

PATHFINDER

ADVENTURE PATH™



SERPENT'S SKULL

RACING
TO RUIN

By Tim Hitchcock

Mwangi Flora

Frog Cactus

Bright green, with pale golden quills, this semi-animate plant has the unusual ability to move via a series of bounding hops when threatened with danger. Once a cactus bulb makes a single ten-foot hop, its flexible roots need a day to slowly refold in preparation for another jump. Yet for those who have received a face full of needles, one such jump is more than enough.

Snapperwine

The Mwangi Expanse holds a wealth of carnivorous plant life. Fortunately, not all of it is large enough to feed on humans. The snapperwine is one such growth. Coiling thick around the lower limbs of trees, each length of snapperwine ends in a voracious mouth capable of snapping up passing insects with blinding accuracy.



PATHFINDER[®] **ADVENTURE PATH**[™]

SERPENT'S SKULL

ADVENTURE PATH PART 2 of 6

RACING TO RUIN



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“Racing to Ruin” is a Pathfinder Adventure Path scenario designed for four 4th-level characters. By the end of this adventure, characters should reach 7th level.

This product makes use of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* and *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*. These rules can be found online as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd.

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table of contents

Foreword	4
Racing to Ruin by Tim Hitchcock	6
Eleder by Tim Hitchcock	58
Gozreh by Sean K Reynolds	66
Pathfinder's Journal: Plague of Light 2 of 6 by Robin Laws	72
Bestiary by Tim Hitchcock, Patrick Renie, Sean K Reynolds, and Neil Spicer	78
Pregenerated Characters	90
Preview	92

SERPENT'S SKULL



BACK ON THE RAILS

With the Kingmaker Adventure Path now two volumes behind me, I've had plenty of time to think about the differences between various Adventure Paths. With Kingmaker, we really did our best to embrace a more "sandboxy" route to presenting a campaign, focusing less on the overarching story and more on the region of the Stolen Lands themselves. More so than any other Adventure Path, the overall story in Kingmaker is one that won't be finalized until your players have experienced it in its entirety and have helped to shape its developments and plot twists.

While the Serpent's Skull Adventure Path is going to have a fair amount of open-ended exploration and discovery (as anyone who's already read through the previous volume's "Souls for Smuggler's Shiv" or next month's "City of Seven Spears" can attest), we are moving back to a more story-driven campaign. "Getting back on the railroad," some might say.

Personally, I've grown to sort of resent the terms "sandbox" and "railroad" as ways to describe a campaign. Maybe it's because those terms seem to be used most often by gamers seeking to crusade for their own preferred style of play and thus eager to deride or belittle the other style. But I think it goes deeper than that. A campaign that's a purely sandbox game, with no pre-calculated plotlines ready to help shape the experience, is just as frustrating to me as a GM or player as would be a campaign that simply presents an immutable series of encounters that must occur in one exact order or else the entire thing comes crumbling down in chaos.

The best kind of campaign is the one that combines elements of both sandbox play and railroad play. And that is the type of campaign I've always tried to present with our Adventure Paths, back to and even prior to the



first Pathfinder Adventure Path, “Rise of the Runelords.” In this volume’s adventure, “Racing to Ruin,” you’ll see evidence of this mix—while the adventure itself is more on a rail than anything we’ve presented in a long time, we’ve opened up the story in another way and leave the decision of who the PCs are working for strictly up to the PCs themselves. Presenting an adventure where the PCs might be allied to the Red Mantis, the Pathfinders, the Aspis Consortium, Sargava, or a bunch of pirates has been a strange new challenge, but in the end I think that it should help to make “Racing to Ruin,” and all of Serpent’s Skull for that matter, a much more dynamic game.

And with that, I think I’ve said pretty much everything I have to say on the subject of which is better—sandboxes or railroads. At least, until some new term comes along to encapsulate some strange new third model for campaigns.

EANDO KLINE’S LATEST JOURNEY

So I probably should have explained the picture we used to illustrate the previous volume’s Foreword last month, but I wanted to give folks a while to try to puzzle out what we’re doing. Just as in *Kingmaker*, where we told a story in the six illustrations that opened that campaign’s six Forewords (in that case, the saga of a particularly unlucky owlbear), we’re telling a new story for Serpent’s Skull.

This is the story of Eando Kline’s latest journey. When last we saw our intrepid Pathfinder, he was actually a Pathfinder no more. His saga comprised a journey from Varisia to Absalom over the course of 17 entries of the Pathfinder’s Journal, a story that involved his discovery of an ancient serpentfolk city hidden in the Darklands of Avistan. That story can actually be viewed as a prequel to the Serpent’s Skull Adventure Path, for the hints of trouble Eando uncovered come to a head (pun intended) in this campaign.

Eando will be making an appearance in the fifth part of Serpent’s Skull, both in the adventure itself and on the cover. But the tale of how he got from the city of Absalom at the end of his Pathfinder Journal arc to the underground serpentfolk ruins of Ilmurea is all but glossed over in this adventure—which is why we’ve chosen to illustrate several scenes from his journey south here. In the previous volume, we saw Eando walking away from the Pathfinder Society, disgusted with their reactions to his warnings. This month, we see him on board a nameless ship that seems to have run afoul of a group of sahuagin. As volumes of Serpent’s Skull continue, we’ll see more and more of his adventures as he draws near to Ilmurea, culminating in his rescue by the PCs.

PASSING THE REINS

Now is the part of the Foreword where I publicly thank Rob McCreary. Rob first came to Paizo’s attention during

ON THE COVER

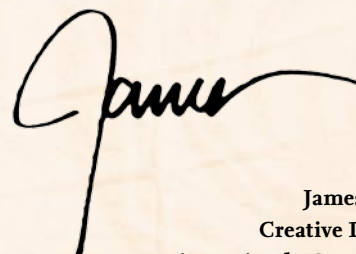
This volume’s cover character is Amivor Glaur, a skilled Pathfinder who has the good fortune to be placed in charge of the Society’s expedition to Saventh-Yhi. A skilled expedition leader and archaeologist, Amivor is likely to be one of the friendlier faction leaders that the PCs are destined to encounter, but that hardly makes him the perfect choice for ally. *Pathfinder Adventure Path #39* provides full statistics for all five faction leaders.

the first RPG Superstar contest with his monkey goblins and his magic coin belts and his jungle ziggurats. And although he didn’t go on to win RPG Superstar 2008, his participation in the contest did ultimately result in his being hired to work at Paizo.

Rob had a few easy months after starting work here, but once we had *Kingmaker* in the can, Wes and I threw a sack over his head and dragged him into the super-secret Adventure Path bunker (also known as my office). There we revealed to him that he would be taking over the development duties for the entire run of the Serpent’s Skull Adventure Path.

He’s now one-third of the way through, and I’m happy to say he’s doing an incredible job turning the slapdash words of our adventure writers (I can pick on them because this time around I’m one of them!) into text that makes sense and adventures that don’t break the rules. Developing Adventure Path installments is among the hardest jobs here at Paizo, since not only do you have to make sure each individual adventure is organized correctly and utilizes the rules in the best way possible, but it’s also your responsibility to make all six parts of the Adventure Path feel connected and like they were designed by one giant hivemind of writers. Rob did a great job developing both “Souls for Smuggler’s Shiv” and this month’s “Racing to Ruin.” I couldn’t be happier!

Actually, that’s a lie. As long as I don’t have a real, live pet deinonychus, I could always be happier.



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SERPENT'S SKULL



RACING TO RUIN

THE JUNGLES OF THE MWANGI EXPANSE ARE RIFE WITH CRUMBLING RUINS—THE ZIGGURATS OF KEMBE, THE FLYING CITY OF KHO, AND POOR, DOOMED HOLY XATRAMBA. BUT NONE OF THESE ANCIENT RELICS HAVE INSPIRED THE IMAGINATIONS OF ADVENTURERS AND SCHOLARS MORE THAN SAVENTH-YHI, THE LEGENDARY LOST CITY OF THE AZLANTI AND THE ONLY OUTPOST OF THAT VANISHED RACE SO FAR SOUTH IN GARUND'S DARK INTERIOR. SAVENTH-YHI'S DISCOVERY WOULD BE THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF ANY EXPLORER'S CAREER, AND GODS KNOW ENOUGH HAVE TRIED TO FIND IT AND FAILED. THE FETID JUNGLES OF MWANGI HOLD MANY SECRETS, BUT PERHAPS SOME CITIES ARE LOST FOR A REASON. THINK ABOUT THAT AS YOU'RE BEING DEVoured BY SOME TOOTHED MONSTROSITY BENEATH THE DRIPPING CANOPY.

—LILAE KURUNDI, *A FOOL'S ERRAND: RUINS AND RELICS OF MWANGI*

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In ages past, the Azlanti hero Savith led an army to Garund to defeat the serpent empire once and for all. After leading her troops on a fierce campaign through the Screaming Jungle and into the Mwangi Expanse in search of the serpentfolk city of Ilmurea, Savith built a small fort in a secluded area a mere stone's throw from the deep scars in the earth that led to Ilmurea from the surface. Within this stronghold, called Tazion, Savith built a map of the region to plot her final assault on the serpentfolk city. When Savith ultimately perished defeating the serpentfolk god Ydersius, her followers built a city in the jungle above Ilmurea and named it Saventh-Yhi ("Savith's Grave") in her honor. With the rise of the city, Tazion waned in importance, though it still stood near one of the entrances to the hidden valley.

Decades later, cultists of Zura, the demon lord of vampires, were banished from Saventh-Yhi for their dangerous beliefs. Fleeing to the island of Smuggler's Shiv, these cultists became vampires and plotted a return to their homeland to spread Zura's worship and their curse of vampirism to their former brethren. Unfortunately for them, the magical wards surrounding Saventh-Yhi kept them from simply retracing their steps. Thus, they planned to enter the city through Tazion, where they could use Savith's original magical map to find the "back door" into Saventh-Yhi. Before their plans could be realized, however, Earthfall struck. The cultists died before they could reach the city, and Saventh-Yhi fell soon after as well, becoming one of the Mwangi Expanse's most famous lost cities.

Thus has Saventh-Yhi existed for millennia, abandoned, ruined, and magically hidden from the rest of the world. And though other inhabitants have found their way into the cloaked city over the years, these are but savage intruders in a city long lost to time and history. Outside the wards cloaking Saventh-Yhi, however, the ancient bastion of Tazion still stands, and clues left on Smuggler's Shiv point the way to this crumbling Azlanti ruin. And though some have discovered the ruins of Tazion, none have yet realized the true nature of the secrets held within its walls.

Saventh-Yhi has long captured the imaginations of explorers, treasure-hunters, and adventurers. Currently, five powerful factions search for Saventh-Yhi, each for their own reasons: the Aspis Consortium, the Free Captains of the Shackles, the Pathfinder Society, the Red Mantis, and the Sargavan government. When the PCs arrive in Eleder and word gets out that they have clues to the location of the legendary city, these factions might finally have a chance of finding the city and claiming it for themselves.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Having escaped Smuggler's Shiv, the PCs arrive in Eleder, where word of their discovery on the island quickly leaks

Advancement Track

Characters should be 4th level when they begin "Racing to Ruin." They should be 5th level by the time they exit the Fzumi Salt Mine. They should be 6th level when they enter the Azlanti ruins of Tazion, and should end the adventure at 7th level. "Racing to Ruin" uses the Medium XP track.

out. Many rival factions seek to find Saventh-Yhi, and the PCs must choose one to ally with to organize their expedition. Before they can set out on their journey, however, they must deal with an armed rebellion in Eleder (possibly instigated by a rival faction), and secure the aid of a strange cleric of Gozreh as a guide.

Once on their way, the PCs race across Sargava, dealing with native hazards and ravenous beasts, and contending with rival factions again at a stopover in Kalabuto. Along the way, the PCs have the opportunity to gain new allies to help them reach their final destination, the ruins of the ancient Azlanti outpost of Tazion.

Now inhabited by a renegade tribe of charau-ka cultists dedicated to the serpent-god Ydersius, the ruins of Tazion also hold an ancient Azlanti device that can reveal the location of Saventh-Yhi. The PCs must battle the vicious ape-men and their mysterious serpentine ally while scouring the ruins for the Azlanti device and the means to activate it.

PART ONE: A GATHERING OF SCAVENGERS

After escaping Smuggler's Shiv, the PCs travel to Eleder, the capital of Sargava and likely their original destination. As the largest port in the region, Eleder represents the closest bastion of civilization after long weeks stranded on Smuggler's Shiv. In Eleder, allow the PCs to rest, recuperate, resupply, and enjoy the comforts of civilization. The city of Eleder is described in the Eleder chapter on pages 58–65 of this volume. Before too long, however, the PCs should plot their next course of action—likely trying to decipher Yarzoth's notes from the Azlanti temple on Smuggler's Shiv so that they can find the legendary lost city of Saventh-Yhi.

If the PCs managed to rescue some of the other castaways from the island, they bid farewell to the PCs and go their separate ways, immediately informing their parent organizations that the PCs possess information about the fabled city of Saventh-Yhi. The actions of each NPC castaway are described on page 8 in "The Castaways."



SERPENT'S SKULL

What if Yarzoth survived?

If the PCs didn't manage to kill Yarzoth at the end of "Souls for Smuggler's Shiv," she makes her own escape from the island soon after the PCs by signaling another passing ship. Assuming the PCs continued their journey to Eleder, she follows them to the city. She remembers enough of her stolen notes to make her own way to Tazion, possibly insinuating herself into one of the other factions' expeditions. In this case, she might set up an ambush to try to stop the PCs from reaching the lost city, or she might bide her time for now, waiting until they have established their camp in Saventh-Yhi to attack them.

DECIPHERING YARZOTH'S NOTES

The PCs are likely very eager to begin deciphering Yarzoth's notes, and may even start on the boat journey to Eleder. All of the notes are written in Aklo, so if none of the PCs speak that language, they may have to wait until they get to Eleder to hire a translator fluent in Aklo.

Finding a translator requires a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check to gather information. A translator can be hired for 10 gp per day, and the work takes 3 to 5 days. Once the notes have been translated, a DC 30 Linguistics check is required to decipher Yarzoth's somewhat elaborate and archaic phrasing. If the PCs are unable to make this check, they may again hire a scholar.

The PCs can also take advantage of Eleder's Colonial Archives to assist them in their research, particularly the library's volumes of the *Pathfinder Chronicles* that mention the existence of Azlanti ruins within the Mwangi Expanse. With a successful DC 15 Intelligence check, each full day spent researching in the Archives grants the PCs a cumulative +1 circumstance bonus (maximum +5) on Linguistics checks to decipher Yarzoth's notes and on Knowledge (geography) checks to locate Tazion (see below).

Once deciphered, Yarzoth's notes prove quite complete. They detail the Zura cult's birth in the fabled city of Saventh-Yhi, their exile to Smuggler's Shiv, and their planned return to the lost city. According to the notes, however, Saventh-Yhi was hidden behind powerful magical wards, preventing the banished cultists from simply returning home. Instead, they planned to journey to a smaller Azlanti outpost called Tazion, wherein they could use something called "the pillars of light" to finally make their way into Saventh-Yhi.

Thus, while the notes do not reveal the location of Saventh-Yhi itself, they do accurately describe the site of Tazion. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (geography) check

places Tazion in the southernmost reaches of the Mwangi Jungle, north of the Bandu Hills, between the Upper Korir and Ocota Rivers.

If the PCs did not manage to recover Yarzoth's notes from Smuggler's Shiv, you can still run this adventure. In this case, one of the surviving castaways reports the existence of Azlanti ruins on Smuggler's Shiv to her faction. The faction then sends an expedition to the island, where the explorers acquire the information contained in Yarzoth's notes. At this point, one of the factions contacts the PCs, offering to hire them to join an expedition in search of the lost city of Saventh-Yhi.

THE CASTAWAYS

The five NPC castaways from Smuggler's Shiv have their own plans once they arrive in Eleder, as they each have a connection to one of the five factions seeking Saventh-Yhi, which are described in "The Factions." As this adventure begins, each castaway is considered either an ally or rival of the PCs, depending on the events of "Souls for Smuggler's Shiv." An NPC castaway who ended the previous adventure friendly or helpful toward the PCs is considered an ally, while an NPC who was indifferent, unfriendly, or hostile is considered a rival. The castaways' actions when they arrive in Eleder and the factions they are associated with are detailed below. Stat blocks for the castaways are presented in "Shipwrecked!" in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #37, but you should advance them to match the PCs' levels.

Aerys Mavato: Aerys was traveling to Sargava to meet with her mentor, Captain Kassata Lewynn, a pirate captain from the Shackles. Upon arriving, Aerys goes to the harbor to meet with Kassata upon her ship, the *Last Hurrah*, to inform her of the PCs' discovery. *Faction:* Free Captains

Gelik Aberwhinge: While not currently in good standing with the Pathfinders, Gelik realizes the discovery of Saventh-Yhi could catapult him through the ranks of the Society. To this end, he contacts Eleder's venture-captain, Finze Bellaugh, hoping to use his connection to the PCs to join the Pathfinders' expedition. *Faction:* Pathfinder Society

Ishirou: Although Ishirou had finally paid off his debt to the Aspis Consortium, when they find about about the PCs' expedition, the Consortium brings him back into the fold, returning him to active duty. *Faction:* Aspis Consortium

Jask Derindi: If the PCs recovered the papers from the wreck of the *Brine Demon* that prove Jask's innocence, Jask immediately goes to the Baron's Palace to clear his name. Because of his tie to the PCs, the Sargavan government asks him to join their expedition. If the PCs did not find proof of his innocence, Jask tries to go into hiding as soon as he arrives, but he is soon found and imprisoned. *Faction:* Sargavan government

Sasha Nevah: While Sasha is not herself a member of the Red Mantis, the assassin organization is unwilling to let her



have free reign once word of the PCs' discovery gets out. The Red Mantis soon contacts Sasha and secures her cooperation with their cause through threats. *Faction:* Red Mantis

If the PCs prefer to keep their allied NPCs with them, they may do so, in which case the actions outlined above do not have to happen. Likewise, should the PCs wish to woo allied NPC castaways from rival factions, they can do so easily, thus depriving those factions of the NPCs' services, which may have repercussions later in the Adventure Path. Rival NPCs will not leave their factions to join the PCs under any circumstance, though should the PCs join a rival NPC's faction, they may try to make that NPC an ally using the normal Diplomacy rules.

THE FACTIONS

Once the PCs begin deciphering Yarzoth's notes, rumors that they have found the route to the fabled city of Saventh-Yhi travel fast, and soon reach the ears of other greedy and ambitious organizations. These rival factions rapidly begin planning their own expeditions in hopes of staking the first claim on the city, and send agents to lure the PCs into their service (likely the former castaways associated with the factions, especially if the NPCs are allies of the PCs).

You should decide beforehand which factions are most likely to be friendly to the PCs, and which are likely to be rivals, based on the PCs' own alignments and motivations, and which NPC castaways they allied with on Smuggler's Shiv. Alternatively, you can have each faction approach the PCs in turn, and let the players decide for themselves which faction they want to ally with.

Each faction offers the same basic compensation: they will outfit and organize the expedition to Saventh-Yhi, paying all the costs of food, water, supplies, porters, guards, and so forth. They also offer a "signing bonus" of 500 gp per PC for the characters to use to outfit themselves for the expedition. Finally, each faction offers an additional reward of 1,000 gp for the entire party once the expedition successfully reaches Saventh-Yhi, though the PCs might be able to negotiate better rates or pit factions against each other in a bidding war (up to a maximum reward of 5,000 gp). In addition, the PCs can gain additional rewards by joining the faction of one of the allied NPC castaways. Each faction also provides a benefit to the PCs' base camp once they reach Saventh-Yhi, which will be further detailed in the next adventure, "The City of Seven Spears."

Regardless of which faction the PCs eventually join, they may interact with rival factions depending on how their journey unfolds over the course of the adventure. Once the PCs have chosen their faction, you should pick one of the other factions to be the PCs' primary rival. In most cases, an obvious choice presents itself, but you should choose the best faction to oppose the PCs based on the details of your game.

The following descriptions outline each faction's motivations, its local leader, a suggested rival faction, any additional rewards for allying with an NPC castaway, and the benefits the faction will provide to the PCs once they reach Saventh-Yhi.

ASPIS CONSORTIUM

The Aspis Consortium wants to find Saventh-Yhi for the same reason behind all of their business ventures: profit. The vast wealth believed to be hidden within the lost city would be a welcome addition to the trade syndicate's coffers, and would doubtless be a source of the exotic artifacts that are the Consortium's stock-in-trade.

Faction Leader: The Aspis Consortium's agent in Eleder is **Dargan Etters** (LN male human sorcerer 9), a charismatic merchant solely interested in his own prestige within the Aspis Consortium. He views the expedition to Saventh-Yhi as a business venture, nothing more and nothing less. He is arrogant and utterly ruthless, and has no qualms about killing anyone who gets in his way, either to lessen the competition or to get what he wants.

Rival Faction: As always, the Aspis Consortium is opposed to the Pathfinder Society. If they can beat the Pathfinders to Saventh-Yhi, that's just icing on the cake.

Ally: If the PCs are allied with Ishirou, the Aspis Consortium additionally offers them a selection of potions and scrolls of the PCs' choice worth 500 gp in total.

Special: Once the PCs establish their base camp in Saventh-Yhi, the Aspis Consortium's experience in dealing with native peoples and opening new trade routes can grant them influence over the city's current inhabitants.

FREE CAPTAINS OF THE SHACKLES

As a group, the pirate lords of the Shackles have no interest in Saventh-Yhi—but one Free Captain in particular is eager to find the lost city. She seeks the legendary wealth of Saventh-Yhi to increase her own standing among the Pirate Lords of the Shackles.

Faction Leader: **Kassata Lewynn** (CN female human fighter 5/rogue 4), captain of the *Last Hurrah*, is an ambitious Free Captain of the Shackles. Though currently the captain of but a single ship, Kassata plans to fill her hold with the city's treasures and sail triumphantly back to Port Peril, in hopes of purchasing her own island, outfitting a squadron of ships, and claiming a seat on the Shackles' pirate council.

Rival Faction: Kassata inherited her ship from her father when a rival captain hired the Red Mantis to assassinate him. As a result, there is little love lost between the fiery pirate captain and the assassins' guild.

Ally: If the PCs are allied with Aerys Mavato, Captain Lewynn offers them a bonus of an additional 500 gp, or command of a small crew of able-bodied buccaneers



SERPENT'S SKULL

to aid them in their journey. If the PCs choose the crew, there is one pirate per PC. You can use the stats for shipmates from page 294 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, or simply use any generic stat block for a 1st-level warrior.

Special: Once a base camp has been established in Saventh-Yhi, Kassata's contacts and her ability to move resources quickly along the region's rivers grant the PCs additional trade assets.

PATHFINDER SOCIETY

The Pathfinder Society seeks Saventh-Yhi for the same reason they explore any other ancient ruin—for the lost knowledge it contains, not to mention the historical artifacts and rumored wealth that can be recovered from the fabled city. In addition, with the recent loss of their lodge in the city of Kalabuto, the Decemvirate is eager to expand their influence in the region, and Saventh-Yhi might just make a good site for a new Pathfinder Lodge.

Faction Leader: The Society has placed a skilled Pathfinder, **Amivor Glaur** (CG male human bard 3/rogue 3/Pathfinder delver 3), in charge of their expedition. A veteran of several expeditions into the Mwangi interior, Amivor is skilled at organizing and leading such missions, as well as appraising and exploring historical sites.

Rival Faction: The Pathfinder Society has long been at odds with the Aspis Consortium, and seeks to limit the trade syndicate's influence here in Garund as elsewhere on Golarion.

Ally: If the PCs are allied with Gelik Aberwhinge, the Pathfinders offer each PC a magical compass called a *wayfinder* (*Seekers of Secrets* 50 or *World Guide: The Inner Sea*). In addition, they hold out the possibility of field commissions in the Society for the PCs once they successfully reach Saventh-Yhi.

Special: After establishing a base camp in Saventh-Yhi, the Pathfinders will assist the PCs' explorations of the city using the Society's knowledge and expertise in exploring ancient sites.

RED MANTIS

The Red Mantis are not necessarily interested in the city of Saventh-Yhi itself, but what is rumored to lie *inside* it. Ancient texts hint at the existence of a temple to Achaekek the Mantis God within the legendary city, and the Red Mantis are eager to find this location, which is sacred to their cult. Within the lost temple, they hope to find powerful relics of the Mantis God unseen on Golarion since the days of Azlant.

Faction Leader: The Red Mantis leader **Chivane** (LE female elf rogue 5/Red Mantis assassin 4) recently fell out of favor with the cult's leadership, and was sent to Sargava to redeem herself. Chivane believes that opportunity is created, not a

thing of chance, and views the discovery of Saventh-Yhi as an opportunity to find the ancient temple of Achaekek.

Rival Faction: As regional rivals, the Red Mantis and the Free Captains of the Shackles often come to blows in the seas between their two lands. Not wanting to give the pirates any advantage, the Red Mantis have instructed Chivane to stymie the Free Captains' efforts in Sargava by any means necessary.

Ally: If the PCs are allied with Sasha Nevah, the Red Mantis offer them 500 gp worth of poison and antitoxin.

Special: Once encamped in Saventh-Yhi, the PCs will have access to the fighters of the Red Mantis, granting them additional offensive resources to use against their rivals.

SARGAVAN GOVERNMENT

The Sargavan government wants to stake a claim on Saventh-Yhi for two reasons. First, if they can establish an outpost there, it increases their presence and influence in the region, while at the same time denying the same benefits to rivals. Second, the city's legendary wealth and the opportunity to open new trade routes would go a long way toward refilling Sargava's depleted treasury, perhaps granting the former colony a greater independence from (or at least less reliance on) the Free Captains of the Shackles.

Faction Leader: The Grand Custodian appoints **Rotilius Havelar** (LN male human fighter 6/ranger 3), a general of the Sargavan Guard, to lead the government expedition to Saventh-Yhi. A loyal supporter of Baron Utilinus, General Havelar is a stereotypical arrogant colonial, with traditionalist views of the Mwangi natives. He is a military man through and through, a skilled warrior and canny strategist, but he lacks true leadership ability.

Rival Faction: The Sargavan government has no direct rivalry with any of the other groups. As such, any of the other factions would make a good rival.

Ally: If Jask Derindi is allied to the PCs and was imprisoned upon arriving in Eleder, General Havelar will use him as a bargaining chip, offering to release Jask the PCs to join his expedition, offering to release Jask in exchange.

If Jask is an ally and has been proved innocent, the Sargavan government offers the PCs temporary command of a squad of Sargavan Guardsmen, up to one guard per PC. You can use the stats for foot soldiers from page 286 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, or simply use any generic stat block for a 1st-level warrior.

In addition, if Sargava manages to claim Saventh-Yhi first, Baron Utilinus promises to grant each PC a noble title and small tract of jungle land as a reward (see page 22 of *Sargava: The Lost Colony* for more information on Sargavan noble titles).

Special: Once the PCs set up their base camp in Saventh-Yhi, Sargava's troops will guard the encampment, making it more defensible.



THE FREEMEN'S REVOLT

Once the PCs have chosen a faction, they should begin making arrangements for their journey. While their faction organizes the main expedition, the PCs must still outfit themselves. They have about a week until the expedition is ready to leave, and may spend this time further exploring Eleder or going on side treks of your own devising. The city is abuzz with rumors of the different factions preparing their own expeditions to Saventh-Yhi, racing to be the first ones to arrive.

During this time, the PCs find themselves caught in the middle of an insurrectionist uprising, spearheaded by an alliance of ex-slaves known as the Freeman's Brotherhood (see page 64). The Brotherhood's primary goal is to instill terror in the hearts of foreigners, merchants, and others they believe stand behind the slave trade. What most of the Brotherhood's members don't realize is that their revolt was actually instigated by the PCs' primary rival faction. Hoping to delay or even halt the PCs' expedition, the rival faction contacted the Brotherhood's erratic leader Umagro, and painted the PCs as foreigners seeking to expand the slave trade into the Mwangi interior.

Spurred by the incendiary words of Umagro, the violent insurgents initiate the revolt by releasing wild dogs into the streets, then begin burning and looting foreign-owned warehouses and private residences. At the behest of his handlers, Umagro targets the PCs' warehouse and kidnaps one of their NPC allies in an effort to draw attention to his cause and his demand that the slave trade must end.

EVENT 1: DOGS IN THE STREETS (CR 4)

As the PCs are heading to the warehouse where their faction's expedition is being organized, screams erupt from up ahead. Moments later a panicked mob tears down the street, fearfully pushing past the PCs and warning them to run. If the PCs can grab hold of a terrified citizen, the individual hurriedly blurts out that the Freeman have set loose vicious packs of wild dogs upon the town.

Creatures: On the heels of the fleeing crowd, a howling pack of wild dogs whips around the corner. Frenzied by the cramped city streets and the screaming people, the rabid beasts attack anything in their path.

RABID WILD DOGS (6)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 6 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

Melee bite +2 (1d4+1 plus rabies)

Development: Shortly after the dogs appear, the insurrectionists begin lighting nearby buildings on fire. The PCs soon see black smoke rising from warehouses a few blocks away, where their own warehouse is located.

EVENT 2: A RIOT OF ARSONISTS (CR 4)

The PCs arrive at their faction's warehouse to find rebel members of the Freeman's Brotherhood wielding torches and flasks of alchemist's fire, eager to burn down as many structures as they can in as little time as possible.

Creatures: A pair of Freeman insurgents is in the process of torching the PCs' warehouse. If the PCs attempt to stop them, the arsonists break away from their task to attack them.

FREEMAN INSURGENTS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

Male human fighter 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 22 each (3d10+6)

Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk club +8 (1d6+3)

Ranged alchemist's fire +6 (1d6 fire)

or mwk composite shortbow +6 (1d6/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat Both of the insurgents hold flasks of alchemist's fire, and if interrupted, they turn and throw them at the nearest target. After hurling their flasks, the insurgents draw their clubs and bash their way through the crowd in a desperate attempt to join their allies at the South Arcadian Whaling Company.

Morale If cornered, the insurgents fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; CMB +6; CMD 18

Feats Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Step Up, Throw Anything, Weapon Focus (club)

Skills Climb +5, Intimidate +5, Profession (laborer) +5, Survival +6

Languages Common, Polyglot

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (5), torches (2); **Other Gear** hide armor, masterwork club, masterwork composite shortbow

Development: During the combat, the warehouse catches fire. Rules for buildings catching fire may be found in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #30. If you don't have that volume, you can use the following guidelines. The flames spread quickly and if not extinguished in 10 rounds, the entire building is consumed. If this occurs, the fire leaps to surrounding structures, rapidly spreading through the city. The PCs need to defeat the arsonists and prevent the fire from spreading. If the PCs work for



SERPENT'S SKULL

5 rounds to stave off disaster, a few dozen reinforcements arrive to help quell the flames. If the PCs are unable to stop the fire, most of their expedition's gear is destroyed in the fire, delaying the expedition by 1 week.

Once the fire has been brought under control, one of the workers at the warehouse informs the PCs that one of their NPC allies was taken hostage by the Freeman. This NPC should be one the PCs have grown close to, likely one of the Smuggler's Shiv castaways that the PCs befriended. The PCs also receive news that the insurgents have seized the South Arcadian Whaling Company in New Haliad, where the Brotherhood's leader Umagro is calling for the slaughter of foreigners and the overthrow of the government. If they want to rescue their friend, the PCs will have to defeat Umagro.

A. SOUTH ARCADIAN WHALING COMPANY

At the end of Whalebone Lane, on the west side facing the beachfront, stands a large complex of whitewashed stone and brick, easily located by the pungent stench surrounding it. The compound belongs to the South Arcadian Whaling Company, a small operation that hunts and processes whales off the southwestern coast of Garund, and serves as one of the region's sources for baleen, whale meat, whale oil, and other whale byproducts. The compound is walled on all sides, including the beachfront, making it one of the most defensible structures in the city and a perfect place for the insurrectionists to hole up. With only a few employees present at the processing plant, the Freeman quickly overran the complex and set up guards.

When the PCs arrive at the compound, Umagro is on the roof of the flensing house (area A6), 30 feet above the ground, holding his hostage at knifepoint and issuing his demands for the abolition of slavery in Sargava to the gathering crowd below. The PCs may employ whatever means they can think of to rescue the hostage. From the ground, Umagro has cover, and it's clear that any attacks upon him will result in the death of the hostage. If the PCs try to reason with him or use spells, Umagro immediately retreats down into the flensing house (area A5).

Most likely, the PCs attempt to sneak into the compound and take Umagro unaware, before he can kill the hostage. The door to the compound's main offices (area A1) is barred (hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 25). The brick walls of the compound are 20 feet high, and require a DC 25 Climb check to climb. Keep in mind the guards that are posted throughout the complex, and the actions they take to prevent the PCs from getting to Umagro and the hostage.

A1. MAIN OFFICES (CR 4)

The main office consists of a small vestibule flanked by desks. A passage leads from the vestibule to a storage room where finished orders await pick-up. An adjacent room

serves as an office as well as a storeroom for baleen, bone, and ambergris.

Creatures: Two Freeman insurgents are holed up in this area, guarding the front entrance. They attack anyone attempting to enter.

FREEMAN INSURGENTS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (see page 11)

A2. THE INNER COURTYARD

This broad, cobbled courtyard is surrounded by buildings. On the side facing the beach, a wide ramp leads down to the shore through a gated arch. Wedged into the passage lies the bloody carcass of a tremendous whale. The carcass is bound with thick cables that lead to a crank hoist at the top of the ramp. On either side sit warehouses converted for stripping and processing whale meat and blubber. The entire complex reeks of burnt fat and slaughter.

Whalers use the ramp to drag whales up from the beach, and the flagstones are saturated with blood and whale oil. Anyone attempting to run or charge through the courtyard must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check to avoid slipping and falling prone.

Development: Anyone entering the courtyard attracts the immediate attention of the insurgents posted at the hopper (area A3) and the flensing house (area A5b).

A3. HOPPER AND GRINDER (CR 4)

A loud mechanical growl echoes from a huge metal box occupying the room. Every so often, large chunks of whale meat are forced through a trough into an adjacent room where a large, rotating iron drum grinds up the meat. Opposite the drum are racks above recessed fire pits where whale flanks are hung for smoking.

The southern wing of the building, which contains the hopper, is roofless.

Creatures: A single insurgent sniper hides on the elevated walkway to the east of the building, behind the hopper. As soon as the PCs enter the inner courtyard (area A2), he starts shooting at them, hoping to lure them away from the flensing house.

FREEMAN INSURGENT

CR 2

XP 600

hp 22 (see page 11)

TACTICS

During Combat The sniper fires off as many arrows as he can before the PCs reach him, then jumps down inside the hopper room. Once inside, he yells insults at the PCs, then





Whaling Company

triggers the hopper trap and darts into the northern room, taking cover behind the grinding drum.

Trap: The insurgent has rigged a deadly trap to slow any pursuers. By over-winding the meat crank and loosening bolts on the hopper's grinding mechanism, he's created a vicious booby trap of flying metal chopping blades. The device must be tripped deliberately. Once the over-wound crank reaches a critical speed (1d4 rounds later), the bolts pull free, sending dull grinding blades in all directions.

HOPPER TRAP **CR 2**
Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20
EFFECTS
Trigger timed (1d4 rounds); **Reset** repair
Effect Atk +10 ranged (2d6); multiple targets (all targets in hopper room)

A4. SEAWATCH (CR2)

At the rear of the compound, a small shack faces the water. The company uses it as a both a seawatch cabin and a lighthouse, to better enable their ships to unload their hauls.

Creature: A lone insurgent keeps an eye on the waterfront.

FREEMAN INSURGENT **CR 2**
XP 600
hp 22 (see page 11)
TACTICS

During Combat The insurgent keeps his distance and fights defensively using his bow. If forced into melee, he switches to his club, waiting for an opportunity to break away.

Morale This insurgent attempts to flee as soon as possible, in order to send warning to the other Freemen.

A5. FLENSING HOUSE (CR 5)

A large brick building stands here; the side facing the inner courtyard is completely open to the elements. At the front of the structure, huge winches hang from the ceiling, rigged to oversized wooden blocks dangling hooks and straps. Toward the back, a metal and wood grid bisects the building, acting as a second floor. Atop the grid, a series of long, trough-shaped vats line the back wall. Below the grid stand three tremendous cast-iron boilers.

Whalers use this building, known as the flensing house, to break down whale carcasses. In the front (area A5a), the whales are skinned, then attached to the block and tackle and hoisted up so that grid workers can peel off the blubber



Serpent's Skull

and transfer it to the nearby vats for rendering into oil. Below, massive boilers heat the vats, reducing the blubber to oil, while a series of brick chimneys belch soot into the sky. The boilers run on coal and wood, which is stored in the two adjacent shacks. Both levels have racks holding gruesome tools used for breaking down carcasses, including a half-dozen sharp-tined flesh rakes and large skinning blades. The building stinks of decay, and the entire structure is coated with greasy film from years of use.

Near the chimneys, a ladder climbs from the ground floor to the grid and continues up to a hatch in the roof (area A6).

Creatures: Three insurgents hold strategic positions on the grid (area A5b), but do not reveal themselves, hoping the sniper in the hopper (area A3) will lead intruders away. They have instructions to hold their attacks until enemies attempt to enter the flensing house.

FREEMAN INSURGENTS (3) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (see page 11)

Ranged flaming whale blubber +5 (1 plus 1d6 fire)
or bucket of whale oil +6 ranged touch (soak with oil)

TACTICS

Before Combat One of the insurgents keeps an arrow nocked in his bow, ready to target the first thing he spots moving. The other two have grabbed chunks of blubber and a broken lantern. They wait until the PCs approach, then dip the slabs into their buckets of oil, light them, and hurl them at the PCs.

During Combat As soon as the PCs come anywhere near the grid, two of the insurgents grab buckets and try to douse the PCs with whale oil. The third insurgent continues to throw flaming blubber, attempting to light any oil-soaked opponents on fire (see page 444 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*). Once enemies reach the grid, the insurgents draw their clubs, keeping their backs to the vats, alternating melee attacks with bull rushes to push their opponents off the grid.

Morale These insurgents fight to the death.

Development: If Umagro retreated into the flensing house when the PCs arrived, he returns to the roof with his hostage while the PCs deal with the guards.

