

NUMENÉRA™



SHADEWALKER

BY SEAN K. REYNOLDS



INTRODUCTION

SHADEWALKER

Shadewalker is a Numenera™ adventure, suitable for beginning player characters (PCs), that can take place almost anywhere in the Ninth World.

Part 1, “Shadewalker Shanty,” describes a small town built around a mobile machine that moves itself every few years and provides details about the machine itself.

Part 2, “Path of Struggles,” centers around the PCs’ chase after the machine, and details the hazards and creatures unearthed by its travels. *Shadewalker* is a simple adventure designed to demonstrate the Numenera system to new players. It includes explanation about how the rules work and page references to the Numenera corebook for important information.

BACKGROUND

The PCs saw a brilliant flash of light in the distance two nights ago, and have followed it from the southwest, investigating its cause, hoping to find something interesting. As they continue on this journey, they come to the trading town of Shadewalker Shanty, famous for having been built under and around an ancient machine, called the Shadewalker, that comes to life every few years and moves itself to a new location—an event the locals call the Big Walk. The people who discovered the machine a few decades ago realized it would make an excellent landmark and a hub for commerce, and built a camp on the site, which attracted merchants and other travelers. Eventually their tents, lean-tos, and simple houses became a shantytown market. When the Shadewalker animated three years later, it pulled free of those temporary structures and moved a few thousand feet away. The settlers quickly adapted, moved their town, and rebuilt their ramshackle homes and stores around the machine’s new location. Since then, they have repeated this activity whenever the machine awoke again. Just after the characters arrive, the machine comes alive once more, disrupting life in the town and giving the PCs an opportunity to explore.

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PART 1

SHADEWALKER SHANTY



This portion of the adventure introduces the PCs to a small trading village, a place more famous for its unusual landmark than its goods, but reasonably safe, comfortable, and profitable for those who live there. Once the characters have a look around, an event shakes the town apart, and they are asked to help out with a special task while the villagers pick up the pieces.

SYNOPSIS

The PCs have come to the town of Shadewalker Shanty on their quest of finding the source of a brilliant flash of light in the distance two nights previous. It is mid-morning, and the characters can do some trading, purchase supplies, and meet interesting creatures. While they are there, the Shadewalker reactivates, pulls itself free, and flies away to the northeast. The village leader announces that he will reward any able-bodied folk who follow the Shadewalker to its new location, scout the area, and make sure it is safe for resettlement. Since the villagers are accustomed to this turn of events, they immediately busy themselves packing up their belongings and salvageable building materials. As such, this exploratory task usually falls to visitors and new arrivals who have no homes of their own—people like the PCs. Of course, the PCs were going that way anyway

The Shadewalker is an organic machine built in some previous era, worn down and damaged by the passage of years, lack of maintenance, and salvage efforts by creatures unaware of its original purpose. It was created to search out, assess, and extract useful materials—water, oil, ore, silicon, and so on—and package them for use by other machines. Now it remains inert most of the time, slowly recharging and running its internal maintenance systems. Every few years it rouses itself to motion, making erratic but inexorable progress toward an unknown goal.

The Shadewalker's body resembles a rigid, flattened dome, about 60 feet (18 m) across, made of a mix of synth, metal, and organic chitin (like a crab's shell), dotted with protrusions, small apertures, and large areas

of hard synth resembling dull, black eyes or windows (these are akin to solar panels). Its five limbs, arranged radially along its underside, are flexible like an elephant's trunk and are made of the same material as its body. The limbs are mostly synth, with an exoskeleton of interlocking metal and chitin plates, thicker toward the outer side of the limb; when inert, the Shadewalker curls up its five limbs and rests on them like table legs, holding its body about 25 feet (7.6 m) off the ground. Much of the Shadewalker's outer surface has been scarred by looters, lightning strikes, and fatigue from repeated expansion and contraction; most of its black "eyes" are covered in a spiderweb of gray cracks.

When functioning well, the Shadewalker is able to fly due to an internal levitation device, which allows it to make aerial surveys. Its limbs are for backup locomotion and contain most of its mining sensors, which it deploys by burrowing them into the ground. When the Shadewalker activates during the adventure, it has only enough power to fly for short bursts, about 1,000 feet (305 m), and usually resorts to walking, using its flight ability to bypass difficult obstacles on its journey. When its power supply is depleted, it slowly comes to a halt in its "sitting" position, usually with its dome a little tilted because some limbs aren't able to completely curl into the appropriate configuration.

NEW ARRIVALS

The characters have arrived at Shadewalker Shanty, a minor trading village notable for an ancient artifact/building called the Shadewalker, which comes to life every few years and moves itself to a new location. This structure resembles a rigid, flattened dome made of a variety of materials, dotted with protrusions, apertures, and black areas resembling windows or perhaps eyes. It has five tentacle-like limbs made of interlocking plates, which are positioned under itself like the legs of a table, holding the dome about 25 feet (7.6 m) off the ground. Its outer surface is scarred from burns, many of its "eyes"

Throughout this adventure, you'll see page references to various topics accompanied by this symbol. These are references to the **Numenera** corebook, where you can find additional details. It isn't necessary to use the corebook to run this adventure; it's an optional way to provide additional information.





