



XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS

Sands of Fate and Fortune Expedition Adventure #4 An Adventure for 6th Level Characters (Scaled for 4th to 8th Levels of Play)

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Sources: Draconomicon [Andy Collins, Skip Williams, James Wyatt], Dragon Magic [Owen K.C. Stephens, Rodney Thompson], Eberron Campaign Setting [Keith Baker, Bill Slavicsek, James Wyatt], Monster Manual II [Ed Bonny, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Skip Williams, Steve Winter], Sandstorm [Bruce R. Cordell, Jennifer Clarke Wilkes, J.D. Wiker], Secrets of Xen'drik [Keith Baker, Jason Bulmahn, Amber Scott], Spell Compendium [Matthew Sernett]

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Adventure Background

In a time before time, the three great progenitor wyrms—Khyber, Eberron, and Siberys—battled for supremacy. At the end of that great battle, Siberys was broken into infinite pieces in the sky, Khyber was trapped in just as many pieces underground, and Eberron sacrificed itself to connect the two and give rise to life. Throughout the land, the remnants of the dragons became manifest in the draconic Prophecy.

The first great creatures were the dragons, who ruled over Eberron. A time came, however, when the barrier between the planes was rent asunder, and demons of horrid aspect poured through. The dragons fought valiantly to quell the tide of horror that swept over Eberron, but the demons were too strong, and soon the plight of the dragons was dire. Just when all hope seemed lost, the dragons happened upon a gift from their sires: the draconic Prophecy. They gathered up and studied the Prophecy, and soon it gave them the power to drive the demons back into the depths of Khyber.

One of the first places the draconic Prophecy was discovered by the dragons was at a sacred place where dragons went to commune with their ancestors. During the battle with the demons, this place became a haven, hiding place, and staging area for the dragons. Many dragons, injured beyond hope by the demonic forces, were brought to this place to die. The dragons soon took to calling the area “Dragonfell Canyon.”

When all of the information about the draconic Prophecy was studied in this canyon, and the war with the demons had ended, the Dragonfell Canyon went forgotten by a majority of the dragons. When the dragons finally fled Xen'drik to inhabit Argonnessen, very few dragons even remembered the place existed. However, a few dragons, those who have the greatest interest in studying and forwarding the fruition of the draconic Prophecy, still honor the area as a sacred place of great power.

The brass dragon Rilydroloquas is one of those dragons. He has studied the Prophecy with a zeal unmatched by many of his kind. He has taken up residence in one of the ruins within Dragonfell Canyon. Rilydroloquas, however, sees the humanoids that study and manipulate the Prophecy as nuisances at best, and threats to the true fulfillment of the Prophecy at worst. He recognizes that humanoids have a role to play in the Prophecy, but he does not feel them worthy of understanding that role.

Rilydroloquas resides in the ruins, studying and meditating. Occasionally an adventurer or some other curiosity seeker stumbles upon the ruins, and Rilydroloquas holds them prisoner while he talks to them, learning everything he can about them and their lives, as he believes all things affect, and are affected by, the Prophecy. Creatures with draconic blood, or creatures that bear a dragonmark, are of particular interest to the dragon. He also has made connections with a number of creatures in the area around the ruins, which rest in the mountains of the northern reaches of the Menechtarun Desert. In fact, a clan of bhuka serves his needs, as long as he does not ask them to perform tasks that conflict with their lawful good leanings.

Recently, the Prophecy has warned Rilydroloquas that creatures would be coming that might have a great impact on the fate of dragonkind. The brass dragon fears that this might mean the end of the dragon race; however, the Prophecy has also led him to believe that he must not have a direct hand in the killing of these creatures. The first creature to come to Rilydroloquas after his discovery was a young bhuka from a distance clan who bore an aberrant dragonmark. The dragon believes that the presence of this young boy brings about the most favorable circumstances when one attempts to bend the Prophecy to his or her will: an extremely powerful charm of good fortune. With that, he has held the bhuka in his chambers.

Recently, some dwarven explorers came to the ruins looking for treasure, hearing tell that this area was once a place revered by dragons. Unfortunately for the dwarves, they fell pray to a trap that ended their lives. The human who brought them to the ruins, however, knows of the location of the ruins and plans to come back for them. Fortunately, the PCs also have access to bits of the Prophecy, and this man is tied to their future. Whether their fortune is good or bad is yet to be seen.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs believe they are on a mission to the ruined city of Mel-Aqat. They stop at an oasis marketplace to refresh their supplies, and they see something that, when viewed in conjunction with the draconic Prophecy that they are following, points them in another direction.

The PCs learn that the man they are destined to follow is about to take a long trip into the Menechtarun Desert in search of a company of dwarves he left there a month or so before. Following the clues of the Prophecy, the PCs may join him. On the way, the PCs learn the dangers of the desert, although they should be safe as long as they stay within the shelter of their sand-faring vessel.

Before they reach their destination, a group of peaceful bhuka intercepts and begs the PCs not to travel north into the area where the dwarves were left. The leader of the bhuka clan fears that terrible things are going to befall his clan if the PCs go. A female bhuka warrior, for unknown reasons, asks the PCs for

permission to accompany them. When the PCs continue, draconic griffons, sent by Rillydroloquas, attack them in an attempt to keep them away.

Finally the PCs arrive at the ruins. The dwarves are dead, and deadly traps and guardians stand in their way as they attempt to enter the ruins at Dragonfell Canyon. If they best the adversity they find, they are rewarded with an encounter with the brass dragon himself. Although he knows he cannot hurt the PCs because of the edicts of the Prophecy he has just read, he is powerful enough to do much worse than kill them. The situation may find resolution in a variety of ways, and the PCs may even gain a powerful tool in their continuing attempts to bring about the fruition of the Prophecy to their advantage.

Troubleshooting

The biggest hurdle in running this adventure is striking a balance between giving away the answers to the various riddles and decisions too easily via the Prophecy, and bringing the game to a standstill because the players can't stay on the path of the adventure. Use your best judgment as to how to make the adventure work. If the PCs get off track, let them. Improvise and introduce situations that get them back into the flow.

PCs who are able to dissect and manipulate the Prophecy should find the adventure much easier and less deadly than those who do not. Players should be able to still complete the adventure even if their prowess at using the Prophecy is terrible; however, it should be much more deadly. Resist the urge to give away the answers, even if the PCs struggle and ultimately fail or die because of it. However, if the PCs show that they are just a bit off on certain interpretations, give them the benefit of the doubt and give them the clues or hints they need to succeed.

Also, as this is an Expedition adventure, PCs from different Factions could be playing together. The campaign does not allow player versus player combat, and this adventure should highlight the need for teamwork. As the DM, do not allow player versus player conflict to grow past the roleplaying stage. Warn the players about this out of character, and if one or more players insist on causing strife even after multiple warnings, reward them with all the conflict they can handle from the NPCs and monsters in the adventure.

Adventure Start

When the players are at the tables and ready, provide them with whichever **Handout 1-4** matches the Faction their character belongs to. Allow them to read the handout and then begin with the following text:

The oasis marketplace where you currently stand is busy. The heat of the sun is overwhelming, but the buildings and tents, as well as the several pools of water, make the situation survivable. As you pay the few copper pieces that it costs to fill up your waterskins and wait for your turn at the well, you hear shouting. Two warforged are verbally assaulting a male human. The shirtless human, skinned tanned to a dark brown, wears a tattoo covering his entire back. The tattoo looks like a vulture. He says only a couple brief words to the warforged before they march away.