A6. FLENSING HOUSE ROOF (CR 5)

The hatch in the flensing house leads to the roof, where Umagro holds his terrified hostage before the massing throng of onlookers below. The hostage is securely bound with ropes and has been soundly beaten, reduced to only 6 hit points. Umagro stands 30 feet away from the hatch. The fervor-filled demagogue is entirely wrapped up with his demonstration, so if the PCs try to surprise Umagro, they can attempt a Stealth check with a -5 penalty. If that check fails, the old hatch creaks as it opens, alerting Umagro to their presence.

The slate-shingled roof has a mild pitch angled toward the street. Anyone attempting to move faster than half speed must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check or slip, fall prone, and begin sliding off the roof. A DC 15 Reflex save prevents the 30-foot drop to the street. Fortunately, the crowd of colonials below attempts to catch anyone but Umagro who falls off the roof, acting as a yielding surface, so the first 1d6 points of falling damage are nonlethal.

Creature: Umagro wears a dark cloak, and paints his face in tribal warrior patterns. At a young age, Umagro was captured by slavers and sold into slavery. Much of his youth was spent digging in the salt mines, until he was sold into the slave armies of a Chelish trading company. Stationed at Kalabuto, he and his fellow slaves revolted during a Mzali siege. Escaping to Eleder, he joined the movement of ex-slaves known as the Freeman's Brotherhood, eventually rising to power and turning the once peaceful organization into a group of violent revolutionaries.

As soon as the PCs confront him, Umagro erupts into a barbaric rage. On the first round of combat, he slits his hostage's throat as a standard action, reducing the hostage to -1 hit points. Umagro then drops the hostage to the roof, and as a move action sets the hostage rolling toward the edge of the roof. On the second round, the dying hostage rolls off the roof into the crowd below, giving the PCs only 1 round to reach their friend. If the hostage falls off the roof, the crowd below catches her, converting the first 1d6 points of falling damage to nonlethal damage. Even if the hostage is prevented from splattering to her death on the street cobbles below, she still loses blood each round. In order to save her, the PCs must get to the ground and find some way to stabilize her before she bleeds to death.

UMAGRO CR 5

XP 1,600

Male human barbarian 6
CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +2; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural, -2 rage)

hp 69 (6d12+30)

Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 kukri +11/+6 (1d4+6/18-20) and mwk kukri +11 (1d4+2/18-20)

Special Attacks rage (16 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury, knockback, superstition +3)

TACTICS

During Combat Once he has dealt with the hostage, Umagro uses Dazzling Display to demoralize his opponents and



impress the crowd below. Once his foes reach him, he attacks wildly, using Power Attack and attempting to reduce the number of his opponents by using his knockback rage power to push them off the roof.

Morale Umagro is a martyr and eagerly fights to the death.

Base Statistics AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **hp** 57; **Fort** +7, **Will** +3; **Melee** +1 kukri +9/+4 (1d4+4/18–20), mwk kukri +9 (1d4+1/18–20); **Str** 16, **Con** 14; **CMB** +9

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 21

Feats Dazzling Display, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nature) +3, Linguistics +0, Perception +8, Profession (miner) +2, Profession (soldier) +3, Survival +8

Languages Common, Polyglot

SQ fast movement

Gear masterwork breastplate, +1 kukri, masterwork kukri, *amulet of natural armor* +1

Development: Once the PCs have defeated Umagro, they may wish to investigate the reasons behind the uprising. Any of the surviving Freeman surrender upon their leader's death, and if interrogated, mention that strange men visited Umagro before the uprising. The descriptions of these men should match those of the PCs' rival faction's agents (for example, they might have been wearing Aspis Consortium badges, or carrying *wayfinders*). If no Freeman survive, consider placing a small item among Umagro's gear, perhaps a map or letter, that hints at the identity of the rival faction behind the scenes. Whatever its form, this evidence should be circumstantial at best—nothing definitively ties the faction to the revolt, but the PCs should come away with the idea that the other factions seeking Saventh-Yhi are willing to play dirty to be the first to reach the city.

THE TEMPEST

After the PCs have dealt with the Freeman's Brotherhood, the final preparations for their expedition can begin. Prior to leaving, however, the leader of their faction

suggests the PCs find a seasoned guide to help them navigate the harsh and strange terrain, as well as to deal with local tribes. The most able candidate is an aged mystic priest of Gozreh named Nkechi, whom locals call the Tempest. He is very knowledgeable, but can be quite temperamental, and like his patron is prone to fits of rage and madness. The holy man lives alone in a cave atop a jagged seaside cliff face several miles north of the city known as the Pallid Bluffs. These great cliffs form the very edge of a long promontory and drop some 300 feet into the angry sea.

In order to find the mystic's hermitage, the PCs are advised to approach the Pallid Bluffs from the shore, as his cave cannot be spotted from above. The best route is to take a small boat up the coast and try to row in at high tide when the ocean waters cover most of the rocky shore. The PCs can also travel up the coast on foot, but they are warned that the beaches consist mostly of jagged, slippery rocks. Walking there will take at least a day. Regardless of which route the PCs choose, they arrive at the cliffs at high tide.

B1. THE PALLID BLUFFS (CR 5)

Jagged seaside cliffs of pale limestone tower over the rocky shore. Gulls weave overhead in the updraft, while from below rise the deafening echoes of the roiling surf as it beats against the rocks.

The cliff face is a staggering 300 feet tall. The waters here are shallow, never reaching depths of more than 3 feet. Still, the rock and sand beneath make for uneasy footing, and the pounding surf and strong undertow make traveling to the crags deceptively dangerous.

Hazard: Once every 1d3 rounds, the PCs are struck by a wave potentially forceful enough to knock them prone. Characters who are lose their footing are then subject to a powerful undertow that can pull them out to sea.

BATTERING WAVES

CR 2

XP 600

Effect knocked prone (Reflex DC 12 avoids); targets knocked prone must make DC 15



Umagro



SERPENT'S SKULL

Swim checks or be pulled 10 ft. per round toward deeper water; targets can make additional Swim checks each round (DC increases by +1 for each round the target fails the Swim check).

Creatures: Two monstrosously sized giant crabs lurk in these waters. Though Nkechi feeds these beasts regularly, he has no control over their actions. He simply admires the creatures' stealth, beauty, and ferocity. He believes Gozreh sent them as a divine favor to guard the waters near his home.

GIANT CRABS (2) **CR 2**
XP 600 each
hp 19 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 50*)

Development: Killing the giant crabs disappoints Nkechi, though he views the act of slaying them as a sign that there is work to be done and he must again move on. Still, he doesn't hesitate to vent his frustrations upon the PCs and remains convinced they could have used a different tactic to safely bypass the creatures.

B2. THE HERMITAGE (CR VARIES)

Nkechi's hermitage is a shallow cave about two-thirds of the way up the cliff face on a remote crag facing the ocean. The cave entrance is covered with gates of woven bamboo and palm leaf securely tied with dried gut. From the top of the bluffs, the cave is completely hidden. Over the years, hundreds have come here seeking Nkechi's counsel and guidance. His words have earned him both devout parishioners and angry enemies, and he's survived several attempts on his life. As a result, he's developed a healthy sense of vigilance and paranoia.

The best way to approach Nkechi is for the PCs to call the cleric to them. When the PCs arrive at the base of the cliff, they can find a conch shell horn to blow and summon him. If they blow the horn and wait patiently, the holy man appears on a high ledge a few moments later and addresses his visitors.

High upon a narrow ledge, a dark-skinned man appears. Dressed in nothing but a loincloth, his wild, knotted hair whips about in the wind. Shouting above the crashing surf he calls down, "Who are you and for what purpose do you seek me?"

Nkechi's initial attitude is indifferent. Irked by the PCs' intrusion, he berates them as interlopers and demands that they leave him alone. If they accommodate his sour temper and can change his attitude to friendly, he agrees to hear their proposal.

If the PCs attempt to climb to Nkechi's hermitage unannounced, the going is difficult. To reach the cave,

one must take a steep and narrow footpath which threads up from the rocky shoals through a series of jagged outcroppings. Eventually, the cliff face becomes too steep to walk, and the path transforms into a perilous series of handholds and small ledges that climb a dizzying 200 feet above the headland. The rock wall is slippery with spray from the waves below, requiring a DC 15 Climb check.

Trap: The Tempest has erected a warning system on the lower path to alert him to the presence of intruders.

TRIP WIRE ALARM **CR —**
Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20
EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** repair
Effect tripping the wire springs open a net full of oyster shells, sending them clattering noisily down the rocky crags and alerting Nkechi

Once alerted by his trip wire alarms, Nkechi emerges onto a ledge as cautiously as possible to size up the intruders. As the PCs approach, he watches, eventually revealing himself as they begin to ascend the crag. Nkechi is considered hostile at this point, and warns the PCs away, threatening them with the wrath of Gozreh. If the PCs call a truce, they can attempt to reason with him as described below.

Trap: Those who ignore the warning and press on without Nkechi's permission risk both his wrath and several traps he has arranged to protect himself where the trail transitions to vertical. These traps consist of sharpened stakes coated with sea urchin venom and attached to springy saplings. If the PCs continue to ascend after encountering his traps, Nkechi attacks with spells.

SPRING STAKE TRAPS (4) **CR 2**
Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 18
EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual
Effect Atk +10 melee (1d6+2 plus sea urchin venom)
Sea Urchin Venom: Stakes—injury; *save* Fort 11; *frequency* 1/minute for 6 minutes; *effect* victim is sickened for 1 minute; *cure* 1 save.

Creature: Though he is still agile and muscular of form, Nkechi's face and knuckles bear fine creases that show his age. Wind and sea salt have turned his dark skin rough and ashen, and his palms and soles are caked with white chalk from climbing the cliff face. He has long, graying dreadlocks and a scraggly beard, and dresses in nothing but a loincloth. He is prejudiced against non-Mwangis and degradingly refers to any obvious northerners as "Pale Ones."

NKECHI THE TEMPEST **CR 4**
XP 1,200

Male middle-aged human cleric of Gozreh 5



N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 27 (5d8+5)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk trident +3 (1d8–1)

Ranged mwk trident +6 (1d8–1)

Special Attacks channel positive energy
2/day (DC 11, 3d6), wooden fist (+2, 7
rounds/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th;
concentration +9)

7/day—storm burst (1d6+2
nonlethal damage)

Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +9)

3rd—*call lightning*^D (DC 17), *create food
and water*, *remove disease*

2nd—*augury*, *barkskin*^D, *delay poison*,
lesser restoration

1st—*endure elements*, *magic stone*, *magic weapon*,
obscuring mist^D, *sanctuary* (DC 15)

o (at will)—*detect poison*, *light*, *purify food and
drink*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; Domains Plant, Weather

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Athletic, Eschew Materials, Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus
(Swim)

Skills Climb +6, Diplomacy +3, Heal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5,
Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge
(local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Knowledge (religion) +5,
Linguistics +5, Sense Motive +8, Survival +11, Swim +9

Languages Azlanti, Common, Polyglot

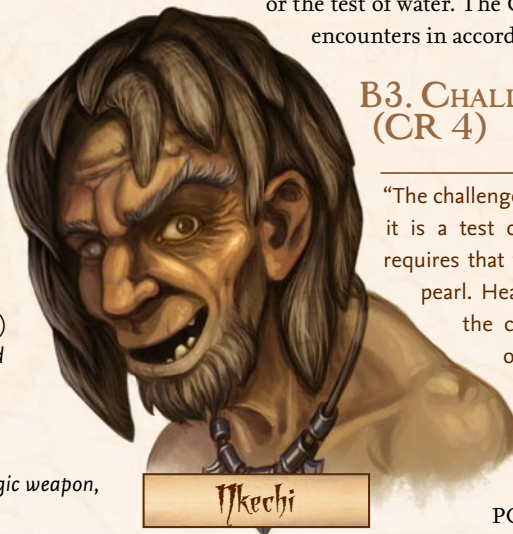
Gear +1 *light wooden shield*, masterwork trident, *pearl of power*
(1st level), *augury* bones worth 25 gp, flint and steel, healer's
kit, waterskin, wooden holy symbol of Gozreh

If made friendly, Nkechi clammers down the rocks to meet the PCs. At the water's edge, Nkechi tolerates the PCs' company long enough to hear why they are here and how it would serve Gozreh for him to accompany them. Once the PCs explain themselves and their purpose, he falls into quiet contemplation for a long moment, and then speaks.

"In truth, I am skeptical of your abilities. At best you seem to me blissful incompetents. I doubt you even capable of finding your way back to town, much less through the jungle. But Gozreh may have different ideas, and it may serve his purpose for me to accompany you. I am willing to accept your proposal if you first

prove yourselves by completing two simple tests, one of wind and one of water. Of course, you may decline, but I must add that if you fear performing Gozreh's simple tasks, there is no way you will survive the jungle."

If the PCs agree to Nkechi's challenges, he asks them which test they'd first like to undertake, the test of wind or the test of water. The GM should then run the next two encounters in accordance with the PCs' answer.



B3. CHALLENGE OF WATER (CR 4)

"The challenge of water is hardly difficult. Mostly, it is a test of patience and fortitude. Gozreh requires that you retrieve for him a single black pearl. Head north a bit, out by the crags of the cape. Those shores are filled with oyster beds, and such pearls are not uncommon to those who know where to look."

The test requires that the PCs perform several dives off a nearby reef known for its hazardous coral and powerful currents. Nkechi suggests to the PCs that when they arrive, they query a few of the local pearl divers asking for pointers.

Traveling up the coast, the PCs come upon a small village of indigenous pearl divers. Their initial attitude is friendly, and they freely offer pointers to outsiders and give them directions to the rocky reefs where the pearls are most common. The divers advise the PCs to be careful about what they touch, as the sharp coral can leave painful wounds. They also warn that although slow, the deceptively strong currents can still disorient divers, and can drag a swimmer out to sea to his death. If made helpful, the divers offer to barter some of their special equipment, including sandbag weights and diving floats (barrels with ropes attached) for some of the PCs' more mundane equipment. The weights can help the PCs reach the bottom swiftly (granting a +2 circumstance bonus on Swim checks to dive), while the floats mark a diver's position relative to others and can help prevent the PCs from being dragged out to sea by the currents (granting a +2 circumstance bonus on Swim checks to return to the surface).

The PCs must swim (or take a boat) out to the oyster beds, which lie at depths of 60 to 100 feet about 100 feet offshore. A PC's Constitution score and swim speed determine how long she can remain submerged. To dive for pearls in the strong currents, a PC must make a DC 15 Swim check. If that check is successful, she can make a DC 20 Perception check to spot the oysters, wedged into crevices of rock



SERPENT'S SKULL

encrusted with sharp coral draped with kelp. Once found, the oysters are easily removed, but the PC must make a DC 12 Reflex save, or be cut by the sharp coral and risk contacting an aquatic strain of filth fever (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 557). A final DC 15 Swim check is required to return to the surface.

Most of the pearls the PCs recover are either too flawed or too small to be worth more than 1d5 gold pieces each. In order to find the rare black pearl that Nkechi requires, the PCs must make a DC 30 Survival check. Each successful dive grants a cumulative +2 bonus on this Survival check.

Creature: As the PCs search for oysters, they soon discover the oyster beds are also littered with bones, for the reef is lorded over by a wily kelpie who hunts overly ambitious pearl divers. A horse-like fey creature, the kelpie's natural form is that of a pony, but it has taken the form of a beautiful maiden with long, flowing hair to attract prey.

KELPIE CR 4

XP 1,200

NE Medium fey (aquatic) (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 249)



Kelpie

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 38 (7d6+14)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 slams +6 (1d6+2 plus grab)

Special Attacks captivating lure

TACTICS

During Combat The kelpie uses her captivating lure to capture a single opponent, drag him into her lair, and devour him.

Morale If the kelpie drops below 10 hit points, she flees.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 18

Feats Alertness, Deceitful, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +15, Disguise +15, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +13, Swim +10

Languages Aquan, Common, Sylvan; telepathy 1 mile (touched creatures only)

SQ amphibious, change shape (hippocampus, horse, Small or Medium humanoid or horse-headed humanoid, *alter self* or *beast shape IV*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Captivating Lure (Su) Once per day, a kelpie can use a powerful mental attack to lure a single creature within 60 feet to her. The target must make a DC 16 Will saving throw or become captivated by the kelpie, thinking she is a desirable woman, in mortal danger, or (if in hippocampus, horse, or pony form) a valuable steed. A victim under the effects of the captivating lure moves toward the kelpie using the most direct means available. If the path leads the victim into a dangerous area such as through fire or off a cliff, that creature receives a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril; the victim does not consider water a dangerous area, and will enter the water even if it cannot swim or breathe. The captivated creature can take no actions other than to move toward the kelpie and defend itself, even if it is drowning. A victim within 5 feet of the kelpie simply stands and offers no resistance to her attacks. This effect continues as long as the kelpie is alive and the victim is within 1 mile of the kelpie. This is a mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Grab (Ex) A kelpie can use its grab ability on a creature its own size or smaller.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check of the bones in the kelpie's lair uncovers a skeletal hand wearing a silver ring inset with a fire opal worth 1,200 gp.

Story Award: If the PCs find a black pearl and return it to Nkechi, award them 1,200 XP.

B4. CHALLENGE OF WIND (CR 5)

“The task of wind is a simple one. All Gozreh requires is a single complete feather from a humble stormbird. One such magnificent creature, named Chirok, lives but a day’s walk east. There, at the end of a peninsula, you’ll spot a lone promontory known as Gozreh’s Crest. The bird nests at the top of the cliff. Return when you have a feather.”

Shortly after the PCs set out, the sky darkens and it begins to rain heavily. As per Nkechi’s description, Gozreh’s Crest sits at the very edge of the peninsula, an ominously scarred chunk of dark granite worn into a steep, wave-like shape by centuries of wind and rain. Its face catches the ocean, creating a natural wind tunnel that amplifies the wind and creates howling updrafts. These updrafts have become the favored spot of larger seabirds, which ride them high into the sky, where they hover above the sea watching for fish.

Severe winds with speeds averaging 40 mph or more build around the promontory, imposing a –4 penalty on Fly skill checks and ranged attacks. Similarly, cascading sheets of rain reduce visibility by half, imposing a –4 penalty on Perception checks. These conditions have a 50% chance of extinguishing unprotected flames (see *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 439.)

Even without the wind, the promontory is a difficult climb. The smooth, wind-beaten eastern face is impossible to ascend. Only the western face is jagged enough to allow for solid footing (Climb DC 20). The storm bird’s nest sits almost at the top of the crest, about 500 feet above sea level, overlooking the water.

THE NEST (CR 5)

Once PCs reach the top of Gozreh’s Crest, the stormbird’s giant nest is clearly visible. The imposing structure is easily 8 feet in diameter, woven from driftwood, seaweed, and other flotsam. Five melon-sized, pale bluish-yellow eggs sit within the nest.

The PCs must use their skills to locate one of the bird’s feathers somewhere in the nest. The stormbird has woven bits of feathers throughout its nest, but the PCs need a whole feather, thus complicating the task. Have the PCs make Perception checks for each minute spent searching. Finding a complete feather requires a DC 25 Perception check.

If the PCs fail this check, allow them to retry it and encourage them to keep searching until they find a feather.

Creature: If the PCs spend 3 minutes searching the nest, the stormbird returns. The stormbird is a tropical ercinee, a large multicolored bird of prey. Ercinees are intelligent, and in the darkness of the storm, the tips of this one’s

feathers and her eyes burn with green light. The sight of intruders near her eggs fills Chirok with violent rage and she immediately swoops in to attack.

CHIROK THE STORMBIRD

CR 5

XP 1,600

Female tropical ercinee (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #5 81)

N Large magical beast

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, –1 size)

hp 52 (7d10+14)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (good)

Melee bite +9 (1d8+3), 2 talons +10 (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks unstable screech

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +7)

At will—*dancing lights*, *light*

3/day—*searing light*

TACTICS

During Combat Upon seeing intruders in her nest, the ercinee becomes enraged and uses her unstable screech before swooping in for the kill, trying to knock the assailants away from her clutch with flyby attacks and rays of *searing light*.

Morale Chirok fights to the death to defend her nest. If the PCs simply pilfer a feather and flee, however, she stays to defend her nest and doesn’t pursue the intruders.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

Feats Flyby Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (talons), Wingover

Skills Bluff +8, Fly +15, Perception +15

Languages Auran

SQ lighted way, radiance

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Lighted Way (Su) At will, an ercinee can shed drops of luminous fluid from its wings. This liquid falls behind it as it flies, with one droplet falling every 25 feet. These droplets illuminate the area within 5 feet of where they land with dim light. This fluid lasts for 1 hour, after which it evaporates to nothing.

Radiance (Su) At night, an ercinee sheds light as the *daylight* spell. It can activate or suppress this ability as a free action.

Unstable Screech (Su) An ercinee can, as a standard action, emit a shrill and bewildering screech. Any creature within 30 feet of the ercinee must make a DC 15 Will save or be confused for 1d4 rounds. Creatures who succeed at this save cannot be affected again by the same ercinee’s screech for 24 hours. Creatures that are already confused take a –2 penalty on their save to resist additional unstable screeches. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Wisdom-based.



SERPENT'S SKULL

Development: Should any of the PCs speak Auran, they can attempt to calm the ercinee and reason with her. Chirok's initial attitude is hostile. If she is made friendly, however, she freely gives the PCs one of her feathers.

Treasure: Among the items scattered about the nest lies a battered spyglass, easily repaired with an appropriate DC 12 Craft check.

Story Award: If the PCs acquire a feather without killing the stormbird and return it to Nkechi, award them 1,600 XP.

RESTLESS NATIVES (CR 5)

Creatures: The PCs face further problems on their return trip to Nkechi's hermitage. A local Zenj tribe called the Ijo lives near Gozreh's Crest, and view the crag and the stormbird who lives atop it as sacred. After witnessing the turbulence upon the spire, the superstitious tribesfolk send a small party of warriors to investigate. The war party waits at the foot of the crags to confront the PCs. The warriors demand to know why the PCs have trespassed upon their sacred lands.

If the PCs reasoned with Chirok to gain a feather, the Ijo are duly impressed and let them go with their blessings. If the PCs stole a feather but didn't kill the sacred bird or damage her eggs, the Ijo challenge one of the PCs to face their strongest warrior in unarmed combat to keep their stolen prize. If the PCs accept the challenge, one PC must wrestle one of the warriors. The first to pin his opponent is victorious. The Ijo warrior will not inflict damage, only attempt to pin the PC; if the PC inflicts damage, the match is forfeit, and the other warriors immediately attack. If the PCs killed the sacred ercinee, the warriors demand an equal sacrifice—the life of one of the PCs. It is a sacrifice they are willing to fight to the death for, if need be.

Regardless of how the PCs answer, the warriors attempt to detain them while one of their number runs to the nest to verify the truth of their tale.

IJO WARRIORS (4)	CR 1
XP 400 each	
Male human warrior 3	
N Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +1; Senses Perception +1	
DEFENSE	
AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +3 shield)	
hp 16 each (3d10)	
Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee shortspear +5 (1d6+2) or unarmed strike +5 (1d3+3)	
Ranged shortspear +4 (1d6+2)	
STATISTICS	
Str 14, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 8	

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+7 grapple); **CMD** 16 (18 vs. grapple)

Feats Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Shield Focus

Skills Climb +4, Intimidate +3, Perception +1, Survival +2, Swim +4

Languages Polyglot

Gear heavy wooden shield, shortspear, decorative jewelry worth 200 gp

Development: If the PCs win the wrestling challenge, they are free to proceed back to Nkechi with their feather. If they lose, the Ijo demand they return what they have stolen from the sacred stormbird. If the PCs refuse, the warriors attempt to take the sacred feather by force and fight to the death.

Treasure: If the PCs win the wrestling challenge, the warriors also present them with assorted pieces of carved abalone, baleen, bone, and pearl jewelry worth a total of 800 gp.

INTO THE SPIRIT REALMS (CR 4)

Once the PCs have completed both challenges, the PCs can return to present their tribute to Nkechi. With great skepticism, he accepts their offerings but asks them to wait while he inspects them for authenticity. He retreats into his hermitage for about half an hour, leaving the PCs at his doorstep. Eventually, Nkechi returns with a smile. Inviting the PCs inside his abode, he asks them to sit in a circular pattern on his floor about a large clay brazier filled with herbs. Nkechi picks up a wooden mortar filled with reddish paste, and proceeds to draw mystic symbols on the PCs' faces with the paste as he walks around the circle chanting esoteric words. He firmly snaps, "Do not interrupt!" at any PC who dares to speak during the ceremony. When finished, he pulls out a pouch filled with some small roots, eats a piece, and requests that the PCs do the same. If queried about the root or his actions, he responds with earnest gravity, "We are going to speak to Gozreh."

The root is a potent hallucinogen called dromotu, which the wide-eyed mystic uses to commune with his deity. Anyone who ingests the root quickly falls into a dream-like trance. PCs who wish to opt out of the trance can attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save to avoid the root's effects. If successful, the PC is sickened for 1 hour. Those failing the saving throw (willingly or otherwise) enter the trance, and perceive themselves exiting their bodies and drifting as smoke through the night sky. These individuals sense, but do not see, the others. As they travel, they see all of the Mwangi Expanse below them. Slowly, the sky turns red and they reform as strange spirit animals in pale translucent colors. To determine what spirit animal a PC takes as her dream form, roll randomly or choose from the following table.



1d10	Spirit Animal
1	hoofed mammal (antelope, buffalo, cow, or goat)
2	canine (hyena, jackal, or wild dog)
3	carnivorous vermin (mantis, spider, or wasp)
4	equine (horse, wild donkey, or zebra)
5	feline (cheetah, lion, or leopard)
6	large mammal (elephant, hippopotamus, or rhinoceros)
7	bird (eagle, hawk, owl, or vulture)
8	reptilian (crocodile, dinosaur, lizard, or turtle)
9	small mammal (rat, porcupine, or weasel)
10	simian (ape, gorilla, lemur, or monkey)

Nkechi manifests as a giant crab. While in the dream, all of the characters function as if under the effect of *beast shape II*. During the strange trance, Nkechi foreshadows the unveiling of the ruins of a forgotten city from ancient folklore. But he warns that many rivals seek the city, and it is unclear who shall be first to claim the location. He also sees a darkness within the city, and ominous storm clouds gathering on the horizon.

Creatures: About halfway through Nkechi's divinations, a dream serpent suddenly manifests and attacks. The PCs must fight this dream serpent in their own animal forms. This giant snake is the dream form of the serpentfolk priest Yarzoth, whom the PCs faced in the last adventure. Observant PCs may notice markings and patterns on the snake's scales that match those of Yarzoth. If the PCs defeated Yarzoth on Smuggler's Shiv, the dream serpent is a reflection of their own fears, but if she survived, she is here in dream form seeking those same ancient secrets the PCs have come to find.

DREAM SERPENT**CR 4****XP 1,200**Advanced giant venomous snake (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 255)

NE Large animal

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +9**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size)**hp** 51 (6d8+24)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.**Melee** bite +6 (1d6+4 plus poison)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**STATISTICS****Str** 16, **Dex** 11, **Con** 18, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 2**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 18 (can't be tripped)**Feats** Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Climb +16, Perception +9, Stealth +4,

Swim +15

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Wis; *cure* 1 save.

Development: If Nkechi drops below 0 hit points, the trance immediately ends, and the PCs awake. If the PCs kill the dream serpent, the last blow against it severs its head. The decapitated serpentine body thrashes and writhes violently before gradually fading away. Once the PCs defeat the spirit, Nkechi and the PCs exit the trance.

When they awake, the PCs discover that any damage they took while in dream form is only nonlethal damage. In addition, any ability damage the PCs took (such as from the snake's poison) is healed. PCs who make a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check recognize the dream serpent's death throes as a symbolic depiction of the decapitation of the ancient snake-god Ydersius.

When the trance ends, Nkechi insists on accompanying the PCs as their guide. He believes now that whatever the PCs face is also a threat to Gozreh, or at least to what Gozreh holds sacred, and that Gozreh desires him to make the journey. Nkechi can aid PCs with decisions concerning the various paths they may take, filling them in on their relative geography, as well as providing folklore and history. He can also help them survive in the wilderness, and can provide healing as well. He will not take on a leadership role in the expedition, and tries to avoid combat if at all possible.

If the PCs do not secure Nkechi's services as a guide, their travel time to Tazion increases by 1 week because of their unfamiliarity with the terrain.

PART 2: THE RACE BEGINS

Once they have secured Nkechi's cooperation, the PCs should return to Eleder to complete their preparations for the upcoming expedition. Their faction leader invites them to discuss their plans with several expert advisors.

The PCs should set out before the main expedition with their guide, acting as "trailblazers" for the rest of the expedition, which will travel a few days behind them. Their faction leader gives the PCs a map of Sargava and the southern Mwangi Expanse, which together with Yarzoth's notes should enable them to find Tazion. It is suggested that the PCs travel light and stop in the city of Kalabuto to restock on supplies. Their faction has allies in the city who can make arrangements for the PCs' stay and continuing journey. The PCs are warned not to stay at an inn, and to limit their interaction with locals who might be working for the rival faction. When they arrive in Kalabuto, they should make contact with a dwarf named Cheiton in the Shrunken Head, one of Kalabuto's most popular taverns. He can be recognized by the distinctive cave-and-pick tattoo on his shoulder. Cheiton owns a house near the



SERPENT'S SKULL

tavern, and the PCs can safely lodge there while preparing for the next stage of the expedition.

According to the map, the fastest route to Kalabuto is to travel overland through the wild scrublands and savanna, along the older trade routes that skirt between the Bandu Hills and the Laughing Jungle. These routes were used primarily by early colonists, most of whom were prospectors seeking their fortunes in salt, gold, and diamonds. While several successful mining operations remain, the trails are far less used than they were in the past, particularly because merchants using them are easy targets for brigands and wild beasts. This same remoteness should lessen the chance of the PCs encountering the allies of rival factions seeking to block or sabotage their mission. The caravan routes lead to the edge of the M'neri Plains, at which point they can break from the trail and head west to Kalabuto.

Once the PCs have resupplied in Kalabuto, they should follow the Upper Korir River north into the Screaming Jungle. Here the terrain climbs upward through a series of rocky falls and churning rapids, greatly impeding passage via boat, and in many places the water becomes too shallow to navigate, so overland travel is recommended over riverborne travel. Leaving the Screaming Jungle, the trail continues to follow the Korir until it comes near the northeastern Bandu Hills and then turns east. At this point, the trail leaves the river, heading almost due west through the northern foothills of the Bandu Hills until it reaches the southernmost reaches of the Mwangi Jungle. Somewhere beneath those trees lies the Azlanti outpost of Tazion, which should show the way to the lost city of Saventh-Yhi.

TRAVEL TIMES

The table on page 23 outlines the distances and travel times between each of the encounter areas in the adventure, assuming a speed of 30 feet. This is the speed at which the main expedition travels, with its large number of people, porters, and heavily laden pack animals. For sake of ease, if the PCs have horses or other faster means of travel, their average speed should remain about 30 feet, because of time spent exploring and trailblazing, and portions of the journey where horses cannot be ridden. Likewise, parties that have characters with speeds of 20 feet or less are assumed to have mounts that allow them to move at 30 feet. Assume the other factions move at the same rate as the PCs.

In all, the route from Eleder to Tazion runs just over 1,010 miles, with an estimated travel time of almost 2 months. However, some of the encounters along the way may increase or decrease this time, so the GM should keep careful track of how long it takes the PCs to reach Tazion.

C. FZUMI SALT MINE (CR 5)

The first leg of the PCs' journey runs through the foothills between Eleder and the Bandu Hills. After 5 days of travel, the

main trail snakes northeast around a tall section of hills, and then detours north connecting with several of the region's more profitable and still operating mines. The PCs' map shows the location of an abandoned mine to the southeast marked as the Fzumi Salt Mine. It appears to lead to the edge of the M'neri Plains, suggesting that passage through the mines provides a shorter route south through the hills. While the map contains scant details concerning the nature of the property and who once owned it, the PCs can decrease their overall travel time by 1 day if they opt to take this route.

Creatures: A feral woman called Athyra claims the outskirts of the mines as her hunting territory. The pale-skinned daughter of the former mine owner, she remains the sole survivor of the tragedy that occurred at the Fzumi mine. Athyra was just a child when undead horrors from beneath the earth boiled out of the mine and slew everyone at the camp except young Athyra, who managed to escape into the surrounding hills. Left alone and too terrified to return to the camp, she was forced to scavenge for food in the wilderness. One day she stumbled upon a clutch of deinonychus eggs; out of curiosity, she gathered one up, brought it back to her campsite and kept the egg until it hatched. Athyra cared for the carnivorous hatchling, raising it on scraps of lizard meat, and named it Jaji. Over time, the two became fast friends, and Jaji is now Athyra's loyal pet.

Now a grown woman, Athyra stands near 6 feet tall with a perfectly muscled figure and stunning features, her dark hair woven into clumped tangles. She dresses in scraps of animal hide and carries a glaive crafted from the toothed jaw of some fearsome jungle beast. Athyra speaks Polyglot, and knows only a smattering of Common.

Athyra has spent her entire life outside the confines of civilization and holds a dire view of civilization, humanity, and in particular, dinosaur hunters. As soon as she spots humans, she becomes curious, but also defensive. Approaching with caution, Athyra attempts to sneak up on the PCs to determine their nature of intentions. When she gets close enough to confront them, she leaps from hiding and screams at them in broken Common, warning them to leave her territory and hunt elsewhere.

Athyra's initial attitude is unfriendly. If made at least indifferent, she backs off her threats and sits with the PCs long enough to allow them to persuade her they're not dinosaur hunters, and she allows them to pass through her territory without a fight. If the PCs choose to fight her, or if she is made hostile, Athyra immediately attacks.

ATHYRA	CR 3
XP 800	
Female human barbarian (savage barbarian) 3/druid 1	
<i>(Advanced Player's Guide 79)</i>	
CN Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +6; Senses Perception +6	





TRAVEL TIMES

Start	Destination	Distance	Travel Time
Eleder	C. Fzumi Salt Mine	100 miles	5.5 days
C. Fzumi Salt Mine	D. Roadside Cockfight	30 miles	1.6 days
D. Roadside Cockfight	E. Village under Siege	30 miles	1.6 days
E. Village under Siege	F. Ankheg Attack	35 miles	2 days
F. Ankheg Attack	G. Feast of Vultures	25 miles	1.4 days
G. Feast of Vultures	H. Gallows Tree	50 miles	2.7 days
H. Gallows Tree	I. Kalabuto	10 miles	3 hours
I. Kalabuto	L. Lake of Vanishing Armies	60 miles	2.5 days
L. Lake of Vanishing Armies	M. Warriors of the Child-God	30 miles	1.25 days
M. Warriors of the Child-God	N. Hippo Hunt	60 miles	2.5 days
N. Hippo Hunt	O. Bodies on the Riverbank	90 miles	5 days
O. Bodies on the Riverbank	P. Amghawe's Tomb	155 miles	8.6 days
P. Amghawe's Tomb	Q. Eloko Headhunters	125 miles	6.9 days
Q. Eloko Headhunters	R. Spirit Dancers	110 miles	4.6 days
R. Spirit Dancers	Tazion	100 miles	8.3 days

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 9 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, -2 rage)

hp 39 (4 HD; 3d12+1d8+15)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +6; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities naked courage, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee glaive +8 (1d10+7/x3)

Ranged dagger +5 (1d4+5/19-20)

Special Attacks rage (9 rounds/day), rage powers (rolling dodge +1)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +2)

At will—speak with animals (4 rounds/day)

Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st—calm animals^o (DC 12), charm animal (DC 12), longstrider

o (at will)—know direction, purify food and drink, resistance

D Domain spell; Domain Animal



Serpent's Skull

TACTICS

During Combat Athyra uses *speak with animals* to order Jaji into a flanking position, then rages, focusing her attacks on one foe at a time.

Morale Athyra fights to the death.

Base Statistics When not raging, Athyra's statistics are AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11; hp 33; Fort +6, Will +4; Melee glaive +6 (1d10+4/x3); Ranged dagger +5 (1d4+3/19–20); Str 16, Con 12; CMB +6; Skills Climb +7

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12

Base Atk +3; CMB +8; CMD 19

Feats Animal Affinity, Endurance, Improved Initiative

Skills Climb +9, Craft (crude weapons) +3, Handle Animal +10, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception +6, Ride +4, Stealth +3, Survival +10

Languages Polyglot

SQ fast movement, nature bond (Animal domain), nature sense, wild empathy +2

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** bone glaive, stone daggers (4), *amulet of natural armor* +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Naked Courage (Ex) A savage barbarian gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC and a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against fear when wearing no armor. This ability replaces trap sense.

JAJI

CR 3

XP 800

Deinonychus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 84)

hp 34

Development: If she is made friendly, Athyra warns the PCs that the old mine is a tunnel to the underworld, inhabited by the spirits of the dead. She knows this because both her father and mother disappeared down the shaft and never came back, and not long after that, angry dead things came out of the mine and killed everyone in the mining camp.

That being said, if the PCs seem determined to enter the mine, Athyra asks them to find out what happened to her father. He wore a silver locket with a picture inside that she would dearly like to have returned. Though superstitious and skeptical that the PCs can find a way to the other side of the hills, Athyra offers to meet the PCs on the other side of the hills, but under no circumstances will she accompany them down into the mine.

C1. ABANDONED MINING CAMP

The sagging and overgrown remains of a small camp mark the site of the old mine, its gaping entrance visible in the hillside behind the camp.

The mining camp is abandoned, and consists of a large barracks and meeting house, an operations office, two storage buildings, and a small house for the mine owner and his family.

Hazard: A DC 20 Perception check while searching the operations office recovers a moldering logbook. Anyone touching the book risks contracting green haze, a virulent jungle mold that thrives on the soft tissue around creatures' eyes (*Heart of the Jungle* 7).

GREEN HAZE

Type disease (fungus), contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 13

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect –4 on Perception checks, target is permanently blinded if it fails 3 saves; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves



Jaji & Athyra





Development: The last few entries in the logbook are dated 15 years ago and document the mining company's downfall. The mine's owner, a man named Feran Crinhouse, was looking for new salt deposits and decided to secretly try connecting his mine with another mine on the far side of the hills, abandoned earlier under mysterious circumstances and rumored to be haunted. Just as the miners broke through to the abandoned mine, they unearthed a strange orb that glowed with a pulsing blue light. Crinhouse decided to go down into the mine to personally investigate. The final entry is in a different handwriting, and reads, "They've come up from below! They're all dead, and their touch withers the flesh! May the gods have mercy on us!"