If the characters want to know if there is anything unusual for sale in Shadewalker Shanty, refer to the table on page 314 of the Numenera corebook and roll 1d100 to determine an oddity.

Climbing the Shadewalker is a difficulty 3 task.

Tewra: level 2,
level 3 for repairing



Gallen, page 145

Kelmar: level 2,
level 3 for negotiation

Alx and Uto: level 3,
1 point of Armor

Parl: level 1,
level 2 for handling animals

GM Intrusion: A character who is trained in social interaction or has an unusual physical characteristic unintentionally makes a strong positive impression on an influential village family, the Thaaqs. Family members comment to each other about the individual, introduce other relatives to the character, and tend to show up in the village wherever the PC is. Family members are annoyingly persistent and can get in the way.

are covered in cracks, and in several places it looks like people tore off pieces, tried to pry it open, or drew markings on it. Nevertheless, on the whole it is still an impressive structure. The village is built under the Shadewalker's bulk, around its limbs, and spills outward from there in a ramshackle of large wagons, lean-tos, tents, and hastily constructed buildings, taking advantage of the Shadewalker's bulk to gain some shelter from the elements. A few hundred feet to the north is a small stream, which emerges from a sparsely wooded area to the northwest.

Once the PCs arrive, give them at least fifteen minutes of game time to gawk at the Shadewalker, explore the village, talk to local people, and do some shopping.

Investigating The Shadewalker: Upon closer inspection, the characters can get a much better idea of the Shadewalker's age and the wear it has suffered. Anything removable has long since been taken from it, and the villagers become upset if the PCs attempt to damage it, but only watch with curiosity if the characters want to climb on it.

If anyone examines the Shadewalker with some knowledge of the numenera and succeeds at a difficulty 4 task, they can determine that while it has been dormant for a long time, something is active within the machine. In other words, they get the idea that something is about to happen. They cannot, however, glean the machine's nature or purpose.

Talking with the Villagers: Shadewalker Shanty is not an exceptionally wealthy village, nor is it a center for any unusual goods, but it does attract visitors who are interested in the numenera and artifacts from previous worlds. Most buildings, tents, and wagons are both shop and home to the locals, and all such objects look like they were made out of local materials (typically wood, straw, and leafy branches) or salvaged from other structures. Many buildings were originally constructed so they could be moved if necessary, but over time they have fallen into disrepair or have been augmented with additions that would make them too cumbersome or fragile to move. Many locals own one or two draft animals.

Four other visitors are currently in the village: Tewra, a traveling peddler, and Kelmar, a stone merchant in search of new business accompanied by two bodyguards.

The villagers are friendly and accustomed to strangers. Although all of them know that the Shadewalker does its "Big Walk" every few years, plodding to a new location before settling down again, it's not something they talk about often.

All the adult villagers have been living here for at least three of these events, and most can trace their lineage back two or three generations to a small tribe of nomads who huddled under the Shadewalker during a great lightning storm and decided to settle there. Thus, the villagers focus on the machine's shelter rather than its very rare movement. With a small population, the villagers are aware that they need new settlers to keep their bloodlines healthy, and are they are happy to see any young visitors willing to work and live here.

Aside from standard equipment, the villagers or other traders might have one or two oddities for sale, priced anywhere from 1 to 20 shins each.

TEWRA

Tewra is a large, burly peddler woman with a friendly grin and many tattoos. She crafts simple weapons such as bows, spears, and knives, and can make temporary repairs to more complex items (not including the numenera). All of her worldly possessions are in a small enclosed yellow wagon hitched to a gallen. She knows to stay on the dirt road, for there are wild creatures who hunt nearby.

KELMAR

Kelmar is a small, fair-skinned man with large eyes. He buys and sells exotic building stone for wealthy clients and occasionally trafficks in precious gems. Very strong for his size, he carries a leather satchel weighted down with samples of the building stones he can acquire. His bodyguards are Alx and Uto, quiet brothers who are very protective of Kelmar.

PARL

Parl owns a large number of gallen, and he is the spokesman for the village, easily recognizable by his large hat with a simple sketch of the Shadewalker on the front of it (which he drew himself). He sells rope and cloth woven out of gallen hair and barter gallen labor to support his family. Prone to exaggerate or tell harmless lies if he thinks he won't be called out on it, Parl is friendly and polite but more concerned about taking care of his animals than repairing his collapsing house.

THE AWAKENING

Without warning, the Shadewalker begins to shudder, and its limbs start to uncurl and lift its body upward. A loud, deep humming emanates from the central structure, and after a few seconds it pulls free of the ground and flies northeast about as fast as a bowshot. The



machine's departure causes chaos as the many structures that used the Shadewalker's limbs as a wall or a support surface fall down and animals throughout the village scatter in fear of the noise.

It's best if this event happens before the PCs learn that it could happen. That way, it's a far greater surprise.

The PCs can overhear comments from the villagers such as "It's flying!" or "Why isn't it walking?" suggesting that this behavior is unusual for the Shadewalker. (They might instead accost a villager and ask questions to get the same result.) Of course, assuming the PCs didn't know that the Shadewalker moved at all, the whole thing likely seems quite unusual.

