



# ZEITGEIST™

THE GEARS OF REVOLUTION

PART  
9

## THE LAST STARRY SKY

FROM THE  
PEN OF RYAN NOCK

A FANTASY ADVENTURE FOR  
INVETERATE HEROES OF LEVELS 15-16

COMPLETELY COMPATIBLE WITH THE  
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# INTRODUCTION

## Wherein the Bad Guys Save the World

The party is trapped in the Dreaming, the realm of the fey that exists as a bright reflection of reality. And in the real world, the conspiracy known as the Obscurati is about to assassinate the king of Risur and perform a grand ritual that will alter the fabric of reality. Stars will vanish from the sky and new worlds will appear, lending their magical essence to usher in a new age. The Obscurati plot not an age of darkness or tyranny, but rather an age of reason: a well-intentioned world of progress and empathy that will soon spiral disastrously out of their control.

*The Last Starry Sky* serves as climax to Act Two of the ZEITGEIST campaign, which by necessity will end with a bittersweet victory for the PCs. By gaining the favor of the fey's Unseen Court and tricking an untrustworthy fey titan, the party can return to the real world, perhaps saving Risur's king in time or possibly having one of their own assume his crown after he falls. But their main objective must be to stop Roland Stanfield, the city governor of Flint, who has been part of the conspiracy all along. The villain activates an eldritch machine on an island in the Flint harbor, and an entire fleet stands in the party's way.

Once they reach the island, their battle seems to shake the heavens, and they'll need to wield a falling star as a weapon to slay Stanfield. But as he dies, the governor reveals what the party may have already deduced: that his ritual is just one of many, and while Risur might be safe, the rest of the world is now loyal to the Obscurati.

### BACKGROUND

If you haven't read any of the other adventures in the campaign, you can find an overview of the Obscurati conspiracy's plot in the ZEITGEIST Campaign Guide. Before we get to the Ob's plans, though, here's what's going on in the Dreaming.

### Dangers in the Dreaming

A teleportation accident at the end of Adventure Eight lands the party in the Dreaming, near the fey capital city of Clover (which is a reflection of the real world capital of Risur, Slate). Fluctuations of planar energy due to the Obscurati's pending ritual make it impossible for the PCs to use any method they know to travel back to the real world. Perhaps the Unseen Court can help them get home, in exchange for some help with a wee dilemma.

The Unseen Court is at war with a rival faction of powerful fey, who call themselves the Hedgehog Court for reasons that make sense to faeries. The Unseen Court has for decades put up with the increase of technology in Risur – technology that makes areas of the Dreaming uninhabitable – since they still received regular tributes from the Risuri nobility. The Hedgehog Court has denounced Risur's industrial revolution, and has stoked tensions and anger among the 'common' fey. It has also offered aid to adherents of the traditional druidic faith in the real world, fought proxy battles through contacts in the Vekeshi Mystics, and given favors to saboteurs like the 'fey terrorist' **Hana Soliogn**, known as Gale.

But until recently, the two courts had never openly fought. The monarch of the Unseen Court, the androgynous and mirror-masked **Thisraldion**, has ignored the criticism; among the fey, being perceived as a strong leader often depends on aloof detachment and ostentatious decadence, which Thisraldion excels at. But **Olazdor**, the aquiline leader of the Hedgehog Court, recently made a slight against Thisraldion that the fey monarch could not ignore.

### Rock is Dead. Really This Time.

Four months ago, a minor but notorious fey named **Copperhat the Headless** brought over into the Dreaming a famous performer from the real world, **Rock Rackus**. Though few in the Risur believe Rock's stories, in the past few years he became famous for claiming he'd traveled to the moon and cuckolded the fey king. In truth, Rock had just drunkenly insulted who he thought was the 'king,' then slept with who he thought was the 'queen,' but they were the same person; Thisraldion's mask reflects the viewer's perceptions of himself, and Rock is uniquely narcissistic to think he is both king and an object of lusty desire.



## ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

To use this adventure outside of ZEITGEIST, each act can stand alone. The fey murder mystery of Act One could involve an established friend of the PCs, or you could tone down the weird a bit and set it as courtly intrigue among human nobles. The palace siege of Act Two could be adapted to any high-level climax to protect a VIP, or you could turn the tables and use it as a villainous base the party is assaulting. And Act Three's island assault could be to stop whatever manner of dark ritual your campaign demands.

If you want the adventure all together as a high-level stand-alone, the fey realm might be allies, and the party can be sent to the Dreaming to find a member of the conspiracy who knows when and where the Ob's ritual will occur. Copperhat, instead of serving the Voice of Rot, is an agent of the conspiracy, out to cause a civil war and distract the fey so they cannot help.

## ENDING THE CAMPAIGN HERE

If you plan to use this adventure as the end of the campaign, then the ritual in Flint is the main one to alter reality. In Act One, the Voice of Rot can provide knowledge of dying worlds that the party could link to instead of the ones the Ob has planned. In Act Three, Nicodemus and the colossus are with the Danoran fleet in Flint Harbor. The colossus carries with it the 100-ft. diameter golden seal from Axis Island, as well as eight white stone pillars that can be linked to different planes. See Campaign Notes: Friendly Death (page 40) and Alternate Finale (page 53).

## PCS IN THE CONSPIRACY

If the party decided to join the Obscurati, their mission first takes them to the Dreaming to ensure Risur cannot call upon their allies. Then they return to the real world (getting clues that the Voice of Rot might be up to something) and help sabotage the Flint naval garrison so the Danorans can seize the harbor. Rather than attacking Torfeld Palace, they protect Stanfield's fortress from the king and his allies.

Thisraldion and Rock rekindled their former romance, but Olazdor contacted Rackus and told him of the struggle of the Hedgehog Court and how, like many of Rock's fans in the real world, he and his followers were oppressed and fighting against authority. Over the course of several months Rock inadvertently became a hero to both sides. One night he might sing for the common fey of the beauty and debauchery of his lover Thisraldion, and the next day he'd attend a rally denouncing 'the power' and calling for people to prepare for a fight.

Three weeks ago, Rock slipped away from Thisraldion's bed while the fey monarch slept, had a few more drinks to steady himself, and

made his way to a meeting of the Hedgehog Court. He never made it, and the next morning his body was found in a graffiti-covered tunnel. An arrow tipped by an eagle talon pierced his heart, and his head had been severed by a single, impossibly sharp slice.

## Assumptions

Thisraldion blamed Olazdor for killing the royal consort. Olazdor claimed Thisraldion learned that Rock was spying for the Hedgehog Court and had him murdered. An oracle was asked to name the killer, and said that he could not see who killed Rock Rackus. Nevertheless, each side quickly armed and – in proper fey fashion – scheduled when they would go to war.

A forest outside of Clover, dotted with groves and clearings similar to a chessboard, has for the past week hosted battles between forces loyal to each side. While the behavior might seem more sporting than militant, dozens have already died and it's only a matter of time before someone assassinates one of the leaders, which will spark a civil war.

## That is Not Dead Which Can Eternal Lie

The truth is, Rock Rackus isn't dead. Copperhat secretly works for the fey titan known as the **Voice of Rot**, an immense serpent of decaying white flesh, who wishes to keep the fey of the Dreaming too busy fighting to notice what he is planning.

When the time was right, Copperhat abducted Rock, 'killed' a fake body, and stored the real man in *the absurdist web*, an extraplanar space accessible by various wads of spider-web that Copperhat carries. Creatures placed in the web enter a stasis, and by dint of being in an extradimensional space most efforts to solve the mystery through brute force divinations fail.

The two sides immediately began blaming each other for Rock's murder, and now the Voice of Rot has killed the observers the Unseen Court usually set to be prepared for fey titan activity.

## A Serpent Coiled Across Two Worlds

The five fey titans – the Voice of Rot, the Father of Thunder, the Ash Wolf, She Who Writhes, and Granny Allswell – are each massive lords of certain parts of Risur's terrain. They have existed since the dawn of time, and their bodies exist in both the real world and the Dreaming. At the foundation of Risur seventeen centuries ago, King Kelland subdued the titans and forced them to sleep and hand their lands over to mortals.

From time to time one of the titans will awaken and rampage, and the current king or queen has been responsible for defeating him or her. The last time the Voice of Rot caused trouble was five centuries ago. The king at the time, Dukain, was a mighty but aged wizard who wielded magic through his sword. He traveled to a mountain ridge overlooking the High Bayou, known as the Black Needles, and there he battled the fey titan, which had taken the form of a towering anaconda of smoke and peat.

The king battled the titan high into the Black Needles, and after three days neither side could force the other to surrender. Realizing he could not defeat the titan and thus was unworthy of his crown, Dukain cast aside his sword and abandoned the battle. The titan, in his fey logic, saw that he and the king were equally matched, so when Dukain ceased to fight, so did the titan. Dukain yielded his crown to his chosen successor, the titan returned to his slumber, and Risur was saved.





Scholars fear that should the lost Sword of the Black Needles ever be recovered, it would signal a resumption of battle for the fey titan, and once again threaten the existence of Risur.

The Voice of Rot is the only one of the five titans awake and active today, having been roused from its torpor by Obscurati excavations to explore an ancient ruin in the High Bayou. During Adventure Three, *Digging for Lies*, the party likely met the serpent and were given a mission to avoid his wrath. The Ob's dig, though, made the titan aware of the plot to open the Axis Seal. Since then he has acted subtly, sending emissaries to cults across the world (such as Grandis Komanov's radical eschatologists), steering the world toward its death.

As a primordial entity, the Voice of Rot is a literal manifestation of the concept of death in this world, and as such his ultimate goal is to witness the world's end. Most of his plans come to light in Adventure Twelve, *The Grinding Gears of Heaven*. For now, he is waiting for the Ob to perform their ritual, and has agents ready to ensure they fail to properly seal the world off from the rest of the multiverse.

As for the party, the Voice of Rot previously needed them to disrupt the Obscurati (and by carrying the *absurdist web* that Copperhat offered them, they let him listen in and learn the conspiracy's plans). Without the party's interference, the Voice of Rot's agents among the radical eschatologists of Drakr would not have had time to get into place on Axis Island. But going forward, he does not need the party any further.

## METAGAMING CONCERNS

Precisely when the assassination plot against King Aodhan occurs involves a bit of narrative hand-waving. Thanks to the oddities of fey magic, the assassins will always strike just after the PCs get back from the Dreaming.

For an in-world explanation, the portals from Methia in adventure eight led to no place in particular, so the teleportation magic reverted to taking the party where they wanted to go, ultimately: their homeland Risur, to report their findings. Then the planar fluctuations kicked them into the Dreaming instead of the real world. The passage of time in the Dreaming, always a bit wibbly-wobbly, makes it impossible for them to know quite what day it is in the real world.

We admit it was a slight bit of a railroad to have the party whisked away by out-of-control teleportation magic, and it might seem a bit railroady to dictate that they'll pretty much always arrive at Act Two 'in the nick of time.' But the events that occur in the Dreaming set up key elements for the final four adventures, so we feel the detour is justified.

That said, if the party somehow found a way out of Methia without teleporting, they can make their way by land and sea to the king in Slate. If so, we recommend you have the king send the party to the Dreaming, to call upon the old alliance between Risur and the Unseen Court. You'll want to highlight the involvement of fey allies in the second and third acts of this adventure, to show that their mission was pivotal in saving the day.



Though the titan is ultimately a foe of the party's and would gladly see them dead, as a fey being he is still bound by the pact made with the first king of Risur, and so cannot simply kill the PCs, who are merely agents of the king. Indeed, the Unseen Court will advise the party to retrieve the Sword of Dukain, and then surrender. This will compel the Voice of Rot to banish the party from the Dreaming back to the real world.

## Obscurati Endgame

Meanwhile in the real world, the Ob now have the colossus under their control, and they have loaded it onto a massive barge bound for Axis Island. Part of the Danoran fleet escorts it, while the rest sail *en masse* for the city of Flint. It is time for the Ob's endgame, and Sovereign Han Jierre is risking a war if their plans fail.

Nicodemus the Gnostic, head of the conspiracy, has gone to Axis Island to oversee the primary ritual, leaving the ritual in Flint to **Governor Roland Stanfield** (and similar rituals to equivalent conspirators in other countries). The fleet that targets Flint harbor is commanded by the ghost of **Lya Jierre** (or the ghost of one of the previous Jierre scions, if events make it impossible for Lya to return as an antagonist).

The main stumbling block for the Ob's plan is **King Aodhan**, ruler of Risur. Aodhan is fully aware of the Ob's plan (thanks to the PCs), and so will be able to resist their new world order. As long as he holds out against the Ob's control, so will the rest of Risur. So the Ob has spent the past few months preparing an assassination plot, led by **Catherine Romana**, a Risuri noblewoman (or perhaps her ghost if she died in adventure Seven, *Schism*). When the time is right, the Ob will activate *wayfarer lanterns* to draw the entire royal palace into the Bleak Gate, where various monsters await, including an army of the dead.

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Picking up the cliffhanger from the end of adventure eight, the party is pincered between the two warring factions of fey. A young fey, the backward-footed **Rambylon**, can usher the party out of harm's way and to a gathering of minor nobles who watch the battle from a nearby hilltop, quite enjoying the show. Their gossip fills the party in on the situation to date, and points the party toward the city of Clover to visit the Unseen Court for aid. Meanwhile Rambylon asks the party to meet with the Hedgehog Court.

Each court sees the party as a chance to gain an upper hand, and both sides ask them to investigate Rackus's murder.

Thisraldion claims (falsely) to know how to get the party home, and promises to share the information once Olazdor is found guilty and defeated. Olazdor admits to *not* knowing how to help the party, but immediately has the Hedgehog Court's minions start searching fey libraries for clues. He would appreciate finding Thisraldion guilty, of course.

The evidence around Rock's death is damning against both sides, and witness testimony about the days leading up to the murder is made confusing by the fact that Rock himself wasn't aware that he was befriending both sides of a conflict. **Beshela**, **Archfey of the Sea** tries to stymie the party's investigation out of a desire to protect Olazdor who she assumes actually is guilty. **Atsla**, icy lady of the Unseen Court, attempts to frame Thisraldion so she can ascend to the leadership, and Thisraldion in turn puts the party in a death trap and tries to pin it on Atsla.

Copperhat the Headless seems particularly distraught that his favorite drinking partner was stolen from him, but ultimately the party can manage to determine that Copperhat staged a fake murder to cause pandemonium. It then falls to the party to decide whether to accept Copperhat's offer to get them back home with the aid of his master the Voice of Rot, possibly leaving the fey at war or presenting false evidence so one Court comes out on top.

Or they could pin the crime on Copperhat, who flees into the ongoing battles in the chessboard forest, hoping to evade capture. Rescuing Rock Rackus can end the war and gain the aid from both sides, but then presents the party with the daunting prospect of fighting the Voice of Rot and forcing him to send them back home. (No other fey titan can be roused from its slumber quickly enough to get its aid.)

By traveling with Copperhat or by riding with the infamous Great Hunt atop their impossibly fast steeds, the party reaches the Voice of Rot in the Black Needles. Though they aren't strong enough to defeat the colossal serpent, if they can survive his onslaught, reach King Dukain's sword, and draw it from a rotted tree stump, the ancient pact between the titans and Risur will let them surrender and be 'punished' by exile back to the real world.

## Save the King

Back in the real world, the party heads to Torfeld Palace in Slate, and barely has time to warn the king before the Ob launch their multi-pronged assassination plot. Operatives in the Bleak Gate activate six *wayfarer lanterns*, which make the real world and the Bleak Gate coterminous. Agents attempt to place anchoring amulets around the palace, which within five minutes will fully transition the building and its surroundings into the realm of the dead.

## Aodhan's Allies

When the Ob's assassination plot strikes, Aodhan will be defended by his principal minister **Harkover Lee** (in truth a polymorphed dragon, a secret known only to Aodhan), and by the Torfeld Palace Guard, led by **Dame Jillian the Green Knight**. Additionally, the eladrin dreadnought **Asrabey Varal** has recently arrived from the Elfaivar, and will join the fight. Everyone here is a certifiable bad-ass, and although the Ob are throwing everything they have at the party, the players should feel like they're nearly invincible.

Once the attack begins, the RHC's minister of infiltration **Lauryr Cyneburg** teleports in, finds out what's happening, and then leaves to rally allies, but unless the party can disrupt the Ob's plot they'll arrive too late.

The attackers deploy magic-disrupting chaff grenades, swarms of undead, a skeletal dragon, and the varied arcane powers of the Obscurati's ghost council. In the midst of this, Risuri noblewoman **Catherine Romana** attempts a coup, while the ghostly sniper **Amielle Latimer** tries to aid the party without the rest of the ghost council realizing her duplicity.

The party can end the assault by breaking the six lanterns, or possibly retuning them to transition part of the palace into the Dreaming (and thus gaining the aid of the two fey courts). They need to decide whether to stay with the king to protect him, or to split up and tackle the threats more quickly. Barring heroic measures by the party (well, more heroic than usual), the king will die here if he hasn't already, and can name one PC to take his crown.



## KING OR QUEEN

Think of who among your PCs would make a good monarch. If none would, Viscount Nigel Price-Hill is chosen to succeed the king. Or Aodhan might survive, in which case we don't intend to try to kill him again during the course of the campaign. Adventure ten assumes a PC monarch will need to subdue the fey titans, but Aodhan might assign the task to the party because he intends to name one as his successor, and he thinks they're better suited than he is.

## The Grand Ritual

While the king is being assassinated, Governor Stanfield calls to his mansion-fortress **Chief Inspector Stover Delft**, head of the RHC in Flint. Stanfield has Delft imprisoned in the central keep, guarded by mimics and oblivious Risuri soldiers. He then has an impostor in an illusory disguise deliver bad intelligence to the naval patrols that guard Flint, passing along false orders to sail out and 'stop the Danoran advance'.

The Danoran fleet of course knows to expect the Flint garrison, and they win the engagement handily, then sail into Flint harbor practically unopposed. Stanfield enacts the precautions that would normally occur in the event of an invasion – evacuating all non-essential personnel from his mansion/fortress, and destroying the bridge that leads to the governor's island. The last messages he sends out are to not engage the Danorans, and to wait for reinforcements from Slate. The public assumes their city is under siege, and they have no idea Stanfield is an enemy.

Stanfield, meanwhile, assumes that the reinforcements from Slate will arrive too late to make a difference. By the time the leaders in Slate learn what has happened in Flint, the ritual should already be in its nascent stages, with stars already drifting from their once-fixed points in the sky.

## Rallying Flint

Either by riding with the Great Hunt or sailing aboard the swift *R.N.S. Impossible* (docked in Slate as a precaution once it became apparent long-range teleportation was no longer viable), the party can reach Flint with a few hours to spare. A magical barricade surrounds the island, which could possibly be shattered with sustained firepower.

They might sneak aboard the mighty *R.N.S. Coaltongue* in drydock and sail into battle against the Danorans, or contact **Hana "Gale" Soliogn** and use her wind magic to address the entire city at once and send up a call to arms, or use their contacts among the Family, the Vekeshi Mystics, and the common workers of the city to clear a path for them to the governor's island. They even receive an unexpected – albeit dangerous – boon when Beshela, the archfey of the sea, tells them that she has steered the just-awakened She Who Writhes to Flint harbor, and the kraken-like titan will begin sinking Danoran ships. Well, any ships really, but the party can probably avoid her wrath if they're quick.

## Governors Galore

Once the party can get a few minutes to concentrate fire on the shield around the island, they find the soldiers inside confused, but it's possible to bring them around to join the fight. Stover Delft is leading them, or rather his impostor, and he'll try to lure the party into a trap once they enter the mansion-fortress.

The building is guarded by numerous versions of Governor Stanfield, who has learned how to manifest his past incarnations. A secondary defensive shield protects the *wayfarer lighthouse*, forcing the party to disrupt the eldritch device that is draining Delft's life force.

This leaves only the final confrontation with 'primary' Stanfield atop the wayfarer's lighthouse. His incarnations try to hold the party off as he adjusts the flow of planar energies, but if the party can seize control even briefly they can steer in one of the many falling stars, which strikes and destroys the lighthouse, seemingly killing Stanfield.

## FLEXIBLE TIMELINE

We assume events start on the 37<sup>th</sup> of Winter, three days after the season's second first-quarter moon (known traditionally as the Orphan's Moon). The party has until noon on the 39<sup>th</sup> to name Rock's killer, and after riding for 12 hours they'll confront the Voice of Rot around midnight. They'll return to the real world, and then it's another 12-hour ride back to Slate (and the party should probably squeeze a few hours' rest in here somewhere). The evening of the 40<sup>th</sup> they'll deal with the assassination attempt against King Aodhan, and they have until late in the night of the 41<sup>st</sup> to stop the ritual in Flint.

In Risur, both the real world and the Dreaming, winters are dry and chill, but never snowy except in highest mountains.

## KASVARINA AND ANDREI

At the end of adventure eight, the party might have managed to teleport away with Kasvarina Varal and/or Andrei von Recklinghausen. If so, the teleport sent Kasvarina where she most wanted to go: Elfaivar. (From a meta standpoint, we don't want her around to explain to the party that the main Obscurati ritual is on Axis Island. The party will, we hope, think everything is happening in Flint, so it will be a surprise when the villains manage to take over the rest of the world.)

She might return in a later adventure, and we will offer suggestions in adventures eleven and twelve, but we have planned no specific plot elements for her throughout the rest of the campaign. Involve her as you think makes for the best story.

Andrei, though, travels with the party. When not possessed by Nicodemus he is not strong enough to really aid the party in battle, though his agility could make him a useful spy. He desires to find Isobel, and is willing to do that either through the Dreaming or the Waking.

But as the party picks themselves up amid the debris, the deva governor reincarnates a final time, now a monstrous rakshasa. The party finds themselves bereft of all but the simplest magic, and Stanfield taunts them – as a few final falling stars land around him – that this was only a secondary ritual, and the main one on Axis Island must be already complete. All that remains for him before he becomes ruler of a new, better Risur is to kill the party.

A blow delivered with a piece of a falling star will slay Stanfield for good, but as the dust clears the party will look skyward and see unfamiliar heavens.

## ADVENTURE LAYOUT

*The Last Starry Sky's* plot has three main acts. Each act has a fairly specific beginning and climax, but the party can take many different paths through each act. We roughly divide events as follows:

- ♦ **Act One: Much Ado.** The party solves a murder to get out of the Dreaming.
- ♦ **Act Two: Long Live the King.** In a group of fellow bad-asses, the party fights off numerous assassination attempts.
- ♦ **Act Three: Pillars of Heaven.** The party finds a way through layers of defenses to stop a world-shaking ritual.
- ♦ **Appendix One: The Rites of Rulership.** Details of the magic of Risur's monarchy.
- ♦ **Appendix Two: Fey Lords.** Stats of the two fey courts.
- ♦ **Appendix Three: Allied Stats.** Stats of allies in the real world.
- ♦ **Appendix Four: Magic and Training.** Things of value the party can acquire.

## Key Locations

During this adventure permanent planar travel or long-distance teleportation is impossible. Make sure you have a clear sense of each of these locations, and how the party might travel between them.

Location	Page
Black Needles	34
Clover	14
Flint	41
Slate	41

**Black Needles.** These steep spires, where the Anthras Mountains meet the perpetually rain-shrouded High Bayou, are encased in immense swaths of ancient spider webs that act as dams. An old megalith staircase here, once used by those who worshipped the Voice of Rot as a god, was the site of the battle between that fey titan and King Dukain five centuries ago.

**Clover.** This fey city is the Dreaming parallel to Risur's capital city Slate. The Unseen Court rule from Thistle Palace.

**Flint.** The coastal city of Flint is the heart of Risur's industrial revolution.

**Slate.** King Aodhan rules from Torfeld Palace, here in the capital city of Risur.

## PACING AND LEVELING

The party starts this adventure at 15<sup>th</sup> level. They will reach 16<sup>th</sup> level just before they they set out for Flint.

## NPC Roster

Detailed entries of the NPCs the party meets are included throughout the adventure close to the characters' first appearances.

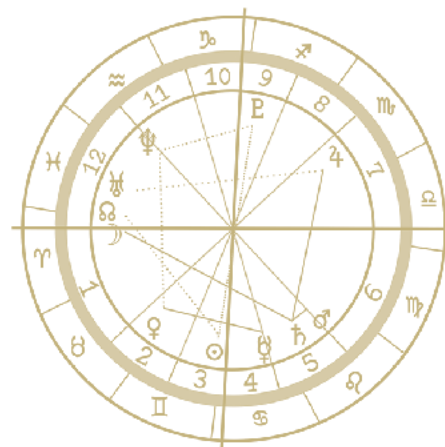
NPC Entry	Page
Amielle Latimer	47
Asrabey Varal	85
Beshela, Archfey of the Sea	20
Chief Inspector Stover Delft	87
Copperhat the Headless	24
Governor Roland Stanfield	71
Hana "Gale" Soliogn	55
Harkover Lee	85
King Aodhan Lesterman	43
Lauryn Cyneburg	86
Lya Jierre	60
Olazdor, Archfey of Winds	20
Rock Rackus	28
Thisraldion, Monarch of the Unseen Court	18
Viscount Inspector Nigel Price-Hill	52

## Recurring Characters

Asrabey and Rock Rackus appear prominently in later adventures. All other NPCs might recur in minor roles, but feel free to do with them as you wish. If anyone important dies, you can replace them with someone thematically similar.

## Rewards

Starting with this adventure, the PCs will no longer be part of a government structure that pays their bills, but will likely end up in charge of the country. They will receive some final boons from the fey in Act One (worth an average of 55,000 gp per PC), and will be able to access a vault of spectacular magic items in Torfeld Palace during Act Two (worth an average of 75,000 gp per PC).





## CHARACTER THEMES IN THE ADVENTURE

Each ZEITGEIST adventure includes one or more scenes that bring the PCs' character themes (detailed in the Player's Guide) to the forefront.

- ♦ **Dockers** are perfectly suited to impress the fey of both courts with their style and flash, and can possibly duet with Rock Rackus to unify the warring factions. Additionally, during the assault on Flint they have the opportunity to rally the common folk of Flint to distract the Danorans.
- ♦ **Eschatologists** are best equipped to parlay with the Voice of Rot.
- ♦ **Gunsmiths** can play with the mega-cannons developed by Obscurati officer Dengar Kriegshaff, and the brand of the R.N.S. *Coaltongue*. They also have the best chance to sway the wavering loyalties of Amielle Latimer.
- ♦ **Martial Scientists** might learn an unorthodox fey fighting style, have the most options when fighting the originality-vulnerable dire Borenbog, and could get another chance to square off against the exceptional duelist Lya Jierre.
- ♦ **Skyseers** will be most politely received by the Unseen Court, and they'll receive a final vision as the stars fall from the skies.
- ♦ **Spirit Mediums** have a leg-up in solving Rock Rackus's "murder," since they can easily tell much of the evidence is fake. Also, they can have a battle of wills against the Voice of Rot.
- ♦ **Technologists** can best defeat the various lanterns and associated gadgets in the Ob's assassination attempts, and can turn Stanfield's eldritch machine against him. In the Dreaming, though, make sure fey scowl at a technologist. Anything with gears or spinning mechanisms makes them wince like it were nails on a chalkboard.
- ♦ **Vekeshi Mystics** can possibly become members of the Unseen Court. Plus, the mystics in Flint are well situated to disrupt Danoran defenses.
- ♦ **Yerasol Veterans** get to captain the R.N.S. *Coaltongue* and oversee a whole fleet to fleet engagement, and likely would be first pick for possible successors should King Aodhan fall.







# ACT ONE: MUCH ADO

In this act, the party solves a murder that never happened, and wins by surrendering.

## MEANWHILE IN THE NEWS

The party won't be hearing any news of the real world while they're stuck in the Dreaming, but they fey have news of their own.

**Rock Rackus Memorabilia.** After his high-profile death, Rock Rackus and everything to do with him has become the talk of the city of Clover. Collectors desire any sort of connection to the slain celebrity, and within hours of the announcement of his demise, his suite in Thistle Palace was looted. Rumors say an unnamed figure is offering a lifetime supply of gold in exchange for Rackus's diamond-encrusted gold pistol, which was not found on his body.

**Gremlin Recruitment.** The riverport of Clover has been befouled by the presence in the Waking of a whirligig ship, its tails spinning and its blowhole belching steam at a mechanical rhythm. The maddening song of the vessel's metal heart is felt in every fey's bones, all the more vexing for its silence to the ears. The High Gardens along the shore call upon every gremlin in the city – no matter their factional loyalty – to gather each dusk to take a barge out onto the water, where their presence can disrupt the clicking and clacking and hopefully drive the monster away.

**When the Hunt's Away, the Cats Will Prey.** With the Great Hunt active around Clover, the great rivy fields of the Weftlands are untended, and the mighty herds are prime pickings for every would-be hunter in the land. Such grand horned beasts are normally kept tightly guarded so that only the formal members of the Hunt can keep them as trophies, but several expeditions have already set out, foremost among them led by Agunn's Children, a litter of sentient cats.

**Snake in the Hen House.** Falgo the Henkeeper, whose illusory eggs make for delicious omelets, says his chicken coops were raided, and numerous eggs were stolen. When questioned, the chickens said a snake charmed them with his song and then made off with the phantasmal treats.

**Seeking Dogs.** The Big Thicket of the east fell under attack by wolves wearing men's skin this past full moon. Faeries of the Magnolia Burrows have put out requests to buy hounds raised in the human realms, in hopes they will fend off the wolfweres. They are desperate, because their normal paths into the Waking are blocked, so they cannot simply steal the dogs they need.

**Exiled Mermaid.** Beshela, Archfey of the Sea, has decreed her court prophet Leira Yensid banished to the land for making false predictions and impugning her honor. Leira claimed, "Soon ships shall fall to the sea floor, and the realm of Lady Beshela shall no longer permit their passage." The prophetess, reduced to crawling from the shore on her hands, leaves a trail of blood as she seeks the aid of the Unseen Court in Thistle Palace.



## FEY BATTLEGROUND

### Action. Real-Time. Level 13.

*The party has to get out of danger as two sides go to war.*

The uneven, wooded terrain of a forest materializes around the party. Nausea grips them as they recover from teleporting out of Methia, and at first all they can tell of their surroundings is that a battle has been fought here: brush is trampled, branches hacked apart, arcane scorch marks blacken the leaves overhead. As they get their bearings, pipes and fiddles begin to play a jaunty but unmistakably militant tune.

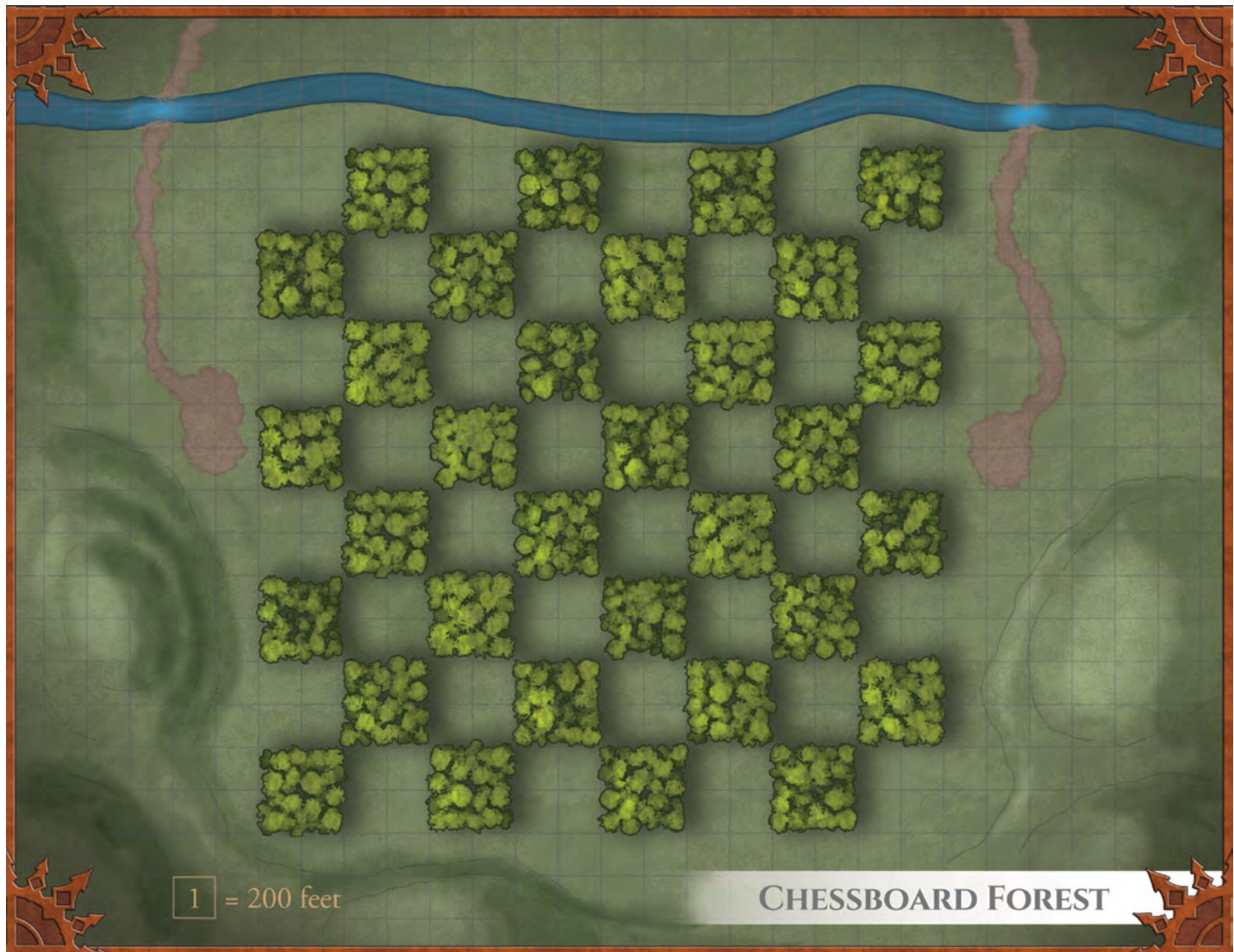
Through the woods to the west they spy figures cavorting their way. Then from the east, guttural whooping and the beating of wooden drums marks the approach of a second force.

A pixie swoops past them – angular purple legs wrapped in streaming viridian ribbons, with furred moth-like wings and a crescent moon mouth full of fangs beneath a single red eye – and it shouts to the eastern drummers, "Here they are! Attack!"

Battle cries ululate from both directions, and audible twangs mark incoming arrows.







### Stuck in the Middle

The party has arrived in the middle of a battle between two fey forces. From a high vantage point, the overall battlefield resembles a stylized chessboard, with an 8 by 8 grid of squares each 400-feet across, alternating with woodland and fields of heather. (The party has arrived in the equivalent of white king's bishop 4 – fourth from the south border and third from the east border.)

A few mossy hills rise up at the edges of the battlefield, each two or three hundred feet high. The fey capital city of Clover lies beyond a river to the north, about two miles away.

Despite the resemblance to a game board, units from each side are free to move as they please. The four rules that everyone generally obeys are:

1. Battle begins an hour before noon each day and lasts four hours.
2. No entry is allowed after the battle begins.
3. No fighting outside the bounds of the gridded battlefield.
4. Anyone who leaves the battlefield cannot return until the following day.

Today several hundred fey fight for each side. Because the party is likely fairly depleted after their battle with Nicodemus and the colossus Borne, in this encounter we're trying to establish that danger is present but give the party plenty of time to get out of its way.

### Hostile Forces

Each side assumes the party belongs to the opposing force, and they're fine to let the party run away. If the party attacks, see *We Now Return to Your Regularly Scheduled Warfare* (page 29) for stats.

From the east, marching under a green banner with a circle cut out of the middle (representing the Unseen Court), are a front line of fomorian giants fifteen feet tall with immense bows and huge thorny clubs; lance-wielding elves mounted on deer defending either wing; and a back row of tortoises carrying light trebuchets operated by gnomes.

The western force, marching under a banner that resembles a Hedgehog rampant on field of waves (representing the Hedgehog Court), consists of a front phalanx of satyrs with tower shields and bows; and a herd of centaurs holding tethers of a gargantuan savage treant that was split by a lightning bolt down to its waist, causing it to have two heads facing opposite directions, and four arms.



## Danger Incoming

Arrows start to land around the party, normal-sized laced with soporific poison ones from the west, and massive bolts from the east. Each round, the party is subject to the following attacks:

**Satyr Archery Volley.** 30-foot radius burst, 1d8+4 damage (DC 25 Reflex negates)

A creature that takes damage must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or take 1d3 Wisdom damage. This is a poison effect.

**Fomorian Archery Volley.** 30-foot radius burst, 3d6+8 damage (DC 25 Reflex for half)

The party is subject to this attack every other round, as the gnome trebuchets hurl screaming severed heads with fuses coming out of their necks. They land, lock eyes with the nearest person, then explode with deafening purple fire.

**Screaming Head Artillery.** 50-foot radius burst, 4d6 fire and 1d6 sonic damage (DC 28 Reflex half). A creature that fails its save is deafened and staggered for 1d4 rounds.

The two sides start about two hundred feet from the party in either direction, and close to melee range five rounds later.

## Getting to Safety

Smart parties will have already gotten out of the way. A hundred feet to the south, a red-haired man waves at them and shouts that he can hide them. The man is barefoot, and his feet turn in the wrong direction: heel forward, toes backward.

He directs them to stay close, then turns everyone within 10 feet of him invisible, though they can all still see each other. He leads the way south, running as fast as the party can keep up.

He introduces himself as **Rambylon**, says that he's not with either side, and that he was just trying to get a good view of the fight. The somewhat bloody and mud-caked bits of jewelry bulging his pockets suggest he was actually looting the fallen. He offers to get them to a safe overlook, and humbly suggests that if they want to thank him afterward, he accepts human coins, halfling cakes, and half-elf kisses.

If the party doesn't go with Rambylon, let them find their own way out of the ongoing battles.

## Things to See, Fights to Avoid

Rambylon guides them two 'squares' south and one east. Over the few minutes that takes, the party sees a few units rushing to and from mounted elves and brachiating trolls and leaping dryads, a four-legged flower blossom the size of an elephant being led by a rattlesnake with a woman's head, small treants trying to shake off squads of ettercaps clambering through their branches, a concert of grigs wearing nose-plugs as they ride atop a catoblepas, and so on.

Amid the jumble and roar of distant battle, occasionally the party hears a persistent sound: piping horns and baying hounds accompanied with cheers. The sound sweeps from side to side in the distance, clearly produced by something moving at speed – in this case the Great Hunt, a mass of mounted fey warriors clad in shining armor.

The Great Hunt has been lured to this battle by the Unseen Court, who use a relay of giant foxes to goad the mighty warriors into a desperate chase. The foxes, each ridden by a pugwampi gremlin, sprint and weave through ongoing battles, kiting the Great Hunt into the paths of followers of the Hedgehog Court. The warriors of the Hunt will not be blocked from their prey, so they trample and slaughter anyone who gets in their way.

When the party has traversed three squares and are entering a wooded square just a few hundred feet from safety, they hear the cheers quickly moving their way. If they look back, all they see in the 'square' they just left is a pair of redcaps, their bloody hats and bloody scythes peeking above the heather.

## Spotted

The pixie from when the party first arrived sweeps down from the sky, her one red eye locked on them. She conjures *faerie fire* around them, limning them all in harmless purple and green flames that reveal their presence, and then she blows a whistle. Rambylon goes pale and yells for the party to run for their lives.

From the nearest thicket edge, about four hundred feet away, a fox the size of a tiger bursts into view. The gremlin strapped into its saddle waves to the pixie, weaves past the confused redcaps, then makes a beeline for the party.

On the fox's heels, three equally huge black hounds leap out of the woods, barking and howling, and then shortly behind them gallop a dozen steeds, each ridden by a mighty warrior clad in gleaming mithral plate armor. One in the lead blares his horn, and the whole procession tramples the redcaps into pulp. The largest of the riders, with silver antlers spreading from his helm and what is unmistakably a bullet hole in the plate over his right breast, is **Riffian, Archfey of the Great Hunt**. He picks up a mangled corpse on the tip of his lance and shouts so loudly that his voice carrying all the way to the party: "Ha ha! None shall stand 'tween me and my prey!" Then he flings the dead redcap away and bears down on the fox.

## Run to the Hills!

The party starts 380 feet from the south edge of the battlefield. The dire fox and rider start 350 feet farther north and run 220 feet per round. The hounds are 30 feet farther north and the Great Hunt follows them in a long line, everyone moving 200 feet per round.

If the party damages the fox or rider, they peel away and flee, figuring the party isn't worth the trouble. This draws the Hunt away too. Otherwise, if the party runs at full speed (~80 feet per round) it would likely take them five rounds to reach the edge of the battlefield, but it would only take the fox three rounds to reach them, with the Great Hunt roaring in on the fourth round. If they don't get out of the way or divert the fox (climb trees, teleport faster, create a *wall of force*, etc.), the Great Hunt will make a trample attack against each of them.



## Pugwampi Fox Rider

CR 7

XP 3,200

Pugwampi ranger 8

NE Tiny fey

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

**Aura** unluck (20 ft.)

### Defense

**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 size)

**hp** 70 (8d8+1d6+26)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

**DR** 2/cold iron; **SR** 7

### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** dagger +13/+8 (1d2–4/19–20)

**Ranged** shortbow +13/+8 (1d3–4/x3)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (animals +4, fey +2)

**Space** 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st; concentration –2)

At will—*prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*

1/day—*shatter* (DC 9)

**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 5<sup>th</sup>; concentration +8)

2nd—*snare*, *wind wall*

1st—*entangle* (DC 14), *pass without trace*

### Statistics

**Str** 3, **Dex** 17, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 4

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Endurance, Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Ride-By Attack, Toughness, Trick Riding, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Bluff +9, Craft (traps) +13, Disable Device +12, Handle Animal +9, Perception +15 (+11 listening), Ride +15, Stealth +27

**Languages** Gnoll, Sylvan, Undercommon

**SQ** favored terrain (forests +2, the Dreaming +4), hunter's bond (fox), swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride

### Special Abilities

**Unluck Aura (Su)** A pugwampi radiates an aura of unluck to a radius of 20 feet. Any creature in this area must roll two d20s whenever a situation calls for a d20 roll (such as an attack roll, a skill check, or a saving throw) and must use the lower of the two results generated. This is a mind-affecting effect that does not work on animals, other gremlins, or gnolls. Any character who gains any sort of luck bonus (such as that granted by a luckstone or divine favor) is immune to the pugwampi unluck aura.



## Fey Dire Fox

CR 7

XP 3,200

N Large animal

**Init** 7; **Senses**, low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +11

### Defense

**AC** 20, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, –1 size)

**hp** 84 (10d8+40)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** 14, **Will** +4

### Offense

**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +12 (1d8+7 plus grab)

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

### Statistics

**Str** 21, **Dex** 24, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +13 (+17 grapple); **CMD** 30 (34 vs. trip)

**Feats** Dodge, Mobility, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Perception +11, Stealth +12, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking)

## Great Huntsman

CR 10

XP 9,600

CN Medium fey

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18

### Defense

**AC** 25, touch 16, flat-footed 19 (+9 armor, +6 Dex)

**hp** 136 (13d6+91); fast healing 5

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10

**DR** 10/cold iron; **Resist** electricity 20, sonic 20; **SR** 21

**Weaknesses** vulnerable to firearms

### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +3 lance +18/+13 (1d8+11) or gore +14 (2d6+8)

**Ranged** masterwork composite longbow +13/+8 (1d8+6/x3)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +13)

Constant—*pass without trace*

At will—*deep slumber* (DC 16), *ghost sound* (DC 13), *obscuring mist*, *phantom steed*

1/day—*call lightning storm* (DC 18), *freedom of movement*

### Statistics

**Str** 26, **Dex** 22, **Con** 24, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 17

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (lance)

**Skills** Acrobatics +22, Handle Animal +16, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (nature) +18, Perception +18, Ride +25, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +22

**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan

**SQ** armor master, bonded mount

### Special Abilities

**Armor Master (Ex)** A Great Huntsman ignores the armor check penalty and maximum Dexterity bonus for any armor he wears.

**Bonded Mount (Ex)** A Great Huntsman has an animal companion with an effective level equal to his Hit Dice. This is usually a horse, but may be another exotic animal suitable to serve as a mount at the GM's discretion.

**Vulnerable to Firearms (Ex)** A Great Huntsman takes 2d6 extra damage from each successful attack with a firearm.

**Great Huntsman Mount**

CR –

N Large animal

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision scent; Perception +15**Defense****AC** 25, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+4 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)**hp** 93 (11d8+44)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4; +4 vs. enchantment**Defensive Abilities** evasion**Offense****Speed** 50 ft.**Melee** bite +14 (1d4+6), 2 hooves +12 (1d6+3)**Statistics****Str** 22, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 29**Feats** Diehard, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Run, Weapon Focus (bite, hoof)**Skills** Perception +15**SQ** combat-trained, link

Any skewered PCs will get taunted by Riffian and flung away as the riders continue their pursuit of the fox.

If the party manages to get out of range, the gremlin rider almost rides out of the battlefield, then wheels about, pauses for a moment to spit at them, then spurs his fox away. The Great Hunt nearly trample into the party as they make the hairpin turn, apparently oblivious to the rules that say they can't leave the battlefield and come back in.

## THE WEBWAY

Scattered throughout the Dreaming, various fey arachnids (we don't care if ettercaps aren't technically fey; they live here and are appropriately weird, so they count) have built large orbs of webs in the hollows or boughs of trees, down shadowed alleys, or beneath uncleaned rafters.

Any Dreaming native with the ability to navigate webs can enter one of these orbs, opening a brief portal into the webway. The portal remains open for about a minute, giving non-spiders a chance to follow.

Inside, the webway is a cramped labyrinth of tunnels composed wholly of webs (the tough fibrous kind, not the sticky kind), sort of like crawling through a child's tubular playset. Every few feet an exit off to the side leads back out to the Dreaming proper, and by traveling just a dozen feet in the webway you might be able to emerge a mile away in the Dreaming.

The tunnels of the webway are big enough for medium creatures to walk through, or large creatures to crawl through. The occasional huge spider also squeezes its way through, devouring anything in its path. Most arachnid fey spend at least part of their day in the webway, and might harass intruders. And while natives have spent years becoming familiar with how different tunnels intersect and where their exits lead, outsiders run the risk of falling out of the webway with no idea where they've landed.

Let PCs who examine one of these orbs make a Knowledge (planes) check (DC 25) to determine the nature of the Webway. One particular trait of note is that it is not planar travel per se. Rather than teleporting or entering another world, accessing the Webway is like crawling into a tunnel most people cannot see. Effects that block teleportation do not prevent entering or leaving the Webway.

## GOGGLING AND GOSSIP

### Social. Real-Time.

*Fey noble onlookers treat the party as honored guests while gossiping about current events.*

Rambylon guides the party to a gathering of onlookers on the hills that border the chessboard battlefield. A few dozen fey, well-dressed in combed furs, fine flowers, or diaphanous gowns, sit on giant toadstools or actual toads, enjoying a picnic and occasionally peeking at the battle below through a novelty: brass telescopic goggles, owned by the picnic organizer, **Clausvald**. Claus resembles a yellow caterpillar the size of a horse, with pudgy arms and tiny hands.

He is attended by black-feathered swanmays. The rest of the crowd is a mix of human-sized, elfin-looking fey and smaller pixies.

A grumpy ettercap named **Mista Nyves** scrambles about on his spindly spider-like legs, serving everyone drinks, slicing their bread and cheese, and constantly itching beneath the ridiculously fluffy angora sweater he's been forced to wear. When called upon for food, he clammers into a nearby tree, disappears into an orb of spider webs about the size of a person, then emerges shortly thereafter with the desired snacks. This is the Webway, a sort of magic transport system that normally only arachnids in the Dreaming can take advantage of. It will play a prominent role later in this act, so make sure to mention it a few times.

Claus, aggressively drunk, welcomes the party and claps with delight at the sight of their magical equipment. He offers them some of his delectable repast, and in exchange only asks that they have a conversation with him. If any PC rests and eats, Rambylon warns them to avoid the apples, which are hallucinogenic. Then on second thought he recommends the apples.

Now is a good time to clear up for the party what day it is, in case their teleportation mishap at the end of adventure eight left caused them to lose some time. Claus has heard rumors about how travel between the Dreaming and the Waking has been chaotic lately, so he suggests the party get comfortable, because they likely won't be going home any time soon.

## Conversation

Clausvald asks which side they're fighting for, and when he gets a sense of their confusion he'll lay out the basics:

- ◆ The Unseen Court monarch Thisraldion has been at odds with the Hedgehog Court for years, with disputes focusing on Risur's use of technology.
- ◆ Olazdor, a master archer and the head of the Hedgehog Court (though he, himself, has no head), had a lot of people in the city of Clover talking about rebellion.
- ◆ Thisraldion's consort, the human musician Rock Rackus, returned in early Autumn, over four months ago. Seemingly unbeknownst to the monarch, Rock was conspiring with the Hedgehog Court.
- ◆ Three weeks ago, during the Snow Moon, Thisraldion found out and murdered Rock when he was on his way to a meeting with Olazdor. Rock's head was sliced cleanly off, but the Unseen Court tried to blame the Hedgehogs by sticking an arrow in Rock's heart.
- ◆ For a week now loyalists of each side have come out to the fields to battle, but it's still civil. Claus thinks things will go out of control and the fighting will move into the city itself, and all across the countryside. That's why he's moved out here, next to the battlefield, where it's safe.



At this point, Mista Nyves impertinently clicks his pedipalps and says that Thisraldion's the rightful ruler, and that Rock was actually spying for the Unseen Court. Olazdor found out, killed Rock, and tried to blame Thisraldion. Mista Nyves heard this from his good friend Copperhat. His name sets off a round of scoffing among the rest of the picnickers, and they complain about various interactions with Copperhat, like when he somehow got hold of a wagon full of children's books from the Waking and tried to sell them. His rationale was that every orphanage in the Waking has these books, so if someone in the Dreaming had them, it would attract children, which have all manner of uses.

A good idea, points out one of the swanmays, except the books were all philosophy texts, and the only people who showed up were dwarves, who seemed intent on ruining their parties.

