



ADVENTURE PATH PLUG-INS



Road to War

The Equinox Crown

By Jim Groves and Neil Spicer



PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Road to War

The Equinox Crown

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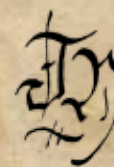
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WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE ROAD TO WAR: THE EQUINOX CROWN

Road to War represents the development of a new product concept from Legendary Games, in that it is in part an adventure and in part a campaign accessory. Like its predecessor, *Road to Destiny* or the Far East Adventure Path Plug-Ins, Road to War comprises a series of loosely linked scenarios rather than a tightly focused adventure. In each case, the companion adventure in the published adventure path presumes a journey of some length, but without a lot to fill it other than random encounters. Road to War offers you a series of interconnected encounters, each a demonic delight in and of itself, which can be inserted piecemeal or in whole into your campaign as heroes plunge into the Demon Wastes that wound the world, either alone or leading a small army of crusaders.

Jim Groves and Neil Spicer, who authored two of the adventures in the published adventure path, have created a diverse set of encounters that are richly detailed, cunningly

designed, and offer the chance to forge ever-deeper connections to the NPCs and organizations that really make the adventure path come alive. Even in terms of pure heroic adventuring, Road to War allows PCs to uncover The Equinox Crown, a lost relic of the fallen druid kingdom of the north, one that will come in very handy later in the campaign as they face down the Locust Lord and his swarming hosts. This item forms a key touchstone for many (though not all) of the encounters in Road to War, and it is designed to grow in power alongside the PCs as they rise to become mythic heroes in their own right, standing in the breach in a war the world dare not lose. Keep your faith and your sword ready, and set out on the Road to War!



WELCOME TO ADVENTURE PATH PLUG-INS

This product is a part of our line of support materials for extended Adventure Path-style campaign play for use with Paizo's *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. When you see the "Adventure Path Plug-In" logo at the top of a Legendary Games product, you can expect it is designed to fit directly with the themes of a particular Adventure Path campaign, but at the same time are rich additions for your home game regardless of what campaign you may be running. The all-star team of designers here at Legendary Games is

committed to bringing you—the busy GM or player—the absolute best third party support for your Pathfinder campaign, products that are innovative in their ideas, beautiful in their appearance, bursting with the creativity of the best authors in the business and developed with a rich interactive layout that blends form and function, and on top of all of that products that are flat-out fun to play.

HEY, WHAT'S WITH THE ADVENTURE PATH PLUG-IN?

You will see us use phrases such as "Righteous Crusade Adventure Path" instead of the title of the 13th adventure path published by Paizo Publishing, LLC, covering issues #73 to 78. Or, you may see us use names such as the "Demon Lands," the "Crusader Stronghold," the "Goddess of Valor," or the "God of Nature" instead of the proper names of specific characters or places from those adventures or gods from the world setting. While we can create compatible products under the Open Game License, we still have to be respectful of certain content Paizo

owns. Because we want to be very respectful of their content and work in partnership with them, we use these "replacement phrases." Plus, this helps the product have a more general appeal to those who may be running a home campaign that fits the same themes. In any event, we are 100% confident you know what we are talking about and will have no problem making the required connection. So, enjoy these pregenerated characters for use in your "Righteous Crusade Adventure Path," helping to tame the "Demon Lands." See, that wasn't so hard, was it?

SPECIAL ELECTRONIC FEATURES

We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the official *Pathfinder Reference Document* as well as *d20PFSRD*. If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an

obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized.

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INTRODUCTION

Road to War is a plug-in adventure designed to supplement a Righteous Crusade Adventure Path campaign. It assumes a great military crusade is waging war against the fiendish powers dominating the once verdant druid lands of Ancient Sarkulis. As holy crusaders march into enemy territory to recapture a location of vital strategic importance, a number of obstacles bar their way. *Road to War* defines these challenges with additional encounters and opportunities for the PCs to gain XP. Designed for levels 6th thru 7th, this plug-in's encounters don't represent a single, self-contained adventure. They can, however, specifically augment the campaign by widening the experiences of the Demonic Incursion when taken together. The adventure also features a unique sub-plot in the form of a new legendary item called the *Equinox Crown*, which the PCs can acquire and unlock as they play through the encounters. *Road to War* also includes full details on how to completely awaken this item for the larger campaign and wield its power against the demons overrunning Ancient Sarkulis.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The *Road to War* starts immediately after the heroes fend off a major demon attack against the city where their crusade first began. Infused with mythic power, the PCs receive command of a small army with orders to retake an important fortress behind enemy lines. Their initial march brings them to a devastated village in the north, occupied by fearful refugees. These villagers look to the PCs as saviors come to retake and defend their homes, but the crusaders must convince them to flee the fiendish outbreak before demons overrun their position. The villagers also share that winged demons stole an ancestral relic from their town and beseech them to prevent this item from falling into the hands of the Abyssal horde. The following night, the crusader encampment suffers an attack by the same hala demons which destroyed the village, leading to an opportunity to recover this relic—a dormant, legendary item once belonging to the druids of Ancient Sarkulis, known as the *Equinox Crown*.