C2. MINE ENTRANCE (CR 4)

The wooden beams supporting the mine's main entrance are weathered and sagging. Water trickles down the sloping floor among the wooden footholds leading down the main shaft.

Inside the mine, the tunnels are pitch black. The walls of the mine are carved from gray rock salt, and most of the tunnels and chambers in the mine are flooded with water, ranging in depth from knee-deep to shoulder-deep. Narrow walkways connected by rickety wooden bridges run along the walls in most of the rooms and passages.

Creature: A variant gray ooze known as a crystal ooze lurks in the waters beneath the cave opening. The natural animal trap provides the ooze with an ample food supply, and it instinctively claims the area as its lair.

CRYSTAL OOZE CR 4
 XP 1,200
 hp 63 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 166)

C3. MAIN DRIFT (CR 4)

The scattered remnants of a small campsite lie in this small alcove, just above the water line.

This alcove marks the beginning of the Fzumi mine's main drift. This is the site where, over a decade ago, Feran Crinhouse camped before descending farther into the mine. For safekeeping, he brought the mine's payroll with him and left it here. The campsite contains mining equipment, three mine carts, the desiccated remains of three mules, and a rusted iron strongbox.

Creatures: Two salt wights lurk under the wooden bridge near the campsite.

SALT WIGHTS (2) CR 2
 XP 600 each



SERPENT'S SKULL

Salt Wights

Wights created in particularly dry deserts or in the desiccating confines of salt mines sometimes become shriveled, emaciated undead encrusted with salt crystals. Salt wights have the desiccating touch special attack, which replaces a normal wight's energy drain attack. Salt wights have a CR of 2.

Desiccating Touch (Su) As part of its slam attack, a salt wight draws the water out of its opponent's body, causing the victim to wither. The target must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or take 1d3 points of Constitution damage.

Variant wights (see sidebar and *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 276)

hp 26 each

Melee slam +4 (1d4+1 plus 1d3 Con)

TACTICS

During Combat Immune to the effects of drowning, the wights try to pull opponents below the surface of the water and use their desiccating touch attacks.

Morale The wights fight until destroyed.

Treasure: The rusted strongbox is still locked, but can be opened with a DC 30 Disable Device check or Jeler's key from area C6. The chest holds the mine's payroll of 500 gp and a bone scroll case with the deed to the mine. Athyra Crinhouse is named next of kin in the deed, and rightfully the mine is hers. Athyra places little value on material possessions, however, and in truth has no idea what money is or how it works.

C4. RAIN OF SALT (CR 5)

At this bend in the main tunnel, a pair of salt wights lies in wait to ambush the PCs. Using their long nails to carve handholds in the soft rock, they've climbed toward the crown of the cavern, 20 feet overhead.

Trap: The wights have loosened large chunks of the ceiling. When the PCs approach, the undead begin hammering wildly at the ceiling. For a few brief moments the banging echoes through the mineshafts. Allow the PCs DC 15 Perception checks to locate the source of the banging and see the wights; then 1d4 rounds after the banging starts, part of the ceiling collapses, kicking up a cloud of dust in the process.

FALLING CEILING TRAP

CR 1

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 15; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger timed (1d4 rounds); **Reset** none

Effect falling debris (2d6 damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; dust cloud (all creatures in 20-ft.-radius gain partial concealment); multiple targets (all targets in 20-ft-square area)

Creatures: The salt wights are the remains of two of the ill-fated miners who died in the mine. After triggering the collapse, they drop from their positions near the ceiling and attempt to grapple the nearest living targets, eager to drain the water from their bodies.

SALT WIGHTS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (see page 25)

C5. THE CRUSHER (CR 4)

A strange metal and wooden device occupies the center of this passage. It consists of a central shaft running from floor to ceiling, surrounded by poles that form a large cage around the device, attached to a trough or basin perforated with tiny holes. Ropes run from the basin up through blocks mounted to the tops of the poles.

This device was once used to smash chunks of ore and separate soil from salt deposits. Pulling upon the ropes lifts or lowers the basin.

Creatures: Two salt wights roam this gallery, more of the unfortunate miners who met their ends here. As soon as they sense the PCs approaching, they hide by sinking beneath the surface of the water, with only their eyes and the tops of their heads above the surface.

SALT WIGHTS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (see page 25)

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check spots a leather satchel lashed under the crusher's basin. Inside is a small stash of uncut diamonds that one of the miners was attempting to smuggle out of the mines. The five small diamonds are worth 400 gp each.

C6. THE BLUE WARRIOR (CR 5)

A small island rises out of the shallow water in the center of the drift. Part of a large, translucent blue orb protrudes from the surrounding earth, pulsing with a pale blue glow. The globe is cracked in several places and shards of the strange, glass-like substance lie scattered across the islet's surface. A sizable hole is smashed into one side, revealing a hollow interior.

The Fzumi salt miners uncovered this strange blue orb while digging to connect the two mines. When Feran

Crinhouse, the mine's owner and Athyra's father, came to investigate, he accidentally shattered the enchanted globe and unwittingly unleashed a potent curse upon the mine, dooming both himself and his employees and family. When he succumbed to the orb's negative energy, the undead spirit trapped within the globe possessed his corpse, turning him into a hate-filled undead creature called the Blue Warrior. He quickly slew the other miners, turning them into salt wights who then attacked the mining camp above, killing everyone except Athyra.

The globe is 20 feet in diameter, and any living thing within it takes 1d6 points of negative energy damage per round (DC 18 Fortitude save for half). Those who die within the globe are afflicted with its ancient curse and transform into wight spawn under the control of the Blue Warrior.

Creatures: In a twisted mockery of their former lives, the undead Feran Crinhouse and his wife Jelera dwell within the globe, bathing in its negative energy emanations. Feran is now a cairn wight, while Jelera was transformed into a desiccated salt wight. When her husband didn't return from the mine, Jelera went in search of him, but fell prey to the undead miners herself. The pair lurk within the globe, waiting until the PCs investigate the orb before attacking.

THE BLUE WARRIOR CR 4

XP 1,200

Male cairn wight (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 276, 294)

LE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Immune undead traits

Weaknesses resurrection vulnerability

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 heavy pick +7 (1d6+4/x4 plus energy drain)

Special Attacks create spawn, energy drain (1 level, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 19

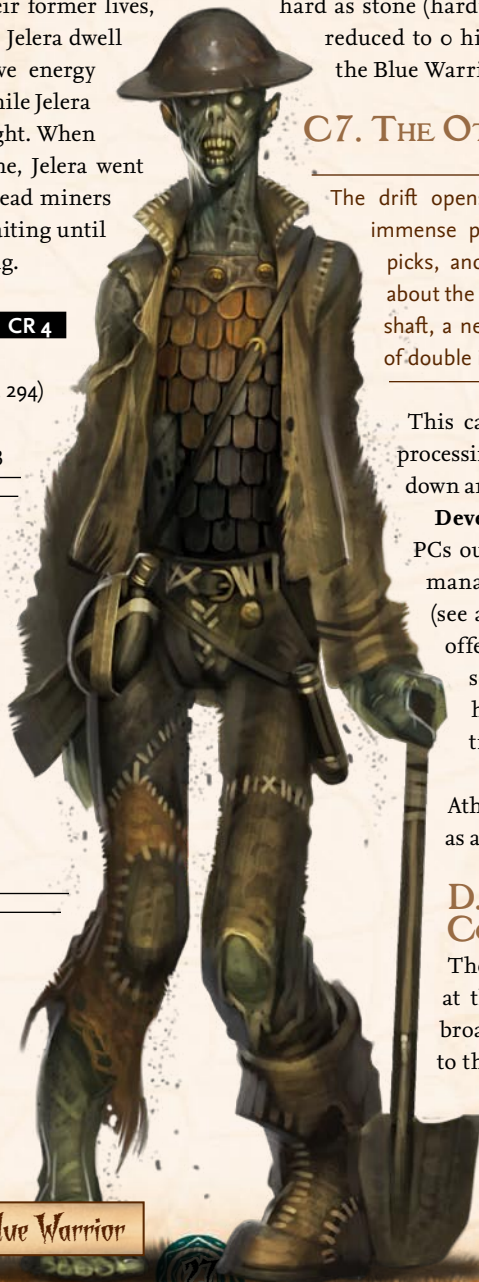
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Blind-Fight, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +10, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +13, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Polyglot

Gear +1 heavy pick, tarnished silver locket (see Treasure)



The Blue Warrior

JELERA CRINHOUSE

CR 2

XP 600

Female salt wight (see page 25)

hp 26

Treasure: Jelera wears a silver chain with a key around her neck, which opens the rusted strongbox in area C3. The Blue Warrior wears a small locket of tarnished silver, engraved with the initials F. C. and containing a faded portrait of a kindly looking man holding a small child. This is the locket that Athyra wants returned to her, depicting her father and herself in happier times.

Development: The negative energy orb remains a threat to any who venture into the mine, as the Blue Warrior can inhabit another corpse and rise again. The orb is as hard as stone (hardness 8, hp 45), but shatters when reduced to 0 hit points. If the orb is destroyed, the Blue Warrior's spirit cannot reform.

C7. THE OTHER SIDE

The drift opens into a large cavern filled with immense piles of rock salt chunks. Shovels, picks, and other mining tools lie scattered about the chamber. At the opposite end of the shaft, a neatly excavated wall supports a pair of double iron doors.

This cavern served as a storeroom and processing room where salt was broken down and bagged before being carted off.

Development: Athyra waits for the PCs outside the mine entrance. If they managed to recover her father's locket (see area C6), she is very grateful and offers to accompany the PCs as a scout. If they accept her services, her skills decrease their total travel time by an additional day.

Story Award: If the PCs find Athyra's locket and secure her services as a scout, award them 1,600 XP.

D. ROADSIDE COCKFIGHT (CR 5)

The PCs emerge from the salt mine at the edge of the M'neri Plains, a broad swath of savanna that stretches to the horizon. The plain extends for almost 200 miles to the River of Lost Tears.

At this point on the trade route between Eleder and

Serpent's Skull

Kalabuto, a number of traveling merchants have made camp and set up an impromptu arena for cockfighting, a popular pastime among both the merchants and their guards and porters. On a good night, bets can climb above a thousand gold pieces, though goods and other valuables are often accepted as payment.

The fights are run by "**Ricketts**" **Perga** (NE male human expert 3), a slender and sickly looking Garundi man who claims to hail from Rahadoum. Ricketts keeps a number of coops within a decrepit wagon drawn by two nags. Nearby, a ring has been cleared and caged off to serve as the cockpit.

The merchants welcome the PCs to join their camp. Soon after the PCs arrive, Ricketts sends his bookies to invite them to attend the cockfight. If the PCs decline the invitation, the bookies jeer and make fun of them, calling them "scared milksops who cry at the sight of the blood," in an attempt to goad them into making bets. If the PCs accept, space is made for them ringside. Over a dozen other people are already watching and betting on the fight.

Creatures: The two contestants are a speckled pea-comb named Cornugon and a brown single comb named Muddy Lyza. Uses a hawk's stats for Cornugon, and the stats for an eagle with the young simple template for Muddy Lyza, without a bite attack. Both birds lose their fly speeds.

The odds are 2:1 in Muddy Lyza's favor, but the betting odds are 2:1 for Cornugon. The PCs begin by picking a gamecock to bet on. Wagers up to 500 gp are accepted, but most bets are between 1 and 10 gp. Once the PCs have chosen their champion, run the fight as a normal combat between the two roosters, with the PCs rolling for their bird. The PCs may want to use magic or other means to assist their bird, but this is forbidden in the rules, and they will have to do so surreptitiously if they don't want to be called out for cheating. The fight ends when one bird is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer. Most cockfights are not to the death, but some do result in deaths for the birds.

CORNUGON CR 1/3
XP 135
 Use statistics for hawk (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 131)
hp 4

MUDDY LYZA CR 1/3
XP 135
 Use statistics for young eagle (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 118, 295)
hp 3

If the PCs' chosen bird wins, Ricketts flushes with anger and throws a fit in front of everyone. He turns on the PCs angrily and accuses them of using magic to rig the fight (whether they did or not). Ricketts refuses to pay up, and sets his thugs on the PCs to run them out of camp.

If the PCs lose the cockfight, Ricketts calls in their bets. Flanked by his thugs, he greedily demands more money than they originally bet. If the PCs argue or refuse to pay, Ricketts threatens to have his thugs beat the money out of them. If the PCs still don't pay, his thugs attack the following round.

Regardless of the turn of events, few of the spectators believe Ricketts' claims, but they've no reason to interfere. In fact, once the thugs attack, the crowd quickly begins placing bets on this newest fight. They cheer loudly during the combat, and congratulate winners, thanking them for a good fight on their way out.

RICKETS'S THUGS (3) CR 2
XP 600 each
 Use statistics for Freeman insurgent (see page 11)
hp 22 each

TACTICS
During Combat The thugs try to flank the most dangerous-looking opponent in the hope of getting that person out of the way early. One thug keeps an eye on any spellcasters to disrupt their spells if they try to cast one.

Morale The thugs are not interested in dying over a cockfight, and flee if reduced to 6 hit points or fewer.

Development: Once the fight is over, the PCs' problems with Ricketts end. He has no interest in personal combat, and if the PCs defeat his hired thugs, he offers to pay them to go away. If need be, Ricketts has a reserve of 500 gp to clean up such a mess.

E. VILLAGE UNDER SIEGE (CR 6)

As the trail skirts the northern border of the Laughing Jungle, the PCs spot a wisp of smoke on the horizon, coming from a small Zenj village huddling under the jungle's eaves. When its inhabitants spot the PCs approaching, they quickly attempt to make contact with them, seeming quite eager to trade goods as well as a share their hospitality. With cheerful greetings in Polyglot and broken Common, the villagers invite the PCs to join them for supper. A DC 20 Sense Motive check hints that something is amiss, as if the villagers' cheerfulness is just a facade.

If the PCs accept the invitation, they are greeted by everyone in the village. Villagers smile, toting baskets of fruit, meat, and laundry. Others sit in the shade weaving leaves and vines. Barefoot children dart about chasing each other around the small huts. The only person who seems uninterested in the visitors is an older woman with a painted face who, upon their arrival, ducks into her hut and pulls a cloth across the doorway. If asked about the woman, one of the villagers says, "She is our shaman, and is old and wary."

Supper consists of flatbread, fresh fruit, and a tasty porridge seasoned with sweet tubers. After the meal the

PCs are offered a heady wine and treated to an impressive performance of acrobatics, dancing, and fire-eating as night falls. At the end of the festivities, the villagers offer the PCs a hut to sleep in, then retire to their own huts.

As the PCs prepare for bed, they receive a visitor—the village shaman. She waits to be invited in, then sits down next to the small fire with a heavy sigh. After a few moments of silence, she speaks in thickly accented Common.

“I am an old woman, and set in my ways. My master taught me long ago that foreigners like yourselves carry curses. But this village suffers under a curse already, and all my magic has so far failed to lift it. The spirits do not help me and I have nowhere else to turn. Perhaps I have been wrong all these years, and perhaps you are the ones who can help free us from the curse.”

If the PCs seem willing to listen, the shaman informs them that the village is plagued by a chemosit, a malevolent and cunning ape-bear that delights in human prey, particularly relishing the taste of human brains. The beast has come out of the jungle every night for 2 weeks, stealing into the village in search of victims.

The witch doctor asks the PCs to save her village and her people by killing or driving off the wicked beast. She has little of value to offer them as a reward, apart from a grisly charm and an old treasure map.

Once the PCs agree, the shaman paints a strange marking across the threshold of their hut with fresh goat’s blood, which she says should draw the beast to their hut. She bids them good luck and returns to her own hut, leaving the PCs to make whatever preparations they deem necessary.

Creature: Later that night, the chemosit appears again, accompanied this time by its mate. Drawn to the PCs’ hut by the blood spilled across the threshold, the two beasts sneak into the village. One climbs silently upon the roof, waiting for a victim to flee from the hut, while the other barges into the hut to attack.

CHEMOSITS (2)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 47 each (see page 86)

TACTICS

During Combat The chemosits are ambush hunters seeking a meal. Their primary objective is to grab victims and then flee into the jungle, to devour their prey in peace in a tall tree. Once they encounter armed opposition, one of the chemosits unleashes its terrifying roar, then concentrates its attacks on a single opponent. The chemosit on the roof waits for an opportune moment to pounce on individuals who exit the hut.

ZENJ SPIRIT FETISH

Aura moderate abjuration; CL 9th

Slot none; Price 4,500 gp; Weight —

DESCRIPTION

The bearer of this shrunken monkey head can use it to cast *dispel evil*. While the spell is in effect, the bearer can make a melee touch attack with the head to banish an evil creature from another plane back to its home plane, or dispel one evil spell or one enchantment spell cast by an evil creature. This use discharges and ends the spell. When the spell ends, the fetish becomes a normal, nonmagical monkey head.

CREATION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *dispel evil*;

Cost 2,250 gp



Morale If a chemosit is reduced below 20 hit points, it makes a last effort to grab the nearest target and flee into the woods.

Development: In the morning, the villagers hail the PCs as heroes, though they are poor farmers and hunters, and thus have little to offer the PCs as a reward other than their grateful thanks. The shaman adds her own thanks, and rewards the PCs with two items: a grisly, shrunken monkey head and a treasure map she claims she took off the corpse of a Sargavan soldier. The monkey head is a *Zenj spirit fetish*, which the shaman says can be used to banish evil spirits and exorcise demons (see sidebar), while the map notes the location of a sunken ship in the Lake of Vanishing Armies that contains a chest full of gold ingots (see area L).

If the PCs traveled on without stopping or spending the night, or if they refused to help, the chemosits make off with two more villagers during the night. Once the PCs leave, the shaman uses a ritual to command the chemosits to hunt the PCs down and kill them. The chemosits trail the PCs and attack them the next night while they camp. Once the PCs have left the vicinity of the jungle (after area F), the chemosits no longer follow them.

F. ANKHEG ATTACK (CR 6)

A collection of snaking mounds about three feet high spreads across the savanna like an alien land formation. Some twist and wind for several hundred yards, while others sink back into the soil after only a few yards.

SERPENT'S SKULL

The strange trailing mounds where the open plains begin are warrens dug by a trio of ankhegs. Beneath the soil, their burrows cover about a quarter-mile stretch.

Trap: Anyone who passes through this area risks stepping on a sinkhole and falling into the passages below.

ANKHEG SINKHOLE CR 1

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25;

Disable Device —

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect 10-ft.-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

Creatures: Falling into a sinkhole quickly attracts the ankhegs that dug the formations. Even if the PCs avoid the sinkholes, the ankhegs use their tremorsense to detect living creatures in the area. The three ankhegs burst from the ground to attack interlopers at staggered intervals, each surfacing 1d4 rounds after the previous one.

ANKHEGS (3) CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 28 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 15)

G. A FEAST OF VULTURES (CR 5)

Creatures: A day and a half after entering the open plains, the PCs attract the attention of sharp-eyed avian scavengers. These opportunists, mostly vultures, circle above the PCs, waiting for one of them to die. Every hour, the number of circling birds grows larger. Though ominous, these creatures pose little threat to the PCs. A couple of hours before sunset, however, two larger birds join the flock. Known as geiers, these giant vultures have a bald, bloody appearance. As sunset approaches, the geiers finally muster up their courage and swoop down to attack the PCs. The smaller vultures in the flock take no part in the battle, only coming down to feed if a creature falls in combat.

GEIERS (2) CR 3

XP 800 each

Advanced vultures (*Nyambe: African Adventures* 234)

N Large animal

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +9



Geier

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 38 each (4d8+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities disease resistant

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee bite +7 (1d8+7)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The geiers gang up on one victim, hoping to bring it down to feed.

Morale The geiers want an easy meal, so they abandon their prospective meal and take to the sky if reduced to 15 hit points or fewer.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Hover, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +4, Perception +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease Resistant (Ex) Geiers gain a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against diseases.

H. GALLOWS TREE (CR 5)

As the PCs approach Kalabuto, they come across the following sight.

A tall and leafless boab tree stands alone in a clearing, its wood burnt black. A circle of tiny bones surrounds the tree. Over a dozen human bodies hang from the branches, making grisly silhouettes against the blue sky. More bodies lie on the ground at the base of the tree, frayed ropes still around their necks. A circle of tiny bones surrounds the tree.

This tree shows the scars of a country at war. Mzali warriors have hung the bodies of several Sargavans high in the tree's branches. The Mzali create these gruesome trees to instill terror in their neighbors. Any living creatures that enter the 10-foot radius surrounding the tree must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds by the stench of rotting flesh. Individuals that succeed the Fortitude save are immune to the nauseating effect for 24 hours.

Creatures: The bodies are plague zombies, the cursed, animated corpses of unfortunate Sargavans. As soon as living creatures approach within 10 feet, the eight bodies on the ground suddenly spring into action, attacking any creatures that come near. At the same time, those dangling from the tree jerk to life, dancing in the air like macabre puppets. Still hanging from the tree, they are unable to attack unless a creature comes within their reach.



PLAGUE ZOMBIES (8)**CR 1/2****XP 200 each****hp 12 each** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 289)

Development: The GM should feel free to place more of these trees in any of the territory surrounding Kalabuto. In addition, if you feel the PCs can handle a fight with more undead, some of the ones hanging from the tree can break their ropes, dropping to the ground to continue the fight.

I. KALABUTO

Surrounded by pineapple fields and date palm orchards, the city of Kalabuto perches atop a low hill overlooking the River of Lost Tears. An ancient pile of vine-choked, crumbling ruins, Kalabuto existed long before the arrival of the native Kalabuta tribe, whom the Chelish colonists discovered living in the ruins when they reached the Sargavan interior. Finding a settlement seemingly ready-made for them, the colonials took over the city after numerous clashes with the indigenous inhabitants.

While native Kalabuta inhabit the majority of the city's ruins, a small minority of Sargavan colonials rule the city and have claimed the highest buildings with the best views for themselves. Racial tension is thus rife in Kalabuto. But the city also serves as Sargava's first line of defense against the city-state of Mzali. In this role Kalabuto has suffered greatly, and has been sacked by the Mzali forces on several occasions.

As it stands, the city appears to be overgrown by the jungle, with a large collection of shanties and warehouses along the riverbank. Kalabuto is a center of trade with the Mwangi interior, serving as a trade hub between foreign colonials, foreigners, and indigenous tribespeople. Over the years, overland caravans have declined in favor of more efficient river barges. To accommodate the increase in vessels, the city erected a snaking boardwalk connected to an elaborate tangle of docks. Warehouses make up the bulk of the structures along the water's edge. Further inland, the ruins of the original ancient city begin, climbing up the hill to the more lavish private colonial residences.

Dozens of small kiosks line the riverside boardwalk, while eager-eyed youths scamper about peddling wares. Most sell local products or services, while others ply the hospitality trade, entreating visitors to stay in their homes for only a few coppers, rather than in more expensive lodgings. The majority of the kiosks belong to native Kalabuta catering to incoming vessels. A few trading companies own kiosks as well, though theirs tend to be larger, permanent structures in locations near their warehouses. Each morning, the kiosk vendors wake early and rush for prominent positions on the boardwalk. They work long hours and some keep their shops open into the early evening.

Once the sun drops, Kalabuto slips into dark shadows. The streets grow quiet and the city becomes far less hospitable. Opportunists wait to lure unsuspecting visitors into the clutches of thugs or even slavers, and prostitution and the sale of illicit substances run rampant amid the smaller shanties. While plenty of taverns offer safety to drunken drovers and barge-hands seeking revelry after their long journeys, those who carelessly wander the crumbling streets often fall to the city's many predators.

More information on the city of Kalabuto can be found in *Sargava: The Lost Colony*.

KALABUTO

N large city

Corruption +4; Crime -5; Economy +3; Law +7; Lore +5, Society +1**Qualities** insular, prosperous, rumormongering citizens, racially intolerant (Mwangi), superstitious**Danger +10****DEMOGRAPHICS****Government** overlord**Population** 11,340 (11,200 humans [700 colonials, 10,500 Mwangi], 140 other)**Notable NPCs****General Alban, governor of Kalabuto** (male human fighter)**Commander Ursel, Praetor of Kalabuto, commander of the Kalabuto militia** (male human ranger)**Tabansi, Kalabuta foreman** (male human rogue)**MARKETPLACE****Base Value** 10,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 75,000 gp;**Spellcasting** 5th**Minor Items** 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 2d4

Kalabuto is the last bastion of civilization before the wilderness of the Mwangi Expanse. Here the PCs can rest, heal, and sell or buy equipment and magic items before they embark on the final leg of their journey to Tazion and Saventh-Yhi. Once in the city, the PCs will most likely want to find the Shrunken Head tavern to meet their contact, Cheiton. But secrets are poorly kept in Eleder—the PCs' rival faction has its own contacts in Kalabuto, and the city's remote location and general lawlessness allows them liberties not available in most other parts of the civilized world.

Creature: Shortly after the PCs arrive in the city, a 10-year-old Zenj beggar approaches them. Introducing herself as **Kibi** (N female human commoner 1), she tries to sell them small, hand-carved wooden fetishes for a few copper pieces each. If they refuse, she pleads, "Please, I need food. These are good luck charms—the tribes in the jungle will see them and know you as friends." In reality, the orphan girl works for the rival faction, and her trinkets mark the PCs as targets for that faction's agents. If Kibi cannot convince the PCs to buy her jewelry, she



Serpent's Skull

Kalabuto

One square = 10 feet



begs them to at least hire her as a guide to show them about the city. Once in their company, she signals to other faction agents who follow her and the PCs. Allow any PCs keeping an eye on the child to make a Sense Motive check against her Bluff check (Bluff +2) to determine she is using subtle hand gestures to signal to someone in the area. In the event that the PCs shoo the girl off altogether, she attempts to trail them to their destination before slinking off to inform her employers where the PCs have holed up.

J. THE SHRUNKEN HEAD TAVERN

The Shrunken Head tavern lies on a stretch of riverside boardwalk wedged between an exotic hardwoods warehouse and a small copper foundry. A former warehouse, the tavern's ground floor sits upon old stone ruins, while the remainder of the structure has a wood frame and plank walls.

Inside, customers crowd the dimly lit hall. A haze of smoke from guttering tallow candles fills the room, and on every table, dark-skinned dancing girls dressed in brightly colored veils work the house, occasionally dipping into the pockets of leering patrons. Once sacred spirit dancers, they've been reduced to little more than exotic curiosities who make their money entertaining drunken foreigners by performing bastardized versions of their ritual dances on bar tables.

The PCs' contact, a brawny dwarf named **Cheiton** (N male dwarf expert 4/fighter 2), recognizable by the tattoo on his shoulder, waits for them at a large table near the bar. Once a miner in the Bandu Hills, Cheiton now makes his living organizing expeditions into the Mwangi interior for other foolhardy people, and has been contracted by the PCs' faction to facilitate the second stage of the journey. He greets the PCs jovially, and orders them a round of drinks before asking for details of their journey to Kalabuto.

Cheiton can arrange almost anything the PCs might need while in Kalabuto. He sets up a tab for them in the Shrunken Head should they wish to enjoy the tavern's hospitality, and offers them rooms in his own home nearby to stay in if they wish to avoid the local inns. Once conversation turns to planning the expedition, Cheiton quickly becomes serious, and in a low voice invites the PCs to accompany him to his house, where they can discuss their plans "safely away from hungry ears."

Development: Even once the PCs enter the Shrunken Head, Kibi continues to loiter around them. If driven away, the girl darts outside the tavern, hides in the nearby shadows, and waits for them to exit. If she is able to remain undetected, she tails the PCs to Cheiton's house. After learning where the PCs are staying, she quickly reports this information to her superiors, who promptly send their agents to deal with them.

K. CHEITON'S HOUSE

Cheiton lives in a two-story house close to the Shrunken Head tavern. Soon after meeting the PCs, he returns home to plan the remaining part of their mission. If the PCs need further supplies or business transactions, he arranges to have their needs met at dawn. Cheiton has three guest rooms on the second floor which the PCs may choose from. Cheiton's room is also on the second floor, in the southeast corner.

The PCs can spend as much time as they want in Kalabuto, but they should be eager to press on. After all, the other four factions are on their way and might beat the PCs to Saventhyi if they tarry too long. In any case, the main expedition of the PCs' faction arrives in Kalabuto 3 days after they do. If they haven't left the city by then, their newly arrived faction leader makes it clear they should leave immediately.

Before the PCs leave Kalabuto, Cheiton warns them to be wary of foreign tribes once they cross the Mwangi border. Besides the xenophobic cult-warriors of Mzali, there are also the cannibalistic fey Eloko of the screaming jungle, and the degenerate, demon-worshiping apemen known as the charau-ka.



Cheiton



Serpent's Skull

FACTIONAL STRIFE (CR 7)

Creatures: The PCs' rival faction has four agents in Kalabuto waiting for the PCs. Their goal is to get as much information as they can about Tazion and Saventh-Yhi from the PCs, and to delay or halt or the PCs' expedition—either by killing them or sabotaging their mission as necessary. However, they also desire to keep their operations in Kalabuto covert, so they avoid open hostilities, if possible.

Once Kibi informs her employers of the PCs arrival, the rival faction agents plan an attack for the PCs' first night in Kalabuto. When and where this attack takes place is up to you. Two locations in Kalabuto, the Shrunken Head tavern and Cheiton's house, are outlined above. If the PCs spend a lot of time in the tavern or take rooms there, the rival agents might attack the PCs in the Shrunken Head, or in a secluded alley while they're on their way back to their lodgings. If the PCs choose to stay at Cheiton's house, the agents assault the house at night. Should the PCs somehow avoid an attack while in Kalabuto, feel free to have the agents follow them out of the city and ambush them along the way.

Wherever the rival agents make their move, they take some time to plan their assault. Their leader carries a *wand of glyph of warding*, and he uses his Use Magic Device skill before the attack to draw *blast glyphs of warding* (2d8 fire damage, Reflex DC 14 for half) with the wand on the ground-floor doors of whichever building the PCs are staying in, to prevent the PCs from fleeing through the doors. The tavern has four exterior doors, while Cheiton's house has two doors. Once their traps are in place, the rival agents begin their assault. They climb to the second floor, break in through the windows, and attack the PCs.

RIVAL FACTION AGENTS (4) CR 3

XP 800 each

Human fighter 1/rogue 3
 CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +7; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)
hp 28 each (4 HD; 1d10+3d8+4)
Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk short sword +6 (1d6+2/19–20 plus poison), mwk punching dagger +5 (1d4+1/x3)
Ranged hand crossbow +6 (1d4/19–20 plus poison)
Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat The agents' first goal is to get information, and they use their poison to paralyze and incapacitate their targets so they can extract whatever knowledge their opponents have. If given what they desire, however, as well

as a safe opportunity to do so, the agents quickly turn on their captives and attempt to slay them.

Morale When dropped below 7 hit points, these agents flee. They are only hired muscle, and have no loyalty to their faction beyond the coins in their purses.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +8, Climb +9, Disable Device +10, Escape Artist +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +7, Stealth +10, Use Magic Device +11

Languages Common, Polyglot

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*, *wand of glyph of warding* (leader only; 5 charges), spider vine poison (4 doses), thunderstone;

Other Gear +1 studded leather, hand crossbow and 10 bolts, masterwork punching dagger, masterwork short sword, grappling hook, silk rope (50 ft.), thieves' tools, 36 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) *Spider vine poison*—injury; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *initial effect* paralysis; *secondary effect* 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. Spider vine poison appears on page 6 of *Heart of the Jungle*.

Development: If captured, the agents remain tight-lipped about their employers, but may eventually be persuaded to reveal more information. Unfortunately, they have little to give, other than which faction hired them. They are just local thugs hired to harass the PCs, and are uninvolved in the greater race to find Saventh-Yhi. If the PCs kill all of the rival agents, a search of the agents' belongings should turn up clues that show they were hired by the PCs' rival faction (a Red Mantis symbol, a *wayfinder*, or something similar).

L. THE LAKE OF VANISHING ARMIES (CR 6)

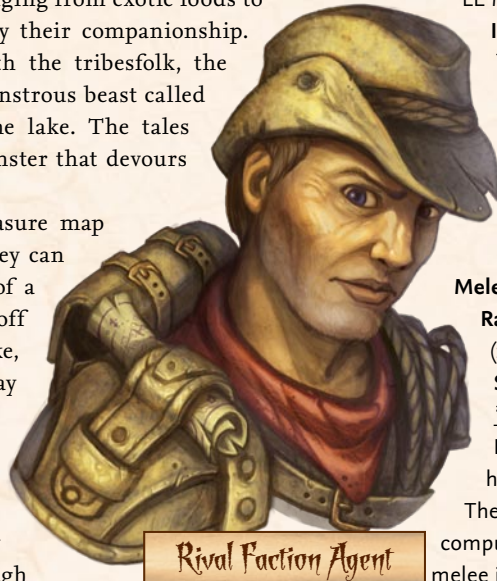
Leaving Kalabuto, the PCs follow the River of Lost Tears to a huge freshwater lake, the Lake of Vanished Armies. Here at the Sargavan border with the Mwangi Expanse, dozens of tribal settlements line the muddy banks of both the river and the lake. Locals earn meager livings catching mud crabs and turtles, making mud bricks, and growing rice, hippo grass, and other native grains. The soft, shallow banks make it difficult to land larger craft, though the tribesfolk typically pole rafts out to passing vessels heading to Kalabuto or elsewhere, hoping to barter their foodstuffs for worked metal, crafted technologies, and other such materials. The settlements are small, consisting only of collections of mud-daub



shacks, and they lack such amenities as shops and inns. Still, outsiders quickly discover that these friendly folk are eager to accommodate travelers in their homes, and offer them all sorts of gifts ranging from exotic foods to mystic drugs, and occasionally their companionship. During their interactions with the tribesfolk, the PCs hear local legends of a monstrous beast called Aomak said to live within the lake. The tales describe a titanic, saurian monster that devours fishermen and their boats.

If the PCs received the treasure map from the shaman at area E, they can try to find the sunken hulk of a Sargavan vessel in the waters off the northern shore of the lake, but the search adds an extra day to their travel time.

Creature: The legendary monster Aomak lurks in the unknown depths of the lake. Though the creature rarely surfaces, one of its smaller, though still impressive, spawn lairs near the sunken Sargavan ship. It attacks any interlopers invading its territory, such as treasure hunters searching the hulk.



Rival Faction Agent

MZALI RANGERS (4) CR 1

XP 400 each

Human ranger 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 15 each (2d10+4)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee handaxe +4 (1d6+2/x3)

Ranged mwk composite shortbow +6 (1d6+2/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +2)

TACTICS

During Combat The rangers target humans with their *human bane arrows*.

They favor ranged attacks, but have no compunctions about fighting with their axes in melee if necessary.

Morale Mzali rangers fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +6, Stealth +8, Survival +6, Swim +7

Languages Polyglot

Combat Gear +1 *human bane arrows* (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, handaxe, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows

SPAWN OF AOMAK CR 6

XP 2,400

Young elasmosaurus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 84, 295)

hp 85

Treasure: Hidden in the flooded hold of the half-sunken hulk is a locked iron military trunk (DC 25 Disable Device). The chest contains 1,000 gp in gold ingots, a *potion of cat's grace*, two *potions of lesser restoration*, and an adamantine machete (treat as a short sword).

M. WARRIORS OF THE CHILD-GOD (CR 5)

Under the rule of the Child-God Walkena, the people of the city-state of Mzali despise colonial Sargava, and have on several occasions attempted to raze Kalabuto. But Mzali doesn't limit its attacks solely to Sargava—it wages war against all foreigners. Walkena's warbands constantly scour the borders between Sargava and the Expanse, brutally putting any non-Mwangi or foreign sympathizers to the blade, hanging them from “gallows trees” (see area H), or skinning their victims alive.

Creatures: Soon after leaving the Lake of Vanished Armies, the PCs encounter a Mzali warband at the junction of the Pasuango and Korir Rivers. The Mzali wait in hiding and ambush the PCs when they seem most vulnerable, such as when they are fording the river or bedding down for the night.

N. HIPPO HUNT (CR 6)

About 2-1/2 days after encountering the Mzali warriors, the PCs enter the Screaming Jungle. At this point the river widens. In the center of the widest spot, a herd of hippopotamuses wallow and graze. Though docile when left to themselves, these creatures are easily provoked and can become dangerously aggressive. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or DC 20 Survival check determines the beasts are best avoided.

Creatures: Three lizardfolk have come to this spot to hunt bull hippos, though they quickly change their plans as soon as they spot the PCs. The lizardfolk anger one of the bull hippos by banging their clubs on their shields and prodding it with spears, sending it charging at the PCs. The lizardfolk join the attack by hurling their javelins.

HIPPOTAMUS CR 5

XP 1,600



Serpent's Skull



N Large animal (*Heart of the Jungle* 60)

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+8 natural, -1 size)

hp 66 (7d8+35)

Fort +10 (+12 vs. nonmagical disease), **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +13 (2d8+12)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks capsize

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 10, **Con** 20, **Int** 2, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 24

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Intimidate +1, Perception +8, Sense Motive +0, Stealth +0 (+10 underwater), Swim +13; **Racial Modifiers** +10 Stealth when underwater

SQ blood sweat, hold breath

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood Sweat (Ex) A hippopotamus excretes a reddish-tinged oil that protects its skin from both the sun and bacteria. It suffers no harm from being in hot environments (up to 140 degrees Fahrenheit) and gains a +2 on Fortitude saves to resist nonmagical diseases.

Capsize (Ex) A hippopotamus can attempt to capsize a boat or ship of its size or smaller by ramming it as a charge attack and making a combat maneuver check. The DC of this check is 25, or the result of the boat captain's Profession (sailor) check, whichever is higher.

Hold Breath (Ex) A hippopotamus can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to four times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

LIZARDFOLK (3)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 11 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 195)

O. BODIES ON THE RIVERBANK (CR 7)

The trees grow broader and taller here, their gnarled branches

rising to a tangled canopy that blots out the sun. Digging into their roots, giant, parasitic corpse-flowers blossom across the forest floor. Littering the banks of the river are several humanoid corpses, their armor and bodies ripped apart as if by large claws. Suddenly, a series of loud slams and crashing noises echo through the jungle, sending small monkeys in the treetops screaming in all directions.