Seeing the vulture should be enough to entice the PCs either approach or follow the human. If there are differing Factions at the table, this is their opportunity to interact. Use the following details to handle the roleplaying portion of this introduction:

- The human is a middle-aged man named Sarjar, with blonde hair and blue eyes. He owns and operates a sand skimmer. A sand skimmer is a flat vehicle, almost like a skiff, but it rides on the back of two huge trained ashworms. The ashworms have been trained to answer to the pull of a system of reins, allowing the sand skimmer to be driven through the sandy terrain of the desert.
- Sarjar grew up in this area with his father, who owned the sand skimmer and trained the ashworms originally. As far as Sarjar knows, his vehicle is completely unique and he is the only one who knows how to drive it and control the ashworms.
- Sarjar generally hires out his sand skimmer to explorers, travelers, and adventurers into the heart of the Menechtarun Desert. It can carry water and other supplies for a journey of several weeks.
- The warforged were upset because Sarjar returned from a job without the group that he had taken. Sarjar tells the PCs (if they ask) that he dropped them off outside a canyon and was supposed to wait for four days. He waited for those four days, and even one extra day, but then he left because he was running low on supplies and feared desert predators might soon spot him.
- Although he is under no obligation to do so, he is returning to that location to make sure that his former passengers are not waiting for him there. There were four adventurers, all dwarves.

- These dwarves wanted to visit a box canyon in the mountainous north-central portion of the Menehtarun, but Sarjar has no idea what they were looking for. Traveling by his sand skimmer, the trip takes roughly 5 weeks.

All of the above is true, but what Sarjar does not tell the PCs is that he sometimes takes very wealthy and unskilled passengers into the middle of the desert, tricks them into getting off the sand skimmer, and then leaves them to die in the desert. He then returns a few days later to remove their valuables while the scavengers and predators pick the bones clean. This is what he is doing now: heading back to see if there is anything he can retrieve from the bodies of the adventurers he left at the canyon, assuming they are dead. Note that he did not abandon them there as he sometimes does, for he feared they might be powerful enough to make their way back and exact revenge.

The warforged who argued with Sarjar do not know the dwarves. The dwarves were supposed to meet with them on their return from the canyon to hire them as bodyguards, but the dwarves never returned from the canyon. They know nothing more of the dwarves or why the dwarves were going to the canyon.

Roleplay Sarjar as very cold and distant when there is no business to be done, but incredibly attentive and deferential as soon as money comes into the picture. He knows better than to attempt to manipulate or dupe powerful adventurers.

If the PCs are paying any attention to the details mentioned in the fragment of the Prophecy they have been provided with, they should understand they must travel with, or at least somehow follow, Sarjar. They have several options for how they might want to do this:

- They can pay him to take them to the canyon. If this case, he charges 20gp per PC. If the PCs have animal companions, mounts, or other hangers-on that require a place on the sand skimmer, they must also pay 20gp.
- They can use Diplomacy, Bluff, or Intimidate to get him to allow them to come for free. This is highly unlikely, so use a target DC of 30, but adjust that based on circumstances and roleplaying.
- They can travel on their own, following Sarjar and his sand skimmer, either blatantly or discreetly. Traveling through the desert without protection or a vehicle is incredibly difficult. (See **Part 1: Riding the Dunes** for details.)
- They may come up with some other plan. Use your best judgment on how the plan works and whether or not it succeeds.
- Even if the PCs take alternate routes or other modes of transportation, they should still encounter all of the creatures and situations described in this adventure.
- The PCs may buy the following items at the oasis marketplace: armorbright (50 gp), keepcool salve (50 gp), desert outfit (6 gp), 20 *potions of endure elements* (50 gp), 20 *scrolls of endure elements* (25 gp). See **New Rules** for more information on these items. Note that all but the desert outfit is considered a consumable, but the prices here are for one use only. Therefore these items do not reset between sessions.

Part One: Riding the Dunes

Getting Your Sand Legs

This section describes the details of the journey on the sand skimmer, including the statistics for Sarjar and the ashworms.

Assuming the PCs follow the direction provided by the fragment of the Prophecy, they might be taking a trip across the desert aboard Sarjar's ashworm-powered sand skimmer. A map of the sand skimmer is provided at the end of the adventure. It is drawn to a 1 inch scale so that you can use it in conjunction with a battlemat. The skimmer moves as fast as the ashworms that power it (30 ft.). The skimmer normally rests 10 feet off the ground when atop the ashworms.

The skimmer is made of a hard wood polished smooth over the years by wind and sand. The center of the skimmer contains a large tarp, allowing passengers to remain shielded from the sun and sand when needed. At the front of the skimmer is a seat and steering system that Sarjar uses to drive.

While the skimmer is moving, the motion of the ashworms makes standing and walking aboard the skimmer a bit tricky. As long as passengers move no faster than half speed, movement is not a problem. However, moving at faster than half speed requires a DC 12 Balance check. Anyone failing by more than 5 falls prone.

Below is a summary of the rules used for dealing with travel through the severe heat of the Menechtarun Desert. Note that staying under the protection of the tarp on the skimmer negates all the following, as does *endure elements* or similar magic:

- Unprotected characters must make a DC 15 Fortitude save every 10 minutes, with a +1 for each previous check, or take 1d4 points nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or any type of armor take a –4 penalty on these saves.
- The need for this save can be negated, even by unprotected characters, using at least one of the following: armorbright, keepcool salve, or a desert outfit. These are described in the **New Rules** section.
- PCs using the Survival skill successfully can help themselves and others avoid this damage. See the Survival skill for details.
- Walking in the deep sand is very difficult. It counts as three squares to move into a sand-filled square, and most of the time the entire desert is sand-filled. It is impossible to run or charge in the sand, and Tumble checks take a –10 penalty.

The first several days of travel are uneventful, but you can describe to the PCs the oppressive heat, the need to conserve water and energy, and the deadliness of the desert. You should also encourage some brief roleplaying among the PCs and between the PCs and Sarjar. If the PCs get silly and attack or kill Sarjar and the ashworms, they may have no way to get where they are going, or even know where they are going. Do not reward stupidity by allowing the PCs to continue.

Creatures: In the case of an emergency, Sarjar can release the ashworms from their harness as a full-round action. He has also trained them to attack, although he cannot control whom they attack. They just hit everything in range of their tremorsense, except him.

Sarjar: male human expert 10; hp 54; **Combat Statistics.**

Advanced Ashworms (2): hp 68; **Combat Statistics.**

Combat Statistics

SARJAR

CR 9

Male human expert 10

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Giant, Goblin

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10

hp 54 (10 HD)

Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee club +7 (1d6)

Ranged mw light crossbow +11/+6 (1d8/19-20)

Base Atk +7; Grp +7

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of fire breath*, *potion of fly*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12

Feats (5) Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Rapid Reload, Skill Focus (Handle Animal), Skill Focus (Ride)

Skills Balance +16, Bluff +14, Handle Animal +17, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (local)

+15, Knowledge (nature) +17, Ride +21, Sense Motive +13, Survival +15 (+17 for navigation)

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance +1*, masterwork light crossbow, club, desert outfit

ADVANCED ASHWORM

CR 4

N Huge Magical Beast

Init -1; Senses Listen +6, Spot +3; tremorsense 60 ft.

AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15

hp 68 (6 HD)

Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 30 ft., climb 5 ft.

Melee sting +14 (1d8+13 plus poison)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +6; Grp +23

Special Atk poison (Injury, Fortitude DC 16, initial and secondary damage 2d6 Strength)

Abilities Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 6

SQ Evasive diver, tremorsense 60 ft.

Feats Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (sting)

Skills Climb +19, Listen +6, Spot +3

Evasive Diver (Ex) In areas of deep sand, the ashworm that succeeds on a Reflex save versus an attack that does have damage manages to dive beneath the sand and takes no damage.

The First Warning

A peaceful group of bhuka intercepts the skimmer to deliver a message. An unlikely ally asks to join the group in their adventure.

About three weeks into the journey, as the PCs and the skimmer get closer to their destination, the following encounter takes place. Read or paraphrase the following:

The sun is at its highest point, and the seemingly infinite stretch of sand is still laid out before you like a great yellow ocean. The skimmer bounds over several more dunes, and as you crest the final one, you see a shimmering image in the distance. Dozens of figures move over the sand in your direction. One seems to be waving in your direction. Sarjar turns to you and says, "Bhuka. Normally very friendly, but they usually keep to themselves. Not sure why they are seeking us. They often have things to trade and can help find water if they are feeling generous."

The skimmer is heading directly toward the bhuka party, so it is not easy to avoid them. If the party truly wants to avoid them though, Sarjar can steer clear of them and outrun them.

Assuming the PCs don't actively forbid Sarjar from approaching the bhuka, read or paraphrase the following:

The group in front of you consists of 42 creatures appearing to be a larger version of a standard goblin you might find on Khorvaire. The creatures are dressed in light-colored desert outfits, and several of them carry spears. The creatures' feet are huge, with widely splayed toes. They can walk on the sand as easily as a normal humanoid walks on the solid ground. They have frills on their necks decorated stunning colors. One near the center of the group, holding a massive hawk on her arm, steps forward, and she speaks in clear and articulate Common.

"Hail, travelers. I am Galliki, leader of the Arimini Bhuka clan. You travel north, but there is great danger there. You must turn back. If you go north, great powers may be unleashed, causing the Arimini Bhuka and several other Bhuka clans great peril. Please do not go north. Think of our children."

The PCs may be worried at this point that they are going to have to fight their way through the bhuka, but this is not the case. The bhuka do not stop the PCs from continuing. They do, however, fight the PCs to the last if the PCs instigate a violent confrontation. Use the following points to guide a dialogue with the bhuka:

- Galliki has been communing with the desert, and she sees a great darkness coming.
- Also, she has heard from other bhuka clans that some dwarves went into the canyons of the north a month ago. A few days later an entire clan of bhuka living in the mountains was slaughtered, and no one knows how it happened. Galliki fears what might happen again if more people go there. [This is not true, but Galliki doesn't know it. The brass dragon Rilydroloquas instructed a bhuka

clan leader to spread this rumor, but Galliki doesn't know this. She still believes it, and thus fears for her clan's existence.]

- If the PCs show that they still plan to go north, Galliki calls forth some bhuka who carry several bars of platinum, gold, and silver. She offers this to the PCs if they agree to not travel north to the canyon. The precious metal bars radiate moderate enchantment magic if detected. If the PCs agree, Galliki asks the PCs (and Sarjar) to place their hands on the bars and swear an oath not to travel north to the canyon. If they do this, they can have the bars, which can be appraised (DC 15 Appraise check) at well over 20,000 gp worth of metal. However, anyone making this promise is now under the effect of a *lesser geas*. Unless the PCs can remove the *lesser geas* with an appropriate spell, they cannot travel to the canyon, and thus the adventure is over. A DC 17 Will save avoids the *geas* affect.
- Even if the PCs continue north, Galliki and the other bhuka are willing to share water and food with the PCs, as it is their way.

Creatures: The bhuka are peaceful and only attack if attacked first. Only 20 of the 42 bhuka in the group are warriors.

Galliki: female bhuka druid 9: hp 70; **Combat Statistics.**

Dire hawk animal companion: hp 50; **Combat Statistics.**

Mixed male and female bhuka warriors (20): hp 5; **Combat Statistics.**

Tactics: The bhuka are peaceful and only attack if attacked first. Only 20 of the 42 bhuka in the group are warriors. If attacked, Galliki orders her animal companion to attack, uses her spells to fight the PCs, and the 20 bhuka warriors swarm the PCs, hoping to overwhelm them with numbers. They will grapple and aid each other in trying to incapacitate and/or destroy the PCs. If the PCs were not overly violent, the bhuka only incapacitate, strip the PCs of gear, and send them back toward civilization. If the PCs were rude or violent in their attacks, the bhuka do not hesitate to kill.

Developments: Assuming the encounter with the bhuka is peaceful, and the PCs make it known that they plan to continue northward after the encounter, one of the female bhuka warriors called Kinerki, steps forward and speaks in Common:

"I wish to travel with you to the canyon. Take me with you and I will assist you in your travels." As she says this, Galliki begins speaking rapidly in a language you do not understand, but it is obvious she is not pleased with this. They argue for several seconds, but the female warrior stands her ground. She steps forward and says again, "The choice is mine. I choose to go if you will allow me to accompany you."

Roleplaying with Kinerki should be an ongoing process. At first she won't reveal anything about herself, only saying that she has dreamed that she is destined to accompany the PCs on their quest. She starts as Indifferent, but if the PCs are kind to her, she can be turned to Friendly with an appropriate Diplomacy check. She still talks very little, but she can reveal some details.

She has several children. The oldest recently exhibited an extensive pattern of markings on his skin. The clan leader interpreted this as an ill omen, and the boy was treated badly by the rest of the clan. Just on the cusp of adulthood, the boy decided to leave the clan, saying that he was being called toward the northern mountains. When she heard about the dwarves going there, and then the destruction of a northern bhuka clan, she knew that her son must be involved somehow. So now she comes with the PCs to find her son. What she does not tell the PCs, unless magically compelled, is that her other children are also exhibiting the marks. She is keeping them hidden until she can figure a way to protect them from the ire of the clan.

If the PCs took the payment and head back to civilization (whether by choice or because of the *lesser geas*), they are still attacked by the creatures in the next encounter, but the mission is over for them. Only allow them to circumvent the *lesser geas* if they come up with a particularly clever plan.