Down below on the battlefield, a stormcloud has gathered, and bolts of lightning flicker out to strike shambling mounds. The picnickers pay attention to the ensuing fight for a few minutes.

### Further Gossip

This can be an opportunity to share the 'Meanwhile in the News' stories (page 8), and to make it clear that while it's normally just difficult to get between the Dreaming and the Waking, for the past few days it has been completely impossible.

At this point, one of the pixies realizes who the party is, and shouts, "These are the ones from Rock Rackus's song! The Royal Homeland Congratulatory!" This provokes a round of toasts to the party's good health, since due to a song Rock performed around Clover a few times, everyone here is a great fan of their fight against the aliens from beyond the moon.

### Let's Make a Deal

Clausvald expresses interest in buying the party's magic items. He explains that he is a great businessman, and while he would normally have no need for weapons, these are dangerous times. "You might think I'm a fool to try to fight, but I have gold, and a fool and his gold are soon parted! Now sell me your weapons, foreigners."

He asks about the party's gear, comes to a reasonable estimate of their value, and offers something around 20% over the market share for one item belonging to each PC. If the PCs agree, one of his swanmay assistants produces a mass of gold coins in a *bag of holding* to pay for them.

In truth, Claus wants to sell the items to collectors, who are interested in everything even tangentially related to Rock Rackus. And he intends to pay the party with fool's gold (Sense Motive DC 25). The coins are enchanted to resemble real gold, and even detecting the illusion is difficult (Spellcraft DC 25). If his deception is caught, he defends himself by claiming he did not lie; he said he was a fool, and so they should expect any gold he offers to be fool's gold. That is, unless they're fools, in which case they might not expect it, but that would make it even more appropriate for him to pay them with it.

If the party doesn't notice the trickery, Mista Nyves interrupts and asks his boss Claus if he's paying with the real gold or the fake stuff. Claus tells the little spider creature that he's fired, and that he wants him to hand over the sweater immediately. Do note that Nyves does this not out of any desire to help the party; he's just incredibly contrary by nature.

## EXPLORING THE DREAMING

The geography of the Dreaming, including mountains, rivers, and the like, are all similar to the real world, though with east and west reversed. Cities are also similar, though not always exact mirrors. Distances are not fixed, and certainly weights and measurements don't adhere to any logical standard. Unattended mechanical devices naturally stop working since the careful alignments of moving parts end up not quite-so-aligned if no one is tending to them.

The most important thing to understand about the Dreaming is that it does not have a single objective reality. Time and distance are subjective, contorting to fit the stories of any given person, though never going so far as to become impossible to anyone else. Two people engaged in conversation might sense time passing at different rates. A bored person would feel like the day is slipping away swiftly, while the person who is boring him thinks only a short time has elapsed. Only once the conversation ends or one of them mentions what time it is will the Dreaming settle on an actual time, and both people's perceptions would shift to match it.

That said, the analogue of Risur in the Dreaming has the same general landscape:

- ♦ The big thicket, home of the fey titan the Ash Wolf, lies to the west beyond the Great Blight (as the lands near Flint are called). The city of Weevil, where giant insects are used as steeds and beasts of burden, sits analogous to Bole.
- ♦ The islands of the Yerasol Archipelago lie to the east, and the whole coastline is the domain of She Who Writhes. Analogous to Shale is the flooded city of Conch.
- ♦ The weftlands surround Clover, and here roam the herds of the Father of Thunder. Erratic farms cling to hills and sometimes run into caves in this hill landscape.
- ♦ The High Bayou to the south, where the Voice of Rot lairs, is filled with creepy villages of dark fey, over which seems to hang a perpetual night. The sun only rises when there is a bloodied carcass to reveal, and even then only for a few hours.
- ♦ Beyond that, in the Anthras Mountains, sleeps Granny Allswell, attended by her brood of gremlins, goblins, bugbears, and other things with G in their name.

What lies beyond the borders of Risur in the Dreaming is outside the scope of this adventure. Imagine whatever you like.

### Need a Guide?

Rambylon says that this is a clear example of why the party could use a guide. Fey are tricky with their words, and if the party isn't clever they might fall victim. He offers to show them around Clover and get them in touch with the Hedgehog Court, who will gladly help them, unlike the deceptive Unseen Court. In exchange, all he wants is a lady's kiss.

Mista Nyves, recently unemployed, says he's not weird, and will work for the normal pretties: coins, gems, and shiny knives. He can be just as good a guide as Rambylon, and only costs 5 gp per day. No kisses necessary, he adds with a fidget of his venomous pedipalps.

With Rambylon as their guide, the party will have an easy time in Clover. Mista Nyves, though, is a disaster of an escort. He leads them maliciously into all sorts of petty fey tricks. For instance, he tries to show them a bar where he claims witnesses to Rock's murder drink, and they're only allowed in if they promise not to leave without buying a drink. Once inside, they discover that all the drinks are free, and that the bar is in an extraplanar space that the fey will only let them leave if they can outdrink the nereid (a water nymph) who owns the place. Plus the whole time he's gathering information and reporting on them to Copperhat the Headless.

If the party declines them both, let them stumble a bit as they navigate the eccentricities of fey city life, but they're famous enough here to get an audience with the Unseen or Hedgehog Courts with little trouble (or the courts will find them once word spreads).

## ENTER CLOVER

### Exploration. Montage.

*The Dreaming analogue to the city of Slate reacts to an infamy the party might not know they had.*

The fighting comes to an abrupt end early in the afternoon, at which point the sun ceases to move through the sky. Everyone packs up, and most of the survivors head for the nearby city of Clover.

Fey soldiers clog the road from the chessboard battlefield to Clover, and few of them display much fey mirth. A large 'traffic jam' has backed up near a river, as the soldiers who are returning to Clover barter for beeswax so they can plug their ears. Everyone complains about the noise, but unless a PC is native to the Dreaming, they don't notice what to the locals sounds like a persistent high-pitched trembling whine.

The road passes within a half mile of a 'blighted area,' which in the real world is the site of a simple flour mill powered by a water wheel in the river. Its presence irritates the fey on a visceral level. The fey who are typically able to cross over into the real world briefly to muck with such mechanical devices – commonly known as gremlins – aren't able to do so now.

The party can easily pass through here, though they have to ford the river (no bridges, because they attract trolls). There's not much they can do other than commiserate or maybe hear the local gossip. All told, walking to Clover takes less than an hour, but as they reach the city the sun is already setting. And it remains setting, potentially for hours, until either the party reaches Thistle Palace or decides to take a sleep.

### The Fey Capital

Clover is built in the Dreaming on lands analogous to the real world city Slate, capital of Risur. The Great Delve River, its steep banks adorned by flowers and dotted with windows of hillside burrows, separates the fey city into the noble east bank and the common west bank.

In Slate six antique castles sit inside a wide bend on the river's east bank, and in Clover there are nearly identical buildings (on the west bank), suggesting some odd resonance between the real world and the Dreaming that causes them to converge when things exist long enough. Clover's castles are home to lords of various regions of the continent, each heavily guarded by lithe warriors in nimble plate armor, who hide beneath mats of grass and moss but are ready to spring to battle and

ambush intruders. The lords fear the rabble of the west bank, led by the Hedgehog Court.

Across the shore is a chaotic mess of narrow winding streets and houses of all sorts – straw, wood, brick, some metal, and even one composed of stacked sheep – inhabited by the common fey. The fey (or occasionally their houses) bustle through the town trading oddities, treats, or songs for whatever other fey can offer.

A broad grassy hill rises above the rest of the city, site of Thistle Palace, from which the Unseen Court rules. Like the castles of the west, this palace is practically identical to Torfeld Palace in the real world.

### Sites of Interest

If the party explores, here are some sample locations.

#### *The Headless Human*

This bar sits in the darkest, gloomiest part of town, not far from the tunnel where Rock Rackus was killed. Many spider webs cling in the alleys and awnings around it, and the bar's hag owner likes the ambience. Copperhat the Headless drinks here, swigging wine and drowning his sorrows. See Copperhat at the Headless Human (page 23) for details.

#### *Honorable Halls of Accumulated Wisdom*

Three stories tall, with three basement levels, this library is filled with labyrinthine rows of books, scrolls, bound codices, and loose bundles held together by twine, ranging in content from cyclops recipes to pixie philosophy to forbidden spellbooks.

A pair of ancient pixie sisters named Alba and Zanel, wrinkled, doddering, and flirtatious, own the library, which is served by dozens of younger pixies who sort and search.

The library plays a small role in Lady Atsla's plot to frame Thisraldion (see Cold as Ice, page 23). Additionally, the librarians will be able to provide critical information to help the party get back home (see Librarians to the Rescue, page 33).

#### *Mosscat Mortuary*

The party can find Rock's body being prepared for burial here. See The Body (page 25).

#### *Flashdrought Fountain*

Analogous to the Grand Weft in Slate (where three highways intersect), Clover has a thoroughfare, albeit more chaotic. At its edge sits the famous Flashdrought Fountain, displaying dessicated wooden statues in the shape of angry air elementals. The fountain itself is perpetually dry, but if you pour liquid into it, sometimes coins rain down from the statues' clouds.

Anyone who sits by the fountain for a minute or so feels suddenly thirsty as the latest things they drank are magically sucked out of them. This is a popular spot for people seeking instant sobriety, though the process can yield horrific hangovers.

#### *Krog Tunnel*

This three-ended tunnel, a mile from Thistle Palace, is where Rock's body was found on the night of the 16<sup>th</sup>. It is detailed more thoroughly in Crime Scene (page 22).



### Shady Grove

This wealthy neighborhood for dark fey consists of a tangle of thorny trees that overgrew an earlier array of buildings. Like a tiny urban jungle, the labyrinthine grove hosts some of the most bizarre and debauched festivals in the city, and separatists aligned with the Hedgehog Court gather here regularly to plan each day's battles. The party might come here to haggle for magic items owned by old collectors who loot the fallen, or to hire a creepy talking mushroom to cast spells they need for their investigation.

### Thistle Palace

On the west side of the city, Thistle Palace has three main buildings – the central House of Perennials, the eastern House of the Unseen Court, and the western House of Mayflies. Prestigious visitors normally enter from the east, especially if they're conducting business with the Unseen Court. Commoners typically enter from the west. Currently the west wing has been given to the Hedgehog Court, and the hall between the central Perennial and western Mayflies houses has been bisected by a thorn wall.

Rock Rackus regularly would visit the Unseen Court, leave through the east gate, travel through the city, get a little lost, and then find his way to the Hedgehog Court through the west gate, never realizing they were both in the same building.

### Instant Fame

Courtesy of Rock Rackus, the whole city knows about the party. Keeping a low profile is challenging, and generally fey follow the party, ask them questions, and occasionally try to pick their pockets.

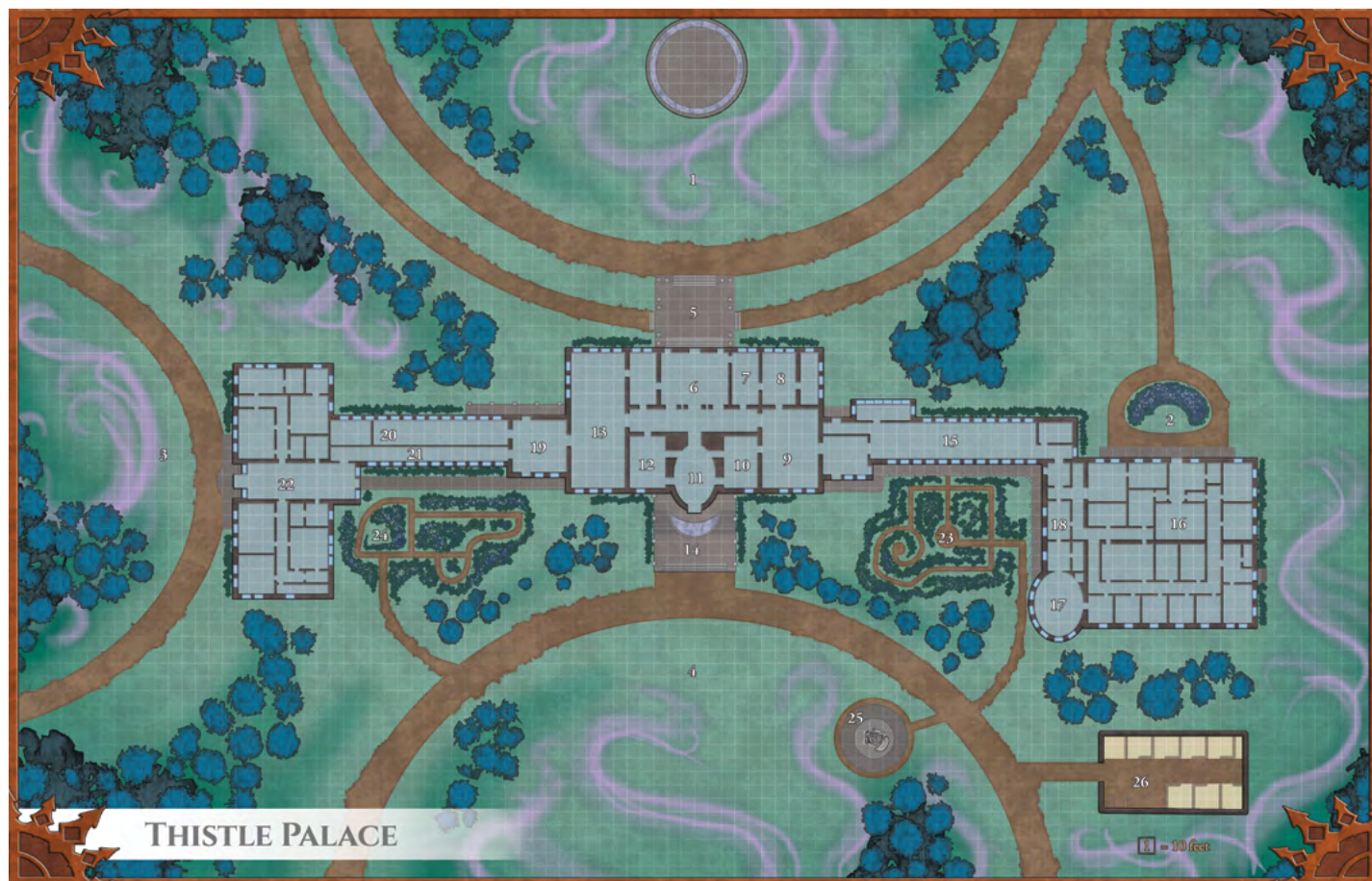
If the party wants to visit Thistle Palace, word has likely preceded them, and the guards known as *rangale* – human-faced elks, stags, and gazelles who telekinetically hover spears or other weapons – gladly let them in. Otherwise, eventually a one-eyed pixie escorted by a pair of women in finely articulated mithral plate armor finds them and delivers a scroll with an invitation. Thisraldion, monarch of the Unseen Court, offers aid in returning to the Waking in exchange for aid in solving the murder of Rock Rackus.

## TWO-FACED POLITICIANS

### Social. Real-Time.

*The Unseen Court offers to get the party home if they can pin the murder of Rock Rackus on the Hedgehog Court, but they're really out to benefit themselves.*

A brownie named **Binniwich** greets the party when they arrive at Thistle Palace, obsequiously proclaiming how wonderful Risur is, how wonderful the PCs are, and how wonderful it is that they've come to help the Unseen Court.



## Palace Layout

1. **Foreigner Fountain.** Non-fey are expected to wash their hands at this fountain. The mere act ends up cleaning everything they wear, from boots to hats, in order to ensure no grease stains the palace carpets.
2. **House of the Unseen Court – Entrance.** A portico held up by dryads welcomes visitors, but those who have not been invited are compelled (DC 25 Will save) not to enter.
3. **House of Mayflies – Entrance.** Commoners are welcome here, and the only guards are swarms of pixies who will put to sleep (DC 18 Will save) anyone who causes a ruckus.
4. **Grand Lawn.** Cheerful sporting events occur here normally. This week, though, tents dot the campus, filled with injured fey returned from the ongoing battles. One lord of the Unseen Court, Sallin the Dryad, makes the rounds each day healing the few that she can.
5. **House of Perennials – Entrance.** More armored stags guard here, these equipped with levitating bows, and the flowery caryatids supporting the awning here can themselves animate as treants. Beautiful nymphs greet renowned visitors and take them to the drawing room to enjoy a light repast.
6. **Entrance Foyer.** A decorative ‘dragon’ made from flower wreaths and purple silks hangs from the ceiling by wires.
7. **Guard Post.**
8. **Drawing Room.** There are canvases and charcoal here so people can draw.
9. **Game Room.** Fey are fond of riddle games, so mostly the room just has comfortable chairs.
10. **Antechamber.** People gamble with cards here.
11. **Diplomatic Reception.** This is a diplomatic way to refer to the palace jail. Right in line of sight of everyone, with barred windows that give prisoners a view of all the fun everyone is having out on the grand lawn. (Well, normally. Now the cell is even more depressing.)
12. **Library.**
13. **Chamber of the Hedgehog Court.** The doorway that leads to the east half of the palace is always closed, locked, and covered with a tapestry. This room has a raised floor along its east side where the members of the court stand like actors in a play put on for whatever visitors and petitioners stand on the lower floor.
14. **Balcony.**
15. **Mask Gallery.** Fey who die as members of the Unseen Court have their masks hung here as mementos.
16. **The Runaround.** A trap door in the floor in this room leads down to the palace’s dungeon. The term ‘the runaround’ actually applies to the halls and rooms surrounding it.

The whole eastern wing of the palace is eerily empty, with magic keeping the place in fine condition. Honored guests of the Unseen Court who arrive here are greeted by one or more Unseen lords, who talk while strolling through the mostly empty building. Members of the court show up, talk for a bit, then peel off, weaving through rooms. Eventually the walk-and-talk leads them back to Area 17, where formal meetings will begin.

17. **Chamber of the Unseen Court.** The Unseen Court holds formal business here.

## LORE OF THE UNSEEN COURT

The fey spread all manner of rumors about who makes up the Court, and accurate knowledge is hard to come by even in the Dreaming. Scholars in the real world have managed to pin down some facts, which the PCs might know. A Knowledge (planes) check check (DC 30) is enough to know the basic personalities of Atsla and Karrest, and Knowledge (nature) is appropriate for Furg and Sallin. If the party has this information going in, they might gain a +2 or +5 bonus to skill checks involving those lords.

Thisraldion has worked to maintain misinformation, so it is practically impossible to get any useful insights to the monarch.

## SKYSEER WELCOMING

Any skyseer among the PCs is treated as an honored guest by the Unseen Court. The fey load them up with luxurious furs, insist they eat rich desserts, and constantly beg forgiveness that they were not ready to ‘repay their debt.’ The truth is, a skyseer many generations ago convinced the ruler of the Unseen Court at the time that any hostility to his order would result in the Dreaming being cracked in two in punishment. These offerings are not ‘gifts’ in the fey sense, and hold no obligation. Indeed, a skyseer can even get the *Book of Kelland* from Furg without owing any debt to the toadstool sage.

18. **Fool’s Chamber.** If an ‘honored guest’ grows impatient of the runaround, the fey lords petulantly punish them by taking them to this room instead of the actual meeting chamber. Here they are told the rest of the court will arrive shortly, and are asked to wait. Once they realize the prank and walk through the unlocked door to the south, the whole Unseen Court bursts into laughter.
19. **Commons.** Guests of the Hedgehog Court gather here, and members of that more blasé court often come out to eat and drink with them.
20. **Party Hall.**
21. **Champion Gallery.**
22. **Offices.** Tiny fey work feverishly in this wing, recording the events and speeches and copying them so they can be distributed to the people of the Dreaming. Olazdor wishes he could get a printing press that wouldn’t grate on everyone’s ears, but this is the next best way to spread the word of their resistance to the Unseen Court.
23. **Monarch Garden.** Statues of Risuri monarchs stand here.
24. **Hood Garden.** Hooded lanterns sit on poles amidst this grove of trees. The lanterns are always lit, but the hoods over them mean they only light the ground directly beneath them, leaving the area gloomy.
25. **Titan Shrine.** An identical set of statues in the Waking depicts the five fey titans.
26. **Stables.** The rangale (stag and gazelle guards) sleep here.



## Meeting the Court

Binniwich the brown-nosing brownie brings the party through the palace to Area 16, the runaround. When the party arrives, Lady Atsla is emerging from the trap door to the palace dungeon. She notes the party's presence, nods to Binniwich to dismiss him, then closes the trap door and gestures for the party to follow her.

The Runaround (in addition to being a *West Wing* reference) is an excuse for you to introduce a collection of NPCs one by one, instead of having to roleplay them all at once. The lords and ladies of the Unseen Court intend to put the PCs through their paces to get a gauge of their personalities. Try to let each make an impression before the party gets back to Area 17 and meets Thisraldion.

Remember that for all of the lords of the Unseen Court, no part of their body is ever visible. They all wear masks on invisible faces, and their clothes suggest the shape of a body, perhaps even with gloves or gauntlets allowing them to gesture with hands. But they never have visible skin. Those who can see invisible creatures or pierce illusions *can* see the members of the court, which really upsets them.

## Atsla the Ice

Appearing just as a dress of snow, a mask of ice, and handprints or footprints of frost from whatever she touches, Atsla stoically refrains from speaking unless truly necessary. Her most common form of interaction is to glare and cause the air to chill significantly to express her displeasure. She's likely first to meet the party, and will merely gesture with her head for them to follow. She then walks through Area 16, heading nowhere in particular but gauging the party's reaction.

She can be won over with shows of sisterly affection between women, and she reacts poorly to threats or innuendo. Honestly the less one talks to her, the more she likes them.

Atsla's ulterior desire is for the party to pin Rock's murder on Thisraldion. She wants to ascend in the court's hierarchy, and to bring in Beshela, Archfey of the Sea, so there will be more women in the court.

## Karrest the Fire

Karrest dresses in heavy black cloaks, a black cowl, and a charred stone mask with seams of glowing lava, but adorns his whole body with fire-gems, including rings on several of his fingers. Flighty and warlike, he'll appear and threaten the party with a sword of ruby if they do not treat his beloved Atsla with respect. He blows Atsla a kiss, who heads off in a different direction, then starts talking earnestly with the party.

Karrest responds positively to aggression and intimidation, which earns his respect. Though his affections would normally sour Atsla to him, he has a knack for sensing her moods. In fact, Atsla will try to keep her distance from him if she's trying to be deceptive, and keeping them together makes it easier to sense her motives; see *Cold as Ice* (page 23).

In particular, the fiery fey lord is curious about what Asrabey's been up to. (This mostly serves to clarify that he never made it back to the Dreaming since the party last saw him in adventure eight.)

Karrest never liked Rackus – the man flirted with Atsla, after all, and bragged about fighting more than he ever actually dusted his knuckles. While he's glad the man is dead, he feels slighted that the Olazdor and the Hedgehog Court stole a kill that he wanted. He hopes the party will pin the murder on Olazdor, and give him an opportunity to dispense justice in an honorable duel.

## Furg the Toadstool Sage

A voice from a nearby room cuts in, claiming that even fools like Rackus can bring wisdom by giving us a mirror to compare ourselves to. Into the hallway steps a mound of mossy and moldy clothes dotted with mushrooms. A mask of brittle cracked turquoise hangs low beneath the figure's shoulders, and vivid blue frogs occasionally crawl across or through its cloak.

Furg tells Karrest to let Thisraldion know the guests are coming, and then asks the party to accompany him to a south window that looks out to the Titan Shrine statues. Beside the window he pulls a book from a shelf and presents it to one of the PCs. This is the original *Book of Kelland*, he says, which reveals how the foolishness of the fey titans led to creating the first human king.

See Appendix Five: Magic and Training for details of this ornately-illuminated tome, but the thrust is that the ambition of the Voice of Rot and the single-mindedness of the other fey titans led to the rise of Kelland, who learned how to defeat them all. Fools, Furg says, are useful, because the wise and clever can use them to step up to greatness.

If any PC accepts this gift from Furg, he will become beholden to the Toadstool Sage, and must fulfill one single task the Unseen lord might ask, or else suffer the consequences of a *geas* spell (caster level 20th). Furg may use this in a later adventure once the PCs have risen to control Risur and have influence even beyond it. We have no specific plans for this, so consider how the fey's influence might compromise the gifted PC's goals later on.

Furg honestly doesn't care who killed Rock Rackus.

## Sallin the Dryad

An ash tree just outside the window rustles with unusual intensity, and the party spots a mask – and just a mask, composed of tree bark framed with feathers – floating over from the Grand Lawn. Sallin the Dryad's passage is marked by flowers and grass blooming with each of her steps, but she is naked save for her mask. When she gets close to the window, Furg waves to her, and she nods back. The tree outside dips and stretches its branches, creating a seat which the invisible Sallin climbs into. Then the entire tree uproots itself and walks through the window as if the glass weren't there.

Sallin stops her tree steed and chuckles like a cheery old grandmother when she sees the party. "So many weapons," she chides. "I keep tryin' t'keep our youngsters alive, and people like you keep choppin' 'eir 'eads off. Shame I couldn't help poor Rock, but maybe I can help you little lost children."

Sallin and Furg lead the party to the Chamber of the Unseen Court, and the building casually makes room for Sallin's massive tree, then returns to its normal form once she has passed.

Sallin desires for the war to end. She happens to think that finding Olazdor guilty and executing him for murder will discredit him and halt the violence, but she's fine with any solution that stops the war.

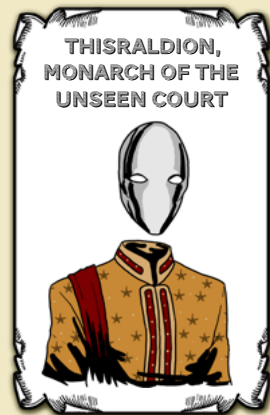


The enigmatic monarch of the Unseen Court, Thisraldion's mirrored mask shows onlookers what they expect to see. If Thisraldion wishes to posit opposing positions in a conversation, the mask will from time to time fade out and reappear speaking from the other side of the room. Each onlooker will somehow sense that the mask looks different in a way they cannot describe.

The fey use the titles 'King' and 'Queen' along with the pronouns 'he' and 'she' seemingly at random when referring to Thisraldion. The monarch's melodious voice hovers somewhere around an androgynous alto/tenor, but for emphasis can shift much higher or lower (and certainly much louder). When mortals first encounter Thisraldion, they assume that the monarch belongs to whichever gender they find most attractive. This led to an amusing love triangle involving Thisraldion, Rock Rackus, and Thisraldion, which none of the fey thought ought to be explained to the human.

Constantly appearing and disappearing in places, Thisraldion seems flighty and capricious, regularly going on tangents, or diverting conversations into discussions about poetry and warfare instead of giving straightforward answers to direct questions. In fact, the monarch is a subtle manipulator, deploying a confusing and stereotypically 'fey' demeanor to unbalance others. Thisraldion will let visitors talk until they reveal what they expect the Unseen Court wants of them.

Thisraldion wields a vorpal longsword. Since there's a chance Thisraldion will die and the party might take the monarch's weapon, consider changing it to a type of weapon a PC would want.



## Thisraldion

The four fey lords gather in the Chamber of the Unseen Court and take their seats around Thisraldion's throne. The fey monarch sits twirling an unsheathed *vorpal longsword* when the party arrives, making snicker-snack sounds as it slices the air.

A spare chair sits unoccupied; it belonged to Ekossigan, whose position has not been filled since the events of *Adventure Five, Cauldron-Born*.

Thisraldion dallies frivolously with the party, acting weird and proposing ambling feasts or useless poetry competitions in order to irk them. If eventually the party grows impatient and starts making demands, the monarch will better know what they want. If they play along, Thisraldion calls for dinner amid the injured on the Grand Lawn, and discusses business then.

## Making Deals with Faeries

Thisraldion states that the Unseen Court will find the party a route back to the real world in exchange for them proving that Olazdor and the Hedgehog Court were responsible for the murder of Rock Rackus. The monarch then weeps a bit – which is mostly staged – saying that never has one of the Unseen loved a mortal so intensely. And the folk of the Dreaming loved him too. If there is to be a new king in Risur, there are few acts that could earn more favor among the fey than to bring justice to the hero Rock Rackus's killer.

That might perk up the party's ears. Thisraldion has a hunch that over in the Waking, Aodhan is not long for the world. Shadows have

been moving strangely around the palace, and Thisraldion knows hostiles are gathering in the Bleak Gate. The Unseen Court of course would gladly help defend Risur's king if the old pacts were invoked, but it seems the humans do not know how to contact them.

Karrest growls that it's more important to defeat the Hedgehog Court. Sallin says solving the murder will do that, but Karrest is flustered, since by 'defeat' he meant 'kill.' Making peace bores him. He then explains that fey law forbids the leaders of the two factions from joining battle until their underlings have had a chance to settle things.

Furg and Atsla don't talk unless the party addresses them. The toadstool sage admits that he appreciates the novelty of the war, and would be fine to let it persist for a few more months at least. Atsla pointedly says that of course their interest is in ensuring the strength of their nation, but she thinks it might be necessary from time to time to let contenders to the throne take their shot, so the common folk are confident they actually do have the best leader possible.

Thisraldion claims that, just as the monarch of Risur has powers to travel between worlds, so does the monarch of the Unseen Court, and the party will not be permitted to return to their homeland unless they can find Rock's killer.

## The Great Hunt

During the discussion, Binniwich the brownie announces the arrival of Riffian, captain of the Great Hunt. The giant of a man strides in, dressed in mithral plate, with silver antlers atop his helm and a bullet hole in the breastplate over his heart. His voice reverberates jollily through his helmet, which he never removes.

He turns to Thisraldion and kneels, begging forgiveness for failing in his hunt. He promises he shall catch that blasted fox soon enough, and the only explanation he can give is that people keep getting in his way. Then, having a sudden revelation, he stands and gives the party a bold 'huzzah.' He recognizes them from earlier, apologizes if he trampled any of them, and says that he won't hold it against them that they were Rock Rackus's friends. He thought that guy was an idiot.

He then realizes he has interrupted politics, and he hates politics, so he makes his departure.

Once he's gone, the Unseen Court members have a laugh. They told Riffian a fox had killed one of Thisraldion's favorite hens, and ever since they've been using him and the whole Great Hunt in battle by luring them around with various foxes. If the party mentions this to Riffian, he shrugs it off, since his duty is to the Court, no matter how inane they may be.

## Negotiating with Thisraldion

Thisraldion is totally lying about knowing how to get to the Waking, and so is willing to offer some other concessions to the party if they demand it in exchange for helping with the murder investigation. Some possibilities include:

- ♦ Joining the fight against the Ob (though only if they can actually get to the real world).
- ♦ Magic items, gems, or coinage worth 50,000 gp per PC (which can be negotiated up to 80,000).
- ♦ Political demands (which go beyond the scope of this adventure).

One offer that would sweeten the deal for Thisraldion is for a PC to take the place of Asrabey Varal as liaison to Risur and chief warrior for the court.



## LONG-TIME PRISONERS: DREAMING EDITION

In the campaign's first adventure, the party may have handed over to Asrabey Varal either the Duchess Ethelyn of Shale or Nathan Jierre (or both). While those two characters don't play a pivotal role in this adventure, if the party did acquiesce to Asrabey, they can benefit now from better reactions by the Unseen Court.

Ethelyn, if present, shares the same house Sallin offers the party. She has sway with Beshela, so if they need help dealing with the aquatic archfey (either to stop her interference or to get her to agree with their findings in the investigation), Ethelyn could be convinced to help if the party can arrange to get her back to the real world.

Nathan Jierre is not an honored guest, and is kept in Area 11, Diplomatic Reception. However, Atsla learned that his cousin, Lya Jierre, tried to save him, and she felt sympathy for the lonely man. If the party can share good news about Lya (or just lie about it), Nathan could get Atsla to open up about her intentions to overthrow Thisraldion.

If on the other hand the party managed to keep either or both of those characters in Risuri custody, they can play a minor role in the events of Act Two. (See Long-Time Prisoners: Risur Edition, page 43.) If you've already done something with either character, though, their involvement is minor enough that removing them won't have a major effect. We just want to be sure to call back to the party's first adventure, to show the consequences – even minor – of their early choices.

Thisraldion proposes to give the party the entire following day to work on their investigation, and then to present their evidence on the palace's grand lawn at noon the day after. The Hedgehog Court will also be invited to see the party's presentation, so from the ten total fey lords (five from each court), if they can convince a majority of who the killer is, Thisraldion will tell them how to return home.

Realistically, no PC should be able to tell that Thisraldion is deceiving them. The fey lord is an amazing liar, protected from divination (Spellcraft DC 50 to overcome), and they would have to attack and dispel several layers of defensive wards before they could use magic to detect Thisraldion's lies.

The fey lords leave it to the party to figure things out from there. Sallin offers a house elsewhere on the palace grounds for the party to sleep in, thoroughly attended to by servants. And Karrest, with a reminder that he's hoping to challenge Olazdor to a duel, gives them directions to the Hedgehog Court so they can interrogate the rebels.

Those directions lead off the palace grounds, through the city for a mile, then loop back to a different entrance to the palace. Rock Rackus never realized the two courts were in the same place, but the party probably will (Survival or Perception DC 15).



## COURT OF JUSTICE

### Social. Real-Time.

*The Hedgehog Court appeals to the party's sense of right and wrong in order to defeat the Unseen Court.*

The Hall of Mayflies is where the Hedgehog Court operates. A mass of satyrs, grigs, and pixies argue in the foyer, and the party might not get recognized at first. Then one of the rebel lords, **Lerina**, realizes who they are. As with the Unseen Court, we try to stagger the arrival of the NPCs, to make it easier for you to present the large group.

### Lerina, the Reseen Marauder

Lerina, a 300-year-old elfwoman who was born in the Waking, served for three decades on the Unseen Court, but Thisraldion stripped her of her title seven years ago when she became openly hostile to King Aodhan. Thisraldion entreated her to maintain harmony with Risur, then tried to buy her loyalty with gold. Now Lerina rather hates both harmony and gold. She is fully visible, which she flaunts by wearing very little clothing, though her old mask – pitted steel with red streaks of war paint – hangs around her neck on a silver chain.

Wielding a massive warhammer emblazoned with twin lightning bolts and accompanied by hawk-sized phoenix animal companion, Lerina has been a crusader for the rebel fey, and in the lead-up to the recent open conflict she often led raids against remote military strongholds loyal to the Unseen Court. She grates at the rules that forbid her from joining the ongoing battles, but expects to have a truly epic battle against Karrest when the time arises.

When she sees the party, Lerina sneaks up through the crowd and talks to them quietly so as not to make a scene. She asks how they're doing and how they ended up in the Dreaming, since it's been difficult to cross over for weeks, and impossible recently. Then she asks about Risur. Try to present her as a 'normal person' rather than a fey or a politician, which might be refreshing to the party.

Eventually she grins and asks them to come meet the rest of the rebels, then guides the group through the crowd to the Chamber of the Hedgehog Court. If asked about Rock Rackus, she had no problems with the man, but he kept poor company, and was always bringing around the obnoxious Copperhat the Headless. The best thing to come from Rock's death was that she doesn't have to deal with Copperhat anymore.

### Darbony, the Gruff Goat

Petitioners are lined up in the hall outside the court chamber, and the attention of many are focused on an aged satyr, **Darbony**, who wears luxurious robes and gold jewelry. He flirts with a trio of veiled nymphs who giggle and slap his hands away as he uses them as props for a tale about wrestling a giant caterpillar.

Lerina interrupts his old war story and says the court recess is over, so they should be attending to business in the chambers. He huffs and ignores her. A few satyrs in the crowd, most of them bandaged from recent battles, curse under their breaths and one throws a bloody rag at the old man. Darbony produces an axe and threatens them. Petitioners scream and the scene will develop into a brawl if the party doesn't intervene. If he gets the chance, Darbony kills the satyr who threw the rag at him, then throws a bag of silver to the survivors. "Weregild," he chuckles, and then stalks into the council chamber.

Darbony bought his way into the leadership of the Hedgehog Court, but all he cares for is the prestige. His mismanagement has caused the satyrs who are allied with him to suffer the brunt of casualties among the rebel forces, and now they're threatening to abandon the rebellion. This would leave Darbony fairly worthless to the Hedgehog Court, but he's too stubborn and short-tempered to actually fix things. Fearing a loss of power he's taken to flirting and drinking at every opportunity.

He didn't like Rock, and saw him as a rival for women's attention. He

particularly hates him now, since by dying he sparked the war, which has eroded Darbony's position. Of all the rebels, he's most desperate to end the fighting, and offers to bear false witness for the party to help them wrap the mystery up quickly.

### Lavac, the Gremlin Herald

Inside the court chambers, curtains cover the windows while the court is in recess, and at first it seems the room is empty. Seats for the various court members (five in total) sit on a low stage. As Lerina goes to open the curtains, a short figure lurking in a dark corner (Perception DC 32) leaps out and snarls at any PCs with technological devices.

This is **Lavac**, a scruffy black-furred gremlin that lopes about like a baboon. He hisses and snarls in Goblin, but understands Common and Primordial. If necessary, Lerina translates that Lavac wants something to break, and will offer a gremlin's boon in exchange. This is a show of respect among gremlins, since normally they just break things without asking. A PC who indulges the gremlin gains *Granny's Boon* (page 90), the favor of the fey titan Granny Allswell.

Lavac represents the gremlins of the Anthras Mountains, who are particularly annoyed by technology and adept at messing with it. He also unwittingly aided the Obscurati, who had him steer his gremlin followers at different mines. This freed up resources the Ob needed to construct the colossus. A few months ago Lavac realized he had been duped. He has heard of the party's battles against the conspiracy, and so he's inclined to help them in order to clean the stain to his pride.

Lavac allied with the Hedgehog Court mostly because he knew Beshela was an avowed opponent of the Ob. The gremlin was indifferent to Rock, but can help the party if they need spies around the city.

### Beshela, Archfey of the Sea

Soon, Beshela and Olazdor return to the court chamber, clearly showing signs of affection. How Beshela reacts to the party depends on their previous encounter in Adventure Seven, *Schism*. She likely is still foul toward them since they were instrumental in the downfall of her friend Ethelyn, but they might have earned her grudging respect.

Beshela's ultimate game is to steer the fey away from their traditional alliance with Risur, which she sees as corrupted by technology. She wants Olazdor to win the war, depose Thisraldion, and make her his consort as queen of the Unseen Court. Unfortunately, she's also fairly certain that Olazdor *did* kill Rock, and so when she learns the party will be investigating the crime she resolves to thwart them. See Beshela's Intervention (page 27).

The archfey is rather blind to the Obscurati's machinations and the looming threat to the world, and dismisses such affairs as 'human problems.'

### Olazdor

The headless, eagle-masked Olazdor has a bow and quiver strung across his back and a pair of shortswords at his hips, presenting quite the image of a mighty warrior. He thumps his chest with his fist when he sees the party, and then asks for all members of the court to gather and for the room to be sealed, since it is time to discuss pressing business.

Olazdor entreats the PCs to investigate Rock's murder and help bring justice. He's certain Thisraldion did the vile deed, and calls the monarch both a jealous husband and a black widow. Rock was a fellow rebel, and his intelligence was a great boon to the Hedgehog Court's efforts to win over the fey public.

Lady Beshela serves as steward of the domains of the fey titan She Who Writhes. Though not a member of the Unseen Court, Beshela bears the title Archfey of the Sea and controls most of the waters along Risur's north shore. With armies of sea creatures at her command, the beautiful fey is like a queen of her own land, though there are other threats that lurk deeper than her domain descends.

Beshela feels she owes a great debt to Risur. Forty years ago Ethelyn, sister of the current king, rescued her from a pirate sorcerer, giving birth to a long-lasting friendship and military pact. Beshela even aided Ethelyn's coup attempt against the king. Her moods are seemingly aqueous, but she is merely a clever charmer, fond of long schemes that depend on her enemies not knowing how dangerous she really is. Of late, she has allied with the Hedgehog Court to try to renegotiate the pact between the fey and Risur, for she and her allies loathe the technology King Aodhan has ushered into their once pristine realms.



Olazdor has a humanoid torso and arms with an athletic build, with raptor talons for feet. Though not a formal member of the Unseen Court, he sought to prove he was mighty enough to be among them, and so he severed his own eagle-like head and replaced it with a wooden mask, which now floats above his torso. He burnt his old head and scattered the ashes on the winds, and it is said that he cannot be killed until each mote is recovered and reassembled.

Olazdor presides over the winds and feathered beasts of the Dreaming, and has grown increasingly dissatisfied with the way that court turned a blind eye to the horrid technology that mortal world is starting to embrace. He saw Ethelyn as the last real friend they fey had, and after learning that the Court sent Asrabey Varal to kill her, he began gathering allies for an eventual war against Thisraldion. He quietly aided Ekosissigan's plan to assault Cauldron Hill in Adventure Five, *Cauldron-Born*, and had hoped to recruit Gale to be both his ally and his queen.

Olazdor passionately believes in his cause, and though he recognizes that his side is losing he has his own uniquely fey code of honor, one where romantic questing and bold combat are superior to deceptions and politicking. When enthused he'll thump his chest, and when like-minded allies quail at the thought of danger he'll loudly denounce them and question their bravery and heroism.





Olazdor admits he doesn't know how to get the party back to the Waking. He'll plainly tell them that if they need the Unseen Court's aid to return to Risur, they should damn him now and falsely convict him of the murder. But if they value justice and an honorable fight, they'll do what's right. He promises that if he joins the Unseen Court he will do all in his power to use the office to find the party a way home.

### Court in Session

Olazdor will gladly talk with the party for a while to get them as much information as they need. Lerina suggests they send people to the Halls of Accumulated Wisdom to look for a way to send the party back to Risur. Darbony thinks they should just join the fight against the Unseen Court, and perhaps claim a kingdom for themselves. Lavac sits in a dark corner and watches. Beshela is primarily interested in what has happened in the Waking, and whether the monarchy is in danger. She disagrees with Aodhan, but he did once save her life.

After half an hour, they'll need to continue to hold court. If the party stays to watch, they see Olazdor's a more just and less erratic leader than Thisraldion. Even thus, Olazdor's sense of heroic certainty makes him unsympathetic to the weak.

## GATHER NO MOSS

### Exploration. Montage.

*Clues and witnesses implicate both sides in Rock's murder.*

It's the evening of the 37<sup>th</sup>. Thisraldion expects them to present their evidence at noon on the 39<sup>th</sup>. If they want to actually solve a murder, they need to accomplish the following three goals:

- ♦ **Understand the Crime.**
- ♦ **Find Suspects with Motive and Opportunity.**
- ♦ **Prove Guilt with Verifiable Evidence.**

Toward those ends, the party will likely want to look at the tunnel where Rock died, speak with members of both courts to see who have corroborated alibis, look for proof that matches likely suspects, and then examine Rock's body in the mortuary. The most obvious two suspects are Thisraldion and Olazdor, but by this point your players are likely genre-savvy enough to know we wouldn't make it so blatant. Indeed, the various fey are all trying to make each other look guilty.

Rather than presenting specific scenes, herein we present the evidence, and leave it to you to present it to your players as they investigate.

### Here's What Really Happened

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the night Rock apparently died, he left Thisraldion's bed-chamber and sauntered out of Thistle Palace. He took a circuitous route through the streets of Clover. A mile from the palace, he passed through Krog Tunnel (see Crime Scene, below), which allies of the Hedgehog Court use as a canvas for their graffiti, and where homeless fey sleep during the night. His entrance was spotted by **Baldur Norther** (see Witnesses, below). There were other fey at the other two exits of the tunnel – **Thanriff** and **Beetlecurse**. Neither saw Rock leave, but Thanriff saw a cloaked figure with a hood leave the tunnel, wearing a mask; Beetlecurse saw the proudly shirtless Olazdor leaving.

## INVOLVING THE WHOLE PARTY

At this level, the party's most likely able to gather a ton of clues with a few well-cast divinations. We want to make sure non-magic-users are still capable of contributing, so consider playing up these elements:

- ♦ Firstly, Copperhat made a point to be tricky in order to foil most common divinations. Some legwork and face-to-face interaction should be necessary.
- ♦ Witnesses might be reticent to talk to strangers, so if you suspect a given PC won't be involved much, maybe give the witnesses something in common with that PC so they'll open up.
- ♦ The three homeless fey who were at the entrances of the Krog tunnel have been arrested and are about to be killed in the annual Winter Culling of unfavorables. A warrior will have the chance to fight in their stead to save them.
- ♦ A nature oriented PC will need to appease the land and plant spirits near Rock's grave, or else they won't let him be exhumed and just keep refilling any hole the party tries to dig. The spirits were fans of Rock too, and don't want to give him up.
- ♦ The fey see the party as celebrities, and so maybe just give one PC the job of distracting or intimidating gawkers who might swarm another PC trying to cast a divination.
- ♦ Various witnesses or gatekeepers of information might indulge in the fine fey tradition of non-combat contests of skill – performing, crafting, or drinking – before they'll agree to help the party.

Both of those sightings were actually illusions. In truth, Copperhat entered in the tunnel via the Webway, since there was a web orb in the crook of the tunnel. He was invisible when he arrived, and set out a bottle filled with sleeping poison from one of the Borenbog's gourds (see Introducing the Borenbog, below). When Rock passed by Copperhat used a magical suggestion to get Rock to notice the draught and drink it. Rock quickly passed out, dropping his lantern, which left the tunnel in pitch darkness.

Copperhat, still invisible in the dark, cracked an illusory egg onto Rock's face. This egg (stolen from Falgo the Henkeeper, see Meanwhile in the News, page 8) was enchanted to create a duplicate of Rock's body, which appeared naked on the floor beside the real Rock. Copperhat then tucked the unconscious Rock into the *absurdist web*.

He then used webs to hold the fake corpse upright like a puppet. He magically disguised himself as Olazdor and shot an arrow (one of Olazdor's own, stolen by an ettercap minion) into the corpse's heart. Then he disguised himself as Thisraldion, drew a replica of the fey monarch's sword (but which was not vorpal), and decapitated the corpse with two chops.

He turned invisible again and sent illusions down two of the exits to frame each fey lord. Then he slipped away via the Webway.

A half hour later an albino elf named **Aric de Rocha** passed through the tunnel and found the body. Aric reported it to authorities, who arrived within ten minutes. Within an hour his body had been taken to the Mossat Mortuary.

Copperhat plans to stick around Clover for another week or so before returning to the Voice of Rot to report on his progress. The trip will take him about a day via several Webway jaunts. Rock still resides in stasis inside the *absurdist web*. In another week or so Rock will pop out (and appear near a random Webway entrance) if someone doesn't retrieve him first. Copperhat likes the guy, and doesn't want to actually kill him.

### Crime Scene

The three hundred foot-long Krog Tunnel takes its name from its elbow shape, and although someone who passes through it only ever sees two ends, it actually has three, making a sort of Y shape if charted on a map. Depending on how you enter – on foot, in a carriage, alone, in a group, singing a song, carrying a toad, etc. – the tunnel may decide to bend and deposit you in either of the other two exits. You only see the people who are taking the same path you are, though if you enter in a group people tend to stick together. Regardless of which way you go, though, the tunnel always seems straight when you go through it.

Each end is capped with stone buttresses, which are perpetually coated in graffiti proclaiming whichever group in the neighborhood is in ascendancy, whether they be criminal, cultural, or culinary.

Inside the tunnel, which has a fifteen foot high ceiling, the graffiti currently has a major 'night sky' motif, though the stars have been replaced with gears, a few of which grind together, spraying blood across the heavens as they crush small creatures. A group plans in the next few days to add a massive likeness of Rock Rackus to the tunnel to commemorate him at the spot where his body was found.

### Clues

Rock's naked corpse and the few things found beside it were taken to Mossat Mortuary (see The Body, below).

Enough traffic has passed through here to ruin normal crime scene investigations, but a Perception check (DC 31) spots odd strands of spider webbing dangling directly over where the body was found.

Divination magic could reveal what happened. Without darkvision, what seems to happen is Rock comes through, drinks from a bottle on the ground, falls unconscious, and drops his lantern.

With darkvision, one could also see a naked copy of Rock's body suddenly appear, and then the real Rock body slowly turn invisible (as it was dragged into an extradimensional space). Then the naked body stands up jerkily like a puppet. Suddenly Olazdor appears and shoots him in the heart, but he does not respond or even bleed that much. Olazdor vanishes, and then Thisraldion appears and hacks off his head with two chops. The body falls unrealistically to the ground, and Thisraldion vanishes.

With darkvision *and* the ability to see invisibility, it's clear that Copperhat is present and disguising himself.

### Witnesses

Three homeless fey were sleeping near the exits of the tunnel that night. Baldur Norther (a dwarf-like fey from across the Avery Sea), saw Rock enter the tunnel from the north. Thanriff (a one-hoofed satyr) saw Thisraldion leave the southwest exit, and Beetlecurse (a dryad who managed to survive after her tree was eaten by beetles) saw Olazdor leave the southeast exit. When word spread of the murder, all three fey began gossiping about what they saw, but they then vanished.

## THE WINTER CULLING

Dozens of poor or mad fey have been rounded up and brought to a small stadium, where on the night of the 38<sup>th</sup> they must earn the right to remain in Clover. Various fey warriors volunteer to perform the culling, both as entertainment and to practice their swordplay. This year Karrest of the Unseen Court is attending.

If the party wants to speak with the witnesses, the condemned fey quickly recognize the 'heroes' from Rock Rackus's music, and ask to be saved. They won't share their stories unless they're rescued. Rescuing them, of course, entails facing Karrest in a duel to three touches. Karrest's stats can be found in Appendix Two: Fey Lords.

If you have an inkling who might defend the condemned, have Karrest be jealous of that PC earlier, thinking he or she is interested in his beloved Atsla. A martial scientist PC here can learn Karrest's *Dramatic Reversal* technique.

If rescued, the witnesses' descriptions of Rock, Thisraldion, and Olazdor are all accurate. Perhaps directly reading their memories could allow a Wisdom check to disbelieve the illusions of Olazdor and Thisraldion, but the mere fact that they saw contradicting events should be curious enough.

For each hour a PC spends looking for witnesses to the murder, have him make a Diplomacy check (DC 25). A success leads to someone who remembers one of the witnesses talking about being there the night Rock died, but it takes three successes to get all their names – Baldur Norther, Thanriff, and Beetlecurse. No one knows where they are now, though, and it takes a DC 34 check to learn that they were rounded up earlier this week for possible execution in the annual Winter Culling.