The bodies are the remains of the advance party of one of the rival factions seeking Saventh-Yhi. Which faction they represent is up to the GM—they are likely not from the PCs' main rival faction, but from one of the other groups heading for the lost city, and serve as a reminder to the PCs that the race to Tazion is still on. This group was able to get ahead of the PCs while they were stopped in Kalabuto, but met their end here at the hands of a shadow demon named Itombu.

Creature: This section of the Screaming Jungle is haunted by a shadow demon who preys upon the inhabitants of isolated villages and the occasional traveler, constantly seeking new bodies for its incorporeal form to possess. The demon is currently possessing the body of a gigantopithecus, a bestial dire ape, and fell upon the unfortunate explorers as they passed this way. Moments after the PCs arrive, the possessed ape bursts from the jungle and attacks.

The PCs may make a DC 25 Sense Motive check to realize the ape is not acting normally and is under some sort of magical control. If the PCs recognize that the ape is possessed and received the *Zenj spirit fetish* from the shaman in area E, they can use it to exorcise the shadow demon from the ape's body and banish it back to the Abyss. If they do not recognize the possession, they will have to wait until the shadow demon exits the ape's body to try that tactic.

POSSESSED DIRE APE CR 3

XP 800

CE Large animal (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 17)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +20

DEFENSE

AC 15, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 13 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

SR 17

Weaknesses sunlight vulnerability

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., **climb** 30 ft.

Melee bite +10 (1d6+4), 2 claws +10 (1d4+4)

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

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d4+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +14)

At will—*deeper darkness*, *fear* (DC 18), *greater teleport* (self only), *telekinesis* (DC 19)

3/day—*shadow conjuration* (DC 18), *shadow evocation* (DC 19)

Into the Screaming Jungle

The Screaming Jungle is so named for the hundreds of species of monkeys living within its lush canopy. Throughout the day, these impish simians create an incessant cacophony. Because of the hazards of navigating the rocky falls and treacherous shallows of the Korir River, the PCs are most likely following the river along its banks. Within the first mile of entering the jungle, it thickens to a medium forest, and after another mile or so it becomes dense forest terrain.

Cooler than the Bandu Hills, M'neri Plains, and sweltering jungles of the north, typical daytime temperatures in the Screaming Jungle rarely reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit, though the humidity trapped beneath the canopy still makes travel uncomfortable. At night, temperatures drop to a more comfortable average in the mid60s.

Almost every day, usually sometime around 1 P.M., a major downpour occurs that lasts 10+4d20 minutes. Rain reduces outdoor visibility ranges by half, resulting in a -4 penalty on Perception checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Perception checks as severe wind. The rains cool the jungle, dropping the temperature so it no longer poses a threat to travelers. Following the rains, the forests fill with thick mists that hover waist high from the jungle floor. Within the mists, all sight is obscured, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures 5 feet away have concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance). These mists last for 10+1d20 minutes.

For the effects of temperature, see page 444 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. More information on the climate and hazards of travel through Sargava and the Mwangi Expanse can be found in *Heart of the Jungle* and *Sargava: The Lost Colony*.

1/day—*magic jar* (DC 19), *summon* (level 3, 1 shadow demon 50%)

TACTICS

During Combat The possessed dire ape begins by casting *fear* at its opponents. Then, relishing in its physical body, it forgoes further spellcasting and leaps into combat, rending with its bite and claws.

Morale The possessed ape fights to the death, at which point the shadow demon exits the ape's body and attacks the PCs.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative,



SERPENT'S SKULL

Lightning Reflexes

Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +14, Climb +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +20, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +8

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sunlight Vulnerability (Ex) A shadow demon that is possessing a creature using *magic jar* is not harmed by sunlight, but if it is struck by a *sunbeam* or *sunray* spell while possessing a creature, the shadow demon is driven out of its host automatically.

ITOMBU

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male shadow demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 67)

hp 59

TACTICS

During Combat Once forced to leave the ape's body, Itombu uses *shadow conjuration* to summon shadow crocodiles (as *summon monster III*) to attack the PCs, then uses *shadow evocation* to mimic spells such as *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *scorching ray*. After he has toyed with his opponents for a while, or if the PCs are able to affect his incorporeal form, Ithunzi switches to melee attacks. If he is able to get one opponent alone or separated from the group, Itombu casts *magic jar* to possess a new body.

Morale Envious of the PCs' physical bodies, Itombu fights until destroyed.

Treasure: PCs searching the bodies of the slain rival faction members can recover four sets of masterwork studded leather, three masterwork spears, five short swords, and a *ring of sustenance*.

P. AMGHAWE'S TOMB (CR 7)

At this point along the river, the PCs notice snapped saplings and torn brush, evidence that something large has passed through the jungle. A DC 14 Survival check finds the tracks of a barefoot humanoid and a larger set of clawed humanoid prints with a stride twice as long as that of a human. The trail leads deeper into the jungle to a small clearing where a boar carcass lies splayed open on a boab tree, its entrails laid out before it. A DC 12 Spellcraft or Knowledge (religion) check determines the boar was slain for use in extispicy—determining the future by studying an animal's entrails. At the edge of the clearing sits a small gravesite surrounded by anthills, with a gaping hole in the side of the cairn marking where the tomb was breached.

Creatures: A greedy necromancer named Jigeke, exiled from his home village for practicing black magic, came to loot the tomb of the great local hero Amghawe. In particular, he was looking for the hero's legendary magic spear and war mask. Jigeke defeated the tomb's zombie guardian, a fabled creature once slain by Amghawe, and took control of it.

As the PCs arrive in the clearing, Jigeke is exiting the tomb, having found the items he was looking for. The

troll zombie stands motionless nearby. The necromancer has smeared his wiry frame with lard and rolled in ashes, covering his skin with a pale white crust. He wears an oversized darkwood mask carved to resemble a tusked frog-demon, and macabre fetishes made from severed human hands dangle from a thong around his waist. He carries Amghawe's spear in his hands. As soon as Jigeke sees the PCs, he orders the zombie to attack.

JIGEKE THE EXILE

CR 6

XP 2,400

Male human necromancer 7

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 50 (7d6+26)

Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *spear* +5 (1d8+2/x3) or dagger +4 (1d4+1/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 12, 7/day)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11) 7/day—grave touch (3 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11)

4th—*animate dead*, *contagion* (DC 18), *enervation* (DC 18)

3rd—*fly*, *ray of exhaustion* (DC 17), *vampiric touch* (2, DC 17)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *false life*, *hypnotic pattern* (DC 16), *spectral hand*, *summon swarm*

1st—*chill touch* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2, DC 15), *shield*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Opposition Schools Enchantment, Evocation

TACTICS

Before Combat Jigeke casts *false life* and *mage armor* on himself every morning.

During Combat Jigeke uses his mask's *scare* ability to frighten away as many foes as possible, then moves behind the troll and casts *fly* on himself. He makes ray attacks to weaken opponents, then makes touch attacks with *spectral hand*. If necessary, he bolsters his defenses with *shield*.

Morale The necromancer fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Martial Weapon Proficiency (spear), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +12, Fly +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge



(arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Spellcraft +14

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Polyglot, Sylvan

SQ arcane bond (amulet)

Gear +1 spear, dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, war mask of terror (see sidebar), onyx stones worth 250 gp, spellbook

FAST TROLL ZOMBIE

CR 3

XP 800

NE Large undead (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 268, 289)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 44 (8d8+8)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+6), 2 claws +11 (1d6+6), slam +11 (1d8+6)

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

Special Attacks quick strikes

TACTICS

During Combat The troll zombie quickly closes on opponents and takes full-round attacks.

Morale The troll zombie fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26

Feats Toughness^B

Q. ELOKO HEADHUNTERS (CR 6)

Creatures: A tribe of filthy, gnome-like headhunters stalk this section of the jungle near the ruined city of Liclac. Known as Eloko, these Mwangi spriggans have grayish-brown skin and spindly arms, and spike their hair and beards with lime. Their faces are painted to resemble leering skulls. These Eloko are of the Ironbell tribe, and hail from the city of Elokobha on the eastern fringe of the Screaming Jungle, but they come into the jungle in search of their favorite prey—humans.

As the PCs near the ruined city, the Eloko begin stalking them. Patient hunters, the Eloko follow the PCs until they make camp for night. Then the spriggans lay an ambush, and one of them rings his enchanted iron bell to compel the PCs to venture unprepared into the jungle, where the Eloko spring their trap.

ELOKO (MWANGI SPRIGGANS) (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Spriggans (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 326)

CE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +1 size)

hp 22 each (4d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk halberd +5 (1d8-1/x3)

Ranged dagger +8 (1d3-1/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +4)

At will—*flare* (DC 10), *scare* (DC 12), *shatter* (DC 12)

TACTICS

During Combat Eloko step from the bushes, startling targets and immediately growing to a terrifying size. They attack



Jigeke the Exile



SERPENT'S SKULL

WAR MASK OF TERROR

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 9th
Slot head; **Price** 9,000 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Shamans and warriors of many of the indigenous tribes of western Garund add to their fierceness and mystique by wearing wooden masks that bear terrifying visages of demonic spirits. A war mask is considered sacred and personal, and is often handed down to the next generation when a wearer dies. Individual masks are often notorious, and many tribesfolk can readily identify masks of other tribes with a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check.

A *war mask of terror* provides its wearer with a +2 competence bonus on Intimidate checks and a +1 deflection bonus to Armor Class. In addition, the wearer may cast *scare* once per day.

Other war masks exist with different abilities; some have higher deflection bonuses, while others can cast *bull's strength*, *fear*, or *flesh to stone* instead of *scare*.

CREATION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *scare*, *shield*;

Cost 4,500 gp



a spriggan becomes Large, its speed increases to 30 feet, and it gains +12 Strength, -2 Dexterity, +6 Constitution, and a -2 size penalty to its AC. While Large, a spriggan cannot use its sneak attack or its racial spell-like abilities (although if it possesses either from class levels or templates, it retains their use in both sizes).

Spriggan Magic (Ex) A spriggan gains a +1 racial bonus on concentration checks and save DCs for all of its racial spell-like abilities.

Spriggan Skills (Ex) Climb, Disable Device, Perception, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth are class skills for spriggans.

LARGE ELOKO (3)

CE Large humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, -1 size)

hp 34 each (4d8+16)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk halberd +9 (2d8+7/x3)

Ranged dagger +5 (1d6+5/19-20)

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

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 22

Skills Climb +7, Disable Device +10, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +6

R. SPIRIT DANCERS (CR 6 AND 7)

By this time, the PCs have left the Screaming Jungle to follow the river across the Korir Plains. At this point, the river widens and becomes fast and shallow, no more than a few feet deep. The surrounding vegetation consists almost entirely of reeds, mangroves, lotuses, and other water plants. After a few miles of travel, the PCs spot four young Zenj women bathing in the river. When they see the PCs, the girls giggle shyly and invite the PCs to their home just upstream for dinner and rest. They introduce themselves as Alala, Masozi, Osumare, and Zakiyya.

Creatures: Alala, Masozi, and Osumare are Zenj spirit dancers, native priestesses whose sacred dances can awaken a person's totem spirit. Zakiyya is really a succubus in human form who has dominated the three other dancers and keeps them as her harem. Zakiyya approached the girls and offered to teach them secret rituals to bring them closer to their totem spirits. The three dancers willingly accepted Zakiyya's profane gifts before they realized her demonic nature—when Zakiyya revealed her true self to them, they were horrified, but they were too afraid to oppose her, for

mercilessly, but break from combat to eat victims as soon as one falls unconscious.

Morale Ultimately, these creatures are cowardly and flee if reduced to fewer than 5 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 19, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 15

Feats Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (halberd)

Skills Climb +1, Disable Device +11, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +15

Languages Aklo, Gnome

SQ size alteration, spriggan magic, spriggan skills

Gear leather armor, daggers (4), masterwork halberd, *Eloko bell* (one only; see sidebar)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Size Alteration (Su) At will, as a standard action, a spriggan can change its size between Small and Large. Weapons, armor, and other objects on the spriggan's person grow proportionally when it changes size (objects revert to normal size 1 round after a spriggan releases them). When

if the demon took back her gifts, the resulting Charisma drain would forever cut them off from their totem spirits.

Zakiyya now keeps the women dominated as her personal harem, slowly tempting them to pervert their ancestral faith and become demon worshipers instead. Though bound to the succubus by fear and magic, the three women have so far managed to stay true to their native religion, but their wills are weakening. It is only a matter of time before they forsake their sacred totem spirits for good and embrace the worship of Zakiyya's patron, the demon lord Sifkesh.

If the PCs accept the dancers' invitation, they are led to a simple but clean hut on the banks of the river and are fed a filling meal of fish, frog legs, and wild rice. Over dinner, the women inform the PCs of their profession, and offer to awaken the PCs' totem spirits. If the PCs accept the offer, the spirit dancers use their blue whinnis poison to drug the PCs, then offer the unconscious PCs to Zakiyya to drain with her kiss. If they refuse, Zakiyya uses *suggestion* and *charm person* to convince them to do so, or to lure them into acts of passion during which she can take advantage of them.

During their interactions with the women, the PCs may notice that something is amiss. Alala, Masozi, and Osumare defer to Zakiyya in almost all things, and seem glassy-eyed and listless when not actually engaged in conversation or some other task. If asked, they all deny that anything is wrong. A successful DC 15 Sense Motive check detects that the girls are enchanted in some way, though the dominated dancers use Bluff to convince the PCs otherwise. If the PCs confront Zakiyya or try to break her enchantment of the dancers, the succubus attacks.

If the PCs refuse the dancers' initial invitation to dinner, Zakiyya and the dancers attempt to charm them to return to the dancers' home with them. If that tactic is unsuccessful, Zakiyya grows angry at being so easily rebuffed and orders the dancers to attack.

ZENJ SPIRIT DANCERS (3) CR 3

XP 800 each

Female human bard 3/druid 1
CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +2; Senses Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+1 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 18 each (4d8)

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +6; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +2 (1d4–1/19–20) or
whip +1 (1d3–1 nonlethal)

Ranged blowgun +4 (1d2 plus poison)

Special Attacks bardic performance 13 rounds/day

ELOKO BELL

Aura moderate enchantment; CL 7th

Slot none; Price 5,000 gp; Weight —

DESCRIPTION

This small, rusty iron bell contains great magic. When the bell is rung as a standard action, all creatures within 60 feet who can hear the bell must make a DC 14 Will save or be compelled to seek out the source of the sound for 7 rounds, moving at their normal speeds. If the sound leads its subjects into a dangerous area, each affected creature gets a second save. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect. The bell affects a maximum of 24 HD of creatures. A bell can be used 5 times before it crumbles away into rusty flakes and becomes useless.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *suggestion*;

Cost 2,500 gp

(countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +1)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +2)

At will—*speak with animals* (4 rounds/day)

Bard Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +8)

1st (5/day)—*charm person* (DC 16), *disguise self* (DC 16),
hypnotism (DC 16), *lesser confusion* (DC 16)

o (at will)—*dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 15), *ghost sound* (DC 15),
lullaby (DC 15), *message*, *prestidigitation*

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st—*calm animals*^D (DC 12), *cure light wounds*, *faerie fire*

o (at will)—*guidance*, *mending*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; Domain Animal

TACTICS

During Combat Under Zakiyya's domination, the dancers try to avoid melee combat, using their spells and abilities to support the succubus and hinder their foes. If they have a clear shot, they use poisoned blowgun darts to knock opponents unconscious. If commanded to enter melee, however, they throw themselves into combat with no thoughts for personal safety.

Morale While dominated, the dancers fight to the death. If freed from Zakiyya's control, they turn against their former captor, though they flee if reduced to below 6 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 20

Base Atk +2; CMB +4; CMD 14

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Dodge, Skill Focus (Perform [dance])

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +10, Craft (tattoo) +8, Diplomacy



Serpent's Skull

+10, Disguise +9, Escape Artist +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +6, Perform (dance) +15, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +7, Survival +7

Languages Common, Druidic, Polyglot

SQ awaken totem spirit, bardic knowledge +1, nature bond (Animal domain), nature sense, profane gift, versatile performance (dance), wild empathy +6

Combat Gear blue whinnis poison (5 doses, *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 558); **Other Gear** blowgun and 10 darts, masterwork dagger, whip, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +1, spell component pouch, masterwork ceremonial tattooing quills

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Awaken Totem Spirit (Su) The spirit dancers can perform a sacred ritual that awakens a creature's totem spirit, and allows that creature to call upon its spirit animal for aid (see Development below).

Profane Gift (Su) The spirit dancers have accepted Zakiyya's profane gifts, gaining a +2 profane bonus to their Charisma scores. This allows Zakiyya to communicate telepathically with the girls across any distance (and use her *suggestion* spell-like ability through the link). *Dispel evil* or *dispel chaos* removes the profane gift. Zakiyya can remove it as a free action as well, causing 2d6+2 points of Charisma drain (no save).

ZAKIYYA

CR 7

XP 3,200

Succubus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 68)

hp 84

TACTICS

During Combat Zakiyya doesn't enjoy hand-to-hand combat, and she knows her dominated dancers aren't melee combatants, so she casts *dominate person* on the strongest-looking fighter in the group to compel him to defend her, followed by *charm monster* and *suggestion* to take others out of combat. As soon as she has the opportunity, she attempts to kiss one of her charmed or dominated enemies to use her energy drain ability.

Morale Zakiyya has no wish to die at the hands of mere mortals. If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, she attempts to summon a babau to her aid. If reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, she teleports away, but may return later to exact her revenge on the PCs.

Development: If the PCs free the spirit dancers from the demon's domination, the women invite them to undergo the ritual to awaken their totem spirits as a reward. If the PCs agree, the women begin dancing to summon forth the spirits of the PCs' totem animals, then give the PCs tattoos of their totems with long, slender quills dipped in a localized numbing toxin. The process is painful, even with the anesthetic, and the entire ritual takes several hours, but PCs who endure the ceremony can call upon their spirit animals for aid in the future.

Once an individual's totem spirit is awakened, that animal becomes her totem for life. A PC's totem animal should be the same animal spirit she took the form of in Nkechi's dream trance (see *Into the Spirit Realms*, page 20). Each animal has three skills associated with it. Once per adventure for the duration of the Serpent's Skull Adventure Path, the PC can channel the power of her totem spirit as a move action and gain a +5 sacred bonus on any associated skill check, or use wild empathy to communicate with creatures of the animal species related to her totem spirit.



Zakiyya
(Human Form)

AWAKENED SPIRIT ANIMALS

Totem Spirit	Associated Skills
hoofed mammal (antelope, buffalo, cow, or goat)	Handle Animal, Heal, Survival
canine (hyena, jackal, or wild dog)	Bluff, Perception, Sleight of Hand
carnivorous vermin (mantis, spider, or wasp)	Climb, Stealth, Survival
equine (horse, wild donkey, or zebra)	Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Ride
feline (cheetah, lion, or leopard)	Disguise, Perception, Stealth
large mammal (elephant, hippopotamus, or rhinoceros)	Bluff, Intimidate, Survival
bird (eagle, hawk, owl, or vulture)	Appraise, Fly, Perception
reptilian (crocodile, dinosaur, lizard, or turtle)	Intimidate, Stealth, Swim
small mammal (rat, porcupine, or weasel)	Climb, Escape Artist, Stealth
simian (ape, gorilla, lemur, or monkey)	Acrobatics, Climb, Disable Device

In addition, if the majority of the PCs choose to awaken their totems, the guidance of their animal spirits reduces their travel time to Tazion by 1 day.

Story Award: If the PCs defeat Zakiyya without harming the spirit dancers, award them 2,400 XP.

PART 3: THE RUINS OF TAZION

The ruins of Tazion stand as a remnant of a forgotten age, an outpost of ancient Azlant lost in the southern Mwangi Jungle. Little remains within its walls, with most of the settlement having crumbled or been buried centuries before. The majority of Tazion's structures remain unidentifiable. Centuries of weathering and erosion have transformed the once-splendid architecture into little more than scattered stones, curious topography, and fetid tar pits. Few suspect that the ruins possess the key to finding the lost city of Saventh-Yhi, and its secrets are ripe for the taking.

A tribe of ape-men known as charau-ka now inhabit the ruins, though they are uninterested in whatever secrets may still be hidden there. Under the guidance of their mad priest Raogru and his serpentfolk ally Issilar, the charau-ka have broken from their traditional demon-worship and embraced the path of the serpent-god Ydersius. When the charau-ka first arrived at Tazion, Raogru's first act was to consecrate the ruin at the center of the outpost as a temple to Ydersius. This temple is now the ape-men's main encampment, where they gather to share information and deposit relics they have found in the ruins as offerings to their new snake-god.

ARRIVAL OF THE FACTIONS

The PCs are in a race against the other factions also seeking Saventh-Yhi. These groups are converging on Tazion as well, and arrive at various times. The GM should calculate the time it took for the PCs to reach the ruins (see Travel Times on page 23). Depending on how quickly the PCs traveled, and how they fared in certain encounters, they may arrive first, last, or somewhere in the middle. The

following descriptions outline what the various factions do once they arrive in Tazion, which may have repercussions for the PCs if they arrive late. This adventure assumes that the PCs arrive in Tazion first. If they do not, the GM will need to modify the adventure appropriately. If the PCs are joined with one of these factions, ignore that faction below—the PCs determine the fate of their own faction. Once the PCs arrive in Tazion, assume the other factions arrive once they leave, allowing the PC the chance to explore the ruins without interference from their rivals.

Red Mantis: The Red Mantis are the first to arrive, on the 56th day. They stealthily infiltrate the ruins, find the information they need without disturbing the status quo, and leave again as quickly as they came.

Aspis Consortium: The Aspis Consortium arrives on the 59th day. Using their extensive diplomatic experience, they offer a bribe to the charau-ka to access the pillars of light and leave again. If the PCs arrive after the Consortium, they may find the chest containing the bribe (2,000 gp) in the Serpentine Shrine (area V6).

Pathfinder Society: The Pathfinders arrive on the 63rd day. They end up fighting the charau-ka, but some of their members are taken prisoner. Unable to free them, the Pathfinders leave the ruins once they know the route to Saventh-Yhi. If Gelik Aberwhinge is with the Pathfinders, he is one of the prisoners being held captive in area V4. About one-quarter of the charau-ka in the encampment are killed, but they replenish their numbers in 1d3 days from individuals returning from hunts away from the ruins.

Free Captains: The Free Captains arrive on the 65th day. They opt for a direct frontal assault, and though they take casualties, they are able to find the information they need. If the PCs arrive after the Free Captains, about half the charau-ka in the encampment have been killed. Issilar still lives, but Raogru is dead, and the pirates have looted the Temple of the Snake (area V), and have taken the Aspis Consortium's bribe. Encounters in the ruins should be modified as needed. In addition, the PCs can find the bodies of several pirates scattered throughout the ruins.



Serpent's Skull

Sargavan Government: The Sargavans are the last to arrive, on the 68th day. Seeing the weakened state of the charau-ka, they decide to attack as well. The resulting conflict takes 2 days. If the PCs arrive during this time, they may decide to join forces with the government troops, or take advantage of the chaos to sneak into the ruins. If the PCs arrive on the 70th day, they find Tazion abandoned and looted. The charau-ka have all been killed or driven off, and the bodies of many Sargavans litter the ruins. At the GM's discretion, Issilar, as well as can some of the non-charau-ka denizens of the ruins, may still be alive and in hiding.

HAZARD: TAR PITS

Tar pits are scattered throughout the ruins of Tazion, and can prove exceptionally hazardous to the unwary. To a casual observer, the water pooling upon a tar pit's surface makes it appear to be nothing more than a shallow pond, but a DC 12 Survival check is enough to recognize the danger. A tar pit functions as quicksand (see the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 427) and ignites if brought into contact with open flame.

S. THE ENCLOSURE WALL (CR 6)

The crumbling remnants of a massive enclosure wall mark the perimeter of the ruins. In its current condition, the wall provides little defense. Entire sections have eroded away or lie buried beneath sediment, while vines and vegetation strangle what little exposed stonework remains. The PCs can scramble over those sections of the wall still standing with DC 5 Climb checks, but there are several large holes in the walls that can simply be walked through.

Traps: The charau-ka have set crude traps of barbed nets in the gaps of the enclosure wall (marked S1 on the map). When stepped upon, these traps entangle their targets and snatch them up into the trees.

CAMOUFLAGED BARBED NET TRAPS (6) CR 3

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Atk +10 touch (entangle, cannot move, creatures caught in the net take 1d4 damage per round from barbs, DC 20 Escape Artist or DC 25 Strength check to escape); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

Creatures: Three trios of charau-ka are posted at scattered intervals throughout the ruins to keep watch over the perimeter (marked S2 on the map). These groups periodically check the traps to see if they've caught anything and attack any intruders.

CHARAU-KA (9) CR 2

XP 600 each

World Guide: The Inner Sea

CE Small humanoid (charau-ka)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 19 each (3d8+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee club +5 (1d4+3), bite +0 (1d3+1)

Ranged rock +5 (1d4+2/19–20)

Special Attacks shrieking frenzy, thrown-weapon mastery

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Throw Anything^B

Skills Climb +14, Fly +0, Perception +2, Stealth +10; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Polyglot

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Shrieking Frenzy (Su) Once per day, a charau-ka can enter a state of shrieking frenzy as a free action. While in this state, a charau-ka automatically fails Stealth checks and cannot speak or cast spells that use verbal components (or use items that require command words to activate), but functions as if under the effects of a *haste* spell. A charau-ka can continue shrieking for up to 3 rounds, after which it is staggered for 1 round.

Thrown-Weapon Mastery (Ex) Charau-ka are masters of thrown weapons. All charau-ka gain Throw Anything as a bonus feat. In addition, a charau-ka gains a +1 racial bonus on all thrown weapons, and the threat range for thrown weapons is doubled, as if the charau-ka possessed the Improved Critical feat for all thrown weapons. This effect doesn't stack with any other effect that expands the threat range of a weapon.

Development: If the PCs get caught in a net trap, they have 1d20 minutes to free themselves and move on before a charau-ka patrol arrives to check the trap. If a patrol spots the PCs, the simians hoot madly, setting off a vocal alarm. Frenzied whooping soon echoes throughout the entire ruins as other charau-ka pick up the call. While most of the ape-men in the ruins ignore such alarms, the charau-ka stationed on the wall do respond, though it takes some time for them to pinpoint the source of the alarm call. Only 1d4 minutes after the first patrol attacks, another patrol arrives on the scene. If the PCs have moved but make no effort to cover their tracks, those patrols drawn to the initial location use their scent ability to try to track the PCs and hunt them down. If the PCs manage to avoid detection, the whooping calls die down after 1d6 minutes.





T. ABANDONED AQUEDUCTS (CR 7)

The ancients used subterranean aqueducts to supply Tazion with fresh water. Though long dried up, two entrances to these cramped tunnels remain, and can be used to traverse the ruins in secret, as the charau-ka remain ignorant of their existence. Both aqueducts originally led to stone water towers inside the ruins, but the northern entrance's tunnel has collapsed and is impassable. The southern entrance opens on a tunnel that leads all the way across the ruins to the Tower of Serpents (area U). Midway down its length, another tunnel branches off to the south, connecting to the Well of Unending Screams (area W).

Trap: The southern aqueduct entrance contains an ancient trap left by Tazion's builders that summons a water elemental to clean and defend the aqueduct. It attacks and pursues any intruders in the tunnels, but will not leave the aqueduct.

ELEMENTAL SUMMONING TRAP CR 7

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); **Reset** automatic (5 minutes)

Effect spell effect (summon monster VI, summons 1 Huge water elemental, CL 11th)

HUGE WATER ELEMENTAL CR—

hp 95 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 126)

U. TOWER OF SERPENTS (CR 6)

The small room to the north is a shaft that connects to Tazion's abandoned subterranean aqueducts (area T; see the map on page 51).

Creatures: Determined to claim these ruins in the name of their serpent-god, the charau-ka have rounded up hundreds of snakes and released them into this tower. While most of these serpents are harmless, the sight of a slithering carpet of multicolored snakes should be enough to give any explorer pause.

The true danger herein comes from the fact that the charau-ka have lured a large snake known as a Mwangi ringed python as well as several small, purplish venomous snakes called violet mambas in here as well. Because of the large number of snakes slithering over the floor, all squares in this building are considered difficult terrain.

MWANGI RINGED PYTHON CR 3

XP 800

Giant constrictor snake (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 255, 295)

hp 25

VIOLET MAMBAS (4) CR 1

XP 400 each

Venomous snakes (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 255)

hp 13 each



SERPENT'S SKULL

V. TEMPLE OF THE SNAKE

Near the center of the ruins stand the shattered remains of three conical cylinders connected by low, thick walls of piled stone. Boab trees burst from crumbling structures, their thick roots and branches devouring large chunks of ancient stonework. The walls surround an overgrown courtyard of toppled statues, weathered foundations, and a path of broken cobbles winding around large, watery pools.

The original purpose of this severely weathered structure is lost to the ages, but the charau-ka have repurposed the ruin as a makeshift temple to their god Ydersius. A small group of charau-ka guards the site, guided by the words of their priest Raogru. The stagnant pools are actually tar pits (see page 44), which the ape-men traverse on rough-hewn planks cut from jungle trees and laid across the pits to form crude bridges.

V1. FOYER (CR 5)

Wide marble steps lead to a short foyer hedged by short, broken walls. A gnarled boab tree erupts from the foyer floor, its powerful roots twisting through the surrounding flagstones, leaving them cracked and shattered.

Trap: The charau-ka have placed a large stone block above the foyer to fall onto intruders.

FALLING BLOCK TRAP CR 5

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Atk +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. square)

V2. SOUTH COURT

Entire sections of the outer courtyard wall have collapsed and sunk into several small tar pits that bubble up among the ruins here.

Hazard: The tar pits vary between 4 and 8 feet in depth.

V3. ASPHALT POND (CR 6)

A large pond stretches through the center of the ruins, its water black and glassy. Crumbling remnants of walls rise from its surface, while huge slabs of salvaged granite form a makeshift foundation that supports crude walkways cut from felled trees.

Hazard: The pond is actually an asphalt lake—a huge tar pit with a depth of 14 feet.

Creatures: Four charau-ka guards hold positions atop the slabs in the center of the tar pit. Hidden behind the

ruined walls, they wait for targets to approach the walkways before attacking.

CHARAU-KA (4) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (see page 44)

TACTICS

During Combat The charau-ka hurl rocks at approaching attackers. Once in melee, they try to bull rush opponents off the rocks into the tar pit.

Morale Once two charau-ka fall in combat, the remaining ape-men flee to the north, taking cover behind the shattered elephant statue before pelting foes with rocks again.

V4. THE SHEDDING PIT (CR 6)

This roofless area has been cleared of rubble and its dirt floors are swept clean. Strange and unnerving images of shedding serpents and burning bodies are smeared upon the soot-stained walls. In the center of the room, three figures, sealed into hardened tar-cocoons, hang above a wide pit of glowing coals. Three clay buckets filled with tar sit to one side of the fire-pit, next to a burning torch set into the ground. The greasy stench of burnt flesh seems to cling to the very air.

The charau-ka practice one of their most brutal rituals, known as the Shedding, in this chamber. Sacrificial victims are tarred and then hung above a pit of glowing coals. During the ceremony, a priest throws oil on the coals, causing them to burst into clouds of licking flames, immolating the tar-coated sacrifices and burning the skin from their bodies.

Special: If the PCs arrived in Tazion after the Pathfinder faction, the captive Pathfinders (possibly including Gelik Aberwhinge, see Arrival of the Factions on page 43) have been brought here by the ape-men. Alternatively, NPC castaways from other factions whom the PCs know may be here instead. These individuals are tarred and now hang above the coal pit awaiting their sacrifice. When the PCs enter the area, they immediately beg to be freed. If the PCs were the first to arrive in Tazion, the three sacrifices are captive Zenj tribesfolk (use the statistics for Ijo warriors on page 20).

Creatures: Four charau-ka acolytes of Ydersius, recognizable by their snakeskin cloaks, stand in this chamber. They ignore the sounds of combat elsewhere in the temple as they prepare to subject their victims to the Shedding. As soon as they spot intruders, three of the acolytes dip their clubs into the nearby tar buckets, then thrust them into the coals, setting them ablaze, which causes them to deal an additional 1d6 points of fire damage for the next 4 rounds. In guttural Polyglot, the fourth acolyte threatens to light the sacrifices on fire unless the PCs surrender to him. If the PCs refuse, he tosses a flask of

Temple of the Snake

One square = 5 feet



oil upon the coal pit, setting the victims on fire (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 444), while his companions attack.

CHARAU-KA (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (see page 44)

TACTICS

During Combat Once in combat, the charau-ka immediately enter a shrieking frenzy, wildly attacking foes with their flaming clubs.

Morale The acolytes fight to the death.

Development: If the acolytes manage to set any of the sacrifices on fire, the thick smoke attracts the attention of the charau-ka in areas **V3** and **V5**, who arrive in 1d6 rounds to watch the sacrifice.

V5. NORTH COURT (CR 4)

Behind a towering elephant statue, rough planks splay crookedly across a small, dark pool, leading into the ruins of one of the outer cylinders.

Hazard: This pool is another tar pit, about 6 feet deep.

Creatures: A pair of charau-ka hides in the bushes behind the elephant statue. As enemies approach, they attempt to sneak past them, climb atop the statue, and attack from behind.

CHARAU-KA (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (see page 44)

V6. THE SERPENTINE SHRINE (CR 7)

Beyond the tower entrance lies a single, circular chamber. Its walls rise almost fifteen feet before arching inward to form a dome. Across the curved walls coils a sculpture of a massive, decapitated skeletal serpent formed from thousands of blackened bones pasted to the stone with tar. A single glittering eye winks from the serpent's severed head.

Under the guidance of his dark and mysterious serpentine mentor Issilar, the charau-ka priest Raogru has converted this area into a shrine to Ydersius.

Creatures: Months ago, Raogru was bitten by a venomous viper. As he lay in a fevered stupor, the snake's poison coursing through the veins, Raogru had visions of a great

Serpent's Skull

headless serpent thrashing across the jungle and crushing everything in its path, with Raogru at its side. Recovering from the effects of the toxin, Raogru soon began preaching the worship of Ydersius to his tribe. Exiled by the demon-worshipping ape-men for his heretical views, Raogru led his followers to the ruins of Tazion, where he soon met the serpentfolk wizard Issilar.

The spiritual leader of the charau-ka in Tazion, Raogru oversees the shrine and performs the tribe's foul ceremonies in honor of Ydersius, always accompanied by his serpent companion Chu-tok. Raogru wears armor crafted from the skins of giant serpents, and wields a bloody, tar-soaked mace. His yellow eyes are wide and staring, betraying his madness. He immediately attacks if anyone invades his sanctum.

RAOGRU, FANG OF YDERSIUS CR 6

XP 2,400

Male charau-ka cleric of Ydersius 6

CE Small humanoid (charau-ka)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 82 (9d8+42)

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

Immune fire (72 points)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee +1 *heavy mace* +13/+8 (1d6+6), bite +7 (1d3+3)

Ranged *magic stone* +13 (1d6+6/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 3/day (DC 13, 3d6), shrieking frenzy, thrown-weapon mastery

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

At will—*speak with animals* (9 rounds/day)

6/day—*venomous stare*

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *deeper darkness*, *dominate animal*^P (DC 16), *protection from energy*

2nd—*animal trance*^P (DC 15), *bear's endurance*, *death knell* (DC 15), *delay poison*, *sound burst* (DC 15)

1st—*bane* (DC 14), *divine*

favor, *doom* (DC 14), *magic fang*^P, *magic stone* (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *guidance*, *resistance*, *virtue*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Animal, Scalykind

TACTICS

Before Combat If he hears the sounds of fighting in the temple proper, Raogru prepares for combat by casting *magic stone*, *bear's endurance*, *protection from energy* (fire), and *divine favor* on himself, and *magic fang* on Chu-tok.

During Combat Raogru uses his venomous stare on opponents, then orders Chu-tok to attack while he casts spells and throws rocks, keeping Chu-tok between him and his enemies. If forced into melee combat, Raogru goes into a shrieking frenzy and attacks with his mace and bite.

Morale Raogru fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Casting, Persuasive, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Climb +20, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +10

Languages Abyssal, Common, Polyglot

SQ animal companion, serpent companion (constrictor snake named Chu-tok)

Combat Gear *elixir of fire breath*; **Other Gear**

+1 *hide armor*, +1 *heavy mace*, wooden holy symbol of Ydersius, spell component pouch

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Scalykind Domain Raogru has the Scalykind domain, which is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #37.

Serpent

Companion (Ex)

Raogru has a constrictor snake animal companion from the Scalykind domain. His effective druid level for this companion is his cleric level –2.

Venomous Stare (Sp)

As a standard action, Raogru can activate a gaze attack with a 30-foot range (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 300). This is an active gaze attack that can target a single creature within range. The target must make a DC 16 Will save. Those who fail take 1d6+3 points of



Raogru



nonlethal damage and are fascinated until the beginning of Raogru's next turn. This is a mind-affecting effect.

CHU-TOK CR—

Constrictor snake serpent companion

N Large animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +10 (1d4+11 plus grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (1d6+10)

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +11 (+15 grapple); **CMD** 24 (can't be tripped)

Feats Athletic, Improved Natural Attack (constrict)

Skills Acrobatics +15, Climb +17, Perception +9, Stealth +8,

Swim +17

SQ link, share spells

Treasure: A stone coffer holds a collection of recently scavenged relics pried from the ruins. They include scrapings of gold inlays, semiprecious stones, ivory carvings, and pieces of decorative wrought-metals. In total, the relics are worth 1,500 gp. Jumbled within the rest of the loot is a set of *figurines of wondrous power* (golden lions).

In addition, a large moonstone is pasted into the tar on the walls to serve as the skeletal snake's eye. This stone could be worth 500 gp, but it radiates faint divination magic. This moonstone is in fact one of the gemstones needed to activate the pillars of light in area X11.

W. THE WELL OF UNENDING SCREAMS (CR 7)

A single massive ruin rises from the dense brush, consisting of concentric rings of crude stone columns surrounding a yawning pit in the earth. Heavily overgrown with jungle plants, weathered writing and stylized pictographs cover the columns.

