

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER®

Strength of Thousands

ADVENTURE PATH

HURRICANE'S HOWL

By Michelle Jones

THE SODDEN LANDS

50 MILES

• JULA

• KOKUTANG

MUGUMO PLAINS

Terwa River

• KIUTU

• RUINS OF BLOODSALT

TERWA
LAKE

MWANGI JUNGLE

Vangji River

• NANTAMBU



PATHFINDER

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HURRICANE'S HOWL

Chapter 1: The Missing Student 4

Now lore-speakers of the Magaambya, the heroes are responsible for teaching several students. When one goes missing, the ensuing pursuit turns into an unforeseen opportunity to study the silt-choked ruins of the city of Bloodsalt.

Chapter 2: Vanished Villagers.....24

The wicked Knights of Abendego have long preyed on the village of Kiutu, but when the Knights escalate to kidnapping several villagers, it's up to the heroes to help. They pursue the kidnappers across the savanna, witnessing the aftermath of their flight and encountering some unexpected allies.

Chapter 3: Prison of the Vacant Eye.....38

The heroes track the missing villagers to an ancient mountainside prison, a remnant of the cyclops empire that fell millennia ago. Sinister jailers, cyclops history-seekers, and monstrous foes await the heroes attempting to liberate their friends.

Chapter 4: Julia's Plight.....52

Ajbal Kimon, the leader of the Knights of Abendego, rules the coastal town of Julia with an iron fist. He's taken some of the prisoners into caves beneath the town as sacrifices to his malevolent god. The heroes must unite the townspeople, delve into the caves, and end Ajbal's evil.

PRACTICAL RESEARCH

The Life in the Academy article starting on page 61 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #169: Kindled Magic* details student advancement at the Magaambya, but only hints at post-graduation advancement. Although many lore-speakers teach, and some teach quite a lot, lore-speakers don't advance in their branch by teaching alone. Primarily, they discover new things for the Magaambya, add new scholarship, or uncover lost knowledge to progress.

These are reflected in the catch-all activity "Practical Research." By the time the heroes get their first opportunity for Practical Research late in this adventure's first chapter, they should be eager for opportunities to advance in their respective branches, since they aren't getting those by simply teaching classes.

Heroes first get to perform Practical Research when a student leaves the Magaambya for her family's village near the ruined city of Bloodsalt. There's a second Practical Research opportunity in Chapter 3, but whether the heroes discover and recognize it as such is up to them.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Hurricane's Howl" is designed for four characters.

- 8** The heroes begin this adventure at 8th level.
- 9** The heroes should reach 9th level before pursuing the Knights of Abendego in Chapter 2.
- 10** The heroes should be 10th level before venturing into the Prison of the Vacant Eye in Chapter 3.
- 11** The heroes should reach 11th level before setting out for Julia.

The heroes should reach 12th level by the end of the adventure.

HURRICANE'S HOWL

Chapter 1:
The Missing
Student

Chapter 2:
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Villagers

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Julia

Adventure
Toolbox

"Ah, what are you doing out of bed at this hour little one? You already got your bedtime story!" the old woman said, doing her best to put on a frown. Uzuwe shuffled her little feet. "I see. Your father doesn't tell it as good as Nana, is that it?" she asked with a mischievous smile and a glint in her eye. "Very well, very well, come sit."

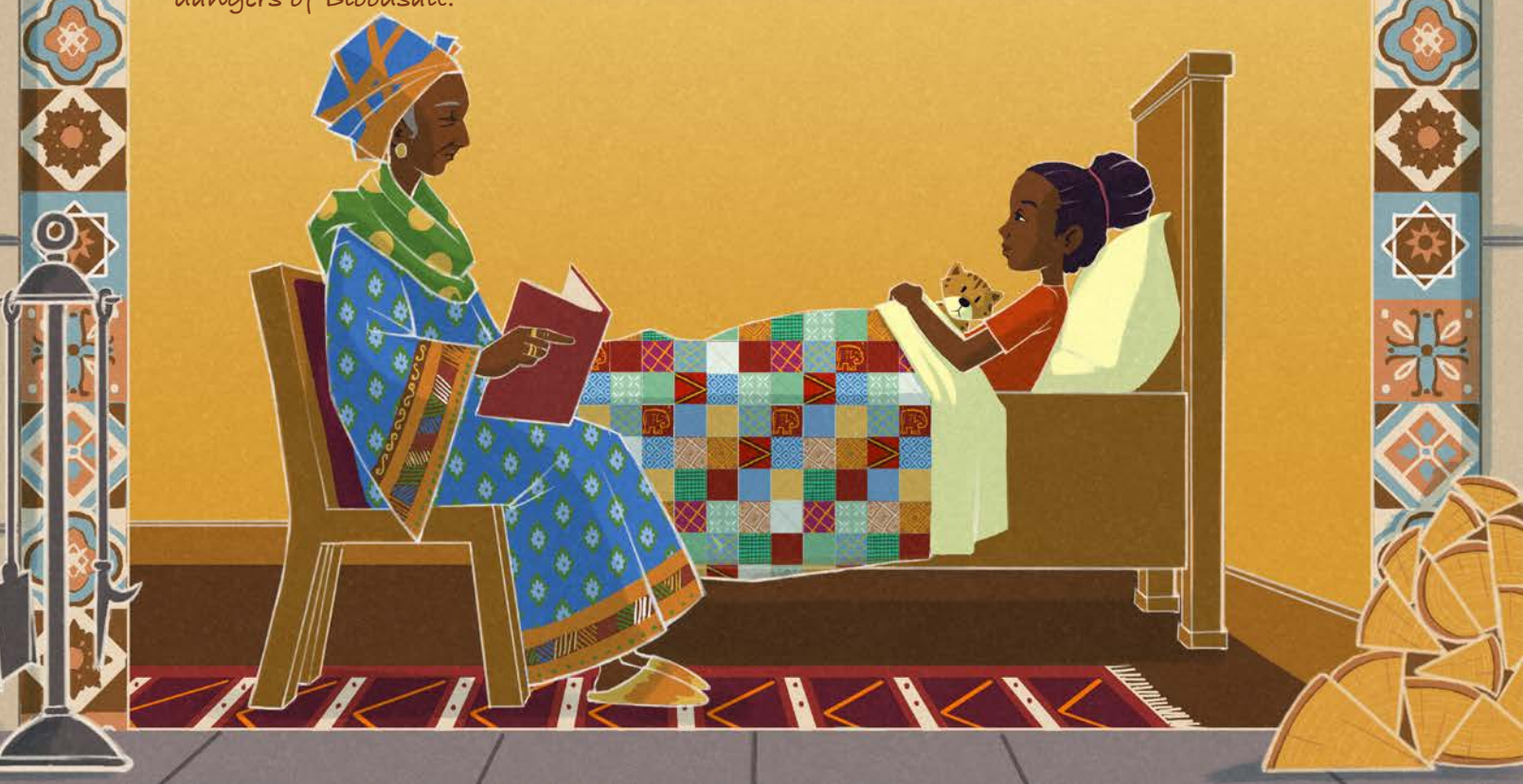
The little girl's eyes lit up as she leapt into bed, making her grandmother laugh heartily. "You want to hear about the Magic Warriors again, hm? When your Nana met them, they had only just become lore-speakers at the Magaambya. After their many adventures as students, they finally had the opportunity to teach, although many said it was too early by far. Perhaps those people were right. Perhaps they were too young to have all that responsibility." She trailed off here, with a well-rehearsed furrowed brow.

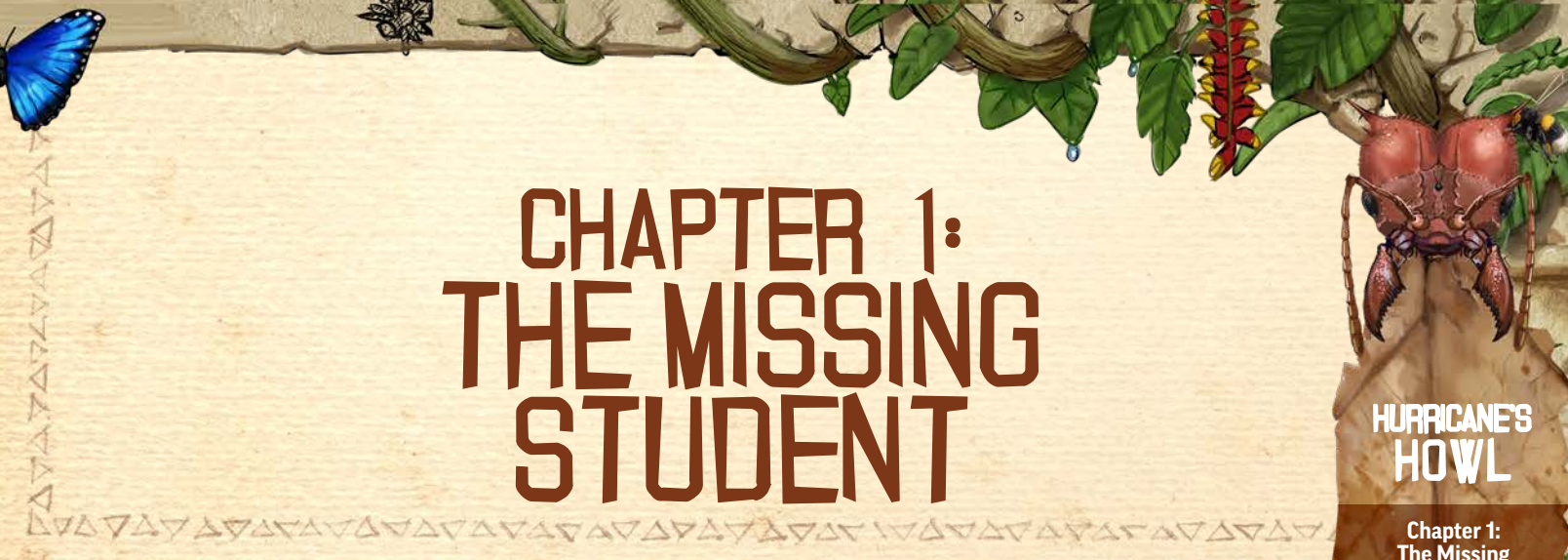
"Heroes are never too young!" Uzuwe objected.

"I think this one might be," she said and tickled her granddaughter's sides. Uzuwe giggled and squirmed. "But you may be right about those heroes, because they did teach their students well. Even a young woman named I'boko.

"Now, I'boko was not a bad student. In fact, she may have been their most clever. I'boko did not cause trouble. She was a victim of it. Because the thing I'boko treasured the most, before even her own studies, was her family. When her village was attacked by the wicked Knights from the north, she snuck away from the school to return to her home.

"When the new lore-speakers discovered she was missing, they knew that things were dire, and went to offer their aid. Along with their remaining students, they followed I'boko, and made camp in the nearby ruins of Bloodsalt. That place, once called the City of Dragon-Speakers, had been overrun by villains and monsters, and at its heart lay a terrible secret. Before our heroes could do anything for I'boko, they would have to face the dangers of Bloodsalt."





CHAPTER 1: THE MISSING STUDENT

HURRICANE'S HOWL

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The heroes have been awarded the title of lore-speakers and officially graduated from the Magaambya. However, Janatimo has requested they stay on as teachers. He believes the heroes' skills may yet be useful, and says that he has already picked out a cohort of students for them to teach together. Each hero will be responsible for teaching a class for their primary branch, although they have some freedom to determine the specifics. For example, a Rain-Scribe class could range from nature excursions in search of rare flora to crafting medicines for sick livestock. Encourage players to help each other decide what their classes entail, since they're working together as teachers. If they are truly stuck for ideas, a faculty member that they've gotten to know in the previous adventures might offer suggestions.

The heroes have their choice of buildings in which to claim a personal office, though new teachers almost always choose an office in the Heron Archives. It's also customary, but by no means required, for others to refer to the heroes with "Teacher" before their name, especially students and Nantambu locals who wish to show respect.

The heroes also receive a stipend for living quarters. Most lore-speakers have rooms in the Magaambya; many buildings ringing the island are teacher residences. However, some choose to live in Nantambu. In either case, the cost of modest personal accommodations is borne by the school.

The heroes have at least a few weeks to prepare for their first classes. During this time, the head of the Magaambya, High Sun-Mage Oyamba, meets with the heroes to congratulate them and answer any questions they have. He's a tall, charming man with a perpetually distracted look, as the business of running the Magaambya is a time-consuming one. He mentions absently that the heroes' exploits as students haven't made his job any easier, but they've made the school significantly safer, and for that he's grateful. Oyamba also introduces the heroes to their cohort of students, offering a bit of background on each of them.

Among their students are a handful of familiar faces. Two of their former classmates, **Ignaci Canterells** (N male human thaumaturge) and **Mariama Keitana** (CN female human chaos magnet), are both close to becoming lore-speakers themselves, but haven't yet fulfilled their final requirements. Ignaci is somewhat jealous of the heroes' rapid ascent, but rather than become resentful, he's more motivated than anyone else in the cohort, and hangs on to every word the heroes say in hopes of figuring out their "secret method." On the other hand, Mariama treats the heroes with complete irreverence. She enjoys teasing them if they ever slip up as teachers and gossiping with newer students about the mischief they once

CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

The heroes begin this chapter by getting to know their students and solving a few of the students' problems. Their brightest student, a dwarf named I'boko, abruptly leaves for her hometown of Kiutu when she learns it's under attack by the Knights of Abendego. The heroes might want to go after her; even if they don't, their students insist on going after her. Rather than have new teachers and students suddenly abandon their education, the head of the Magaambya proposes a research opportunity to the nearby ruins of Bloodsalt.

CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 1 are as follows.

- +1 kukri
- +1 striking rod of wonder
- bird feather token
- cloud dragon rune bracelet
- detecting exploration lens
- explosive ammunition
- greater staff of providence
- Ixamë's eye
- lesser darkvision elixir
- lesser smokestick
- moderate alchemist's fire
- moderate healing potion
- moderate red-rib gill mask
- necklace of fireballs type III
- scroll of freedom of movement
- scroll of spectral hand
- sphere barricade stone

got into. If you'd prefer to replace these NPCs with other students the heroes have gotten to know well, feel free to do so.

The cohort also includes the anadis whom the characters got to know during the last two adventures. This adventure presumes there are three of them (Rainbows-Reflected-Upon-Gossamer-Strands who goes by **Goss**, **Barest-Threads-Billowing Maztachia**, and **Droplets-Hanging-Gently Savanakin**), though any of them might have died during previous adventures. The anadis are no longer mere seekers—you can use the statistics for anadi fateweavers (*Kindled Magic* 79) for them. The anadis have worked hard to overcome their initial shyness, but they still prefer each other's company. They bury themselves in their lessons and dedicate most of their time to researching obscure formulas that support some of their more unorthodox theories about the potential applications of magic. In an effort to coax the anadis into becoming more comfortable with their fellow students, the school administration has given them the heroes' old rooms in the Spire Dormitory.

If the heroes worked hard to rehabilitate **Fire-Pot Ubanu** (CN male human pyrochemist 8) in the last adventure and arranged for his admittance to the Magaambya, he's also among the heroes' cohort. He respects the heroes and is as well-behaved as his fiery temper allows.

The other students are unfamiliar to the heroes. **Jumimo** (N male elf veteran student) has been a student at the academy since before some members of the faculty were even born. While the Ekujae elf is more than qualified to become a lore-speaker, he refuses to take the last steps that would lead to graduation. **Onyiji's** (LN female half-orc staff warrior) entire life path had already been plotted out by her elders before she even came to the academy. As the most accomplished spellcaster and fighter in her home village, she was chosen over a number of rivals to attend the Magaambya. She has the makings of a talented magus, but she's a bit arrogant and makes no effort to earn friends. **Fardrik** (CG male tiefling human orator) and **Selozè** (CN male tiefling human

novelist) are rarely seen without one another. Fardrik is disarmingly charismatic and loves to gossip, making

him the perfect Emerald Bough. He uses humor to deflect questions of his past, but has opened up to those closest to him about the oppression he faced as a tiefling in the formerly Chelax-held colony of Sargava. Fardrik knows Ignaci from those pre-revolution days, but the two didn't move in the same circles and even today don't get along. Selozè's parents are Bekyar devil-binders, and his birth was the condition of one of their pacts.

He ran away from home at a young age, and arrived at the Magaambya after honing his talents on his own. Fardrik and Selozè met shortly after enrolling at the academy and formed an instant bond that slowly grew into romance.

The final new member of their student group is **I'boko** (NG female dwarf rain caller). I'boko is a brilliant student who excels at nearly every subject but always seems distant. She often spaces out during class,

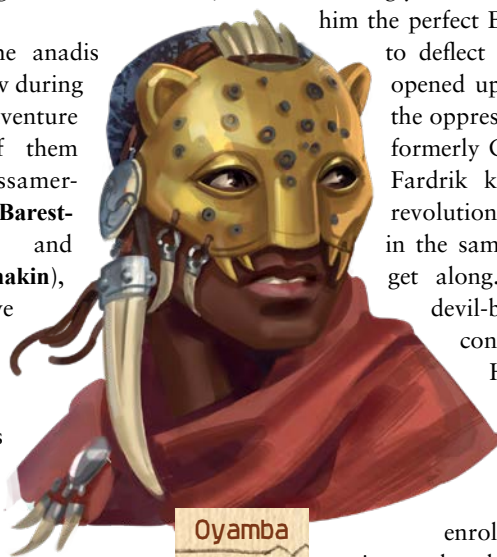
although her work never seems to suffer for it. However, I'boko never seems to get any satisfaction from her work; in fact, the more successful she is, the more dejected she becomes. She feels incredibly guilty about attending the Magaambya, worried that she's taking the "easy path" while her family labors in Kiutu.

Teacher Life

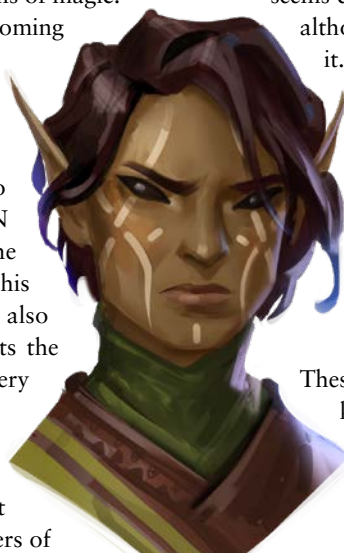
These encounters allow the heroes to get to know their students better; you can run these in any order, so long as you conclude with I'boko's Disappearance on page 11.

AN EVENING REMINISCING


The heroes go out with Mariama and Ignaci for a night of drinking to celebrate their new roles and talk about old times without the other students around. However, Mariama has an ulterior motive that she doesn't reveal until later in the evening. Through their own independent research, Mariama and Ignaci each discovered a series of magical glyphs and runes hidden at several points around the campus and the surrounding city of Nantambu. Ignaci is convinced they're a part of a Chelaxian conspiracy to invade the school and steal its secrets. Mariama believes they



Oyamba



Jumimo



are the focus for a massive ritual intended to shift the entire school onto another plane, likely the domain of one of Old-Mage Jatembe's ancient enemies. If the heroes aren't already aware that Ignaci has a habit of leaving coded messages for himself around the school, he insists these messages aren't his doing.

Neither Mariama nor Ignaci can continue with their research without accessing restricted school documents. Lore-speakers can provide the needed authorization, of course, and this is the reason Mariama and Ignaci have brought this up: they want the heroes' assistance in their research. Each is working hard to prove their own theory, both to preserve the school and to show up the other student.

Searching the records is not a straightforward task, as they are full of dry and redundant minutiae about the school and its students both past and present. It takes 1d6 hours of Searching and a successful DC 25 check with a relevant Lore skill (such as Academia Lore, Library Lore, Magaambya Lore, or Nantambu Lore) to find the truth. If the heroes bring Ignaci and Mariama with them to help, reduce this DC by 2 for each student. If no hero possesses a relevant Lore skill, you might allow them to attempt a DC 30 check with Arcana or Society instead.

Records show that, although the runes line up with certain constellations known in antiquity, there's nothing sinister behind them. The glyphs were a part of an unfinished thesis project on astrology, begun by a former student who later changed their focus of study. They simply left the out-of-the-way runes in place on the off chance that someone else might someday pick up the project where they left off. Mariama and Ignaci are both relieved and a little disappointed to discover the runes' benign nature. Ignaci is eager to move on to other endeavors after this, but Mariama still has a few questions and decides to learn out more about the former student's thesis. Her discoveries will help the heroes in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #174: Shadows of the Ancients*.

XP Award: If the heroes successfully track down the truth of the runes, award them 80 XP.

RUNAWAY EXPERIMENT

LOW 8

The anadi students approach the heroes, looking obviously nervous. Goss starts a long, rambling explanation about how a class on preservation of endangered flora led him to do further research

into environmental conservation. This in turn led to research on urban sprawl, which led to research on alternative forms of waste management, which led to research on using magic to eradicate waste. He began theorizing on the possibility of an artificial creature that consumes refuse.

When pressed, Goss confesses that the anadis went beyond theory and have actually managed to create a creature that proved more voracious and more powerful than they anticipated. It's currently on the loose in the Spire Dormitory, going from room to room and eating whatever it can find. None of the students can control or contain it, and the anadis need the heroes' help.

Despite the obvious danger, Goss can't let go of the research opportunity. He gives the heroes a crystal vial and asks if one of them might preserve a piece of the creature as they dispatch it.

The map for this encounter appears on page 8.

Creature: Born of untested and unsupervised evocation magic, Goss's experiment is a strange creature called a roiling incant. It wanders the east wing of the Spire Dormitory, destroying items it can engulf. It hasn't hurt anyone yet, but when the heroes confront it, the roiling incant turns violent. It fights until destroyed, at which point it disappears with a hissing pop.

A hero who wishes to claim a sample as Goss requested can Strike with the crystal vial as an improvised weapon (*Core Rulebook* 278). This attack deals no damage, but scoops up a harmless piece of the roiling incant into the vial.

ROILING INCANT

CREATURE 9

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 215

Initiative Perception +15

Development: Once the heroes vanquish the roiling incant, a group of shouting students approach them, angry about having their own projects and personal belongings destroyed. The heroes can attempt to pacify them by giving Goss a severe punishment, or they can defend him and order the other students to disperse. Goss stoically accepts whatever fate the heroes' decide, but placating the other students after giving Goss only light repercussions requires a successful DC 24 Diplomacy check (DC 29 if Goss faces no consequences whatsoever). On a failure, the heroes have a -1 circumstance penalty on skill checks



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The Missing Student

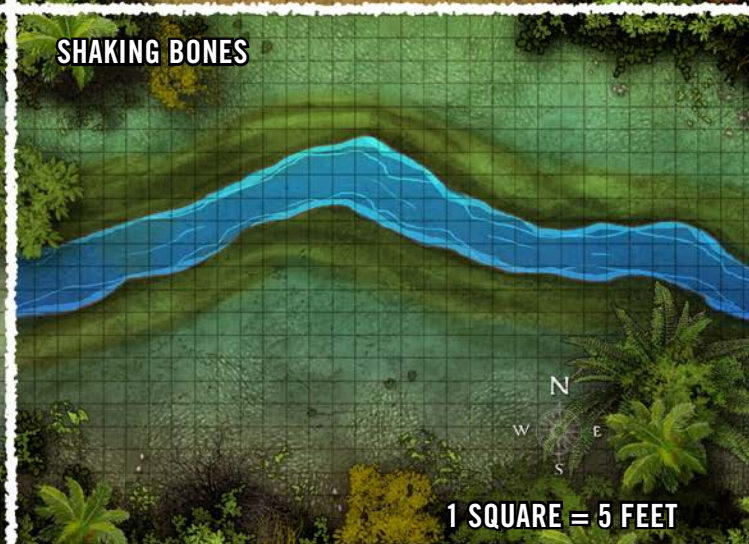
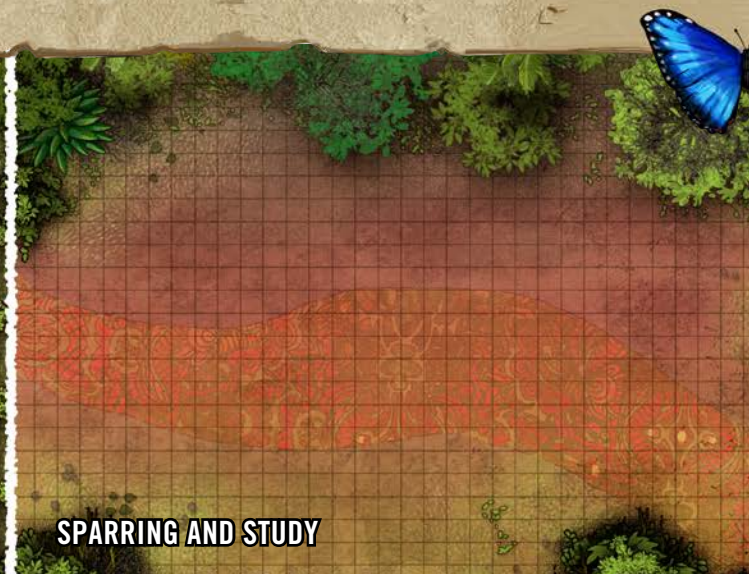
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Jula

Adventure
Toolbox



with students until their departure for Bloodsalt, due to an undercurrent of discontent.

XP Award: If the heroes handle the situation with the angry students effectively, award them 30 XP in addition to the XP for defeating the roiling incant.

SPARRING AND STUDY

While crossing campus, the heroes pass the sparring grounds and see Onyiji in combat with two other students. They seem to be pushing her back at first, but she quickly turns the fight around, knocking both opponents onto their backs at once. She complains loudly that she can't improve if no one is going to give her a challenge. She notices the heroes and calls to them.

"Teachers! Perhaps you can help me. I need someone to review my performance, but none of my peers can keep up. Would one of you do me the honor of sparring?"

If any of the heroes accept, they can participate in a one-on-one duel with Onyiji. She intends this to be a combat duel rather than a spellcasting duel, although she's planning to use spells in the battle, so she can't

complain if her opponent does as well. She knows that the Magaambya has plenty of spellcasters who are more capable and competent than she is, but she considers herself one of the best at the school in a melee fight, so her pride has pushed her into challenging her teachers.

This map for this encounter appears above.

Creature: Onyiji is a serious combatant who loves immersing herself in the thrill of a fight. Duels are dangerous, but Onyiji doesn't intend to kill anyone or get killed herself. She yields if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points, or once her opponent has 4 Appraisal points. She makes nonlethal attacks with her weapon (at a -2 circumstance penalty) against opponents who look badly injured and recommends they yield to her. If you'd like, you can use the combat duel rules beginning on page 166 of the *Gamemastery Guide*.

As Onyiji is looking for immediate feedback, a hero can take the following action during this fight.

ASSESS ONYIJI'S PERFORMANCE

AUDITORY CONCENTRATE LINGUISTIC MENTAL

Prerequisites This must be your last action on your turn.

You provide Onyiji with an evaluation of her tactics and how



your actions during your turn were intended to counter her attacks. Attempt a DC 22 Diplomacy or Intimidation check, or a DC 20 check with an appropriate Lore skill, such as Warfare Lore. If you hit Onyiji with a melee Strike during your turn, you have a +2 circumstance bonus to this check (+4 if you critically hit Onyiji on your turn).

Critical Success You communicate especially insightful feedback and gain 2 Appraisal Points.

Success You gain 1 Appraisal Point for your commentary.

Critical Failure Onyiji openly wonders whether you're the right person to teach her. She gains a +1 status bonus on attack rolls against you during the combat, and you have a -1 circumstance penalty to Assess Onyiji's Performance. This bonus and penalty are cumulative with subsequent critical failures.

ONYIJI

CREATURE 8

UNIQUE LN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID ORC

Female half-orc staff warrior

Perception +15; darkvision

Languages Common, Orc

Skills Acrobatics +14, Arcana +16, Athletics +18, Intimidation +16, Nature +14, Warfare Lore +16

Str +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** +4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

Items +1 striking staff

AC 26; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +14, **Will** +16

HP 140

Attack of Opportunity ↻

Orc Superstition ↻ (concentrate) **Trigger** Onyiji is about to make a saving throw against a spell or magical effect; **Effect** Onyiji gains a +1 circumstance bonus to the triggering save.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ **staff** +20 (agile, two-handed d8), **Damage** 2d6+8 bludgeoning

Arcane Prepared Spells DC 26, attack +18; **2nd** *shocking grasp*, **1st** *true strike*; **Cantrips (4th)** *detect magic*, *produce flame*, *ray of frost*, *shield*

Spellstrike ♦♦ **Frequency** twice per day; **Effect** Onyiji casts a spell and couples it with a staff Strike. She casts *produce flame*, *ray of frost*, or *shocking grasp*, but the effects don't occur immediately. She makes a melee Strike with her staff and uses the attack roll result as the effect of both the Strike and the spell. This counts as two attacks towards her multiple attack penalty, but the penalties don't apply until after the Spellstrike.

Twisting Tree When Onyiji wields a staff in one hand, it gains the agile trait and its damage die size increases to d6 (these adjustments are reflected in the Strike above). When she wields a staff in two hands, it gains the parry, reach, and trip traits. She can Interact to Release or change her grip on her staff as a free action

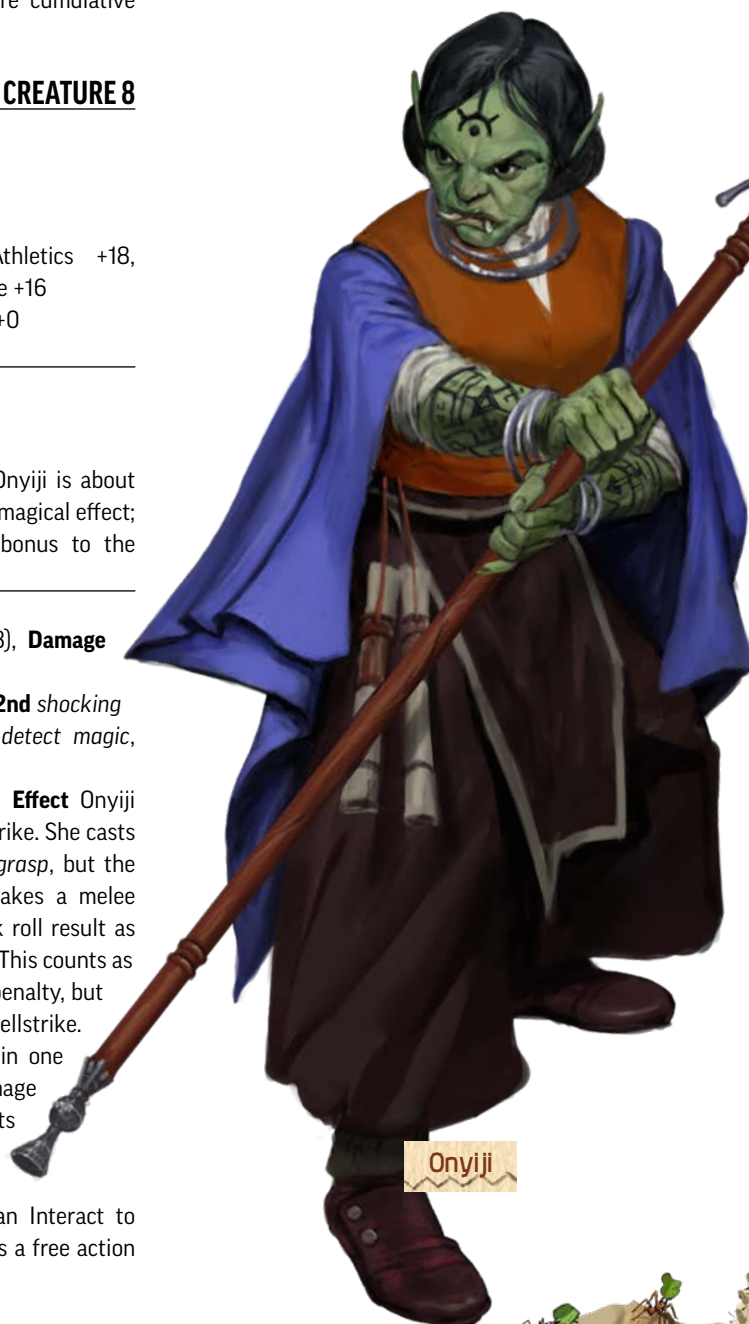
when she Strikes with the staff (including Strikes made in a Spellstrike).

Aftermath: If the hero sparring with Onyiji earns at least 1 Appraisal Point, Onyiji is in higher spirits than usual and thanks the teachers for indulging her. Other students ask Onyiji to teach them staff fighting skills.

XP Award: The heroes don't gain XP for defeating Onyiji; instead, award them 30 XP for each Appraisal Point earned in the duel, to a maximum of 120 XP.

HEROIC TALES

Fardrik and Selozè have developed something of a minor fascination with their teachers. Selozè, an



Onyiji

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aspiring novelist, has begun writing dramatic retellings of the heroes' various adventures, but he wants a deeper insight into who they are as people. He asks the heroes to take a walk around campus one day after class and share personal anecdotes. Fardrik comes along, occasionally interjecting leading or provocative questions. Of course, the heroes don't need to indulge the pair, but if they do, you should ask the players what stories they share. A successful DC 20 Performance check to tell one of these tales thrills Seloze (as does a successful DC 20 Deception check to invent or embellish a tale).

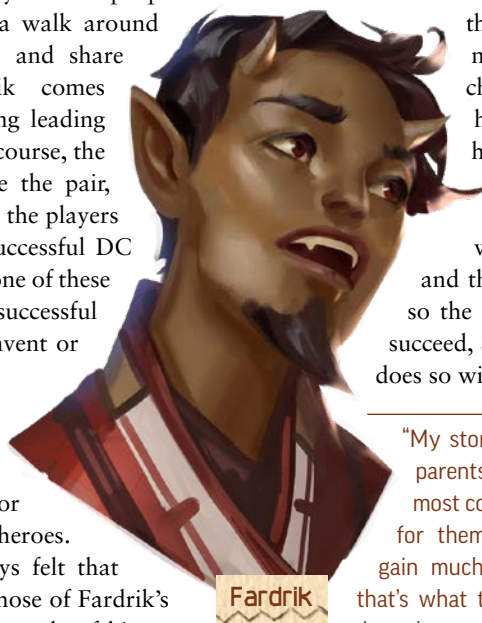
After hearing the heroes' tales, Fardrik excuses himself to study. Seloze then reveals that he has an ulterior motive for speaking to the heroes. The young tiefling has always felt that his stories don't compare to those of Fardrik's exploits. Seloze wants a daring tale of his own, and for that, he needs the heroes' help. Six-Faces Nemadu, the Learned One who leads the Emerald Boughs, has posted a request for information about a group of poachers hiding out in Nantambu. This task is intended for lore-speakers, although someone of a lower rank can seek out this information with a lore-speaker's permission. (Heroes with Emerald Boughs as their primary branch have likely heard of this minor task, and are perhaps keeping an eye out for a likely candidate to pursue it.)

Seloze is careful and attentive, both traits that make him ideal for the mission. If the heroes approve, he makes his preparations and leaves as soon as possible. During the next class session, Seloze is bruised and a bit disheveled, but otherwise no worse for wear. He provides a comprehensive report on the poachers, who are hunting for food rather than profit. Seloze concludes by naming some butchers in Nantambu who, if directed by Magaambyan faculty, might provide the poachers with cheaper meat so they needn't resort to crime. Despite Seloze's unqualified success at the mission, he grows increasingly despondent over the next few days.

The Truth of the Matter

Fardrik is worried about his boyfriend. He believes the only way to help Seloze out of his funk is to help him realize how amazing his life already is, and he asks the heroes for their help. He wants them—as people Seloze respects—to ask Seloze to tell his own story, genuinely,

with all the same flair and excitement he uses to tell everyone else's. He hopes that in doing so, Seloze will realize that his life is every bit as amazing as those of the people he admires. A hero must succeed at a DC 25 Diplomacy check to get Seloze to open up about his past; reduce this DC 20 if the heroes remarked positively on his report about the smugglers. On a failure, Seloze changes the subject with a joke or unrelated anecdote and then pretends to forget the question, so the heroes must try again later. If they succeed, Seloze shares his personal story, but does so with little enthusiasm.



Fardrik

"My story begins before I was even born. My parents wielded power and influence that most could only dream of, but it wasn't enough for them. They always sought more—and to gain much, much must be sacrificed. At least, that's what they always told me. And that's why, when they contracted with a very dangerous devil in Hell, I was to be their payment. Or, to be more precise, the payment was to be "the first-born daughter of the mortal party, upon her sixteenth birthday." When I told my parents I was a boy, they were furious. They said it would ruin them. I'm not sure if they meant that literally or not, and I never found out. That very night, I fled home and never looked back."


From then on, Seloze had to fend for himself, using what little magic he knew to stay alive. He lived a life of narrow escapes, hiding from deadly beasts and outwitting brigands. The further he ran, the more his talent grew, until he eventually found himself on the steps of the Magaambya and realized he could stop running. He sees his life as a boring tale of fleeing from adversity and finding refuge before it could catch him. It takes an outside perspective to reframe the events in a way that he can appreciate. The heroes can do so either through supportive roleplaying or with a successful DC 24 Diplomacy check, at your discretion.

While a single encounter isn't enough to completely change Seloze's outlook, he knows what the heroes (and Fardrik) are trying to do for him. He agrees to try his best to give himself more credit in the future.

XP Award: If the heroes succeed in getting Seloze to open up about his past, award them 80 XP.

THE LIFELONG STUDENT

The heroes' former mentor **Takulu Ot** (LG male human teacher), now their fellow lore-speaker, pulls



them to the side one day for a private conversation. Jumimo is by far the most learned student in the school, with more practical knowledge than most of the teachers. While he knows that Jumimo won't accept a promotion to lore-speaker, he doesn't know why. He has tried several times to convince Jumimo to graduate, and Jumimo flatly refuses each time, only stating that he "can't do it yet." While Takulu Ot hasn't been able to motivate Jumimo, he believes the heroes can.

Takulu suggests the heroes talk to **Nhyira** (NG genderfluid elf historian), one of the longest-tenured lore-speakers at the school. Unfortunately, Nhyira is a bit hard to pin down, as she's on sabbatical at this time to focus on her collections of rare flowers and mushrooms. Heroes who succeed at a DC 22 Diplomacy check to Gather Information track her down to a public garden on Nantambu's western edge. Although she first requires a little assistance repotting some bright flowers, Nhyira shares what she knows.

"Yes, I know the boy well. He was one of my first students, almost 50 years ago now. He enrolled together with his older brother, Tizawa. Those two, they were inseparable. They made a pact to graduate together and become teachers. Jumimo would always be fast at Tizawa's heel, but I don't think he ever minded. Jumimo's admiration inspired Tizawa to always do better, and those successes inspired Jumimo in turn.

"Slowly, Jumimo started to surpass his older brother. I don't think either noticed at first. But one day, Tizawa realized he couldn't keep up. Both boys had talent, but Jumimo always worked just a little bit harder. Tizawa grew increasingly frustrated until eventually it was too much and he left the school. Jumimo wrote him letters frequently, encouraging him to return, but Tizawa never replied. After a few years, he gave up on writing, but he still keeps his promise. He won't graduate without his brother."

Nhyira reveals that Tizawa never actually left the city. He works in Nantambu as an apothecary, but the brothers haven't seen each other in person in decades.

Finding Tizawa's apothecary shop isn't difficult; when the heroes enter, he welcomes them cheerfully. Any mention of his brother sours Tizawa's mood, but he hears them out. If the heroes reveal that Jumimo is now their student, he's incredulous. He was certain that Jumimo had become a lore-speaker at the Magaambya

by now. Tizawa had ignored Jumimo's letters because he assumed they would be full of gloating.