Aric de Rocha, who found the body, is known to authorities. He saw two key bits of evidence, but thinks they're inconsequential. First, there were bits of cracked eggshell on the ground near the body. Second, there was a huge orb of spider webs hanging in the ceiling, glinting very clearly in Aric's lantern light. But he sees those things everywhere, and will only remember these details if specifically asked.

### Attempt on the Party's Lives

When the PCs are inside the Krog tunnel, someone tries to kill them by sealing the tunnel's ends with ice and flooding the passage with seawater. See Mid-Investigation Attacks below.

### Suspects, Alibis, Motives

While potentially anyone in the city could have killed Rock, the most likely suspects are members of the Unseen and Hedgehog Courts.

**Thisraldion.** The fey monarch claims to have been asleep and quite intoxicated after spending the evening with Rock, and has no alibi. However, Thisraldion's *vorpallongsword* is supremely sharp, and would not have required two strikes to sever Rock's head.

Questioning the lower-ranked fey of the palace can yield (Diplomacy DC 25) rumors that Thisraldion was perfectly aware of Rock's visits to the Hedgehog Court, and was planning some public disgrace for the human in order to discredit the rebellion. Most of the staff assume their monarch had something more clever in mind than simply murdering the man.



However, a search of Thisraldion's personal quarters on the second floor of Thistle Palace reveal (Perception DC 34) a hidden compartment in the wall, filled with trophies from old battles, including withered severed heads of foes, cracked masks of former members of the Court, and one of Rock's white evening shirts stained with blood and wrapped around a crude sword. Thisraldion denies knowing about that. (The shirt and sword were actually planted by Binniwich the brown-nosing brownie, who so despised the actual members of the Unseen Court that he was easily goaded by an agent of Copperhat.)

**Atsla and Karrest.** Atsla and Karrest sat among a crowd of dozens in a wooded theater watching a grig concert. That said, they sat in a private balcony booth and never spoke to anyone, so either could have easily slipped away.

Atsla's attendants all say only positive things about their lady, though if threatened (Intimidate DC 34) they confess Atsla has eyes on the throne of Unseen Monarch, and they suspect she might have seen Rock as a lever to unseat Thisraldion.

Meanwhile Karrest's braggadocio-filled henchmen gladly gossip about how much their lord hated Rock Rackus. But if Karrest had done him in, Rock would have had a bigger weapon in his hand than just his naked manhood.

**Furg.** The toadstool sage was roaming Thistle Palace, reading its scattered shelves of books, researching what might be causing the strange disruptions to planar travel. A dozen different attendants and guards saw him.

One of the rangale (the telekinetic stag and gazelle guards, Diplomacy DC 18 to locate) overheard Furg talking to Rock on a few occasions, trying to convince the man to pursue the kingship of Risur. If questioned, Furg admits that he thought it'd be good to have a friendly king who owed him a few favors.

**Sallin.** The dryad's tree remained rooted beside the Hood Garden all night, but she has no alibi. However, no one can ascribe her a motive for killing Rock.

**Olazdor.** The whole Hedgehog Court was in a meeting with scores of attendees, and Olazdor was rallying them to recruit more allies to their cause in hopes of starting a revolt in the Spring. They were waiting for their honored guest Rock Rackus to perform, and when midnight came and went, Olazdor left to look for him. He returned an hour later, having heard from the authorities that Rock was dead. He gave a thrilling speech inciting the crowd and proclaiming Rock a hero who had been cut down by Thisraldion.

Everyone attending meetings of the Hedgehog Court knew that Rock was 'spying' on the Unseen Court for them, but Lerina had warned Olazdor that Rock might be a double agent.

A search of Olazdor's personal quarters on the second floor of Thistle Palace can discover (Perception DC 34) a small treasure chest under a floorboard, which contains Rock's famous diamond-encrusted gold pistol. This was planted by a (now-dead) pixie whose family was being held captive by agents of the Voice of Rot.

**The Rest of the Hedgehog Court.** Nearly a hundred witnesses corroborate that Lerina, Darbony, Lavac, and Beshela were all at the rally for several hours before and after Rock died.

Of the group, Darbony had several public arguments with Rock after the man flirted with women Darbony claimed were 'his.' Lerina and Beshela both expressed public support for Rock, and Lavac was a huge fan of the man.

**Copperhat the Headless.** Copperhat claims he was at the Headless Human, drinking alone and waiting for Rock to swing by after he performed for the rebels. He says that when Rock didn't show up he hit up a conversation with the Borenbog, who has been very supportive for him ever since. The bartender – a hag named **Elocene** – recalls that Rock drank there often, but next to the celebrity, Copperhat never made much of an impression. But the night Rock died, she remembers someone coming in and announcing the news, after which Copperhat threw a massive fit. Elocene tried to throw Copperhat out, but the Borenbog grumbled something and she decided it wasn't worth the trouble.

**Riffian of the Great Hunt.** He feasted earlier that evening with his fellow knights, then slept in his armor beside his horse under the stars.

## Cold as Ice

Throughout the day, the party likely notices (Perception DC 18) ice sprites following their movements, and occasionally they'll sense scrying sensors accompanied by a chill in the air. Atsla is spying on them.

At some point in the night, Atsla and her entourage of female frost trolls find the party. She makes a point of not bringing Karrest along, because he'll notice she's lying and wonder if she's upset. She claims that the night of Rock's murder, Thisraldion discarded a bloody coat and ordered it burnt, but that a servant kept it and brought it to her. She divined it, and found that the blood on the sleeve was Rock's.

This is a clever trick. Atsla had a small book written, with a story of Thisraldion doing just that – murdering Rock, then discarding a blood-stained coat, which was kept by a servant named **Paprika**. Then she had Alba and Zanel, the sisters who run the Honorable Halls of Accumulated Wisdom, to use a spell that lets them pull objects out of a book. The powerful magic has made the fictional coat *and* Paprika the servant real, and so divinations on either confirm Atsla's story, since in the book that story was *true*. Paprika is telling the truth as far as she knows, though in a few days she'll completely disappear when the magic giving form to her fiction fades.

If the party mentions being trapped by ice and nearly drowned, Atsla correctly surmises that Thisraldion is trying to frame her, though she has no way to prove it.

## Copperhat at the Headless Human

Copperhat the Headless spends most of his time in a bar called the Headless Human, apparently drinking away his sadness at Rock's death. His drinking buddy, the **Borenbog**, is actually a hired bodyguard, because Copperhat worries he'll be discovered. He would leave, but his master the Voice of Rot ordered him to stay and ensure the fey courts continue fighting.

The Borenbog is an obscure folk terror from the High Bayou (Knowledge (nature) DC 25), which can steal men's will, passion, and creativity, which it stores in a gourd at its hip. Though only the size of a dwarf, its stupefying presence affects a vast area. None have managed to kill it, for it is said that no given weapon can ever harm it twice, and most challengers run out of ideas of how to attack it before it will die. It carries an oversized fish filleting knife, and it wears a belt of severed hands. It also drinks more than a horse, belches, farts, and is all around an unpleasant boor.

The legend of the Borenbog tells of a group of fishermen who brought beer to drink when they rowed out into a swamp to fish. The Borenbog, smelling the delicious alcohol, used his magic to daze the fishermen,

then climbed aboard the boat and drank himself into a stupor. Finally, the only drink left on the boat was a gourd of beer one of the fishermen was holding, but when the Borenbog tried to take it, the man was too stubborn to let go, so the Borenbog took the fisherman's knife and chopped off the man's hand. The pain snapped him out of his confusion, and he managed to swim away, but his companions were never found.

The Borenbog is a dour, grumpy creature who is jealously protective of his drink. He hates being bothered and normally only leaves his boggy hut to hunt or steal alcohol. (Copperhat bribed the 'bog with an entire abandoned stone giant brewery in the Anthras Mountains in order to be his bodyguard for a few weeks.) Some say that the Borenbog and his rotting swamp first held the secret of fermentation, which was stolen by dwarves, men, elves, or whoever is telling the tale. It is for this reason that the Borenbog hates the civilized races, and terrorizes any he comes across who have alcohol.

The Borenbog never smiles, and enjoys complaining. He takes no joy in his drinking, but gets viciously angry if denied it. The Borenbog loves absinthe, and offering the spirit in a toast is one of the few ways to win his favor.

Matching his dull demeanor, the Borenbog has the ability to strip men of their passion and creativity. Those who drink are particularly vulnerable, and over the centuries many a drunken poet has been warned to watch out for the Borenbog on his walk home after a long night of seeking his muse. Tales say that the stolen ideas are trapped in the creature's gourd, and that by drinking from the gourd another creature can take those ideas for himself.

There are many stories about how the Borenbog is invulnerable to all but one type of weapon; just what that weapon is, however, the stories never agree on. No single weapon ever works twice to harm the Borenbog, at least not in the short term. The only real vulnerability the Borenbog has is his foe's imaginations.

The Borenbog's gourd is enchanted, letting the creature have an endless supply of drinks, mundane, alcoholic, even magical.

A somewhat infamous fey who acts a mix of trickster and jester for the Unseen Court. Like actual members of the court, Copperhat has no face, at least none that anyone can see. His namesake hat sits atop a seemingly invisible head, which is enough to fool most minor fey into thinking he's really one of the Unseen.

In truth he's just a clever ettercap-like pixie who hides inside his coat and levitates his clothes and hat, controlling his fake body like an oversized puppet. He normally travels between fey enclaves trading knick-knacks and favors, with a particular fondness for telling stories about the human world. People find him amusing in small servings, but are quick to suggest new places for him to go after a day or so.

Copperhat is secretly a minion of the Voice of Rot, the only one of the fey titans currently awake.



## INTRODUCING THE BORENBOG

*Hunched like a dwarf with a hangover, this squat, wart-skinned goblin-like creature has a vindictive disdain in his red eyes, and he slowly licks his lips with thirst. One of the creature's hands tightly clenches a large sloshing gourd, while the other errantly twirls a long blade meant for gutting fish. The blade is rusted and blood-stained, perhaps from the severed hands hanging at the creature's belt. The creature meets your eyes and sneers, and the world begins to turn dull and hazy.*

*Suddenly Copperhat steps up and shakes your hand, and you snap out of the odd malaise that had gripped you. (Only then do you realize that Copperhat doesn't actually have any hands to have shaken.) The headless fey's top hat tips jauntily to the side and he holds up two glasses of wine.*

*"Please, drink with us. Ever since Rock died I've been truly bereft, and the only one who would listen to my sorrows is my new buddy. Let me introduce The Borenbog."*

*The Borenbog sips from his gourd, indifferent to Copperhat's enthusiasm. You notice that two of the bar's other patrons – both keeping their distance – are each missing a hand.*

## Mourning for Rock

When the party arrives, Copperhat quickly takes a drink from a flask in his coat; this *potion of glibness* makes it nigh impossible to realize when the faceless fey tells a lie (Sense Motive DC 56).

If the party comes to Copperhat looking for clues of who killed Rock, he convincingly plays the role of a sullen bereaved friend who is sincerely happy to see the party. He's not sure who would have killed such an amazing person as Rock, but he trusts the party will do the right thing.

Copperhat figures someone has to take the fall for the murder, and framing Thisraldion will cause the most chaos. He doesn't want to seem suspicious by just giving the party the answer, so he wants them to 'discover' for themselves the damning evidence he planted in Thisraldion's bedchambers. So after recounting to the party the many good times he and Rock had together, and how they caused such a ruckus in the two courts, he offers his theory, which comes in three parts:

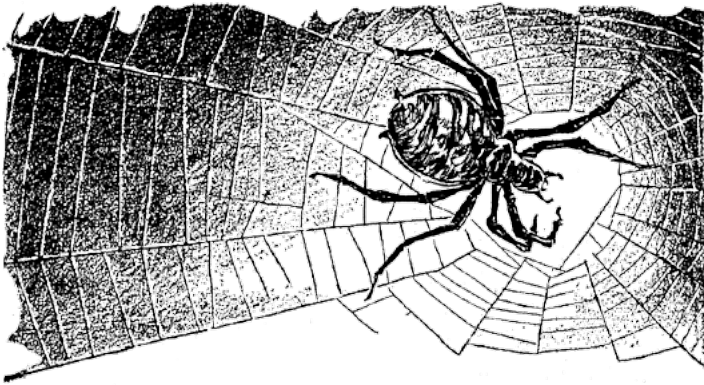
First, whoever killed Rock has to have powerful magic to avoid all the divinations both sides have been casting. That means someone in one of the courts, and probably Olazdor or Thisraldion.

But second, Olazdor isn't smart enough to lie about something like this.

And third, Thisraldion was a jealous lover. Emphasis on *lover*. Copperhat, who weeps at the memory of his friend, can't let go. He nods to the one-handed patrons here, and says that they still long for what they lost. So he bets Thisraldion would have wanted some keepsake. The news said Rock was found naked. Who knows what Thisraldion might have taken.

Copperhat says he's afraid Thisraldion would kill him too, which is why he's been lying to everyone who will listen, singing the monarch's praises. But if he were braver, he'd go and look for clues. It's what Rock would have done. He asks to be present whenever the party presents their evidence to the two courts, so he can face Rock's killer.





### Tangled in His Web

If the party accuses Copperhat of killing Rock without having evidence, he feigns shock, and the Borenbog starts to move toward them. Copperhat stops him, and says he forgives the party. In his grief he has thought terrible things of people too.

Certainly, there seems to be no motive for Copperhat to have killed Rock. But the party might have figured out that Rock isn't dead. If they present such evidence, or if they start threatening Copperhat's life, he'll change demeanor and become suddenly serious.

He says that Rock is alive, and that the war between the two courts was orchestrated by his master, the Voice of Rot. He's not quite sure what the fey titan wants, but it's clear that things in both the Dreaming and the Waking are turning chaotic. With the Unseen Court weakened, the Voice of Rot will be able to reclaim his power and his territory.

He knows the party wants to return to the Waking to save their king. A lot of people will die soon if the party isn't there to save them; after all, Copperhat can always smell a corpse in the offing. And the Voice of Rot can aid them. Fey titans exist in both worlds. They can banish their enemies across the planes, or send their agents as needed. If Thisraldion offered to send them home, he's lying. His power is pathetic next to a fey titan.

If the party helps Copperhat, he promises them – and this is a fey promise that he must fulfill – that his master will send them post-haste back to the Waking, and will cause no harm to them nor allow his minions to harm them for as long as they remain in Risur, unless they attack him first. All he asks is that they find the evidence he planted to implicate Thisraldion, and that they name the fey lord as Rock's killer. Then he will bring them to the Voice of Rot and send them back to the Waking. They can take Rock back or leave him here, as they prefer.

If the party attacks, see Copperhat's tactics in *We Now Return You to Your Regularly Scheduled Warfare* (page 29).

### The Body

West of the city, located near an idyllic flowered cemetery, the cheery Moss-cat Mortuary has plenty of tall windows to let in light, which feeds the staff: intelligent cat-like plant creatures made of moss. The moss-cats, led by a high-strung mortician named **Desulie**, are only a foot or two tall, but can extend tendrils of moss to manipulate objects. Desulie herself has the ability to assume the form of an elf, but with distinctively cat-like mannerisms.

The mosscats have just finished burying the body of Rock Rackus (or rather, the fake body left by Copperhat). The party can dig it up themselves, or wait a few hours for Desulie to get proper approval and call in the gravediggers. Though he 'died' three weeks ago, a *gentle repose* spell has kept the body pristine.

### Personal Effects

The only thing found beside Rock was a half-empty bottle of liquor, which Desulie has kept locked away, thinking she can sell it as a relic of the celebrity. No one ever thought to examine it, but a Craft (alchemy) check (DC 18) detects soporific poison. If someone drinks it, he feels drowsy and lazy, unable to take any initiative or have an original thought for about five minutes.

A Spellcraft check (DC 34, or DC 25 if someone tries drinking the poison) can determine the liquor is tainted with the spittle of an obscure fey known as the Borenbog. The rest of Rock's personal belongings are at Thistle Palace.

### Murder Weapon

They also have the arrow found in Rock's chest. The shaft has a rough texture like bark, and the head is a carved eagle talon. Using *object reading* or similar abilities on the arrow might reveal misleading information, since Copperhat was disguised as Olazdor when he shot Rock. And in any case, the spidery fey never personally touched the arrow, just manipulated it with his webs.

### Autopsy

Rock's body was cleaned in preparation for burial, but not embalmed. A Heal check (DC 18) can tell that the arrow wound in Rock's chest was not fatal. It did not reach his heart, and indeed only went in fairly shallowly. The wound to the neck required two strikes. A check that beats DC 25 determines that the amount of blood still in the body indicates the heart wasn't beating at the time of death. If a PC tests his blood, a DC 25 check finds there was practically no alcohol in his system, but there are traces of a poison. He also has nothing in his gastrointestinal tract.

The fey cast divinations to find out, "Who killed Rock Rackus?," which of course yielded nothing, because of course this body was never alive in the first place. Similar divinations by the PCs might seem to indicate powerful anti-divination magic, when in truth they're just not asking the right questions.

Close inspection of the body's hands and feet (or a Perception check DC 34 if they don't specify where they're looking) finds that he has no calluses, nor any scars or signs of ever having suffered injury other than the two 'killing blows.' It should become fairly obvious that Clover was not the site of Rock Rackus's demise. No, what we have here is a sham-Rock.

## MID-INVESTIGATION ATTACKS

### Action. Tactical. Level 14.

*A pair of ambushes are each likely too weak to challenge the party.*

The party can't just blithely walk through a city full of fey on the brink of war, asking questions that might implicate leaders of either faction. Thisraldion tries to drown the party when they investigate Krog Tunnel (and hopes to make it look like Atsla and Beshela targeted them). And right after they escape that death trap, Beshela's *actual* attempt on their lives comes in the form of elite satyr warriors (which she hopes the party will think have been sent by Darbony, the satyr member of the Hedgehog Court).

The flooding trick only really works in the tunnel, but feel free to move the satyr ambush elsewhere if needed.

## Flooded Tunnel

While the party is in Krog tunnel examining the murder site, Thisraldion attempts to make it look like Beshela and Atsla have conspired to kill them, but the trap is one the fey monarch expects the party to be able to survive.

Once the party starts examining where Rock's body was found, walls of ice seal the three exits of the tunnel, blocking out sound and light from outside (Perception DC 18 during the day to not be caught by surprise, DC 25 at night).

One round later, frigid seawater bursts from the walls down the length of the tunnel with intense pressure. All creatures in the tunnel must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or take 1d6 nonlethal damage and be knocked prone.

The crime scene is in the middle of the tunnel, 150 ft. from any exit, and the water immediately makes the ground difficult terrain. The tunnel fills a foot in depth each round, taking fifteen rounds to flood completely. The walls at each end of the tunnel have magic that makes them hard to injure, with hardness 10. The walls are nearly 3 feet thick, and it takes 100 points of damage to break through. They have take double damage from fire. Any creature that starts its turn adjacent to the wall takes 3d6 cold damage, and a creature who makes a melee attack against the wall takes an additional 1d6 cold damage.

Breaking the ice wall drains the tunnel by one foot per round.

Additionally, when the party nears the wall, two fey orcas are summoned on either end of the party. Until the water is at least 5 feet deep they can only move at a crawl with a speed of 5 feet, but they're still quite adept at grabbing prey and thrashing them to death.

♦ 2 Fey Orca

## Fey Creature Orca

CR 10

XP 9,600

N Huge fey

Init +10; Senses blindsight 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +26

### Defense

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+6 Dex, +7 natural, -2 size)

hp 137 (13d8+78)

Fort +13, Ref +14, Will +8; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

DR 10/cold iron; Resist cold 10, electricity 10; SR 21

### Offense

Speed swim 80 ft.

Melee bite +18 (3d6+15 plus grab)

Special Attacks deafening whalesong

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

### Statistics

Str 30, Dex 23, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 19, Cha 8

Base Atk +9; CMB +21 (+25 grapple); CMD 37

Feats Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Skill Focus (Perception, Swim), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +26, Swim +35

Languages Sylvan

SQ hold breath, long step

### Special Abilities

**Deafening Whalesong (Ex)** As a standard action, a fey orca can unleash a deafening blast of clicks and shrieks. This ability only affects creatures who are mostly or completely submerged in water. All non-whales within 50 feet must make a DC 21 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Hold Breath (Ex)** A fey orca can hold its breath for a number of minutes equal to 6 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

**Long Step (Su)** A fey orca can teleport up to 130 feet as a move action. It may use this ability once every 1d4 rounds.

## MASKING OF THE UNSEEN

Throughout the party's time in the Dreaming, Thisraldion and others on the Unseen Court consider who among the party might be worthy of joining them. Certainly the party has powers that make them quite mighty in combat, which the court needs to maintain its supremacy. But a PC must also display the proper charisma and familiarity with the fey, and have motives amenable to the rest of the court.

At some point before the party leaves Clover, if you think one of the PCs would be deemed worthy, the fey lords and ladies come to him or her and make their offer: fill the vacancy left by Ekossigan (as well as anyone who gets killed in the course of this adventure), but serve as ambassador of the Unseen Court in the Waking. Continue to work for Risur, but steer them to favor the fey, and when your mission is complete, return and take your throne.

Even Thisraldion, who has come to accept that the people of the Waking will continue to use technology, would still prefer his Waking allies to show more care for the effects their technology has on the Dreaming. And if Olazor or Beshela join the Unseen Court, finding a solution to the blighting effect of industry will be critical to avoid a war in the coming years.

If a PC is invited and accepts induction into the Unseen Court, he or she is tasked with designing a mask. Whatever the PC can imagine, someone in the Court or among their minions can craft it. Thereafter, that PC's physical body will be invisible. They gain the Mask of the Unseen Court boon, detailed in Appendix Five: Magic and Training. Moreover, they can command immediate loyalty from most fey, and will speak with authority even among humans.



## Beshela's Intervention

Beshela thinks Olazdor is guilty, but she needs Olazdor as an ally, so she wants to pin the murder on Darbony. She has in the past bedded the randy old satyr and in post-coital chats learned many of his secrets. She uses some of those secrets now: with the aid of illusions and calling in favors Darbony is owed, she has convinced the *Debauched Brotherhood*, the most elite warriors of the satyr armies, to target the PCs.

Disguised as Darbony, Beshela spun a tale to the brotherhood of how another satyr mercenary – named Dolax the Deathmask – had assassinated Rackus on Darbony's orders, because the human was interfering in his romantic endeavors. (Dolax is indeed a satyr assassin, but he died a few days ago in the ongoing warfare, so he can't readily dispute Beshela's lies.) Beshela-disguised-as-Darbony claimed that it would be disastrous to satyrkind if word got out he had provoked this whole war just so he could bed a few extra women, and the brotherhood think they're doing a public service by silencing the party.

Right after the party emerges from the flooded tunnel, the *Debauched Brotherhood* attacks. They expect to be able to kill them quickly, and if defeated confess that all they know is that Darbony didn't like the outsiders asking questions. They expect to be summarily executed, but if spared would be willing to fight for the party for a year and a day to repay the debt.

- ♦ 3 Satyr Springjacks     ♦ Xeniam, Boon Satyr
- ♦ 1 Satyr Piper

### Satyr Springjack

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male satyr warrior 7

CN Medium fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +21

#### Defense

**AC** 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

**hp** 134 (7d10+8d6+68)

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12

**DR** 5/cold iron

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** mwk longsword +17/+12/+7 (1d8+6/19-20)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +16/+11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)

**Special Attacks** blastback arrows

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +12)

At will—*charm person* (DC 15), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *sleep* (DC 15), *suggestion* (DC 17)

1/day—*fear* (DC 18), *summon nature's ally III*

#### Statistics

**Str** 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19

**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +15 (+19 to bull rush); **CMD** 30 (32 vs. bull rush)

**Feats** Dodge, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Mobility, Quick Draw, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

**Skills** Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +21, Perform (wind instruments) +19, Stealth +17, Survival +7

**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan

**Gear** mwk longsword, mwk composite longbow (+4 Str), 15 arrows, 5 +1 blastback arrows

#### Special Abilities

**Blastback Arrows** When this arrow strikes an enemy, it performs a bull rush maneuver using the archer's CMB.

### Satyr Piper

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male satyr bard 8

CN Medium fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +28

#### Defense

**AC** 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

**hp** 136 (8d8+8d6+72)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +16, **Will** +13

**DR** 5/cold iron

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** pipes (improvised weapon) +14/+9 (1d8+6), horns +9 (1d6+2)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +15/+10 (1d8+4/x3)

**Special Attacks** bardic performance 24 rounds/day, (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion), pipes

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +14)

At will—*charm person* (DC 17), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *sleep* (DC 17), *suggestion* (DC 19)

1/day—*fear* (DC 20), *summon nature's ally III*

**Bard Spells Known** (CL 8th; concentration +14)

3rd (3/day)—*confusion* (DC 19), *haste*, *major image*

2nd (6/day)—*invisibility*, *mirror image*, *shatter* (DC 18), *sound burst* (DC 18)

1st (6/day)—*animate rope*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *grease* (DC 17), *silent image*

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 16), *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

#### Statistics

**Str** 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 23

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 29

**Feats** Arcane Strike, Catch Off-Guard, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Spring Attack, Vital Strike

**Skills** Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +11, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (nature) +14, Perception +28, Perform (dance) +25, Perform (wind instruments) +29, Stealth +27, Survival +6

**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan

**SQ** bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (dance, wind)

#### Special Abilities

**Pipes (Su)** A satyr can focus and empower his magic by playing haunting melodies on his panpipes. When he plays, all creatures within a 60-foot radius must make a DC 20 Will save or be affected by *charm person*, *fear*, *sleep*, or *suggestion*, depending on what tune the satyr chooses. A creature that successfully saves against any of the pipes' effects cannot be affected by the same set of pipes for 24 hours, but can still be affected by the satyr's other spell-like abilities as normal. The satyr's use of his pipes does not count toward his uses per day of his spell-like abilities, and if separated from them he may continue to use his standard abilities. The pipes themselves are masterwork, and a satyr can craft a replacement with 1 week of labor. The save DC is Charisma-based.



**Xeniam, Boon Satyr**

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male satyr ranger 9

CN Medium fey

**Init** +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +31**Defense****AC** 27, touch 16 flat-footed 21 (+5 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, +1 shield)**hp** 153 (9d10+8d6+76)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +16, **Will** +12**Defensive Abilities** evasion; **DR** 5/cold iron**Offense****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** +2 *short sword* +18/+13/+8 (1d6+6/19-20) and +2 *short sword* +18/+13/+8 (1d6+6/19-20), horns +12 (1d6+2)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +19/+14/+9 (1d8+4/x3)**Special Attacks** favored enemy (fey +4, humans +2), flash strike**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +11)At will—*charm person* (DC 14), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *sleep* (DC 14), *suggestion* (DC 16)1/day—*fear* (DC 17), *summon nature's ally III***Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 6th; concentration +9)2nd—*barkskin*, *cat's grace*1st—*feather step*, *longstrider*, *resist energy***Str** 18, **Dex** 20, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 33**Feats** Dodge, Double Slice, Endurance, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Perception), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +8, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (nature) +19, Perception +31, Perform (wind instruments) +18, Stealth +28, Survival +17**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan**SQ** favored terrain (forests +4, the Dreaming +2), hunter's bond (companions), swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy, woodland stride**Gear** +2 *studded leather*, +2 *short sword* (2)**Special Abilities****Flash Strike (Su)** When Xeniam makes a full attack action with his short swords, he can teleport to any space within 100 feet. He can make his melee attacks from that new space. At the end of his turn, Xeniam automatically returns to the space that he started his turn in.

## DON'T RAILROAD

We like the idea of the two factions meeting for a dramatic reveal of the killer. It's very Sherlock-y. But if the party makes a move early, just let them. Ultimately they'll need to go to the Voice of Rot, and that might be while chasing Copperhat, or after capturing or killing him, or going along with him as part of a deal. Stats for all members of the two courts are presented in Appendix Two: Fey Lords, in case the party picks a fight. Unless the party antagonizes multiple fey lords, the two courts leave whoever the party accuses to fend for him- or herself.

## ELEMENTARY DEDUCTIONS

**Social. Montage.***The party reveals their findings.*

At Thisraldion's invitation, the Hedgehog Court comes to the entrance foyer (area 6) of Thistle Palace, where they and the Unseen Court will listen to the party's findings about the murder of Rock Rackus. Copperhat the Headless attends too (along with his drinking buddy the Borenbog), since he wants to know whether his deception has been discovered. He has several escape routes planned in case the party correctly identifies him, though.

**Gathered Suspects**

Thisraldion, Atsla, Karrest, Furg, and Sallin stand on the east side of the room. Olazdor, Beshela, Lerina, and Lavac stand on the west side (Darbony had assistants bring a chair for him to sit in). Copperhat and the Borenbog lean against the south wall.

The Borenbog wears a truly massive gourd strapped across his back (which secretly holds a silk orb that leads to the Webway). Copperhat walks around the room with a bottle of surprisingly strong wine trying to get everyone drunk. All the fey lords except Darbony decline. Keep track of who among the PCs drink, because they'll be more susceptible if they end up fighting the Borenbog while intoxicated.

Riffian and other members of the Great Hunt are only here if the party requested them. Otherwise they're busy chasing a fox through the chessboard forest south of the city.

As is traditional for the *Unseen Court*, Thisraldion has forbidden anyone else to be present during the party's presentation. No guards or gawkers are allowed even within earshot of this vital business.

**And the Killer Is...**

We leave it your the party to decide how to present their findings. Have the accused demand evidence. Throw in a few startled gasps from the other lords if the revelation is particularly dramatic. If the PCs have figured everything out, the most perfect reveal would be for them to reach into their own *absurdist web* (the one Copperhat gave them in adventure seven leads to the same extradimensional space) to pull out a still-alive Rock Rackus.

What happens depends on who the party names. Even if the evidence they present is weak, the two courts are just glad to resolve the matter. If their evidence is just outright pathetic, treat it as the Nobody reaction.

**Nobody.** If the party avoids naming anyone, the fey lords are furious, start shouting, and eventually begin fighting. Barring PC intervention, Olazdor engages Thisraldion; Furg and Sallin square off against Lavac and Lerina; Darbony runs away; and Karrest is double-teamed by Atsla and Beshela. Within a minute Furg, Lerina, and Karrest are dead, Sallin and Lavac have withdrawn, and the remaining three lords – Atsla, Beshela, and Olazdor – have cornered Thisraldion. When the monarch refuses to 'confess,' Olazdor delivers a killing blow, then proclaims himself new King of the Unseen Court.

**Thisraldion.** Thisraldion attacks the party, but Olazdor comes to their aid, so it should be a quick battle. Once Thisraldion falls, Olazdor thanks the party, then proclaims himself king.



**Olazdor.** Olazdor throws down his weapons and presents his chest to the crowd. He proclaims that the fey will keep the monarch they deserve: deceptive and villainous. He turns to the party and tells them they'll be *excellent* allies of the Unseen Court. Then he kneels and lets Thisraldion plunge a vorpal sword through his heart.

**Darbony.** The old satyr is completely blind-sided, and as Karrest drags him to the center of the room he screams that he's being set up. Thisraldion starts to make a speech of condemnation, but when Darbony won't shut up the monarch just sighs and slices his head off with one stroke.

**Beshela.** If the party names Beshela, Olazdor interposes himself and confesses. He lies and claims that he was responsible for whatever evidence would have damned his beloved, and he asks that they kill him instead. Thisraldion obliges.

**Other Fey Lord.** Unless the party's just making stuff up, it's unlikely they'd name anyone else on the two courts, but if so, the accused denies it, is dragged forward, and executed.

**Copperhat.** Copperhat tries to appear calm while feverishly poking the Borenbog to get his attention. He clears his throat and quietly explains that the party won't ever get home to the Waking without his help. Perhaps they would rather name Thisraldion, who after all has lied about knowing how to send them home.

If the party isn't willing to help him, Copperhat gives a nod to the Borenbog, who smashes his huge gourd on the ground, revealing an orb gate to the Webway. Copperhat dives into it, and the opening keeps glowing for about a minute, but the Borenbog stomps it flat. It takes a full round to 'refluff' the orb enough to enter it, and the Borenbog will fight anyone who tries to go through.

If somehow the party prevents this, Copperhat will try to flee across the Grand Lawn. Rather than coming across an active battleground, the party will pass by dozens of wounded fey, whom Copperhat can trick into attacking them.

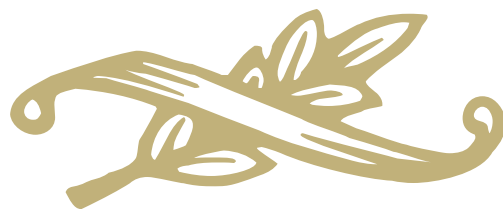
## WE NOW RETURN TO YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED WARFARE

### Action. Tactical. Level 17.

*Copperhat the Headless flees through the field of battle in a bid to shake your pursuit.*

This scene of course only happens if the party outs Copperhat as the one behind Rock's "murder" and the subsequent warfare. Several stages are all part of the same encounter. If the party waits more than a minute or so to pursue Copperhat, he gets away.

The first stage is getting past the Borenbog, who wants to keep the party from getting into the Webway. If the party does end up diving into the Webway, the last PC to go hears Thisraldion (or whoever is monarch of the Unseen Court now) announce that they're conjuring a barrier in the Webway – thorns, ice, fire, etc. – which will force Copperhat to exit so he'll be easier to pursue.



In the Webway, various spiders get in the party's way. Once they make it through, they emerge onto the Chessboard Battlefield, where Copperhat uses his illusions to turn the fighters upon the party.

Alternately, the party might pursue Copperhat directly from Thistle Palace, across the grand lawn and through injured fey soldiers. Or they might have Riffian of the Great Hunt on hand at the palace, who will summon steeds for them, call forth his hunting hounds, and lead them at high speed toward the Chessboard Forest to find the fleeing Copperhat.

### Battle and Brew

During this fight, the various fey lords only get involved if the party has previously cultivated a friendship (in which case you should make saves for them as normal to break free from being the Borenbog's *stupefy* aura). Or a PC can spend an action and succeed a Diplomacy check (DC 25 for Olazdor or Lerina, DC 40 for Thisraldion or Darbony, DC 34 for anyone else) to convince a fey lord to help.

The entrance foyer of Thistle Palace is about 40 ft. by 50 ft., with doorways leading out in many directions. This means all the PCs and the members of the two courts likely start in the Borenbog's *stupefy* aura. The aura also keeps the guards from interfering; they just come to the edge and stand there, confused.

The *stupefy* aura means that (except for rare immunities), he will get to go first. He swigs a *giant's draught* from his gourd, then closes with a PC and tries to hack his hand off. The following rounds he'll go after other stupefied PCs, or anyone who tries to reopen the orb that leads to the Webway.

Once he's reduced below half his hit points, he shrinks back to Medium, stupefies everyone again, and then drinks *bayou brew*, which transforms the area around him into a copy of his High Bayou home.

The Borenbog's *redundant defense* is meant to stymie the party and encourage the PCs to have to seek novel ways to harm their enemy. Make them be creative – dropping chandeliers, throwing consumable items, digging out all the seldom-used spare magic items from a *bag of holding*, or forcing the Borenbog into battle with the convalescing soldiers on the Grand Lawn. The 'bog is a lower-level foe than the party, so they should be able to still hurt it even if they have to use non-magical weapons.

If the party seems particularly stymied, that's fine. The Borenbog is slow and they can easily run away from it and find more weapons.

### Aftermath

If the party manages to get into the Webway, the 'bog will chase them, squeezing awkwardly if he's still Huge. If the Borenbog is defeated, the Unseen Court takes him prisoner but ultimately can't figure out how to kill him. In the long run they'll banish him back to his bayou, and give the party the *Borenbog's gourd* as a reward.

♦ The Dread Borenbog

**The Dread Borenbog**

CR 15

XP 51,200

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** -1; **Senses** alcohol sense, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1**Aura** stupefying aura (40 ft., DC 24)**Defense****AC** 29, touch 9, flat-footed 29 (-1 Dex, +20 natural)**hp** 262 (15d10+180)**Fort** +16, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8**Defensive Abilities** lucky hands, redundant defense; **SR** 26**Offense****Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** gutting knife +20/+15/+10 (1d6+5/17-20), slam +15 (1d6+5 plus grab)**Ranged** entangling spit +14 (5d6 acid plus entrap)**Special Attacks** entrap (DC 24, 1d6 rounds, hardness 5, hp 15), quick swig, take hand**Statistics****Str** 20, **Dex** 8, **Con** 32, **Int** 6, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 4**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +20 (+24 grapple); **CMD** 29**Feats** Bleeding Critical, Diehard, Critical Focus, Endurance, Power Attack, Improved Critical (gutting knife), Intimidating Prowess, Toughness**Skills** Intimidate +20, Survival +17**Languages** Goblin, Primordial**Special Abilities****Alcohol Sense (Su)** As a standard action, the Borenbog can sense the direction to the nearest source of alcohol, as long as it is within 1 mile.**Entangling Spit (Ex)** The Borenbog can spit a glob of black spit at a foe within 50 feet as a standard action. The spit deals 5d6 acid damage and entraps the target. The creature takes 5d6 acid damage each round that it is entrapped.**Lucky Hands (Su)** The Borenbog begins combat with two severed hands tacked to its belt, and might add more if it succeeds with its take hand ability. When affected by a harmful condition, the Borenbog can rip one of the hands free (this requires no action), which causes the condition to end.**Quick Swig (Su)** As a swift action, the Borenbog can drink from his magical gourd. It can normally do this once per encounter, but if reduced below half hit points, the previous effect ends and it can use this ability a second time. It gains one of the following benefits:*Giant's Draught:* The Borenbog grows to Huge size. Its Strength increases by 4, and its Dexterity decreases by 4. Its attacks gain the push ability (15 feet).*Bayou Brew:* All ground within the Borenbog's stupefy aura becomes swampy, with marble floors turning no more solid than waterlogged spiderwebs and tangled roots popping just above the surface. The murky water bubbles with a black miasma of negative energy. The ground is difficult terrain to any creature other than the Borenbog, and creatures touching the floor at the end of their turn take 5d6 necrotic damage.

The gourd is attached to a knotty leather cord around the Borenbog's neck. It has 50 hit points and can be sundered by a slashing weapon. If the gourd is taken, the Borenbog cannot use this ability, but it will do all in its power to get the gourd back and kill the bastard who tried to take it.

**Redundant Defense (Ex)** Any attack made against the Borenbog has no effect if the same type of weapon or energy harmed it in the past day. For example, only one attack with a longsword can harm it per day, even if one longsword was made of mithral and another of adamantine.

Use your best judgment for attacks that don't use weapons or energy damage. If the Borenbog takes ongoing damage, once that ongoing damage ends it cannot suffer that same type of ongoing damage for 24 hours.

An exception to this is any martial scientist technique. The novelty and ingenuity of such attacks means any weapons or implements used in them ignore the Borenbog's redundant defense.

**Stupefying Aura (Su)** The mere sight of the Borenbog makes life seem dull and uninteresting. Hostile creatures entering or starting their turn within the aura must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or be stupefied for 1 round. Intoxicated creatures take a penalty of -1 to -5, depending on how drunk they are. A stupefied creature is flat-footed and staggered and can only move at half speed. Additionally, the only actions it can take are ones that are very uncreative, like walking and making basic attacks. Once a creature makes its save, it is immune to the aura for 24 hours.

However, when the Borenbog is reduced below half of its hit points for the first time, the aura surges with power. Creatures previously immune to the aura are subject to its effects again until they successfully save once more.

**Take Hand (Ex)** If the Borenbog successfully pins a grappled creature or reduces a stupefied creature to below half of its hit points with an attack from its gutting knife, it also cuts off one of the target's hands, impaling it on a nail on his belt. The target is sickened until it receives magical healing and takes 2d6 points of bleed damage each round. However, the pain of losing a hand makes the creature immune to the Borenbog's stupefying aura, even after it surges with power.





## Webway Chase

Copperhat enters the Webway and throws handfuls of trinkets in the pathway in order to attract other spidery fey to cover his escape. He only has a chance to move about a hundred feet in the tunnels before his path is blocked by fey lord magic. He drops out the nearest exit, which deposits him right in the middle of the chessboard forest, a couple miles south of the palace. He won't be able to reenter the Webway for hours, until the locals clear it out, so he turns invisible and hides, hoping to turn the local warfare against the party.

Should the party pursue through the webs, they have to make their way through a criss-cross of eight 5-ft. wide tunnels, all of which are blocked off about 100 ft. from where the party enters. Copperhat can be tracked by the random bits that fell out of his coat as he moved. A few creatures reflexively attack them as intruders, but flee as soon as they're injured. If the party happens to still have Mista Nyves with them, though, he clears a path without a fight.

- ♦ 12 Dreaming Ettercaps
- ♦ 2 Webway Giant Spiders

### Dreaming Ettercap

CR 5

XP 1600

Advanced fey creature ettercap

NE Medium fey

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11

#### Defense

**AC** 20, touch 17, flat-footed 13 (+7 Dex, +3 natural)

**hp** 38 (4d8+20)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

**Defensive Abilities** evasion; **DR** 5/cold iron; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

#### Offense

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

**Melee** bite +10 (1d6+3 plus poison) and 2 claws +10 (1d4+3)

**Special Attacks** traps, web (+10 ranged, DC 17, hp 4)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th, concentration +6)

3/day—*dancing lights*

1/day—*entangle* (DC 13), *faerie fire*, *glitterdust* (DC 14)

#### Statistics

**Str** 16, **Dex** 25, **Con** 21, **Int** 12, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Great Fortitude, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Bluff +9, Climb +18, Craft (trapmaking) +16, Intimidate +9, Perception +11, Stealth +14

**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan

**SQ** spider empathy +10

#### Special Abilities

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *frequency* 1/round for 10 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dex; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution based.

**Spider Empathy (Ex)** This ability functions as the druid's wild empathy, save that an ettercap can only use this ability on spiders. An ettercap gains a +4 racial bonus on this check. Spiders are mindless, but this empathic communication imparts on them a modicum of implanted intelligence, allowing ettercaps to train giant spiders and use them as guardians.

**Traps (Ex)** The ettercap is particularly skilled at crafting cunning traps with its webs. Deadfalls, nooses, and spear traps are the most common traps ettercaps build with their webs. An ettercap doesn't require gold to build its traps, merely time.


### Giant Webway Spider

CR 12

XP 19,200

N Gargantuan vermin

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +4

#### Defense

**AC** 33, touch 11, flat-footed 28 (+5 Dex, +22 natural, –4 size)

**hp** 161 (14d8+98)

**Fort** +16, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** bite +21 (4d8+22 plus poison)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

**Special Attacks** poison, poisoned web (+11 ranged, DC 24, 14 hp), trample (4d8+22, DC 32)

#### Statistics

**Str** 41, **Dex** 21, **Con** 24, **Int** —, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +33; **CMD** 48 (60 vs. trip)

**Skills** Climb +23, Perception +4, Stealth –5

**SQ** compression

#### Special Abilities

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 24; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Str and paralysis 1 round; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Poisoned Web (Ex)** This ability works like the web ability, but affects all creatures in a 10-foot-radius burst. In addition, any creature hit by the web must save against the spider's poison.

## Pawn's Gambit

Copperhat hides at the intersection of four squares in the Chessboard Forest. The webway exit the party will likely emerge from sits in a tree, twenty feet up, which will spell a modest fall if the PCs aren't careful. Copperhat hides a hundred feet away, up in another tree (Perception DC 35), near a group of rebel soldiers carrying the banner of the Hedgehog Court. When the party appears, he conjures an illusion of Olazdor and orders the soldiers to attack the party.

He has to stay within 50 feet in order to control his illusion, so he slowly moves through the trees, giving the party a chance to detect his presence. If spotted, he shouts one final order for the fey to 'defend our ally Copperhat,' then strikes a PC who is unaware of him. This makes his illusion of Olazdor vanish.

### Rebel Units

- ♦ Copperhat the Headless
- ♦ 2 Centaur Cavalry Units
- ♦ Lightning-Split Treant
- ♦ 4 Satyr Springjacks (see page 27)

## Tactics

Copperhat always tries to keep confused soldiers between him and the party, preferring to throw webs from afar. If forced into melee, he flanks with an ally and strikes with his dagger, then uses *mislead* to get away.

The treant just smashes the party in melee. Two satyr springjacks try to protect Copperhat while the others fire arrows. The centaur cavalry units skirmish around the party. If things look bad, Copperhat turns invisible and flees toward another force, this one of loyalists, about 200 feet away. He calls for their aid as well, this time using an illusion of Thisraldion. (You can just reuse the same units, reskinning the treant as a catoblepas, the centaurs as elvish lancers, and the satyrs as fomorian archers.)

The Great Hunt is busy chasing a fox a 'square' away (about 400 feet), and if the party gets their attention somehow, their hounds can easily corner Copperhat, who surrenders and tries one last time to make a deal with the party. If it's clear he's going to die, he tells them to get Rock from the *absurdist web*. He kinda likes the guy, and there's no reason to keep him trapped anymore. He hopes he gets immortalized in song.

### Copperhat the Headless

CR 12

XP 19,200

CE Medium fey

Init +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +14

#### Defense

**AC** 24, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)**hp** 126 (14d6+70)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +16, **Will** +10**DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** poison; **SR** 23**Defensive Abilities** boon of the Voice of Rot, giggling departure

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.**Melee** +3 dagger +17/+12 (1d4+5/19-20 plus poison)**Special Attacks** sneak attack +7d6, poison, web (+14 ranged, DC 22, 14 hp)**Spell-like Abilities** (CL 14<sup>th</sup>, concentration +17)At will—*disguise self*, *misdirection*, *ventriloquism*3/day—*quicken invisibility*, *major image*, *mislead*, *searing light*

#### Statistics

**Str** 15, **Dex** 24, **Con** 20, **Int** 19, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 27**Feats** Deceitful, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*invisibility*), Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse**Skills** Bluff +26, Climb +25, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +22, Escape Artist +22, Perception +14, Perform (comedy) +18, Sleight of Hand +22, Stealth +22, Use Magic Device +18**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Primordial, Sylvan**SQ** sound mimicry (voices)**Gear** +3 dagger, collection of random holy symbols (just in case)

#### Special Abilities

**Boon of the Voice of Rot (Su)** If Copperhat is adjacent to an ally (even one he has tricked into thinking he's an ally), he may transfer up to 20 points of damage from any given attack to that ally. He can likewise transfer any harmful conditions the attack would inflict. If an ally is reduced below 0 hp while adjacent to Copperhat, that creature immediately dies, and a white serpent slithers out of its mouth, healing Copperhat of 3d8+14 hp.

**Giggling Departure (Su)** The first time each day Copperhat would be reduced to negative hit points or killed, he takes no damage from the triggering attack.

Copperhat turns invisible and immediately teleports away as per *dimension door* (CL 14<sup>th</sup>). Observers see his clothing fall to the ground in a tattered lump, and his top hat starts to drift downward. Then a tiny arm reaches up out of the collar of his seemingly empty coat and grabs the brim of his hat just before it lands. He pulls the hat into his coat, pulling a reverse magician's trick. Then he – and his hat – are gone, leaving behind only an empty suit and laughter on the air.

**Poison (Ex)** Injury; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Str; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. As a free action, Copperhat can coat a weapon in his hand with this poison. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Sound Mimicry (Ex)** Copperhat can perfectly imitate the voices of other creatures. He makes a Bluff check opposed by the listener's Sense Motive check to recognize the mimicry, although if the listener isn't familiar with the person mimicked, it takes a –8 penalty on its Sense Motive check. Copperhat has a +8 racial bonus on its Bluff check to mimic voices (including accents and speech patterns) it has listened to for at least 10 minutes.

**Web (Ex)** Copperhat can throw a web up to eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than Copperhat. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst the web with a Strength check. Both are standard actions with a DC equal to 22. Attempts to burst a web by those caught in it take a –4 penalty.

### Centaur Cavalry Unit

CR 11

XP 12,800

N Large monstrous humanoid (troop)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +21

#### Defense

**AC** 23, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +11 natural, –1 size)**hp** 152 (16d10+64)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +14**Defensive Abilities** troop traits

#### Offense

**Speed** 50 ft.**Melee** troop +23 (4d6+8)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** spear volley (DC 23)

#### Statistics

**Str** 26, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 38**Feats** Ability Focus (spear volley), Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Run, Toughness**Skills** Intimidate +20, Knowledge (nature) +19, Perception +21, Survival +21**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan

#### Special Abilities

**Spear Volley (Ex)** A centaur cavalry unit can hurl a volley of spears as a standard action. The spears fall in a 20-foot radius burst within 50 feet of the cavalry unit. Any creatures in the area take 8d8+8 points of damage (DC 23 Reflex for half). The save DC is Dexterity-based.



**Lightning-Split Treant**

CR 13

XP 25,600

NE Huge plant

**Init** +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +22**Defense****AC** 28, touch 9, flat-footed 23 (+1 Dex, +19 natural, –2 size)**hp** 187 (14d8+124); fast healing 10**Fort** +18, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9**Defensive Abilities** electric healing, two minds; **DR** 10/slashing;**Immune** electricity, fire, plant traits**Offense****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** 2 slams +23 (2d8+14)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Special Attacks** double damage against objects, trample (2d8+19, DC 28)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 16th; concentration +18)Constant--*greater magic fang* (self only)At will--*faerie fire*3/day--*call lightning storm* (DC 17), *lightning bolt* (DC 15), *protection from energy*1/day--*chain lightning* (DC 18)**Statistics****Str** 32, **Dex** 13, **Con** 28, **Int** 15, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 15**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 35**Feats** Cleave, Greater Sunder, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)**Skills** Knowledge (nature) +16, Perception +22, Stealth +10 (+26 in forests), Survival +19**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan, Treant**Special Abilities****Double Damage Against Objects (Ex)** A lightning-split treant that makes a full attack against an object or structure deals double damage.**Electric Healing (Ex)** Electricity damage heals a lightning-split treant 1 point of damage for every 3 points it would otherwise deal. If the amount would cause the lightning-split treant to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points—these temporary hit points last for 2 hours.**Two Minds (Ex)** Whenever a lightning-split treant makes a Will save, it rolls twice and takes the higher result.**Aftermath**

If Copperhat gets away, you might have him show up at the Voice of Rot's lair, or have him disappear until the party finds their way back to the Dreaming in Adventure Twelve, *The Grinding Gears of Heaven*.