Combat Statistics

GALLIKI

CR 9

Female bhuka druid 9

NG medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; Senses Listen +, Spot +

Languages Bhuka, Common, Druidic

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 70 (9 HD)

Immune poison

Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee quarterstaff +4/-1 (1d6-2)

Base Atk +6; Grp +4

Atk Options wild shape

Combat Gear *pearl of power* (3), *scroll of flame strike*, *wand of cure light wounds* (15 charges)

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 9th):

5th—empowered *dehydrate* (DC 18), *stoneskin*

4th—*chain of eyes*, *flame strike* (DC 19), *rusting grasp* (DC 19)

3rd—*cure moderate wounds*, *dehydrate* (DC 18), *greater magic fang*, *wind wall*

2nd—*barkskin*, *heat metal* (DC 17), *lesser restoration*, *resist energy*, *warp wood*

1st—*calm animals* (DC 16), *cure light wounds*, *endure elements*, *longstrider*, *produce flame*, *speak with animals*

0—*create water* (3), *cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*

Abilities Str 6, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 11

SQ animal companion, glare resistance, sure feet, trackless step, wild shape (3x/day, large creature), water sense, wild empathy

Feats (2) Empower Spell, Heat Endurance^B, Natural Spell, Sandskimmer^B, Next

Skills (48) Handle Animal +12, Knowledge (nature) +16, Spellcraft +12, Spot +17, Survival +9

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +2, *periapt of wisdom* +2

Glare Resistance (Ex) Bhukas are never dazzled by bright sunlight.

Sure Feet (Ex) Bhukas have broad feet that allow them to tread normally on sand.

Water Sense (Ex) Bhukas have the innate ability to detect a source of drinkable water with 100 ft with a successful Survival check.

Hook “I’m sorry you have forced me to do this.”

DIRE HAWK ANIMAL COMPANION

N medium magical beast

Init +6; Senses Listen +8, Spot + 10 (+18 in daylight); low-light vision

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15

hp 50 (7 HD)

Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +7; evasion

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +11 (1d4+1) and
bite +6 (1d6)

Base Atk +5; Grp +6

Abilities Str 13, Dex 23, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 11

SQ evasion, link, low-light vision, share spells

Feats Flyby Attack, Hover, Weapon Finesse

Skills Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +10 (+18 in daylight)

BHUKA WARRIOR

CR 1/2

Mixed male and female bhuka warrior 1

LG medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +1; Senses Listen -1, Spot +0

Languages Bhuka, Common

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12

hp 5 (1 HD)

Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee spear +1 (1d6)

Ranged shortbow +2 (1d6/x3)

Base Atk +1; Grp +1

Abilities Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

SQ glare resistance, sure feet, water sense

Feats Endurance

Skills Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Spot +0, Survival +0

Possessions padded armor, light steel shield, spear, shortbow, 20 arrows

Glare Resistance (Ex) Bhukas are never dazzled by bright sunlight.

Sure Feet (Ex) Bhukas have broad feet that allow them to tread normally on sand.

Water Sense (Ex) Bhukas have the innate ability to detect a source of drinkable water with 100 ft with a successful Survival check.

The Second Warning

Draconic griffons fly from the desert mountains to the north and attack the party as they travel.

As the PCs head further north (or if they are leaving the area, as they head south), they are targeted by some draconic griffons, sent by the brass dragon Rilydroloquas to “dissuade” the PCs from heading north any further.

If the PCs can make a DC 30 Spot check, they can see the creatures at 800 feet away. A DC 20 Spot check lets the PCs see the creatures at 600 feet. A DC 15 Spot check sees the creatures at 300 feet. The PCs automatically see the creatures when they are 100 feet away. The creatures can fly at 80 ft./round, meaning that they can cover 320 feet in a round if using the run action while flying.

Read or paraphrase the following, adjusting for PC actions and distance:

In the distance, you notice a number of large creatures flying in your direction. At first they appear they might be incredibly massive birds of prey, then they look like they could be winged lions, but then they look like a cross between eagles, lions, and lizards.

Foes: A DC 17 Knowledge (arcana) check (or DC 20 for the advanced creatures) recognizes the creatures as a draconic form of griffon. The creatures are progeny of the sire of the brass dragon Rilydroloquas, and they think of him as an older brother. He has asked them to watch for any creatures approaching his canyon lair, and now they are going to trying to kill the approaching creatures.

Draconic Griffons (4): hp 66; **Combat Statistics.**

Tactics: The griffons attempt to destroy the PCs in a straightforward assault. If the PCs get to close to the edge of the skimmer, the griffons might attempt a bull rush to knock them into the sand, where the PCs movement is lessened but the griffons can fly. The griffons know that bhuka are peaceful and accepted by Rilydroloquas, and they do not target Kinerki unless she attacks them first.

Sarjar continues driving the skimmer unless the PCs instruct him to stop. It takes him a full-round action to bring the skimmer to a complete stop.

Scaling the Encounter

4th-Level Characters: Use two draconic griffons.

5th-Level Characters: Use three draconic griffons.

7th-Level Characters: Use three advanced draconic griffons.

8th-Level Characters: Use four advanced draconic griffons.

Combat Statistics

DRACONIC GRIFFON

CR 5

N Large magical beast

Init +2; Senses Listen +6, Spot +12 ; darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision

Languages Common (cannot speak)

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16

hp 66 (7 HD)

Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +5 (+4 versus magical sleep and paralysis)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee bite +12 (2d6+5) and

2 claws +9 (1d4+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +7; Grp +15

Special Atk Pounce, rake (1d6+2)

Abilities Str 20, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 10

SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision

Feats Iron Will, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Intimidate +2, Jump +9, Listen +6, Spot +12

Pounce (Ex) If a draconic griffon dives upon or charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex) Attack bonus +8 melee, damage 1d6+2

ADVANCED DRACONIC GRIFFON**CR 6**

N Large magical beast

Init +3; Senses Listen +6, Spot +15; darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision

Languages Common (cannot speak)

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16

hp 93 (10 HD)

Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +6 (+4 versus magical sleep and paralysis)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee bite +15 (2d6+5) and

2 claws +13 (1d4+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +10; Grp +18

Special Atk Pounce, rake (1d6+2)

Abilities Str 20, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 10

SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision

Feats Iron Will, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Intimidate +2, Jump +9, Listen +6, Spot +15

Pounce (Ex) If a draconic griffon dives upon or charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex) Attack bonus +8 melee, damage 1d6+2

Part Two: The Dragonfell Ruins

The PCs arrive at the canyon, where they see the ruins of an ancient dwelling carved into the canyon. The PCs must face more guardians and a trap before meeting with the brass dragon Rillydroloquas and fulfilling the Prophecy.

The Final Warning (Area 1)

Refer to **Map 1** for the layout of this portion of Dragonfell Ruins.

When the PCs arrive at the canyon, a particularly grisly sight greets them. The deep sand they have seen for most of the journey gives way to rocky ground. The ashworms can no longer burrow through the sand, so they now crawl over the ground. Walking returns to normal within the canyon. As they approach the place where Sarjar left the dwarves, read or paraphrase the following:

Sarjar drives the skimmer to an area of the canyon that has obviously seen recent activity, as the thin layer of sand covering the hardened rock here has been disturbed by footprints of countless types of creatures: vermin, humanoids, clawed animals, and even a larger clawed creature.

In one part of the canyon, a hole in the canyon face is flanked by two enormous carvings in the rock. The carvings have been worn away by millennia of wind-blown sand, but you still recognize the forms as dragons. In some areas, the statutes have been obviously defaced, but recently sculpting has made the damage less severe and the forms more recognizable.

Approximately 40 feet from the opening, four prone forms lie motionless.