Learning the truth fills Tizawa with regret, but he promises to set things right. He leaves right away to go to the school and talk some sense into Jumimo. While the heroes aren't part of that private conversation, Jumimo finds them the next day and informs them he plans to become a lore-speaker at the end of the year. In the meantime, he'd like permission to pivot his studies toward medicine and spend half of each school day in his brother's apothecary shop.

Treasure: Teacher Ot is pleased to hear of Jumimo's pending graduation at last. He sends the heroes a *scroll of freedom of movement* in gratitude for their efforts.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for reconciling Jumimo and Tizawa.

I'BOKO'S DISAPPEARANCE

This event occurs near the end of the heroes' first year of teaching. One day, I'boko doesn't appear for class and is nowhere to be found. This is her first absence of the semester, but she doesn't reappear in the following days, either.

The students know that I'boko has left the Magaambya, but they're nervous about admitting this to their teachers for fear of getting her in trouble. A hero who asks the students about I'boko must succeed at a DC 25 Diplomacy check to get answers. Reduce this DC by 2 for each student the heroes have successfully aided in this chapter. On a failure, the students stay quiet until at least the next class session. On a success, the students admit what they know, which isn't much.

A few nights ago, I'boko received a letter from home. None of the students know what it said, but she immediately grew distressed and began packing her things. When pressed, she told her classmates that it was none of their concern and they should keep quiet. She was gone before morning; the students suspect she went home to Kiutu.

The heroes might discover the same information by investigating I'boko's hastily abandoned dorm room. A crumpled piece of paper in the corner is a letter from her father, Kolnoku. He says that their village was attacked, but no one was seriously hurt, and she doesn't need to leave school because they're rebuilding



Seloze

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on their own. Judging by the mess of hastily emptied drawers, it's obvious that I'boko didn't listen.

Once I'boko's departure is out in the open, the students feel guilty for not helping her sooner. They all agree to go after I'boko, with or without the heroes' approval. They've done research on their own (including some improper access of student records, which they don't mention), and learned that I'boko came from a village called Kiutu near Terwa Lake. Rather than simply disappear, as I'boko did, they plan to let their teachers know they're leaving for Kiutu.

The Bloodsalt Solution

High Sun-Mage Oyamba wants to meet informally with the heroes to ask how they're faring in their first year of classes. This meeting likely takes place in one of the heroes' offices, and they should decide which one. It's during this meeting that the heroes' students come by, fully packed, to announce their departure.

Oyamba's amusement is plain, even behind his mask. "Teachers lead their students, most of the time, but here at the Magaambya we believe that teachers must be prepared to go where the students lead them, as well." He gestures to the students, packed and ready, and continues, "If your students are eager to experience the wider world, it is up to you to guide them, not to stop them.

"But I cannot allow your students to abandon their studies, no matter how important they feel the task before them to be. As I recall, Kiutu is a village of boat-makers and fishers on the Terwa River, near Terwa Lake. It's also within a day or so of a very important research site that the school has been hoping to investigate for quite some time. This ruined city, Bloodsalt, has been mostly reclaimed by the red silt of the lake, but it once held a civilization of poorly understood 'dragon speakers,' about which we know little. With some archaeological work, we could learn much more.

"Students, I would like to assign you a few semesters of practical research in the ruins of Bloodsalt. You'd have to delay your departure a few days so we can outfit you with necessary archeological supplies and research materials. You'll be expected to keep detailed research notes about Bloodsalt, as whatever you write will be the only official record the school has. You could check on your friend while you're in the area. Would that be acceptable?"

The students' grim determination transforms into excitement; it's clear none of them expected to venture so far from Nantambu so soon in their academic careers. They share eager whispers, already making plans.

Oyamba continues, "Bloodsalt has some dangers, but I can think of no group of lore-speakers more capable of meeting them. You might even convince your errant

student to return to her studies, as she could do so close to home."

When the students are dismissed, Oyamba shares with the heroes the reason Bloodsalt is poorly understood. Terwa Lake occasionally produces a dense, odorless volcanic gas that lingers for days, choking out life with its toxic vapors. This gas is known as Dead Man's Breath, and might possibly be the reason Bloodsalt was abandoned a few generations ago. Oyamba provides the heroes and all of their students with silver charms that tarnish in the presence of the deadly gas; when the charm starts to change color, it's time to quickly abandon the region and stay away for at least a few days.

Oyamba asks the campus quartermaster Xhokan to assemble the necessary supplies, along with four determined, if plodding, donkeys to pull the laden wagons. Xhokan provides the heroes with an exceptionally detailed inventory list. He's happy to add any additional gear the heroes purchase.

The heroes can learn more about Bloodsalt and even Kiutu with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to Gather Information, or with a successful DC 22 Nature, Society, or relevant Lore check in the Magaambya's libraries. More information about both locations can be found starting on page 166 of *Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse*.

TRAVEL TO TERWA LAKE

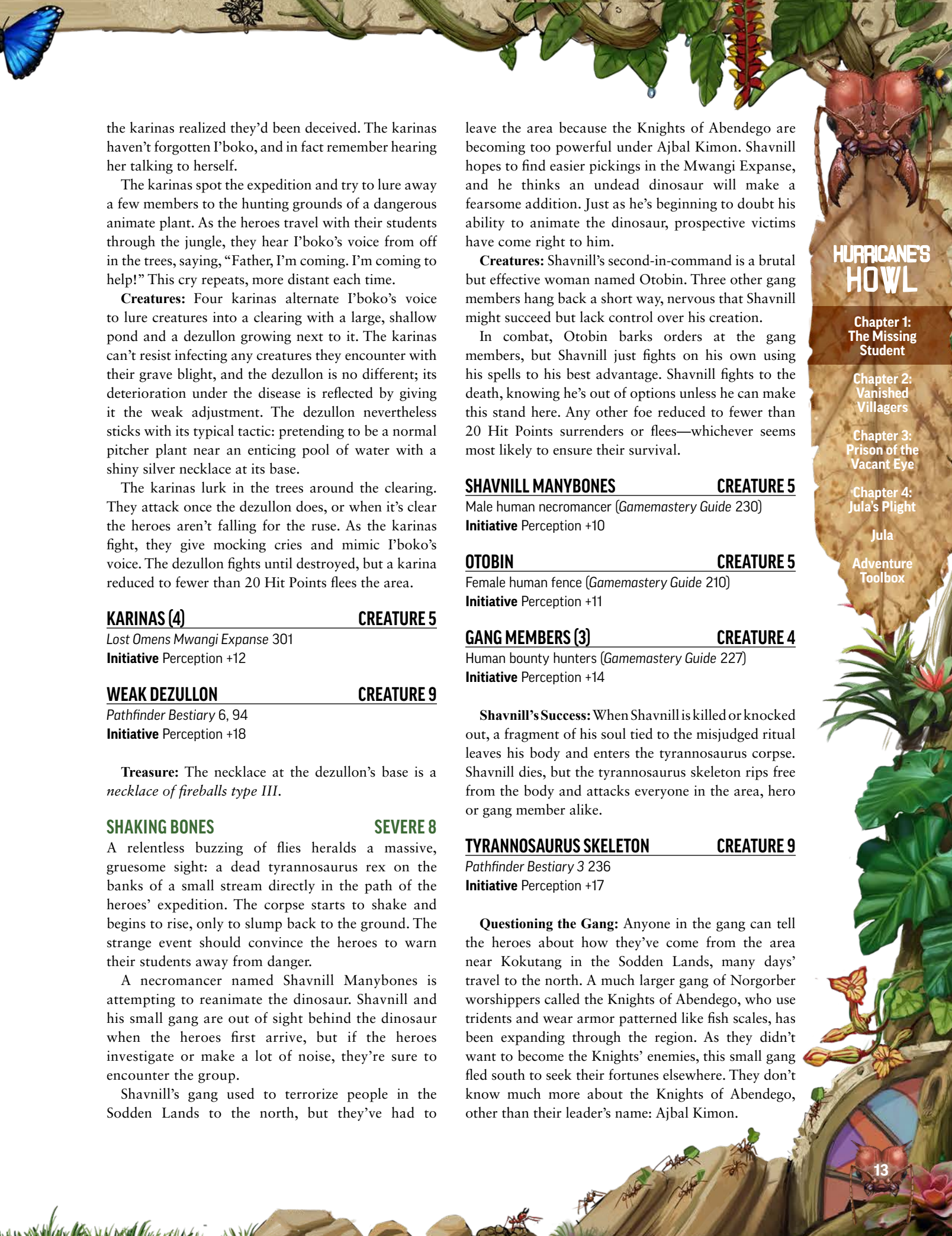
It takes several days for the heroes, their students, and all the necessary research materials to arrive in the Terwa Lake region. Bloodsalt is about 150 miles due west of Nantambu, and Kiutu about 30 miles north of Bloodsalt. It's up to the heroes which location they visit first, but as they're both in the same general direction, they don't need to decide until they're close to Terwa Lake.

Most of this journey is through jungle, but the last two days are across grassy hills. The roads west of Nantambu quickly become trails, then tracks, then nothing at all. The trip is straightforward but not entirely safe, and you should include at least one of the following encounters to show the region's isolation and foreshadow some later challenges the heroes will face. Maps for these encounters appear on page 8.

MOCKING CRIES

SEVERE 8

I'boko rushed through the jungle several days ago on her way to Kiutu, anguished over her village's fate. During her trip, she was spotted by two malicious owl-like monsters called karinas, but she distracted them with an illusion and hurried on her way before



the karinas realized they'd been deceived. The karinas haven't forgotten I'boko, and in fact remember hearing her talking to herself.

The karinas spot the expedition and try to lure away a few members to the hunting grounds of a dangerous animate plant. As the heroes travel with their students through the jungle, they hear I'boko's voice from off in the trees, saying, "Father, I'm coming. I'm coming to help!" This cry repeats, more distant each time.

Creatures: Four karinas alternate I'boko's voice to lure creatures into a clearing with a large, shallow pond and a dezullon growing next to it. The karinas can't resist infecting any creatures they encounter with their grave blight, and the dezullon is no different; its deterioration under the disease is reflected by giving it the weak adjustment. The dezullon nevertheless sticks with its typical tactic: pretending to be a normal pitcher plant near an enticing pool of water with a shiny silver necklace at its base.

The karinas lurk in the trees around the clearing. They attack once the dezullon does, or when it's clear the heroes aren't falling for the ruse. As the karinas fight, they give mocking cries and mimic I'boko's voice. The dezullon fights until destroyed, but a karina reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points flees the area.

KARINAS (4) **CREATURE 5**

Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse 301

Initiative Perception +12

WEAK DEZULLON **CREATURE 9**

Pathfinder Bestiary 6, 94

Initiative Perception +18

Treasure: The necklace at the dezullon's base is a *necklace of fireballs type III*.

SHAKING BONES **SEVERE 8**

A relentless buzzing of flies heralds a massive, gruesome sight: a dead tyrannosaurus rex on the banks of a small stream directly in the path of the heroes' expedition. The corpse starts to shake and begins to rise, only to slump back to the ground. The strange event should convince the heroes to warn their students away from danger.

A necromancer named Shavnill Manybones is attempting to reanimate the dinosaur. Shavnill and his small gang are out of sight behind the dinosaur when the heroes first arrive, but if the heroes investigate or make a lot of noise, they're sure to encounter the group.

Shavnill's gang used to terrorize people in the Sodden Lands to the north, but they've had to

leave the area because the Knights of Abendego are becoming too powerful under Ajbal Kimon. Shavnill hopes to find easier pickings in the Mwangi Expanse, and he thinks an undead dinosaur will make a fearsome addition. Just as he's beginning to doubt his ability to animate the dinosaur, prospective victims have come right to him.

Creatures: Shavnill's second-in-command is a brutal but effective woman named Otobin. Three other gang members hang back a short way, nervous that Shavnill might succeed but lack control over his creation.

In combat, Otobin barks orders at the gang members, but Shavnill just fights on his own using his spells to his best advantage. Shavnill fights to the death, knowing he's out of options unless he can make this stand here. Any other foe reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points surrenders or flees—whichever seems most likely to ensure their survival.

SHAVNILL MANYBONES **CREATURE 5**

Male human necromancer (*Gamemastery Guide* 230)

Initiative Perception +10

OTOBIN **CREATURE 5**

Female human fence (*Gamemastery Guide* 210)

Initiative Perception +11

GANG MEMBERS (3) **CREATURE 4**

Human bounty hunters (*Gamemastery Guide* 227)

Initiative Perception +14

Shavnill's Success: When Shavnill is killed or knocked out, a fragment of his soul tied to the misjudged ritual leaves his body and enters the tyrannosaurus corpse. Shavnill dies, but the tyrannosaurus skeleton rips free from the body and attacks everyone in the area, hero or gang member alike.

TYRANNOSAURUS SKELETON **CREATURE 9**

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 236

Initiative Perception +17

Questioning the Gang: Anyone in the gang can tell the heroes about how they've come from the area near Kokutang in the Sodden Lands, many days' travel to the north. A much larger gang of Norgorber worshippers called the Knights of Abendego, who use tridents and wear armor patterned like fish scales, has been expanding through the region. As they didn't want to become the Knights' enemies, this small gang fled south to seek their fortunes elsewhere. They don't know much more about the Knights of Abendego, other than their leader's name: Ajbal Kimon.

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Kiutu

Kiutu is a small village of about 200 people, primarily Bonuwat humans and Mbe'ke dwarves, on the east bank of the Terwa River. The village was founded, at least partially, through coincidence. A group of Bonuwat sailors, travelling inland along the river, crossed paths with a caravan of dwarven merchants traveling north. Their meeting point became a small trading post, which eventually became a village. The village is near enough to Terwa Lake to take advantage of the waterway, but just outside of the area plagued by the deadly volcanic gas.

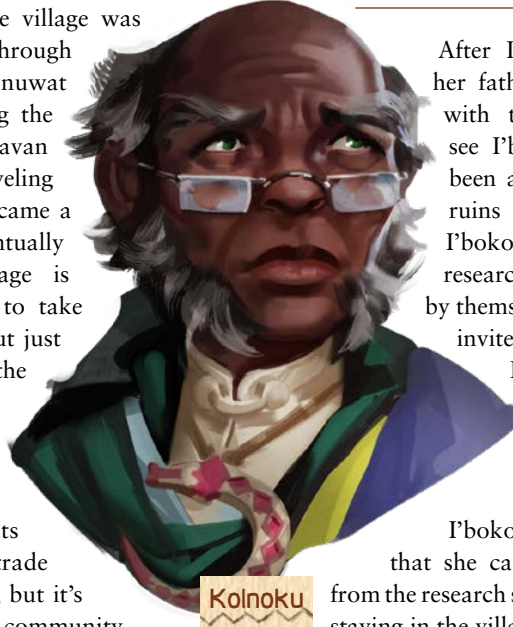
Most buildings in Kiutu are constructed primarily of clay brick, with woven roofs made from river reeds. Its population has declined as the trade routes gradually shifted away, but it's nevertheless still a thriving community. Fishing and boat-building are the most common professions, and Kiutu's boats are highly regarded across the northwest Mwangi Expanse. Many of Kiutu's youths, like I'boko, leave the village to hone their skills before returning once they've grown older.

When the heroes arrive, the village is still in an extreme state of disrepair after the recent attack by the Knights of Abendego. The roofs of several buildings have entirely burned away, and the Knights destroyed most of the village's boats and stole food and other supplies. No one was badly hurt, but their lives were upended. The villagers are still on edge, and are wary around the heroes until it's made clear they're from the Magaambya.

When they find I'boko, she's hard at work restoring her family's house, mending what she can with magic and repairing the rest by hand. Her father, Kolnoku, is a middle-aged dwarf who leans on a stone cane and wears a religious symbol of Uvuko, the Mwangi deity of metamorphosis and growth. He watches from a short distance away, giving instructions on the "right" way to repair a house, while I'boko shouts back, exasperated, that she knows what she's doing. When Kolnoku sees the group approaching, he takes a cautious step back as he looks them up and down.

"You approach openly, in daylight, so I assume you're not more Knights of Abendego. But you should know, I'm not in the mood for welcoming strangers at the moment."

I'boko looks up from her work when she hears talking and steps over, putting a hand on her father's shoulder. "It's fine, Baba. They're from the school."



After I'boko performs introductions, her father relaxes. If the students are with the heroes, they're happy to see I'boko and explain that they've been assigned to research the nearby ruins of Bloodsalt. They eagerly ask I'boko to come with them for this research expedition. If the heroes are by themselves, it's up to them whether to invite I'boko to rejoin her classmates.

I'boko is hesitant to leave her home in such a state, but her father insists she should go to pursue the learning she began.

The heroes can side with either

I'boko or Kolnoku, convincing I'boko that she can still help Kiutu occasionally from the research site, or convincing her father that staying in the village won't hurt her academically. Their choice will determine where I'boko can be found later in this adventure. If they can't decide or choose not to interfere, I'boko chooses to remain in the village.

Kolnoku—or anyone else in Kiutu—can answer any questions about the Knights of Abendego. Kolnoku only knows them as the roving bandits who attack unprepared travelers in the north. They've never raided this far south before, and their attack was far more organized than he'd expected. The Knights struck under the cover of darkness, rushing deep into the village before anyone even knew they were there. They said little, but claimed to be the hands of Norgorber.

When Kolnoku learns that the heroes are going to be working near Bloodsalt, he warns them about the toxic gas and says that when exposed silver visibly tarnishes, it's time to hurry away until the gas dissipates in a few days. He doesn't know much about Bloodsalt, except that it used to be called the City of Dragon-Speakers long ago. The true reason has been lost to time, but he theorizes it has something to do with the historical prevalence of cloud dragons in the Terwa region. Mbe'ke dwarves have a long history of peaceful coexistence with cloud dragons, and Kolnoku is well-versed in the old folktales. If the heroes struggle to interpret their findings in Bloodsalt, Kolnoku may be able to provide some assistance. Although he's more than a day's journey away from Bloodsalt, he insists that his help is always available to the heroes.

Ruins of Bloodsalt

Bloodsalt was abandoned over a century ago, but remains surprisingly well preserved. Its swift destruction caused little damage to the existing structures, but in the intervening years, it's been beset upon by wind, rain, and restless undead. Most of the stone buildings still stand, some as high as three stories tall—though the lowest floors are often buried in red silt. Bronze towers jut from the tops of the grandest buildings.

The silt has preserved much from the city. Remnants of market stalls and animal-drawn carts jutting from the silt prove that the city was once a bustling commercial center, and submerged skeletons show that death came quickly to the community. Geologists and naturalists agree that Bloodsalt's ruin came from an unusually potent buildup of volcanic gas in the lake, released by a seismic event such as an earthquake. This pairing of events occurs only once every few hundred years; when it does, the gas is so heavy and thick in the air that running away becomes virtually impossible.

In fact, Bloodsalt was the third grand city to rise and fall on the east bank of Terwa Lake. Signs of the first two cities can be found throughout the ruins of the third, as each was built on top of the last. Architecture and art from several distinct cultures across three different time periods mingle here in a way that is wholly unique to Bloodsalt. An archaeologist could spend a lifetime unraveling the influences they had on each other. If the heroes can clear it of danger, they may be the first to study the city in detail since its destruction, laying the foundation for every academic to follow.

The heroes should realize that the ruins might contain dangerous monsters or old traps; certainly, the students all know this. The heroes should therefore explore the ruins first, while the students get the research camp and tents set up a safe distance away. If the heroes attempt to bring the students with them into danger, Mariama takes them aside to give them a lecture about their foolishness and insists the students will pick up the work only when they've ensured this part of the ruins is safe.

FEATURES OF THE RUINS

As much of the ruins are covered with the iron-rich silt and alluvial mud of the lake, the most exposed section makes the best starting point for the Magaambya expedition. Here, the city is ringed by a stone wall that has fallen apart in places. Within the wall, the clinging silt makes the ground difficult terrain.

The ruins aren't empty. Not only are rumors of restless dead true, but a cloud dragon named Ixamè survived

A PARTIAL MAP

The heroes might have acquired a folio with a partial map of Bloodsalt in "Kindled Magic." This map not only gives a rough outline of this part of Bloodsalt, but also notes the building in the middle of the ruins, labeled "Hatchery." In addition to providing the heroes some information about the area, this map can also be used to help remind the cloud dragon Ixamè of her role in area A8.



the city's destruction, in a fashion. Additionally, a spirit naga named Vyrina arrived a year ago to exert her will over the dead and now makes her home in the ruins. More recently, an unscrupulous treasure hunter named Thiarvo the Quick came to Bloodsalt with some mercenary tomb robbers in his employ. Although Vyrina doesn't much care for the legacy preserved in the city's stone, preferring instead to treat with the bog mummies beneath the silt, Thiarvo goes out of his way to destroy anything he can't steal.

This portion of the ruins of Bloodsalt appear on page 16. The ruins are much larger than this section, but the dangers and discoveries in the rest of Bloodsalt are outside the scope of this adventure.

A1. MUDWRINGER CAMP

SEVERE 8

Before arriving in Bloodsalt, the heroes and their students see smoke from a campfire just outside Bloodsalt's walls. The camp belongs to the treasure-hunter named Thiarvo the Quick, a sprightly Song'o halfling who's traveled all over the world collecting treasures from old ruins and lost cities. He's commissioned a group of loyal mercenaries he calls the Mudwringers.

Thiarvo maintains a pleasant demeanor to hide his crafty and greedy nature. He plans to take whatever he can from the ruins and deface anything else, to impede anyone who follows him from getting any riches or claiming secrets he wasn't able to seize. Although perceptive heroes might see through Thiarvo's deceptions right away, some groups might only learn of Thiarvo's malice once they've seen some of the recent damage in the ruined city.

When the heroes first arrive, Thiarvo welcomes them. He invites the heroes to sit by his fire and rest after their journey. Thiarvo asks a lot of questions and seems particularly interested in the heroes' status at the Magaambya and their intentions for this expedition. Thiarvo's mercenaries lurk at the edge of the camp, as they know to stay out of the halfling's way.

Once Thiarvo understands why the heroes have come, he realizes he's in danger of losing his unimpeded

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RUINS OF BLOODSALT
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



A6

A3

A4

A8

S

A7


A2

A5

A1



16



access to the ruins of Bloodsalt. He begins his first ploy to get them out of the picture.

The halfling's face falls, and he looks genuinely sad. "Such a long way to go to have to turn around. I don't suppose you contacted the Assembly of Speakers in Cloudspire, much less obtained the approval of Thabsing, the High King of Cloudspire himself? Because I did. Oh, the dwarven bureaucracy! But I was pleased to do it, because Bloodsalt bears the legacy of cloud dragons, and all things related to cloud dragons in the Terwa Uplands fall under Cloudspire's jurisdiction. So I've got the first, best, and only right to be here. I'll ask you to keep back from the city, let's say six miles? Perhaps there are some buried roads or crumbling outposts you can investigate instead?"

There are a number of things wrong with Thiarvo's claim, but he delivers his lies boldly. First, he has no proof of his authority to be in the ruins because he never got any. If the heroes challenge him on this, he ducks into a tent long enough to acquire a bronze medallion he recovered from the ruins a few days ago, bearing the stylized image of a dwarf with dragon wings atop a bronze minaret. "Thiarvo" is scratched on the back. He insists this is a "authorized explorer's token" given to him, when he merely scratched his name on the back a few days ago so the mercenaries wouldn't get ideas about stealing it. A successful DC 30 check to Sense Motive catches the devious halfling in his lie, but a successful DC 24 Nature check realizes that bits of red silt in the medallion show it came from the ruins of Bloodsalt, probably very recently.

Second, Thiarvo is building upon poorly remembered details about Cloudspire, since he's never been there. A hero who succeeds at a DC 24 Society check knows that the current High King is named Lek'sanji; Thabsing is a naval admiral.

Finally, Thiarvo's statement about Cloudspire's authority extending to Bloodsalt just because of a draconic connection is also dubious. A hero who succeeds at a DC 24 Arcana or Society check recalls that dragons are independent, and cloud dragons more than most. A dragon with authority over Bloodsalt wouldn't claim it from distant Cloudspire.

If the heroes confront Thiarvo in any of his lies, he glibly deflects, asking them to leave for the night and come back to talk in the morning. If the heroes persist, Thiarvo moves from duplicity to strongarm tactics, hinting that they'd best keep away from Bloodsalt if they know what's good for them. As he delivers this threat, he gives a subtle hand sign to the Mudwringers to get them ready for a fight if the heroes don't comply. A hero who succeeds at a DC 25

Perception check catches Thiarvo's signal, and if that hero succeeds on a DC 20 Society check, they know what it portends.

Creatures: If the heroes insist on being confrontational, Thiarvo and his four mercenaries attack. All four like to get in close, using trick attacks to keep their foes off balance. Thiarvo prefers to attack targets his own size. The mercenaries are loyal, but they surrender or flee if reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points. Thiarvo is wholly invested in this venture and doesn't surrender or flee, fighting to the last to protect what he believes to be his vast treasures within Bloodsalt.

THIARVO THE QUICK

CREATURE 9

Page 90

Initiative Perception +20

MUDWRINGER MERCENARIES (4)

CREATURE 5

NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human tomb raiders (*Gamemastery Guide* 217)

Initiative Perception +13

Dividing the Mudwringers: If the heroes get through this initial conversation without triggering a fight, dealing with the treasure hunters becomes a little bit easier: this becomes two Low-difficulty encounters rather than a single Severe-difficulty encounter.

Thiarvo realizes he should eliminate the heroes as soon as he can, so he sends his mercenaries to attack them while they sleep. He doesn't participate in the attack; on the off chance the heroes survive, he tries to claim that he was entirely unaware that his assistants would take such a heinous and sinister action. Thiarvo's claims of innocence ring hollow if the heroes managed to capture and question one of the mercenaries during the nighttime attack, or if they overcome his Deception DC of 30.

In either case, Thiarvo tries to slip away into the ruins as soon as he can, counting on the fact that he knows them better than the heroes. He then tries to set up ambushes as they move through the ruins, picking off anyone who lags behind the group or attacking when the heroes are recovering from another encounter.

Searching the Tents: None of the people here allow the heroes to search their tents, but the heroes might come back when they've dispatched the treasure hunters (or sneaky heroes might poke around while the discussion is going on). One tent contains four barrels of alchemical ingredients particularly useful in making alchemist's fire, though no vials of the substance are here. A hero who succeeds at a DC 20 Crafting check realizes these materials are useful primarily as an

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exceptionally unreliable explosive, such as that which brought down the tower in area A2. Thiarvo intends to use them to excavate areas of the ruins he can't easily reach or to bring down buildings he has already explored. A fifth barrel is currently next to the sealed entrance in area A7.

Treasure: The camp contains several items the Mudwringers have wrested from the ruins, including a *sphere barricade stone* (page 75). Each of the four barrels of explosives weighs 5 Bulk and is worth 100 gp. In the tent with the alchemical ingredients are two *explosive bolts*, suitable for igniting the explosives from a distance. The bronze medallion Thiarvo tries



Mudwinger Mercenary

to pass off as his “authorized archaeology token” is worth 90 gp.

A2. COLLAPSED TOWER

MODERATE 8

The upper levels of this building have collapsed over the lower levels, leaving only a twisted bronze spire amid chunks of red-stained stone.

A successful DC 22 Crafting check indicates that this tower was brought down by some sort of alchemical explosive, and that it came down within the last few days. Thiarvo plundered the building and wanted to test his explosives, so he collapsed the entire structure.

Creature: The destruction of the tower disturbed several bodies buried deep in the silt. Their spirits had been dormant until the explosion, but the mix of fiery ruin, trapped gases, and the lingering rage and guilt of Bloodsalt's draconic defender combined into a creature called a screaming sulfur. It oozes out from beneath the ruin to attack when anyone steps close.

The screaming sulfur fights until destroyed. If its wailing continues for at least 4 rounds, four bog mummies in area A3 take notice, claw their way to the surface, and lumber over to attack. This takes an additional 3 rounds but might result in a particularly tough fight.

SCREAMING SULFUR

CREATURE 10

Page 84

Initiative Perception +22

Rejuvenation: The screaming sulfur rejuvenates here after 1d4 days, but it's then much more proactive in seeking out intruders. Because of the wailing, it's unlikely to surprise anyone, but its continual rejuvenation might vex the heroes. The screaming sulfur is only put to rest permanently once Ixamè dies.

A3. RESIDENTIAL AREA

LOW 8

This part of the city once contained several upscale homes, though it now holds only the bodies of residents poisoned in Bloodsalt's destruction a century ago.

Creatures: When living creatures intrude in this area, residents preserved as bog mummies Rise Up to the surface and attack. There are eight bog mummies here, but only four attack at once; the others don't rise unless living intruders leave and return again. The bog mummies in each wave fight until destroyed.

BOG MUMMIES (8)

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 177

Initiative Stealth +13

Treasure: A hero who Searches this area finds evidence of how upper-class residents once lived and three well-preserved serving platters worth 60 gp each.

A4. CONVERTED SHOP

MODERATE 8

Negative psychic energy clings to the shore of Terwa Lake, growing stronger with each successive fall of the communities built there. About a year ago, the spirit naga Vyrina discovered this energy and made her nest in an abandoned shrine in Bloodsalt, where she enjoys the solitude and the ruined, desolate landscape. She's been controlling the local bog mummies through magical manipulation and intimidation, using them to gather magical items from different parts of the ruins to add to her growing hoard. She keeps her valuables displayed on shelves still affixed to the wall, mimicking the former shop's displays with red-stained relics and decaying treasures.

Creatures: Vyrina spends most of her time in this shop, waited on by two bog mummies. She has seen others, like the Mudwringers, seeking treasures in the ruins over her short time here, but senses the heroes to be more than common thieves. She thus regards them with curiosity rather than hostility, asking why they've come and what their plans are in the ruins. But some things, she realizes, are worse than mere thievery. She's horrified by the thought of a gaggle of students poring over her ruins for months at a time, and shrieks at the heroes to take their expedition and leave.

However, Vyrina is willing to discuss a compromise with the heroes. Her first suggestion is that the teachers and students can explore the ruins for a single week, then they must depart forever; obviously, this is unworkable from the Magaambya's perspective. She's open to any reasonable counter-proposal the heroes make, up to exploration for a full year—Vyrina expects to be here much, much longer than that anyway. The heroes must agree not to destroy any of the buildings still standing in the ruins, as Vyrina loves their desolate look, but she doesn't mind if they destroy any of the creatures lairing here other than herself.

Another aspect the heroes might leverage is that Vyrina hates Thiarvo and the Mudwringers. She knows they collapsed the tower in area A2 and suspects they've got more destruction planned for the ruined city. Vyrina wants the heroes to eliminate these destructive trespassers (or is delighted if they've already done so).

To seal negotiations, a hero must succeed on a DC 28 Diplomacy check (or a related check based on the heroes' negotiations, such as Deception if they've lied to Vyrina or Intimidation if they've tried to bully her). If they've eliminated the Mudwringers or promised to do

so, reduce this DC to 24. On a success, Vyrina agrees to the deal and gives the heroes the vase in her collection as a token of her promise. On a critical success, she lets them choose another item on display to take, in addition to the vase. On a failure, Vyrina tries to subtly cast *subconscious suggestion* on as many heroes as she can, suggesting they negotiate a different deal that's more in Vyrina's favor. On a critical failure, she denounces the heroes as liars and attacks immediately.

Vyrina also fights if the heroes attack her or try to steal from her. She likes to stay back from melee and use her debilitating spells like *confusion* and *paralyze*, letting her bog mummies fight up close. She slithers away and leaves the ruins if reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points, but the bog mummies fight until destroyed.

VYRINA

CREATURE 9

Female spirit naga (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 179)

Initiative Perception +18

BOG MUMMIES (2)

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 177

Initiative Stealth +13

Treasure: Vyrina has amassed many treasures in her shop, although the only valuable ones are a *moderate red-rib gill mask* (page 76), a *greater staff of providence* (*Advanced Players Guide* 264), and a vase that depicts a cloud dragon sheltering the city of Bloodsalt under its wings. At the very heart of the illustrated Bloodsalt, there is an egg with cloudlike patterns on its shell. The vase is worth 200 gp.

A5. MURAL WALL

LOW 8

An awning of wood and stone which has somehow withstood the long years shelters this long exterior wall from the elements, protecting the mural it holds. This mural depicts several humans growing billowing, cumulous wings and taking flight above a spired city. A gap in the all obscures part of the mural's narrative.

A hero who succeeds at a DC 20 Society check realizes that the city is Bloodsalt and the images are the "Dragon-Speakers" of popular local lore. On a critical success, the hero notices that the people first gain their wings while near an egg-shaped building. This is a clue about the hatchery (area A8).

Tumbled stone interrupts the mural and obscures the ultimate destination of the depicted Dragon-Speakers. The students can restore this section with diligent work, and from there they can make guesses about the fate of the residents who fled Bloodsalt. But

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first, a dangerous creature lurks in the room beyond the broken wall. Packed silt 3 feet deep covers the floor of the darkened room beyond. A single arm bearing a gleaming gold bracelet juts up from the silt.

Creature: A family died together while huddling in this building, and their grasp upon one another persists in death; they arose as a bog mummy amalgamation. At first, the only part of the amalgamation sticking above the silt is the arm bearing the bracelet. When the silt in the room is disturbed, the entire creature

Rises Up to attack. The amalgamation can't fit easily through the gap to pursue foes; it must succeed at a DC 20 Acrobatics check as a single action to squeeze through it. It fights until destroyed.

BOG MUMMY AMALGAMATION CREATURE 9

UNIQUE LE LARGE MUMMY UNDEAD

Perception +18; darkvision, tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet
Languages Common, Necril

Skills Athletics +19, Stealth +16 (+18 while buried in silt)

Str +6, **Dex** +1, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

AC 27; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +15, **Will** +20

HP 160, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Resistances** fire 10; **Weaknesses** cold 10

Breath of Silt (aura, divine, enchantment, mental) 30 feet. A creature that begins its turn within the area feels as if its lungs are filling with silt and must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or be unable to speak or breathe.

The creature can still hold its breath and can attempt a new saving throw at the end of its turn. A creature that succeeds is temporarily immune to breath of silt for 24 hours.

Rise Up ➤ **Trigger** A creature walks on top of the bog mummy amalgamation lying buried in the silt below;
Requirements Initiative has not yet been rolled; **Effect** The bog mummy amalgamation notices the creature automatically and Burrows before rolling initiative.

Speed 20 feet; burrow 15 feet

Melee ➤ fist +20 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+5 plus bog rot

Bog Rot (curse, disease, divine, necromancy, negative) This affliction can't be reduced below stage 1, nor can the damage from it be healed, until it's successfully treated with *remove curse* or a similar effect; the affliction can then be removed as normal for a disease. A creature killed by bog rot melts into a noxious sludge and can't be resurrected except by a 7th-level *resurrect* ritual or similar magic; **Saving Throw** DC 21 Fortitude; **Stage 1** carrier with no ill effect (1 minute); **Stage 2** 3d6 negative damage and clumsy 1 (1 day).

Fist Flurry ➤➤ The amalgamation makes two fist Strikes against two different targets within its reach. Its multiple attack penalty doesn't increase until after both attacks.

Treasure: The amalgamation wears jewelry worth 55 gp and a polished gold bracelet etched with draconic runes. The bracelet is a *cloud dragon rune bracelet* reading "Hatchery Attendant" in flowing Draconic script.



Bog Mummy Amalgamation

A6. SHORELINE

The waters at the eastern edge of Terwa Lake are tinged a blood red from the grains of silt suspended in it. Large, red-ribbed salamanders lurk in the water near the shore, wary of the undead in the city but eager to snap at meat that comes within reach. These salamanders don't have the strength or numbers to threaten the heroes, or even the students so long as they remain wary. They're also particularly tasty, and Onyiji and the anadis spend their free time hunting them once they're situated in the ruins.

A7. HATCHERY EXTERIOR

This massive, circular building has a mosaic running entirely around it. The mosaic depicts a cloudy sky that makes the entire building appear as if it's floating. Writing in flowing Draconic script circles the building and reads, "Defend to the death those who defend us." The building has resisted the wear and staining of other buildings in Bloodsalt due to fortunate placement and Ixamè's lingering magic. A hero who examines the building closely and succeeds at a DC 24 Perception check sees several names in Draconic hidden amid the cloud mosaics, along with dates. The most recent, with a date that began two centuries ago and has no end, is "Ixamè." That mosaic piece is loose and can be carefully removed, if the heroes choose. The names are those of cloud dragons who served a tenure guarding the hatchery inside this building. Ixamè's tenure coincided with Bloodsalt's destruction.

There's no obvious entry to this building, but a pair of thin, vertical lines run through the mosaic that indicate the presence of a door. There are no handles or latches to open it. The Mudwingers spotted these lines but haven't gotten around to opening it yet; a crate of alchemical explosives, like those found in the tent in area A1, are set near the cracks to blow the door open (and ruin the nearby mosaics in the process).

The heavy door grinds open in the presence of anyone carrying the *cloud dragon rune bracelet* from area A5, as the hatchery attendants were free to come and go from this building. Otherwise, opening the door requires careful manipulation of the narrow seams with four successful DC 25 Thievery checks to Pick a Lock. The heroes can also open the door by triggering the Mudwingers' explosives, but this shatters most of the mosaics on this side of the building and rouses Ixamè, in the chamber beyond, to violence.

Treasure: The barrel of alchemical explosives weighs 5 Bulk and is worth 100 gp.

A8. HATCHERY

The sealed room's interior was once a cloud dragon hatchery tended by Ixamè, the last in a long line of cloud dragon guardians who protected the hatchery and the city around it. The hatchery was an important place, visited by supplicants seeking draconic wisdom and the humanoid "hatchery attendants" who carefully saw to the care of dragon eggs and helped raise young cloud dragons. Hatchery attendants knew their short lives only allowed them to raise their young charges for a fraction of their long period of growth, but the title was nonetheless prestigious, granted only to the most knowledgeable and compassionate.

When the Dead Man's Breath blew over Bloodsalt and poisoned the populace, Ixamè was sealed inside the hatchery and didn't realize that doom had come to the city. When no one came for several days, Ixamè became curious. When she opened the sealed door, poison flowed in and Ixamè realized she had doomed the eggs she swore to protect. The poison didn't quite kill Ixamè, but put her into a half-undead state infused with poison and sustained by grief and rage.

This massive room was once beautifully decorated, but Ixamè's grief-stricken rampage destroyed most of walls, revealing bare stone behind them.

Creature: Ixamè is a cloud dragon in a strange, half-dead state. If the heroes entered without waking her, the dragon lies still as though dead, curled around three petrified dragon eggs. She rouses when anyone approaches, disoriented but not immediately hostile. The trauma of her sudden near-death and pain of losing the eggs has damaged her memory. She looks quizzically at the heroes and asks, "Who am I? What is this lair? Am I protector, poisoner, killer?"

The heroes have the opportunity to tell Ixamè about her role, if they've learned it. Ixamè imperiously demands tangible proof of claims the heroes make—she wants them to show her, not just tell her. The following items each allow a hero to attempt the Remind Ixamè activity, but each item can be presented to her only once.

- The vase from area A4.
- The *cloud dragon rune bracelet* from area A5.
- The mosaic piece with Ixamè's name, from area A7.
- The three petrified eggs here in this chamber.
- The map of area B6 from page 36 of "Kindled Magic."

REMINDEXAMÈ

AUDITORY CONCENTRATE EXPLORATION LINGUISTIC MENTAL

You present evidence of Ixamè's role in Bloodsalt and remind the cloud dragon of her past. Attempt a DC 24 Arcana or Diplomacy check.

Critical Success Ixamè's memories come back in a wave,

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and she becomes lost within them. She is stupefied 2, which is cumulative with other stupefied conditions from this action. When she reaches stupefied 3, Ixamè lies down, gives a heavy sigh (which affects everyone in the room as with her Breath Weapon), then dies for good.