The GM should use one or more of the following quick encounters to show the villagers that the characters are quick to take action and solve problems. The GM should use intrusions to advance the story and allow the PCs to feel and appear confident.

- The PCs hear a weak cry for help from under a collapsed roof—an elderly person is trapped and cannot get out. Freeing the victim without injury is a difficulty 2 task.
- A villager with a limp asks for assistance rounding up his two gallen, which ran away when their hitch broke. The creatures are skittish, but can be caught by a character with good speed or one who is skilled at dealing with animals, requiring two separate difficulty 1 tasks.
- Kelmar and a villager were negotiating over some traveling rations when the Shadewalker roused itself. The stone merchant is annoyed by the sudden interruption and starts yelling at the villager. If the PCs don't stop this tirade (a difficulty 2 task), another frustrated villager will start punching Kelmar, prompting his bodyguards to wrestle the villager to the ground. If the PCs intervene and resolve things peacefully, Kelmar is grateful and gives them 1 shin each.

After a few minutes (perhaps during which the PCs are retrieving gallen or otherwise helping out), things in the ruined village settle down a bit, and the villagers begin the process of picking up their belongings, salvaging what they can from their homes and shops, and start arranging to move the town. No longer distracted by commotion and danger, the villagers are eager to discuss and explain what they know about the Shadewalker—that every few years, it gets up and moves, and the people of the tiny town follow it. But they've never known it to fly (after all, they do call this event

the Big Walk); at earlier times it walked like a strange insect, with heavy steps. If the PCs look to the northeast, they can see the Shadewalker lurching off in that direction, having landed some distance away and continued on the ground thereafter.

Normally the village would send a scouting party to follow the Shadewalker's trail so they could get an idea of the terrain the others would have to move through and where their new homes would be. However, because the Big Walk came early this time, and the destruction was heavier than expected, they don't have anyone to spare for a scouting party. Parl, the village spokesman, turns to the visitors (the PCs and the two merchants) and asks them to go after the Shadewalker, make note of tracks from game or dangerous animals, find out where it stops, and report back to the village with this news. The village isn't wealthy, but the locals can scrounge together about 10 shins and some fresh fruit, and Parl offers a healthy young gallen to sweeten the deal.

The visiting NPCs aren't interested in this task. Tewra knows there are dangerous creatures in this area, doesn't like leaving the road, and isn't much for scouting. Kelmar's bodyguards can fight, but they're more suited for discouraging thieves than for fighting wild beasts; as well, Kelmar is too greedy and the payment isn't worth his time or the danger—and he's not really fond of gallen). Therefore, this opportunity falls to the PCs; if they made a good impression on any villagers (such as the Thaa family), those people speak up on the PCs' behalf, praising them for helping in the immediate aftermath of the Shadewalker's departure (if they did indeed help).

Parl tells the PCs that the Shadewalker rarely travels more than about a day's walk before settling down again. He tells the PCs that the most dangerous creatures in the area are huraths, snakelike animals about the size of a tall human with multiple vestigial limbs; they lurk in tall grass and can climb trees, but normally attack only solitary creatures. He also tells them that if they kill one, hurath meat is delicious, and encourages them to try it, or at least bring it back to the village for bartering.

Talking about huraths reminds Parl that the PCs should keep an eye out for Balvo, a reclusive hunter who sometimes comes to the village to trade hurath meat for supplies. Balvo is gruff and generally unpleasant, but means no harm and knows the area well.

When the players are ready to proceed, continue to the next section of the adventure.

GM Intrusion: After the room collapses, the debris shifts just as the PCs attempt to move it, increasing the difficulty to 3, and failing means that the victim and any character within an immediate distance takes 1 point of damage from the collapse.

For more on the influential Thaa family, see the GM intrusion on page 4.

Hurath: level 2

Details about the PCs' encounter with Balvo are on page 7.



PART 2

PATH OF STRUGGLES

SYNOPSIS

The mechanisms that allow the Shadewalker to leave the ground are old and unreliable, and it is able to fly only about a thousand feet before it has to land and start walking. The giant machine's path takes it over a rocky ridge (which the PCs need to find a path through or around) and near a camp of margr abhumans (which the PCs need to drive away). Eventually the Shadewalker settles in an isolated area where it burrows all of its limbs into the ground instead of just curling them underneath itself. It then manufactures crab-like guardians to protect itself and guard the resources that its limbs digs up. The PCs can reset its programming so that it stops creating the guardians and is again safe for the villagers to approach.

TRACKS AND CURIOUS DIRT

The Shadewalker's large, heavy tracks are easy to follow (no roll needed), creating an odd pattern of trapezoidal flattened areas as its five radially symmetrical limbs move it northeast, sometimes flattening the small trees growing in this area. The PCs move about 2 miles per hour over this terrain. Despite its size, the Shadewalker moves faster than a typical human can run over long distances, and the PCs won't be able to catch it on foot until it stops moving. Every half mile or so, the tracks cluster together and overlap, as if the Shadewalker had paused. Near the perimeter of these clustered areas is a shallow patch of disturbed soil about 10 feet (3 m) across, surrounded by a low ridge of spilled dirt and rocks, as if someone had dug a big hole



Margr, page 244



and quickly filled it in again without bothering to pound the earth flat. The diameter of the loose earth is about the same as one of the Shadewalker's limbs.

