

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER®



GATEWALKERS

ADVENTURE PATH

THE SEVENTH ARCH

By James L. Sutter

Interview 1

From the Desk of Dr. Etward Ritalson

Patient Record: 12-a9 (name redacted)

Entry Dated: 30 Lamashan, 4722 AR

Exhibit: Spontaneous Dentarium Feralus

Examiner's Note: First, my apologies to any future scholars. It recently became necessary for me to utilize this new writing mechanism in light of the extreme amount of patient records I must transcribe due to the Missing Moment and my subsequent investigations (see file a-23b for a complete description and scope of this current project and goals therein). This scriptmaton does allow me more speed than pen and ink but, as we all know, such speed often leads to mistakes and I do not have the time to go back and edit them all. Perhaps that onerous task will fall to you, future researcher... and I cannot say I envy you.

The following is a transcript of the patient's account, collected directly by me in an interview. Once they got over their initial reluctance to speak to me, they entered a rapturous trance and began:

Ritalson:yes, just like that. Make yourself comfortable and tell me your story like you were talking to an old friend.

Patient 12: I am not going to talk again about the stuff after the door, or why I went into it in the first place. I already talked about all that; if I repeat it one more time I think I will scream. I need to tell you about these.

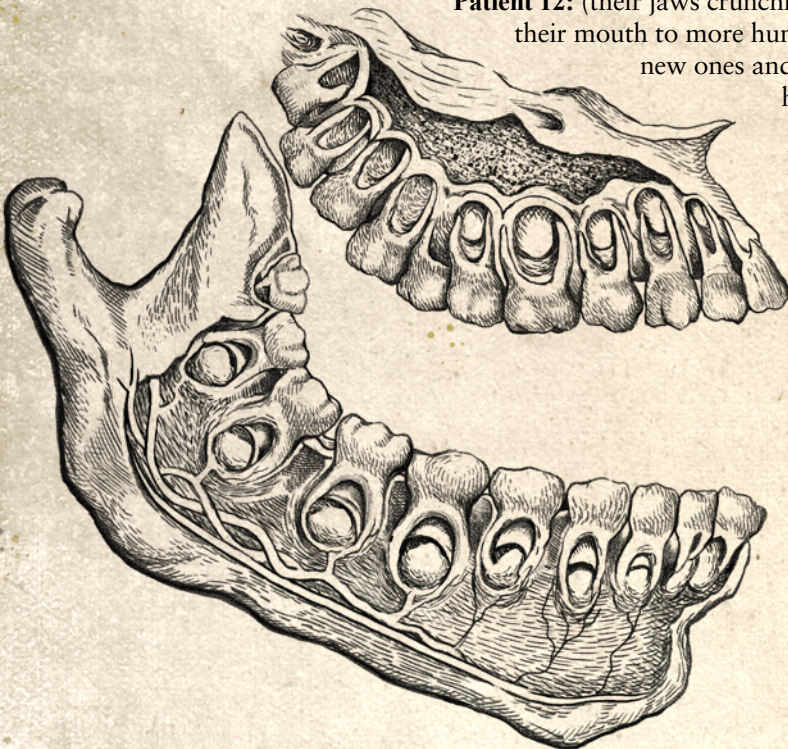
Do you see them? I can stretch them further. Look, the skin now opens before them. See how they line my mouth?

At this point the patient opened their mouth and, grasping the corners of the lip with two crooked fingers on each side, began to pull it even wider until it stretched impossibly—inhumanly—open. For a moment I thought I saw something dark and glistening curled behind the cage of ivory, but when I blinked it was gone and my attention was fully taken by the patient's teeth. The entire inside of the patient's oral cavity was lined with flat, gleaming molars. It immediately suggested certain geodetic rocks that, when split in half, are found to house a concavity completely lined with sharp, crystalline structures. These, however, were inside the mouth of a (to all surface appearances) human patient and were softly pulsating in and out like a carpet of fungal cilia.

Patient 12: (their jaws crunching as the bones rearranged as they closed their mouth to more human dimensions) Every morning there are new ones and now my mouth is full. I both fear and hope for where they will show up next. Have you found this to be the case, Dr. Ritalson? You went through the door as well, right? Let me see your family... please... hold still... no, stop it...

This interview was cut short when the patient attempted to examine my own teeth against my will to see if "I had any new teeth for their family." Patient 12 is still under observation as of this account and will bear further interviews.

—E.R.



PATHFINDER

AUTHOR

James L. Sutter

ADDITIONAL WRITING

Patrick Renie

DEVELOPER

Patrick Renie

DESIGN LEAD

James Case

EDITING LEAD

Solomon St. John

EDITORS

Leo Glass, Patrick Hurley, Avi Kool,
Stephanie Lundeen, K. Tessa Newton,
Solomon St. John and Simone D. Sallé

COVER ARTIST

Olivier Bernard

INTERIOR ARTISTS

Rael Dionisio, Xabi Gazte, Fabio Gorla,
Chris L. Kimball, Luis Salas Lastra, Rob Lazzaretti,
Ilina Naydenova, Brooklyn Smith, and Jessé Suursoo

ART DIRECTION

Sonja Morris

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Sonja Morris

PUBLISHER

Erik Mona



GATEWALKERS

ADVENTURE PATH

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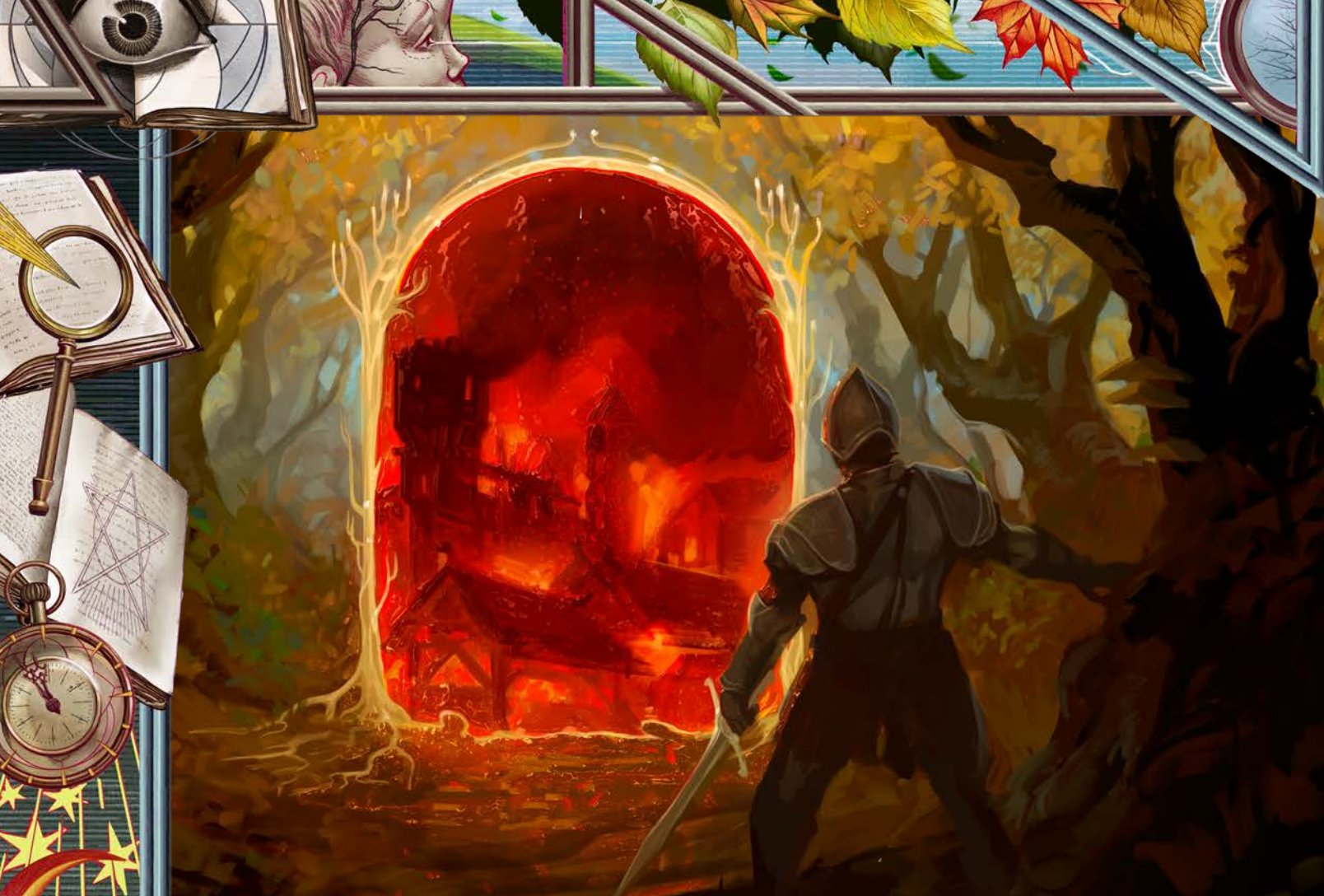
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Paizo Inc.
7120 185th Ave NE, Ste 120
Redmond, WA 98052-0577

paizo.com



GATEWALKERS

In this campaign for Pathfinder Second Edition, players assume the roles of superpowered adventurers undertaking a mindbending paranormal investigation. Their objective is simple: fill in the gaps in their memories from the night of the so-called Missing Moment.

As the Game Master, you'll describe weird situations and portray a bevy of non-player characters (NPCs) both familiar and alien. To find the answers they seek, the party must brave otherworldly wildernesses, cross demon-scarred wastelands, and delve into the heart of ancient arctic ruins. Ultimately, they fulfill their destinies

by facing the source of both their strange powers and their memory gaps: an alien entity of leviathan proportions named Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale.

How to Use These Books

The Gatewalkers Adventure Path contains everything you need to run an exciting Pathfinder campaign for 1st- to 10th-level characters. Each of the three volumes includes a Pathfinder adventure that tells one part of a complete story, supplemental articles to enhance the campaign setting, and an Adventure Toolbox filled with new creatures and rules options designed specifically for this campaign.

We encourage you to use and modify the Gatewalkers Adventure Path to suit you and your group's unique play style. You might read each volume cover-to-cover to run the adventures as written, mine the pages for inspiration and new rules to drop into your own campaign, or use the text as a flexible framework your group can deviate from and return to as desired.

To run Gatewalkers as a Game Master, you should have a copy of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* and access to the supplemental rules in the Pathfinder Reference Document (available online at www.paizo.com/prd). To play in this campaign, a player should have a copy of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* as well as the *Gatewalkers Player's Guide*, a free supplement downloadable from www.paizo.com.

Campaign Background

Osoyo has dwelled on Golarion since before the age of humans—though not before the age of elves.

OSOYO'S ORIGINS

The wisest Ilverani priest-scholars say that Osoyo was first encountered near the elves' ancient homeland of Sovyrian. In a vast canyon filled with a magical sea of mist, the massive, ice-blue whale floated through the air as easily as a fish through water. Those who encountered "the psychic whale" and inhaled its chilling, shadowy vapors developed paranormal powers. Unfortunately, they also lost control of their minds, becoming potent yet senseless thralls.

Once discovered, the Blackfrost Whale could not simply be ignored. Sovyrian's High Families knew this entity was far too dangerous to remain anywhere near the elven capital. At great cost, brave elves subdued, shackled, and shuttled Osoyo to the Crown of the World. There, they sealed the beast beneath the thickest part of Golarion's icecap, where Osoyo lay dormant for thousands of years.

BLACKFROST

Eventually, sentient life came to thrive even upon the barren ice caps. These large, white-furred humanoids—called saumen kar—had long sensed a powerful force beneath their icy homeland. This presence was partly why they chose to build the temple to their goddess Aqakaru, the Snow Mother, at the place where the stars above danced in a perfect circle.

When the sky came crashing down on the apocalyptic day now known as Earthfall, the thick ice at the northern pole cracked wide open. From beneath the crust, the ancient, alien being Osoyo awoke from its millennia-long torpor and breathed a tired sigh. Each exhalation blasted

whirlwinds of black, powdery dust out from the fissures in the ice. In an instant, the saumen kar's beloved spires were caked in thick, greasy ash.

The substance that coated the temple was not the same ash that smothered the rest of the world during Earthfall. This ashen muck glimmered like ice, and the merest touch inflicted a chill that cut to the bone. In time, people would come to call this umbral ash "blackfrost."

From the blackfrost that poisoned the saumen kars' holy site emanated maddening whispers, which echoed in the minds of any who went near the haunted temple. Though the honeyed words differed according to the listener, they always promised the same thing: the power to obtain one's truest desires. Ultimately, the Blackfrost Whale's poisoned promises would seal the tragic fate of the saumen kar and force them to make the ultimate sacrifice.

SEAL OF THE SAUMEN KAR

The saumen kar rallied their strongest and wisest warriors to confront Osoyo. The battle was not won with brawn or brains, but with faith. Priests pleaded with their goddess for guidance, and the Snow Mother answered their prayers by offering a covenant: she would seal Osoyo away, even if it meant destroying herself in the process. In exchange, though, the saumen kar would need to sacrifice their language and their knowledge—in other words, everything they knew.

The saumen kar accepted this dreadful bargain. In an instant, all they'd ever known of Aqakaru, Osoyo, and the world beyond was extinguished from their collective minds. They retained only a vague notion of a sacred duty to ward the mysterious black towers at the top of the world—what they began to call the Nameless Spires. To remind them of their compact, magical blue marks appeared on the flesh and fur of all saumen kar and their descendants. Yet the details of their covenant would forever be sealed, along with Osoyo, beneath the ice.

BREATH ON THE ICE

In the millennia after sealing away Osoyo, the saumen kar gradually dwindled from the face of this world. Now, nearly 5,000 years after his ancestors sacrificed their past to save the world, only one saumen kar remains: Ainamuuren. (For more information, see *Pathfinder Lost Omens: Monsters of Myth*, page 6).

Ainamuuren has wandered the edges of the Crown of the World, alone, for centuries. Recently, he met Seshu, a friendly Erutaki elder from the town of Aaminiut. To her, he began to pass on all he knew of his people and their story. Ainamuuren has long worried what would happen to the saumen kar's pact if he—and thus his entire people—died out. He hoped that he could at

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least mitigate this seeming inevitability by passing their story on to Seshu.

Five years ago, though, a group of humans threatened to undo everything the saumen kar had fought for. The Pathfinder Svala Ice-Rider led an excavation to the Crown of the World, which inadvertently released a cloud of blackfrost. While most of the contamination was contained, the damage had been done: Osoyo's malevolent will had awakened once again.

A single mote of Osoyo's blue-black breath contains more potential psychic energy than the collective wills of an entire humanoid species. The sparsity of life on the Crown of the World, however, means that errant blackfrost particles had few opportunities to latch onto a living host. Luckily for Osoyo—and tragically for the rest of the world—the Blackfrost Whale found an even better catalyst. After many months of drifting across the boreal expanse, a single fleck of blackfrost managed to alight upon an *aiudara* called *Icegate*—a teleportation portal created by none other than the descendants of Osoyo's original elf captors.

THROUGH THE WHITE GATE

When Osoyo's blackfrost touched *Icegate*, the Blackfrost Whale used the portal as a conduit to transmit a psychic signal across the entire *aiudara* network. In an instant, gates all over Golarion suddenly activated and filled with tremendous white light. For a moment, Osoyo was able to flex its incredible will upon the whole of an unsuspecting world.

Creatures near an *aiudara* when it activated saw whatever they most desired within the blinding halo: a loved one, a lost homeland, or a glorious treasure. It was only an illusion, but few could resist the impulse to walk toward the light in the hopes of grasping the apparent object of their obsession.

No one who walked through an *aiudara* that night remembers what happened next—their memories of what transpired on the other side of the white gate vanished, totally and irretrievably. One moment they stepped into the door, and the next they were stepping back out to discover that they'd been gone for minutes, hours, or in some cases, even days or months.

During this missing time, Osoyo took control of its thralls' minds and bodies. Its tasks for these "gatewalkers" varied, though all advanced its ultimate goal of freedom. Many, Osoyo simply marched to the Crown of the World, where it transformed them into blackfrost-infused zombies—none of these returned. To its most promising servants, Osoyo gave special tasks. Dr. Etward Ritalson, for example, was tasked with creating hubs of blackfrost from which the curse could spread.

Osoyo entrusted its most important work to a select group of gatewalkers—the heroes of this Adventure Path—each drawn to *Icegate* from different gates around the world. The alien ordered these characters, rendered as its witless thralls, to locate and capture Ainamuuren, the last saumen kar. Under Osoyo's command and infused with the strength of the Blackfrost Whale, the player characters dragged Ainamuuren to the Nameless Spires, where they shackled the saumen kar so he could serve as a conduit for Osoyo's reawakening power.

Once their tasks were done, Osoyo's favored thralls returned to the *aiudara* from whence they came. Upon them, the Blackfrost Whale left a special brand—a distinct arcane rune lifted from Ainamuuren and placed on the gatewalkers' throats. Physically, this mark was the only trace of an abductee's sojourn. Psychically, however, no one who walked through a gate that night would ever be the same.

DREAMING OF DIVINITY

The oracle Seshu became worried about her missing friend Ainamuuren. One night, as Seshu lay dreaming, the saumen kar informed her he was in danger, and that the magic of his ancestors' seal was failing. A new sacrifice, from a new deity, was necessary.

In the morning, Seshu and the other Aaminuit elders agreed to send their youngest seer, Sakuachi, to Sarkoris, where deities still walked the land. There, the girl would enlist one of these beings to help fulfill the quest of which Ainamuuren spoke.

GATEWALKERS

The months since the night of the Missing Moment haven't been quiet. In the wake of their strange experience, gatewalkers the world over have manifested unexplainable supernatural powers such as telekinesis, levitation, and regeneration. In the Ustalavic town of Lepidstadt, a consortium of gatewalkers has gathered under the leadership of the venerable scientist and fellow gatewalker Etward Ritalson. Dr. Ritalson hopes to orchestrate his cadre of fellow paranormalists to solve the mystery of what happened on that fated summer night.

At the beginning of this Adventure Path, a small team of agents (the player characters) have set forth on their first official mission for the Doctor's Illuminated Consortium of Epopts. By covertly tapping into their dreams, Ritalson has deduced that the player characters played some important role in his own Missing Moment story. Like him, they are key players in their mysterious, alien abductor's grand plot. Ritalson hopes they can help unravel the mystery at hand, though for now he's keeping his cards close to the vest.

CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

The background of the Gatewalkers Adventure Path is summarized on the following timeline.

Date	Event
Unknown	Elves from Sovyrian shepherd Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale, from their homeland to the Crown of the World. They use powerful magic to imprison the behemoth beneath the polar ice.
Unknown	Saumen kar build the First and Last Temple to Aqakaru, the Snow Mother, at the Crown of the World.
-5293 AR	Earthfall. Meteors shatter the ice containing Osoyo, unleashing the Blackfrost Whale upon the unsuspecting saumen kar. In desperation, the saumen kar sacrifice their memories and goddess to reseal the awakened monster's prison.
4718 AR	A Pathfinder expedition at the Crown of the World unwittingly releases plumes of blackfrost from the dig site.
21 Erastus, 4722 AR	The night of the Missing Moment. A fleck of blackfrost infects Golarion's <i>aiudara</i> network, allowing Osoyo to inflict its will through the magical gates. Hundreds of onlookers walk through <i>aiudara</i> and commit deeds under Osoyo's thrall. Many never return; those who do manifest strange powers and bear a distinct rune on their skin.
23 Lamashan, 4722 AR	Several months after the Missing Moment, Dr. Etward Ritalson invites gatewalkers from around the world to his manor in Lepidstadt, Ustalav. He establishes the Doctor's Illuminated Consortium of Eopts, a small organization of gatewalkers, to investigate the cause of the Missing Moment.
6 Abadius, 4723 AR	Present day at the beginning of this Adventure Path. Dr. Ritalson escorts his finest agents to the border of Sevenarches for their first mission.

In the forest realm of Sevenarches, militant druids called the Oakstewards stand guard before the kingdom's eponymous *Seven Arches*, all of which are *aiudara*. They forbid anyone—especially elves—from approaching. As important as the location once was to them, elves have been unable to visit the *Seven Arches* safely for many years. Those who tried fell ill to a potent wasting ailment called the *obnubilate curse*, which erased the afflicted's memories when it didn't kill them outright. Yet, since the Missing Moment, it seems the curse has abated; several elves have reported visiting Sevenarches with no ill effects.

Dr. Ritalson believes that Sevenarches, the *obnubilate curse*, and the interests of his consortium are somehow connected. He's selected his most promising initiates to look into the matter.

Adventure Path Summary

THE SEVENTH ARCH

By James L. Sutter

Pathfinder Adventure Path #187, Levels 1–3

The characters' investigation into the Missing Moment takes them to the River Kingdom of Sevenarches, where they confront a fellow gatewalker and violent druids. To question a dark fey implicit in the mystery, the party enters the shadowy realm of Kaneepo the Slim. From there, the gatewalkers are transported to the planet Castrovel, where they learn about the alien entity responsible for the gaps in their memories before teleporting to the city of Skywatch, back on Golarion.

THEY WATCHED THE STARS

By Jason Keeley

Pathfinder Adventure Path #188, Levels 4–7

In Skywatch, the gatewalkers meet a young oracle from the Crown of the World named Sakuachi. She tells them of her quest: to travel to the Sarkoris Scar and find a guide to join her in sacrifice to save her homeland. Sakuachi believes that the alien Osoyo and the ancient evil threatening her people are one and the same, so it behooves everyone to see her mission through. To get to Sarkoris, the party must escape the monster-riddled streets of Skywatch, voyage across the ominous Lake of Mists and Veils, and trek across the demon-battered heartland of post-war Mendev.

DREAMERS OF THE NAMELESS SPIRES

By James Jacobs

Pathfinder Adventure Path #189, Levels 8–10

The party travels to Ustalav to report their progress to their patron, Dr. Ritalson, who reveals his treachery when he attempts to halt their quest! Now on their own, the characters walk through *Lichgate* to reach *Icegate* at the Crown of the World. From here, the gatewalkers accompany Sakuachi to the Nameless Spires, where they finally learn the truth of what happened to them on the fated night of the Missing Moment. Their final challenge is to face Ainamuuren, the mind-controlled saumen kar champion of the alien Osoyo. The gatewalkers are given a grim choice—to strengthen their paranormal gifts to unimaginable heights or spare the life of the last saumen kar.

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Adventure Summary

The Gatewalkers Adventure Path begins! The characters gather to investigate the mystery of the Missing Moment, a supernatural event that turned each of them into “gatewalkers”—gifted paranormalists with no memories at all of what transpired that fateful night. Following this volume’s dramatic events, the campaign continues in the next volume, “They Watched the Stars.”

Chapter 1: Mighty Oaks Do Fall.....8

The characters arrive in Sevenarches as paranormal investigators working for Dr. Etward Ritalson. To follow their best lead on the cause and significance of the so-called Missing Moment, they must first halt a sinister ritual and interrogate the rebel druids involved.

Chapter 2: Thin Air 28

Upon learning that the druids of Sevenarches are mere pawns in a malevolent fey’s schemes, the characters travel through the *Seventh Arch*. In the shadowy First World realm on the other side of the gateway, they confront the fearsome mastermind behind the trouble at Sevenarches: Kaneepo the Slim. When the characters try to leave, the *Seventh Arch*’s mysterious magic transports them to an entirely different planet.

Chapter 3: Memories of the Green..... 50

On the dangerous jungle world of Castrovel, the characters must join forces with a sect of elven astronomers to uncover clues about the Missing Moment. By wielding ancient magic and gathering the resources necessary, the party constructs a device capable of returning them to Golarion.

DEVIANT ABILITIES

At the beginning of this campaign, the player characters are all presumed to be united by their shared experience of having stepped through a *aiudara* on the night of the Missing Moment, as well as the strange powers they gained in the aftermath of this event. In game terms, these powers are called deviant abilities.

Deviant abilities are supernatural powers that manifest in untraditional ways. The rules for deviant abilities appear in *Pathfinder Dark Archive*.

During character creation, each character gains a 2nd-level deviant feat. This deviant feat comes in addition to all of a character’s usual feats, and characters gain this feat despite being only 1st level.

The characters’ deviant abilities increase in power as they recover their lost memories. This increased power is represented by additional deviant feats. The text of the Gatewalkers Adventure Path explains which deviant feats the characters gain at which points in the story. Characters gain these feats in addition to all the usual ancestry, class, general, and skill feats they gain throughout the course of their adventuring career.

The abridged rules for deviant abilities appear in the *Gatewalkers Player’s Guide*. The Player’s Guide also includes suggestions and new backgrounds to establish the characters’ motives for walking through a gate and, more recently, joining the Doctor’s Illuminated Consortium of Eopts. Visit paizo.com to download this free supplement.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

“The Seventh Arch” is designed for four characters. Characters should level up between chapters.

- 1 Characters begin this adventure at 1st level.
- 2 Characters should reach 2nd level after defeating Bolan.
- 3 Characters should reach 3rd level upon reaching Loskialua.

Characters should reach 4th level by the end of this adventure.



CHAPTER 1: MIGHTY OAKS DO FALL

The Oakstewards of Sevenarches do everything they can to protect their kingdom's namesake magical archways—the *Seven Arches*—from outsiders. Would-be Oakstewards must prove their unerring loyalty to the militant order and to its cause, but few could have anticipated the allure of the *Seven Arches* on the night of the Missing Moment. When the dread Blackfrost Whale, Osoyo, caused the *Seven Arches* to explode with light, projecting compelling illusions to nearby onlookers, none of the guards on duty could resist the entity's power. To use one of these portals, one must typically bear one of the *Seven Arches'* special keys—which the Oaksteward leaders fervently guard—but on that night

the doorways were flung open to all, and enraptured witnesses walked through unopposed.

Among the Oakstewards present that night was a brute named Bolan, a man known for both his skill in combat and his repeated acts of insubordination. Of the seven Oakstewards who fell prey to Osoyo's mass illusion, only Bolan eventually returned from his mysterious sojourn.

If Bolan had gone into the *Seventh Arch* a hard, unlikable man, he emerged five days later as a true menace. Always full of righteous indignation at what he saw as the high Oakstewards' cowardice, he now boasted dangerous psychic powers with which to

enforce his own, more fanatical approach to druidism. He rallied his supporters and took over a gnome commune in the Wilewood, and from this hideout began meeting with a fey patron named Kaneepo the Slim.

Bolan was a perfect target for Kaneepo, who knew all about the Missing Moment from questioning superstitious locals and interrogating fey spies. Kaneepo had long desired to twist the heart of an Oaksteward, and now was their chance. The Slim spied on Bolan for a time, then used a combination of shadowy magic and simple lies to win him over. Based on Kaneepo's stories, Bolan came to believe that this fey trickster could help him unlock even greater psychic powers. Kaneepo promised to share these secrets with Bolan if he helped Kaneepo in return.

Sevenarches had long been famous for the *obnubilate curse*, a powerful affliction that struck down all elves who entered the kingdom's borders, but not even the Oakstewards knew the curse's provenance. Now Kaneepo revealed the truth to Bolan: Kaneepo himself created the curse long ago as revenge on the elves, and they'd imbued both the *Seventh Arch* and its key with the evil magic. On the night of the Missing Moment, Osoyo's own magic inadvertently dispelled the curse from the *Seventh Arch*. Now Kaneepo, enraged, wishes to curse the *Seventh Arch* once again. To do so, they need the arch's key, which remained untouched by Osoyo's powers and thus still bears traces of the *obnubilate curse*.

Bolan complied happily, stealing the gate key to the *Seventh Arch* from the Oaksteward headquarters and delivering the item to the fey. Kaneepo has remained cagey ever since, feeding Bolan only enough lies to keep him within arm's reach as they decide what other uses the rebel Oaksteward might have.

Meanwhile, the Oaksteward leaders have had their hands full in the aftermath of the Missing Moment. The ending of the *obnubilate curse* seems a miracle, but one that comes with political pressure to lift Sevenarches' centuries-old elf prohibition. Making matters worse, attacks by fey creatures called gorgas (page 86) have increased dramatically in and around the city since the Missing Moment. Bolan's rebellion is simply one more plate the Oakstewards must desperately try to keep spinning while maintaining order in the realm.

So far, Bolan's forces have only grown stronger as the busy Oakstewards seek a way to defuse his coup quietly, without alerting Sevenarches' citizens to the strife. The aid of some outsiders familiar with Bolan's unorthodox psychic powers might be just the answer the Oakstewards have been looking for.

Getting Started

The adventure begins with the characters arriving at the border of Sevenarches, a few miles from its capital city of the same name. They've come here with Dr. Etward Ritalson, their employer and the founder of the paranormalist investigation group to which they belong, the Doctor's Illuminated Consortium of Epopts.

The doctor's ultimate aim is for his agents to unravel the mystery of the Missing Moment. He's chosen his most promising initiates to investigate the most likely lead: the sudden cessation of the *obnubilate curse* and other strange events in Sevenarches whose onset coincided with the Missing Moment. More information on Dr. Ritalson and his organization can be found in the campaign background beginning on page 2.

CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

The party arrives at the city of Sevenarches to investigate its seven magical gates and a mysterious elf-killing curse that's recently been lifted. Their investigation embroils the characters in a rebel Oaksteward's plot to overthrow the kingdom's druidic leaders. To continue their quest to unravel the mystery of the Missing Moment, the characters learn they'll need to track down a shadowy fey troublemaker named Kaneepo the Slim.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Determine what connection the *Seven Arches* have, if any, to the Missing Moment.

PLOT BEATS

The party should learn the following details throughout this chapter.

- The Missing Moment coincided with the sudden cessation of the *obnubilate curse*, a fatal memory-wiping affliction that only affected elves.
- An Oaksteward rebel named Bolan has stolen the gate key to one of the *Seven Arches*.
- Bolan has given the gate key to an evil fey named Kaneepo the Slim.

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RECALL KNOWLEDGE

As the party approaches the Sevenarches border, roll a secret DC 15 Society check to Recall Knowledge for each character. The result of each character's check determines what that character already knows about Sevenarches.

Critical Success As success, and: Sevenarches is rife with magical wildlife and fantastical creatures. Peculiar, shadowy fey called gorgas are among the region's more troublesome native denizens. Since the Missing Moment, gorga attacks against Sevenarches' homesteaders have become more frequent—and vicious.

Success Long ago, elves dwelled in the verdant forests of Sevenarches, and it's believed they built the stone arches that give the region and its eponymous capital city their name. Now, Sevenarches is overseen by the Oakstewards—enigmatic druids who prohibit elves from even entering the kingdom's borders. This ostensibly has to do with the *obnubilate curse*, a mysterious affliction that kills any elf who dares go near one of the *Seven Arches*. In the wake of the Missing Moment, however, rumor has it that the curse has been lifted.

Failure Beyond its strict ban against elves, you've heard very little of the River Kingdom of Sevenarches.

Critical Failure The citizens of Sevenarches quiver under the brutal thumb of the Oakstewards, wicked druids whose blasphemous rites drove away the region's native elves long ago. Heroic First World folk frequently send their bravest soldiers to Sevenarches' capital city to fight the Oakstewards, but the druids' defenses against the fey have so far proven impervious.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

At the border gate to Sevenarches—a low bridge across a stream just beyond a bustling caravanserai—Dr. Ritalson bids the characters farewell. Before he leaves them, though, he addresses the party in person one last time, then offers to answer any last-minute questions they have about their mission.

Read the following aloud to summarize the party's mission and begin the adventure.

Sighing, Dr. Ritalson uses a black handkerchief to mop the sweat from his age-spotted forehead. "I fear this is as far as I accompany you," he says. "I have matters to attend to farther east." He smiles fondly. "I've no doubt that you can handle this investigation yourselves. Of all my field

researchers, you show the greatest promise for uncovering the secrets of the hidden world.

"I need not remind you of the importance of your mission."

He points to the mysterious rune emblazoned across his throat—the same mark that brought you together, the one you all share. "Three months ago, we embarked upon a mystery. All across the world, elven teleportation gates—*aiudara*—burst with light and lured people like us in with visions of our greatest desires. A subset of we so-called 'gatewalkers' returned from the sojourn—some, like you, bearing fascinating new abilities. We all, however, remain ignorant of what befell us on the other side of our doorway, how we came to be marked with this unknown sign, or what may have happened to those who did not return."

He chuckles ruefully. "In every university and seminary, scholars are ransacking their libraries to understand this 'Missing Moment.'

Yet I believe that we—that *you*—will succeed where they all fail. For our quest into the paranormal is not merely academic, but personal.

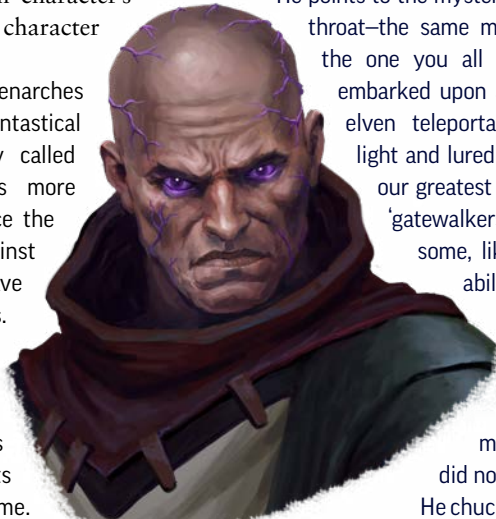
"Toward that end, I've given you my most promising lead: Sevenarches. For centuries, any elf who approached the city's infamous Seven Arches has been subject to a terrible curse. Yet, on the night of the Missing Moment, the curse was somehow lifted. We need to know why. The city's famed *aiudara* no doubt hold some of the answers we seek, and moreover represent a prime research opportunity to study the portals in person. That's where you come in.

"To help, I've arranged for you to meet with an old associate of mine. Fianara Caralestri claims to have crucial information about the arches. Ah, and there she is now!"

An elven woman wearing traveling leathers and a backpack overflowing with scrolls waves from the caravanserai's porch.

The characters have the chance to ask Dr. Ritalson any questions they might have before he takes his leave. The following are some of the characters' most likely questions, along with the doctor's answers. In addition, Dr. Ritalson can relate any information from the *Gatewalkers Player's Guide*.

What is the Missing Moment? "Well, that's the question, isn't it? A collective memory gap. When the *aiudara* activated on that fateful night, they beguiled onlookers into stepping through. Those who returned did so minutes or days later, with no memory of what happened on the other side. And of course many never returned at all."



Etward Ritalson

What are *aiudara*? “An ancient network of magical portals, sometimes crudely referred to as ‘elf gates.’ They always take the form of stone arches, and each is activated by a specific magical key that opens a portal to a linked gate somewhere else on the Material Plane. Many *aiudara* and their keys have been lost, so only a few functional gates are known to remain—which makes the sudden activation of so many defunct ones on the night of the Missing Moment all the stranger.”

What do you know about the *obnubilate* curse? “A terrible affliction, clearly magical in nature. First you fall unconscious, then you shrivel up, lose your memory, and dissolve into ash. Thankfully, it affects only elves.” If any characters are elves, he pauses awkwardly, then follows up with, “...not that this makes it any less tragic, of course!”

Who is Fianara? Dr. Ritalson looks wistful as he leans on his cane. “An old traveling companion from back before I settled down into my studies. A fine scholar. You’d do well to trust her.”

How do we report back to you? Dr. Ritalson looks surprised and a little uncomfortable. “Oh! Well, I suppose if you can find a *secure* way to get a message to me, that would be grand. Otherwise we’ll have to wait until both our investigations are concluded, and we meet back in Lepidstadt. We wouldn’t want anyone to intercept a message and steal the thunder of our discovery!”

Where are you going? “A city called Uringen, famous for half of it disappearing and reappearing at random intervals. It’s been happening for decades, so it’s perhaps unrelated to our present matter, but worth investigating all the same.”

What’s in this for us? Dr. Ritalson looks confused. “Why, *knowledge*, of course! You’ll finally know what happened to you beyond those gates! And fame, no doubt. Perhaps even tenure—or at least whatever treasures you discover.” (Any request for payment gets waved off as “lowbrow mercantile thinking.”)

Once the characters have finished questioning Dr. Ritalson, he introduces them briefly to Fianara, then steps back into his carriage before it disappears down the road.

FIANARA'S RESEARCH

Fianara (CG female elf scholar 4) is a rough-and-tumble scholar and Pathfinder deeply interested in the history of *aiudara*. She refers to Dr. Ritalson as “Doc Etty,” and calls him “a bit of a cracked nut, but a brilliant theorist.” She greets the characters warmly but shrewdly.

“As I told Doc Etty,” Fianara says, “I have some information I think you’ll find useful—but if you want it, I need help with my own research first.”

She points across the bridge. “I’d like to test a theory, but the Oakstewards still aren’t letting elves into Sevenarches. To be honest, I’m not especially keen to test the rumor about the curse suddenly lifting, nor the uptick in attacks from gorgas—monstrous, shadow-eyed fey creatures, if you’re unfamiliar.” She shrugs. “What can I say? I’m a reader and writer, not an adventurer. So here’s what I need:

“Sevenarches is supposedly named for the cluster of seven *aiudara* in the middle of the city. Well, I’ve been going through old records, and I’ve reason to believe those arches



Fianara Caralestri

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are fake—decoys to draw attention away from the *real* arches. But if I want to publish my findings, I need proof.”

From her bag, Fianara withdraws a foot-long glass tube with a cluster of hollow bulbs at one end like a mace. “This is an aura recorder I’ve keyed specifically to *aiudara*. When you pass it through an *aiudara*, it will record the gate’s magical signature. I’d like you to go to the town’s center then use this to read the aura of one of the gates there. If I’m right, this will prove that the aura of the supposed ‘Seven Arches’ is all wrong for true *aiudara*.”

The city of Sevenarches is just a few miles down the road. Since Fianara has never been there, she can’t give many more details about the locale and trusts the characters to come up with their own plan. She knows that the arches are a popular attraction, but that non-residents are kept at a safe distance by alarmed barriers and guards.

Fianara asks the characters about their skills and abilities. (This is a good chance for players to introduce their characters to the rest of the party.) How the party ultimately handles their task isn’t Fianara’s concern, though she suggests they try to

be discreet. “The Oakstewards don’t take kindly to troublemakers,” she notes.

Treasure: To aid the party’s mission, Fianara supplies them with a standard disguise kit and five replacement cosmetics.

The *aura recorder* is a unique occult item designed specifically for this one mission, so no stat block is provided. If necessary, the *aura recorder* has all the physical properties of a typical hourglass; otherwise its design is inscrutable. Attempts to use it on anything other than one of the arches at the center of Sevenarches yield no effect.

Reward: If pressed about payment, Fianara reminds the characters that they’re making a trade of information. A character who rolls a successful DC 14 Diplomacy or Intimidation check elicits an eye roll from Fianara. In this case, she offers the party what’s left of her research grant—5 gp—if they bring back the data she needs.

ENTERING SEVENARCHES

Once the characters accept Fianara’s mission, getting to Sevenarches is easy. The citizen guards at the

border aren't Oakstewards, and they wave non-elven characters through without issue. Elven and half-elven characters, however, will need to find a way to slip through the border in secret or in disguise (likely using the disguise kit they got from Fianara).

Exploring Sevenarches

SEVENARCHES SETTLEMENT 4

N TOWN

Long-cursed River Kingdom and arboreous city of enigmatic druids.

Government Mayor and Oakstewards (elected leader and druidic oligarchy)

Population 4,340 (88% human, 5% fey, 4% gnome, 2% halfling, 1% other)

Languages Common, Druidic, Gnomish, Sylvan

Religions Erastil, Green Faith, Hanspur

Threats attacks from gorgas (page 86), internal divisions, threat of the *obnubilate curse's* return

Superstitious of Elves Sevenarches was long plagued by the *obnubilate curse*—a mysterious affliction that erased the memories of elves and half-elves before it killed them. The curse has recently been lifted, but the people of Sevenarches still bar elven characters from their settlement, afraid that any change to their longstanding ways might result in some unforeseeable catastrophe. Elves and half-elves caught by the kingdom's guards are politely but firmly escorted to the River Kingdom's border.

Esmet Silkenlock (N female human reformed thief) Mayor of Sevenarches

Dethenesthen Carcusian (N male human ranger) Captain of the Underbrush

Leoti (LN female human druid) Voice of the Wind

AT A GLANCE

Sevenarches is built at the confluence of two streams, the Wendwater and Fogmorn Creek, which continue their flow eastward to eventually join the Sellen River. A third, artificial waterway known merely as the Canal connects the two streams west of their natural meeting, turning the city's central district into an island.

The entire city is built atop the stone ruins of a pre-Earthfall elven settlement, and much of that repurposed architecture is still visible beneath the wooden human additions and the vines that seem to cover every surface in the city. Trees and shrubs line the streets and flourish in parks, with many residents

simply building around them rather than risk the ire of the Oakstewards.

SEVENARCHES LOCATIONS

Significant locations in Sevenarches include the following.

Arch Plaza: The center of town is also the site of the Oakstewards' counterfeit "Seven Arches." **Event 1** occurs here.

Honeybrush Cabaret: While Sevenarches boasts plenty of places to get a drink, none can provide a show to match the Honeybrush Cabaret, with entertainment ranging from whimsical fey-themed musicals and bloody pit fights to satirical comedies baiting the Oakstewards. With a motto of "Something new every night!" the owner, **Kerr Woodsong** (CN male human theater promoter 5), is always looking for fresh talent

and fresher ideas.

The Ivy Wall: While many of the city's elven structures have been repaired, the original stone curtain wall that ringed it has been left to time, its crumbling masonry now covered in strangling ivy. While the stones seemingly provide little protection, most residents claim the ivy itself is more than it appears, believing it would animate and devastate any invading force that tried to cross it.

Justice House: This large building houses Sevenarches' courts, jail, and offices for government officials. While some of the functionaries here like to pretend otherwise, everyone knows that only Oakstewards hold real power, and that even the most senior official at Justice House can be overruled by one of the mysterious druids.

The Quaking Stacks: Sevenarches' library is detailed on page 30.

Seven Sisters Tannery: Crime is a risky business in Sevenarches, as the Oakstewards rarely give second chances, yet every city has its underworld. Among those in the know, the Seven Sisters gang is the most dangerous of the local criminal enterprises. It's run by an actual family of biological and adopted sisters from their tannery and stockyard at the western edge of town. The gang has been able to operate for so long that some townsfolk speculate the Seven Sisters may in fact have connections among the Oakstewards.

Silver & Cold: Sevenarches is a wild country full of beasts, fey, and other threats. Smart travelers do well to see to their own protection. Toward that end,



Sevenarches Banner

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ASKING AROUND

While in Sevenarches, a character can attempt to Gather Information about the arches' security by attempting a DC 15 Diplomacy check. (Remember that you should roll this check in secret.) The check's result determines what particular rumor the character hears.