Success As critical success, but stupefied 1.

Failure Your attempts to invoke Ixamè's memories only enrage her. Treat any future failure at this action as a critical failure instead.

Critical Failure Ixamè's mind is utterly overcome with grief and fury. She loses any stupefied condition and attacks immediately.

If the heroes detonated the explosives to gain entry to the hatchery, or otherwise forced their way in using noisy means, Ixamè is already awake and ready to

fight, as though they'd critically failed the Remind Ixamè activity.

IXAMÈ

CREATURE 10

UNIQUE N LARGE AIR DRAGON ELEMENTAL UNDEAD

Female poison-wracked young cloud dragon (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 89)

Perception +22; darkvision, mist vision, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic

Skills Acrobatics +20, Athletics +21, Deception +20, Diplomacy +18, Intimidation +22, Nature +18, Stealth +18, Survival +16


Str +7, **Dex** +2, **Con** +5, **Int** +2, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +4

Mist Vision Fog and mist don't impair a cloud dragon's vision; Ixamè ignores the concealed condition from fog and mist.


AC 30; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +18, **Will** +20


HP 175, negative healing; **Immunities** electricity, paralyzed, poison, sleep


Frightful Presence (aura, emotion, fear, mental) 90 feet, DC 26


Deflecting Cloud  **Trigger** Ixamè is the target of a ranged attack; **Requirements** Ixamè is aware of the attack and has a free wing; **Effect** Ixamè rapidly flexes one of her wings and creates a billowing cloud of mist. She is treated as if she were hidden for the purposes of resolving the triggering attack, so normally the attacker must succeed at a DC 11 flat check to target her. Ixamè also gains a +4 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Speed 40 feet, fly 140 feet; cloud walk

Melee  jaws +23 (poison, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+13 piercing plus 1d12 poison

Melee  claw +23 (agile), **Damage** 2d8+13 slashing

Melee  tail +21 (reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d12+13 bludgeoning

Melee  horn +21 (deadly d8, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d12+11 piercing

Primal Innate Spells DC 29; **2nd** *obscuring mist*; **1st** *gust of wind* (at will)



Ixamè

Breath Weapon ♦♦ (evocation, poison, primal) Ixamè breathes a cloud of poison like that emitted from Terwa Lake that deals 11d6 poison damage in a 40-foot cone (DC 29 basic Reflex save). She can't use Breath Weapon again for 1d4 rounds.

Cloud Walk Ixamè can tread on clouds or fog as though on solid ground.

Draconic Frenzy ♦♦ Ixamè makes two claw Strikes and one horn Strike in any order.

Draconic Momentum Ixamè recharges her Breath Weapon whenever she scores a critical hit when making a Strike.

Treasure: Ixamè's eyes shrivel in her skull when she dies and roll onto the floor as sky-blue gems. Each is an *Ixamè's eye* (page 76).

Practical Research and Restoring Kiutu

Once the heroes check in at Kiutu and overcome the dangers in the ruins, the students waste no time setting up the encampment to begin their study of the ruins of Bloodsalt.

The heroes have access to two downtime activities, each of which takes 1 month of time. The first is Practical Research in Bloodsalt, a downtime activity described on page 63 of "Kindled Magic." As an alternate activity during a month, one or more heroes can help with Kiutu's restoration, which earns Restoration Points that the heroes share as a group. A hero can't perform both Practical Research and Rebuild Kiutu in the same month. The heroes shouldn't realize they're on a timer, but after 3 months of downtime activities, you should begin the events of the next chapter.

Though the occasional release of the poisonous gas called Dead Man's Breath poses a constant danger to those who travel through the ruins of Bloodsalt, the students and the heroes all receive advance warning from the tarnishing on their silver charms. There's plenty of time to vacate the ruins to someplace safer. After only a few days away from the ruins—which the students celebrate as arbitrary yet mandatory time off—the heroes and their students can return to pick up their research where they left off. The gas might affect activities on a day-to-day basis, but it doesn't impact these month-long downtime activities.

I'boko would prefer to help her village rebuild, but she feels comfortable investigating the ruins with the other students if the heroes advise it. Their decision has an impact on I'boko's fate, as described at the beginning of the next chapter.

PRACTICAL RESEARCH IN BLOODSALT

DOWNTIME

Requirements You are a lore-speaker and have unrestricted access to the ruins of Bloodsalt.

You carefully explore the ruins of Bloodsalt with your students, pointing out archaeological evidence your branch would find most interesting. Choose either your primary or secondary branch, and attempt a skill check against a standard DC of the branch's level. You can use Diplomacy or one of the branch's associated skills for this check. This activity takes 1 month.

Critical Success An amazing discovery! You find previously unseen evidence regarding Bloodsalt's vanished residents that's certain to bring renown to you and your students. You gain access to the Bloodsalt Dragon Disciple archetype feats. Increase the branch level of the branch you chose by 2.

Success The evidence you uncover is interesting and your students learn much from your instruction. Increase the branch level of the branch you chose by 1.

Failure You're unable to uncover much of interest. Your branch level remains the same.

Critical Failure You or your students damage the ruins in a way that makes future examination more difficult. You must skip your next month of downtime repairing the damage and can't perform this activity or Rebuild Kiutu during that month.

REBUILD KIUTU

DOWNTIME

You travel back and forth to Kiutu from the Magaambya camp over 1 month, helping to rebuild their village from past raids and fortify their defenses for the future. Attempt a DC 24 Athletics, Crafting, or Society check.

Critical Success You restore some of the village's buildings and, more importantly, the villagers' confidence in their ability to thrive despite the attacks. You gain 1 Restoration Point, and all skill checks to Rebuild Kiutu in the next month have a +1 circumstance bonus.

Success Your work to restore the village is solid. You gain 1 Restoration Point.

Failure You don't aid Kiutu much with your work, but the villagers appreciate that you tried.

Critical Failure You inadvertently undermine a foundation stone, flood part of the village, or collapse part of a defensive wall. You lose 1 Restoration Point (to a minimum of 0).

XP Award: Award the heroes 10 XP for each success or critical success they achieve performing practical research in Bloodsalt. In addition, award them 30 XP for each Restoration Point they've earned at the end of the 3 months (to a maximum of 150 XP).

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"... And with the thieves driven away and the half-dead dragon put to rest, Bloodsalt was quiet once more. The students were free to learn the secrets of the ruins, and to help I'boko restore her home. In just a few short months, Kiutu was as fine a village as you had ever seen. But the peace did not last long. The evil Knights descended from the north once again, but this time they were not satisfied with stealing food and causing chaos. This time, they stole people," the old woman said, letting a somber pause hang in the air.

"The lore-speakers steeled themselves for the journey ahead. They knew that this time, their students must stay behind, because their journey would take them into the very heart of danger. They crossed the wide savanna, following the Knights' path. The Knights did not respect the nature they travelled through, and so their trail was obvious. It was along that trail that they met a group of raiders sent by—"

"The Terwa Lords! Even they hate evil knights!"

The old woman raised an eyebrow. "Oh, are you telling the bedtime stories now, little one? Should I let you tuck me in while you finish the tale?"

"No, please, you tell it the best!"

"Are you sure? You seem ready to be our family's own little lore-speaker."

uzuwe pouted at her grandmother's teasing and the old woman laughed. "Okay, okay. Then let me tell you about the Terwa Lords. Those iruxis from the Sodden Lands whisper words like 'empire' and 'destiny.' And even now, when prophecies fail and fall forgotten, they have the power to see glimpses of the future written in the stars. Our heroes learned this firsthand when they met the iruxi raiders, still nursing wounds from their battle with the Knights.

"Eventually, the lore-speakers crossed the river into the rain-soaked north, and followed the Knights to their lair in the mountains. The hurricane raged on, and they marched toward that dark prison."





CHAPTER 2: VANISHED VILLAGERS

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After the heroes spend 3 months near the ruins of Bloodsalt, the events of this chapter begin. Read or paraphrase the following.

Just after dawn, an exhausted young man stumbles into the camp, plainly worn out from running through the prior day and all through the night. "The Knights have returned to Kiutu! They're taking people this time—they took Kolnoku!" His frantic message delivered, the young man collapses.

If the heroes encouraged I'boko to stay with her father in Kiutu, she was taken prisoner alongside him, and they can rescue her in Chapter 3. If they instead convinced I'boko to come to Bloodsalt, she's the first to leave the Magaambyan camp, running for Kiutu as quickly as she can. Unless the heroes are quick to arrive, she beats them there, confirms her father has been captured, and chases off after the Knights herself. It's up to you whether the heroes catch up to her on the way (perhaps imperiled by one of the threats in this chapter) or whether she's far enough ahead to have been captured by the jailers in the Prison of the Vacant Eye.

Assessing Kiutu

Evidence of the recent attack on Kiutu is obvious. Dozens of people are missing, kidnapped by the Knights of Abendego; in a village of only 200, the loss is devastating. The village's state depends on how many successful Restoration Points the heroes earned at the end of Chapter 1.

0 Restoration Points: The villagers had barely finished rebuilding and had no defenses in place for this recent attack. There are fewer than a dozen survivors, each too overwhelmed by loss to do anything but weep.

1–2 Restoration Points: The villagers had begun preparing a few rudimentary defenses when the second attack came. Many buildings still smolder, and the fifty or so survivors are reverently burying the dead.

3–4 Restoration Points: With the heroes' help and expertise, Kiutu was in better shape than it had been in years. Although there are a few dead and many wounded, more than a hundred people remain in Kiutu.

5 or more Restoration Points: The attackers couldn't penetrate very deeply into the town and simply grabbed whomever they could. There are no dead, but many wounded. Other than the few dozen kidnapped by the Knights, everyone else in town has survived.

The Knights made no effort to hide their tracks or disguise their movements, as they believe the villagers are too cowed and weak to come after them. The heroes can start their pursuit of the Knights right away, but if they have fewer than 5 Restoration Points, the villagers

CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter, the heroes leave their students behind in Bloodsalt to rush after villagers that the Knights of Abendego have kidnapped from Kiutu. There are several encounters the heroes face as they cross the Mugumo Plains, and you have some flexibility to reorder them based on what works best for your table. Although the heroes won't catch up to the Knights of Abendego in this chapter, you should keep up the pressure and the pace as they travel. The Mugumo Plains aren't just full of enemies; the heroes might make allies of iruxi raiders sent by the Terwa Lords, and they have an opportunity to free some abducted villagers who've inadvertently gone from a bad situation into a worse one.

CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 2 are as follows.

- *+1 striking gaff*
- *armbands of athleticism*
- *collar of empathy*
- *fighter's fork*
- *grievous rune*
- *iron medallion*
- *moderate sturdy shield*
- *scroll of 4th-level clawsong*
- *scroll of 6th-level Girzanje's march*
- *storm bolt (as storm arrow)*
- *vanishing coin*



beseech them to help tend the wounded and lay the dead to rest. This takes no more than a few hours, but successfully easing the villagers' distress requires a successful DC 24 Medicine check, or a DC 26 Diplomacy, Religion, or Society check. Increase these DCs by 1 for every Restoration Point fewer than 5 that the heroes earned.

XP Award: If the heroes successfully ease the villagers' distress, award them 30 XP.

Mugumo Plains

Ancient runes and scarlike crevices dot the lush savanna of the Mugumo Plains. An incredible variety of life call these plains home, but the best known are the plentiful mugumo fig trees that give the region its name. While the heroes may not be able to undo all of the harm the Knights left in their wake, they may be able to repair some of it.

The Knights have too great a lead for the heroes to catch them, but they can reach the Knights' initial destination—the Prison of the Vacant Eye near Jula—by following their trail. This prison is about 160 miles due north from Kiutu, and travel takes several days.

You can intersperse the following encounters, one or two per day, during the trip. You need not present these in the order listed, but the Undead Knight encounter should come sometime before Terwa Lords. When the heroes reach the prison, go to Chapter 3.

AERIAL PREDATOR

MODERATE 9

This encounter occurs at a campsite the Knights used a few days ago. You might place this encounter only a few hours outside of Kiutu, to show where the raiders camped before launching their attack, or you might have the heroes come across this campsite while they're following the Knights northward back to Jula.

The camp doesn't have any useful gear, just a hastily made fire ring filled with ashes and plenty of abandoned food and other refuse. The Knights knew they needed to travel quickly, and carelessly discarded their trash before breaking camp. Examination of the campsite reveals that there were around 20 Knights camped here. If the Knights are traveling with prisoners, there's also evidence of a site where dozens of people were all tied together and lashed to a thick, stunted tree.

The map for this encounter appears above.

Creature: The Knights didn't realize they'd passed through a kongamato's hunting grounds. The draconic predator only just realized that interlopers have been in the land he claims as his own. He arrives while the heroes are looking over the camp, mistakes them for the people who so carelessly trashed his land, and opens combat with his Wailing Dive. He then makes Flying Strafes for as long as he's able, and flees when reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points.

If the heroes talk to the kongamato, he screeches about trespassers despoiling his land. If they convince the creature that they aren't to blame for the trashed camp and are after the people who left the mess, the kongamato lets them depart peacefully. This requires a successful DC 29 Diplomacy check, but if the heroes produce gifts or otherwise express their respect for the kongamato or the land, you can reduce or even waive this DC.

KONGAMATO

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 152

Initiative Perception +19

CREATURE 11

Treasure: Amid the refuse is a pouch with 65 gp that one of the Knights accidentally left behind.

UNDEAD KNIGHT

MODERATE 9

The heroes come across the obvious aftermath of a skirmish. There are two dead Knights of Abendego and five dead iruxis on churned ground stained with blood and pockmarked with boot and claw prints. At the center of the chaos, a third dead Knight is propped up in her half plate armor, a trio of spears sticking through her body and keeping the corpse upright.

Here, the Knights encountered scouts of the Terwa Lords, an aggressive group of iruxi conquerors who strive to subjugate an increasingly large swath of the Sodden Lands. The Terwa Lords seek to unite all iruxis under one banner and form a new empire. The Knights didn't expect the Terwa Lords to range this far from the lands they've claimed and knew that combat was inevitable. The Knights prevailed, but they lost two of their number and their raid leader, Bharlen Sajor.

A hero who examines the dead iruxis and succeeds at a DC 15 Society check to Recall Knowledge realizes that they were Terwa Lords. On a critical success, the hero remembers that the Terwa Lords are aggressive and expansionist, but value honesty and openness. They bear grudges, and losing a battle like this isn't something they'd likely forget or forgive.

Indeed, the Terwa Lords group that lost this fight haven't given up on the Knights just yet. They fled but then doubled back on their tracks to find out

more about the Knights' numbers, prisoners, and destination. The heroes can meet up with the Terwa Lords in the next encounter.

The map for this encounter appears on page 26.

Creature: The propped-up corpse is that of Bharlen Sajor. A devotee of Norgorber and an eager follower of Ajbal Kimon, Bharlen happily led the Kiutu raid. An iruxi astrologer that Bharlen impaled on her trident used their last breath to curse the knight, infusing Bharlen's armor with dread energy. Other iruxis slew Bharlen, but the curse won't let her soul rest; she is now a graveknight. She animates for the first time when the heroes approach the battlefield, her flesh and blood dissolving away in sparks of electricity to reveal gray bone beneath. She steps easily out of the spears that impaled her and attacks.

Bharlen lives for battle, and even though she doesn't understand her new nature, she fights the heroes until destroyed. If no one is around when she rejuvenates, she follows the trail left by the retreating Terwa Lords to get revenge.

BHARLEN SAJOR

CREATURE 11

UNIQUE **NE** **MEDIUM** **UNDEAD**

Female graveknight (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 190)

Perception +21; darkvision

Languages Common, Necril

Skills Athletics +24, Intimidation +22, Stealth +20, Survival +20

Str +5, **Dex** +7, **Con** +7, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +5

Items +1 breastplate, heavy crossbow (20 bolts and 2 storm bolts [as storm arrows]), trident

AC 32; **Fort** +22, **Ref** +24, **Will** +18

HP 190, negative healing, rejuvenation; **Immunities** death, disease, electricity, paralyzed, poison, unconscious

Rejuvenation (divine, necromancy) When Bharlen is destroyed, her armor rebuilds her body over the course of 1d10 days—or more quickly if the armor is worn by a living host (see Graveknight Armor, *Bestiary* 191). If the body is destroyed before then, the process restarts. Bharlen can only be permanently destroyed by obliterating her armor (such as with *disintegrate*), transporting it to the Positive Energy Plane, or throwing it into the heart of a volcano.

Sacrilegious Aura (abjuration, aura, divine, evil) 30 feet. When a creature in the aura uses a positive spell or ability, Bharlen automatically attempts to counteract it, with a +18 counteract modifier.

No Escape **Trigger** A creature within Bharlen's reach moves away from her; **Effect** Bharlen Strides up to her Speed, following the foe and keeping it in reach throughout this movement.

Speed 25 feet

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Melee ♦ *shock trident* +24 (electricity, magical, shove), **Damage** 3d8+11 piercing plus 1d6 electricity

Melee ♦ fist +23 (agile, electricity, magical), **Damage** 2d6+11 bludgeoning plus 1d6 electricity and Push

Ranged ♦ *shock heavy crossbow* +24 (electricity, magical, range increment 120 feet, reload 2), **Damage** 2d10+8 piercing plus 1d6 electricity

Ranged ♦ *shock trident* +24 (electricity, magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 3d8+11 piercing plus 1d6 electricity

Brute Strength Bharlen deals an extra 1d8 damage with tridents, and a trident gains the shove trait while she is using it in melee (both the extra damage die and the shove trait have been included in Bharlen's trident Strikes above).

Devastating Blast ♦♦ (arcane, electricity, evocation) Bharlen unleashes crackling lightning in a 30-foot cone. Creatures in the area take 6d12 electricity damage (DC 30 basic Reflex save). Bharlen can use this ability once every 1d4 rounds.

Graveknight's Curse This curse affects anyone who wears a graveknight's armor for at least 1 hour. **Saving Throw** DC 40 Will save; **Onset** 1 hour; **Stage 1** doomed 1 and cannot remove the armor (1 day); **Stage 2** doomed 2, hampered 10, and cannot remove the armor (1 day); **Stage 3** dies and transforms into the armor's graveknight.

Ruinous Weapons Any weapons Bharlen wields gain the effects of the +1 *striking* and *shock* runes.

Sodden Strike ♦♦ (conjuraton, divine, water) Bharlen calls to the endless storm to lend murderous power to her blows. She makes a Strike; on a hit, seawater appears in the target's lungs and the target is sickened 1 (sickened 3 on a critical hit).

Weapon Master Bharlen has access to the critical specialization effects of any weapon she wields.

Two Trails: It's clear that the two groups who fought here, the iruxis and the Knights, went off in different directions. Regardless of which trail the heroes follow, they reach the same place a few miles later, as the Terwa Lords waited until the Knights passed before doubling back across their trail.

Treasure: Four of the dead iruxis are scouts, while the other is the astrologer who cursed Bharlen. The scouts don't have any gear worth taking, but the astrologer's corpse still carries a scroll of *4th-level clawsong* (page 77), a scroll of *6th-level Girzanje's march* (page 77), *armbands of athleticism*, and a round stone etched with markings to indicate the astrologer's hatching date. This small stone is worth 5 gp.

TERWA LORDS

SEVERE 9

The Terwa Lord scouts have camped along the trail left by the Knights, hoping to learn more about these intruders from their tracks before deciding what to do about them. The Terwa Lords are self-interested expansionists; their first priority is to defend their growing lands against malicious forces like the



Bharlen Sajor

Knights of Abendego. This advance group is on a secret scouting mission for the leaders of the Terwa Lords, but only this group's leader, Ssaraku, has all the details. The attack put her in an awkward position, because the mission is important but it's also vital to learn more about the Knights' movements.

The iruxis in the camp spot the heroes at about the same time the heroes spot them. The camp consists of four temporary huts woven from tall grasses. Three shelter wounded iruxis and those providing them care; the fourth belongs to the group's leader and her child Ssarazul. There are fewer than a dozen iruxis here, but all are well-armed and attentive.

Two iruxis move to interpose themselves between the heroes and the camp. A taller iruxi with old battle scars crossing over her chest and shoulders approaches from behind these guards, appraising the party with the eyes of a seasoned veteran.

"State your names and intentions. If you intend to do us harm, we will kill you. If you lie to me, we will kill you."

This is Ssaraku. She doesn't want a fight so soon after the last one, but neither does she want to let strangers pass unquestioned. If the heroes mention they're from the Magaambya or that they're enemies of the Knights of Abendego, Ssaraku realizes they might be allies and is eager to hear more from them.

She orders the guards to stand down and introduces herself as Scout Leader Ssaraku Akai of the Terwa Lords. The iruxis' confrontation with the Knights was unintended; the two groups happened to be traveling along intersecting paths, and when the Knights saw the iruxis, they attacked. The iruxis fought well, and the Knights were hampered by several prisoners they needed to keep in line while fighting, but the Knights prevailed and the iruxis had to retreat. Ssaraku is obviously unhappy about leaving the slight unanswered.

Ssaraku offers to share a meal with the heroes, and invites them to camp nearby for safety. If the heroes try to return the gear from the dead astrologer at the battlefield, Ssaraku insists they keep it all except for the hatch stone, which she takes to return to the astrologer's family.

Creatures: Most of the iruxis in the camp are reluctant to get into another fight with a large group of strangers, and thus treat the heroes with caution. Ssaraku, a strong and courageous iruxi with a star-shaped birthmark over one eye, leads this group. Ten iruxis remain under her

command. Ssaraku's strongest warriors are two other Terwa chosen, iruxis who've been marked by star signs at birth. Their names are Urukani Tenth-Star and Ghiashi. Ssaraku's chief advisor is Giri, a venerable Terwa star reader who is at least two decades older than the next oldest iruxi in the group. The six wounded iruxis are scouts; they were the ones most hurt in the battle. Ssarazul's magic has brought them



Ssaraku Akai

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back from the brink of death, but they're not yet at full health.

SSARAKU AKAI

CREATURE 9

Female elite Terwa chosen (83, *Bestiary* 6)

Initiative Perception +21

TERWA CHOSEN (2)

CREATURE 8

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Initiative Perception +19

GIRI

CREATURE 7

Male Terwa star reader (page 82)

Initiative Perception +18

LIZARDFOLK SCOUTS (6)

CREATURE 1

Pathfinder Bestiary 231

Initiative Perception +8

Lingering Injury The lizardfolk scouts were nearly at death's door. They are drained 2, and enfeebled 2 for as long as they are drained.

XP Award: If the heroes approach the iruxis peacefully, award them 120 XP as though they'd defeated the group in combat.


The Star Reader Speaks

Ssaraku doesn't like idle chitchat and has no desire to give any sort of history lesson on the Terwa Lords or explain her group's current mission (which is to scout out communities in the Sodden Lands for incorporation into the Terwa Lords' empire). If the heroes have bigger questions about her society or culture, she calls over Star Reader Giri. The thin, elderly iruxi is hunched with age and seems out of place among the raiders with his many charms and trinkets. He's delighted that the heroes are curious about the Terwa Lords and is happy to answer nearly any question they have, though he can't tell them anything about the group's current mission. More information about the Terwa Lords appears on page 181 of *Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse*.

Why are the Terwa Lords so determined to conquer/subjugate/dominate the Terwa Uplands? "I suppose, to an outsider, it would seem like a mission of conquest. Tell me, in your history books, did you call it conquest when the elves formed their great nation to the north? What about when the dwarves carved their way up through the mountains to create a domain on the surface? I suppose they did call it conquest when the orcs founded Belkzen. Perhaps the less one looks like the majority, the more their actions are vilified. So it doesn't surprise me that others call it conquest when the 'lizardfolk' claim a home. No, we do not seek to conquer. We seek to unify. It is time for the iruxis to take our place among the nations of others. Many of us would be willing to do so peacefully. Those who try to hold us back are responsible for any violence."

How are the Terwa Lords ruled? "The strong and honorable lead us, and the greatest of our leaders rule us. To gain the recognition of the others, your leader must be able to earn the title of Warcaller. Consider them our governing council, though they





would abhor such a sedentary title. But not all leaders, no matter how skilled, are suitable as Warcallers. Ssaraku is a good leader, but her skills are in swift movement across the plains and quick eye for danger in the hills. She will not be a Warcaller. What she thinks about that, only she can say.”

What is a star reader? What do you do? “To put it simply, a star-reader’s calling is to advise those of great import, like our dear Ssaraku. My duty is to provide guidance beyond the logical scope. If the stars foretell our mission going well, then we know that we can proceed as planned. If they predict misfortune, then we know we should change course. I also offer guidance on personal matters and help settle disputes. And I happen to have enough skill as a healer to make myself useful when that guidance is not as urgent.”

Ssaraku's Request

Ssaraku says little over the meal she shares with the heroes, preferring to let Giri do the talking while she keeps a careful eye on their guests. Eventually, she starts to tell a little about herself. She’s confident that she is the strongest scout leader among the Terwa Lords, but doesn’t believe she will ever rise higher in the ranks as her place is on the fringes of the Terwa Lords’ territory. She wants more for her child, however, and believes an education at the Magaambya would be the best way to prepare them for a higher leadership position than Ssaraku could ever obtain.

In exchange for the heroes’ promise to admit Ssarazul to the Magaambya, Ssaraku promises to come back after completing her current mission (about which she says nothing) and help the party face the Knights. She can’t promise when that will be, as she’s unsure how long her current mission will take, but she gives her word.

This offer places the heroes in a somewhat difficult position. While they do technically have the power to endorse a new student, it’s exceedingly rare for a lore-speaker to do so this early in their teaching career. An endorsement is also not a guarantee; the final determination must be made by an impartial faculty member (just as Takulu Ot admitted the heroes at the beginning of the Adventure Path). If the heroes endorse a student who doesn’t have the necessary skills, it reflects poorly on their judgment. They might also feel apprehensive sponsoring a student from the Terwa Lords, as this could give the appearance of the Magaambya taking a side in an ongoing conflict.

The heroes’ best option, if they wish to entertain Ssaraku’s request, is to administer a brief aptitude test and gauge her child’s potential based on their abilities alone. **Ssarazu Akai** (N nonbinary Terwa prodigy, page

82) is currently on the other side of the camp. They’ve grown bored following their mother around on raids and scouting missions; the Magaambya sounds like an exciting place to learn more about their natural abilities and find out how they can contribute to the world. Ssarazul is honest about their abilities, showing the heroes their innate primal magic and answering any questions about their knowledge, competence, and attitude that the heroes wish to pose. It’s probably not difficult for the heroes to see that Ssarazul is more skilled than the heroes were upon their own admission to the Magaambya and would make a fine addition to the Magaambya’s student body.

If the heroes approve Ssarazul, Ssaraku wastes no time. She has Ssarazul and Ghiashi pack and set out for Nantambu right away.

Treasure: If the heroes talk to Ssarazul, the iruxi presents some bark sheets they brought along to study more primal magic. These notes provide the heroes with access to the spells *gasping marsh*, *stormburst*, and *swampcall* (page 77).

XP Award: Award the heroes 80 XP for assessing Ssarazul’s abilities and sending the iruxi to study at the Magaambya.

BHARLEN'S VENGEANCE

MODERATE 9

If the heroes didn’t destroy the graveknight Bharlen’s armor, and it’s been at least a day since her defeat, Bharlen has rejuvenated and trailed the iruxis. In a fortunate coincidence, from her perspective, the heroes are present as well, so she can avenge herself against both groups at once. If the heroes took her weapons, she’s already acquired replacements.

This encounter works particularly well if the heroes camped near the iruxis. Use one of the maps on page 26 for this encounter.

Creature: Now aware of her ability to rejuvenate when destroyed, Bharlen throws herself into the fight with reckless enthusiasm, using her Devastating Blast on as many foes as possible before rushing into melee. This time around, the fight is likely to be a little easier, as Ssaraku and the Terwa chosen fight on the heroes’ side (or just Ssaraku and Urukani Tenth-Star, if Ghiashi has already left the camp). Once again, Bharlen fights until destroyed, cackling with laughter as she believes her return is inevitable.

BHARLEN SAJOR

CREATURE 11

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Initiative Perception +21

XP Award: If all of the iruxis survive the fight with Bharlen, award the heroes an additional 30 XP.

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A Gift Foretold

When the heroes get ready to leave the encampment, as long as there has been no physical violence, Urukani Tenth-Star chases after them, calling for them to wait. This tall, imposing iruxi has green scales with yellow spots on his back that form the shape of his birth constellation. He asks if it's true that the heroes are lore-speakers, and if they confirm it, he begs them for a gift—any gift at all.

Urukani explains that before leaving his village, an astrologer told him that he would encounter a group of strangers who seek to tame that which can't be tamed. According to his fortune, those strangers would give him a gift that would be the difference between life and death. He believes the heroes are those strangers, and pleads for them to grant him anything that may change his fate.

If the heroes give Urukani any gift at all, he reacts with gratitude as though they had just pulled him from a burning building, squeezing them in a tight embrace.

Treasure: To thank the heroes for “saving his life,” Urukani offers them a *grievous* rune on a *runestone*.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for giving a gift.

BAOBAB ORCHARD

The massive fig trees that give the Mugumo Plains their name are generally solitary plants—they grow too large and their roots spread too wide to allow other plants to grow nearby. The plains are nevertheless suitable for all manner of other flora, and long ago, enterprising siblings started a baobab orchard near the Terwa River. The trees are healthy and strong, but transportation proved too difficult, so they abandoned the orchard and its large buildings. Grasses have overgrown the yard between the house and storage barn, but everything otherwise remains in good shape.

The Knights of Abendego grew inattentive with their prisoners, and five villagers seized the opportunity to escape. They discovered the orchard, which seemed an ideal place to hide out before heading back to Kiutu. Unfortunately, they soon had company: a gang of boggards annoyed a mobogo, a creature the boggards believe to be a living representative of their goddess, Gogunta. The mobogo demanded sacrifices from the boggards, who were unable to provide them and decided to flee instead. The mobogo pursued, chasing

them all the way to the orchard. The boggards were pleased to find the hiding villagers here, as they could finally give the mobogo the sacrifices it expected. They imprisoned the villagers in a shed while making preparations in the abandoned house. Meanwhile, the mobogo squats in the storage barn, adjusting the interior to its liking and making demands of the boggard servant sent to placate it until the sacrifices are ready.

The map of the buildings at the center of the baobab orchard appears on page 32.

B1. ORCHARD

LOW 9

Neat rows of baobab trees hint that this area was once cultivated as an orchard, though the laden trees and overgrown path hint that it hasn't been tended in a season or longer. From deeper in, a gurgling cry of pain echoes down the twisting path.

The buildings at the orchard's center are just barely visible between the rows of trees, but this twisting path takes an indirect route to them. There are several footprints in the grass along the path; a successful DC 20 Survival check indicates that a small group of humanoids wearing boots came this way a few days ago, and were more recently followed by several frog-like creatures.

Creatures: A group of tree-dwelling bloodsuckers called asanbosams dwell at the far edge of the orchard, where they catch animals coming to nibble on the baobabs. Asanbosams aren't particularly bright, and it took them several days to muster the interest to investigate the recent activity at the orchard's center. They've come creeping through the trees and are now warily watching the path from above. Though neither the imprisoned humans nor the boggards know it yet, the asanbosams are present and happy to pick off any creatures that come by.

The asanbosams try to attack with surprise, using their Attack from Above ability. As soon as any two asanbosams are defeated, the others flee through the treetops and don't return.

ASANBOSAMS (4)

CREATURE 6

Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse 293

Initiative Perception +17

B2. FARMHOUSE PORCH

The wide porch of this farmhouse looks out on an overgrown yard. The roof of the porch has partially collapsed, putting the front door of the farmhouse into deep shadow.

The dilapidated porch looks unstable, but it remains sturdy enough to support the weight of several creatures. Anyone listening at the door hears the rhythmic croaking of the boggards chanting inside.

B3. MAIN ROOM

MODERATE 9

The wooden table in this large dining room has been cracked in half and pushed against the walls of the room, near a cupboard with its doors torn off and foodstuffs strewn about. The floor is a disgusting slurry of mud, decaying plant matter, and fouler substances.

Creatures: The repugnant ritualist Grouloop lairs here in the common room of the farmhouse. She's the most powerful of the boggards but isn't truly their leader, as she spends her time in a dreamy daze barely connected to the waking world. She maintains this state by consuming dried dragonflies from a pouch at her side. While in this daze, she feels a close connection to Gogunta and can reach out to powerful creatures of field and fen. As she's the most religiously minded of the boggards, the others left the preparation of the humanoid sacrifices for the mobogo in her hands. Grouloop has drawn a variety of esoteric spirals and runes in the muck hauled into this room as the ritual focus, but her work moves slowly; she keeps forgetting why the boggards are here and what she's supposed to be doing. She's two days into the three-day *consecrate* ritual to dedicate this building to Gogunta.

Grouloop is dangerous despite her dreamy daze. She's quick to attack anyone who intrudes on her lair using her most powerful spells like *cloudkill* and *hydraulic torrent*. She hardly cares whether these spells affect the two boggard hunters aiding her. Grouloop fights to the death, but once one hunter falls, the other flees.

GROULOOP

CREATURE 9

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM AMPHIBIOUS BOGGARD HUMANOID

Female boggard ritualist (*Bestiary* 44)

Perception +18; darkvision

Languages Boggard

Skills Athletics +17, Deception +16, Intimidation +18, Nature +18, Religion +18

Str +4, **Dex** +0, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +3

Items bag of dead dragonflies, leather armor, sickle

AC 27; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +15, **Will** +21

HP 185

Speed 20 feet, swim 25 feet; swamp stride

Melee ✦ sickle +20 (agile, trip), **Damage** 1d4+6 slashing

Melee ✦ tongue +20 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d4+6 bludgeoning and Tongue Grab

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Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 28, attack +20; **5th** (2 slots) *cloudkill*, *hydraulic torrent*; **4th** (3 slots) *acid arrow*, *freedom of movement*, *summon elemental*; **3rd** (3 slots) *animal vision*, *glyph of warding*, *stinking cloud*; **2nd** (3 slots) *darkness*, *water walk*, *web*; **1st** (3 slots) *fleet step*, *grease*, *mending*; **Cantrips (5th)** *acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *read aura*, *tanglefoot*

Rituals DC 28; *consecrate* (2nd), *primal call* (6th)

Soul-Shaking Croak ◆◆ (sonic) Grouloop utters a powerful croak that deals 6d10 sonic damage to any non-boggard within a 30-foot emanation (DC 27 basic Fortitude save). A creature with the frightened condition that fails its saving throw increases its frightened condition by 1 (on a critical failure, the creature is also fleeing for as long as it is frightened). Grouloop can't use Soul-Shaking Croak again for 1d4 rounds.

Swamp Stride Grouloop ignores difficult terrain caused by swamp terrain features.

Tongue Grab If Grouloop hits a creature with her tongue, that creature becomes grabbed. Unlike with a normal grab, the creature isn't immobilized, but it can't move beyond the reach of Grouloop's tongue. A creature can sever the tongue by hitting AC 24 and dealing at least 9 slashing damage. Though this doesn't deal any damage to the boggard, it prevents her from using her tongue Strike until she regrows her tongue, which takes a week.

BOGGARD HUNTERS (2)

CREATURE 7

CE MEDIUM AMPHIBIOUS BOGGARD HUMANOID

Boggard hunter (Bestiary 44)

Perception +14; darkvision

Languages Boggard

Skills Athletics +16, Intimidation +12, Stealth +15 (+17 in water), Survival +14

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

Items greatclub, javelin (5), studded leather armor

AC 24; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

HP 140

Speed 20 feet, swim 25 feet; swamp stride

Melee ◆ greatclub +18 (backswing, shove), **Damage** 1d10+7 bludgeoning

Melee ◆ tongue +18 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d4+7 bludgeoning and Tongue Grab

Ranged ◆ javelin +15 (thrown 30 feet), **Damage** 1d6+7 piercing

Sneak Attack A boggard hunter deals an additional 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Swamp Stride A boggard hunter ignores difficult terrain caused by swamp terrain features.

Terrifying Croak ◆ (auditory, emotion, fear, mental) The boggard unleashes a terrifying croak. Any non-boggard within 30 feet becomes frightened 1 unless they succeed

at a DC 25 Will save; those who critically succeed are temporarily immune for 1 minute.

Tongue Grab As Grouloop, but AC 22 and 7 damage.

B4. BUNK ROOM

LOW 9

This bunk room was once subdivided by hanging curtains, but the boggards tore down and shredded those curtains for lizard nests, so this is now one large room. Three bunk beds show recent use by boggard hunters, and there's a nest in one corner large enough for three very big lizards.

Creatures: Two boggard hunters and a pair of trained giant lizards doze here. Sounds of combat in nearby areas (the main room or around the prisoner shed) rouse them, but the boggards assume it's the mobogo demonstrating its displeasure and don't intervene. They prepare themselves for a fight, however, so noisy heroes who come into this room find the boggards and lizards ready for combat. The lizards fight to the death, as they've been trained, but a boggard reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points flees through the main room, alerting any boggards there, and runs away through the orchard.

BOGGARD HUNTERS (2)

CREATURE 7

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Initiative Perception +14

GIANT FRILLED LIZARDS (2)

CREATURE 5

Bestiary 229

Initiative Perception +11

Treasure: The nest contains a gnawed arm with a bloody *vanishing coin* looped around its wrist.

B5. PRISONER SHED

LOW 9

This old wooden shed stands apart from the main farmhouse. It's made of scrap wood and is in much worse shape than the farmhouse, sagging slightly to one side. Posts that likely once supported a wooden fence extend to the west and south, with weeds growing up between them. The shed's only door is barred closed from the outside with a broken fence post.

Grouloop declared that the humanoids' presence in the farmhouse would spoil her ritual preparations, so the boggards instead keep them locked in this large shed. The walls are flimsy, but the people inside know they wouldn't get far if they tried to escape, as the guards outside circle the shed regularly. The five villagers are two married couples and a traveling tinsmith with the poor luck to get caught up in the

Knights' raid. All five have armed themselves with leftover tools they've found in the shed, but they're dispirited and hopeless, as they realize there's no way they'll be able to overpower the giant and the boggards outside. The statistics for these prisoners can be found on page 215 of the *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*, if necessary.

Creatures: The guards for this shed rotate regularly with those in the bunk room, but at any time there's a single boggard hunter and a giant frilled lizard trained to follow its commands. There's also a marsh giant named Youuti who joined up with the boggards a few years ago because he had nowhere else to go; the boggards respect the giant's strength and consider him useful to have around. They don't let Youuti sleep in the bunk room, so he just naps in the weeds when he gets tired. All of these guards gorge themselves on baobabs whenever they get hungry, and they've stripped the nearby trees of their fruit. If the heroes are stealthy in their approach, either Youuti or the boggard might be encountered climbing a tree deeper in the orchard. It's only a matter of time before they run afoul of the asanbosams and simply disappear in the trees, but they've avoided this fate so far.

As soon as these guards realize that others have intruded on the area, they cry out and attack. The lizard fights to the death, but Youuti and the hunter aren't so dedicated. They flee into the orchard if reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points.

YOUUTI CREATURE 8

Male marsh giant (*Bestiary* 2 125)

Initiative Perception +16

BOGGARD HUNTER CREATURE 7

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Initiative Perception +14

GIANT FRILLED LIZARD CREATURE 5

Bestiary 229

Initiative Perception +11

The Prisoners: The prisoners can talk about their experiences while captured by the Knights and the boggards, but there's little they can share that the heroes don't already know. They're confident of reaching Kiutu on their own, but encourage the heroes to keep up their pursuit and rescue the others from their village as soon as possible.

Treasure: A *collar of empathy* was forgotten in the shed. The prisoners found it, but haven't been able to make use of it, so they give it to the heroes when rescued.

XP Award: Award the heroes 80 XP for rescuing the prisoners and sending them safely back to Kiutu.