As the PCs continue north, officers of their army soon call on them to adjudicate a matter of desertion, having captured a group of soldiers fleeing the front lines. Unaware that these men carry a demonic pestilence, they bring them before the PCs for judgment, putting the entire camp in danger. After dealing with this fiendish ploy, the PCs lead their army west and enter the Demon Lands. The road ahead requires the heroes to scout for a safe passage through the treacherous countryside, bringing them into

A Standing Army

While *Road to War* includes a single, mass combat for the crusaders, most encounters feature challenges designed exclusively for the PCs, allowing them to showcase their mythic talents in dramatic fashion. Nevertheless, some players may question their army's activities during these individual encounters, so the following suggestions may help define an appropriate backdrop explaining their presence.

Encounter A. This social encounter takes place in the army's presence with the town's citizens interacting with the soldiers and PCs alike.

Encounter B. This attack occurs at the army encampment where hala demons keep their army pinned down with weather-based, area attacks while three more individually assault the PCs.

Encounter C. This battle involves a massive swarm assaulting the PCs and their army simultaneously. While the soldiers suffer no lasting damage, the swarm prevents them from effectively contributing to the battle, leaving it to the PCs to take control of the situation.

Encounter D. This scene includes a mass combat with direct participation by the PCs' army.

Encounter E. After their advance scouts fail to report back, the PCs must blaze ahead to secure a safe passage for their army.

Encounter F. The individual scouting mission culminates with this encounter as the PCs defeat the last significant threat on the road ahead. The adventure assumes they rejoin their troops following this battle and continue their assigned mission to retake the demon-held fortress in the north.

Encounter G. This encounter takes place after the PCs recapture the fortress, leaving their army behind to defend it while they continue exploring the surrounding Demon Lands.

conflict with a territorial frost drake and a cunning ettin.

From there, the *Road to War* assumes the PCs successfully retake the demon-held fortress they were sent to reclaim, consequently using it as forward base from which to launch their own forays against the fiendish tide. However, establishing full control of the region requires one final task associated with the *Equinox Crown*. An otherworldly terror plagues a circle of standing stones once held as a holy site among the druids of Ancient Sarkulis. To free this site of demonic taint, the PCs must contend with a confused elemental and its battle against a mythic derakni creating further tears in the fabric of reality between Sarkulis and the Abyss. Defeating this corruption not only prevents an unspeakable plague from descending on their fortress, but it also unlocks the true potential of the *Equinox Crown*, giving the PCs an all new weapon in the war against the Abyss.

A. REFUGEES (CR 3)

Distance from starting city: 25 miles

Travel time for army from starting city: 1 day

Northeast of the city where the Demonic Incursion first struck, the PCs and their army should reach a small village set among unusually verdant and agriculturally sustainable farmland. The village was founded prior to the Demonic Incursion by the adult daughter of a powerful druid trained in the traditions of Ancient Sarkulis named Vorian. The surrounding countryside remained fertile and encouraged the growth of orchards and fields of grain, such that the village once provided a key resource for supplying food to the crusade. Unfortunately, the recent demonic outbreak has nearly decimated the town. A number of villagers and their families have taken refuge at nearby farms and homes located on the outskirts of town. Deprived of news and a broader perspective on the war, they continue to hold out in the hope that help will arrive to drive off the hala demons lurking across the nearby river. For their part, the demons tarry on the far shore, gathering in strength before mounting an all-out assault meant to overwhelm the townsfolk.

When the PCs arrive, their army's presence brings a welcome reprieve from this threat. The townsfolk prove exceedingly grateful and welcoming, believing their salvation has finally come. Many press small gifts of food, free lodging, and repairs upon them in an effort to curry favor with the PCs and their troops. A DC 10 Profession (soldier) or DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check can easily determine the town's defenses stand a poor chance of surviving another demon offensive. However, convincing

the villagers to give up their homes and evacuate to the larger, more fortified cities of the south proves difficult. Anyone attempting to do so must succeed on a complex DC 20 Diplomacy check (5 successes required before 3 failures), but others may assist these efforts with Aid Another actions.

Development: The PCs may think to end the village's plight by arraying their forces to fight the demons, but the PC with the highest skill ranks in Profession (soldier) or Wisdom modifier (in that order) automatically realizes the folly of such a plan. The town no longer has an easy means to cross the river as its only ferry was destroyed in the last battle. Additionally, based upon the villagers' description of the demons' tactics, the hala are unlikely to engage the PCs on anything but their own terms. With their night-vision and ability to fly, they won't risk a fight with an entire army during the daytime. It's also clear that a prolonged battle at this vulnerable village will only delay and hinder their army from successfully reaching its true goal—the heavily-defended fortress in the Demon Lands.

If the PCs successfully persuade the villagers to evacuate, one of the community's leaders also tells them about a sacred relic known as the *Equinox Crown*, stolen by the demons from a local shrine. The silver circlet belonged to the legendary druid whose daughter founded the town centuries ago. The *Equinox Crown* has never evidenced any magic powers before, but the locals know it belonged to Ancient Sarkulis and fear what the demons might do with it. Even if the PCs cannot promise to restore the village, they're asked to reclaim the *Equinox Crown* and keep it safe, if given the opportunity.