The Shadewalker is actually probing into the earth about 50 feet (15 m) to use its sensors to determine if there are any valuable resources underground. Then it withdraws the limb and allows most of the displaced earth to settle into the hole. Following each of these scans, it slightly adjusts its course in search of the richest deposits.

If the characters decide to excavate one of these pits, after an hour they make some headway, but the edges of the pit are prone to collapsing. Meanwhile, the Shadewalker is not getting any closer and the PCs are running out of daylight. If the characters insist on digging for more than an hour, the GM should use an intrusion to collapse one of the pit's walls, potentially trapping a PC or burying some of the group's equipment.

STONE RIDGE

Unless they delayed themselves by examining the site of one of the Shadewalker's ground probes, the PCs should reach this next point in the story one to two hours before sundown. Up ahead, the Shadewalker's path is blocked by a jutting ridge of stone. Ranging from 50 to 100 feet (15 to 30 m) high, the ridge ends a little over a mile to the south-southeast and extends north-northwest for longer than that. From the ground on the near side it is impossible to tell how thick the ridge is; it might only be a hundred feet (which is actually the case), or it might be the edge of an elevated mesa that continues on for a long distance. The Shadewalker's tracks stop about 100 feet (30 m) short of the near side of the ridge. (It is physically incapable of climbing up the slope of the ridge, but was able to use its levitation engine to fly over it, landing on the other side to continue its walking survey.)

Near where the PCs approach the stone ridge, they encounter the reclusive hunter Balvo. He had found signs of margr in the area and was going to climb to the top of the ridge to see if he could spot the creatures. The Shadewalker's flight overhead distracted him, and he slipped and fell, breaking his leg. He has tried to splint the leg himself but lacks the leverage or tools to do so. Realizing he's out on his own, vulnerable, and probably near some dangerous abhumans, he decided he should make the long crawl to Shadewalker Shanty to get help.

Fortunately for Balvo, the PCs end up finding him. He tries to quietly attract their attention (so

as not to disturb the margr) by shooting arrows into their general area, well clear of their actual location, and it's an easy matter for the PCs to locate him after that.

Balvo is fairly young, with a scruffy, wolf-like appearance, unkempt hair, a few missing teeth, and bad breath. He doesn't like being around other people any more than he has to be, but is aware that he needs help with his leg. He explains that he spotted some margr tracks in the area and was climbing the ridge to get a better look when the Shadewalker flew overhead and caused him to slip. He would prefer that the PCs help set and splint his leg so he can be on his way, rather than carrying him back to the village. He is embarrassed that he hurt himself falling and gets angry if anyone laughs at him for doing it.

If asked about the margr, he tersely explains that they are savage, violent brutes with animalistic features. So far in this area he has seen only tracks and the remains of what they've killed, but he estimates them to number between four and six. He says that the near side of the ridge is fairly steep, but the other side is a gentle slope; he might size up the PCs and suggest that they climb over or go around, depending on his estimation of their mountaineering ability.

Setting and splinting Balvo's leg is a difficulty 4 task that takes 10 minutes.

If the PCs succeed at treating Balvo, he is visibly relieved but tries not to sound too grateful. As thanks for their help, he offers them his remaining eight arrows and some hurath jerky (he can make more arrows later, and would have a hard time firing a bow anyway since he can't stand freely on two legs), keeping his dagger and wood axe for himself.

If the PCs fail twice in their attempts to set his leg, Balvo becomes frustrated and starts yelling at them, insisting that he'll crawl all the way to the village on his own and they should leave him alone. Thereafter he refuses all help and actively fights the PCs if they try to carry him back to the village (they'll need to knock him out or otherwise make him helpless to get him to stop fighting).

Once his leg is set and the PCs are done with their questions for him, Balvo fashions himself a crude pair of crutches and hobbles off to make camp for himself, refusing any offers to travel with the PCs. As long as they haven't made him angry or resentful, Balvo grudgingly respects them but doesn't consider them friends; he would help them as they had helped him if the circumstances were reversed, but he's still an

Balvo: level 1, trained in hunting, level 3 for resisting interactions with people

Before the PCs attempt to splint Balvo's leg, the GM could remind the players that they can use Effort and treat the help of another person as an asset to make this task easier (cyphers and numenera abilities might also affect the difficulty of this roll, at the GM's discretion). If the PCs fail at this task and want to try again, they must use Effort on the retry.

Effort, page 21

Retrying, page 89

Falling, page 94

If asked about the numenera, Balvo admits he has one cypher (a level 3 speed boost) and is willing to trade it for one the PCs offer him, if he finds the item useful. He can be persuaded into giving up his cypher as payment for the PCs' help instead of trading it, but doing so makes him resentful and unwilling to talk more.

Speed boost, page 295

GM Intrusion: *The stone the character is using to pull himself up a tricky spot in the side of the ridge comes loose, and the character tumbles down the ridge. It is a difficulty 3 Speed task for the character—or another nearby character—to stop her tumble. If not, she suffers 2 points of damage and must begin the climb again.*



Laak, page 295

Pallone, page 251

asocial hermit and would rather be on his own.