Critical Success As success, but the bartender adds, "That alarm don't extend to the plaza's entrance, though. That's how the druids go in and out without setting it off."

Success A tired barman polishes a glass while musing about recent events. "Ever since gorgas started hunting closer to the city, there's been two Oakstewards posted at the arches, plus an ensorcelled rope. If you even try to go under or over it, it starts screaming like an angry squirrel. Birds and things are always setting it off. It's a real headache."

Failure A grim-faced farmer narrows her eyes at you. "Now why would you want to be knowin' a thing like that? I think you better make like a barge and shove off before I call the 'Stewards.'"

Critical Failure A loquacious gnome adventurer beckons you to come closer, then loudly whispers in your ear. "The druids got that barrier up for a reason. Step past it, their magic'll turn you into a squirrel quicker than you can say 'acorn!' I seen it with my own two eyes!" (This is false, though the gnome truly believes they saw what they described.)

Camoor Li (NG female human blacksmith 7) sells the widest variety of cold iron and silver weapons in the city.

Thornleaf Barracks: This large, U-shaped building houses 200 members of Sevenarches' military branch, the Underbrush. Captain Dethenesthen Carcusian is the leader of the Underbrush, though he and his special retinue regularly leave the city to tour the rest of Sevenarches' territory.

Vinehall: Also called the "Wicker House," this structure is the closest thing the Oakstewards have to a capitol building. Once, it was a ruined elven manor, but the Oakstewards filled the gaps with woven ivy and other creeping vines. Now, the Wicker House's living walls and floors are stronger and more resilient than any normal wood.

EVENT 1: TESTING THE ARCHES

LOW 1

Seven stone archways stand in a neat circle in this central town plaza. Each arch is twenty feet tall and ten feet wide. Multicolored lights of unknown provenance warp and weave across the arches' stone faces.

Surrounding the arches is a circle of dwarf oak trees, each just ten feet tall. A hempen rope tied around the tree trunks forms a barricade whose only gap is just south of the arches. Shops, inns, and merchant wagons surround the busy square on all sides. To the southeast, a small podium rises five feet high.

The podium is used as a stage for both Oaksteward official pronouncements and for any citizens who want to pontificate.

Creatures: The recent uptick in gorga attacks has prompted the Oakstewards to make a show of bolstering security. Two low-ranking Oakstewards are posted here at all hours, with one usually standing guard at the break in the barricade while the other patrols the Arch Plaza. Since no one expects trouble this deep in the city, the guards are casual in their duty, often chatting with each other and passersby.

The Oaksteward guards are quick to confront anyone breaking the rules, but have no particular desire for a fight. If met with violence, they immediately drop their staves and cast *fear* to disperse opponents. If that's not enough, they change shape to attack with bestial claws, hoping to drop enemies quickly and figuring they can always get other druids to heal the troublemakers once they're safely restrained. If it seems warranted, and they're given the opportunity, the enforcers further strengthen themselves with *magic fang*.

OAKSTEWARD ENFORCERS (2)

CREATURE 0

RARE LN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human druids

Perception +6

Languages Common, Druidic

Skills Intimidation +5, Nature +6

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

Items dagger, leather armor, staff

AC 16; **Fort** +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

HP 15

Speed 25 feet

Melee **◆** staff +6 (two-hand d8), **Damage** 1d4+2 bludgeoning

Melee **◆** dagger +6 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

Ranged **◆** dagger +6 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

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Druid Prepared Spells DC 16, attack +8; **1st** *magic fang*, *shillelagh*; **Cantrips (1st)** *light*, *ray of frost*, *stabilize*, *tanglefoot*

Wild Shape ◆◆ (morph, primal, transmutation) **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** The Oaksteward's hands transform into wild claws for 1 minute. The Oaksteward gains the following Strike.

Melee ◆ claw +7 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d6+2 slashing

Alarm: The rope around the arches is enchanted with a magical alarm. Any object larger than a few inches that passes through a vertical cylinder emanating from the rope triggers an alarm that sounds like a gray squirrel's squawk, but extremely loud and emanating from the point where the perimeter was breached. The only exception is entry through the opening in the barrier to the south.

CORDON ALARM

HAZARD 2

ABJURATION | MAGICAL | TRAP

Stealth DC 18 (trained)

Description A hempen rope tied between trees emanates an invisible, cylindrical barrier that sounds an alarm when crossed.

Disable DC 18 Thievery (trained) to move the rope without setting off the alarm, or *dispel magic* (1st level; counteract DC 16) to disable the rope's magic

Alarm ◀ (abjuration, primal) **Trigger** An object or creature of at least 1 Bulk crosses an invisible vertical barrier extending 30 feet above and below the rope; **Effect** The rope squawks like an angry squirrel from the point where the barrier was breached. This alarm is as loud as a human scream and lasts for 1 minute. If an item or creature is still breaching the barrier at the end of this duration, the alarm immediately triggers again.

Reset The alarm resets immediately. Multiple breaches can cause the alarm to sound in multiple places at the same time, though the alarm can still be triggered only once per round.

Taking the Measurement: In order to get the data Fianara needs, the party must place the *aura recorder* partway through one of the arches and keep it there for 3 consecutive rounds. Upon doing so, the recorder lights up to signal completion, shining as brightly as a torch. (In this case, the light is predominantly purple, though a few bulbs of other colors glow faintly.)

How the characters accomplish this task is up to them. Talking the guards into allowing the measurement is extremely difficult (DC 23 Diplomacy or Deception), but characters could also sneak past the

guards, lure them away, or overpower them (though they might face trouble with the Oakstewards later if they're identified). Encourage creative solutions—for example, perhaps the characters toss around breadcrumbs so that a flock of birds triggers a series of false alarms.

XP Award: Regardless of how they do so, if the characters successfully use the aura recorder on one of the arches, award them XP as if they'd defeated the plaza's guards and overcome the alarm.



Oaksteward Enforcer

What Fianara Knows

When the characters return to the caravanserai and hand over the aura recorder, Fianara is thrilled.

Fianara points gleefully to her device, where one of the bulbs shines a brilliant purple. "Just as I suspected!" she exclaims. "Illusion magic." She points to a different, unlit bulb. "And not a trace of conjuration. Those arches are as fake as a kelpie's smile."

She settles back in her chair. "Well then, a deal's a deal. Here's what I know:

"The real Seven Arches are hidden somewhere south, in the Wilewood, which is why the Oakstewards restrict travel there. They also post guards. On the night of your Missing Moment, all seven of the guards at the Seven Arches stepped through the portals, just like you did, but only one of them returned—a self-righteous Oaksteward named Bolan.

"When he got back, Bolan was a changed man... and not in a good way. After the high council chewed him out for shirking his post, he stole an important Oaksteward artifact and hid out in the Wilewood along with some other malcontents. From there, he's been sending cronies to the city to harass the citizens, undermine the Oakstewards' authority, and recruit other discontented druids to his cause. His ultimate aim, as far as I can tell, is a full-on coup."

Fianara concludes: "I don't know what happened to this Bolan character when he went through the arch. But whatever he knows, I figure you'll want to know it, too."

Since Bolan is both dangerously antisocial and deep in restricted territory, Fianara suggests the party start by talking to other Oakstewards. As it happens, she's on good terms with a mid-ranking member of the druids' council, a halfling named Lemma Feldthorn. Fianara can give the characters a letter of introduction so they can meet with this woman and offer to help with the Bolan situation. In doing so, Fianara says, the party is bound to advance their investigation into the Missing Moment. (If the party somehow manages to get a message to Dr. Ritalson, he agrees that this is an excellent idea.)

Meeting the Oakstewards

Though the Oakstewards' most secret rites and deliberations occur in the Elderwoods along the southern border with Kyonin, the necessities of governance ensure that a few representatives can always be found in Vinehall (page 14). With Fianara's

letter in hand, the party can gain entry to the building to meet her contact.

Lemma Feldthorn (LN female halfling druid 6) is an unexpected sight, both as one of Sevenarches' few halflings and due to her full-sized horse animal companion, Mulberri, who walks the halls with her. Though Lemma is initially reluctant to divulge Oaksteward secrets, if the characters reveal that they know about Bolan, the fake arches, or any of the other information Fianara provided, she frowns but opens up.

Lemma admits that the Oakstewards are presently stretched thin. The seeming disappearance of the *obnubilate curse* has created not just an ethical conundrum—as allowing

elves in could be a disaster if the curse returned—but a matter of national defense: without the curse, some fear the strained relationship between Sevenarches and neighboring Kyonin might blossom into an actual conflict. Factor in the increased gorga attacks, and the Oakstewards have no time for Bolan's troublemaking.

Bolan's crimes go beyond mere rebellion. Lemma says that before he left, Bolan stole the gate key for the real *Seventh Arch*, a fanciful jade amulet shaped like a leaf called the *Shadewither Key*. She's heard rumors that he plans to use the key in some sort of evil ritual at the arches a few nights hence.

The Oaksteward agrees with Fianara that there could be a mutually beneficial arrangement here. While Lemma doesn't know where Bolan himself is hiding, she can tell the party the location of the real *Seven Arches*, and she can give them a barkwrit—an official pass allowing them to roam freely in Sevenarches, including visiting the Wilewood and the *aiudara*. In exchange, she needs the characters to disrupt Bolan's ritual, reclaim the gate key, and capture the rebel Oaksteward so that he can be punished for his crimes.

Lemma doesn't know anything about Kaneepo the Slim, but otherwise can reveal most of the information about Bolan presented on pages 90–91.

Reward: Lemma feels that earning the Oakstewards' favor—and the chance to investigate both Bolan and the arches for clues about the Missing Moment—is compensation enough. If the characters press for payment for returning the *Shadewither Key*, Lemma sighs, shares a meaningful look with her horse, and offers the party 30 gp, with half paid up front. (Note that because the party won't be returning to



Lemma Feldthorn

Sevenarches before the *Shadewither Key* is destroyed at the end of this adventure, they'll likely never see the other half of this payment.)

Disrupting the Ritual

The characters are welcome to shop or conduct other business before leaving Sevenarches, but the impending ritual makes time of the essence. The Oakstewards are willing to lend them horses or an oxcart to expedite their 50-mile, 2-day journey south to the Wilewood.

The Wilewood is the largest forest in Sevenarches, full of fey and wild magic, with rumors that as many as one in 10 animals here has been awakened to magical sentience. No roads larger than a footpath cut through its dense and tangled interior, and anyone passing through feels the weight of countless unseen eyes upon them.

With Lemma's directions and the barkwrit, it's simple enough for characters to make their way through the forest to the *Seven Arches*. When they arrive, read or paraphrase the following to set the scene for the event encounters that take place here.

The forest opens suddenly up into a clearing roughly four hundred feet across, its long grasses blowing in the wind across a gently rolling landscape. In the clearing's center, a huge stone arch rises fifty feet into the sky. Smaller arches cluster around the massive gate.

From the clearing's perimeter, the party can see activity around the arches, but sound seems muffled, and the light here is strangely dimmer than it should be—if it's daytime, the glen seems shrouded in twilight, while if it's night, the moonlight seems somehow attenuated.

Ritual Encounters: Three events take place at the *Seven Arches*. Use the Forest's Edge map for **Event 2** and the Seven Arches map for **Event 4**; these maps are on page 18. Upon the flat, empty field between these two locations, the characters encounter a hazard (**Event 3**, unmapped) that might alter the terrain.

EVENT 2: GORGA ATTACK MODERATE 1

Creatures: Kaneepo loaned Bolan the use of several temagyr gorgas, two of which Bolan sent to guard the outskirts of the *Seven Arches* while the Oaksteward rebels conduct their ritual. Regardless of which direction the characters approach from, the gorgas are ready and waiting.

Both gorgas hide in the waist-high grass (the standard cover grants them a +2 circumstance bonus to their Stealth checks), then spring out and ambush the party, using Stealth for their initiative checks. The gorgas are devoted to Kaneepo, and fight until slain.

DREAM INVASION

Throughout "The Seventh Arch" and "They Watched the Stars," Dr. Etward Ritalson checks in on his operatives' progress by invading their dreams in disguise. You can use these nocturnal visitations as opportunities to highlight this campaign's ominous tone and foreshadow dangers to come.

Whenever the characters rest for the night, there's a chance one of them recalls a strange dream the next morning. In the dream, a man wearing a fine coat and a monstrous mask of white fur and thick horns watches the dreamer from afar. As is common in scary dreams, the character is unable to interact with this figure in any way. Fill in the other details of the dream—the setting, what the character is doing—based on the character's backstory.

While unsettling, the dream imparts no lasting negative effects. You can randomly determine who experiences the dream and when, but each character should have this dream at least once by the end of the next adventure, and never two in the same night. Consider spacing out the dreams so that there are nights of normal rest between them, adding to the mystery. The party will discover that their invader is none other than Dr. Ritalson in this Adventure Path's finale, "Dreamers of the Nameless Spires."

Deviant Feat: The first time Dr. Ritalson invades a character's dream, that character gains the Awakened Power feat (*Pathfinder Dark Archive* 100). See the sidebar on page 7 for more details.

TEMAGYRS (2)

Page 86

Initiative Stealth +9

EVENT 3: SHADOWSHIFT

LOW 1

Halfway from the clearing's edge to the *Seven Arches* (about 100 feet on either side), the characters encounter a wall of shadowy magic caused by the druids' ritual.

A shadowy line seems to cross the clearing here, beyond which the tall grasses look dark and colorless, like charcoal sketches of themselves.

Thanks to the druids' ritual, the forest clearing is flooding with shadowy magic from the First World. Unless something is done to stop the rebel Oakstewards, their actions threaten to create a planar breach.

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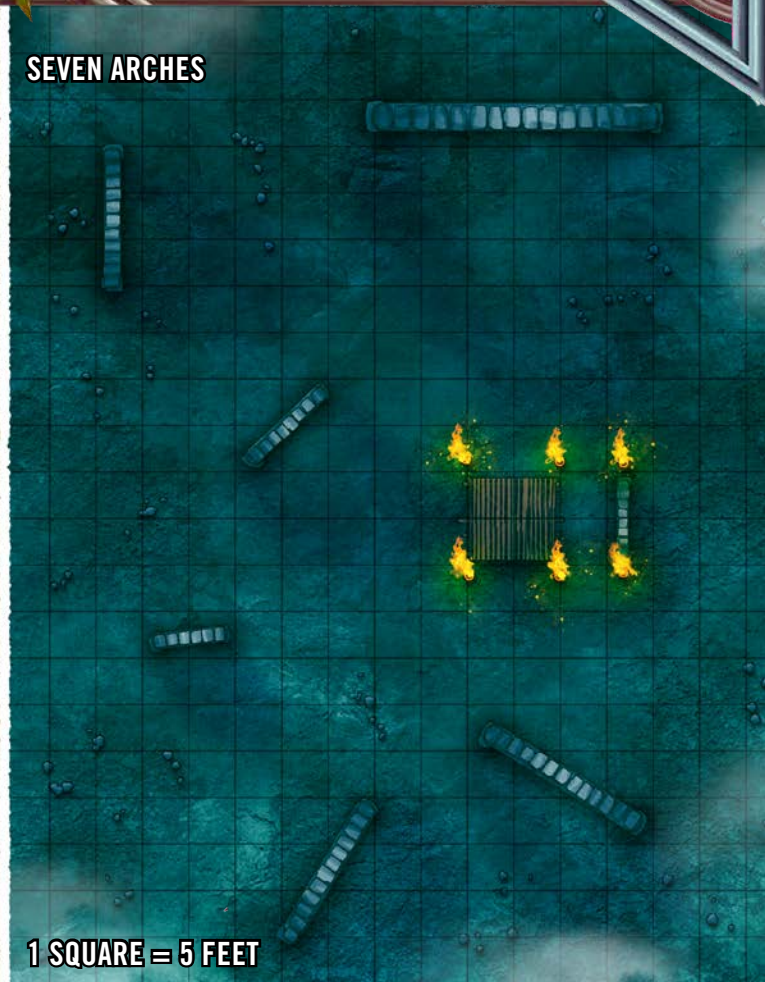
**Adventure
Toolbox**

FOREST'S EDGE



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

SEVEN ARCHES



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Hazard: A field of unstable reality created by the ritual tears tiny micro-portals between the planes. Though each is no bigger than a pinprick, enough of these wounds can have negative effects on living creatures. Once triggered, this hazard floods the entire clearing, likely affecting the encounter of **Event 4** and potentially **Event 2** (such as, if the characters run toward the center of the clearing while still fighting the gorgas).

SHADOWSHIFT FIELD

HAZARD 1

COMPLEX CONJURATION MAGICAL

Stealth +7 (trained) to notice the air and plants wavering and shifting

Description Cross-planar seepage from the Oaksteward rebels' ritual causes shadowy warping effects to strain and damage living creatures in the forest clearing.

Disable DC 17 Arcana (trained) to will the Material Plane's hold on the area back into firmness and disable the effect for 1 hour, or *dispel magic* (1st level; counteract DC 15) to end the effect permanently

Shadowshift \curvearrowright (conjunction, primal) **Trigger** A character enters the affected area; **Effect** The hazard rolls

initiative as the field of planar warping surges, filling the forest clearing.

Routine (1 action) Each creature in the clearing must attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save as the planar warping threatens to create microscopic tears inside their body. Fey, plant creatures, and druids are unaffected.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and immune for 24 hours. The land is healed 1d6 points by the primal magic.

Success The creature is unaffected and immune to the effect for 24 hours.

Failure The creature takes 1d6+3 force damage.

Critical Failure The creature takes 2d6+6 force damage.

Reset This effect continues for 1 day, after which it ends and cannot be triggered again without another ritual.

EVENT 4: THE RITUAL

MODERATE 1

Seven arches of gray-brown basalt loom around the center of the forest clearing. In the middle is a crude wooden altar carved with vines. A hogtied unicorn bleats deliriously upon the altar. Despite two lines of lit torches around the altar, shadows clog the area like thick mist.

Creatures: Bolan has sent three of his rebel Oaksteward minions to prepare the *Seven Arches* for his sinister ritual. The trio have captured a unicorn, which they intend to slaughter with its own horn before anointing each arch with the beast's blood.

In addition to the leather armor and green cloaks typical of the Oakstewards, each of these rebels wears an eerie leaf-shaped mask that marks them as followers of Bolan's cause. If the druids are warned by the sounds of combat with the gorgas, they cast *shillelagh* on themselves and wait for the party to arrive, initially flinging their daggers before closing to attack with staves. As soon as two of the druids fall, the third immediately surrenders.

REBEL OAKSTEWARDS (3) CREATURE 0

NE Oaksteward enforcers (page 14)

Initiative Perception +6

In addition to the Oakstewards, the wounded unicorn also poses a threat. In order to prepare the unicorn for the ritual, the Oakstewards have dosed it with magical drugs capable of circumventing its poison immunity. The beast is currently out of its mind with panicked hallucinations.

If a character unties or cuts the ropes binding the unicorn, the terrified creature immediately attacks the nearest creature in the area, making no distinction between Oakstewards and player characters. The unicorn can be calmed with a successful DC 17 Nature check, causing it to regain its senses enough to flee into the surrounding forest. Otherwise, it attacks until reduced to 10 Hit Points or fewer, at which point it flees.

SACRIFICIAL UNICORN CREATURE 2

Weak unicorn (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 316)

Initiative Perception +11

XP Award: If the characters free the wounded unicorn and manage to calm it or fight it off, award them full experience, as if they'd defeated it in combat.

INTERROGATING THE REBEL

The surrendering Oaksteward is a hard-faced young woman named Korimona. Loyal but pragmatic, she freely offers to take her victorious opponents to Bolan's hideout or to give them directions if they prefer. (Alternatively, the characters can follow the blood-soaked trail the Oakstewards left when they dragged the unicorn here.)

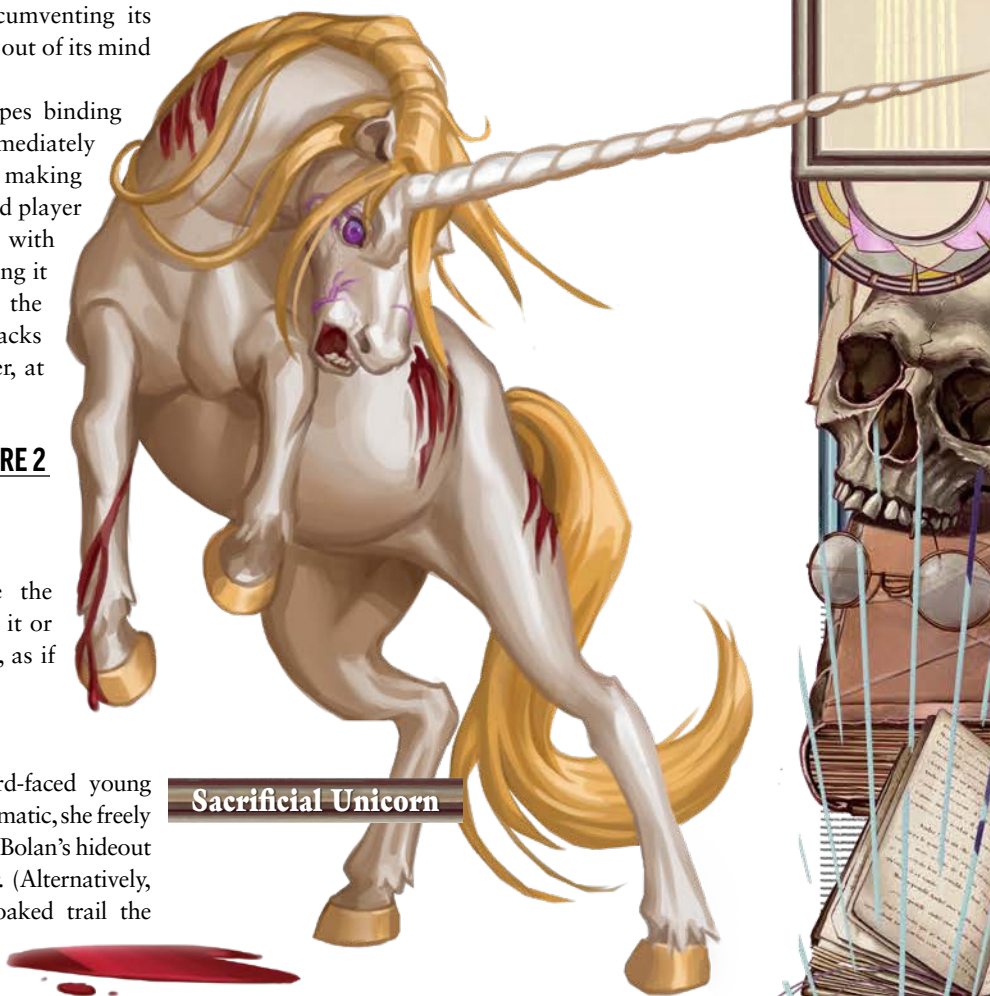
Korimona's responses to the characters' most likely questions follow.

What's this ritual for? "To bring back the obnubilate curse, obviously!" She looks a little uncomfortable. "We didn't *want* to kill a unicorn, of course. But it's a small sacrifice in the long run..."

Why would you want to bring back the curse? Korimona smirks ruefully. "If you don't already know, then you'll never understand. The curse is the world's way of restoring the natural balance. If we had it our way, this curse would affect not only elves, but *all* who call themselves 'civilized.' Just look." She points to the carnage all around—her fallen comrades and the unicorn blood upon the altar. "Do you really think any of us have a right to be here?"

Where's Bolan? "At the hideout. He was going to bring the key once we'd prepared the site. We were supposed to send a runner back to tell him when the deed was done."

What can you tell us about this hideout? "It's an old gnome forest house, up in the trees. I can lead you there, but you'll never get in. Bolan will hear you coming and lock the place down tighter than a terrapin." She grins



Sacrificial Unicorn

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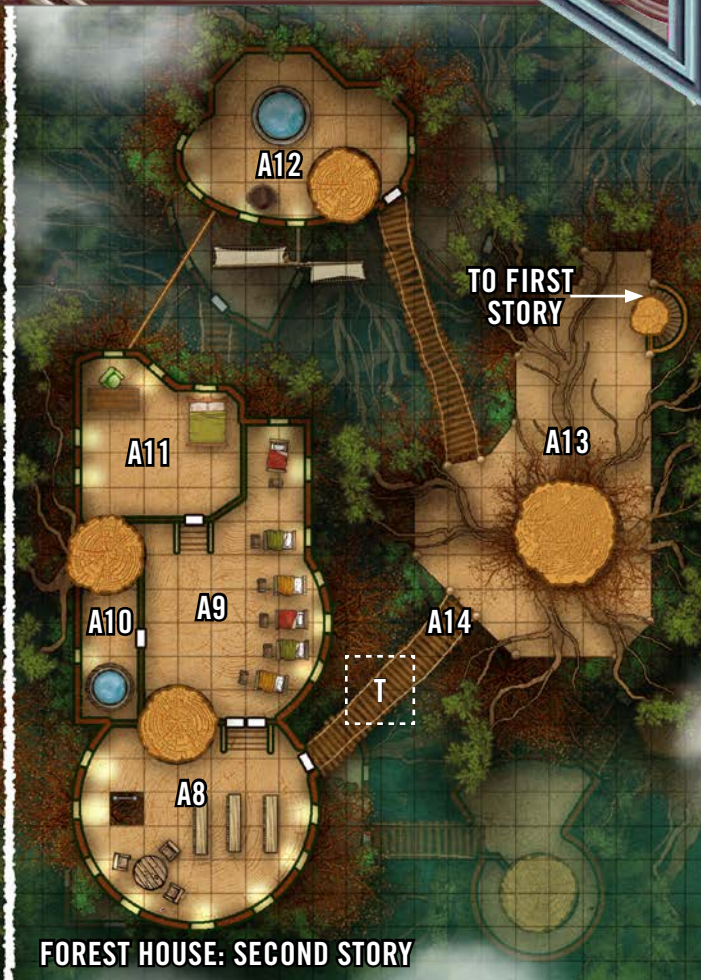
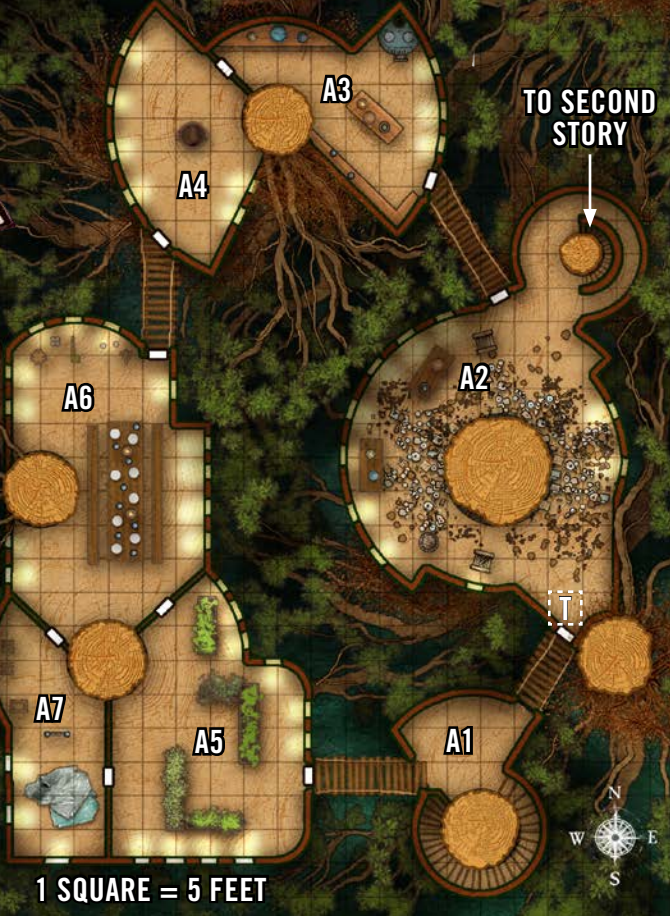
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FOREST HOUSE: FIRST STORY



unpleasantly. “You may have beat us, but Bolan’s got twice as many with him, plus friends—friends you’ll never expect.” Korimona initially refuses to say more, though if magically charmed she reveals that the “friends” are mostly fey and leshys Bolan has recruited to his cause. She’s unaware of the hideout’s traps.

Greenleaf Forest House

The Oakstewards largely ban humanoid settlements in the Wilewood, reserving them for the fey and other native creatures. Years ago, however, several groups of gnomes exiled from nearby Omesta successfully petitioned for the right to settle here, citing their people’s own fey origins and their dire situation. The settlers established a few tiny freeholds in the forest, incorporating Omesta’s arboreal building style into their enclaves. More recently, Bolan’s malcontents have taken over one such enclave, a small commune called the Greenleaf Forest House, and transformed the once-peaceful gnome village into a fortified rebel hideout.

A map of this area is shown above. If they reach this area with Korimona’s guidance, the characters arrive from the south.

Read or paraphrase the following to your players to describe the scene.

Just ahead, the forest thins to reveal a chaotic network of brightly painted wooden houses high above. The structures are all several stories tall and interconnected by swaying rope bridges. In the southeastern corner of the enclave, a wooden staircase spirals upward from the forest floor to a suspended gazebo. Atop a tower at the enclave’s northern end, a small canvas-sailed windmill creaks in slow circles.

The whimsical houses are contrasted by recent fortifications: the trees’ lower branches have all been shorn clean, and the bare trunks shine with grease and are studded with downward-pointing wooden spikes.

A1. GATEHOUSE

MODERATE 1

A wooden staircase spirals from the ground up to a gazebo-turned-pillbox twenty feet above the forest floor. The structure’s windows are completely boarded up except for a few small murder holes. To the east and west, steep rope bridges ascend ten feet from the landing to larger buildings.

Creatures: Two rebel Oakstewards—Rifon and Menelimus—are stationed in the gatehouse at the top of the staircase, along with Rifon’s pet snake Cucumber. Menelimus watches for enemies from the western bridge while Rifon observes from the gatehouse. At the first sign of anyone they don’t recognize, they shout in alarm and begin firing their crossbows. The gatehouse’s murder holes provide creatures inside the gatehouse greater cover to attacks from outside.

Attempts to negotiate with the guards are futile. Bolan has foreseen this possibility and given explicit instructions that no one except members of their band is allowed into the fortress, no matter the cost. If Korimona is visible, the Oakstewards demand that the characters let her go and leave, but don’t cease their attacks.

RIFON AND MENELIMUS CREATURE 0

NE male Oaksteward enforcers (page 14)

Initiative Perception +6

Items heavy crossbow (10 bolts), leather armor, oak leaf mask, staff

Ranged ➤ heavy crossbow +5, **Damage** 1d10 piercing

CUCUMBER CREATURE -1

Viper (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 302)

Initiative Perception +5

A2. WORKSHOP MODERATE 1

Workbenches and tool-filled pegboards line this trashed workshop. Half-finished carvings and wooden apparatuses are strewn all across the floor. Along the eastern wall, several shelves have been knocked over and piled with detritus to form a sort of nest. Doors to the north and south lead out onto rope bridges. To the northeast, a staircase spirals up around a tree trunk in a bulbous antechamber.

The ceiling in this room is 15 feet high.

Snare: The space directly in front of this area’s southern door (indicated on the map with a “T”) is trapped with a caltrop snare (Stealth DC 18 to detect, Thievery DC 18 to disable). When triggered, the snare releases caltrops in the same space; the triggering creature must succeed at a DC 14 Acrobatics check or take 1d4 piercing damage and 1 persistent bleed damage. As long as the creature takes persistent bleed damage, it takes a –5 circumstance penalty to Speed. A creature can spend an Interact action to pluck the caltrops free, reducing the flat check DC to recover from the bleed damage to 10.

Creatures: A vexgit gremlin and its two grimple cronies have taken this room as their lair, where they’ve

FOREST HOUSE FEATURES

Keep the following rules in mind as the party explores the Greenleaf Forest House.

Climbing the trees is dangerous. A character can ascend the limbed, greased, spiked tree trunks with a DC 20 Athletics check to Climb. On a failure, the character takes 1 piercing damage from the spikes jutting out of the trunk. The heights of each tree house are indicated on the map.

The enclave is protected from fire. Magical sensors detect dangerous amounts of flame and trigger pipes that douse the flames before they can spread. The pipes connect to the water reservoir in area A12.

The way is clear and brightly lit. Unless otherwise noted, all doors are unlocked, ceilings are 10 feet high, and rooms are brightly lit by windows during the day or by lanterns at night.

Structures are made of wood. Walls, floors, and ceilings are made of wooden slats (Hardness 10, 40 HP [BT 20]).

HIGH ALERT

With the ritual so close at hand, the entire complex is on high alert, watching the surrounding trees for enemies. Bolan, currently in area A11, is the keenest denizen on site (Perception DC 21), while most of the enclave’s other inhabitants are less attentive (average Perception DC 16).

delighted in turning the former inhabitants’ hard work into a rusting, putrid mess. Though Bolan recruited the gremlins to help him upgrade the enclave’s defenses, they’ve (unsurprisingly) proven difficult to work with. Now, Bolan has largely written off the meddlesome fey, letting them keep this room until he has time to deal with them properly.

Notoriously ill-tempered, the gremlins don’t differentiate between Oakstewards and intruders, starting as unfriendly toward anyone who enters their domain. They browbeat the characters until the party attacks or attempts to leave, at which point the gremlins attack.

A character who improves the gremlins’ attitudes to friendly or better (Will DC 16 for the vexgit, DC 14 for the grimples) can convince them to let the party pass. This is not, however, sufficient incentive for the vexgit to warn the party about the snare if they haven’t tripped it yet; see above.

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In battle, the vexgit enjoys attacking heavily armored foes with their maul and Rusting Grasp ability, while the grimples prefer to stay out of reach near the ceiling, flying from shelf to shelf and spraying foes with vomit.

VEXGIT

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 134

Initiative Perception +6

CREATURE 1



Rifon and Cucumber

GRIMPLES (2)

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 120

Initiative Perception +6

CREATURE -1

Treasure: A set of artisan's tools and a magnifying glass lie amid the workshop rubble.

A3. KITCHEN

MODERATE 1

This large kitchen is swelteringly hot from a roaring iron stove in the northern corner of the room. Burst bags, shattered jars, copious crumbs, and other food detritus litter the floor and tables. Doors lead out to the west and south.

Creatures: Bolan bribed two melixie sprites into helping him by promising them all the sugar they can stomach. The fey have gleefully taken him up on that offer, and they're currently eating their way through the house's larder (smashing and tossing aside anything insufficiently sweet). The pair fight to the death to defend their sugar stash. Even their battle cries are food-themed, with the sprites yelling that they'll "bake your cake" or "glaze your scones." They each use their Sugar Rush ability on the first round of combat.

MELIXIES (2)

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 254

Initiative Perception +4

CREATURE 0

Trap: Bolan's people rigged the stove to blow if anyone gets too close. The melixies have been warned and so avoid triggering the trap, though they might still inadvertently get caught in the trap's blast.

EXPLODING STOVE

HAZARD 3

MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 22 (expert)

Description The stove has been rigged to explode when pressure sensors under the floor are depressed.

Disable DC 20 Thievery (trained) to disable the pressure sensors, or DC 20 Survival (trained) to safely extinguish the stove fires

AC 19; Fort +10, Ref +5

Hardness 10; HP 42 (BT 21); Immunities critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Explode **Trigger** A creature steps on the floor within 5 feet of the stove; **Effect** The stove explodes, dealing 2d10+13 fire damage to each creature within 10 feet (basic DC 20 Reflex save).

A4. STORES

This well-stocked larder has been thoroughly ransacked. Bottles, baskets, and sacks are haphazardly piled on the floor. In the middle of the room, a five-foot-wide wicker basket hangs suspended from ropes beneath a hole in the ceiling that leads to the building's upper story. Doors lead out to the north and south.

Consummate tinkerers, the gnomes removed the ladder from this room and replaced it with a basket elevator system powered by the house's windmill. With a successful DC 10 Engineering Lore or Thievery check, a character can figure out which ropes to pull to engage the winch and ascend to area A12. Alternatively, a character can simply Climb the ropes with a successful DC 10 Athletics check.

Treasure: Bolan's followers haven't had time to do a thorough search of the commune's stores. Scattered among the debris are a *minor healing potion*, five tindertwigs, and a bottle of *nectar of purification*.

A5. GREENHOUSE

MODERATE 1

Large windows and elaborately positioned mirrors fill this warm greenhouse with bright light. Potted plants choke the room in what can only be described as an indoor jungle. A door to the east leads to a rope bridge. North and west, other doors lead farther into the house.

Many Greenleaf gnomes experimented with growing out-of-season plants. They used the produce from this room to supplement both their meals and income.

The door to the west has been boarded up from the other side, making it as impassable as a wall.

Creatures: Two simpleminded gourd leshys named Wisteria and Hyacinth used to periodically assist the gnomes with their gardening and foraging. Both readily accepted Bolan's explanation that the gnomes have gone to Sevenarches to trade, and they've agreed to help the Oakstewards protect the commune until the gnomes get back.

The two leshys are in here watering plants when the characters arrive. As long as they remain unfriendly (their initial attitude toward outsiders), Wisteria and Hyacinth question anyone not dressed as an Oaksteward, believing their home may be in danger. If unswayed, they ultimately attack anyone who acts suspiciously or attempts to leave.

Characters can convince Wisteria and Hyacinth that they've been misled by improving the leshys' attitudes to friendly or better (Will DC 17). At this, the leshys

simply shrug off concerns and leave the commune. No amount of talking can convince them to fight Bolan or any other Oakstewards.

WISTERIA AND HYACINTH

CREATURE 1

Genderless gourd leshys (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 218)

Initiative Perception +5

Treasure: One of the plants growing in the greenhouse is a flayleaf. A character can harvest 10 doses of flayleaf poison (*Gamemastery Guide* 120) by succeeding at a DC 15 Survival check. On a critical success, the character harvests 20 doses instead.

A6. GATHERING HALL

LOW 1

This dining hall sports a long wooden table lined with benches. Assorted musical instruments lean against the walls. Two doors lead south, another north.

The gnomes used this area as their dining hall and entertainment space, where they could sing and dance away the long winter nights. The ceiling in this room is 15 feet high.

Creatures: A grig named Bowfoot and a sprite named Chibs have claimed this room for themselves. If they haven't yet heard the sounds of combat, they're in here tinkering with the massive (relative to them) gnome instruments. Otherwise they hide in the branches and wait for trouble to arrive, at which point they attack with their ranged and magical abilities, attempting to stay out of reach among the tree's glass bulbs. They're both dedicated to preventing Bolan's predictions of wide-scale logging, but neither have a death wish. If Bowfoot is reduced to 5 Hit Points or fewer, he flees; if Bowfoot flees or is knocked unconscious, Chibs flees.

BOWFOOT

CREATURE 1

Male grig (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 308)

Initiative Perception +7

CHIBS

CREATURE -1

Female sprite (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 308)

Initiative Perception +4

Treasure: There are four ordinary handheld musical instruments here—a drum, a fiddle, a flute, and a bass guitar—as well as a *lesser maestro's instrument*. If a character plays a particular instrument, the *lesser maestro's instrument* happens to be that type; otherwise it's an ornate banjo painted with a whimsical deciduous forest motif.

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A7. TEXTILES ROOM

Looms with colorful, half-completed fabrics are mounted around this room, along with large washboards, basins, and baskets of laundry. A wooden ladder leads up to another room through a five-foot-wide hole in the ceiling.

An Oaksteward and a dream spider furtively watch this area from above. As soon as a character makes a move toward the ladder, the Oaksteward pulls up the ladder and attacks the intruders. See area A8 for details.

A8. POISON LAB

LOW 1

This cozy library has been repurposed as a laboratory. Easy chairs are shoved against brimming bookshelves to make room for glass vessels, burners, and other distilling equipment. Stairs ascend five feet to a door to the north. Another door leads east. To the west, a wooden railing surrounds a hole in the floor, which can be descended via a wooden ladder.

Bolan's ritual requires a sedated unicorn—a notoriously difficult task, given unicorns' immunity to poison. Fortunately for the rebels, Kaneepo provided Bolan with an arcane formula to bypass a unicorn's defenses. This makeshift laboratory has become the center of Bolan's efforts to produce the magical poison.

Creatures: To lead the poison project, Bolan enlisted a dwarven Oaksteward named Delphon to harvest and process dream spider venom, one of the poison's key ingredients, from a tamed dream spider. Delphon has also been tasked with guarding the prisoners in area A9, so he maintains a steady vigil in this lab, which is the only safe exit from the prisoners' room.

When the characters arrive in area A7, Delphon Hides (Stealth +4) at the top of the ladder here, peering over the edge into the room below. If he sees anyone enter the room, he waits for them to be at their most vulnerable before he Interacts with the ladder to hoist it up. He then hurls his acid flasks down into the textiles room and directs his spider to throw down webs to immobilize opponents and block the way.

DELPHON

CREATURE 0

NE MEDIUM DWARF HUMANOID

Male dwarven Oaksteward enforcer (page 14)

Initiative Perception +6

Items lesser acid flask (3), leather armor, oak leaf mask, staff

Ranged ♦ lesser acid flask +5 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 1d6 acid plus 1 acid splash

DREAM SPIDER

CREATURE 0

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 249

Initiative Perception +6

Treasure: Scattered about the shelves of the makeshift poison lab are two doses of shiver (*Gamemastery Guide* 121), three vials of lesser antidote, and one dose of cytillesh oil.

All of the magical poison Delphon created was used on the unicorn the party encountered at the *Seven Arches*. After memorizing the instructions Kaneepo gave Bolan, Delphon destroyed the formula.

A9. DORMITORY

This large room is filled with small beds, wooden cabinets, and dressers, no two of them alike. To the north, stairs ascend to a door. Two other doors mark exits to the west and south.

Dream Spider

Creatures: Half a dozen Greenleaf gnomes, including the commune's leader, Parva, lie bound and blindfolded on the beds. Bolan had been holding onto them as disposable test subjects for the unicorn poison, and hasn't yet gotten around to dealing with them. If freed, the Greenleafs immediately flee as a group into the woods. Before she goes, Parva enthusiastically offers the party every scrap of wealth in the compound if they can root out the evil druids and save the gnomes' home.

Trap: The Oakstewards have set a trap on the door leading to **A10**. The rebels always disable it before taking the gnomes to use the facilities, so none of the prisoners are aware of it.

VIOLET MISTER

HAZARD 2

MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 20 (trained) to notice the trap's trigger-thread attached to the door

Description Opening the door pulls a thread, which causes a plant mister to spray a cloud of poison into the triggering creature's face.

Disable DC 18 Thievery to safely cut the thread

AC 16; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +10

Hardness 7; **HP** 25

Poisoned Welcome **Trigger** A creature attempts to open the door; **Effect** Every creature within 10 feet of the door is exposed to violet venom poison.