Story Award: If the PCs successfully convince the villagers to leave, award them XP equivalent to a CR 3 encounter.

B. NIGHT DEMONS (CR 7)

Distance from ruined village: 27 miles

Travel time for army from ruined village: about 1 day

Creatures: The following night, the army campsite comes under attack from the same hala demons which harassed the ruined village. Unknown to the PCs, a spy among their troops slips away to send a *message* to the demons. The spy effectively outlines the PCs' goals and movements to the hala demons so they can relay this information to the Demon Knights of Subversion. While a scattering of hala demons maintain their distance to create hailstorms to pummel the army itself, three others directly assault the PC's command tent, as pointed out to them by the spy. The demonic trio hopes to kill the mythic upstarts before their quest can get fully underway.

HALA DEMONS (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

CE Medium outsider (air, chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

Aura stormwind aura

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 37 each (5d10+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities vengeful wind; **DR** 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 15

Weaknesses enemy of dragons and eagles

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+3), bite +9 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks hailstorm

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +7)

At will—*alter winds* (DC 13)

3/day—*gust of wind* (DC 14), *river of wind* (DC 16)

1/day—*control winds* (DC 17), summon (level 3, 1 hala 40%)

TACTICS

During Combat One hala demon uses *control winds* to rip away tents and push PCs together with an updraft equivalent to a windstorm. The others then pelt this area by calling down hailstorms. They use *gust of wind* to blow back opponents trying to break free of the affected area and execute Flyby Attacks through the maelstrom while under the protection of their stormwind aura. Once the demons identify an enemy spellcaster, they use *river of wind* to separate them so they can swoop in to tear them apart.

Morale The demons fight until slain.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 19, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

Feats Flyby Attack, Hover, Weapon Finesse^B, Wingover

Skills Acrobatics +12, Escape Artist +12, Fly +20, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +8, Stealth +12

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enemy of Dragons and Eagles (Ex) Halas are hated enemies of dragons and eagles. Such creatures gain a +2 bonus on attack and damage rolls against them.

Hailstorm (Su) A hala can call down hailstones from surrounding clouds once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action. These hailstones deal 1d6 points of bludgeoning

damage and 1d6 points of cold damage to all creatures within a 20-foot radius that have no overhead cover. A DC 14 Reflex save halves this damage. The save DC is Constitution-based. To use this ability, a hala must be outside and there must be clouds in the sky.

Stormwind Aura (Su) Halas surround themselves with a buffeting shroud of supernatural, windstorm-force winds. These winds shield a hala from any other wind effects and form a shell of breathable air around it, allowing the hala to breathe underwater. Ranged weapons and gases directed toward a hala are affected as the spell *wind wall*.

Vengeful Wind (Su) Anytime a hala takes damage from a critical hit, a powerful blast of wind explodes forth in the direction of the attacker. This blast takes the form of a 60-foot-long gale, treated as a *gust of wind*, directed from the hala toward the opponent which scored the critical hit against it (if that creature is more than 60 feet away, the wind is aimed in its direction but doesn't come close enough to affect it). This wind is also charged with electricity. Any creature in or that enters the area of effect must make a DC 14 Reflex save or take 3d6 points of electricity damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Treasure: One of the hala demons carries a *bag of holding* (type II) containing the *Equinox Crown*, a *potion of blur*, *scrolls of lesser restoration* and *resist energy* (fire), 387 gp, 544 sp, three rubies worth 100 gp each, a silver canister worth 50 gp holding three separate vials of holy water, a pair of loaded gambling dice, and a *feather token* (fan).

C. DESERTERS (CR 7)

Travel time from previous night's campsite: 4 miles

Travel time for army from previous night's

campsite: About 1 hour, 45 minutes

The late morning after the hala demon attack (**Encounter B**), scouts return to the main army with three captured deserters from the front lines named Nandus, Olen, and Rezzik. They present these prisoners to the PCs for judgment, and a crowd of onlookers soon gathers. Whether in public view or out of sight for interrogation, the deserters all tell the same tale without exception. They fled their last battle against a superior army of cultists and their demon allies, claiming all others were killed or scattered into the countryside. They explain the demonic leaders displayed an extreme appetite for abusing their captured victims and each deserter fled rather than face such torture. When presented, each still has their armor but has had their weapons and gear confiscated.

Creatures: One of these captives, a soldier named **Nandus Tarn** (use statistics for a guard officer) tells a more detailed story than the others about the horrors inflicted by the demon leaders. This results from personal experience, as their forces captured him when he tried to flee. He endured horrendous torture before they surprisingly let him go. They only did so, however, to use him as a cruel ruse meant to spread fear and panic among the crusader ranks. For Nandus now carries a unique parasitic infection of Abyssal larvae inside him.

