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: See description.

## LEVEL 10C

**10C-13i:** Unlike the other cells, this one is currently furnished with a hard wooden bed covered with a thin straw mattress and a blanket. Lying tied and gagged on the bed is a brown-skinned half-elf who appears asleep or possibly dead.

This man is **Setiathet**, a priest of the evil god Set. He has traveled from a far land, hoping to set up contact and possibly an alliance with the church of Orcus; unfortunately for him, the priests of Orcus had little desire for an alliance with some distant power, and so he was imprisoned. However, they have not yet started an interrogation by torture, as they wish to flush out any hidden allies that Setiathet may have. In point of fact, Setiathet is operating alone, and faces a grim death at the hands of the priests of Orcus if fate does not intervene.

Although he is evil, he does his best to cut a deal with any rescuers, promising to assist them in dealing with the temple of Orcus if need be in exchange for his freedom—and he sticks to the letter of any bargains he agrees to. He is only too happy to proselytize his faith if there are any sympathetic people in the group who share a similar world view as he.

**Setiathet, Half-Elf Cleric 9:** HP 31; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 strike (1d2); Move 12; Save 7; AL C; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Rebuke/command undead, spells (1st—*cause light wounds*; 2nd—*hold person*; 3rd—*prayer*; 4th—*cause serious wounds*)

### 10C-14. Sitting Room

This sitting room serves as an antechamber and guard room for Hesperix's private domain. Light floods the chamber from a pair of lanterns enchanted with *continual light* hanging from brass hooks on the north wall. A black carpet edged in gold covers nearly the entire floor. Against the east wall is an ottoman, in front of which is a low table. A cabinet that holds high-quality liquor stands in the southwest corner.

The stone door on the western wall is locked, and only Hesperix possesses the key to it. It also has three traps upon it, a poison needle trap (lethal), a poison gas trap (3d6 damage, 10-ft. radius cloud) and a bestow curse trap (-2 to all attacks and saves until removed).

The room also holds **4 black skeletons**, lined up along the north wall, each bearing a pair of forward-curved daggers across its body in a ceremonial posture. They attack anyone not wearing an Orcus priest's robe, and otherwise obey only the direct orders of Hesperix.

**Black Skeletons (4):** HD 6; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6) or 2 claws (1d4); Move 12; Save 11; AL N; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Shriek, immune to sleep and charm.

### 10C-15. Hesperix's Bedroom

A great four-poster bed dominates the western end of this 30 x 40 ft. chamber. The walls to the north and south are lined with bookshelves, a wardrobe, and several tapestries, one depicting the symbol of Orcus, another exhibiting a detailed anatomical study of a dissected human, and a third showing a pastoral surface scene. The floor is covered with wolf pelts to ward away the chill of the stone floor. A small table with a chair stands in the northeast corner, and to the southeast stands an empty manikin of the type used to display armor.

A thorough search of the room turns up 1,000 gp in knickknacks, furnishings, and the like, weighing a total of 250 pounds. The bookshelves primarily contain tomes dealing with necromancy, anatomy, and pro-Orcus doctrine, though one shelf does have a copy of *Pirates of the Purple Dawn*, a lurid tale of romance and adventure on the high seas. The

wardrobe contains spare clothes for Hesperix.

Behind the tapestry displaying the symbol of Orcus on the north wall, one section of stone has been replaced with a smooth, non-reflective jet black surface. Those touching the surface feel a mild electrical jolt (dealing 1d4 points of damage per round of direct contact). This black surface blocks access to **Area 10C-16**. The key to pass this barrier is the black energy blade of Hesperix's scythe *Dacris*. When it comes into contact with the black surface, the barrier melts away, forming a steep set of stairs leading up to the vault beyond. This opening lasts for one minute before resealing.

The black barrier cannot be dispelled, though it can be bypassed or destroyed in the same manner as a *wall of stone*. Even if it is destroyed, the black barrier returns in exactly one minute.

### 10C-16. The Vault

This chamber contains the treasury of the Talon of Orcus, along with any valuable possessions looted from captives that have not been sent on to temples deeper within Rappan Athuk. The chamber is 20 ft. square, with half the southern wall being a black surface that bars access to **Area 10C-15**. The rest of the walls are lined with shelves, and a pair of chests sits on the floor in the western part of the room.

The first chest is unlocked and not trapped, and holds the Talon's funds: 863 gp, 1,043 sp, and 163 cp. The second chest is likewise unlocked and not trapped, and holds funds set aside to be transported to other strongholds of Orcus: 1,300 gp, 83 sp, five 50 gp amethysts, and four 100 gp pearls.

The shelves hold the following:

- 20 vials of unholy water, all clearly stamped with the symbol of Orcus
- A small rack containing three *potions of healing*, a *potion of giant strength* and a *potion of gaseous form*; all potion flasks are engraved with cryptic symbols that identify their contents to Hesperix's eyes
- Another rack holding 7 random scrolls
- A trio of wands in a small rack: A *wand of cure light wounds* (6 charges), a *wand of enemy detection* (5 charges), and a *wand of fear* (3 charges)
- A weapon rack holding five heavy maces and a *+1 morningstar* (1d6+1 damage)
- A set of magical boots resting near one of the chests; these identify as *boots of leaping*, but are actually *cursed boots of dancing*
- A bundle containing some of Mezuryk's equipment: *+2 leather armor*, thieves' tools and a *+1 short sword*; the rest of his equipment has been filed elsewhere in this room, claimed by other priests of the Talon, or sent elsewhere in Rappan Athuk
- Another bundle containing the remains of Setiathet's gear: a suit of *+2 platemail*, a *+1 shield*, two unmarked vials containing unholy water, a holy symbol of Set and a magical small golden statuette of Setiathet's god.
- A third bundle composed of items stripped from another NPC fighter: a *+1 flaming two-handed sword*, a *+1 longbow*, 40 arrows, and two *+2 arrows*.

**Note:** Although the contents of this treasury are quite valuable, and may seem overbalancing, be sure to have Hesperix make use of these items liberally when defending the Talon or stalking the PCs within the Bloodways. Further, if Mezuryk or Setiathet is freed, they insist on regaining their equipment.

This chamber is a good location to place maps, diaries, or other hooks for possible future adventures.