Violet Venom (contact, poison) **Saving Throw** DC 17 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison plus enfeebled 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison plus drained 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 2d6 poison plus enfeebled 1 (1 round)

A10. BATH

This bath chamber resembles a private sauna, with a large wooden tub filling most of the floor space. Bamboo pipes from outside run through a small steel boiler and then into the tub.

The Greenleafs devised this luxuriant sauna room for soaking and relaxing.

The trap on the door leading to **A9** is obvious from this side.

A11. PARVA'S OFFICE

SEVERE 1

This cozy chamber has large, glassless windows, several of which are unshuttered to look out over the rest of the complex. Furniture includes a four-foot-long bed, a small desk, and a variety of elegant built-in drawers and cabinets. Unceremoniously unfurled on the floor lies a rumpled human-sized bedroll.

This was the office and bedroom of the commune's elected leader, Parva. Characters who examine the window see the cable secured beneath it (see Zipline, below).

Creatures: Bolan has taken this room for himself, directing his operations from its elegant (if slightly undersized) accommodations. Keeping him company is his sunflower leshy friend, Sunward. If the characters make it this far, Bolan wastes no time in attacking. Sunward, while not evil, has complete faith in Bolan and can't be reasoned with, fighting to the death to protect her friend.

If given the chance to prepare for combat, Bolan casts *magic fang* and *wild morph* on Sunward and *shillelagh* to enhance his staff. However, Bolan relies primarily on his strange new psychic abilities, using Guardian Thorns to keep enemies at bay. All the while, he bellows that his "plant necromancy" proves that "the forest has chosen him to hold civilization accountable."

When reduced to half his Hit Points, or if Sunward is killed, Bolan slings one of his leather hand wraps over the zipline (see below) and slides to area **A12** (with Sunward potentially clinging to his back). He then flees down through areas **A3** and **A2**, hoping any remaining traps and minions can help soften up the characters. Finally, he makes his last stand in area **A13**. If brought to 10 Hit Points or fewer, he surrenders (see the Interrogating Bolan section on page 27).

BOLAN

CREATURE 2

Page 90

Initiative Perception +11

SUNWARD

CREATURE 1

Female sunflower leshy (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 160)

Initiative Perception +7

Zipline: A greased rope outside the northern window functions as a zipline to the window in area **A12** below. Sliding down the line safely requires a successful DC 10 Athletics check; failure results in a fall to the forest floor 50 feet below. Thanks to his hand wraps (and practice), Bolan automatically succeeds at this check.

If he flees using the zipline, Bolan waits at the bottom for a character to follow. He then cuts the line while the character is in midair. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Reflex save manages to cling to the rope and swing safely down onto the rope bridge between areas **A4** and **A6**; otherwise, they fall to the ground and take 25 points of bludgeoning damage.

Treasure: In one of the cabinets, Bolan has stashed two *lesser healing potions*.

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A12. WATER TOWER

LOW 1

Droplets of condensation bead along the exterior of the large catchment vessel in the center of this room, occasionally dripping onto the floor. The vessel is shaped like a funnel, so that its top balloons outward to encompass the whole ceiling, connecting to a much larger catchment atop the building. Pipes covered in gauges and spigots snake out from the tank in all directions along the floor and walls.

Ropes and pulleys connect to a basket that can be raised or lowered through a five-foot-wide hole in the floor. Just out the window to the southwest, a well-oiled hempen rope stretches up to the window of an adjacent building.

The reservoir atop this building contains water for the house's experimental plumbing and firefighting system, all of which gets funneled through the regulator tank in this room. Unfortunately for the party, Bolan's people have rigged it to fight more than fires.

Hazard: The house's plumbing used to be gravity-fed until a crafty gnome decided to pressurize it via an experimental bellows system attached to the building's windmill. Bolan's followers have intentionally pushed the regulator tank beyond its safe levels, weakening the seals so that the slightest jostling will cause catastrophic failure.

Bolan knows which pipes are safe to touch, and thus can move through the room without triggering the hazard.

RESERVOIR TRAP

HAZARD 2

COMPLEX MECHANICAL TRAP

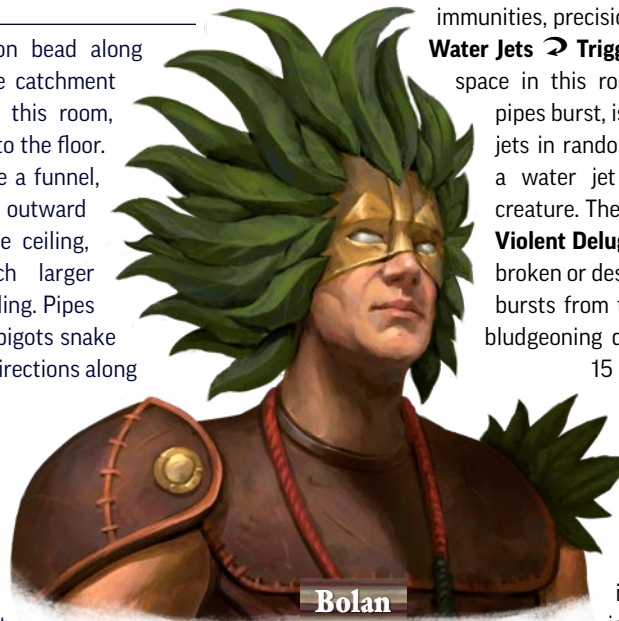
Stealth +11 (trained); DC 19 (expert) to notice the water tank bulging under the immense pressure

Description Pipes extending from a pressurized water tank spray flesh-cutting jets of water at unwary passersby.

Disable DC 18 Thievery (trained) to safely puncture a pipe, or DC 16 Engineering Lore (trained) to find and turn a pressure release valve; any combination of three punctured pipes or turned valves disables the trap

AC 18; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +3

Tank Hardness 7, **Tank HP** 50 (BT 25); **Pipe Hardness** 7,



Bolan

Pipe HP 30 (BT 15); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Water Jets **Trigger** A creature steps on a floor space in this room; **Effect** Seals on the water pipes burst, issuing forth high-pressure water jets in random directions. The hazard makes a water jet Strike against the triggering creature. The hazard rolls initiative.

Violent Deluge **Trigger** The water tank is broken or destroyed; **Effect** A torrent of water bursts from the shattered tank, dealing 3d8 bludgeoning damage to each creature within 15 feet (basic DC 22 Reflex save).

The trap is then disabled.

Routine (3 actions) For each pipe destroyed or disabled, the trap loses 1 action. On each of the trap's actions, the trap targets a random creature in the room with a water jet Strike.

Ranged water jet +11 (water), **Damage** 2d8 piercing; no multiple attack penalty

Reset The trap deactivates after 5 rounds. It cannot be reactivated until the reservoir is refilled, which takes an average of 5 days.

Elevator: The ropes through the floor operate the elevator from area A4—see that area for details.

Zipline: The slanted rope outside the western window is a zipline ascending to a window in area A11. Attempting to climb up the greased line is obviously difficult and dangerous, requiring a DC 20 Athletics check to Climb; a critical failure results in a 50-foot fall to the forest floor below that deals 25 bludgeoning damage.

A13. CANOPY PORCH

This open-air platform has no proper walls, only a screen of leafy branches on all sides and a dense roof of leaves. The floor is a chaotic parquet of mismatched boards carefully fitted to allow small living branches to fill the gaps between them. Rope bridges lead north and south, and a staircase to the east winds downward.

Creatures: An older Oaksteward named Jeraya waits here with her fading fox friend, Moss. The area is natural enough for Moss to use its abilities; in combat, it prefers to Vanish into the Wilds so it can deal sneak attack damage to foes caught unawares. Jeraya stands her ground and fights directly, drawing attention away from Moss.

JERAYA

CREATURE 0

N MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female Oaksteward enforcer (page 14)

Initiative Perception +6

MOSS

CREATURE 2

Fading fox (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 102)

Initiative Perception +11

A14. TRAPPED BRIDGE

TRIVIAL 1

Trap: This rope bridge looks like all the others, but it's been rigged to fall apart when traversed.

FALLING BRIDGE

HAZARD 3

MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 23 (trained)

Description The frayed ropes on both sides of this bridge snap when enough weight is put on the bridge's center.

Disable DC 20 Survival (trained) to reinforce and secure the ropes on one side of the bridge

AC 10; **Fort** +1, **Ref** +1

Rope **HP** 6 (BT 3); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Collapse **Trigger** A Medium or larger creature steps onto the middle of the bridge (any of the squares marked "T" on the map); **Effect** The ropes on both sides of the bridge snap simultaneously, causing the bridge to collapse. Any creature on the bridge falls to the forest floor 50 feet below and takes 25 bludgeoning damage. A creature within 10 feet of one end of the bridge can attempt a DC 18 Reflex saving throw to Grab a Ledge along the side of either **A8** or **A13**.

If one side of the bridge has been disabled by resecuring the ropes, a character on any section of the bridge can attempt a DC 18 Reflex save to hang onto the bridge as one side of it falls. The dangling bridge thereafter functions as a ladder connecting either area **A8** or **A13** (whichever was secured) to the forest floor.

INTERROGATING BOLAN

Upon surrendering, Bolan is eager to talk. He angrily explains his backstory and views: namely, that humanoids have become completely out of balance with the rest of the natural world, and that it's his responsibility to "cull the herd" via a more powerful *obnubilate curse*. For more information on Bolan's character and motivations, see page 90.

The following are Bolan's answers to questions the characters might be likely to ask.

Where's the gate key? Bolan grins unpleasantly. "You're too late. I already gave it to Kaneepo the Slim."

Who's Kaneepo? "Kaneepo the Slim. Maybe you've heard the stories: a skull-faced smile in

WHAT IF BOLAN DIES?

If the characters kill Bolan before they can question him, they can acquire all the information in the Interrogating Bolan section by questioning one of his rebel Oaksteward lackeys or by finding a journal Bolan kept hidden in his bedroll.

the fog, a stick-thin boogeyman who lurks near the Wilewood, a shadowy absconder of the overly precocious. But Kaneepo is no mere story. The Slim is fey, lord of the Thinlands and powerful beyond mortal ken—and they've chosen me as their instrument. Kaneepo sends the gorgas. Kaneepo created the *obnubilate curse*. And Kaneepo will punish you for what you've done here."

If pressed, Bolan can paint an accurate physical picture of Kaneepo: a spindly, 8-foot-tall humanoid with hairless, pale slate skin stretched taut over a skull-like face with oversized teeth. Beyond that, however, Bolan knows little of their backstory and nothing of the fey's true motives. Of Kaneepo's lair, the Oaksteward knows only that it's somewhere in the Thinlands.

What are the Thinlands? "In the fields along the western edge of the Wilewood, the homesteaders say you can see the shadows of a forest that isn't there. They call it the Thinlands. It's an eerie place, but the soil's rich—richer than it has any right to be—so folks stay, grow their crops, and huddle close to their hearths at night."

How do we find Kaneepo? Bolan laughs. "You don't find Kaneepo—Kaneepo finds you. I never had a way to contact them. I'd just turn around, and there they would be, stepping out from the shadows behind a tree, or through a hole in the world. Kaneepo is everywhere. Kaneepo sees everything." He shakes his head, still grinning. "But you'll find out for yourself. Yes, the Slim will come for you soon enough."

Finishing with Bolan: Regardless of what the characters do with Bolan—taking him back to the Oakstewards or dispensing frontier justice here and now—his part in this adventure is now complete. If the characters turn him over to the authorities, the Oakstewards leave him to stew in an enchanted jail cell, where he waits zealously but fruitlessly for his master to retrieve him.

XP Award: For defeating Bolan and learning about the gate key and Kaneepo the Slim, award the characters 120 XP.

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CHAPTER 2: THIN AIR

Lemma is grateful to the party for defeating Bolan, but she and the other Oakstewards are still concerned about the missing gate key for the *Seventh Arch*. It's clear that for all his antagonism, Bolan was the junior partner in his plot to revive the *obnubilate curse*. As long as the key remains in the hands of Bolan's fey master, there's no way to guarantee anyone's safety. Given the party's success in dealing with the rebels, the Oakstewards ask them to track down this Kaneepo figure and finish the job.

Reward: In addition to the 30 gp the characters may have bargained for earlier, Lemma can offer another 20 gp if a character presses her with a successful DC

15 Diplomacy check. Regardless, she still pays only half the sum up front—to a maximum total advance of 25 gp—and promises the remainder when the characters return the gate key.

Investigating Kaneepo

While the Oakstewards have heard rumors of an eerie slender figure roaming the Wilewood, there are a thousand folktales floating around the River Kingdoms—most of them, Lemma points out, “the product of overimaginative minstrels and farmers afraid of the dark.” If the characters really want to find Kaneepo, they're going to have to do some research.

Thanks to Bolan, the characters already have three pieces of information to go on: the name Kaneepo the Slim, some connection between Kaneepo and the fey called gorgas, and the name of Kaneepo's ostensible domain, the Thinlands. Lemma suggests the party follow up on these leads by combing through records in Sevenarches' **Quaking Stacks**, interviewing a victim of a gorga attack, investigating the scene of the attack, and questioning residents of the **Thinlands Farms**.

Investigation Sites: Each avenue of inquiry corresponds to a different investigation site. The characters can conduct these investigations in any order and can travel to each site as a group or strike out individually. It takes 1 day to travel to an investigation site, perform the investigation, and return to Sevenarches.

If they travel separately, characters will likely have to make multiple days' visits to each site to get the full story there; if they travel to each site as a group, the party can likely learn all each site has to offer in just 1 day. Either way, the end result is the same, as it will likely take the party at least 3 days to learn the information necessary to complete their investigation into Kaneepo's whereabouts.

New Activity: When they visit an investigation site, each character can use the Investigate Kaneepo exploration activity to gain Investigation Points (IP).

INVESTIGATE KANEPEO

CONCENTRATION | EXPLORATION | LINGUISTIC

Over the course of the day, you conduct interviews, analyze evidence, or comb through archives in order to learn more about Kaneepo the Slim. Attempt a skill check to determine how many Investigation Points (IP) your efforts yield. Which skills you can use and the DC for the check depend on the investigation site you visit.

Critical Success You gain 2 IP.

Success You gain 1 IP.

Critical Failure You make a false discovery and lose 1 IP.

PURSUE A LEAD

A character with access to the Pursue a Lead activity (such as investigators; *Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide* 56) can use that activity in place of Investigate Kaneepo. In this case, the character gains their +1 circumstance bonus to any of the skill checks listed in the investigation site stat blocks.

End of Day Results: At the end of each day of the party's investigation, perform the following steps. These steps determine what the characters have learned so far and whether they have enough information to complete their investigation.

1. Run the next visitation encounter in the order listed (see Visitations page 32).
2. Tally the IP gained at each investigation site.
3. Compare the IP gained at each site to the thresholds listed in the site's stat block. If the party has enough IP to meet or exceed a threshold, tell your players the information indicated for that threshold.
4. Combine the party's IP from each site to calculate the party's total IP.
5. Compare the party's total IP to the thresholds listed in the Kaneepo's Whereabouts table on page 30. If their total IP meets or exceeds a threshold, tell your players the information listed for that threshold.

CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

To learn more about the *obnubilate curse* and its connection to the Missing Moment, the characters track down a fey trickster known as Kaneepo the Slim. The party investigates recent events in Sevenarches to gain entry to Kaneepo's shadowy extraplanar domain, the Thinlands. After defeating Kaneepo, the characters are transported to the alien jungles of the planet Castrovel, where they must seek sanctuary in a nearby city.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Retrieve the *Shadewither Key* from Kaneepo the Slim.

PLOT BEATS

The party should learn these details throughout this chapter.

- Kaneepo the Slim dwells in a corner of the First World called the Thinlands.
- The only way out of the Thinlands is by walking through the *Seventh Arch* on that plane.
- By the end of the chapter, the party has been transported to the planet Castrovel.

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KANEEO'S WHEREABOUTS

Total IP Investigation Results

- 4 A fey called Kaneepo the Slim seems to be behind both the gorga attacks and a slew of disappearances, all of which have become much more common since the Missing Moment. One of the most recent victims is an Oaksteward named Varna, a skinny man with a wooden septum piercing.
- 6 The real Thinlands are a shadowy extraplanar forest in the First World, bound somehow to the farmlands of the same name on the Material Plan. Kaneepo clearly has some means of opening portals between the two.
- 8 There's a pattern to the timing and locations of the Kaneepo sightings. According to this pattern, one of the fey's portals will open tomorrow night in the middle of a particular farm's potato patch. (Proceed to Finishing the Investigation on page 32.)

Visitations: The party's inquiries don't come without complications. One of Kaneepo's powers is the ability to hear their name being spoken from anywhere across the planes, and the party's investigation inevitably draws the Slim's attention. After each day of investigation, the characters experience an eerie, unsettling situation, as detailed in the Visitations section starting on page 32.

Deadline: Lemma worries that every passing day means Kaneepo is that much closer to completing their sinister ritual. Based on what she knows, Lemma reckons the party has 3 days and 3 nights to locate Kaneepo—or to get Kaneepo to locate them.

INVESTIGATION SITES

The player characters can pursue their leads at the following locations in any order they like. If the party comes up with other ways to investigate Kaneepo, you can repurpose these details to fit the party's unique investigation or you can use these sites as examples on which to model your own.

The Quaking Stacks

Sevenarches' grand library is one of the city's tallest structures, and it's also unlike any other. Once a spiraling stone tower that tapered into a cone like a snail shell, its ruins have been thoroughly taken over by a grove of magical aspen trees. Resident druid-librarians shaped tree boles into shelves and branches into roofs to protect the library's collection of birch-bark scrolls and leather-bound tomes. Most incredible, however, is the way the semi-sentient grove—in fact a single vast

being connected by roots—can function as a living database. The “library tree” stores vast quantities of information in its sap and can even guide readers to the books they need.

With Lemma's barkwrit, the characters gain access to the Quaking Stacks. The party can enlist one of the building's caretakers to commune with the library tree and lead them to likely records, but they'll still need to comb through the sources by hand to understand what they're looking for.

THE QUAKING STACKS

Investigation Checks DC 14 Academia or Library Lore, DC 16 Nature, DC 18 Arcana or Occultism

- 1 IP** In a tome of ancient elven lore, the characters find a short passage mentioning the defeat and imprisonment of “a slender, lurking creature of shadows.” If this is a reference to Kaneepo, it would suggest the Slim—or something like them—has been around for millennia.
- 2 IP** A volume of the *Pathfinder Chronicles* about the First World contains a small footnote regarding the Thinlands. The footnote describes a colorless forest located in the shadowy realm of Nighthold, once ruled by the exiled Eldest Count Ranalc.
- 4 IP** Secret records reveal that the *Shadewither Key* can also conjure a shadowy copy of its wearer to shield them from attacks.

Gorga Victim

Pabel “Pa” Moseby (NG male human farmer 3) was the most recent victim of a gorga attack, having been ambushed just two nights ago while returning to his farm after a day selling turnips in Sevenarches. The gorgas killed his mule, Shelyn, and he barely escaped with his life, running all 10 miles home. Now he lies bandaged up in bed, still wild-eyed and traumatized from the experience, eager to drink maudlin toasts to “my beautiful Shelyn—the best mule in the Kingdoms!”

Pabel wants to talk about his experience—and in fact, can hardly do anything else—but sorting the truth from his panicked ravings is difficult, as he constantly changes his mind as to whether the gorgas are fey, demons, undead, and so forth.

GORGA VICTIM

Investigation Checks DC 16 Diplomacy; DC 18 Intimidation, Medicine, or Perception

- 1 IP** Pabel's description of “a skull-dog” with eyes “like saucers full o' night” matches the description of the temagyr gorgas the party fought at the *Seven Arches*.
- 2 IP** Pabel thinks he saw a figure in the woods behind the beasts—a tall, thin humanoid, all shadowed except for an eerie smile. For a moment, it felt like the thing was

inside his mind, reading his thoughts—and leaving him with a profound feeling of unworthiness.

- 4 IP** Pabel tells the story of another recent victim—Hatria Pebblesworth—found dead and “withered like a spider-sucked fly.” Witnesses who saw her body couldn’t find any obvious source of Hatria’s wounds, but strangely, her corpse cast no shadow, no matter what light was brought near. (While characters may have had their own shadows attacked by temagys, this attack sounds much cleaner than the gorgas’ ragged bites.)

Gorga Scene

Several days ago, Hatria Pebblesworth’s body, overturned cart, and mutilated mule were discovered on a lonely dirt road south of Sevenarches. Since then, folks have steered clear of the road, sure that Hatria was attacked by gorgas but afraid to conduct a more thorough investigation. Hatria’s ruined cart remains in a rut along the path, not far from her mule’s partially eaten corpse.

GORGA SCENE

Investigation Checks DC 12 First World Lore; DC 16 Arcana, Hunting or Scouting Lore, or Survival; DC 18 Perception

- 1 IP** Both the flesh wounds and wounds to the mule’s shadow indicate a gorga attack. Yet in addition to the expected gorga tracks, there’s a pair of large, shoeless humanoid footprints farther back among the trees.
- 2 IP** Much like the gorga tracks, the humanoid footprints frequently disappear and reappear farther away, suggesting flight, teleportation, or some other non-terrestrial movement.
- 4 IP** The footprints both appear from and disappear back into a strangely verdant forest clearing. Within the clearing, flowers bloom out of season and the grass stands tall, but the plants’ colors are all weirdly drab and washed out. The magical residue and unusual plant growth is consistent with a breach—a portal from the First World. This one was clearly temporary, with probably no more than an hour between when it opened and when it shut.

Thinlands Farms

The region Sevenarches residents call the Thinlands is the traditional epicenter of gorga attacks. Lonely,

KANEEXO'S HEIR

As detailed in their backstory on page 92, Kaneexo’s ultimate goal is to produce an “heir” who will one day assume control of the Thinlands. The Slim’s experiments have so far yielded no tangible results, but many mortals abducted from Sevenarches have perished in the process.

As the characters begin their investigation, they naturally draw Kaneexo’s attention, thanks to the fey’s magical ability to hear their name spoken. By the time the characters reach Kaneexo’s Court, the Slim has chosen them as prospective successors. Over the course of the rest of this chapter, it gradually dawns upon the party that they’ve been marked for this dubious honor.



Abelina Choi

mist-shrouded moors pocked with sodden farms and villages stretch from the eastern edge of the Wilewood to the Tymon border. Folks here have long shared stories of Kaneexo the Slim. Player characters who venture to the Thinlands have the opportunity to gather intelligence by talking to local residents and experiencing the eerie shadow forest phenomenon for themselves.

While the locals are insular and suspicious, their eagerness to be free of gorga predations overcomes their reticence. The most talkative of them is Alderwoman **Abelina Choi** (LN female human politician 2), a dour woman who regularly spits and alludes to her distrust of strangers, following each instance with a begrudging “...begging your pardon.”

THINLANDS FARMS

Research Checks DC 12 First World Lore; DC 16 Diplomacy, Nature, or Survival

- 1 IP** The shadows of the invisible forest quiver and boil like the shadows of the gorgas the party fought at the *Seven Arches*. According to the farmers, it’s not just gorga attacks folks worry about around here—the region also has a long history of mysterious disappearances, many of which are attributed to a mythical being called “Kaneexo the Slim.”
- 2 IP** Several children report nearby sightings of a tall, willowy figure matching Kaneexo the Slim’s

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description. Neither the children nor their parents have reported the figure because “everybody knows that even just saying the Slim’s name draws its attention.”

4 IP The evidence suggests that both the shadowy forest effect of the Thinlands and the abnormally fertile farms here are a “bloom”—the result of planar seepage from the First World. Locals affirm this theory with their talk of “holes in the world” that show through into the shadow forest. A few brave locals have even stepped through these holes, never to return.

VISITATIONS

Each night after completing a day of research at one of the above sites, the player characters experience one of the following creepy encounters. These visitations should happen in the order they are presented.

Visit 1: Lurking Figure

As the characters are wrapping up for the night, they notice a tall, slender figure watching them from the shadows of a distant tree or building. No matter how quickly or stealthily the characters approach, the creature is gone without a trace when they arrive. When they awake the next morning, the player characters find

a strange symbol—halfway between a five-pointed star and an elongated stick figure—carved or drawn on the ground or door near where the party slept that night.

Visit 2: Gorgas

Moderate 1

Before they turn in for the evening, the characters are attacked by three temagyr gorgas. This encounter can take place anywhere; if the characters are spending the night in the same location as the previous night, then the temagyr attacks the party not far from the spot where Kaneepo left his symbol.

Upon defeating the gorgas, the characters find the same symbol from the previous visitation scarred onto one of the temagyr’s throats.

TEMAGYRS (3)

CREATURE 1

Page 86

Initiative Perception +9

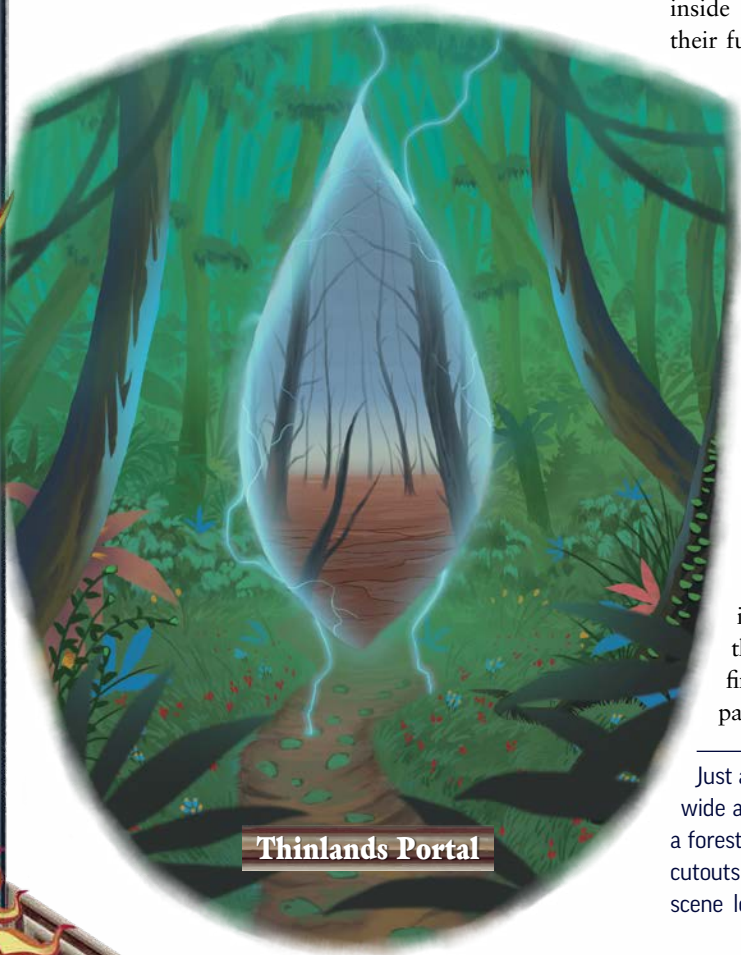
Visit 3: Broken Bird

Nothing happens the evening after their investigation, but when the characters wake the next morning, they find a dead bird with its wings elaborately broken hanging in their tent, bedchamber, or other place well inside the party’s defenses—a gift from Kaneepo to their future “heirs.” As far as anyone can tell, no one entered or left the party’s dwelling; all doors and windows are still locked, and no one on watch saw anything suspicious. The bird’s corpse casts no shadow.

FINISHING THE INVESTIGATION

The characters’ investigation ends in one of two ways. If they accumulate a total of at least 8 Investigation Points by the end of the third day, they can accurately predict the time and place of Kaneepo’s next appearance. Otherwise, after the third night of the party’s investigation, Kaneepo becomes so curious about these mortals that they intentionally open a portal near the party to lure them in.

The specifics of either result are left for you to decide based on the details of the party’s investigation. Whatever the case, the day after their investigation concludes, the player characters find one of Kaneepo’s breach portals. Read or paraphrase the following aloud to set the scene.



Thinlands Portal

Just ahead, the air itself seems ripped like a curtain, torn wide and crumpled at the edges. Through the tear stands a forest at twilight, its black trees as thin as the cardstock cutouts in a pop-up book. Everything about the gloomy scene looks drained of color, painted solely in shades of

shadow. From the point where the portal touches the ground, a footpath winds off into the forest—a clear invitation.

This portal lasts for an hour or until all player characters have passed through into the First World, at which point it reseals itself without a trace. If the characters don't enter, portals continue to appear daily—perhaps with Kaneepo's sigil scratched into nearby walls and trees, or even more gorga attacks on innocents—until Lemma or some other contact beseeches the characters to heed Kaneepo's call.

XP Award: Award each character 10 XP per Investigation Point the party earned in the course of their investigation, to a maximum of 120 XP each.

The Thinlands

Once the characters pass through the portal, they're in the Thinlands—the *real* Thinlands. The air seems to drain everything within the plane of color, even the characters themselves. The wind howls constantly, and the ground periodically heaves and rumbles, with slopes crumbling away or new trees thrusting out of the earth fully grown. Rot and decay stud the plant life and ruins of old structures, and any animals and other creatures the characters spot seem twisted and wrong.

A character who succeeds at a DC 16 Arcana, Occultism, or First World Lore check to Recall Knowledge recognizes this area as Nighthold. That character knows a few things about this realm's history and properties, including the rules in the Thinlands Features sidebar. Always a shadowy corner of the First World, Nighthold fell to pieces when its Eldest master—Count Ranalc, lord of betrayal, exiles, and shadows—was himself exiled to the Shadow Plane by the other Eldest millennia ago. The place is deeply dangerous and unstable, even for the First World, and prone to regular breaches through which creatures can enter from the Material Plane and the Shadow Plane.

Kaneepo's Court

Kaneepo's lair in the First World is a gargantuan tree stump that looms above the surrounding foliage. Long ago, this was the prison where the elves locked away the malevolent fey. In the millennia since Kaneepo's escape, the Slim has made a point of reclaiming their former prison, enlisting weaker fey to hew out new chambers in which to conduct foul experiments. Kaneepo now regards the stump as a palace, and the residents their royal court.

Reaching Kaneepo's lair is surprisingly easy. Though the First World is geographically unpredictable, Kaneepo the Slim can bend their small corner of the plane to their will, and they do so in a way that offers

THINLANDS FEATURES

Keep the following rules in mind as the characters explore the Thinlands.

Shadow effects are stronger. Spells and abilities with the shadow trait deal twice as much damage as usual.

Light effects are weaker. Spells and abilities with the light trait deal half as much damage as usual.

The Thinlands are dimly lit. The Thinlands are perpetually shrouded in dim light. Artificial light, such as that from lanterns and spells like *light*, function as usual.

KANEPEO'S COURT

Unless otherwise noted, areas inside Kaneepo's Court have the following environmental features.

Rooms are dimly lit. The chambers are all dimly lit by wild fireflies and glowworms. The ceiling in each room is 12 feet high.

The tree is hard. All the walls of the tree are as strong as reinforced wood (Hardness 15, 60 HP [BT 30]).

The front door is the only way in or out. All the doors are unlocked and made of wood (Hardness 10, 40 HP [BT 20]).

the party the straightest possible route to their lair. The walk from the portal to Kaneepo's Court takes the party no more than an hour to complete. If the characters strike out in a different direction, Kaneepo reshapes the plane accordingly, causing the party to stumble upon the same path again and again.

The following locations correspond to the map of Kaneepo's Court on page 34.

B1. ENTRANCE

LOW 2

The dark forest opens up into a wide clearing of ash-gray grass and twisted, thorned trees. In the clearing's center squats an enormous tree stump, its top broken off at an angle and huge roots rippling through the dirt like leviathans in surf. An ornate wooden door stands at ground level between two giant roots, faintly illuminated by a delicate paper lantern full of tiny moving lights.

The lantern is full of fireflies clambering to escape. A creature that attempts to move into the same space as a thorned tree (whether voluntarily or via forced movement) takes 2d6 piercing damage.

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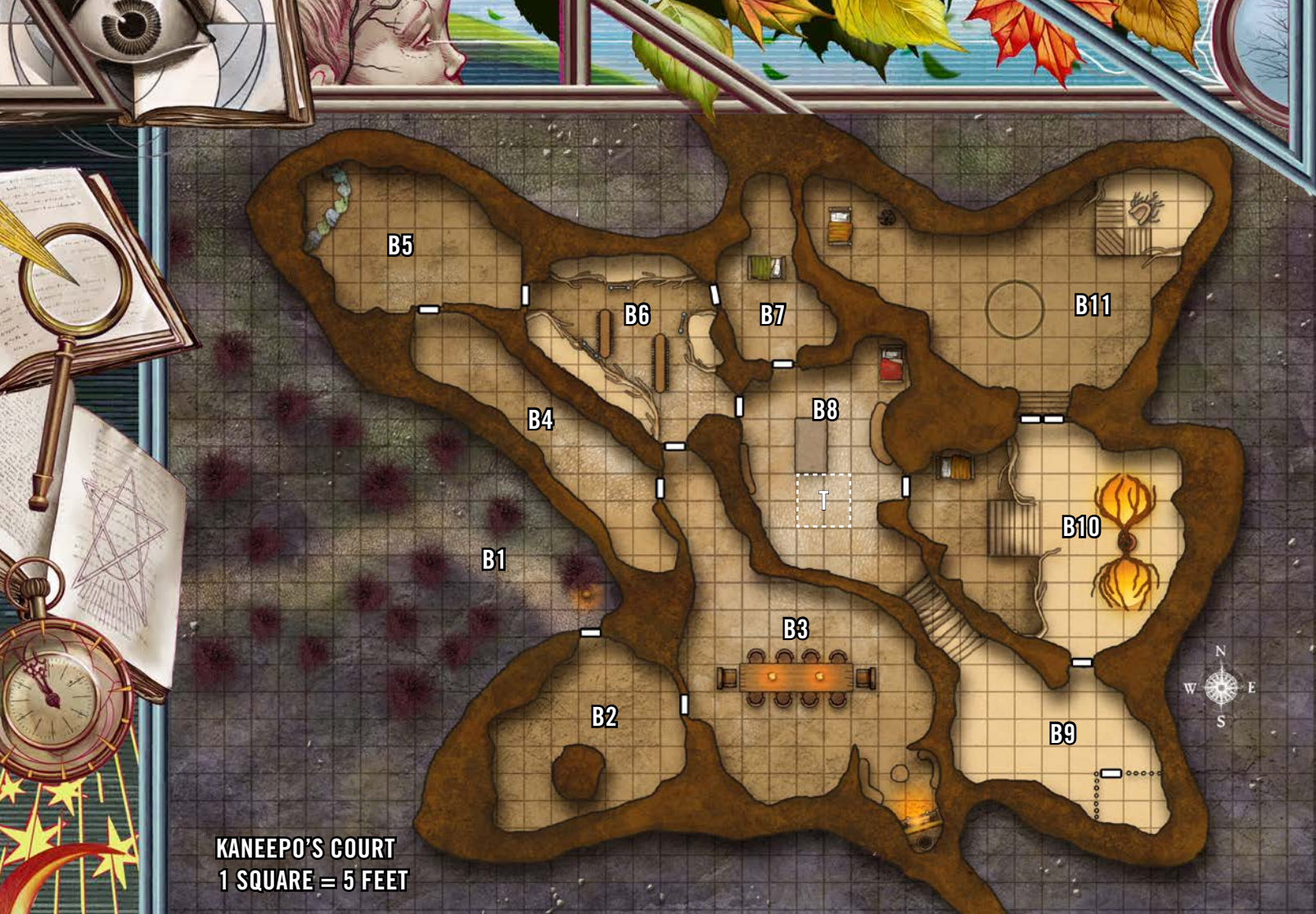
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KANEPO'S COURT
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Creature: An oculai gorga (page 87) guards the door, perched on the same branch as the lantern 10 feet above the ground. It's been warned of the characters' arrival and is ready to ambush them. It uses its lost in the dark aura to interfere with their approach, hoping to watch the party impale themselves on the thorn trees, while also terrifying them with its Corner of the Eye ability. Though it initially makes no effort to hide, enjoying the fear it inspires, the oculai takes cover behind its spindly snag if successfully damaged by ranged attacks.

OCULAI

Page 87

Initiative Perception +12

CREATURE 3

B2. TOOTH TEMPLE

LOW 2

Fist-sized tunnels riddle the walls and ceiling of this chamber like the trails of boring worms. A pillar of living wood near the southern wall has been carved into a terrifying yet majestic statue of a lanky, stripe-skinned humanoid monster, its wooden flesh pocked with pearl

inlay. A door to the north exits the structure. To the east, a door delves deeper into the stump.

The pillar in this room depicts a grandiose version of Kaneepo. A character who examines the "pearls" dotting the statue realizes that they aren't pearls at all, but humanoid teeth.

Creatures: A tooth fairy swarm loyal to Kaneepo infests the warren of tiny tunnels here, using the carving of Kaneepo as both a monument to their liege and an artistic way to display their hoard. The tooth fairies flood out of their hidey-holes to attack as soon as they notice the intruders. Eager to harvest the party's teeth for their collection, the rabid fey fight to the death.

TOOTH FAIRY SWARM

CREATURE 3

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 273

Initiative Perception +8

Treasure: Here and there among the teeth in the statue are a few molars made of gold. These grisly mementos are worth 4 gp altogether.

B3. BANQUET HALL

MODERATE 2

A long wooden dining table sits under twenty-foot-high ceilings in the center of this huge chamber. To the south, large slabs of meat stock a crude pantry. Humanoid skulls line the walls in small, randomly spaced niches, each filled with glowing larvae that create the effect of macabre lanterns. A door to the west leads out toward the entrance. A passage north connects to two more doors.

When not holding court in a more traditional capacity, Kaneepo entertains their retainers here. The skulls are harvested from Kaneepo's many victims after being gnawed clean in area **B8**.

Creature: Here, a centaur serial killer named Salah acts as Kaneepo's primary defender and "captain of the guard." Salah attracted the Slim's attention years ago when she gruesomely slaughtered one of the fey's intended victims. In addition to a scarred black breastplate, Salah wears a horse skull like a helm in order to "connect with the beast within" and a cloak of magical, carnivorous leaves that snap and bite at her enemies.

Salah's sadism has also attracted a nameless velstrac augur—a miniature supplicant who floats in the centaur's shadow at all times.

CAPTAIN SALAH

CREATURE 3

Female centaur (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 60)

Initiative Perception +9

Items breastplate, *cloak of gnawing leaves* (page 80), longsword, spear (3), steel shield (Hardness 5, HP 20, BT 10)

AUGUR

CREATURE 1

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 280

Initiative Perception +8

B4. GALLERY

Ten framed paintings line the western side of this long corridor. Each painting glows softly as the depicted figures silently move again and again through short, repeating scenes. Doors exit to the north and south.

The magical moving paintings in this room were created by a servant of Kaneepo called the Chronicler. The paintings each depict a different moment from Kaneepo's long life. The first portrays Kaneepo awakening in a dark, mossy bower on the First World, and the second shows Kaneepo kneeling before a massive cloaked fey of chaotic darkness, Count Ranalc.

The paintings continue in this fashion—showing scenes of Kaneepo finding the *Seventh Arch*, being imprisoned in this tree stump, breaking free, creating the *obnubilate curse*, and so forth—to depict the Slim's entire backstory from page 92. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Nature or First World Lore check can ascertain the details so well that you can safely share a full copy of Kaneepo's backstory with that character's player.

Disturbingly, the final painting in the series shows the characters themselves during their encounter at the *Seventh Arch*. In the scene's background, Kaneepo watches from the trees with their trademark silent grin.



Captain Salah

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B5. ARTIST'S STUDIO

Jars of pigment and canvases in the process of being stretched line the walls of this artist's studio. An easel with a half-finished painting stands in the center of the room, and a nest of blankets occupies the western wall. Doors lead south and east.

This is the bedroom and workspace of the Chronicler, who currently resides in area B6. The half-finished painting shows Kaneepo sitting on a leafy wooden throne, while the sketched-in forms of dying elves writhe in agony at the Slim's feet. If she hears any commotion here from the adjoining room, the Chronicler races to attack the party in defense of her "masterpieces."

Treasure: While most of the painting supplies here are ordinary enough, a few bottles of glowing goo have been harvested from the d'ziriak's own glands. These are two *bioluminescence bombs* (page 80).

B6. LIBRARY

LOW 2

Ladders connect the floor of this two-story library to three separate balconies. Books, scrolls, and scattered pages are crammed every which way into shelves and stacks carved from the tree's own wood. A firefly chandelier hangs from the domed center of the ceiling thirty feet above. Four doors on the ground level lead out of the library: two to the east, one to the west, and one to the south.

Creature: With promises of an important job as the official court historian for Kaneepo's burgeoning new empire, Kaneepo recently lured a d'ziriak artist called the Chronicler here from the Shadow Plane. Though the job hasn't proven quite as exciting as the Chronicler hoped, she's still relatively content with her duties, stoking her liege's ego with detailed magical paintings. If she hears the party from her chamber to the northeast (B5), she rushes in to defend her artwork. Otherwise, she lurks here, studying a tome from behind one of the freestanding bookshelves, and ambushes the party when they enter the area.

The Chronicler's loyalty to Kaneepo is purely mercenary. If reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points, she surrenders, pointing out that she was just here to capture a historic moment in her art. If questioned, the Chronicler can explain Kaneepo's entire backstory, as detailed on page 92.

THE CHRONICLER

CREATURE 3

Female d'ziriak (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 104)

Initiative Perception +10

Treasure: This room contains all the research Kaneepo had to acquire and assimilate in order to create the *obnubilate curse*, including tomes on magical diseases, elven medical texts, codices on evil rituals and curses, and more. While the collection as a whole is likely worth a great deal, it can be difficult to tell which writings are valuable, especially since many are in poor condition. A character who succeeds at a DC 16 Arcana or Occultism check to Recall Knowledge can identify three obviously valuable texts, each worth 7 gp: an ancient Osirian scroll on magical blights, a rare unburned copy of *Curses Foul and Fell* bound in eel hide, and a beautifully illuminated copy of *The Physicker's Guide to Elves*. On a critical success, the character also finds a spellbook inset with tiny pieces of glass that contains *mirror image*, plus two other 2nd-level arcane or occult spells of your choice.

B7. HEIR'S ROOM

This chamber looks like a noble's bedroom. Yards of pastel fabric hang on an elegant, but dusty, four-poster bed and nearby vanity. A large painting on the wall depicts two slender black-and-white creatures with skull-like faces and huge teeth. In a grotesque parody of a familial portrait, the figures hold hands and grin terribly toward the viewer.

At the north end of the room, scattered candles, crystals, and other occult accoutrements suggest a spell or magical project in process. Two finished doors at the southern end lead west and south.

Kaneepo keeps this room in constant readiness for their future "heir," the transformation of which is Kaneepo's ultimate reason for kidnapping and experimenting on the mortals of Sevenarches. A character who examines the bed can deduce from the thick layer of dust that it's likely never been slept in.