PCs can attempt Sense Motive on each deserter, but a successful DC 20 skill check reveals only the truthfulness of their hardships and cowardice. A successful check while questioning Nandus, however, also discerns his distracted demeanor and unhealthy pallor. Despite these outward concerns, discovering his larval infection is much more difficult, requiring a successful DC 30 Heal check. A successful examination reveals his condition, but also determines he's beyond any immediate help. The GM should proceed immediately to the encounter described below, but with no chance of a surprise round for the swarms Nandus is about to unwittingly unleash.

Whether the PCs interrogate or punish him, Nandus eventually grows sick and vomits forth a fiendish locust swarm which engulfs the PCs in a potential surprise round. When Nandus first begins to choke and cough, PCs who make successful DC 25 Perception checks receive enough warning to realize something is terribly wrong and remain unsurprised by the swarm. On the subsequent round, two more swarms erupt as Nandus' skin sloughs away under the parasitic onslaught of his infection, releasing a veritable cloud of demonic locusts into the crusader camp. The swarms attack the PCs as well as the soldiers, driving most of the crusaders into their tents. Fending off the locusts proves difficult as they move over and among the encampment where area attacks endanger the PCs' forces as much as the swarms themselves. For every 5 points of damage inflicted on a swarm through area effects, also inflict 1 point of damage on the PCs' army.

DESERTERS (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Human fighter 4

LN Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+9 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 34 (4d10+12)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk guisarme +9 (2d4+5/x3) or sap +7 (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Ranged net +5 ranged touch (entangle) or javelin +5 (1d6+2)

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

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (guisarme), Weapon Specialization (guisarme)

Skills Intimidate +11, Perception +3, Ride +2, Sense Motive +2

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear potion of cure light wounds; **Other Gear** full plate, masterwork guisarme, javelin, nets (2), sap

FIENDISH LOCUST SWARMS (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

NE Diminutive vermin (swarm)

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

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 size)

hp 21 each (6d8–6)

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

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** mind affecting effects; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 9

OFFENSE

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

Melee swarm (2d6 plus distraction)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks smite good 1/day (+0 attack, +6 damage)

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 19, **Con** 8, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +4; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Skills Fly +6, Perception +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception

SQ swarm traits, vermin traits

Development: A mythic PC wearing the *Equinox Crown* in battle against the swarms can automatically bond with it as a legendary item (see Appendix Two, pg. 20).

If the other two deserters survive, the PCs are within their rights under law to arrest and imprison them—or even see them executed, without risk of alignment

violation. Compassionate PCs however may redeem them as well. By pointing out that Nandus's fate is what every man, woman, and child faces without good people coming together and taking a stand, the PCs can persuade the remaining deserters to rediscover their courage and join their army. The GM can adjudicate this through good roleplaying or a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check for each deserter.

Story Award: Grant the PCs 800 XP for each redeemed deserter.

D. CONDEMNATION'S END (ACR 4)

Following the route northeast the PCs cross a river ford enroute to an important strategic location, a small border town on the edge of the Demonic Incursion. Twenty miles northeast of the ford, scouts belonging to the PCs' army encounter **Garidan Sharne** (CG male human fighter 3/rogue 2) and escort him to their attention. Garidan salutes the PCs and identifies himself as a sergeant from a battalion of convicted criminals known as the Condemned all of whom received pardons in exchange for enlisting in the crusades. The Condemned were assigned to a greater field commander named **Darvan Bataari** (LN male human aristocrat 2/cavalier 5), a disdainful noble who often complained of having to accommodate the Condemned, and resented their presence alongside his more valued knights. Darvan was tasked with patrolling the only road between the ford and border town to the northeast. When he received reports of a demon army headed for the ford, he decided their forces should ride to its defense.

Unfortunately, Darvan planned to rid himself of the Condemned by having them harry the demon army into chasing them towards the cliffside canyons to the west—a dead-end sure to pin them down until the demons overwhelmed them. For his part, Darvan and his knights were to circle behind, breaking through to the south to reinforce the ford and eventually assault the demon army pursuing the Condemned in a two-pronged pincher strategy. Garidan reports this maneuver never happened. Instead, the Condemned became trapped without Darvan's reinforcements. Garidan volunteered to slip away from the siege to seek help and to determine why Darvan never followed through on the plan. Now, he seeks the PCs' assistance in locating Darvan and saving the Condemned.

Assuming the PCs travel northeast to where Darvan's company was last seen by Garidan, read the following description:

A chill wind sweeps across the swollen river, ruffling the pitched banners and pennants of hundreds of dead and dying men strewn across a ravaged battlefield. The

reinforcements supposedly heading for the ford have been annihilated. Trampled and burned tents, as well as other camp fixtures, call into question whether these crusaders ever broke camp before the demons slaughtered them.

At this sight, Garidan swears loudly and begins searching among the bodies for any of the knights who still clings to life. He finds at least one soldier who makes a deathbed confession: Darvan ordered his knights to stand fast, making clear his intention to abandon and sacrifice the Condemned in order to weaken the demons chasing them and delay their arrival at the ford. The field commander thought his knights could then hold out on their own until more reinforcements (such as the PCs) arrived from the south. In this way, Darvan's knights would suffer the least casualties—and Darvan could appear as the heroic leader who weathered the assault and held onto the strategic river crossing. With this revelation, Garidan makes an impassioned plea to the PCs that his soldiers deserve better than the grisly death Darvan's vanity has brought them. If the PCs consent, 5 miles to the west they can locate where the box canyon where the demons continue to assault the surviving members of the Condemned.