Foes: The desiccating corpses of the dwarves have drawn monstrous scorpions here. They come out of hiding in the cracks of the canyon walls and attack as the PCs get within 20 feet of the dwarves. The scorpions do not surprise the PCs, as they are too large to hide, and they make noise as they approach.

Huge Monstrous Scorpion: hp 75; *Monster Manual* 287.

Large Monstrous Scorpions (3): hp 32; *Monster Manual* 287.

Developments: Once the scorpions have been defeated, the PCs can examine the dwarven bodies. All of their equipment has been taken, and they have obviously been dead for several days, if not longer. A DC 20 Heal check reveals that no wounds are on the body. A DC 25 Search check shows that the bodies have a lot of sand on and in their orifices. A PC with the Investigate feat understands that these dwarves suffocated by being buried in sand. This is a clue to the sand-filled chamber trap in the next chamber.

Sarjar promises to wait for the PCs but refuses to enter the ruins any further. Kinerki looks pale but vows to continue if she is with the PCs.

A scroll on one of the bodies bears this warning in Common: "Enter the ruins and share the fate of those unworthy few who came before you."

Scaling the Encounter

- 4th-Level Characters: Use two large monstrous scorpions.
- 5th-Level Characters: Use three large monstrous scorpions.
- 7th-Level Characters: Use two huge monstrous scorpions.
- 8th-Level Characters: Use three huge monstrous scorpions.

Chamber of Sand (Area 2)

The entire network of chambers within the ruins is covered in a thin layer of sand. The first hurdle the PCs encounter is a trapped passageway. In the spot marked Area 2 on **Map 1**, the PCs come upon a passageway. The passageway is trapped to kill those who do not belong in the company of dragons, with a puzzle lock barring the way.

Trap: When the PCs enter the passageway, the wall to the west (the gray line blocking the corridor on the map) is in place, but the wall to the east is not. The western wall is obviously made of a material different from the rest of the chamber. In a small recess in the wall rest nine stones containing words carved into them in Draconic. The words are as follows: **dragonkind, giant, human, couatl, orc, kobold, warforged, elf, and dwarf**. [If the PCs cannot speak Draconic, have no magic available to read languages, and fail a DC 20 Decipher Script check, tell them that the translation in Common has been scratched faintly into the back of the stone by the dwarves.] Also in the western wall are nine small niches, where it looks like these stones might fit, arranged one atop the other going up the wall.

A PC with Trapfinding searching the wall and succeeding on a DC 25 Search check learns that the wall is trapped, and that disturbing the stones or touching the wall causes something to happen, but the PC can't discern what happens. The trap can be disabled. If the trap is set off, a wall closes off the eastern side of the passage (the other gray line on the map) and the chamber begins slowly filling with sand from tiny chutes all throughout the passageway.

In 10 rounds, the sand is roughly 3 feet high. In 20 rounds the sand is 7 feet high. In 30 rounds, the sand is up to the ceiling. Once the sand reaches 3 feet, PCs must take 3 squares of movement to move into 5 feet. Once the sand reaches 7 feet, the PCs are immobile and must hold their breaths or suffocate. Once the sand reaches the ceiling, the PCs take 1d6 crushing damage per round.

The walls can only be opened by solving the puzzle lock or breaking through the wall in some way. The answer to the puzzle lock is placing the carved stones in the order of how the dragons rank the races in terms of power and importance. The answer can be found by referring to the Prophecy, or by using Knowledge skills. The correct order from top to bottom is **dragonkind, couatl, kobold, giant, elf, orc, human, dwarf, and warforged**. These are described in the Prophecy, but the following Knowledge checks can give clues:

- DC 20 Knowledge (history): The couatls sacrificed themselves to seal away the demonic forces. Many orcs follow a druidic traditions of keeping the demonic forces trapped as well, holding vigil over wards that seal away the vile creatures. The elves were the slaves and servants of the giants in Xen'drik, and the giants were the students of the dragons.
- DC 15 Knowledge (arcana): Kobolds are often the servants of dragons, and they come from draconic lineage.
- DC 20 Knowledge (planes): Orcs in Khorvaire often act as wardens, guarding the seals that hold the demonic forces in Khyber.

It takes 2 full-round actions to get all the stones in place, although 2 people can do the task to cut down on the time. When the stones have been placed in the proper locations, the sand stops flowing and the walls pull back into the cavern sides, releasing the trapped PC and the sand. If the PCs have access to an **Adventure Secret**, they can use one to learn the key to the puzzle lock, and then they can use another to learn the correct sequence of stones.

If the PCs attempt to break the walls, they have a lot of work ahead of them. The Break DC for the walls is 45, and the walls have a hardness of 8 with 360 hit points.

Sand-Filled Chamber Trap: CR variable; magic and mechanical device, location trigger; manual reset; suffocation and crushing damage (1d6/round, crush); Search DC 25, Disable Device DC 25.

Scaling the Encounter

4th-Level Characters: Alter the check to Search DC 21, Disable Device DC 21.

5th-Level Characters: Alter the check to Search DC 23, Disable Device DC 23.

7th-Level Characters: Alter the check to Search DC 26, Disable Device DC 26.

8th-Level Characters: Alter the check to Search DC 27, Disable Device DC 27.

Chamber of Fate (Area 3)

When the PCs get through the trapped passageway, read or paraphrase the following:

In front of you is a huge chamber. Through the thin layer of sand on the floor, you notice that the stone holds a pinkish hue. In the center of the chamber rests a pile of sand, brush, weeds, cacti, and other rough desert growth. The mass of sand and vegetation moves at your intrusion, and instantly the pile is now shaped roughly in the form of two dragons [or one, depending on the encounter scaling].

Creature: The creature(s) here are known as twilight guardians. So many dragons perished in this chamber, following the battles with the demons, that the essence of the dragons that died infused the area with life. Only sand and plants were present to soak up that essence, and it gave the plants life. The twilight guardians now protected these ruins from any non-draconic creatures, or from creatures that Rillydroloquas has not given permission to be here.

Twilight Guardians (2): hp 76; **Combat Statistics.**

Developments: While this combat does have the potential to seriously decimate an under-prepared party, they do have an advantage in the draconic Prophecy. The twilight guardian is formed of the essence of dragons, so those who are dragon-touched in any way can sacrifice a small part of their own essence, in the form of blood, to appease the guardian momentarily. Creatures of the dragon type or dragonblood subtype, creatures with dragonmarks (including temporary ones), sorcerers, creatures with draconic feats, or other creatures with a close connection to dragons (DM's discretion) can place some of their blood on the twilight guardians. For each point of damage the PC takes in blood for the twilight guardian, the guardian gains one temporary hit point but is stunned for one round. (Four points of damage give the plants 4 hit points, but stuns them for 4 rounds.)

Spellcasters who use spell component pouches, if they figure out the need to offer draconic blood to the guardians, realize that their pouches contain a small amount of dragon blood (4hp worth) that they can use.

Scaling the Encounter

4th- and 5th-Level Characters: Use one twilight guardian.

7th- and 8th-Level Characters: Use one advanced twilight guardian.

Combat Statistics

TWILIGHT GUARDIAN

CR 7

N Large plant (dragonblood)

Init +2; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2; low-light vision

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17

hp 76 (8 HD); DR 10/magic

Immune plant immunities

SR 16

Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d6+7) and
tail +7 (2d6+3 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +6; Grp +17

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

At will—*transport via plants*

Abilities Str 25, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 6

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (tail), Run

Skills Climb +9 Listen +2, Search –1, Spot +2

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 19, initial and secondary damage 1d4 Con.