Anyone who investigates the northern edge of the room can see smoothed hunks of tree flesh removed from the wall in the shape of a doorway to the east (into area B11). To alter a part of the Thinlands so close to the realm's core, Kaneepo must use mystical ephemera such as that on the floor to cast powerful transformative spells. Kaneepo wants to ensure easy access to their heir, but they haven't yet gotten around to boring all the way through the wall.

Treasure: A character who sifts through the occult tools on the floor finds an *onyx dog wondrous figurine* among the detritus.

B8. VIVISECTION THEATER

MODERATE 2

A stained wooden operating table with a gutter around the edge and a variety of leather restraints stands in the

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middle of this large theater. A rack of immaculate surgical tools stands along the western wall, while a counter to the east holds papers and pens. The floor has been carved in elaborate geometric designs, and an alcove to the northeast holds a bed. Doors exit to the north, west, and east, while a staircase to the south leads up out of sight.

Kaneepo's experiments mostly take place in the reproduction lab (area B10), but botched or ruined experiment subjects get sent here to be vivisected and analyzed in hopes of deciphering what went wrong. The staircase to the southeast ascends 20 feet to area B9.

Creature: Kaneepo's vivisectionist is a sadistic shae named Leiko. In addition to genuinely enjoying her work at both an intellectual and emotional level, Leiko also sports an unrequited infatuation for Kaneepo. She's convinced that *she* should be the Slim's heir, as they have so much in common—their shadowy teleportation abilities, their love of preying on humanoids, and more. Unfortunately for Leiko, Kaneepo's interest in her extends only as far as her surgical acumen.

Leiko wears a long surgeon's coat and supple leather gloves, and both her mask and clothing sport black stripes in a clear attempt to match Kaneepo's own patterning. She knows the characters are coming and waits to ambush them here. She uses her teleportation ability to great effect, blipping around the chamber so she can throw daggers, stab backs, and hopefully lure characters over the trapdoor to the disposal pit. She knows all about Kaneepo's plans to turn the characters into their heirs, and she angrily shouts things like "You? Kaneepo chooses *you* over me?!" or "They are *mine*, you fleshy interloper!" Leiko cannot be reasoned with, and she fights to the death.

LEIKO CREATURE 4

Female shae experimenter (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 230)

Perception +10; darkvision

Languages Aklo, Auran, Common, Shae, Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +13, Deception +9, Occultism +11, Shadow Plane Lore +11, Stealth +13

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

Items dagger (15)

Shadow Shift Being made partially of shadow herself, Leiko is concealed in dim light or darkness even to creatures that can see clearly in those light levels.

AC 21; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +10

HP 45; **Immunities** precision; **Resistances** cold 5, negative 5
Counterattack **Trigger** Leiko is targeted by an attack from an adjacent creature that misses due to Leiko being concealed; **Requirements** Leiko is aware of the attack; **Effect** Leiko makes a Strike against the attacker.

Slip **Trigger** A creature moves adjacent to Leiko; **Effect** Leiko teleports to a clear space adjacent to another creature she can see within 30 feet.

Speed 25 feet, fly 35 feet; swift steps, tenebral form

Melee **◆** dagger +13 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing plus 1d6 cold

Ranged **◆** dagger +13 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing plus 1d6 cold

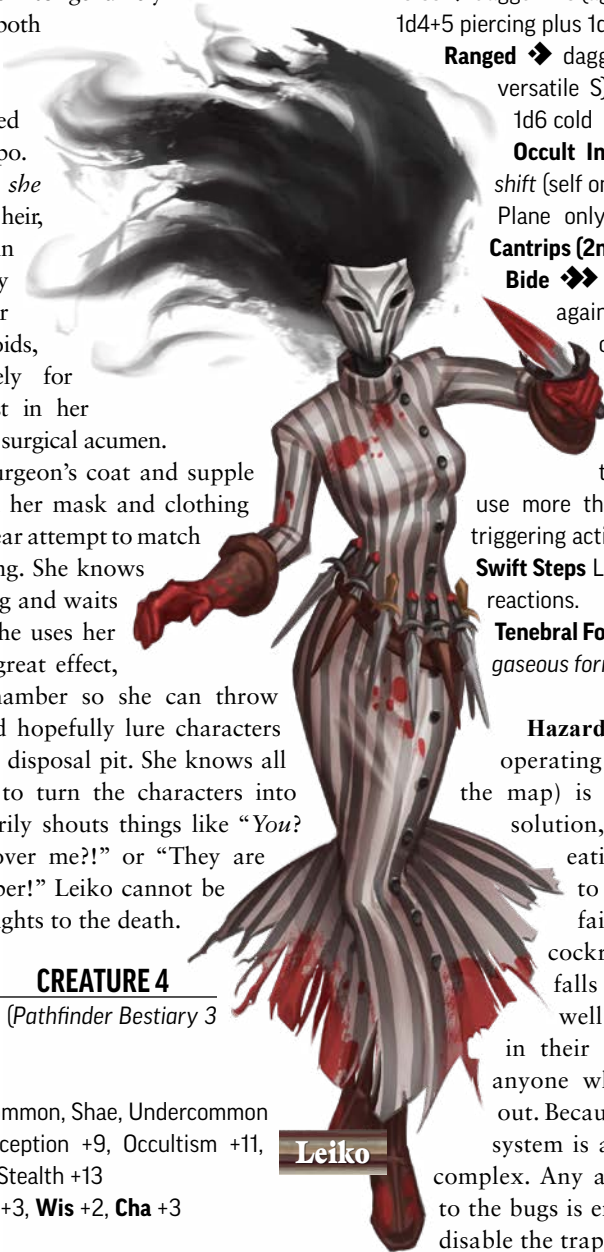
Occult Innate Spells DC 21; **7th plane shift** (self only; to Shadow Plane or Material Plane only); **4th gaseous form** (at will); **Cantrips (2nd)** *chill touch*, *detect magic*

Bide **◆◆** Leiko prepares to take action against her foes, watching her opponent and waiting for the right opportunity to respond. Leiko gains a second reaction until the start of her next turn, though she still can't use more than one reaction on the same triggering action.

Swift Steps Leiko's movement doesn't trigger reactions.

Tenebral Form Leiko can Fly at full Speed in *gaseous form*.

Hazard: Hidden beside the operating table (marked with "T" on the map) is the room's corpse disposal solution, a 10-foot-deep pit of flesh-eating First World cockroaches to which Kaneepo feeds their failed experiments. Though the cockroaches attack anyone who falls into the pit, they've been well fed and trained to remain in their hole, and so won't pursue anyone who attempts to climb back out. Because of this, the corpse disposal system is a simple hazard, rather than complex. Any amount of fire damage dealt to the bugs is enough to kill the swarm and disable the trap.



Leiko

CORPSE DISPOSAL

HAZARD 2

MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 21 (or 0 if the trapdoor is disabled or broken)

Description A wooden trapdoor conceals a spike-filled pit 10 feet square and 20 feet deep. The DC to Climb out of the pit is 10.

Disable DC 18 Thievery (trained) to jam the trapdoor open
AC 18; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +7

Trapdoor Hardness 9; **Trapdoor HP** 30; **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Dispose **Trigger** A creature steps onto the trapdoor (marked "T" on the map); **Effect** The triggering creature falls into the pit. The creature can use the Grab an Edge reaction to avoid falling. Failing that, the creature falls 20 feet (taking 10 bludgeoning damage from the fall) and takes 3d6 piercing damage from the metal spikes jutting up from the pit's floor. A creature who takes damage from the spikes is exposed to tetanus.

Tetanus (disease) **Saving Throw** DC 14 Fortitude; **Onset** 10 days; **Stage 1** clumsy 1 (1 week); **Stage 2** clumsy 2 and can't speak (1 day); **Stage 3** paralyzed with spasms (1 day); **Stage 4** death

Treasure: Buried among the collection of worthless knives and needles here is a syringe containing a *minor healing potion*.

Oaksteward's Fate: Characters who examine the notes in this room find carefully illustrated diagrams of Leiko's bizarre experiments on Kaneepo's victims. Sketches show test subjects with radically elongated limbs, faces stripped of muscle and fat, and other grotesque transformations.

A character who succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check while studying the sketches recognizes one with a wooden septum piercing. This sketch matches the description of the missing Oaksteward, Varna. Indeed, by venturing into the cockroach pit and sorting through the remains there, a character can find a half-skeletonized corpse of the same individual.

XP Award: For determining the fate of Varna, award each character 30 XP.

B9. HATE ROOM

TRIVIAL 2

The walls, ceiling, and floor of this room are completely blackened by fire. Crude drawings scratched into the wood depict elves dying in all manner of horrifying ways. A large iron cage on the eastern side hangs open, its bars bent out of true. An alcove to the north holds a door, while to the west a staircase descends out of sight.

This room was Kaneepo's original prison, where elven druids locked the Slim in a cage of cold iron, sealed the stump closed, and warded it against all forms

of exit, physical or magical. When shifts in the First World's landscape finally allowed Kaneepo to break free, they took a torch to the place and transformed it into a "shrine" dedicated to their hatred of elvenkind.

Kaneepo now uses the cage in this room to hold kidnapped victims prisoner until they can be experimented upon. With a successful DC 17 Perception or Survival check, a character notices that a humanoid was imprisoned here sometime in the last few weeks, but not in the last few days.

Hazard: Hiding in plain sight among the thousands of drawings are the runes of a magical trap.

SHADOW GUARDS

HAZARD 2

COMPLEX EVOCATION MAGICAL SHADOW TRAP

Stealth +11 (trained) to notice the runes concealed among the drawings

Description Shadowy caricatures of elves peel themselves from the floor and attack everyone in the room.

Disable DC 16 Acrobatics to move through the room without touching any of the runes, followed by DC 18 Thievery (trained) to carve them out of the wood without triggering them; or *dispel magic* (1st level; counteract DC 16) to counteract the runes

AC 18; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +11

Hardness 8; **HP** 32

Shadow Rush **Trigger** A creature enters the room; **Effect** After waiting 1 round, the trap animates its shadowy stick figures and makes a painted spear Strike against each creature in the room. The trap rolls initiative.

Routine (1 action) The drawings stab at each character in the room with spears drawn from sharp lines.

Melee **◆** painted spear +11, **Damage** 1d10+4 piercing

Reset The trap deactivates and resets after 1 minute. The drawings cannot pursue characters out of the room.

B10. REPRODUCTION LAB

MODERATE 2

This large chamber splits into two levels. A wide staircase connects the room's western half to the eastern half, which is a full twenty feet higher. The ceiling rises forty feet above the lower floor. Worktables covered in books, beakers, and strange reagents crowd the lower floor.

On the room's raised half stand two ten-foot-tall amber pods like empty bug cocoons, each glowing softly with orange light. A miniature gray tree with white leaves hangs suspended in the air between the pods, its roots twisting around each pod.

Doors exit the upper story to the north and south.

This room is the heart of Kaneepo's twisted experiments. The Slim recruited an eccentric fetchling engineer called the Looksee Man to assist them, and the pods in this chamber represent the Looksee Man's

great triumph: a magical machine that can transmit one creature's defining biological aspects to another. While the machine has created some fascinating monstrosities so far, the Looksee Man's tests are far from done.

Creature: If asked, the Looksee Man would claim his name comes from his empirical, experimental approach to occultism and arcana—his catchphrase “let’s have a look-see” represents the essence of his scientific “method.” To anyone else, the name is more likely a reference to the bizarre *stalk goggles* (page 80) he wears, which cause his eyes to extend out of his head on exposed optical nerves like a snail’s eyestalks. His colorless fetchling skin and affectation of an armored lab coat only add to the eeriness of his appearance.

If the Looksee Man hears commotion in an adjacent room, he casts *spider climb* on himself and clambers up the walls to avoid attack. He prefers to fight from a distance, targeting the characters with his most powerful evocation spells while yelling about the genius of his machine and how he’s so close to a breakthrough.

The Looksee Man is willing to die to protect the machine in this room—but that’s where his loyalties end. If reduced to 10 Hit Points or less, he drops his dagger and surrenders. As long as the party promises to leave his invention be, he even offers to run the machine for the characters, explaining what it does and how they can all be greater as a result of it. If the characters take him up on this offer, the Looksee Man can attempt an Occultism check while two characters are situated in the pods; see below for more details.

THE LOOKSEE MAN CREATURE 4

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM FETCHLING HUMANOID SHADOW

Male fetchling engineer

Perception +14; darkvision

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, D’ziriak, Shadowtongue, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +10, Arcana +12, Crafting +12, Medicine +10, Nature +8, Occultism +12, Stealth +10

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

Items dagger, *greater stalk goggles*, padded armor, ring with Nethys mask sigil (bonded item worth 4 gp), spellbook

AC 21; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

HP 70

Shadow Blending When the Looksee Man is concealed as a result of dim light, the flat check to target him has a DC of 7, not 5.

Stalk Goggles Specialist As long as he wears his *greater stalk goggles*, the Looksee Man can’t be flanked by creatures of 4th level or lower.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ dagger +12 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

Ranged ♦ dagger +12 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

Wizard Prepared Spells DC 21, attack +14; **2nd** *acid arrow*, *scorching ray* (2), *spider climb*; **1st** *magic missile*, *shocking grasp*; **Cantrips** (2nd) *mage hand*, *shield*, *tanglefoot*

Transmutation School Spell 1 Focus Point; **1st** *physical boost* (Core Rulebook 407)

Occult Innate Spells DC 21; **1st** *illusory disguise*

Shadow Stride ♦ (illusion, occult, shadow) **Requirements**

The Looksee Man is in dim light; **Effect** The Looksee Man Strides. He has a +10-foot status bonus to his Speed during this Stride. The DC from shadow blending increases to 11 during this Stride, and the Looksee Man remains concealed by dim light until the end of the movement, even if he leaves dim light during the Stride.



The Looksee Man

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The Pods: A character can ascertain the purpose of the pods in this room by rolling a successful DC 15 Arcana or Occultism check. The pods are intended to magically transfer traits from a creature in the northern pod to the creature in the southern pod. The character can also determine that, amazingly, the device might actually work—but the outcomes could be unexpected and potentially dangerous.

Characters can attempt to use the machine to acquire traits from each other. Operating the machine requires a character to stand in each pod while a third creature at the control tree attempts a DC 15 Occultism or Nature check. If the machine's controller rolls a critical success, the outcome of the roll for the Pod Outcomes table (below) increases by 1, to a maximum of 4.

Characters can use the machine multiple times. Both characters must be conscious for the machine to work. Animals and other non-player creatures refuse to willingly go near the pods.

Once the machine has been activated, roll 1d4 and consult the table below to determine the outcome.

POD OUTCOMES

d4 Outcome

- 1 The character in the southern pod permanently loses 2 points of Charisma and gains an odd disfigurement (such as vestigial fingers emerging from their cheeks, their ears growing five times their original size, and so on).
- 2 The characters in both pods take 10 negative damage (DC 18 basic Fortitude save). On a critical failure, the character is also fatigued.
- 3 The character in the southern pod gains a trait randomly selected from the traits possessed by the creature in the northern pod. Acquirable traits include ancestry traits (such as aasimar, elf, or groll) and creature type traits (such as animal, celestial, or undead). If the character already has the selected trait, choose randomly again. The affected character permanently gains some physical indication of the obtained trait, such as pointed ears, shorter legs, or different-colored eyes.
- 4 As above, but the character in the southern pod can choose the trait they acquire instead of it being determined randomly.

Despite not being a curse, the effects of the machine can be undone with a *remove curse* spell (3rd level; counteract DC 20)—a single casting removes all changes the machine made to the targeted creature, both beneficial and harmful.

Treasure: Many of the materials scattered about the worktables are valuable reagents produced from First

World flora. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature or First World Lore check to Recall Knowledge can identify several reagents worth a total of 10 gp (or 20 gp on a critical success).

B11. THRONE ROOM

SEVERE 2

A short flight of stairs leads up into this wide chamber. To the east, a raised dais holds an elaborate throne of living wood, leafless black branches twisting up out of its back. To the west is a four-poster bed of black silk. Next to the bed is a small birdcage, inside of which a hat-wearing hedgehog clutches at the iron bars. Huge tapestries hang down from the twenty-foot-high ceiling, showing a bright forest at the top slowly turning to spindly black branches at the bottom.

This is Kaneepo's throne room, boudoir, and primary workshop. The runes inscribed in the floor represent a key part of the ritual to expand the curse from the *Shadewither Key* back through the *Seventh Arch*, returning the *obnubilate curse* to Sevenarches and from there on to the rest of the Material Plane.

Creatures: When the characters arrive, Kaneepo is sitting on their throne, wearing the *Shadewither Key* around their neck and stroking a pet temagyr. The party should, by now, have some idea of the Slim's intention to make the PCs their heirs. This adventure assumes that the PCs reject the offer, leading Kaneepo to attack; the consequences of one or all accepting the role are left to your discretion.

In combat, Kaneepo activates the *Shadewither Key's mirror image* effect and then keeps their distance, using their Slimstep ability to move away from attackers. They position themselves to catch as many creatures in their Shadow Pull ability as possible. The gorga, by contrast, gets up close and attempts to lock down the character who seems most capable of harming Kaneepo. Both fight to the death, but as Kaneepo dies, they smile cryptically and welcome the player characters "home."

The hedgehog in the cage, Hubert Hedge, doesn't take part in the fight, but comes into play immediately afterward (see sidebar on page 41).

KANEPEO THE SLIM

CREATURE 4

Page 92

Initiative Perception +14

TEMAGYR

CREATURE 1

Page 86

Initiative Perception +9

Treasure: The characters can easily recognize the *Shadewither Key* (page 79) from Lemma's description,

and they can deduce its beneficial powers by watching Kaneepo use it (or by talking to Hubert).

The artifact's curse, however, is initially undetectable, as Hubert has never even seen an elf before. Furthermore, any elven player characters are immune to the *obnubilate curse*, thanks to their previous unremembered interactions with Osoyo's magic (as described on page 4). A character who succeeds at a DC 21 Arcana check determines that there's more to the key than they know, but under no circumstances should the party be able to detect the key's curse at this time—its revelation is a major plot point in Chapter 3.

Leaving the First World

Defeating Kaneepo may feel like a victory, but the Slim's death creates a host of new problems for the characters. Once they release Hubert from his cage and finish with introductions, the hedgehog explains their predicament. Read or paraphrase the following aloud.

"So, here's the thing..." Hubert twists his little cap anxiously in his hands. "When Kaneepo welcomed you 'home'... well, you know that portal you came through to get here? Only Kaneepo can make those. Without them, I don't know of any way to get you back to your real home. And you can't exactly walk out, either—the Thinlands are stable enough, but beyond them is Nighthold. The shadowstorms of that place'll scour you dead, assuming the ankous don't get you first." He shakes his head, black eyes gleaming sadly. "I'm sorry, friends, but you're well and truly spiked."

Fortunately, the characters have a secret weapon. Whichever character carries the *Shadewither Key* notices a faint tugging from the artifact in a particular direction. The key urges its wielder out of Kaneepo's Court and into the woods, tugging more insistently and glowing green—faintly at first, then gradually brighter—as it nears its destination. Eventually, the party members find themselves at the *Seven Arches*.

Everything about these arches appears identical to what the characters remember. Whether they're mere simulacra or some kind of shadow-version of the real things is impossible to determine. As the character holding the *Shadewither Key* draws near, the stone of the *Seventh Arch* begins to hum and glow



Hubert Hedge

HUBERT HEDGE

The Tiny fey in the cage in Kaneepo's throne room is Hubert Hedge, a talking First World hedgehog who wears a floppy brimmed hat. As soon as Kaneepo is defeated, he begins shaking the bars of his cage, yelling, "Oi! You smoothies gonna let a hog out, or what?"

Hubert is grateful to be rescued and eager to throw in with the party for protection, noting that it's "a hog-eat-hog world out there." He's jovial and brash, referring to humanoids as "smoothies" or "spikeless wonders," and fond of folksy hedgehog sayings like "whatever tickles your prickles" and "well spit on my spikes!" (a reference to hedgehogs' habit of licking their quills). Though not particularly bright or helpful in a fight—if necessary, use statistics for a giant porcupine and apply the weak template (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 6, 207)—he's a loyal friend, and can serve the party as a mascot and comic relief. He also has information to offer: having been imprisoned in Kaneepo's throne room for months, he knows all about the Slim's background and plans, and he can fill the party in on any elements of the story their investigation hasn't already revealed.

with the same magical light as the key. The light cascades down the archway, coalescing into an opaque, shimmering jade-green veil.

THROUGH THE PORTAL

The portal here is a one-way trip—anything that goes *in* must invariably go *through*.

A character who touches the green veil is immediately sucked into the light and to the other side. While the characters are free to rest and recuperate before interacting with the archway, this portal represents the party's only way out of the Thinlands, a point which Hubert—intrigued by the idea of leaving the First World—is quick to point out. If the characters hesitate, their hedgehog companion is quick to reassure them. "Trust me, friend," Hubert says, motioning toward their gloomy surroundings. "Wherever that door goes, it's better than here."

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CASTROVEL FEATURES

Castrovel's atmosphere is similar to Golarion's, but different enough to notice in certain circumstances. Keep the following rules in mind as the characters adventure on Castrovel. These rules are explored in greater detail in the "Adventures on Castrovel" article starting on page 66.

Flying is difficult. Any amount of wind is difficult terrain for flying creatures. Gusts are powerful, but are so rare on the jungle floor of the Ikal Expanse that they shouldn't be a concern in this adventure.

The air is rich. Creatures from Golarion gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Fortitude saves against effects that would cause them to become fatigued.

Fires burn hotter and faster. Any effect that deals fire damage deals an additional 1 fire damage.

Arriving on Castrovel

As the last character passes through the portal, read or paraphrase the following aloud to set the scene.

Humid air slaps you like a hot towel. All around is a verdant jungle, nothing like either the shadowy Thinlands or the temperate Wilewood. The trees are huge, sprawling affairs, and the air shivers with chittering insects and hooting beasts.

Looking back, you see the portal blink out, leaving only a stone archway in its place. Yet instead of the now familiar Seven Arches, the one behind you stands alone on a plinth, its shape different, its stone cracked and worn. At the arch's feet lie the ruins of some building long since collapsed, its large gray blocks and obelisks carved with strange symbols and wrapped in strangling vines.

GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION

The portal has taken the characters to Golarion's sister planet of Castrovel. As it's still daytime, there's no way for someone unfamiliar with the planet to immediately tell the difference. It's entirely reasonable for the average adventurer to assume they've arrived in some tropical jungle south of Golarion's equator. The truth is far more dramatic. Specifically, the region in which they find themselves is called the Ikal Expanse, the heartland of the continent of Ukulam.

For details on how Castrovel's environment can affect the rules, see the Castrovel Features sidebar. More details about Castrovel in general can be found in the "Adventures on Castrovel" article starting on page 66.

GAINING BEARINGS

A map of this area, The Dragon's Gate, is shown on page 64 (The Dragon's Gate). The party will return to these ruins later, during **Event 11**, with a much greater understanding of the site.

For now, the player characters might examine some the features of their surroundings as they gain their bearings. They can note the following details of the scene around them. They can also attempt a skill check, as described below, to deduce their approximate location. When the party is ready to continue the adventure, proceed to **Admiring the View**, on page 43.

Aiudara: The arch is an *aiudara*, just like the ones at Sevenarches and the gates the characters themselves walked through on the night of the Missing Moment.

The runes engraved onto this arch are in an alien dialect of Elven. Characters who can read Elven can confirm that the arch is an *aiudara*, and characters under the effects of *comprehend language* can further determine that the archway was originally a portal to the First World.

The *Shadewither Key* does nothing to activate the gate. A character who holds the key and succeeds at a DC 18 Arcana check can feel a vague sympathetic resonance between the key and the gate, but it's clear that this is the extent of their interaction.

Ruins: Deep gouges in the stone—as well as a mound of bone-riddled scat the size of a treasure chest—suggest that a very large, likely predatory animal lives nearby. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Arcana check to Recall Knowledge identifies the remnants as belonging to a dragon. Anyone trained in Survival can quickly deduce that this isn't a safe place to linger.

Vines: The flora around the archway doesn't resemble any plant the characters may have seen in Sevenarches or the Thinlands. Thick green vines climb the arch itself, occasionally punctuated by crimson flowers with bright blue stamens.

Nature (Recall Knowledge) or Survival (Sense Direction)

A character can attempt to get a sense of where they are by attempting a DC 20 Survival check to Sense Direction or a DC 20 Nature check to Recall Knowledge. The result of the character's check determines how confidently the character can ascertain their location relative to Sevenarches. On a critical failure, the character makes false conclusions based on the available evidence.

Critical Success As success, and you realize you're clearly a long way from Sevenarches—or even the Inner Sea region, for that matter. The animals are strange, to say the least, consisting of species like mosquito-nosed purple lemurs that reek of almonds and scaly birds with

compound insect eyes. Furthermore, you realize you've seen the leaves of the largest trees before: they're the same strange shape as the *Shadewither Key*. Wherever you are, this place is utterly alien.

Success You ascertain from the ambient climate—hot, humid—and the nature of nearby plants and animals—fruit-laden palms, colorful amphibians—that you're in a tropical jungle, and not likely one anywhere near Avistan.

Failure Your survey of the flora and fauna results in more questions than answers. You're no closer to figuring out your location than before.

Critical Failure There's no doubt about it: you're firmly entrenched in the wilds of the Mwangi Expanse. Jungle palms, blood-sucking insects, and muggy air all match the descriptions you've heard of the Inner Sea's most famous subtropical region.

ADMIRING THE VIEW

Though they've escaped Kaneepo's shadowy domain, it's unclear what the player characters should do from here. Luckily, in the course of getting acquainted with their new surroundings, they soon come upon a nearby cliff that offers a stunning panoramic view—as well as an obvious objective in the distance.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud to get the characters moving through the jungle and headed toward the next part of the adventure: an elven astronomical outpost called Loskialua.

From the vantage of a high overlook, a rolling green sea stretches westward. Two points of interest immediately catch your eye.

One is a jagged mountain range thrusting toward the sky like teeth, gray walls steep and foreboding, many miles away. The outlines of pyramidal structures can be seen on one of the range's lower slopes.

Second, a pair of brilliant purple ropes connect a nearby hill to the pyramids in the distant mountains, like lines drawn in the air to guide your eye. Tiny dots—vessels of some sort—travel back and forth along these blazing magical lines, forming a steady circuit hundreds of feet above the jungle canopy below.

A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check can pick out more detail: the tiny dots are large platforms suspended from the lines like gondolas. They appear to be carrying cargo from the nearer hill to the distant pyramids and then returning empty. The pyramids on the mountainside look to be only the largest structures in a more substantial settlement. The pyramids are perhaps 40 miles away. The much nearer hill where the light beams touch down is only 5 miles away.

REPURPOSING THE JUNGLE ENCOUNTERS

Even a brief exploration of the surrounding area reveals that the jungle is dense and forbidding, and that it would be a hard, multi-day slog to reach the settlement entirely on foot.

The encounters in this section presume that the characters try to reach the near end of the light-gondola and ride safely through the air to the settlement. Hubert is happy to voice this plan if necessary, given his tiny legs and the way the local fauna keeps sizing him up.

If the characters prefer to bushwhack their way to the city, however, that's fine as well. In this case, simply run **Events 5–10** throughout the long journey, each event separated by long hours of arduous trekking. The characters will also likely need to roll frequent Survival checks to avoid getting lost, forage for food, and make shelter.

For parties eager to reach safety, **Events 9 and 10** can be removed from this section of the adventure. You can repurpose these events in Chapter 3 by running them as the characters return to the archway with their new allies (see *Going Home* on page 61).

Journey to the City

The nearest end of the light-gondola may be only a few miles away, but the jungles of Castrovel are a formidable obstacle. Throughout their journey, the characters encounter a number of challenges to test their survival skills.

Event Encounters: The encounters detailed in **Events 5–9** can be run in any order as the characters trek through the Ikal Expanse toward Loskialua. After the characters have overcome these events or once your group is ready to be done with their foray through the jungle, run **Event 10**. Intersperse these encounters with descriptions of interesting sights, non-dangerous opportunities to engage with the environment, and chances for the party to roleplay with one another and travel companions like Hubert Hedgehog.

EVENT 5: DEATH FROM THE TREES

LOW 2

Use the first map on page 44 for this encounter.

Several huge trees provide shade for the undergrowth here, offering a temporary reprieve from the clinging vines and bushes.

THE SEVENTH ARCH

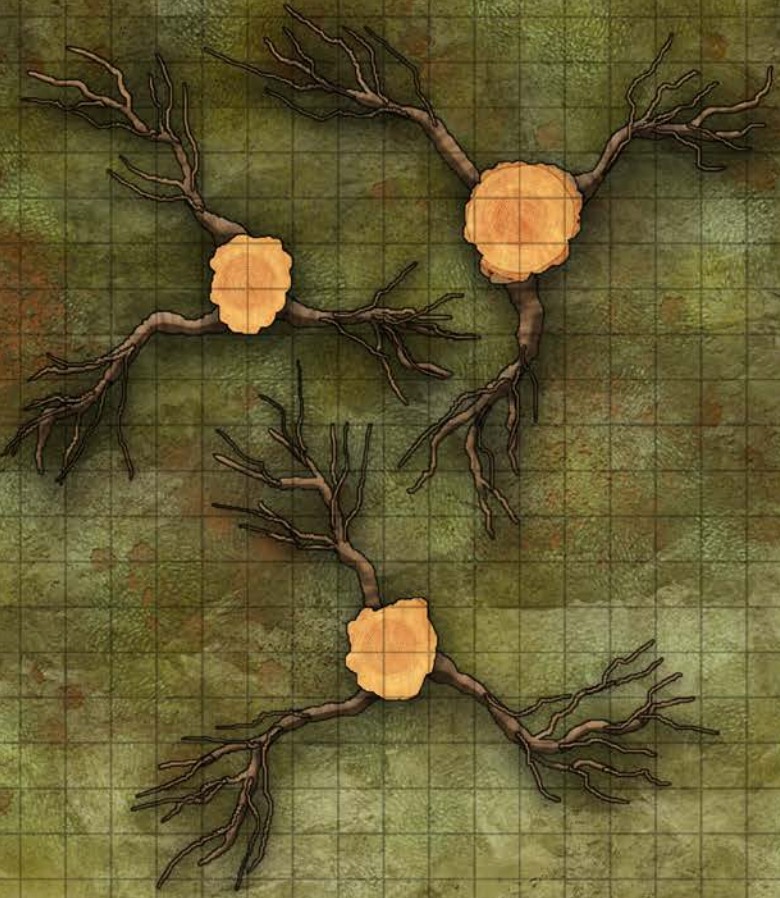
Chapter 1:
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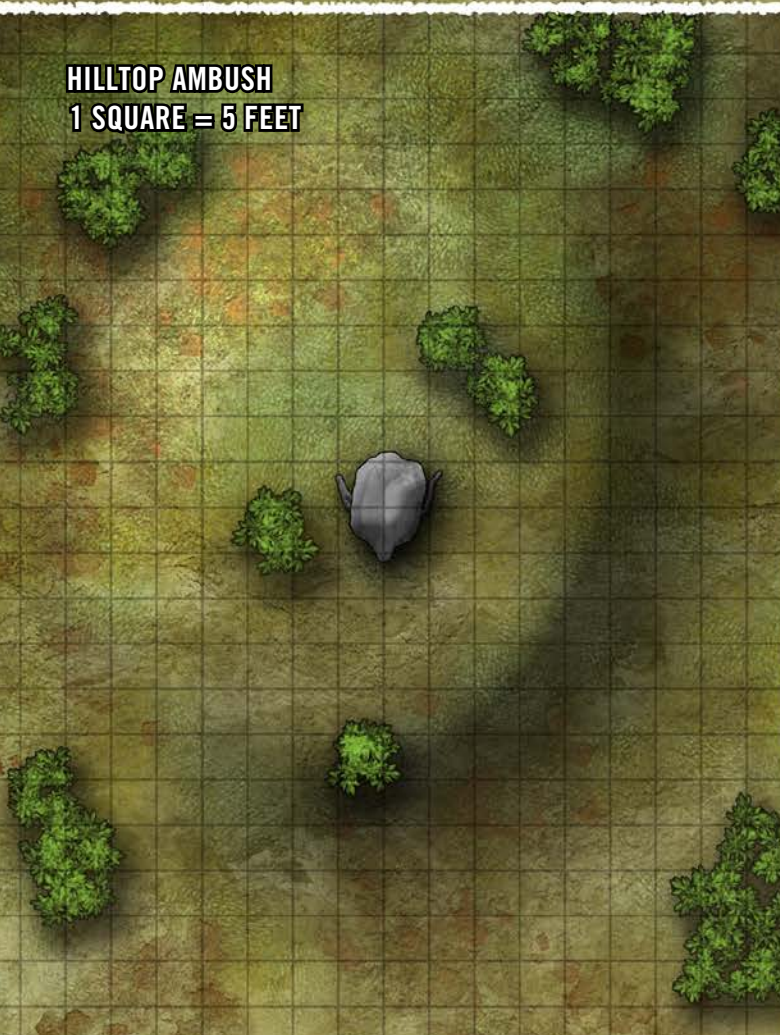
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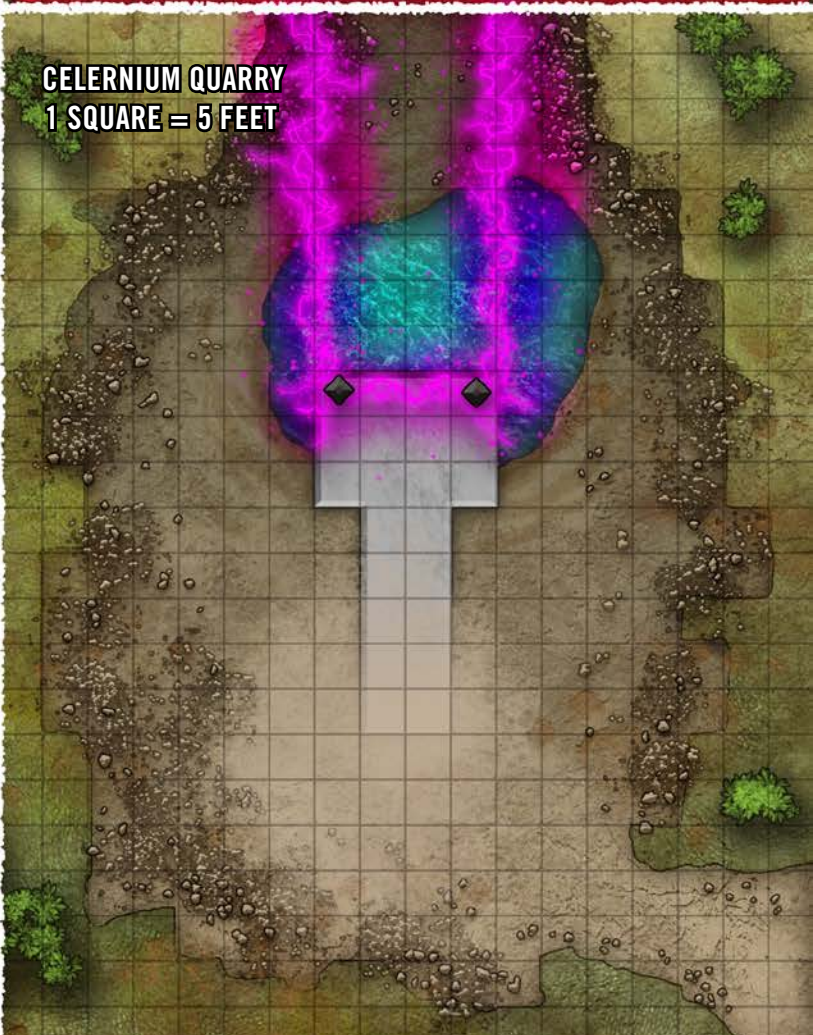
DEATH FROM THE TREES
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



RIVER CROSSING
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



HILLTOP AMBUSH
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



CELERNIUM QUARRY
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Branches on the big trees start 20 feet above the ground, but the boles' bark is rough and gnarled, requiring only a DC 14 Athletics check to Climb. The branches themselves are narrow, requiring a DC 15 Acrobatics check to Balance upon.

Creature: An arboreal predator called a tree fisher lurks on a low branch of one of the big trees. While it fills a similar niche to the cave fisher on Golarion, the two are unrelated and merely products of convergent evolution. A tree fisher looks like a cross between a monkey and a scorpion, with a harpoon of solidified webbing connected to spinnerets at its aft end, held by the coiled, scorpion-like tail that acts like an atlatl.

The tree fisher Hides among the foliage (Stealth +13 thanks to the canopy's lesser cover) and waits for a character to enter the clearing. It then snaps its tail forward to launch its harpoon at the character before hauling them up into the trees to devour. The fisher is completely at home in the branches, and doesn't need to make either Athletics or Acrobatics checks to Climb and Balance. If reduced to 7 Hit Points or fewer, it attempts to flee.

TREE FISHER

CREATURE 3

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM ANIMAL

Perception +9; low-light vision

Skills Athletics +12, Stealth +11

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

AC 19; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

HP 45

Speed 15 feet, climb 15 feet

Melee ♦ claw +11, **Damage** 2d6+5 slashing

Ranged ♦ harpoon +12 (range 60 feet), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing plus barbed filament

Barbed Filament A creature hit by the tree fisher's barbed filament is grabbed. The tree fisher can move while it has a creature grabbed with its filament, but automatically releases the Grab if the tree fisher moves beyond the filament's 60-foot length. A creature grabbed by the filament at the beginning of its turn takes 5 bleed damage.

The tree fisher can sever the filament and release any creature grabbed by it as a free action. The filament can be severed by a Strike that deals at least 10 slashing damage to it. This doesn't deal any damage to the tree fisher itself. The filament has AC 17, and its Escape DC is 19.

The tree fisher has only one harpoon; if the filament is severed, the tree fisher loses this ability and its ranged attack for 1 week as it fashions a new harpoon.

Treasure: If harvested with a successful DC 17 Survival or Nature check, the tree fisher's filament gland can be used as 25 gp worth of raw materials for creating potent adhesive, such as sovereign glue. The filament itself is identical to a 60-foot length of rope. Finally, the creature's harpoon can be used as a javelin.

EVENT 6: RIVER CROSSING

MODERATE 2

Use the second map on page 44 for this encounter.

A rushing river cuts across the jungle, its wide waters red as blood against the jungle's green. Just upstream, red rock outcroppings squeeze the river into narrow rapids, providing a line of jutting boulders close enough to hop across.


A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature or River Lore check to Recall Knowledge can tell that the water's ominous coloration is merely a result of the presence of iron and other mundane minerals.

While the characters can theoretically cross the river anywhere, the water is deep and wide for miles in either direction. The area shown on the map is the only obvious choice for a safe crossing. (A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Survival check to Track sees that many other animals, and even a humanoid wearing shoes, have made the crossing in the recent past.)

River Terrain: The characters start on the western side of the river and must cross to the eastern. Characters can Leap from rock to rock easily enough, but a character



Tree Fisher



who takes damage while standing on one of the slippery stones must attempt a DC 15 Acrobatics check to Balance. On a failure, the creature must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save to Grab an Edge or be dumped into the water and swept downriver. Characters who fail to Swim against the current (DC 15 Athletics) are swept southward at a rate of 10 feet per round. After a minute of floundering, a character so swept away is deposited on the far shore as the river makes a lazy bend; such castaways can trek back up the bank to rejoin the rest of the party.

Creature: An amelekana—sometimes called an “organ snail” by locals—lurks beneath the shallows on the eastern side of the crossing. It waits for the party to begin their crossing, then erupts from the water and launches its symbiotic amoebas toward them, attempting to catch the characters while they’re most vulnerable. Amoebas that land in the water are unable to hold their own against the current without making an Athletics check.

The amelekana fights until reduced to 10 Hit Points or fewer, then submerges and scuttles away downriver. If the characters manage to get past the amelekana and flee into the jungle, the beast doesn’t give chase, preferring to instead wait for easier prey.

AMELEKANA CREATURE 4

Page 84

Initiative Stealth +20 (includes +8 for concealment due to running water)

Treasure: A character can attempt to remove the slain amelekana’s shell with a DC 19 Survival check. On a success, the valuable shell can be traded for 15 gp at Loskialua, or 30 gp if removed with a critical success.

EVENT 7: HILLTOP AMBUSH MODERATE 2

Use the third map on page 44 for this encounter.

Just ahead looms a short hill covered in grass and low vines. The mound is punctured here and there by mossy boulders and ambitious trees. At the hill’s crest, the largest of the boulders has been carved into the unmistakable likeness of an elven head.

Characters who examine the sculpted boulder and succeed at a DC 15 Engineering Lore check realize the wear patterns on the stone are several centuries old. Furthermore, this extant piece is likely just one part of a larger structure buried beneath the hill. Beyond it being an elf, the statue reveals no further clues about its sculptors.

Creatures: A mated pair of predators called desa-desas hunt around this hill. When the characters first arrive,

one Hides in the vines at base of a tree near the top of the hill. The other Hides in the bushes down near the bottom. If possible, they wait for the party to pass between them, then leap to attack. If one of them is slain, the other flees when reduced to fewer than half its Hit Points.

DESA-DESA CREATURE 2

Page 85

Initiative Stealth +11 (includes +2 for lesser cover)

EVENT 8: PSYCHIC SHROOMS TRIVIAL 2

No map is necessary for this encounter.

Short, rainbow-colored mushrooms fill the mostly dry streambed ahead, offering a welcome reprieve from the forest undergrowth.

Dangerous Fungi: Like many animals on Castrovel, some plants have developed rudimentary psychic powers. The mushrooms in this patch, known locally as “mindhammers,” ward off predators and fertilize their soil by incapacitating animals that try to eat them. When trod upon, the fungi emit waves of overwhelming psychic energy that overloads the nervous systems of creatures in the vicinity.

MINDHAMMER MUSHROOMS HAZARD 3

ENVIRONMENTAL FUNGUS


Stealth DC 20 (trained) to notice small animal skeletons among the mushrooms

Description The mushrooms emit powerful psychic blasts that overwhelm potential predators with exhausting psychedelic visions.

Disable DC 20 Survival (trained) to navigate a safe path without triggering the mushrooms

AC 16; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +8

HP 20; **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage; **Weaknesses** fire 10

Psychic Blast  **Trigger** A creature walks through the mushrooms; **Effect** The mushrooms release a loud hum of psychic energy. The triggering creature takes 2d8+8 mental damage (DC 23 basic Will save). On a critical failure, the creature is fatigued.

Reset The mushrooms must rest for 24 hours before they can emit another Psychic Blast.