The ancient Azlanti arranged the columns to cast shadows that created mystic patterns, which could then be read and interpreted to divine future events and unlock celestial mysteries. Their purpose can be divined with a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check, but the patterns defy interpretation, as most of them relate to astrological signs of a lost era. The pit in the center of the ruins is 10 feet in diameter, and though the charau-ka believe the

well is bottomless, it is actually only 60 feet deep. Twenty feet down, an opening in the side of the shaft connects the well to the subterranean aqueducts beneath the ruins (area T).

Creatures: A group of four charau-ka warriors camp next to the monument, their gear resting near the edge of the pit. The ape-men occasionally throw living sacrifices to Ydersius into the pit, as Raogru has told them that the well leads to the underworld where the serpent-god lives. The charau-ka attack any invaders who approach their camp.

Unknown to any of the charau-ka, the pit also serves as the lair of a decapus, an octopus-like aberration with 10-foot-long tentacles. Normally content to wait at the bottom of the well for the ape-men's sacrifices, the sounds of combat above attracts its curiosity.

Once fighting breaks out, one of the charau-ka accidentally knocks some of their equipment into the pit. This disturbance is enough to bring the decapus to the surface to investigate 1d4 rounds later. As soon as it reaches the lip of the pit, it reaches out to grab the nearest creature with its tentacles, whether it be a PC or charau-ka.

CHARAU-KA (4) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (see page 44)

TACTICS

During Combat The charau-ka throw rocks at the PCs, waiting for enemies to come to them so they can make full attacks.

Once the decapus emerges, the ape-men go into a shrieking frenzy and recklessly attack whichever foe is closest.

Morale If the decapus kills one of the charau-ka, the rest flee into the ruins. Otherwise, they fight to the death to protect the sacred well.

DECAPUS CR 3

XP 800

Tome of Horrors Revised 93

CE Medium aberration

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 26 (4d8+8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 9 tentacles +5 (1d4+2 plus grab)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacles)

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +6)

At will—*minor image* (DC 13)

TACTICS

During Combat The decapus hangs on to the side of the pit with one tentacle and attacks with the rest, but it can



SERPENT'S SKULL

only use three tentacles at a time against a single foe. It makes no distinction between the PCs and the charau-ka, attacking whoever is within its reach.

Morale The decapus flees back into the pit if reduced to 8 hit points or fewer.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 16 (can't be tripped)

Feats Iron Will, Power Attack

Skills Climb +17, Escape Artist +8, Perception +7, Stealth +8

Languages Decapus

SQ sound imitation, uncanny climber

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sound Imitation (Ex) A decapus can mimic any creature it has previously encountered with near total accuracy, though it cannot mimic humanoid speech for more than two or three words at a time. A DC 13 Will save detects the ruse. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Uncanny Climber (Su) A decapus can climb with ease, as if using *spider climb*. It can use the accelerated climb action to cover any distance up to four times its climb speed, with each check allowing it to climb a distance equal to its climb speed. Climbing a distance equal to or less than its climb speed is a move-equivalent action.

Treasure: The remains of several of the decapus's victims lie at the bottom of the pit. Among the bones are a masterwork breastplate, a +1 *scythe*, two *potions of cure serious wounds*, a climber's kit, masterwork thieves' tools, and 132 gp in assorted coins.

X. THE AZLANTI ZIGGURAT

In the northern section of the ruins rises a tremendous mound of vegetation, barely recognizable as a great, overgrown ruin. Yet lying beneath the dripping leaves and vines stands a multitiered stone ziggurat of Azlanti construction. The Azlanti hero Savith erected this monument in honor of her people's gods, using their divine power to show her the way to the serpentfolk city of Ilmurea. Having sunk into the dark Mwangi soil, the lowest tier of the ziggurat is only partially exposed, and its heavy stone doors are almost completely obscured by hanging vegetation, requiring a DC 20 Perception check to spot. The sides of the mound can be easily scaled with a DC 5 Climb check, giving access to the upper tiers of the ruins.

X1. MAIN HALL (CR 6)

Almost half of this cavernous chamber surrounds a smaller, inner structure. The ceiling has collapsed in some places, and a tangle of vines, mosses, and other plants grow in the thick mud covering the floor.

The charau-ka avoid this level of the ziggurat because of the presence of the giant wasps. The thick vegetation conceals a flight of stairs in the southwest corner. They can be detected with a DC 16 Perception check, and lead to area X4.

Creatures: At any given time, three giant wasps crawl through this area, taking mud, fibers for making paper, or food into the hive in area X2. Trapped indoors, they feel threatened by intruders and immediately attack.

GIANT WASPS (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 34 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 275)

X2. THE HIVE (CR 7)

A bulging conglomeration of layered paper and mud completely fills this small room. More of the papery substance clings to the surrounding stonework, securing the mass to the walls, floor, and ceiling. A few feet above the floor, a wide hole burrows into the structure.

The extraordinary structure is a massive giant wasp nest. Somewhat hollow, it consists of wide, honeycomb-shaped walls that the wasps and their queen can move through. A DC 16 Perception check also reveals a second hole near the top of the hive.

Creature: Within the hive rests the queen wasp, a fiendish monstrosity that settled here centuries ago. The queen thrums loudly when the hive is approached, but quickly grows silent and waits for creatures to crawl into her lair before attacking. If nothing happens after a few minutes, she crawls out of the second tunnel at the top of the hive and attacks any creature in the room.

QUEEN WASP

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female advanced fiendish giant wasp (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 275, 294)

NE Large vermin

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 84 (8d8+48)

Fort +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

DR 5/good; **Immune** mind-affecting effects; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee sting +11 (1d8+9 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks smite good 1/day (+2 to hit, +8 to damage vs. good creatures)



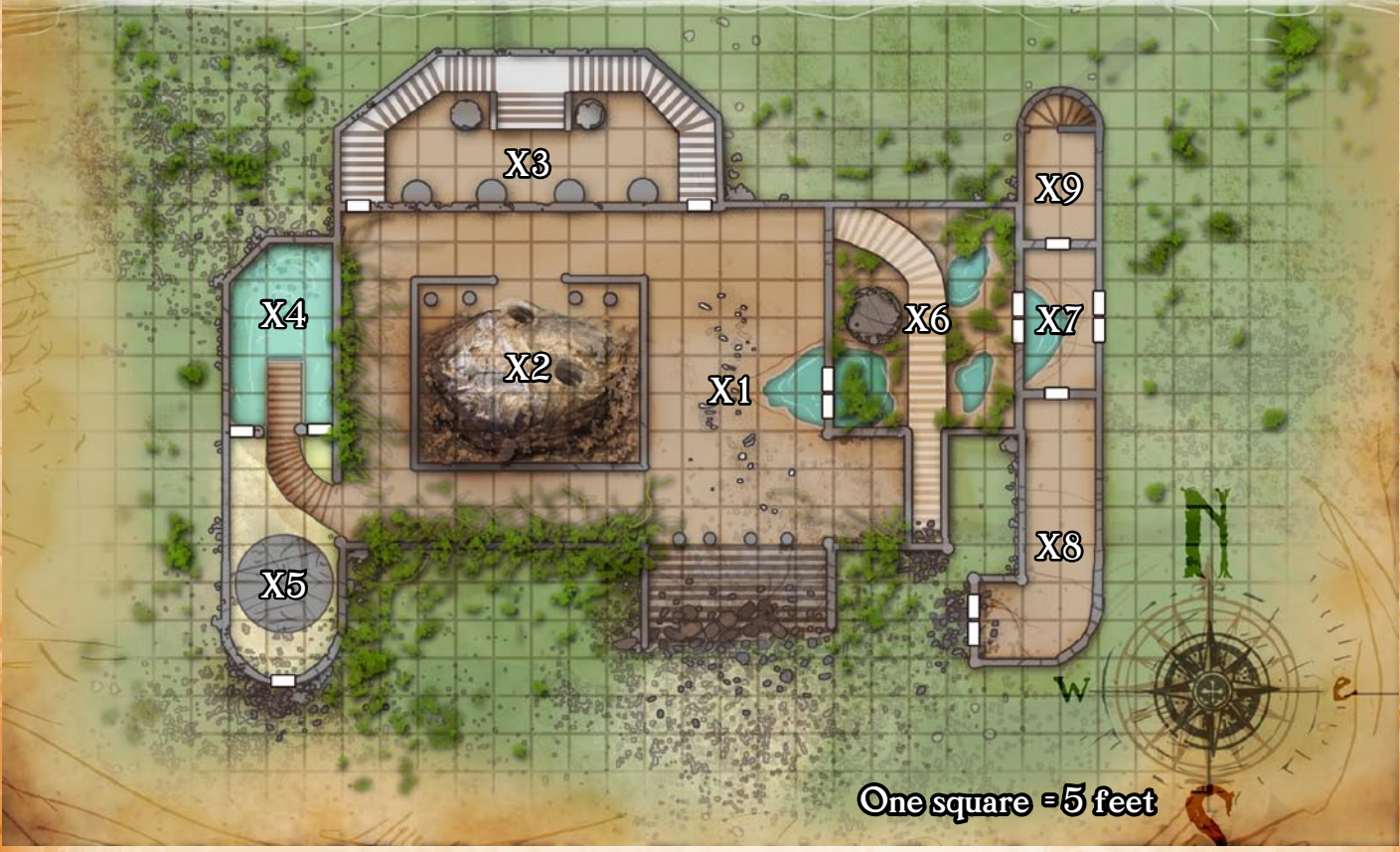
Azlaniti Ziggurat



T. Abandoned Aqueducts



U. Tower of Serpents



Serpent's Skull

TACTICS

During Combat The queen attacks the nearest target, attempting to drag that foe into the narrow tunnels of her nest. Once she captures an opponent, she exits and targets a new victim.

Morale The queen wasp fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 16, **Con** 22, **Int** —, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26 (34 vs. trip)

Skills Fly +5, Perception +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dex; *cure* 1 save.

X3. THE AZLANTI IDOLS (CR 7)

Stairs flanked by broken columns lead down to a wide, sunken courtyard. The entire room is set in white marble, trimmed with elaborate inlays of jade and turquoise. Along the south wall, four small, faceless humanoid statues carved from pale, bluish stone hover above marble display pedestals.

Creatures: Four idols carved from a rare Azlanti sea stone face the stairs, resting against the far wall. Each of the strange, highly stylized figurines has a featureless face that glows with a flickering light. These stone idols were created by the ancients to safeguard their memories. Tazion's elders imbued each idol with a specific memory; when the stored memories of the other idols are combined, they complete an accurate mental image that shows how to operate the pillars of light in area X11. The ancients also placed permanent *magic mouths* on the idols that activate when the idols have fascinated intruders, ordering, "Lay down your weapons and await judgment."

After thousands of years alone in the ruins of Tazion, the idols have become damaged and lost some of the abilities they once had, but they still faithfully perform their task to guard the room and defend the knowledge they hold by attacking any trespassers in the courtyard.



AZLANTI IDOLS (4) CR 3
XP 800 each

Azlanti Idol



Variant stone idols (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #27 84)

N Diminutive construct

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

Aura stony mind (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (–1 Dex, +4 natural, +4 size)

hp 19 each (3d10+3)

Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

DR 5/—; **Immune** cold, electricity, fire, sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)

Melee slam +8 (1d4+1)

Space 1 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks suggestive

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)

At will—*animal trance* (DC 14), *detect snares and pits*, *magic stone*

3/day—*doom* (DC 13), *hypnotic pattern* (DC 14), *reduce person* (DC 13)

1/day—*bear's endurance*, *hold person* (DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The idols remain inanimate as they try to fascinate intruders with *hypnotic pattern*, at which point their *magic mouths* activate to make suggestions. The idols use *hold person* to paralyze any opponent who resists the fascination or suggestion, before animating and moving in to attack opponents with their slams. They cast *doom* and *reduce person* on foes who continue to resist.

Morale These eternal guardians defend their knowledge until destroyed, at which time their memories are released (see Development).

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** 7, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** –2; **CMD** 9

Feats Alertness, Toughness

Skills Fly +5, Perception +7, Stealth +11 (+15 amid stone)

SQ inanimate

Languages understands

Azlanti (cannot speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Inanimate (Ex) An idol is effectively a statuette and does little to suggest otherwise. Spending most of its existence perfectly motionless, a stationary idol is indistinguishable from a normal inanimate object. An idol can make use of the majority of its special abilities without moving, though the round after it does so observers can make a DC 25 Perception check to notice minute hints—magical glimmers, minute contortions, etc.—

suggesting that the idol is actually animate. Overt actions, such as an idol moving or attacking, make its nature obvious to witnesses, and to others who make a Perception check (as previously noted) even 1 round after it moves.

Stony Mind (Su) Any divination spell targeting a creature or object within 30 feet of a stone idol instead targets the construct. Thus, for the purposes of any spell that reveals auras, those affected are treated as being under the effects of the spell *misdirection*, while spells like *detect thoughts* receive nothing more than vague impressions. Should *detect thoughts* or another mind-reading effect target a stone idol that contains a memory, the ability user instantly gains the memory held within.

Suggestive (Su) Those fascinated by a stone idol's *animal trance* or *hypnotic pattern* spell-like ability become highly susceptible to the suggestions of others nearby. Any creature can make a suggestion (as per the spell *suggestion*) to a fascinated creature, which must then make a DC 15 Will save or proceed to follow the suggestion. Any creature that makes a suggestion is understood by the fascinated creature, as per the spell *tongues* or *speak with animals*. A suggestion lasts for 1 hour, even if the creature is no longer being fascinated. A fascinated creature follows only the first suggestion it fails its saving throw against and no additional suggestions. The DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Development: Each of the four stone idols correlates to one of the pillars of light in area X11. Once an idol is destroyed, it releases its stored memories, which circulate around the room like spirits, giving everyone in the room an accurate mental picture of how its associated column functions. Together, the memories within the four idols act as the "combination" for successfully activating the pillars of light. Even once the PCs know how the device works, however, they'll still need to find the missing gemstones to activate it properly.

X4. THE DARK TAPESTRY (CR 6)

This small, dark room is flooded with dark, stagnant water, concealing the floor. The walls and ceiling are carved from a darker stone than is found in the rest of the building, and are covered with numerous intertwining carvings depicting nameless and disturbing creatures. Stone stairs rise out of the water to disappear through the south wall above two doors.

A DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that this chamber is dedicated to the alien gods of the Dark Tapestry, the lightless void between the stars. Indeed, the entire room acts as a conduit between the Dark Tapestry and the pillars of light in area X11. The brackish water covering the floor is knee-deep, and slimy algae grows on

the floor, making the entire room difficult terrain. The stairs lead up to area X1.

Creatures: The stagnant water flooding the room makes an ideal home for leeches, which swarm any living creatures stepping into the water.

LEECH SWARMS (2)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 39 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 187)

X5. HALL OF THE MOON

A huge circle of grayish-white stone covers the floor in the center of the room; it's inscribed with detailed carvings of geographical features. Mosaic friezes running along the top and bottom of the walls depict warriors in archaic armor battling a race of snake-headed people under dark skies.

This room acts as a conduit between the pillars of light in area X11 and Golarion's moon. A DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check is enough to recognize the stone inlay as a map of the moon. The room is dedicated to a forgotten Azlanti goddess of the moon and battle called Acavna, who can be identified with a DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check.

Treasure: A DC 25 Perception check reveals a secret recess hidden beneath the inlaid moon map, which contains ancient reliquaries and sacred implements dedicated to Acavna. In total, these relics are worth 2,000 gp.

X6. COURTYARD (CR 5)

High walls surround an open-air courtyard that's entirely overgrown with wild brush. From amid the dense vegetation rises a single massive stone pillar, sheared off just above the middle tier of the ziggurat. A crumbling staircase arches over the courtyard, descending from the middle tier. The stairway curves around the pillar, then continues into the brush and through a stone arch into darkness.

The stairway continues only 15 feet beyond the arch before a clot of earth and rock block further passage. The room to which the stairs once led collapsed and has lain buried for untold years. The stairs lead up to the middle tier outside area X12.

Creature: A fungal predator known as a basidironid lurks in the shadows of the collapsed staircase. As soon as it senses warm-blooded creatures in the courtyard or stairwell, it attacks.

BASIDIRONID

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 28)

SERPENT'S SKULL

X7. FOYER

The exterior doors to this foyer are unlocked, though their lower halves are sunk in the soil and their iron hinges have rusted together, requiring a DC 25 Strength check to force them open. A large puddle of water seeps from under the double doors to area X6.

X8. HALL OF THE SUN (CR 6)

Faded, yellowish-brown paint flakes from the ceiling of this room, which is decorated with solar designs. Cracked, faded paintings on the walls depict ancient soldiers fighting snake-headed creatures under bright skies. The stonework beneath appears damp and is covered with condensation.

The weapon racks that once lined the walls of this chamber have long since disintegrated. This room acts as a conduit between the pillars of light in area X11 and the sun. A DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that the room is dedicated to Nurgal, demon lord of warfare and the sun.

Hazard: A sizable 5-foot-by-10-foot patch of yellow mold grows in front of the doors to the foyer (area X7), and releases its spores if disturbed.

YELLOW MOLD CR 6
XP 2,400
Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 416

X9. HALL OF STARS (CR 6)

The high, arched ceiling of this hall is embedded with glittering crystals to represent a starry sky. Friezes along the walls show people of noble bearing traveling through a variety of landscapes and terrains. The hall ends at a curved flight of descending stairs.

After only a few steps, rubble fills the northern stairwell, blocking further exploration. This room acts as a conduit between the pillars of light in area X11 and the stars. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that the room is dedicated to Desna, goddess of the stars, dreams, and travel.

Creatures: A trio of ancient constructs guards this room, or whatever chambers the collapsed stairway once led to. The ancients placed three mithral cobras here to act as watchdogs. They attack any creature that enters the room.

MITHRAL COBRAS (3) CR 3
XP 800 each
 hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 182*)

X10. THE WATCHLEDGE (CR 6)

Walls at both ends of this section bear gaping holes, having been eroded or smashed away in some unknown cataclysm.

Little lies within the structure except creeping vines and the thin blanket of dusty soil covering the floor.

Creatures: Four charau-ka camp at this location. Tasked with keeping an eye out for wasps, they watch a hole in the floor that leads to the hive (area X2) and whoop out warnings to the others when the insects leave the nest. In an effort to contain the wasps, the charau-ka have started feeding the insects by dangling the carcasses of small animals over the hole. Thus far, providing the wasps with easy prey has seemed to limit their activity. Every 1d4 hours, a giant wasp crawls out of the hole seeking a meal. If no meal is provided, the wasp seeks the nearest available food source.

CHARAU-KA (4) CR 2
XP 600 each
 hp 19 each (see page 44)

GIANT WASP CR 3
XP 800
 hp 34 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 275*)

X11. PILLARS OF LIGHT

A circular grid formed with deep grooves sits in the center of the floor of this roughly circular room beneath a domed ceiling decorated with crystalline patterns. At either end, passages open to the building's exterior. Four elaborately carved columns stand in the passageways, one to the north and three to the south in a triangular arrangement.

Built by the Azlanti hero Savith, this entire chamber essentially functions as a giant map. The circular grid on the floor is approximately 10 feet in diameter, with 1-inch-square grid-boxes set in evenly arranged rows. A DC 25 Knowledge (geography) identifies the map as depicting the Mwangi Expanse as it appeared 10,000 years ago, divided into 1-mile squares. A DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check recognizes the patterns on the ceiling as constellations, though slightly distorted from their current shapes. In fact, they display the constellations as they appeared at the height of Azlant, over 10,000 years ago.

The four columns in the room are carved with elaborate arcane symbols and etchings. The symbols on each column represent one of four celestial bodies or forces, recognizable with DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or (nature) checks—the sun, the moon, the stars, and the space between the stars known as the Dark Tapestry. Each column contains several deep holes bored into 4-inch sections that swivel around a central shaft.

These columns draw upon the power of their associated celestial force, channeled through rooms on the level below, to power the device, which in Tazion's heyday could be set to divine the location of almost any spot in northern Garund.

Now they form a sort of combination lock to activate the magical map that will reveal the location of Saventh-Yhi. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to realize that the holes in the columns are designed to hold crystals or gemstones, and that the swiveling sections must be set in the correct configurations. Without the crystals and knowledge of the proper settings, a DC 40 Disable Device check and DC 40 Use Magic Device check are required to find the right “combination” and activate the pillars.

Fortunately, the Azlanti idols in area **X3** preserve the memories of the proper configurations of gemstones and columns to focus the map on Saventh-Yhi, but the charau-ka looted the gems when they first arrived in Tazion. The serpentfolk wizard Issilar (area **X12**) has recovered three of them, while the fourth decorates the charau-ka’s temple to Ydersius (area **V6**).

Development: Once the PCs have found the four gemstones and defeated the stone idols to gain their memories, they can attempt to set the columns in their proper configurations and activate the map that will show them the way to Saventh-Yhi. The columns only function during the day, when the sun shines directly into the southern opening. If the columns and gemstones are set correctly, the sunlight strikes the first stone in the southernmost column, which sends out three beams of light—yellow, blue, and purple—to the other three stones in their respective columns. These stones then emit their own beams of light—the northern column pinpoints a spot on the floor grid, while the two remaining columns radiate shifting beams in the air above the grid.

As the light beams illuminate the room, a hazy image appears in the air above the grid, an illusory representation of the pinpointed location on the grid. In Savith’s time, the image showed the portion of the Mwangi jungle that lay above the subterranean serpentfolk city of Ilmurea. Now it shows an ancient city of towering ziggurats and crumbling, vine-choked buildings around a central lake, filling a hidden valley—the lost city of Saventh-Yhi. By studying the grid and making a DC 20 Knowledge (geography) or Survival check, the PCs can plan the final leg of their journey from Tazion to Saventh-Yhi.

Story Award: If the PCs activate the pillars of light and discover the location of Saventh-Yhi, award them 4,800 XP.

X12. HALL OF LINEAGES (CR 8)

This wide room has a high, arched ceiling painted with fading pastel swirls. Its walls are carved with seemingly random combinations of branching lines, connected to patterns of overlapping circles of various sizes. Along the southern wall, a flight of stairs leads up to the next tier.

The exterior door to this chamber is barred from the inside (Break DC 25). The stairs climb to area **X13** above. A

Using the Faction Guide

If you have *Pathfinder Chronicles: Faction Guide*, your PCs can also gain Prestige Award (PA) from the faction that hired them for meeting certain milestones in the adventure. This PA can then be spent on special resources and rewards offered by that faction. The Sargavan Government is not covered in the *Faction Guide*, but PCs working for that factions can still spend PA on the standard boons available to all factions, as outlined on pages 54–55 of the *Faction Guide*. The PCs can earn PA for completing the following tasks:

- Rescuing their faction’s NPC castaway from Smuggler’s Shiv: 1 PA
- Putting down the Freeman Revolt (area **A**): 1 PA
- Defeating rival faction agents in Kalabuto (area **I**): 1 PA
- Rescuing the Zenj spirit dancers and awakening PCs’ totem spirits (area **R**): 1 PA
- Arriving first in Tazion: 4 PA (this award is reduced by 1 for every faction that gets to Tazion before the PCs)
- Activating the pillars of light (area **X11**): 2 PA

DC 25 Knowledge (history) check identifies the marks on the walls as depictions of the genealogy and immigration routes of the Azlanti people before the Age of Darkness. Unfortunately, the worn markings lack a precise unit of measurement and fail to provide names or other positive authentications of ancient landmasses and settlements.

Conversely, a series of later etchings show the work of an ancient archaeologist’s attempts at deciphering the work. Written in Tekritanin (DC 30 Linguistics check to decipher), several names are scrawled in the stone, including Tazion and Saventh-Yhi. At your option, this list might also include the names of other Azlanti settlements.

Creature: A powerful serpentfolk wizard named Issilar lurks in this room. Recently exiled from the serpentfolk community within Saventh-Yhi, Issilar met the charau-ka priest Raogru when the ape-men moved into the ruins of Tazion. Being quite mad, Raogru believed Issilar was an emissary sent by Ydersius, and ordered his followers to pay obeisance to the serpentfolk. Issilar serves as a covert mentor to the charau-ka, basking in their adoration while he tries to formulate a plan that will allow him to return home at the head of a charau-ka slave army.

Issilar spends most of his time in this chamber, attempting to decipher the engravings here in hopes of learning more about the pillars of light in area **X11**. While he has reclaimed three of the gemstones needed from the

Serpent's Skull

charau-ka, he hasn't realized the fourth stone lies in his ally's temple (area V6), nor that the stone idols in area X3 hold all of the knowledge he seeks.

ISSILAR

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male serpentfolk enchanter 6 (*Into the Darklands* 56)

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 18, flat-footed 18 (+1 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +4 shield)

hp 92 (11 HD; 5d10+6d6+44)

Fort +7, **Ref** +12, **Will** +13

Immune fire (60 points), mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison; **SR** 21

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 dagger +15/+10 (1d4/19–20), bite +9 (1d6–1 plus poison)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL

6th; concentration +12)

9/day—dazing touch

Serpentfolk Spell-Like

Abilities (CL 11th;

concentration +15)

At will—*disguise self* (DC 15), *ventriloquism*

1/day—*blur*, *dominate*

person (DC 19),

major image (DC 17),

suggestion (DC 17),

mirror image

Enchanter Spells Prepared

(CL 6th; concentration +12)

3rd—*hold person* (DC 21),

lightning bolt (2, DC 19),

protection from energy

2nd—*cat's grace*, *flaming sphere*

(DC 18), *hideous laughter* (DC 20),

protection from arrows, *scorching ray*,

spider climb

1st—*burning hands* (2, DC 17), *charm*

person (DC 19), *magic missile* (2), *shield*

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 18), *detect magic*, *mage*

hand, *ray of frost*, *read magic*

Opposition Schools Conjuraton, Necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as he realizes intruders have entered the ziggurat, Issilar casts *blur*, *mirror image*, *shield*, *protection from energy* (fire), *cat's grace*, and *spider climb*. If he has

additional time, he also casts *protection from arrows* and uses *disguise self* to appear like a charau-ka.

During Combat Issilar uses *spider climb* to stay out of reach of opponents, and attempts to dominate one of his attackers to defend him. He uses his *wand of web* and *flaming sphere* to control the battlefield.

Morale If reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, he attempts to flee up the stairs to area X13, hoping the charau-ka and girallon there can deal with the PCs while he makes good his escape.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 23, **Con** 19, **Int** 22, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 28

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Defensive Combat

Training, Dodge, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +21, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +15 (+25 with *disguise self*), Escape Artist +15, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (history) +20, Perception +17, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +20, Stealth +20, Use Magic Device +18

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Azlanti, Common, Draconic, Polyglot, Undercommon; telepathy

100 ft.

SQ arcane bond (viper familiar), enchanting smile,

Combat Gear *wand of web* (20 charges); **Other**

Gear +1 dagger, ring of protection +1, spellbook, spell component pouch

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 19;

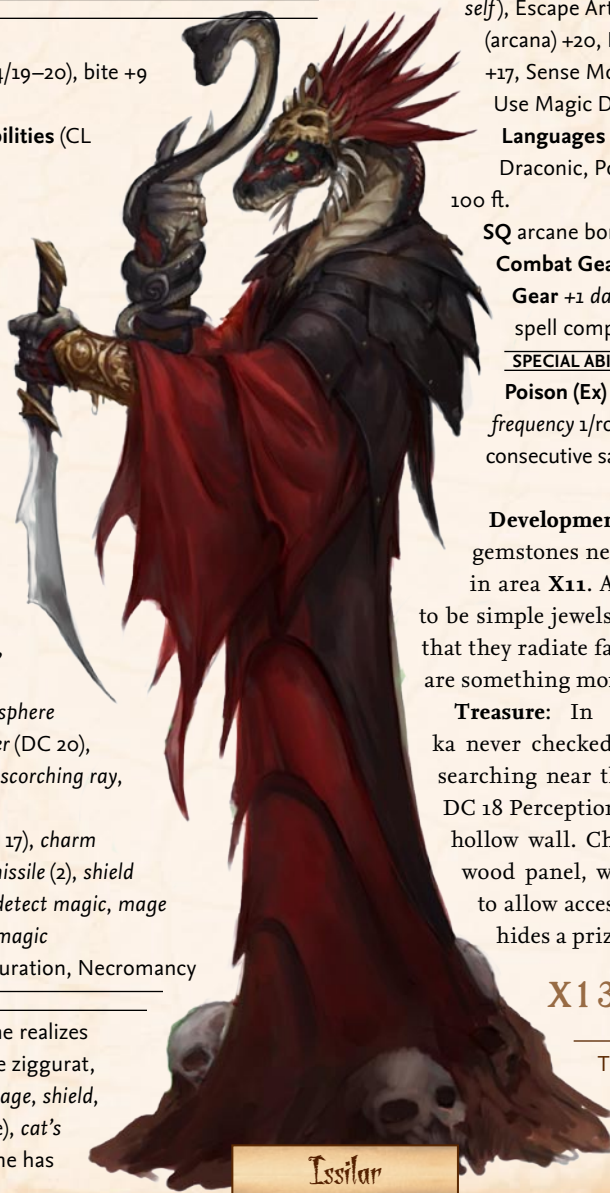
frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Development: Issilar has collected three of the gemstones needed to activate the pillars of light in area X11. At first glance, these stones appear to be simple jewels, worth 500 gp apiece, but the fact that they radiate faint divination magic is a clue they are something more.

Treasure: In their carelessness, the charau-ka never checked this room for secret doors. PCs searching near the southern staircase can make a DC 18 Perception check to locate a thinly plastered hollow wall. Chipping away the plaster reveals a wood panel, which can be broken or pried free to allow access to a small hollow beyond, which hides a prized Azlanti weapon, a *shatterspike*.

X13. UPPER TIER (CR 7)

The roof of the topmost tier has collapsed inward, leaving the top floor of the ziggurat open and exposed to the elements.



Issilar





Rainwater has collected in small pools throughout, feeding wild, dense tangles of overgrown jungle plants.

The northern stairway leads to the exposed eastern portion outside area **X12**, while the southern stairs lead to area **X12**.

Creatures: A pair of charau-ka and their mascot, a brutal girallon called Paleflesh, camp within the upper tier. Using the site as point of entry while delving and looting the ziggurat's interior, the ape-men have cut pathways through the brush and cleared away most of the more hazardous species of plants and vermin. When the PCs arrive, they are arguing over some spoils, but as soon as they spot intruders, they immediately drop what they're doing and attack.

CHARAU-KA (2) **CR 2**
XP 600 each
 hp 19 each (see page 44)

PALEFLESH **CR 6**
XP 2,400
 Girallon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 154)
 hp 73

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs activate the pillars of light, they can pinpoint the route to Saventh-Yhi. The final leg of the journey from Tazion to Saventh-Yhi is detailed in the next Adventure Path volume, "The City of Seven Spears." However, the PCs' act does not go unnoticed. Any charau-ka left within Tazion regroup as quickly as possible and attempt to pursue and slay the PCs before they leave the ruins. Likewise, rival factions might also be lurking in the area, waiting for the opportunity to jump in and steal the PCs' prize. These groups might have left agents behind to set ambushes for the PCs once they leave Tazion.

If the PCs were unable to activate the pillars of light, they may still be able to find the way to Saventh-Yhi. They could set their own ambush for a rival faction, or attempt to track one of the other factions through the jungle to the lost city. If none of these options are successful, it's possible that Issilar was able to activate the pillars to relocate the city. In this case, he might have left behind a map or copious notes that, when deciphered, can lead the PCs to their destination.





ELEDER

“EACH MONTH, MY FATHER WALKED THIRTY MILES TO THE SALT MINES. HE STAYED THERE FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH, WORKING FROM DAWN TILL NIGHTFALL, AND SOMETIMES LONGER. FOR ONE OR TWO DAYS, HE'D RETURN, HIS FEET DRY AND CRACKED AND HIS PALMS AS ROUGH AS GRANITE. WHEN HIS BROTHER CAME WITH THE NEWS OF HIS DEATH I CRIED, NOT BECAUSE I LOST HIM, BUT BECAUSE I NEVER KNEW HIM. SO ASK ME AGAIN IF THESE SHACKLES HURT, AND I SHALL TELL YOU THE SAME—YOU CANNOT HURT A FREEMAN.”

—OLAMUNI FREEMAN, SOLDIER OF THE FREEMAN'S BROTHERHOOD,
AS STATED TO A SARGAVAN OFFICER UPON HIS CAPTURE.

Eleder gouges itself into the craggy coast of Sargava's western shore. Chelish troops founded the port under the imperialistic expansion efforts of mad Prince Haliad I at the place of their first landing in Desperation Bay. In the beginning, Eleder was no more than a small coastal settlement of fewer than 200 colonists eager to build a new life in the southern continent. The small harbor rested between the Laughing Jungle and the Bandu Hills, impractically located leagues north of Sargava's only major inland water routes. Nonetheless, the excitement of a new settlement brought settlers by the thousands. From across the north they came, eager to strike it rich. Miners sought to harvest salt, diamonds, and gold in the Bandu Hills, while foresters arrived to log the exotic hardwoods to the south. By 4138 AR, Eleder was granted official status as a Chelish colony.

Eleder prospered swiftly, fed from the coffers of trading companies and the colonial aristocracy, both operating on sizable stipends from the Chelish government, with additional funds arriving from ever-increasing, likely crooked tax policies. Expansionists paid great sums to acquire official charters to explore inland, where they hoped to claim the riches of the pristine land. After the discovery of the city of Kalabuto, these same individuals pushed to establish overland routes traveling east. Kalabuto's distance from the coast served as a powerful lure to those seeking autonomy and financial stability. Yet the intrusions of foreign colonists caused extreme tensions with numerous Zenj tribes. These tribes deemed the colonists exploitative, both in their ruthless trade and abusive labor practices. Conflicts arose, with several tribes openly declaring war against the foreigners. This unrest made travel unsafe and further expansion difficult. The overland route between the two cities broke down completely when most of Kalabuto's trading companies began shipping goods down the Korir River. Kalabuto no longer needed to rely on Eleder for trade, and thus continued to prosper while Eleder's growth stagnated.

At present, Sargava's capital has only three-fourths as many inhabitants as Kalabuto. Despite its smaller population, however, it remains a stronghold for the nation's political structure. The bulk of Eleder's economy is divided between its shipping industry and the trafficking and processing of gemstones, gold, silver, and salt brought in from mines in the Bandu Hills. Eleder's harbor is huge, perhaps one of the biggest along the southern coast. Enhanced by dredging, it can handle the deep drafts of massive merchant vessels and similar ships too large to travel up the Korir. At the harbor mouth, jetties slow currents and tempestuous waters. They also provide the harbormaster a modicum of power over ships entering and leaving port. Within the harbor, a sprawling array of granite block piers provides docking for ships of almost

every size from a dozen different countries. Vessels docked there run the gamut from huge merchant galleys to tiny fishing boats belonging to tribesmen.

Eleder's architecture readily displays its Chelish roots, though it has evolved to accommodate Sargava's far warmer climate. Rooftops are designed to collect rainwater, rather than brush away wind and snow, while open courtyards pull in cooling drafts. Trading company warehouses and shipyards offset the homes of early settlers with their plain, but practical, construction. A large wall of weathered stone encircles properties around the harbor, isolating them from the remainder of the city. Beyond the wall, a noticeable shift in construction style occurs, as Chelish colonial-style buildings give way to thousands of crudely constructed mud-daub huts. These house Eleder's impoverished Zenj, who live off meager wages earned working as day laborers or menial labor for various trading companies, picking pineapples, fishing, or mining. This ruthless class division is the source of much tension between Eleder's wealthier colonials and its indigenous peoples.

Would-be adventurers who arrive in Eleder quickly discover the underlying resentment colonials bear toward their profession. Such sentiment is particularly strong in the district of New Haliad. The Lady Madrona Daugustana actively campaigns against adventurers, damning them as "thrill-seeking addeleates" and "would-be liberators come to rile up the natives." Beyond the nuisance of their carousing and debauchery, adventurers have an uncanny knack for angering indigenous tribesfolk, who cannot tell the difference between a cultured colonial noble and a sword-swinging Pathfinder. Eleder's militia has swift orders to approach any who stink of adventuring and give them a few hard-and-fast warnings about how to behave in their city, as well as threaten them with steep fines and a shackled visit to a putrid bilge of a holding cell in Grallus Lock should they prove unable to abide by the laws of decent society.

ELEDER

LN small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +3; **Law** +3; **Lore** +2,
Society +1

Qualities insular, prosperous, racially intolerant (Mwangi),
strategic location

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 8,900 (8,000 humans [3,000 colonials, 5,000
Mwangi], 500 halflings, 200 dwarves, 100 elves, 100 others)

NOTABLE NPCS

Baron Utilinus, Grand Custodian of Sargava (LN male human
cleric of Iomedae 10)

General Septimia Arodatus, Grand Praetor of Sargava,



SERPENT'S SKULL

commander of the Sargavan Guard (N female half-elf fighter 11)

Commander Ezio Egorius, Praetor of Eleder (LG male human paladin of Iomedae 8)

Lady Madrona Daugustana, matriarch of Eleder (LE female human aristocrat 12)

Briga, owner of the Sargava Club (CG female half-orc barbarian 6)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 5,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 37,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 6th
Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

CITY GEOGRAPHY

Eleder is visibly divided, a direct reflection of its varied populace. Architecture and landforms clearly indicate when structures were built and who owns them. The city is comprised of essentially five distinct districts: Northcoast, Portside, New Haliad, Lower Harbor, and Outerwall, also known as the Zenj Slums. Northcoast, Portside, and New Haliad surround the harbor and are principally settled by colonials of Chelish descent. The Diomar Wall divides these wards from the other two. Lower Harbor rests along the coast just south of the main harbor, naturally separated by the cliff face. It is chiefly populated by working-class fishermen, both colonials and Mwangi. The remaining two-thirds of Eleder's population live in Outerwall, a sprawling slum outlining the central harbor.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Eleder suffers from extreme racial and class division, with colonials dominating the far larger Zenj population. The Zenj supply the bulk of the port's menial labor for paltry weekly wages. Colonial law provides them few if any rights, and is geared toward trade, goods, properties, and the taxation thereof, as based on the charters of Eleder's founding trading companies. Civil law falls to the responsibility of the Sargavan government. Sargavan law is overly complex, severe, and distinctly Chelish. It is designed with hundreds of loopholes that favor the upper class, and a good barrister can reduce almost any crime's punishment to a simple fine.