A captured Copperhat doesn't know the Voice of Rot's ultimate plan, just that it needed to distract the fey for a few more days until something momentous happened. He's quite sure his master is in no way allied with the Obscurati; indeed, he was told to be careful not to be discovered by them. Apparently the fey titan fears the conspiracy, but thinks the party is inconsequential.

**RECONSTRUCTION****Social. Real-Time.**

*The fallout of the party's actions gives them a chance to still save King Aodhan.*

If the party allies with Copperhat, they likely never have this scene.

Merely revealing Copperhat as the one who tricked the two courts is not enough to end the fey civil war. Now that bodies are piling up, the leaders are quite content to keep blaming the other side and ignoring the truth as long as it suits their goals. It's quite likely the party could bring back Copperhat to Thistle Palace, expecting to be proclaimed heroes, only to find the fey leaders arguing and almost ready to come to blows.

Give the party a chance to get involved if they want (including duetting with Rock Rackus, see below). But after a few minutes, good news for the party arrives and distracts everyone from preparing to fight.

**Librarians to the Rescue**

Alba and Zanel, the pixie sisters who run the Honorable Halls of Accumulated Wisdom, arrive and demand Furg hand over the book he stole from their library: an original copy of the *Book of Kelland*. He obliges (or directs them to the party if one of them accepted his earlier gift), and the sisters explain that the book can help the party.

First, the fey titans exist in both the Dreaming and the Waking, since they both link and divide the two realms. They can grant their minions the power to be in either place with ease and, more importantly, they can banish intruders. This provides a way for the party to get back to the Waking – either become minions of a fey titan, or anger one enough to get expelled (but not so much to get outright killed).

Second, the book contains the words used by Kelland's daughter to taunt the Voice of Rot. The party could use this to draw the titan's ire. There are other fey titans, of course, but none of them are awake, and it seems like the party's in a hurry.

Third – they produce a book on the history of Risur, and open to a passage about King Dukain – retrieving the Sword of the Black Needles would reinitiate the last battle the Voice of Rot had with Risur five centuries ago. Obviously, even great warriors like the party would have no chance of defeating the fey titan, but if they intentionally surrendered, the ancient pact between Risur and the fey titans would force the Voice of Rot to banish the party back to the Waking.

There would, of course, be some small negative consequences. The Voice of Rot would be able to move freely from his domain and attempt to claim more territory for himself. But that can be dealt with later, once the king is saved and he can get around to beating the colossal serpent himself. The pixies end their exposition with two matching, optimistic grins.

**Thank You, Now Leave**

The two fey courts pause from arguing and thank the party. If the PCs go with the librarians' plan, Thisraldion will call the Great Hunt, and order them to convey the party to the High Bayou so that they might confront the Voice of Rot. There is no time to rest. Within half an hour a dozen bold fey knights will arrive, ready to guide the party on lightning-fast steeds across two hundred miles to the High Bayou, completing the trip in about twelve hours. (Recall, the planar fluctuations make teleporting the distance impossible.)

The fey courts also insist the party accept treasure, as repayment for the debt they owe.

## Rewards

The party should leave Thistle Palace with the equivalent of 55,000 gp apiece in gold, gems, and jewelry. This is truly extravagant wealth – clothing woven of platinum and moonbeams, blue warpaint containing actual sapphires, wooden bracelets carved from the raft that delivered Kelland's family to this land, and the like.

The fey lords can arrange to quickly buy one magic item per PC, but we expect the party to carry their wealth and use it to craft new items at the end of this adventure.

They can also earn the following rewards, depending on whose favor they have earned. None of these can be traded or sold.

- ♦ **Granny's Boon.** Earned by befriending Lavac.
- ♦ **Borenbog's Gourd.** Earned by defeating the Borenbog.
- ♦ **Mask of the Unseen Court.** Earned by one PC (likely a Vekeshi Mystic) having the proper demeanor to join the Unseen Court.

## Backup Option

The party might distrust the Voice of Rot and refuse to go to him. In this case, Beshela is able to bring them by ship to awaken She Who Writhes the morning of the 41<sup>st</sup>. The aquatic fey titan thrashes angrily at their presence and banishes them to the Waking, then gives chase all the way to Flint. The party can arrive just as Stanfield starts the ritual, but *sendings* from Torfeld Palace will inform them that the king has been killed and hundreds slain.

## What's Rock Up To?

If the party retrieved Rock from the *absurdist web*, he's distraught. Even though he knows the party is trying to get back to the Waking, he wants to stay behind to try to help here. Our intention is for him to help the party escape peril when they return to the Dreaming in adventure twelve.

## Fey-Aid Concert

What if the party wants to actually set things right among the fey? Mere diplomacy cannot accomplish that. Only one force is strong enough to unite these fractious fey: the power of song.

This is an opportunity for a Docker PC to shine. While the party prepares to leave Thistle Palace, the wounded warriors on the Grand Lawn begin singing one of Rock Rackus's hit songs, *I Had a Threeway*, which recounts the singer getting into trouble for having two lovers at once. The injured fey have turned it into something of a drinking song, toasting as the situation gets worse and worse for the man in the middle.

Meanwhile a group of fey wandering over from the Hedgehog-controlled wing of the palace starts singing a traditional song commemorating a famous battle. Tensions are starting to mount since neither side likes their song being interrupted, but a Docker PC (or anyone with a musical background) notices that the two songs have the same basic beat and structure.

Don't push this, but the PCs could seize the opportunity to create a duet or mashup that unifies the competing songs and captures the spirits of both the fey warriors and the lords who command them. At least two singers need to participate, and at least one of them must succeed a DC 34 Perform check. If the party rescued Rock he'll let a PC take the lead, and if needed he automatically succeeds the skill check.

Note, this is cheesy as hell. But if your party likes Rock, they might enjoy this.

If the skill check fails (or if the party doesn't try), the arguments intensify as the party mounts up with the Great Hunt, and one of the fey lords encourages the party to go deal with their own troubles, and leave the Dreaming to lie in the bed it has made. The party rides away to the sounds of a brawl on the palace lawn.

If the skill check succeeds, the song spreads across the entire palace, until finally even the fey lords start smiling and joining in. The party can mount up on the Great Hunt's steeds and ride away to the cheers of the crowd.

## TO THE BLACK NEEDLES!

### Action. Montage. Level 20.

*The party rides forth with the Great Hunt to confront the Voice of Rot.*

The twelve-hour ride to the High Bayou passes in a blur of grandiose music played by the Great Hunt's trumpeters (which magically have full orchestral accompaniment), while the party tromps through the most beautiful landscape New Zeala-er, Risur has to offer. The sun sets, and the riders hold forth torches.

The last hour is spent sprinting through the High Bayou, since the magical steeds can run across the bog water. Occasionally giant spiders or crocodiles try to ambush the group, but the Great Hunt tears through them and presses onward with nary a pause to shout huzzah. Distant drums thrum faintly beneath the patter of drizzle, and dim red eyes watch from beneath trees and the edges of brush. Occasionally an ettercap will scuttle out of their path. Sometimes they sit completely still, only turning their heads atop husked, decayed bodies.

Fey hounds guide the group higher and higher across hills and peaks shrouded in webs and choked with marsh plants. Occasionally they lose the trail and a PC must intone the words from the Book of Kelland: "Lies are dead words made to walk. O Voice of Rot, do you fear to talk?"

A rumble, almost inaudibly deep, replies, "Talk we shall."

The hounds bark and resume their tracking, mile after mile, until finally, through rain-darkened skies, a flash of lightning reveals the Black Needles. Spires of stone rise up amid berms of spider webs. The peaks ascend rapidly and roughly, such that even the Great Hunt's horses cannot climb them. From afar the tallest ridge seems insurmountable, but something in the shape of the webs and tree canopy suggests a stone structure there.

Riffian halts his riders and explains that they can go no farther. He offers a last bit of advice. Each fey titan has a weakness. The Father of Thunder is a drunkard. The Ash Wolf is protective of other wolves. And the Voice of Rot can be tricked into talking when it could be fighting.

He shall have a hound guide them to their battle, and he promises his knights will defend their flank from any of the Voice of Rot's worshippers. But his oaths forbid him from fighting a fey titan. He seems incredibly forlorn about this.





### Spirits of the Dead

A spirit medium PC hears ghostly howls, chittering, and other animal noises, for the Voice of Rot controls the dead beasts of his High Bayou. A few voices speak among this chatter as well, crying for help. If the spirit medium attempts to contact them, they explain that they were observers working for the Unseen Court, tasked with watching in case the fey titan was active. But the Voice of Rot had his ettercap minions slay them, and now their bodies are under the titan's command, and their souls cannot find a way to leave their rotting corpses.

During the coming battle, a spirit medium will have the ability to control some of the Voice of Rot's own minions.

### Titan Shrine

The party must make their final ascent alone, covering a quarter mile as the hound guides through the midnight rain. Finally they climb over a berm of webs and arrive at the bottom of one of the stone spires. The side of the hundred-foot high spire is sheer cliff streaked with rain, and scraggly forest grows atop it. Immense carvings along the cliffs have been eroded by time and covered by brush, but they show that the natives of this swamp worship the Voice of Rot here.

The hound has led them to a canyon of sorts, cut into the side of the peak. A massive and ancient stone staircase ascends up the middle of the canyon to the top of the spire, but millennia of webs have grown across it, creating tiers of dammed pools. Nothing of interest is on top of it, other than a swath of wilting grass amid the forest, where the Voice of Rot normally sleeps.

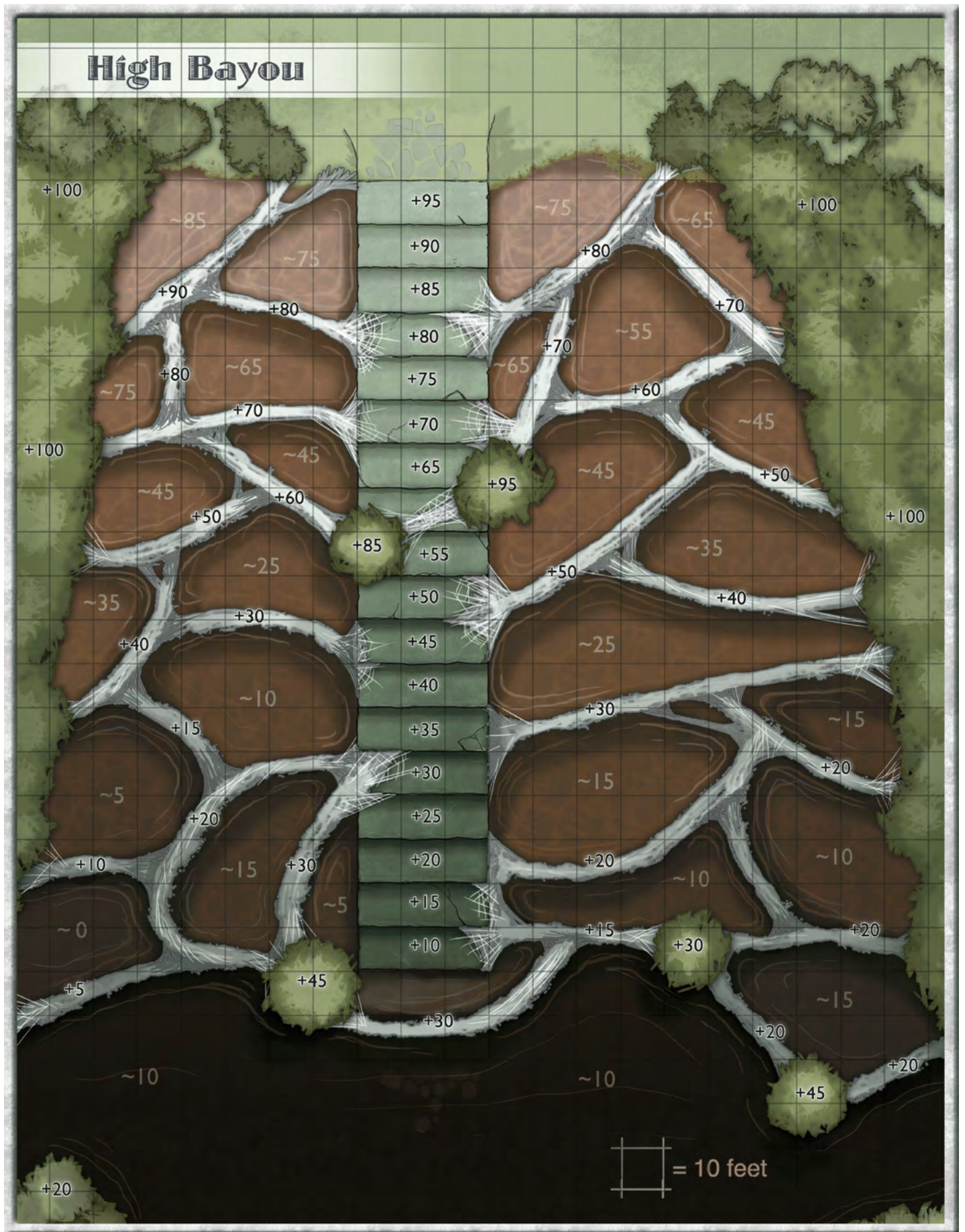
The drizzle fades, the clouds part, and a beam of moonlight shines upon a spot halfway up the massive staircase. Barely visible through a wall of spider webs, the glint of pale light reflects off a metal blade stuck in the trunk of a black, rotted, and fallen tree.

From beside the party, fifty feet away, the water stirs. With a slowness only possible for something so immense, coils rise up from amid sunken trees. A withered, antlered skull twenty feet long sways and drips as it pulls free of the swamp. Unlike the last time they saw it, though its body is still certainly a serpent, its skull is that of some other beast. A single eye socket glares at them, dull and gray.

Then the eye lights up and locks on them. "Speak," says the Voice of Rot. "Speak, agents of King Kelland. And do not deceive, for I know when a lie is told."









## CURSE YOUR SUDDEN BUT INEVITABLE BETRAYAL

If the party goes with Copperhat's help directly, they teleport through the Webway to the High Bayou shrine and arrive shortly after midnight on the 40<sup>th</sup>. Though Copperhat promised to help them, the Voice of Rot owes them nothing and will order his minions to take them prisoner. The party might cue in to the value of the Sword in the Stump, they might recall the lore and what it implies (Knowledge (history) DC 25, or Knowledge (arcana) or (nature) DC 34), or if the party looks truly lost, the sword itself might call out to them with the voice of the long-dead King Dukain.

### Conversation

The Voice of Rot does not know the party's intention. They may have thwarted his plans for the Unseen Court, but he thinks they are trapped in this world and does not realize the 'trick' of using King Dukain's sword. The sword lies in a toppled black stump on the stair at elevation "+60" on the map. The Voice of Rot (whose head is the size of a gargantuan creature) waits in the southeast corner of the map.

He sees them as no threat, but is curious. Smart PCs will distract him, but if they mention their plans – or when they get within 30 feet of the sword – he shouts, "Tricksters! You are like me, but I have no equal! You challenge, and I greet your deaths gladly."

### Philosophy of the End of the World

Before or during the coming battle, PCs who keep the Voice of Rot distracted by talking to him will help the party immensely. Recall, the Voice of Rot feels compelled to engage and match those who challenge him. If no one talks to him, he will use his powers to harm the party (but not kill them; he leaves that to his minions). But if he's engaged in a battle of words, he'll pay less attention to the physical battle.

Before combat, this means that PCs who are trying to get close to the *sword of the black needles* can on any given round use either their own Stealth check to oppose the Voice of Rot's Perception check (+32), or the Bluff or Diplomacy check of a PC who is talking to the fey titan. Attempts to hide automatically fail once a PC gets within 30 feet of the sword, though, since the Voice of Rot will sense the threat and give battle.

During combat, if a PC spends a swift action to address the Voice of Rot, he can make a Bluff or Diplomacy check (DC 34) to compel the titan to respond on his following turn. And if the Voice of Rot is talking, he cannot use his bite attack, channel energy, or spell-like abilities.

The Voice of Rot is particularly intrigued by any eschatologists among the party. He senses their connection to the end of the world. An eschatologist gains a +10 bonus to these Bluff or Diplomacy checks.

## THE SWORD IN THE STUMP

### Action. Tactical. Level 19.

*Drawing forth a sword abandoned by a king will let the party escape the Dreaming.*

The Voice of Rot calls forth allies from the swamp as soon as he realizes the party is going for the sword. The surprise here is that the fallen tree the sword is stuck in is actually an undead treant, and the party will have to destroy it before they can remove the sword. Whoever has the sword can then surrender. The Voice of Rot snarls as it realizes what this means, and then it banishes them (and the Great Hunt) to the real world.

- ♦ 8 Ettercap Exoskeletal Gang
- ♦ 2 Rotted Archers
- ♦ Blackwood Treant
- ♦ The Voice of Rot

### Terrain

The battle likely occurs at night with only dim moonlight occasionally breaking through rainclouds. Even with light, anything beyond thirty feet is lightly obscured.

Each step of the stairs is ten feet long and ten feet high. Huge walls of webbing contain pools. The elevation markers show how high the tops of the webs are, and thus how high up the surface of the adjacent pool is. The "~~" elevation markers in the pool show how high above 'ground level' the surface of the water is (which is also how deep the pool is).

For example, the party starts in a pool that is 10 feet deep, and north them is a wall that goes up to 30 feet above the ground – but only 20 feet above the pool they're in. North of that is actually a shallower pool, and the stairs.

The tops of the walls are solid and easy to walk across. Each 5-ft. space of the wall has 50 hit points, making it possible to breach a wall and start a catastrophic waterfall that drains the next highest pool.

The Voice of Rot can move easily through the water and even through the web walls without slowing down. His movement does not breach the walls.





## Tactics

If running this battle with a tactical map, you will need to keep track of the entire length of the Voice of Rot's body. We recommend using a Gargantuan miniature for the head (or an actual snake skull if you have one), and then coins every 2 squares trailing behind him. His body is fifteen feet wide (i.e., one square to either side of a coin) and a total of 300 feet long (30 coins). When he moves, move the head, then remove sufficient coins from the tail end to fill in the spaces between where he started and where his head ended up.

If using a battle map, trace all movement from his head, and avoid hairpin turns. The party should feel like if they move right, they can stay out of reach of his bite.

The titan moves from the southeast corner, up through the pools, and tries to circle around the entire party. His mere presence sickens living creatures, and he can easily crush a person just by twitching his body. He can will parts of the swamp to entangle his foes. But his greatest threats are his bite and his voice.

The blackwood treant lies inert on 60-ft. high stair (Perception DC 30 to realize it's a creature). It attacks if damaged or if someone tries to retrieve the sword stuck in its body.

Two rotted archers hide in the trees near that treant (Perception DC 25).

Gangs of undead ettercaps emerge from the swamp – two adjacent to each PC, and more crawl up from the web walls within 30 feet of the sword in the stump.

## Speaking with Spirits

A spirit medium PC senses strong death energy around the Voice of Rot, and is able to use his *unfinished business* power once per round as a swift action, instead of its normal use of once per encounter. If he tries to control one of the ettercap gangs, he can affect them even when they still have hit points.

Alternately, as a standard action he can expend his *unfinished business* power to attempt to control the myriad consumed spirits that grant power to the Voice of Rot. If he does, he can make the Voice of Rot move its speed and make a single attack (even against itself).

## Exoskeletal Ettercap Gang

CR 7

XP 3,200

CE Medium undead (troop)

Init +7; Senses Perception +14

### Defense

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

hp 86 (9d8+36)

Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +8

Defensive Abilities troop traits; Immune undead traits

### Offense

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee troop (3d6+5 plus poison)

Space 20 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks web blast

### Statistics

Str 20, Dex 17, Con -, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 16

Base Atk +6; CMB +11; CMD 24

Feats Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Climb +13, Perception +14, Stealth +15

Languages Common, Primordial

### Special Abilities

**Poison (Su)** Troop—injury; save Fort DC 17; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d2 Dex; cure 2 consecutive saves.

**Web Blast (Ex)** As a standard action, an exoskeletal ettercap gang can hurl webs at a target space within 50 feet. The webs cover a 10-foot radius burst. Any creatures in the area must make a DC 17 Reflex save or be entangled. An entangled creature can break free with a DC 17 Escape Artist or Strength check made as a standard action.



**Rotted Archer CR 9**

XP 6,400

NE Medium undead

**Init** +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

**Defense**
**AC** 24, touch 17, flat-footed 17 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 natural)

**hp** 97 (15d8+30)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +9

**Immune** undead traits

**Offense**
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

**Melee** 2 claws +14 (1d6+3)

**Ranged** +1 composite longbow +20/+15/+10 (1d8+4/19-20/x3 plus 1d6 negative energy and paralysis)

**Special Attacks** devour soul, dread howl, infused arrows

**Statistics**
**Str** 17, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 31

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Critical (composite longbow), Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

**Skills** Fly +28, Intimidate +20, Perception +18, Stealth +24

**Languages** Common

**Special Abilities**

**Devour Soul (Su)** A rotted archer can take a standard action to devour the soul of an adjacent dead or dying creature. A dying creature can resist this attack with a DC 19 Fortitude save. If it fails, the target is instantly slain. If the creature is already dead, it does not make a saving throw, although the body cannot be more than 1 hour dead. A creature subjected to this attack cannot be brought back to life via *raise dead* (resurrection and more powerful effects work normally). When a rotted archer devours a soul in this way, it heals 5d6+10 points of damage and becomes hasted for 4 rounds (as if affected by *haste*). This is a death effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Dread Howl (Su)** Once per day, a rotted archer can unleash a blood-curdling howl. Any living creature within a 30-foot-radius burst becomes paralyzed with fear for 1 round unless it resists with a DC 19 Will save. Any creature that makes this saving throw is instead shaken for 1 round. This is a fear effect. The DC is Charisma-based.

**Infused Arrows (Su)** A rotted archer creates arrows of bone as it fires its bow—it need not carry arrows as ammunition. These bone arrows do normal damage for arrows fired from the bow, but gain a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls. In addition, each arrow deals an additional 1d6 points of negative energy on a hit. Further, the first creature struck in a round by a rotted archer's arrow must make a DC 19 Fortitude save to avoid being paralyzed for 1d3 rounds. A rotted archer can fire normal arrows from its bow if it wishes—such arrows, however, do not gain the special negative energy damage or paralysis effects. The DC is Charisma-based.

**Blackwood Treant**

CR 13

XP 25,600

Advanced juju zombie treant

NE Huge undead

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18

**Defense**
**AC** 29, touch 10, flat-footed 27 (+2 Dex, +19 natural, –2 size)

**hp** 160 (16d8+80)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +7, **Will** +12

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4; **DR** 10/magic and slashing; **Immune** cold, electricity, *magic missile*, undead traits; **Resist** fire 10

**Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire

**Offense**
**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 slams +24 (3d8+13/19–20)

**Ranged** rock +13 (2d6+18)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Special Attacks** rock throwing (180 ft.), trample (3d8+18, DC 31)

**Statistics**
**Str** 37, **Dex** 14, **Con** –, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 18

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +27 (+29 sunder); **CMD** 39 (41 vs. sunder)

**Feats** Alertness, Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)

**Skills** Climb +21, Diplomacy +21, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (nature) +20, Perception +18, Sense Motive +22, Stealth +1 (+17 in forests)

**Languages** Common, Sylvan, Treant

**SQ** animate trees, double damage against objects, treespeech

**Special Abilities**

**Animate Trees (Sp)** A treant can animate any trees within 180 feet at will, controlling up to two trees at a time. It takes 1 full round for a tree to uproot itself, after which it moves at a speed of 10 feet and fights as a treant (although it has only one slam attack and lacks the treant's animation and rock-throwing abilities), gaining the treant's vulnerability to fire. If the treant that animated it terminates the animation, moves out of range, or is incapacitated, the tree immediately takes root wherever it is and returns to its normal state.

**Double Damage Against Objects (Ex)** A treant or animated tree that makes a full attack against an object or structure deals double damage.

**Treespeech (Ex)** A treant has the ability to converse with plants as if subject to a continual *speak with plants* spell, and most plants greet them with an attitude of friendly or helpful.



**The Voice of Rot**

CR 20

XP 307,200

CE Colossal undead

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense, *true seeing*; Perception +32**Aura** stench (30 ft., DC 22, 10 rounds)**Defense****AC** 36, touch 1, flat-footed 36 (-1 Dex, +35 natural, -8 size)**hp** 362 (25d8+250); fast healing 30**Fort** +17, **Ref** +9, **Will** +21**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4; **DR** 20/epic; **Immune** undead traits;**Resist** acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30, fire 30, positive energy 30, sonic 30**Offense****Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.**Melee** bite +30 (6d6+30/19-20 plus grab)**Space** (head only) 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.**Special Attacks** channel negative energy 14/day (10d6, DC 31), constrict (6d6+30), energy drain (2 levels, DC 31), gaping maw, life-draining coils**Spell-like Abilities** (CL 25th; concentration +34)Constant—*freedom of movement*, *true seeing*At will—*bestow curse* (DC 22), *create undead*, *control undead* (DC 27), *entangle* (DC 20)3/day—*circle of death* (DC 24), *geas/quest*, *suffocation* (DC 24), *temporary resurrection*, *waves of exhaustion*1/day—*horrid wilting* (DC 27), *finger of death* (DC 26)**Statistics****Str** 50, **Dex** 8, **Con** -, **Int** 26, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 28**Base Atk** +18; **CMB** +46 (+50 grapple); **CMD** 55**Feats** Channel Smite, Critical Focus, Extra Channel, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Natural Attack (bite), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Lunge, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Vital Strike, Toughness**Skills** Appraise +33, Bluff +34, Climb +56, Heal +29, Intimidate +37, Knowledge (arcana) +36, Knowledge (nature) +33, Knowledge (religion) +36, Perception +32, Sense Motive +32, Stealth +11, Swim +56**Languages** Primordial; *tongues***SQ** titanic**Special Abilities****Ever Moving (Ex)** In addition to his normal movement, the Voice of Rot automatically moves 10 feet after each PC's turn. Any creature adjacent to the Voice of Rot when he ends this movement must make a DC 32 Reflex save or take 2d8+20 damage, be pushed sideways 5 feet and fall prone. On a successful save the creature takes no damage but can let itself be pushed aside (and remain standing) in order to avoid having to make another save the next time the fey titan moves. The DC is Strength-based.**Life-Draining Coils (Su)** The Voice of Rot seethes with negative energy capable of sapping the life force of creatures trapped within its coils. Every time a creature takes constriction damage from the Voice of Rot, it gains two negative levels. The Voice of Rot also gains 5 temporary hit points for each negative level it bestows.**Lifesense (Su)** The Voice of Rot notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability.**Gaping Maw (Ex)** The Voice of Rot's bite attack hits all creatures in a 20-foot cone. Make one attack roll and compare it to the AC of each target. The Voice of Rot can attempt to grab more than one creature hit by the same bite attack by taking a -20 penalty on each CMB check. Damage from the bite attack counts as epic and magic for the purposes of overcoming DR.**Titanic (Ex)** The head of the Voice of Rot occupies a 20 foot square, and his body trailing behind him is 15 feet wide, a total of 300 feet long. Any part of his body can be targeted, but he has DR 20/- everywhere but his head. Due to his size, he cannot turn more than 45 degrees for every 10 feet he advances (so he must travel at least 40 feet in order to turn around).

Because he is so massive, uneven ground and other terrain features that form difficult terrain do hinder the Voice of Rot's movement, though areas of forest or settlements are considered difficult terrain to him.

A Huge or smaller creature can move through any square occupied by the Voice of Rot, and vice versa. The Voice of Rot can make attacks of opportunity only against foes that are Huge or larger, and can only be flanked by Huge or larger foes.

It's possible for a Huge or smaller creature to climb the Voice of Rot. This requires a DC 30 Climb check, and unlike the normal rules, a Small or larger creature that climbs on the Voice of Rot's body provokes an attack of opportunity from the fey titan if within reach of his head.

**Aftermath**If the party fails to reach the sword, the Voice of Rot will kill them. The campaign's over, unless you want the PCs waking up in the Gyre as ghosts, which would entail skipping straight to adventure twelve, *The Grinding Gears of Heaven*.If the party gets the *sword of the black needles* and surrenders, the Voice of Rot banishes them to the Waking, along with the Great Hunt. Smoke and fog rolls across them, and when it passes they are at the northern edge of the High Bayou, far from any enemies but still some 180 miles from Slate.

Whoever had the sword, still has it. See Appendix Five: Magic and Training for stats.

The party might be ready to rush to Slate, but the Great Hunt's horses need until sunrise before they'll be ready to go again, and teleportation isn't working over long distances here any better than in the Dreaming. Luckily, a nearby farm offers some rest, and stables for the horses.

## CAMPAIGN NOTE: FRIENDLY DEATH

If you want to end the campaign with this adventure, you'll need to alter this scene. The Voice of Rot is not hostile, but is still compelled to battle the party if they make a move for the sword of the black needles.

Either before the battle, or after it but before he banishes them, the Voice of Rot speaks of a distant gyre, a constellation of grinding gears that consumes all dying worlds, as this world too shall some day die, far from now.

The shadows will sever the ties between this world and those that feed it the energy it needs to live. They will bind it to new worlds, and the old worlds will drift away, toward the gyre, to die. The titan tells them to look to the gyre for other dying worlds. Perhaps they will find salvation there.

This is similar to what the party will discover on their own in the coming adventures, though the Voice of Rot will be a foe, not a friend.





# ACT TWO: LONG LIVE THE KING

In this act, people try to kill the king. A lot.

## COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

Attempts to communicate with Slate or Flint via magic likely fail. The Obscurati have set up *sending* interceptors in Slate and Flint. If the party uses *sending* or similar magic, an Ob agent receives it and fakes a response. He claims that they're already aware of the party's concerns, and that the king has moved to Shale for safety, but that they should tell no one. A Sense Motive check (DC 15) can tell that the person is not who he seems to be.

The Ob's interception magic doesn't work if the party uses the *messenger wind* they received from Gale. A properly warned king wants the party by his side as soon as possible.

## TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Adventure Six, *Revelations from the Mouth of a Madman*, the party might have gained for Risur the innovations of the gnome artificer Tinker Oddcog. The party should have chosen three innovations by now (one at the end of adventure six, seven, and eight), and the latest will be nearing completion when the party returns to the real world.

When the PCs reach the real world have them roll an Intelligence and Wisdom check (as explained in adventure six's Appendix Three) to see whether the latest innovation is ready. We encourage you to implement that technology immediately in the defenses of the palace. Perhaps Tinker coils can be activated near the building entrances, or a couple guards have steam-powered battle suits, or short-range radio communicators mounted in each hall allows coordination between the defenders.

Moreover, if the players wanted to pursue sparkgap radio communication, let them reach a fort nearby the High Bayou from which they can contact Torfeld Palace.

In Act Three, if the party had the forethought to pursue rocket technology, they'll have practically no trouble breaching Stanfield's outer defenses.

### Gamemastering Note

After the previous fairly combat-light act, this one is a bit of a gauntlet. It might be best to think of this act as a dungeon that happens to have innocent bystanders. The party faces a series of combat threats in close succession, and has to decide which enemies to deal with in which order. They likely won't have time to take a short rest, and might have to content themselves with 'surviving' rather than winning.

We don't think it's necessary to track civilian casualties – it can be assumed many innocents will die, and the exact number won't change how the rest of the adventure plays out. But the party might choose to defend the defenseless, in which case we reward them by having a cache of powerful magic in the vault under Area 18.

If you want to track civilian casualties, start with 400 bystanders in the palace. Fifty start in the throne room for the wedding, and at least 10 people are in each other numbered area. You can use a coin or other token to mark 3 bystanders who share a 5-ft. square. Once fighting begins (i.e., once Romana's coup attempt fails), each of the five 'threats' (ghost council, undead horde, skeletal dragon, wights and flayed jaguar, and assassins) kills 3 bystanders per round, unless they're busy fighting the PCs.

## KING'S COURT

### Social. Real-Time. Level 15.

*The party reaches Slate and interrupts a wedding to warn the king.*

Dame Jillian the Green Knight commands the guards at Torfeld Palace in Flint, and when the party arrives (likely riding in after sunset with a raucous band of fey knights), she refuses to let them enter until they prove they're who they say they are. She orders the guards to attack if the party refuses.

She concentrates to detect magic on them, asks them obscure questions about the RHC headquarters in Flint, and then escorts them to the king, who is officiating a wedding between two beloved members of the palace house staff. Casually she mentions that the royal skyseer killed himself this morning, claiming that he saw no future after tonight.





### My, This Palace Layout Sure is Familiar

A mirror image of Thistle Palace in the Dreaming, Torfeld Palace also has three main buildings – the central Palace Hall, the eastern Dolomite Hall, and the western Marble Hall. State business occurs in the central palace, while administrative duties occur in the west hall, and public events occur in the east.

1. **Dignitary Lawn.**
2. **Marble Hall - Entrance.** The palace guards – distinctive in their green uniforms – defend this entrance.
3. **Dolomite Hall - Entrance.** Guards also watch this entrance, but in fewer numbers.
4. **Grand Lawn.**
5. **North Colonnade.** The primary entrance for guests and dignitaries.
6. **Entrance Foyer.** The skeleton of a slain dragon tyrant from Ber hangs from the ceiling by wires.
7. **Guard Post.**
8. **Drawing Room.**
9. **State Dining Room.**
10. **Antechamber.**
11. **Diplomatic Reception.**
12. **Library.**
13. **Throne Room.** Guards and druids defend this room even when the king is not present. The throne sits at the north wall.
14. **Balcony.**
15. **Royal Gallery.** Paintings of former kings.
16. **Principal Minister's Chamber.** Harkover Lee has a few attendants, whom he dismisses twice a day to take his meals in private.

17. **Archdruid's Chamber.** The archdruid is away making funeral arrangements for the late court skyseer. Asrabey Varal currently resides here.
18. **Noble's Gallery.** Risuri nobility take turns offering art to hang here. Additionally, a trap door under the carpet here leads to the palace's vault and bunker. The tunnel down is a highly defensible chokepoint, and the bunker has supplies for thirty people to last a month.
19. **Commons.** Where people gather to meet the king.
20. **Party Hall.** The wedding reception will occur here.
21. **Clayton Gallery.**
22. **Offices.**
23. **Unseen Garden.** Pedestals stand here, each with footprints but not figure, to commemorate the lords of the Unseen Court.
24. **Lantern Garden.** Numerous lanterns hang amid the flowers and topiaries.
25. **Titan Shrine.** An identical set of statues in the Dreaming depicts the five fey titans.
26. **Stables.**



## The Wedding

King Aodhan officiates from in front of his throne, performing a ceremony to marry **Arla** and **Orlando**, two loyal members of the house staff. Principal Minister Harkover Lee waits close by, always vigilant. Fifty guests stand. Dame Jillian goes to Harkover, who then whispers something to Aodhan. The king curtly pronounces the couple married, then waves the party over to explain what's happening.

In the middle of the party's explanation, all the magical lights in the palace flicker and die. Purple light begins to shine through the windows, and everything takes on the familiar gloom of the Bleak Gate. Harkover ushers the king away from the windows and asks everyone who isn't combat trained to head to the Noble's Gallery in Marble Hall (Area 18). But people begin to scream out in the Commons (Area 19).

## The Obscurati's Plan

From this point on, track events roughly round by round. The palace and everything within about 200 feet is affected by an array of six *wayfarer lanterns* spaced around the palace grounds. Everything in their light starts to transition to the Bleak Gate. In five minutes (50 rounds) it will be fully transitioned, barring PC intervention. Between now and then, if someone manages to get more than 200 feet from the palace, he'll emerge in the real world. After the palace has fully transitioned, though, anyone leaving the light's radius instead emerges fully into the Bleak Gate, where the Obscurati have gathered an army of the dead. The Ob will then snuff their lanterns.

At that point, from the perspective of people in the real world, the palace will suddenly become empty, bare, and decayed as everything

within it except the oldest stones have been pulled into the realm of the dead. It won't be possible to cross between the two worlds unless the party has a *wayfarer's lantern* of their own. Only people who took refuge in the bunker beneath area 18 will still be in the real world.

## Environmental Effects

The Obscurati have gotten tricky in their use of planar magic. In addition to drawing the palace into the Bleak Gate, the lanterns also suppress magic that would create light, flight, or invisibility. Any such magic dies after one round, and since most of the palace's lights are enchanted, battles will likely occur by the dim light coming through the windows from outside, unless someone has a spare hand to carry a torch.

## Array of Threats

The party likely begins in the throne room (area 13). Five different threats (and one secret ally) target the king, and an outer perimeter filled with massed undead deter people from fleeing.

- ♦ **Catherine Romana and the Rites of Rulership.** Risuri noblewoman Catherine Romana and part of the Obscurati ghost council enter the throne room with hostages. Romana explains the situation and commands Aodhan to surrender, invoking Risur's Rites of Rulership to weaken the king.
- ♦ **Dengar Kriegshaff and the Colossal Cannonade.** A Drakran scientist has cannons on the north lawn, which start blowing holes through the palace walls so swarms of undead can enter and kill the weak.
- ♦ **Amielle Latimer's Sharpshooting.** The sniper ghost of Amielle Latimer guards a lantern on the palace roof, and though she wants to help the party she is being watched.
- ♦ **Skeletal Dragon Tyrant Venkio.** A dragon skeleton kept as a trophy is animated in the entrance foyer and heads for the king.
- ♦ **Professor Bugge's Infectious Necromancy.** The dragon was animated by a famous necromancy instructor, who sweeps in with wights and a massive flayed jaguar, targeting the guards and others who are fighting back. The necromancer can also reanimate the undead hordes.
- ♦ **Shadow Assassins.** These are the conspiracy's ace in the hole, waiting to strike when the king is vulnerable.

Each of the six *wayfarer's lanterns* is 10 ft. across and affects a 200-ft. radius. Magically reinforced, they have hardness 15 and 200 hit points. If a given lantern is destroyed before five minutes are up, part of the palace will return to the real world, and all the attackers in that area will vanish, though they can reenter the palace once they get to an area still affected by a lantern.

- ♦ **Lantern One** is located on Dignitary Lawn (area 1).
- ♦ **Lantern Two** is outside the entrance to Marble Hall (area 2).
- ♦ **Lantern Three** is outside the entrance to Dolomite Hall (area 3).
- ♦ **Lantern Four** is appropriately in the Lantern Garden (area 24).
- ♦ **Lantern Five** sits inside the Titan Shrine (area 25).
- ♦ **Lantern Six** sits atop the roof of Palace Hall, about fifty feet up above the entrance foyer (area 6).

## LONG-TIME PRISONERS: RISUR EDITION

If the party captured Duchess Ethelyn in adventure one, she is disgraced and has had her title stripped but has nevertheless been allowed to attend the wedding, as she was friends with both the bride and groom. Rituals have stripped her of her magical power, so she is neither a threat nor an asset. Her brother will order her taken for safety to area 18 – Noble's Gallery, and perhaps the party might encounter enemies and have to save her.

Nathan Jierre, if he was taken prisoner, is present for more Machiavellian reasons. King Aodhan knows the Obscurati will make a move at some time, and he wants a Jierre family member close to deter Han Jierre. During the various assassinations, the shadow men (see Assassination: Shadowy Callback) will try to abduct Nathan and carry him away. If the party keeps him close they can distract at least some of their enemies.

## ALTERNATE TIMELINES

If the party somehow reaches the palace without having rested, the king insists they recuperate and be ready for a fight. Instead the attack happening right away during a wedding, there can be a 'war council' meeting, with news coming in about Flint being attacked. That's when the Ob strike the palace.



Destroying all six lanterns before five minutes are up thwarts the assassination attempt. (It also strands the Ob operatives in the Bleak Gate, though depending on who's still alive they might be able to reactivate them and return to the real world eventually.) See the lantern overlap map on page 97 for the ranges and locations of the different lanterns.

### Minor Officers

In addition to Catherine Romana and Amielle Latimer, named NPCs the party might recognize among the Obscurati include **Dengar Kriegshaff**, a human wizard from Drakr who designed weapons to fight the fey titans, and who organizes the giant cannons; and **Tittling Grainet**, a gnome cleric from Crisillyir who is a master of the lanterns, and who watches from beside Lantern Six atop the roof. Neither of them are combatants.

### Unwinnable?

From a meta standpoint, each lantern is guarded by a level 12 encounter, and each assassination plot is at least equivalent to a level 14 encounter. The party is outnumbered, but they have allies, and they don't face the full brunt of their enemies all at once. The scene is meant to appear potentially unwinnable, but it isn't necessary for the party to defeat all their foes in order to survive.

### The Good Guys

Stats for King Aodhan, Principal Minister Harkover Lee, Asrabey Varal, Dame Jillian the Green Knight, and Amielle Latimer can be found in Appendix Three: Allied Stats. The other defenders of the palace do join the fight, but they don't make a significant difference compared to the PCs and these high-level allies.

We suggest you print these stats out and let your players run them, especially if the party splits up.

### Reinforcements

On round 20, Lauryn Cyneburg, the RHC's chief infiltration specialist, teleports in and arrives near one of the PCs. She quickly asks what's happening, perhaps helps fight an immediate threat, then teleports away to guide in the reinforcements. Unfortunately it will take more than five minutes for allied forces to reach the palace.

One option for help is perhaps more unorthodox: Thistle Palace. If the party secures one of the lanterns they could mix the witchoil with some flammable liquid from the Dreaming. (Best option: the Borenbog's gourd has plenty of fey spirits.) The lantern's not meant to work that way, but a Use Magic Device check (DC 34, can be reattempted each round) can get the variant oil to light. That lantern would then make the Bleak Gate, the real world, and the Dreaming coterminous. After five minutes, the lantern implodes and is utterly destroyed.

Alternately, the party might jury rig a lantern to pull the Obscurati forces on the Bleak Gate into the real world (Use Magic Device DC 34). Though reinforcements still won't arrive until about round 70, if the fight goes long this would make the Ob easy pickings.

## THE ASSASSINATION: COUP

### Social. Real-Time. Level 20.

*Risuri noble Catherine Romana makes a bid for the crown. (Yes, even if the party already killed her.)*

Moments after the lanterns pull the world into the Bleak Gate, people outside see the undead and start screaming, but the Obscurati forces don't attack yet. Dengar Kriegshaff (on the north lawn with the grand cannons) drops the needle onto a primitive phonograph record, and tinny Drakran opera begins to play.

A contingent of the Obscurati ghost council enters the throne room – over a dozen ghosts, each holding a prisoner from Area 19. The prisoners are mostly palace staff, but might also include Ethelyn or other NPCs familiar to the PCs. They make no immediate aggressive moves, but look ready to kill their hostages.

If combat doesn't begin, a round later one of the ghosts nods back the way they came, and in walks Catherine Romana, a Risuri noblewoman (who might have died in adventure seven; if so, she's a ghost now). She holds a white cat in her arms.

Romana kindly asks for Aodhan to negotiate for his people's lives.

### Who?

When last the party met Romana in adventure seven, she was likely trying to flee the Obscurati Conclave, having voted against Nicodemus's desires. But she's a clever politician, and managed to parlay herself back into the conspiracy by promoting this coordinated, multi-part assassination plan.

In particular, Romana was learning some of the obscure nuances of Risur's rites of rulership, ancient magic rules that dictate how power is passed from monarch to monarch.

### Explaining the Rites of Rulership

If given the chance to talk, Catherine has a speech prepared. Each paragraph takes one combat round, so the party might just rush her, especially if they recall how fast the lanterns work.

"First, there's no reason to attack me. After all, loyal followers of Nicodemus shall endure as ghosts for as long as he's safe, and as far as even the ghost council knows, there's no way to truly destroy him. So let's discuss this like civilized people.

"Civilization. Now, Risur's rites of rulership trace back to the first defeat of the fey titans. The titans each command one terrain – mountain, swamp, et cetera. And the monarch of Risur is like a titan too, but his – or her – terrain is civilization. The more faith the people have in society and the state, the stronger the king is. And the stronger the king is, the stronger his people are.

"Normally, that's wonderful. But you know our plans, or at least suspect them. Everywhere else, perhaps the rulers will resist, but the people – the weak-willed, stupid children who we have to take care of – they'll follow us.

"Oh, but not in Risur. It won't do to have a king resisting our new age of reason. We will be the lords of civilization, and you'll be the rebels, the . . . the savages in the wilderness clinging to your old ways.

"King Aodhan, I contest your throne. On *this* plane, I am a quorum of the nobility, so until you convene a council of the House of Nobles, your powers are hereby revoked, as decreed in the rites of rulership. Surrender, and pass on your crown to me, and not only will Risur's people avoid becoming enemies to the entire world, but they will prosper."



Unless the party discussed the rites of rulership with Livia Hatsfield during adventure seven, they have practically no way of knowing these obscure rules. In particular, the old rites gave the king the power of his people's devotion, but only at the approval of the nobility. However, Romana's plan hits a snag.

Aodhan sags a bit, but he shakes his head. "Romana," he says, "you're right about being the only noble on this plane. So with unanimous approval of your fellow nobles, I hereby revoke your title. Constables, I hereby make you all Dukes. We'll work out the details after you kill this traitor for me. Oh, and Harkover: you have my permission."

At that, Romana glowers and claps her hands. Outside, cannons fire.

## THE ASSASSINATION: OVERTURE

### Action. Tactical. Level 16.

*Massive cannons breach the walls, and undead hordes press through the hole.*

Just north of the throne room, Dengar Kriegshaff, a human wizard and weapon designer from Drakr, has set up an array of six colossal cannons, each 20 feet long and attended by ten (non-combatant) engineers.

A small army of shambling wraiths waits around him. When people die, their souls linger in the Bleak Gate, but not their bodies, so actual zombies cannot be animated here. But corpses interred in the real world eventually become part of the landscape, and these wraiths consist of souls that have been bound to the shadowy copy of their original dead bodies.

At a magical signal from Catherine Romana, Kriegshaff orders the engineers to fire, and the blasts tear six holes along the length of the palace's north walls (including one on either side of the throne room). The wraiths surge in, and will reach the throne room in two rounds.



## Catherine Romana and the Ghost Council

The ghost council doesn't bother killing their hostages, and instead focus on the king and the PCs. Romana will disappear as soon as she's attacked. She'll cast *invisibility* and move away. She shouts, "Amielle, the king!" (see Bullseye, below) then summons a bone devil before unleashing her enchantment spells. If reduced below half of her hit points, she'll withdraw to one of the lanterns and try to keep coordinating the attack..

### Coup Members

- ♦ Catherine Romana
- ♦ 2 Senior Ghost Councilors
- ♦ Ghost Council Detachment

#### Catherine Romana

CR 14

XP 38,400

Female human witch 15

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2, **Senses** Perception +8

#### Defense

**AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)**hp** 104 (15d6+45)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk dagger +7 (1d4-1/19-20)**Ranged** mwk dagger +7 (1d4-1/19-20)**Special Attacks** hexes (agony [15 rounds], beast eye, charm [2 steps, 4 rounds], disguise, evil eye [-4, 7 rounds], feral speech, retribution, slumber)**Witch Spells Prepared** (CL 15<sup>th</sup>; concentration +19)8th—*irresistible dance* (DC 24)7th—*mass hold person* (DC 23), *summon monster VII*6th—*cloak of dreams* (DC 22), *mass suggestion* (DC 22), *unwilling shield* (DC 20)5th—*dominate person* (DC 21), *feeblemind* (DC 21), *mind fog* (DC 21), *summon monster V*4th—*black tentacles*, *charm monster* (DC 20), *confusion* (DC 20), *crushing despair*, *cure serious wounds*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 20)3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *fly*, *suggestion* (DC 19), *summon monster III*2nd—*augury*, *cure moderate wounds*, *enthrall* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *mad hallucination* (DC 18)1st—*command* (DC 17), *cure light wounds*, *mage armor*, *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism* (DC 17)0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *message***Patron** deception

#### Statistics

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 19, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20**Feats** Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment, illusion), Iron Will, Persuasive, Spell Focus (enchantment, illusion), Toughness**Skills** Bluff +15, Diplomacy +20, Fly +20, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (nature) +15, Knowledge (nobility) +22, Perception +8, Sense Motive +10**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Primordial, Sylvan**SQ** witch's familiar (cat named Kelland)**Other Gear** mwk dagger, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *headband of mental prowess* (+4 Int and Cha; Fly, Knowledge [nobility])

**Senior Ghost Councilor**

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female or male human ghost aristocrat 10

NE Medium undead (human, incorporeal)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25**Defense****AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +1 Dex)**hp** 90 (10d8+50)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +9**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation;**Immune** undead traits**Offense****Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** corrupting touch +8 (10d6; DC 19)**Special Attacks** malevolence, telekinesis**Statistics****Str** --, **Dex** 12, **Con** --, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 18**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22**Feats** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Perception, Sense Motive), Toughness**Skills** Bluff +17, Diplomacy +21, Fly +9, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (planes) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perception +25, Sense Motive +25, Stealth +22**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal, Primordial**Special Abilities**

**Corrupting Touch (Su)** By passing part of its incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, the ghost inflicts 10d6 damage. This damage is not negative energy—it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save (DC 19) halves the damage inflicted.

**Malevolence (Su)** Once per round, the ghost can merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to a *magic jar* spell (CL 10th), except that it does not require a receptacle. To use this ability, the ghost must be adjacent to the target. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 19). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same ghost's malevolence for 24 hours.

**Telekinesis (Su)** The ghost can use *telekinesis* as a standard action once every 1d4 rounds (CL 12th).

Descendant of one of the previous queens of Risur, Catherine has long sought to rise in power herself, though the traditions of her nation deter any hereditary rule. After the Fourth Yerasol War she got into trouble for harshly criticizing war veterans, implying that cowardice led to Risur losing ground in the war.

Though she believes magic is superior to technology, she desires progress, and has pushed the Risuri parliament to pursue grand civil projects of arcane engineering, to little success. In the Obscurati she sees her chance both to make the world a better place, and to step into a position of rule over her homeland.

She has an unfortunate drug habit, preferring the high of fey pepper and the false and wondrous world it conjures to the world she really has to deal with. The party might have slain her in adventure seven, in which case she has returned as part of the Obscurati ghost council, and she bitterly misses her ability to indulge her vice.