Treasure: The Oatia—the people of Loskialua—know how to brew the mushrooms into a potent but safe psychedelic. A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Nature, Survival, or Fungus Lore check can harvest 10 gp worth of mushrooms from this patch. Doing so triggers the mushrooms’ Psychic Blast if it hasn’t already been triggered.

EVENT 9: CELERNIUM QUARRY MODERATE 2

Use the fourth map on page 44 for this encounter.

As the characters approach the hilltop where the light-lines end, read or paraphrase the following aloud.

At the crest of the hill, the trees thin and a broad stone quarry comes into view. The steep sides of the quarry are sheared fifteen feet deep, the walls and floor a mix of naturally broken stone and expertly precise excavation. In the center of the quarry, a shallow pool of water encircles the base of a thirty-foot-tall stone tower. The tower's flat top is accessible by a ramp on its south side. Atop the tower, two curving, rune-carved pillars crackle with purple lightning and generate the two narrow light beams that lead straight to the pyramid city in the distant mountains.

Loskialua's engineers established this quarry to harvest a rare Castrovellan stone called celernium, a dark, mica-like rock with flecks that glow only under starlight, making it sacred to the astronomy-loving elves. This outcropping is the closest deposit Oatia could find to their distant mountain-city. To bypass the costly work of regularly transporting celernium blocks across 40 miles of dense jungle, Oatia established the light-lines, a magical gondola system similar to a suspended conveyer belt.

Gondolas: One of several dozen gondolas arrive at the quarry every 30 minutes. Each gondola is a wooden platform suspended from the purple light-line by enchanted steel cables. The platform pauses next to the loading tower for several minutes, like a ship docking at port, then loops around the pillars so it can reverse direction and voyage back toward the city to be unloaded.

Quarry Terrain: The best way into or out of the quarry is via the sloping canyons to the north and south. The 15-foot-tall walls can be Climbed with a DC 15 Athletics check. The sides of the quarry's central tower have been chiseled smooth, requiring a DC 19 Athletics check to Climb. The pool at the bottom of the pit is only 5 feet deep.

Creatures: Oatia don't promote physical strength as a virtue, and so few are up to the hard task of extracting celernium from quarries such as this. Instead, their spellcasters created two stone constructs to tirelessly hew stone and load it onto the gondolas for transport back to the city. Fashioned from the same stone they quarry, the two statues resemble burly elves with androgynous features. Instead of heads, the statues bear metallic sculptures of celestial orbs, each sculpture suspended inside a large vertical ring. One statue's head is a stylized sun; the other is a crescent moon.

The statues have orders to load the gondolas and to protect the quarry from non-Oatia. True to their programming, the statues completely ignore the characters as long as the party stays outside the quarry, going about their work in full view. As soon as a character enters the pit, however, both statues rush to attack, fighting until the trespassing creature exits the quarry or is slain. Each statue fights until destroyed.

Escaping the Quarry: The gondolas operate on a constant timer, and the statues have no way of halting them. If the characters can hold off the statues long enough to board a gondola and let it pull away from the tower, the statues go back to work.

Delaying this Encounter: If you run this encounter later in the adventure when the characters are returning to the Dragon's Arch from Loskialua, the quarry statues have gone berserk and attack their former masters as well as the party.

QUARRY CONSTRUCTS (2) CREATURE 2

N **LARGE** **CONSTRUCT** **EARTH** **MINDLESS**

Perception +8; darkvision

Skills Athletics +9

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

Items warhammer

AC 18 (14 when broken), construct armor; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

HP 23; **Hardness** 4; **Immunities** bleed, death effects,



Mindhammer Mushrooms

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FALLING FROM THE GONDOLAS

If the pteranodons in area **Event 10** have their way, one or more characters might have a nasty fall from the gondolas. A fall of hundreds of feet like this would undoubtedly be fatal, but, fortunately for the party, the gondolas contain a hidden safety feature.

Anything that falls from the gondola falls normally for 20 feet, then is surrounded by a purple glow as it suddenly reverses direction, the gondola's magic yanking it back up onto the platform. Though potentially lifesaving, this process is far from gentle, as the Oatia originally installed it to keep from accidentally losing valuable stone in high winds. The snapback of the reverse momentum still deals 10 points of bludgeoning damage and leaves a creature sickened 2 (DC 16 to recover on subsequent rounds). This magic affects only falling creatures or objects, not creatures flying under their own power.

Note that since the characters likely don't know about this safety feature in advance, the first time a pteranodon yanks a character from the platform is an excellent opportunity for drama as the rest of the group watches their friend plummet toward what appears to be certain death. Don't be afraid to play it up!

disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

Construct Armor Like normal objects, a quarry construct has Hardness. This Hardness reduces any damage it takes by an amount equal to the Hardness. Once a quarry construct is reduced to less than half its Hit Points, or immediately upon being damaged by a critical hit, its construct armor breaks and its Armor Class is reduced to 14.

Speed 20 feet

Melee ♦ warhammer +10 (shove), **Damage** 1d8+4 bludgeoning

EVENT 10: THE GONDOLA

MODERATE 2

Once the characters all board a gondola, it isn't long until the vessel departs for Loskialua. Read or paraphrase the following.

The jungle drops away as the twenty-foot-square gondola climbs quickly into the sky, its platform rocking gently beneath the line of sizzling, heatless lightning above. Thick tree canopies fill the region for miles all around.

To the northwest is the forbidding mountain range and its pyramid city to which you're headed.

The gondola is a simple 20-foot-square wooden platform with thick cables at each corner that connect to the central suspension point 15 feet above. While the foot-high lip around the platform's edge isn't much of a safeguard, the ride is stable enough that characters don't have to worry about falling off on their own. A character who specifically investigates the gondola's magic and succeeds at a DC 21 Arcana check notices the hidden safety feature described in the sidebar.

Creatures: The characters don't remain alone for long. An hour into their journey, two passing cliffhunter pteranodons spot them, shrieking with joy at this suspended snack. The animals—who normally prey on ram-crickets and other cliff-dwelling creatures—are formidable fighters, but they prefer to let gravity do the work for them. Each round, they Swoop at the platform, attempting to bite a character and fling them off the gondola before continuing back out of range.

The pteranodons fight until one has been killed and the other reduced to 10 Hit Points or less, at which point the remaining pteranodon flaps off to pursue easier prey.

No Map: Because this encounter takes place entirely on a platform suspended high in the air, no map is necessary. If you decide to draw a map anyway, you can represent the gondola platform with a simple 20-foot square.

CLIFFHUNTER PTERANODONS (2) CREATURE 2

Variant pteranodons (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 272)

Initiative Perception +8

Melee ♦ beak +10, **Damage** 1d10+3 piercing

Pluck ♦ The cliffhunter pteranodon attempts to fling its prey off a cliff or into some other hazardous situation; **Frequency** once per round; **Trigger** The pteranodon's last action this turn was a successful beak Strike. The pteranodon can use this ability mid-Swoop; **Effect** The pteranodon attempts to fling the struck creature into harm's way. The pteranodon makes an Athletics check against the target's Fortitude DC.

Success The target creature is flung 15 feet in a direction of the pteranodon's choosing and potentially falls or takes damage accordingly. The creature cannot use the Grab an Edge reaction.

Failure The pteranodon fails to move the target creature.

Critical Failure As failure, but the pteranodon's clumsy movement leaves it open to attack. The pteranodon's turn ends, and it becomes flat-footed until the beginning of its next turn.

Arriving in Loskialua

After resolving **Event 10**, the characters' path to the city is clear. No matter what time they boarded the gondola or whether or not they take time to rest first, the characters arrive at their destination right as the sun sets.

Read or paraphrase the following as the characters arrive at Loskialua.

As the platform nears the mountains, what appeared to be a vast pyramid city reveals itself to be only the beginnings of one. While many completed buildings stand atop several-story-tall pyramidal terraces, many more lie in various states of construction, piles of stones and wooden cranes dotting the work sites. The setting sun glints off the glass of telescopes protruding from many of the completed buildings' roofs, including a huge one in a central domed structure.

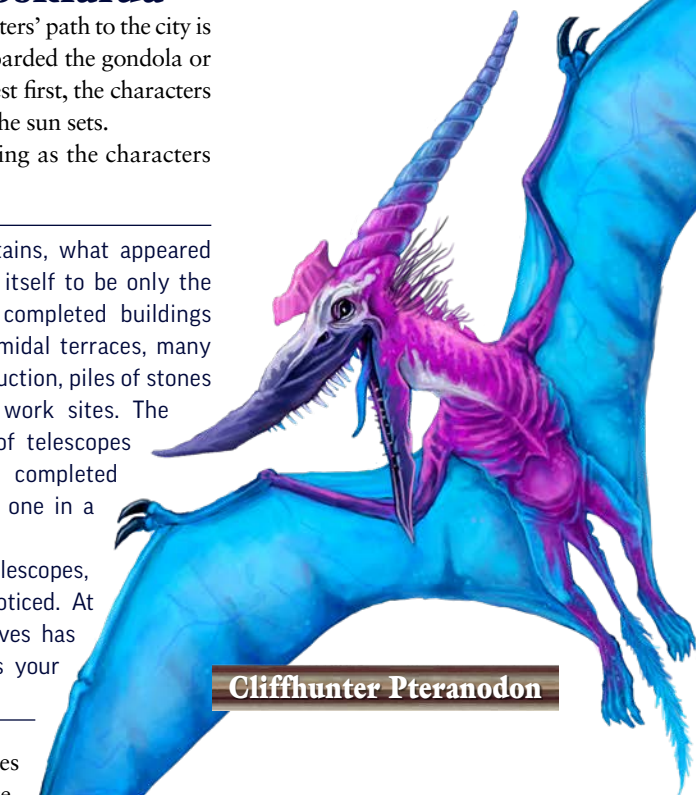
Perhaps thanks to these telescopes, your approach has not gone unnoticed. At the gondola's dock, a crowd of elves has gathered, watching expectantly as your gondola draws near.

While the assembled elves seem wary, they look far more curious than threatening. Their clothing appears practical but of no immediately recognizable fashion—loose robes and leather adventuring attire, essentially. Far more distinctive and arresting is their prolific jewelry: a mixture of silver and gold bangles, rings, necklaces, earrings, circlets, and more, all bearing esoteric astrological and astronomical symbols.

LOSKIALUA

This is the settlement of Loskialua. While most elves on Castrovel live in the traditional elven homeland of Sovyrian on the other side of the planet, Loskialua's residents represent a fringe group of astronomers called Oatia. The Oatia choose to live on the sparsely populated jungle continent of Ukulam in order to peacefully watch the stars and record their observations. Though they communicate occasionally with distant allies and trade with local bands of nomadic humanoids, visitors such as the player characters are a rare treat.

Loskialua's half-completed appearance is deceptive; Oatia first built this city generations ago. The reason for so many new buildings is the recent completion of what Loskialua's citizens call the "light-line gondolas," which prompted a boom in new construction.



Cliffhunter Pteranodon

WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

As the gondola docks, the elves all begin talking at once, excitedly greeting the characters. Oatia speak Elven with an unfamiliar Castrovelian accent, but they're a community of scholars, including a number of polyglots. If the characters don't speak Elven, those in the welcome party cycle through other languages, beginning with Castrovelian languages, before trying languages like Draconic, Celestial, and Sylvan. In each case, they repeat basic questions like "Who are you?", "What are you?" (to non-elves), and "Where are you from?"

As soon as communication is established—or even if it isn't—one of the scholars, a middle-aged elven woman named **Alleli** (LG female elf cleric of Desna 5), rushes forward excitedly, having recognized either the language the characters speak with each other or specific place names. She addresses the characters in their native tongue (presumably Golarion Common), saying, "I know you! I know where you're from!" She pulls the characters over to a nearby telescope, pointing it at bright star low in the darkening sky. Characters who look through see a small, bluish dot.

"Golarion!" she says proudly. "The Blue Planet. That's your world!"

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CHAPTER 3: MEMORIES OF THE GREEN

If the characters didn't already deduce their present location on an alien planet, the revelation that they're so far from home might come as quite the shock. With the dangers of the jungle behind them, the party's most immediate concern is now to find a way back home.

Fortunately for the party, their Oatia hosts are amiable and eager to welcome these alien visitors. Though these elves don't have any means of interplanetary travel, their cosmological expertise—as astronomers, as researchers, and as ancestors of elves who once migrated across planets—makes the Oatia ideally situated to help the characters resolve their present conundrum.

First Contact

In the first part of this final chapter, the Oatia convey important new information that will eventually help the player characters get back home, and which also pertains to the characters' overarching quest to determine the cause of the Missing Moment.

The characters' primary contacts right now are Alleli, the astronomer who recognized them as from Golarion at the end of the last chapter, and **Jenthiel** (NG genderless elf wizard 4), a knowledgeable sage and popular figure among Loskialua's intellectual community. Both Alleli and Jenthiel speak a passing version of Avistani Common as spoken on Golarion.

Between pressing the characters for the story of their arrival and their home world, Alleli and Jenthiel can also answer basic questions about Castrovel. They describe it as a lush, warm world full of wild monsters and predators. The most notable intelligent peoples of Castrovel are elves, psychic humanoids called lashuntas, and insectile formians. (For more details about Castrovel, see *Adventures on Castrovel* on page 66.)

Oatia are culturally similar to Golarion's elves in many respects, but they are exceptionally passionate about the worship of Desna. The settlement's long-term plan is to eventually extend their magical gondola line up a mountain called the Alhuenar Spire, so that they can turn the small Desnan shrine there into a vast temple and observatory.

If the players ask about the Missing Moment, the elves look confused. Castrovel has more *aiudara* than Golarion, but however the characters describe the paranormal event that took place on their home planet, no such phenomenon occurred here.

CURSED COMPLICATIONS

The following scenes occur as the party gets acquainted with their Oatia hosts. Characters can interact with their new friends however they like, but make sure the key scenes below occur in the listed order and the characters learn the information detailed in each scene.

If the characters wish to rest, these scenes can take place after the party's reprieve. Once Alleli becomes cursed (see *The Curse*, below), time will once more be of the essence.

The Human

Early on in their discussions, Alleli reveals to the characters that they're actually not the first people from Golarion she's met. Just last week, while working in the settlement's main observatory, Alleli received a message from a young human oracle named Sakuachi who claimed to be sending a message from a city on Golarion called Skywatch.

"A marvelous mind," Alleli sighs. "Apparently, the young stargazer stumbled onto a magical telescope in Skywatch's observatory, through which she somehow managed to transmit a message to our own observatory in Loskialua."

Though the connection was quickly lost, Alleli wants to study the transmission in the hopes of reverse engineering it. Whatever magic was involved, it could well be the key to getting the party home again.

The Curse

Alleli and Jenthiel are eager to learn more about the *Seventh Arch* that somehow connected the party to this world. In the course of this conversation, Alleli asks to study the *Shadewither Key* up close. As soon as Alleli touches the key, however, disaster strikes. She falls unconscious, and her skin begins to wither visibly as the *obnubilate curse* takes hold of her.

The Whale

The Oatia are deeply dismayed by Alleli's sudden affliction. Jenthiel questions the characters further about the curse, which seems to affect only elves who touch the *Shadewither Key*. As healers attempt to treat Alleli, Jenthiel recognizes a familiar "psychic imprint" in both the curse and the key's magic.

CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

The party discovers they're stranded on the planet Castrovel and have arrived in a city of elven astronomers called Loskialua. In the course of meeting their hosts, the player characters learn more about the possible nature of the Missing Moment—including its potential source, a dangerous alien entity named Osoyo. They also inadvertently inflict the only sage capable of helping them with the *obnubilate curse*. To save the sage and find a way home, the party must undertake a series of harrowing quests that ultimately send them hurtling through the void of space toward Golarion.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Find a way back to Golarion.

PLOT BEATS

The party should learn these details throughout this chapter.

- The *Shadewither Key* is afflicted with the *obnubilate curse*. The curse can be traced back to a massive alien entity named Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale.
- Castrovelian elves sealed Osoyo beneath the Crown of the World on Golarion long ago, but the seal may be weakening.
- The characters can return to Golarion by teleporting to a telescope in Skywatch. There, they should meet an astronomer named Sakuachi, whose quest likely has some connection to their own.

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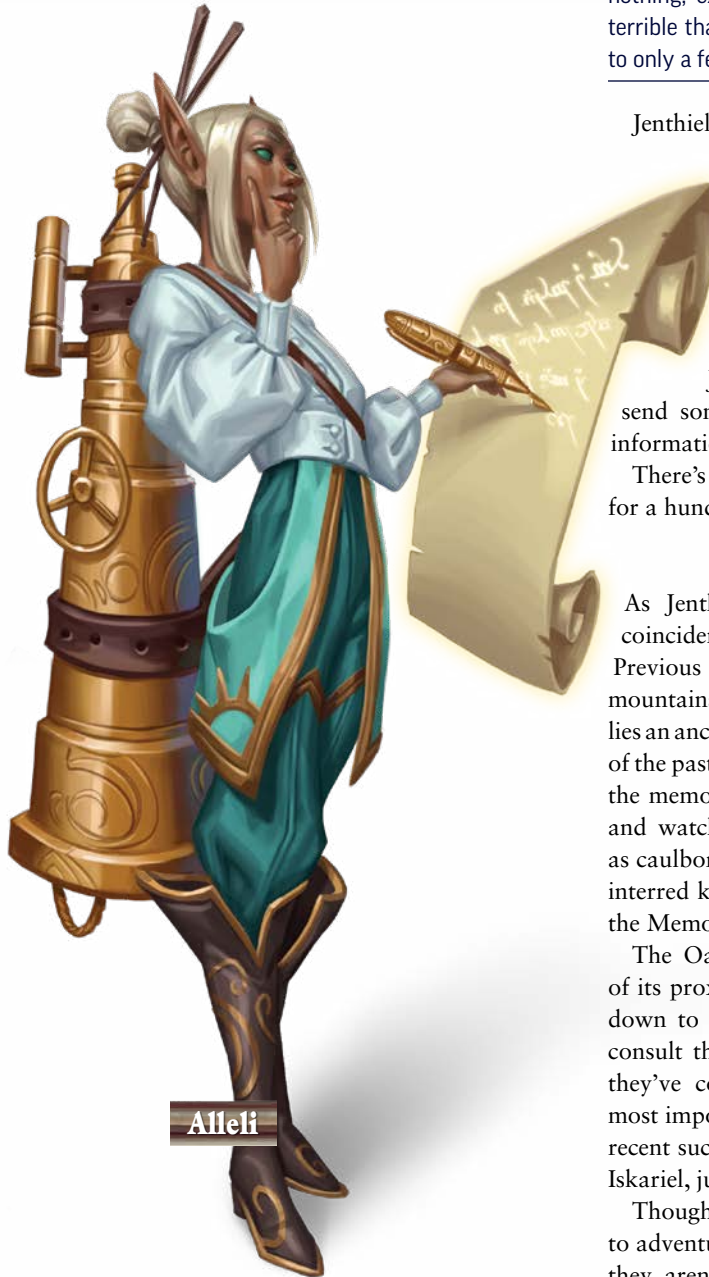
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ALLELI'S CURSE

Characters who predict the *Shadewither Key's* ill effects on Alleli might take steps to mitigate this possibility. Even if Alleli isn't afflicted by the *obnubilate curse*, you can run this chapter as written—the party simply has more time to accomplish their objectives in the Memory Cache and atop *She Who Walks Through Seasons*.



Alleli

"I've experienced this psychic signature only once before," Jenthiel says. "My mother, Iskariel, revealed it to me so that I would recognize it again if such a time should come. It is the imprint of Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale."

Naturally, the revelation likely means little to the characters at this point, but Jenthiel elaborates in a solemn, rasping tone.

"My mother was a renowned healer, and also part of a secret society—a fellowship tasked with remembering the campaign against Osoyo. Of this being, I know almost nothing, except that it was a grave threat, a danger so terrible that even the mere legend of it was passed down to only a few worthy scholars."

Jenthiel is sure that Osoyo is somehow bound up in the key's curse, and that knowledge about it could be vital to curing Alleli's ailment before it's too late. (Given that Alleli is the only one with any idea of how to get the characters home, it's also in the party's best interest to help their Oatia hosts.) As the other scholars nod in agreement, Jenthiel explains that the only option is to send someone to go find Iskariel and retrieve the information about Osoyo they need.

There's just one small problem: Iskariel's been dead for a hundred years.

Memory Cache

As Jenthiel explains, Loskialua's location isn't a coincidence, nor solely related to watching the stars. Previous civilizations have come and gone in these mountains, and deep beneath Loskialua's stony streets lies an ancient, sacred site—a place where great scholars of the past were laid to rest. In this subterranean grove, the memories of the best and brightest are preserved and watched over by extraplanar guardians known as caulborn, who use their unique powers to keep the interred knowledge from fading. Oatia call this place the Memory Cache.

The Oatia chose to build their city here because of its proximity to the Memory Cache. But the route down to the grove is dangerous enough that Oatia consult the Cache only in times of great need. Still, they've continued the tradition of entrusting their most important sages to the caulborn's care. The most recent such sage to be given over to the caulborn was Iskariel, just over a century ago.

Though wise, the sages of Loskialua aren't suited to adventuring. As desperate as they are to help Alleli, they aren't willing to travel down to the Memory

Cache themselves. Of the route, the elves can say little—it's been a hundred years since anyone journeyed there. Jenthiel notes that the route to the grotto's entrance is straightforward, though beyond its cavernous entryway none are certain what the party might find.

"Go there," Jenthiel intones. "Find the Gardeners, who tend that place. They will help you find Iskariel and retrieve the knowledge we need."

Once the player characters are ready, Jenthiel and what seems like half of Loskialua accompany them to the city's outskirts.

The following areas correspond to the map on page 54. Unless otherwise noted, each area within the Cache is unlit and all ceilings are 15 feet high.

C1. ENTRANCE

Just past the edge of town, huge trees with gnarled branches loom over a wide, circular stone well. The well's interior is lined with ancient stone steps that spiral down into the darkness of the earth below.

The steps descend 30 feet to a natural stone passageway at the bottom of the well. The passage twists and turns for at least a mile, interspersed with inclines and declines and stairwells before descending down a final circular staircase. At the bottom of the stairs, the passage widens into a landing. To either side of the eastern exit, the walls have been carved with identical images of leafless trees.

C2. SINKHOLE

The sky peeks into this sinkhole chamber through a fissure in the ceiling, hundreds of feet above the floor. Narrow streams of water cascade down the walls in a dozen tiny waterfalls, collecting in a pool to the south. Beyond the pool, the ceiling lowers into a smaller cavern that turns a corner and disappears from view.

The water in the pool is 15 feet deep, with a natural stepping stone that makes it easy to Leap to area C3. The walls are rough and covered in copious plant life, requiring a DC 18 Athletics check to Climb.

Creatures: Two immolises (page 88) reside in this chamber. When the characters arrive, they're

just returning from a hunt. If they detect the party approaching, they Hide among the plants 20 feet up the eastern and western walls, gaining lesser cover.

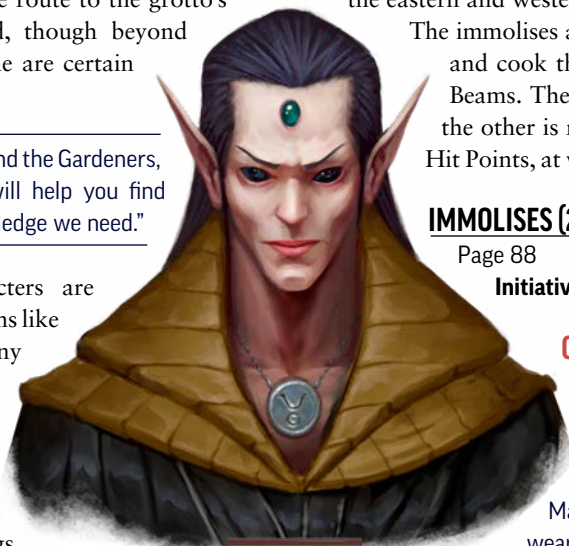
The immolises attempt to keep their distance and cook the characters with their Heat Beams. They fight until one is slain and the other is reduced to fewer than half its Hit Points, at which point the survivor flees.

IMMOLISES (2)

CREATURE 3

Page 88

Initiative Perception or Stealth +12



Jenthiel

C3. SCHOLARS' CAVE LOW 3

The walls of this natural stone cavern have been carved into dozens of bas-relief statues. Many are familiar humanoids wearing robes and carrying books or staves, but others are insectile, reptilian, rodential, or completely unrecognizable.

Trap: This room contains a magical trap designed to challenge those most likely to seek out the Memory Cache: scholars. Any creature with an Intelligence score of 10 or more is beset by a psychic cyclone.

SCHOLAR'S BANE

HAZARD 4

COMPLEX ILLUSION MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth +14 (trained) to notice magical sensors hidden within four of the carvings' eyes

Description Illusion magic overwhelms the minds of particularly intelligent creatures, forcing them to relive every intellectual failure and shame they've ever suffered.

Disable DC 22 Thievery (trained) to carve out one eye sensor, DC 22 Arcana or Occultism (trained) to blank out one's mind (disables trap for self only), or *dispel magic* (2nd level; counteract DC 20) to counteract one eye sensor

AC 20; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +8

Eye Hardness 6; **Eye HP** 20

Reveal Failure **Trigger** A creature with an Intelligence score of 10 or greater enters the room; **Effect** The trap fills the triggering creature's mind with shameful memories. The creature must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or take 2d8+2 mental damage. The trap then rolls initiative.

Routine (4 actions) The trap uses each action to target a creature in the room with an Intelligence score of 10 or greater. A target must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or take 2d8+2 mental damage. On a critical failure, the creature takes a -10-foot status penalty to Speed for 1 minute as they stagger under the weight of their failures. The trap loses 1 action for each eye sensor disabled or destroyed.

THE SEVENTH ARCH


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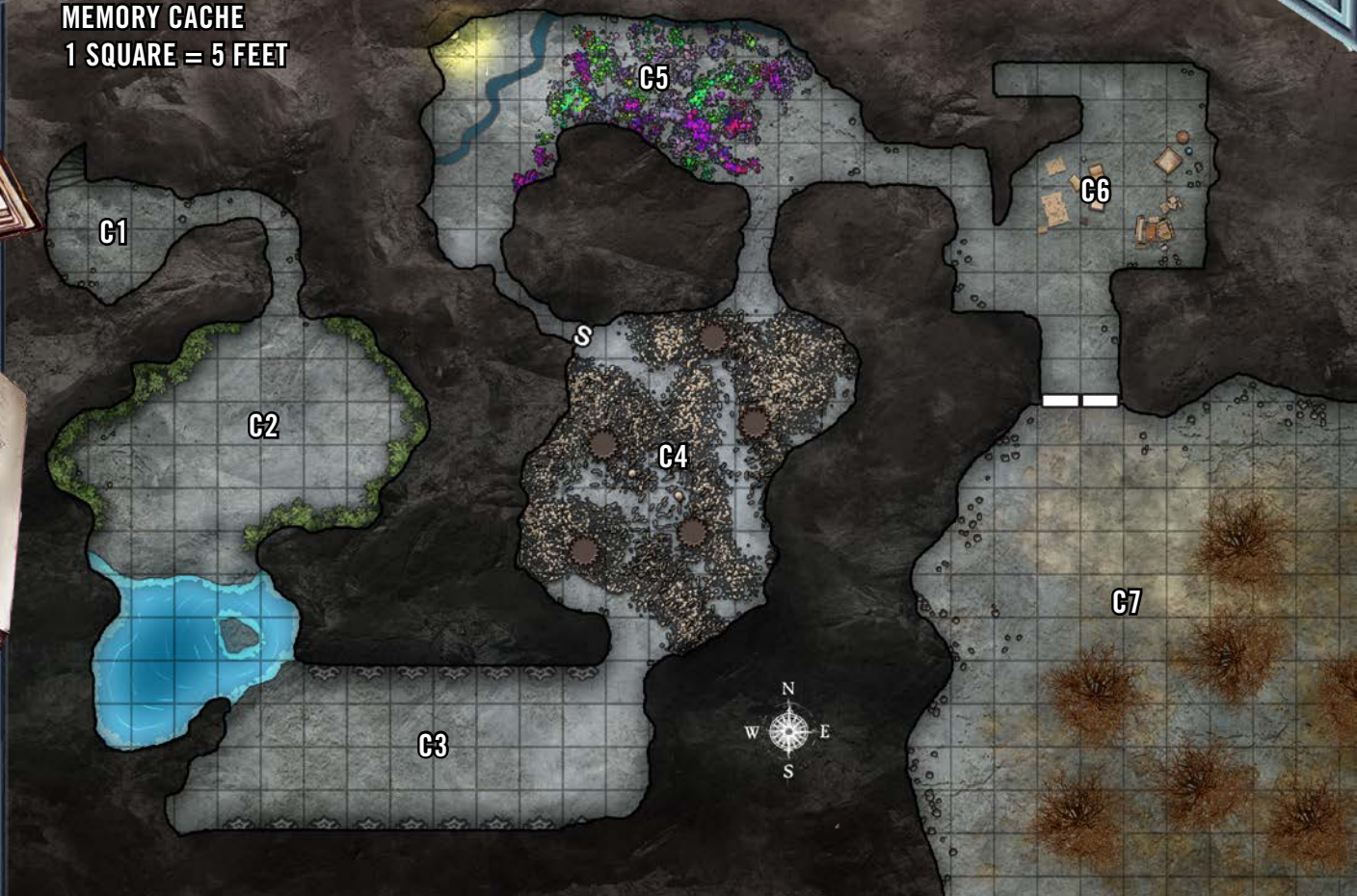
Chapter 3:
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Toolbox



MEMORY CACHE
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



Reset The trap can function for 10 rounds, which don't need to be consecutive, before it must recharge for 24 hours.

C4. DEAD'S END **MODERATE 3**

This otherwise-rough cavern is braced by huge pillars of worked stone. Bones and rusted, rotted armor lie scattered across the floor. To the north, a passage continues onward.

Creatures: As soon as the characters enter the room, three skeletal champions—one an elf, the other two bearing the remnants of lashunta antennae—animate from the bones littering the floor and immediately attack. The elf fights with a lance, while the two lashuntas fight with longswords. All three fight until destroyed.

SKELETAL CHAMPIONS (3) **CREATURE 2**

Pathfinder Bestiary 298

Initiative Perception +8

Languages Elven, Lashunta

Secret Door: A character who succeeds at a DC 18 Perception check to Search discovers a crack in the

northwestern wall. The crack connects to a narrow passage that leads to area C5.

Treasure: Between them, the skeletal champions have three suits of chain mail, one lance, two longswords, and two steel shields. Additionally, one of them has a +1 *striking crossbow* and 20 bolts.

C5. FUNGAL FOREST **LOW 3**

Mushrooms and fungi of every size and shape choke this room with a riot of color, soaking up the light of a glowing shield-shaped panel on the western wall. A one-foot-deep stream curves through the room, emerging through cracks in the stone and disappearing again in the same fashion.

Creatures: Two fungus leshys live in this chamber, farming mushrooms and making periodic excursions to the surface. (The prideful skeletons in area C4 ignore the little plant creatures.)

If the leshys hear combat in area C4, they transform into oversized mushrooms and Hide near the main tunnel to that area, hoping to avoid detection. If the characters spot the transformed leshys or disturb their

grove, the leshys attack. The leshys begin combat as hostile but aren't overly committed to it—a DC 20 Diplomacy check and a gift of a fresh corpse (such as one of the immolises from C2) is sufficient to get them to stand down and let the party pass.

FUNGUS LESHYS (2)

CREATURE 2

Pathfinder Bestiary 219

Initiative Stealth +8

Treasure: Characters who investigate the glowing panel discover that it is in fact a *glamorous buckler* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 261) that's been enchanted to glow like an *everburning torch*. It's worth 50 gp.

C6. RECEPTION

MODERATE 3

The stone here has been carefully chiseled into worked walls. Papers ranging from whole scrolls to tiny tatters are pasted over every surface. To the south stands a large metal double door etched with a leafless tree design.

Creatures: Two scalescribes named Jarvs and Wutherby dwell in this chamber. Having stumbled across the grove and despaired at being ousted by the caulborn, the serpentine aberrations are now determined to mine every last bit of knowledge (and paper) out of creatures who come to visit the Memory Cache.

The scalescribes initially try to pass themselves off as the Gardeners' "secretaries," talking rapidly over each other as they insist that the characters must give them "some basic information in order to secure an appointment." This "basic information" turns out to be the characters' entire life stories, plus an encyclopedic overview of every subject they've ever studied.

Once the characters get fed up with this bureaucracy, the scalescribes shift tactics, insisting that the appointment is now, and the party can go right in—but they'll need to leave anything with paper out here, including scrolls, spellbooks, and formula books. Roll a single Deception check for both scalescribes (no modifier) against the characters' Perception DCs. On a failure, the characters can easily see through the scalescribes' ruse. Only if the characters attempt to push past them do the scalescribes attack, stabbing with their pens and taunting spellcasters in hopes of being targeted with spells they can catch.

If either scalescribe is reduced to fewer than 8 Hit Points, it surrenders, even as the other fights on.

JARVS AND WUTHERBY

CREATURE 3

Scalescribes (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 226)

Initiative Perception +11

Treasure: Among the papers collected in this room are a *scroll of glitterdust* and a *scroll of haste*. Depending on your party, you can replace these with scrolls of one 2nd- and one 3rd-level spell more suitable to the characters' abilities.

C7. THE GROVE OF MEMORY

Ornate lanterns hang from the stalactites along the ceiling of this vast, dimly lit cavern. An orchard of short, leafless trees spreads out across the floor, their twisted branches weighed down with shadowed shapes of odd fruit.

Three emaciated and hairless humanoids with their arms folded into the sleeves of silver robes stand before the grove. The figure in front raises a long-fingered hand, and telepathic words ripple through your head, seeming to echo with many voices.

"Welcome, scholars."

These creatures are caulborn—telepathic scholars linked into a single consciousness by a hive mind. Unlike most humanoids, caulborn require information to be "predigested" by other conscious minds before they can assimilate new concepts and ideas. See *Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 (page 94) for more details on caulborn.

Upon greeting the characters, the caulborn here cast *mind reading* on the party, targeting characters who look likely to have poor Will saves. Assuming at least one attempt succeeds, the caulborn intone the following.

"We see the knowledge you desire. The Grove contains these memories—but what memories will you offer in turn?"

The caulborn maintain the Memory Cache, which they refer to as "this world's Grove of Memory." They explain that they don't allow just anyone into the grove freely. To be given access to the wealth of lore contained in the Grove of Memory, the characters must contribute to the caulborn and their project.

MEMORY TRADE

The exact form of their trade with the caulborn is partially up to the party to decide. As the caulborn's preference is for memories—recollections of experiences that, once harvested, are permanently erased from the characters' minds—the strange Gardeners open with this proposal. Since the characters may naturally have objections to this, though, the caulborn are willing to negotiate. You can determine the party's success in bargaining for a better deal by asking one character to roll a DC 18 Diplomacy check. On a critical success and at your discretion, the party might be able to negotiate different terms altogether.

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The caulborn aren't chatty, but they're willing to answer basic questions about who they are and what they do. They refer to themselves only as "we," though they note that other cultures have many names for their people—the Oatia call this group "the Gardeners," which suits them well enough.

SPEAKING WITH ISKARIEL

Once the party comes to an understanding with the caulborn, read or paraphrase the following aloud.

The Gardeners lead the way into the grove. The darkened shapes that appeared to be fruit from a distance now reveal themselves to be severed heads—the elegant heads of elves, multicolored humanoid heads with prominent

antennae, insectile heads like giant ants, strange heads that appear to be almost entirely brain, and more. Each head rests in a cradle of branches like a jewel in a setting, looking as fresh and peaceful as if its owner were sleeping. Tiny shoots pulsing with faint silver light extend from the tree and into the open necks of the cradled heads.

One branch bears the head of a raven-haired elf. As the Gardeners touch the branch, the elf's eyes snap open, glowing with silvery light as she speaks.

"What knowledge do you seek?"

Iskariel is calm and detached, aware of her situation but unperturbed by it. To be preserved in this manner is a great honor among Oatia, and maintaining this connection to the Material Plane hasn't kept her spirit from entering the afterlife.

The magic of the Grove compels Iskariel to answer the characters' questions as best she's able. Iskariel knows the following about the indicated topics.

Alleli's Curse: Iskariel asks to see the *Shadewither Key*. On it, she immediately recognizes the same psychic imprint Jenthiel noted—that of Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale. She also notes, however, that it seems somehow muffled—as if only clinging to the edge of the key. She notes with surprise that Osoyo's mark doesn't seem to be causing the *obnubilate curse* but is trying to negate it.

The combination of magic involved gives Iskariel an idea for a cure. She asks the characters to tell Jenthiel to consult "the third restorative formula from my seventh lab journal, but scrap the peony seeds and azata tears and sub in water from She Who Walks Through Seasons." If the characters press for more explanation, she just rolls her eyes. "Trust me," she says, "Jenthiel will know what to do."

Osoyo: Iskariel is convinced by the psychic imprint that Osoyo is somehow tied up in both the *obnubilate curse* and the Missing Moment. She tells the party the information covered in the Osoyo's Origins section on page 3: how millennia ago, the elves of Sovyrian encountered a psychic whale who gave people paranormal powers but enslaved their minds, and how its victims breathed out a chilling black dust that imparted the same terrible affliction. Fearing the whale's power, the High Families of El subdued the beast and transported it to the Crown of the World on Golarion, where they sealed it beneath the thickest part of Golarion's icecap.



Caulborn

The Missing Moment: While Iskariel doesn't know anything about the Missing Moment or the recent supernatural events around Golarion's *aiudara*, the fact that the characters developed supernatural powers afterward concerns her deeply. Combined with the psychic imprint Jenthiel noticed with the *Shadewither Key* and its curse, the phenomenon suggests they've somehow been exposed to the Blackfrost Whale's influence. How exactly Osoyo could be involved is still beyond her, but she suggests that all of these mysteries must be tied together somehow.

Once the characters have completed their interview, Iskariel closes her eyes once more, and the Gardeners escort the characters back out of the grove, reminding them of their bargain.



Iskariel

She Who Walks Through Seasons

The Oatia are overjoyed at the party's return. As promised, Jenthiel lights up at the words from their mother and retrieves the journal. The other scholars crowd around, nodding and musing. Yet, while the Oatia have most of the ingredients they need to brew the proposed antidote, there's one that's more difficult: the headwaters of She Who Walks Through Seasons.

Jenthiel explains:

"She Who Walks Through Seasons is a sacred being—not quite god, not quite beast. Many Ikal natives have worshipped her as an avatar of the jungle itself. The size of a hill, she lumbers through the forest, as the forest. Atop her head bubbles a sacred spring. To save Alleli, you must summon She Who Walks and bring back some of her headwaters. We'll prepare the rest of the components and be ready for your return."

Jenthiel explains that She Who Walks Through Seasons (sometimes abbreviated as She Who Walks) isn't so much found as summoned. To call forth the ancient being and collect the water from her crown, the characters must complete the following tasks.

1. Secure the Spire: She Who Walks can be beckoned out of hiding from an ancient tower called the Offering Spire. Since the site's caretakers abandoned it long ago, the Spire is likely now home to territorial monsters.

2. Make the Offering: One hundred pounds of special fruit and fungus will make a sufficient offering to She Who Walks. The characters must also

blow a huge relic called the *Sporehorn* to complete the summoning.

3. Gather the Water: When She Who Walks draws close, the characters can board her, gather the water from her crown, and rappel back down to safety. Jenthiel provides the party with a skull-sized stoppered gourd to fill with water.

The Oatia send several strong young elves to guide the party to the Offering Spire and haul their ropes and offerings, but that's as far as they're willing to go. A sage explains that recent astrological consultations confirm that this job, like seeking the Memory Cache, belongs to the characters alone.

THE OFFERING SPIRE

It takes half a day to march through the jungle east of Loskialua and reach the Offering Spire. When the characters arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

A slender spire of vine-choked gray stone juts out of the jungle and points to the sky above. Sixty feet high, the tower is terraced with narrow ledges and windows at every story, plus a yawning open archway at its base. Mounted atop the spire's uppermost ledge is a giant horn.

The party's Oatia guides halt at the edge of the clearing around the sacred spire. It's been decades since any Oatia has visited the spire, and while the jungle has seemed strangely reluctant to reclaim it, there's no telling what might be living inside. The guides tell the party that they'll wait here with the fruit. Once the player characters have reached the top of the tower and lowered down ropes, the Oatia will approach with the offering.

These areas correspond to the maps on page 58.

D1. SPIRE'S BASE

MODERATE 3

A large, squared-off doorway offers entrance into the tower's cavernous ground-floor chamber. In the center of the room, branches and dried leaves form a pungent animal nest. Above, the space extends all the way to the hollow tower's roof. Stone catwalks line the interior walls.

Thorny Vines: The needle-tipped vines that climb the tower require great care to safely scale. A character can Climb the sides of the spire with a DC 22 Athletics check; on a failed check, the character takes 1 piercing damage.

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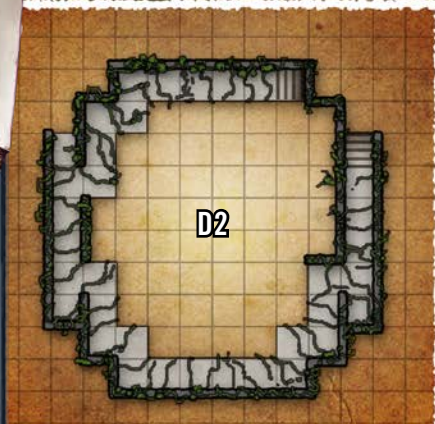
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THE OFFERING SPIRE



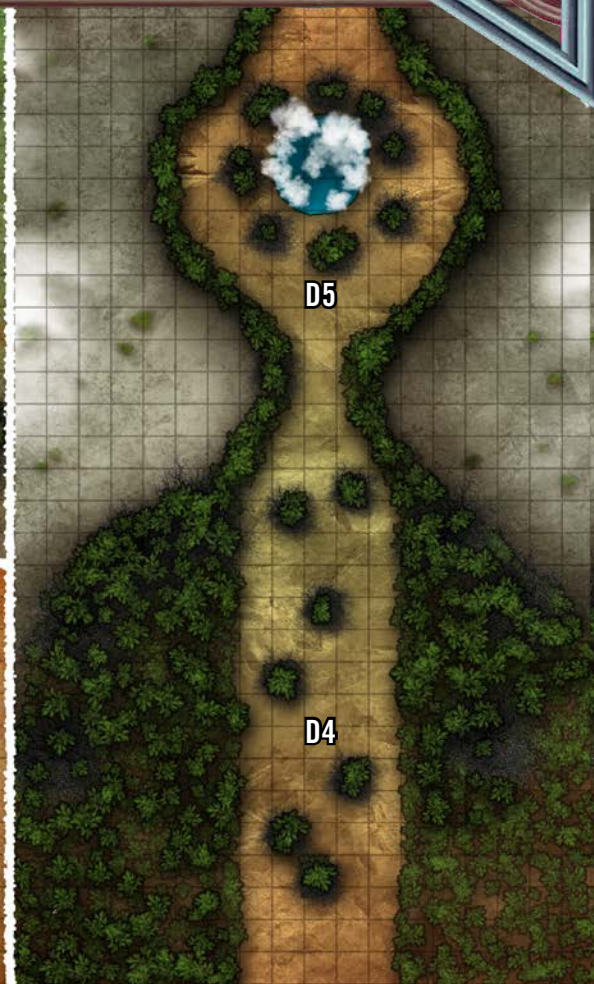
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



D2



D3



D5

D4

Creature: A kareq (page 89) has claimed the base of the tower as its lair, planning to eventually seize the top from the hieracosphinx at area **D3**. As soon as a character draws near the entrance or attempts to climb the tower's sides, the kareq attacks.