The PCs will have to climb the ridge or travel southeast to get around it. Climbing is definitely the faster option, but is a difficulty 2 task. The GM should remind the PCs that they can spend Effort or use assets such as rope or the assistance of a trained character to reduce the difficulty of the climb roll.

Once the PCs reach the top, they see that the ridge is fairly narrow, and it slopes down on the far side, allowing them to negotiate the far side without climbing as long as they don't rush. From this elevation, they can easily spot the Shadewalker's tracks and the occasional broken tree resulting from its movement. If it is still daylight, the Shadewalker is visible in the distance, although it is hard to tell if the machine is stationary or moving. It would take about three hours for the PCs to get to its current location.

If the PCs reach this point in the adventure relatively early in the game session, or if this is part of an ongoing campaign instead of a convention or store demonstration, the GM can add an encounter at the top of the ridge with a group of laaks or pallones.



From the top of the ridge, the PCs might be able to spot what looks like a small camp about an hour away near a small pond, just south of the Shadewalker's path. Seeing the camp in daytime is a difficulty 4 task, but at night the campfire reduces this to a difficulty 2 task.

Once the PCs climb off the ridge, it is probably about sundown (unless digging delayed them, in which case it is completely dark). If the PCs camp for the night, the margr at the camp reach the Shadewalker first. If the PCs press on toward the Shadewalker at night and aren't aware of the camp, the margr ambush them along the way. If the PCs move forward, are aware of the camp, and try to get around it, they might avoid the camp encounter but the abhumans could still arrive later, while the PCs are dealing with the dangerous plants or the Shadewalker's defenses. If the characters decide to investigate the camp, they can sneak up on its occupants or brazenly approach the place. For information on the camp and its inhabitants, proceed to the "Abhuman Camp" section; otherwise, proceed to the "Shadewalker Guardians" section.

If the PCs decide to travel around the ridge to the southeast, it takes them about an hour to reach the end of the obstacle. If the characters follow the other side of ridge, they meet up with the Shadewalker's tracks on the far side in about an hour and resume their tracking. If the PCs assume that the Shadewalker kept moving after crossing the ridge and decide to bear to the north to make up for lost time, they will pass very close to the margr's camp. Proceed to the "Abhuman Camp" section.

ABHUMAN CAMP

A group of margr wandered into this area in search of food. They found and killed a hurath and have made camp to cook it. Their camp has a small campfire, and the abhumans are using their spears to cut slices of meat from their prey and roast them over the fire. They see their hunting success as a good sign and plan to stay here for a while, which means they'll eventually cause trouble for the villagers of Shadewalker Shanty. Although the PCs were instructed to "make note of" dangerous animals, the presence of violent, brutish abhumans is a more significant threat. The characters can attempt to get rid of the margr, either through force or trickery. There is one margr for each PC; this group has no leader.

If the PCs are aware of the camp, how this encounter plays out is up to them—killing, intimidation, and persuasion are all



possibilities. Any outcome that keeps the margr away from the villagers is a success.

If the characters are unaware of the camp, they might stumble onto it and be forced into a confrontation, or the margr might hear the PCs in the vicinity and send a few of their number to investigate. If the margr discover the PCs before the PCs discover them, the abhumans attack, either in a direct charge or by circling around the characters and setting an ambush.

The margr carry their treasure in a heavy leather bag: 6 shins, several polished animal skulls, an oddity (a rubber-like marble that, when squeezed, creates sparks like a struck flint), a level 4 living solvent, and a pair of level 3 telepathy implants. The hurath carcass is freshly killed and unspoiled, and the PCs can cut several large steaks from it and take them along without being overburdened.

DANGEROUS PLANTS

Beyond the margr camp, the Shadewalker's tracks lead through a large, sparse patch of flowering bushes with green berries. The bushes don't look unusual and do not have a noticeable odor, but they give off poisonous fumes, and the PCs are unlikely to notice that anything is wrong until after they are among the plants. About a minute after coming within a short distance of the bushes, each character must succeed at a difficulty 3 Might defense roll or move one step down the damage track (from hale to impaired, or from impaired to debilitated, but not worse than debilitated). Resting for 10 minutes removes this penalty. The PCs must attempt this Might defense roll every minute they remain within range of the plants.

The berries are tasty. However, they are also poisonous, and anyone who eats a handful automatically moves one step down the damage track for one hour. Each additional handful requires a difficulty 3 Might defense roll to avoid moving down one more step on the damage track for an hour (the berries do not count as an asset for these rolls). Unlike the fumes, this poison can move a creature from the debilitated condition to the dead condition. Gathering a handful of berries takes 10 minutes.

SHADEWALKER GUARDIANS

Finally, the PCs come to within a few hundred feet of the Shadewalker. Instead of "sitting" on its curled limbs, the underside of its body is resting on the ground, all of its legs are thrust into the earth at 45-degree angles away from its body, and several large containers are visible on its upper surface. Three crab-like creatures, each

resembling a smaller version of the Shadewalker and made of similar materials, patrol the top of the structure and the area around it. A low rumble can be felt in the earth, and the characters hear a clanking noise that sounds like a mill or simple machinery at work.