**Ghost Council Detachment**

CR 12

XP 19,200

NE Large undead (human, incorporeal)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +33**Defense****AC** 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+5 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, –1 size)**hp** 165 (15d8+90)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +15**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, incorporeal, swarm of ghosts;**Immune** undead traits**Offense****Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** 2 incorporeal touches +11 (10d6 plus 2d6 energy and grab; DC 22)**Special Attacks** carry off, eldritch grasp, oppressive moan, poltergeist activity**Statistics****Str** --, **Dex** 12, **Con** --, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 20**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +14 (+18 grapple) **CMD** 28**Feats** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness**Skills** Fly +30, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (religion) +25, Perception +33, Sense Motive +27, Stealth +18**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal, Primordial**Special Abilities**

**Carry Off (Ex)** The Ghost Council detachment can grapple corporeal creatures. It can make a CMB check to maintain up to two grapples at once as a swift action. A grappled creature automatically takes damage from the detachment's incorporeal touch each round.

**Eldritch Grasp (Sp)** The Ghost Council detachment has two incorporeal touch attacks. Each attack must be directed against a different creature. Each touch deals 10d6 untyped damage and 2d6 energy damage (either acid, cold, electricity, or fire as the swarm chooses). A DC 22 Fortitude save reduces this damage by half.

**Oppressive Moan (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds, the detachment can unleash a frightening moan as a standard action. All living creatures within 50 feet must take 10d6 sonic damage (Fortitude DC 22 for half). A creature that takes damage from the moan must also make a DC 22 Will save or be shaken for 1 minute. This is a sonic mind-affecting fear effect.

**Poltergeist Activity (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds, the detachment can use the violent thrust version of *telekinesis* against every creature within 50 feet (CL 15th, DC 20).

**Swarm of Ghosts (Ex)** The detachment consists of fifty or more ghosts who travel together closely-packed, filling the space of a Large creature. The swarm needs only fill 4 contiguous spaces, and can stretch across a battlefield. Enemies can move through the swarm, which counts as difficult terrain. The damaged ghosts disincorporate but will return in a few days unless Nicodemus the Gnostic is defeated.

**The Undead Horde**

More than a thousand semi-corporeal wraiths fill the grounds of Torfeld Palace. A hundred of them guard each of the six lanterns, while hundreds more surge through holes in the wall of the palace. Even more horrific shadow beasts wait beyond the edge of the light, ready to attack if the palace is fully pulled into the Bleak Gate.

One horde goes through each hole in the palace walls, and two of them will converge on the throne room two rounds after combat begins. The others are intended to split the palace's defenders along the length of the building.



### Roaming Undead

- ♦ 6 Wraith Assassination Hordes (2 in the throne room now, see page 52)

### The Cannonade

It takes several rounds to reload the cannons, but on round 11 of the encounter, Dengar can fire them again. If the cannons are attacked, though, his engineers withdraw, since their job is done. Thereafter the party can try to make use of the cannons. Gunsmith PCs can use their own attack bonus; otherwise, the ungainly cannons attack with a +15 attack bonus.

### Grand Cannon

**Special:** Mounted on massive turrets, the cannons require a move action to adjust their aim. Only a single move action can be spent this way per round, and the turret can only adjust its aim 45 degrees per move action. The cannon has a range increment of 150 ft. and deals 8d6 damage with a x4 critical multiplier.

## GETTING AND USING ALLIES

At the start of the assassination plot, the party is likely with the King, Harkover, and Dame Jillian in the throne room. The king trusts the party to have good tactical sense, and lets them decide where each of them are best deployed. Harkover's magic handles large groups well, and Jillian is literally impossible to kill unless the sun is up, making her an ideal bodyguard. Aodhan excels with singular foes, but if you're planning to have a PC take the crown and become Risur's next monarch, Aodhan makes a point to fight beside him or her. He tries to find a good time to mention that he wants to name the PC as his successor.

Amielle Latimer is on the roof over the entrance foyer of Palace Hall (Area 6), but will only help when she isn't surrounded by Obscurati forces.

Asrabey is in Area 17 practicing yoga, and once the lanterns turn on it takes him just one round to be ready for combat. But if the party does not go to him he observes what's happening outside his window and waits until round 15 to join the battle. If left to his own devices he goes after lantern five in Titan Shrine (Area 25). By round 20 he's finished off the Obscurati squad and has his lion shield gnawing on the golem, but he withdraws so as not to be overwhelmed by the wraiths. He relies on his shield to finish them off, and in round 30 he heads off to find the king.

Finally, if the party gets bystanders to the bunker and vault under Area 18, they can make use of various rare magic items. You can come up with items worth a total equal to the number of PCs times 75,000 gp, or use some of the following items.

- ♦ +5 dragon bane longsword
- ♦ +4 disruption heavy mace
- ♦ lesser helm of brilliance
- ♦ phylactery of positive channeling
- ♦ ring of spell storing
- ♦ belt of stoneskin
- ♦ Ten potions of cure critical wounds
- ♦ Two potions of bull's strength
- ♦ potion of fly (However, the Ob's lantern makes this last only one round.)

## THE ASSASSINATION: BULLSEYE

### Action. Tactical. Level 14.

*A spectral sniper guns for the king.*

The sixth lantern sits atop Palace Hall, guarded like the rest (by 2 Obscurati Squads, a Bleak Lantern Golem, and a Wraith Assassination Horde; see Overture). The ghost of Amielle Latimer is stationed there as well, having volunteered to protect **Tittling Grainet**, a gnome cleric tasked with keeping the lanterns in working order.

Amielle wants to somehow aid the party, but she knows she cannot move openly against the Obscurati. Indeed, to avoid drawing attention she has to keep up appearances and shoot at the palace's defenders; if the ghost council gets suspicious they'll annihilate her.

At some point during this prolonged scene – likely at Catherine Romana's command, or when the party leaves the palace so she can see them – Amielle fires a shot and intentionally wings the king, dealing just 1 damage. She'll continue to wing the PCs round after round, also for 1 damage each, hoping to draw their attention to the roof. She'll only attack the Obscurati's forces if she sees that a PC is in danger, or if it is the last foe. (If everyone is dead, no one can tattle on her.)

### Lending Aid

If the party gets to the roof, Amielle will phase through the roof into the palace's attic so she can avoid combat. Once the lantern's defenders are defeated (see Destroying the Lanterns, below), she'll emerge and say she wants to help.

Most importantly, she tells them that Stanfield is going to perform a ritual tomorrow night in Flint, but if it can be disrupted they can protect Risur at least. The PCs probably already know this, but if they've somehow missed it, Amielle can make the timeline explicit.

Thereafter she wants to follow the party and help in a fight. The ghost council will target her above all other threats.



A hundred years ago Amielle brought her one-of-a-kind rifle to Flint and lent her keen marksmanship toward defeating the witches of Cauldron Hill. That olive branch opened up the city to investment by industrialists from Danor, which had by that point fought two painful wars with Risur. Amielle proposed the plan to Nicodemus, and it worked like clockwork.

A grandiose woman with grandiose plans, she is only stymied by the fact that she died eighty years ago, and while she endures as part of the ghost council her influence is weak. She has for the past few months only feigned loyalty to the conspiracy; she agreed with the need to alter the world, but not how the Ob have gone about it. But she knows any sign of disobedience will

spell her demise, so she bides her time.

Amielle still remembers life fondly, and she often disagrees with her fellow ghosts, showing her disapproval with piping sarcastic laughter.

### Ongoing Alliance

The ghost council will know of Amielle's betrayal, and if she's destroyed Nicodemus will rejuvenate her solely so they can interrogate her. Understanding this, Amielle will offer to lend her aim to them, but says it isn't safe to ever tell her any plans. She can be a resource in future adventures, if she survives.

#### Amielle Latimer

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female tiefling ghost fighter 8

LN Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25

#### Defense

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +4 Dex)**hp** 80 (8d10+32)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation;**Resist** cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5; **Immune** undead traits

#### Offense

**Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** corrupting touch +12 (9d6; DC 18)**Ranged** +1 *ghost touch rifle* +15/+10 (1d10+2/x4) or +1 *ghost touch pistol* +15/+10 (1d8+2/x4)**Special Attacks** malevolence, telekinesis, weapon training (firearms +1)**Spell-like Abilities** (CL 8<sup>th</sup>; concentration +11)

1/day—darkness

#### Statistics

**Str** --, **Dex** 18, **Con** --, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22**Feats** Far Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (rifle), Rapid Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (pistol), Weapon Focus (rifle)**Skills** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +11, Fly +12, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (engineering) +13, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +15, Stealth +14**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** armor training 2, bravery +2**Other Gear** +1 *ghost touch rifle*, +1 *ghost touch pistols* (2)

#### Special Abilities

**Corrupting Touch (Su)** By passing part of her incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, Amielle inflicts 9d6 damage. This damage is not negative energy—it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save (DC 18) halves the damage inflicted.

**Malevolence (Su)** Once per round, Amielle can merge her body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to a *magic jar* spell (caster level 10<sup>th</sup>), except that it does not require a receptacle. To use this ability, she must be adjacent to the target. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 18). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same ghost's malevolence for 24 hours.

**Telekinesis (Su)** Amielle can use *telekinesis* as a standard action once every 1d4 rounds (caster level 12<sup>th</sup>).

## THE ASSASSINATION: TYRANT'S REVENGE

### Action. Tactical. Level 18.

*A dragon skeleton kept as a trophy animates and attacks.*

A gargantuan dragon skeleton, animated by Professor Bugge (see below) detaches from its wire mountings in the Entry Foyer (Area 6) and goes on a rampage. A Knowledge (history) check (DC 18) recalls that this dragon was Venkio, a copper-scaled dragon tyrant who would melt those who disobeyed him in vats of acid. Though initially a simple brute, as it rampages it consumes souls, awakening the spirit of the original tyrant and empowering its magical abilities.

The skeleton fights until it reaches 182 hp. Then it burns an exit hole and tries to withdraw, but will swoop back in the next time the party is engaged in another fight. Once reduced to 91 hp, it withdraws and defends Catherine Romana if she still lives.

### Foyer Foes

- ♦ Skeletal Dragon Tyrant

#### Skeletal Dragon Tyrant

CR 18

XP 153,600

CE Huge undead (earth)

**Init** +4; **Senses** blindsense 120 ft., darkvision 240 ft.; Perception +39**Aura** cowering fear, frightful presence (270 ft., DC 28), slow (5 ft., DC 28, 1 round)

#### Defense

**AC** 40, touch 12, flat-footed 40 (+4 deflection, +28 natural, -2 size)**hp** 273 (21d8+168)**Fort** +20, **Ref** +12, **Will** +17**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, soul ward (10 hp), uncanny dodge;**DR** 15/good; **Immune** acid, undead traits; **SR** 27

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor); climb stone**Melee** bite +31 (2d8+18/17–20), 2 claws +31 (2d6+12/17–20), tail slap +26 (2d6+18/19–20), 2 wings +26 (1d8+6/19–20)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)**Special Attacks** breath weapon (100-ft. line, DC 28, 18d6 acid and 2 negative levels), crush (2d8+15, DC 26), slow breath, soul consumption (DC 28), soul magic**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 21<sup>st</sup>; concentration +29)At will—grease (DC 19), *hideous laughter* (DC 20), *stone shape*, *transmute mud to rock*, *transmute rock to mud***Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 16<sup>th</sup>; concentration +23)8<sup>th</sup>—*scintillating pattern* (DC 27)7<sup>th</sup>—*mass hold person* (DC 25), *reverse gravity*6<sup>th</sup>—*antimagic field*, *mislead*, *programmed image* (DC 25)5<sup>th</sup>—*mind fog* (DC 23), *polymorph*, *sending*, *teleport*4<sup>th</sup>—*confusion* (DC 22), *rainbow pattern* (DC 23), *stone shape*, *stoneskin*3<sup>rd</sup>—*dispel magic*, *haste*, *major image* (DC 22), *tongues*2<sup>nd</sup>—*glitterdust* (DC 20), *invisibility*, *phantom trap*, *pyrotechnics*, *see invisibility*1<sup>st</sup>—*alarm*, *identify*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *silent image* (DC 20)0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 19), *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*



**Statistics**

**Str** 35, **Dex** 10, **Con** -, **Int** 24, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 26

**Base Atk** +21; **CMB** +35 (+39 trip); **CMD** 49 (55 vs. trip)

**Feats** Combat Expertise, Greater Trip, Improved Critical (bite, claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus (Illusion), Vital Strike

**Skills** Bluff +32, Craft (traps) +40, Diplomacy +32, Fly +16, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (geography, history) +31, Perception +39 (+48 vs. traps), Perform (comedy) +29, Sense Motive +31, Stealth +24, Use Magic Device +32

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Halfling

**SQ** trap master

**Special Abilities**

**Climb Stone (Ex)** The skeletal dragon tyrant can climb on stone surfaces as though using the spider climb spell.

**Cowering Fear (Su)** Any creature shaken by the skeletal dragon tyrant's frightful presence is cowering instead of shaken for the first round of the effect, and shaken for the rest of the duration. Any creature that is panicked by its frightful presence is instead cowering for the duration.

**Slow Aura (Su)** The skeletal dragon tyrant is surrounded by an aura of slowness, visually represented by incorporeal chains that float about it, mimicking the actual wires that once dangled its body from the palace ceiling. All creatures within 5 feet of the dragon must make a DC 28 Will save or be affected as per slow for 1 round. The dragon can suppress or activate this aura at will as a free action.



**Slow Breath (Su)** Instead of a line of acid, the skeletal dragon tyrant can breathe a cone of slowing gas. Those in the cone must make a DC 28 Fortitude save or be slowed (as per the spell slow) for 1d6+9 rounds. The breath weapon also inflicts 2 negative levels; a successful save reduces this to 1 negative level.

**Soul Consumption (Su)** When a living creature within 30 feet of the skeletal dragon tyrant dies, that creature's soul is torn from its body and pulled into the tyrant's maw if the dying creature fails a DC 28 Will save. This adds a number of hit points to the tyrant's soul ward equal to the dead creature's Hit Dice. Creatures that have their souls consumed in this way can only be brought back to life through miracle, true resurrection, or wish.

**Soul Magic (Sp)** The skeletal dragon tyrant loses all spell slots. Instead, whenever the tyrant wishes to cast any one of its spells known, it consumes a number of hit points from its soul ward equal to the spell slot level necessary to cast the spell (including increased levels for metamagic feats and so on). If the soul ward has insufficient hit points, the tyrant cannot cast that spell. Casting a spell that reduces its soul ward to exactly 0 hit points does not harm the tyrant (though it is not comfortable without this buffer of soul-energy and tries to replenish it quickly).

**Soul Ward (Su)** An intangible field of siphoned soul energy protects the tyrant from destruction. This ward has 21 maximum hit points, but starts at 10. Whenever the tyrant would be reduced below 1 hit point, all damage in excess of that which would reduce it to 1 hit point is instead dealt to its soul ward. If this damage reduces the soul ward to fewer than 0 hit points, the tyrant is destroyed. Whenever the tyrant scores a critical hit with a natural weapon, it bestows 1 negative level and adds 5 points to its soul ward. It adds 1 point to its soul ward for each negative level inflicted by either of its breath weapons.

**Trap Master (Ex)** The skeletal dragon tyrant receives a +9 bonus on Craft (traps) and Perception checks made to locate a trap. He can also use Disable Device to disarm magic traps as if he had the rogue's trapfinding class feature.

## THE ASSASSINATION: PARDWIGHT

### Action. Tactical. Level 16.

*Under the command of a famed professor of necromancy, wights and a massive flayed jaguar sweep through the palace, killing and turning everyone they find.*

Professor Jon Bugge, formerly a necromancy instructor at Pardwight University in Flint, has been working in a remote laboratory for the Obscurati for decades. Now the withered old man hobbles through battle, his thick brogue voice ordering about wights that were once his most promising students. His presentation tonight is a giant flayed jaguar like the ones the party first encountered in adventure two.

He delays his actions so he'll go right before the wights, then casts *blessing of fervor*. The wights swarm the PCs while Bugge uses his spells to aid his minions and hinder the party.

### Undead Educator

- ♦ Professor Bugge
- ♦ 4 Dread Wights
- ♦ 1 Flayed Dire Jaguar

**Professor Jon Bugge**

CR 14

XP 38,400

Male old human cleric (cloistered cleric) 15

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** -2; **Senses** Perception +5

**Defense**
**AC** 19, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 armor, +4 deflection, -2 Dex, +4 natural)

**hp** 90 (15d8+15)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +14

**Offense**
**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk quarterstaff +10/+5/+0 (1d6-2)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy 7/day (7d6, DC 21)

**Cleric Spell-like Abilities** (CL 15<sup>th</sup>; concentration +20)

8/day—bleeding touch

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 15<sup>th</sup>; concentration +20)

8<sup>th</sup>—*create greater undead*<sup>(D)</sup>

7<sup>th</sup>—*blasphemy* (DC 22), *destruction* (DC 24)<sup>(D)</sup>

6<sup>th</sup>—*antilife shell*, *create undead*,<sup>(D)</sup> *greater dispel magic*

5<sup>th</sup>—*dispel good*, *greater command* (DC 20), *slay living*<sup>(D)</sup> (DC 22), *spell resistance*

4<sup>th</sup>—*aura of doom* (DC 21), *blessing of fervor*, *death ward* (D), *spell immunity*,  
*unholy blight* (DC 19)

3<sup>rd</sup>—*animate dead*,<sup>(D)</sup> *blindness/deafness* (DC 20), *dispel magic*, *magic circle*  
*against good*, *magic vestment*

2<sup>nd</sup>—*bear's endurance*, *death knell* (D) (DC 19), *desecrate*, *hold person* (DC 17),  
*owl's wisdom*

1<sup>st</sup>—*bless*, *cause fear*<sup>(D)</sup> (DC 18), *doom* (DC 18), *obscuring mist*, *protection from*  
*good*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *spark*
**(D)** Domain spell; **Domain** Death

**Statistics**
**Str** 7, **Dex** 6, **Con** 10, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Combat Casting, Command Undead, Extra Channel, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Channel, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Spell Focus (necromancy)

**Skills** Appraise +20, Heal +23, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (all others) +10, Knowledge (planes) +28, Knowledge (religion) +34, Linguistics +7, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +21

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Primordial

**SQ** aura, breadth of knowledge, death's embrace, diminished spellcasting, verbal instruction, well-read

**Gear** mwk quarterstaff, *amulet of natural armor* +4

**Special Abilities**
**Death's Embrace (Ex)** Bugge heals damage instead of taking damage from channeled negative energy.

**Verbal Instruction (Ex)** Bugge can use the aid another action to assist an ally within 30 feet on a skill or ability check. The ally must be able to hear and understand the cleric's instructions. He can aid up to five allies at the same time. If all allies are not engaged in the same task, using this ability is a full-round action rather than a standard action.

**Well-Read (Ex)** Bugge gains a +2 bonus on skill checks, caster level checks, and saving throws if such rolls pertain to mundane or magical glyphs, runes, scrolls, symbols, and other writings.

**Dread Wight**

CR 10

XP 9,600

Cairn wight warrior 7

LE Medium undead

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

**Defense**
**AC** 25, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+5 armor, +1 dodge, +3 Dex, +6 natural)

**hp** 127 (4d8+7d10+68)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9

**Immune** undead traits

**Weaknesses** resurrection vulnerability

**Offense**
**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk longsword +15/+10 (1d8+4/19-20 plus energy drain), slam +8 (1d4+3 plus energy drain)

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

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

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

**Feats** Blind-Fight, Dodge, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword)

**Skills** Intimidate +18, Knowledge (religion) +16, Perception +23, Stealth +23

**Languages** Common

**SQ** create spawn, desecrated

**Gear** +1 chain shirt, +1 longsword

**Special Abilities**
**Create Spawn (Su)** Any humanoid creature that is slain by a wight becomes a wight itself in only 1d4 rounds. Spawn so created are less powerful than typical wights, and suffer a -2 penalty on all d20 rolls and checks, as well as -2 hp per HD. Spawn are under the command of the wight that created them and remain enslaved until its death, at which point they lose their spawn penalties and become full-fledged and free-willed wights. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

**Desecrated (Ex)** These wights were created in the area of a *desecrate* spell and have +1 hit point per HD.

**Resurrection Vulnerability (Su)** A raise dead or similar spell cast on a wight destroys it (Will negates). Using the spell in this way does not require a material component.




**Flayed Dire Jaguar**

CR 12

XP 19,200

N Large magical beast

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +12**Defense****AC** 21, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +8 natural, –1 size)**hp** 147 (14d10+70)**Fort** +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** corrupted blood**Offense****Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +24 (2d4+10 plus grab), bite +24 (2d6+10/19–20 plus grab)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** pounce, rake (2 claws +24, 2d4+10)**Statistics****Str** 31, **Dex** 19, **Con** 21, **Int** 2, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +25 (+29 grapple); **CMD** 39 (43 vs. trip)**Feats** Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Run, Skill Focus (Perception, Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite, claw)**Skills** Acrobatics +9, Climb +18, Perception +14, Stealth +17 (+21 in undergrowth)**SQ** witchoil vessel**Special Abilities****Corrupted Blood (Ex)** If a flayed dire jaguar is damaged by a piercing or slashing weapon, its black blood sprays upon the creature who damaged it, dealing 3d6 negative energy damage (DC 22 Reflex for half). The save is Constitution-based.**Witchoil Vessel (Ex)** An adamantine plate is bolted directly into the ribcage of the poor creature, and black oil leaks in pulses, like the beating of a heart. As a standard action, a character adjacent to the jaguar can make a Strength check (DC 20) to tear free the steel plate over its chest. The character takes a –1 penalty to this check for each square the jaguar moved on its last turn, unless the jaguar is immobilized or prone. When the plate is removed, the jaguar takes an immediate 30 points of damage and any additional attack that hits automatically kills it.

## THE ASSASSINATION: SHADOWY CALLBACK

### Action. Tactical. Level 17.

A gang of assassins who have been granted familiar shadow powers try to kill Aodhan.

Four elite members of the *Portuers de Mort* who were nearly killed by the party in the previous adventure were saved by the same procedure that afflicted Cillian Creed in adventure two. These shadow men, lacking Creed's proficiency with disguises, simply appear as matte black.

At the start of the assault, they split up and place wreathes of rusted metal on the walls of the palace, to help ensure that it will be pulled into the Bleak Gate. They might be spotted at that time from afar (Perception DC 37), but they don't engage until at least round 20. At that point they have regrouped, and they wait for the king to be vulnerable, and preferably engaged in a fight. Then they strike, and will not withdraw until the king is dead.

### Shadow Men

- ♦ 4 Bleak Gate Killers

**Bleak Gate Killer**

CR 13

Male shadow-touched human slayer 12/shadowdancer 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Perception +17**Defense****AC** 24, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +4 shield)**hp** 138 (12d10+2d8+56)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +6**Defensive Abilities** evasion, uncanny dodge**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** eclipse claw +18/+13/+8 (1d8+2+1d6 negative energy)**Ranged** +2 *human bane hand crossbow* +19/+14/+9 (1d4+2/19-20)**Special Attacks** slayer talents (assassinate [DC 17], fast stealth, hunter's surprise, lasting poison, poison use, swift poison), sneak attack +4d6, studied target (+3, 3 targets, swift action)**Statistics****Str** 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 29**Feats** Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (hand crossbow), Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (eclipse claw)**Skills** Acrobatics +21, Bluff +16, Climb +19, Intimidate +16, Perception +17, Perform (dance) +4, Sleight of Hand +19, Stealth +27, Survival +17**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** hide in plain sight, shadow man, stalker, swift tracker, track +6**Combat Gear**; **Other Gear** +2 *human bane hand crossbow*, 20 bolts, +3 *studded leather*, +3 *light steel shield***Eclipse Claw (Su)** One of a Bleak Gate killer's arms has been transformed into a hideous claw. The claw acts as a natural weapon and deals an additional 1d6 points of negative energy damage on a successful strike. Once per round as a free action, a Bleak Gate killer may extend his reach with the appendage to 15 ft. and attack with the claw.**Shadow Man (Su)** A Bleak Gate Killer takes damage from positive energy and heals from negative energy damage as though he were undead. He is also affected by abilities that affect undead. As a move action, he may become an insubstantial mass of shadows. During this time, he is considered to be incorporeal, but cannot initiate any attack actions. He can only maintain his shadowy state for up to 5 minutes per day, though he may space these out into smaller groupings (effectively 30 rounds worth). Shifting back to corporeal form is a move action. If a Bleak Gate Killer is targeted by positive energy while in this state, he immediately shifts back to corporeal form and is dazed for one round.

## THE ASSASSINATION: DESTROYING THE LANTERNS

### Action. Tactical. Level 14.

*Destroying the lanterns ends the assassination plot.*

The six lanterns are each guarded by two dozen soldiers, who wear bloodstone and opal amulets that temporarily grant them negative energy resistance 10 and low-light vision, and which keep the semi-mindless wraiths from attacking them. Looting these amulets would aid the party immensely, though they only last for a few hours.

Those guards are themselves defended by a horde of wraiths, which surround a golem similar to the witchoil ones the party has fought

previously. This one is much improved, however, and the necrotic energy of its *bleak aura* actually heals the undead. (The lantern on the roof has no golem – they couldn’t get one up there – but they thought Amielle Latimer would be a sufficient defender in its place.)

The lanterns are spaced close enough that the soldiers at one might be able to lend fire to help others, but they don’t move far from their assigned location.

Each lantern has hardness 15 and 200 hit points. A Spellcraft check (DC 25) can dim it, shrinking the area of light to a 25-foot radius; another check can turn it off, though Grainet could relight it quickly, and even the soldiers could turn it on again with enough time. With the right fuel, a Use Magic Device check (DC 34) can adjust it to make the real world, the Dreaming, and the Bleak Gate all coterminous at once within its radius.

### Lantern Defenders

- ♦ 2 Obscurati Squads
- ♦ Bleak Lantern Golem (not at lantern six)
- ♦ Wraith Assassination Horde

#### Obscurati Squad

CR 7

XP 3,200

LN Medium humanoid (human, troop)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +14

##### Defense

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)**hp** 86 (9d8+36)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** troop traits

##### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** troop (3d6+5)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** antimagic chaff grenades (DC 18), fusillade (DC 17)

##### Statistics

**Str** 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24**Feats** Ability Focus (fusillade), Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Toughness**Skills** Climb +17, Perception +14, Survival +14**Languages** Common, Primordial

##### Special Abilities

**Antimagic Chaff Grenades (Ex):** Obscurati squads are equipped with a single group of grenades filled with chunks of stone from Methia. Once per day as a move action, a rifle troop can target a single square up to 60 feet away with a volley of fragmentation grenades. A volley deals 6d6 points of piercing and slashing damage in a 30-foot-radius burst (Reflex DC 17 for half). Creatures damaged by the grenade are affected as if dispel magic struck them. Make a dispel check (d20 + 10) against each nonpermanent magical effect on the creatures. Additionally, they must make a concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) anytime they cast a spell, or until someone removes the shards of stone from their skin, requiring a full-round action and a DC 20 Heal check. Any creature attempting to cast a spell within the impacted radius for 5 rounds after the grenades explode must make a concentration check (DC 15 + spell level).

**Fusillade (Ex)** An Obscurati squad can fire a fusillade of rifle bullets as a standard action. This attack takes the form of up to four lines with a range of 200 feet. These lines can start from the corner of any square in the troop’s space. All creatures in one of these lines’ areas of effect take 4d10+3 points of bludgeoning and piercing damage (Reflex DC 19 for half). The save DC is Dexterity-based.

#### Bleak Lantern Golem

CR 10

XP 9,600

N Large construct

**Init** –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0**Aura** bleak aura (15 ft.)

##### Defense

**AC** 24, touch 8, flat-footed 22 (–1 Dex, +16 natural, –1 size)**hp** 113 (14d10+30)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4**DR** 10/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits

##### Offense

**Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** 2 slams +21 (2d6+7)**Special Attacks** tracer cannon**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

##### Statistics

**Str** 24, **Dex** 9, **Con** –, **Int** –, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 28

##### Special Abilities

**Bleak Aura (Su)** Wailing spirits coil around the golem, drawn by the witchoil that fuels it. Living creatures that enter or end their turn in the aura take 3d6 negative energy damage. This damage heals undead creatures in the aura.

**Tracer Cannon (Ex)** As a standard action, the golem can fire this cannon mounted on its right hip at a space within 200 feet. The shot explodes in a 10-foot-radius burst of bright light, dealing 8d6 points of damage (DC 17 Reflex for half). The area remains brightly illuminated until the end of the golem’s next turn. Any creature in the burst is blinded for 1d4 rounds; a successful save means the creature is merely dazzled for the same duration. Reloading the cannon is a standard action.

#### Wraith Assassination Horde

CR 11

XP 12,800

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense; Perception +27**Aura** unnatural aura (30 ft.)

##### Defense

**AC** 19, touch 19, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +5 deflection, +1 dodge)**hp** 152 (16d8+80)**Fort** +12, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13**Defensive Abilities** troop traits; **Immune** undead traits

##### Offense

**Speed** fly 60 ft. (good)**Melee** troop +15 (4d6 negative energy plus 1d6 Con drain)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attack** create spawn

##### Statistics

**Str** –, **Dex** 16, **Con** –, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 21**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Diplomacy +23, Fly +7, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (planes) +21, Perception +27, Sense Motive +21, Stealth +28

**Languages** Common, Infernal



*Special Abilities*

**Create Spawn (Su)** A humanoid slain by a wraith horde becomes a wraith in 1d4 rounds. These spawn are less powerful than typical wraiths, and suffer a –2 penalty on all d20 rolls and checks, receive –2 hp per HD, and only drain 1d2 points of Constitution on a touch. Spawn are under the command of the wraith horde that created them until its death, at which point they lose their spawn penalties and become free-willed wraiths. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

**Constitution Drain (Su)** Creatures hit by a wraith horde's troop attack must succeed on a DC 23 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. On each successful attack, the wraith horde gains 5 temporary hit points. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Lifesense (Su)** A wraith horde notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability.

**Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex)** A wraith horde caught in sunlight cannot attack and is staggered.

**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals do not willingly approach within 30 feet of a wraith horde, unless a master makes a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride, or wild empathy check.

## THE KING IS DEAD!

### Social. Montage. Level 16.

*In the aftermath of the assassination plot, the party takes stock.*

Around seven minutes after the attack begins, hundreds of Risuri soldiers start streaming to the palace, commanded by the local garrison colonel but guided by Lauryn Cyneburg and Viscount Nigel Price-Hill. They're too late to fight anyone from the Bleak Gate unless the party got clever and found a way to drag them into the real world.

If Aodhan lives, he gives orders to make sure no other forces can surprise them, sends for as many healers as possible for the wounded, then gathers the PCs and appropriate NPCs to discuss what comes next. If he died or was captured, either have Price-Hill give these orders, or if you plan to make one of the PCs king, Harkover suggests it to that PC.

### War Council

Communication magic cannot reach Flint, and multiple sources have said Governor Stanfield is about to perform a ritual for the Obscurati. The obvious mission now is to get to Flint and stop him, and omens suggest tomorrow night might be the last night in the world. The R.N.S. *Impossible* waits on the Great Delve River, and with all the magic they can muster it could reach Flint by about 9 p.m. the following night. Ships in Shale could be rallied as well, though they wouldn't be fast enough.

Teleportation still isn't an option, but the party might ride with the Great Hunt again. They again need a few hours to rest their steeds, but they could get to Flint by 6 p.m. The party has to make plans with limited information. *Sendings* don't work, but divinations still might, if asked about something other than Stanfield himself.

### Long Live the King!

If the king has died, a new one should be crowned quickly, though a formal coronation with pomp and circumstance will have to wait. It will take an hour to prepare the *Impossible* for travel (and six hours for the Great Hunt), and before that time, a hurried session of the lords of Risur is called together.

## CAMPAIGN NOTE: SURPRISE GUESTS

If you intend to end the campaign with this adventure, to wrap up dangling plot threads involving Benedict Pemberton, you should include the following scene.

Benedict Pemberton has two duplicants in the palace – they're innocuous members of the palace staff, controlled remotely from a villa he owns south of Flint. When the attack begins, Pemberton (at his Yerasol Island lair) takes control of one and has his chief henchnoll Pardo take control of the other. This changes their appearances to match what they really look like; ideally this can happen right next to one of the PCs.

Pemberton's goal is to seek an eleventh-hour alliance with Risur against the Obscurati. His two duplicants here are useless in a fight; they don't even have kill switches to let them explode when they're destroyed. But he knows the Ob have something planned for Flint, and he's volunteering to help.

Well, "volunteering" is the wrong word. "Agreeing to help *if* Risur lets Pemberton Industries be chief manufacturer of weapons for the inevitable upcoming war with Danor," is more accurate. Or he'll accept a duchy.

If the new monarch of Risur agrees, Pemberton will make an appearance in his full draconic glory in Act Three. If the campaign is going to continue, though, Pemberton shows up in the next adventure, having seized control of Axis Island.

If you don't think any of your PCs are monarch material, Nigel Price-Hill is chosen as the best choice to become king. Otherwise, it's time for one PC to be in the spotlight.

First, though, the lords ask for witnesses to the character of the heir. Give each PC a chance to speak on behalf of appointed successor, and if their testimony is sufficient, the lords vote and approve the PC as the new monarch of Risur. An aged steward produces a worn leather book written in rough, hand-scribed text. From it he recites a ten-minute declaration of the rites of rulership, after which the office of the king is formally transferred. See Appendix Five: Magic and Training for details of the powers of the king.

If Aodhan is alive, he names a successor, and then seeks approval from the nobles, in a similar process to above. He'll keep his crown for now, but realizes he needs a clear line of succession in case of disaster.

### In the Air and the Earth

When the party sets out from Slate, they feel a change in the air. Winds gust, and they feel like the world is shuddering beneath them. The Axis Seal is about to be opened.

If the PCs have any of the golden icons of the various planes crafted by the Ancients (Avilona, Nem, and Urim in adventure one, Apet in adventure three), opening the seal floods them with more power, so they function as if they were on Axis Island. During Stanfield's ritual in the next act, however, they lose all their powers.



# ACT THREE: PILLARS OF HEAVEN

In this act, the party attacks the best-defended lighthouse in the world.



## CAMPAIGN NOTE: ALTERNATE FINALE

If you want to end the campaign here, you'll need to alter a few scenes.

The colossus starts by devastating ships on the PCs' side, but when things are looking grim, Pemberton and a small fleet of duplicant-crewed ships show up to even the odds, firing Oddcog-designed weapons that break through the colossus's defenses. No single hit is enough to weaken the titan, but Nicodemus pulls it back anyway and orders it to begin the ritual.

The colossus sets the golden plate down in the center of the governor's mansion fortress; it sinks into the earth and conjures a starmap on the surface. Meanwhile Stanfield uses the lighthouse to stabilize chaotic energies that burst from the ground. The colossus plants stone pillars in the starmap, each linked to one new world. If the party can disrupt Stanfield's control of the lighthouse, the energy stuns the colossus. They can then climb aboard (or, if they've let the Ob switch the plane of air, fly on the back of Pemberton and Harkover, who return to dragon form), in order to install a device from Oddcog that grants them manual control. Nicodemus will fight them, but they can drive him into the witchoil forge at the colossus's heart, consuming his spirit and fueling a final push to alter reality in their own way.

## FOOLPROOF VILLAINY

If the party weren't involved, the king would be dead, and Stanfield's ritual would go off without a hitch. There would still be trouble at the Axis Seal due to interference by the Voice of Rot, and after less than a year – a year filled with madness, collapsing social structures, and extraplanar invasions – the white serpent would destroy the world.

However, the Obscurati do plan for opposition. Threats they've considered are Gale and her ability to fly (hence the domed shield over the fortress), the Coaltongue's brand (which is why they have it seized and garrisoned), and others you think are important. Of course, we want the players to figure out how to beat them, so if they have a clever idea, perhaps they can outwit even the geniuses of the Obscurati.

## A MOMENT OF CALM

### Social. Montage. Level 16.

*News and allies arrive to help the party stop Stanfield's ritual in Flint.*

The party makes their way to Flint, on the *Impossible* or with the Great Hunt or by some other means they devise. (If they have their own ship, they likely haven't seen it since adventure eight, but it could be docked in Flint waiting for them, or in another Risuri coastal city.) The party might bring along allies, but unless the players are particularly attached to someone, we suggest allies 'fade into the background' once the party reaches Flint. They can handle challenges that the PCs aren't.

Maybe Asrabey hews through Ob agents who are searching the Cloudwood for Gale and her allies; together the two eladrin can sabotage the Danoran fleet. Dame Jillian goes to rescue Captain Dale and his men atop Cauldron Hill, where the wards are failing; once rescued, they help evacuate people from the slums, fearing a disaster. Lauryr Cyneburg gathers soldiers from the Battalion military academy and teleports them (and their cannons) into positions around the city so they can fire upon the Danoran ships. Viscount Price-Hill likely stays behind in Slate to prepare for war.

One ally who asks to stand beside the party is Harkover Lee. He has served Risur's monarchs for two centuries, and he would like to continue. He explains his history as a former dragon tyrant, but swears his loyalty to the new king or queen.

(If Aodhan lives, he leads the attack. Honestly, we kinda want to kill him before the adventure ends so a PC can take on the responsibilities of ruling.)





### Ship Graveyard

If the party sails to Flint, about twenty miles west of the city they find the wreck of Flint's garrison fleet. A few survivors survive on their crippled ships, and can speak of how they must have been betrayed. Flint's fleet followed the intelligence the governor shared, and they sailed into a field of submerged mines (called 'torpedoes'), which exploded and hulled many vessels.

The Danorans knew exactly where they'd be, and with many ships out of commission, the Risuri forces were easy pickings. The attackers didn't even take prisoners for ransom, or claim ships as salvage, instead rushing ahead and leaving a thousand men to die. If the party can't spare the time to bring the men to shore, other ships from Shale will be along soon to accomplish the job.

### Final Reverie

An hour or so outside the city, the sun has already set, and you might want to devote a scene to the party making final plans and having a moment to reflect and talk – as they rest for a bit on the deck of the ship, or while the Hunt's horses take a breather.

Consider which Flint NPCs you want to involve in this final act, what elements of the party's past endeavors deserve to be revisited, and what sorts of choices the PCs could be forced to make if they wish to succeed. Either Captain Rutger Smith of the *Impossible* or Riffian, head of the Great Hunt, asks the party to regale him with stories of their city, so that he might know what the heroes fight for. This gives you an opportunity to remind the party of potential allies and avenues of attack.

Whichever route the party takes to Flint, they'd be wise to enter quietly. Captain Smith can drop the party off in the bayou west of the city, near the Battalion academy of martial science. The Great Hunt need some sleep, at least, and will take the party no farther than the city limits. They arrive by 9 p.m., and have until about 6 a.m. in the predawn hours to act.

Whenever they do launch their final assault, stars start to fall from the sky, but be flexible with just when Stanfield begins his ritual.

### City Bonds

These are suggested ways the party can gain an upper hand, assuming they don't just sail straight into Flint Harbor alone.

### Dockers

If a PC has close ties to the dockers, you might have them greeted by Thames Grimsley who's ready to organize a counter-attack against the Danoran fleet, which will cost many lives. Danoran ships keep guns trained on the docks, so as cover the PC might be asked to call in the Flint police to stage a fake riot; the dockers and police get close enough to the ships without looking hostile, and then can rush aboard and try to launch before they're sunk.

### The Family

Parties who have had friendly dealings with The Family might seek aid from Morgan Cippiano, who is attending a funeral with hundreds of mourners. A bereaved family member might indicate romantic interest in one of the PCs, offering a chance to join the family (and the Family). The criminals agree to help – perhaps using holy magic to sneak the party onto the garrisoned Coaltongue and claim it – but first ask the party to be blessed in a Clergy church.

### Skyseers and the Old Faith

The common people of Flint still revere the old faith, and the few novice skyseers still active in the city have been foretelling doom, reminding people to avoid Cauldron Hill, per the final warning of Nevard Sechim. But people are scared, and they hope to hear a new vision to reassure them. The stars, however, reveal no future after tonight.

### Gale and the Vekeshi Mystics

Gale could come to the party on behalf of the Vekeshi Mystics, offering their aid in sabotaging the Danorans if the new monarch pledges to laud their efforts and no longer treat the secret society as enemies of Risur. At night, a flying woman and her allies can easily sneak aboard rumbling steamships and cripple their engines.

Gale also offers an even greater deed. The Obscurati have worked some magic over the harbor to prevent her from making the weather hostile to them, but she thinks she can leech some of its power to control the clouds over the city. The people of Flint deserve to know what is happening, and may need to know that they have a new king who will defend them. Gale will be able to let a PC speak from the sky for a few minutes. The clouds will take on his countenance, and his voice will carry across the entire city. Whether the PCs want to urge calm or send out a call to arms, they will have Flint's undivided attention.

### Danoran Defenses and Other Hazards

You might just have spies report this information to the party, but some groups could enjoy directing their various avenues of information to learn what the Danorans are up to, and what other problems beset Flint.

### The Fleet

The Danoran Fleet consists of three battleships and six grand steam frigates guarding targets of value, a dozen steam frigates in a line blockading the harbor entrance, two dozen medium steam warships on patrol in the central harbor, and a handful of support vessels.

Spies report spotting a spectral figure on the deck of *Praepollens Auctoritate*, the flagship. Two of the grand frigates keep their cannons trained on the Coaltongue, which is berthed at the Royal Docks.

### Naval Minefield

The mouth of Flint Harbor has been seeded with floating mines (called 'torpedoes'). Danoran ships still sail through the area, so either they have precise maps, or have some way to deactivate the mines. (The answer is the former; they have clear parameters where to sail and where to avoid.)

### Coaltongue Garrison

Over three hundred Danorans guard the Risuri flagship. They attempted to claim it as their own, but somehow its enchanted engine will not ignite at their command. The ship's original engineer, Geoff Massarde, is allegedly in hiding, and Danoran spies are offering rewards for anyone who hands him over. (The tiefling is loyal to Risur, and has taken refuge with factory owner Heward Sechim, since he recalled hearing the alchemist was on good terms with the PCs, who he hopes will save him.)

### Governor's Island Defenses

The Governor's Island has an outer government district surrounded by a modest wall. Inside that, heavier walls defend the Governor's Island Fortress, and in its center is the forty-foot-high keep surrounded by a twenty-foot-deep dry moat.

Stanfield evacuated all non-essential personnel from his mansion fortress, and then destroyed the bridge to the mainland. Shortly thereafter some people spotted a tarp over the central keep's roof being pulled away revealing something like a lighthouse. Then a magical barrier that is translucent like burnt glass surrounded the fortress, rising up like a dome several hundred feet high.

The government district is accessible but deserted. A scout who got onto the island found the barrier surrounding the fort impenetrable, but otherwise harmless. Any PC trained in Knowledge (arcana) who gets a look at the magical dome over the fort can surmise that it could be broken with sufficient damage (like a naval bombardment) or antimagic (dispelling a caster level 20 effect), but likely any opening would be brief before the shield reformed.

Stover Delft was on the island when it was sealed off. His last orders to the RHC were to keep the city on defense, and to prepare for a siege. (No one knows that Delft was replaced by a doppelganger.)

### Ravens Atop Cauldron Hill

No one has seen birds flying to the mountain top, but somehow they're appearing: thousands of ravens perched in trees, growing in number hour by hour. The district mayor's mansion, now controlled by Captain Dale, has launched flares as if to call for help, but no one who has gone up has returned. (Evil spirits have possessed several of Dale's men, and the rest have locked themselves into the remains of the old hidden laboratory of Mayor Macbannin. The flares are sent by the spirits to lure in more possible hosts.)

### Fish Gone Mad

Sea life has begun beaching itself around Flint harbor, and the shores are covered with seagulls gorging on dead fish. The wildlife knows She Who Writhes is coming.

## FLINT AND STEAL

### Action. Tactical. Level 16.

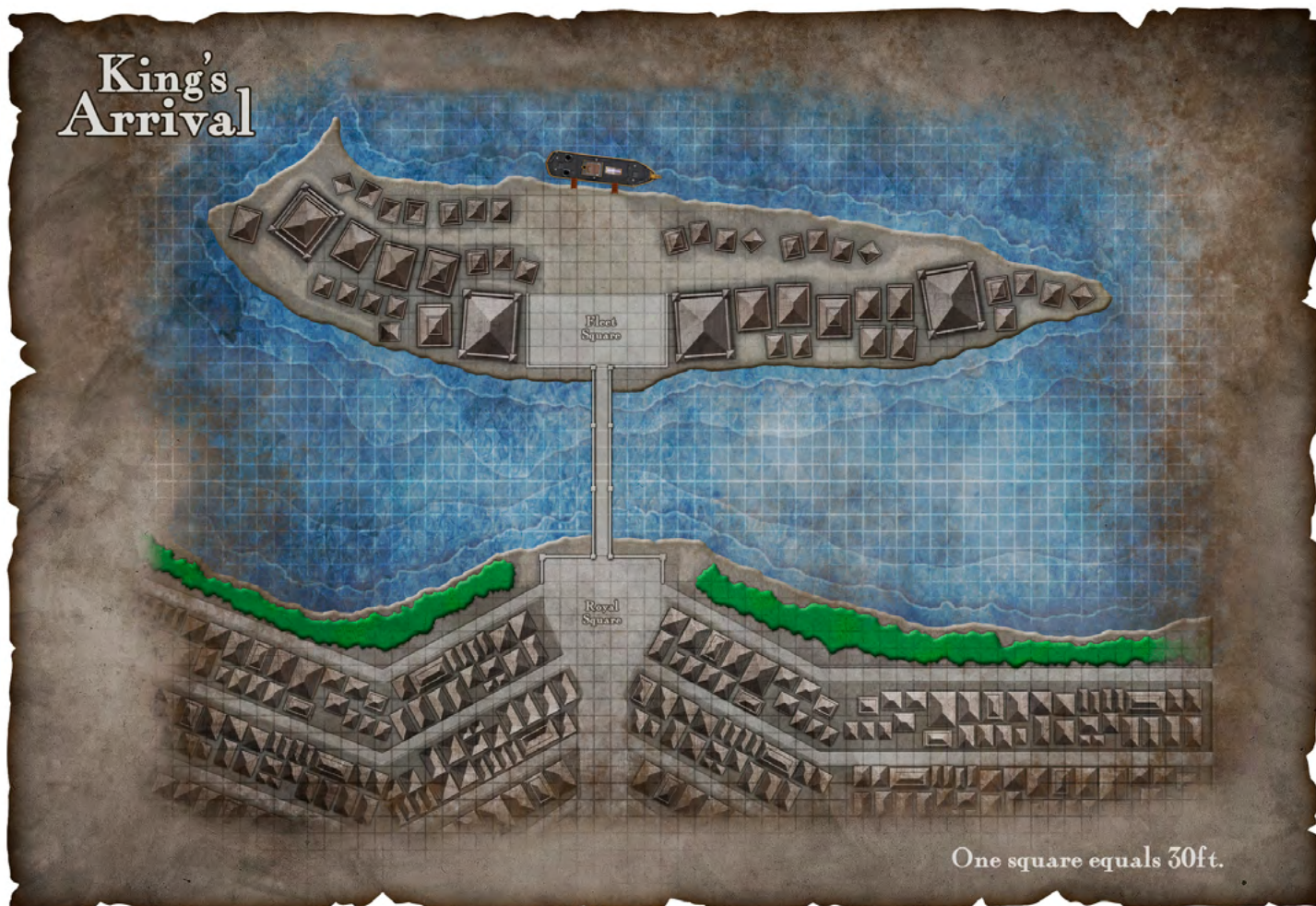
*The party retakes the R.N.S. Coaltongue.*

The R.N.S. *Coaltongue* has enough firepower to take down the magical barricade around the Governor's Island Fortress.

Four hundred soldiers defend the Royal Docks, and five hundred feet away two grand frigates have their guns trained on the ship, ready to sink it if Risur tries to reclaim it. The party will need to find a way to distract the Danorans if they want any chance of actually using the vessel.

Possible solutions include swimming onto the frigates and defeating their crews first, or pulling off an absolutely stealthy attack on the *Coaltongue* garrison, or launching a diversion with other ships (which will be sunk quickly) to give them time to get the *Coaltongue* up and running.

Even if the party can claim the ship, the Danorans have a failsafe: the propeller mechanism of the *Coaltongue* is packed with explosives, which will shatter the hull and cripple the ship if not disabled. Of course, the party has saved this ship from sinking once or twice before.





### Coaltongue Garrison

- ♦ 4 Danoran Companies
- ♦ 2 Steam Walkers
- ♦ 12 Danoran Lookouts

### Frigate Overwatch

- ♦ 2 Grand Frigates (each with another two Danoran companies on board)

### Terrain and Tactics

One Danoran company waits inside the *Coaltongue*, distributed across a few decks. They can attack from the superior cover of the gunports; however, they take 2 rounds to respond to any alarms. Another company actively keeps watch along the dock beside the ship, and have set up simple barricades to provide cover. The remaining two companies are inside the two nearest warehouses.

Each of the warehouses is also guarded by a steam walker, a ten-foot tall bipedal construct piloted by an elite soldier. These are based on designs of Tinker Oddcog, and while the gnome was a cleverer inventor, the Danoran military has much greater coffers, so these walking machines carry enchanted weapons. They use their *arcane shield* to try to protect the soldiers, and they're trained enough to recognize magical attacks and choose the right type of energy resistances.

A dozen lookouts keep watch. Six patrol the deck of the *Coaltongue*, two watch from the roofs of the warehouses, and two roam the rest of the royal docks. They carry primitive rockets that when fired illuminate the sky with red light.

As for the two grand frigates, *Aula Alba* and *Cervus Vigilus*, they each have a crew complement of two hundred who can engage the party if boarded. The party's incredible power likely lets them storm through all those crew hardly a scratch, but if either ship sees its sister has been taken, or if they see the *Coaltongue* about to be claimed, they'll fire their cannons.

### Bombardment

The Danoran companies all carry flares, which than can launch to light up the night. However, if they believe the party is far enough from them to be safely targeted by the ships, they'll shoot their flares at the party, marking them for bombardment. (The party might wise up to this and trick the frigates into shooting the companies.)

Each round, two cannons fire at the general location of the flare. For each ship that can see the target area, two cannonballs strike different areas. Each strike deals 6d6 damage in a 15-foot radius (DC 22 Reflex for half) and leaves behind a smoking crater.