ADVANCED TWILIGHT GUARDIAN

CR 10

N Huge plant (dragonblood)

Init +1; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2; low-light vision

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 19

hp 156 (16 HD); DR 10/magic

Immune plant immunities

SR 16

Fort +17, Ref +6, Will +3

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee 2 claws +21 (1d8+11) and
tail +19 (3d6+5 plus poison)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +12; Grp +31

Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th):

At will—*transport via plants*

Abilities Str 33, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 6

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (tail), Multiattack, Power Attack, Run

Skills Climb +21 Listen +2, Search –1, Spot +2

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial and secondary damage 1d4 Con.

Chamber of Fortune (Area 4)

In the northwest corner of this chamber rests the brass dragon Rillydroloquas and his “guest,” the young bhuka male called Nyrlivi. The young bhuka is actually the son of Kinerki, the female bhuka warrior who asked to accompany the PCs and may be with them right now. Read or paraphrase the following, adjusting the description based on the circumstances of the meeting:

Like in the other chambers of the ruin, a thin layer of sand covers the floor here. So do piles of coin, gems, jewelry, and items of magic. In the northwestern corner of the chamber, a large brass-colored dragon sits peacefully, his head resting on the ground. Sitting on the floor next to the dragon's head is a young bhuka. He looks like the other bhuka you have encountered, except he has a massive dragonmark splashed across his face, neck, and chest. A tunnel in the 30-foot-tall ceiling appears to lead out into the open of the desert.

Rillydroloquas has been studying the boy since he arrived at the lair a few weeks ago. The boy manifested the dragonmark about two months ago, and the clan leader took it as a sign of great danger and foreboding. The boy, growing tired of being treated like a pariah in his own clan, left his home against the wishes of his mother. Something in the boy's blood called him to this place, and since arriving he has been held prisoner by the dragon. The dragon would never consider mistreating or hurting the bhuka, but he finds the boy's condition too important to his studies to allow the bhuka to leave.

If Kinerki is with the PCs, she immediately runs to her son and embraces him. The dragon allows this, and even finds it touching. Unless the PCs attack immediately, he begins a dialogue with them. Use the points below to guide the conversation:

- Rillydroloquas is a member of the Chamber, a group of dragons who study and work to fulfill the draconic Prophecy. The brass dragon strongly feels that while non-dragons are certainly part of the Prophecy, they should not be attempting to interpret or fulfill it, as they are inferior and certainly not worthy.
- This place is an area sacred to the dragons, and it once revealed to them important pieces of the Prophecy that assisted the dragons in defeating the demonic forces ages past.
- The dragonmark on the young bhuka is like nothing he has ever seen. He believes that the boy is some form of good luck charm. If the Prophecy shows any sort of split in what can happen, he believes the boy's presence pushes the results of the Prophecy in favor of anyone in his presence.
- The boy is a commodity too powerful to let go. The dragon can allow the PCs to leave peacefully, but the young bhuka must stay.

The PCs should realize that having access to this young bhuka would be of monumental benefit to their Faction if what the dragon says were true. However, the dragon is not going to let him go, and it would be a near impossible fight to take on a powerful dragon. The dragon, fortunately for the PCs, has interpreted a snippet of Prophecy that forbids him from killing the PCs.

The final encounter can play itself out in several ways:

- The PCs can leave the young bhuka to his fate, realizing that they are overmatched. The bhuka mother refuses to leave her son alone.
- They can snatch the boy and try to escape, but Rillydroloquas harries them all the way back to civilization. They must fight the dragon at some point.
- They can fight the dragon. In this case, the dragon uses his powers to subdue the PCs, and the bhuka clan that serves the dragon binds the PCs. The dragon takes the boy to a new location, and the PCs are released after a few weeks' captivity.
- They can offer something in return for the boy. A PC who has a dragonmark can offer to take the boy's place. In this case, the PC is considered dead for the purposes of the campaign. If the PCs can come up with a plan to rescue this PC and escape, let it happen. But they must deal with Rillydroloquas in this case.
- The PCs can offer 5000gp each worth of treasure for the boy. A Story Object “Paid Ransom” covers this contingency.
- Only if the PCs suggest it, they can convince the dragon that the mother of the bearer of the mark may be more interesting to study than the bearer himself.
- The PCs may come up with some other plan. Use your best judgment to decide whether the plan works, and how it works. Keep in mind that the brass dragon is not willing to give up the young bhuka without compensation as described above.

Combat Statistics

RILLYDROLOQUAS

CR 12

CN Male large adult dragon (fire)

Init +4; Senses Listen +, Spot +; darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision

Aura aura of fear (DC 21)

Languages Bhuka, Common, Draconic, Dwarf, Elf, Giant, Gnome, Goblin

AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27

hp 199 (19 HD); DR 5/magic

Immune fire, sleep, paralysis

SR 20

Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +15

Weakness cold vulnerability

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares), burrow 30 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +24 (2d6+6) and

2 claws +22 (1d8+3)

2 wings +22 (1d6+3)

tail slap +22 (1d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Base Atk +19; Grp +29

Atk Options breath weapon, Cleave, Power Attack, Recover Breath

Special Atk breath weapon, spell-like abilities, spells

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th):

3rd (4/day)—deep slumber (DC 16), suggestion (DC 16)

2nd (7/day)—daze monster (DC 15), Tasha's hideous laughter (DC 15), touch of idiocy

1st (7/day)—charm person (DC 14), comprehend languages, hypnotism (DC 14), magic missile, sleep (DC 14)

0 (6/day)—arcane mark, daze (DC 13), detect magic, detect poison, flare, mage hand, prestidigitation

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

At will—*speak with animals*

3/day—*endure elements*

1/day—*suggestion* (DC 15)

Abilities Str 23, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

SQ darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision

Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Recover Breath, Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Concentration +26, Gather Information +24, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (history) +24, Listen +24, Search +24, Spot +24, Survival +24

Breath Weapon (Su) 80 ft. line, damage 6d6 fire, Reflex DC 23; or 40 ft. cone, sleep 1d6+6 rounds, Will DC 23 negates.

Hook Do you have a story to tell me? I'd love to hear it! I hope you have a century or so!

Ending the Adventure

If the PCs end the adventure with possession of the young dragonmarked bhuka and are not pursued by the dragon, there is still a question of what to do with the boy. If the PCs belong to multiple Factions, there may be some conflict as to who gets the bhuka.

The boy, however, has felt what it is like to be a captive of those who wish to use and study him. If there is any conflict aside from civil discussion, the boy ends his own life, not wanting to be a prisoner and experimental tool anymore. Because of the inability to work together, no Faction wins.

The Factions can agree to share the boy. As long as he is treated well, the boy agrees to this. The Factions may also learn that the boy's siblings also bear the same mark. The PCs can rescue the marked bhuka children from being outcasts in their own clan. As long as the PCs treat the children well, there are enough for each Faction to get a marked bhuka.

Event Treasure

PCs surviving the adventure can select 1500 gp worth of equipment to bring with them if they are playing more sessions at this event. The items must be selected from equipment the PC has access to.