SCHIR ARMY

CR 4

XP 1,200

CE Medium army of schirs

hp 22

DV 18; OM +6

Tactics standard, withdraw

Special darkvision, disease, powerful charge

Speed 2; **Morale** —; **Consumption** 0

Commander Grueblox (brimorak; Cha +2; merciless)

Treasure: If the PCs defeat the demon army and rescue the Condemned, Garidan vows to repay them, returning to the riverside massacre to locate Darvan's body next to his tattered war banner. He then provides them with Darvan's suit of +1 *full plate*, his *belt of giant strength* +2, and his *circlet of persuasion*. The knight's +2 *longsword* also lies a few feet away, but suffers from the broken condition after being sundered in combat. Garidan offers these treasures to the PCs in thanks. If, for some reason, the PCs refused to help Garidan, the GM should consider these items to have been claimed by the demon army which slaughtered Darvan and his knights.

Development: Tragically, too few of the Condemned remain to form their own army again. But Garidan vouches for their courage, determination, and unconventional strategies. If the PCs accept them, they may add remnants of the Condemned to their army, allowing it to immediately heal 1d6+2 hit points.



E. HUNTER IN THE SKY (CR 8)

Distance from a recently conquered holding: 5 miles

Army travel time from a recently conquered holding: about 2 hours

The hills attain a much higher elevation here, giving a panoramic view of a river valley and its far shore to the south and east. A winding trail leads northeast before wrapping back west and a slow descent into a cloud-filled valley below.

The PCs and their army must march up a steep slope in order to crest the hills that separate the river valley the main horrors of the Demon Lands. Their army's scouts fail to return from the ridge and their commanders express concern the army cannot proceed into unknown territory without a navigable path. Rather than delays in doubling back, they suggest the more powerful PCs forge ahead to scout the ridge and clear the way. The army scales the hills at a considerably slower pace anyway and the PCs should make better time without them. The GM should strongly encourage this plan, and point out some situations in the Demon Lands are better handled by smaller group of more powerful heroes. See the development below if the players prove unwilling to do so.

Creatures: A giant frost drake hunts the skies of this borderland, partially concealed in the low-lying clouds. This beast is fiercely territorial and has already had several battles against hala demons, causing the local fiends and their flying allies to give it a wide berth. When the PCs venture into the hills, it soon attacks where the trail descends toward the west.

Sections of the icy slope act as difficult terrain. Any PC without a means to safely walk on the ice who moves up to half their base speed must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to remain upright. Shorter moves and 5-foot steps do not provoke these checks. Failure means they fall prone and slide 1d4 squares in the direction of the downward slope. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity. PCs who come in contact with other creatures pose no risk in knocking them prone. A sliding PC who cannot slide to an unoccupied square or reaches a square not covered in ice immediately stops sliding.

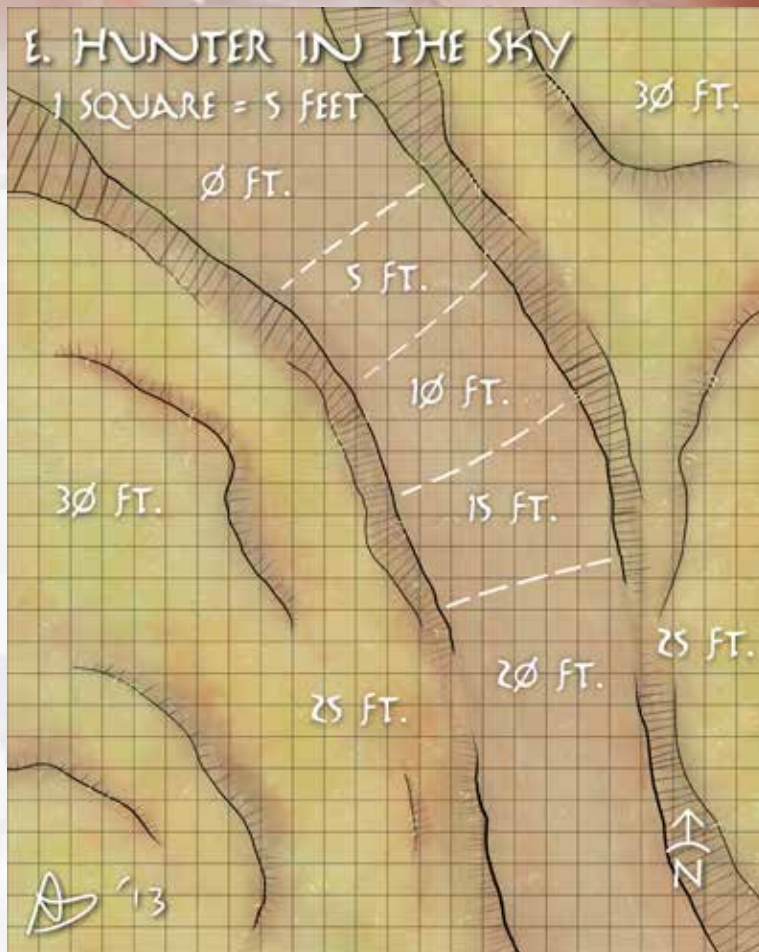
GIANT FROST DRAKE

CR 8

XP 4800

CE Huge dragon (cold)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, snow vision; **Perception** +10



DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (-2 size, +13 natural)

hp 100 (8d12+48)

Fort +12, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Immune cold, paralysis, sleep

Weakness vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., burrowing (20 feet), flight (60 feet, average)

Melee Bite +14 (3d6+8/x2) and Tail slap +9 (2d6+4/x2)

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

Special Attacks freezing mist breath

TACTICS

During Combat The drake uses a speed surge to race overhead, unleashing a freezing mist to damage PCs and coat additional squares of the surrounding slope with more slippery ice. It then circles back with another speed surge to land and charge into battle, relying on its

icewalking ability to keep its footing while making Power Attacks and Vital Strikes with its bite and tail slap.

Morale The drake fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 11, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 28

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Climb +19, Fly +7, Intimidate +12, Perception +10, Stealth +3

Languages Draconic

SQ icewalking, speed surge (3/day)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freezing Mist Breath (Su) A frost drake can, as a standard action, spit a ball of liquid that bursts into a cloud of freezing mist. This attack has a range of 60 feet and deals 7d6 points of cold damage (DC 18 Reflex half) to all creatures in a 20-foot-radius spread. The mist cakes all surfaces in the area with a sheet of slippery ice that turns the area into difficult terrain for 2d4 rounds, after which the ice cracks or melts enough to revert to the normal terrain features in the area. Once a frost drake has used its freezing mist breath, it cannot do so again for 1d6 rounds. The Reflex save is Constitution-based.

Icewalking (Ex) This ability works like spider climb, but the surfaces the drake climbs must be icy. It can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.

Snow Vision (Ex) A frost drake can see perfectly well in snowy conditions, and does not take any penalties on Perception checks while in snow.

Speed Surge (Ex) Three times per day as a swift action, a drake may draw on its draconic heritage for a boost of strength and speed to take an additional move action in that round.

Development: If the players stubbornly refuse to separate from their army despite the loss of their scouts, have the frost drake appear from the low-lying clouds to perform fly-over surprise attacks with its freezing mist breath weapon. This should automatically deal 1d6 points of damage to their army, which should lack any effective means of defending itself against the drake's tactics from the ground with mass combat rules. With its speed surge, flyby attacks, and total concealment among the clouds, the PCs are better off advancing and drawing the drake to ground, which it will never do when confronted by an entire army.

F. ETTIN SURVIVALIST (CR 9)

Distance from site of the frost drake attack: 3 miles

Travel time from site of the frost drake attack: about an hour

The trail descends more sharply here before leveling out into a narrow ravine. Giant logs with scratch marks from some unknown beast lay anchored in the hardened mud, shoring up the embankment against landslides.

This gorge once served as a gathering place and training ground for the ancient druids of Sarkulis. Since the Demonic Incursion, it has lain fallow and unused by their cults. Several tracks, however, lead through the mud. A DC 15 Survival check or DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check can identify they belong to a large grizzly bear (see **Traps** below).

Since no scouts have explored beyond the frost drake ridge, the army commanders are reluctant to press forward without once again knowing the trail ahead. They point out the risk a dead end canyon (such as the one the Condemned recently survived) which could delay their progress and leave the troops in a vulnerable position if another threat like the frost drake or more hala demons arrive. Everyone agrees this risk will be significantly reduced if the PCs advance ahead and ensure the path is clear. See the development below if they refuse to undertake this task.

Creatures: An embattled ettin with separate personalities called Junner and Vetter lies in wait here, along with his companion grizzly bear named Ripclaw. The ettin purposefully directed the bear to leave tracks to lure visitors into the pit trap, and both creatures have prepared an ambush for anyone trying to aid those who fall inside. Obsessed doomsday survivalists, Junner and Vetter are the last of their tribe, having weathered demons, monsters, and crusaders alike in their shared bid to eke out a living in the hills. Smarter than their regular kin, the ettin's two heads often debate the wisdom of living so close to the Demon Lands and hunting the hills. But, so far, Junner and Vetter have stood their own, surviving by stalking and eating any prey which wanders the trail.

Trap: The bear tracks lead directly through the middle of the trail where a cleverly disguised pit trap awaits. Those who fail a DC 25 Perception check must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid falling into it.

Treasure: Junner and Vetter have collected an odd assortment of crusader shields and armor. While far undersized for the ettin, it keeps this collection strategically placed around the ravine to catch rainwater. Among the better pieces is a *lion's shield* and an adamantine breastplate.