If the party is on the *Coaltongue*, use the normal rules for striking and damaging the ship. (Make a single attack each minute.)

## SKYSEER FULL CIRCLE

If you have a skyseer in the party, the last vision they get before arriving in Flint is of a crowd, a purple ribbon, and a broken tin whistle. Some of these same images appeared in the first vision at the beginning of the campaign, and here they refer to a purple ribbon tied around the *Coaltongue*'s conning wheel, and explosives packed in the engine room, near the same alarm siren that saboteurs damaged in adventure one.

### Starting the Boiler

Dealing at least 100 fire damage to the interior of the boiler activates the *Coaltongue*, though its capacitor and brand won't be charged for 1d4 minutes. Without magic, the enchanted boiler takes five minutes to warm up enough for action.

### Rigged to Explode

Explosives are packed into obscure corners of the engine room, out of easy line of sight, and primed to detonate if the screws begin to turn. If the party doesn't check for sabotage, as soon as they take the ship out, it takes two strikes to the propulsion and starts to sink slowly (requiring one save per ten minutes to avoid descending ten feet).

Disabling the explosives requires five minutes and a Disable Device check (DC 20). Every 5 points of success shaves a minute off the time.

### Aftermath

If the *Coaltongue* starts to move, half the Danoran fleet swoops in to sink it. See Home Sea Advantage, below.

#### Danoran Company

CR 11

XP 12,800

LN Medium humanoid (human, troop)

Init +3; Senses Perception +23

#### Defense

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural)

hp 152 (16d8+80)

Fort +11, Ref +13, Will +8

Defensive Abilities troop traits

#### Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee troop +20 (4d6+8)

Space 20 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks fusillade (DC 23), grenade volley (DC 21)

#### Statistics

Str 26, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11

Base Atk +12; CMB +20; CMD 32

Feats Ability Focus (fusillade), Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness

Skills Climb +15, Craft (firearms) +4, Knowledge (engineering) +1, Perception +23, Profession (soldier) +6, Stealth +10, Survival +8

Languages Common

#### Special Abilities

**Fusillade (Ex):** Rifle troops can fire a fusillade of rifle bullets as a standard action.

This attack takes the form of up to four lines with a range of 200 feet. These lines can start from the corner of any square in the troop's space. All creatures in one of these lines' areas of effect take 6d10+6 points of bludgeoning and piercing damage (Reflex DC 23 for half). The save DC is Dexterity-based, and includes the bonus from the troop's Ability Focus feat.

**Grenade Volley (Ex):** Rifle troops are equipped with grenades. As a move action, a rifle troop can target a single square up to 60 feet away with a volley of fragmentation grenades. A volley deals 12d6 points of piercing and slashing damage in a 30-foot-radius burst (Reflex DC 21 for half). The save DC is Dexterity-based.

## SHIP LAYOUT.

The R.N.S. *Coaltongue* has a wooden hull sheathed with 5-inch thick iron armor plating, engraved with subtle magical icons of defense and power. Measuring 205 ft. long with a beam of 50 ft. and a draft of 20 ft., the warship has three lower decks and a two-story command bridge amidships the maindeck. The steam engine, powered by heating a boiler with burning firegems, gives the vessel a top speed of 18 knots (roughly 20 miles per hour).

A heavy turret on the main deck fires enchanted shells in a forward arc. Twenty-three cannons line the gundeck, which is capped at the rear by the galley. When being pursued, this room can be converted into a firing platform.

Below that is the berth deck, with the ship's magazine at the bow and quarters for the ship's wizard and guests at the stern. The engine deck contains the engine, fuel bins, and various cargo.

The bridge's main level contains quarters for captain and officers, while the second story command deck has speaking tubes to various sections of the ship, and is where the captain must stand to direct the Brand.

All the lower decks have sections of grated floor panels to help circulate air. Characters easily have line of sight, but not necessarily line of effect, through this grating.

### CAPACITOR AND BRAND.

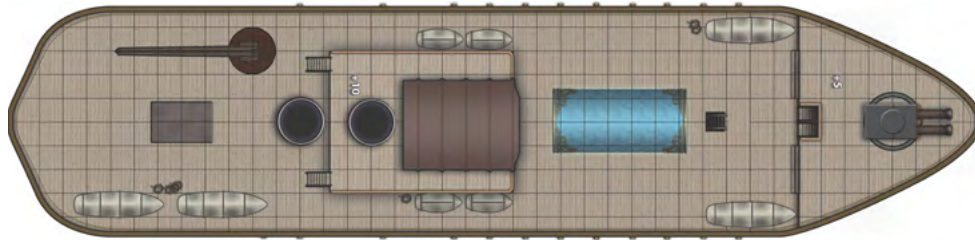
On the *Coaltongue's* maindeck sits an elaborate glass frame, reinforced by magic to be as strong as steel, and shaped in a half-cylinder to resemble the boiler of a train locomotive. While its design is partially aesthetic, intended to evoke the power of Risur's new industry, this innovative structure is Risur's greatest trump card against Danoran warships: a magical capacitor.

Excess energy from the steam engine is stored in thin metallic etchings within the structure. Even while storing its full power, the interior of the capacitor is perfectly safe to walk through, and its expansive windows let it serve as venue for ceremonies and celebrations. But the primary purpose of the capacitor is to power attack spells of the ship's warmages, and to charge the Brand.

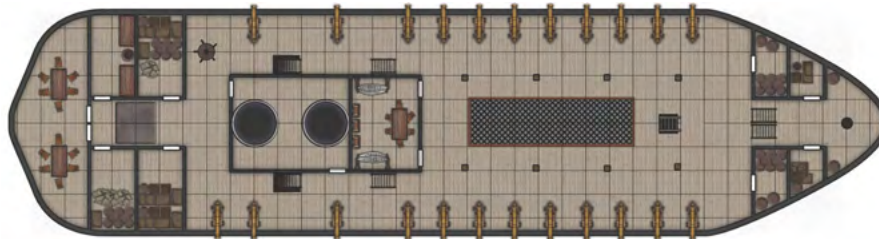
The Brand—so named because it burns an image into any surface it strikes—fires a massive blast of pyromantic energy from the ship's figurehead, often enough to outright destroy a smaller

### R.N.S. *Coaltongue*.

#### MAIN DECK.



#### GUN DECK.



#### BERTH DECK.



#### ENGINE DECK.



### GOLDEN WARD.

vessel and cripple a larger one. Its range is limited to about a hundred feet, and after firing it takes hours to recharge the capacitor, but combined with the *Coaltongue's* speed and maneuverability, the Brand should deter attacks by Danor's navy.

The gunports, windows, and main deck are all ringed by a thin inlay of gold wire. As detailed in the Player's Guide, this decorative work prevents teleportation across any opening so ringed.



**Steam Walker**

CR 13

XP 25,600

N Large construct

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1**Defense****AC** 30, touch 16, flat-footed 23 (+7 Dex, +14 natural, –1 size)**hp** 140 (16d10+46)**Fort** +5 **Ref** +11, **Will** +5**Defensive Abilities** arcane shield; **DR** 10/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits**Weaknesses** piloted construct**Offense****Speed** 50 ft.**Melee** chain sword +22/+17/+12/+7 (3d6+10/18–20)**Ranged** shotgun +22/+17/+12/+7 (2d6)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Statistics****Str** 24, **Dex** 23, **Con** –, **Int** –, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 1**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 30**Feats** Rapid Reload (B), Toughness (B)**Special Abilities**

**Arcane Shield (Su)** As a swift action, the steam walker's pilot can choose an energy type. Until the end of its next turn, the steam walker and all allies within 20 feet gain resist 10 against that energy type.

**Piloted Construct (Ex)** A steam walker relies on a pilot to control its motions. His stats are equivalent to a Danoran Lookout, below, though he does not act independently from the steam walker.

The pilot has total cover and normally cannot be targeted by attacks. Whenever the walker fails a save against an attack that deals energy damage (or if some other attack penetrates the suit to damage the pilot), the pilot gets progressively more panicked. On the first failed save, the steam walker can only move at half speed. On the second failed save, the steam walker is staggered. On the third failed save, the pilot falls unconscious, rendering the walker completely inert.

**Danoran Lookout**

CR 4

XP 1,200

Human rogue 5

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +9**Defense****AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)**hp** 40 (5d8+15)**Fort** +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk short sword +6 (1d6+3/19–20)**Special Attacks** sneak attack +3d6**Statistics****Str** 16, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18**Feats** Acrobatic, Alertness, Dodge, Stealthy

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Climb +11, Escape Artist +12, Fly +5, Intimidate +7, Perception +11, Sleight of Hand +10, Sense Motive +3, Stealth +12, Swim +11

**Languages** Common**SQ** rogue talents (fast stealth, peerless maneuver), trap-finding**Gear** mwk short sword, mwk studded leather, mwk buckler**DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE**

The party might decide to sail straight into Flint Harbor on the fast but lightly-armed *Impossible*. They have to navigate the naval mine field, and get past a dozen frigates. Even if the Danorans cannot catch them, the party won't be able to get close to either the *Coaltongue* or the island without getting attacked. But if they lure She Who Writhes like a fey fox luring the Great Hunt, they might stand a chance.

**HOME SEA ADVANTAGE****Action. Tactical. Level 18.**

*With the party at the lead, and a fey titan somewhat on their side, the Risuri navy attacks the Danoran fleet in Flint Harbor.*

The party might engage the Danoran fleet several ways – with the *Coaltongue*, with a ragtag fleet of dockers, on the *Impossible*, and so on. Use the following elements to pace a large naval battle, culminating with Lya Jierre's flagship, *Praepollens Auctoritate*, closing so the tiefling ghost can engage them personally. Of course, if the party has other ideas, go with it. They might even make it onto the island without ever firing a single cannon, rush through the abandoned government district as the Danorans try to shell them, then use a ritual to create a crack in the dome shield. In that case, when the governor's ritual is disrupted the Danorans beat a hasty retreat, losing a third of the fleet to She Who Writhes.

Ship and sea monster stats for this encounter can be found in Appendix Four: Naval Forces.

**Battle Elements**

This is a huge battle, so keep the focus on the party's actions. You only need to keep rough track of where the Danoran ships are. If the party's on the ball, they won't have to engage the entire force at once.

**Scale of the Harbor**

The mouth is about four miles wide. It's about seven miles from the mouth to the Governor's Island, or eight to the Royal Docks. It would take the *Impossible* about twenty minutes to cross that distance, and a little longer for the *Coaltongue*, though clever engineers can shave a little off.

**Falling Stars and Ominous Lights**

Overhead, the heavens shift and stars literally fall from the sky, a few every minute. They plunge silently, then flash and sizzle as they strike the water. None interfere with the battle. (We only want one star to actually collide with anything, and that's at the adventure's end.)

The lighthouse atop Stanfield's keep begins to glow, though it is initially muted by the translucent magical shield defending the fort.



### Line of Battle

There has not been a major naval engagement at fleet scale for eight years, and so the Danoran's tactics with their newly-improved steam warships are untested. Even if the PCs are identified, they don't commit their entire force against them, fearing a trick. A dozen steam frigates form a line blockading the harbor entrance, leaving the three battleships, four grand frigates (or six if the party didn't handle the pair guarding the *Coaltongue*), and a variety of smaller vessels occupying the harbor itself. At over four miles across, the harbor still has plenty of room, and at night it might even be possible to sneak a sailing vessel past the Danorans.

### Stealthy Approach

A ship with a steam engine has no chance of sneaking through the harbor, unless the party can conjure a thunderstorm or something to mask the sound. For a sailing vessel, there's a slim chance.

Four general areas of the harbor are under observation: the mouth of the harbor (moderate watch), the harbor center (light watch), Governor's Island (heavy watch), and the Royal Docks (light watch). If the party is going elsewhere, they can move freely.

It takes five naval turns to pass through the moderately-watched harbor mouth, eight to sneak through the heavy watch around the Governor's Island, and two to either pass through the harbor center or get past the grand frigates watching the *Coaltongue* at the Royal Docks.

Each naval turn, the captain or lookout must succeed a Perception check (DC 25), representing keeping aware of the Danorans' locations, and knowing how the party's ship will appear against the city lights of Flint. A successful check determines where any Danoran ships are within a thousand feet.

Next, the captain or navigator must succeed a Stealth check (DC 25, or 30 if the Perception check failed). A failed check alerts one of the Danoran ships, which will launch a rocket that hangs in the sky and illuminates the rough area of the party's ship for one naval turn.

If they intentionally try to enter the same stage as another ship, increase the Stealth DC by 5.

### Torpedoes

The naval minefield is a variant 'catch hazard.' Each naval turn that a ship is in the minefield, during the Terrain phase the Captain must make a Command check (DC 20), adding the ship's maneuverability, and taking a -10 penalty due to the ship's size (for either the *Impossible* or *Coaltongue*). A lookout can choose to make the check, using the Captain's Command check and adding the lookout's own Wisdom modifier.

On a failed check, make an attack against the ship's defense. **Attack:** 1d20+18. Strikes inflicted this way can only damage parts of the ship below the water line, which is typically Hull Integrity, as well as Propulsion for the *Coaltongue*.

The minefield is thin and long, so a ship trying to speed through it is only in danger for one naval turn.

### Scattered Battles

Unless the party screws up, they probably only have to fight a few ships at a time. If the party avoids a battle, the enemies give chase, which might result in the party being pincered by multiple encounters' worth of enemies at once. Even then, though, the Danoran fleet won't commit all its forces against one vessel. I mean, that's ridiculous. About half keep their distance.

While the *Coaltongue* is resilient, there's a limit to how much punishment it can take. If the party is reckless in engaging enemies, they're liable to end up with a crippled ship. Of course, they have enough personal strength to probably seize another ship and continue the fight, though they might be short on crew.

**Harbor Mouth:** A first wave consists of three frigates, which try to drive the party into the torpedoes. Two naval turns later, another trio of frigates joins up with the first wave.

**Harbor Center:** The enemy being widely spaced, the party only encounters one steamship, which will flee and try to reach the next nearest ship, one or two turns later. They continue to try to find allies while making their way to the battleships near the Governor's Island, and at most six steamships engage the party.

**Royal Docks:** Two grand frigates watch the *Coaltongue*.

**Governor's Island:** Forced to watch both sides of the island, it takes a while for the defenders to converge on the party. Start with one grand frigate, then a battleship arrives the next naval turn, then another grand frigate, then Lya Jierre's own *Praepollens Auctoritate*.

### The Kraken

Beshela, Archfey of the Sea appears at some point, leaping from the surf and landing on the deck of the PCs' ship. She hurriedly explains that whatever the party did after they left Thistle Palace caused She Who Writhes to awaken. Now the fey titan seeks to contest the monarch of Risur for control of her domain.

She Who Writhes has chosen the form of a colossal kraken, and she creates a massive wave as she enters Flint Harbor and sets off several of the torpedoes. They barely harm her.

For the rest of the naval encounter, the fey titan pursues the party, discouraging them from sitting still. She's slow, though, which gives the party the option to lure her so she crosses paths with their enemies. She'll angrily crush and drown any vessel in her path.

If She Who Writhes is within a thousand feet of the party's ship, and if the PCs are in the same stage as another ship or in an adjacent stage, during the Location phase the party can choose to take a -5 penalty to its Command check. If so, they can draw She Who Writhes toward one vessel whose Command check they beat.

### Ghostly Duel

Lya Jierre has been brought back as a ghost by Nicodemus the Gnostic, and is wholly devoted to seeing the Obscurati's plans to fruition. But (barring particularly boorish behavior by the party in the past) she understands and respects the party's need to defend their homeland. No grudge stirs her to anger, not even if the constables dropped her into lava in Pemberton's volcano lair (see adventure six, *Revelations from the Mouth of a Madman*).

She views them as equals, and recognizes that of all the forces in Flint Harbor, she has the best chance to defeat them. That said, respecting them isn't the same as fighting fair. Lya is above all else intelligent, and will use her new powers to their fullest.

Lya likely first spots the party by spyglass as they near Governor's Island. From the prow of *Praepollens Auctoritate* she flares with white fire to draw their attention, draw her sword and nods to them, then gives the order to make ready to board. The battleship roars and unleashes a constant barrage of cannonfire as it tries to come alongside the party's vessel.



When the two ships are near, Lya orders the hold open to release her ‘pet’: a mechanical dragon, powered by witchoil. Then like any good swordfighting villain, she closes to melee and holds a conversation as she duels. (Alternately, the party might want to talk first, then fight.) In battle she lets the dragon keep most of the party occupied, and tries to draw off whichever PC she’d most enjoy trading words with. She likely also has a full crew of hundreds of soldiers.

### ***Battle with Lya Jierre***

- ♦ Lya, the Lost Jierre Scion
- ♦ Draconic Witchoil Golem
- ♦ 2 Danoran Companies (see page 57)

This chatty swordfight should have a different tone from the challenge proclaimed by Catherine Romana in the previous act, and from Roland Stanfield’s deconstruction of Risur’s flaws in the climax. Lya talks instead about why she believes the conspiracy is necessary.

“It’s an honor to cross blades with you again. Despite our past disagreements and their consequences,” she briefly flares with ghostly fire, then smiles, “this is not personal for me.

“I won’t try to persuade you with compassion. Nicodemus cares about saving the world from suffering. He and I both have seen wars, and bloodshed. We agree it must stop. But for different reasons.

“It wasn’t the atrocities I saw, or the horrible wounds my friends suffered that bothered me most.” (Try to time this with her cutting off someone’s limb.) “It was that there was no place for reason. When I’m honest with myself, a stranger’s suffering – it doesn’t bother me. But a mind left fallow, poisoned by desperation? *That* is cruel.

“You’re loyal and decent. I respect that. But a new age of reason is upon us. Your time is past.”



**Lya, the Lost Jierre Scion**

CR 16

XP 76,800

Female tiefling ghost fighter 10 (lore warden)/duelist 6

LN Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Perception +26**Defense****AC** 36, touch 27, flat-footed 24 (+9 armor, +5 deflection, +6 Dex, +6 dodge)**hp** 168 (16d10+80)**Fort** +16, **Ref** +16, **Will** +8**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, enhanced mobility, parry, rejuvenation;  
**Immune** undead traits**Resist** cold 5, electricity 5, fire 30**Offense****Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** +3 *agile flaming razorbust rapier* +27/+22/+17 (1d6+21/15–20 plus 1d6 fire)  
or *corrupting touch* +21 (1d6d6, DC 22)**Ranged** dancing lantern blaster +22 touch (5d6)**Special Attacks** duelist combat (acrobatic charge, precise strike +6, riposte), infernal wrath of the Jierre bloodline, reality wound, telekinesis**Statistics****Str** -, **Dex** 22, **Con** -, **Int** 20, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 20**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 47**Feats** Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (rapier), Greater Weapon Specialization (rapier), Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Reposition, Mobility, Repositioning Strike, Spring Attack, Staggering Critical, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier), Whirlwind Attack**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Bluff +24, Climb +7, Diplomacy +24, Escape Artist +13, Fly +21, Knowledge (nobility) +24, Knowledge (planes) +15, Perception +28, Perform (oratory) +24, Sense Motive +20, Stealth +21, Swim +7**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal**SQ** grave trappings, maneuver mastery, weapon training (light blades +2, firearms +1)**Other Gear** +3 *agile flaming razorbust rapier*, +3 *mithral chainmail*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *belt of constitution and dexterity* +2, *headband of vast intelligence* +4**Special Abilities****Duelist Combat (Ex)** Between her Mobility feat and her duelist training, Lya gets a +8 bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity she provokes by moving. She can also charge across difficult terrain.

Her rapier attacks against living creatures with a discernible anatomy deal +6 damage, which is factored in above. Remove this damage against creatures with no proper anatomy.

Whenever she takes a full attack action, she can elect not to take one of her attacks. At any time before her next turn, she can attempt to parry an attack against her or an adjacent ally as an immediate action. To parry, she makes an attack roll, using the same bonuses as the attack she chose to forego. If her attack roll beats the roll of the attacking creature, the attack automatically misses. She also takes a –4 penalty when attempting to parry an attack made against an adjacent ally.

When she successfully parries, she can make an attack of opportunity against the creature whose attack she thwarted.

Due to her Critical Focus, Repositioning Strike, and Staggering Critical Feats, Lya has a +4 bonus to rolls to confirm critical hits. If her confirmation roll beats the target's CMD, she can reposition them, moving them 5 ft., plus 5 ft. for every 5 points she beat their CMD. Additionally, if her attack is a confirmed critical hit, the target is staggered 1d4+1 rounds. A Fortitude save (DC 24) reduces the staggered duration by 1 round.

Finally, her *razorbust weapon* can cut people's limbs off. If a target is reduced to 6 HP or below, it must make a Fortitude save (DC = damage dealt). On a success, the target loses an extremity of its choice—hand, foot, arm, or leg. On a failure, Lya chooses which extremity the target loses.

So if she's surrounded, she'll use whirlwind attack to strike everyone, probably crit a few and shove them overboard while staggering them.

**Dancing Lantern Blaster (Ex)** Beside Lya floats a strange carbine built around a glass lantern. She can attack with it once each round as a free action. This does not provoke attacks of opportunity, but she cannot target creatures adjacent to her. Each time she fires it, Lya chooses one of the following types of damage for it to deal: acid, cold, electricity, fire, force, negative energy, or sonic. The blaster can be targeted independently, but it is unaffected by area attacks. It has Lya's AC and saves and 50 hp.**Corrupting Touch (Su)** By passing part of her incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, Lya inflicts 16d6 damage. This damage is not negative energy—it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save (DC 22) halves the damage inflicted.**Grave Trappings (Su)** Lya continues to be able to use and benefit from spectral duplicates of items she had when she died. These items cannot be destroyed or removed from her. Should Lya be destroyed, her equipment reappears with her upon rejuvenating. Additionally, since she died in or metaphysically near a volcano, she has incredible fire resistance.**Infernal Wrath of the Jierre Bloodline (Su)** Once per day as an immediate action when hit by an attack, Lya can cause the creature who hit her to take 5d6 points of fire damage. The creature must make a DC 22 Reflex save or catch on fire, taking an additional 5d6 points of fire damage each round until the flames are extinguished. Whether or not the creature saves, any debilitating conditions affecting Lya are also transferred to the target.**Reality Wound (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds, Lya can make an attack that seems to leave a gash in the world itself. As a free action when she makes an attack, tongues of flame lash out through an apparent rip in space, occupying one 5-ft. square of the space of the target she attacked. Until the end of the encounter, any creature entering or ending its turn in that space takes 5d6 fire damage.**Telekinesis (Su)** Lya can use can use *telekinesis* as a standard action once every 1d4 rounds (CL 14<sup>th</sup>).



**Draconic Witchoil Golem**

CR 16

XP 76,800

N Huge construct

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8**Defense****AC** 34, touch 14, flat-footed 28 (+4 Dex, +2 dodge, +20 natural, -2 size)**hp** 177 (25d10+40)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8**DR** 15/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits; **SR** 27**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** slam +35 (4d6+12 plus 3d6 negative energy), 2 claws +35 (2d8+12), tail slap +30 (2d6+6)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Special Attacks** adamantine weapons, close-quarters rocketry, witchoil headbutt**Statistics****Str** 34, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1**Base Atk** +25; **CMB** +39; **CMD** 55 (59 vs. trip)**Skills** Perception +8**Special Abilities****Adamantine Weapons (Ex)** The natural weapons of a draconic witchoil golem are made of adamantine and have the qualities of a weapon made from that material.**Close-Quarters Rocketry (Ex)** Once every 1d4 rounds, a draconic witchoil golem can cause the vents along its flanks erupt with fire. All creatures within a 15-foot-radius burst centered on the golem take 14d6 fire damage (DC 22 Reflex for half). The save DC is Charisma-based. The force of the blast allows the golem to fly up to 50 feet, but it must land at the end of its movement.**Witchoil Headbutt (Ex)** The head at the end of a draconic witchoil golem's stubby neck has no mouth, but when it makes a slam attack, black witchoil sloshes through its eye sockets onto its target. A creature hit by the golem's slam attack takes 3d6 points of negative energy damage, and it must make a DC 22 Reflex save or take an additional 3d6 points of negative energy damage on the following round. The save DC is Charisma-based.**Aftermath**

A defeated Lya reincorporates, but will return to the ghost council in a few days. If the party sinks the flagship, the Danorans think better of tussling with She Who Writhes and retreat. Once the fey titan has done her fair share of damage, Beshela dives into the sea and tells her mistress that Risur's monarch has fled to the land. The kraken withdraws, but continues to terrorize the seas around Risur in the coming months.

The party has a chance to get close to Governor's Island and see the shield protecting the fort, which glows brighter as the lighthouse within activates. A sustained cannon barrage (or the *Coaltongue's* brand) can crack a hole in the wall, though the party will need to be prepared to move through quickly. They might bring some soldiers or other allies with them, but the shield recloses rapidly, and waiting for another barrage to create a new opening gives Stanfield time to activate the lighthouse, which will turn the entire city against the party.

**STANFIELDS' STAND****Social. Real-Time. Level 16.**

*Yes, the apostrophe is supposed to be there. One of Governor Stanfield's incarnations converses with the party before they attack.*

The Governor's Island has an outer government district surrounded by a modest wall. Inside that, heavier walls defend the Governor's Island Fortress, and in its center is the forty-foot-high keep surrounded by a twenty-foot-deep dry moat. Once the party finds a way to crack the shield protecting the fort and get inside, they find the fort's main doors open, the courtyard and interior buildings seemingly abandoned, except for the central keep.

A second, smaller dome covers the roof of the keep. Translucent, it reveals several pillar-like structures of some sort, emitting beams of differently-colored light that generally converge on a taller structure that resembles a lighthouse. Every few moments the beams angle away from the lighthouse, change colors, then swing back. Each time they do, another star falls out of the night sky.

Then a single figure approaches them from a nearby smithy. It's Roland Stanfield, but not the governor the party knows.

**Framing What is to Come**

This Stanfield has a normal skin tone, and doesn't have the flat-colored eyes and lined skin of a deva. He wears plain grey clothes and a silver fishhook necklace, but there is a soft glow about him. If given the chance, he explains that he was the first Roland Stanfield, who fought in the Second Victory and witnessed Srasama's fall. Possessed of a bit more swagger and a bit less serene detachment than the current Stanfield, he describes himself as 'the conscientious objector,' the only one of Stanfield's past lives who objects to the Obscurati's plan.

The current governor has manifested a dozen past lives into physical form, but in a desire to be honest to himself, he has allowed this incarnation to speak against him. This Stanfield entreats the party to stop his newer self. It was hubris of man that led to the Great Malice, and hubris will spell disaster for this great design as well.

Or, at least that what this incarnation claims. In truth, all the Stanfields are united, and this earliest version is simply stalling and gathering information, since Stanfield is aware of everything his incarnations perceive. A Sense Motive check (DC 38) realizes his ploy. Otherwise, the original Stanfield talks for a few minutes, offering deceptive advice – destroying the lighthouse will reverse the Obscurati's changes, Stanfield is weakest if you destroy his other incarnations in order from earliest to most recent, and Nicodemus himself will be arriving soon with the colossus to make Flint the capital of his new world.

This incarnation claims he is not permitted to harm his other incarnations, and that he has sworn off violence altogether. He'll accompany the party if they ask, but will wait to betray them until they reach the top of the tower. His stats are the same as a Holy Warrior Incarnation (page 72).

### Miscellanea

Stanfield needs time to complete his ritual and attune the whole of Risur to the planar traits of the Obscurati's new world order. Keep the timeline flexible, so that the party inevitably arrives with only about ten minutes to spare. However, if they sit and wait and refuse to press ahead, Stanfield will finish, causing everyone in the nation – except for a few high-level or strong-willed individuals – to hold off on fighting until they give talking a chance. The party will find themselves without allies and possibly bereft of some of their powers. See the sidebar New World Order.

If the party explores, they can find a few members of the fort's maintenance staff in hiding. All the defenders have consolidated into the keep. The keep has no windows, only scattered arrow slits, including three directly over the entrance door, through which light sneaks.

Parties who want to harken back to adventure one can find the fort's sewer system and try crawling up the drainage into the keep's latrine, arriving in Area B.

### NEW WORLD ORDER

More detailed rules of the magical nature of the new world will be presented in Adventure Ten, *Godmind*, but when the Obscurati ritual is complete, the following changes affect reality. This probably happens after the party thwarts Stanfield and a star strikes the keep, but it might happen earlier if they wait too long.

- ♦ Gold no longer blocks teleportation. Flight magic can last more than five minutes.
- ♦ Everyone gets a +5 bonus to Diplomacy checks if they use rational appeals rather than emotional ones. Everyone takes a -5 penalty to Sense Motive and Intimidate checks.
- ♦ Everyone automatically stabilizes when unconscious and heals to 1 hit point after a minute. You have to deliver a coup de grace to finish someone. You get a +5 bonus to Fortitude saves against disease and poison.
- ♦ Every creature with intelligence 3 or greater can teleport within line of sight as a move action, but only to places it has been since the nature of the world changed. This new ability is not apparent, and likely will only be discovered by chance, unless the party paid close attention to the Ob's plans in adventure seven.
- ♦ Eladrin lose their racial ability to teleport via the Dreaming, but their attacks deal full damage against insubstantial creatures. They of course do gain the line-of-sight ability everyone has.
- ♦ Deva who die reincarnate one last time, but as a different race or creature, appropriate to how they lived their life. Stanfield, for instance, will reincarnate as a rakshasa due to his ongoing deception.
- ♦ Because magic functions differently, people cannot use any magical powers until they learn the new planar physics. In the short term, no character can use any arcane or divine spells or spell-like abilities.

### LIGHTNING STRIKE RESCUE OP

#### Action. Tactical. Level 18.

*The party tries to save the day, and discover Stover Delft has been replaced by a doppelganger.*

When Governor Stanfield ordered the island evacuated, he kept a contingent of soldiers and warned them that a group of RHC agents had become traitors. Stover Delft (rather, his doppelganger) corroborated this. The soldiers don't initially trust the party, but if they're convincing, if the Delft doppelganger is revealed as an imposter, or if they leave the soldiers alive long enough to hear Stanfield's diatribe about Risur, they may turn to the party's side.

Otherwise, this battle could be overwhelming.

#### Keep Exterior

The drawbridge over the moat is withdrawn up when the party arrives (hardness 5, 100 hp, Break DC 35). Behind it a steel-reinforced set of wooden double doors (hardness 8, 150 hp, Break DC 37) and a steel portcullis (hardness 20, 50 hp, Break DC 32, but only providing cover, since attacks can pass through it) block the entrance. The reinforced stone walls (hardness 10, 500 hp, Break DC 40) only have three arrow slits, directly over the entry door, each lined with interior gold wire to prevent teleportation. However, if the party waits five minutes until Stanfield completes his ritual, the golden ward will no longer function due to altered planar physics.

Three levers inside the door at Area A lower the draw bridge, open the doors, and raise the portcullis.

A magical shield (hardness 50, 200 hp, regenerates 50 hp/round) covers the roof and all parts of the building's exterior higher than thirty feet.

#### Keep Interior

Inside the keep, if the party used massive firepower to break the magical shield around the fortress, scatter thick chunks of squares with debris, creating difficult terrain. The ritual in Area H creates a pillar of lightning that rises through area N up to the ceiling, brightly illuminating the building. It causes the internal rooms to cast sharp shadows. Any PC trained in Knowledge (arcana) immediately realizes that the shield overhead is powered by that beam.

#### Last Line of Defense

- ♦ 6 Risuri Elite Squads
- ♦ 1 Doppel-Delft
- ♦ 1 Staircase Mimic
- ♦ 4 Swordsman Incarnations
- ♦ 1 Conspirator Incarnation
- ♦ 2 Sorcerer Incarnations





Seven of Stanfield's incarnations wait here:

- ♦ One swordsman, leading the soldiers from just south of the barricade in area A;
- ♦ One conspirator atop the roof at area N, acting as a target;
- ♦ Two more swordsmen hiding south of the two central pillars, invisible (thanks to the magic of sorcerer incarnation) and ready to ambush PCs who blunder too close;
- ♦ A swordsman waiting in room F;
- ♦ A sorcerer overseeing the ritual in area H; and
- ♦ Another sorcerer providing defensive magic from atop area K.

Three squads of marines (each consisting of a dozen men) defend the ground floor – one on the arrow slit overwatch in Area J, one behind the entrance barricade at Area A, and the other in room E. Another three squads provide fire from the roofs of the rooms – one each atop areas K, L, and M. Additionally, the doppel-Delft commands from atop area L.

Finally, the staircase at area D is a giant mimic. It doesn't attack until someone steps on it.

**Risuri Elite Squad**

CR 7

XP 3,200

LN Medium humanoid (human, troop)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +14**Defense****AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)**hp** 86 (9d8+36)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** troop traits**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** troop +11 (3d6+5)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** druidic support (DC 18), fusillade (DC 17)**Statistics****Str** 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24**Feats** Ability Focus (druidic support), Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Toughness**Skills** Climb +17, Perception +14, Survival +14**Languages** Common, Primordial**Special Abilities****Druidic Support (Sp)** A Risuri elite squad contains a druid able to command lightning. As a move action, the squad can call down a lightning bolt in any space within 100 feet. A creature in that space takes 5d6 points of electricity damage (Reflex DC 18 for half). The save DC is Wisdom-based.**Fusillade (Ex)** A Risuri elite squad can fire a fusillade of rifle bullets as a standard action. This attack takes the form of up to four lines with a range of 200 feet. These lines can start from the corner of any square in the troop's space. All creatures in one of these lines' areas of effect take 4d10+3 points of bludgeoning and piercing damage (Reflex DC 17 for half). The save DC is Dexterity-based.**Doppelganger Agent**

CR 13

XP 25,600

N Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18**Defense****AC** 24, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)**hp** 94 (4d10+10d8+38)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10**Defensive Abilities** evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; **Immune** charm, sleep**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *wounding dagger* +18/+13/+8 (1d4+6/19-20) or 2 claws +17 (1d8+6)**Special Attacks** sneak attack +5d6**Doppelganger Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 18th; concentration +20)At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 14)**Rogue Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +12)3/day—*mage hand*2/day—*vanish***Statistics****Str** 22, **Dex** 19, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 22**Feats** Deceitful, Dodge, Combat Expertise, Greater Feint, Great Fortitude, Improved Feint, Iron Will**Skills** Bluff +24 (+28 while using change shape ability), Diplomacy +15, Disable

Device +17, Disguise +24 (+44 while using change shape ability), Escape Artist +17, Perception +18, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +18, Use Magic Device +15

**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** change shape (*alter self*), perfect copy, mimicry, rogue talents (canny observer, crippling strike, face in the crowd, minor magic, major magic)**Gear** +1 *wounding dagger*, +3 *leather armor***Special Abilities****Mimicry (Ex)** A doppelganger is proficient in all weapons, armor, and shields. In addition, a doppelganger can use any spell trigger or spell completion item as if the spells were on its spell list. Its caster level is equal to its racial Hit Dice.**Perfect Copy (Su)** When a doppelganger uses change shape, it can assume the appearance of specific individuals.**Staircase Mimic**

CR 13

XP 25,600

N Gargantuan aberration

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25**Defense****AC** 23, touch 7, flat-footed 22 (+1 Dex, +16 natural, –4 size)**hp** 162 (13d8+104)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11**Immune** acid**Offense****Speed** 10 ft.**Melee** slam +20 (4d6+21 plus 2d6 acid plus adhesive)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.**Special Attacks** constrict (4d6+21), corrosive glue**Statistics****Str** 38, **Dex** 12, **Con** 24, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 13**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 38 (can't be tripped)**Feats** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)**Skills** Climb +30, Disguise +17 (+37 when mimicking objects), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +18, Perception, Stealth +5, Survival +18**Languages** Common, Primordial, Undercommon**SQ** mimic object, supple shifter**Special Abilities****Adhesive (Ex)** A mimic exudes a thick slime that acts as a powerful adhesive, holding fast any creatures or items that touch it. An adhesive-covered mimic automatically grapples any creature it hits with its slam attack. Opponents so grappled cannot get free while the mimic is alive without removing the adhesive first. A weapon that strikes an adhesive-coated mimic is stuck fast unless the wielder succeeds on a DC 30 Reflex save. A successful DC 30 Strength check is needed to pry off a stuck weapon. Strong alcohol or universal solvent dissolves the adhesive, but the mimic can still grapple normally. A mimic can dissolve its adhesive at will, and the substance breaks down 5 rounds after the creature dies. The save DC is Strength-based.**Corrosive Glue (Ex)** The mimic deals an extra 2d6 points of acid damage with every successful slam attack or grapple check.**Mimic Object (Ex)** A mimic can assume the general shape of any Gargantuan object, such as a spiral staircase or a ship. The creature cannot substantially alter its size, though. A mimic's body is hard and has a rough texture, no matter what appearance it might present. A mimic gains a +20 racial bonus on Disguise checks when imitating an object in this manner. Disguise is always a class skill for a mimic.**Supple Shifter (Ex)** The mimic can squeeze into a space as small as 1/4 its base size.



**Swordsman Incarnation**

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male deva fighter (free hand fighter) 10

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +20**Defense****AC** 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +3 dodge, +1 natural)**hp** 85 (10d10+30)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy**Defensive Abilities** elusive +2, life-bound**Weaknesses** old injury**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +1 rapier +17/+12 (1d6+7/17-20)**Special Attacks** singleton +1, timely tip**Deva Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +11)1/day—*comprehend languages*, *deathwatch*, *stabilize***Statistics****Str** 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +14 (+19 disarm); **CMD** 28 (33 vs. disarm)**Feats** Combat Expertise, Dodge, Following Step, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Step Up, Step Up and Strike, Toughness, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier)**Skills** Bluff +16 (+19 to feint or create diversion), Intimidate +14, Perception +15**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** deceptive strike +3, shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)**Gear** +1 rapier, +1 chain shirt, amulet of natural armor +1, belt of giant strength +2, cloak of resistance +1



**Conspirator Incarnation**

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male deva inquisitor 10

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +17**Defense****AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +4 Dex)**hp** 75 (10d8+30)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy**Defensive Abilities** life-bound**Weaknesses** old injury**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +1 dagger +10/+5 (1d4+1/19-20) and +1 dagger +10/+5 (1d4+1/19-20)**Special Attacks** bane (10 rounds/day)**Deva Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +10)1/day—*comprehend languages*, *deathwatch*, *stabilize***Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +13)5/day—*copycat* (10 rounds)10 rounds/day—*master's illusion* (DC 17)**Inquisitor Spells Known** (CL 10th; concentration +13)4th (1/day)—*coward's lament* (DC 16), *divine power*3rd (3/day)—*greater stunning barrier* (DC 15), *heroism*, *keen edge*, *righteous vigor*2nd (5/day)—*delay poison*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *silence* (DC 14), *spiritual weapon*1st (6/day)—*alarm*, *bless*, *disguise self* (DC 13), *divine favor*, *litany of weakness*0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *brand*, *guidance*, *light*, *sift***Domain** Trickery



**Statistics****Str** 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21**Feats** Double Bane, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Lookout, Outflank, Precise Strike, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Bluff +15, Climb +12, Disguise +13, Intimidate +13, Perception +17, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +16**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** cunning initiative, judgment (2, 4/day), monster lore +3, shards of the past (Bluff, Perception), stern gaze +5, track +5, solo tactics**Gear** +1 chain shirt, +1 dagger (2), belt of incredible dexterity +2, cloak of resistance +1**Sorcerer Incarnation**

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male deva sorcerer 10

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

**Init** -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +18**Defense****AC** 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, -1 Dex, +1 natural, +4 shield)  
**hp** 65 (10d6+30)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +10; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy**Defensive Abilities** fated +2, life-bound**Weaknesses** old injury**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk quarterstaff +6 (1d6-1)**Special Attacks** it was meant to be 1/day**Deva Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +19)1/day—*comprehend languages*, *deathwatch*, *stabilize***Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 10th; concentration +19)5th (4/day)—*acidic spray*4th (6/day)—*fire shield*, *freedom of movement*, *stone shape*3rd (7/day)—*fireball*, *force punch*, *protection from energy*, *spiked pit*2nd (7/day)—*acid arrow*, *blur*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *spider climb*1st (8/day)—*alarm*, *floating disk*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance***Bloodline** destined**Statistics****Str** 10, **Dex** 8, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 20**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19**Feats** Combat Casting, Defensive Combat Training, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Maximize Spell, Toughness**Skills** Bluff +20, Perception +18, Spellcraft +14**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** bloodline arcana (luck bonus to saves for 1 round equal to spell level of personal spell cast) shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)**Gear** amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of resistance +2, headband of alluring charisma +2, ring of protection +1**Stanfield Incarnations**

Stanfield has three varieties of incarnations in this encounter. All three share Stanfield's old injury weakness (see page 71 for more details).

**Avoiding a TPK**

If the party is looking bad and there are still plenty of enemies, feel free to have reinforcements arrive. Gale might have conjured a mighty lightning bolt to crack the shield, allowing her and Asrabey to come through, or Lauryn Cyneburg might have figured out the arcane resonance of the shield and managed to teleport through with a few allies. If this happens, though, try to tie it into the party's own actions, or what they ordered their allies to handle.

**Terrain**

The interior of the keep has a 40-ft. ceiling, with a lot of open space. Several one-storey buildings fill the room, and a grand staircase (actually a mimic) spirals up to the roof. (It ate the original staircase, and now access is only via magic.

- A. Entrance Barricade.** Various furniture bits form 5-ft.-high walls (Break DC 20).
- B. Toilets.** Finely-appointed bathrooms for men and women.
- C. Offices.** The soldiers have been using these rooms as uncomfortable barracks for the past day. A ladder in the southwest hall leads to the roof of these buildings.
- D. Grand Staircase.** Actually a mimic.
- E. Conference Room.** Plenty of tables for partial cover. A staircase leads to the roof of this building.
- F. Quartermaster Office.** A staircase leads to the roof.
- G. Supplies.** There's enough here to survive several weeks worth of siege.
- H. Banquet Hall.** It has been adapted to a ritual chamber. The door is inscribed with a nonsense phrase that hides a sepia snake sigil (DC 15 Reflex negates, CL 10th).

Inside, Stover Delft has been placed on the central table, while the other four tables have ritual components. Since Delft – as a high-ranking agent of the king – is imbued with some power of Risur's rites of rulership, the ritual is perpetually draining his life force to power the shields around the fortress and over the top of the keep. Lightning streams from his chest through the ceiling and up into an arcane capacitor on the roof.

Ending the ritual safely requires four characters to simultaneously disassemble the ritual components. Each table requires a different check – Knowledge (arcana), Heal, Knowledge (nature), and Knowledge (religion), all DC 25. Failing even a single check causes Delft's heart to stop, and the ritual to go out of control, dealing 8d6 electricity damage in a 15-foot radius burst (DC 25 Reflex for half).

On success or failure, the shields over the keep and the fortress vanish. (At this point, if the party had allies on the ready just outside the fort, they can rush inside. Otherwise, even if the party takes a short rest, it takes more than five minutes for reinforcements to get onto the island and into the keep.)

- I. Kitchen.** Stanfield has used this as a makeshift prison. If the party has any associates whom you'd like to keep as hostages, they're here.
- J. Arrow Slit Overwatch.** One of the squads attacks from here as the party approaches, though they can only target a single foe with fusillade when firing through the arrow slits.

- K. Rooftops.** Each rooftop has a 5-ft.-high stone wall to provide cover. Planks placed between the buildings act as bridges, but could be kicked away to stymie enemies.
- L. More Rooftops.** As above.
- M. Even More Rooftops.**
- N. Over the Ritual.** The beam of lightning that crackles into the ceiling is blindingly bright, and attacks against creatures within 10 feet of the glowing area take a -2 penalty. A creature that enters or ends its turn in the area of the lightning takes 8d6 lightning damage.

## Deconstruction

In the midst of the battle, while the fake Delft is shouting orders and the soldiers are shooting the party, the various Stanfield incarnations have a speech prepared, which they read in the same calm, judgemental tone regardless of how much peril they are in. Every incarnation talks at the same time (except conspirator incarnations who are trying to hide). Each incarnation glows slightly, making it clear that they aren't the real Stanfield.

Each paragraph takes about a round for him to say.

"I know you've recently dealt with Catherine Romana and Lya Jierre, so you might be tired of speeches, but we intelligentsia like to explain ourselves. Constables, I hope you've considered whether the cause you fight for is worthy.

"Consider Risur. It has been at near-constant war for the past five hundred years. It has been justified as self defense, but except from this latest conflict we were always the superior force. Ber's armies were savage and untrained. Danor lacked magic. In Elfaivar we removed unwanted survivors to claim our colonies.

"Here in Flint, among the government who else but I expressed concern for the plight of the workers? People died to protest the injustice they suffered, but did the king ever speak out in their favor? No, he remained silent so that the industry necessary for his war machines would flourish.

"So then we come to you, brave constables. How wonderfully strong you are. By our last census, about fifty thousand people work in the factories of Parity Lake. Their per capita annual income is about 700 silver. Right now you're casually wearing enchanted items that cost more than the entire district earns in a year. Of course, that's ignoring the fabulous prosperity of the owners.

"You were present during Aodhan's announcement that he intended to seek peace with Danor, a speech given from the deck of the most powerful weapon in the world. The hypocrisy was astounding, but what unsettled me most was that he seemed blind to it.

"This nation is a source of greater misery than any other in five centuries, and you are the hand that wields the scourge. Set it down, constables, before the world changes and discovers what villains you truly are."

During his speech, the Risuri soldiers don't seem to get it at first, but by his third round some of them stop fighting. In the fourth round they all stop, realizing they're not serving the loyal servant of the king they thought the governor was. They look to the party for guidance.

## Aftermath

Once the party has secured the room (and killed the staircase), they have a chance to rest and figure out how to reach the roof. Simple options include teleportation, levitation, flight, or using the monarch's ability to just extrude a new staircase of rough rock from the earth itself.

## COSMIC POWER

### Action. Tactical. Level 19.

*Stanfield operates an eldritch machine, trying to sway Risur to the Ob's control before the party can stop him.*

The fall of the shield panics Stanfield, and he shifts his plans from finishing the ritual to preparing to kill the party. If they destroy the lighthouse, all his work will be for naught. He takes cover east of the control panel on the raised platform (Area B), while his four last incarnations wait beside the Area D lighthouse (holy warrior), the E7 lantern (lore master), the Area C capacitor (politician), and the E4 lantern (technologist).

Stanfield doesn't have another speech prepared. Honestly he thought he would have killed them by now. As the battle progresses and his incarnations are destroyed, his serene façade cracks, red seams of light flicker across the lines that trace his body, and he starts to lose his temper.

### The Eldritch Machine

- ♦ Roland Stanfield
- ♦ Holy Warrior Incarnation
- ♦ Loremaster Incarnation
- ♦ Technologist Incarnation
- ♦ Politician Incarnation

### Terrain

Five-foot high walls line the top of the tower, with occasional ten-foot-high adornments. Between these, eight brass lanterns glow different colors, fed a stream of gas that is refined by the red devices adjacent to them. The lanterns emit beams, which start the encounter all aimed directly at the central lighthouse.

A pipeline runs three feet off the ground at that awkward "do I climb over it or crawl under it" height. The raised platform has control switches to turn lanterns on and off, but Stanfield can manipulate them telekinetically. He can also telekinetically change the aim of the lanterns.

By the time the party arrives, the capacitor that received energy that was drawn from Delft is drained and no longer creates the forcefield.

- A. Staircase Entrance.** To Stanfield's dismay, there's no trap door to cover the stairs.
- B. Control Platform.** The panel has a lever for each of the lanterns, allowing them to be turned on or off as a minor action. You have to squeeze the handle to move the lever, so it's not possible to just shove multiple at once.
- C. Capacitor.** It feeds energy to the lanterns, and still has sufficient storage for the ritual. It just can't create a forcefield any longer. If damaged (hardness 10, HP 50), it struggles to provide sufficient power. Each round at initiative count 0, roll 1d8 to determine one lantern that doesn't work for that round.
- D. Wayfarer's Lighthouse.** Designed to help transition Flint, and by proxy the entirety of Risur, easily into the new metaphysical reality the Ob have created, this lighthouse is enchanted to resist attacks. As long as it is being fed energy from at least one lantern it is invulnerable.



**E. Lanterns.** Each channels a different plane of energy. The complicated part of the process that slowly replaced one plane with another is over. Now each represents one of the new worlds the Ob is linking reality to. Each lantern has hardness 15 and HP 100. A creature adjacent to the lantern can spend a standard action to reclaim its beam, using a pair of crank wheels.

1. **Jiese, the Plane of Fire.** Aspect of inspiration.
2. **Perlocus, the Plane of Air.** Aspect of speech.
3. **Mojang, the Plane of Life.** Aspects of artifice and craft.
4. **Ostea, the Plane of Water.** Aspect of healing.
5. **Ratios, the Plane of Earth.** Aspect of logic.
6. **Fourmyle, the Plane of Space.** Aspect of empowerment.
7. **Illocus, the Plane of Time.** Aspect of expression.
8. **Av, the Plane of Death.** Aspects of dreams and mirrors.