After decades or centuries of alternately scanning and crawling, the decrepit Shadewalker has found a place where it can fulfill its intended function: harvest and collate minerals and other resources for distribution to other machines for construction and repair. Its limbs are deep in the ground, gathering various compounds, which are separated and packaged within its body and dumped into hoppers for later transport or pickup. It reserves a small portion of these resources for self-repair, but its repair mechanisms are undependable, and it will take years for the Shadewalker to undo all the damage it has suffered since it was abandoned.

The crab-like robots are Shadewalker guardians, security units programmed to prevent unauthorized removal of the processed materials. They react threateningly to all creatures that approach the Shadewalker, but not necessarily aggressively. They are made of the same stuff as the Shadewalker, and were released from a hidden storage chamber when the machine entered this mode of operation.

If the PCs do not attack the guardians or approach the minerals, the guardians do not attack. However, after just a few moments, the PCs can see that these things are not functioning at top efficiency. Their limbs move clumsily or erratically, and the guardians sometimes inexplicably spin or even bump into things. Even if not attacked, a guardian might:

- Attempt to grab a PC or an item from one's person and carry the PC or item to the mineral bins, dumping them in.
- Bump into a PC, inflicting 1 point of damage.
- Emit a high-pitched screech for one minute.

Because the guardians would most likely attack the villagers who arrive here, and because they will not leave the vicinity of the Shadewalker, the PCs must destroy them to make the new village site safe. The characters might discover later that the Shadewalker can manufacture more guardians if necessary (each taking several weeks), leading them to realize that they should find a way to deactivate or reprogram this function.

Once the PCs defeat the guardians, they can salvage a total of three level 3 anoetic cyphers from their remains: a datasphere siphon, an

GM Intrusion: *If the PCs are having an easy time fighting the margr, a level 3 leader arrives.*

Living solvent,
page 289

Telepathy implant,
page 89

Damage track,
page 93

Having the margr attack the PCs after one or more of them are impaired is a nasty surprise—one that would challenge even tough, experienced characters.

Shadewalker guardian:
level 3, defends as level 4; 9 health; 3 points of Armor



*Datasphere
siphon, page 283*

Eagleseye, page 285

*Remote viewer,
page 293*

eagleseye, and a remote viewer. The characters can then examine the Shadewalker more closely, particularly its new features and its functioning control panel.

SHADEWALKER'S HEART

The upper surface of the Shadewalker is a smooth, gentle slope (difficulty 0, no roll needed to climb). Each of the containers on top is large enough to hold a crouching human and has walls about a foot thick; a 1-foot-diameter pipe projects out of the top of the Shadewalker to just above each of these bins. Each container is mostly empty, but every so often (anywhere from a few seconds to a minute) a small nugget of material—crystal, iron, stone, or synth—is blown out of the pipe and falls into the container. The hum of machinery comes from within the limbs and body of the Shadewalker, and after a time, characters can discern that some of the repeated noises seem to indicate the pending arrival of another sample. In short, the Shadewalker is processing raw materials into refined materials and placing them in these bins for collection; nevertheless, any creature or machine that was intended to collect these materials is probably long destroyed, along with whatever civilization created the Shadewalker, so these items are now up for grabs. If the people of Shadewalker Shanty rebuild their village here, they will slowly accumulate valuable resources they can use for trading or construction (these resources aren't useful to the characters unless one or more of them have crafting abilities).

One large box initially appears to be a closed container, but is actually a control panel that was hidden within the Shadewalker until the machine switched to mining and refinery mode. Activating the panel is a difficulty 2 task. Someone trained in the numenera can spend an hour puzzling out the basic functions of the control panel, which consist of:

- scanning, cataloguing, retrieving, and processing buried resources
- self-repair (already active)
- building additional guardian units to replace damaged or destroyed ones (also active)

Deactivating either of the active functions is a difficulty 4 task; it is impossible to reprogram the Shadewalker to move, to look for other resources (such as water or gold), or to activate any of its other abilities by using this control panel. Dismantling and scavenging the control panel yields 1d6 shins and a level 4 machine control implant, but renders the panel inoperable thereafter.

CONCLUSION

It takes about the same amount of time as the trip out for the PCs to return to the ruins of Shadewalker Shanty. When they arrive, they see that the villagers are much more organized, and various homes and wagons are already being converted or rebuilt for transportation. The villagers enthusiastically greet the characters and ask what they've discovered. Parl is pleased by the news about the material the Shadewalker is crafting, since he expects this to increase the village's wealth.

Tewra is curious about the margr weapons and anything the PCs salvaged from the guardian robots.

Kelmar wants to see the stone samples produced by the Shadewalker and might proposition Parl for first rights to negotiate trade for them.

If the PCs brought back any hurath meat, the villagers suggest sharing it as part of a celebratory feast. (If the PCs are hesitant to give up the tasty meat, a villager offers an appropriate amount of salted meat in exchange.)

Parl and the other villagers make good on their payment to the PCs, and invite them to stay for a couple of days and enjoy the local hospitality (and he has an ulterior motive: he would like the PCs to help escort the villagers safely to the new site).