B6. STORAGE BARN

MODERATE 9

This cavernous barn is sturdy despite obvious neglect. The air reeks of swamp water and rot, and swamp plants grow in profusion despite the dimness.

The mobogo who pursued the boggards here decided to lair in this large barn simply because it was the biggest, best-protected building in the orchard. It's repeatedly used its innate spells and *plant growth* ritual to convert the barn interior to its liking. The swamp plants growing here will eventually die without the mobogo's attention, but for now they give the barn a swampy atmosphere comfortable for the mobogo.

The barn's swampy interior is difficult terrain.

Creatures: The mobogo lairing here isn't particularly interested in enacting vengeance upon the boggards who fled rather than provide it with sacrifices, as



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it enjoys their terrified adoration. So long as the boggards continue to insist the sacrifices are pending, the mobogo is happy to let them live in terror of its fury. Intruders change that equation, however, so the mobogo does its best to slaughter or drive off anyone that interferes with its petty tyranny.

The mobogo insists on having a boggard on hand to help tend to the swamp plants, feed it small morsels like rats or bugs, or otherwise demean itself in the mobogo's presence. None of the boggards like this task, of course, so they rotate the duty with threats and bullying. In combat, however, the boggard relishes the chance to prove its valor by "devending" the mobogo against intruders. The mobogo makes use of this, allowing the boggard to protect it from dangerous melee opponents while it picks off easier targets with its long tongue. If anyone overcomes the mobogo's regeneration, it orders the boggard to focus on that opponent.

The boggard fights to the death as long as the mobogo is present, but flees if the mobogo is defeated. The mobogo doesn't want to look fallible in front of the boggard, so it doesn't stop fighting as long as the boggard is still alive. If the boggard is slain and the heroes have shown they can consistently overcome the mobogo's regeneration, it realizes it's in trouble and needs to negotiate. It makes a big show of apologizing for its presence and offers to leave

the area, leaving any prisoners or boggards with the heroes for them to deal with as they see fit. The mobogo is a bad liar. It doesn't intend to leave for long, and simply looks for an opportunity to ambush and betray the heroes if they agree to spare its life.

MOBOGO

CREATURE 10

Bestiary 3 170

Initiative Perception +21

BOGGARD HUNTER

CREATURE 7

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Initiative Perception +14

Treasure: The mobogo keeps a few favored trinkets offered to it in the past. A hero Searching the area finds an *iron medallion*, a *moderate sturdy shield*, and six large sapphires worth 100 gp each.

CROSSING THE RIVER

MODERATE 9

The Knights of Abendego crossed the Terwa River at one of its shallower fords, but they weren't trying to deter pursuit and thus their tracks on both sides of the river are obvious. The Knights drew the ire of a large hippopotamus as they crossed. Although they drove the creature off, it's still here and still extremely angry.

The river crossing map appears on page 26.

Creature: When the heroes arrive, the massive hippopotamus is lurking in the reeds along the heroes' side of the river. It bursts out of the water, eager to attack. Several wounds in its side were obviously made by swords, spears, and similar weapons, and the hippopotamus is still wounded from its encounter with the Knights. It's unwilling to break off its attack, even for abilities such as *speak with animals* or Wild Empathy, unless it's healed first. The hippo is aggressive and pursues foes who flee, but retreats to the water and swims away if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points.

BLOODIED HIPPOPOTAMUS CREATURE 11

Elite behemoth hippopotamus (Bestiary 2 6, 144)

Initiative Stealth +22

HP 185 (of 210)

Hippo Tales: If the heroes heal and calm the hippopotamus, it can describe the Knights of Abendego and their prisoners in general terms. It doesn't understand why some of the travelers were tied up; if they

Bloodied Hippopotamus

were weaker allies, why didn't the other humanoids just eat them?

INTO THE SODDEN LANDS

Once the heroes cross over the Terwa River, they enter the region known as the Sodden Lands. Here, the wind blows strong and it rains for at least part of each day—and often for many days in a row. The land has a drab, muddy look, and vegetation tends to be shorter and stunted to avoid being blown over by the wind. The terrain gradually becomes more uneven, with hills and mountains closer to the coast. Evidence of past mudslides and flooded rivers is common. Much of the travel is through mud, making the Knights' tracks plain to follow.

STRAGGLERS

The Knights of Abendego have realized that some of their prisoners escaped during the journey. These are the villagers that made their way to the baobab orchard (page 32), whom the heroes might not have met yet. Worried that losing prisoners would get them in trouble, the Knights sent a group to backtrack along their trail and find the escaped villagers. This group meets up with the heroes on their backtrail—if the heroes haven't yet reached the baobab orchard, the Knights simply missed it while retracting their steps.

The Knights backtrack along a low ridge, which is where this encounter occurs. Use the map on page 26 for this encounter.

Creatures: These four Knights of Abendego are brutes selected for this task because they weren't clever enough to get out of the job. They're eager to find the missing villagers and take out their frustrations by knocking them around a bit before bringing them to the Prison of the Vacant Eye.

ABENDEGO BRUTES (4)

CREATURE 8

NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human bruiser

Perception +15

Languages Common

Skills Athletics +18, Intimidation +16, Stealth +14, Survival +15

Str +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +4, **Int** -1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

Items *fighter's fork*, religious symbol of Norgorber, scale armor

AC 27; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +15, **Will** +14

HP 135

No Escape ➔ **Trigger** A creature within the brute's reach moves away from the brute; **Effect** The brute Strides up to their Speed, following the foe and keeping it in reach throughout this movement.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *fighter's fork* +20 (magical, shove), **Damage** 3d8+8 piercing

Melee ♦ fist +19 (agile, unarmed), **Damage** 1d10+8 bludgeoning plus Push

Ranged ♦ *fighter's fork* +18 (magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 3d8+8 piercing

Brute Strength Abendego brutes deal an extra 2d8 damage with tridents, and a trident gains the shove trait while the brute is using it in melee (both the extra damage dice and the shove trait are included in the *fighter's fork* Strikes above).

Interrogating the Knights: The brutes reveal that their leader, a vicious man named Ajbal Kimon, ordered them to take the people of Kiutu to an old jail built into the side of a mountain called the Prison of the Vacant Eye. They know that the Knights normally live in the town of Julia, but they assume that all the Knights are at the prison, including Ajbal. They don't know that some of the villagers are being winnowed out and taken to the Julia Alehouse.

Although the Knights share their destination and information about their leader without much prompting, getting more information from them requires a successful DC 24 Deception or Intimidation check (or a successful DC 29 Diplomacy check). Each success compels a brute to answer one of the heroes' questions; on a critical success, the Knight imparts all they know. On a failure, the brute either makes up a lie or sullenly refuses to respond.

If successfully interrogated, the brutes tell the heroes of the lizardfolk ambush that killed the leader of the raid on Kiutu, a terrifying/formidable woman named Bharlen Sajor. They admit to being followers of Norgorber, whom they revere as the patron god of murder and greed. Some of the other Knights are accomplished spellcasters with Norgorber's favor, and the brutes believe they intend to sacrifice the villagers to Father Skinsaw (Norgorber's name as the god of killers).

These Knights claim not to know much about the Prison of the Vacant Eye beyond its location, but they've heard rumors it's haunted by old ghosts and clearly find the thought unsettling. If prompted further, they reveal that it was constructed by cyclopes long ago, so everything is impossibly old and built on a much larger scale than they're used to. The warden is a cyclops seer named Halbrux, and several other cyclopes report to her. The brutes claim ignorance regarding the deal Ajbal Kimon struck with the cyclopes, but it's clear they're working together towards nefarious ends.

HURRICANE'S HOWL

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The Missing Student

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Julia

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A middle-aged man leaned his weight against the door frame, smiling gently. "I thought I heard a little cub up past her bedtime," he said.

Uzuwe quickly dove underneath her grandmother's blanket. "No little cubs here!" she said, her voice muffled by the quilt.

"Ma, you know I already gave this one her story."

The old woman shrugged innocently. "Perhaps my bedtime stories are better?"

Olubara chuckled and shook his head. He crossed the room and sat down at the foot of the bed. "Ah, I see. Well, I'd better learn from the master then, huh? Let's hear the rest."

Uzuwe poked her head back out from under the quilt and, seeing that she was on the winning side, sat up excitedly in bed. "So what happened next?"

"Next? The lore-speakers fought the wicked Knights, of course! But it wasn't so easy, because the prison was a twisting maze of tunnels and passages. And the Knights were not the worst evil the heroes encountered there. Because even though the Knights used the prison as their hideout, it did not belong to them. No, the master of that place was a deadly, dangerous woman who could see future and past as easily as you look to your left and right. A cyclops who lived half in history, working to bring the past into the present.

"You see, that cruel giantess used the Knights for her own gain as much as they used her. Because she needed prisoners clever enough to help her discover the secrets she hunted. And less clever prisoners to feed her awful pet."

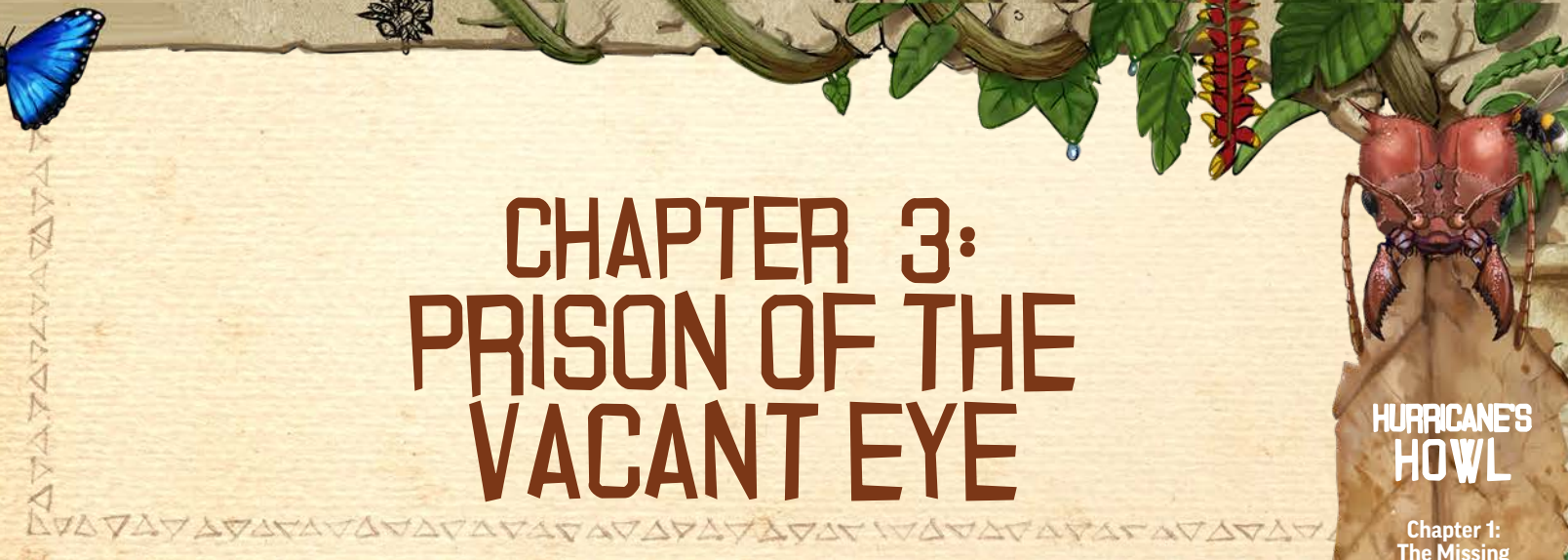
"Ma, you're going to scare the girl," Olubara admonished.

His mother glanced at Uzuwe, then back to him. "Are you sure she's the scared one?"

Olubara scoffed, but didn't say anything else.

"Well, the Knights had taken prisoners not just from Kiutu, but from villages from the top of the Sudden Lands to the bottom of the Mugumo Plains. I'boko's father was nowhere among them. Nor was the knights' wretched leader. To find them, the lore-speakers would go to Julia, the town lashed by the hurricane."





CHAPTER 3: PRISON OF THE VACANT EYE

The storm intensifies as the heroes approach the partially submerged mountain that serves as the jail and secondary base of the Knights of Abendego.

A craggy mass of rocks rises from the rain-soaked ground. It doesn't take much imagination to see that the rocks form the shape of an immense cyclops skull, with a large cave providing a broad single eye above a triangular alcove of a nose. Torchlight glows feebly in the eye socket, and towering standing stones serve as the rocky skull's jagged bottom teeth. The swampy ground around the teeth yields to water, forming something of a moat.

This jail dates from the Ghol-Gan empire, when the cyclopes were among Golarion's most intelligent and sophisticated cultures. In those long-ago days, the mass of rocks was a mountaintop whose natural resemblance to a cyclops skull attracted interest. The initial architects imagined a retreat for cosmological education and reflection, but the mountaintop was so remote that improvements to the natural cavern system progressed very slowly. As the empire slipped into decadence and decay, the cyclopes that took over the project reimagined its purpose, turning the half-finished retreat into a full-fledged prison and re-education center for dissidents. In this remote location, there was little hope for those imprisoned, and the jailers' brutal treatment went unchecked. Deaths far outnumbered any who were ever rehabilitated into the cyclopes' decaying society.

The Knights of Abendego know nothing of this grim history and simply lucked into the well-built rock prison. When they happened upon it, they found a small group of cyclopes, headed by a seer and historian named Halbrux Far-Sight, investigating the site. Halbrux is an expert on Ghol-Gani culture. She learned of the site (called the Prison of the Vacant Eye in old cyclops histories) and came to learn more. But years of water damage and occasional collapses have made studying this place an arduous task. Halbrux is cruel, self-aggrandizing, and fully focused on excavating the site and documenting as much of it as possible; she's particularly interested in uncovering evidence of the site's original purpose.

Halbrux and her minions had already been at the site for many months when the Knights of Abendego arrived. She'd already made several discoveries, but she needed smaller, quicker hands for more detailed work unsuitable for her minions. The Knights struck a bargain with Halbrux: as long as she would allow them the use of the prison and would work with them as its warden, she could use the prisoners as she wished in clearing the old ruins.

So far, this arrangement has worked quite well for both sides. Halbrux

CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

This chapter presents an ancient cyclops ruin packed with enemies. The Knights of Abendego keep most of their prisoners here, so a big part of the exploration is liberating captives and discovering that the remaining prisoners—including I'boko's father, and possibly I'boko herself—were taken to Julia and given over to Ajbal Kimon.

This chapter provides some guidance to make the prison feel more active: humans might be resting or working depending on the time of day and so on. Feel free to expand on this idea further, as few of the denizens (except the prisoners, of course) remain in one area all the time. Be careful when doubling up on harder encounters (like Halbrux and the great cyclops), as this can make for an overwhelming fight.

CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 3 are as follows.

- +1 scale mail
- +1 resilient studded leather
- +2 striking greatclub
- +2 striking shortsword
- +2 striking trident
- cassock of devotion (Gozreh)
- elemental gem (blue-green)
- fighter's fork
- knapsack of halflingkind
- moderate elixir of life
- shadow essence



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and her minions help the Knights keep the dispirited, ill-treated, and isolated prisoners under control. In turn, Halbrux's work at restoring the deepest and oldest part of the prison is proceeding well with prisoners as convenient labor.

Halbrux had already captured several giant frogs from the region to keep a food supply close at hand. The Knights negotiated for use of these giant frogs as mounts to come and go from Jula, training them to bear saddles and riders. Halbrux doesn't mind the loss of this food source—so long as the Knights turn over the occasional prisoner in their stead.

The Kiutu Scheme

Ajbal Kimon and his closest advisors have hatched a scheme to earn Norgorber's favor through humanoid sacrifice. Yet not just any prisoners will do. They want to select two kinds of people for special sacrifice: those who are adherents of other deities, particularly good-aligned ones; and those whose souls might prove of special use to Norgorber. The Knights targeted settlements spread across the Sodden Lands, hoping to amass a large number of kidnapped villagers without allowing rumors to alert nearby communities of the attacks. Based on their previous successful raids on the fishers and builders, Kiutu was a prime target. The Knights followed their swift attacks with swift retreats across the savanna, bringing all captives to the Prison of the Vacant Eye.

Among this group of prisoners, the Knights secretly sorted out their special sacrifice victims. Ajbal left the task in the hands of two people: a priest of Norgorber named Bashantu and his chief warden, the catfolk Yonsuu. Bashantu and Yonsuu found the devout believers easy to identify; those who called upon their faith in the miserable prison conditions were marked for sacrifice and sent to Ajbal in Jula. They identified the second group by “accidentally” leaving sharpened sticks or broken blades among the prisoners or engineering decoy escape opportunities that only those prisoners who betrayed the others could exploit. Captives who quickly betrayed other prisoners for a slim chance at freedom were rounded up in the same cell with those who used the makeshift weapons to settle old grudges or bully other prisoners. The worst of the worst soon rose to the top of their vicious, violent pecking order and were branded and sent to Jula alongside the faithful. The Knights have thus far sent six prisoners to Ajbal, including I'boko's pious father Kolnoku.

The rest of the prisoners are of little interest to Ajbal, and he doesn't much care what Yonsuu does with them. The scheming catfolk keeps them alive, if only barely, in case any of them prove useful to ransom

or to provide leads to other victims. The prisoners' lot is a dismal one. They know that some of them are taken away for backbreaking labor for the cyclopes in the lower levels, and others are taken away from the prison entirely for some sinister purpose.

Prison of the Vacant Eye

The original Ghol-Gani structure was built within two separate caverns: one extending from a narrow cave that formed a great eye, and the other beyond the large stones that serve as massive teeth. The walls and flooring were skillfully carved from natural rock outcroppings, and the cyclopes' work has stood the test of time. The doors and walls dividing the rooms show the same amount of skill, though their current state is far from uniform. In some places, water has worn the stone thin, while in others, the stone has grown with accretions of minerals and other substances. Overall, the prison exudes a discordant atmosphere from being neither entirely a cave nor a building.


The following features and locations correspond to those of the maps on the inside cover.

FEATURES OF THE PRISON

The scale throughout the prison is uncomfortably large by human standards. Doors and furnishings are built for creatures 15 feet tall, and are often awkward to reach or use. The cavernous top floor has ceilings 30 feet high except where indicated, while the lower floor has ceilings 20 feet high except where indicated.

Doors are stone slabs 15 feet high and 10 feet wide unless otherwise noted. The doors are good at blocking noise, which was a boon to meditation when the site was used for contemplation and introspection, but also advantageous when used to isolate or torture cyclops dissidents. The heavy stone doors are hard to move; a creature trained in Athletics can push open a door with a single Interact action, but other creatures require two Interact actions to open a door. Doors pivot on clever, if ancient, hinges that swing back to a closed position when left alone.

Cell entrances bear floor-to-ceiling steel bars, ancient but strong (Hardness 18, Hit Points 72). Each is held closed by an ancient locking mechanism that requires adjusting metal tabs along the side. Once the tabs are in the proper configuration, the bars swing open. The tabs can't be accessed from inside a cell, as the bars are too close together to reach them. The tabs are thick and stubby, each about the size of human thumbs and brittle with age. Too much force could easily break off a tab and jam the door permanently shut. Figuring out the right configuration requires a successful DC



25 Engineering Lore or a DC 30 Thievery check. The combination is different for each cell. If the heroes can talk with prisoners within a cell, the prisoners can describe the movement their jailors made to get the door open, decreasing the DC to open that cell by 5.

There are no windows in the prison, but the inhabitants have brought torches and lanterns to illuminate the rooms they frequent.

The furnishings include enormous stone slabs, tables, and benches built at cyclops scale. The walls and larger furnishings are carved with constellations and other bits of idle astronomical lore that intrigues Halbrux, but about which the Knights care not at all.

ENTERING THE PRISON

The prison's obvious entrance is through the eye in the cyclops skull (area C1), 80 feet up. Rough-hewn stairs carved into the mountain long ago lead up to the cave.

Another way is to wade through the 4-foot-deep water around the skull's massive stone teeth and slip between them. This is easy for Medium or smaller creatures, but larger creatures (like the cyclopes) must succeed at a DC 15 Acrobatics check to Squeeze between the rocks. In addition, the cyclopes don't want any creatures entering or leaving this way without their permission, so they've blocked the cave just beyond the teeth with massive boulders hauled from deep within the ruin; when necessary, they simply move the boulders aside to make an opening and then restack them. When the boulders are stacked, even Small creatures must Squeeze through them, which requires a successful DC 27 Acrobatics check. Larger creatures can't fit through at all without hefting some of the boulders out of the way, which requires a successful DC 25 Athletics check. The noise of this effort alerts the giant frogs in area C12, who start to croak eagerly—it's possible the heroes interpret this noise as a threat, but the frogs are harmless.

There are two secret ways into the prison. The first of these is the passage leading to the frog pen (area C12). A hero Searching the mountainside with the secret door discovers it with a successful DC 27 Perception check—a hinged section of stone swings inward when pushed the proper way. It's even harder to spot from the inside due to the rubble-choked passage beyond it, requiring a successful DC 29 Perception check. None of the prison's denizens know about this entrance. The other secret entrance requires swimming through the one of the flooded cells that lead off of the moat (area C17a).

C1. MAIN ENTRANCE

LOW 10

This curious elliptical cave forms the "eye" of the cyclops skull when seen from afar. It consists of an cave ledge carved into the side of the mountain.

In the cave, torches burn on either side of an enormous stone door. This exterior door is heavier than the others in the prison and requires 3 Interact actions to open, regardless of whether the opener is trained in Athletics. The door is deeply carved with ancient diagrams of comets, constellations, and one large symbol that depicts the moon. Close examination of this moon symbol shows that it was once a depiction of the sun, but was altered long ago. A hero who succeeds at a DC 25 Nature or Occultism check realizes that these are symbols used by the ancient Ghol-Gan empire; on a critical success, the hero recalls that the sun symbol signified a place of learning, but the moon symbol signified a place of despair or punishment. The change to the symbol must mean that this place changed its function sometime during the days of the now-fallen empire.

Creatures: Three Knights are stationed here at all times. These brutes mostly occupy themselves with games of chance or throwing things over the ledge in an attempt to clear the water pooled below. They're more interested in making sure prisoners stay in than they are in anyone who comes up the stairs, so they're not particularly attentive when the heroes arrive. They have a -4 circumstance penalty to Perception checks for initiative unless the heroes arrived noisily. They also have a -4 circumstance penalty to their Perception DCs if the heroes try to convince them that they're fellow Knights or otherwise belong at the prison; the guards don't really know who's supposed to be here. Even if a hero succeeds at fooling the brutes, they have orders to go get Warden Yonsuu (see area C6), which one of the brutes does. Only if the heroes critically succeed on a check to fool the brutes do they simply let the heroes pass by to enter the prison.

These brutes are quick to attack once they know the heroes don't belong. During a fight, they try to Shove intruders over the ledge. Anyone they knock over the side can attempt to Grab an Edge (DC 20). Otherwise, it's an 80-foot fall into the 4-foot deep water below.

As soon as two brutes are defeated, the third realizes they'd better get help. The remaining brute moves to the heavy door and opens it as quickly as possible, shouting for the guards in area C2 to join the fight.

ABENDEGO BRUTES (3)

CREATURE 8

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Initiative Perception +15

Treasure: The brutes have been gambling with some small, flawed gemstones they discovered in the prison. 24 of them are worth 2 gp each, and one is a blue-green *elemental gem*.

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C2. MESS HALL

MODERATE 10

The center of this hall is filled with two enormous stone tables and benches. The ceiling rises forty feet to two large stalactites, one looming over each table. Large stone doors pierce the north and south walls, while the western and eastern walls sport two doors each. Ten-foot-wide passages face out from the hall's northeast and northwest corners.

Both stalactites are carved with swirling designs of stars, planets, comets, and other celestial phenomena, along with runes written in Cyclops explaining the designs. The passage of millennia have worn down these sprawling carvings, which are now uneven and difficult to decipher.

The tables and benches are far too tall for humans to use as intended. Instead, the Knights use the benches as tables, standing as they eat, tend to their equipment, or play games. The Knights have tossed some personal items, trash, and prisoners' belongings up onto the tables to keep them secure and out of sight.

Creatures: Two Knights of Abendego serving as jailers are usually here eating or repairing their equipment. If it's late, they might be passed out from drinking too much of the liquor in area C3.

Having already earned accolades from Warden Yonsuu for their past performance, these jailers are eager to gain even more prestige by capturing intruders without any assistance. They use forked, barbed longswords called mancatchers, which their special training allows them to use to grab foes and hold them in place. The jailers fight side by side to take advantage of their subduing attacks and render their opponents unconscious. Neither jailer wants to suffer the punishments Yonsuu will deal out for fleeing from danger, so both fight until defeated.

ABENDEGO JAILERS (2)

CREATURE 10

NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human prison guard

Perception +19

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +20, Athletics +21, Intimidation +18, Thievery +20

Str +5, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

Items dagger, average manacles, mancatcher, religious symbol of Norgorber, +1 scale mail

AC 30; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +21, **Will** +17

HP 175

Attack of Opportunity ⤴

Speed 20 feet

Melee ⬥ mancatcher +23 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d8+9 slashing plus restrain

Melee ⬥ dagger +23 (agile, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

Ranged ⬥ dagger +22 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

Restrain When the jailer makes a successful mancatcher Strike, their target must succeed at a DC 27 Reflex save or become grabbed until the end of the jailer's next turn. Each time the target fails an attempt to Escape the jailer, it takes 2d6 piercing damage.

Subduing Attack Abendego jailers deal an additional 3d6 precision damage to creatures that are frightened or within reach of at least one of their allies. The jailer can make an attack with this additional damage as a nonlethal attack, if they choose.

Treasure: Tossed up on the table, out of casual view, is a moderate elixir of life.

C3. KITCHEN

MODERATE 10

A large door leads into a mostly square room that the Knights of Abendego use as a kitchen. The ceiling slopes steeply to the west and south, following the natural curve of the cavern, so that the ceiling is 30 feet high to the east (above the large door) but only 15 feet high in the southwest corner.

The kitchen is haphazard at best. A stone table that once served as a cyclops' footstool contains a variety of knives, forks, skewers, and other implements. Sacks containing foodstuffs rest against the walls and don't seem to have been sorted well. A metal-lined firepit in the southwest corner serves as the only stove, with some large pots and pans jumbled next to it.

Two crates of cheap, potent liquor are stacked against the north wall. Warden Yonsuu doles out this liquor as rewards for good service, and the Knights know that to touch it without permission means losing a hand.

Creatures: During the day, two Abendego jailers are here. They're supposed to be cleaning the cooking implements, but they're just swapping stories and glancing enviously at the liquor crates. Once one of the jailers is defeated, the other tries to get aid from the Knights in area C2 or, if they're already defeated, from Warden Yonsuu in area C6.

ABENDEGO JAILERS (2)

CREATURE 10

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Initiative Perception +19

C4. WEST BUNK ROOM

This rectangular room is somewhat larger than the kitchen but much smaller than the mess hall. The ceiling again slopes down from 30 feet high in the eastern part of the room to about 15 feet high toward

the west. The walls are covered in carvings similar to those on the stalactites in area C2 except along the southern wall, where a large sunburst carving covered in runes dominates. A successful DC 25 Occultism check indicates that this carving is an old Ghol-Gani meditation aid. One of the Knights has used soot to make the sunburst into a scowling catfolk's face.

Four bedrolls lay perpendicular to the north wall, and four large burlap sacks filled with clothing and personal effects stand against the south wall. If the heroes enter at night and have been stealthy, two Abendego jailers are sleeping in the bedrolls rather than in the kitchen (area C3). Otherwise, no one is in this room.

C5. SQUALID CELL

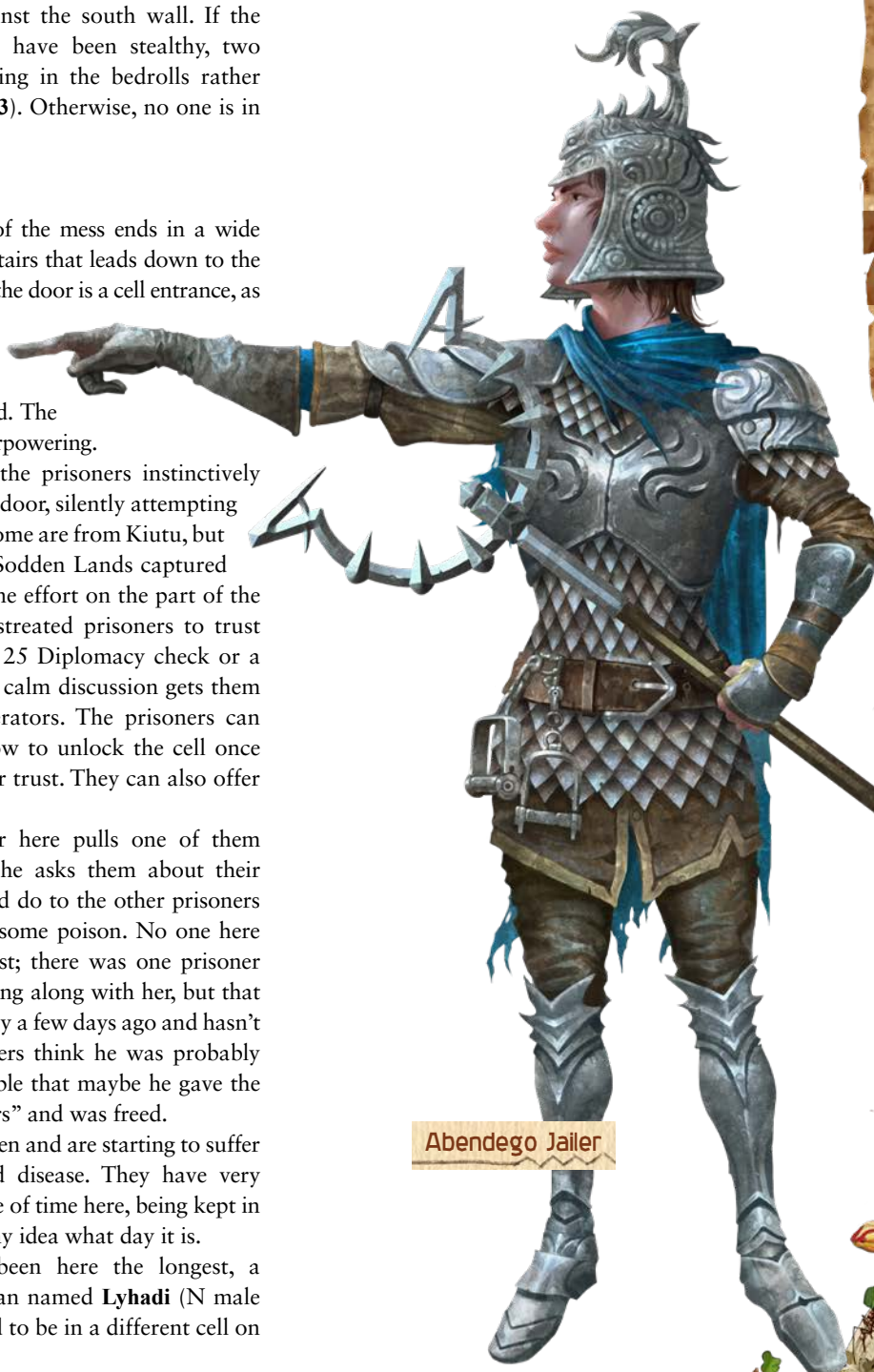
The hall to the northwest of the mess ends in a wide stone door next to a set of stairs that leads down to the prison's lower level. Beyond the door is a cell entrance, as described on page 40. Behind the bars is a cramped, dank room in which about a dozen people are imprisoned. The smell of human waste is overpowering.

When the heroes enter, the prisoners instinctively back away from the barred door, silently attempting to meld into the shadows. Some are from Kiutu, but others are travelers in the Sudden Lands captured by the Knights. It takes some effort on the part of the heroes to convince the mistreated prisoners to trust them, but a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check or a few minutes of patient and calm discussion gets them to view the heroes as liberators. The prisoners can offer some guidance on how to unlock the cell once the heroes have gained their trust. They can also offer the following information.

- A priest of Norgorber here pulls one of them out every few days. She asks them about their secrets, and what they'd do to the other prisoners if they had a knife or some poison. No one here likes or trusts the priest; there was one prisoner who seemed to be getting along with her, but that prisoner was taken away a few days ago and hasn't been back. The prisoners think he was probably killed, but a few grumble that maybe he gave the priest the "right answers" and was freed.
- They aren't fed very often and are starting to suffer from malnutrition and disease. They have very little idea of the passage of time here, being kept in the dark. None have any idea what day it is.
- The prisoner who's been here the longest, a scarred and wasted man named **Lyhadi** (N male human laborer 2), used to be in a different cell on

a lower level. He claims there are cyclops bullies down there who spend a lot of time moving rocks around, but the other prisoners wonder whether Lyhadi was just hallucinating.

- There are several Knights around—at least six or eight. They don't talk to the prisoners at all when they bring food and water, but they talk to each other. Their leader is someone named Warden Yonsuu. The Knights talk about the town of



Abendego Jailer

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Jula and how getting from here to there somehow involves frogs.

XP Award: Award the heroes 80 XP for getting these prisoners out. They can get themselves to safety.

C6. WARDEN'S ROOM

LOW 10

This small, tidy room boasts a cot and a trunk. Carvings of astronomical phenomena cover the ceiling and walls. An elaborated sunburst annotated in strange, carved script adorns the otherwise-empty western wall.

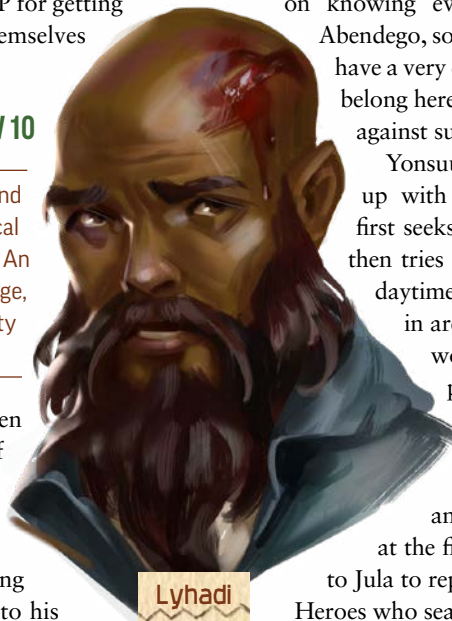
This room belongs to Warden Yonsuu, leader of the Knights of Abendego in the prison. Yonsuu spends much of his time in his room reading poetry, as he's convinced the Knights are running the prison efficiently and according to his commands. When Yonsuu leaves his room, it's often to perform surprise inspections or check in with Halbrux or Bashantu.

The trunk contains a meticulous record of the Knights under Yonsuu's command as well as the many prisoners kept here. It's clear from the notes that the Knights are selecting specific prisoners and sending them to Ajbal Kimon in Jula. The prisoners they're sending are of two types: those who demonstrate excessive piety or divine ability—particularly toward good-aligned deities—and those who “meet Bashantu's criteria.”

The carved sunburst is accompanied by writing in Cyclops about obtaining harmony by extending praise to others. Much of the message was defaced long ago, but enough remains to convey its original meaning. Yonsuu has learned just enough Cyclops to pick out the message.

Creature: Yonsuu is a tall catfolk with a piercing gaze and a reputation for inflicting excessive cruelty on those who shirk their duties or break rules. He's recently decided to adjust his domineering leadership style with occasional bouts of praise or gifts, hoping to become a more effective leader and inspire greater loyalty. He hopes Ajbal Kimon will notice the improvement and trust him with more responsibility. Unfortunately, his newfound fits of kindness have had just the opposite effect—the Knights here are even more afraid of him and what his capricious moods might bring from day to day.

If the heroes manage to get to here without raising an alarm, they find Yonsuu lounging on his bed, reading.



Lyhadi

He's quick to demand to know why the intruders are here as he grabs his trident. Yonsuu prides himself on knowing everyone within the Knights of Abendego, so heroes masquerading as Knights have a very difficult time convincing him they belong here in the prison (his Perception DC against such lies is increased by +5, to 36).

Yonsuu makes a fighting retreat to join up with other jailers on this level. He first seeks aid from the jailers in area C2, then tries to reach those in area C3 (if it's daytime; otherwise, he seeks them out in area C4). Yonsuu knows that Ajbal would want information about powerful intruders foiling the Knights' plans, so he surrenders if reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points. This is a ruse, however, and the warden attempts to escape at the first opportunity, intent on fleeing to Jula to report on the heroes' presence.

Heroes who search the room find notes detailing the plans to return the prisoners to Jula and offer them as sacrifices. In addition to the captain's gear, the room contains four volumes of rare poetry (mostly pirate-themed) and two novels (also pirate-themed) worth reading. There is also some silver jewelry and a portrait of a young amurrun girl.

YONSUU

CREATURE 11

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM CATFOLK HUMANOID

Male catfolk head warden (*Bestiary* 54)

Perception +21; low-light vision

Languages Amurrun, Aquan, Common, Cyclops

Skills Acrobatics +22, Athletics +21, Diplomacy +19, Intimidation +21, Society +19, Stealth +21, Survival +19

Str +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +0, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

Items dagger, good manacles (3), religious symbol of Norgorber, +1 resilient studded leather, +2 striking trident

AC 31; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +24, **Will** +21

HP 200

Cat's Luck ☞ (fortune) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** Yonsuu fails or critically fails a Reflex saving throw; **Effect** Yonsuu rerolls the saving throw and takes the better result.

Speed 30 feet

Melee ✦ trident +24 (magical), **Damage** 2d8+6 piercing

Melee ✦ dagger +23 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Ranged ✦ dagger +23 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Hampering Strike A foe that takes damage from Yonsuu's melee Strike is slowed 1 for 1 round (slowed 3 if the Strike is a critical hit).

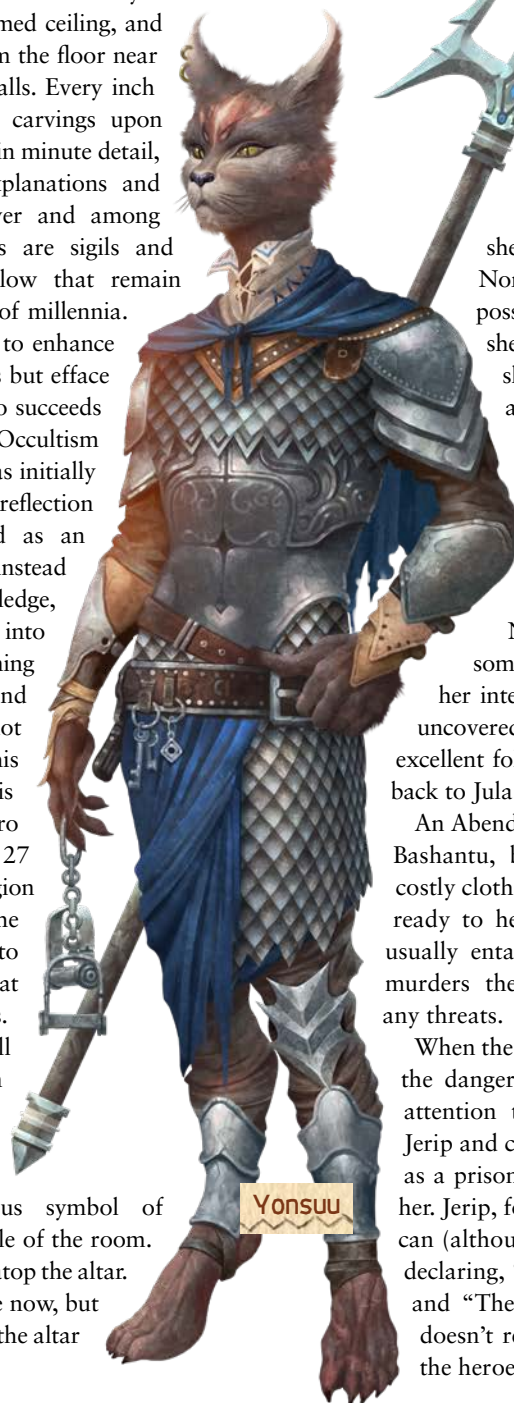
Subduing Attack Yonsuu deals an additional 3d6 precision damage to creatures that are frightened or within reach of at least one of his allies. Yonsuu can choose to make an attack with this additional damage as a nonlethal attack.