## Roland Stanfield

CR 17

XP 102,400

Male deva oracle (reincarnated oracle) 18

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

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

### Defense

**AC** 22, touch 9, flat-footed 22 (+10 armor, -1 Dex, +3 natural)

**hp** 189 (18d8+108)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +14, **Will** +21; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy

**Defensive Abilities** life-bound, living memories

**Weaknesses** old injury

### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk dagger +14/+9/+4 (1d4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** planar beam

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 18th; concentration +29)

1/day—*comprehend languages*, *deathwatch*, *stabilize*

**Oracle Spells Known** (CL 18th; concentration +29)

9th (3/day)—*energy drain*, *overwhelming presence* (DC 26)

8th (5/day)—*divine vessel*, *mass cure critical wounds*, *moment of prescience*

7th (7/day)—*destruction* (DC 24), *dictum* (DC 24), *ethereal jaunt*, *greater scrying*,  
*mass cure*      *serious wounds*, *reverse gravity* (DC 24)

6th (7/day)—*blade barrier* (DC 23), *forbiddance* (DC 23), *greater heroism*, *heal*,  
*mass cure moderate wounds*

5th (7/day)—*ancestral memory*, *cleanse*, *contact other plane*, *greater command* (DC 22),  
*mass cure light wounds*, *spell resistance*, *telekinesis* (DC 22)

4th (8/day)—*air walk*, *cure critical wounds*, *death ward*, *divination*, *freedom of*  
*movement*, *spiritual ally*

3rd (8/day)—*bestow curse* (DC 20), *borrow fortune*, *cure serious wounds*, *heroism*,  
*prayer* (DC 20), *protection from energy*

2nd (8/day)—*augury*, *calm emotions* (DC 19), *cure moderate wounds*,  
*detect thoughts* (DC 19), *enthrall* (DC 19), *pilfering hand*, *spiritual weapon*

1st (8/day)—*cure light wounds*, *forbid action* (DC 18), *liberating command*,  
*protection from chaos*, *sanctuary* (DC 18), *see alignment*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*,  
*purify food and drink*, *read magic*, *virtue*

**Mystery** ancestors

### Statistics

**Str** 10, **Dex** 8, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 24

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Quicken Spell, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness

**Skills** Bluff +36, Diplomacy +19, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (planes) +15, Linguistics +7, Perception +13, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +22

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Primordial

**SQ** oracle's curse (haunted), revelations (location memories [10/day], sacred council [7/day], spirit memories [10/day, DC 26], spirit shield [+10 armor, 18 hours], storm of souls [3/day, 9d8, DC 26]), shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)

**Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +3, *belt of mighty constitution* +4, *cloak of resistance* +5, *headband of alluring charisma* +6

### Special Abilities

**Living Memories (Ex)** Stanfield is linked to his previous incarnations. Each incarnation physically resembles Stanfield, but is slightly translucent and wields equipment appropriate to its talents.

Stanfield acts at Initiative count 30, and the four incarnations in this encounter act at 25, 20, 15, and 10. (If the incarnation of Stanfield's first life is also present, it acts on initiative count 5.) Each of them takes a full turn at that initiative count, and in most ways they act like independent creatures with their own abilities detailed below.

Whenever the real Governor Stanfield would take damage or be affected by a condition, he can choose to have his nearest active incarnation suffer that damage or condition instead. Physical objects (like entangling vines) can still impede Stanfield's movement, but he can shunt supernatural effects to his other lives.

Whenever one of Stanfield's incarnations is destroyed, the glowing lines on the real Stanfield's skin dim, and he coughs up a bit of blood. If the central lantern is destroyed, the magic letting him manifest all his incarnations ends; all the remaining incarnations fade away, and Stanfield collapses but survives (helpless) long enough to have a final word.

**Old Injury (Ex)** Stanfield has an old wound on his back that has persisted throughout his myriad lives. Whenever Stanfield or one of his incarnations is knocked prone, he takes 1d6 bleed damage.

**Planar Beam (Ex)** As a swift action, Stanfield or one of his incarnations chooses a lantern he can see, aiming its beam to fill a 5-foot radius burst anywhere within 500 feet. Until the lantern is re-aimed or destroyed, creatures suffer an effect appropriate to the plane of the chosen lantern as long as they remain within the area of the burst.

**Jiese.** The creature takes 5d6 fire damage if it enters or starts its turn in the area.

**Perlocus.** The creature cannot take hostile actions against Stanfield or his allies.

**Mojang.** Objects in the area are repaired 50 points of damage at the initiative count 0. Destroyed objects cannot be repaired.

**Ostea.** The creature is covered in blood and takes 3d6 negative energy damage. Whenever the target takes damage this way, the real Stanfield heals that much damage.

**Ratios.** The creature is entangled and cannot move from its space.

**Fourmyle.** The creature can spend 5 feet of movement to teleport to any other zone created by a lantern.

**Illocus.** As long as the creature is in the area, note the types and amounts of damage it takes. At the start of its turn, it takes damage equal to the damage it has taken since the start of its last turn. This damage is cumulative if the target remains in the zone.

**Av.** Objects in the area take 50 damage at initiative count 0 (ground becomes difficult terrain), as parts of the terrain spiral away, like dust caught in a whirlwind.

## Incarnations

Stanfield has four main varieties of incarnations.

### Holy Warrior Incarnation

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male deva warpriest 14

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

**Init** special; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +15

#### Defense

**AC** 26, touch 9, flat-footed 26 (+12 armor, -1 Dex, +5 shield)**hp** 119 (14d8+56)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +5, **Will** +14; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy**Defensive Abilities** life-bound**Weaknesses** old injury

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +2 *bastard sword* +17/+12 (1d10+5/17-20)**Special Attacks** channel negative energy (DC 20), fervor 5d6 10/day, planar beam**Deva Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 14th; concentration +20)1/day—*comprehend languages*, *deathwatch*, *stabilize***Blessing Supernatural Abilities** (10/day) agile feet, demoralizing glory, dimensional hop, glorious presence (DC 20)**Warpriest Spells Prepared** (CL 14th; concentration +21)5th—*righteous might*, *slay living* (DC 18)4th—*air walk*, *divine power*, *greater shield of fortification*, *persistent vigor*3rd—*chain of perdition*, *deadly juggernaut*, *dispel magic* (2), *searing light*, *stone shape*2nd—*align weapon*, *bull's strength*, *delay poison*, *effortless armor*, *hold person* (DC 15), *weapon of awe*1st—*bles*, *compel hostility*, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *remove fear*, *shield of faith*0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *stabilize*, *virtue*

#### Statistics

**Str** 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 22**Feats** Combat Casting, Disruptive, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Power Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Spellbreaker, Step Up, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)**Skills** Bluff +14, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +15**Languages** Primordial**SQ** aura, sacred armor +3 (14 minutes), sacred weapon +3 (14 rounds), shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)**Gear** +2 *bastard sword*, +3 *full plate*, +3 *heavy steel shield*, *belt of mighty constitution*+2, *cloak of resistance* +2

### Loremaster Incarnation

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male deva diviner 7/loremaster 7

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

**Init** special; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +22

#### Defense

**AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, -1 Dex, +4 shield)**hp** 91 (14d6+42)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy**Defensive Abilities** life-bound**Weaknesses** old injury

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk quarterstaff +7/+2 (1d6)**Special Attacks** planar beam**Deva Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 14th; concentration +20)1/day—*comprehend languages*, *deathwatch*, *stabilize***Diviner Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th; concentration +16)

6/day—diviner's fortune (+3)

**Diviner Spells Prepared** (CL 14th; concentration +23)7th—*deflection*, *greater arcane sight*, *prismatic spray* (DC 22), *spell turning*6th—*battlemind link*, *disintegrate* (DC 21), *greater dispel magic*, *true seeing*5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), empowered *fireball*, *telepathic bond*, *wall of force* (2)4th—*detect scrying*, *greater invisibility* (2), *ice storm*, empowered *scorching ray*3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *displacement*, *fireball* (DC 18), *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *stinking cloud* (DC 18)2nd—*bear's endurance*, *blur*, *bullet ward*, *glitterdust* (DC 17), *see invisibility*1st—*illusion of calm* (DC 16), *grease* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *mending*, *message*, *ray of frost***Opposition Schools** enchantment, necromancy

#### Statistics

**Str** 10, **Dex** 8, **Con** 12, **Int** 21, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17**Feats** Craft Wondrous Item, Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Penetration, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge [planes]), Spell Penetration, Toughness**Skills** Appraise +15, Bluff +21, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (engineering) +25, Knowledge (history) +25, Knowledge (planes) +31, Perception +22, Spellcraft +25, Use Magic Device +12**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Primordial**SQ** arcane bond (staff), forewarned, greater lore, lore +3, secrets (lore of true stamina, secret health, secret knowledge of avoidance, secrets of inner strength), shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)**Gear** *cloak of resistance* +3, *headband of vast intelligence* +4, *ring of protection* +2



### Technologist Incarnation

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male deva expert 14

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

Init special; Senses low-light vision; Perception +21

#### Defense

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 105 (14d8+42)

Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +13; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy

Defensive Abilities life-bound

Weaknesses old injury

#### Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Ranged stormburst rifle +13/+8 (7d6 electricity or sonic)

Special Attacks planar beam, subrail strike

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

1/day—comprehend languages, deathwatch, stabilize

#### Statistics

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 11

Base Atk +10; CMB +10; CMD 27

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Knowledge [engineering]), Toughness

Skills Appraise +20, Craft (technology) +20, Bluff +20, Disable Device +19, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (engineering) +26, Perception +21, Sleight of Hand +19, Use Magic Device +17

Languages Common, Dwarven, Primordial

SQ shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)

Gear stormburst rifle, +3 mithral shirt, amulet of natural armor +1, belt of incredible Dexterity +2, cloak of resistance +2

#### Special Abilities

**Stormburst Rifle (Ex)** The technologist incarnation wields a unique rifle of his own design. Its attacks resolve as touch attacks. The rifle has two settings, which the technologist can change between as a swift action.

In lightning mode, the rifle can target any creature within 100 feet, dealing 7d6 electricity damage on a successful hit. If the target is adjacent to a metal surface, like a lantern or pipe, he takes half damage.

In thunder mode, the rifle unleashes a 15-foot cone of sonic energy, gaining the scatter weapon quality. Creatures struck take 7d6 sonic damage and must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or be pushed 15 feet directly away from the rifle.

**Subrail Strike (Su)** Once per day as a standard action, the technologist incarnation can activate a small contraption that quickly grows and disgorges a full-sized locomotive engine made of force. The engine is 10 feet wide and 30 feet long, and it moves 50 feet in a straight line before vanishing. It passes through physical obstructions harmlessly, but all creatures in its path must take 10d6 points of force damage (DC 20 Reflex for half). Creatures who fail their save are pushed 5 feet along the train's path and knocked prone. Creatures who succeed immediately leap 5 feet to a space out of the train's path. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

### Politician Incarnation

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male deva rogue (charlatan) 14

LE Medium humanoid (deva)

Init special; Senses low-light vision; Perception +20

#### Defense

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +5 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 105 (14d8+42)

Fort +7, Ref +16, Will +6; +2 vs. death effects and negative energy

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, life-bound

Weaknesses old injury

#### Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger of venom +17/+12 (1d4+1/19-20)

Special Attacks planar beam, sneak attack +7d6

Deva Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +17)

1/day—comprehend languages, deathwatch, stabilize

#### Statistics

Str 10, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16

Base Atk +10; CMB +10; CMD 25

Feats Combat Expertise, Greater Feint, Improved Feint, Quick Draw, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Bluff +22, Diplomacy +20, Disable Device +20, Escape Artist +20, Intimidate +20, Perception +19, Sense Motive +19, Sleight of Hand +20, Stealth +20

Languages Common, Primordial

SQ grand hoax, natural born liar, rogue talents (black market connections, cunning lie, hard minded, honeyed words, skill mastery [Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Sense Motive], underhanded, unwitting ally), shards of the past (Bluff, Perception)

Gear dagger of venom, +3 mithral shirt, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of resistance +2, belt of incredible Dexterity +4



Stanfield witnessed the fall of the eladrin goddess Srasama five hundred years ago and died soon thereafter. But he reincarnated, his memories vague and jumbled. He found his way back to his homeland of Risur, settled in Flint, and eventually became the city's governor.

In the centuries since he has died with irregular intervals, and with each rebirth he returned to the city he calls home. He has constantly striven to improve himself with each life, from a simple warrior, to a humble leader, to an educated renaissance man nimbly handling the complex challenges of the fastest-growing city in the world. Stanfield wears a near-constant expression of contented optimism, but still occasionally complains of a war wound he took to his back in his first life.

A century ago, Nicodemus the Gnostic taught Stanfield a method to conjure forth his past incarnations, learning from them directly and gaining the ability to deploy them in battle. At the same time, he convinced the deva to join the Obscurati as a pivotal, long-term operative who would eventually be rewarded with Risur's crown. Though far from power-hungry, Stanfield has seen centuries of short-sighted leadership, and he is quite certain he could rule better than any mere mortal.

### Tactics

The real Stanfield tries to keep the high ground, raining down *energy drains* on whoever seems most resilient among the party. The rest of his incarnations then ignore that constable. The loremaster incarnation then lights up a target with empowered *scorching ray*, which the holy warrior incarnation attacks. The politician incarnation will try to flank and backstab that target. The technologist incarnation is an opportunist, but prefers to target enemies who try to keep their distance.

Every Stanfield will, on its round, spend a swift action to telekinetically adjust the beam of one of the lanterns, usually to catch a PC in something dangerous, but if necessary they'll aim a beam back at the lighthouse, use *Mojang* to repair a damaged lantern, or use *Fourmyle* for coordinated tactical maneuvering. If possible, they'll combo *Jiese* and *Ratios* on the same area, to burn a trapped creature slowly to death unless an ally can free them without also entering.

They make sure to always keep at least three beams pointed at the lighthouse, because if the lighthouse ever has no lanterns illuminating it, Stanfield will lose all his powers and his incarnations will all vanish.

Remember, a PC can reclaim a lantern as a standard action if they're adjacent to it. Effects like *mage hand* might also work, but it still takes a standard action to control the lantern.

### Aftermath

When Stanfield is finally cut down, or when the lighthouse is snuffed, he coughs and clutches his back as he collapses. Blood pools around him, and his skin drains of color, but he looks skyward as his eyes darken with death.

"You might have saved Risur," he says, "but Nicodemus will complete the ritual on Axis Island. It was a grand folly. Not my folly, though. Yours. Death has not stopped me before, and I swear even if the whole nation resists, it will not stop me now."



He smiles and releases a dying breath. Everything is growing steadily brighter, lit from above, as a falling star approaches. One round later the roof of the keep is struck by the falling star. Any skyseer present knows this star's name: Mishados, named after an incarnation of Srasama, said to be a healer. Every creature in the lighthouse takes 100 damage (DC 33 Reflex for half). This damage cannot reduce a character below 1 hit point. The impact levels the building and leaves the party scattered in the debris, but miraculously doesn't kill anyone, except Stanfield.

Depending on your players' mood at this point, you can just keep this as a straight victory. Or if they're riding high and aren't particularly injured, you can throw in the twist. As the party pulls themselves from the rubble, they discover that their magic barely works. Then rocks fall aside as Stanfield rises up, reborn as a rakshasa. (This 'curse' was teased in the eladrin temple in adventure eight.)

Rakshasa Stanfield's eyes glow red, and he stalks after the party, intending to cut them down one by one. Use the stats of a Holy Warrior incarnation, except that he fights with claws, not swords, and no attack can harm him unless it comes from one of the dagger-like shards of the fallen star (the magic item *arsenal of Dhebisu* works as well). A single strike from such a weapon destroys Stanfield utterly, leaving a smoking crater and a clattering, bleached skeleton.

## BRAVE NEW WORLD

When the dust clears, the sky overhead is no longer dotted with a field of stars, but instead glows with the uneven haze of a charcoal nebula. A mere handful of stars wander the night, and skyseers recognize their energy as matching the lanterns of the lighthouse.

Magic above cantrips and orisons doesn't work, though the mana is still there, just not moving as it once did. Already the PCs can feel something nudging them to behave differently, but they can easily shake it off. Others aren't so adept, and the party quickly discovers citizens of Risur readily trust and listen to strangers.

A bright golden glow rises in the air on the western horizon, then fades a few minutes later. It isn't until more than an hour later that the entire world rumbles with a deafening sound like an explosion, sweeping in from the same direction. A quick calculation of the speed of sound supports any guesses that the explosion occurred on Axis Island.

Any surviving Danoran ships flee, many of them pulled into the deep by She Who Writhes before the kraken withdraws to the wider sea. Atop Cauldron Hill stormclouds gather, but instead of falling rain, the mountain itself starts to erode and float upward, mote by mote. Flint holds its breath, wondering what the new day will bring. But hours pass, and when the sun should rise, instead the world is greeted only by a patch of the cloudy sky somewhat less dark. The haze there seems to churn ever so slowly, like two gears – immeasurably titanic to be visible at this cosmic distance – grinding between their teeth the heavens themselves.

The new age has dawned.



## ONWARD TO ZEITGEIST, ACT THREE

In adventure 10, *Godmind*, the party has to subdue four fey titans before they can safely leave Risur. The new world order turns Asrabey Varal into an enemy of Risur, and he betrays them while trying to commune with She Who Writhes. Benedict Pemberton has captured Axis Island and has critical intelligence, but is blockaded by the Danorans. If the party saves him, he can retrofit the party's ship to be able to fly. The priority then becomes disrupting a gathering in Danor's capital of heads of state and the world's brightest minds, whom Nicodemus intends to turn hostile to Risur. A Gidim expedition force takes advantage of new psychic energy in the world to drive the gathered thinkers mad and create a monstrous psychic gestalt bent on consuming all it deems unworthy.

In adventure 11, *Gorged on Ruins*, while the world slips into decay around them, the party seeks knowledge and magic to let them undo the Obscurati's ritual. Help can be gained by dealing with each of three threats – a Gidim invasion of Ber, a wintry undead army in Drakr, and the execution of gods in Crisillyir awakening ancient evil trapped in the volcano that overlooks Alais Primos. Once they're ready, the party can fly from this world to The Gyre, a celestial phenomenon that devours dying worlds.

In adventure 12, *The Grinding Gears of Heaven*, the path to the gyre takes them to Av, the plane of dreams that is slowly dying and drawing the whole world toward annihilation. After saving as many of the fey as they can, the party has to explore the motes of ruined worlds around the Gyre. Undoing the Ob's ritual requires finding new worlds to bind reality to, and each world possesses its own dangers and unique magical traits. Combining the right mix of planes could stabilize the world and save it from a final death, but the Voice of Rot wants to achieve apotheosis by causing the world's end. The party must confront the fey titan at



the center of the gyre where dead allies, enemies, and legendary figures join the battle for the fate of the world.

Finally in adventure 13, *Avatar of Revolution*, the party returns to their homeworld and must rally the people of every nation. Their faith and fervor fuel a ritual to give the PCs the strength to restore the colossus, but the Obscurati fight them for control. The party battles Nicodemus and the ghost council on Axis Island, all of them imbued with godlike power that stretches their conflict across days, and every action influences the world-wide uprising against the Obscurati's dominion. Nicodemus would rather see the world enslaved than reject his grand design, but if he is vanquished, the party's hands will guide the course of civilization's next age.

# APPENDIX ONE: THE RITES OF RULERSHIP

The monarch of Risur derives powers from his or her position, but must rule with the approval of the populace. Herein are described the narrative and mechanical nature of the office.

## BECOMING MONARCH

The current king or queen typically appoints a successor, which can be done as simply as saying out loud to a person that they are next in line to the throne. Anyone can be named a successor, regardless of race, nationality, or family. Aodhan held off naming a successor because he was unsure how marrying Lya Jierre might have affected Risuri politics.



## Succession and Acceptance

When the current monarch dies or abdicates, the successor must be approved by the House of Nobles. The House of Nobles includes the current holders of any Baron, Viscount, Count, Earl, Marquess, or Duke titles (or the equivalent) handed out by the current or a previous monarch. Such titles can be revoked by royal decree, with consent of a majority of other nobles.

This can be done procedurally in advance if the nobles know the successor, which prevents a discontinuity of the monarchy. A consequence of this is that if a king who has named a successor dies and remains dead for more than a few minutes, the powers of the crown will be passed on, and cannot be reclaimed even if he were brought back from the dead. (Roland Stanfield or other devas could potentially become monarch, but only for one lifetime.)

If the current monarch dies without naming a successor, the House of Nobles can name one, but they must have majority approval of all nobles living in the land the monarch will rule.

Formal acceptance by the nobles grants the new monarch the powers detailed below under **Lord of the Land**. Once the people of Risur accept their new king or queen, he or she also gains the powers of **Monarch of the Masses**.

## Contesting Control

At any time the monarch's authority can be challenged if a majority of the nobles issue their grievance to him or her. The monarch retains the powers of **Monarch of the Masses**, but loses those of **Lord of the Land**.

Similarly, if the monarch is not supported by his or her citizens, the powers of **Monarch of the Masses** will be weaker.

The nature of the Rites has trouble with planar travel, and if the monarch travels to another world his or her power can be contested by a majority of nobles or citizens on *that plane*.

## POWERS OF THE MONARCH

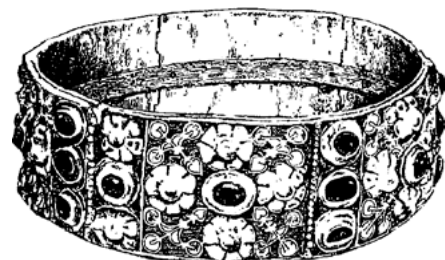
Of course the monarch has political power to direct the army and navy, and to make broad dictates which generally the nobility enact into law. Immense wealth is available for his or her use, though restraint must be shown to avoid weakening the country. But the most famous powers of Risur's kings and queens are tied to their defense of the homeland. The rites of rulership grant the monarch sufficient might to fend off a fey titan.

## Lord of the Land

While in Risur, the monarch can spend a swift action once per round to move up to four 5-ft. cubes of earth, stone, or foliage up to five feet.

The monarch can name creatures to forbid them from entering Risur via teleportation or planar travel for one month, but must know the person's actual name. Likewise, the king can spend ten minutes to open a pathway to the Dreaming, though the current state of the planes prevents such a transition.

When the monarch is engaged in battle with a person or group actively contending for control of Risur's territory, his power is elevated to match the strongest individual among his enemies. When facing a fey titan, this gives a mortal man incredible strength and stamina, but it is of little use against invading armies, since the monarch is likely already about as powerful as even the most dangerous of his or her enemies.





When the monarch is in an encounter with a hostile creature that is contesting control of Risuri lands (or if the monarch is trying to conquer lands controlled by his or her enemy), the monarch gains the following benefits.

- ♦ A bonus to AC, attack rolls, and saving throws equal to the difference in Hit Dice.
- ♦ A bonus to Strength-, Dexterity-, and Constitution-based checks equal to 5+ half the difference in Hit Dice.
- ♦ Fast healing equal to the difference in Hit Dice. This is in addition to the default fast healing 10 from Monarch of the Masses (see below).
- ♦ For the purpose of abilities that depend on size, the monarch can choose to be considered the same size as his or her opponent. (Zidi the Halfling Queen once put Granny Allswell into a headlock.)

Effects that factor in the difference in Hit Dice only care if the enemy has more Hit Dice. Fighting a lower Hit Die foe never weakens the monarch. And the monarch only gains bonuses from a single enemy, whichever has the most Hit Dice. After all, the rites were designed to help a man fight a fey titan, not two fey titans.

For example, when King Dukain (IHD 20) fought the Voice of Rot (HD 25), he benefited from a +5 bonus to AC, attack rolls, and saving throws, +7 to physical ability checks, and fast healing 15.

### Monarch of the Masses

The monarch gains a +5 bonus to saves against charm, fear, and poison. When the monarch falls to 0 HP or below for the first time in an encounter, each of the monarch's allies within three miles is dazed for one round. However, the monarch has fast healing 10.

The monarch also receives the Crown of Risur, which lets the wearer always know the names of those he or she can see. As a free action the crown's wearer can say someone's name to grant them an immediate save against an ongoing charm, fear, or poison effect; but a given creature can only be granted one bonus save in this way per day.

## ROYAL BOOKKEEPING

Throughout the final four adventures, the PCs will have access to the nation's coffers, which are filled through taxation and other tedious financial processes. With a nation full of spellcasters at their command, they can produce practically any magic item they need. Scholars later might argue over whether it was more effective to spend two hundred thousand gold pieces on a single +10 equivalent weapon than on a new palace, or a fleet of ships, or thousands of soldiers. Feel free to delve into such kingdom-building challenges if that interests you, but it lies slightly beyond the focus of this adventure path.

The simple version is that each PC will have access to the following amounts at the beginning of the adventures; the amount increases as Risur shifts into 'save the world' mode and more people contribute to the cause.

- ♦ **Adventure Ten:** 95,000 gp.
- ♦ **Adventure Eleven:** 110,000 gp.
- ♦ **Adventure Twelve:** 155,000 gp.
- ♦ **Adventure Thirteen:** 195,000 gp.

These amounts assume the party 'pays for' magic items they recover in the course of the adventure; unwanted ones will be disenchanting for energy to create other items. If they keep everything they find, the nation is only able to provide about 50,000 gp per PC each adventure.



# APPENDIX TWO:

## FEY LORDS

Use these stats if the party picks a fight, if they side with Copperhat and provoke a bloody battle for control of the Unseen Court, or if they get allies from Thistle Palace during Act Two.

### Palace Guards

The telekinetic elk-like rangale serve as the primary guards of Thistle Palace.

#### Rangale

CR 9

XP 9,600

N Large monstrous humanoid

**Init** +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

#### Defense

**AC** 24, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 110 (12d10+44)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +10

#### Offense

**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** longspear +18/+13/+8 (1d8+10/x3), 2 hooves +13 (1d6+3)

**Ranged** composite longbow +14/+9 (1d8+7/x3)

**Space** 10 ft., **Reach** 5 ft.

#### Statistics

**Str** 24, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip)

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Run, Toughness

**Skills** Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +15, Survival +17

**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan

**SQ** telekinetic, undersized weapons

**Telekinetic (Su)** A rangale has no arms, but uses telekinesis to levitate and attack with its weapons. It can also use its telekinesis to make grapple checks against creatures within 15 feet. When grappling in this manner, the rangale does not gain the grappled condition.

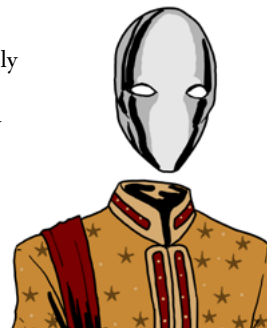


### Unseen Court

The lords and ladies of this court are seated comfortably on their thrones, and feel no threat of attack that their numerous bodyguards would not handle first.

### Thisraldion

In battle, Thisraldion teleports with deadly speed, and if an enemy has no weapon to defend himself the fey monarch can easily behead them. His walls of thorns can cleverly divide a battleground, though against the fey lords – who almost all can teleport – it's not as useful.



#### Monarch Thisraldion

CR 18

CN Medium fey

**Init** +7; Senses low-light vision; Perception +28

#### Defense

**AC** 34, touch 15, flat-footed 29 (+7 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural; +2 deflection vs. evil or law)

**hp** 270 (20d6+200); fast healing 10

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +20, **Will** +17

**Defensive Abilities** *blur*, *protection from good (and law)*, **DR** 10/cold iron;

**Immune** mental control, poison, possession; **Resist** acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30

#### Offense

**Speed** 70 ft.

**Melee** +3 *cold iron keen vorpal longsword* +20/+20/+15 (1d8+12/17–20 plus bleed)

**Ranged** +3 *ironwood longbow* +20/+20/+15 (1d8+3/x3 plus bleed)

**Special Attacks** bleed (1d6), favored enemy (all humanoids +10), monarch mastery

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +25)

Constant—*blur*, *haste* (self only), *protection from evil*, *protection from law*, *speak with animals*, *speak with plants*

At will—*invisibility*, *whispering wind*

3/day—*animate plants*, *black tentacles*, *cure critical wounds*, *haste*, *ironwood*, *move earth*, *plant growth*, *summon nature's ally VI*, *summon* (level 6, 1d4+1 centaurs or 1 treant 100%), *tree stride*, *wall of thorns*

1/day—*finger of death* (DC 23), *repel metal or stone*, *summon nature's ally IX*

#### Statistics

**Str** 20, **Dex** 25, **Con** 28, **Int** 19, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 21

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 33

**Feats** Critical Focus, Disruptive, Greater Weapon Focus (longsword), Greater Weapon Specialization (longsword), Power Attack, Spellbreaker, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

**Skills** Acrobatics +19 (+35 when jumping), Bluff +18, Climb +12, Diplomacy +13, Fly +18, Handle Animal +15, Heal +10, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (geography) +17, Knowledge (nature) +27, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Perception +28, Perform (dance) +13, Ride +16, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +29, Survival +15, Swim +17

**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan; *speak with animals*, *speak with plants*

**SQ** long step, warrior fey

**Gear** +1 *vorpal longsword*, ironwood longbow, ironwood chain shirt



*Special Abilities*

**Monarch Mastery (Su)** Any armor Thisraldion wears gains a +3 enhancement bonus, and any weapon the monarch wields is treated as a +3 cold iron keen weapon.

**Long Step (Su)** Thisraldion can teleport up to 25 feet as a move action.

**Warrior Fey (Ex)** Thisraldion counts as a 20th-level fighter for all abilities and effects requiring fighter levels.

**Atsla**

Not particularly threatening by herself, Atsla focuses on debilitating foes while an ally actually delivers the damage.

**Atsla the Ice**

CR 15

XP 51,200

CN Medium fey (cold)

**Init** +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +26*Defense***AC** 30, touch 18, flat-footed 22 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural)**hp** 210 (20d6+140); fast healing 5**Fort** +14, **Ref** +18, **Will** +17**DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** cold, mental control, possession**Weaknesses** vulnerable to fire*Offense***Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +1 icy burst lance +13/+8 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 cold)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +31)Constant—*speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*At will—*chill metal* (DC 19), *frigid touch*, *frost fall* (DC 19), *ice slick* (DC 19), *invisibility*, *ray of frost*, *resist energy*, *unshakable chill* (DC 19)3/day—*empowered cone of cold* (DC 22), *ice spears* (DC 20), *icy prison* (DC 20), *wall of ice*1/day—*freezing sphere* (DC 23), *polar ray**Statistics***Str** 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** 23, **Int** 22, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 24**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 27**Feats** Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Empower Spell-Like Ability (*cone of cold*), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness**Skills** Bluff +30, Diplomacy +30, Escape Artist +27, Heal +23, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (nature) +29, Perception +26, Sense Motive +26, Sleight of Hand +27, Stealth +27, Survival +23, Use Magic Device +30**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan; *speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*, *tongues***SQ** icewalking, long step*Special Abilities*

**Icewalking (Ex)** Atsla can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics check to run or charge on ice. She can also climb icy surfaces as if under the effects of *spider climb*.

**Long Step (Su)** Atsla can teleport up to 25 feet as a move action.

**Karrest**

This fiery swordsman likely demolishes the battlefield, setting fire to things and hurling his foes through them.

**Karrest the Fire**

CR 15

XP 51,200

CN Medium fey (fire)

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +26*Defense***AC** 31, touch 15, flat-footed 26 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural)**hp** 210 (20d6+140); fast healing 5**Fort** +14, **Ref** +16, **Will** +15**Defensive Abilities** melodramatic swordsman; **DR** 10/cold iron;**Immune** fire, mental control, possession**Weaknesses** vulnerable to cold*Offense***Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** *flametongue bastard sword* +21/+16 (1d10+14/17-20 plus 1d6 fire)**Special Attacks** dramatic reversal**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +26)Constant—*speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*At will—*burning hands* (DC 17), *burning gaze* (DC 17), *flaming sphere* (DC 18), *heat metal*(DC 18), *invisibility*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 18), *resist energy*3/day—*fireball* (DC 19), *flame strike* (DC 20), *fire snake* (DC 20), *wall of fire*1/day—*fire seeds* (DC 22), *fire storm* (DC 23)*Statistics***Str** 28, **Dex** 18, **Con** 23, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 22**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 33**Feats** Dazzling Display, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (*bastard sword*), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Shatter Defenses, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (*bastard sword*)**Skills** Acrobatics +27, Bluff +29, Craft (weapons) +25, Climb +32, Intimidate +29, Perform (act) +29, Perception +26, Survival +23**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan; *speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*, *tongues***SQ** long step**Gear** *flametongue bastard sword*, +2 mithral shirt*Special Abilities*

**Dramatic Reversal (Ex)** Once per encounter when struck by an attack while prone or flanked, Karrest may use this ability as an immediate action. He stands up without provoking an attack of opportunity, moves up to 15 feet, and makes a melee attack. The target is flat-footed against this attack, and the attack deals an extra 3d6 points of damage.

**Melodramatic Swordsman (Ex)** Whenever an attack damages Karrest, he can choose to be knocked prone. He reduces the damage from the attack by 5 points and may fall prone in any adjacent space.

**Long Step (Su)** Karrest can teleport up to 25 feet as a move action.

## Furg

The toadstool sage tries to befuddle and charm foes, but his overconfidence in his political schemings have left him unprepared for sudden battle. He'll use *rain of frogs*, then turn invisible and try to rely on his poison frogs.



### Furg the Toadstool Sage

CR 15

XP 51,200

CN Medium fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +26

#### Defense

**AC** 30, touch 10, flat-footed 30 (+20 natural)**hp** 210 (20d6+140); fast healing 5**Fort** +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15**DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** mental control, possession; **Resist** acid 30

#### Offense

**Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +25 (1d4+14/19-20 plus moldering touch)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +27)Constant—*greater magic fang*, *speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*At will—*entangle* (DC 14), *faerie fire*, *fungal infestation* (DC 14), *invisibility*, *poison* (DC 16), *rain of frogs*5/day—*baleful polymorph* (DC 18), *charm monster* (DC 17), *cloudkill* (DC 18), *command plants* (DC 17), *move earth*, *plague storm* (DC 19), *touch of slime* (DC 17)1/day—*animate plants*, *control plants* (DC 21), *heal*, *summon nature's ally VIII*, *sunbeam* (DC 21)

#### Statistics

**Str** 28, **Dex** 10, **Con** 24, **Int** 24, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 29**Feats** Combat Casting, Deceitful, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)**Skills** Bluff +29, Diplomacy +29, Disguise +29, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (geography) +30, Knowledge (local) +30, Knowledge (nature) +30, Knowledge (religion) +27, Knowledge (planes) +27, Perception +26, Sense Motive +26, Survival +23**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan; *speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*, *tongues***SQ** long step

#### Special Abilities

**Long Step (Su)** Furg can teleport up to 25 feet as a move action.**Moldering Touch (Su)** Whenever Furg damages a creature with his claw attack, the creature must make a DC 23 Fortitude save or take a -1 penalty to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws for 1 minute. This penalty stacks with itself, to a maximum of -5. The DC is Charisma-based.

## Sallin

As a healer, Sallin supports her allies while trying to hide invisibly. If she is found, her tree provides some element of offensive power.



### Sallin the Dryad

CR 15

XP 51,200

CG Medium fey

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +31

#### Defense

**AC** 29, touch 17, flat-footed 22 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural)**hp** 210 (20d6+140); fast healing 5**Fort** +12, **Ref** +18, **Will** +18**DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** mental control, possession; **Resist** acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk dagger +16/+11 (1d4+5/19-20)**Ranged** +2 *speed composite longbow* +18/+18/+13 (1d8+7/x3)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +30)Constant—*speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*At will—*entangle* (DC 17), *hold animal* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *rusting grasp*, *tree shape*, *wood shape* (10 lbs. only)5/day—*charm monster* (DC 20), *charm person* (DC 17), *confusion* (DC 19), *deep slumber* (DC 19), *neutralize poison*, *sending* (dryads only), *suggestion* (DC 19), *tree stride*1/day—*call lightning storm* (DC 21), *changestaff*, *greater heroism*, *heal*, *liveoak*, *summon nature's ally VIII*

#### Statistics

**Str** 12, **Dex** 23, **Con** 23, **Int** 18, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 22**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 28**Feats** Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Stealthy, Toughness, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Bluff +29, Climb +14, Craft (wood) +12, Diplomacy +29, Escape Artist +19, Handle Animal +16, Heal +9, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (geography) +17, Knowledge (nature) +27, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Perception +31, Perform (any one) +19, Ride +16, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +19, Survival +14**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan; *speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*, *tongues***SQ** druid magic, long step, tree meld, wild empathy, woodcraft

#### Special Abilities

**Druid Magic (Su)** Sallin can use any magic item as if she were a 20th-level druid.**Long Step (Su)** Sallin can teleport up to 25 feet as a move action.**Tree Meld (Su)** Sallin can meld with any tree (similar to *meld into stone*) and can remain melded with a tree as long as she wishes.**Woodcraft (Ex)** Sallin has a +8 racial bonus on Craft checks involving wood, and is always treated as if she had masterwork artisan's woodworking tools when attempting such checks.



## Hedgehog Court

Unlike their Unseen rivals, this court expects battles, and so all of them – even lazy Darbony – have coordinated tactics in battle.

### Beshela

The archfey of the sea has the most tricks of any fey on either court, though when she becomes bloodied the wrath of her pact patron, She Who Writhes, will bring down acid rain indiscriminately. Unless she's alone she tries to avoid direct combat, not wanting to inadvertently hurt her allies.



#### Beshela, Archfey of the Sea

CR 14

XP 38,400

CN Medium fey (water)

**Init** +10; **Senses** low-light vision, ripplesense; Perception +21

##### Defense

**AC** 25, touch 25, flat-footed 18 (+6 Dex, +8 deflection, +1 dodge)**hp** 162 (16d6+96)**Fort** +12, **Ref** +16, **Will** +12**DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** poison, **Resist** acid 20, cold 20**Weaknesses** vulnerable to fire

##### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 60 ft.**Melee** 2 slams +15 (1d6+8 plus push)**Special Attacks** corrosive tempest, kraken tentacle strike, push (slam, 20 ft.), summon the kraken**Spell-like Abilities** (CL 16<sup>th</sup>, concentration +24)At will—*control water*, *cup of dust* (DC 19), *hydraulic push*3/day—*summon nature's ally VII* (aquatic creatures or water elementals only)

##### Statistics

**Str** 26, **Dex** 22, **Con** 20, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 26**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +16; **CMD** +1**Feats** Combat Expertise, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Toughness, Whirlwind Attack**Skills** Bluff +27, Diplomacy +27, Knowledge (geography) +21, Knowledge (nature) +21, Intimidate +24, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Swim +35**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan**SQ** fey dive, unearthly grace

##### Special Abilities

**Corrosive Tempest (Su)** When Beshela is first reduced below half of her hit points, dark clouds gather overhead and begin spewing forth black rain in a quarter-mile radius centered on her. Any creature that ends its turn without some sort of cover from the rain takes 1 point of acid damage. The clouds move with Beshela and last for five minutes.

**Fey Dive (Su)** As a move action, Beshela can teleport from one area covered in water to another area covered in water within 50 feet, as long as there is a contiguous path of water between the two spaces.

**Kraken Tentacle Strike (Ex)** If Beshela has summoned kraken tentacles, as a swift action, she can command one or both to move up to 20 feet through areas covered in water and make an attack against any adjacent target.

*Kraken Tentacle* +15 (3d6+8 plus grab); CMB +20; constrict 3d6+12

**Ripplesense (Su)** Beshela perfectly knows the location of any creature within half a mile if there is a contiguous path of water between its space and hers.

**Summon the Kraken (Su)** Once per day, Beshela can conjure a massive tidal wave in a quarter-mile radius burst centered on herself. All creatures hit by the wave must make a Fortitude save DC 26 or be knocked prone and pushed away 20 feet. Water floods the quarter-mile radius to a depth of two feet, though it may flow away quickly based on terrain. In addition, Beshela summons two kraken tentacles made of seaweed within 50 feet of her. Each tentacle is a Large creature with Beshela's AC and save bonuses, and 40 hit points. If a tentacle is ever completely out of water, it is destroyed.

**Unearthly Grace (Su)** Beshela adds her Charisma modifier as a deflection bonus to her AC and her CMD.

### Olazdor

Though he prefers archery and a support role, if given a chance to face Thisraldion he'll let pride get the better of him and enter melee.



#### Olazdor, Archfey of Winds

CR 15

XP 51,200

CN Medium fey (air)

**Init** +9; **Senses** low-light vision, *true seeing*; Perception +26

##### Defense

**AC** 31, touch 19, flat-footed 22 (+9 Dex, +12 natural)**hp** 210 (20d6+140)**Fort** +14, **Ref** +21, **Will** +18**DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** beheading; **Resist** electricity 20, fire 20

##### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (good)**Melee** +1 *short sword* +18/+13 (1d6+6/19-20) and +1 *short sword* +18/+13 (1d6+6/19-20)**Ranged** +2 *composite longbow* +23/+18 (1d8+7 electricity/19-20/x3)**Special Attacks** harrier shriek, lightning shots**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20<sup>th</sup>; concentration +31)Constant—*aspect of the falcon*, *speak with animals*, *true seeing*At will—*alter winds*, *cloak of winds*, *gust of wind* (DC 19), *shocking grasp*3/day—*call lightning storm* (DC 23), *control winds*, *fickle winds*, *lightning bolt* (DC 20)1/day—*sirocco* (DC 23), *whirlwind* (DC 24)

##### Statistics

**Str** 20, **Dex** 28, **Con** 23, **Int** 14, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 24**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 34**Feats** Deadly Aim, Great Fortitude, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Rapid Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (longbow)**Skills** Acrobatics +32, Diplomacy +30, Fly +36, Knowledge (nature) +25, Intimidate +30, Perception +32, Sense Motive +29, Survival +26**Languages** Elven, Primordial, Sylvan; *speak with animals*

##### Special Abilities

**Harrier Shrike (Su)** As a swift action, Olazdor can conjure a swarm of birds with silvery, jagged feathers that distracts his foes. One target Olazdor can see takes -2 to AC until the end of his next turn.

**Immune to Beheading (Ex)** Olazdor has no head, so he is immune to the effects of *vorpals* weapons.

**Lightning Shots (Su)** All arrows Olazdor fires from his bow deal electricity damage instead of physical damage.

## Lavac

Lavac functions best by just scrambling across his foes and confusing them.



### Lavac, the Gremlin Herald

CR 12

XP 19,200

Giant vexgit rogue 3/sorcerer 4/arcane trickster 3

LE Small fey

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +16

#### Defense

**AC** 24, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, +1 size)**hp** 100 (8d6+3d8+59)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +11**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +1; **DR** 5/cold iron; **SR** 12

#### Offense

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +10 (1d3-1), bite +10 (1d4-1)**Special Attacks** impromptu sneak attack 1/day, sneak attack +4d6, speedy sabotage, wrecking crew**Vexgit Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st; concentration +3)At will—*prestidigitation*1/hour—*rusting grasp*, *snare***Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +6)

6/day—laughing touch

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 7th; concentration +9)3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 20), *sands of time*, *suggestion* (DC 20)2nd—*darkness*, *frost fall* (DC 15), *hideous laughter* (DC 19), *invisibility*1st—*ant haul*, *bungle* (DC 18), *burning disarm* (DC 14), *entangle* (DC 14),*mage armor*, *shocking grasp*0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *daze* (DC 17), *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *open/close spark*

#### Statistics

**Str** 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18**Feats** Dodge, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Mobility, Skill Focus (Disable Device), Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Appraise +12, Craft (traps) +13, Disable Device +27, Knowledge (engineering) +16, Knowledge (nature) +16, Perception +16, Stealth +21 (+25 in metal or stony areas, +17 when moving)**Languages** Goblin, Primordial, Sylvan**SQ** bloodline arcana (+2 DC for compulsions), ranged legerdemain, rogue talents (fast stealth), trapfinding +1, woodland stride

#### Special Abilities

**Speedy Sabotage (Su)** Vexgits are adept at disassembling machinery, reducing even complex devices to trash with shocking speed. When using the Disable Device skill, these gremlins treat all devices as being one category simpler for the purposes of determining how long it takes to use the skill. Thus, difficult devices count as tricky, tricky devices count as simple, and simple devices can be dismantled as a free action.

**Wrecking Crew (Su)** A group of up to six vexgits can work together to dismantle a device. This ability functions like the aid another action, but a single vexgit can receive help from up to five other vexgits, granting it up to a +10 bonus on its Disable Device check.

## Lerina

The Reseen Marauder knows all the tricks of the Unseen Court, since she used to be a member, and while she doesn't have many answers of her own, she made sure Darbony put his gold to use in purchasing countermeasures.



### Lerina, the Reseen Marauder

CR 14

XP 38,400

Female elf barbarian (savage barbarian) 15

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +21

#### Defense

**AC** 22, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +3 dodge, +3 natural, -2 rage)**hp** 180 (15d12+70)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9; +4 vs. enchantments, +5 vs. spells and spell-like abilities**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, naked courage +3, natural toughness +3

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** Large +1 thundering throwing returning warhammer +22/+17/+12 (2d6+11/19-20/x3)**Ranged** Large +1 thundering throwing returning warhammer +19 (2d6+8/19-20/x3)**Special Attacks** greater rage (37 rounds), rage powers (flesh wound, guarded stance [+3, 4 rounds], intimidating glare, rolling dodge [+3, 4 rounds], superstition +5, terrifying howl [DC 24], unexpected strike)

#### Statistics

**Str** 24, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 31**Feats** Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Dodge, Improved Critical (warhammer), Power Attack, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer)**Skills** Acrobatics +21 (+25 when jumping), Intimidate +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Perception +21, Stealth +21**SQ** fast movement**Languages** Elven, Primordial**Gear** Large +1 thundering throwing returning warhammer, belt of physical might (Str, Dex) +2, bracers of armor +4





## Darbony

As commander of satyrs, Darbony figured his best contribution was allies. He is fairly harmless himself, but has a *bracelet of friends* to call in members of the *Debauched Brotherhood*.



### Darbony, the Gruff Goat

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male satyr aristocrat 10

CN Medium fey

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +30

#### Defense

**AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)**hp** 137 (10d8+8d6+64)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +14**DR** 5/cold iron

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** mwk greataxe +15/+10/+5 (1d12+4/x3), horns +10 (1d6+1)**Special Attacks** pipes**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +15)At will—*charm person* (DC 18), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *sleep* (DC 18), *suggestion* (DC 19)1/day—*fear* (DC 21), *summon nature's ally III*

#### Statistics

**Str** 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 25**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 28**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Deceitful, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception, Use Magic Device), Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Bluff +32, Diplomacy +28, Disguise +14, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +30, Perform (wind instruments) +32, Stealth +18, Survival +6, Use Magic Device +20**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan**Gear** *bracelet of friends*, *scroll of glitterdust*, *scrolls of resist energy* (3), *scroll of heal*

#### Special Abilities

**Pipes (Su)** A satyr can focus and empower his magic by playing haunting melodies on his panpipes. When he plays, all creatures within a 60-foot radius must make a DC 21 Will save or be affected by *charm person*, *fear*, *sleep*, or *suggestion*, depending on what tune the satyr chooses. A creature that successfully saves against any of the pipes' effects cannot be affected by the same set of pipes for 24 hours, but can still be affected by the satyr's other spell-like abilities as normal. The satyr's use of his pipes does not count toward his uses per day of his spell-like abilities, and if separated from them he may continue to use his standard abilities. The pipes themselves are masterwork, and a satyr can craft a replacement with 1 week of labor. The save DC is Charisma-based.



## Satyr Springjack

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male satyr warrior 7

CN Medium fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +21

#### Defense

**AC** 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)**hp** 134 (7d10+8d6+68)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12**DR** 5/cold iron

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** mwk longsword +17/+12/+7 (1d8+6/19-20)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +16/+11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)**Special Attacks** blastback arrows**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +12)At will—*charm person* (DC 15), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *sleep* (DC 15), *suggestion* (DC 17)1/day—*fear* (DC 18), *summon nature's ally III*

#### Statistics

**Str** 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +15 (+19 to bull rush); **CMD** 30 (32 vs. bull rush)**Feats** Dodge, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Mobility, Quick Draw, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)**Skills** Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +21, Perform (wind instruments) +19, Stealth +17, Survival +7**Languages** Primordial, Sylvan**Gear** mwk longsword, mwk composite longbow (+4 Str), 15 arrows, 5 +1 blastback arrows

#### Special Abilities

**Blastback Arrows** When this arrow strikes an enemy, it performs a bull rush maneuver using the archer's CMB.



# APPENDIX THREE:

## ALLIED STATS

These allies can fight alongside the party. Aodhan, Harkover, Asrabey, Jillian, and Amielle can all participate in defending the palace, while Lauryn, Dale, Gale, and Delft can aid in Flint.

### King Aodhan Lesterman

Before becoming king, Aodhan led a crew of privateers. While a mighty warrior in his own right, he can draw upon his connection to the land to aid his allies.



#### King Aodhan Lesterman

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male venerable human fighter (mobile fighter) 15

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +8

#### Defense

**AC** 31, touch 16, flat-footed 29 (+9 armor, +4 deflection, +2 Dex, +6 shield)

**hp** 118 (15d10+35); fast healing 10

**Fort** +17, **Ref** +14, **Will** +15; +4 vs. paralysis, slow, or entangle; +5 vs. charm, fear, and poison

**Defensive Abilities** agility +4, monarch of the masses

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** *six-lobed saber* +22/+17/+12 (1d6+9/15-20)

**Special Attacks** leaping attack +3, rapid attack

#### Statistics

**Str** 11, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 31

**Feats** Alertness, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (cutlass), Greater Weapon Focus (cutlass), Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Specialization (cutlass), Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (cutlass), Weapon Specialization (cutlass), Whirlwind Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +17 (+21 when jumping), Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +17, Perception +8, Profession (sailor) +11, Sense Motive +15

**SQ** bounty of the land, fleet footed, lord of the land, wealthy

**Languages** Common, Primordial

**Gear** +5 mithral shirt, +5 buckler, *six-lobed saber*, belt of physical perfection +2, boots of speed, cloak of resistance +5, crown of Risur, gloves of arrow snaring, headband of mental superiority +2, periapt of health, ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +4

#### Special Abilities

**Bounty of the Land (Su)** As a standard action, Aodhan can call upon the land to restore his allies. All allies adjacent to Aodhan gain the effects of *cure critical wounds* and *restoration* (CL 15th). A given creature can only benefit from this ability once per day.

**Fleet Footed (Ex)** Aodhan's speed increases by 10 feet. He can take 10 on Acrobatics even while distracted or threatened, and he can take 20 on an Acrobatics check three times per day.

**Leaping Attack (Ex)** When Aodhan moves at least 5 feet prior to attacking, he gains a +3 bonus on attack and damage rolls.

**Lord of the Land (Su)** As a swift action, Aodhan can move four 5-foot cubes of earth, stone, or foliage up to five feet.

**Monarch of the Masses (Su)** Aodhan has fast healing 10, and a +5 sacred bonus to saves against charm, fear, and poison. When he falls to 0 hp for the first time in an encounter, each of his allies within three miles is staggered for one round. Even if his fast healing is suppressed, he automatically stabilizes at negative hit points.

**Rapid Attack (Ex)** Aodhan can combine a full-attack action with a single move. He must forgo the attack at his highest bonus but may take any remaining attacks at any point during his movement. This movement provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

**Wealthy (Ex)** Aodhan has access to the full resources of Risur. He has the wealth of a PC rather than an NPC. This increases his CR by 1.