Adventure Questions

1. How did the meeting with the bhuka go?
 - a) The PCs avoided the encounter altogether, or they agreed to leave.
 - b) The PCs talked to the bhuka but continued north nonetheless
 - c) The PCs attacked and defeated the bhuka unprovoked.
 - d) The PCs attacked but were defeated by the bhuka.
 - e) The PCs took the bribe and were unable to continue because of the geas.
 - f) The PCs took the bribe and found a way to continue despite the geas.
2. How went the battle with the draconic griffons?
 - a) The PCs never made it this far.
 - b) The PCs won the battle easily.
 - c) The PCs won the battle but took heavy casualties.
 - d) The PCs were defeated by the wondrous flying creatures.
3. How went the battle with the draconic griffons?
 - a) The PCs were defeated by the scorpions.
 - b) The PCs won the battle but took heavy casualties.
 - c) The PCs won the battle easily.
 - d) The PCs never made it this far.
4. What happened in the sand-filled chamber?
 - a) The PCs never made it this far.
 - b) The party avoided the trap thanks to a well prepared rogue.
 - c) The PCs sprung the trap but solved the puzzle lock in time.
 - d) The PCs sprung the trap and found an alternative way out.
 - e) The PCs fell prey to the trap and did not survive.
5. Did the PCs win against the twilight guardians?
 - a) Yes, they won handily and used the Prophecy to help.
 - b) Yes, they won handily without using the Prophecy to help.
 - c) Yes, but it was a bloody battle that cost the PCs lives and many resources.
 - d) No, the PCs never made it this far.
 - e) No, the PCs were defeated by the dragon-plants.
6. What best describes the final outcome in the encounter with the brass dragon?
 - a) They never made it this far.
 - b) Against all odds, they slew the dragon.
 - c) The PCs were captured and the dragon escaped with the young bhuka.
 - d) The PCs paid the ransom, left the bhuka mother, or left one of their own in exchange for the boy.
7. How would you rate the group's roleplaying?
 - a) Fantastic. Everyone had interesting and engaging characters that interacted with the adventure in very fun ways.
 - b) Good. Most everyone had interesting and engaging characters that interacted with the adventure in very fun ways.
 - c) Okay. There was some roleplaying.
 - d) None. They treated the adventure as a set of objectives. There was no roleplaying.

Story Objects

Object ID: EXFF01

Object Name: Paid Ransom

Object Description: The PC paid a high price to win the freedom of the dragonmarked bhuka. The PC's Faction offset some of the cost, but still the PC's EV is permanently 1000gp less than it would normally be.

Object ID: EXFF02

Object Name: Prophetic Fortune

Object Description: Having rescued the bhuka and making arrangements to bring the lad back for study, the PC's faction sees a great upturn in their fortune. Once per adventure, when using an action point to modify a die roll, the PC may add a d4 to the roll in addition to the normal die rolled. If both dice rolled come up as 1s, the check automatically succeeds regardless of the difficulty. This does not allow impossible checks to be made, such as someone using Search to find a magical trap without the trapfinding ability.

New Rules

Armorbright: The metallic paint is applied to the outside of armor, producing a reflective surface. For 24 hours after applying, you gain a +2 bonus to Fortitude saves to avoid heat danger, as well as providing a level of protection against the heat of the sun.

Keepcool Salve: Each application is enough to cover one medium creature and lasts for 24 hours. Applying the salve counts as protection against the heat of the sun. The salve also grants a +1 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves to resist damage from hot environments. Price 50gp; Weight ½ lb.

Desert Outfit: This outfit consists of loose, billowy clothing to keep the wearer cool and protected in hot, dry desert terrain. It counts as light clothing and offers protection against some heat dangers. The protection it offers against heat is negated if the wearer also dons armor. Price: 6gp; Weight: 3 lbs.

Heat Endurance [Feat]

Either as a result of growing up in the waste, or by training your body and mind to ignore the effects of searing heat, you can exist with ease in high-temperature environments.

Prerequisites: Base Fortitude save +2

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against fire effects. You can exist comfortably in temperatures up to 120 degrees without having to make Fortitude saves. Your protection against heat is level 1.

Recover Breath [Feat]

You wait less time before being able to use your breath weapon again.

Prerequisites: Con 17, breath weapon.

Benefit: You reduce the interval between uses of your breath weapon. You wait one round less than usual, before breathing again, but always at least 1 round. The feat stacks with the effects of metabreath feats.

Sandskimmer [Feat]

You are particularly adept at moving over sand.

Benefit: You treat shallow sand as normal sand and deep sand as shallow sand. Sand crust does not break beneath your feet, allowing you to move atop it as if it were normal terrain.

Special: This feat can be taken twice, allowing creatures to move over all sand as if it were normal terrain.

Dehydrate

Necromancy

Level: Druid 3

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You afflict the target with a horrible, desiccating curse that deals 1d6 points of Constitution damage, plus one additional point of Constitution damage per three caster levels, to a maximum of 1d6+5 at 15th level. Oozes, plants, and creatures with the aquatic subtype are more susceptible to this spell. Such creatures take 1d8 points of Constitution damage, to a maximum of 1d8+5 at 15th level.

Chain of Eyes

Divination

Level: Cleric 3, druid 4, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Living creature touched