C7. RITUAL ROOM

MODERATE 10

This odd room encapsulates the eerie feeling the jail gives off, as it's simultaneously the most cave-like and the most ornately decorated in the entire complex. Immense stalactites—larger than in any of the other rooms—hang from the domed ceiling, and stubby stalagmites rise from the floor near the eastern and western walls. Every inch of these protrusions bear carvings upon carvings of celestial bodies in minute detail, accompanied by runic explanations and diagrams. But painted over and among these educational carvings are sigils and symbols in reds and yellow that remain bright despite the passage of millennia. The painted symbols seem to enhance the carvings in some places but efface them in others. A hero who succeeds at a DC 25 Nature or Occultism check realizes this room was initially a place of study and reflection but was later repurposed as an interrogation chamber; instead of imparting cosmic knowledge, the carvings were perverted into instructions about obtaining knowledge through pain and suffering. Whether or not the heroes learn about this long-ago distortion of this chamber's purpose, a hero who succeeds at a DC 27 Arcana, Occultism, or Religion check understands that the painted symbols serve to enhance magical effects that discern lies or read minds. Such effects have their spell DCs increased by 1 when cast in this room.

A portable wooden altar stained with blood and bearing the religious symbol of Norgorber sits in the middle of the room. A bloody shortsword rests atop the altar. There are no prisoners here now, but there's no ambiguity about the altar being used for murder.



A brazier burns in the west alcove with a branding iron thrust into it. The brand is the shape of Norgorber's religious symbol, and it's used to mark prisoners sent to Jula for sacrifice.

Creatures: Bashantu is a priest of Norgorber who joined the Knights of Abendego only recently. Though she grew up in a wealthy family and wanted for nothing, she devoted her life and the blood of her family and friends to the Gray Master, the thieving aspect of Norgorber she reveres. Bashantu is as unhinged as she is intense, believing that if she fails to commit a ritual murder in Norgorber's name every few days, her possessions will crumble to dust and she'll be poor forever after—a prospect she finds more horrifying than anything imaginable. Ajbäl sent the bloodthirsty woman to the Prison of the Vacant Eye mostly to get her out of his presence, but also to see what she could accomplish there. It was Bashantu's idea to "test" the prisoners with features that Norgorber would like. Although some of the prisoners have seen through her intense and incessant questioning, she's uncovered a few prisoners that would make excellent followers of Norgorber and sent them back to Jula.

An Abendego brute named Jerip accompanies Bashantu, being somewhat smitten with her costly clothing and unwavering faith. He stands ready to help her however she'd like—which usually entails holding down prisoners as she murders them, or standing between her and any threats.

When the heroes first arrive, Bashantu realizes the danger but decides to deflect the heroes' attention to Jerip. She points accusingly at Jerip and claims that he's just brought her here as a prisoner and she needs the heroes to free her. Jerip, for his part, plays along as well as he can (although he lacks any skill at Deception), declaring, "That's right, you're my prisoner!" and "They can't save you from me!" Jerip doesn't realize that Bashantu is happy to let the heroes kill him.

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If her ruse is discovered or she gets tired of stringing the heroes along, Bashantu turns against them with startling viciousness. She prefers to cast three-action *harm* spells and *phantasmal killer* to eliminate her foes quickly. She never surrenders, supremely confident that someone of her wealth and favor in Norgorber's eyes can't lose.

ABENDEGO PRIEST

CREATURE 11

NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human priest of Norgorber

Perception +22

Languages Common

Skills Athletics +21, Deception +21, Intimidation +19, Religion +22, Thievery +20

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +2

Items dagger, religious symbol of Norgorber, shadow essence (2 doses), +2 striking shortsword, studded leather armor

AC 30; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +21, **Will** +17

HP 175

Sudden Defense ⤵ (conjunction, divine, water) **Trigger** An attacker misses or critically misses the Abendego priest with a melee Strike; **Effect** The priest calls upon the endless storm to punish the attacker. Seawater appears in the target's lungs and the target is sickened 1 (sickened 3 if the triggering attack was a critical miss).

Speed 25 feet

Melee ⤵ shortsword +24 (agile, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 2d6+8 piercing

Melee ⤵ dagger +22 (agile, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+8 piercing

Ranged ⤵ dagger +22 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+8 piercing

Divine Prepared Spells DC 30, attack +22; **6th** *harm* (×3), *heal*, *phantasmal killer*; **5th** *flame strike*, *sending*, *shadow blast*; **4th** *freedom of movement*, *invisibility*, *phantasmal killer*; **3rd** *blindness*, *chilling darkness*, *water breathing*; **2nd** *heal*, *illusory disguise*, *silence*; **1st** *command*, *create water*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips** (6th) *daze*, *detect magic*, *divine lance*, *light*, *guidance*

Cleric Domain Spells 2 Focus Points, DC 30; **6th** *appearance of wealth* (Core Rulebook 389), *precious metals* (Core Rulebook 395)



Abendego Priest

Sneak Attack The Abendego priest deals an additional 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Steady Spellcasting If a reaction would disrupt the priest's spellcasting action, they attempt a DC 15 flat check. On a success, the action isn't disrupted.

ABENDEGO BRUTE

CREATURE 8

Page 37

Initiative Perception +15

C8. BASHANTU'S ROOM

This bedroom is the pinnacle of opulence in an otherwise plain structure, bearing a cot covered in rich furs, a small desk draped with patterned cloth, and a small chest with gold inlay tucked beneath the desk. A sunburst design was once carved into the wall, but it looks to have been carefully chiseled away a long time ago.

This is Bashantu's room, and its furnishings display her ostentatious love of wealth.

Treasure: The furs on the bed are worth 100 gp and the chest is worth 150 gp. The contents of the chest aren't quite as valuable; it holds three onyx shards worth 10 gp each and a well-read copy of *The Words Behind the Mask*, an anthology sacred to Norgorberites. Draped on the desk is a bloodstained *cassock* of devotion to Gozreh, and it's wrapped around 15 pp and a severed finger.


C9. BLOODY CELL

This small room resembles area C5, except it currently holds no prisoners. A suspicious amount of fresh blood stains this room, as if from a vicious fight. This is the cell in which Bashantu slipped a few makeshift weapons and let the prisoners fight it out to see who would be sent to Jula. The Knights haven't yet cleaned it.

C10. EAST BUNK ROOM

LOW 10

This rectangular room is twice the size of the west bunk room (area C4) and has two doors, one in the north wall opening into the hall and the other on the west



opening into the mess (area C2). The ceiling is somewhat shorter than in most of the rooms on the upper floor, descending from 20 feet high in the west to 15 feet high to the east. The walls once bore images of comets, but each was long ago carved to appear as a drop of blood and painted red. The red paint has faded only a little, thus this room depicts a gruesome rain of blood.

The Abendego brutes like the imagery and extra space, so they sleep here. This room contains seven bedrolls, four lying perpendicular to the north wall and the three others along the east wall. Several large burlap sacks sag against the south wall.

Creatures: Three Abendego brutes are here resting, preparing to take their shift at the main entrance (area C1). They dislike being interrupted by anyone except Warden Yonsuu, and react angrily whether or not they realize the heroes are intruders in the prison. Once one of the brutes is defeated, the other two look at each other and realize it's time to get help. They make a fighting retreat into area C2 to get the aid of the jailers there, or from there to area C6 to get Yonsuu's aid. If they can't find help in either location, they throw down their tridents and flee.

ABENDEGO BRUTES (3)

CREATURE 8

Page 37

Initiative Perception +15

C11. ARMORY

Several weapons, manacles, and backpacks with supplies hang from stone pegs in this largely empty room. A few huge mats have been spread across the center of the room. The Knights use this room as an armory, storage room, and training room.

Treasure: None of the gear here is particularly valuable, except one of the backpacks is a *knapsack of halflingkind*.

C12. FROG PEN

Murky water a foot or two deep covers much of the floor in this large cavern. A wall of stacked boulders blocks the passage south, perhaps pulled from a narrow, rubble-strewn passage to the southwest. To the north, a freestanding wall extends from floor to ceiling. A metal cage extends out from this wall to form a pen bearing several enormous frogs and a pungent smell. Saddles and tack hang on hooks mounted on the outside of the cage.

This room was once a cage to hold very large prisoners but now serves as a corral for the riding frogs the Knights use to travel between here and Jula. The frogs like the wet environment.

The small passage ends at the secret door out of the mountain, described in Entering the Prison on page 41.

Creatures: The riding frogs are docile creatures that emit resounding croaks when impatient or curious. Riding the frogs takes a little bit of patience, but the animals are used to the route to Jula and back and need very little guidance to head that way once they're saddled and led out of the prison.

RIDING FROGS (6)

CREATURE 2

UNCOMMON N LARGE ANIMAL

Variant elite giant frog (*Bestiary* 2 6, 121)

Initiative Perception +7

Speed 35 feet, swim 25 feet

C13. HALBRUX'S ROOM

MODERATE 10

This modest chamber is scarcely large enough for the two stone slabs that occupy it. One serves as an enormous bed while the other provides a makeshift desk, covered with large papers, rocks, rubbings, various writing implements, and so forth. The carvings on the walls here are badly eroded and hard to make out.

This room belongs to the cyclops seer Halbrux Far-Sight. She's usually found here reviewing her notes but sometimes checks on the ongoing work in the excavation area (area C15) or looks in on other areas of the lower prison level.

The papers and artifacts on her desk are Halbrux's archaeological discoveries made in the prison. There are rubbings of most of the carvings on the walls and ceilings of both levels, along with rock samples and stone fragments from area C15.

Creatures: Halbrux is quick to attack any intruders she sees, as she doesn't want anyone else barging in on the ruins she's so desperate to study. She's always accompanied by a strange, loyal construct called a golgopo, which she built years ago using ancient cyclops methods that she'd rediscovered. The golgopo either rides around on Halbrux's shoulder or follows behind her like an adoring pet, aiding her whether she's performing research or engaging in a fight.

When reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points, Halbrux realizes she may have underestimated the heroes. She tries to bargain, appealing to the heroes as fellow academics. Despite her cruelty and complicity in the imprisonment of the people from Kiutu and across the Sodden Lands, Halbrux is one of the greatest living experts on Ghol-Gan culture, and her death would mean losing untold knowledge on a lost civilization. What the heroes might do with her is described in the Campaign Role section on page 88.

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HALBRUX FAR-SIGHT

Page 88

Initiative Perception +21

GOLGOPO

Page 80

Initiative Perception +16

Treasure: The slab bearing Halbrux's notes contains a ruby carved to look like a comet within a staring eye. It's worth 600 gp.

C14. SLEEPING SLABS

MODERATE 10

Three giant stone slabs fill this room, each made up with furs and rugs as beds.

This room serves the same basic purpose it did when the site was previously occupied: as a sleeping chamber for cyclopes. The slabs have slight depressions the size of a cyclops, making them comfortable despite being made of stone. The ceiling is carved with whorls and lines that don't have any meaning, cosmological or otherwise, but generally aid in mediation and rest.

CREATURE 11

CREATURE 8

Creatures: Three cyclops bullies sleep here, although they're only all together during the morning hours. The rest of the time, only one or two cyclopes will be here, and you can place the other cyclopes or two around the prison as you see fit. They might be poking at the riding frogs in area C12, bullying the prisoners in area C17, or running a message up to Warden Yonsuu on the upper level. These cyclopes are quick to enter into a fight with people who don't belong in the prison, or even people who do belong but seem easy to bully or frighten.

The only thing these cyclopes love more than a fight is seeing smaller creatures cower and suffer. They're too swaggering and overconfident to surrender to smaller creatures and laugh rudely whenever they see one of the other cyclopes fall in battle, certain that their own victory will be all the greater since they won't have to share it.

CYCLOPS BULLIES (3)

CREATURE 9

UNCOMMON LE LARGE GIANT HUMANOID

Cyclops bruisers (*Bestiary* 68)

Perception +17; low-light vision

Languages Common, Cyclops, Jotun

Skills Athletics +19, Intimidation +18, Survival +17

Str +6, **Dex** +0, **Con** +4, **Int** -1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +3

Items greatclub, hide armor

AC 28; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +15, **Will** +17

HP 155

Brutal Recovery ◆ (divination, fortune, occult) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** The cyclops bully fails (but does not critically fail) an attack roll or an Intimidation check; **Effect** The cyclops bully forces its will on an array of possible futures. It gets a success on the roll instead of a failure.

Ferocity 2

Speed 30 feet

Melee ◆ greatclub +21 (backswing, reach 10 feet, shove), **Damage** 2d10+10 bludgeoning

Melee ◆ fist +21 (agile, unarmed), **Damage** 2d6+10 bludgeoning

Terrorizing Swing ◆◆ The cyclops bully attempts to Demoralize a foe within its melee reach, then makes a melee Strike against that foe.

If the creature is frightened and takes damage, it takes an additional 2d10 damage and is knocked prone. This counts as two attacks toward the cyclops's multiple attack penalty.



Riding Frog

Treasure: Among the few personal effects near each slab are nine gold nuggets worth 45 gp each. These were excavated from the back of area C15 and given to the cyclopes as payment.

C15. EXCAVATION AREA

MODERATE 10

A protruding cave wall divides this wide cavern into two parts. An enormous stone table and benches stand in the southwest quadrant, while the northeast remains a rough cavern with just enough tumbled stone and smooth walls to indicate that it used to be worked, but collapsed long ago. Murky water covers the floor to the south.

The southwest part of this room is where the cyclopes sometimes meet for meals or planning. Most of a messily butchered ox covers the top of the table; fortunately, the gory mess is out of sight to people who stand shorter than cyclopes do.

The northeast cavern is Halbrux's active excavation. She initially thought this part of the cavern was unfinished, but later realized it contained several chambers sealed off when the site was transformed into a prison. The collapse destroyed most of these chambers, including the walls separating them, and Halbrux wants to reconstruct their original purpose.

Although the great cyclops that's usually here can move away the largest boulders with ease, Halbrux doesn't want the clumsy oaf knocking over anything that might be of historical significance. She therefore has one or two prisoners constantly at work here, moving smaller stones, clearing and cleaning the walls, or reconstructing broken stone into best guesses of original shapes. This work isn't difficult, but Halbrux is demanding and prone to throw slow or careless helpers to the gogiteth in area C16.

If I'boko ended up in the prison, she's currently the prisoner here. As she knows her father was once here but was taken away, I'boko is miserable and hopeless; nevertheless, she's intellectually intrigued by the ruins and finds the hard work something that lets her put her troubles out of mind temporarily.

The pool of water is murky and is mostly only a foot or two deep. Exploring the water reveals that the southeast corner of the pool is much deeper; it leads into the flooded cave (area C18). None of the prison's inhabitants know about this flooded exit, and the great cyclops here couldn't fit through it even if he knew.

Creature: Other than one or two prisoners, the most significant creature here is a great cyclops named Tir who serves as Halbrux's muscle. Halbrux doesn't much like the dull, towering Tir; when Halbrux comes here to work, she usually commands Tir to go out hunting (he knows how to remove the boulders south of area C12, pass through, and re-stack them when he leaves or returns). Since the heroes don't look like prisoners, Tir assumes they're Knights of Abendego. When he realizes his mistake, he feels tricked—whether the heroes actively tricked him or not—and attacks in a fury. Tir hasn't ever met a creature he can't beat in a fight, so he doesn't think to flee or surrender, no matter how badly he's losing.



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If I'boko is present, she does her best to help in a fight; her presence grants any character attempting a skill check against Tir (such as an Athletics check to Trip him or a Deception check to Feint him) a +1 circumstance bonus to the skill check.

TIR

CREATURE 12

Male great cyclops (*Bestiary* 69)

Initiative Perception +22

C16. GOGITETH GROTTO

MODERATE 10

The stairs leading down from the upper level descend into a ruined room, with half the wall to the north fallen away into a large, half-flooded grotto. A wet clicking noise reverberates through the room, bouncing off the irregular rock walls with strange echoes. A hero who succeeds at a DC 20 Occultism check recognizes the sound as that of a dangerous Darklands predator called a gogiteth.

When Halbrux first came to the prison, the gogiteth lairing in the moat just outside attacked her. She seemed to expect the ambush, which surprised the creature enough that Halbrux easily drove it back into the prison while the other cyclopes who accompanied her merely watched. One she'd forced the gravely wounded gogiteth to retreat all the way to the grotto, Halbrux spoke with it. She told the gogiteth that she had foreseen its presence and attack, and she further saw that it would follow her willingly and loyally. The gogiteth wasn't quite sure what to think about that, but Halbrux gave it a shiny trinket to wear and agreed to feed it occasionally, so it's decided to remain here in the grotto for now.

Creature: The gogiteth rarely emerges from the water, but when any creatures smaller than a cyclops enter the chamber, the gogiteth knows it's time to feed. It likes to snatch up a meaty-looking target and retreat into the water for its meal. The gogiteth doesn't pursue foes who leave this room, but it otherwise fights to the death.

GOGITETH

CREATURE 12

Bestiary 183

Initiative Perception +7

C17. PRISON CELLS

Originally built as ascetic meditation rooms for the cyclopes (who could barely lay down in them), these cells were long ago converted into miserable spaces for solitary confinement of Ghol-Gani dissidents. They are only 15 feet high. Behind the narrow door to each one are steel bars with a locking mechanism described on page 40. Two feet of murky water


floods the cells, making them awful, festering places to be imprisoned. The three cells are physically nearly identical.

As indicated in area **C14**, a cyclops bully might be squeezed into the area between a cell's door and its bars, tormenting the prisoners with wicked glee. Heroes who catch a cyclops here have an advantage, as the cyclops has little room to maneuver. The prisoners aid any such combat by hurling debris or splashing water on the cyclops from inside the cell. In addition to treating the tight confines as difficult terrain, a cyclops is flat-footed due to the distraction.

C17a: This cell holds four prisoners: a caravan master and her guards, captured by the Knights many days ago. Because the guards are all fairly strong, Halbrux uses them to help out in the excavation area (area **C15**) quite often; they know its layout and about the dangerous great cyclops there. This cell has a secret passage at the back, underneath the water line. The prisoners know about it but haven't dared to use it, since as far as they can tell it leads to a murky, flooded cavern. They don't realize it leads out to the moat, and if the heroes let them know this (particularly by coming through the secret door from the other side), they're quick to swim to safety.

C17b: Several prisoners from Kiutu are kept here (including I'boko, if she's a captive of the cyclopes and isn't currently in area **C15**). They're accompanied by a white-spotted gnoll from Julia named **Nourishing Gull** (CN female gnoll prognosticator 4). Nourishing Gull, or "Gully," used to frequent the Julia Alehouse until she inadvertently spilled a pungent drink on Ajbai Kimon. As punishment, she was sent here. She can tell the heroes a lot about Julia and about the Julia Alehouse in particular, especially that it's the Knights' headquarters. If given writing materials, she can draw a rough sketch of both the town and the alehouse interior, though she doesn't know the alehouse's back rooms too well. Gully insists that Ajbai lives and works in some hidden room in the back of the alehouse. She encourages the heroes to stop the Knights by capturing or eliminating Ajbai, but she warns them that merely rushing the alehouse is likely to bring all the Knights in Julia down on them at once. A better strategy is to contact the town's beleaguered leader, Father Heveril, and ask his counsel. Gully greatly respects Father Heveril despite all he's been through as leader of a town that's slid into gang rule.

C17c: The prisoners in this cell are drawn from many places, including Julia, Kiutu, and other communities the Knights have raided. They've fared



worse than the others, as the water here is a little deeper so they can't sleep easily and the cyclopes don't feed them as often. The only information they can provide is that they've sometimes caught a glimpse of the narrow hall leading west from area C12, and they're convinced it leads to freedom if they can only reach it.

XP Award: Grant the heroes 80 XP for each cell they empty of prisoners (to a maximum of 240 XP).

C18. FLOODED CAVE

The entrance to this cave is underwater, but heroes who pass between the skull's stone teeth or who fall from area C1 realize it's here. The cave is only 6 feet high and wholly flooded with muddy water, so heroes exploring it must swim and hold their breath. The cave winds back into the mountain but has two entrances to the prison.

The nearest entrance is a secret door that leads into area C17a. A hero Searching this area finds the secret door with a successful DC 20 Perception check, but characters who can't see in the murky water have a -4 penalty to Perception checks. Created in secret long ago by the only prisoner to have escaped the Ghol-Gani jailers, the door is a stone panel that shifts sideways when pulled. Opening the secret door sloshes more water into area C17a, but allows access to that cell—or escape from it.

To the north and east of the secret door, the flooded cave opens into the water pooled in area C15; anyone in the flooded cave can swim up into that chamber.

TAKING THE JAIL

Once Halbrux has been defeated, any remaining cyclopes flee the jail to seek plunder and violence elsewhere. The Knights of Abendego don't flee unless both Yonsuu and Halbrux have been defeated, but in that case they decide to leave the Soddan Lands entirely rather than face the consequences Ajbal will undoubtedly inflict upon them for their failure.

Released prisoners return to their lives and loved ones as soon as they can, but they must first regain their strength. They take what they can (and what the heroes permit) from the Knights' stores in preparation for their journey. Even though Kiutu is several days' travel to the south, the Kiutu residents are confident they can make it back unaided.

Jula's Plight: Any resident of Jula can explain to the heroes that the Knights of Abendego are headquartered in the Jula Alehouse, but the gnoll Gully (area C17b) has the most information. Since the heroes have proven themselves against the

Knights here in the prison, these residents hope the heroes will continue their fight against those in Jula. Any of them encourage the heroes who are going to Jula to beware the Knights and first speak to Father Heveril. They also share helpful information for getting around in Jula, such as offering rooms for them to sleep or sheds to hide their gear from the roving Knights.

I'boko's Plea: If she's rescued from Halbrux's custody, I'boko is grateful but her restlessness is obvious. She fears her father is facing some dire fate, as she knows he was taken to Jula days ago. She has seen firsthand how dangerous the Knights can be and she won't rush off on her own again, but she's vocal about her concern for her father and pleads with the heroes to save him.

Practical Research

As the heroes crossed the Mugumo Plains by themselves in pursuit of the Knights of Abendego, their students are likely still many days to the south. However, once the heroes have cleared out the Prison of the Vacant Eye and learn that it contains a great deal of Ghol-Gani history, they might spend time investigating the site or even send for their students. Even if they don't examine the Prison of the Vacant Eye until after dealing with Ajbal and the rest of the Knights in Jula, the site is rife for academic study.

PRACTICAL RESEARCH IN THE VACANT EYE

DOWNTIME

Requirements You are a lore-speaker and have unrestricted access to the Prison of the Vacant Eye.

You carefully explore the ruined prison with your students, piecing together cosmological symbols and society shifts in the ancient Ghol-Gan empire. Choose either your primary or secondary branch, and attempt a skill check against a standard DC of the branch's level. You can use Nature, Society, or one of the branch's associated skills for this check. This activity takes 1 month.

Critical Success A new understanding of history! You find evidence of practices within the Ghol-Gan empire that no scholars have previously discovered. Increase the branch level of the branch you chose by 2.

Success You and your students successfully piece together several ancient clues into a workable theory. Increase the branch level of the branch you chose by 1.

Failure You're unable to uncover much of interest. Your branch level remains the same.

Critical Failure You or your students make a series of dramatic misinterpretations that put the validity of your entire research in doubt. You may not engage in Practical Research at this site for 1 year.



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"Long, long ago, Julia was a city of traders. Then the Eye of Abendego, that never-ending storm, appeared. What once were valleys were now coastlines. Mountaintops became islands. Traders became fishers. So the people of Julia are no strangers to adversity. But when the Knights invaded, they were unprepared.

"The spirit of the people of Julia had been broken for years when the lore-speakers arrived. But the strength of a true hero is not the ability to vanquish evil. It is the power to inspire good. They met the townspeople, rallied them, and led a great battle to reclaim Julia.

"And now, I tell you the truth of those vicious people who called themselves 'Knights.' In the end, they were nothing but common bullies. Against the weak, they were bold. But in the face of good, brave people, they revealed themselves for the cowards they were.

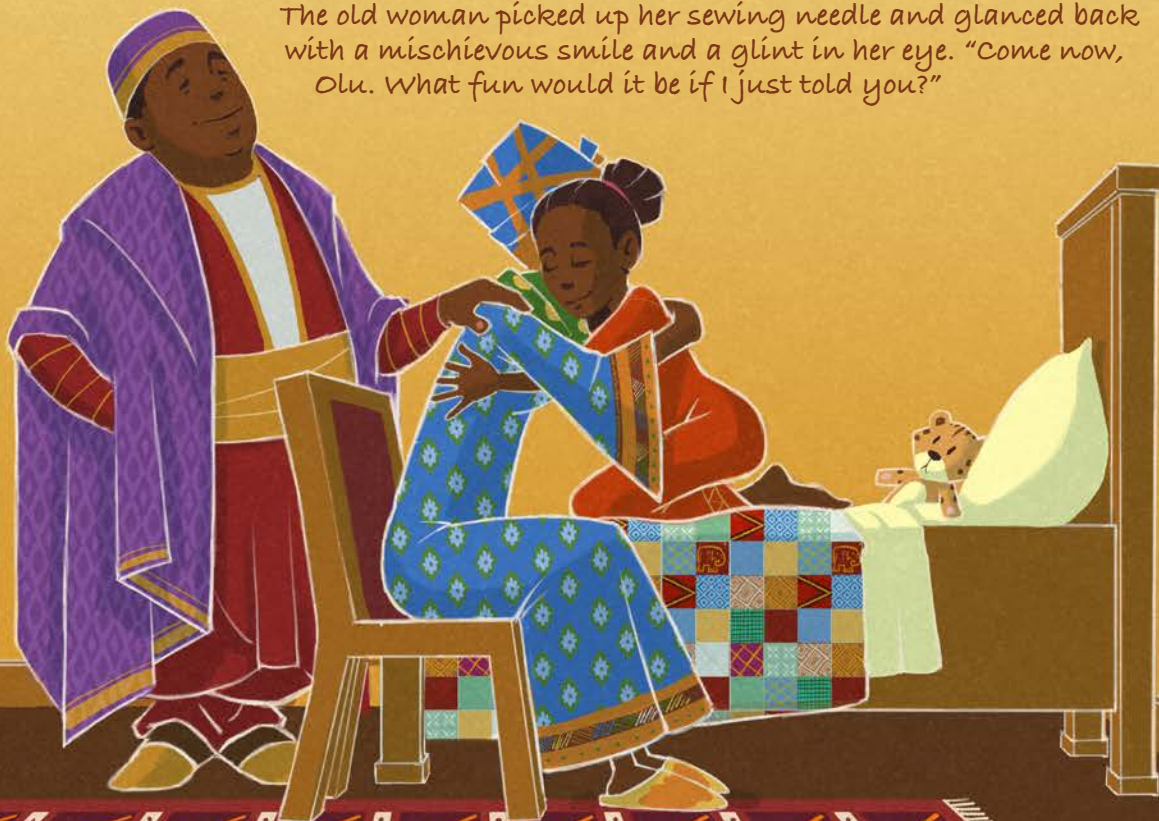
"With his so-called-Knights scattered to the wind, their leader hid himself beneath the town. The man who called himself Ajbal Kimon, the diseased heart of that group of pillagers, called upon The God Who Hides in Shadow. And in that final decisive moment, he—are you sleeping?"

Olubara shook with silent laughter as he rose to his feet and stretched. He lifted Uzuwe and cradled her in his arms. "I guess your bedtime stories really are better," he conceded.

"I have just had more years to practice them than you, that's all. One day it will be your grandchild sneaking around past her bedtime, don't worry."

Olubara seemed warmed by the thought as he squeezed his little cub. "Perhaps. But for now, let me put this one down." He paused in the doorway, a sudden thought popping into his head. "Ma, where did you learn those Magic Warrior stories? Nana Zoe never told me any of the ones you tell."

The old woman picked up her sewing needle and glanced back with a mischievous smile and a glint in her eye. "Come now, Olu. What fun would it be if I just told you?"





CHAPTER 4: JULA'S PLIGHT

HURRICANE'S HOWL

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Jula

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The road to Jula is muddy, miserable, and poorly maintained. The unrelenting rain pours throughout the 40-mile trip. Although the heroes can simply walk, the journey will be easier if they take the riding frogs stabled in the prison. The frogs' loping leaps take some getting used to, but are ultimately rhythmic and pleasant. The heroes don't see any other travelers on the way to Jula; it's become something of an open secret that the Knights of Abendego control this region, so few people bother to travel this way.

The constant rain douses unprotected fires and provides concealment to creatures more than 90 feet away from an observer. This rain continues throughout the events of this chapter.

RAIN SPIRIT

LOW 11

Just because there aren't any travelers on the road doesn't mean the road isn't watched. A murderous rain-loving fey called a ssumzili lurks along the road to Jula. The ssumzili has seen the Knights come and go, but they travel in groups too large for it to risk attacking. The heroes, on the other hand, pose more tempting targets. You can use any of the maps on page 26 for this encounter.

Creature: The ssumzili waits where the path has been washed away by a wide river. The Knights know to simply wade through the river, as it's only a few inches deep even in a downpour, but it might give the heroes some pause. The ssumzili hides in the rain and tries to get as close as it can to the rearmost of the traveling heroes before attacking. It doesn't cease its attacks until it kills at least one enemy, after which, if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points, it tries to retreat with the body to feast on alone in the rain.

SSUMZILI

CREATURE 12

Page 85

Initiative Stealth +25

JULA GATES

TRIVIAL 11

Jula is built upon cliffs overlooking the sea. It was once a larger city, occupying steep river valleys along a highland trade route, but when the Eye of Abendego drowned the region more than a century ago, only the clifftop portions of the city survived. The Knights of Abendego now dominate the town, having used it as their base of operations for two decades. The gazetteer beginning on page 68 describes Jula in detail.

Creatures: When heroes arrive at the town's east entrance, a pair of Knights are standing guard. They're more interested in shaking down strangers for money than in protecting anything and aren't scrutinizing

CHAPTER 4 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter, the heroes go after the leaders of the Knights of Abendego in their home base of Jula. Jula's residents long ago grew tired of having the Knights boss them around in their own town, so the heroes can stoke an undercurrent of rebellion and convince the townspeople to rise up. This allows the heroes to investigate the alehouse that the Knights use as their headquarters, but the leaders aren't there; they're in caves accessed by a hidden trapdoor in the alehouse. In these old smuggler caves, the heroes face the most powerful Knights—including their leader, Ajbal Kimon—and have a chance to stop the last of the prisoners from being sacrificed to a sinister god.

CHAPTER 4 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 4 are as follows.

- +1 glamered leather armor
- +1 resilient mithral scale mail
- +2 striking returning trident
- eye of apprehension
- fighter's fork
- greater cognitive mutagen
- greater healing potion
- moderate bravo's brew
- oathbow
- slumber wine
- wand of smoldering fireballs (5th level)

travelers closely; they're likely to mistake the heroes for ordinary travelers. However, if the heroes rode the frogs from the prison, the Knights are likely more suspicious. Either way, they demand an entrance fee of 10 gp per person, with an extra 5 gp for mounts (such as riding frogs). If any hero wears obvious jewelry or valuables, the Knights demand those instead.

If the heroes pay off the Knights, they can enter the city without any trouble. If the heroes refuse, the Knights grow hostile and try to intimidate them. If that fails, they resort to violence, bellowing about "teaching stubborn travelers a lesson." Both are Abendego brutes; they're unlikely to cause 11th-level characters much trouble.

ABENDEGO BRUTES (2) CREATURE 8

Page 37

Initiative Intimidation +16

Inside Julia

Knights of Abendego patrol the streets in groups of four or more brutes. One member of each group carries a signal horn, and another group of Knights is only a horn's call away. Few bother staying alert and, like the guards at the gate, they're more interested in shaking down wealthy-looking travelers than keeping alert for any trouble. They've grown complacent with their stranglehold on the city and don't expect to face any danger here. However, if the heroes are blatant about making themselves a known threat, such as by challenging multiple groups of Knights in the streets, the patrols become more vigilant. This forces the heroes to move through the town more carefully to avoid the Knights' notice.

The Knights of Abendego occupy (and, unknown to most town residents, operate beneath) the Julia Alehouse, although they sleep at an inn called the Wheelwright's Widower and their numbers are greatest there. Near this inn is the Hall of the Watchful Ibex, Julia's temple to Erastil and communal workshop. Father Heveril spends nearly all his time there, and it's a natural first stop in Julia. Any towns person the heroes question discreetly directs them there.

MEETING FATHER HEVERIL

The Hall of the Watchful Ibex has become the closest thing Julia's townsfolk have to a safe haven. Here, **Father Heveril** (LN male human ex-paladin of Erastil

7) tends to the spirits of Julia's residents as best as his own low spirits can manage. Father Heveril doesn't actually have the strength to stop the Knights if they sent their full forces to the Hall of the Watchful Ibex; luckily, Ajbai has decided to leave the shrine alone for now, focusing his priorities elsewhere. Ajbai knows that the numerous Knights present in the nearby Wheelwright's Widower are sufficient to keep the people in the shrine cowed.

Father Heveril is haggard, jaded, and cynical. He offers aid to any who seek it, but it's obvious that he's been worn down by the burden of leading a town through calamity after calamity. Any animals accompanying the party take an immediate and noticeable dislike to Father Heveril, though he doesn't seem to pay them any mind.

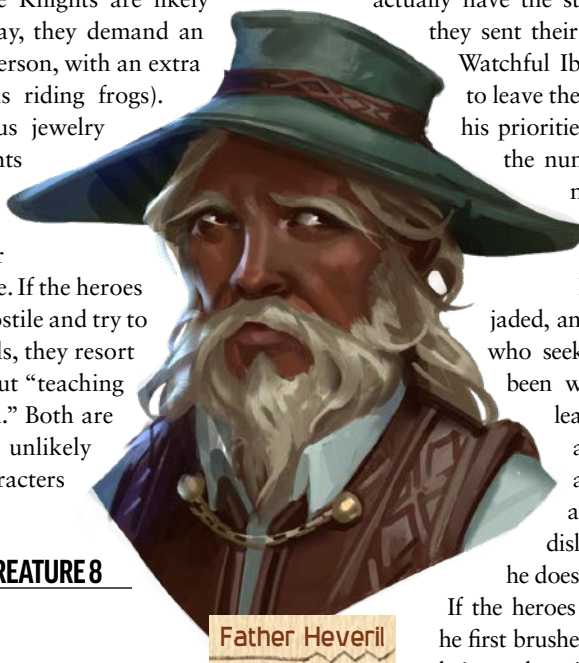
If the heroes ask about this unusual effect, he first brushes their questions aside and says he's used to it. If pressed, he explains that

Erastil has been displeased with him for decades. Heveril serves Julia as selflessly as possible to try to atone for his sins, but it's clear he's simply going through the motions.


Father Heveril is curious about visitors from the Magaambya and wants to hear what brings them to Julia. When he learns they're enemies of the Knights of Abendego, he's glad but cautious. He informs the heroes that there are dozens of Knights in town, including their most powerful leaders like Ajbai and priests of Norgorber, and a frontal assault to expel them from Julia is doomed to failure. Father Heveril wants to help, but he's afraid that if they fail, the consequences will lead to even worse treatment for the citizens. To succeed, an attack against the Knights must be decisive and, in the process, strike down their leaders in the Julia Alehouse. If the heroes promise to defeat Ajbai Kimon, Father Heveril vows to do everything in his power to help the people rise up against the Knights and let the heroes strike at the organization's leaders.

RALLY SUPPORT

Father Heveril knows of four individuals (other than himself) who have the influence or resources to make a significant difference in a public uprising against the Knights of Abendego. Unless the heroes can convince at least two of these people to lend their aid, Father Heveril refuses to even consider a fight. The more they can convince to aid in a battle against the Knights, the better.



Father Heveril



"I'm doing everything I can to recruit and coordinate anyone willing to fight back against the Knights. But I'm going to need some help. The people of Jula are brave, but courage is no substitute for a good shield. Ajbal has been working our blacksmith Zihara Steeltale to the bone, but she may be able to spare a few things. If she can supply a few shields, even a blade or two, then this plan might not be dead in the water after all."

"Then there's the Third River, our local thieves' guild. I trust those cutpurses about as far as I can throw them, but they have their own reasons to hate the Knights. They're quick, and they're smart; if nothing else, they'll make a good distraction."

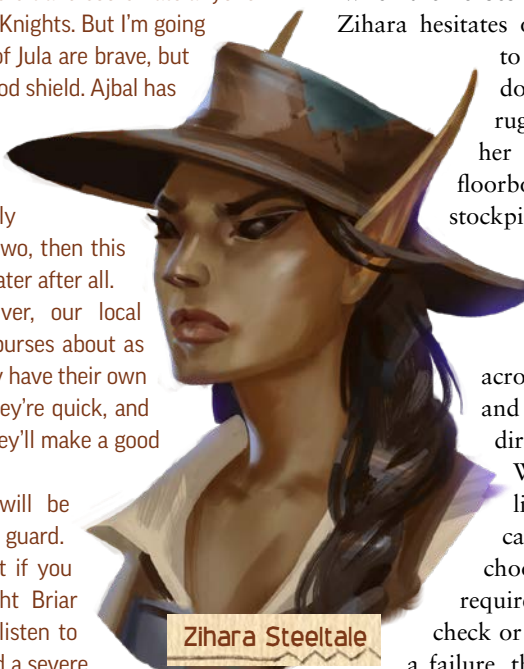
"Our front line, hopefully, will be made up of the former town guard. I doubt they'll listen to me, but if you can get their old captain, Eight Briar Sunsets, to step up, they may listen to him. Unfortunately, he's acquired a severe fear of open spaces. If I wasn't still bringing him food, he'd probably starve before stepping outside."

"Imara High-Hearth owns the alehouse; in fact, she grew up in it. No one knows the Knights or their movements in the alehouse better. She's been avoiding a confrontation for fear of her beloved alehouse becoming a focus of the Knights' wrath, but she needs convincing that the time is now. This might be the best time, in fact, as the Knights recently turned her out, and I'm certain she's not happy about that."

The Blacksmith

Most of the townspeople need little encouragement to resist the Knights, but very few are actually equipped for combat. Unless the party can secure the proper equipment, people will be wielding boathooks and filleting knives against scale mail and tridents.

The blacksmith, an elf named **Zihara Steeltale** (CG female elf armorer 6), has been conscripted by the Knights to produce armor and weapons exclusively for them. Her wife, **U'kuyo** (NG female human blacksmith 3), and their two adult children have been assisting her, but even with their help, she has barely been filling Ajbal's growing demands. Ajbal has begun to grow impatient, issuing thinly veiled threats about what will happen to her family if she doesn't produce enough. She blames her aging bones to buy herself time but has actually produced more than double his demands for months now, hiding away excess arms that she crafts. Getting the family to agree to help isn't difficult, as they have a deep-seated hatred for Ajbal and his gang, and have been waiting to put their cache to good use.



Zihara Steeltale

When the heroes explain what they're here to do, Zihara hesitates only a moment before nodding to her family. Her wife bars the door, her son pulls away the heavy rug in the middle of the floor, and her daughter begins to pry away floorboards, revealing the weapons stockpile.