### Dame Jillian the Green Knight

The title of Green Knight is bestowed to the king's chief bodyguard. Among the position's perks is an inability to die when the sun isn't up.

#### Dame Jillian the Green Knight

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human cavalier 13

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +10

#### Defense

**AC** 24, touch 12, flat-footed 23 (+11 armor, +1 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 130 (13d10+52)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10

#### Offense

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** +2 *adamantine halberd* +20/+15/+10 (1d10+8/19-20/x3)

**Special Attacks** challenge 5/day (+13 damage, +4 dodge bonus to AC), channel positive energy 5/day (7d6, DC 18), green smite

#### Statistics

**Str** 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 28

**Feats** Animal Affinity, Duck and Cover, Improved Critical (halberd), Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Shake it Off, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (halberd)

**Skills** Handle Animal +17, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (nobility) +16 (+22 related to the king of Risur), Ride +16, Perception +10, Sense Motive +16

**SQ** banner (+3), cavalier's charge, demanding challenge, expert trainer, greater tactician 3/day (swift action, 9 rounds), mantle of the Green Knight, mighty charge, mount (not present), order (lion), order abilities (lion's call, for the king)

**Languages** Primordial

**Gear** +2 *adamantine halberd*, +2 full plate, amulet of natural armor +1, belt of giant strength +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1



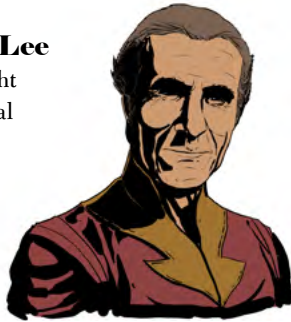
*Special Abilities*

**Green Smite (Su)** Upon hitting with a melee attack, as a swift action Jillian can cause the creature she hits to sprout entangling vines that attempt to hold it in place, entangling it for 1 round (DC 18 Reflex negates). The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Mantle of the Green Knight (Su)** The king of Risur has invested Jillian with the power of the land. She adds her Charisma bonus as a sacred bonus to her saving throws, can channel positive energy as a cleric of her level, and gains access to the green smite ability. If she dies while the sun is not out, she automatically returns to life one minute later as if affected by *raise dead*.

**Principal Minister Harkover Lee**

A one-time dragon tyrant known as Inacht the Hex-Eater, Harkover Lee might reveal his true form if the situation looks dire, though after so long in human form it hurts him to be a dragon again. Otherwise he relies on fairly direct fire magic.

**Principal Minister Harkover Lee**

CR 16

XP 76,800

Male mature adult red dragon sorcerer 3

LN Huge dragon (fire)

**Init** +4; **Senses** dragon senses, smoke vision; Perception +26**Aura** fire aura (5-ft., 1d6 fire), frightful presence (210-ft., DC 26)*Defense***AC** 35, touch 10, flat-footed 33 (+2 Dex, +25 natural, -2 size)**hp** 267 (19d12+3d6+132)**Fort** +18, **Ref** +14, **Will** +20**DR** 10/magic; **Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 26**Weaknesses** vulnerability to cold, draconic necrosis*Offense***Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** bite +28 (2d8+15/19-20), 2 claws +28 (2d6+10), 2 wings +26 (1d8+5), tail slap +26 (2d6+15)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)**Special Attacks** breath weapon (50-ft. cone, 14d10 fire damage, Reflex DC 27 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), crush (Small creatures, DC 27, 2d8+16)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 19th; concentration +24)At will—*detect magic*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 17), *suggestion* (DC 18)**Spells Known** (CL 13th; concentration +18)6th (3/day)—*greater dispel magic*5th (6/day)—*break enchantment*, *sending*4th (7/day)—*dimensional anchor*, *greater invisibility*, *stoneskin*3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *fireball* (DC 18), *haste*2nd (7/day)—*alter self*, *misdirection*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*1st (8/day)—*alarm*, *grease* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*0th (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed*, *detect poison*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic***Bloodline** draconic (red)*Statistics***Str** 31, **Dex** 14, **Con** 23, **Int** 18, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 21**Base Atk** +20; **CMB** +32; **CMD** 44 (48 vs. trip)**Feats** Bodyguard, Catch Off-Guard, Combat Reflexes, Eschew Materials, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, In Harm's Way, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell**Skills** Appraise +29, Bluff +30, Fly +16, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (nobility) +29, Perception +26, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +28, Stealth +16**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Orc, Primordial**SQ** bloodline arcana (fire spells deal +1 damage per die), change shape (specific humanoid form, *polymorph*)**Gear** golden orb, *orange prism ioun stone**Special Abilities***Change Shape (Su)** Harkover spends most of his time in human form. In this form, he is Medium-sized, removing his -2 size penalty to AC and attacks. He loses access to his breath weapon, frightful presence, and natural attacks. He gains the following melee attack:**Melee** golden orb +30/+25/+20/+15 (1d6+10)**Fire Aura (Su)** Harkover is surrounded by an aura of intense heat. All creatures within 5 feet take 1d6 points of fire damage at the beginning of his turn.**Smoke Vision (Ex)** Harkover can see perfectly in smoky conditions (such as those created by *pyrotechnics*).**Draconic Necrosis (Su)** A side effect of remaining polymorphed into a human for a long period of time, while in dragon form Harkover's old wounds deal 10 points of negative energy damage to him each round. The wounds also prevent him from using his fly speed.**Asrabey Varal**

Asrabey is supremely confident and wades into the midst of large groups of enemies, but will use hit-and-run tactics against large enemies.

**Asrabey Varal**

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male eladrin fighter 15

CN Medium humanoid (eladrin)

**Init** +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13*Defense***AC** 35, touch 16, flat-footed 31 (+12 armor, +2 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +5 shield)**hp** 162 (15d10+75)**Fort** +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8; +2 vs. charm & compulsion**Defensive Abilities** bolstered will, bravery +4*Offense***Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** *Vekeshi Blade* +28/+23/+18 (1d8+14/17-20 plus 1d6 fire)**Special Attacks** weapon training (heavy blades +3, light blades +2, thrown +1)*Statistics***Str** 22, **Dex** 19, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 37**Feats** Cleave, Critical Focus, Great Cleave, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Step Up, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Climb +17, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (nature) +6, Perception +5, Sense Motive +6, Swim +10**SQ** armor training 4, fey step**Languages** Elven, Primordial**Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical perfection* +4, *cloak of smoke*, *glamered plate*, *lion shield*, *slippers of spider climbing*

### Amielle Latimer

Amielle is terrified of being defeated and returning in Nicodemus's custody, so she desperately avoids getting close to enemies.



#### Amielle Latimer

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female tiefling ghost fighter 8

LN Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25

#### Defense

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +4 Dex)**hp** 80 (8d10+32)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation;**Resist** cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5; **Immune** undead traits

#### Offense

**Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** corrupting touch +12 (9d6; DC 18)**Ranged** +1 *ghost touch rifle* +15/+10 (1d10+2/x4) or +1 *ghost touch pistol* +15/+10 (1d8+2/x4)**Special Attacks** malevolence, telekinesis, weapon training (firearms +1)**Spell-like Abilities** (CL 8<sup>th</sup>; concentration +11)

1/day—darkness

#### Statistics

**Str** --, **Dex** 18, **Con** --, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22**Feats** Far Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (rifle), Rapid Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (pistol), Weapon Focus (rifle)**Skills** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +11, Fly +12, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (engineering) +13, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +15, Stealth +14**Languages** Common, Primordial**SQ** armor training 2, bravery +2**Other Gear** +1 *ghost touch rifle*, +1 *ghost touch pistols* (2)

#### Special Abilities

**Corrupting Touch (Su)** By passing part of her incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, Amielle inflicts 9d6 damage. This damage is not negative energy—it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save (DC 18) halves the damage inflicted.

**Malevolence (Su)** Once per round, Amielle can merge her body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to a *magic jar* spell (caster level 10<sup>th</sup>), except that it does not require a receptacle. To use this ability, she must be adjacent to the target. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 18). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same ghost's malevolence for 24 hours.

**Telekinesis (Su)** Amielle can use *telekinesis* as a standard action once every 1d4 rounds (caster level 12<sup>th</sup>).

### Lauryn Cyneburg

The RHC's minister of infiltration might briefly aid the party in battle, before teleporting away to get reinforcements.



#### Lauryn Cyneburg

CR 14

XP 38,400

Half-elf sorcerer 15

CN Medium humanoid (elf, human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2

#### Defense

**AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)**hp** 85 (15d6+30)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11; +2 vs. enchantments (reroll 1/day)**Immune** fire (120 points), sleep

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk fist +7/+2 (1d4-1)**Ranged** mwk insult +10 (mild embarrassment)**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 15<sup>th</sup>; concentration +21)7<sup>th</sup> (4/day)—*delayed blast fireball* (DC 23), *greater teleport*, *phase door*6<sup>th</sup> (6/day)—*contingency*, *sending*, *true seeing*, *veil*5<sup>th</sup> (7/day)—*cloudkill* (DC 21), *dominate person* (DC 21), *mind fog* (DC 21), *prying eyes*, *teleport*4<sup>th</sup> (7/day)—*dimension door*, *dimensional anchor*, *greater invisibility*, *locate creature*, *scrying*, *wall of fire*3<sup>rd</sup> (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *hold person* (DC 19), *major image*, *nondetection*, *protection from energy*2<sup>nd</sup> (8/day)—*darkvision*, *invisibility*, *rope trick*, *scorching ray*, *spider climb*, *whispering wind*1<sup>st</sup> (8/day)—*disguise self*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *unseen servant*0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *flare* (DC 17), *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic***Bloodline** arcane**Contingency** When knocked unconscious, *teleport* to Flint's teleportation beacon

#### Statistics

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 22**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 21**Feats** Agile Steps, Combat Casting, Dimensional Agility, Dodge, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Nimble Moves, Silent Spell**Skills** Bluff +14, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (planes) +19, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +12**Languages** Common, Elven, Primordial

**SQ** bloodline arcana (+1 to DC of spells affected by metamagic), bonded item (any known spell 1/day), metamagic adept (4/day, no increase of casting time), dimensional hop (teleport as move action, in 5-ft. increments, up to 150 ft. per day; can bring willing creatures, but each uses an equal amount of your distance)

**Combat Gear** *potion of fly*; **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +2, *headband of alluring charisma* +4, *ring of protection* +2, 1,413 gp



## Gale

Included for completeness.



### Hana "Gale" Soliogn

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female eladrin sorcerer 13

CN Medium humanoid (eladrin)

Init +5, Senses Perception +5, low-light vision

#### Defense

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 75 (13d6+26)

Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +12; +2 vs. charm and compulsion

Defensive Abilities bolstered will; Immune wind; Resist electricity 20

#### Offense

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Special Attacks control winds

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th, concentration +18)

Constant—*overland flight*, *speak with animals* (flying animals only)

10/day—elemental ray (1d6+6 electricity)

1/day—elemental blast (13d6, DC 23)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 13th, concentration +18)

6th (5/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 24), *elemental body III*, *sirocco* (DC 24)

5th (7/day)—*cloudkill* (DC 22), *elemental body II*, *fickle winds*, *lightning arc* (DC 23)

4th (7/day)—*ball lightning* (DC 22), *dimension door*, *elemental body I*, *solid fog*, *shout* (DC 22), *storm shield* (as *fire shield*, but blocks and deals electricity damage)

3rd (8/day)—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 21), *nondetection*, *protection from energy*, *sleet storm*

2nd (8/day)—*fog cloud*, *gust of wind*, *levitate*, *protection from arrows*, *scorching ray*\*, *shatter* (DC 20), *whispering wind*

1st (8/day)—*burning hands* (DC 19)\*, *feather fall*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *message*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*

0th—*daze*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*

\*These spells deal electricity damage.

Bloodline elemental (air)

#### Statistics

Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 25

Base Atk +6; CMB +5; CMD 17

Feats Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Empower Spell, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration, Toughness

Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Fly +12, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (planes) +5, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Elven, Primordial, Sylvan

SQ air affinity, bloodline arcana (change energy damage to electricity), fey step

Gear cloak of resistance +3, headband of alluring charisma +4, messenger wind

#### Special Abilities

**Air Affinity (Su)** Gale can innately control winds, and is immune to the effects of strong wind. She can fly at will and can speak with flying animals, who usually are friendly to her.

**Control Winds (Sp)** Gale can control winds in a 360-ft. radius. She can use this ability for up to 13 minutes per day, in chunks of at least one minute at a time. Activating or controlling it is a standard action, maintaining is a free action. She can increase winds by up to three steps (enough to turn a still day into a severe storm of 50 miles per hour), or a strong breeze into a small hurricane. Creatures other than her in the area must make a DC 23 Fortitude save each round to resist the winds.

## Stover Delft

When rescued in Act Three, Delft's not in peak fighting form (he starts at 10 hit points when rescued), but he quickly heals and can contribute.



### Stover Delft

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male human rogue (investigator) 10

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +11

#### Defense

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

hp 48 (10d8); fast healing 5

Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3

#### Offense

Speed 20 ft. (due to leg wound)

Melee +1 sword cane +9/+4 (1d6+1)

Ranged mw pistol +9 (1d8/x4)

Special Attacks Sneak attack +5d6

#### Statistics

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 14

Base Atk +7; CMB +7; CMD 19

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Martial Weapon Proficiency (sword cane), Persuasive, Weapon Focus (sword cane)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +17, Escape Artist +12, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Perception +17, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +15

Languages Common, Primordial

SQ follow up, rogue talents (canny observer, coax information, distracting attack, follow clues, slippery mind), royal power

Gear +1 sword cane, masterwork pistol, masterwork leather armor

Royal Power (Su) The Rites of Rulership grant Delft fast healing 5.

# APPENDIX FOUR:

## NAVAL FORCES

Herein are the stats of the likely ships (and sea monsters) of Act Three.

### ALLIED

<b>Impossible, extreme clipper</b>	Level 17 Vehicle
Gargantuan Vehicle	234,000 gp
<b>Hull Integrity</b> 4	<b>Command</b> –
<b>Defense</b> 25	<b>Full Crew</b> 64
<b>Maneuverability</b> 4	<b>Minimum Crew</b> 16
<b>Speed</b> 22	<b>Total Complement</b> 120

<b>Design</b>
Length 250 ft. Beam 45 ft. Four masts, 150 ft. high. Three decks.
<b>Armaments</b>
Eleven light cannons on the maindeck to each broadside. Useless against a ship of the same size, but enough to deter small foes.
Crew: 40. Attack: +11 to broadsides, or +8 fore or aft.

<b>R.N.S. Coaltongue</b>	Level 26 Vehicle
Gargantuan Vehicle	1,500,440 gp
<b>Hull Integrity</b> 4	<b>Command</b> by PC
<b>Defense</b> 30	<b>Full Crew</b> 32
<b>Maneuverability</b> 8	<b>Minimum Crew</b> 4
<b>Speed</b> 18	<b>Total Complement</b> 200

<b>Design</b>
Length 205 ft. Beam 50 ft. Two level central bridge. Steam engine with two propellers. Five decks.
<b>Armaments</b>
Dozens of cannons fire to either broadside.
Crew: 100. Attack: +25 to broadsides. Can use acidic, chain shot, flaming, freezing, and shocking attacks, but no more than one in any given round in a single firing arc.

<b>Capacitor and Brand</b>
The ship's greatest weapons are its capacitor which magnifies the spells of mages who cast from the main deck, and its brand which can launch a blast of arcane flame from the prow.

If a spellcaster of level 10 or higher stands in the capacitor on the main deck, the ship can also make attacks with a +22 bonus forward or aft, and can use acidic, flaming, freezing, and shocking attacks in any firing arc. However, it can apply no more than one special trait in any given round in a single firing arc.

The captain can choose to fire the brand, making an attack with a +30 bonus in the forward firing arc. This depletes the ship's store of arcane power, requiring 1d4 naval turns to replenish. During that time, the ship's speed is reduced by 4, and it cannot use the abilities of its capacitor and brand.

<b>Eldritch Defenses</b>
The ship gains a +5 bonus to saving throws against the burning condition. Any spells that originate more than 50 feet from the ship deal 52 less damage to targets within that area. Teleportation cannot enter or leave the ship.

### ENEMY

All the Danoran ships are equipped with tar and brimstone sheathing on the bottom of their hulls, which inflict 10 points of fire damage to any creature that attacks the hull from underwater. This sheathing also deters most aquatic creatures, but cannot harm She Who Writhes.

- ♦ Three battleships. The flagship *Praepollens Auctoritate*. Also the *Inventum Nobilis* and *Ira Infernalis*.
- ♦ Six grand steam frigates. *Aula Alba* and *Cervus Vigilius* guard the *Coaltongue*. The others are *Semper Autumna*, *Puer Aestatis*, *Ritus Tempis Verni*, and *Feriae Beatae* (colloquially, the Autumn, the Summer, the Spring, and the Winter).
- ♦ Twelve steam frigates, two dozen steamships, and a few noncombatant vessels, none important enough to get names.

<b>Battleship</b>	Level 20 Vehicle
Gargantuan Vehicle	250,000 gp
<b>Hull Integrity</b> 4	<b>Command</b> +10*
<b>Defense</b> 30	<b>Full Crew</b> 32
<b>Maneuverability</b> 2	<b>Minimum Crew</b> 4
<b>Speed</b> 16	<b>Total Complement</b> 500

\* *Lya Jierre* commands the flagship with a +16 Command check.

<b>Design</b>
Length 250 ft. Beam 55 ft. Three steam stacks, 50 ft. high. Five decks, plus a three-deck conning tower. Berth decks typically carry hundreds of marines.
<b>Unstable on the Roll</b>
The vessel looks almost over-sized, with too many weapons atop it.

Rushed into service without sufficient field testing, the massive battleship is unstable. If struck by a ram attack against its broadside that deals at least 1 strike, it must make a saving throw. On a success, it lists in the opposite direction and is immobilized. On a failure, it capsizes and begins to sink slowly.

<b>Armaments</b>
Three turrets forward of the conning tower, three more aft of the steam stacks, each armed with four massive cannons. Additional mortar-style cannons along the broadside.

Crew: 100. Attack: +20 to broadsides (when all the turrets can converge), or +17 forward or aft (when only two are available). Can attack at Long range with a -5 penalty.

<b>Grand Steam Frigates</b>	Level 20 Vehicle
Gargantuan Vehicle	210,000 gp
<b>Hull Integrity</b> 4	<b>Command</b> +10
<b>Defense</b> 30	<b>Full Crew</b> 32
<b>Maneuverability</b> 2	<b>Minimum Crew</b> 4
<b>Speed</b> 16	<b>Total Complement</b> 500

<b>Design</b>
Length 250 ft. Beam 55 ft. Three steam stacks, 50 ft. high. Five decks, plus a two-deck conning tower. Berth decks typically carry hundreds of marines.
<b>Armaments</b>
Two turrets forward of the conning tower, two more aft of the steam stacks, each armed with four massive cannons.

Crew: 40. Attack: +19 to broadsides (when all the turrets can converge), or +16 forward or aft (when only two are available).



**Steam Frigate**

Level 17 Vehicle

Huge Vehicle

110,000 gp

**Hull Integrity** 4**Command** +8**Defense** 25**Full Crew** 16**Maneuverability** 4**Minimum Crew** 4**Speed** 12**Total Complement** 200**Design**

Length 170 ft. Beam 35 ft. Two steam stacks, 30-ft. high. Four decks, central one-deck conning tower. Berth deck carries a hundred marines.

**Armaments**

One turret forward of the conning tower, one more aft of the steam stacks, each armed with four large cannons.

Crew: 40. Attack: +16 to broadsides, or +13 fore or aft.

**Steamship**

Level 10 Vehicle

Large Vehicle

10,000 gp

**Hull Integrity** 3**Command** +5**Defense** 15**Full Crew** 8**Maneuverability** 6**Minimum Crew** 2**Speed** 6**Total Complement** 25**Design**

Length 85 ft. Beam 25 ft. Steam engine, three decks.

**Armaments**

A trio of heavy cannons in a turret.

Crew: 15. Attack: +6, forward or broadside.

**FORCE OF NATURE****She Who Writhes, Fey Titan**

Level 28 Leviathan

Gargantuan Leviathan

**Hull Integrity** 4**Command** +14**Defense** 30**Maneuverability** 8**Perception** +13**Speed** 14

Blindsense

**Dimensions**

Body 100 ft. x 40 ft. Tentacles 110 ft. Feeding tentacles extend an extra 160 ft.

**Tentacles**

The kraken lashes out with two feeding tentacles, then pulls herself close and grasps with the other eight. Slowly, unstopably, it crushes, until even steel bends within its coils.

When She Who Writhes rams, she stops 50 feet from her target and takes no damage from the collision. The target cannot move until the tentacles take damage or the titan releases her grip.

**Crush and Bite**

Crunching from beneath the water line is followed quickly by an alien ululation from belowdecks. Crew members issue horrified screams about a massive beak, inhuman eyes, grasping tendrils lined with barbs, and snapping jaws.

She Who Writhes bites and crushes only at short range, but acts as a weapon with a +25 attack bonus (effectively +30 due to range). She has other powers, but has only recently awakened, and so her storms and whirlpools will wait for another day.

**Titanic Resilience**

Cannonballs simply bounce off the massive creature.

Reduce all damage She Who Writhes takes by 1 strike. If her 'hull integrity' is reduced to 0, she merges with the seas and withdraws. No power present in this adventure can slay her.



THE GREAT SEA SERPENT  
(according to Hans Egede)

# APPENDIX FIVE: MAGIC AND TRAINING

The party might acquire these items, rituals, or special training. Also, various magic items in the vault of Torfeld Palace are detailed in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* and *Ultimate Equipment*.

## Book of Kelland

Minor Artifact

**Slot** none; **Aura** strong abjuration; **CL** 20th; **Weight** 3 lbs.

### Description

This book tells in verse the story of Kelland and his wife and daughter. Their ship was attacked while crossing the Avery Sea, and Kelland was claimed as a lover by She Who Writhes. His wife and daughter reached shore, but his wife was taken as a hostage by the Voice of Rot, who demanded the daughter retrieve a book from Granny Allswell, to steal trickery from the gremlins.

The daughter trekked across the Weftlands and got the Father of Thunder drunk, then hid on his back as he crossed through a lightning storm. She then snuck into the gremlin caves and danced like them to reach the book. She stole the book and fled into the forest of the Ash Wolf, who sniffed her and thought she was a wolf. The Ash Wolf defended the daughter from the angry gremlins.

She returned to the sea, but instead of giving the book to the Voice of Rot, she used the book's magic to grow scales and swim down to rescue her father Kelland. She Who Writhes saw them leave and chased them to the shore, where her domain of the seas met the low bayou.

The daughter claimed the Voice of Rot sent her on her mission. Though fey titans know when a lie is told, this was only a half-truth, and so She Who Writhes fought the Voice of Rot and banished him to the High Bayou. But the serpent slew the wife as retaliation.

Kelland and his daughter survived, and with the knowledge from his daughter's quest, he was able to eventually drive back the fey titans and claim the land of Risur for mortal races.

Presenting this book grants the bearer a +5 bonus on all Charisma-based checks with fey titans. Fey titans perceive the bearer as innocuous unless he threatens them. Even then, they will not take attacks of opportunity on him, and he reduces all damage dealt by fey titans by 10.

## Borenbog's Gourd

Minor Artifact

**Slot** none; **Aura** strong conjuration and transmutation; **CL** 20th; **Weight** 2 lbs.

### Description

This ugly, battered gourd smells strongly of alcohol. Only those who defeat the Borenbog can take his gourd. If the owner tries to sell or trade it to anyone who did not battle the Borenbog, he suffers from a constant severe hangover (sickened) until he recovers the item.

The gourd can reproduce any beverage the owner has ever drunk, providing it whenever he drinks from the container. Any attempt to store the beverages or just keep pouring it out fails; unless someone drinks what comes out right away, a round later it turns to wretched bog water.

The gourd can even reproduce magical beverages like elixirs or potions, but each day it can only produce up to two magical drinks, each with a value of up to 5,000 gp.

The bearer of the gourd also ignores difficult terrain if that terrain is the result of bog, mud, or shallow water.

## Crown of Risur

Minor Artifact

**Slot** head; **Aura** strong divination and evocation; **CL** 20th; **Weight** 1 lb.

### Description

In its normal form, the crown is a simple incomplete circlet of gold. The crown only functions for the rightful monarch of Risur. Anybody else who wears it suffers crippling migraines and is staggered for as long as he continues to wear it.

The rightful monarch of Risur can command the crown to assume any design that she sees fit. While wearing the crown, she always knows the names of any person she can see. As a free action, she can say someone's name to grant them an immediate save with a +5 bonus against an ongoing charm, fear, or poison effect. A person can only benefit from this ability once per day.

## Dramatic Reversal

*Fey respond to things differently than rational humans. Tapping into their unusual worldview, you eagerly accept martial misfortune, then exploit your enemies' attempts to capitalize on your vulnerability.*

### Training

**Requirement:** Characters with the Martial Scientist theme who spend time training with Lord Karrest can learn this power. Alternatively, they can acquire it by finding a rare thesis of a martial scientist who studied fey fighting, *Unexpected Tactics of Fey Swordsmen*.

**Description:** If you choose this power as your Martial Scientist power for the day, once per round when an attack damages you, you can let yourself be knocked prone. If you do, reduce the damage dealt to you by 5, and you may fall prone in any adjacent space.

Once per encounter when struck by an attack while prone or flanked, you may use this ability as an immediate action. You stand up with provoking an attack of opportunity, move up to 15 feet, and make a melee attack. The target is flat-footed against this attack, and the attack deals an extra 3d6 points of damage.

## Granny's Boon (Su)

*Sometimes when you sleep you dream about a gremlin nursery rhyme, but the words always fracture when you wake. You try to remember a short verse, and suddenly an object nearby simply breaks.*

Lavac, gremlin herald of the Hedgehog Court, can grant this boon if a PC lets him break a magic item of at least caster level 10. Only one PC can get this boon, and if the party angers Granny Allswell, she can revoke this boon. But she's pretty easy-going.

You can use Disable Device and Sleight of Hand at a range of 30 feet. Working at a distance increases the normal skill check DC by 5, and she cannot take 10 on this check. Any object to be manipulated must weigh 5 pounds or less.

Once per day as a swift action, you may target a weapon or object up to 30 cubic feet in size. It gains the broken condition. The wielder of a weapon broken this way may attempt a Will save each round (DC 10 + half your character level + your Charisma modifier). On a success, the weapon loses the broken condition.





### Mask of the Unseen Court (Su)

*You have designed this mask to reflect your personality and powers.*

Your body is invisible, though your clothing remains visible. You cannot remove the mask, which is now your face. If the Unseen Court turns against you, they can revoke this boon.

You gain a +2 bonus on Charisma-based checks and the ability to teleport 25 feet as a move action. You are immune to mental control and possession, similar to the effects of a *protection from evil* spell. You may use *invisibility* as a spell-like ability at will with a caster level equal to your character level.

## Six-Loa Saber

Minor Artifact

**Aura** strong conjuration and evocation; **CL** 20th; **Weight** 4 lbs.

### Description

This +5 *keen cutlass* contains six island spirits. As a free action, the wielder can whisper the name of one of the spirits to call upon its aid. He can only use this ability once per round, and he may only call upon each spirit once per day.

- ✦ **Moonbeam Loa.** The saber or an object it is touching is affected by *daylight*.
- ✦ **Flaming Loa.** A creature or object just struck by the saber catches on fire, as per the burn universal monster ability (2d6 damage, DC 20).
- ✦ **Greedy Loa.** If an enemy just missed the wielder with a melee weapon attack, or if the wielder struck them with the sword, the enemy is disarmed.
- ✦ **Crossroads Loa.** The wielder teleports the sword to his hand, or teleports himself to the sword.
- ✦ **Butcher Loa.** An enemy just struck by the sword loses a limb if it is below 20 hit points. If the enemy makes a DC 20 Fortitude save, it chooses which limb; otherwise, the wielder chooses.
- ✦ **Drinking Loa.** If the wielder killed an enemy this round, he heals 4d8+15 hp.

## Sword of the Black Nettles

**Aura** strong evocation and moderate transmutation; **CL** 15th; **Weight** 4 lbs.;

**Price** 78,315 gp

### Description

King Dukain fought a fey titan to a standstill with this sword. Five centuries in a bog has not tarnished its gleaming blade. The wielder of this +5 impervious spell-storing longsword can cast spells with somatic components while wielding it as if he had a hand free.

### Construction

Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a caster of at least 15th level, *fabricate*, *make whole*; **Cost** 39,315 gp

## Words Made Real

**School** conjuration (creation); **Level** bard 4, sorcerer/wizard 5, summoner 4, witch 5

## Casting

**Casting Time** 10 minutes

### Components V, S, F (a book)

*Effect*

**Range 0 ft.**

**Effect** one creature or object of size Large or smaller

**Duration** 72 hours (D)

**Saving Throw** none; **Spell Resistance** no

### Description

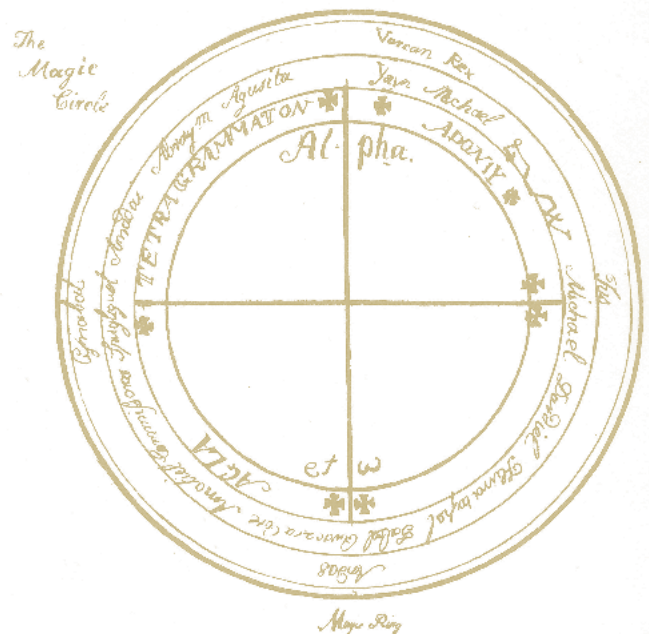
Using a book as the focus of the spell, you pull a creature or object from that book, typically no bigger than a Large creature. Until the spell's duration ends, that creation acts in all ways as if it were exactly as described in the book, with a few exceptions.

The creation lacks any magical or supernatural abilities, and its memories are sufficiently fuzzy that it does not realize it is fictional unless told so. It has no recollection of being pulled from a book, and depending on its narrative origin it might think the world around it is actually an illusion.

If you produce an object in this way, you must include additional material components for the spell – typically in the form of rare inks and exotic pages – equal to the creation’s market value.

The creation does not have any magical aura, though close inspection might reveal that it lacks fine details. When you cast the spell, make a Disguise check with a +10 bonus. This is the DC for a Perception check to determine that the creation is not real.

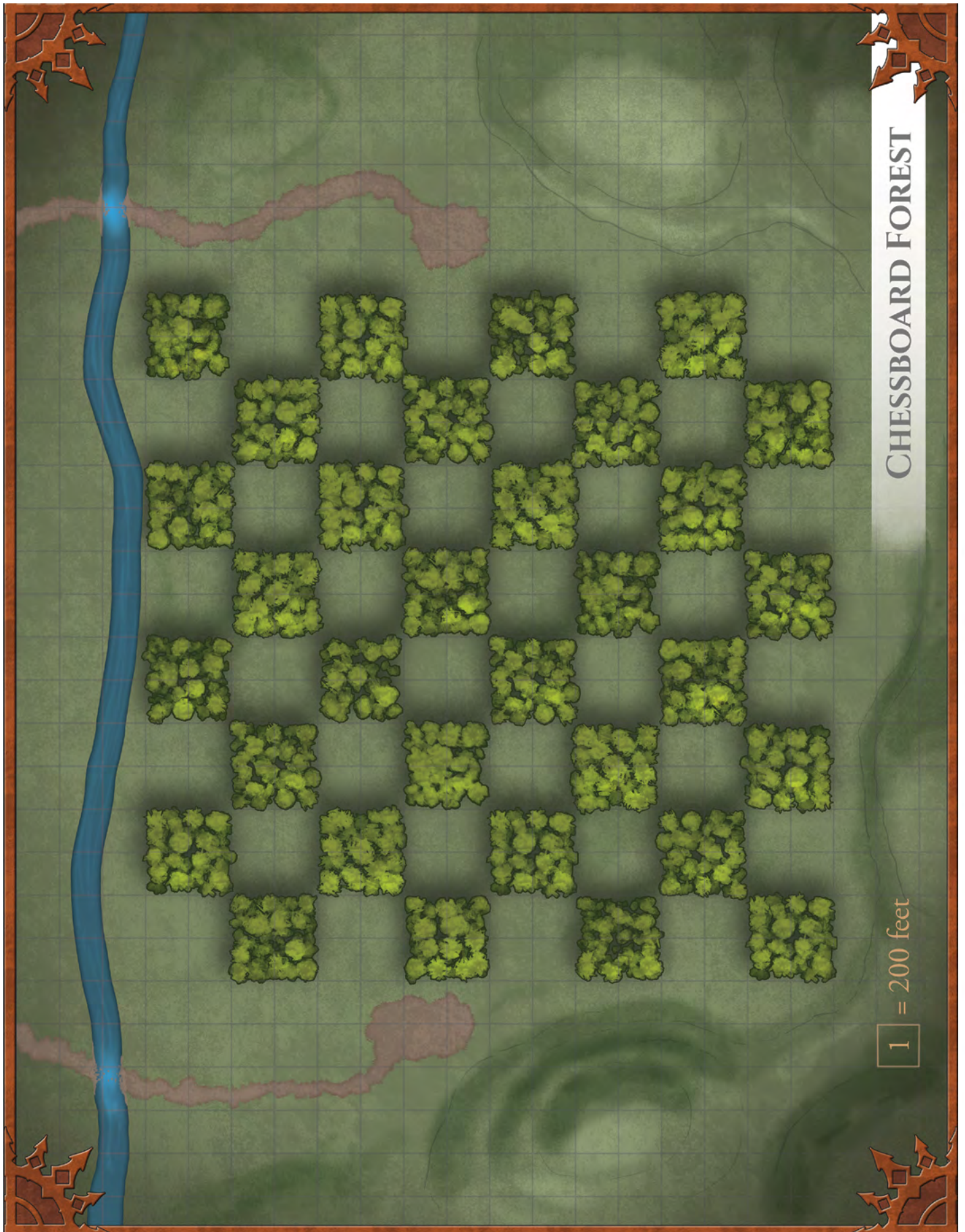
The book used as a focus glows on the page from which you extracted the creation. If that page is damaged or altered, the creation might change to reflect minor edits, or be completely destroyed, falling apart into torn sheets of parchment. It likewise disappears at the end of the spell's duration. If it returns to the book before the duration ends, it does not 'survive'; barring a wish or miracle, the created object or creature can in no way last longer than the spell's duration.



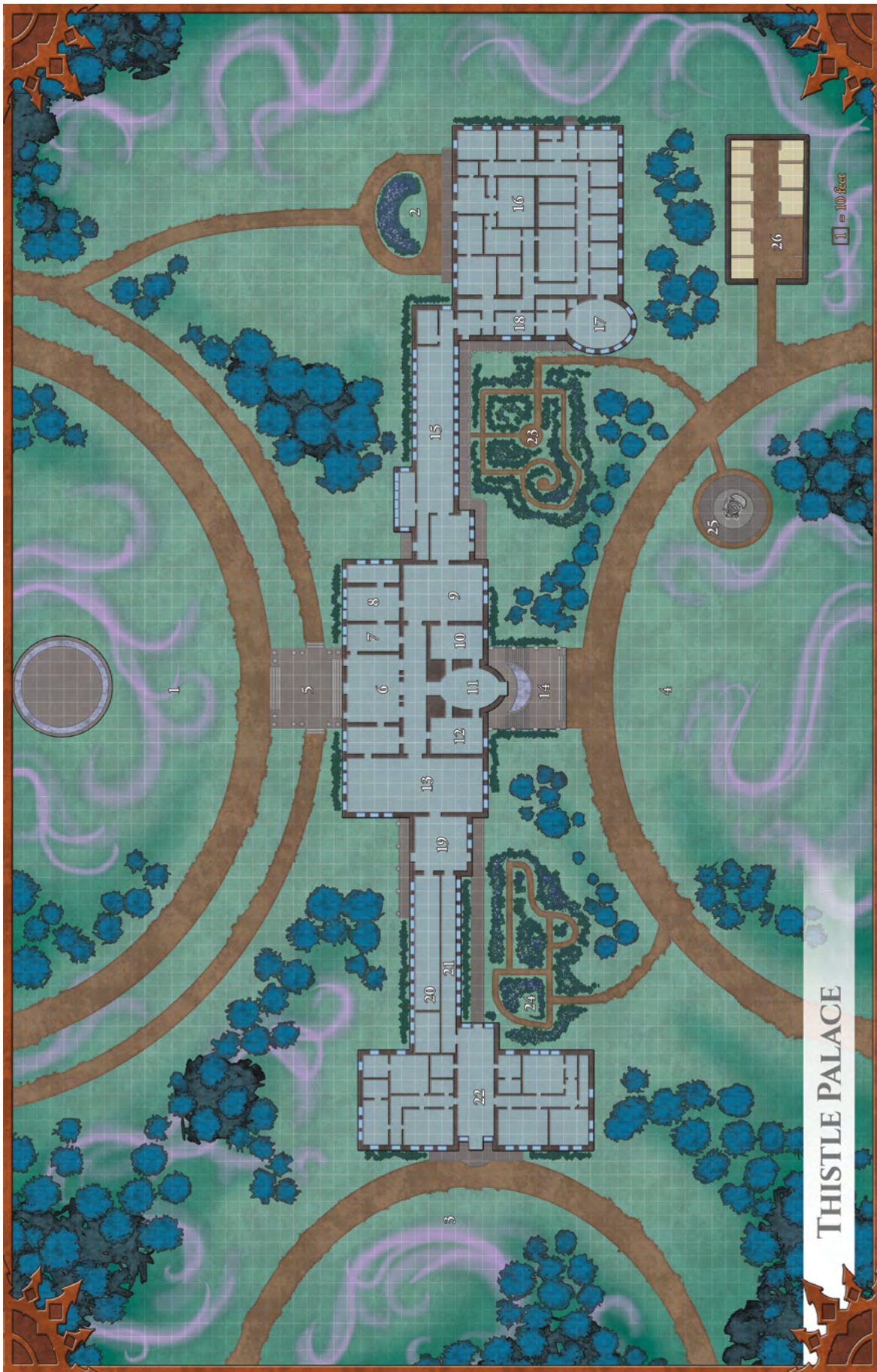












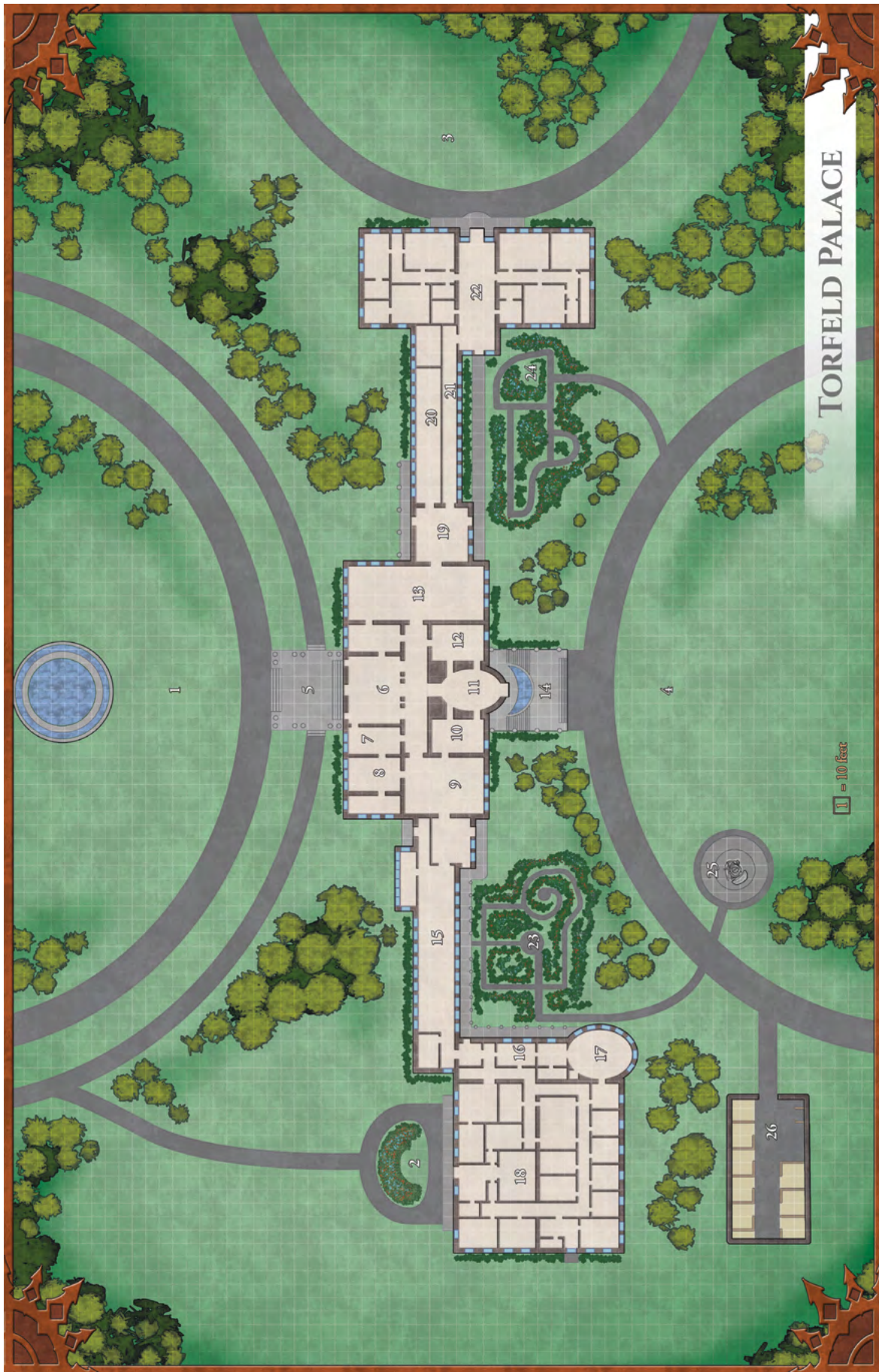
THISTLE PALACE



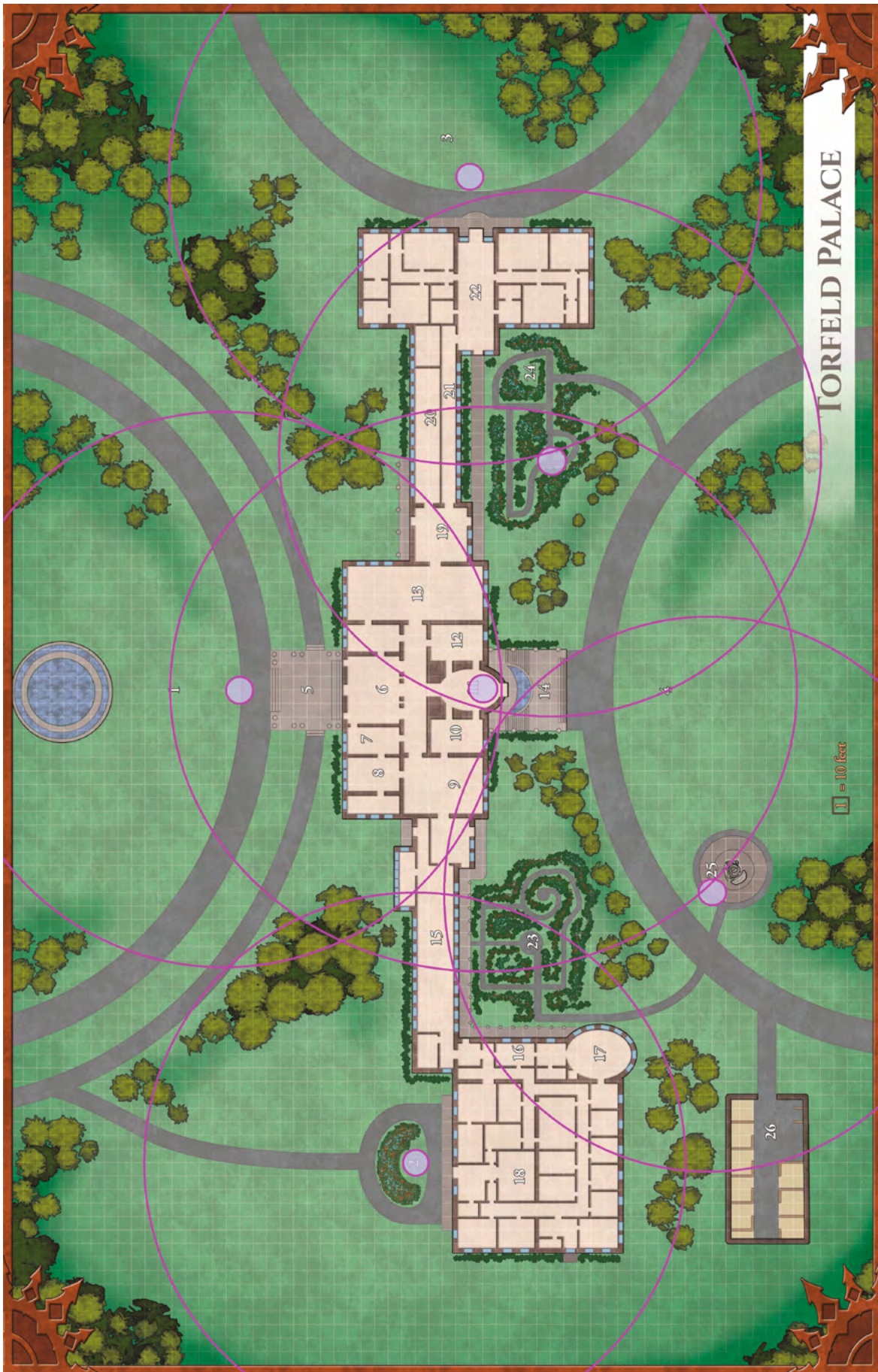
# High Bayou











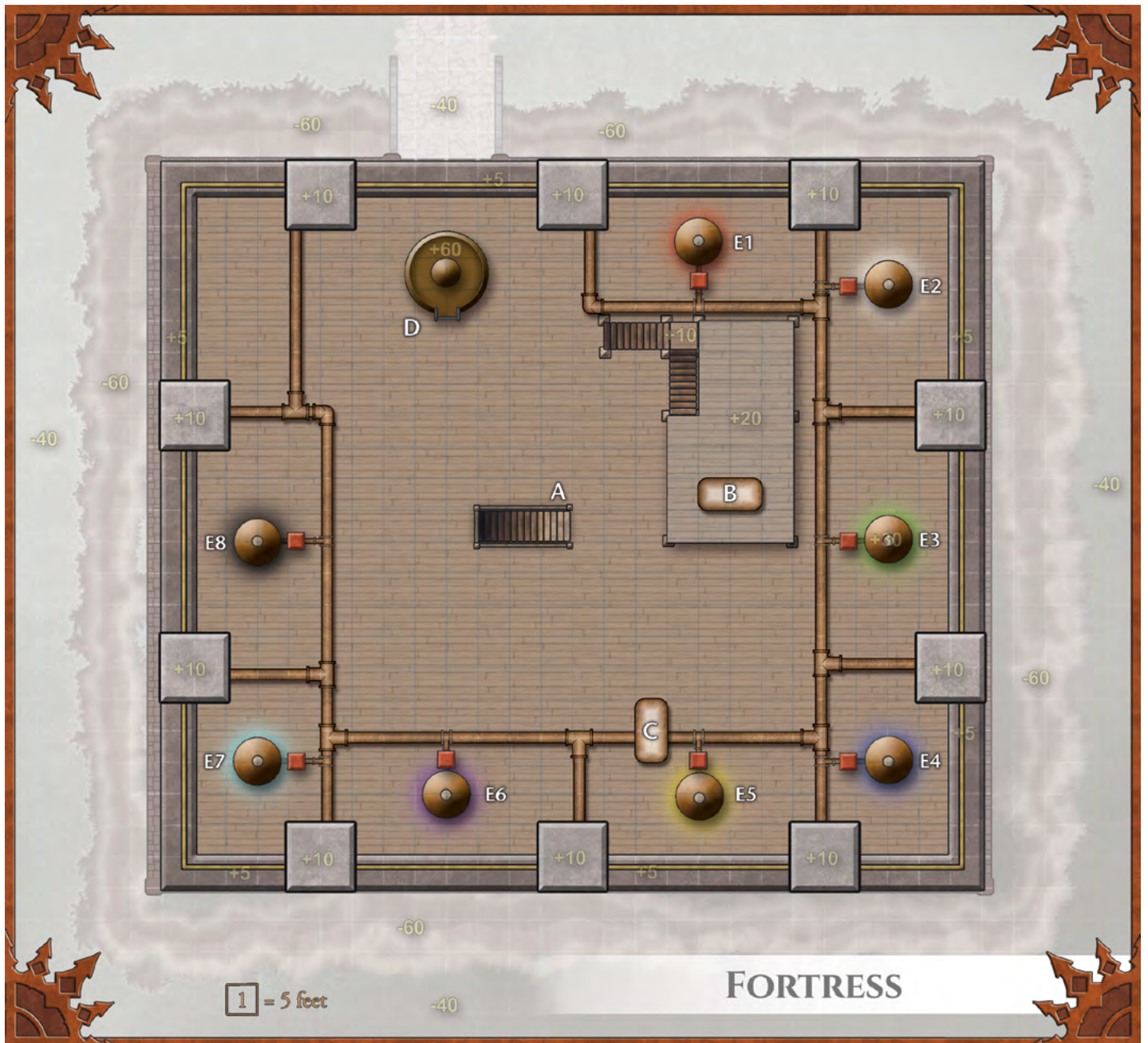














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