The characters' successful mission cements the reputation of the PCs in the eyes of the Thaaf family. Family elders might suggest an arranged marriage to a character. If no PCs are interested in this offer, the elders suggest that one or more young, able-bodied family members accompany the PCs as a porter, with the hopes of learning useful skills, discovering a bit about the outside world, and finding people who are interested in moving to the village.

Now that the Shadewalker is performing a function instead of being an inert hulk, Aeon Priests might take an interest in it and its creations. Likewise, rumors of the Shadewalker's manufacturing abilities might spread and be exaggerated into stories that claim the machine creates vast wealth and powerful artifacts, which will likely attract the attention of unsavory folk.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 1 XP for helping the villagers deal with the aftermath of the Shadewalker's relocation, 1 XP for eliminating the threat of the margr, and 1 XP for securing the Shadewalker so the villagers can relocate. They can also earn 1 XP if they were able to help Balvo without making him angry or resentful.

Note that 4 XP is enough to increase an aspect and put the character on a path to 2nd tier!



*Machine control
implant, page 289*

SKILLS

Climbing X S

T S

T S

T S

T S

T S

Lies and tricky X S

Resist mental X S

Assess danger, lies, quality, importance, function, or power X S

T S

T S

T S

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Practiced in Armor

Practiced With All Weapons

Bash (1 Might point)

Pierce (1 Speed point)

Attack Flourish

Inability: Lore, knowledge, and understanding

1 TIER

1 EFFORT

XP

MIGHT

POOL 14

EDGE 1

SPEED

POOL 13

EDGE 1

INTELLECT

POOL 9

EDGE

IMPAIRED

DAMAGE

DEBILITATED

RECOVERY ROLLS

1D6+1

10 HOURS

1 HOUR

10 MINS

1 ACTION

2 ARMOR

MOD DMG

Battleaxe

4

Crossbow

4

CYPHERS

Controlled blinking nodule (level 5)

Sound dampener (boots, level 6)

2 LIMIT

POSSESSIONS

EQUIPMENT

Extremely stylish clothing

Beastskin armor

Ornately jeweled battleaxe

Crossbow / 12 medium bolts

ARTIFACTS & ODDITIES

A pair of rose-colored spectacles that, when worn, cause everyone to appear to be either in the prime of their lives or dead

15 SHINS

BACKGROUND

In your younger days, you served as a caravan guard, traveling throughout the Steadfast. You got to know a smattering of people in many cities and towns along the way, and consider many of them allies.

You got involved with this group because _____ is one of those allies that you met along the way, and you would like to impress this person with your skills, bravado, or wit.

NOTES

NUMENÉRA

Kalen

NAME

Clever

DESCRIPTOR

glave

TYPE

WHO

IS A

Fights with Panache

FOCUS

CHARACTER ILLUSTRATION

SKILLS

Jumping (T X)
Climbing (X S)
Running (X S)
Swimming (X S)

Training, riding, and placating animals (X S)
Botany (X S)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Practiced in Armor
Practiced With All Weapons
Bash (1 Might point)
Thrust (1 Might point)
Move Metal (1 Intellect point)
Inability: Charm, persuasion, etiquette & deception

TIER 1
EFFORT 1
XP

MIGHT
POOL 16
EDGE 1

SPEED
POOL 11
EDGE 1

INTELLECT
POOL 7
EDGE

IMPAIRED
DAMAGE
DEBILITATED
RECOVERY ROLLS
1D6+1
1 ACTION
10 MINS
1 HOUR
10 HOURS
ARMOR 3

ATTACKS
Swordstaff
MOD 6
DMG

CYPHERS

Dataphere siphon (pill, level 3)
Ray emitter (numbing) (glove, level 6)

LIMIT 2

POSSESSIONS

EQUIPMENT
Clothing
Plate armor
Swordstaff
Shield
Explorer's pack

ARTIFACTS & ODDITIES

A small metal box that produces sounds of hysterical laughter when shaken

SHINS 5

BACKGROUND

Preferring the wilds to anything that even smacks of populated areas, you are self-taught and self-reliant. Recently on a trip to a nearby town, _____ saved you from a very uncomfortable social situation and you are in this person's debt.

Although you're new to this group, you've notice that when you use your powers within short range of _____, any metallic items on that character's body shudder, rattle, clank, and shake.

NOTES

NUMENÉRA

Mulran
NAME

IS A Rugged
DESCRIPTOR

glave
TYPE

Employs Magnetism
FOCUS

CHARACTER ILLUSTRATION

SKILLS

Might Defense

X S

T S

T S

T S

T S

T S

Stealth

X S

T S

T S

T S

T S

T S

Perception

X S

T S

T S

T S

T S

T S

Lies and Trickery

X S

T S

T S

T S

T S

Fletching

X S

T S

T S

T S

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Practiced With Light and Medium Weapons

Flex Skill

Pierce (1 Speed Point)

Archer

Inability: Movement-related tasks

1

TIER

1

EFFORT

XP

MIGHT

POOL 10

EDGE

SPEED

POOL 15

EDGE

1

INTELLECT

POOL 13

EDGE

IMPAIRED
DAMAGE
DEBILITATED

RECOVERY ROLLS
1D6+1
10 MINS
1 HOUR
10 HOURS

ARMOR
1

MOD DMG

Sick

-1

2

Crank Crossbow

4

CYPHERS

Detonation (web) (level 3)

Living solvent (canister, level 5)

2

LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Clothing

Leather jerkin

Sick

Crank crossbow / 12 medium bolts

POSSESSIONS

ARTIFACTS & ODDITIES

Ring that reduces the wearer's sense of touch.