The hard part is moving the weapons to the Hall of the Watchful Ibex without being caught. Hauling them by wagon across the bridge between the forge and the temple means moving directly past the Wheelwright's Widower. As many Knights are living there, the chance of getting caught is high. The heroes might choose to disguise the wagon, which requires a successful DC 28 Deception check or the use of concealing magic. On a failure, the ruse is detected. Whether the weapons are actually discovered by the Knights or simply need to be tucked away out of sight to avoid discovery, Zihara's weapons can't be used in the upcoming battle.

Another possibility is to transfer the weapons across the rope bridge that extends from the cliff near the forge to the opposite cliff. Carrying heavy weapons makes this a job suited for the strongest and most nimble haulers making as few trips as possible to avoid arousing suspicion. Anyone taking on this task must attempt a single DC 25 Athletics check and a single DC 25 Acrobatics check. A hero who fails either check is enfeebled 1 for 24 hours from the strain of the crossing; a hero who fails both checks or critically fails at either check inadvertently drops so many weapons in the river that Zihara can't aid the upcoming battle.

XP Award: Grant the heroes 80 XP for getting the weapons to the Hall of the Watchful Ibex in preparation for the battle.

The Thieves' Guild

Jula's thieves' guild, the Third River, is a loose affiliation of almost twenty pickpockets and ruffians. They used to swindle traveling merchants and start the occasional tavern brawl for fun, but the town guard mostly left them alone as long as they avoided causing any serious harm to locals. While they lack discipline, Heveril believes their skills will make a big difference in the coming battle. Combat abilities aside, the guild members know every dark alley and secret byway in Jula. With a little direction, their particular expertise

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makes them excellent guerilla fighters.

The heroes find the guild in an old warehouse by the docks. A wiry-looking rogue named **Grinning Lex** (CN agender human thief 4) sees the party approach and instantly raises their guard. If the heroes mention that Heveril sent them, Lex relaxes slightly, but is still reluctant to speak with them. A successful DC 28 Deception or Diplomacy check convinces Lex to hear them out. They let the heroes inside and introduce them to the rest of the guild. Although Lex appears to be in charge, they're insistent that all the guild members are equal because their actual leader, Barrister Indeg, was murdered.

When the Knights first arrived in town, Barrister Indeg didn't take the threat seriously. But once merchants and travelers stopped coming to Julia, it became impossible for the guild to keep up the lifestyle they once knew. Eventually, Indeg grew fed up and attacked the Knights out of desperation. He underestimated how dangerous the Knights were and was badly injured in the fight, passing away from his injuries soon after.

The promise of payback is enough to get everyone in the Third River interested, but they don't see the point in fighting without a strong leader who knows what they're doing. If the heroes suggest the guild follow them, or Father Heveril, most of them laugh it off, but Lex looks thoughtful. Lex whistles loudly to get everyone's attention and makes an offer. If one of the heroes can take one of their toughest thieves in a fist fight, the guild will join the revolt.

Creature: This nonlethal combat is between a single hero of choice and a guild tough who uses a sap. This combat isn't likely to be a difficult one; Lex chooses a tough that they think has deserved a beating for a little while now. Although the Third River won't follow the heroes if the chosen hero doesn't beat the guild tough, it's also important for the hero to show confidence while doing so.

GUILD TOUGH

CREATURE 4

Male burglar (*Game mastery Guide* 210)

Initiative Perception +10

XP Award: Grant the heroes 80 XP for getting the Third River's commitment to participate in the upcoming battle.

The Captain

Before the Knights of Abendego came to Julia, **Eight Briar Sunsets** (LN male human guard captain 7) was the captain of Julia's town guard. In a town like Julia, that mostly meant settling disputes between merchants, breaking up fights that got too rowdy, and slapping local pickpockets on the wrist if they were clumsy enough to get caught. He was perhaps not the finest or most noble, but he was respected and maintained the peace.

Eventually, Captain Briar thought to find some peaceful resolution with Knights, delineating authority in the town. He met with Ajbal Kimon a year ago, ready to negotiate, but Ajbal stabbed him in the face without warning. That was the last time the captain was seen in public. Since then, he can't step outside of his home without being wracked with overwhelming fear that forces him back inside. Several townspeople have met with him to convince him to keep working, but he's turned away everyone and fallen deeper into despair and self-pity. Father Heveril hopes that perhaps the heroes can succeed where others have failed and help the captain find his courage. If Captain Briar can rally the guards, Julia will have a disciplined fighting force to join them into battle.

When the heroes arrive at Captain Briar's home, he's surprised to see new faces, but invites them in. All the windows have been nailed shut from the inside, and makeshift insulation—mostly torn clothing—has been placed all around the house to mute the sound of rain. Stepping into Captain Briar's house effectively feels like leaving Julia behind. The captain is distant but polite. He understands the desire to fight back against the Knights of Abendego, but he instantly becomes withdrawn as soon as the heroes imply that he needs to leave his house. No amount of discussion can compel him to step outside.

Captain Briar's agoraphobia doesn't solely result from his painful and humiliating encounter with Ajbal. The weapon Ajbal used to stab him afflicted him with a powerful, fear-inducing curse that made Captain Briar afraid of the first thing he saw after being stabbed. Ajbal thought Captain Briar would see and remain fearful of him forever after, but Captain Briar instead glanced up as the blow fell, seeing the cloud-covered sky above. Now, the sight of the sky triggers a debilitating fear. No one in Julia has been able to recognize Captain Briar's curse, much less



Grinning Lex

dispel the affliction, so he's remained isolated in his home ever since. The magical effect is easy to detect with the right spell, but a hero must succeed at a DC 25 Arcana, Occultism, or Religion check to Identify Magic to realize it's a curse. A *remove curse* spell or similar magic can lift the curse (5th level; counteract DC 26). Unless the curse is lifted, Captain Briar can't aid the battle against the Knights.

If freed from his curse, Captain Briar opens his door and takes a few tentative steps outside. He looks up at the sky for several seconds before running back inside, laughing and soaking wet. He's trembling in a mixture of fear and exhilaration, and he assures the heroes that the curse is truly broken. It takes him some time to get used to the outdoors again, and even more time to convince the other guards to follow him once more, but Captain Briar promises to be ready by the time Father Heveril needs him.

XP Award: Grant the heroes 80 XP for removing Captain Briar's curse.

The Barkeep

The Jula Alehouse is busier than it's ever been, but busy doesn't mean lucrative. The Knights have been even more overt about taking full control of the alehouse, even dragging off established customers like the gnoll Gully. Imara High-Hearth has never known any life other than working at her family's centuries-old establishment, but when Ajbal began preparations for his ritual sacrifices, he told Imara she was dismissed from her own bar. Imara knows the Knights aren't interested in much more than drinking away her stores without paying for them (not that they've ever made payments a priority before).

Imara hasn't been to work in a while, and it's increasingly difficult for her to maintain the pleasant demeanor she's kept up for years. She would make an excellent addition to the group preparing to fight back against the Knights, as she knows practically everyone in Jula. With her help, organizing the numbers needed to rise up against the Knights is much easier. Yet even after being kicked out of her own bar, Imara's not interested in provoking any conflict with the Knights, and she's more than a little afraid of Ajbal. She's seen too many people who've crossed him disappear.

The heroes can meet with Imara and gain her help with a successful DC 28 Diplomacy check. You might



Imara High-Hearth

permit another relevant skill check instead, such as an Intimidation check if they tell about the horrors of the cyclops prison. If the heroes freed Gully, one of Imara's best customers, reduce the DC of whichever check they attempt by 4. On a failure, Imara becomes convinced that her decision not to get involved is the right one and she won't help with the upcoming battle. On a success, she sends word through the town and readies everyone to fight.

XP Award: Award the heroes 80 XP for convincing Imara to help against the Knights.

Terwa Lords Aid

If Scout Leader Ssaraku Akai promised to aid the heroes in Chapter 2, she's completed her secret mission and come to lend a hand. Her timing is nearly perfect. She and two of her most powerful followers climb up from the water when the heroes are

traveling through town and seek them out. Although the townspeople are initially surprised to see armed and armored iruxis walking boldly through town, they soon realize they're here to help and keep them out of sight of the Knights.

Creatures: Ssaraku doesn't mention her promise to the heroes, but simply nods and asks how she can help. The iruxis don't agree to any plan that obviously uses them as bait or as a lone frontal assault, but they otherwise help as the heroes request.

SSARAKU AKAI CREATURE 9

Female elite Terwa chosen (page 83, *Bestiary* 6)

Initiative Perception +21

URUKANI TENTH-STAR CREATURE 8

Male Terwa chosen (page 83)

Initiative Perception +19

GIRI CREATURE 7

Male Terwa star reader (page 82)

Initiative Perception +18

Strange Luck: The battle might be the time when the heroes' earlier gift to Urukani saves his life, perhaps by inadvertently intercepting a fatal blow on the iruxi but getting destroyed in the process. Alternatively, the gift might be instrumental in saving the lives of one of the heroes—the prophecy wasn't specific that it would be Urukani's life that's saved.

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THE BATTLE OF JULA


Once the heroes bring together the forces they can, Father Heveril handles the rest of the preparations. The following morning, dozens of townspeople come to the Hall of the Watchful Ibex, with still more spread out in key locations throughout town. Father Heveril changes out of his usual robes and into a suit of armor emblazoned with Erastil's religious symbol. He attempts to string an old, well-crafted bow, but his hands are shaking too much. When he sees the heroes, he sighs and puts the bow down, privately voicing his concerns that he is the wrong person to lead this revolt. He opens up about his past with them for the first time, revealing that he was once in a very similar situation.

When Chelaxian colonists attacked Jula many years ago, it seemed a losing battle. Someone needed to give their life fighting the invaders so others could escape, and that fell to Heveril. As he had recently lost his mother, Heveril agreed to face death for the town. But when he realized how overwhelming the enemy forces were, Heveril turned and fled. He lost Erastil's favor that day, and doesn't believe he can be of any use without it.

Give the heroes a chance to bolster Father Heveril's nerve; if you'd like, you can ask for a DC 25 Diplomacy or Religion check, although this should be more of an opportunity for kind words and support rather than rolling dice. If the heroes restore his confidence, even momentarily, he overcomes his nerves, strings his bow, and counsels the townspeople about the coming battle. If the heroes want to address the townsfolk as well, Father Heveril introduces them and lets them speak.

Just as the townspeople are ready to go, Father Heveril pulls the heroes to the side one last time to remind them of their mission: enter the alehouse, find Ajbäl Kimon and defeat him. The people of Jula will do their part to keep the other Knights elsewhere in town, away from the alehouse, though the heroes are on their own to face anyone currently inside it.

This uprising comes to be known as the Battle of Jula, a desperate revolt against well-armed and -armored bullies who have kept the town under their thumbs for far too long. How the battle plays out depends on how many NPCs the heroes convinced to participate (of Zihara, Lex, Captain Briar, and Imara).



Fewer than two NPCs: Father Heveril realizes there isn't enough support to rise up against the Knights, and the heroes must face them alone. There are 6 Abendego brutes in area **D1**, and another 6 brutes lounging around outside the alehouse, whom the heroes have to face before they even enter the building.

Two NPCs: The hastily assembled revolt can do little more than harry the Knights with hit-and-run attacks. The Knights are scattered and confused. Knight patrols receive conflicting reports, spreading themselves thin as they chase down the rebels. Father Heveril is nowhere to be seen, and rumors spread that he has, once again, fled the town during its time of need. The Knights can reinforce key strategic areas like the Julia Alehouse; there are six Abendego brutes for the heroes to face in area **D1**.

Three NPCs: The hit-and-run attacks from the resistance disorient the Knights and draw them away from the alehouse, bringing the battle into Julia's streets. As the heroes make their way to the alehouse, they see a line of determined townspeople defending Father Heveril as he shoots at the Knights with his bow, which has transformed into white wood. Father Heveril shouts an order to the rebels and they begin a slow, guarded retreat. The Knights follow. The plan to move the battle away from the alehouse is successful. Only four Abendego brutes remain in area **D1**.

Four NPCs: As the heroes make their way from the temple to the alehouse, they see all of the people they've met locked in fierce combat. Father Heveril fires steadily at the Knights with his white wood bow. U'kuyo wields a warhammer with Zihara's maker's mark, smashing through the enemies in her path. Lex bears a big grin as they flee from a group of Knights, drawing them into an alley where rogues wait in ambush. Captain Briar and four people wearing matching uniforms have turned old market stalls into an impromptu barricade to keep the Knights at a distance. Many, many more residents fight from homes and shops, directed by Imara High-Hearth. The people of Julia will win the day, but their victory won't mean much if the heroes can't hold up their end of the bargain. Only two Abendego brutes retreat to area **D1**.

Treasure: So long as the heroes bolster Father Heveril's morale and earn the assistance of at least three NPCs, Father Heveril is redeemed by the Battle of Julia. His old bow has become an *oathbow* that speaks Common in the voice of Father Heveril's departed mother, rather than Elven. After the battle—which might be after the heroes have returned from the caves below the alehouse—he presents them with this bow and his thanks. He doesn't need the bow, he insists, as he has his restored faith to guide him.

Julia Alehouse

The Julia Alehouse is widely known as the headquarters of the Knights of Abendego, but the public perception isn't quite true. In fact, the true headquarters is in old smugglers' tunnels beneath the tavern. This doesn't mean the Julia Alehouse isn't important to the Knights; they spend a lot of their time here bullying the patrons and planning their raids out of Julia and into the Sodden Lands. Before being turned out, Imara High-Hearth tried to serve locals and Knights alike and keep everyone happy, as she feared earning the Knights' ire. She has a sense that the Knights are using a secret passage somewhere in her tavern's back room, but scrupulously ignores their comings and goings so she can't be accused of knowing more than she should.

During the Battle of Julia, some of the Knights retreat into the tavern. At first, the heroes likely think that breaking into the tavern and routing Ajbal Kimon—who wasn't present at the fight outside—is their task here. They'll soon realize Ajbal isn't here, and they must locate and investigate the smuggler tunnels to find him. They can learn about the secret trapdoor in area **D4** from any Knights they interrogate here, or simply by looking around.

The map of the Julia Alehouse appears on page 58.

D1. COMMON ROOM

LOW OR MODERATE 11

This lofty common room is made of old wood weathered by generations of smoke and damp. A few stained glass windows give light, but the room nevertheless seems dark and gloomy, as many windows are broken and covered by wooden boards.

People of Julia have gathered in the Julia Alehouse for centuries, but in the last 20 years the clientele has increasingly been the Knights of Abendego. At first, the Knights came singly or in small groups, demanding the best food and drink at reduced prices. Their bossy, demeaning attitudes eventually drove almost everyone else away.

Creatures: A number of Abendego brutes have retreated to this common room during the Battle of Julia. They're currently drinking their way through the stores of liquor behind the counter and nursing their wounded pride. They don't intend to let anyone into the tavern, even Imara, and fight anyone who tries to get in. An Abendego brute reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points flees or surrenders, whichever seems most likely to result in their immediate survival.

The heroes' preparations at the Battle of Julia determine whether there are two, four, or six brutes still here.

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ABENDEGO BRUTES (2, 4, OR 6)

CREATURE 8

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Initiative Perception +15

Interrogating the Knights: All of these brutes know there's a secret trapdoor in area **D4** that leads to tunnels beneath the alehouse. A hero who successfully interrogates one of the Knights (by succeeding at a DC 24 Deception or Intimidation check) learns about the trapdoor. The Knights know Ajbal is currently there, performing sacrifices of the most valuable prisoners

kidnapped from Kiutu. They also know better than to venture into the tunnels without being specifically invited, as there are dangerous monsters and powerful magic down there (of which they can only speak in vague terms).

Treasure: There are two neatly labeled vials of moderate bravo's brew behind the bar, which Imara saved for emergencies. She certainly doesn't mind if the heroes use them against the Knights.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for learning about the trapdoor in area **D4** from these Knights.

D2. KITCHEN

This large and functional kitchen is tidy despite its apparent age.

Imara kept the kitchen well-supplied with basic foods such as rice, fish, and dense bread. This remains one of the cleanest rooms in the alehouse, as the Knights rarely come back here to mess it up. They've already eaten the food that doesn't require a lot of effort to prepare, and the alcohol is all out in the common room, leaving them no reason to disturb the kitchen.

D3. STORAGE ROOM

MODERATE 11

This room contains casks, crates, and other supplies such as spare chairs. The sharp smell of spilled beer fills the air.

Creature: A few weeks ago, a pair of Norgorberites named Sherris Lodd and Vinson Haddelor came to Jula and sought out Ajbal Kimon to offer their services.

They'd fled from Absalom after failing in their complicated plot to overthrow the city. Trying to get as far from Absalom as possible, they followed up on a chain of leads within their evil faith that led them to Ajbal. They admitted to Ajbal that they're jorogumos, but they keep their human guise around the other Knights, none of whom know their true nature. Vinson is down in the smuggler tunnels, but Sherris is here. She's currently performing a quick inventory of the storeroom, looking for anything useful. When interrupted, Sherris first attempts to feign innocence, claiming (truthfully) that she's not a Knight of Abendego, but also (falsely) that she works for Imara High-Hearth as a server and has been forced to keep the Knights here in food and drink. She tries to get the heroes to split up, using *mind*



reading and charm on them one at a time. She might even cast *suggestion* to get some of the heroes to leave the alehouse to split them up further.

Once she thinks the odds are in her favor, she sprouts her spider legs and attacks. As she's not dedicated to the Knights, she flees the alehouse if reduced to fewer than 100 Hit Points. If escape seems unlikely, she surrenders and offers the location of the hidden trapdoor in area **D4** in exchange for freedom.

SHERRIS LODD

CREATURE 13

Female jorogumo (*Bestiary* 3 141)

Initiative Deception +28

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for learning about the secret trapdoor in area **D4** from Sherris.

D4. SECRET TRAPDOOR

The trapdoor to the smuggler caves is carefully hidden in the rear of the alehouse, appearing as a section of floor with a chair that, when triggered, rotates upward and outward to reveal a hole with a metal ladder descending to area **E1**.

A hero who Searches the area and succeeds at a DC 24 Perception check discovers the hidden trapdoor, while heroes with a good idea of where to look—gained through interrogating the Knights in area **D1** or Sherris in area **D3**—find it automatically.

Hazard: The trapdoor bears a magical trap that conjures a phantom stinger to poison anyone opening it. Creatures wearing a religious symbol of Norgorber don't trigger the trap, so most Knights of Abendego have forgotten it's even there.

STINGER WARD TRAP

HAZARD 11

UNCOMMON MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 32 (expert)

Description A ghostly stinger appears in the air and jabs at anyone moving through the opening.

Disable DC 36 Thievery (master) to prevent the ghostly stinger from forming or *dispel magic* (6th level; counteract DC 34).

Deadly Sting ☞ (divine, necromancy, poison) **Trigger** A creature who isn't wearing a religious symbol of Norgorber moves the trapdoor; **Effect** The trap targets the creature with *purple worm sting* (DC 30 Fortitude save).

Reset The trap resets after 24 hours.

Smuggler Caves

A previous owner of the Jula Alehouse with less-than-legal leanings secretly commissioned a connection between the alehouse's storage closet and a cave system in the cliffs below. These old caves riddle

the cliffs upon which Jula is built, and the previous owner is far from the only person in town to build a hidden passage to the caves beneath his establishment. Smugglers traveling along the valleys below Jula have long used these caves and the connection to the alehouse let them move goods into the town unseen. When the waters rose a century ago, the cave entrance became inaccessible except during unusually low tides, and the caves were soon forgotten. When Ajbal took over the Jula Alehouse as his base of operations, he discovered the forgotten trapdoor and the caves below. He kept the caves' presence a secret from all but the most loyal Knights, but most at least suspect the existence of a secret passage Ajbal and his favorites use somewhere in the back of the alehouse.

Ajbal took the most likely candidates for sacrifice to Norgorber into the caves. He and his right-hand priest, Addo, are preparing to harness the profane energies of the sacrifices to gain personal power. The longer the heroes take to venture through the caves, the more prisoners are sacrificed and the more powerful Ajbal and Addo become.

Once the heroes first venture into the smuggler caves, after every 12 hours that passes, Ajbal and Addo bring a prisoner from area **E8** to area **E7** for sacrifice. Kolnoku is the last of the six prisoners to be sacrificed, at the end of 3 days. The first sacrifice gives Ajbal and Addo a permanent +1 status bonus to saving throws, the second gives them a permanent +1 status bonus to Armor Class, and the third gives them a permanent +1 status bonus to attack rolls and saving throw DCs. The next three sacrifices increase these bonuses to +2 (first to saving throws, then to AC, then to attack rolls and DCs). As the benefits from the sacrifices increase, the villains' shadows lengthen and curl around them, regardless of the ambient light.

SMUGGLER CAVE FEATURES

The smuggler caves are large, clammy, and moist. Although natural, they've been smoothed out and enlarged over the years to make for better storage and even create small rooms. The ceilings range from 10 feet high in the connecting passages to 20 feet high in the larger caverns. Iron pegs in the walls support oil lanterns, so the rooms are well-lit, if a little hazy, and long shadows fill the connecting corridors.

The map of the smuggler caves appears on page 62.

E1. TRAPDOOR ROOM

This small cellar was carved from the natural rock beneath the alehouse. A wooden trapdoor can be seen in the ceiling, and a narrow opening leads south.

HURRICANE'S HOWL

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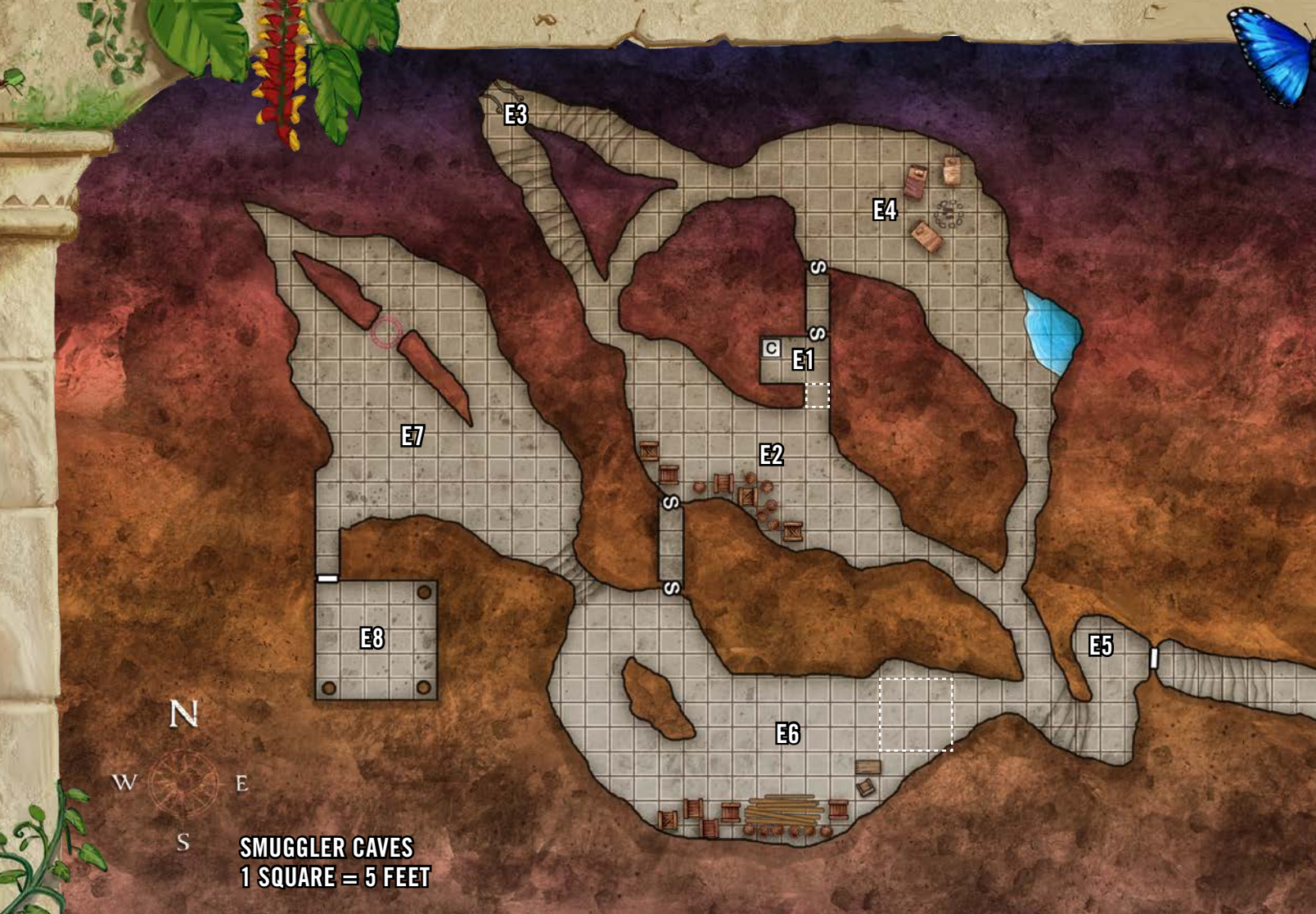
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SMUGGLER CAVES

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

This roughly rectangular cellar connects to the smuggler caves. Some old boxes contain mugs, rags, and other supplies that the Knights haven't deemed valuable enough to move elsewhere.

A secret passage leads to area **E4**, which the Knights use when they want to come down here to sleep. The secret passage is opened by manipulating a loose stone in the wall. A hero Searching the room finds the secret door with a successful DC 20 Perception check.

Hazard: The narrow opening to area **E2** bears a stinger ward trap just like that in area **D4**. It triggers when a creature that isn't wearing a religious symbol of Norgorber passes through the opening.

STINGER WARD TRAP

Page 61

Stealth DC 32 (expert)

HAZARD 11

E2. PLUNDER STORES

Several crates and barrels stand in haphazard piles against the southern wall of this long cave.

The Knights spend a lot of time demanding payment for protection, raiding travelers, and stealing from unprotected settlements. They bring their ill-gotten gains here and store them until they can be resold or put to some other use. They pile these goods indiscriminately about the room, as it sometimes takes a while for the Knights to locate a buyer for their stolen wares.

A secret door connects this chamber to area **E6**, the cave where more valuable goods are stored. Like the secret door in area **E1**, this one is opened by manipulating a stone in the wall, but it's a little harder to find, as it's hidden in the middle of a pile of plunder. A hero Searching this room or the plunder finds it with a successful DC 26 Perception check.

Treasure: The trade goods include several fine bolts of colorful cloth weighing 10 Bulk and worth 300 gp in total. The moist air hasn't yet damaged the fabric, but will likely do so in the next few weeks. A crate with a shipping label destined for Bloodcove is filled with assorted toys of fine workmanship, each with a secret hollow space inside. The toys are all empty right now, so there's no telling what they're designed to smuggle. Each of the 40 toys is worth 10 gp.

E3. PRISON WALL

MODERATE 11

Steep natural steps lead down to this low area where two passages meet. A smooth stone wall blocks the end of the passage, in which two bloodstained iron manacles have been driven in about six feet from the floor. Salt stains on the wall and floor indicate that this dead end sometimes floods with seawater.

This grim dead end is where the Knights torture people to gain information, usually regarding the whereabouts of hidden treasure or enemies of the gang. Fortunately, there's no one manacled here now. The good manacles each bear a cunning clasp that can't be opened by someone who has been locked in them.

Upon close inspection, the heroes can tell that the flat wall bearing the manacles blocks off a passage leading to the northwest. A few holes, each no larger than a finger in diameter, pierce the wall right at floor level. When the tides are high, water seeps into this dead end, sometimes high enough to drown a prisoner chained here. The wall is several feet thick, but if the heroes take the time to remove the obstruction they expose a network of half-flooded sea caves. The contents and dangers of these caves are beyond the scope of this adventure, but they likely lead out to unknown exits in the Gulf of Abendego.

Creature: A jorogumo who travels under the name Vinson Haddelor is helping Ajbal with various tasks. Ajbal has set Vinson to cleaning this area and preparing it for future victims, a task Vinson performs with gruesome relish.

As with the jorogumo Sherris in the alehouse above, Vinson prefers to remain disguised as a human in simple yet fashionable clothing. He doesn't have a good sense of which Knights are permitted down in the sea caves and which aren't, so he might mistake the heroes for gang members he simply hasn't met. He mentions that he's preparing this area at Ajbal's request and asks whether the heroes know who's going to be placed here next, and how he might be involved in the torture. His eagerness to participate should come across as macabre.

If it's clear the heroes are enemies of the Knights—or if any of the heroes are tengus, whom many jorogumos despise—Vinson attacks. He sprouts his legs right away and tries to web distant opponents to the walls long enough for him to bite or claw the closest heroes to death. Vinson likes Ajbal and the Knights more than Sherris does; he doesn't flee unless reduced to fewer than 50 Hit Points.

VINSON HADELOR

CREATURE 13

Male jorogumo (*Bestiary* 3 141)

Initiative Perception +26

E4. SLEEPING CAVE

MODERATE 11

A clear pool of water fills a depression at the east end of this long cave. In the center, comfortable-looking cots with warm blankets surround the fire pit. Nearby, pegs driven into the natural stone wall hold several cloaks and cooking gear, most of it stained from heavy use.

Some Knights occasionally sleep here rather than at the Wheelwright's Widower inn, because the best of their stolen goods make for soft cots and good food.

Creatures: The Knights here vary depending on the time of day. When the heroes first arrive, they find two Norgorberite spies describing a caravan to a pair of Abendego brutes. The spies, Nalima and Kilgigim, are loyal to the Knights of Abendego, but they don't look like the other rough gang members; they're urbane and cunning infiltrators who frequently disguise themselves as innocent travelers or even victims of Sodden Lands gangs to locate likely targets for the Knights.

The spies recently identified just such a target. A caravan a few days north of Julia is traveling with rookie guards, and Nalima is explaining the caravan route while Kilgigim describes the guard shifts. In truth, neither thinks the brutes stand much of a chance against the caravan's defenses, but they're likely to weaken it enough that Nalima and Kilgigim can later overcome it themselves, earning accolades from Ajbal when they lead the stolen caravan into Julia.

These Knights don't let intruders meddle with their plans and leap to attack any they detect. The spies prefer to hang back and throw daggers while the brutes take the brunt of melee attacks. All four know that their lives are forfeit if Ajbal learns they've let intruders survive, so they fight to the death.

These foes don't expect anyone who isn't a fellow Knight to come through the secret door, so they have a –4 circumstance penalty to their initiative checks if the heroes come in that way.

NORGORBERITE SPIES (2)

CREATURE 10

NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human infiltrator

Perception +18

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +19, Deception +22, Diplomacy +20, Intimidation +20, Religion +18, Society +20, Thievery +19

Str +2, **Dex** +5, **Con** +0, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

Items dagger (4), +1 glamer leather armor, religious

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symbol of Norgorber; one spy carries a greater cognitive mutagen and the other carries a vial of slumber wine, but the labels on each are switched.

Ranged Feint When the Norgorberite spy successfully Feints a creature, the target is flat-footed against the spy's ranged attacks as well as melee attacks.


AC 29; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +22, **Will** +19


HP 170


Reaper's Protection  (manipulate) **Trigger** The spy is about to attempt a saving throw; **Effect** The spy touches

their religious symbol of Norgorber and gains a +2 circumstance bonus to the triggering save.

Speed 25 feet

Melee  dagger +23 (agile, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Ranged  dagger +23 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Quick Draw  The Norgorberite spy Interacts to draw a weapon, then Strikes with that weapon.

Sneak Attack The Norgorberite spy deals an additional 4d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures or creatures within reach of at least two of their allies.

Surprise Attack On the first round of combat, creatures that haven't acted yet are flat-footed to the

Norgorberite spy.

ABENDEGO BRUTES (2)

CREATURE 8

Page 37

Initiative Perception +15

Treasure: A fine ladle near the pool is worth 15 gp, and each set of bedding on the three cots is worth 30 gp. Under one of the cots is a satchel with the mixed components of three different dice games and, shoved in the bottom, an *eye of apprehension*.

E5. WARPED DOOR

MODERATE 11

Steep natural stairs descend to a wooden door, its bottom swollen with moisture and stained with salt.

The stairs lead steeply down on the east side of the smuggler caves to the sea cave entrance the smugglers used to use. That entrance is now underwater except at the lowest tide, so it's not useful. The Knights erected a solid wooden door to keep people out; only the Abendego priests, who keep *water breathing* among their prepared spells, can reliably come and go this way. Or, at least, they could until recently, as the wood of the door has warped with water and is stuck.

Creatures: A skinny Abendego priest named Skittering Maafi is working here, making minor repairs to the damaged door and frame. He's heard about the uprising above and became nervous that this escape route is inaccessible due to the stuck wood. Maafi has Norgorber's special favor and earned the companionship of a skittering, spiderlike creature called a karumzek. More and more tiny karumzeks have come to join the first, until a small swarm of them now follows the priest around. Even more



Norgorber Spy

unnervingly, the swarm spends nearly all of its time invisible. This makes Maafi nervous, as he wonders what his god has in mind by sending him more and more of these creatures, but they're loyal—for now.

When intruders come down this way, Maafi seems alone because the karumzek swarm is invisible. If he can, he tries to convince the heroes to help him get the door open (which requires a successful DC 28 Athletics check or the use of magic to shape wood). This is just a ploy for time, however, as he plans to kill these intruders—he just hopes to get some help from them first.

The karumzek swarm tries to keep its presence hidden until combat breaks out, when it joins Maafi in the attack. It fights until destroyed. Maafi fights to the death if cornered; if he got help opening the door, he flees that way if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points (casting *water breathing* on himself when he reaches the sea cave at the bottom of the stairs).

ABENDEGO PRIEST

CREATURE 11

Page 46

Initiative Perception +22

KARUMZEK SWARM

CREATURE 11

Page 81

Initiative Perception +21

E6. PLANNING CAVE

MODERATE 11

A natural column in the middle of this large cavern has been carved with a huge, crude map of the Sodden Lands region, with painted dots in different colors all across the map. Jumbled goods are heaped against the south wall, next to a small and dilapidated desk.

This is where the Knights of Abendego keep their most valuable plunder and where their leaders plan operations throughout the region. The painted dots represent communities that the Knights raid for goods, visit to demand protection money, contain possible enemies, and so on. The map is just large enough to include Kiutu on the bottom. A long painted line leads from Kiutu to a place depicted as a skull with a single eye; the heroes can tell by the positioning that this is the Prison of the Vacant Eye.

The plunder includes a lot of useful but low-value items like stacks of lumber and sturdy

chains, as well as the treasure listed below.

A secret door in the north wall connects this chamber to area E2, and it's opened just like the secret door there. A hero Searching this cave finds it with a successful DC 24 Perception check.

Searching the Desk: A small, wobbly desk to one side of the heaped plunder bears a few notes and records, including a logbook in which Ajbal is, at best, haphazard about inventorying the plunder that comes and goes from the caves. Several pieces of correspondence are jammed in the back of the logbook. Most of these are uninteresting missives from Knights across the Sodden Lands updating Ajbal on their schemes, but a few letters on nice paper are of particular interest to the heroes. These letters are all from Koride Ulawa of the Magaambya asking whether Ajbal had any information about an artifact called the *Vesicant Egg*. Koride's letter insinuates that Ajbal might use his connection with priests of Norgorber, famous for keeping secrets, to unearth any lore about it. Although Ajbal's responses aren't here, subsequent letters indicate that he'd responded to Koride and that they'd negotiated a price and some further details. There's a reference to Koride coming to Julia to meet with Ajbal and his priests in person, but there's no indication one way or the other whether she did so. These letters are recent but undated; there's nothing



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in them to indicate whether they were sent before or after Koride agreed to dispose of the *Vesicant Egg* at the end of the prior adventure. This correspondence is damaging but not damning; it hints that Koride was more invested in finding out about the artifact than she ever indicated to the heroes or her peers, and that she was willing to turn to unsavory sources to get more information.

Hazard: The Abendego priests worked together to create a magical rune that summons a gigantic defender to smuggler caves when necessary. The invisible rune extends from wall to wall on the east side of the room. Like the stinger ward traps in areas **D4**, **E1**, and **E7**, this trap doesn't trigger for creatures associated with Norgorber, including karumzeks or anyone wearing Norgorber's symbol.

SPIDER SUMMONING RUNE


HAZARD 11

UNCOMMON COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth +24 (master)

Description An invisible rune on the floor summons a goliath spider when disturbed by someone who isn't wearing Norgorber's religious symbol.

Disable DC 34 Thievery (master) to erase the rune or *dispel magic* (6th level; counteract DC 36) to dispel the rune.

Summon Animal  (conjunction, divine, summon) **Trigger** A creature that isn't wearing a religious symbol of Norgorber enters the area above the rune; **Effect** The trap summons a goliath spider (*Bestiary* 307). The goliath spider rolls initiative and remains for 2d6 rounds, after which the spell ends and the spider disappears. The spider also disappears if someone disables the trap before the duration expires. Unlike most summoned creatures, the goliath spider can use 3 actions each round and can use reactions.

Reset The trap resets after 24 hours.

Creatures: An Abendego priest named Yartei is working at the desk when the heroes arrive. He's looking over the pile of lumber and sketching out plans for a large, sturdy table and big map board to put against this room's north wall. A fussy perfectionist by nature, Yartei is unhappy with the crude map and wobbly desks and wishes Ajbal would insist on something nicer for strategy sessions and directions.

How Yartei interacts with the heroes depends on how they enter this room. If they come through the opening to the east and trigger the rune, he joins the goliath spider in the fight right away. If they come through the secret door, he casts *invisibility*, retreats into the area of the rune, and casts aside his religious symbol. This summons the spider, which Yartei hopes

won't attack him because he's invisible. Yartei flees through whichever exit is closer if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points.

ABENDEGO PRIEST

CREATURE 11

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Initiative Perception +22

Treasure: The stack of plunder includes a silver tea service worth 140 gp, a large ivory statue of a rearing drake worth 600 gp, a crate with fifteen bottles of exceptionally fine wine worth 90 gp each, a charred case containing a *5th-level wand of smoldering fireballs*, and a crystal vial with a *greater healing potion* attached to a note reading, "D.L., please use if Father's condition worsens."

XP Award: If the heroes discover the correspondence between Ajbal and Koride Ulawa, award them 30 XP.

E7. SACRIFICE CAVE

SEVERE 11

A wedge of rock splits this long cave in two, bisected by an open space with runes carved into the floor. An alcove to the south leads to a metal door pocked with rust.

This is the site where Ajbal prepares his sacrifices. Here, he made his assistant—a simpering, subservient Abendego priest named Addo—painstakingly carved runes into the floor of the gap in the wedge of stone, making the empty area sacred to Norgorber. Addo believes he and Ajbal are sharing the power of the sacrifices; in the short term, this is true. However, after all the prisoners have been murdered in Norgorber's name, Ajbal intends to betray Addo and make him the final sacrifice.

Norgorber's influence has touched this place and imbued it with an uncanny, omnipresent wind that blows silently around the room. The wind muffles sound; no matter how loud someone speaks in this room, their voice never comes out louder than a whisper. Creatures in the room have a -1 circumstance penalty to physical ranged attacks, as the wind buffets projectiles.

Hazard: The natural steps ascending into this room from area **E6** have another stinger ward trap that triggers when a creature who isn't wearing a religious symbol of Norgorber traverses the stairs. The DC to spot this trap is reduced by 2 (to DC 30), as there's a splash of blood right where the trap is triggered. A few days ago, one of the intended sacrifice victims tried to escape and was slain by the trap before she could get far. Her body isn't here, but evidence of her death remains.

STINGER WARD TRAP

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Stealth DC 34 (expert)

Creatures: Ajbal Kimon and Addo are diligently working toward gaining power through the sacrifices. Ajbal is furious at being disturbed and rails against anyone who enters. If he learns that the heroes are from the Magaambya, he demands they crawl back to their “jungle school” and leave the Sodden Lands to better people, like him, with the will to seize it. The Abendego priest Addo hangs back behind Ajbal, echoing and supporting whatever Ajbal says.