KAREQ

Page 89

Initiative Perception +15

CREATURE 5

D2. WINDING STAIRCASE

MODERATE 3

Several stories of catwalks connected by staircases ascend the inside of the tower in seemingly random geometric patterns. Thirty-five feet above the ground floor, the stairs end in yet another five-foot-wide ledge circling the inside of the tower, this one leading through archways to continue on the tower's exterior.

Creatures: Two assassin vines have positioned themselves along the western ledge outside, just beyond the doors and hidden from view by anyone inside. They blend in with the ordinary vines, gaining

their +2 bonus to Stealth and allowing them to Hide even without cover. The vines wait for characters to pass onto the ledge before attempting to grab them, then move to block both entrances to prevent escape. The plants fight until slain.

ASSASSIN VINES (2)

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 26

Initiative Stealth +11

CREATURE 3

Final Ascent: Beyond this level, the staircase and catwalk continue partway around the northern side of the tower's exterior before crumbling; characters must free climb the last 15 feet. The safest place to do so is the western face: thanks to thick vines, the Climb DC here is only 15, and the ledge from area **D2** means that a character who falls can attempt to Grab an Edge rather than falling all the way to the ground. This ascent does, however, potentially leave characters vulnerable or late to a fight in area **D3**, since the hieracosphinx attacks as soon as it notices anyone haul themselves over the battlements onto the roof.

D3. PINNACLE

MODERATE 3

Smooth, three-foot-tall battlements surround the Offering Spire's flat top. In the center of the stone floor, an engraved circle depicts interwoven vines and esoteric runes. On the eastern side, a horn of living fungus grows up out of the stone, its hollow stalk starting as a small mouthpiece and growing larger as it encircles itself and ends in a large trumpetlike bell. A nest of sticks and bones fills the roof's northeastern corner.

The fungal horn is the *Sporehorn* needed to complete the summoning ritual.

Creature: A hieracosphinx has built its nest atop this tower and defends it fiercely. As soon as it detects an intruder, it Pounces, saving its Shriek until it's threatened by multiple enemies. Its contingent glyph is attuned to fire damage, and it goads any character with an obvious fire source. The hieracosphinx is extremely hostile, but it attempts to flee if reduced to 10 Hit Points or fewer.

HIERACOSPHERIX

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 250

Initiative Perception +14

Treasure: The characters aren't the only humanoids the hieracosphinx fought recently. Anyone who searches its nest finds the gnawed bones of a lashunta, as well as a +1 *striking short sword* with an obsidian inlay of a serpent.

SUMMONING SHE WHO WALKS

Once the party defeats the tower's final inhabitant, it's time to complete the summoning ritual. When the party lowers the ropes, their Oatia guides below tie on the sacks of fruit, which the characters can then hoist up and spread out in the demarcated circle. All that's left then is to blow the *Sporehorn*. At this point, read or paraphrase the following.

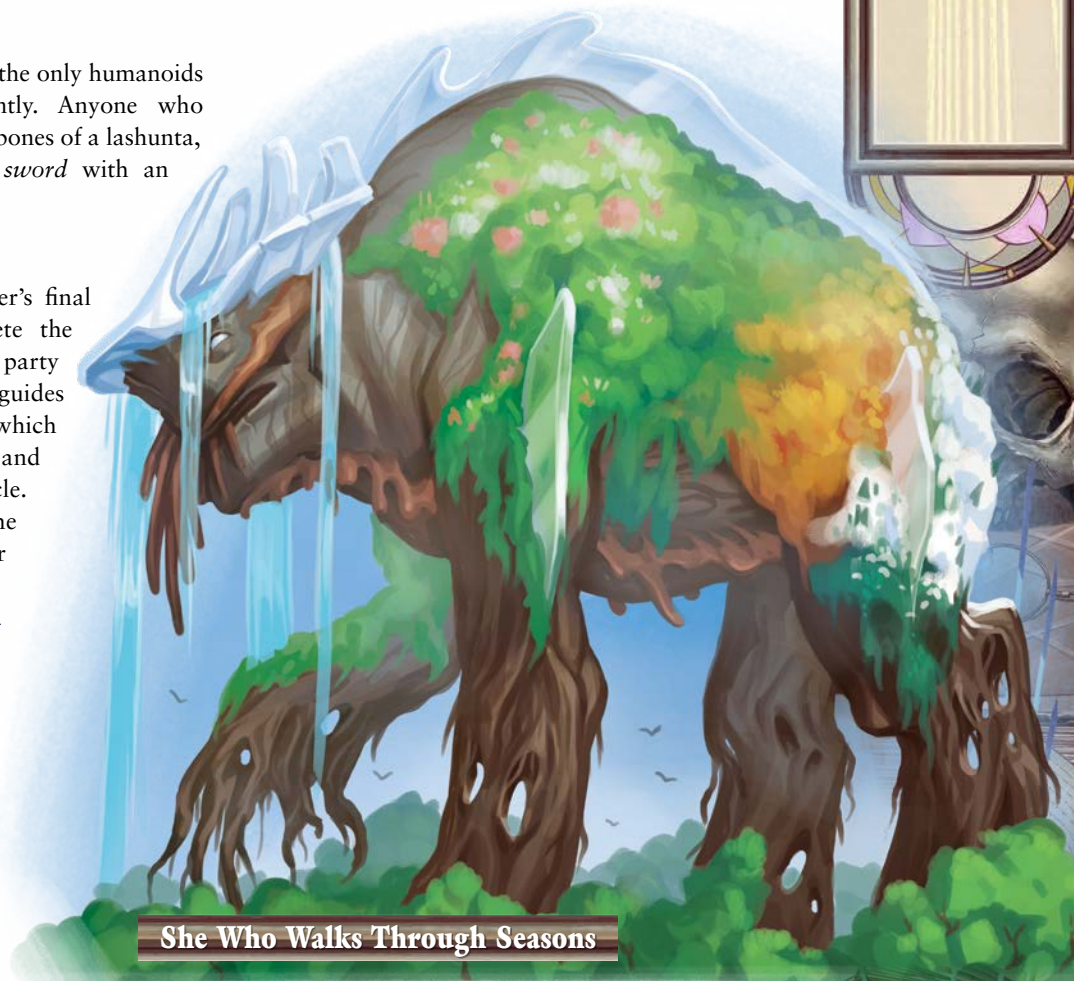
As you blow the bizarre horn, it releases not only a surprisingly deep, mournful tone, but also bright orange spores that explode from the horn's bell cap.

For several minutes, nothing happens. Give the PCs time to get nervous that something's gone wrong, then read or paraphrase the following.

A low rumble, like a peal of distant thunder, shakes the tower. To the east, the jungle canopy seems to rise up and crest like a wave. The surge resolves itself into a titanic, quadrupedal body made of the jungle itself, a form either made of plants or encrusted so thickly that no flesh can be seen. The foliage on the creature's back is thinner, and her head is crowned with a knot of trees around a glimmering freshwater spring, barely visible through a protective ring of glacial ice.

She Who Walks Through Seasons approaches quickly but stops 20 feet short of the tower and opens a whale-like mouth of tree roots and moss. At this cue, the flocks of birds following her descend on the tower in a flurry, working together to pluck up the offerings and carry it into her waiting maw.

This is the party's chance. The demigod's flank is 20 feet from the edge of the tower, meaning a character will need to make a successful DC 20 Athletics to Leap to land atop She Who Walks. Characters who fail can use the Grab an Edge action (DC 20 Reflex save) to attempt to catch one of the trees lower on the flank, but a character who fails this save falls all the way to the ground 60 feet below.



She Who Walks Through Seasons

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As long as one character successfully scampers onto She Who Walks, they can tie one of the Oatia's ropes to a tree to enable others to tie in and swing across without risk. Once atop She Who Walks, characters aren't at risk of falling off and can easily climb through the dense tangle to area D4.

D4. JUNGLE GOD'S SPINE

MODERATE 3

A long, narrow strip of grass runs down the length of the behemoth's spine, forming a temperate valley between imposing walls of glacial ice. The grassy glen is studded with small, gnarled trees bearing fruit of all different types.

The grassy sward continues off the map to the south for another 200 feet, looking much the same before finally curving down and emerging from the ice to end in more forested flanks. The forested flanks at the edges of the sward are steep and dense, serving as difficult terrain and granting creatures within standard cover. The ice walls, not depicted on the map, are too steep and slick to climb, so the PCs must enter this area from the south.



Creatures: An enclave of kappas calling themselves “We Who Defend” lives atop She Who Walks, where they worship the great water-headed beast as the mother of their kind. These kappas never leave their host, instead taking the oasis water for their head bowls and surviving solely on her fruits, which they also brew into potent spirits. Unlike kappas on Golarion, these Castrovelian natives are mottled with bright colors. They have wavering antennae that grant them telepathy, as well as bulging eyes that can rotate independently of one another.

Fervently devout, the kappas assume that anyone else attempting to harvest the waters of She Who Walks is unworthy at best and a dire threat at worst. The moment any character reaches the grassy sward, the kappas burst from their hiding places and attack, attempting to block the party's way to the oasis and pursuing them to its shores if necessary.

All the kappas have already used their Pull Arm ability, granting themselves reach. They zealously fight to the death, shouting telepathically that the characters are trespassers and blasphemers.

KAPPAS (3)

CREATURE 2

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 147

Initiative Perception +9

Languages Aquan, Elven, Lashunta; telepathy 100 feet

Treasure: Each kappa has a *minor healing potion* (in the form of a gourd of sacred fruit liquor) hidden in its shell. The spirits were brewed from the spring water and fruits of She Who Walks.

D5. OASIS OF SEASONS

TRIVIAL 3

A ring of trees, their leaves flickering through vibrant colors, surrounds a bubbling pool fogged with fragrant steam. Jets of boiling water occasionally burst from the water's surface.

Geyser Hazard: The magical headwaters of She Who Walks Through Seasons boil from their point of origin. The pond is pungent with the scent of eucalyptus and other plant oils. An innate defense mechanism targets those who attempt to harvest water from the oasis.

SACRED GEYSER

HAZARD 3

ENVIRONMENTAL FIRE WATER

Stealth DC 19 (trained)

Description A geyser of boiling water erupts at any character who attempts to take water from the oasis.

Disable DC 21 Thievery (trained) to concoct a mechanism for indirectly harvesting the water from a safe distance

Boiling Geyser ↻ **Trigger** A creature dips a vessel or

otherwise attempts to remove water from the oasis; **Effect** A jet of magical boiling water targets the triggering creature and affects all creatures within 5 feet of the target. Creatures caught in the burst take 2d10+13 fire damage (basic DC 23 Reflex save).

Reset The geyser resets automatically and adapts to previous circumvention, requiring a new check to disable it each time.

Being struck by the geyser doesn't prevent the triggering character from successfully harvesting water, and they get enough for their needs on their first attempt. While characters are welcome to continue harvesting more water, the liquid essence of She Who Walks actively resists commodification—whether the characters gather a gourd-full or multiple barrels, the water has the same amount of magic as if they'd collected the single gourd.

Descending She Who Walks: Once they have the water, the player characters' mission is complete. Rappelling down the side of She Who Walks is a trivial matter. Once all visitors have disembarked, She Who Walks Through Seasons turns with a rumbling moan and strides back into the jungle, sinking into the trees and disappearing. The player characters are left with the distinct, inexplicable feeling that She Who Walks understood their goal and approved.

SAVING ALLELI

Once the party returns to Loskialua, the elves immediately set to brewing a cure for the *obnubilate curse*. As they administer it to Alleli, read or paraphrase the following.

Alleli's wheezing body lies curled and charred on the bed. As the sages' glowing tincture touches her tongue, however, the change is instantaneous. Shriveled skin swells with new vigor, and gray dust falls away to reveal raw but healthy flesh beneath. The elf lurches upward with a gasp. She looks around in shock, then smiles, and in a shaky voice says, "Hello, everyone. I hope I haven't kept you waiting." The room erupts in cheers and happy sobs.

Townpeople the player characters haven't even met yet hug them, thanking them for their help, and the entire settlement erupts into a spontaneous party, with Oatia shaking the PCs' hands, kissing cheeks, and garlanding them with flowers. A feast is quickly pulled together to honor the new heroes of Loskialua.

Treasure: An alchemist named Oloffia uses the extra waters collected from She Who Walks Through Seasons to concoct some useful consumable items for the party. The bundle of concoctions, worth 189 gp in all, includes the following.

- Two *bottled omens* and two *drafts of stellar radiance* (both on page 81)
- Four lesser antidotes, four lesser antiplagues, and four lesser comprehension elixirs
- Two *barkskin potions*, two *potions of water breathing*, and a *potion of leaping*

Oloffia also thinks to apply a few drops of the finished cure to the *Shadewither Key*, removing the *obnubilate curse* from the relic entirely.

Going Home

With the danger of the *obnubilate curse* past, the PCs have as many days as they'd like to rest, recover, and interact with their new friends. Their Oatia hosts are, in turn, eager to learn from the party and share their own traditions, even teaching any so inclined their greatest astronomical secrets (see New Archetype on page 62). If you and your group are up for it, you can even use this time to devise some short adventures for characters who want to explore more of the Ikal Expanse or beyond. See *Adventures on Castrovel* on page 66 for inspiration.

At some point, however, it's time to go. Alleli, for her part, isn't one to sit on her hands. After several days of research and examining the *Shadewither Key* from a prudent distance, she finds the characters and briefs them on her discoveries.

Read or paraphrase the following to begin the final leg of this adventure.

"I think I've found a way to get you home." Alleli's green eyes gleam. "Before you arrived, I was communing with a distant astronomer named Sakuachi—a human from your world. She hails from the same part of Golarion where Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale, is buried, but there's more: she told me she was on a quest to seal away an ancient evil that had recently awoken beneath the ice. And now here you are, bearing a key with Osoyo's mark."

Alleli closes her eyes and shakes her head ruefully. "We Oatia believe in omens, not coincidences," she says. "I believe your mission and Sakuachi's may align."

She pulls out a bunch of notes lined with arcane equations. "Through means I won't pretend to understand, Sakuachi attuned her telescope and mine, creating a bond stretching across the space between our planets. At the same time, your *Shadewither Key* had the power to activate the *aiudara* that led you here. I believe that if I can link all three—the telescope, the arch, and the key—I can create a one-way portal from our telescope to hers. A doorway back to your world!"

Alleli grins proudly, then frowns. "I should warn you, though: the magic of the *aiudara* is poorly understood, even here. It'll be dangerous, and there's a chance that the feedback could destroy the artifacts. But, stars willing, it might just work."

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NEW ARCHETYPE

During the characters' stay with the Oatia after Alleli's curse is cured, sages from Loskialua offer to teach the party the secrets of the stars. Each character gains access to the Oatia Skysage archetype, detailed on page 82. A character so inclined can use the downtime spent with in Loskialua to retrain into this archetype.

LEAVING LOSKIALUA

Once the characters are ready, Alleli and a handful of her fellow sages meet them at the light-line gondola headed out of Loskialua. The sages haul with them a massive deconstructed telescope, which they'll set up at the same ruins where the characters first emerged on Castrovel. The light-line makes the first portion of their journey relatively easy, and the size and strength of the group scares away predators between the light-line and the *aiudara*.

Unfortunately for the party, simply reaching the archway is the easy part. The following encounters use the maps on page 64, starting with The Dragon's Gate.

EVENT 11: THE DRAGON'S GATE

SEVERE 3

The ruins of this jungle *aiudara* appear exactly as before. The arch stands atop a crumbling, ten-foot-tall stone platform with stairs leading up from north and south, while lower five-foot-tall platforms bracket the main platform's corners, tipped by obelisks of darker stone.

Creature: Unfortunately for the characters, the ruins are now occupied. A Castrovelian jungle drake—which the characters might have found signs of the last time they were here—considers the arch and its surroundings its territory. Having returned from a hunt to find evidence of trespassers, the enraged drake waits in hiding (Stealth +13) to ambush the party.

On the first round of combat, the jungle drake Spits Venom at the party, hoping to surprise the group and catch them clustered together. After that, it races into melee with Speed Surge and relies on Draconic Frenzy to attack as often as possible, trusting that its twisting tail will help lock down enemies.

JUNGLE DRAKE

CREATURE 6

Pathfinder Bestiary 132

Initiative Stealth +13

Healing: Though she doesn't take part in the fight, an Oatia sage named Oxaya offers to heal the characters to their maximum Hit Points after this encounter.

Treasure: A poison-spattered +1 *breastplate* lies unceremoniously next to the drake's scat pile.

Redirecting the Gate

With the drake defeated, the characters can get out of the way and let Alleli take over. Under her direction, the Oatia quickly rig the telescope to the *aiudara* with enchanted copper wire. They strap the *Shadewither Key* to the top of the arch with delicate strands of gold appropriated from someone's necklace. Alleli makes one last adjustment to the telescope, then looks to the characters for the go-ahead. As soon as the party says they're ready, read or paraphrase the following aloud.

Alleli closes her eyes and softly chants as she places both hands on the telescope. Golden light spills out from the gate key and cascades down the *aiudara*, then through the wire to the telescope. With a deep, chest-rattling hum, the telescope blasts a beam of light up into the sky.

Alleli grins and cries, "It's working!"

Yet as she says it, the hum takes on a discordant note. Her smile falters as the telescope's beam suddenly changes direction, refracting toward different points across the sky. The landscape itself begins to fuzz and shift, the stones around the *aiudara* remaining the same but everything else transforming. Images of alien beings and strange places—dragons in the snow, gelatinous blobs in candyfloss clouds, spindly angels soaring in a starry void—flicker past too quickly to catalogue.

"The *aiudara*'s broken loose," Alleli shouts, her hands working frantically at the telescope. "It's searching for a new connection, and trying to take this whole clearing with it. Hold on—we won't have another chance at this!"

As Alleli struggles to control the *aiudara*, the portal locks temporarily onto worlds that aren't Golarion.

Event Encounters: The following encounters, **Events 12–14**, occur one after the other. In each, the environment holds steady long enough for one or two nearby creatures (as indicated in each event) to notice and engage the characters in 4 rounds of combat.

During each encounter, Alleli shouts for the party to keep the monsters away from the telescope and the *aiudara*. At the end of the fourth round of combat, the scene shifts to the next location, starting the next event. The characters, marked by the *aiudara*'s magic, teleport along with the *aiudara* and the Oatia attendants. They begin each event in the same space relative to the *aiudara*.

XP Award: Because these encounters are time-limited, treat the following events as one 12-round mega-encounter. Regardless of how many opponents they defeat, award each character 120 XP for holding out long enough for Alleli to fix the portal.

EVENT 12: AKITON MODERATE 3

Alleli adjusts something, and the flickering landscape suddenly locks in place. Cold red desert appears all around, broken up by delicate rock columns and high canyon walls. The gateway ruins now stand in the mouth of a canyon, at the bottom of which lies a strange contraption like an insect with canvas wings.

Forty feet away, a ratfolk in a wide-brimmed hat glares at you from the back of a giant red lizard. He rears his mount and shrieks, "This is *my* salvage, you too-tall sand-suckers!"

Creatures: The panicked salvager, a ratfolk (or ysoki, on this planet) named Nurl, is native to the desert world of Akiton. He assumes the characters are rival scavengers and is immediately hostile toward the party. Unless the characters can quell his rage with a *calm emotions* spell or similar effect, Nurl leaps off his mount Carla and orders her to charge in while he hurls bombs at the characters from a distance.

NURL CREATURE 4

Ratfolk grenadier (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 277)

Initiative Perception +10

CARLA CREATURE 1

Giant gecko (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 228)

Initiative Perception +7

EVENT 13: AUCTURN MODERATE 3

Clouds of roiling yellow-green mist rush over the desert. The sandy ground falls away and is replaced with spongy, fleshlike hills of oozing blisters, dotted with pools of black goo and groves of what look like hair follicles. From the peak of a nearby ridge like a huge vein, an eyeless, black-winged shape takes flight.

This is Aucturn, the mysterious living planet at the edge of Golarion's solar system, home to nightmares and cults of the Outer Gods.

Creature: A nightgaunt—immune to the effects of Aucturn's atmosphere—immediately notices the characters and flies in to attack. It attempts to grab one of the characters and fly up into the air, where it can tickle and claw them at its leisure.

NIGHTGAUNT

CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 186

Initiative Perception +10

Environmental Hazard: Aucturn's atmosphere is a soup of magical effluvium that has strange effects on living creatures. This atmosphere floods in the moment the scene changes, giving the characters no chance to hold their breath or otherwise mitigate the poison on the first round of combat with the nightgaunt. On subsequent rounds, though, characters can attempt to disable or respond to the hazard as below.

POISONOUS ATMOSPHERE HAZARD 1

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL MAGICAL MENTAL POISON

Stealth +5 (expert) to identify the source of sudden nausea



Castrovelian Jungle Drake

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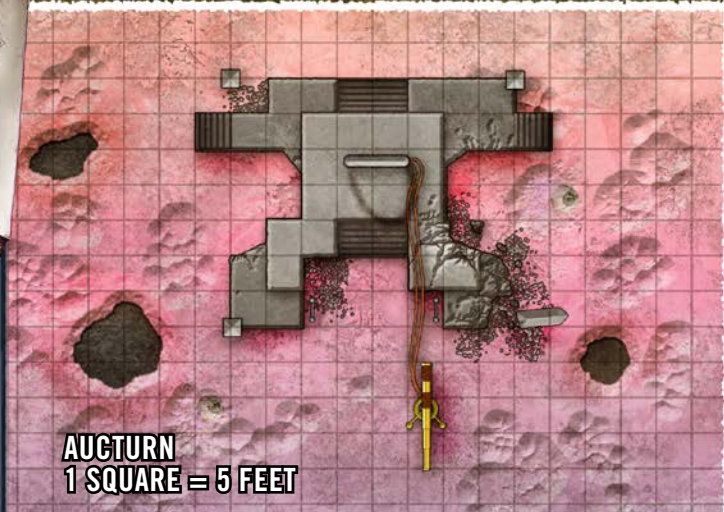
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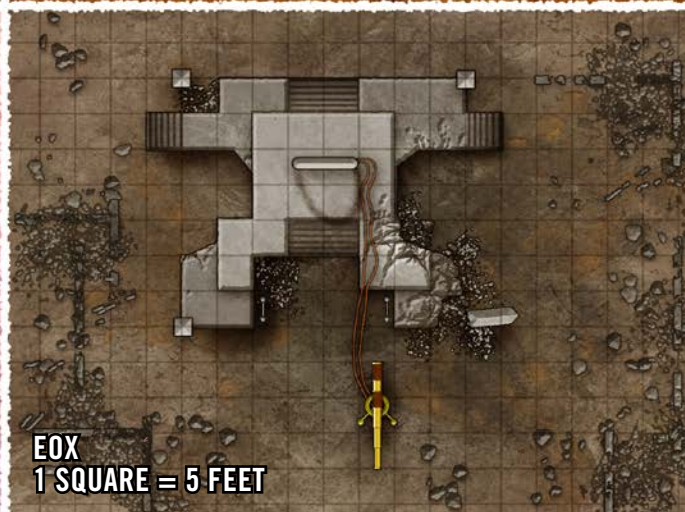
THE DRAGON'S GATE
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



AKITON
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET




AUCTURN
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



EOX
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Description Aucturn's poisonous, magical atmosphere has strange effects on the planet's creatures.

Disable DC 20 Survival (trained) or Occultism (trained) to breathe pockets of safe air trapped in bags and clothing

Poisonous Atmosphere  (illusion, mental, occult) **Trigger** A non-native creature breathes the atmosphere; **Effect** The triggering creature must attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save. The hazard then rolls initiative.

Critical Success The creature is invigorated by the atmosphere and is quickened for 1 round.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is clumsy 1.

Critical Failure The creature is confused for 1 round.

Routine (1 action; illusion, mental, occult) The atmosphere continues to affect all creatures in the area, requiring a new Fortitude save each round against its Poisonous Atmosphere (above). A creature holding its breath gains a +2 circumstance bonus to the save.

sky once hung overhead is now only the starry black of space. Nearby, cracked bones litter the blasted foundation of a ruined building. In the distance, a delicate palace rises from the rock, its walls formed from giant, fused bones. Wind howls into the arch of the *aiudara* from all directions.

This is Eox, an apocalyptic world ruled by undead who, in life, burned away their planet's atmosphere.

Creature: A cairn wight sits in the ruined building, chatting with the inanimate bones of long-dead loved ones. When the characters arrive, the wight looks up happily and rushes in to take them prisoner, crowing about how its Bone Sage masters will reward it for capturing "warmbloods." The attacker jabbars excitedly as it assails the characters, wondering aloud whether the Bone Sages will keep the party as pets or sacrifice them to empower their necromantic experiments. Attempts at diplomacy or reason can only fail—the wight knows all too well the penalty for failing its masters.

EVENT 14: EOX

MODERATE 3

The grotesque living landscape blinks away, replaced by a dead plain of blackened and cratered stone. Where the

CAIRN WIGHT

CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 292

Initiative Perception +11

Environmental Hazard: As Eox no longer possesses an atmosphere, the pressure difference between that world and Castrovel creates an intense wind. Though the whole scene appears to be Eox, it's in fact just a magical superposition of the two worlds; the true portal is a small hole inside the archway, which is why the wind rushes there to fill the vacuum. The wight, existing more on the Eox side, is unaffected by the wind.

RUSHING WIND


HAZARD 2

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL

Stealth +7 (trained) to detect the change in pressure

Description A raging wind sucks creatures in the area toward the *aiudara*.

Disable DC 20 Thievery (trained) or Arcana (trained) to recognize what's happening and craft a patch to block air from escaping through the portal

Gale  **Trigger** The *aiudara* appears here on Eox; **Effect** A jet of wind pulls creatures caught between the worlds toward the archway. The hazard rolls initiative.

Routine (1 action) The hazard uses its action to suck each creature (except the cairn wight) toward the *aiudara*. Each affected creature must attempt a DC 18 Fortitude save.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is pulled 5 feet toward the *aiudara* and is stunned 1. If the creature is already adjacent to the *aiudara*, it doesn't move but is stunned 2.

Critical Failure The creature is pulled 10 feet toward the *aiudara*, falls prone, and is stunned 1. If the creature is already adjacent to the *aiudara*, it doesn't move but falls prone and is stunned 2.

Once 4 rounds have passed on Eox, or the characters have defeated the wight attacking them, the landscape shifts one final time, marking the end of the party's harrowing gauntlet across space.

Concluding the Adventure

After the party's foray to Akiton, Aucturn, and Eox, the gate finally stabilizes on its intended destination, and the characters can take their final plunge toward Golarion.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud to conclude the adventure.

With a lurch, the landscape blinks back into the original jungle clearing, everything as before except the archway—the gate's interior is now filled with a veil of white mist, through which a simple stone chamber is faintly visible. Above the arch, the gate key sputters and sparks, rusting into dust before your very eyes.

Alleli, sweaty from effort, clings to the telescope with both arms, its beam of light pointing steadily back in its original direction. "Hurry!" she says, gesturing to the rapidly deteriorating key. "I don't know how long it'll stay open!" She gives you a weary smile. "And thank you—for everything. We will tell this story for generations..."

The booming sounds of the rushing portal drown out Alleli's final words.

When the characters leap through the *aiudara*, the portal vanishes behind them as the *Shadewither Key* crumbles to dust. What they find beyond the portal—the city of Skywatch, the oracle Sakuachi, and a quest to find a living god—unfolds in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #188: They Watched the Stars*.



Eox Cairn Wight

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ADVENTURES ON CASTROVEL

Golarion is the third planet from its sun, while Castrovel is the second. Verdant and teeming with life, the Green Planet has long been viewed as a sister world by neighboring Golarion and is the planet most visited by Golarion natives. In writing about Castrovel, travelers from Golarion usually describe it as a primal world, its elegant cities overshadowed by the trackless jungles and oversized predators that constantly claw at the gates. Yet while Castrovel's landscape harbors great dangers, it also offers great rewards.

As on Golarion, the people of Castrovel have a rich tradition of venturing into the wilds in search of wealth and glory. The ruins and secrets within Castrovel's dinosaur-haunted jungles and chittering desert battlefields provide countless opportunities for exploration and discovery. In the following pages, you'll find rich details, story hooks, and practical tools for creating your own adventures on Castrovel.

CASTROVELIAN CULTURES

Though many different intelligent species call the planet home, Castrovelian society is dominated by three main peoples—lashuntas, elves, and formians—each of which rose to power on their own continent.

Naturally gifted psychics, **lashuntas** are Castrovel's most influential ancestry, and their city-states can be found across the continent of Asana. These antennae humanoids divide naturally into two subspecies: the tall, intellectual damaya and the short, burly korasha. Membership in a given subspecies is not hereditary, and lashunta children decide at puberty which of these two clades they'll grow into. While damaya tend toward leadership and interpersonal roles and korasha tend toward physically demanding jobs, both share a cultural obsession with scholarship and self-improvement. Fractious and individualistic, lashunta cities regularly form and break alliances as they jockey for position, occasionally engaging in ritual battles or raiding each other with lizard-mounted cavalry. Despite this, the lashuntas of Castrovel always band together to combat external threats.

Elves are common on Castrovel, and many believe that the Green Planet was the birthplace of

their people. Certainly, many elves retreated to the continent-nation of Sovyrian during the chaos of Earthfall on Golarion. While Castrovel's elves are less standoffish than most elves on Golarion, their history in the region (a long one, even by elven standards) manifests as ardent and often arbitrary traditionalism. Largely cut off from other continents by stormy seas, the people of Sovyrian have managed to domesticate far more of their territory than the embattled lashuntas on Asana, and internal conflict typically takes the form of political scheming within the Great Houses of El.

The last and most unusual of the three great societies of Castrovel are the **formians**. Resembling giant telepathic ants, formian society mirrors that of their insectile cousins with queen and caste being integral parts of daily life. Though capable of independent thought and pursuing individual goals, a formian never loses sight of their duty to the hive. Thousands of years ago, numerous independent hives battled one another for territory. Faced with continual civil war and the threat of lashunta expansionism, the largest hives reached concordance during the historic Meeting of the Queens, where formians the world over swore fealty to "the Overqueen," an ideological symbol which allowed individual hives to operate independently while honoring an encompassing hierarchy. Today, the conglomerate empire of formians has many names—the Everlasting Queendoms, the Unified Hive, and so forth—but other peoples usually refer to this realm simply as the Colonies.

Interspecies relations on Castrovel vary wildly. While lashuntas and elves trade goods and ideas freely, lashuntas and formians have been at war for centuries over the archipelago where their territories meet. Elves and formians maintain tentative relations, though most elves find the formians' strict hierarchy stifling while formians see elves as flighty and mercurial. Reactions to species beyond these three varies, but most Castrovelians recognize that the largest imminent threat to their people is that of wild beasts and carnivorous plants, not alien invasion. Thus, Castrovelians generally tolerate peaceful strangers, seeing in them potential allies against the natural dangers of their home world.

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ADVENTURING RULES

Fortunately for characters, Castrovel's environment is practically identical to certain parts of Golarion. The gravity is the same on both planets, and Castrovel's atmosphere is breathable from pole to pole. While much of the Green Planet is hot and humid thanks to its proximity to the sun and relatively thick atmosphere, temperate regions exist, and even the most sweltering swamps are no worse than what Golarion natives might encounter in the jungles of the Mwangi Expanse.

Still, a few differences between the two planets are striking enough that parties are likely to notice. While you can certainly run adventures set on Castrovel using the normal Pathfinder rules, you might incorporate the following changes to emphasize the unfamiliar nature of this alien world.

Environment

Castrovel's atmosphere is noticeably denser than Golarion's and slightly richer in oxygen. As a result, Castrovelian winds are often stronger, and creatures from Golarion tend to have noticeably more stamina on Castrovel. Yet this higher oxygen concentration can also be dangerous—fires of all sizes burn hot and fast,

and creatures unaccustomed to this fact do well to keep an eye on their torches and campfires.

- Wind is always strong, functioning as difficult terrain for flying creatures. Occasionally, a strong gust might knock landbound creatures prone unless they succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save. See page 517 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* for more details on the effects of wind.
- Creatures from Golarion gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Fortitude saves against effects that would cause them to become fatigued.
- Any effects that deal fire damage deal an additional 1 fire damage.

Languages

Linguistically, Castrovel is both more and less alien than travelers might expect. Creatures on Castrovel with Common listed in their statistics generally don't speak the Common that Golarion-based characters do (namely, Taldane in the Inner Sea region). Instead, Castrovel's version of Common is Lashunta, the most widely-spoken language on the planet.

Fortunately for visitors from Golarion, most Castrovelian humanoids speak multiple languages. Elven is nearly as common as Lashunta and is largely

identical to the Elven dialect spoken on Golarion. Many scholars also speak Sylvan, Draconic, Celestial, Infernal, or any number of other languages that transcend the planets, making it relatively easy for multilingual parties to establish communication.

The following languages are Common and Uncommon on Castrovel. Languages not listed have the same rarity as their Golarion counterparts, which are listed on page 65 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*.

CASTROVELIAN LANGUAGES

Rarity	Languages
Common	Aquan, Auran, Common (Lashunta), Formian, Ignan, Terran
Uncommon	Common (Taldane), Dwarven, Goblin, Halfling, Orcish, Undercommon

Travel

Castrovel's network of *aiudara*—magical archways built by elves to teleport vast distances—is both larger and more functional than Golarion's. Large hubs like El or Telasia contain many *aiudara*, which link to others across the globe, making intercontinental travel feasible and almost even practical. In recent generations, however, the population has shrunk, leaving many of the network's gates in disrepair or abandoned to local monsters. As suits your campaign, you might present *aiudara* for the party to find and use to access different regions of Castrovel.

ALIEN CREATURES

Golarion and Castrovel each have their own ecosystems and species of wildlife. That said, feel free to use creatures from the *Pathfinder Bestiary* to populate your Castrovelian adventures with these simple modifications.

Creature Abilities

You can quickly modify a creature to feel more Castrovelian by giving it one of the following abilities.

Extra Large A rich atmosphere and access to plentiful food make this creature larger than its Golarion counterpart.

The creature's size increases one step (from Medium to Large, for example).

Gaseous Adaptation A creature adapted to Castrovel's atmosphere has fire resistance equal to its level and electricity weakness equal to its level + 2.

Telepathy (aura, divination, magical) A creature with telepathy can communicate mentally with any creatures within the listed radius, as long as they share a language. This doesn't give any special access to their thoughts and shares only the information than normal speech would.

RARITY

Creatures native to Castrovel are rarely encountered on Golarion and vice-versa. Some types of magic are also more common on the Green Planet. The Castrovelian creatures and spells in this volume's Adventure Toolbox all have the uncommon rarity. This reflects their rarity on Golarion, the presumed setting for most Pathfinder adventures, as well as how much Golarion natives would know about these creatures and spells. On Castrovel and to Castrovel natives, though, these creatures and spells are common.

Superficial Features

Superficial changes to descriptions of familiar Golarion creatures can also yield Castrovelian creatures. For any standard creature the party encounters, you can roll 1d8 and reference the following table to give that creature a distinctly Castrovelian physical feature.

CASTROVELIAN FEATURES

d8	Physical Feature
1	Brightly colored skin, scales, or plumage
2	Adapted to a different environ than its Golarion counterpart
3	Amphibious features (smooth flesh, webbed digits, or water-dwelling larvae)
4	Avian features (feathered skin, beaked mouth, or taloned legs)
5	Bioluminescent internal fluids (blood, saliva, or scat)
6	Mottled or striped coloration
7	Backward-bending legs
8	Arthropodal features (antennae, extra eyes, or extra legs)

LEGENDARY LOCATIONS

The following pages detail some of the most fabled and mysterious locations on Castrovel—places ripe for adventurous explorers, monster slayers, and treasure hunters. As with the Lost City of Kho or the ruined crusader keeps of the Gravelands on Golarion, scholars on Castrovel may well know where to find these epic locales, yet only the bravest heroes actually dare venture into them.

These locations are organized by continent. Each section also includes information on the cities from which characters might launch their wilderness expeditions, as well as a new hazard or item adventurers might encounter along the way.

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Asana

Castrovel's largest and most densely populated continent is framed by the Stormshield Mountains to the west, the Glow silk Jungle to the east, the Frost Isles to the north, and the Strait of Glory to the south. Thanks to the *aiudara* network, isolated city-states lie scattered all across the continent, with their de facto capital being Qabarat. Known as the Shining Jewel of the Western Sea, this metropolis boasts no less than three major universities and four different portal-gates, including one to Akiton, the Red Planet.

By far the most mysterious natural feature in Asana is the Ocean of Mists: a vast canyon network hundreds of miles long, filled with multicolored mists that waver and splash like an actual sea. Although drowning in this sea is believed to be impossible, plenty of predators have adapted to the strange faux-aquatic environment, making diving in the murky mists a dangerous proposition.

MOLDSTORMS

Castrovel's fecundity is both a blessing and a curse. Through means that scholars still don't understand, fields of mold and fungi will sometimes coordinate their spore release, creating vast fungal clouds called moldstorms. These voracious storm fronts roll across the landscape, dissolving organic matter with terrifying speed. Although moldstorms can be encountered anywhere on the planet, they're most common in the northern hemisphere, where they rage through Asana's most populous cities. The statistics presented below represent a relatively minor storm, but huge "death blooms" can deal significantly more damage and last for hours, even days.

Moldstorms are an environmental feature unique to Castrovel. The full rules for environmental features appear on page 512 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*.

Depending on their severity, moldstorms impose varying effects. These effects are summarized on the Moldstorms table on page 71.

Difficulty Class: The table indicates the DC for each category of moldstorm. Use this DC for Fortitude saving throws, Survival checks to build a shelter, and other relevant saves or checks to weather the moldstorm.

Shelter: A creature can shelter in place to lessen the damage and effects of a moldstorm by one category. To construct a suitable shelter, a creature can spend 1 hour and attempt a Survival check against the moldstorm's DC.

Visibility and Fatigue: Moldstorms reduce visibility to the indicated distance. Characters traveling in a moldstorm become fatigued after the listed duration.

Acid Damage: Moldstorms' corrosive spores deal acid damage to creatures in the area. A creature can roll a basic Fortitude save to mitigate the damage.

Other Effects: Severe and stronger moldstorms produce additional effects.

Sickened: A creature that fails its Fortitude save against a severe or stronger moldstorm's acid damage becomes sickened. The creature can remove the sickened condition as usual but can be sickened again by failing subsequent



Lashunta Moldblazer

MOLDSTORMS

Category	DC	Visibility	Fatigue	Acid Damage	Other Effects
Mild moldstorm	10	1/2 mile	4 hours	1d6 per hour	—
Severe moldstorm	15	200 feet	2 hours	2d6 per hour	Sickened 1
Extreme moldstorm	25	60 feet	1 hour	6d6 per minute	Sickened 1, item disintegration
Incredible moldstorm	35	10 feet	1 hour	12d6 per round	Sickened 2, item disintegration

saves. A creature that critically succeeds on its save is immune to the moldstorm's sickening effect for 24 hours or until the moldstorm's category increases.

Item Disintegration: In especially strong moldstorms, attended organic items are damaged by the corrosive spores. If a creature critically fails its Fortitude save against acid damage in an extreme or incredible moldstorm, one random item made of organic material (such as leather or wood) in the creature's possession gains the broken condition.

ADVENTURE SITES

The following are some of Asana's most storied adventure locations.

The Silent Shard: Running along Asana's southeastern peninsula are the Floating Shards, mountain peaks cut off and levitated by lashunta spellcasters. Among them float the nine great Mountainheart Cities, fortified settlements inside vast cylinders that connect the peaks to the mountains below. If formians manage to break through the battle lines beyond the contested island chain called the Bulwarks, each city can slide into subterranean safety, lowering its peak back down and turning the entire mountain into a sealed bunker.

Yet this plan isn't foolproof. Thirty years ago, the Mountainheart City called Yemar closed unexpectedly. Efforts to establish communication with the city failed, as did attempts to break in via the city's secret escape tunnels. Privately, lashunta leaders suspect that the disaster has something to do with the secret superweapon that was being constructed in the fortress-city's laboratories. Enterprising salvagers still mount expeditions to find ways into the Silent Shard in search of survivors—or whatever treasures they might have left behind.

The Source of Mists: The "seafloor" of the Ocean of Mists has long attracted treasure hunters. Those who descend to its depths find not just salvage from wrecked ships but also the ruined citadels of some as-yet-unknown species. The merfolk-like teshki who soar through the fog refer to these lost people as the "forecomers" but otherwise avoid the ruins, believing them to be haunted. Greatest of these structures is the fabled Source of Mists: a long, articulated fortress constructed atop the back of a great serpent, its hinged

walls undulating as the beast swims. According to teshki legend, this structure was responsible for the sea's strange birth, creating the mists in a magical shockwave. No reputable surface-dwelling scholar has seen the traveling keep, let alone ventured inside, but the first to do so might finally understand a vital piece of the planet's history—as well as gain access to magic of unbelievable power. But the Source is reportedly guarded by the sea's most feared inhabitants: the mysterious mistcallers whose magical name-speech is said to be able to disincorporate a trespasser into a cloud of bloody droplets.

Tidelight: Situated at the southern edge of the Gulf of Parting, this castle has stood empty as long as lashuntas have kept records. Its smooth, almost organic stone towers adhere to the cliff's face like a mussel, while its top arcs over the water and cuts the sea winds into eerie melodies. When the tide is high, seawater floods the keep, drawn inexplicably upward through the towers, filling them from floor to ceiling but refusing to spill out through the open doors. As the tides recedes, a line of light blasts into the sky, after which the water drains out in a rush. Those water-breathing explorers who've dared enter the towers speak of strange chime-songs that waft on the breeze, doors that slide open and close at random, and the desperate sense that they're being asked an urgent question they don't quite understand. Those who remain in the towers during the bolt of light and subsequent draining are never seen again.