JUNNER AND VETTER**CR 7****XP** 3200

Advanced male ettin

CE Large Humanoid (giant)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +14
Defense**AC** 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +10 natural)**hp** 85 (10d8+40)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** 2 flails +14/+9 2d6+8**Ranged** 2 javelins +7 1d8+8/x2**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** superior two-weapon fighting**TACTICS**

During Combat Junner and Vetter direct Ripclaw in battle with simple commands using their Handle Animal skill. Initially, they stay back, letting the bear ravage opponents in melee, while they hurl javelins at spellcasters and anyone staying at range. Once Ripclaw appears badly wounded, or if anyone closes on them, Junner and Vetter switch to their flails and charge into battle with Improved Overrun. Thereafter, one of them always fights with Power Attack in an effort to Cleave while the other fights defensively to guard their flank, a tactic virtually unseen among less intelligent ettins.

Morale Junner and Vetter are survivalists at heart, but have an abiding love for Ripclaw. If the bear dies, they fight on with a furious rage.

STATISTICS**Str** 27, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 15**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +16 (+18 Overrunning); **CMD** 27 (29 vs. Overrun)**Feats** Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Power Attack**Skills** Craft (traps) +7, Handle Animal +12, Intimidate +7, Perception +14, Survival +7; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception**Languages** Common, pidgin of Giant, Goblin, and Orc**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex) An ettin fights with a flail or javelin in each hand. Because each of its two heads controls an arm, the ettin does not take a penalty on attack or damage rolls for attacking with two weapons. Also, because of their advanced intelligence, Junner and Vetter may coordinate different combat feats, maneuvers, or special attacks (such as fighting defensively) with each weapon simultaneously.

RIPCLAW**CR 6****XP** 2,400

Man-eating grizzly bear

CE Large magical beast

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8**DEFENSE****AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)**hp** 47 (5d10+20)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4**DR** 5/slashing**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +9 (1d6+5 plus grab), bite +9 (1d8+7/19–20)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**TACTICS**

During Combat Ripclaw grabs and mauls the first opponent he can reach, pinning them to inflict further damage with his bite. If he suffers a critical hit, he releases any held opponents to retaliate.

Morale The man-eating bear fights to the death.