Ajbal is quick to initiate combat against the heroes, but he doesn't like getting locked down in melee against strong opponents who might quickly gain the upper hand. He prefers to pick on weaker foes or those hindered by Addo's spells and moves about the battlefield as he fights. Addo likes to cast spells from a distance and minimize the harm he takes personally. He takes every opportunity to withdraw from melee combat with an almost obsessive aversion.

Addo gives up on Ajbal if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points—at that point, he flees or surrenders. Ajbal has invested too much of his life into the Knights of Abendego and this ritual in particular to give up, so he doesn't surrender or run. Once he's reduced below 50 Hit Points, Ajbal realizes that the prisoners must mean something to the heroes, so he makes his way over to the metal door, opens it, and threatens to murder the prisoners unless the heroes back off. However, Ajbal is only bluffing, as he much prefers to use the prisoners as sacrifices rather than as hostages. If the heroes disobey his commands to leave, he renews his fight against them.

AJBAL KIMON

Page 86

Initiative Perception +23

ABENDEGO PRIEST

Page 46

Initiative Perception +22

Treasure: Addo has been copying the runes from a large tome titled *Secret Marks*, which lies on the floor near the rune-carved area in the wedge of stone. This book is worth 200 gp and details perverse and abhorrent rituals in Norgorber's faith, including the sacrifice ritual Ajbal and Addo have prepared. It also provides a glimpse into unique spells of Norgorber's

HAZARD 11

faith, providing access to the spells on page 78: *Blackfingers' blades*, *gray shadow*, and *mirecloak*. Despite the wind throughout the cave, the book's pages don't even flutter.

E8. VAULT

This lead-lined vault once hosted the Knights' greatest treasures; Ajbal even slept here when feeling particularly paranoid. It was a simple matter to haul the treasures here into area E6 and convert this vault into a cell for the prisoners, who've been languishing here ever since.

The number of captives that can be found here depends upon how quickly the heroes made their way through the smuggler caves. If they arrive here in fewer than 12 hours, all six prisoners are still present and none have been sacrificed. Kolnoku is the last to be sacrificed, and he's overjoyed to see the heroes again. His first question is about the fate of his daughter. Only once he knows she's safe does he think about getting himself and any other prisoners to safety.

XP Award: Award the heroes 20 XP for each prisoner they rescue (to a maximum of 120 XP).

Conclusion

Without Ajbal's leadership, the Knights of Abendego are little more than common bandits. The people of Julia can defeat or capture some Knights, but many more flee the town to evade justice. If the heroes made a deal with Ssaraku, the iruxis dedicate the next few weeks to hunting down the Knights who escaped and dragging them back to answer for their transgressions. The heroes can take care of any other loose ends that remain, such as helping to clean up around Julia, escorting prisoners home, or reuniting Kolnoku and I'boko.

While the heroes were away, the students have learned all that they can from Bloodsalt, and their research notes present lots of enlightening information. High Sun-Mage Oyamba will surely be pleased with the decision to allow the heroes and their students to pursue field research so early in their academic careers.

The heroes can bring up Koride's letters to anyone they'd like, but without further evidence, they prove only that she made contact with a known criminal. Koride admits to sending the letters, but swears that it all happened before she knew the true nature of the *Vesicant Egg*, and that she hasn't looked into it any further since. This is a lie, but it's something the heroes can't press until the events of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #172: Secrets of the Temple-City*.

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JULA

Spreading out from a temple founded centuries ago, Julia was once a bustling trade city built among the steep river valleys in northwestern Garund. Its position along the region's safest highland road made the city an ideal waypoint between northern Yamasa and the agrarian nation's southern markets. Alas, at the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens, an everlasting hurricane formed in the Gulf of Abendego and consumed everything in its path, including Julia's lowlands—only those on the cliff tops survived.

The few surviving Julans, storm-lashed and grieving, nevertheless rebuilt. They fought back aquatic menaces and learned the ways of the sea, converting their infrastructure from mercantile to maritime. The stalwart settlement endures, divided by water and elevation, but united against whatever the Eye of Abendego throws its way.

Ajbal Kimon and his fellow Norgorberite raiders, the Knights of Abendego, are a challenge Julia hasn't managed to overcome. The Knights began occupying Julia in 4699 and use the town as a base for their banditry and pillaging. They drain the town's resources and siphon off the profits from what little trade still trickles through the desperate community, using this leverage to bend the populace to their will. However, like the unconquerable rivers that cut through Julia, the spirit of this hardy community can't be constrained for long.

History

Julia served mainly as a stopping point between the nation of Yamasa and what is now the Shackles. Travelers could take advantage of the fresh water provided by the waterfall pool from the Green and Blue Flows. They also frequently encountered a curiously protective ibex with bronze horns, an animal they associated with the noble god of the hunt, Erastil. The ibex died defending an Erastilian priest, who went on to build the Hall of the Watchful Ibex over the waterfall pool to honor the animal. The lush valleys filled with homes and farms

JULA

NE TOWN

Resilient seaside town under Norgorberites' thumb.

Government Authoritarian Cult (but previously an elected council)

Population 292 (77% humans, 14% halflings, 9% other)

Languages Mwangi, Taldane

Religions Erastil, Gozreh, Norgorber

Threats Knights of Abendego, predators, sea creatures, strange forest manifestations

The Town That Stares Back Julia defies the nearby Eye of Abendego, surviving such oceanic threats as flooding, a leviathan attack, and a Chelaxian flotilla.

Blackfingers' Grip Julia is controlled by the Knights of Abendego, a vicious band of Norgorberites.

Ajbal Kimon (NE male human gang leader 13) cruel and ambitious leader of the wicked Knights of Abendego.

Heveril Dagambi (LN male human ex-paladin of Erastil 7) former paladin of Erastil struggling to overcome personal challenges and lead the town through adversity.

Imara High-Hearth (NG female human tavern keeper 8) warm, good-natured proprietor of the now-overrun Julia Alehouse.

SETTLEMENT 3

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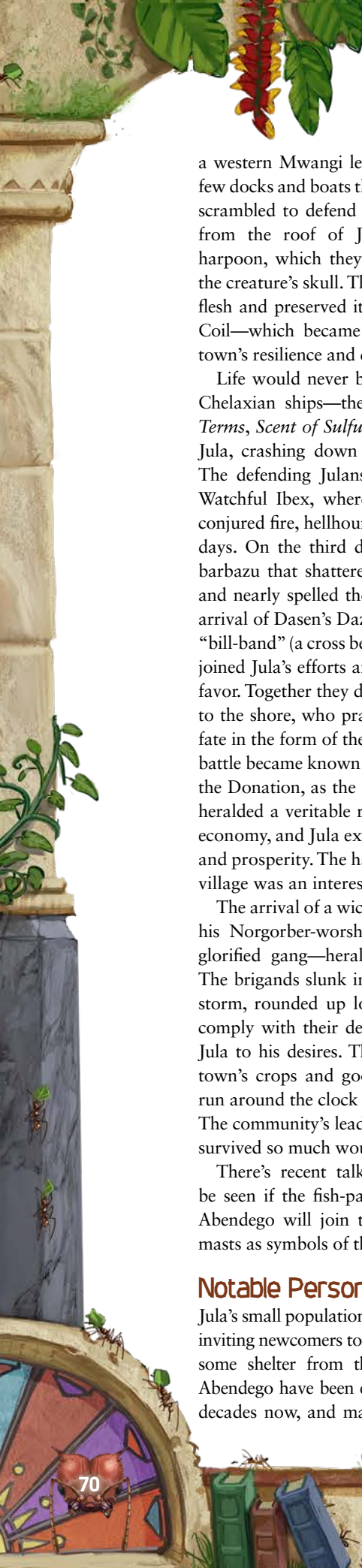
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over time, and Julia soon became a center of prosperity. But when the Eye of Abendego opened in 4606 AR, the hungry sea rushed in to devour Julia's lowland districts. The town's lush valleys became trenches at the bottom of the sea, and the prospering valley communities became mausoleums for the drowned dead.

Julia's survivors, those on the cliff tops, did their best to repair the fractured city, but within months, an immense elasmosaurus thundered into Julia's bay. This obeondo,



a western Mwangi leviathan, completely trampled the few docks and boats the Julans had built. The townsfolk scrambled to defend the city, turning a cracked beam from the roof of Jula Alehouse into a makeshift harpoon, which they sent down a repair gantry into the creature's skull. They feasted on the defeated beast's flesh and preserved its skeleton—named the Obeondo Coil—which became a symbol of the newly remade town's resilience and defiance.

Life would never be easy, though. In 4661 AR, four Chelaxian ships—the *Henderthanian Mace*, *Ironclad Terms*, *Scent of Sulfur*, and *Might of the Pit*—invaded Jula, crashing down on the town like a grim wave. The defending Julans rallied around the Hall of the Watchful Ibex, where they weathered assailments of conjured fire, hellhounds, and Thrune warriors for two days. On the third day, the Chelaxians summoned a barbazu that shattered a young Father Heveril's faith and nearly spelled the end for Jula, but the fortuitous arrival of Dasen's Dazzling Dozen, an itinerant halfling "bill-band" (a cross between a club and a sporting gang) joined Jula's efforts and tipped the scales in the town's favor. Together they drove the Chelaxian invaders back to the shore, who praised Asmodeus as they met their fate in the form of the sharks swirling in the water. The battle became known as the Devils' Gifts or, informally, the Donation, as the salvage from the Chelaxian ships heralded a veritable revitalization for the beleaguered economy, and Jula experienced a golden age of growth and prosperity. The halflings bill-band decided that the village was an interesting place to settle down.

The arrival of a wicked man named Ajbal Kimon and his Norgorber-worshipping Knights of Abendego—a glorified gang—heralded the end of Jula's fortunes. The brigands slunk into town under cover of a raging storm, rounded up local leaders, and demanded they comply with their demands. Ajbal proceeded to bend Jula to his desires. The Knights hoard the best of the town's crops and goods, and they force the forge to run around the clock to keep the Norgorberites armed. The community's leaders resolved that a town that had survived so much would somehow survive this, too.

There's recent talk of uprising, but it remains to be seen if the fish-patterned armor of the Knights of Abendego will join the Obeondo Coil and Chelax's masts as symbols of the town's success against all odds.

Notable Personalities

Jula's small population is compassionate and welcoming, inviting newcomers to share a bit of grilled fish or simply some shelter from the endless rain. The Knights of Abendego have been exploiting the village for over two decades now, and many in Jula's youngest generation

instead trend toward attitudes of bitter nihilism and pragmatic self-preservation. Though each of Jula's residents has a story to tell, the following individuals are especially noteworthy.

AJBAL KIMON

Ajbal Kimon (NE male human gang leader 13) has led the Knights of Abendego's occupation of Jula for over 20 years. He uses the town as a base of operations to fuel his ambitions of apotheosis. He steals from the citizenry, visits sadistic punishments on any who defy him, and trawls Old Town for lost secrets that might help further his goals. He also enjoys petty torments and acts of revenge, but Ajbal steers clear of bullying straight-spined Imara and Father Heveril to avoid riling the townsfolk.

EIGHT BRIAR SUNSETS

The leader of Jula's patchwork village watch, **Eight Briar Sunsets** (LN male human guard captain 7), is professional and courteous. He prioritizes results over appearances, and so no one begrudges Captain Briar his ragged armor. The captain reluctantly respects Lex, to whom he owes a life debt for saving him from a flash flood. Lex hasn't had a chance to needle Briar for weeks, however; when Briar defied Ajbal Kimon recently, the Knight's vicious reprisal left Briar with an intense fear of the rain, so much so that he's now terrified of going outdoors. If it weren't for Father Heveril leaving food, Captain Briar would no doubt be on death's doorstep from dehydration.

GRINNING LEX

Lex (CN agender human thief 4) is known for their curse-peppered language and unique grin: they replaced their upper left teeth with shark teeth, and their lower left are a fish-bone ridge. The thief is the de facto leader of the Third River, Jula's thieves' guild, now that Barrister Indeg is dead by Ajbal's hand. Lex has the guild laying low while they plan revenge; their morals are guided by a system of favors, and they're indebted to the former leader, dead or not.

HEVERIL DAGAMBI

Father **Heveril Dagambi** (LN male human ex-paladin 7) trained under his mother Iboda, the former priest of the Hall of the Watchful Ibex, and a religious leader who helped a post-flood Jula thrive in accordance with Erastil's principles. For many years, young Heveril was a thoughtful and dedicated defender of Jula's physical and spiritual well-being, but his faith was tested when his mother passed and Chelaxians besieged Jula in the span of a single year. Heveril's courage, already strained

by grief, broke during the Devils' Gifts, and he fled his community during that time of need. Erastil abandoned Heveril in turn. The fallen paladin wandered the Sodden Lands for decades before hearing that violent scavengers had taken over his childhood village. Heveril returned to Jula, but his faith has remained shattered. Each day the priest barely overcomes enough self-doubt and melancholy to perform his duties and he's made no progress at all leading a rebellion against Ajbal Kimon's band of bullies. Every few nights, Heveril secretly visits his mother's grave on the Green Flow's waterfall island to mourn both her and the life he left behind.

IMARA HIGH-HEARTH

A stocky woman with a colorful full-arm tattoo of the Julian shoreline, **Imara High-Hearth** (NG female human tavern keeper 8) is the latest High-Hearth to operate the Jula Alehouse. Imara grew up in the establishment with her mother Miria, her maternal grandparent Janje, and her father Egarius, a Chelaxian defector from the Donation. Imara's parents disappeared shortly after the Knights of Abendego began their occupation, yet as much as it pains her, she won't risk the peace and safety of the Alehouse by taking action against them. Imara truly loves Jula, and she handles the town's recent troubles by making the Alehouse a place of refuge and comfort. She cooks hearty meals (her father's recipe for Kintargan silvered fish is a favorite), her presence is strong, and her Fireday marimba performances lift her fellow villagers' spirits.

NOURISHING GULL

A diminutive, white-spotted gnoll, **Nourishing Gull** (CN female gnoll prognosticator 4) is affectionately called "Gully" by the Larderside community. She arrived at the Trader's Gate about a decade ago, without any pack mates. She has taken the Claw's regulars as her new family and supplies them with reasonably accurate predictions about weather and fishing prospects. Imara High-Hearth is used to daily visits with Gully, who sits in the Alehouse crunching on animal bones to fuel her occult divinations. What Gully really wants is a taste of the Obeondo Coil and the powerful visions it will certainly grant, but someone always manages to dissuade her out of such cultural insensitivity.

THE STEELTALE FAMILY

The living members of Jula's venerable smithing family include the married couple **Zihara Steeltale** (CG female elf armorer 6) and **U'kuyo** (NG female

human blacksmith 3) and their two adult children. U'kuyo handles the forge's orders and deliveries along with her daughter **Oribzi** (N female half-elf apprentice 2), who will soon take over her aging human mother's end of the business. Oribzi's younger brother **Maluril** (NG male half-elf artist 1) can barely manage making nails, though he has a talent for sculpture. The family has little spare time; the Knights of Abendego keep the smiths busy repairing the company's arms.



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Jula Gazetteer

Julans use a network of ropes and pulleys to connect important buildings and limit the need to traverse dangerous coastal waters or muddy hillsides. Broad, sturdy awnings cover many streets and public spaces, woven from the same local rainfan hemp used by the town's sailmakers. Most buildings are wooden affairs with broad eaves and dormered windows, and many homes are converted merchant houses or silos from Jula's distant past. Companion-planted farm plots outside the city supplement the town's seafood diet, and rainfan grows along the eastern forest's edge. Two rivers separate Jula into three informal neighborhoods.

TRADER'S LANDING

Traders with goods from Yamasa, Lirgen, and beyond once made the switchback climb to Jula's south gates, now just a hundred or so feet above sea level.

1. The Blue Flow

The Blue Flow bisects eastern Jula. Succulent daredevil fish frequent the edge of its waterfall, and townsfolk collect food and drinking water from the swift river.

2. Steeltale Forge

Zihara Steeltale built the forge between cliff and shore along the Blue Flow's southern bank, and it has squatted there for almost three centuries. The forge conceals a basement shelter, currently stockpiled with arms and armor for a possible Julian uprising.

3. Bluespan

This bridge's corners are marked by the masts from the four Chelaxian ships defeated during the Donation. Built atop Bluespan is the Span House, the former headquarters of the now-disbanded town guard. The Span House provides shelter from the rain, and Julans congregate there to fish, wash clothes, or socialize.

4. The Warehouses

Once the hub of Jula's now-extinct trade economy, the Trader's Landing central plaza still bustles with residents. Julans converted most old buildings into homes, partitioning each warehouse's interior so that multiple families could comfortably share a single roof. Many Julans refer to buildings after their former function, such as Yam House or Weaverhome.



5. Third River Headquarters

Jula's thieves' guild convenes in the cellar of an abandoned alchemist's shop. The old laboratory has long been boarded up due to supposed chemical contamination, but both Father Heveril and Captain Briar know this is a ruse.

THE GRANARIES

Many grain-laden caravans from northern Yamasa once frequented the highland road running through Jula, and the town was an important waypoint. Now, the grain silos that once held mountains of fonio and rice instead house multiple families who use the former merchants' offices and countinghouses as their shops and studios.

6. The Green Flow

The Green Flow pours into Jula from the north, splitting around a small island before crashing into the bay below. The roiling waters have foiled two attempts to build a bridge between the Granaries and the Claw.

7. The Silos

The ground floors of these old grain silos now function as storefronts, while the upper levels are portioned into homes stacked atop one another. The bill-band Dasen's Dazzling Dozen (which now markedly includes more than 12 members) occupies the northeastern silo and runs a few of the businesses. Colorful awnings stretch over the district to shelter a stone-tiled common area frequented by musicians and storytellers.

8. Hall of the Watchful Ibex

The Hall of the Watchful Ibex has witnessed Jula's birth, destruction, and rebirth. Jula's oldest building still holds the ibex-horn bow and tanned hide made from the blessed animal which inspired the town's founding. Erastilian temples are practical structures, and the Hall provides ample space for hemp processing, weaving, healers' work, and a dry dock for repairing larger watercraft.

9. The Wheelwright's Widower

Currently inhabited by the Knights of Abendego, Jula's sole inn is named after the Whistling Wheelwright, another inn now drowned in Gozreh's Urn. A carved stone lintel depicts a man draped melodramatically over a wheel, weeping gutter-drawn "tears."

THE CLAW

This spit of land is named for its shape, but also from a western Mwangi saying: "Leave a cat in the rain, come back to a tiger." The phrase honors the tenacity and

resourcefulness of the sodden town. Switchback ramps on the valley walls linked the Claw and the Granaries before the flood, but now the neighborhoods can be traversed only via boat or sturdy ropes.

10. Smuggler's Cove

The northern slope of the Claw conceals a small cave mouth visible only during the lowest tide, no more than once a month. The cave system winds beneath Jula to smugglers' caves beneath the Jula Alehouse.

11. Obeondo Coil

The preserved skeleton of Jula's first assailant, a massive obeondo, winds up and around a cliff-top tower that overlooks Larderside. The animal's skull is level with the top of the monument, and one can look through the orbit to stare defiantly toward the Eye of Abendego.

12. Jula Alehouse

The High-Hearth family has run the Jula Alehouse for centuries as a sanctuary offering good food and camaraderie. Many of the once-elegant inn's imported stained glass windows were replaced with wooden panels after sustaining damage during storms and the obeondo attack. Every few months Imara has to chase off children digging holes in her yard or prying at foundation stones in search of the purportedly hidden "High-Hearth fortune." There is, however, a true underground secret: a previous owner built a hidden subterranean passage at the center of the inn to access smugglers' caverns in the cliff below. This secret was initially lost with the owner's death—until the Knights of Abendego discovered the secret caves and put them to use. The Knights have since flocked to the alehouse, displacing several regulars and testing Imara's perpetual cheer.

13. Larderside

Most of Jula's nautical activities, such as fish processing and net repair, happen on the Claw's southeast bank. Larderside's inhabitants shelter beneath the wide eaves of incongruously elaborate, centuries-old buildings—remnants of the town's mercantile past—and sing haunting, beautiful songs while they work.

14. Old Town

The flood-carved bay in the center of Jula is officially named Gozreh's Urn, but most call it Old Town due to the city ruins submerged beneath its surface. The bay's choppy waters and tempest shark population intimidate visitors, but locals have long since learned how to navigate such dangers.

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ADVENTURE TOOLBOX

In this adventure, the heroes can find a number of new treasures, learn some unusual spells, and gain feats that complement the dragon disciple archetype originally presented in the *Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide*.

Treasures of Bloodsalt

The heroes might be the first adventurers to ever uncover the following incredible treasures hidden in Bloodsalt.

BARRICADE STONE

ITEM 6+

UNCOMMON CONJURATION CONSUMABLE MAGICAL STRUCTURE

Bulk – (when not activated)

Activate ♦♦ command, Interact

The ancient inhabitants of Bloodsalt crafted these magic rocks to construct defenses quickly. In its stone form, a *barricade stone* appears to be a simple pebble with an unnaturally geometric shape. The size and shape of the stone's final form depends on the type of *barricade stone*.

When you activate the *barricade stone*, you drop it on the ground, throw it up to 20 feet away, or sling it using a sling weapon. Upon landing, the stone instantly and permanently expands. The stone grows to its maximum size. While normally items with the structure trait put creatures in their area inside the structure, this effect creates solid stone, so it can't be placed in an area where there are creatures. While it's likely to take some time even with the right tools, an activated *barricade stone* can be destroyed the same as any normal stone structure (Hardness 14, HP 56).

Type sphere; **Level** 6; **Price** 40 gp

This smooth marble keeps its shape when activated, growing into a spherical boulder 10 feet in diameter. If stationary, the boulder can be pushed 5 feet with a successful DC 24 Athletics check. If the marble was thrown or slung, the boulder retains its momentum, moving 25 feet away from you each round. A creature in the boulder's way takes 4d6 bludgeoning damage (DC 20 basic Reflex save; on a failure, the creature is knocked prone).

Type cube; **Level** 8; **Price** 80 gp

This seemingly simple six-sided die was designed to block a corridor. When activated, it grows to fill a solid square or rectangular space no more than 20 feet on any side. The cube fills spaces well enough that Tiny creatures can't slip through, but it's far from a perfect seal. Liquids, gases, and minuscule creatures such as insects can still find ways around it. Depending on the irregularities of the space the cube fills, it might be possible to see or hear past it.

Type cylinder; **Level** 10; **Price** 160 gp

When activated, this cylinder expands to a diameter of 5 feet, 10 feet, or 20 feet, depending on the command, with respective maximum heights of 80 feet, 40 feet, and 20 feet. If a dimension can't be reached due to contact with another solid surface, the cylinder ceases to grow in that direction. You can activate the cylinder horizontally instead of vertically. If you do, the cylinder moves similarly to the *sphere barricade stone*, with the following changes: both DCs increase to 27, the damage increases to 6d6, and a creature that critically fails its Reflex save against the rolling cylinder gains the wounded 1 condition (or increases the value of its wounded condition by 1).

DRAGON RUNE BRACELET

ITEM 11

UNCOMMON ENCHANTMENT FOCUSED INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 1,400 gp

Usage worn bracelet; **Bulk** –

This polished golden bracelet is formed around the scale of a famous dragon. The bracelet is etched with esoteric symbols or words—always in Draconic—that indicate kinship with dragons. As many types of *dragon rune bracelets* exist as there are types of dragons, though *dragon rune bracelets* associated with Uncommon or Rare dragons are Rare.

While wearing a *dragon rune bracelet*, you gain a +2 item bonus to Diplomacy checks while interacting with dragons of the same type as the pendant's scale (such as red dragons or cloud dragons). You also gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against fear effects from any kind of dragon.

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Activate ◆ envision; **Requirements** You can cast bloodline spells from the draconic bloodline, such as from the sorcerer class or sorcerer multiclass archetype; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You regain 1 Focus Point, which you can spend only to cast a sorcerer bloodline spell. If you don't spend this Focus Point by the end of your turn, it is lost.

EXPLORATION LENS ITEM 10+

UNCOMMON DIVINATION INVESTED MAGICAL

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** –

Activate ◆ Interact

An *exploration lens* is a magical glass lens designed for a bull's-eye lantern. When light from the lantern passes through the lens, it alters the light to make it easier to perform a common exploration activity with the lantern. You can find more information about exploration activities related to these lenses on page 496 of the *Core Rulebook*.

Alternatively, an *exploration lens* can be installed in a *wayfinder* like an *aeon stone*. In this case, light (such as that from a lantern, torch, or *light* spell) must still pass through the lens and you must hold the wayfinder in your hand for it to function.

There are several different types of *exploration lens*, each granting benefits with a different type of exploration activity. Each type of lens is distinguishable from all the other types by holding it up to a bright light.

Type detecting; **Level** 10; **Price** 1,000 gp

When held up to light, this lens sparkles as though infused with glitter. While Detecting Magic in exploration mode, when the lantern's light falls upon something you detect as magical, it pulsates faintly. This makes it easier to triangulate the magic, since you can use the cone of the bull's-eye lantern instead of the circular pulse of *detect magic*. You also gain a +2 item bonus to checks to Identify Magic within the light.

Type investigating; **Level** 12;

Price 1,750 gp

The outer rim of this lens glows faintly when held up to the light. While activated, the lens grants you a +1 item bonus to skill checks to Recall Knowledge while Investigating by outlining potential clues in a way that triggers your memory. If you're Investigating something while using the lens, you can always roll a Recall

Knowledge skill check appropriate to the investigation for initiative.

Type searching; **Level** 14; **Price** 4,000 gp

This lens has an opalescent sheen when held up to light. The lens subtly outlines hidden doors and concealed hazards, granting you a +2 item bonus to Perception checks to spot such features while Searching. Even if you aren't Searching, you get a check to find traps that normally require you to Search.



Exploration Lens

IXAMÈ'S EYE ITEM 9

RARE CONSUMABLE DIVINATION MAGICAL TALISMAN

Price 150 gp

Usage affixed to headgear;

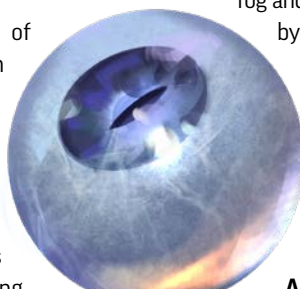
Bulk –

Activate ◆ envision

Via some strange alchemical reaction with the gasses of Terwa Lake, the cloud dragon Ixamè's eyeballs have shriveled into sky-blue gems.

The dragon's sense of vision isn't impaired, and her eyes can't be removed from her head until she's destroyed. Once removed, each gem functions as a special talisman.

Ixamè's eye sparkles when it's in an area of fog or mist. Activating the talisman enables you to see clearly through fog and mist for 1 minute; any creature concealed only by fog or mist is no longer concealed to you. If such a creature was relying on the concealment to Hide or Sneak, this also means it's no longer hidden or undetected.



Ixamè's Eye

RED-RIB GILL MASK ITEM 2+

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ Interact

This mask is made from the gills of the red-rib salamander, an amphibious creature unique to Terwa Lake. Once activated, the mask intensifies the odors of gaseous toxins, allowing you to automatically detect toxic fumes within 30 feet and their approximate source (making the source undetected instead of unnoticed). You can't wear other masks while you're wearing a red-rib gill mask. After Activating the mask, you also gain the listed item bonus to Fortitude saves against inhaled effects; this bonus is increased against the deadly volcanic gas known around Terwa Lake as Dead Man's Breath, and possibly against other similar volcanic gases at the GM's discretion.

Type lesser; **Level** 2; **Price** 7 gp

The item bonus is +1, or +2 against Dead Man's Breath, and the duration is 10 minutes.



Red-Rib Gill Mask

Type moderate; **Level** 8; **Price** 100 gp

The item bonus is +2, or +3 against Dead Man's Breath, and the duration is 1 hour.

Type greater; **Level** 14; **Price** 700 gp

The item bonus is +3, or +4 against Dead Man's Breath, and the duration is 8 hours.

Spells of the Sodden Lands

Spellcasters have invented new spells to help scratch out a living on western Garund's gloomy coast.

TERWA LORDS SPELLS

Many of the Terwa Lords—the lizardfolk rulers of the southern Sodden Lands—use sheer brawn to cement their authority. Others, however, wield the incredible magic of their ancestors.

CLAWSONG

SPELL 2

UNCOMMON TRANSMUTATION

Traditions divine, primal

Cast ◆◆ verbal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 willing creature with an unarmed claw Strike

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

You sing a fierce prayer, low and growling, and awaken the ancient spirit of a Terwa beast to guide and strengthen the target's unarmed blows. The target's claw attack gains the versatile (piercing) trait, and deals 1d6 slashing damage. If the target's claw attack already deals 1d6 slashing damage, it deals 1d8 instead. If its claw attack already had the versatile (piercing) trait, it gains the deadly 1d8 trait.

Heightened (4th) The spell can affect up to 6 willing creatures with unarmed claw Strikes.

GASPING MARSH

SPELL 3

UNCOMMON EVOCATION POISON

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Area** 10-foot burst

Saving Throw basic Fortitude

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

With a rattling hiss, you create a quickly evaporating mist of invisible poisonous marsh gas to smother creatures in the area. When you Sustain the Spell, the mist dissipates completely from the previous area, and you can select a new area within range to fill with the mist. If you don't Sustain the Spell, the mist dissipates and the spell ends.

You deal 4d6 poison damage to each breathing creature that starts its turn in the area. Each affected creature must attempt a Fortitude save. The creature is then temporarily immune to *gaspig marsh* for 1 minute.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes half damage.

Failure The creature takes full damage and is sickened 1.

Critical Failure The creature takes double damage, is sickened 2, and takes 1d8 persistent poison damage.

GIRZANJE'S MARCH

SPELL 4

UNCOMMON AUDITORY ENCHANTMENT LINGUISTIC MENTAL

Traditions divine, occult

Cast ◆◆ verbal

Area 30-foot burst

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

You sing a prayer for war, inspiring valor in allies who hear your song. Allied creatures who can hear and understand you gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls, Fortitude saves, and Will saves against mental effects.

Heightened (7th) The status bonus increases to +2.

Heightened (10th) The status bonus increases to +3.

STORMBURST

SPELL 5

UNCOMMON ELECTRICITY EVOCATION

Traditions primal

Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range 60 feet; **Area** 15-foot burst

Saving Throw Reflex

Your voice projects like cracking thunder as you summon a localized storm, creating a fearsome surge of lightning and wind that deals 6d6 electricity damage. Each creature must attempt a Reflex saving throw.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes half damage.

Failure The creature takes full damage and is knocked prone. **Critical Failure** The creature takes double damage, is knocked prone, and is stunned 1.

Heightened (7th) The damage increases to 8d6, and targets who critically fail are stunned 2.

Heightened (9th) The damage increases to 10d6, and targets who critically fail are stunned 3.

SWAMPCALL

SPELL 1

UNCOMMON EARTH TRANSMUTATION

Traditions primal

Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Area** 10-foot burst

Duration 1 minute

You call upon the spirits of the soil to twist and churn, transforming the terrain in the targeted area into a sodden mess. The area becomes difficult terrain. Creatures in the area when you Cast this Spell must attempt a Reflex saving throw.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature sinks partially into the mud. The creature takes a -10-foot circumstance penalty to its Speeds (except for its swim Speed, if any) and becomes flat-footed. These

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effects last until the creature leaves the area or until the end of its next turn, whichever comes first.

Critical Failure As failure, but the penalty to Speeds (except Swim speed) is -15 feet.

Heightened (3rd) The range increases to 60 feet, and the area increases to a 20-foot burst.

KNIGHTS OF ABENDEGO SPELLS

Some Norgorberites in the Sodden Lands earned favor with their cruel god, who granted these spells. Several of the spells affect four targets—one for each aspect of Norgorber.

BLACKFINGERS'S BLADES

SPELL 5

UNCOMMON POISON TRANSMUTATION

Traditions divine, primal

Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range touch; **Targets** up to 4 weapons, each wielded by a separate willing creature within range

Duration up to 1 minute

You pray for swift and painful death to your enemies and find your and your allies' weapons blessed to deliver just that. The target weapons are coated with giant scorpion venom (*Core Rulebook* 551) with a DC equal to your spell DC. The effects remain on a weapon for

1 minute or until the weapon deals damage, whichever comes first.

GRAY SHADOW

SPELL 6

UNCOMMON NECROMANCY SHADOW

Traditions divine

Cast ◆◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Target** 1 dying creature

Duration sustained, up to 1 minute

You pray over a dying creature, drawing its shadow into your service as long as its owner is stooped at death's door. You summon a greater shadow in a space adjacent to the dying creature. The greater shadow has its usual stats (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 289), with the following modifications:

- The greater shadow's shadow hand Strike deals an additional 1d8 poison damage.
- When you Cast a Spell, you can use the greater shadow's location as the origin point instead of your own location. Upon doing so, the greater shadow immediately disappears.

If the dying creature targeted by this spell dies or regains consciousness, the greater shadow disappears and this spell ends.

MIRECLOAK

SPELL 5

UNCOMMON DIVINATION MENTAL

Traditions divine, occult

Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** up to 4 creatures

Saving Throw Fortitude; **Duration** up to 1 minute

You wrap the targeted creatures in thin, sickly green shrouds that sap information from attackers. The shroud settles about each target's shoulders, granting a +1 status bonus to AC and a +2 status bonus to Stealth checks, both only while the target is in dim light or darkness.

If a creature deals damage in melee to or touches a cloaked creature, the cloak wraps around the attacker, temporarily connecting the psyches of the cloaked creature and the attacker and violently prying a random piece of interesting information from the attacker's mind. The attacker takes 2d8 mental damage and must attempt a Will save. Afterward, the spell ends for the cloaked creature, and the attacker is temporarily immune to *mirecloak* for 24 hours.

Critical Success The attacker is unaffected.

Success The attacker takes half damage.

Failure The attacker takes full damage and is sickened 1. In addition, the cloaked creature gleans a piece of information from the attacker's mind. The details and extent of this information are at the GM's discretion.

Critical Failure As failure, but the attacker takes double damage and is sickened 2.



Swampcall



Bloodsalt Dragon Disciple Feats

While classic tales of dragons evoke the horrors of chromatic dragons or the beneficence of metallic dragons, the ancient dragons of old Bloodsalt were something else altogether. Carvings and runes depicted these creatures as majestic cloud dragons surveying the land from aloft or standing guard on a mountaintop. The more you studied these creatures, the more you realized your connection to the dragon-people of Bloodsalt was more than idle curiosity—it was in your blood and your bones!

The following archetype feats are for the dragon disciple archetype (*Advanced Player's Guide* 168). You must take the Dragon Disciple Dedication feat before selecting any of these feats, and you must select cloud dragon (which is associated with the electricity energy type) as the type of dragon you've studied. The feats below are dragon disciple archetype feats. By studying the ruins, you gain access to the dragon disciple archetype and to these feats

If you have the draconic sorcerer bloodline, you must choose cloud dragon as your dragon type. This choice affects the *dragon breath* and *dragon claws* bloodline spells and several of the feats below; in these cases, use the following rules, which complement the table on page 403 of the *Core Rulebook*.

Dragon Type	Area and Damage Type	Saving Throw
Cloud	30-foot cone of electricity	Reflex

CLOUD WALK FEAT 10

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Dragon Disciple Dedication

Your growing link to cloud dragons has granted you the ability to walk on clouds. Once per hour, you can cast *air walk* on yourself as an innate arcane spell, but only to walk on clouds or fog.

SHAPE OF THE CLOUD DRAGON FEAT 14

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Dragon Disciple Dedication

You've discovered how to transform yourself into a cloud dragon. Once per day, you can cast 7th-level *dragon form* as an innate arcane spell, transforming into a cloud dragon. The spell automatically heightens to 8th level if you're 16th level and 9th level if you're 18th level. On a critical hit with an unarmed Strike gained from *dragon form*, you recharge the spell's breath weapon immediately.

While in this form, you gain the following cloud dragon-specific abilities:

- **Cloud** cloud walk (you can walk on clouds or fog); **Melee** ♦ jaws, **Damage** 2d10 piercing plus 1d12 electricity; **Melee** ♦ claw (agile), **Damage** 3d10 slashing; **Melee** ♦ tail (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d10 bludgeoning; **Melee** ♦ horn (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d8 piercing; breath weapon 30-foot cone, 6d12 electricity.

Special You can use this feat in place of Shape of the Dragon (*Advanced Player's Guide* 169) to fulfill feat requirements.

DEFLECTING CLOUD FEAT 16

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Dragon Disciple Dedication, *dragon wings* sorcerer bloodline spell

Frequency once every 10 minutes

Trigger You are the target of a ranged attack.

Requirements You are aware of the attack and currently have *dragon wings* active.

You've mastered a defensive technique unique to the ancient dragons of Bloodsalt: beating your wings to create a billowing cloud of mist. You become momentarily hidden from the triggering attack if vision is the attacker's only precise sense. Normally this means the attacker must succeed at a DC 11 flat check to target you. You also gain a +4 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

MIGHTY WINGS FEAT 18

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Dragon Disciple Dedication, *dragon wings* sorcerer bloodline spell

Your dragon wings are now a permanent part of your body, giving you a fly Speed equal to your Speed. If you spend 1 Focus Point to cast *dragon wings*, your fly Speed increases to 90 feet for the duration, unless your Speed is faster, and you gain the effects of *dragon claws* for the duration.

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Bloodsalt Dragon Disciple



BEINGS OF MANY USES

While a golgopo usually serves their master as a ritual assistant, they can also be useful in a more gruesome fashion. Particularly ruthless cyclopes sometimes tear their golgopo apart so that they can cast their servant's magically imbued bones while fortune-telling before rebuilding the golgopo once more. These bones can also be ground into a powder which can be used as a material component to enhance ritual magic, permanently destroying the golgopo.

Golgopo

As their empire crumbled and fell into ruin, many cyclopes turned to increasingly depraved and vicious rituals to enhance their divinations and oracular powers. Some, especially those too fearful or suspicious of their fellow cyclopes to collaborate, constructed servants known as golgopos to aid in their rituals. These squat creatures are made from ancient bones dredged from fetid swamps and packed with mud to resemble a squat humanoid. Their heads are little more than the skull of whatever creature's bones were used in their creation with an extra eye socket punched in the forehead, glowing with eerie light.

Golgopos spend most of their time perched on the shoulder of a cyclops master, acting as secondary casters for foul rituals and casting spells to aid them as needed. Golgopos are generally not evil, however, and one whose master has abandoned them or been destroyed might be convinced to employ their knowledge of ritual magic in service of another.

GOLGOPO

CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON N SMALL CONSTRUCT

Perception +16; low-light vision

Languages Cyclops

Skills Acrobatics +16, Occultism +20

Str +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +5, **Int** +6, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -2

Ritual Conduit Golgopos were created to assist with complex rituals. The golgopo can always use Occultism to attempt secondary checks during rituals, regardless of the skill normally required. If a golgopo would critically fail a secondary check, they fail instead.

AC 26; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +16, **Will** +14

HP 130; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, diseased, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** acid 5; **Resistances** fire 6

Warning Call **Trigger** A creature targets a flat-footed ally within 10 feet of the golgopo; **Effect** The golgopo has a premonition of the attack and shouts a warning to their ally. The ally gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Speed 15 feet, climb 15 feet

Melee fist +18 (finesse), **Damage** 2d8+5 bludgeoning

Occult Innate Spells DC 26; **4th** *read omens*, *seal fate* (Advanced Player's Guide 224); **3rd** *locate*, *nondetection* (×2); **2nd** *augury*, *paranoia*, *restore senses*; **1st** *ill omen* (Advanced Player's Guide 221)

Portents of Doom (auditory, divination, emotion, fear, mental, occult) The golgopo unleashes a wailing cry that heralds impending disaster. Each creature within 30 feet must attempt a DC 26 Will save. Golgopos and cyclopes are immune to this effect.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and temporarily immune for 1 minute.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is frightened 1.