At the Baron's Palace in New Haliad, the Grand Custodian's primary duties involve tending to Sargava's political affairs. Baron Utilinus maintains a personal court of eight barristers whom he relies upon for legal counsel, while an array of clerks and personal servants handle groundskeeping and more mundane responsibilities. The Grand Custodian serves more as Eleder's figurehead than as its ruler, and other than enforcing taxes, he exerts little influence upon city politics. Instead, this responsibility falls to the upper classes. The aristocracy operates under a parliamentary high council, whose final decisions are determined by the heads of the most influential and

powerful families in Eleder. While these families claim no official title, they hold the majority of the city's wealth; thus theirs is the ability to determine the fate of their city. Council seats are allotted by heredity.

Currently, the Daugustanas are the most powerful of New Haliad's politicians. The matriarch of the family, Lady Madrona Daugustana, is the oldest living woman in Eleder. Her influence stretches all the way to Baron Utilinus's palace, and she controls almost a third of all major businesses in the port. Her family's funds quietly make their way into the hands of many city officials and high-ranking members of Eleder's military; few places fall outside the sphere of her personal influence. In addition to her extensive political influence, Lady Madrona bears responsibility for upholding the ideals and customs of her forebears. All activities within Portside and New Haliad, from marriages to business deals, must meet with her approval.

Despite the colony's 500 years of existence, at heart, most colonials still consider themselves Chelaxians. They believe themselves to be superior in stock and culture to the "ignorant savages" their ancestors encountered upon their arrival. Their prejudice almost exclusively targets the Zenj tribes, which provide the majority of Eleder's menial labor and tend to be more passive than the Bekyar or Bonuwat. While recent Sargavan law has changed, granting full rights to all citizens, sadly the stranglehold of Eleder's aristocracy has buried the implementation of this change, rendering Zenj civil rights an easily bypassed formality of state. As a result, life in the hundreds of mud-daub huts beyond the Wall remains one of abject poverty.

TRADING COMPANIES

Over the centuries, trading companies have had a profound influence upon Eleder's development. Many of Eleder's first settlers worked for trade and shipping companies that came to the new colony seeking to expand their influence and increase their holdings in Garund. By and large, these companies were of Chelish origin, and traveled south in the wake of imperialist expansionism. In the southern continent, trading companies discovered vast, untapped sources of valuable goods—salt, gold, lumber, and slaves. Further, the tropical climate provides a longer growing season and the ability to grow cash crops such as sugarcane, hemp, and a variety of fruits. There are ample plains for raising cattle, while the waters of Desolation Bay teem with fish and mollusks. In an effort to encourage expansion, the Chelish government drafted the South Arcadian Charter, a codified set of laws granting rights above and often outside the regulations of Chelish law to merchant collectives seeking to do business in Garund. The Chelish government offered them substantial financial subsidizations and military protection. Collectives applied for expensive writs that, when granted, allowed them



corporate amnesty under Chelish law. The South Arcadian Charter expedited the process of colonization largely at the expense of the region's indigenous people. Essentially, all chartered trading companies were granted the right to govern themselves—provided they paid marginal portions of their profits to the Chelish throne.

Operating under the South Arcadian Charter, trading companies soon formed the backbone of a new economy. Not only did they provide Chelias with new resources, but they also became importers of northern goods such as steel, weapons, tools, books, wheat, and cotton. As these companies became increasingly wealthy, their political influence also grew. In the wake of House Davian's fall following the Chelish Civil War, then-ruler Baron Grallus appealed to the trade companies for aid. He offered to fully honor all writs under Sargavan law, provided the companies joined Sargava in its secession from Chelish rule.

Currently, a handful of such companies still operate under the original South Arcadian Charter. The two most powerful of these companies are the Nine Forts Collective and Portside Purveying. Both are ruthlessly capitalist; they gear themselves toward the monopoly of various industries and have already bought out most of their competitors.

Nine Forts Collective: Founded by a previously successful merchant's collective from the Chelish port of Corentyn, this hard-nosed conglomerate holds high stakes in the lumber industry, shipbuilding, and the gold and gemstone trades. However, their primary source of income remains the buying and selling of slaves—many of whom they traffic to Avistan through Eleder, the city of their founders. Their main office is in New Haliad, though their holdings stretch throughout the city. Most scandalously, the Collective purchased the Grallus Lock and converted it into a private slave market.

Portside Purveying: Originally an import/export company, Portside Purveying now specializes in the trade of salt and other spices. For a long time they held a monopoly on Eleder's salt trade, though recently they have sold off some of their less profitable mines. The bulk of the company's holdings lie throughout the lower Bandu Hills, and their salt mines employ thousands of day laborers from Outerwall. These individuals make the long trek to the mines where they work for several weeks straight, earning meager wages. Not surprisingly, the company's headquarters and most of its storage facilities are in Portside.

ELEDER AT A GLANCE

Eleder remains Sargava's capital city for two reasons. First, it is still the country's only deepwater port. Despite Kalabuto's growing exports trade, it remains too remote for many importers to reach, especially those seeking safe harbor or repairs for larger vessels. Second, Eleder's

government remains more stable than that of Kalabuto. While it remains racially biased, its leaders maintain more presence. Eleder's military is capable of policing the city without substantial bribes, and its populace is less subject to the fickle whims of external criminal organizations, like those involved in Kalabuto's thriving drug trade.

To a lesser extent, trading companies also contribute to Eleder's continued political value. Provisions within the South Arcadian Charter have permitted them to become incredibly wealthy, and they are more than capable of defending their investments. For this reason, Eleder is perhaps one of the few places where organizations such as the Aspis Consortium hold little power. Sargavan law restricts the actions of such international corporations, while the Sargavan trading companies are moderated only by the rules of their charters.

Despite a sizable aristocracy and steady economy, the Sargavan Barony's finances remain precarious. When Baron Grallus paid for Eleder's freedom by enlisting the aid of the Shackles pirates, he forever indebted the city to them. Its coffers frequently run low, forcing the Baron to enact steep taxes, particularly on trade goods, to pay for ongoing protection. This makes him quite unpopular with the upper class. Taxes levied on foreign merchants can be steep, keeping most of Eleder's food supply dependent on local agriculture. On the other hand, the city's labor force consists almost entirely of unskilled Zenj, desperately eager to work, even for low wages.

Eleder Harbor: Eleder Harbor is a masterwork of old-style Chelish design and engineering. When the colony was first settled, the harbor's calm, shallow waters were only accessible by small crafts such as oarboats and dories. Larger ocean-faring vessels would moor or anchor in the deeper waters of Desperation Bay. While the bay remained relatively safe from storms and rough waters, these ships quickly became easy prey for pirates and other such maritime scavengers. To protect their investments, wealthy merchants and other influential city folk commissioned the dredging of a new harbor—one able to accommodate the docking requirements of larger ships and safeguard them against attacks.

Jetties at the harbor's mouth serve as a barricade against hostile ships and control and limit the number of ships entering the port. The jetties run between low watchtowers, which overlook waterways running into and out of the main harbor. Beyond, a curved and sandy shoal divides the harbor into two main sections, separating the Portside docks and the granite piers of New Haliad from the Grallus Locks—a large, dredged channel currently owned by the Nine Forts Collective.

Diomar Wall: Upon the completion of New Haliad, then-Baron Cymdon Diomar commissioned the construction of a mighty granite defense wall to protect the fledgling



SERPENT'S SKULL

colony from the savage lands beyond. Built from large chunks of rough-cut granite cemented together with mud-daub, the Diomar Wall stands over 15 feet tall and is easily 5 feet thick. Three well-guarded gates allow passage into the inner city—Militia Gate in Portside, and Baron's Gate and Grallus Gate in New Haliad. To the colonials, the wall serves as a symbol of triumph, but to the indigenous residents living beyond its shelter, it is a symbol of oppression.

LOWER HARBOR

The original site of the Eleder colony, Lower Harbor stands as one of the city's few ethnically mixed neighborhoods. Inhabitants include Zenj who emigrated from up the coast, Bonuwat, and Bekyar, as well as more liberal colonial Sargavans and other colonists contemptuous of New Haliad's genteel gluttony and pomp. Lower Harbor remains home to several of the city's first and oldest businesses, particularly those involved in the fishing industry or those manufacturing mundane goods that require lots of space and cheap labor. Although outside the Diomar Wall, Lower Harbor remains geographically isolated from the slums by the ivory cliffs, while its beachfront connects to New Haliad via a narrow, rocky path that sneaks around the southernmost jetty. Thus, while the district's residents tend to be more liberal and working class, prejudice still exists within Lower Harbor in more discreet forms.

Barter Markets: For a few hours each day, Lower Harbor's beaches and side streets fill with vendors who lay out their goods on blankets and bargain with passersby. The middle and lower classes come to trade their goods to avoid paying taxes on income earned from selling them. Some days there are but a few traders, but on others they arrive by the hundreds. Over the course of a week, almost anything can be found at Barter Markets, and the majority of the city's black market and illicit goods are peddled here.

Fish Markets: The fishing industry provides Lower Harbor with most of its income. At the far end of the beach sits a series of long docks where fishermen tie off their boats and sell their daily catches. Because fish are so plentiful, competition is steep. As the tides pull in, fishermen race to get their catches to the docks first, where they soon become embroiled in competitive haggling. Latecomers are lucky to unload their day's catch as bait.

Pearl Markets: Several miles north of the city lie miles of rocky shoals filled with oyster beds. For centuries, stalwart Gozreh-worshipping Zenj tribes have held this territory, which they consider sacred. Once a week, tribe members send boats to Lower Harbor to trade pearls for weapons, grain, cloth, and other supplies.

NEW HALIAD

More so than any other district, New Haliad upholds the religious and cultural traditions of Sargava's Chelish

forebears. The church of Aroden, though mostly defunct elsewhere, retains tremendous influence over the lives of the ruling class, compounding their overall belief in racial superiority and god-given right to sovereignty over the masses. Yet Eleder's isolation also influences New Haliad society. Northerners describe the city as woefully backward in regard to things like fashion, art, and architecture. Citizens living in New Haliad dress in styles centuries old, and are unfamiliar with contemporary works of Chelish literature and philosophy. In fact, most Chelaxians consider colonials backward and ignorant.

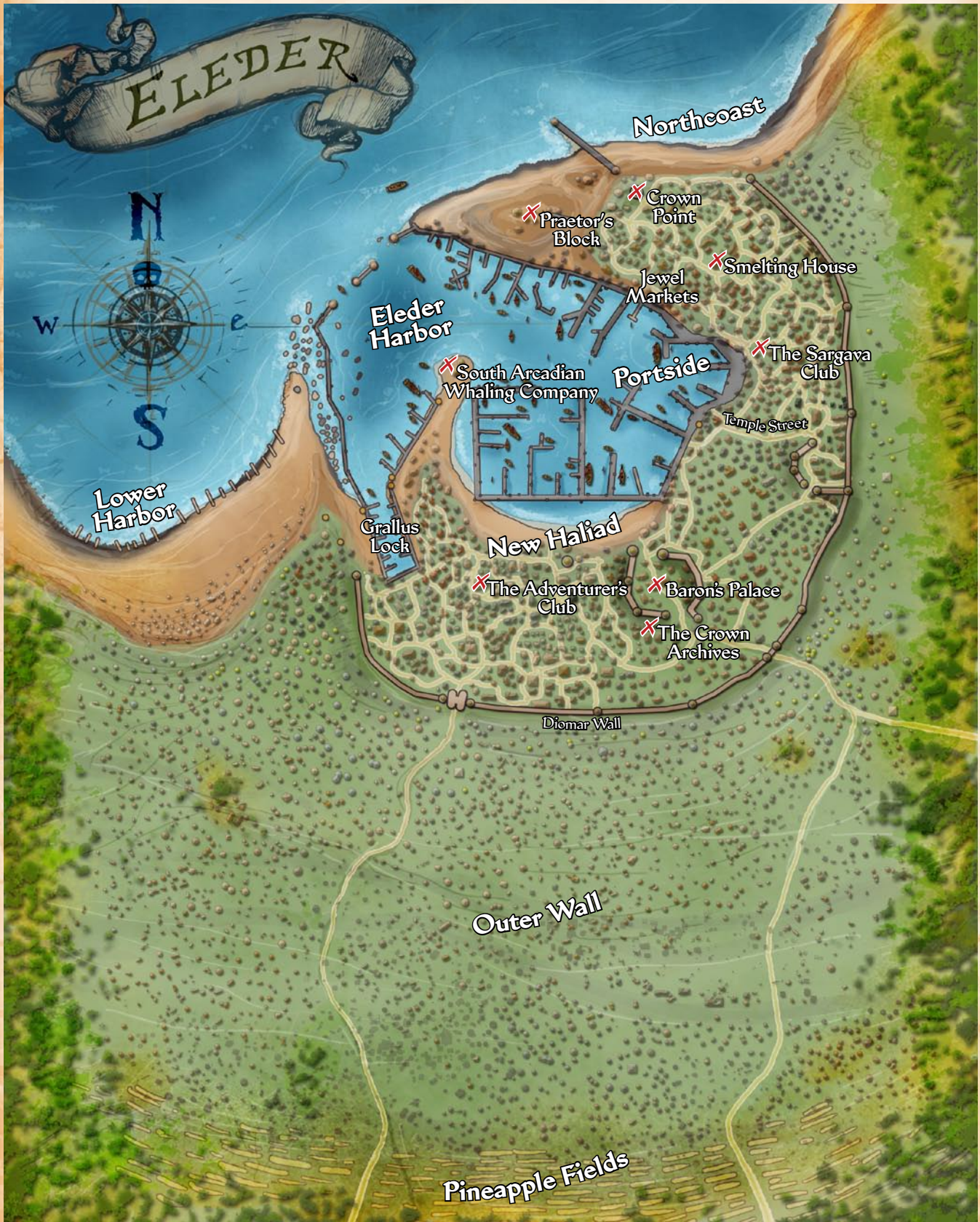
The Adventurers' Club: At one time, the Adventurers' Club served as a meeting place for thrill-seeking aristocrats to launch covert and often reckless expeditions into the wilds. When news of such a club reached Lady Madrona Daugustana, she became outraged. Spearheading a group of influential aristocrats, she and her associates took it over, transforming it into a social club for New Haliad's elite. Now under the control of the Lady's close friend **Sirquo** (LE male aristocrat 2/bard 1), it has become most famous for hosting decadent "Chelish Masquerades."

Baron's Palace: Built in 4219 AR, the Baron's Palace belongs to the city of Eleder and is ceded to whoever currently possesses the title of Grand Custodian. The mansion rests on a huge, 2-acre stretch of property located in the heart of New Haliad, near the very center of the city. The palace faces the harbor, overlooking both the great stone piers and Lower Harbor. High hedges and lattices isolate the mansion from the rest of the city and from the ever-increasing slums just beyond the Diomar Wall.

Of those marvels located upon the property, the most impressive are the Baronial Gardens, which contain a tremendous, multi-tiered fountain with inset pools teeming with colorfully scaled river fish and blossoming with flowering water-lilies, lotuses, orchids, and other exotic flora. An amateur equestrian, the Baron maintains a sizable horse stable that boasts an impressive collection of exotic, purebred Keleshite stallions. Also within his properties lie the Custodial Granaries, which serve as the emergency food stores for the city. The Custodial Armory houses Utilinus's personal guards, crack colonial members of the Sargavan Guard, hand-picked for their loyalty and trained in what were once the highest forms of Chelish combat (somewhat outdated now). Secured somewhere beneath the Custodial Armory, Sargava's dwindling treasury lies secreted away in a great stone vault.

The Colonial Archives: Near the Baron's Palace stands Eleder's sole library and seat of learning. The Colonial Archives hold records dating back to the colony's founding, but the librarians are always eager to acquire more books of a mundane nature from around the world to add to the library. The Archives house detailed collections of local interest, including maps, exploration and trade charters, ethnographic





SERPENT'S SKULL

studies, and even a few volumes of the *Pathfinder Chronicles*, mostly dealing with exploits within the Mwangi Expanse.

Grallus Lock: Following the successful construction of Eleder's harbor came failed attempts to create a lock for beaching and servicing large warships. For years, the city held on to the property, using the channel to dock smaller vessels, and for a short time during Baron Grallus's rule, it served as Eleder's naval yard. Eventually, the city sold it to pay some of the debt it owed to the Free Captains, and ever since then, its ownership has exchanged hands constantly. At present, the Nine Forts Collective owns the lock, though for how long remains to be seen. Both secure and defensible, the Collective runs their considerable slaving operations out of the lock. They purchase most of their slaves from the Bekyar, who bring them in by boat. From there, slaves are placed onto galleons and shipped to wealthier overseas buyers, mostly in Cheliah.

South Arcadian Whaling Company: Situated on a narrow beach just beyond the harbor jetty, this location is detailed on page 12 of this adventure.

Temple Street: A row of small temples serves as the unofficial border between Portside and New Haliad. Over the years, numerous missionaries from various churches have attempted to save the misguided souls of Chelish devil-worshippers and pagan totemists alike. While most of the temples remain in service, they are wholly reliant on foreign funding. Despite Temple Street's draw for visitors, most locals consider it a novelty. Only the temple of Aroden has achieved local success, though in recent years it has mostly been absorbed by the church of Iomedae. In addition to offering regular services, it provides training as clerics for Sargavan youth.

NORTHCOAST

Most of Northcoast falls under the martial command of Sargava's Grand Praetor, General Septimia Arodatus. Under Sargavan law, all Zenj citizens must serve compulsory military service for a minimum of 2 years. The majority of Zenj are born outside the wall, making accurate census counts nearly impossible, and those wishing to dodge military service can do so with relative ease. Most, however, enter the service willingly, in search of skills, education, and a better life. Aside from the spoiled children of the Sargavan aristocracy, many colonials also send their children to Northcoast for martial training. While their training is no less demanding, these conscripts begin their service with the informal title of sub-Praetor, and so hold rank over even seasoned Zenj veterans.

Crown Point: Built as tribute to Westcrown, this lighthouse serves as Eleder's primary beacon, as well as a strategic observation post where guards keep a lookout for storms, pirates, and other seafaring threats. Over a dozen well-trained Sargavan marines crew the lighthouse,

regularly communicating their observations to Praetor's Block using a complex code of signal flashes.

Praetor's Block: This quarter serves as the training grounds for the Eleder militia. Commander Ezio Egorius holds the title of Praetor, which gives him responsibility for the census and the conscription of the Eleder Militia, as well as charge of the mandatory martial training. Training takes place as early as age 10, and conscripts range in age from puberty to adulthood. Youths, however, rarely perform active duties. After the mandatory training period, conscripts may apply to become career soldiers. While soldiery pays better than menial labor, many Zenj deride these individuals as racial traitors.

OUTERWALL

Enveloping the colonial settlements surrounding Eleder Harbor is nearly a mile of tightly packed, crude, mud-daub huts and dusty, rat-infested streets, known to locals as Outerwall, or the Zenj Slums. While Outerwall's population dwarfs that of the rest of the city, many of its community members lack even the most basic necessities. Crime, begging, vagrancy, hunger, and disease (malaria in particular) are endemic. Those able to find employment must often walk miles and stay away for weeks, even months, to work long hours in the salt and gold mines of wealthy Sargavans, or earn even lower wages breaking their backs in the pineapple fields. Those lucky enough to learn a trade may attempt to ply it in Lower Harbor or can apply to serve in the city militia as career soldiers.

Freeman's Brotherhood: Composed of notorious insurrectionists, the Freeman's Brotherhood works throughout Outerwall distributing funds and food where they are needed. Within the district, its members enjoy the status of folk heroes and are highly recognizable to the general populace, though none would ever reveal their identities to those outside the Slums. The Brotherhood maintains no specific location, but instead moves throughout the district, relying on the efforts of community members to provide them with shelter and meeting places.

Pineapple Fields: Along the outskirts of Outerwall lie miles of pineapple fields. Originally planted by early colonists as a food source, trading companies soon sought to cultivate pineapples for export. The largest of these was Serepitous Exports, which at one time owned several large plantations. After blight destroyed the industry, Serepitous Exports sold the majority of its holdings to the Sargavan government. Currently, the government leases fields to both for-profit sharecroppers and Zenj subsistence farmers.

PORTSIDE

Portside serves as the lifeblood of Eleder's economy, housing most of the city's merchant and middle classes. While not as urbane as New Haliad, its property-owning population



consists entirely of colonials, largely of Chelish descent. In addition to residential homes, the harbor front is dotted with warehouses, shipyards, storefronts, and trading company offices.

Jewel Markets: Portside's jewel markets rank among the finest in Garund. Occupying more than two blocks, shops specialize in appraisal, cutting, specific gemstones, and jewelry making. The jewel markets are heavily policed by both the city militia and guards hired by shop owners and their trading company financiers. While Sargavan law regarding theft is strict, charter law for jewel theft carries far harsher penalties, ranging from removal of digits to execution. Would-be thieves are well advised to educate themselves on their marks before attempting anything as foolish as pilfering gems in the jewel markets.

The Sargava Club: Set back from the Portside docks in a narrow alley facing the harbor is a two-story mud-brick building covered in plain whitewash. Upon its front door hangs a carved wooden sign that reads "The Sargava Club." The bottom floor is split between a shop and a tavern, while the top floor serves as an inn. The Sargava Club is owned by a feisty and outspoken half-orc named **Briga** (CG female half-orc barbarian 6). Originally a sellsword from the Varisian highlands, she came south as part of an expedition to explore the southern jungles. Subsequently, she fell in love with the region, purchased an old warehouse in Portside, and set up shop. Since opening, she has faced her share of discrimination, not the least of which has come from Lady Madrona Daugustana. The matriarch of Eleder has levied both fines and threats against her, but Briga remains unyielding in the face of her prejudice. The Sargava Club is one of the few places inside the wall where prejudice is not tolerated, and Briga demands that all who enter her establishment treat each other as equals.

The bulk of the ground floor is dedicated to a small but well-stocked pawnshop specializing in adventuring equipment, information, maps, and magical items. Those serious about launching expeditions may also use the club to contact and hire native guides. A modest tavern occupies the remainder of the ground floor. It serves reasonably priced local fare—mostly fish—along with beer and a sickly sweet but potent Zenj liquor distilled from pineapple and sugarcane called mupute.

Shipyards: Eleder is home to some of the finest shipbuilders on all Golarion. With an ample supply of cheap lumber from the nearby jungles and a steady demand for large ships, Eleder has long attracted master-shipbuilders from around the world. Those who complete apprenticeships in Eleder can open shipyards anywhere. Quality woodworking tools are

in constant demand, as are supplemental industries such as rope making, sail making, and machining, particularly block and tackle production. These industries place high demand on imports of steel, cotton, and hemp.

Smelting House: The majority of Eleder's minerals come from the nearby Bandu Hills, but ore is chiefly processed in Portside. Almost as well guarded as the jewel markets, the sooty brick Smelting House occupies part of a row known as Smelter's Block. **Daruk Bludwedge** (LN male human expert 4/fighter 2) owns and operates the Smelting House with a crew of several dozen local Zenj. Within the house, Zenj laborers churn out unmarked coins, bars, and ingots for export to buyers around the world. Daruk ensures his workers receive skilled training and fair wages, in part to embitter the city's aristocracy. Over the years, Daruk has become quite wealthy from brokering deals with various mining companies and now holds a monopoly over Eleder's smelting industry.



SERPENT'S SKULL



BONZALO
FLORES

GOZREH

GOZREH IS TIMELESS. BORN WHEN THE FIRST BREEZE CARESSED THE OCEAN, SHE IS EVER-CHANGING, TEMPESTUOUS, UNPREDICTABLE, YET ALSO PRONE TO PERIODS OF CONSTANCY, STILLNESS, AND ROUTINE. HE IS THE STORM CLOUD ONE DAY AND A CLEAR SKY THE NEXT, SPRING FOLLOWING WINTER, AND RELIABLE WINDS THAT ALLOW FOR EASY TRADE BY SEAGOING SHIPS. SHE IS THE GREAT WAVE THAT CAPSIZES THOSE SHIPS, THE GENTLE CURRENT THAT DEPOSITS SAILORS ON SAFE SHORES, AND THE PREDICTABLE TIDES. THOSE WHO PLY THE WATERS OR RELY UPON THE RAINS KNOW THIS BETTER THAN MOST, AND ARE SURE TO PLACATE GOZREH AND HONOR HIM WHEN THE WIND AND WAVES ARE FAVORABLE.

Gozreh has two aspects, equally depicted in art and sculpture. When at sea or over water, Gozreh is a woman with wild, flowing green hair, whose body transforms into endless waves. In the sky and over land, Gozreh appears as an aged man with a long white beard, emerging from a mighty storm cloud.

Gozreh is moody and brooding, able to spend weeks in a glowering quiet only to explode in a fury of water, wind, and lightning. He is an elemental force, refusing to be confined by the work of mortals and only reluctantly abating his wrath when they appease him with gifts and flattering words. Many cargo ships throw a crate or two overboard in the deep ocean in the hope she will be satisfied and not take more by force. Gozreh is the amoral side of nature, that which brings life but may take it away unexpectedly. As a being of either sex, Gozreh represents both male and female, as well as the necessity of both sexes for life to continue. Grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, eternal and ever-changing, the Wind and the Waves are echoes of, and forces that shape, the countless living things on Golarion.

Gozreh refers to himself or herself as “I” or “We” interchangeably. He loves to race the wind, tearing clouds in two with his passing, or sculpting them into islands and palaces for his pleasure. She hides under the waves and plummets to the crushing depths of the ocean, chasing whales and building grottoes only visible by the light of the glowing creatures that live there. She hates those who defile the sky with smoke, taint the waters with mortal filth, or abuse the bounties of land and sea. Her official church is small, but her lay worshipers are countless. He particularly likes seabirds, flying fish, and frogs, both as living specimens and as sacrificial offerings. He is known to watch the world through the eyes of beasts, whether on the wing or under the earth, flitting from the body of a solitary bear to the countless beating hearts of a flock of starlings. She senses the day and night through green plants and pale fungi, drinking deeply through the roots of the mighty oak or clinging to a stone as the tiniest moss or lichen.

Gozreh’s interests lie entirely in the realm of weather and living things. He has little interest in earth except in the form of soil or as a foundation for living works. She cares naught for fire but for how flame and ash provide opportunities for new life to grow in their wake. These materials are not taboo to her faithful, just inconsequential. Likewise, she accepts that some creatures must die so that others may survive and still others be born, but the mystical aspects of death and its cycles do not concern her, and she leaves these things to entities such as Pharasma. Like nature itself, Gozreh can be cruel and indifferent,

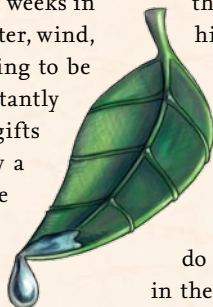
allowing a storm to ravage the land or sink a dozen ships, or a plague to wipe out an entire herd of animals; yet she pushes trading ships across the world, multiplies animals in springtime, and brings gentle rain to thirsty fields. She is beyond morals and ethics—as long as life survives in some form, water exists to support it, and weather keeps the world itself dynamic, Gozreh is satisfied. Though his priests and priestesses may have personal ideas about which creatures should live and which should not, or visions of what Gozreh wants protected or destroyed, they accept that their beliefs are just one facet of their deity’s infinite perceptions.

The Wind and the Waves may be intractable one moment and sympathetic the next. She does not do this to be deliberately contrary or mischievous, or in the interest of chaos; it is simply because he perceives every living thing, every drop of water, and every gust of wind, at all times. Events distant and unrelated may draw her attention, and the outcome of those events may change her mood, whether because a potential tornado disperses too soon or a rare type of fox births a dozen healthy kits. He is a great monarch, constantly beseeched by courtiers and commoners, listening to each argument simultaneously and shifting his attention and emotion to each in turn. To one unaware of the cacophony, she may appear flighty or distracted, but the truth is that she perceives all.

Gozreh’s avatar is a colossal humanoid whose lower half trails away into a mass of roiling elemental matter. In male form, he becomes a storm cloud and always remains flying; he has been known to gather storm clouds to himself and merge them with his body. According to one old legend, he can stretch from one horizon to the other, darkening the entire sky with his fury. In female form, her body blends with the water of a lake or sea. She sometimes rises from a waterspout, but may pull all the nearby water upward as a great wave, emerging from the top as a nymph-like shape, a crone, or a vaguely humanoid construct of pure water.

Statues of Gozreh are usually made of driftwood or lightning-scorched trees tied together into a human-like shape or carved to resemble either incarnation; a few are carved of ice and either magically preserved or allowed to melt and then replaced as needed. Stone and brick are never used for religious imagery. Holy symbols and small idols may be made of coral, polished shell, lacquered wood, whalebones, and other natural materials.

Signs of Gozreh’s favor include a sudden but gentle breeze that carries a scent of flowers, the appearance of large numbers of her favorite animals, the unexplained sound of waves crashing on a distant beach, and dreams of a specific, recognizable animal (such as a white wolf, a frilled lizard with glowing blue eyes, or a ghostly raven). Omens



**“Respect the sea and the sky,
lest we bring you ruin.”**
—Hymns to the Wind and the Waves

SERPENT'S SKULL

of his displeasure include being watched and shrieked at by wild birds or beasts, sudden rainstorms localized over a specific building or individual, or an unending taste of blood in the mouth. He may foul fresh water, or afflict offenders with terrible smells or excruciating joint pain when the weather changes.

Formal raiment varies by temple but usually includes feathers, green or blue cloth, a rope belt, and a hoodless cloak of thin, oiled leather. In coastal areas, at least one garment is made of *kimlé*, a linen-like cloth made of a sea plant the church cultivates.

Male priests are expected to grow long beards; those with patchy growth often braid or knot their facial hair into tangled masses. Female priests must keep long hair, and hair that nearly reaches the ground is common. The cutting of hair and beards is not forbidden, and what constitutes "long" varies from region to region but is always at least 6 inches. Both sexes weave dried seaweed, strands of white cloth, *kimlé* fibers, feathers, and other decorative items into their hair. When an old priest or priestess dies, snippets of this long hair are cut and given to his or her successors, who tie or weave it into their own locks.

It is not unusual for zealous priests to remain celibate, devoting all their energy to Gozreh; these priests have been known to "embrace" their deity naked in high places or shallow waters (called "sky-clad" and "sea-clad"), writhing in passion. Priests have a habit of finding discarded things washed up or left on the shore, including infants orphaned by shipwrecks or abandoned to die from exposure; in most lands, such children are traditionally raised by the church (which offsets the low number of children born to priests because of their high celibacy rate).

Gozreh is neutral, and his portfolio is nature, weather, and the sea. His favored weapon is the trident. His holy symbol is a green leaf with a drop of water pouring from the lower end. Her domains are Air, Animal, Plant, Water, and Weather. Most of Gozreh's priests are clerics, but about a tenth are druids, with a few rangers ("weather-hunters") and adepts taking active roles in the priesthood.

His worshipers are typically sailors, naval merchants, and farmers. Seagoing barbarians ask her to speed them to their prey, fisherfolk pray for favorable currents to bring them heavy catches, millers ask for consistent winds to power their mills and well pumps, and travelers seek good weather on their journeys. Wise generals ask Gozreh's blessing before transporting soldiers by sea; wiser ones ask her priests if a blessing would do any good.

Worship services include chanting, wind instruments, chimes moved by wind or water, salt, perfume, smokeless incense, and drinking clear water or other clear liquids. Farming communities offer sacrifices of meat and grain by leaving the tribute exposed on a high rock to allow the deity's servants to claim it. Fishing communities string

together bones from the greatest fish caught during the previous month and tow them behind their boats, releasing them as offerings to the goddess. Some civilized folk perpetuate stories of the church encouraging human sacrifice in lean times (often by burning victims encased in wicker effigies or drowning them in tidal pools), but no records of this are found in the modern era.

The church does not have a strong preference for or against marriage, reflecting how in nature some creatures mate for life while others mate only for a season or until offspring are mature. They are very tolerant of "nontraditional" families, including same-sex and polyamorous unions, and individuals interested in such relationships often join the priesthood because of this tolerance (though it is actually more akin to indifference, as the bonds that humanoids make between their own kind and the gender roles they choose to play are irrelevant to the forces of nature).

Because of the deity's many roles and areas of interest, there are countless splinter cults of Gozreh. Some embrace the deity's entire area of influence; others choose one particular aspect (such as weather) or a handful of specific interests (such as birds and wind, or fish and the sea, or storms and plants). A few extreme or isolated groups develop fringe beliefs or practices not present in the more mainstream churches, such as belief in beast totems or reincarnation, pursuit of lycanthropy, veneration of spirit animals or intelligent plants, eunuchs, fertility and crossbreeding cults, ritualized baptisms or dream quests, "mushroom cults" that seek to commune directly with the god by ingesting strange fungi, and diets restricted to fruits, nuts, and leaves. Despite such radical beliefs, members of these sects continue to receive spells from Gozreh, and the church as a whole makes no attempt to eliminate these unusual groups as long as they continue to respect the wind, the waves, and the natural world.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Gozreh's temples are always open to the sky and often contain some sort of pool or open water at their heart. Coastal temples are usually made of driftwood, and are often just a wooden wall with lean-tos on the outside rim. Some temples incorporate water wheels, windmills, lighthouses, or other structures that harness the wind and waves or are essential to a community that relies on the sky and sea for survival; for these locations, tending the mechanism of the structure is a hereditary, traditional role, and priests who assume such a position tend to have remarkably advanced knowledge of the necessary engineering despite the church's general preference for wildness and nature over civilization.

Shrines are incredibly simple, often just a flat stone at a high elevation or on a secluded beach, a large whale bone jutting from a cleft on a rocky shore, or a place where



the waves crash against a crevice to create a high-arching spray. Some shrines remain underwater most of the time and only appear in years when stellar conjunctions cause especially low tides. A few ancient, large-scale shrines tied to Gozreh's faith still exist on Golarion, primarily circles or triangles of standing stones (though one circle north of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings is composed of blocks of nearly indestructible ice rather than stones). These standing stones function as a calendar, tracking solstices, equinoxes, and other celestial events; most are also burial sites for priests or devout members of the faith.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Priests of Gozreh look for the goddess's will in water, clouds, and the movement of flocks of birds and schools of fish. Those associated with humanoid communities serve as diviners or provide advice about fishing, the weather, or the care of domesticated birds. Some live on ships, selling their services to pirates, navies, or merchants, hoping to keep fair weather and prevent deadly storms. Others dedicate themselves to healing and nurturing the wounded places in the world or destroying the things responsible for the wounds, with some struggling to battle the corruption of the Worldwound, the deadly radiation of certain locations in Numeria, or coastal pollution from large human cities. Others see themselves as agents of the god's wrath against damage wrought by civilization, sending plagues of bats, crows, and locusts to ravage cities and croplands, turning schools of fish away from seaside towns, and summoning storms to drown fleets built from stolen timber. A few are explorers, determined to experience as much of the goddess's beauty as possible. Priests usually have ranks in Heal, Knowledge (nature), and Survival, as well as Diplomacy or Intimidate depending on their interests and personality. Flight and swimming are common obsessions of the priesthood, and magic items that permit flying or water breathing are treasured. Most Gozrens avoid steel armor because it rusts, preferring wood, hide, or mithral, and some even wear armor made of hardened ice (see the *ice armor* spell on page 71).

Druids of Gozreh are often hermits, rarely seeing other speaking creatures, and only leaving their refuges when the goddess calls or a local settlement bribes them to make rain. Most are content to live off the land, sometimes gathering treasures of the sea such as pearls, coral, and abalone shells, or selling sea ivory or scrimshaw. Some spend their entire lives on boats; others exile themselves to remote islands to commune with their deity.

The church tends to have periods of stability offset by sudden turmoil and reorganization on a local level, though in the long term a charismatic and powerful priest is apt to stay at the top of his temple's organization. When a high priest dies, contenders for his rank compete in



SERPENT'S SKULL

ceremonies traditional to the faithful of their region, but varying widely across the entire religion. In rugged coastal regions, claimants dive naked from tall ocean cliffs and swim to shore, with the first to return becoming the new high priest. In river countries and along gentler coasts, retrieving heavy stones from the ocean or river bed is a common test. In woodlands, hopefuls might climb as far up the forest's tallest tree as they dare and throw themselves off, the survivor to fall the farthest ascending to high priest. Across other climes, would-be successors make harrowing treks and face death at the hands of the elements, with those who endure proving their commitment to the faith—a more important quality than their deity's unpredictable favor. Inexperienced and overly ambitious priests have been known to die because of these

contests, but in most cases the worst anyone suffers is injuries and severe exhaustion.

Within the church, a respected priest is one who reacts quickly to changing circumstances, interprets portents accurately, and is good at working with plants, animals, or both (depending on the specific focus of the priest's temple). For splinter churches, traits such as a sense of the spirit world or prophetic dreams may be more important.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to various regional holidays based on harvests, seasonal high and low tides, and similar phenomena, most members of the church celebrate two common holidays.

Currentseve (7 Gozran): The original meaning of this holiday's name is lost to time, as it doesn't refer to any specific event relating to water or wind currents. In modern tradition, it is a day-long fast in anticipation of the first sprouting plants of the year (in planting and gathering communities) or fish spawning season (in fishing communities). It represents the fact that feast and famine are natural cycles; by abstaining from food, worshipers redirect spiritual energy to other lives so that they may multiply and provide food when needed.

Firstbloom (Vernal Equinox): Honored primarily in farming communities, this holiday marks the start of the planting season. Traditionalists of the faith consider Firstbloom the start of the year, even though the common calendar starts the year 2 months earlier in Abadius.

APHORISMS

Followers of Gozreh are often curt and gruff, and their sayings reflect this tendency.

Drink Deep, Think Fast: In many ways, the church of Gozreh is a religion from a simpler time, and some of its traditions stem from the days before civilization when the humanoid races lived in hunter-gatherer tribes. The presence of water and the ability to react to unexpected predators were both vital for survival, and phrases such as this one harken back to those times. To the faithful, this aphorism essentially means "gather your wits, be ready, and make the best of what you have."

Storm and Salt! A common oath, used for both fortuitous and calamitous events. In most temples, when a priest joins the clergy, he or she swears "to obey the Wind and Waves, come storm and salt, drought and flood, feather and scale, until the sky or sea claims my dead flesh."