8

SHINS

BACKGROUND

Long ago, you were accused of a crime you didn't commit. You tried to prove your innocence but were unable to, and finally ran. You suspect that you're still being hunted, and this group seemed like the perfect cover for a little while.

While here, you've become close with _____, someone you consider a true friend. This person gave you a gift of the bow that you currently use.

NOTES

NUMENÉRA

Sados

NAME

Stealthy

DESCRIPTOR

jack

TYPE

WHO

Carries a Quiver

FOCUS

CHARACTER ILLUSTRATION

BACKGROUND

Your whole family is full of nanos.
While you haven't been able to follow
in their path, you have a fair amount of
knowledge of the numenera.

_____ suspects that you're
a messiah or a supernatural being, and
convinced you to join the group, although
you're not entirely certain why that is.

NOTES

NUMENERA

Denwor

NAME

Swift

DESCRIPTOR

jack

TYPE

WHO

Works Miracles

FOCUS

CHARACTER ILLUSTRATION

SKILLS

Skills section with 10 slots. Each slot contains a 'T' (Technical) or 'S' (Specialist) icon. The slots are arranged in two columns of five. The first column contains: T, T, T, T, T. The second column contains: S, S, S, S, S.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Practiced With Light Weapons
- Scan (2 Intellect points)
- Ward
- Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point)
- Distant Activation (1 Intellect point)
- Inability: Charm, Persuasion, and Deception

TIER 1

EFFORT 1

XP

MIGHT

POOL 7

EDGE

SPEED

POOL 12

EDGE

INTELLECT

POOL 17

EDGE 1

Central circular area with four segments: IMPAIRED, DEBILITATED, DAMAGE, and RECOVERY ROLLS. The RECOVERY ROLLS segment contains a '1D6+1' icon.

1 ACTION

10 MINS

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

ARMOR 1

MOD DMG

Blowgun

-1 2

ATTACKS

CYPHERS

- Reality spike (level 3)
- Visual displacement device (bracelet, level 2)
- Detonation (flash) (ceramic sphere, level 6)

LIMIT 3

EQUIPMENT

- Clothing
- Blowgun / 12 darts
- Book on the numerera
- A bag of small tools

POSSESSIONS

ARTIFACTS & ODDITIES

- A ceramic bird with a razor-sharp metal beak
- The face of a person stretched and pressed between two panes of glass

SHINS 4

BACKGROUND

While traveling alone, you tried to save the “life” of a powerful machine. In gratitude, this machine taught you much of what you know. Since then, your life has been devoted to the pursuit of knowledge about the numenera, all of which you do in the name of your machine friend.

You’ve noticed that _____ seems to have a terrible relationship with machines. You believe you could fix that, if you just had the chance.

NOTES

NUMENERA

Trasyn

NAME

Mystical/Mechanical

IS A DESCRIPTOR

nano

TYPE

WHO

Talks to Machines

FOCUS

CHARACTER ILLUSTRATION

SKILLS

Skills section with 10 slots, each containing a 'T' and an 'S' icon. Below the slots are three rows of icons: a row of 10 'T' icons, a row of 10 'S' icons, and a row of 10 'T' icons. The 'S' icons are connected to the 'T' icons by lines.

TIER 1

EFFORT 1

XP

MIGHT

POOL 7

EDGE

SPEED

POOL 9

EDGE

INTELLECT

POOL 20

EDGE 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Practiced With Light Weapons
- Onslaught (1 Intellect point)
- Push (2 Intellect points)
- Telepathic (1+ Intellect point)
- Inability: Lore, knowledge, and understanding
- Inability: Resist mental

CYPHERS

LIMIT 3

- Might rejuvinator (patch, level 5)
- Stim (injector, level 4)
- Catseye (pill, level 2)

POSSESSIONS

EQUIPMENT

- Clothing
- Punching dagger
- Book on the numerera

SHINS 14

ARTIFACTS & ODDITIES

- Forehead crystal (+1 to Intellect pool when worn)
- A scarf that releases a soothing odor when its owner is scared or hurt

ATTACKS

Punching Dagger

MOD -1

DMG 2

Onslaught

2/4

BACKGROUND

You worked for a time with a group of Aeon Priests, and they still look upon you with fondness. In fact, you remain friends with one of the higher-ranking members of the Amber Papacy. When you discover pieces of the numenera for them, you are richly rewarded for your discoveries.

You recently discovered that

_____ is particularly tuned into your mental powers. While within short range of each other, the two of you are always in telepathic contact.

NOTES

NUMENERA

Perem

NAME

Charming

DESCRIPTOR

nano

TYPE

WHO

Commands Mental Powers

FOCUS

CHARACTER ILLUSTRATION