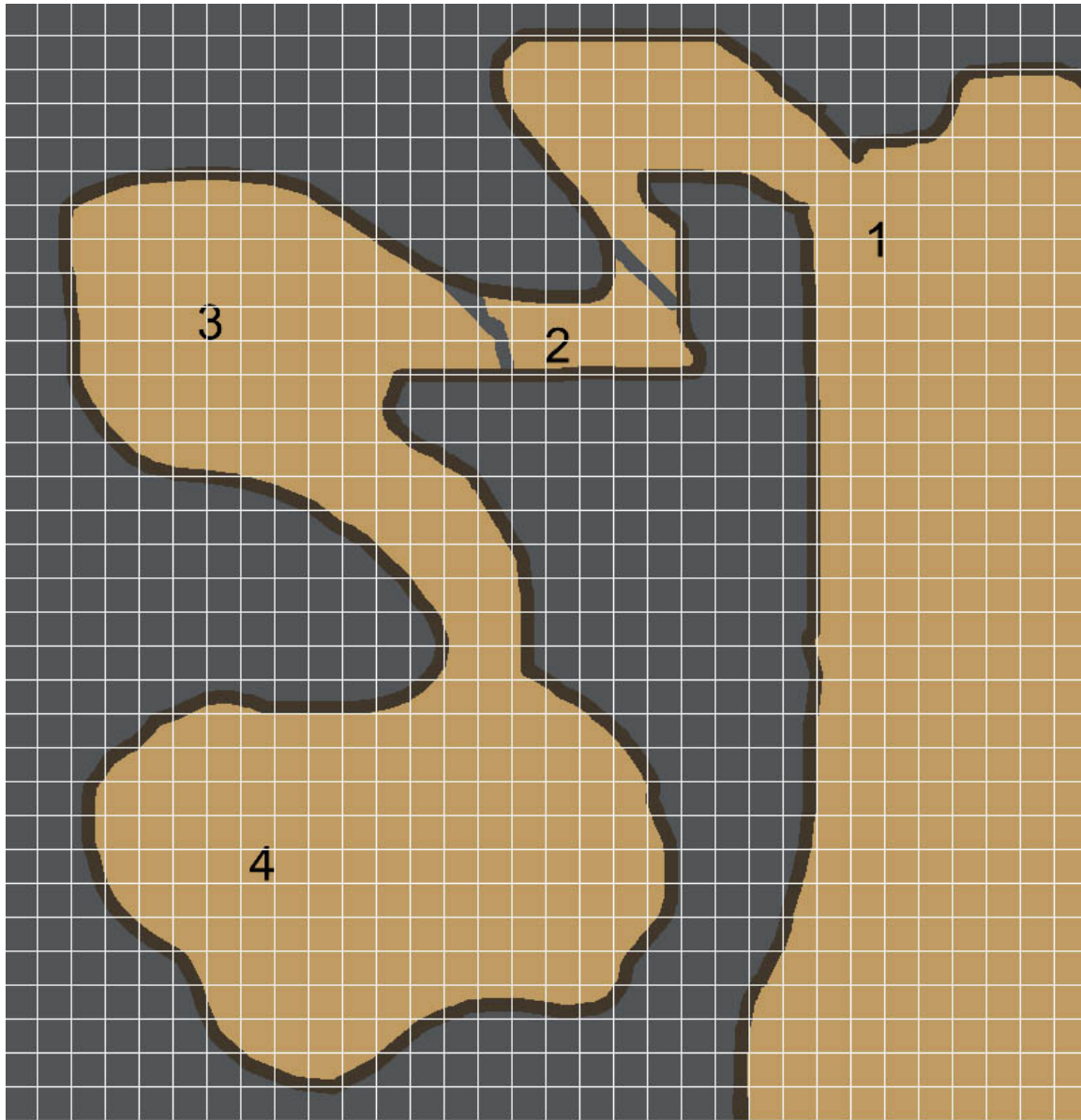
Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You can use another creature's vision instead of your own. This spell gives no control over the subject, and you can choose to transfer your sensor to another creature by touch. During your turn, you can switch from seeing through another creature's eyes to your own.

Map 1 – Dragonfell Canyon Ruins



Handout 1 – Blackwheel Company

Based on one of the Caldyn Fragments of the draconic Prophecy that your organization has been studying, you have been sent on a mission into the Menechtarun Desert. The Prophecy, copied for you below to reference, speaks of a “sandy ruin in the vast waste.” Your Faction’s interpreters have decided this is the ruined city of Mel-Aqat, which rests on the eastern edge of the desert. You are supposed to go there, and then use the rest of the Prophecy fragment to guide your way. Much is believed to be at stake, but no one knows quite what that might be.

Since the ruins are not too deep into the desert, each member of your Faction has been given two *potions of endure elements*. You are currently re-supplying yourself at an oasis marketplace in the northeast corner of the Menechtarun.

The fragment of the draconic Prophecy that you are following is supplied below:

When a millennium passes since the North Kingdom formed
The sandy ruins in the vast waste hold a key to life’s future.
Follow the vulture as he glides over the sand.
The peril for all is yours, and a mother’s,
For knowledge and fortune are siblings.
Know the wyrms’ thoughts on themselves, the sacrificers,
the blooded servants, the students, the student’s slaves, the wardens,
the many, the deep dwellers, and the empty vessels.
Essence of the body of dragontouched quells the verdant guardians,
But the guards may guard the innocent in their safety
As much as the guilty from escape.
Sand and Fate passed, Fortune stands awestruck but wishing release.
We pay a dear price for Fortune.

Handout 2 - Cabal of Shadows

Based on one of the Caldyn Fragments of the draconic Prophecy that your organization has been studying, you have been sent on a mission into the Menechtarun Desert. The Prophecy, copied for you below to reference, speaks of a “sandy ruin in the vast waste.” Your Faction’s interpreters have decided this is the ruined city of Mel-Aqat, which rests on the eastern edge of the desert. You are supposed to go there, and then use the rest of the Prophecy fragment to guide your way. Much is believed to be at stake, but no one knows quite what that might be.

Since the ruins are not too deep into the desert, each member of your Faction has been given two *potions of endure elements*. You are currently re-supplying yourself at an oasis marketplace in the northeast corner of the Menechtarun.

The fragment of the draconic Prophecy that you are following is supplied below:

When a millennium passes since the North Kingdom formed
The sandy ruins in the vast waste hold a key to life’s future.
Follow the vulture as he glides over the sand.
The peril for all is yours, and a mother’s,
For knowledge and fortune are siblings.
Know the wyrms’ thoughts on themselves, the sacrificers,
the blooded servants, the students, the student’s slaves, the wardens,
the many, the deep dwellers, and the empty vessels.
Essence of the body of dragontouched quells the verdant guardians,
But the guards may guard the innocent in their safety
As much as the guilty from escape.
Sand and Fate passed, Fortune stands awestruck but wishing release.
We pay a dear price for Fortune.

Handout 3 – Covenant of Light

Based on one of the Caldyn Fragments of the draconic Prophecy that your organization has been studying, you have been sent on a mission into the Menechtarun Desert. The Prophecy, copied for you below to reference, speaks of a “sandy ruin in the vast waste.” Your Faction’s interpreters have decided this is the ruined city of Mel-Aqat, which rests on the eastern edge of the desert. You are supposed to go there, and then use the rest of the Prophecy fragment to guide your way. Much is believed to be at stake, but no one knows quite what that might be.

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Know the wyrms’ thoughts on themselves, the sacrificers,
the blooded servants, the students, the student’s slaves, the wardens,
the many, the deep dwellers, and the empty vessels.
Essence of the body of dragontouched quells the verdant guardians,
But the guards may guard the innocent in their safety
As much as the guilty from escape.
Sand and Fate passed, Fortune stands awestruck but wishing release.
We pay a dear price for Fortune.

Handout 4 – Crimson Codex

Based on one of the Caldyn Fragments of the draconic Prophecy that your organization has been studying, you have been sent on a mission into the Menechtarun Desert. The Prophecy, copied for you below to reference, speaks of a “sandy ruin in the vast waste.” Your Faction’s interpreters have decided this is the ruined city of Mel-Aqat, which rests on the eastern edge of the desert. You are supposed to go there, and then use the rest of the Prophecy fragment to guide your way. Much is believed to be at stake, but no one knows quite what that might be.

Since the ruins are not too deep into the desert, each member of your Faction has been given two *potions of endure elements*. You are currently re-supplying yourself at an oasis marketplace in the northeast corner of the Menechtarun.

The fragment of the draconic Prophecy that you are following is supplied below:

When a millennium passes since the North Kingdom formed
The sandy ruins in the vast waste hold a key to life’s future.
Follow the vulture as he glides over the sand.
The peril for all is yours, and a mother’s,
For knowledge and fortune are siblings.
Know the wyrms’ thoughts on themselves, the sacrificers,
the blooded servants, the students, the student’s slaves, the wardens,
the many, the deep dwellers, and the empty vessels.
Essence of the body of dragontouched quells the verdant guardians,
But the guards may guard the innocent in their safety
As much as the guilty from escape.
Sand and Fate passed, Fortune stands awestruck but wishing release.
We pay a dear price for Fortune.