HOLY TEXT

Gozreh's *Hymns to the Wind and the Waves* is a collection of prayers and rules for personal behavior and respect for the natural world. The exact message varies from temple to temple, which only preserve the parts relevant to local needs (certain bardic colleges have large collections of



church teachings, but no known temple bothers with all of them). Most excerpts from the text are carved on wood plaques or walls, as paper and parchment tend to mold and rot after decades in the vicinity of salt and water magic.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Gozreh is indifferent to other deities unless they threaten her domain or existence. She squabbles with Abadar when his farms encroach too much on wildland, and the Master of the First Vault takes it as a personal affront when one of his cities suffers because of severe weather. Gozreh hates Nethys and Rovagug for their urges to destroy the world, and Urgathoa for bringing undead abominations to the natural world; complete destruction and undeath itself are abominations to her. He is alternately affectionate and cool with Desna, for while the sky and stars are a good match, Gozreh can be jealous of travelers' prayers to the Song of the Spheres. He is genuinely friendly with Erastil, for he believes only Old Deadeye fully appreciates all aspects of nature; informally, Gozreh considers the beasts of the earth and crops planted by humanoids to be Erastil's, while the sky, sea, fish, birds, and wild plants belong to her.

NEW DIVINE SPELL

Clerics, druids, oracles, and rangers may prepare *whispering wind* as a 2nd-level spell, and have an aquatic variant for communicating with creatures that are underwater. Druids may prepare *water walk* as a 3rd-level spell. Rangers may prepare *create water* and *purify food and drink* as 1st-level spells. In addition to *Gozreh's trident* (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Gods and Magic*), his priests have access to the following spell.

ICE ARMOR

School transmutation [cold, water]; **Level** cleric 1, druid 1 (Gozreh)

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, F (5 gallons of water)

Range 0 ft.

Effect a suit of armor made of ice

Duration 1 hour/level or until destroyed

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You create a suit of armor made of ice. While cold to the touch, it does not harm the wearer, especially if worn over normal clothing (though it can hasten the effects of exposure in cold environments). It offers the same protection as breastplate armor, except it has hardness 0 and 30 hit points. If the intended wearer is submersed in water when you cast this spell, you may form the armor around the wearer (who may be you); otherwise the wearer must don the armor normally. Attacks against the wearer that create heat or fire degrade the armor, reducing its Armor Class by 1 for every 5 points of fire damage the wearer takes; when the armor's AC reaches 0, the spell ends. Because the ice is slightly buoyant, the wearer gains a +2

CUSTOMIZED SUMMON LIST

Gozreh's priests can use *summon monster* and *summon nature's ally* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells.

Summon monster II

Merfolk*

Summon monster VII

Young frost giant*

Summon monster VIII

Frost giant*

Young cloud giant*

Summon monster IX

Cloud giant*

Young storm giant*

* This creature is summoned with the celestial template if you are good, or with the fiendish template if you are evil; you may choose either if you are neutral.

circumstance bonus on Swim checks, except when swimming downward. This armor is freely wearable by druids.

PLANAR ALLIES

All of Gozreh's servitors have an air or water aspect; if a creature can neither swim nor fly, she has no use for it as a supernatural minion. Few true elementals serve Gozreh, as most of their kind feel allegiance to the elemental lords. Many cloud and storm giants are native to her planar realm. Her herald is Personification of Fury, an ancient elemental that appears to be a fusion of air and water.

The following are well-known servitors of Gozreh, suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar spells.

Hargle: This easily distracted air elemental looks like a dark storm cloud with flickering lightning for eyes. It is equally comfortable high in the air or deep in the sea (where it looks like a roiling mass of bubbles). It strongly dislikes dwarves, offerings of metal, and speakers who take too long to get to the point.

Kraz'Tesh: This creature resembles a giant dragonfly with icy hairs and dexterous claws. Frequently called upon to carry travelers in inclement weather, it is immune to electricity, as is any passenger it carries. It enjoys eating fat larvae from bug-like creatures and gibbering mouters.

Saltbeard: Like an old sailor, this snaggletoothed, white-bearded male triton has a foul mouth, fouler breath, and an even fouler temper. He enjoys wielding his trident to moor ships in ice, then stabbing the landlubbers who try to chip their vessels free. Hot rum is his favorite drink.



SERPENT'S SKULL



PLAGUE OF LIGHT: 2 OF 6

Friends and Other Enemies

Verkusht is as I had seen him a few days before, when I first came to Free Station, seeking an end to the firefly plague. I shrank back, then, so he would not see me. Now I, along with the balance priestess Obai, stand before him, seeking his favor.

With a ragged fingernail, he picks at a morsel of food lodged between his small, uneven teeth. "I saw you, you know."

We stand in the back parlor of a drunkard's den. Here northern liquors are served, along with palm wine and the strength-sapping mash of the garuti plant. Free Station overflows with such places. It is one thing for the foreigners to poison themselves. That is their custom. But it is not the Zenj way, not in a place that smells of blood and vomit, away from friend and kin and the safety of the feasting circle.

Verkusht repeats himself. "I saw you try to hide from me. I didn't confront you, because you know how I hate embarrassment." His sharp-ended beard, waxed in the manner of an outland dandy, bobs up and down, agreeing with him. As it always does when he's aggrieved, Verkusht's left hand absently strokes the raised red scar encircling his right wrist. If you ever look closely at his right hand, you will see that the lines of his arm do not quite match up with those on his hand.

"It is right to dislike embarrassment," I say. "So let us speak no more of it."

"Not so fast." He leans forward in his wooden chair. His linen Bekyar headdress lies over its back, exposing the black hair slicked tightly to his skull. "After all we've been through together, you hide yourself from me?"



"What we have been through together," I repeat. "That includes the time of the Moon People?"

"I explained that a thousand times already. My seeming betrayal was merely a ruse."

"At the ruins of Shopar?"

"I meant to come back for you."

"In the Vault of the Locust?"

"Again: seeming betrayal, merely a ruse."

The priestess shrugs. "In that instance, arguably the truth."

Verkusht removes a dagger from his boot. With its razor tip, he expertly pries lodged dirt from beneath his nails. "Let me waste no more time with this ungrateful loghead," he mutters to Obai. "That I regard him as a brother evidently means nothing to him. Tell me again what I stand to gain by keeping company with those who do not value it."

"The Consortium generously rewards me," she says.

"Even though you're really in it to strike the balance of Nethys. Double loyalties."

"I thought you'd approve." She gestures toward his ragged attire. "Clearly you could use the silver."

"You complain of my fickleness, yet seek my aid in betraying my people."

"I said nothing about fickleness."

"You say it with your gaze, priestess. Always with those damned eyes of yours."

"You are still an outcast from your people, as Xhasi here is from his."

"Helping keep them away from this child of yours won't exactly get me back in their graces, will it?"

"Tell me what you want the Aspis to pay, and I'll see they pay it. We need to know why the slavers sought the boy specifically, and neither Xhasi nor I..."

"Neither of you are effective sneaks and betrayers?" He breaks off mid-chortle, suddenly righting himself. The legs of his chair bang against tavern floorboards. Foreigners pour in through the doorway and a pair of windows. They carry short swords, cutlasses, and clubs with nail-covered heads. More than half a dozen of them fill the drinking hall.

"You will pay what you owe," growls a towering half-human, whose other half might be orc or ogre. "You will pay in gold or blood!"

"My good friends here dispute the justice of your claims," says Verkusht. He seeks the smallest of his adversaries and kicks him between the legs.

Verkusht vanishes into the scrum. The meadhall becomes a whirl of grunting flesh and swinging swords. Three of them are upon me. With difficulty I find room for my spear and push them back. Obai, her best spells expended against the slavers earlier in the day, lays harming hands on one opponent, who falls back groaning.

She takes up her double-edged sword, its hilt decorated with the masks of Nethys, and lays into the debt collectors. Steel rings against steel. The weaker foes fall back while the stronger rush in. The half-human lumbers toward me, his enormous club clearing his path. He strikes a comrade, who sinks to the floor, head bleeding. If the mishap troubles him, he shows no signs of it.

I duck beneath his club, though it comes close enough to dislodge my boar-fur headdress. I stab at him with my spear, but he deftly sidesteps. A glancing blow tears at my flesh; the tips of the club's jutting spikes carve a raking pattern across my shoulder. I connect my spear haft to his bony jaw. Though the blow is a solid one, he shakes it off, hardening his face into an idiot grin. I step aside from his next blow, then slash his fingers with the spearhead's edge. He bleats out what is undoubtedly a curse in some outland tongue as his hand unclenches, dropping the club. When he ducks down to retrieve it, I direct a haft-blow to his temple. It judders across his thick skull to little effect. His great hands are upon my throat, thumbs pressing deep.

The half-human's eyes roll back in his head. His grip loosens, and I step back to let him collapse. A curving Bekyar dagger handle protrudes from his back. The blade has pierced his heart from behind. Verkusht admires his handiwork approvingly, then ducks an enraged blow from another creditor. He arranges his fall so that it pulls his enemy with him. Then they are on the floor, with Verkusht behind the man, Verkusht's garotte tight around his neck and the debt collector clawing vainly at it.

Verkusht breathes a harsh whisper into the man's ear. "Order your men to stand down, Zenes, or you'll lose more of them today." A slash of a smile incises itself on Verkusht's face. "You've picked on more than just one bedraggled gambler. Today you face the Scarred Ones."

Zenes, an olive-skinned man with oiled beard and hair, tries to speak but hasn't the air. He waves his hands in a gesture of surrender.

Two broad-armed men in motley armor step back from Obai, whom they had pushed into a corner. Spread across the floor are three men, their throats slashed. One still lives, a whitening hand pressed hard to keep the vein closed.

"Go, then," Zenes wheezes.

Verkusht is first to leap up, leaving us to bear the brunt if his debt-holders choose to charge. With a determined pull he retrieves his dagger from the big man's corpse. We follow him, eyes fixed on the men still capable of fighting. We walk backward and ready from the drinking house, but the men remain within.

The Bekyar strides merrily down the road. "Sorry to keep dragging out the argument like that. I thought Zenes and his bunch would never arrive. It goes without saying

SERPENT'S SKULL

that I'll go along on this mission of yours. Assuming the Consortium bargains fairly for my services."

It is fruitless, but I cannot help myself. "You owe them a gambling debt?"

Verkusht shrugs. "There are two sides to every story."

"You could have offered them the fees you'll earn for the mission."

His face ovals in shock. "And be left with nothing? Your judgment wounds me, Xhasi. You may well be a man of the jungle, content with nothing more than trees over your

head and an overflowing basket of grobfruit and areca. I, however, am a person of civilized virtues, ill suited to deprivation or indignity. Now on to the important question: these slavers who were attempting to take your god-cursed boy—I don't suppose you saw the clan markers on their headbands?"

I shake my head.

Noticing that his beard was blunted by the fight, he restores its waxen point. "Never mind. Most likely they are of the Rostoun."

"Your clan," Obai says.

Verkusht loses some of his flamboyance. "Indeed, priestess. You remember details well."

"Have they seers and magicians among their number?" she asks.

"We are not inclined in that direction. Aside from a few minor magics of obedience and coercion."

"So they are unlikely to have stumbled across the boy's mythic significance on their own?"

The Bekyar frowns, as if wondering whether offense should be taken. "If it's the Rostoun, they'll be led by a cousin of mine, Tarood. A man of tenacious cruelty, and I say that admiringly. His usual preference is for low-quality merchandise. That way if you lose a few along the way, because of rough handling, it's no matter for concern."

"So if it was he who sought Mwonduk in particular, he was likely hired by someone else."

Verkusht considers her words for a moment. "It's possible, but there are many ifs and guesses at play. Surely you desire a first-hand investigation. And before that can occur, there are terms to be struck."

We reach the Aspis counting house. Shedding his air of sudden gravity, the Bekyar bounds across its threshold.

The glee is still in his step after he has made his pact with Thorold, the Aspis man. The two of us wend through the puddles of a muddy back lane. Numbers glitter in his eyes.

"I knew it," he says. "I knew my luck would turn. Wait long enough and it always does. And I have waited, my friend, oh how I have waited." He waggles his fingers, cracking each joint. "Yes, when I look back on it all, today will mark the turning point. The time when it all changed, and Verkusht began to get his due."

I have already told him of my friends, the Ngali, every one of them slaughtered by the firefly plague. I remind him again. And of the many others killed so far.

His triangular features arrange themselves into a frown. He is annoyed at me for ruining his joy. "Xhasi, my friend, the jungle devours. Devouring is its reason for being, and its sole intent. It falls to us to pick its scraps. Along with the hyenas, the vultures, the lions, and the other scavengers."

"Verkusht has an unusual definition of friendship."



Choup 10



We head to the north side of town, where its oldest buildings lie. Or sink, to tell it more completely. The rebel traders who made Free Station were explorers, robbers, and gamblers, not builders. Their first storerooms and winehouses were built to hug the Vanji's bank. They meant to shorten the number of steps between the landing of a riverboat and the unloading of its cargo. To see that no more than a few steps separated a thirsty riverman from his fresh jug of grog.

The riverbank did not sympathize with its colonizers. Its soft banks hungered. They took these interloping structures and dined on their foundations. The taverns sank. The warehouses filled with disgorged mud. Abandoned, they stood tilting and wheezing, the river slowly advancing on them. Patiently devouring.

Verkusht squints at the collapsing buildings. "If Tarood's hiding—and if he weren't we'd see him and his clanmates all over town—he'll be holed up here. There's an old counting house he used last time I, er, ran into him. If not there, the back rooms of the Funeral Ship."

The Funeral Ship is the only remaining tavern in the town's sinking quarter. Its patrons imbibe at an angle. To take a seat there, the drinking men say, is to feel half-drunk already.

"He won't be in the jungle?" I ask.

"He won't be in the jungle," Verkusht confirms.

We advance. I follow Verkusht, who sneaks well along laneways and between buildings. The counting house is empty, save for a fat constrictor and a scurry of heedless rats.

To the back of the tavern is the chancier approach. A wide avenue offers little cover. Its muck sounds a wet alarm every time we set a foot down. Finally we reach the back of the tavern, and Verkusht presses an ear against its gray, weathered boards. He nods and points to his ear. He hears them, inside.

A boiling, squealing thing erupts at my ankles. My spear is ready. It rushes past me—a piglet, one of the foreign kind, foolishly screaming. It circles around, momentarily intent on nipping my ankles. It reconsiders and veers off.

Shutters slam open. A Bekyar slaver leans out. I am seen. I look to my side for Verkusht.

He is gone.

Slavers leap from the windows. They pour from the porch. I turn to run. My feet slide beneath me. I right myself before succumbing to a painful, humiliating fall, but put scant distance between myself and my pursuers. One, propelled by some kind of leaping charm, is upon me before I can move further. The haft of my spear catches the bottom of his jaw, sending him sprawling into the muck. Then I am surrounded.

I wait for Verkusht's counterassault to begin. For daggers to appear between shoulder blades. For arrows to zip from nowhere to thin out my foes. The wait is in vain.

I topple a second slaver, wind a third, clout another so hard he falls to his knees, retching. It is not enough. They outnumber me. Slavers shoulder in past my spear. They wrench it from my grip. Thudding blows dance over my ribs to graze my kidneys. The gray day blackens and twists. As I slip into a daze, I realize that they at least intend to keep me alive. This grants me faint solace as a dim awareness of floating seizes me. They have lifted me up. Are carrying me into the back of the Funeral Boat.

Verkusht has gone to get reinforcements, I tell myself. It cannot be that he has betrayed me yet again.

Water awakens me. Thrown into my face, it rushes up my nose and into my gaping mouth. I return to life, choking. It smells like river mud.

I am lashed to a chair. I test my bonds and find them tight. This is expected, when captured by slavers. Old memories, never buried deep, surge to the surface. The fury rises in me. If I get loose, I will have to fight not only my captors, but also the siren urge to kill.

There are a dozen of them, more or less. Muck spatters their white robes. Bruises color the undersides of their eyes. They rub unhappily at throats, arm muscles, legs—places I have hit them. They sulk in corners, pick at their teeth, pace small circles on the floor. Because of who they are, the cruel trade they conduct, I take satisfaction in their pain. I wish only that they felt it a thousandfold.

The man who has thrown the bucket of river water into my face looks to his superior for permission to back away. As if I were capable of snapping the wet leather straps that bind me to the chair, of flying at him and twisting his neck until it snaps. He can sense my desire, but overestimates my capability.

The man who nods to him is a Bekyar like himself. He is taller and thinner than the others. The family resemblance is easily seen. Were you to flatten and elongate Verkusht's head, to extend his nose outward into a majestic slope, and then douse him in a spring of youth, you would have this man. It can only be Tarood. His robes are impeccably clean; he took no direct part in my capture. His mouth opens like a snake's. The quivering tip of his tongue peeks out to sample the air. Tarood is excited. A coiled whip hangs from his hip. He holds his left hand curled into a fist. Across his knuckles are looping lengths of barbed wire. Not a fighting weapon. A torturing weapon.

How long have I been unconscious? It shouldn't be long before Verkusht arrives, with Obai and a troop of Aspish guardsmen. My words must keep me alive until then.

It is not Tarood who speaks. A foreigner steps from the gloom. His garb and accented speech describe him as an

SERPENT'S SKULL

outlander, but of what sort I cannot tell. Later I will be told that he is a Taldan.

He tilts his head slightly. Tarood takes a disappointed step back.

This man is in command, not the slaver.

His skin is nearly as dark as the Bekyar, though light compared to mine. The crown of hair wreathing his head shines like sunset. It is darker near his scalp—dyed. I judge him a once thin and handsome man, newly encased in rich folds of flesh. Threaded with silver, his garments sparkle and dance. Heavy rings of yellow metal cover each of his fingers. A medallion, big as an outlander tea saucer, hangs from his neck. Its golden face glowers, a grimacing, angry sun.

None of these decorations are as striking as the man's eyes. One is brown. The other iris is doubled: a light blue ring is imprisoned within a partner of deep violet. The strange eyes look me over, as if I am for sale. As a prisoner of slavers, some might say that I am.

"The boy," he says. "Tell me about the boy."

I look again at Tarood's fist of sharp-edged wire.

"The boy is needed to reverse a deadly plague."

The man contemplates, his face still. "You get to it, don't you? I expected to waste some time before coming to the nub. First you would deny you knew what I was talking about. Then Tarood here would hurt you..."

"Why invite injury?" I ask.

"You are an intelligent man, then. A man I can deal with."

I am not that last thing, but in the interest of delay I let his charge go unanswered.

"What is your name, Zenj?"

"What is yours?" I ask.

Again he thinks before speaking, his features empty of intent. "Brachantes," he finally says. "It is not a name that will be known in these parts."

"I am Xhasi," I allow.

"Xhasi, formerly of the Ara tribe, occasionally of the Scarred Ones, improbably a Pathfinder," Brachantes says. "Tell me what business you have with the boy."

"The boy, Mwonduk, is accursed by Kitumu, the firefly goddess. If you have heard so much about me, you are doubtless also informed about the firefly deaths."

Brachantes nods.

"To end the plague, the boy must be delivered to the goddess."

"And you have a strong desire to end the plague?"

"My friends were slain by it. Many more will be if no one acts."

He comes too close, peers into my face, as if reading a text written on my skin. "It does not trouble you that the child will be sacrificed?"

"The price of many lives is one life," I say.

"A cold-blooded thought," says Brachantes.

"The jungle devours," I reply.

He seizes a wooden chair, finds a safe position for it on uneven floorboards, places it a few feet from me, and sits down. "Instead of letting a god devour him, I propose to purchase him. Name your price. No blood need be shed."

"Except for that eaten by fireflies."

Brachantes adjusts one of his golden rings. "Perhaps if I take the boy far from here, the goddess will forget her prize, and return to her slumbers."

"I do not know about your homeland. Here in the Mwangi, gods and goddesses are never forgetful."

He points a meaty finger into the air. "You cannot be sure it is so. Your seer says it. My seers, who sensed this boy's presence from afar, whose visions brought me all the way to this rotting riverbank, predicted merely that I would find a boy touched by the gods. You say cursed, I say blessed."

"Your prophets will be proven right," I venture, "if we take him to the goddess and she chooses not to take him."

Anger wells in his face. "Unlike you, I will not see him harmed. He'll while the rest of his days in comfort." Brachantes softens his tone, forces a benevolent smile. "He'll not labor, nor will he want. Far better than life here. Even if he weren't held by Consortium hirelings who mean to sacrifice him."

It is cleverest to seem tempted. "What do you want with him?"

His round face widens, excited. "I am a collector of marvels, Xhasi. My menagerie is famed throughout the northeast. Housed in its golden cages are chimeras, basilisks, minotaurs. I include in my collection the great sphinx of Samun, even the black dragon Éirma."

"How does the dragon like it?"

"She has resigned herself to her lot. Like most beings on this earth."

"And now you wish to collect children, too?"

"As the Bekyar here can attest, there is no race of person that cannot legally be regarded as property. As a young connoisseur, I started with objects—paintings, jewels, arcane artifacts. Then I realized that only living wonders are worth owning."

I realize too late that I am seething. Unlike Verkusht, I have never been a good liar.

Brachantes laughs. "You would let this boy be devoured, yet fume when I propose to establish him in permanent splendor? He would grow up in elevated company. My permanent guests include Oedes, poet of the shadow quatrains, and the former adventurer Strodai, who learned to breathe fire on the elemental planes."

"They too are resigned to their fates?"

"Perhaps not. The occasional escape attempt keeps an inmate vigorous, that's what I say. It is essential that the

mind remains alive." He steps up out of the chair, kicking it aside. "Yet I sense that moral argument, as one-sided in my favor as it might be, is taking us nowhere. Tarood?"

The Bekyar advances. Brachantes gestures to his fist and shakes his head. Tarood petulantly removes the barbed wire from his fist. It is with bare knuckles that he strikes me. I reel backward. In quick succession he hits me again, and again. I feel blood trickling from my nose, resolving into droplets, and falling onto my chest.

My eyes swell shut. The outlander's reedy voice comes from somewhere behind me.

"You will agree to the following, Xhasi. You will choose a rendezvous point in the jungle. This way we will not have to fight our way through an entire counting house of Aspis Consortium guards. We will be waiting for you there. We will take the boy off your hands. And the Bekyar traitor Verkusht, too. He is nothing to me, but Tarood says that he owes a debt to his people, which must finally be discharged."

Tarood's smile is that of a serpent.

Brachantes continues, still where I cannot see him. "I regard myself as a fair dealer. Within reason, I am prepared to compensate you for your efforts on my behalf. I pay better than the Pathfinders, that is for certain."

"How do you ensure my cooperation, once you let me go?" My words wheeze through bloodied lips.

"Let's say that you don't want to find out, and leave it at that." He steps into view, wincing at whatever Tarood has done to my face. "Do you agree?"

With effort, I raise my head. "You know that I can't."

Brachantes shrugs. Tarood places his barbed implement back in his fist. A whining giggle traps itself in his bobbing throat.

The back door slams open.

It is not the rescue party I have been expecting. No Obai, no Verkusht. No squadron of Aspis enforcers.

Standing silhouetted in the doorway is a single halfling. Her hair is a matted and tangled mess. Her nose lies flat across her face, the result of multiple breakings and healings. She wears a tattered tunic and leggings of antelope hide, in the manner of the halfling tribes of the jungle interior. A powerful stench of stale breath and palm wine accompanies her entrance. The spatters of mud on her face and arms are lighter than her gleaming skin.

"This is a drinking establishment," proclaims my old friend Sunasuka the halfling, "and by the forgotten gods and all the shrieking apes, I will not be barred from it!" The booming roar of her voice contradicts her tiny frame.

She sees me in the chair, bound and bleeding. A howl of drunken indignation escapes her throat. Sunasuka rolls into the room, caroming unpredictably on her oversized, jungle-hardened feet.

The slavers are startled and surprised.

I am startled, but not surprised. My friend makes a habit of unlikely appearances and fortuitous blunders.

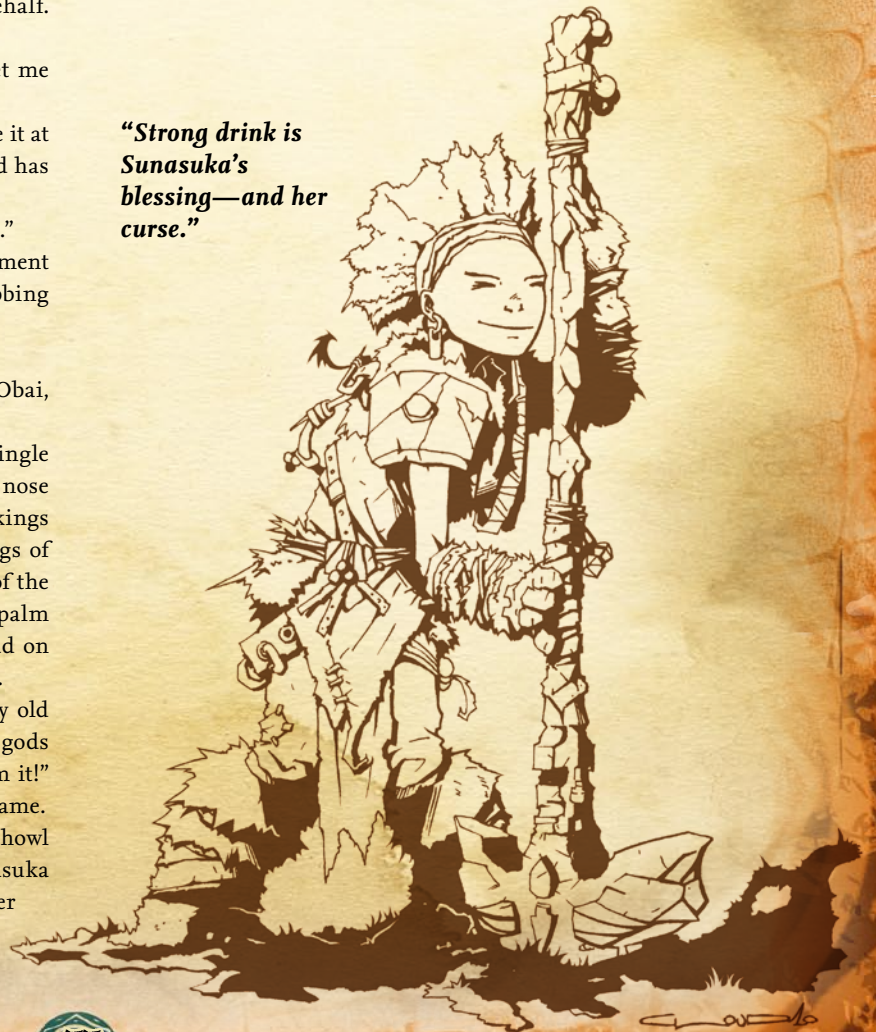
She utters commands in the universal tongue of beasts. At her bidding, vermin drop from the ceilings, roil up through the floorboards. Rats drop onto the slavers like water over the Korir Falls. Wasps, each as thick as a thumb, swarm around them, stinging. Roaches fly at their faces, buzzing and vomiting gluey spittle.

The few slavers missed by nature's onslaught advance on Sunasuka's position, but her wobbly path confounds them. Their scimitars slash the air where she should be, but isn't. Her double-headed club catches and sweeps them aside, the screams of its carved monkey faces adding to the chaos. Ducking crazily under a swung scimitar, she kicks my chair, toppling it on its side. Its damp-rotted wood crumbles on impact and I am free.

Sunasuka calls up a wall of flame to separate us from my captors. She helps me to my feet. Together we lurch from the scene. Behind us the Funeral Boat is consumed by spreading flame. The halfling looks back regretfully at the loss of yet another favorite drinking establishment.

"So something's going on, then?" she asks.

"Strong drink is Sunasuka's blessing—and her curse."



SERPENT'S SKULL



BESTIARY

THE JUNGLE KNOWS NO GOD BUT ITS OWN HUNGER. MIGHTY BEASTS ENTER, AND NOT EVEN BONES RETURN. ANCIENT RIVERS POUR ENDLESSLY IN, AND ARE DRUNK DOWN, EVERY DROP. EVEN SPIRITS, GIVEN UP BENEATH THE CANOPY, BECOME SNARED AND TANGLED—DRAGGED DOWN AMID ROOTS AND VINES. BUT THE JUNGLE'S HUNGER IS NOT A DEAD THING LIKE MINE AND YOURS. THE JUNGLE KEEPS WHAT IT EATS, MAKES IT PART OF ITSELF, AND GROWS RICH AND TALL AND EVER MORE DEADLY. AND AMID ITS FAT MILES AND HEAVY LIMBS WHAT ONCE WERE THE GHOSTS OF THINGS THAT WALK AND CRAWL OPEN NEW EYES AMID THE BRUSH, AND KNOW A NEW HUNGER. A HUNGER LIKE THE JUNGLE'S.

—BAHALOS VOA, MWANGI GUIDE

Savage inhabitants of the Mwangi Expanse prowl forth from the depths of the jungle in this month's entry into the Pathfinder Bestiary. Menaces of the endless rainforests and denizens of the wild coasts threaten those who dare the land's deadly reaches, creatures with no mercy or regard for civilization's fragile trappings. From swarms of deadly bloodhaze mosquitoes to the herald of the god of nature, few can stand before the primal ferocity and deadly tides of the savage world, and even fewer dare to intrude upon such pitiless realms and hope to survive.

IN AND OUT OF THE JUNGLE

Racing to Ruin leads the PCs on a winding route through some of the most deadly wilderness in all of Garund. Beyond the relative safety of Eleder lurk deadly jungle hunters, hostile tribes, ferocious monsters, and fauna deadlier than most monsters. The tables below present GMs with encounters customized to the two types of terrain the party will be traveling through for the majority of the adventure: the dense rainforest of the Screaming Jungle and sprawling savanna of the M'neri Plains. GMs who wish to supplement the encounters here might also look to *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Heart of the Jungle* for menaces customized to the Mwangi Expanse, or

the *Core Rulebook* or *GameMastery Guide* for a variety of environmental hazards.

Aside from the common threats listed on the random encounter tables here, the PCs might also run into menaces specific to the events of the greater Adventure Path.

Mwangi Tribesfolk: Numerous peoples inhabit the untamed reaches of the Mwangi Expanse, some deadly cannibals, some peaceful villagers. If a GM rolls an encounter with Mwangi tribesfolk, it's up to him to decide whether they are hostile hunters, peaceful gathers, or simple wanderers. At the GM's discretion, such an encounter might be a simple isolated fracas or might have ramifications later in the Adventure Path as the PCs have increased dealings with the inhabitants of the Mwangi Expanse.

Rival Faction Agents: Over the course of this volume's adventure, the PCs are likely to develop a bitter rivalry with another group of treasure seekers. Just as the interplay between opponents features in the adventure's encounters, GMs might add additional encounters to further incite this dangerous competition. Such encounters might range from traps left along likely paths to deadly ambushes to one group merely meeting the other in their travels. See page 9 for more details on the factions featured in *Racing to Ruin*.

Screaming Jungle Random Encounters

d% roll	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–6	2d6 monkeys	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 132
7–11	1 leopard	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 40
12–16	1d4 giant spiders	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 258
17–20	2d6 biloko	4	see page 82
21–25	1 botfly swarm	4	HotJ 59 ¹
26–27	1 chemosit	4	see page 86
28–32	1d4 gorillas	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 17
33–36	1d6 Mzali rangers	4	see page 35
37–43	1d6 venomous snakes	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 255
44–48	1 army ant swarm	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 16
49–52	1d6 charau-ka	5	see page 44
53–57	1d4 deinonychuses	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 84
58–62	1 giant frilled lizard	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 194
63–67	1 hippopotamus	5	see page 35
68–74	1d8 Mwangi tribesfolk	5	see page 20 ²
75–79	1d4 rival faction agents	5	see page 34
80–83	1 ankylosaurus	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 83
84–88	1 bloodhaze mosquito swarm	6	see page 84
89–92	1d6 Eloko	6	see page 39
93–95	1 girallon	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 154
96–98	1 dire tiger	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 265
99–100	1 tyrannosaurus	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 86

¹ See *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Heart of the Jungle*

² Use the stat block for Ijo warriors on this page

M'neri Plains Random Encounters

d% roll	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1 cheetah	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 40
6–9	1 cockatrice	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 48
10–13	1 giant scorpion	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 242
14–18	1d4 bat swarms	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 30
19–24	1 botfly swarm	4	HotJ 59 ¹
25–28	1d4 monitor lizards	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 194
29–32	1 rhinoceros	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 235
33–38	1d6 venomous snakes	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 255
39–43	1d4 ankhegs	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 15
44–47	1 dire lion	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 193
48–53	1d8 hyenas	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 179
54–59	1d8 Mwangi tribesfolk	5	see page 20 ²
60–64	1d6 lions	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 193
65–68	1d6 pteranodons	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 85
69–73	1d6 rival faction agents	6	see page 34
74–78	1d6 vultures	6	see page 30
79–82	2d4 ankhegs	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 15
83–87	1 elephant	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 128
88–90	2d6 giant ants	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 16
91–93	1 stegosaurus	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 85
94–97	1 dire tiger	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 265
98–100	1 triceratops	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 86



ADARO

This hybrid of human and shark holds its spear menacingly, thick, glistening saliva dripping from its razor-sharp teeth. Sleek, sharp scales cover most of the creature's body, growing thicker from the waist down where its muscular body tapers into the powerful fins and tail of a shark.

ADARO CR 3 

XP 800

NE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., low-light vision, keen scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 26 (4d10+4)

Fort +3; **Ref** +7; **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 50 ft.

Melee spear +8 (1d8+3 plus nettlefin toxin/x3), bite +7 (1d6+3/x3)

Ranged spear +8 (1d8+3/x3)

Special Attacks nettlefin toxin (1d4 rounds, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20

Feats Deadly Aim, Weapon Focus (spear)

Skills Intimidate +5, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Swim +17

Languages Aquan, Common; speak with sharks

SQ amphibious, poison use

ECOLOGY

Environment tropical oceans

Organization solitary, hunting party (2–6), or tribe (7–12)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Keen Scent (Ex) An adaro can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius underwater and can detect blood in the water at a range of up to a mile.

Poison Use (Ex) Adaros are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. They favor a paralytic toxin secreted by the flying nettlefin pufferfish.

Nettlefin Toxin: Spear—injury; *save* Fort DC 15, *frequency* 1/round for 3 rounds, *effect* paralyzed for 1 minute, *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Rain Frenzy (Ex) Adaros revere storms, and their lust for blood is amplified exponentially while it is raining. While fighting in the rain or during other stormy weather, adaros act as though affected by the *rage* spell.

Speak with Sharks (Ex) An adaro can communicate telepathically with sharks to a distance of 100 feet. This communication is limited to simple concepts, such as “come,” “defend,” or “attack.”

Malevolent humanoids of the waters, adaros are among the fiercest sentient hunters of the Arcadian Sea's tropical

reaches. Their terror is known and feared by sailors on many exotic shores, as well as by many common folk who just happen to live near the ocean. Many have witnessed a fellow sailor or fisher suddenly go rigid, a poisoned spear jutting from his guts, only to fall into the water and be taken by the vicious adaro responsible.

Individual adaros differ slightly in size and build, their most distinctive variation being their physical strength, often determined by the environment they inhabit. Tranquil, warm-water harbors are often home to adaros no more threatening than common merfolk, while cold, stormy bays produce ferocious specimens of intimidating prowess and stature—old sailors swear to having seen some the size of small whales. Most adaros fall somewhere between these two extremes. The average adaro measures 7-1/2 feet from head to tail fin, and weighs 250 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Striking with sharp spears—the heads of which typically come from whale bones or the spines of large sea creatures—most adaros coat their weapons with the poison of the deadly nettlefin pufferfish. This sticky venom is a strong paralytic that has a seizing effect on most creatures. Thanks to exposure to it from a young age, adaros are immune to nettlefin toxin, and so are never at risk of paralyzing themselves while working with it.

Strictly carnivorous, adaros feed upon their victims almost immediately after slaying them. Their brutally sharp teeth cut through bone almost as easily as skin, and their powerful digestive systems are capable of handling most organic matter. Adaros usually eat once every couple of days, gorging on meals half their weight.

Adaros mate with other members of their tribe only briefly; females spawn four to seven eggs, which males fertilize. Both female and male adaros understand the purpose of procreating to be solely to sustain the tribe, and thus develop no feelings for one another or their offspring. They tend to make nests within aquatic caverns or small stone and coral structures on the seafloor some distance from the shore, to better ensure the survival of their brood when they hatch. Gestation usually takes only 2 to 3 months, and it takes about 10 years for adaros to fully mature, during which time they hunt fish or other oceanic animals until they are capable of taking down greater prey. Adaros rarely live for more than 25 to 30 years because of their violent lifestyle, but truly powerful individuals have been known to live for half a century.

Adaros' strange relationship with storms has mesmerized and intrigued scholars for centuries. These sea-dwellers have an especial connection to the deadly creatures of the water and the wildness of foul weather, and it is not by coincidence that they attack humanoids more often during rough seas. Adaros universally worship Gozreh,

deity of the sea and weather, and fly into a frenzy when the rain clouds overhead become dark and let loose their tears. One of the more accepted theories regarding adaros' connection with the rain suggests that the hunters of the sea are children of Gozreh, manifested from the chaos of the Winds and Waves in some distant ocean beyond the horizon. When it rains, the bond between the two aspects strengthens and drives adaros into a fury akin to the storm that initiated the turbulence.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Adaros are semi-nomadic by nature; tribes travel until they find a suitable hunting ground, and leave either when their presence becomes too well known or when their game runs low. Although they have been seen on the high seas, the wandering tribes tend to stay close to shore, sometimes venturing out to raid ships leaving nearby ports. Having stealthily trailed behind a vessel for miles, waiting to strike until the boat and its passengers are too far from shore to receive immediate aid, a band of adaros swiftly and without warning attacks those onboard. Depending on the size of the ship, any number of adaros might participate in this raid, from a single hunter to dozens. The water-dwelling predators choose their targets carefully and strategically.

This is not to say those onshore are safe from the well-aimed spears of adaros. Small portside towns suffer from the occasional adaro attack, their unprotected docks easy targets for lone adaros. Larger cities have also seen their fair share of the aquatic hunters, as bands of adaros assail unwary dockworkers or any who visit the beach past dusk.