The Winding Way: Deep in the Shemez Desert, a vast maze is carved into the ground, its yards-wide lines shallow but sharp against the sand. Those who walk the labyrinth to its end are said to be gifted three visions: one of their past, one of their present, and one of their future. Attempting to acquire these visions is perilous, however: once a traveler begins walking the Winding Way, they cannot step off without losing whatever they hold most dear—a person, an object, status, or even their own memories. Furthermore, the maze's narrow corridors make its visitors into tempting targets for predators. Misery *siktemporas* (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 232) in particular are called by the maze, following its lines of prophecy down from the Dimension of Time so they can knock wayfarers from the path and revel in their despair.

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The Colonies

Often maligned by their humanoid neighbors, the Colonies' settlements are efficient, orderly, and industrious. While traditional formian deference to rules and authority can discourage innovation, intense organization and a collectivist mindset allow industry to thrive at a scale beyond anything achieved by Castrovel's elves or lashuntas. Vast agricultural fields, most underground, ensure that no hive goes hungry. Assembly lines allow for cheap and efficient production of many simple goods, and hereditary specialization among crafting castes leads to works of astonishing power and beauty.

Because most formian settlements are subterranean, their cities have a comparatively small footprint on the landscape, and large portions of their continent remain robust wilderness. This arrangement supports the other intelligent creatures who share their land: while the formians brook no threat to their sovereignty (hence their long war with the lashuntas), many formian queens are uninterested in subjugating "lesser" peoples, and so they allow most two-legged beings to dwell in their territory unbothered. This ethos means that benign humanoid travelers and traders can interact with formians without fear—usually.

Though bound together in the Glorious and Undeniable Dominion of All Beneath Moon and Soil, formian hives generally respect each other's independence, with the understanding that each hive-queen's individual whims are collectively blessed by the Overqueen. The largest of the formians' hive-cities, Queensrock, resembles a series of towering termite mounds and sits just offshore the Gulf of Legions. Two other large cities—Chisk the Undying and Kebenaut—line the gulf farther south. The three cities trade with each other by means of huge waterstriding yugulars. Other major cities on the Lemenore Coast include arid Qarik and Zsyk with its half-submerged ocean tunnels. To the east, the formerly fertile Ghechek Peninsula has been scarred by war, with all queens regularly sending troops to staff the bristling warhives in the Nestwall Mountains and the beachheads along the Strait of Glory. Given the constantly shifting battle lines, enterprising salvagers can make good money picking through the killing fields and abandoned fortresses—provided they can avoid the formians' clever traps.

LAST STRIKES

After generations of war, the armies of the Colonies know how to make the most of their soldiers, even in death. When forced to give up ground, the Colonies' troops seed the landscape with vicious booby traps,

including the much-feared "last strikes." For these grisly traps, formians harvest the stingers and acid glands of their fallen comrades, then embed the body parts along the walls of a camouflaged pit or trench. While other species often look askance at the morbid act of harvesting body parts for guerilla warfare, formians see this practice as a way to honor the dead. In this way, a soldier can serve the hive one last time even after death.

The "last strike" trap presented here is just one of dozens of variations.

FORMIAN STING TRENCH

HAZARD 4

MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 25 (trained)

Description A thin layer of canvas conceals this 10-foot-square pit, the walls of which are studded with dagger-sized formian stingers. Creatures that fall into the trap risk being gouged by the poisonous barbs.

Disable DC 22 Thievery (trained)

AC 18; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +8

Canvas **HP** 30 (BT 15); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Entrench ↻ (attack) **Trigger** A creature walks onto the canvas; **Effect** The creature falls into the concealed trench and takes falling damage (typically 10 bludgeoning damage). The creature is also gouged by three poisoned stingers as they fall. The creature can use the Grab an Edge reaction to avoid falling.

Melee ♦ stinger +17, **Damage** 1d8+3 plus formian trench poison

Formian Trench Poison (poison) **Saving Throw** Fortitude DC 21; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage and clumsy 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 1d6 poison damage, clumsy 1, and enfeebled 1 (1 round); **Stage 4** 2d6 poison damage, clumsy 1, and enfeebled 1 (1 round)

Reset Creatures can still fall into the trap, but the canvas must be reset manually for the trap to become hidden again.

ADVENTURE SITES

The following are some of the Colonies' most mysterious adventure sites.

The Colossus of Molkik: This immense statue seems frozen in the act of pulling itself free from Tchekal Mesa. The statue's body is split down the middle in such a way as to form a creature that's blasphemously half-formian, half-lashunta. Whoever crafted it or what it represents are unknown, but the intense magical auras surrounding the Colossus of Molkik indicate that it's no mere art piece. The most common interpretation is that it represents a hope for peace between the warring civilizations—but leaders on either side quietly fear that it may accomplish its goal only by crushing both.

The House of Runes: This strange stone palace stands empty in the desert, its grounds guarded by a dense border of cacti. Inside, corridors and staircases run in bizarre, sometimes physics-defying patterns, with connecting chambers ranging from cavernous to just a foot tall. All furnishings in the manor are stone, seemingly extruded from the walls and floors in the form of benches, tables, and pools. The house takes its name from the mysterious symbols that cover every surface. Even after generations of study, scholars have been able to decipher less than a tenth of the symbols. Research is often stymied by claims that some of the runes are in fact living symbols (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 162) which come alive to rearrange the text—and sometimes the vital organs of scholars. Others report rune-shaped rashes rising on visitors' skins or researchers vanishing up staircases that appear from nowhere.

The Seacrown: This cluster of sharp mountains rises up from the center of the Shattered Sea. Only the beaches of the archipelago are accessible, however, as a strange cylindrical field of magical force starts halfway up each slope, completely enclosing each peak in a murky bubble. Through these shields, strange cliffside cities can be glimpsed, populated by blurred, human-sized shapes that twist the eye, appearing like moving gaps in the air. Suspended doorways to these strange bubbles open briefly during solar eclipses, but so far no one who's entered has returned, though their gear is sometimes found unharmed years later and thousands of miles away.

Shemesh-Golol, the City Above and Below: The floating city of Shemesh-Golol is composed of two distinct halves: Shemesh above the waterline, home to witchwyrds (four-armed, potently magical planar travelers from a distant star) and their retainers; and Golol, the inverted city beneath where locathahs and other aquatic denizens dwell in long, soft-walled towers that descend like seaweed into the depths. Finding the hidden barge-city is difficult even with the most powerful magic. Instead, those who wish to trade with those in Shemesh-Golol are best advised to find one of its lighthouses secreted in hidden coves across Castrovel, most famously on the island of Zesn just off the coast of the Plains of Ru. Creatures who make their way up through the towers by solving puzzles and avoiding traps can then “ride the light” out to the city, wherever it may be.

The Treasure-Burrow of the Overqueen: Tangible or not, the Overqueen must receive tribute from her vassals. Each year, the hives of the Colonies each send one work of exquisite wealth or magical power to this fortress-vault in the middle of the continent's northern badlands. The ceremonial caravans and their armored chrysalis crawlers present ripe opportunities for bandits with the strength and cunning to ambush them, yet the real prize is the treasure-burrow itself, where many of the greatest relics of history lie fallow. Only the queens' most trusted representatives are allowed to enter the burrow or borrow its artifacts, and then only for matters of grave imperial security. Surrounded by alternating walls of rock, water, and pure elemental magic, the burrow is guarded by elite warriors, who are born inside its walls and raised to the task, and by bound outsiders whose loyalty is magically assured.



Formian Archer

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Sovyrian

Small and cut off from the other continents by the stormy Sea of Teeth, Sovyrian is not so much isolationist as simply isolated. While the region has more *aiudara* than any other and thus easy access to points across the globe, most Sovyrian elves are content to let their imaginations stop at the borders of their homeland. Earthfall and the coinciding elven retreat from Golarion led to an unprecedented population spike in Sovyrian, an anomaly that quickly manifested in the elves' environment as well as

society. For millennia, it seemed that every cliff, grove, valley, and peak harbored some delicate monument or picturesque village. Yet in the midst of Golarion's Age of Enthronement, great throngs of elves poured back through the *Arch of Refuge* in El, giving up their familiar settlements for the promise of adventure and opportunity.

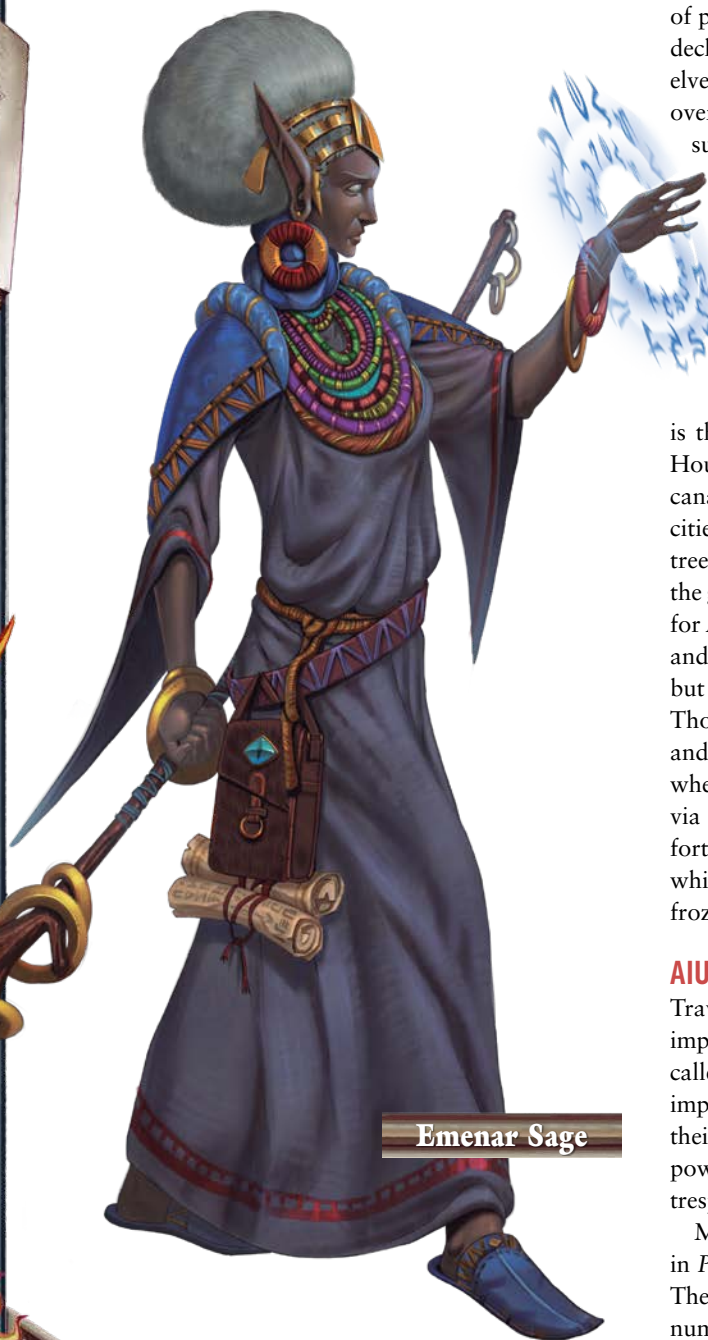
Today, Sovyrian's urban centers remain bustling and densely populated, yet its outskirts are a crumbling reminder of its former grandeur as the wilderness slowly reclaims what was built during the elves' height of power. Many of the elves who remain speak of this decline as "the Abandonment," looking down at those elves who choose Golarion's comparative rusticness over their halcyon home world. For better or worse, such sentiments drive ever-increasing traditionalism within the cities. At the same time, however, the unknown numbers of forgotten buildings in Sovyrian's wild places are ripe for treasure hunters, while the rebound of monstrous predators and the shrinking of Sovyrian's military has created an urgent need for mercenaries and heroes in outlying settlements.

The oldest and most important city on Sovyrian is the capital city of El, where the town-sized Great Houses climb cliff walls above the carefully manicured canals and bridges of the Woven River. Other major cities include Telasia, a magical transit hub of tree-shaped buildings with a dozen different *aiudara*; the great port of Cordona, whose brave sailors embark for Asana; and Farrowdell, where animals speak freely and share authority with elven citizens. Less populous but just as legendary are settlements like Lomai of the Thousand Flags, with its peerless nele-riding scouts and legendary Watchtower; freewheeling Nerundel, where as many gnomes as elves study and trade via the Greengate to the First World; and the icy fortress of Southwatch, whose soldiers defend against white-furred horrors who come charging across the frozen sea from Aurovas each winter.

AIUDARA WRAITHS

Travelers who frequent *aiudara* can leave faint psychic imprints on the magical gateways. Malevolent undead called *aiudara* wraiths are one potential result of these imprints. Protective of an *aiudara* that they regard as their private domain, these wraiths use their unholy powers over astral energies to block unsuspecting trespassers' passage.

More details about *aiudara* wraiths can be found in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #150: Broken Promises*. The following haunt can be encountered at any number of disused *aiudara* across Castrovel.



Emenar Sage

HAUNTED AIUDARA


HAZARD 6

COMPLEX HAUNT

Stealth +15 (expert)

Description The spiritual imprints of long-dead explorers haunt this *aiudara*, manifesting as a trio of astral wraiths who guard the gateway jealously.

Disable DC 25 Religion (trained) to exorcise one of the wraiths or DC 25 Occultism (expert) to erase one of the wraith's astral sigils; three successful checks are required to disable the haunt

Forceful Screech  (divine, necromancy) **Trigger** A creature comes within 30 feet of the *aiudara*; **Effect** Three *aiudara* wraiths screech in unison and manifest to protect the arch. Each creature within 30 feet must attempt a DC 27 Will save. The haunt rolls initiative.


Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature takes 2d8+9 force damage.

Critical Failure The creature takes 4d8+9 force damage and is fatigued.

Routine (3 actions; conjuration, divine, teleportation) With spectral claws, the *aiudara* wraiths hurl trespassers through time and space. Each of the three wraiths has 1 action which it can use to make a forceful hand Strike against a creature within 60 feet. The haunt loses 1 action for each successful check to disable the haunt.

When the haunt rolls a critical hit to Strike a creature, the creature is instantly shunted to an empty space within 30 feet. The haunt chooses which space the creature is transported to.

Melee  forceful hand +17 (magical), **Damage** 2d8+9 force; no multiple attack penalty

Reset The *aiudara* wraiths disperse after 1 minute, but the haunt resets after 24 hours.

ADVENTURE SITES

The following are some of Sovyrian's most legendary points of adventure.

Castle Velidae: Brooding and gothic, Castle Velidae writhes up from the black firs around it, its thin towers formed from the braided trunks of huge, limbless trees. Before his transformation, the vampire lord Bariel Velidae was an elven druid from a long line of aristocrats. Bariel's ancestors shaped the ancestral towers to watch over their grim fiefdom, and the current lord keeps several druids as thralls to maintain the corrupted structure's cohesion. Though he exercises a hidden hand in Sovyrian politics by using supernatural domination to guide the course of history, Bariel's true passion is his continued effort to perfect an esoteric magical theory he calls "blood sympathy." Though stories of his depraved rituals have spread far and wide, official attempts to put an end to the vampire seem to always end in tragedy.

Coth-Marilar: Pipes and pressure valves of black iron stretch down from Coth-Marilar's bubbling caldera like geometric lava, attended by obsidian-armored serpentine humanoids, called *quezeqars*, and their leashed elementals. Smoke and steam from these strange mechanisms rise into the sky at all hours, and raiding parties from the volcano conscript any who dare settle too close, pressing them into service on "the Grid." Orchestrating this system is the ancient magma dragon Challoch, but exactly what the ever-expanding geothermal machine *does* is a subject of much debate. Escaped captives speak of a sword of pure obsidian floating in a chamber in the volcano's heart, surrounded by nested black rings that spin and sing. Most assume that Challoch's great arcane machine is designed to break the sword free—or else keep it locked away forever.

The Last Tower of Emenar: Once, the Towers of Emenar were the greatest magical college outside of El. The five spires floated safely above the jungle, their opalescent facades dazzling onlookers near and far. That all ended with the Book Plague a century ago: infected tomes spontaneously ignited, burning faculty, scorching libraries, and ultimately bringing the towers themselves crashing to the ground. All the towers were destroyed—all but one, that is.

Escaped apprentices said the remaining tower was already empty by the time the others fell. Yet those who pass near the Last Tower of Emenar sometimes report lights moving in its windows as well as periodic beam-like blasts of the old leys probing the ruins of the other towers as if they were searching for something. Due to the longevity of the fatal plague and legends of its virulence, the university has never been explored.

Starrock Mines: Nomadic miners have long excavated swaths of the Korinath Divide, where the tunnels of giant orepedes make it relatively easy to pick valuable metals out of the worms' castings. For generations, the most legendary Korinathic pit was Starrock Mines, where the magically influenced beasts chewed their way through the buried remains of an ancient asteroid to reveal rich veins of precious skymetals. Ten years ago, however, something broke free from the asteroid. Seemingly overnight, the tunnels became a charnel house, the walls literally painted with blood. Those miners who escaped speak of eyes that ate their lights and flashing blades that tore like a thresher through elf and orepede alike. House Terethai, the High Family most heavily invested in the concern, would dearly love to reclaim Starrock—and plenty of other nobles would love to horn in on their territory—but so far, every attempt to clear the tunnels of their mysterious menace has ended in carnage.

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Ukulam

In contrast to the other three continents, wild Ukulam has never fostered a large-scale civilization—at least as far as anyone alive today can tell. Both the cold winds of the arid Northern Steps and the lush jungles of the Ikal Expanse devour settlements, and numerous cultures have risen here only to vanish, their only traces mysterious temples buried beneath vines or strange monuments scoured to indecipherability. Even by Castrovelian standards, the untamed lands of Ukulam teem with predators. Though all three of the planet's major ancestries make regular attempts to establish colonies here, such efforts are inevitably swallowed up by native wildlife or the landscape itself.

This isn't to say that Ukulam is without civilization. Numerous intelligent species call the continent home, from the telepathic plantlike humanoids called khizars to swamp-dwelling lizardfolk and arboreal gripli. The difference is that the most successful of these peoples tend to live in small, scattered bands, often migrating nomadically or living in simple structures that incorporate natural features or are easily rebuilt when the environment turns against them. By attempting to live in harmony with the "Ferocious Continent" and remaining flexible to its whims, such cultures are able to thrive where would-be conquerors fail. As the old formian saying goes, "Only a fool fights the land."

SUN SOWERS

Castrovel's close proximity to the sun makes solar phenomena more common, including solar flares and geomagnetic storms. Many species of Castrovelian flora have evolved to take advantage of the sun's radiant energy, sometimes to strange—and dangerous—effect. Though consisting of countless varieties known by many names, such plants are generally referred to as sun sowers.

Jijioa patches are a common type of sun sower found all over Ukulam. Most of the time, this sprawling species of ground cover looks like pale blue alfalfa or clover, unassuming in its mundanity. When exposed to a solar flare, however, the plant's thousands of individual flower pods suddenly bloom in a riotous display of every color imaginable. Onlookers' bedazzlement is destined to be shortlived: jijioa flowers reflect the sun's light so that it inflicts fatal radiation burns to any creature caught in the patch. A typical jijioa patch can measure anywhere between a few feet wide to the breadth of a coliseum.

BLOOMING JIJIOA

ENVIRONMENTAL
Stealth DC 26 (expert)

HAZARD 5

Description An invisible solar flare causes this patch of unassuming ground cover to suddenly bloom into a radioactive field.

Disable DC 22 Survival (trained) to remove a 5-foot square of jijioa, or 5 points of fire damage to destroy an affected area

AC 25, **Fort** +17, **Ref** +9

HP 52 (BT 26); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage; **Weaknesses** fire 10

Solar Bloom **Trigger** The jijioa patch is exposed to a solar flare; **Effect** The countless jijioa flowers suddenly bloom, magnifying the ambient heat of the sun a hundredfold. Creatures in the jijioa patch take 4d6 fire damage (DC 22 basic Fortitude save). Creatures that end their turn in the patch continue to take damage in this way as long as the jijioa is in bloom.

Reset An hour after blooming, a jijioa patch goes dormant for 1 week.

ADVENTURE SITES

While much of Ukulam remains unexplored by lashuntas, formians, or elves, tales of the following places have captured popular imagination.

Ankelun, the Dry City: The Dry City of Ankelun, once protected by a moat of kaiju blood, now sits empty, its streets channeling mournful winds as its great domes fall to ruin. Those steppeland nomads who roam the area tell of Ankelun's seven sealed doors, still glowing and marked with the blood of the Epoch Beast, whose opening will herald the rise of Uanshak Khatun and the city's return to life as the center of a great khaganate. Toward this end, fierce young warriors travel here each year to compete and sacrifice themselves in the bloody Trial of Dust, hoping to be recognized by the spirits as the city's champion.

The Brood Temple: No one has ever found the breeding grounds of the krimesh—oversized pheasant-like animals which teleport away when they become pregnant and reappear later with fully grown offspring. Legend tells that the marked stones they carry in their gizzards are in fact pieces of a central "Brood Temple" hidden somewhere on Ukulam, with the stones acting as beacons to guide them home. Scholars have long sought the temple, both by land and by attempting to use the stones as telepathic foci, but so far to no avail. Though some undertake these expeditions in hopes of locating juvenile krimesh young enough to be trained as mounts, others believe that the krimesh are perhaps not the ordinary beasts they appear and that (rather than being an innate natural ability) their teleportation is powered by the Brood Temple directly—suggesting a technology that,

if stolen or replicated, could upend Castrovel's reliance on *aiudara*.

Caliria: The Hidden City of Caliria has long called to explorers. Located where two rivers join to form the Rahoma, the city takes its epithet from the way the jungle around it seems to shift, as if to deliberately hide it from outsiders. Those who make it through the Caliri Maze, as this living bulwark is known, find themselves in a wood-walled temple-city which, though it rises up from the forest canopy in great tiers, nevertheless remains invisible to those beyond its walls. Humanoid representatives from across the continent can be found here, where they are best described as servants: shaman-warriors, bestial druids, and other retainers dedicated to protecting Caliria's Font. Legends remain unclear on what exactly the Font is—a magical spring, a sacred text, a guru—but all agree that it's a source of immense primal magic, some calling it "the Heartbeat of the World." For an unworthy outsider to gain access to it would threaten not just Ukulam, the stories say, but all of Castrovel. Whatever the truth, those who dwell in the Hidden City dutifully give their lives to maintain its secret.

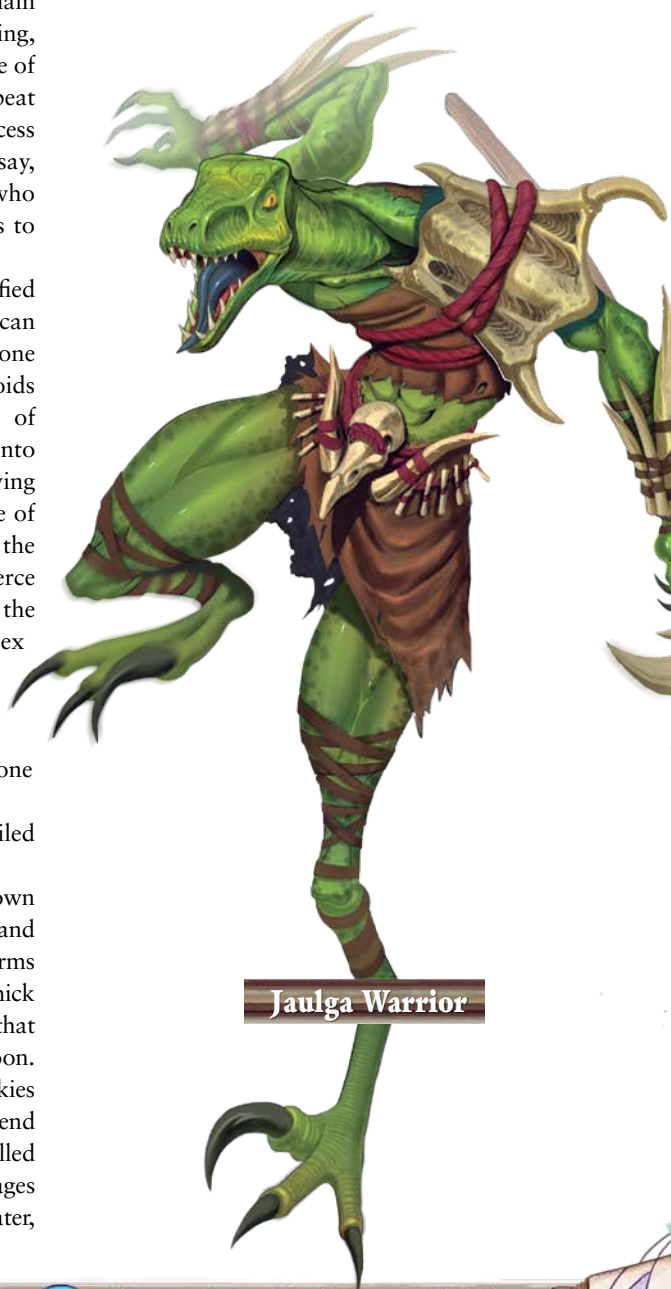
Jaulga, Hold of the Moon: This small, fortified village is populated entirely by werereatures who can all trace their lycanthropic ancestry to a great stone dolmen at the center of the settlement. Humanoids brought into the totem's presence at the apex of the full moon are transformed permanently into werereatures, with the exact type of beast varying depending on the individual. The prowess of some of these legendary "moon-spirits"—those who gain the strength of great saurians or the poison wings of fierce proto-birds called *ibarixo*—has led many to seek the city, either for their own transformation or to annex its people. The Jaulga, for their part, welcome all lycanthropes as siblings but remain suspicious of other outsiders. As a testament to the Jaulga's vigilance, no one has ever breached the thick stone walls surrounding their idol's cave.

Loskialua: This city of elven astronomers is detailed in Chapter 3 of "The Seventh Arch."

The Sky Chains: Four huge statues of no known Castrovelian race—humanoids with avian beaks and halos of horns—stand in a square with right arms stretched inward. Each extended hand holds a thick chain which anchors a spherical, black-iron cage that floats magically above each statue's head like a balloon. When living creatures occupy all four cages, the skies above darken with clouds, and the four cages ascend like elevators, their chains lengthening as they're pulled from hidden reservoirs inside the statues. These cages disappear through the clouds and return a day later,

invariably empty. What happens to their contents, or what might lie above the clouds, remains unknown.

Yan Monastery: Monks and sages of all species are welcomed at Yan Monastery, provided they honor the order's byzantine and ascetic rules. While some come to pursue simple enlightenment, most come for the monastery's grueling gauntlet of tests. Those who pass earn the right to descend into the labyrinth beneath the temple's waterfall baths and fight their way to the center, where the Chained God lies ready to answer any question with absolute truth and foresight. Who or what this god actually is remains the monastery's most closely held secret, and any who seek the god's wisdom must first accept a *geas* to never reveal that secret.



Jaulga Warrior

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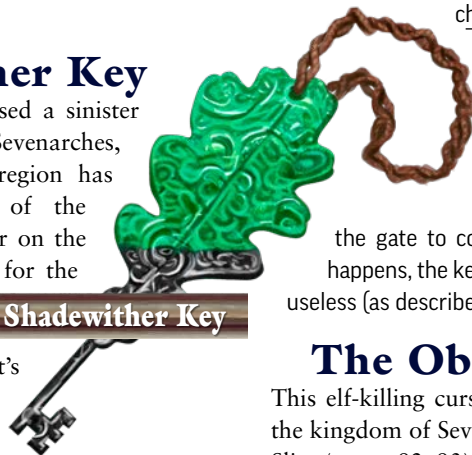
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The following new rules options appear throughout “The Seventh Arch.”

The Shadewither Key

Long ago, Kaneepo the Slim used a sinister ritual to curse the elves of Sevenarches, but the curse’s hold on the region has recently ended. Still, traces of the so-called *obnubilate curse* linger on the *Shadewither Key*, the gate key for the *Seventh Arch*. The key’s curse spells certain doom for elves who touch it, but the artifact’s tantalizing powers are difficult to ignore.

Shadewither Key



SHADEWITHER KEY

ITEM 22

UNIQUE ARTIFACT CURSED ILLUSION INVESTED PRIMAL SHADOW

Usage worn; Bulk –

This palm-sized talisman hangs on a string of braided bark fibers. It resembles a leaf from some unknown tree similar to oak, carved from jade and then dipped halfway into black ink that looks wet despite feeling completely dry. The gate key was originally created to open the *aiudara* known as the *Seventh Arch*. In recent years, corrupting magic has given it additional, stranger powers.

When you wear and invest the *Shadewither Key*, shadows gather around you. You gain a +1 item bonus to Stealth checks. However, this boon comes with great risk: any elf who touches the *Shadewither Key* is immediately afflicted with the *obnubilate curse* (see below).

Activate ◆◆ Interact; **Effect** You touch the *Shadewither Key* and command the shadows it casts around you to peel away. The shadows form an umbral double that resembles you in every way except for its fiery red eyes and the expression of wicked delight on its face. The double occupies the same space as you and attempts to intercept any attacks aimed at you. A creature must succeed at a DC 11 flat check when targeting you with an attack, spell, or other effect; on a failure, they hit the shadowy double instead of you. The effect lasts for 1 minute or until the double is hit, whichever comes first. Once the double is hit, it’s destroyed. As long as the double exists, you don’t gain

the *Shadewither Key*’s item bonus to Stealth checks.

Destruction The *Shadewither Key*’s magic can be destroyed by exposing the artifact to uncontained teleportation energies. If touched to an unlinked or malfunctioning *aiudara*, the *Shadewither Key* causes

the gate to connect to a new counterpart. If this happens, the key’s magic leaves it, rendering the item useless (as described on page 65).

The Obnubilate Curse

This elf-killing curse was devised and inflicted upon the kingdom of Sevenarches eons ago by Kaneepo the Slim (pages 92–93). After escaping their prison in the First World realm of Nighthold, Kaneepo created the *obnubilate curse*—sometimes called the obnubilate plague—from shadow stuff and malice as an act of revenge against their elven enemies. Luckily, Kaneepo’s reach from their umbral domain, the Thinlands, extended only so far.

Ever since the night of the Missing Moment, the *Seventh Arch* no longer inflicts the curse, but the *Shadewither Key* (above) still bears its taint. Any elf who touches the *Shadewither Key* contracts the curse.

Player Character Immunity: Though at this point they can’t remember their meeting with Osoyo, the Blackfrost Whale, the player characters’ interaction with that powerful entity grants them a unique benefit in the context of this adventure: immunity to the *obnubilate curse*. Because the curse’s magic is tied up in the *Shadewither Key* along with Osoyo’s psychic imprint—an imprint which the characters also bear in the form of their gatewalker marks—creatures that have come in contact with the Blackfrost Whale are immune to the *obnubilate curse*, even if they’re elves.

OBNUBILATE CURSE

CURSE 10

CURSE ENCHANTMENT INCAPACITATION MAGICAL MENTAL SHADOW

Only elves can be afflicted with this magical curse; other creatures are immune. An elf who touches the *Shadewither Key* must save against the curse. Victims quickly fall

unconscious; then, over several days, they slowly blacken and shrivel like rotting fruit until they die. The corpse of an elf killed by the *obnubilate* curse is dry and charcoal-like; it collapses into ash at the slightest touch.

Saving Throw DC 27 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Stage 1** unconscious and 3d6 mental damage (1 day); **Stage 2** unconscious and 6d6 mental damage (2 days); **Stage 3** unconscious and 6d6 mental damage (2 days); **Stage 4** unconscious and 6d6 mental damage, permanent loss of most recent year of memory (1 day); **Stage 5** unconscious and 6d6 mental damage, permanent loss of all memory (1 day); **Stage 6** death.

Bioluminescence Bomb

D'ziriaks pride themselves on the bioluminescent runes that cover their bodies like tattoos. These runes secrete a glowing byproduct which d'ziriaks can fashion into a sort of weapon. Though less powerful than a d'ziriak's dazzling burst ability, these bioluminescence bombs have the advantage of marking their targets. Any non-d'ziriak wandering through a d'ziriak settlement stained with this glowing goo is apt to be arrested on suspicion of criminal behavior.

Alchemical in nature, bioluminescence bombs are martial thrown weapons with a range increment of 20 feet that explode upon hitting a creature or object. See page 544 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* for full rules.

Characters can find these bombs in Chapter 2 of "The Seventh Arch."

A character can reverse-engineer a bioluminescence bomb to learn its formula (*Core Rulebook* 293).

BIOLUMINESCENCE BOMB

ITEM 1

UNCOMMON ALCHEMICAL BOMB CONSUMABLE LIGHT

Price 3 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ Strike

This vial of glowing goo constantly sheds dim light in a 10-foot radius. When a bioluminescence bomb strikes a creature or a hard surface, it shatters and releases the bioluminescent fluid's energy in a flare of light. Each creature within 10 feet of where the bomb exploded must succeed at a DC 17 Reflex save or be marked with dye that continues to glow for 24 hours. An affected creature must also attempt a DC 17 Fortitude saving throw against the overwhelming burst of light.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is dazzled for 1 round.

Critical Failure The creature is blinded for 1 round, then dazzled for 1 round.

Magic Items

Characters can acquire the following magic items throughout "The Seventh Arch."

CLOAK OF GNAWING LEAVES

This cloak, made from enchanted carnivorous plants, is a rare hallmark of fey warriors and their chosen champions. Kaneepo the Slim gifted one such cloak to their "captain of the guard," Salah, as a symbol of the centaur's high station.

CLOAK OF GNAWING LEAVES

ITEM 3+

RARE INVESTED PRIMAL TRANSMUTATION

Usage worn cloak; **Bulk** L

This cloak appears to be woven from a thousand living leaves, hungry for flesh and eager to defend the cloak's wearer.

Activate ↻ envision; **Frequency** once per day;

Trigger You are damaged by a melee attack from an adjacent creature; **Effect** The leaves lash out at your attacker, rising up to reveal snapping jaws made of wicked thorns. The triggering creature must attempt a DC 17 Reflex saving throw.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature takes 1d4 piercing damage.

Critical Failure The creature takes 2d4 piercing damage and 1 bleed damage.

Type *cloak of gnawing leaves*; **Level** 3; **Price** 60 gp

Type *cloak of thirsty fronds*; **Level** 7; **Price** 330 gp

The save DC is 23, and the cloak can be activated once per minute. The leaves deal 1d6 piercing damage to a creature on a failed save, or 2d6 piercing damage and 2 bleed damage

on a critical failure.

Type *cloak of devouring thorns*; **Level** 12; **Price** 2,000 gp

The save DC is 30, and the cloak can be activated once per round. The leaves deal 2d6 piercing damage to a creature on a failed save, or 4d6 piercing damage and 3 bleed damage on a critical failure.

STALK GOGGLES

Stalk goggles grant their wearer the useful (and, some would say, disturbing) ability to elongate their eyeballs into eyestalks. The exact appearance of these eyestalks—ranging from those of stalk-eyed flies to the more familiar stalks of common slugs—depends on the pair of *stalk goggles* in question, but all are eerily inhuman in appearance. Of course, for people like the Looksee Man in Chapter 2 of "The Seventh Arch," this intimidating appearance is a feature rather than a flaw.

STALK GOGGLES

ITEM 1+

RARE INVESTED MAGICAL MORPH TRANSMUTATION

Usage worn eyepiece; **Bulk** –



Bioluminescence Bomb

These black leather goggle frames have no lenses. Instead, when a character puts them on and invests them, the wearer's eyes transform and lengthen into snail-like eyestalks. The wobbly eyestalks stretch out through the lens holes and up over the wearer's head on lengthened optic nerves.

Activate ♦ envision; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** By focusing hard, you can watch for enemies in all directions. You gain all-around vision for 1 minute; during this time, you can't be flanked.

Type stalk goggles; **Level** 1; **Price** 20 gp

Type greater stalk goggles; **Level** 3; **Price** 60 gp

When you activate the goggles, you also gain a +1 item bonus to Perception checks involving sight for the duration of the effect.

Type major stalk goggles; **Level** 8; **Price** 450 gp

When you activate the goggles, you also gain a +2 item bonus to Perception checks involving sight and low-light vision for the duration of the effect.

Potions

The astronomers of Loskialua combine their fascination with the stars with a mastery of magical brewing, using potent exotic ingredients gathered from the wilds of the Ikal Expanse. Characters can find the following new potions in “The Seventh Arch.” A character with the Magical Crafting feat can reverse engineer any of the potions they find to acquire the formulas for these items.

BOTTLED OMEN

Consummate astrologers, the Oatia have so thoroughly mastered the secrets of the stars that they can even bottle the heavens' revelatory abilities into this drinkable liquid form.

BOTTLED OMEN

ITEM 4

RARE CONSUMABLE DIVINATION FORTUNE MAGICAL POTION

Price 20 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

This potion holds a tiny, tightly wrapped scroll and tastes like paper. Upon drinking it, you gain a burst of insight into your immediate future—and how to potentially avoid it. When you attempt a saving throw, you can roll twice and use the better result. The potion's magic ends when you make use of this effect, or after 1 minute. You then become immune to *bottled omen* potions for 24 hours.

DRAFT OF STELLAR RADIANCE

Though most Oatia are elves and so can see in the dark, some scholars distill the glow of distant starlight

into this magical potion for the benefit of their non-elfen friends. Those who imbibe the potent brew not only glow like a torch, but also gain the protection of the stars' blazing light.

DRAFT OF STELLAR RADIANCE

ITEM 3

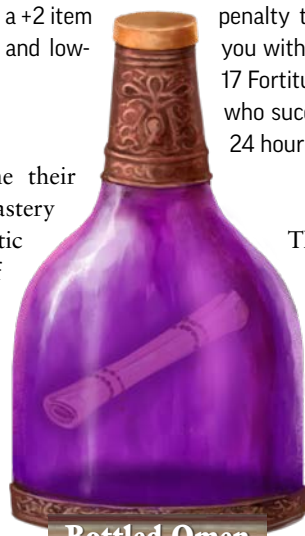
RARE CONSUMABLE EVOCATION LIGHT MAGICAL POTION

Price 12 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

This potion's bottle glows softly with shimmering silver light. Upon drinking this potion, you're surrounded by a nimbus of blazing starlight that lasts for 1 minute. You emanate a field of bright light with a 20-foot radius (and dim light for another 20 feet, like a torch). You take a -20 penalty to Stealth checks. Any creature that targets you with an attack or an ability must succeed at a DC 17 Fortitude save or be dazzled for 1 round. A creature who succeeds at this save is immune to the effect for 24 hours.



Bottled Omen

Castrovelian Spells

The following spells were devised by sages on Castrovel and see frequent use on that planet. Although these spells don't appear in “The Seventh Arch,” you can introduce them to your players if the party decides to linger on Castrovel or if you use the “Adventures on Castrovel” article on page 66 to devise quests and storylines to pursue on this planet.

LASHUNTA'S LIFE BUBBLE

Novice lashunta moldblazers pioneered this spell to help them withstand the ravages of moldstorms (page 70).

LASHUNTA'S LIFE BUBBLE

SPELL 5

UNCOMMON ABJURATION AIR

Traditions arcane, divine, primal

Cast ♦ (verbal)

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Duration 8 hours

You create a replenishing protective bubble of fresh, temperate air around the target. The shell of air enables the target to breathe even underwater or in a vacuum, protects from severe cold and heat, and grants a +1 status bonus to the target's saves against inhaled dangers such as inhaled poisons and *cloudkill*.

Heightened (6th) The bubble lasts until your next preparation.

Heightened (8th) The bubble lasts until your next preparation, protects against extreme cold and heat, and grants a +2 status bonus instead of +1.

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Oatia Skysage

Player characters who befriend the Oatia elves in Chapter 3 of “The Seventh Arch” gain access to this new archetype.

OATIA SKYSAGE ARCHETYPE

The tradition of Oatia skysages stems from a small sect of dedicated stargazers on Castrovel. To better study the celestial mantle, these eccentric astronomers broke away from their Sovyrian kin and migrated to the wild continent of Ukulam, where the night skies were clear of light pollution. Though reclusive, Oatia skysages have been known to pass on their esoteric knowledge and unique worldview to similar-minded adventurers. Such adventuring skysages search for secrets and omens in the stars and can even call down stars’ light to aid them in battle.

Additional Feats: 10th: Know-It-All (*Core Rulebook* 102).

OATIA SKYSAGE DEDICATION FEAT 2

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

Prerequisites trained in Occultism

Your study of the stars unlocks supernatural insights and magic. You either become trained in Astronomy Lore or an expert in Occultism.

You learn to cast spontaneous spells and gain the Cast a Spell activity. You gain a spell repertoire with two common cantrips of your choice; these cantrips can be from any spell tradition, but they must be divination spells. You cast these spells as occult spells as you draw on the stars and night sky. You’re trained in occult spell attack rolls and spell DCs. If you have a hand free and you’ve gazed at the night sky in the last 24 hours, you can usually replace material components with somatic components, so you don’t need to use a spell component pouch. Your key spellcasting ability for these spells is Intelligence.

Special You can’t select another dedication feat until you have gained two other feats from the Oatia skysage archetype.

BASIC SKYSAGE DIVINATION FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

The stars move, granting you a sliver of their magic. Choose a 1st-level spell from any spell list to add to your spell repertoire. You can Cast this Spell as an occult Oatia skysage spell.

At 6th level, you gain a 2nd-level spell, and at 8th level, you gain a 3rd-level spell. Each of these spells must be from the divination school.

STARGAZER'S EYES FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

Long hours in darkened observatories have sharpened your senses. If you don’t have low-light vision or darkvision, you gain low-light vision, or if you already have low-light vision, you gain darkvision.

Special You can take this feat a second time, upgrading your low-light vision to darkvision.

NIGHT'S GLOW FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE EVOCATION OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

The stars and moon lend you their light. You gain your choice of the *moonbeam* or *zenith star* (*Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 117) domain spell. Like your Oatia skysage spells, you cast this focus spell as an occult spell. It costs 1 Focus Point to cast a focus spell. This feat grants a focus pool of 1 Focus Point that you can recover by using the Refocus to reflect upon or gaze at the stars.

Special You can take this feat a second time, gaining the focus spell that you didn’t gain the first time. Increase the number of Focus Points in your pool by 1.

MINOR OMEN FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE DIVINATION FORTUNE OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

Frequency once per day

Trigger You fail a Reflex save.

Requirements You can see the night sky.

The stars warn you of danger in the nick of time. Reroll the failed save and use the new result.

SCHOLAR'S HUNCH FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE FORTUNE OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

Frequency once per hour

Trigger You fail a Lore or Occultism skill check.

Scholarly debates have taught you to think on your feet. Reroll the failed check and use the new result.