Critical Failure The creature is frightened 2 and confused for 1 round.

Golgopo

Karumzek

Karumzeks are crafty, spider-like servitors of Norgorber.

KARUMZEK

Karumzeks work with Norgorberites to further the secretive deity's goals.

KARUMZEK

CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM ABERRATION

Perception +11; darkvision, poison sense (precise) 30 feet

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +10, Crafting +12, Nature +8, Religion +10, Stealth +12

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** -1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

Poison Sense A karumzek senses any poisoned creature. It can spend an action with the concentrate trait to determine the poison's type and current stage.

AC 21; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

HP 60; **Immunities** poison; **Weaknesses** good 5

Speed 40 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee ♦ bite +12, **Damage** 2d6+4 piercing plus karumzek venom

Occult Innate Spells DC 21; **2nd** *death knell*, *invisibility* (at will; self only), *vomit swarm* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 227); **Constant (2nd)** *negate aroma*

Change Shape (arcane, concentrate, polymorph, transmutation) A karumzek can take the shape of a Tiny spider. This doesn't change its Speed or Strikes.

Karumzek Venom (poison, virulent) **Saving Throw** DC 19 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison and enfeebled 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 2d6 poison, clumsy 1, and enfeebled 1 (1 round)

KARUMZEK SWARM

Groups of tiny karumzeks can form a dangerous swarm.

KARUMZEK SWARM

CREATURE 11

UNCOMMON NE LARGE ABERRATION SWARM

Perception +21; darkvision, poison sense (precise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +21, Crafting +23, Nature +19, Religion +21, Stealth +23

Str +2, **Dex** +5, **Con** +4, **Int** -1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

Poison Sense As karumzek.

AC 30; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +24, **Will** +18

HP 175; **Immunities** poison, precision, swarm mind; **Weaknesses** area damage 10, splash damage 10, good 10; **Resistances** bludgeoning 5, piercing 10, slashing 10

Speed 40 feet, climb 30 feet

Swarming Bites ♦ Each enemy in the karumzek swarm's space takes 2d6 piercing damage (DC 27 basic Reflex save) plus karumzek venom.

Occult Innate Spells DC 30; **6th** *death knell* (×3), *vomit swarm* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 227); **2nd** *invisibility* (at will; swarm only)

Karumzek Venom (poison, virulent) **Saving Throw** DC 28 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 4d6 poison and enfeebled 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 5d6 poison, clumsy 1, and enfeebled 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** 6d6 poison, clumsy 2, and enfeebled 2 (1 round)



TRAVELING FROM AXIS

Karumzeks remain in Duskfathom, awaiting orders from Norgorber. Once a karumzek receives its orders, it begins its journey from Axis to elsewhere in the Great Beyond via a secret system of planar strands known as the "Reaper's Web." While not instantaneous, a karumzek traveling along the web can reach almost any point in the Great Beyond within a few hours.

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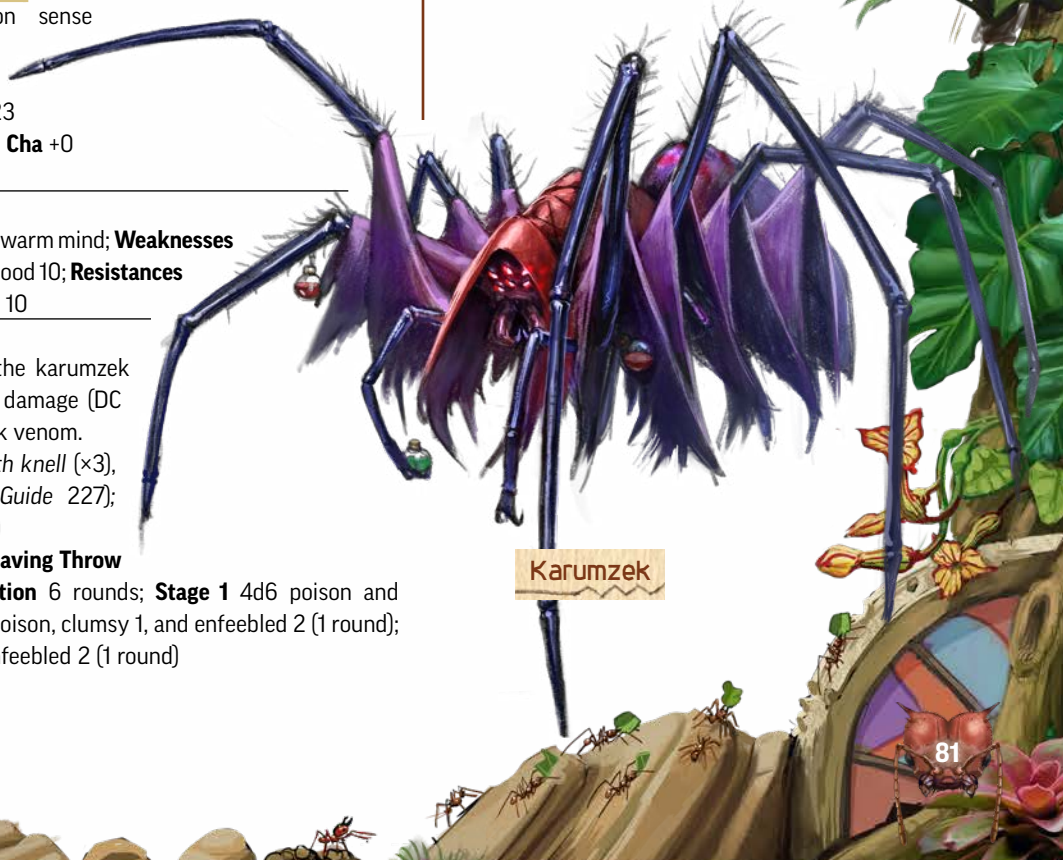
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BLESSING OF THE STARS

Beyond the star sign of their respective clans, many iruxis adopt specific guiding stars. Iruxis follow the movement of their individual stars to help provide guidance during difficult times. Sometimes, when a guiding star lines up with other planets in the night sky, the alignment can grant an iruxi supernatural powers, like the ability to cast a specific spell or divine the future. This happens even to iruxis who normally don't exhibit magical or supernatural abilities.

Lizardfolk

Iruxis, known as lizardfolk outside the Mwangi Expanse, draw upon the stories of past generations and the stars to deepen their magical knowledge. The Terwa Lords, a group of iruxi conquerors based in the Sodden Lands, are among some of the most knowledgeable iruxis in the Mwangi Expanse.

TERWA PRODIGY

Among the Terwa Lord clans, iruxis display immense, unrefined magical talent from a very young age. These abilities reveal themselves in a wide number of ways, but advanced spellcasting is the most common.

TERWA PRODIGY

CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM HUMANOID LIZARDFOLK

Perception +17

Languages Common, Draconic, Iruxi

Skills Acrobatics +15, Arcana +13, Astrology Lore +11, Medicine +13, Nature +15, Survival +15

Str +2, **Dex** +5, **Con** +4, **Int** +3, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +2

Deep Breath A terwa prodigy can hold their breath for 10 minutes.

Items leather armor, +1 longbow

AC 23; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +15, **Will** +15

HP 100

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✎ claw +15 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+5 slashing

Ranged ✎ longbow +17 (deadly d10, volley), **Damage** 1d8+5 piercing

Primal Innate Spells DC 24, attack +16; **3rd** fireball (x2), heal; **2nd** acid arrow, clawsong (page 77), dispel magic, heal; **1st** heal (x2), pass without trace, swampcall (page 77); **Cantrips (3rd)** acid splash, guidance, stabilize

TERWA STAR READER

While stargazers are important among all iruxi societies, Terwa star readers serve as lieutenants, advisors, and confidantes to important and influential members of the Terwa clans. Only one who is especially proud or foolish would turn away a star reader's counsel.

TERWA STAR READER

CREATURE 7

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM HUMANOID LIZARDFOLK

Perception +18

Languages Common, Draconic, Iruxi

Skills Acrobatics +19, Astrology Lore +19, Diplomacy +22, Nature +22, Religion +22

Str +1, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** +4, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +3

Deep Breath A Terwa star reader can hold their breath for 10 minutes.

Items hide armor, staff of fire

AC 24; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +15, **Will** +18

HP 115

Move the Stars ✎ (divination, occult) **Frequency** once per day;

Trigger An attack or effect would reduce an ally within 30 feet to 0 Hit Points or would cause the ally to gain the dying condition; **Effect** The star reader interprets the meaning of astrological omens in an



Terwa Prodigy

instant, determining a new fate for the ally. The triggering ally remains at 1 Hit Point, does not increase their dying or wounded condition, and gains 10 temporary Hit Points for 1 round.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ claw +16 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+5 slashing

Occult Spontaneous Spells DC 25, attack +17 **4th** (3 slots) *discern lies*, *girzanje's march* (page 77), *heal*; **3rd** (4 slots) *heroism*, *searing light*, *wanderer's guide*; **2nd** (4 slots) *augury*, *calm emotions*, *restoration*; **1st** (4 slots) *mending*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips (5th)** *detect magic*, *guidance*, *message*, *shield*

Guiding Star ♦ (divination, fortune, occult) The star reader finds the star that would guide their own attack or that of an ally. The star reader grants themselves or an ally within 30 feet the effects of *true strike*. If the star reader chooses an ally, the duration lasts until the end of that creature's turn. The target is then temporarily immune to Guiding Star for 1 day.

TERWA CHOSEN

Birthmarks, in the exact shape of constellations or abstract representations of them, are thought to signify a mighty destiny. These "chosen" put a faith in astrology that even some iruxis might call superstitious.

TERWA CHOSEN

UNCOMMON LN MEDIUM HUMANOID LIZARDFOLK

Perception +19

Languages Common, Iruxi

Skills Acrobatics +16, Athletics +18, Astrology Lore +14, Diplomacy +14, Intimidation +14, Religion +18

Str +6, **Dex** +4, **Con** +4, **Int** +0, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Deep Breath A Terwa chosen can hold their breath for 10 minutes.

Items leather armor, +1 striking returning mamebele (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 120)

AC 27; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +16, **Will** +15

HP 140

Attack of Opportunity ↻

Born Lucky ↻ (divine) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** The Terwa chosen rolls a success or a critical failure on a check; **Effect** The Terwa chosen improves the triggering roll by one degree of success, only from a success to a critical success or from a critical failure to a failure.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ mamebele +20 (disarm, deadly d8), **Damage** 2d6+9 slashing

Melee ♦ claws +18 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+6 slashing

Ranged ♦ mamebele +18 (disarm, deadly d8, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 2d6+9 slashing

Celestial Might ♦♦ **Frequency** once per round; **Effect** The Terwa chosen calls upon the stars to empower their attack. They attempt a Strike. If the Strike hits, the Terwa chosen deals an additional 2d6 precision damage.

Champion's Star ♦ (divine, divination, fortune) **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** The Terwa chosen looks to the sky for a star to guide their attack. The Terwa chosen gains the effects of *true strike*.



GENERATIONAL STARS

Many iruxis keep the bones of generations past within their homes, using them as part of the building material. Iruxis can use these bones to commune with their ancestors or even call upon them in times of need. The bones tend to shift and move slowly over months and years, and sometimes these bones line up in formations that match constellations. Iruxis believe these to be messages from their dead kin—clues that suggest a special significance or meaning of the noted constellation.

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SCREAMS OF THE SODDEN LANDS

The countless lakes and waterways of both the Sodden Lands and Terwa Lands are rife with trapped gases, providing the perfect conditions for the creation of screaming sulfurs. These occurrences are common enough in the region that Lirgeni and Yamasan populations refer to the waterways near their homes as "Assassin Lakes," due to the silent method through which these gases kill others. Whether or not a given waterway will be a cause of death is unclear, but many people in the Sodden Lands avoid taking chances, building their homes on stilts to avoid the unexpected release of deadly fog.

Screaming Sulfur

A screaming sulfur is a creature born from gasping death and suffocating suffering. When an earthquake or other geological phenomena releases toxic gases, these gases can build up beneath lakes and other large bodies of water. Eventually, they escape the water, expanding into massive clouds that cover the immediate area. Its silent, unexpected arrival can take thousands of lives in an instant. Confused, in pain, and desperate for a way out, the dying souls become trapped in the noxious cloud and amass into this horrifying creature.

While not truly undead, a screaming sulfur shares many similarities with undead creatures, including the malice of vengeful spirits and the hatred of all living creatures who breathe freely and painlessly.

A screaming sulfur resembles a cloud made of countless, featureless faces, mouths agape and releasing ghostly wails.

SCREAMING SULFUR

CREATURE 10

UNCOMMON NE HUGE INCORPOREAL SPIRIT

Perception +22; darkvision

Languages Common

Skills Stealth +22

Str -5, **Dex** +7, **Con** +0, **Int** +3, **Wis** +7, **Cha** +3

Site Bound A screaming sulfur becomes bound to the location where the people whose souls make up its form died.

It can stray up to 1,000 feet from this site of death, or up to 100 feet from the edges of any waterway associated with its death, whichever distance is shorter.

AC 27; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +20, **Will** +20

HP 125, negative healing, rejuvenation; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 10 (except force, *ghost touch*, or positive; double resistance vs. non-magical)

Agonizing Cries (auditory, aura, emotion, mental) 30 feet. The screaming sulfur constantly shrieks with the pained wails of countless spirits. A living creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 26 Will save or become frightened 1 as long as it remains in the aura (frightened 2 on a critical failure). A creature that succeeds is temporarily immune for 1 hour.

Rejuvenation (divine, necromancy) Blessing the site where the screaming sulfur was formed and burying whatever dead remain allows the spirits within the screaming sulfur to move on to the afterlife, rendering it inert.

Speed fly 40 feet

Melee ♦ ghostly hand +21 (agile, finesse, magical, reach 15 feet)

Damage 2d8+15 negative damage

Choke ♦♦ (divine, illusion, mental) The screaming sulfur bombards all creatures within its Agonizing Cries aura with visions of death and a feeling of suffocation. Each creature takes 4d6 mental damage (DC 26 basic Will save).



Screaming Sulfur

Ssumzili

Ssumzilis are lanky, murderous fey who delight in the thrill of the hunt. They are particularly skilled/adept at stalking their prey in the rain and most commonly reside in rainforests and coastal regions, where frequent rain provides ample opportunity to hunt. Camouflaged by their cloud-gray skin, ssumzilis often compete in tests of stealth when hunting in groups, taking particular delight in approaching their quarry as closely as possible without being observed.

SSUMZILI

UNCOMMON CE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +25; low-light vision

Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +23, Athletics +21, Intimidation +19, Nature +17, Stealth +25, Survival +21

Str +5, **Dex** +7, **Con** +4, **Int** +3, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +3

Deluge Vision A ssumzili ignores sensory difficulties caused by rain.

Precipitation Camouflage A ssumzili can Hide and Sneak in rainfall, even if it doesn't have cover.

AC 33; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +25, **Will** +23

HP 201; **Weaknesses** cold iron 10; **Resistances** fire 10

Standing Water (aura, primal, transmutation) 10 feet.

When it rains, the ground near a ssumzili becomes slick. When raining, all terrain within 10 feet of a ssumzili is slippery, with the effects of *grease* (DC 29). Ssumzilis are immune to this effect.

Speed 40 feet; puddle stride

Melee ♦ claw +24 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 3d8+7 slashing

Primal Innate Spells DC 29; **5th** *transmute rock and mud* (Advanced Player's Guide 226; rock to mud only); **4th** *hydraulic torrent*; **3rd** *earthbind*; **2nd** *pass without trace*, *quench* (Advanced Player's Guide 223; at will), *waterwalk*; **1st** *negate aroma*; **Constant (2nd)** *endure elements* (cold)

Puddle Stride A ssumzili ignores difficult terrain caused by rain, such as puddles or wet rocks.

Sneak Attack A ssumzili deals an additional 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Soaking Strike ♦♦ The ssumzili makes a melee Strike. If the Strike damages the target, the target must also attempt a DC 32 Fortitude save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature becomes soaked, causing them to treat the environmental temperature as one step colder (mild to severe, severe to extreme, and so on; Core Rulebook 517) until they dry off.

Failure As success, and the creature is fatigued for 1 minute.

Critical Failure As failure but the fatigue lasts until the target gets a full night's rest.

CREATURE 12



HUNTING PATTERNS OF SSUMZILIS

Being ambush hunters, ssumzilis tend to avoid hunting without the cover of rainfall whenever possible. A ssumzili encountered hunting on a sunny day is doing so out of desperation and is likely to be unpredictable and erratic as a result.

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Ssumzili



AJBAL KIMON

Brutal Gang Leader

Life is hard in the Sodden Lands, but Ajbal Kimon knows self-interest and cruelty can go a long way toward making it easier. Ajbal never knew his parents and drifted from gang to gang in his youth. His keen eye and pugnacious nature meant he always rose to the top of whatever group of thieves or ne'er-do-wells he ran with, and by the time he was a teenager, Ajbal led a gang called the Fish Scale Slicers. He set his sights on the collective of disparate gangs known as the Sodden Scavengers, thinking that he might be able to join them or even lead them someday if he could show his grit and his might. And if it meant sacrificing the other Fish Scale Slicers along the way, he didn't mind.

However, Ajbal was wholly unaware that the Sodden Scavengers shared a common religious connection. Once a unified group of Norgorberites who resolved to pillage what they could from the Sodden Lands in the wake of the Eye of Abendego, the Sodden Scavengers soon fell into infighting. The unified organization split into several smaller gangs that fought each other as much as they fought the desperate survivors eking out an existence in the Sodden Lands. Some of these fractures resulted from religious considerations; Norgorber is a god with four aspects, and some of the new, divided gangs prioritized one over the others (such as the Possum Gang, who revere the aspect of Blackfingers, patron of poison). Most often, however, the strong personalities of the gang leaders drove wedges that resulted in split allegiances. Few of the Sodden Scavenger gangs lasted longer than the despot or demagogue who founded them, and many members shifted between the gangs to find the greatest opportunities for plunder or mayhem.

The Knights of Abendego were an exception. This group believed in the power of the permanent hurricane nearly as much as that of Norgorber and counted at least as many primal spellcasters among its membership as divine ones. This provided an unrivaled opportunity for success: with the ability to control winds and storms, the Knights of Abendego positioned themselves as saviors and helpers, though their protection rackets and shakedowns proved them anything but. Still, the Knights prospered.

Ajbal knew nothing of the Knights' faith when he set his sights on joining them. He planned a raid against the Knights as they were leaving one safehouse for another, assuring his Slicers that the plunder would make them infamous while secretly double-crossing them. Ajbal had previously contacted the Knights to let them know about the pending raid, positioning himself as a lone traveler and informant. The Knights overwhelmed the Fish Scale Slicers, but not before several of its leaders had died (most due to some infighting of convenience during the attack, but some at the blades of lucky Slicers). This all resolved according to Ajbal's plans, granting him an opening to rapidly ascend within the organization.

At only 16 years old, the wily Ajbal became the leader of the Knights of Abendego. Since they'd lost their old safehouse, they needed a new base of operations. Ajbal directed them to the cliffside city of Jula, once a trade hub that still had wealth despite decades of misfortune. First, he had the Knights offer their magical support to get a foothold in the community. Once the Knights had co-opted the local inn and alehouse, set up protection rackets in the town, and thoroughly oppressed the local populace, the Norgorberite priests set to work on Ajbal. They convinced the young leader that Norgorber's favor could be his if he showed enough piety. Eager for still more power, Ajbal promoted the Abendego priests within the gang and followed their guidance. Now secure in his role, he seeks more power than worldly plunder can give him.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Ajbal is the heroes' final opponent in this adventure, and if they don't face him quickly enough, he's empowered by his sacrifices to Norgorber. Although the heroes might capture Ajbal and shake him of his faith—he's not a priest, after all, and merely adopts the mantle of piety for the power it promises—they can't change the fact that he's a wicked man.

With Ajbal destroyed, the Knights have a crisis of leadership. If Bharlen Sajor still exists, she's able to seize control eventually, refocusing the gang's efforts

away from the Sodden Lands to raid the Terwa Lords for wealth and vengeance. Absent Bharlen's single-minded leadership, the Knights simply scatter into small groups across the Sodden Lands and the northern part of the Mwangi Expanse. Each pocket claims to be the true Knights of Abendego, but none have the reach or the numbers to pose a serious threat to the region.

AJBAL KIMON CREATURE 13

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

NE male human gang leader

Perception +23

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +25, Athletics +26, Deception +24, Intimidation +24, Religion +25, Society +22, Stealth +24, Survival +25

Str +5, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +3

Items dagger (4), +1 resilient mithral scale mail, +2 returning striking trident

AC 34; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +24, **Will** +23

HP 225

Deny Advantage Ajbal isn't flat-footed to creatures of 13th level or lower that are hidden, undetected, flanking, or using surprise attack.

Evasion When Ajbal rolls a success on a Reflex save, he gets a critical success instead.

Nimble Dodge **Trigger** Ajbal is targeted with a melee or ranged attack by an attacker he can see; **Effect** Ajbal gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Speed 20 feet

Melee **Trident** +27 (magical, shove), **Damage** 2d8+11 piercing

Melee **Dagger** +25 (agile, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

Ranged **Trident** +25 (magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 2d8+9 piercing

Ranged **Dagger** +23 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

Hunt Prey **Concentrate** Ajbal designates a single creature he can see and hear, or one he's Tracking, as his prey. Ajbal gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception checks to Seek his prey and Survival checks to Track his prey. The first time Ajbal hits his designated prey in a round, he deals an additional 2d8 precision damage. Ajbal also ignores the penalty for making ranged attacks within the second range increment when attacking his prey. These effects last until Ajbal uses Hunt Prey again.

Sneak Attack Ajbal deals an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Tear the Wound **Requirements** Ajbal's last action was a melee Strike that dealt sneak attack damage to a flat-footed target; **Effect** Ajbal deals 6 persistent bleed damage to the target creature, and the target is enfeebled 1 for as long as it's bleeding.

Trident Bully A trident Ajbal is using gains the shove trait, and any creature Ajbal critically hits with a trident is flat-footed until the start of Ajbal's next turn.



Ajbal Kimon

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HALBRUX FAR-SIGHT

Cyclops Historian and Oracle

Halbrux's family is larger than most cyclops kin groups, and they claim an entire—if relatively small— island in the storm-tossed Shackles. The hilly island bears several ruins of the Ghol-Gan empire, the culture that represented the greatness of the cyclopes in an age long since perished. It was while lying in the crumbling hall of one of these ruins one night that Halbrux had the vision that changed her life.

Halbrux had always been something of an outcast in her family. She didn't experience the painful, never-ending hunger that drives the cyclops psyche to the extent that her kin did. Though not much more than a minor physiological difference, it meant that Halbrux developed a milder, more easy-going, and less gluttonous personality. Still, she exhibited her fair share of brutal strength and often responded with fury if attacked, as when an older cousin might be bored or want to take away her supper. As a result, she was typically ignored and left to wander the island on her own. She learned nothing to temper her natural inclinations toward selfishness and cruelty, though socializing more with her family wouldn't have done much to mitigate these tendencies.

Because Halbrux wasn't determinedly hunting her next meal while wandering, she began to pay attention to the ruins that covered the island. She explored them in earnest, entering chambers that hadn't been disturbed in untold generations and finding the occasional historical clue or treasure.

The day of her vision, teenage Halbrux had carefully worked her way through an opening in the ancient ceiling of a mostly submerged great hall. The walls contained faded murals depicting a celebration of some kind. She studied the murals for hours, trying to piece together its narrative but largely failing to comprehend it. Exhausted and demoralized, she fell asleep on the floor—and then the murals came alive! In a vision of vivid detail, Halbrux beheld the ancient day of celebration. The hall's murals recorded a victory over an immense dragon who had threatened the cyclopes' city, and the momentous defeat had ushered in a time of great prosperity. She experienced this moment with the most profound joy of her life.

Halbrux's ability to see the future had never quite worked like it should; instead, she had suddenly gained the ability to see the past. Her explorations took on new intensity, and she sought to experience further visions. This passion solidified into a sense of greater purpose as she began to document and share what she learned. Her kin had little interest in her exploits, though a few of the wiser ones grasped that she was doing something important for cyclopskind.

Documenting the ruins on the island took several years and inspired her to set off in search of new discoveries. Her voyages took her to several other islands in the Shackles. Though not averse to ridding an area of its occupants, she preferred to find uninhabited places or even to make a deal with locals to give her unfettered access. Halbrux has always considered uncovering the lost knowledge of the past empire and triggering her visions about it to be her most important role.

Halbrux has pursued these goals for decades, and her personal knowledge of the Ghol-Gan empire surpasses most known lore about it. She's begun to wonder whether her visions are part of something greater, perhaps something that will lead her to restoring the might of the Ghol-Gan empire in the present day.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Halbrux is one of the heroes' chief antagonists in the Prison of the Vacant Eye. She not only works the prisoners hard and summarily executes those who shirk their labor, but she allows her brutish cyclops minions to bully them without repercussions. However, unlike the catfolk warden Yonsuu, Halbrux's main goal in the prison isn't to serve as a jailer. She's a historian captivated by the ruins and determined to study them at any cost. There's a slim chance the heroes might find common cause with Halbrux, as they also know the value of scholarly research. If they offer her the ability to keep studying the ruins in exchange for better behavior (including letting the prisoners go, and eschewing her relationship with her aggressive kin), she accepts—studying the ruins is more important to her than just about anything else.

HALBRUX FAR-SIGHT

CREATURE 11

UNIQUE NE LARGE GIANT HUMANOID

Female cyclops historian

Perception +21; low-light vision

Languages Common, Cyclops, Jotun

Skills Athletics +22, Crafting +22, Fortune-Telling Lore +22, Ghol-Gan Lore +24, Intimidation +22, Occultism +22, Religion +21, Survival +19

Str +7, **Dex** +0, **Con** +2, **Int** +7, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +5

Items +2 striking greatclub, average manacles (4)

AC 30; **Fort** +23, **Ref** +17, **Will** +21

HP 195

Resolve When Halbrux rolls a success on a Will save, she gets a critical success instead.

Flash of History ♦ (divination, fortune, occult) **Frequency** three times per day; **Trigger** Halbrux is about to attempt a skill check; **Effect** Halbrux peers into lore of the past and increases the level of success by one step (for example, a success becomes a critical success).

Speed 30 feet

Melee ♦ *greatclub* +24 (backswing, magical, shove), **Damage** 2d10+9 bludgeoning

Divine Spontaneous Spells DC 30, attack +22; **6th** (2 slots) *heroism*, *stoneskin*, *true seeing*; **5th** (3 slots) *flame strike*, *harm*, *heal*, *vampiric touch*; **4th** (3 slots) *freedom of movement*, *globe of invulnerability*, *outcast's curse*, *read omens*; **3rd** (3 slots) *blindness*, *haste*, *neutralize poison*, *wanderer's guide*; **2nd** (3 slots) *augury*, *continual flame*, *death knell*, *heal*; **1st** (3 slots) *create water*, *purify food and drink*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips** (6th) *daze*, *detect magic*, *light*, *prestidigitation*, *read aura*, *shield*

Revelation Spells 3 Focus Points, DC 30; **6th** *brain drain* (Advanced Player's Guide 230), *scholarly recollection*, *vision of weakness* (Advanced Player's Guide 234)

Curse of Torrential Knowledge When halbrux uses her revelation spells, her mind fills with a flood of disorienting information. The first time Halbrux casts one of her revelation spells in a day, she takes a -4 penalty to initiative rolls until the next time she makes her daily preparations. The second time Halbrux casts one of her revelation spells in a day, she is also flat-footed until the next time she makes her daily preparations.

Predictive Blows ♦ (concentrate, divination, occult, visual) **Trigger** Halbrux's turn begins; **Effect** Halbrux identifies the immediate movements of a creature she can see and attempts a Fortune-Telling Lore check against that creature's Reflex DC. On a success, Halbrux's melee Strikes deal an additional 4d6

precision damage (6d6 precision damage on a critical success) to the creature until the end of Halbrux's turn.

Quickened Casting ♦ **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** If Halbrux's next action is to cast a cantrip or a 4th-level or lower spell, reduce the number of actions to cast it by 1 (minimum of 1 action).

Steady Spellcasting If a reaction would disrupt Halbrux's spellcasting action, she attempts a DC 15 flat check. On a success, the action isn't disrupted.



Halbrux Far-Sight

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THIARVO THE QUICK

Ruthless Halfling Treasure Seeker



A Song'o halfling from the Laughing Jungle, Thiarvo had a loving and nurtured upbringing in a big family. Yet he was always rebellious, restless, and never felt like he fit in. He practiced traditional Song'o stick fighting, both to distinguish himself from his many siblings and cousins and because he could disguise the beatings he frequently gave them as "practice." His skills grew, and he competed in stick fighting at the Song'o gatherings called Kana Fetes. The gatherings are held three times each year, and anyone who wins all three tournaments in a year is given the title of Unbending Champion. In Thiarvo's first three Kana Fetes he was victorious, claiming the title of Unbending Champion with remarkable speed. Only then did Thiarvo learn that the title also carried a restriction: an Unbending Champion can't fight in future Kana Fetes, to give others an opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Thiarvo felt as though he was being punished for his mastery and took the exclusion particularly hard.

Storming away from the settlement of Lakay Se, where the Kana Fetes are held, Thiarvo came across a human mercenary named Iron-Arm Iyeki dying in the jungle. Intruders in the Laughing Jungle are rare, and for one so large to have gotten so near Lakay Se puzzled Thiarvo. He nursed Iyeki back to health, if only to learn what secret ways the mercenary had taken through the jungle, and the two discovered a mutual infatuation despite their differences in size and upbringing. By the time Iyeki felt comfortable enough with Thiarvo to admit that his presence in the Laughing Jungle was only due to dumb luck and a terrible sense of direction, the two had become close.

Against his family's protests, Thiarvo decided to pack his things and leave with Iyeki. The pair traveled the Mwangi Expanse together, working with various employers in need of warriors who didn't much care about the morality of the work they were hired to perform. Thiarvo learned of many unscrupulous mercenary companies operating in the region, and as he drifted among them he heard their tales of overgrown ruins, lost treasures, and secret caches of riches. Thiarvo decided these would be his.

Thiarvo and Iyeki eventually drifted apart. Iyeki wanted to join a more powerful group of mercenaries, but Thiarvo was tired of working for others. He resolved to work only for himself, seeking out treasure-laden ruins and making his own fortune. In his first solo expedition—exploring a crumbling, flooded serpentfolk temple infested with a gang of demon-worshipping boggards—he discovered a strange wooden stick imbued with chaotic energies. This *rod of wonder* has been his most cherished trophy ever since, and he's learned to wield it just as well as he did the fighting sticks in Lakay Se. Thiarvo also carried out a backpack full of unusual gold coins, and his fortune had been made.

Suddenly wealthy beyond even his own high expectations, Thiarvo realized that it wasn't the treasures that thrilled him, but the satisfaction of collecting them. With each relic or bauble he took, he knew that no one other than him would ever claim it from its hidden vault or crypt. He alone showed his mastery over the ruins and other treasure hunters by plundering lost troves.

Thiarvo started spending his money on mercenaries, calling in contacts from his days as a warrior-for-hire. He paid well, but as his expeditions always took him to distant and dangerous places, only the desperate or erratic accompanied him. They were useful to keep rival explorers or dangerous monsters at bay, but Thiarvo always went alone in the ruins he explored, claiming treasures on his own. Few of these mercenaries ever made it back to civilization. Thiarvo was quick to talk about their bravery in the face of long odds, deadly diseases, and frightful monsters, but the truth is he'd frequently murder his companions just to keep the secrets of his finds to himself.

His excess wealth allowed Thiarvo to indulge in expensive gear. He has a strong love for explosives, which derives from the unstable kiwano melons he loved as a young halfling in the Laughing Jungle. Thiarvo hadn't seen alchemical explosives until he left his home, and he considers them among the best inventions that larger humanoids have ever produced. He especially likes blowing up locked

doors or ruin walls to reach the treasures inside, and he usually brings plenty of explosives on any expedition he undertakes.

Though Thiarvo is approaching middle-age, he's still quite fit after spending a lifetime fighting to survive and exploring dangerous places. He has a disarming personality that he uses to put others at ease, often before turning against them. He prefers to wear broad-brimmed hats to keep both rain and sun off of his face, and to keep his eyes shadowed for when he invariably heads into another darkened ruin to see what treasures he can find.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Thiarvo understands how far a friendly demeanor can go, so he adopts one when he meets the heroes. He doesn't have any respect for the Magaambya or archaeological exploration in general, and he sees the heroes and their small horde of students as nothing more than an impediment to his short-term goal of taking everything of value from Bloodsalt. But he doesn't like to open with confrontation, and therefore hopes to convince the heroes to leave, or at least delay long enough to eliminate them quickly.

A confrontation with Thiarvo is inevitable, but heroes who capture rather than kill the halfling can convince him that they're in Bloodsalt to stay, at least for the time being. Ever one to cut his losses when he knows he's beaten, Thiarvo does his best to flee and not look back. If you'd like, the heroes might encounter him again in some other ruin later in this Adventure Path—by then, Thiarvo will be better prepared to face them and has likely restocked his prodigious store of explosives.

THIARVO THE QUICK

CREATURE 9

UNIQUE CE SMALL HALFLING HUMANOID

Male halfling treasure hunter

Perception +20

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Halfling, Iruxi

Skills Acrobatics +19, Athletics +15, Deception +15, Diplomacy +15, Stealth +18, Survival +18, Thievery +20

Str +0, **Dex** +5, **Con** +0, **Int** +4, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

Items moderate alchemist's fire (4), moderate healing potion, +1 striking rod of wonder, studded leather armor, infiltrator thieves' tools

AC 28; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +20, **Will** +18

HP 150

Halfling Luck ☞ (fortune) **Frequency** once per day;

Trigger Thiarvo fails a skill check or a saving throw;

Effect Thiarvo rerolls the triggering check and must use the new result.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *rod* +21 (backswing, magical, nonlethal, shove),

Damage 2d6+7 bludgeoning plus 2d8 precision

Fighting Rod Thiarvo's *rod of wonder* is supple wood and can be used as a fighting stick (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse* 86). It can be enchanted with fundamental runes but not property runes, and it's currently enchanted with the +1 and *striking* runes.

Lethal Fighter Thiarvo can make lethal attacks using weapons with the nonlethal trait without taking the usual -2 penalty. His attacks with weapons with the nonlethal trait deal an additional 2d8 precision damage, whether he's making nonlethal attacks or lethal attacks with them. This damage is included in his melee entry.

Slippery Halfling Thiarvo ignores difficult terrain from trees, foliage, rubble, and undergrowth.



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NEXT MONTH

DOORWAY TO THE RED STAR

by Michael Sayre

Old-Mage Jatembe is not lost, as commonly believed, but on the planet Akiton. To reach that distant world, the heroes must negotiate with the guardians of the Doorway to the Red Star and prove themselves to the enigmatic Contemplatives of Ashok. The Contemplatives reveal that Jatembe's old foe, the King of Biting Ants, has imprisoned Jatembe aboard a fortress-airship. The heroes must infiltrate this airship, stop to the insectile sorcerer, and return with Jatembe.

AKITON THE RED

by Michael Sayre

Peer into the heavens, to the red planet Akiton! This article presents its cultures, technology, and more.

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The Strength of Thousands Adventure Path continues! This volume presents new magic items, new monsters that populate the Red Planet, and much more. Don't miss out on a single Adventure Path volume—visit paizo.com/pathfinder and subscribe today!

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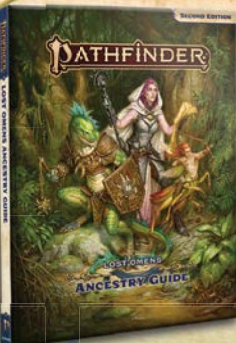
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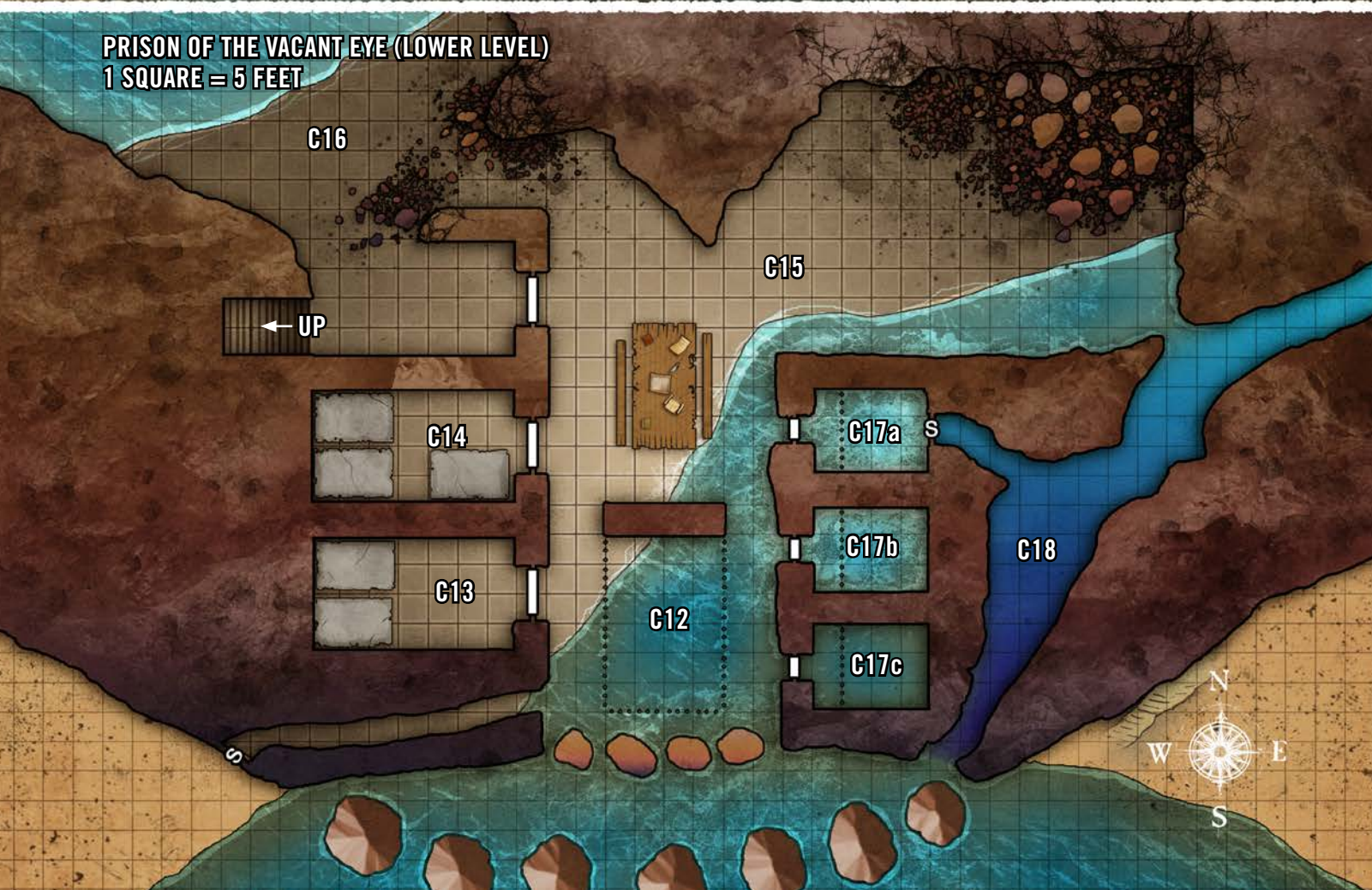
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PRISON OF THE VACANT EYE (UPPER LEVEL)
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



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