The commonality between all places adaros gravitate toward, however, is the weather. Adaros live only in waters that experience rain at least semi-frequently, and so are rarely found in such places as desert-lined coasts or frozen, arctic waters. During the rainy season, adaros behave in an almost completely different manner than usual, their tactical nature overrun by primal instinct and bloodlust. When the weather gets rough, adaros lose their inhibitions and thirst only for another kill, but it is universally understood that killing an adaro within one's own tribe is strictly taboo, and is punished by death with almost no exceptions.

Adaros usually live in tribes of no more than 100 individuals. Members observe no set hierarchy—rather, they gain esteem and honor in their small societies by taking down particularly hardy or large victims. When two tribes encounter each other, there is usually a mutual understanding that the tribe that first came to the territory in question has rightful claim to it. When feuds do arise, however, they have occasionally turned into wars—especially if such confrontations occur during rainfall—leaving many fallen adaros to wash up on the nearby shore at the end of the bloody battle.

Adaros in Mythology

Originating from Solomon Island mythology, adaros are thought to be the evil aspect of a human's soul, manifested in the form of half-fish, half-human sea spirits that live on the sun and travel to Earth via rainbows. From these prismatic bridges, adaros hurl poisoned sawfish at fishers or sailors, knocking their victims unconscious or killing them. In mythology, the adaro has a shark-fin horn, as well as a spearfish-like spike growing out of the back of its head, and at times, these sea spirits visit people in their dreams, teaching them new songs and dances.



SERPENT'S SKULL

BILOKO

This gnome-sized humanoid's face is adorned with fiery red eyes and a sharp-toothed mouth that seems too wide for its head. The creature is garbed in leaves and possesses no hair—patches of grass and moss grow from its skin instead.

BILOKO CR 1/2 

XP 200

NE Small fey

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 5 (2d6–2)

Fort –1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 1 shortspear +0 (1d4–2), 1 bite +0 (1d4–2)

Ranged 1 shortspear +4 (1d4–2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

3/day—*charm person* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 15, **Con** 8, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +1; **CMB** –2; **CMD** 10

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Climb +3, Craft (traps) +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception +6, Stealth +11, Survival +3

Languages Common, Sylvan

ECOLOGY

SQ Persuasion

Environment warm forests

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–16)

Treasure standard (4 shortspears, other gear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Persuasion (Su) Biloko can gradually insinuate their desires into the minds of those in the power of their *charm person* spell-like ability. For every 10 minutes a humanoid is under the influence of a biloko's *charm person*, the victim takes a –1 penalty on her opposed Charisma check (to a maximum of –5) when the biloko is trying to convince her to do something she would not normally do. This penalty applies to the charm of only a single biloko and is reduced back to 0 as soon as the victim breaks free or the spell ends.

Blood-red man-eaters and cunning jungle stalkers, biloko hunt those who think themselves hunters, preying upon foolish travelers and incautious jungle natives with maniacal zeal. Lanky and quick humanoids, biloko possess exaggerated, fearfully expressive facial features, including mouths capable of stretching impossibly wide. Adept at blending in amid jungle underbrush despite their brilliant coloration, these ferocious jungle fey delight in constructing deadly traps, tricking victims into deadly ambushes, and leading enthralled foes into dangerous situations.

The average biloko stands between 3 and 4 feet tall and weighs between 40 and 50 pounds, though a biloko who has recently fed might bear the weight of a far greater creature.

ECOLOGY

Wild-eyed and unpredictable, biloko are feared by many natives of the jungle and the tropical lands around their verdant hunting grounds. Frequent menaces in both the fireside tales of children and the bravest adults' nightmares, they embody the most common fears of the jungle, proving that beneath the jungle canopy lurk forces that seek to do the unwary harm and can make even experienced warriors disappear without a trace.

Biloko exclusively consume humanoid meat, and though they tend to prowl near forest-side villages, prey can be sparse at times. A biloko can live without sustenance for a lengthy period, but the hunger it eventually suffers proves nearly maddening. Sometimes fasting for weeks at a time, the intense hunger pains a biloko feels may drive it to cannibalism, though such occurrences are somewhat rare.

A biloko's mouth stretches across its face in a grotesque, unnatural fashion, and it can consume a whole human-sized creature in one terrible, hours-long bite, dislocating its jaw like a snake in order to do so. With the aid of its acidic saliva, its powerful maw is capable of grinding flesh and bone into a concentrated, compact form, allowing it to digest and survive off of a single meal for the extended period of time it may be forced to fast while awaiting new prey. If uninterrupted, an eager, starving biloko can swallow an adult human in about 3 hours.

Biloko are related to the jungle spriggans known as Eloko, though they are far less organized and more at home in the jungle depths. While wilder and more bloodthirsty than their spriggan kin, biloko possess several similar physical traits, though their gaunt builds and bright red skins make the two unmistakably distinct. Some biloko look on their fey kin as strangely colored relatives, while other biloko attack them just as they would any other stranger. Thus, little special connection exists between the two races. Eloko are further detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Heart of the Jungle*.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Biloko are cruel, mischievous humanoids, known and feared by all who dare live near a forest plagued with the vile beings. Non-locals are urged never to travel alone; those foolish enough to ignore these warnings are seldom seen again. Whether hunting for food or journeying through the wilderness, locals know well to move in groups.

While biloko are intelligent beings, their reclusive habits and lust for flesh drive them from any sort of civilized society. They keep mostly to deep, dark areas of



the forest, and are rarely seen on the woods' outskirts. Their numbers are small enough that it is rare for two unacquainted biloko to run into each other on a given day, but the species is sufficiently widespread to pose a threat to all travelers.

Biloko are not social creatures by nature, but recognize the benefit of traveling in a group. When stealth is not of primary concern, several biloko might band together in order to hunt. While not organized by a tribal system, biloko often identify other biloko long residing in a region as friendly, although they remain cautious when encountering newcomers. They rarely see others of their kind as enemies, but more typically as rivals who begrudgingly allow one another to hunt on the same turf.

Biloko rarely deal with other sentient beings—save during a meal. They choose lives of isolation from other races, usually dwelling within dark forests where their fiendish acts are less likely to be noticed by strangers. Large, hollow trees provide shelter for the small humanoids, who drape cloths of moss and ivy across the gaping portals behind which they slumber. A biloko often waits stealthily in his hideout, perched in one position for most of the day as he hungrily anticipates an unwary group of travelers or a lone wanderer. Once such a party or individual has passed, the monster creeps out of his hole, giving his prey a wide berth as he stalks it. At a time he deems appropriate—usually when a traveler is alone or has strayed from the group—the biloko whistles, creating an enchanting melody that draws his target near. The encounter ultimately ends in either the victim's hideous consumption or the biloko's flight.

Far from being anchored to his hiding spot, a biloko often leaves his nook to wander the forest in search of other hiding spots on the edges of trails or well-trodden paths. Boring through a stump or the trunk of a tree with his razor-sharp claws, he can create a new abode in the span of several hours. A single biloko can have as many as a dozen hollow tree-holes, which provide valuable landmarks in the often complex jungle-maze he inhabits, as well as safety from pursuing predators or attackers.

During his exploratory treks through the thick brush, a biloko might acquire dozens of fruits and berries for their bright colors, carrying the goods back to his nearest hiding hole to gaze upon later. Biloko have little interest in metals and artifacts, though they occasionally stumble upon a particular object they find especially attractive or interesting. They do, however, love gems, as the brightly colored crystals appear dazzling in the creatures' enhanced vision. This sense of sight, which makes anything not green in color stand out magnificently, helps biloko spot prey even in the thickest of jungles, where the skyscraping canopy blots out the sun for miles.

In the Real World

Legends of biloko originate in Central Africa, where the dwarf-like creatures are said to be spirits of ancestors. They are said to populate the darkest regions of the rainforest, and hoard their treasures—which usually consist of berries and meat—in the hollow trunks of trees. Some stories and folklorists say a biloko exists because of a grudge it holds against the living. It exacts its cruel punishment on any wanderer foolish enough to go into the forest alone, ringing a tiny bell to enchant its victim before persuading it to give up its life. Heroes and sorcerers are able to conquer biloko with magic, but must possess an amulet or enchanted trinket that can ward off the biloko's gripping spell.



SERPENT'S SKULL

BLOODHAZE MOSQUITO SWARM

A high-pitched whine issues forth from the haze of this surging crimson cloud. Within, thousands of tiny forms whirl in agitation, each a tiny insect with a needle-like proboscis.

BLOODHAZE MOSQUITO SWARM CR 6



XP 2,400

N Fine vermin (swarm)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 size)

hp 71 (13d8+13)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** weapon damage

Weaknesses swarm traits

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)

Melee swarm (1 Con damage and sleeping sickness)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks cling, Con damage, distraction (DC 17), disease

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** —, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +9; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Skills Fly +10, Perception +9; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception

ECOLOGY

Environment warm forests and swamps

Organization solitary, pair, pestilence (3–6 swarms), or plague (7–12 swarms)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cling (Ex) If a creature leaves a bloodhaze mosquito swarm's square, the swarm takes 1d6 points of damage as dozens of insects tenaciously cling to the victim. A creature with bloodhaze mosquitoes clinging to it takes 1 point of Constitution damage at the end of its turn for the next 1d4 rounds. As a full-round action, the creature can remove the mosquitoes with a DC 18 Reflex save or by immersing itself in water. High winds or any amount of damage from an area-affecting effect destroys all clinging mosquitoes. The save DC is Dexterity-based. Once a group of clinging mosquitoes has dealt 4 points of Constitution damage, the mosquitoes detach and disperse to digest their meal.

Disease (Ex) Bloodhaze mosquitoes are bearers of a terrifying and deadly disease common to the jungle, known to most locals as sleeping sickness.

Sleeping Sickness: Swarm—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *onset* 1d2 days; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d4 Wisdom damage and target is fatigued, *cure* 2 consecutive saves or arsenic (see page 35 for more details).

Thousands of species of insects make their home within the shelter of the Mwangi Expanse, but few elicit as much

dread as the voracious bloodhaze mosquito. Migratory in nature, these ravenous insects amass in great numbers, forming swarms capable of feasting on the blood of humanoids and beasts alike. Perhaps worse, the crimson parasites carry a debilitating disease known for sapping the vitality of its victims. Because of this potent mix of teeming esurience and virulent pestilence, bloodhaze mosquitoes panic almost any community they threaten. Legends describe crimson clouds decimating entire populations on their flight from breeding pool to jungle interior. Only high winds, drought, and torrential rain consistently keep them at bay. Thankfully, the swarms also wax and wane with fluctuations in local prey populations. In combination with the mosquitoes' relatively short lifespan, competition for food helps keep their numbers under marginal control.

A typical bloodhaze swarm contains more than 10,000 flying mosquitoes. Individually, each mosquito is smaller than a child's fingernail, yet together they form a terrifying assault. Their iridescent wings can refract light, creating a shimmering effect as they move in unison. This effect proves disconcerting to most animals, which wisely flee such clouds, their panic often alerting other jungle inhabitants to the swarm's presence.

ECOLOGY

Bloodhaze mosquitoes always sate themselves on the blood of other animals, using their darkvision and ability to detect pheromones to track prey. They typically lie in wait near water sources where they can both breed and feed on animals that come to drink. Warm-blooded creatures draw their attention more quickly than amphibians or reptiles, though even lizards, snakes, and frogs become food sources during leaner times.

Not only does blood provide sustenance to bloodhaze mosquitoes, but the females actually require it to reach egg-laying maturity. Females must also have water in which to lay their eggs, though even a sewage-filled mud puddle will suffice. A single female mosquito can lay up to 100 eggs, which hatch into larvae after 2 days. Many of these eggs suffer the predation of fish and other aquatic scavengers during this time of vulnerability. The surviving eggs hatch, releasing larvae that molt and shed their skins while feeding on organic matter and microorganisms in the water. Then they enter a pupal stage, conserving energy as they undergo a final transformation before finally emerging as fully grown adults. The entire hatching and growth process takes less than a single week.

After reaching maturity, bloodhaze mosquitoes swiftly take to the air, naturally drawn to one another through their pheromones and banding together in swarms strong enough to challenge any animal for territorial



supremacy. The life of a typical bloodhaze mosquito spans only 3 months. They spend that time ravenously feeding in their swarms, consuming enough blood that their females can continue laying eggs. The mosquitoes possess no maternal or protective instincts, however, quickly abandoning their progeny before dying out to be replaced by them.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Bloodhaze mosquitoes live in tropical wetlands, only venturing farther away when hunting becomes scarce or high winds carry them into other regions. Unintelligent predators, the mosquitoes give off pheromones to maintain their swarm's cohesion. Specific scent markers for distress, mating, and food rule most of their behavior. Powerful, false odors or thick and pungent smoke can sometimes mask or disrupt this communication, as can immersion in water, leading to traditions among many native peoples of coating themselves in sulphurous mud or burning reeking torches during the height of the mosquitoes' feeding seasons.

Although bloodhaze mosquitoes don't feed on other insects, they do prove highly territorial. While swarming, a group of the mosquitoes will attack and kill any other insects they encounter. Such ferocity can wipe out whole hives or nests of insectile jungle inhabitants, potentially having farther-reaching ramifications for other creatures speedy or canny enough to escape the swarms. In more dramatic instances, swarms might fell massive jungle insects or the populations of whole areas, leaving trails of crunching insectile corpses to mark their path.

MWANGI MENACES

Deadly beasts, trackless wildernesses, and violent storms typify most explorers' visions of travel through the Mwangi Expanse. Yet however real and deadly such perils may be, they are hardly the only threats travelers through these lands face. Diseases, vermin, parasites, rot, and uncountable other hazards unite in an endless assault against those who intrude upon these wild lands. Maladies like the sleeping sickness carried by bloodhaze mosquito swarms and other insects present just one such danger. While the following details present that disease, GMs who seek to make their tropical travels feel distinct from adventures elsewhere on Golarion should check out Chapter 1 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Heart of the Jungle* for details on jungle maladies and other threats.

SLEEPING SICKNESS

Endemic throughout the Sodden Lands and the Mwangi Expanse, the parasitic affliction known as "sleeping

sickness" is spread when flying insects inject tiny parasites into their unsuspecting victim's bloodstream, thus inducing fever, headache, joint pain, swelling of glands in the back and neck, and most notably fatigue. The disease gradually infects the brain, causing confusion, reduced coordination, difficulty keeping track of time, and insomnia.

While exceedingly dangerous, even when administered by a practiced healer, the best cure for this disease is dosing the patient with the poison arsenic (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 558). If the patient survives, there's a cumulative 30% chance per dose that the disease is immediately cured.

SLEEPING SICKNESS

Type disease (parasite), **injury**; Save Fortitude DC 14

Onset 1d2 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d4 Wis damage and target is fatigued; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves or arsenic (see text)



CHEMOSIT

This massive, shaggy beast uses long and muscular forearms to raise itself onto its hind legs and beats its chest like a gorilla. Despite its ape-like stance, its frame is far heavier and its features more primitive, its powerful muzzle and gnashing canines bespeaking terrible, bestial savagery.

CHEMOSIT

CR 4



XP 1,200

N Large magical beast

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

hp 47 (5d10+20)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +11 (1d6+7), 1 bite +11 (1d8+7)

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

Special Attacks pounce, rake (1d6), terrifying roar

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills Climb +15, Stealth +15; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth

ECOLOGY

Environment warm forests

Organization solitary, pair, or troop (3–6)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brain Eater (Su) Should a chemosit kill an opponent with a coup de grace attack, it breaks open the creature's skull and devours what's inside. If the creature killed is of one of the following classes or creature types, the chemosit gains the associated benefit. If the creature killed falls into multiple categories, the chemosit chooses a single benefit to gain. With the exception of healing, the effects provided by this ability affect a chemosit for a number of minutes equal to 5 times its Hit Dice.

Animal: The chemosit regains a number of hit points equal to the victim's Hit Dice, and the DC of its terrifying roar increases by +2.

Arcane Spell-Caster: The chemosit regains a number of hit points equal to 1d4 times the victim's Hit Dice and gains SR 15.

Divine Spell-Caster: The chemosit regains a number of hit points equal to 1d8 times the victim's Hit Dice.

Humanoid: The chemosit regains a number of hit points equal to 1d4 times the victim's Hit Dice.

Outsider: The chemosit regains a number of hit points equal to 1d4 times the victim's Hit Dice but is confused for 1d4 rounds.

Monstrous Humanoid: The chemosit regains a number of hit points equal to 1d4 times the victim's Hit Dice and is affected as per the spell *rage*.

Undead: The chemosit takes 1d4 points of damage and is sickened for 1d4 rounds. In addition, the chemosit detects as undead for the purposes of spells like *detect undead*, though it is in no other way treated as an undead creature.

Terrifying Roar (Su) The terrifying roar of the chemosit unnerves even the bravest souls. Any creatures within a 300-foot spread must make a DC 15 Will save or become shaken for 1d4 rounds. This is a sonic mind-affecting fear affect. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to the same chemosit's roar for the next 24 hours. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

From the time their children are young, Mwangi tribesfolk tell them chilling tales of the savage, child-eating chemosit. While most believe these stories hold little truth and serve only to keep children from wandering too far from their villages, others know better. Few who have witnessed the gruesome work of the chemosit survive. Bearing terrible scars, both physical and mental, they recall the creature's utter savagery and inhuman strength. Tribes living in close proximity to chemosits believe them to be the living embodiment of wrathful gods or nature spirits, and pay them grisly sacrifices. In such places, those who suffer the beast's attacks are often blamed for the violence and exiled. In other regions, evil shamans capable of summoning or commanding these beasts gain great power and infamy. It is a common practice for warring tribes to pay such shamans to summon a chemosit to plague the villages of their enemies.

Chemosits stand over 9 feet tall on average and weigh upward of 750 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Chemosits (or Mwangi ape-bears, as northerners sometimes refer to the creatures) are readily identified by their thick and bristly dark-blue fur and broad, stumpy tails. Beneath their fur, coils of muscle stretch across their broad frames, and they move with ferocious confidence. Chemosits can walk upright or run on all fours, and are able climbers. A chemosit's face is a mix of simian and ursine features, with a long lower jaw and the sharp, powerful teeth of a dedicated carnivore. Perhaps its most identifiable characteristic, however, is its terrifying roar. On still nights, its grim echoes roll through the forests, leaving all who hear it sleepless with fright.

Strict carnivores, chemosits go through monthly feeding cycles. During the first cycle, they barely eat, often passing the entire month without feeding. During the second cycle, they emerge as voracious predators.

Chemosits hunt nocturnally, preferably on dark moonless nights. Able climbers, they often hide in trees, dropping down upon prey from great heights. They favor easy prey, such as cattle, but they consider humans a delicacy and do not hesitate to attack and devour lone travelers or small groups, their favorite morsel being the brain. Feasting upon brains invigorates chemosits, though in varying ways depending on the type of creatures they consume. Some even say that chemosits take on the knowledge and powers of creatures whose brains they ingest, a legend supported by the strange powers or behaviors exhibited by individuals that have recently gorged. Chemosits often stalk villages, entering each night by stealth and stealing away with sleeping victims, preferably children, the infirm, or others too weak to defend themselves.

A small number of bold or reckless exotic animal trainers value chemosits for their hunting and tracking abilities. They pay top coin for newborns or cubs, and attempt to raise them in captivity, training them to track down and ferret out prey. A competent handler can typically train them to follow simple commands, particularly instinctive concepts like “hunt” and “kill.” Most captive-bred chemosits are accomplished trackers. Once they taste fresh blood, however, they eventually turn feral; thus trainers typically attempt to get to targets before their pets.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Chemosits live in Mwangi’s most remote and fiercest jungles, where they can find massive boab trees capable of supporting their tremendous weight. They choose regions with large trees near fresh water supplies and, if possible, caves. For the untrained, chemosits’ territory is difficult to detect. They leave behind few traces of their passing, fastidiously scratching out their tracks and burying their dung. Principally arboreal, chemosits spend the majority of their waking time climbing through the shadowy understory. Caves serve chemosits not as shelters, but as repositories for the remains of their kills. It is unknown why chemosits create such middens, though some suggest they use the scent of carrion to attract prey.

Chiefly nocturnal, chemosits retire to the safety and shadows of high trees by day. Once darkness falls, the creature hunts with reckless voraciousness.

Chemosits live in small patriarchal clans dominated by an alpha male. Male chemosits are solitary hunters, and establish their clan status through their kills. As they seek out larger game, particularly creatures not found in the deep forest, their hunting grounds often grow to extend beyond the borders of their clan territory. Clan members that display the largest and most impressive kills rise in status and gain access to preferred hunting grounds and mates.

Real-World Chemosits

“Chemosit” is an alternate name for a Central African cryptid known as the Nandi bear (named after the Nandi people of Kenya). Its numerous descriptions vary greatly, though in all accounts it is described as an ape-like beast sharing the features of other animals, usually a bear but sometimes a hyena, aardvark, or even humans. Though chemosits are documented primarily in the tales of indigenous peoples and dozens of written accounts by British colonists and explorers during the early half of the 20th century, modern cryptozoologists continue to pursue the chemosit, with many investigators suggesting it fits the physical description of a chalicothere—a large, knuckle-walking herbivore that lived during the Early Pleistocene era.



SERPENT'S SKULL

PERSONIFICATION OF FURY

This creature is over 40 feet tall, and looks like a cross between an air elemental and a water elemental, or perhaps a black storm cloud compressed into a vaguely humanoid shape. Jagged bolts of lightning form bright, eye-like spots within its churning depths.

PERSONIFICATION OF FURY

CR 15



XP 51,200

N Huge outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar, water)

Init +16; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +24

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 21, flat-footed 17 (+12 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, -2 size)

hp 218 (19d10+114); **fast healing** 10

Fort +17, **Ref** +23, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities air mastery; **DR** 15/—; **Immune** cold, electricity, elemental traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 100 ft. (perfect), swim 90 ft.

Melee 2 slams +29 (2d10+10/19-20 plus 2d6 cold or electricity)

Ranged 2 energy arcs +29 ranged touch (2d6 cold or electricity/18-20)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks drench, vortex (10-60 ft. high, 2d10+10, DC 29), water mastery, whirlwind (10-60 ft. high, 2d10+10, DC 29)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 19th; concentration +23)

At will—*create water*, *invisibility* (self only), *summon monster II* (air or water elemental only)

5/day—*air breathing* (as *water breathing*, but allowing water-breathing creatures to breathe air or water), *control water*, *water breathing*

3/day—*control weather* (as a druid)

1/day—*beast shape IV*, *summon monster IX* (air or water elementals only)

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 35, **Con** 22, **Int** 15, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 54

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Acrobatics +25, Escape Artist +31, Fly +38, Knowledge (nature) +21, Knowledge (planes) +15, Knowledge (religion) +24, Perception +24, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +26, Survival +13, Swim +18

Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Druid, Ignan, Sylvan, Terran

SQ change shape (air or water elemental, *elemental body IV*)

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Plane of Air or Plane of Water)

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Air Mastery (Ex) Airborne creatures take a -1 penalty on attack

and damage rolls against the herald.

Drench (Ex) The herald's touch puts out nonmagical flames of Huge size or smaller. The herald can dispel magical fire it touches as *dispel magic* (caster level 19th).

Energy Arc (Ex) The herald can throw blasts of cold or electricity to damage foes. These blasts have a maximum range of 100 feet.

Storm Spirit (Su) Once per day, the herald can merge with an unattended object of Large, Huge, or Gargantuan size, giving it life as an animated object (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 14). The herald flows into the animated object, and cannot itself be harmed while in this form, though the animated object can be damaged as normal. The herald controls the object and may speak through it and use any of its own spell-like abilities in addition to those of the animated object, but may not use any of its own extraordinary or supernatural abilities. The herald may animate an object for an indefinite period, and may leave whenever it chooses, though it may not animate another object for 24 hours after leaving. The herald can be driven out of an object by *dismissal* or by taking 10 or more points of damage from a channel energy effect utilizing the Elemental Channel feat to damage air or water elementals. If driven out, the herald appears in an adjacent space to the now-inert object and is stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Vortex (Su) The herald can create a whirlpool at will as a standard action. This ability functions identically to its whirlwind special attack, but can only form underwater and cannot leave the water.

Water Mastery (Ex) The herald gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if both it and its opponent are touching water. These modifiers apply to bull rush and overrun maneuvers, whether the elemental is initiating or resisting these kinds of attacks. (Unlike a water elemental, the herald does not have a penalty if it or its opponent is touching the ground.)

Gozreh's herald, Personification of Fury, is a living elemental storm of air and water. It may in fact have once been an actual storm given independent life and intelligence, but it does not remember anything before awakening in the service of Gozreh. Its powers allow it to shift itself fully into air or water or even to assume the form of a beast, though it is most comfortable in its dual-material elemental shape.

Unusual in that it is one of the few elemental creatures serving the Wind and the Waves, Personification of Fury is often courted by the elemental lords to join their ranks as a high-ranking general or advisor on the mortal world, but Fury dislikes the lords' squabbling and petty wars among their kind, seeing itself as a perfect example of how in the material realm elements should mix together without jealousy. It remains neutral in the dealings of various planar entities, and with Gozreh's permission it sometimes acts as an intermediary between rival forces—but only in



a direct, blunt, and expedient way, for it is a creature of force and action, not gentle diplomacy. Its actions have attracted a small number of sycophants and refugees from the elemental wars, air and water elementals tired of battle and looking for other ways to fill their immortal lives; these creatures follow Fury and allow it to summon them, and in faithful service to it they allow mortals to summon them. When the herald is on the Material Plane and left idle (such as before a battle or while guarding a sacred place), it entertains itself by summoning dozens of Small elemental minions and sending them scurrying about, letting them explore for a few minutes and get into mischief.

Though Gozreh is both male and female, alternates genders frequently, and answers to both male and female pronouns, Personification of Fury is genderless, and is easily offended if someone calls it a “he” or “she.” It also dislikes being called “the” Personification of Fury, as if its name were a title; if a speaker doesn’t want to use its full name, it expects to be called “Fury.” It has a short temper, and has been known to blast even servants of Gozreh with cold or lightning if sufficiently annoyed (though more as a warning than with intent to kill)—those who anger it receive no mercy just because they share the same deific master. It prefers to be conjured during active storms or when such phenomena are nearby; a caster who calls the herald under these circumstances (whether natural or invoked by magic such as control weather) gains a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks to bargain with it. The creature is also fond of certain monoliths and standing stones used by the church of Gozreh, some of which include large stone faces or roughly anthropomorphic figures. It often flows into such idols, giving them life and speaking as though it were the voice of Gozreh. Having a penchant for dramatics, it might use its control over an object and varied abilities to pose as the deity on a whim or to guide mortals on a desired course.

As a living storm, the herald can provide life-sustaining water,

whisk others to safety, save mortals from drowning, or rain down watery death upon the enemies of Gozreh. It is comfortable doing any of these things, and has no objection to taking lives—even innocent lives, if this serves the will of Gozreh.

ECOLOGY

Personification of Fury is an elemental outsider, and does not need to breathe, eat, or sleep. However, it enjoys mixing with the thin air on mountaintops, skimming misty valleys, or tasting the icy waters of the deep ocean. It sometimes forgets its own strength, and may accidentally crush, freeze, or electrocute nearby creatures and objects—its errant bolts of lightning have started many forest fires. It is amoral in this destruction, just as it is in any help it unintentionally provides. Certain magical pools, springs, and streams in the mortal realm may be inadvertent manifestations of its presence, changing the ecology of the region where they appear for hundreds or thousands of years.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Fury has no urge to reproduce or create more of its kind; interacting with its minions and mortal worshipers of Gozreh is the closest it comes to familial interests.

On the rare occasions when one of its elementals is permanently slain, it has been known to grieve for years, becoming more withdrawn and prone to outbursts, though its attitude is more that of a creature who has lost a pet than that of someone who has lost a friend or relative. When it finishes grieving, it usually travels to the Plane of Air or Plane of Water, working with the lords there in hopes of finding another like-minded minor elemental minion who may replace the one who was lost. Because the herald can recover from almost any injury as long as a small portion of it remains, some elementals wandering the Material Plane may actually be derived from its substance, cleaved off in some mighty battle and only becoming self-aware after gathering sufficient air or water—though they would not recognize any kinship.



SERPENT'S SKULL



EZREN

MALE HUMAN

DEITY Atheist
HOMELAND Absalom

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Wizard 4
ALIGNMENT Neutral Good
INITIATIVE +3
SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 11
DEXTERITY 9
CONSTITUTION 12
INTELLIGENCE 19
WISDOM 15
CHARISMA 9

DEFENSE

HP 20
AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11 (+2 armor, -1 Dex)
Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +6

SKILLS

Appraise +9, Diplomacy +1, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (geography) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Linguistics +11, Perception +5, Spellcraft +11, Swim +1

FEATS

Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll

OFFENSE

Melee cane +2 (1d6)
Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8/19-20)
Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 11
Special Abilities arcane bond, hand of the apprentice (7/day)

Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +8)
2nd—*bull's strength*, *scorching ray*, *web* (DC 16)
1st—*alarm*, *magic missile* (2), *shield*
o (at will)—*daze* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*

Familiar weasel named Sneak

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 1st, 50 charges); **Other Gear** cane (as club), light crossbow with 20 bolts, dagger, *bracers of armor* +2, *pearl of power 1st level*, backpack, rations (4), scroll case, spell component pouch, spellbook, 15 gp

Born to a successful spice merchant in one of Absalom's more affluent districts, Ezren's childhood was pleasantly safe. This changed when his father was charged with heresy. Ezren spent much of his adult life attempting to prove his father's innocence, only to discover his father was guilty. The revelation shook to the core Ezren's faith in family and church and he abandoned both, setting out into the world to find a new life. Ezren fell naturally into the ways of wizardry, and swiftly became a gifted spellcaster.



KYRA

FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY Sarenrae
HOMELAND Qadira

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Cleric 4
ALIGNMENT Neutral Good
INITIATIVE -1
SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 13
DEXTERITY 8
CONSTITUTION 14
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 18
CHARISMA 12

DEFENSE

HP 29
AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, -1 Dex, +2 shield)
Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +11

SKILLS

Diplomacy +8, Heal +11, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +8, Swim -3

FEATS

Channel Smite, Iron Will, Selective Channel

OFFENSE

Melee +1 scimitar +5 (1d6+2/18-20)
Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8/19-20)
Base Atk +3; CMB +4; CMD 13
Special Abilities channel positive energy 4/day (DC 13, 2d6 [+4 vs. undead]), sun's blessing

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; conc. +8)
6/day—rebuke death (1d4+2)

Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +8)
2nd—*aid*, *bull's strength*, *heat metal*^P (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*
1st—*bles*, *command* (DC 15), *divine favor*, *endure elements*^S, *shield of faith*
o (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mending*
D Domain spell; Domains Healing, Sun

Combat Gear *potion of lesser restoration*, *wand of cure light wounds* (CL 1st, 50 charges); **Gear** +1 *chainmail*, heavy wooden shield, +1 *scimitar*, light crossbow with 20 bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, backpack, silver holy symbol, rations (6), 75 gp

Kyra was one of the few survivors of a brutal raid on her hometown, and on the smoking ruins of her village she swore her life and sword arm to Sarenrae. Possessed of a fierce will, pride in her faith, and skill with the scimitar, Kyra has traveled far since her trial by fire. She lost her family and home that fateful day, yet where another might be consumed by anger and a thirst for revenge, Kyra has found peace in the Dawnflower, and in the belief that, if she can prevent even one death at evil hands, her own losses will not have been in vain.





FEMALE ELF

DEITY Calistria
HOMELAND Varisia

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Rogue 4
ALIGNMENT Chaotic Neutral
INITIATIVE +4
SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 12
DEXTERITY 18
CONSTITUTION 12
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 13
CHARISMA 10

DEFENSE

HP 29
AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)
Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +3; +2 vs. enchantments
Senses low-light vision
Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge

SKILLS

Acrobatics +11, Bluff +7, Climb +8, Disable Device +11, Perception +10, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +11, Swim +8

FEATS

Dodge, Weapon Finesse

OFFENSE

Melee +1 rapier +8 (1d6+2/18-20)
Ranged dagger +7 (1d4+1/19-20)
Base Atk +3; CMB +4; CMD 19
Special Abilities sneak attack +2d6, trapfinding +2, trap sense +1

Rogue Talents bleeding attack, trap spotter

Combat Gear acid, alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cat's grace* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*; **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, +1 rapier, daggers (12), *cloak of resistance* +1, backpack, grappling hook, hooded lantern, oil (5), rations (3), silk rope, thieves' tools, 25 gp

Merisiel's life experiences have taught her to enjoy things to their fullest as they occur, since it's impossible to tell when the good times might end. Never the sharpest knife in the drawer, Merisiel makes up for this by carrying at least a dozen of them on her person. She hasn't met a problem yet that can't, in one way or another, be solved with things that slice. While she's always on the move and working on her latest batch of plots for easy money, in the end it comes down to being faster than everyone else—either on her feet, or with her beloved blades. She wouldn't have it any other way.



MALE HUMAN

DEITY Cayden Cailean
HOMELAND Andoran

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Fighter 4
ALIGNMENT Neutral Good
INITIATIVE +7
SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 16
DEXTERITY 16
CONSTITUTION 12
INTELLIGENCE 13
WISDOM 8
CHARISMA 10

DEFENSE

HP 34
AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)
Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +0

SKILLS

Climb +8, Intimidate +7, Perception -1, Survival +6, Swim +8

FEATS

Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

OFFENSE

Melee +1 longsword +9 (1d8+6/19-20) or
Dual Wielding +1 longsword +7 (1d8+6/19-20) and +1 short sword +6 (1d6+2/19-20)
Ranged mwk shortbow +8 (1d6 +3/x3)
Base Atk +4; CMB +7; CMD 20
Special Abilities armor training 1, bravery +1

Combat Gear alchemist's fire, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, +1 longsword, +1 short sword, masterwork composite shortbow with 20 arrows, backpack, rations (2), silk rope, 14 gp

Born a farmer's son in the quiet Andoren countryside, Valeros spent his youth dreaming of adventure and exploring the world. For the past several years, he's been a mercenary with the Band of the Mauler, a guard for the Aspis Consortium, a freelance bounty hunter, and hired muscle for a dozen different employers. Gone is his youthful naivete, replaced by scars and the resolve of a veteran warrior. While noble at heart, Valeros hides this beneath a jaded, sometimes crass demeanor, often claiming that there's no better way to end a day's adventuring than with "an evening of hard drinking and a night of soft company."



CITY OF SEVEN SPEARS

by James Jacobs, Kevin Kulp, and Rob McCreary

Lost no more, the ruined city of Saventh-Yhi lies ready for exploration and plunder. Yet, as the adventurers soon discover, the ancient metropolis is far from abandoned. Tribes of menacing jungle natives, monstrous lurkers, and other unscrupulous explorers make investigating the crumbling towers and winding streets a perilous venture. But more than spear tips and greedy rivals wait in the ancient shadows, and time has not erased all the dangers of mighty Saventh-Yhi.

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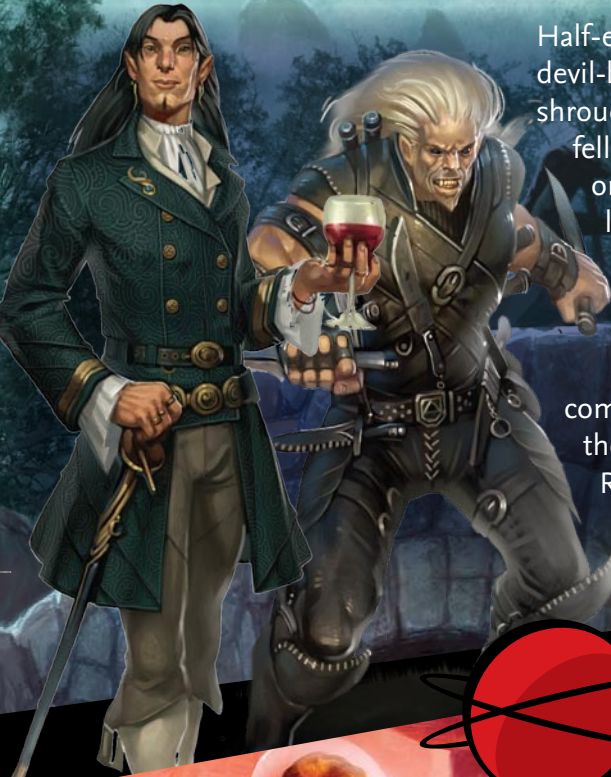


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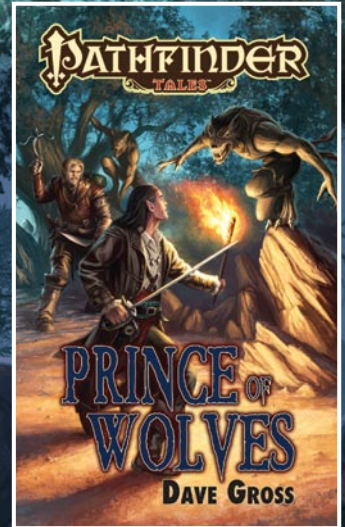
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Mwangi Fauna

Maka-Yika

Native to the Oubinga River in the Kaava Lands, the voracious maka-yika have supposedly been sighted in other Mwangi rivers. These crimson fish resemble piranhas in more than shape, for they are capable of flensing a human-sized body to bones in a matter of minutes. Some hold them sacred, but most simply avoid their waters entirely.

Hellsting Wasp

Brightly colored and aggressive, the hellsting wasp can grow to astonishing size. Unlike its smaller kin, its papery nests only house a relatively small number, but when each wasp is the size of a horse, numbers are less important. The strange tendency for hellsting wasp queens to mutate into fiendish monsters makes them even more dangerous, and hints at an otherworldly origin.



The Race is On

Finally reaching the port city of Eleder, the adventurers arrive with knowledge of the route to the lost city of Saventh-Yhi. But new rivals are also on the trail of the legendary metropolis, and soon the race is on to reach the fabled ruin and claim its unimaginable treasures. Will the adventurers ally with ambitious explorers like the treasure-seeking Pathfinder Society, the unscrupulous Aspis Consortium, the gold-hungry Shackles Pirates, or others on their quest into the jungle's depths? And what dangers will they face as they enter the Screaming Jungle, one of the deadliest wildernesses on all of Golarion?

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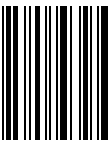
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