STARLIT SPELLS FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE EVOCATION OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

The stars reveal and punish your enemies. You can cast *faerie fire* and 3rd-level *searing light* as occult innate spells, each once per day.

EXPERT SKYSAGE DIVINATION FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Basic Skysage Divination

Your studies of the stars have taught you about the mysteries of the cosmos. You learn a 4th-level spell from

any spell list. At 12th level, you learn a 5th-level spell, and at 14th level, you learn a 6th-level spell. Each of these spells must come from the divination school. You become an expert with spell attack rolls and spell DCs for occult spells.

NIGHT'S SHINE

FEAT 12

ARCHETYPE EVOCATION OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication, Night's Glow

Your power from the moon and stars becomes strong enough to illuminate the night sky. You gain your choice of the *asterism* (*Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 117) or *touch of the moon* domain spell. Increase the number of Focus Points in your pool by 1.

Special You can take this feat a second time, gaining the focus spell that you didn't gain the first time. Increase the number of Focus Points in your pool by 1.

NIGHT'S WARNING

FEAT 14

ARCHETYPE CONCENTRATE OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

Trigger A creature targets you with an attack and you can see the attacker.

Frequency once per hour

Requirements You can see the night sky.

Portents written in the night sky show you how to avoid an attack. The triggering attack roll targets your Occultism DC instead of your AC. Though this allows you to avoid taking penalties to your AC, it doesn't remove any conditions or other effects causing such penalties. For example, an enemy with sneak attack would still deal extra damage to you for being flat-footed, even though you wouldn't take the -2 circumstance penalty when defending against the attack.

STARLIGHT ARMOR

FEAT 14

ARCHETYPE CONJURATION OCCULT

Prerequisites Oatia Skysage Dedication

Frequency once per day

You armor yourself in the light of distant suns, shielding yourself from harm. The armor grants you resistance 7 to piercing, bludgeoning, and slashing damage. The armor also sheds bright light for 20 feet (and dim light for the next 20 feet).

Whenever an adjacent creature attacks you, the attacker must attempt a Will save against your spell DC at the end of its action. On a failure, it becomes dazzled until the end of its next turn. Regardless of the result of the save, the attacker is temporarily immune until the end of its next turn. The dazzling effect has the light and visual traits.

When you reach 17th level, the resistance increases to 10.

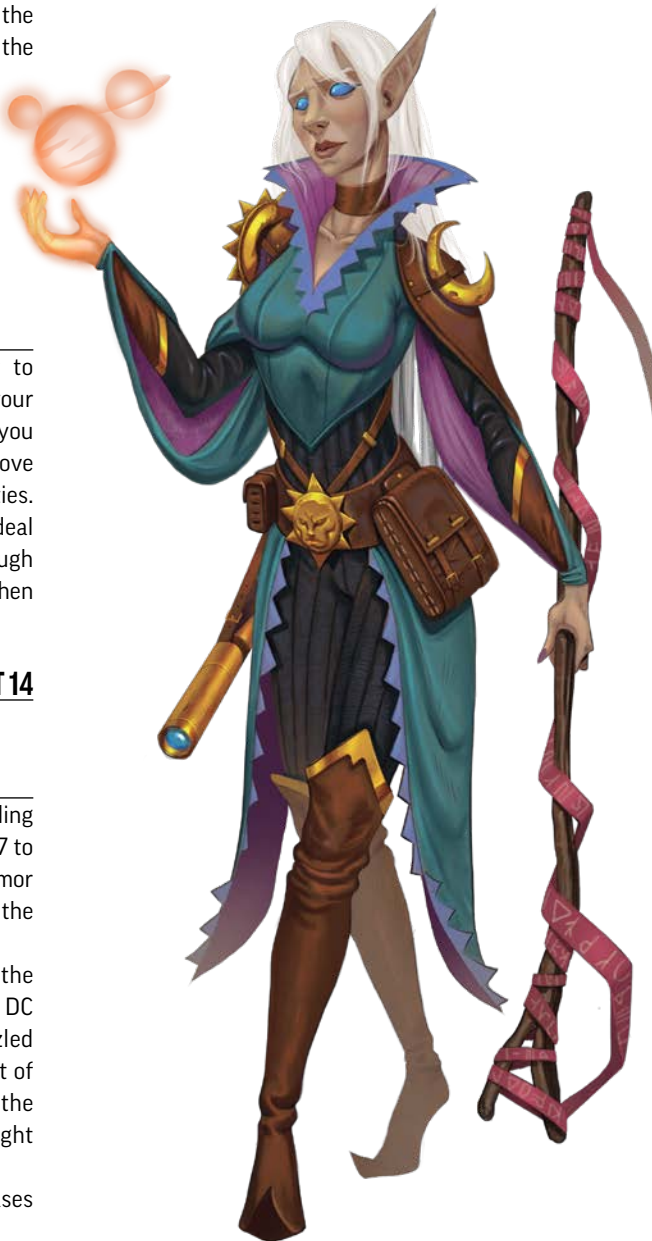
MASTER SKYSAGE DIVINATION

FEAT 16

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Expert Skysage Divination

You unlock the most powerful secrets hidden in the stars above. You learn a 7th-level spell from any spell list. At 18th level, you learn an 8th-level spell, and at 20th level, you learn a 9th-level spell. Each of these spells must come from the divination school. You gain master proficiency with spell attack rolls and spell DCs for occult spells.



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AMELEKANA SHELLS

Amelekana shells' swirling shine warps light in water to the point where the shells almost disappear, making them quite valuable. Among terrestrial cultures, amelekana shells are often used in jewelry.

Locathahs and other aquatic cultures have long sought some way to turn the unusual shells into armor or other gear that might aid in underwater hunting, but few have succeeded so far. Crafting a single piece of stealth-enhancing amelekana shell armor would be a worthwhile endeavor indeed.

Amelekana

Amelekanas are amphibious ambush predators native to rivers and lakes across Castrovel. An amelekana looks similar to a giant snail, with an opalescent spiraling shell and eyeless face sporting a crown of six antennae, but that's where the resemblance ends. Instead of one giant foot, the amelekana has fleshy tubes standing upright through holes in its shell and a host of tiny armored legs, like those of a crab. Yet perhaps the most unusual feature of the amelekana is that it's actually a symbiotic community of two separate organisms, neither of which can live without the other.

Like many creatures on Castrovel, amelekanas have some basic psychic ability—in their case, a sense for nearby living creatures. A hunting amelekana submerges itself to obscure its location. When prey draws near, the amelekana rises from the water and releases compressed gasses to launch its symbiotes—blobby amoebas the size of a bread loaf—at their victims. These amoebas act as external digesters for the stomachless amelekana, using their acidic coating to dissolve prey and absorb nutrition. Once its amoebas have had their fill, the amelekana slurps them back up, providing the amoeba colony with a safe haven inside its body in exchange for a portion of the processed nutrients.

A typical amelekana is 9 feet long and weighs up to 2,000 pounds.

AMELEKANA

CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON N LARGE AMPHIBIOUS BEAST

Perception +14; **lifesense** 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +10, Stealth +12, Survival +12

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

AC 21; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14

HP 72

Reflective Shell An amelekana submerged in water gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks. If the water is moving, this bonus increases to +8.

Speed 20 feet, swim 20 feet

Melee ♦ pseudopod +13, **Damage** 2d4+8 bludgeoning

Ranged ♦ lob amoeba +14

Lob Amoeba ♦ The amelekana flings a symbiotic amoeba at a target within 40 feet—this is a ranged attack that doesn't count toward the amelekana's multiple attack penalty, and its multiple attack penalty doesn't apply to this attack.

Success The target takes 2d4+8 bludgeoning damage and the symbiotic amoeba lands in a square adjacent to the target.

Failure The target takes no damage, but the symbiotic amoeba still spawns in a square adjacent to the target.

Critical Failure The target takes no damage and the lobbed amoeba dies on impact.

Symbiotic Amoeba An amoeba produced by the amelekana is a Tiny, mindless, semi-independent creature controlled by the amelekana. It has the minion trait, AC 15, 1 Hit Point, and the same skills and saving throws as the amelekana. Each round, the amelekana can Command a Minion to make an amoeba Step or Swim 20 feet and make a pseudopod Strike (**Melee** pseudopod +13, **Damage** 2d4 acid). If an amelekana is killed, its symbiotic amoebas are also killed by the host creature's psychic backlash. An amelekana can have up to three extant symbiotic amoebas at a time.

Desa-desa

Also known as “bubble cats” or “gas cats,” desa-desas are small, vaguely feline predators that hunt the jungles of Castrovel. A typical desa-desa is roughly the size and shape of a bobcat. Its head is reptilian, sporting large eyes and slender fangs that protrude from its lips. Desa-desa fur tends to match their environment—most are dark green and brown—and is punctuated by patterns of small, bubble-like bladders that protrude from the creature’s skin like transparent boils. Every desa-desa has a different bladder pattern, and this distinctive anatomical feature is key to the creature’s survival.

Desa-desas’ lives revolve around a little-understood (and likely magical) process by which the creatures transform water into its constituent gaseous elements. A desa-desa stores these gasses in the polyp-like bladders, which are lined with an electricity-conducting material that allows the creature to create sudden blasts of flame in all directions.

As a predator, the desa-desa’s most dangerous attack is its bite, which passes along its bubble venom, which can ravage the fluids in the victim’s own body. This reaction causes water in the target’s cells to split rapidly, creating bubbles of gas that percolate through the creature’s flesh to its skin, where it balloons outward in large, agonizing blisters before popping. The combustible gasses in these blisters also make a creature particularly susceptible to fire attacks—such as the desa-desa’s defensive blast. A typical desa-desa is 4 feet long counting the tail, and weighs just 30 pounds.

DESA-DESA

CREATURE 2

UNCOMMON N SMALL ANIMAL

Perception +10; low-light vision

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +7, Stealth +9, Survival +8

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

AC 18; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +8

HP 34; **Weaknesses** electricity 2; **Resistances** fire 4

Volatile Gasses Whenever a desa-desa takes electricity damage, it must attempt a DC 18 Fortitude save. On a failure, the sparks cause the desa-desa to immediately use Fire Blast if it can, and the desa-desa becomes flat-footed for 1 round.

Speed 40 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee **◆** bite +11, **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing plus bubble venom

Bubble Venom (arcane, poison) A creature bit by a desa-desa breaks out in large, painful blisters which expand and pop as water in the victim’s body turns into volatile gasses. Magical healing of any kind counteracts the bubble venom; **Saving Throw** DC 18 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** weakness to fire 2 and 1d6 piercing (1 round); **Stage 2** weakness to fire 4 and 2d6 piercing (1 round)

Fire Blast **◆◆** (arcane, evocation, fire) The desa-desa releases a burst of explosive gasses in all directions, dealing 3d6 fire damage to all creatures in a 5-foot emanation. The desa-desa can’t use Fire Blast again for 1d4 rounds.



CAT GASSES

Castrovelian elven scholars have long noted the utility of the gasses contained in desa-desa bubble bladders. Researchers at Tolris University in Qabarat have used the gasses to create hotter forges, bottled air for diving, and even lift for airships. The former head of the department, Shimah Teph, believed that the cats could keep a ship aloft indefinitely, while feeding them just a few scraps of meat, and managed to pilot a test flight to Laubu Mesa before dying of desa-desa-inflicted wounds.

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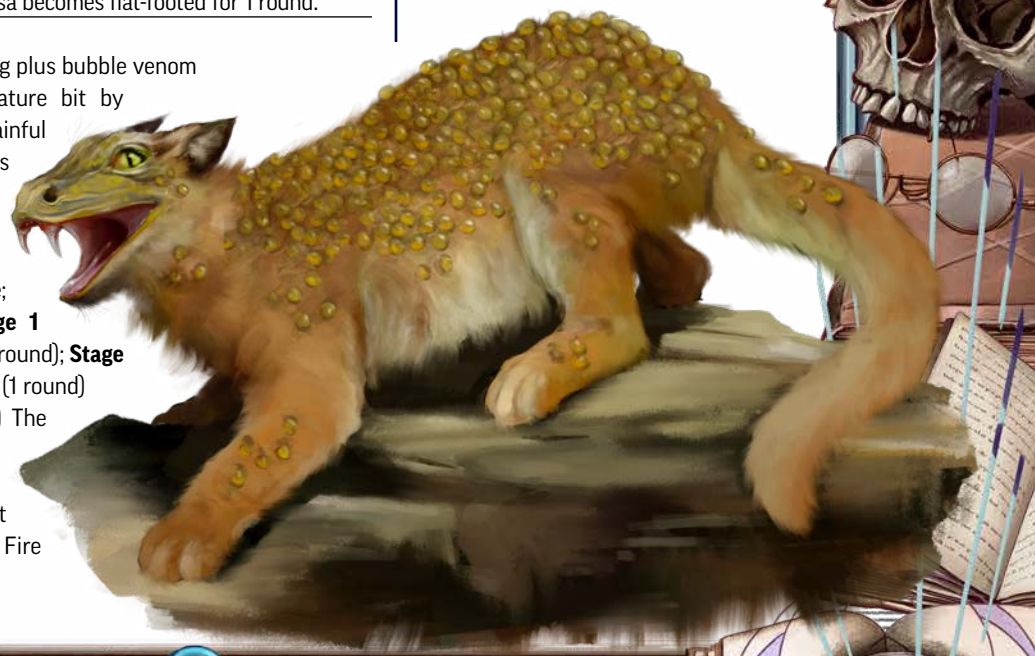
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GORGAS AND ELVES

For thousands of years, gorgas have sought vengeance for the loss of their beloved Count Ranalc. A few centuries ago, a fey schemer named Kaneepo the Slim saw in the shadowy creatures' grudge an opportunity to carry out their own vendetta. The slick-tongued fey convinced a group of gorgas that elves were behind Count Ranalc's disappearance and that the gorgas could achieve vengeance if they joined Kaneepo's assaults on the Material Plane. Though some of the brighter gorgas have seen through the ruse, most are content to have an outlet for their fury.

Gorga

Gorgas are fey embodiments of diurnal creatures' fear of the dark. Beings of shadow and hunger, they love to prey upon light-loving creatures. Many different kinds of gorgas exist, and each embodies a different facet of the night's countless terrors.

Gorgas are common in the First World realm of Nighthold, where they once served the mysterious Count Ranalc. After Ranalc's disappearance, the gorgas quickly lost what little compassion they had, scattered into small bands led by their strongest members, and began hunting any fey they could find. All gorgas carry shrouds of shadow within them, and most find daylight unpleasant, tending to remain within Nighthold's perpetual gloom or hole up in caverns or deep forests until night falls. Their bizarre eyes—hollow pools of magical shadow—allow them to see even in magical darkness.

TEMAGYR

Temagyr's embody the fear of nocturnal hunters—predators that stalk through the dark of night and attack when their prey is most vulnerable. Able to blend in with and step between shadows to surprise victims, temagyr's delight in ambush tactics.

An average temagyr is 8 feet long and weighs 500 pounds but moves with unnatural fluidity and grace, the shadows they carry seeming to hang in the air behind them. In combat, a temagyr can take down opponents either with physical attacks or by taking bites out of their enemy's shadow. These shadow wounds, which remain visible unless healed, often perplex Material Plane doctors and investigators; a corpse from a temagyr attack can appear pristine, its tattered shadow the only clue to how it met its untimely fate.

TEMAGYR

CREATURE 1

UNCOMMON CE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +9; greater darkvision

Languages Aklo, Sylvan (can't speak any language)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +7, Stealth +8

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

AC 16; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5

HP 25; **Weaknesses** cold iron 3

Attack of Opportunity ↻

Cloak of Shadows Temagyr's are constantly surrounded by shifting shadows. A temagyr can always Hide in dim light or darkness.

Speed 40 feet

Melee ✦ bite +9, **Damage** 1d4+4 piercing

Shadow Bite ✦ **Frequency** once per round; **Effect** The temagyr attempts to tear away and swallow a goblet of shadow from a creature within reach. The creature must attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save.

Success The target takes no damage.

Failure The target takes 1d4+4 piercing damage and the temagyr gains 2 temporary Hit Points for 1 minute.

Critical Failure The target takes 2d4+8 piercing damage and the temagyr gains 4 temporary Hit Points for 1 minute.

Umbral Leap ✦✦ (conjunction, primal, teleportation) **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** The temagyr bends light and darkness to leap into a



creature's shadow. The temagyr targets a creature that it can see who is in dim or brighter light within 120 feet. The temagyr teleports to a space adjacent to the target creature.

OCLUAI

Ocluais embody the fear of being lost and helpless in the darkness as well as the danger of unreasoning terror. An ocluai's gray body resembles that of a featherless owl with a serrated beak, the legs of a monkey, and oversized eye sockets full of shadow. The field of unnatural darkness that surrounds an ocluai disorients most creatures; while other gorgas are quick to move in for the kill, ocluais love to perch on a low branch or lintel and watch with their blank expressions as prey succumbs to panic. Though capable fighters, ocluais prefer to hang back and slash at those whose frantic flight brings them within range, letting their prey's own terror drive them over cliffs or bring them to their knees.

Ocluais understand several languages but rarely communicate with non-fey. When they do, their communication takes the form of unsettling telepathic images projected directly into the other party's mind as the ocluai holds their gaze.

OCLUAI

CREATURE 3

UNCOMMON CE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +12; greater darkvision

Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan (can't speak any language; telepathy 100 feet, images only)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +8, Intimidation +10, Nature +8, Stealth +10

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

AC 18; **Fort** +6, **Ref** +12, **Will** +12

HP 55; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Lost in the Dark (aura, darkness, enchantment, mental) 60 feet. An ocluai's presence distorts nearby creatures' senses of direction. Nonmagical bright light within the aura becomes dim light, and nonmagical dim light with the aura becomes darkness. Any non-gorga within range of the ocluai's aura that attempts to move must declare where they intend to move. Before moving, however, the creature must attempt a secret DC 20 Will saving throw. An ocluai can exempt specific creatures from this effect. Magical light anywhere within the ocluai's aura increases the light level as normal and reduces the Will save DC by 5.

Success The creature moves normally.

Failure The creature moves the intended distance, but not in the right direction.

The ocluai chooses the creature's destination and route, which could be a straight line or could include multiple changes in direction. If the path is blocked or would go through obviously dangerous terrain (such as off a cliff or through a fire), the movement ends before the blockage or danger.

Critical Failure As failure, but if the creature's path would lead them into obviously dangerous terrain, they must succeed at a second Will save to end their movement just before they would enter the danger.

Speed fly 25 feet

Melee ♦ talon +10, **Damage** 3d4+3 slashing

Corner of the Eye ♦♦ (illusion, mental, primal, visual) The ocluai creates a wave of disturbing illusory images in a 10-foot burst centered on a point within 60 feet. Any creature caught in this burst takes 3d6 mental damage (DC 20 basic Will save) as their peripheral vision churns with terrifying visions of worm-eaten corpses and monsters ready to pounce.



OTHER GORGAS

As many different types of gorgas exist as there are ways to fear the dark. The fear of losing one's sole source of illumination—a flickering torch in a rainstorm, the last tindertwig on a moonless night—manifests as a notua, capable of snuffing lights as well as lives. When the dark makes distant objects appear to be something other than they are—a tree trunk seems to be a crouching beast, a drape of moss becoming a dangling snake—the gaiomyr gorga dances with delight and brings its victims' imagined dangers to horrific life. Some gorgas, it's said, represent nocturnal fears that defy description altogether—the fear of unknown unknowns, perhaps.



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WEAPONIZING IMMOLISES

The Wemnora lashunta of northern Asana are one of the few cultures to actively hunt immolises. Before setting out, hunters paint their bodies in a thick layer of mud to camouflage themselves from the immolises' heatsense. Using torches and carefully shaped brush fires, Wemnora hunters attempt to drive immolises out of their lairs and into boxes with a single, closable window. These boxes are then used as siege weapons: simply point a box at opposing troops, open the window, and let an angry immolis set them ablaze.

Immolis

Most complex organisms, whether plant or animal, produce energy by converting fuel (such as food) into heat. Though this process is invaluable, it's also a vulnerability—one that the immolis has evolved to exploit.

Immolises are psychic predators found all across Castrovel, especially underground and in cool environs. Mostly blind, they hunt by sensing the body heat of other creatures. When an immolis acquires a target, it focuses its innate psychic energies in an invisible beam aimed at its prey. The sudden influx of energy causes the target's metabolism to accelerate rapidly, spurring the creature's body to produce energy at a dangerous rate. This sudden rush of heat literally cooks the creature internally—innards burst, blood boils, and fat catches fire. The end result isn't just warm food, but a meal roasted to morbid perfection.

An immolis's basic shape resembles that of a spidery, spindly frog covered in delicate scales. The head has a simian muzzle, the lips of which pull back to reveal a squid-like beak. Above the mouth, the creature has three pairs of nostrils, which flare and chuff as the creature hunts. Though they walk with a hunch, immolises climb with shocking speed.

Unlike many other pyro-predators, immolises have a deep and paradoxical fear of fire, perhaps because they know how easily any flesh—their own included—can blacken and burn. As a result, they prefer to lair near water. This presents its own problem, however, as their heat sense is easily disrupted by creatures taking steps to hide their heat signatures, such as submerging themselves in water or snow. While intelligent enough to communicate and band together with others of their kind, immolises view all other species as either prey or threats and have as little interest in cultural exchange as in personal possessions.

The average immolis stands 5 feet tall and weighs 150 pounds.

IMMOLIS

CREATURE 3

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM BEAST

Perception +12; **heatsense** 120 feet

Languages Immolis; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +10, Intimidation +9, Stealth +10, Survival +9

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

Heatsense An immolis can sense creatures whose bodies are hotter than their surroundings as a precise sense at the listed range. Creatures that produce no heat—such as many undead or constructs—are concealed to an immolis, as are creatures who successfully mask their body heat (such as by submerging themselves in cold water).

AC 19; **Fort** +6, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9

HP 50

Speed 40 feet, climb 40 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +10, **Damage** 1d10+5 slashing

Heat Beam ♦ (evocation, fire, occult) The immolis targets a living creature within 30 feet and directs a beam of volatile psychic energy toward it, increasing the rate at which the creature's body produces heat. The target must attempt a DC 20 Fortitude save. The second and third time an immolis uses Heat Beam in the same round, the DC lowers to 16 or 12, respectively.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature takes 2d6+5 fire damage.

Critical Failure The creature takes 4d6+5 fire damage and 5 persistent fire damage.

Kareq

A kareq looks like a cross between a dinosaur and an insect. The kareq's torso extends back into a bulbous abdomen like an ant's.

A kareq has a resonance chamber in its lower body, and when it flexes its muscular back legs against it, pressure builds up and sound waves are amplified and then focused as the kareq opens its mouth and releases the blast. The resulting shock wave can easily kill.

Kareqs are thought to be related to Golarion's destrachans, though their similarities may simply be the result of convergent evolution. Unlike the stronger subterranean destrachans, kareqs are native to a variety of different environments, most often jungles and forests. A few sandy-colored species are found in the deserts of the Colonies, where formians regard the beasts as noble or, in some cases, practically sacred.

Kareqs tend to be solitary predators, bold and unafraid, even willing to take on predators significantly larger than themselves. In combat, they keep their distance at first, softening up opponents with their boomstrikes before moving in for the kill with their claws.

While they don't usually hunt in populated areas, kareqs are extremely territorial, and their desire to lay claim to tall landscape features can bring them into conflict with humanoids. During mating season, a kareq seeks height, climbing to the top of hills, boulders, or—if a settlement is particularly unlucky—towers and other buildings. From these perches, kareqs blast out their booming mating call which can carry for dozens of miles.

A typical kareq stands 5 feet tall at the shoulder and is 10 feet long, weighing up to 300 pounds.



KAREQ DRUMS

Castrovelians have long hunted kareqs, both for glory and to harvest their unique abdomens. A ceremonial drum made from a kareq resonance chamber is an intimidating mark of prestige. While most such drums are only instruments, a properly enchanted kareq war drum can bring down walls and blast apart enemy troops.

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KAREQ

CREATURE 5

UNCOMMON N LARGE ANIMAL

Perception +15; low-light vision

Skills Acrobatics +12, Athletics +13, Intimidation +13, Stealth +12, Survival +10

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

AC 22; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

HP 95; **Immunities** sonic

Speed 40 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee ♦ claw +14, **Damage** 2d10+5 slashing

Boomstrike ♦♦ The kareq beats its legs against its reverberation chamber, creating a blast of sound concentrated enough to ignite the air around it. The kareq chooses to affect either a 30-foot cone (which deals sonic damage) or a 60-foot line (which deals fire damage). Affected creatures must attempt a DC 21 Fortitude save.

Success The creature takes no damage.

Failure The creature takes 3d6 damage of the appropriate type.

Critical Failure The creature takes 6d6 damage of the appropriate type and either is deafened for 1 minute (if sonic damage) or takes 1d6 persistent fire damage (if fire damage).



BOLAN NOGASSO

Rebel Oaksteward

Druidism draws some adherents because they love nature—and others because they hate people. Bolan Nogasso has always been the latter.

Bolan grew up in the logging camps of Andoran, the son of parents with too many offspring and too little affection. Shy and scrawny, he found himself a target of constant abuse from burly loggers' children, including his own siblings. He took to spending as much time as possible hiding in the woods. There, in the quiet among the trees, he could finally let his guard down. In time, he managed to befriend local fey, including pixies and brownies. Bolan began to pray that he'd turn out to be a changeling—anything but the child of boorish humans.

Time and again, the same story would play out: Bolan would return to a favorite grove and find it clear-cut, his fey friends nowhere to be found. As he grew older, he filled out, and he used his new strength to fight these atrocities. Yet the loggers—those same childhood chums who'd spent their lives bullying him—only laughed as they bloodied his nose. Hopeless, he tried to drink his troubles away.

It was on one of these benders that he first heard of Sevenarches. In Sevenarches, people served nature, rather than the other way around. Guards called Oakstewards reminded citizens of the delicate balance between the needs of humanoids and those of plants and animals. Bolan set out immediately, vowing not to rest until he was apprenticed to these sagacious druids.

It worked: Bolan excelled in his training and soon became a full Oaksteward. With his knowledge and magic, he felt closer to the natural world than ever—while also appreciating the distance his status put between him and Sevenarches' deferential citizens.

Yet his joy was short-lived. Bolan soon realized that, for all their talk of balance, the Oakstewards actually put humanoid interests first. He began to clash more and more with his superiors, eventually seeing them as just another petty hierarchy that was more concerned with international politics than truly safeguarding the natural world. He volunteered to patrol the nation's borders, venting his merciless frustrations upon anyone he caught sneaking into Sevenarches.

And then came the Missing Moment. Through the *Seventh Arch*, Bolan saw a tranquil, natural world

where humanoids were no more important than blades of grass. He leapt eagerly through the portal. Though (like everyone else) he has no memory of what occurred in his time through the gate, he returned with a new determination to realize the perfect vision he'd glimpsed. Adding to his conviction were strange powers he'd somehow gained from the Missing Moment: magic which allowed him to control the human-despoiled remains of plants—the wood in buildings, the fibers in fabric. To Bolan, this vegetative necromancy was a sign that he'd been chosen as an avatar of nature's vengeance.

Soon afterward, Bolan received his first visit from a terrifying fey which called itself Kaneepo the Slim. Desperate for an ally and already favorably inclined toward fey, Bolan agreed to do whatever the figure wanted. In exchange for a simple favor from Bolan—namely, stealing the sacred key to the *Seventh Arch*—Kaneepo promised to help Bolan not only overthrow humanoid civilization, but to destroy it entirely so that the natural world could heal.

Campaign Role

Though the primary antagonist for the first chapter of the adventure, Bolan is ultimately a patsy—a desperate zealot who's become a pawn in Kaneepo the Slim's wicked game. Kaneepo has no problem with the rebel Oaksteward's genocidal goals. The fey only needs Bolan to steal the *Shadewither Key*, with which Kaneepo can expand their territory and pursue their own vengeance against the elves of Kyonin.

Bolan is at once a tragic figure and a dangerous foe, quick to spout proclamations about civilization's unchecked growth. Although he cares little for the other Oakstewards who've joined his cause, he genuinely feels for his fey allies, and he's surprisingly tolerant of their shenanigans.

BOLAN NOGASSO

CREATURE 2

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human druid

Perception +11

Languages Common, Druidic, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +7, Intimidation +8, Nature +8, Stealth +5, Survival +8

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

Items dagger, hide armor, leaf mask, +1 staff

AC 18; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11

HP 40

Speed 20 feet

Melee ♦ *staff* +9 (magical, reach 10 feet [with *wild morph*], two-hand d8),

Damage 1d8+3 bludgeoning

Druid Prepared Spells DC 18, attack +10;

1st *burning hands*, *fleet step*, *shillelagh*, *summon fey*; **Cantrips (1st)** *acid splash*, *guidance*, *light*, *ray of frost*, *tanglefoot*

Druid Order Spells DC 18, attack +10; **1st** (1 Focus Point) *wild morph* (Plant Shape; *Core Rulebook* 400)

Guardian Thorns ♦♦ (conjunction, primal) Bolan compels plant-based materials within 10 feet of him to grow sharp thorns and spiky branches. This ability affects all walls, floors, and large objects made from dead organic material, such as wood. Affected areas become difficult terrain. Non-fey and non-plant creatures in the affected area or those who move through an affected square take 2d10 piercing damage (DC 18 basic Reflex save). This ability does not affect stone, dirt, living plants, or other materials. The effect ends when Bolan moves out of his square.

Item Treachery ♦ (primal, transmutation) Bolan targets a held item (such as a bow stave, wooden shield, or scroll) within 60 feet composed, at least partially, of wood, cotton, or other dead plant matter. The plant-based part of this item animates and attempts to wriggle free of its holder's grasp. The holder must attempt a DC 18 Reflex save.

Success The creature holds onto the item with no ill effect.

Failure The creature struggles to hold onto the item. Until the start of the creature's next turn, attempts to Disarm the creature of that item gain a +2 circumstance bonus, and the creature takes a -2 circumstance penalty to attacks with the item or other checks requiring a firm grasp on the item.

Critical Failure The creature drops the item into the creature's space or drops the object in an adjacent square of Bolan's choice, at which point the item returns to normal.

Vengeful Fibers ♦ (primal, transmutation) A piece of clothing animates and attacks its wearer at Bolan's command. Bolan targets a creature within 60 feet wearing clothing made from plants, such as cotton, hemp, or grass. The clothing chokes its wearer, restricts their movement, and abrades their skin. The target takes 2d10 bludgeoning damage (DC 18 basic Fortitude save). A creature that takes damage in this way is also flat-footed and takes a -10-foot circumstance penalty to Speed until the beginning of Bolan's next turn.



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KANEEPO THE SLIM

Malevolent Fey Schemer

The First World is a primal cauldron of spontaneous creation and experimental evolution. From the beginning, the First World has churned out inexplicable creatures that defy mortal logic. Kaneepo the Slim is one such entity.

The fey trickster called Kaneepo woke, fully formed, thousands of years ago in the shadowy realm of Nighthold. Kaneepo initially struggled with their identity, bereft of any kin after which to model themselves. Years of mingling with other fey eventually suggested kinship with bogeys and bogeymen, given their similarly slender forms and unsettling appetites. Yet the match was far from perfect: unlike the stronger bogeymen who feed on souls and fear, Kaneepo was drawn to victims' shadows and felt compelled to drink their umbral auras. Disgusted by the shadow drinker's "perversion" and threatened by the idea that Kaneepo might represent the future of their kind, the other bogeys shunned Kaneepo.

Kaneepo then sought shelter in the court of Count Ranalc, Eldest of shadows and chaos. Yet they still felt eternally alone. As their loneliness curdled to resentment, Kaneepo began to see themselves as the progenitor of a new fey race, destined to rule a realm of their own. The only question was how.

One day, while wandering the wild shadow forests of Nighthold, Kaneepo came upon the gnawed corpse of a human bearing a strange carved leaf. Tracing the human's trail, Kaneepo found a curious stone arch and passed through it, using the carved leaf as the gate's key. They emerged into the forest known today as the Wilewood.

Kaneepo immediately recognized the opportunity for what it was and swiftly set about hunting the area's elves, glutting themselves on unprotected elven shadows. They began kidnapping elves who caught their fancy and experimented on each one with rituals designed to evolve them into a creature just like Kaneepo. But all these experiments failed, each ritual killing its victim.

Unfortunately for Kaneepo, this was long before Earthfall, at the height of elven power. Soon, a group of elven heroes banded together to stop the fey menace. They hauled Kaneepo back through the *Seventh Arch* to the First World, where they imprisoned the vile trickster inside the stump of a vast tree. The adventurers took the arch's gate key with them to ensure Kaneepo would be stranded.

And there Kaneepo sat as millennia passed.

The First World is nothing if not tumultuous, and Nighthold is among its most mutable regions. In time, the flexing of the planar fabric broke the lock on Kaneepo's prison. Kaneepo was pleasantly surprised to discover that their stump prison had served as a cocoon, allowing them time to come into their full power. Kaneepo no longer had the *Seventh Arch's* gate key, but an age of primal metamorphosis had given them the power to shape the little patch of First World around their tree stump. Through this shaping power, Kaneepo created breaches that connected to the Material Plane. Freed and filled with zeal, the vengeful fey dedicated themselves to seeking revenge against their elven persecutors. Kaneepo developed the perfect apocalyptic weapon which harnessed the magic of the *Seventh Arch*: the *obnubilate curse*.

Their victory was cut short, however. While Kaneepo was locked away, Earthfall had sent most elves fleeing to distant Sovyrian. Kaneepo was dismayed to realize that their perfect weapon, crafted specifically to afflict elves, targeted a population that was already in decline.

Despondent, Kaneepo retreated to the First World, back into the patch of shadow-forest they controlled, an area now known as the Thinlands. Over the centuries that followed, Kaneepo hunted the other humanoids who dwelled near the Wilewood and gradually resumed their attempts to create more of their kind. When elves finally returned to Golarion, Kaneepo was pleased to discover that the *obnubilate curse* still worked, though it didn't spread nearly so far as they'd hoped. Heartened but still afraid of drawing attention, the fey began slowly increasing their hunting, recruiting the local gorgas into their quest.

When the Missing Moment dispelled the *obnubilate curse*, Kaneepo was furious. To devise a new means of destroying elves, Kaneepo searched for a way to get the *Seventh Arch's* gate key from the Oakstewards. In the course of this search, Kaneepo ran across Bolan (pages 90–91) and found him ripe for manipulation. With the rebel Oaksteward now under their thumb, Kaneepo's ambitions have expanded to something far grander than a simple curse. Now, they aim to extend the Thinlands into the Material Plane itself, turning Sevenarches into their own private hunting preserve.

Physically, Kaneepo resembles an 8-foot-tall hairless humanoid, their rail-thin body genderless and the color of pale slate. An oversized mouth full of flat teeth punctures their otherwise skull-like face. Strips of flayed skin cling to Kaneepo's spindly forearms; these stripes can peel away around their hands, catching nearby prey's shadows like the sticky tentacles of an anemone.

Campaign Role

Kaneepo has been a source of problems since time immemorial. Not only did they arrange for Bolan's theft of the *Shadewither Key*, but they devised the original *obnubilate curse* that has long defined Sevenarches.

Though Kaneepo doesn't share Bolan's desire to annihilate humanoid society, they're happy to play along to secure the druid's help. Kaneepo needs Bolan's aid to complete the ritual to resurrect the *obnubilate curse*. Their strongest desire is to create more of their kind and begin a dynasty. In the course of this adventure, the characters impress Kaneepo sufficiently that they select one of them for this "honor." During the party's final confrontation with Kaneepo, the fey attempts to capture them, talking loudly about how much the chosen character will enjoy "becoming slim" and ruling the Thinlands by their side.

KANEIPO THE SLIM

CREATURE 4

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +14

Languages Common, Sylvan; telepathy 100 feet


Skills Arcana +10, First World Lore +10, Intimidation +12, Occultism +12, Stealth +12, Survival +8

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


Items *Shadewither Key* (page 79)

AC 20; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

HP 80; **Immunities** fear; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Phasic Defenses  **Requirements** Kaneepo hasn't Slimstepped since the beginning of their last turn; **Trigger** Kaneepo would take damage from an attack; **Effect** Kaneepo Slimsteps, taking no damage if their new square would move them out of the range or area of the attack.

Speed 30 feet

Melee  claw +14, **Damage** 1d6+1 slashing plus shadowfeed

Primal Innate Spells DC 21; **3rd** *mind reading*, *paralyze*

Create Breach Once per day, Kaneepo can tear open the fabric between planes, creating a portal between the Thinlands and a point


anywhere in Sevenarches. This portal lasts for up to 1 hour, but Kaneepo can close it at will.

Shadowfeed (fear, emotion, mental) Whenever Kaneepo hits a creature with an attack, Kaneepo's flayed strips of flesh wrap around the target's shadow, causing the victim's body to wither. The struck creature must attempt a DC 21 Fortitude saving throw.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature takes 3d6 mental damage and is frightened 1.

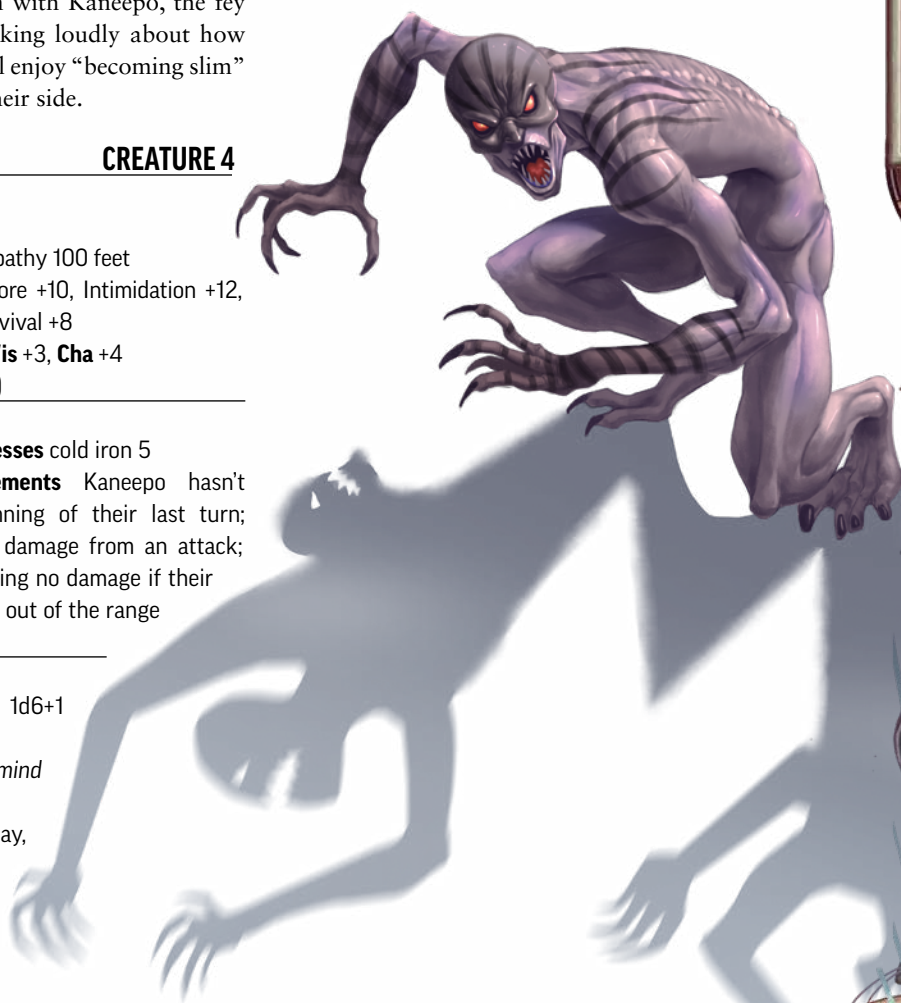
Critical Failure The creature takes 6d6 mental damage and is frightened 2.

Shadow Pull  All creatures in a 60-foot line are affected by Kaneepo's shadowfeed ability.

Slimstep  (conjunction, primal, shadow, teleportation)

Requirements Kaneepo is in dim light or darkness;

Frequency once per round; **Effect** Kaneepo instantly transports themselves from one shadow to another. Kaneepo teleports themselves and any items they're holding to a clear space within 30 feet that's in dim light or darkness. If this would bring any other creature with Kaneepo, the ability is disrupted.



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DARK ARCHIVE



Journal

From the Desk of Dr. Etward Ritalson

Patient Record: 2-A7 (name redacted)

Entry Dated: 10 Neth, 4722 AR

Exhibit: Somnabular Taste/Hunger

Examiner's Note: What follows is an entry from the patient's personal journal, which I took upon myself to read and transcribe herein—for purposes of research, of course.

You know the feeling of remembering a past meal so intensely your mouth floods with hot saliva and your jaws ache from the phantom of past chewing? How a meal or certain dish can lodge so firmly into the malleable basement of your brain that it remains forever, ready to be found anew at the slightest hint of memory? Now imagine all of that but with no memory of what it is you had tasted. All the diaphanous desire of long-past memory but none of the details to relieve the hunger. Now you can begin to perceive the curse placed upon me by the door. Many other Gatewalkers I've talked to have been able to remember what it was that lured them into their door and whatever lay beyond. I was not so lucky. I don't remember approaching the door at all, only stumbling out of it, naked and howling, into a nearby ditch, thrashing like a senseless beast. All I could think of was the taste that filled my mouth. My stomach bulged against my skin and my bones creaked against each other as if all the hidden space within me had been rearranged by what I had eaten. As my senses returned, I saw my hands covered with the drying remains of something that smelled delicious. Underneath my fingernails were scraps of some kind of meat I couldn't place. Firm bits of flesh, slightly spongy and garnet red in the center. There was no chance for me to taste it again, because even as I raised my hand to my mouth, the flecks of meat and the drying liquid evaporated like fog before the morning sun.

I don't need to recount all the boring details of how I stumbled home naked. How I begged the use of a cloak from a passing farmer. How I sat numbly in the sun outside my house but felt not a moment of warmth from it.

The important thing to record here is that the Taste has never left me. When I wake it is in my mouth and my jaws ache as if they have spent the night chewing. But chewing what? It evaporates even as I recognize it's there, and I'm filled not with a mournful longing for a dream deferred, but with a ravenous hunger, a need to find it again, to hold it throbbing in my jaws as it leaks down my throat. So far, nothing I've eaten tastes the same. Nothing I chew sates that dream hunger. My mind has turned to terrible thoughts and I think of all the things I had, until now, never considered eating, meats we are forbidden to sample. I'm terrified and full of anticipation that one morning I will wake and have found the thing I need to eat. I will walk to a certain door and knock, my mouth watering in anticipation and my smile spreading to reveal... something altogether new.



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