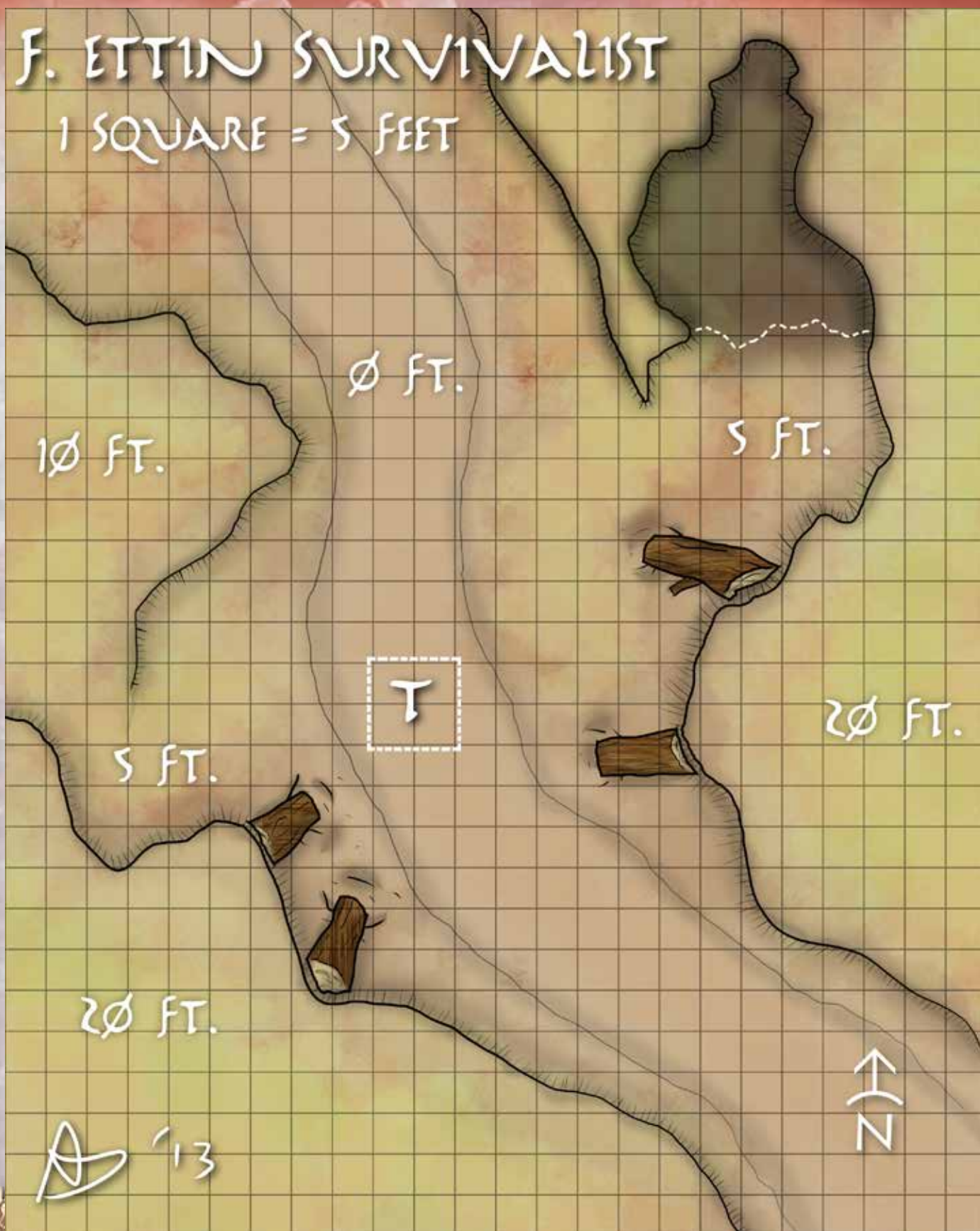
Statistics

Str 21, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 4, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +11 (+15 grapple); **CMD** 24 (28 vs. grapple)**Feats** Endurance, Improved Critical (bite)^B, Improved Natural Attack (bite)^B, Run, Skill Focus (Survival)**Skills** Perception +8, Survival +7 (+11 to follow tracks), Swim +14; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival to follow tracks, +4 Swim**Languages** Abyssal, Common (cannot speak)**CAMOUFLAGED PIT TRAP****CR 3****XP** 800**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20**EFFECTS****Trigger** location; **Reset** manual**Effect** 30-ft.-deep pit (3d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

Development: If the PCs refuse to explore ahead of their army, Junner, Vetter, and Ripclaw will certainly become aware of an advancing army on their home. They evacuate the area and the ettin takes his treasures with them (he'll replace his rain-catchers once the army is gone). The GM may consider with their knowledge of the immediate area,

F. ETTIN SURVIVALIST

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



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ettin and grizzly may circle around to the top of the ravine and trigger an avalanche which automatically inflicts 2d4 points of damage to the army—after which they flee before the PCs can locate the source of the falling rocks.

G. MENHIR MALEVOLENCE CR 8 & CR 12

Distance from a recaptured military holding: about 20 miles

This encounter takes place after the PCs have completed the goal of retaking the fallen stronghold deep in the Demon Lands. It assumes their army stays behind to defend the fortress as they explore the surrounding region on their own. The GM may introduce this encounter as a random location as the party sets about this exploration. Or, alternatively, it can be treated as a mini-quest to learn more about the *Equinox Crown* and research its origin.

This encounter plays out in two stages. The first situation can be resolved through social interaction or combat, but the encounter which immediately follows pits the heroes against a mythic demon which brooks no intrusions or interruptions of its goal to corrupt the standing stones of the ancient druids of Sarkulis. Unlike the earlier encounters in *Road to War*, it's advised the PCs be at least 10th level before taking on this location.

An immense circle of standing stones lies atop this sloping hill, their ring shape still very apparent despite a few menhirs having long since toppled to the hard-packed dirt supporting them. Each stone is carved with ancient symbols and runes, portraying a variety of nature-themed depictions. And the hill itself is a small plateau with a flattened top, sloping down sharply just past remnants of the circle. A number of smaller rocks and boulders form outer rings in the sickly grass and exposed ground surrounding the hill. Some distance outside these rings of stone, stands a singularly tall menhir, set apart and leaning at an odd angle.

The native druids of Ancient Sarkulis once used this circle of standing stones as both a seasonal calendar and focal point for mythic elemental forces. The demons have mostly ignored the menhirs due to their relative isolation and dormant power. Nevertheless, several ley lines also intersect at this geographic location, and any perceived lack of usefulness speaks more to the demons' laziness and lack of imagination than actual fact—a status quo which recently changed when a derakni demon named Zillconnox came across the site and discerned its potential value with the looming equinox. Given mythic power by the Demon Lord of Locusts himself, Zillconnox has started using the site to more actively corrupt the surrounding terrain, magnifying the demonic taint of the Abyss by turning the

elemental energy back on itself. This mythic dissonance has further fractured the terrain, tearing more Abyssal rifts in the already fragile dimensional fabric of the Demon Lands. As these rifts expand, they pose an increasingly dire threat to any liberated territory which the PCs and their crusaders have gained.

The circle of standing stones also provides specific benefits to characters with the druid menhir savant archetype (like Illemandir Ziruul from *Legendary Game's Righteous Heroes*). By expending a single point of mythic power, menhir savants receive a +2 circumstance bonus on all concentration checks, as well as caster level checks to overcome spell resistance within the standing stones. By drawing upon the alignment of the ley lines, they may also increase the DC of all their spells by +1. Should they focus their spirit sense spell-like ability on the menhirs, they may also discover the presence of the demon Zillconnox without having to secure such information from Grumtarr (see *Creatures* below).

Creatures: The circle of standing stones is inhabited and protected by a durdalis called Grumtarr (see Appendix One, page 19). Grumtarr draws on the site for his sustenance and in turn has protected the druidic site from further harm for decades. He's aware of the derakni's presence and knows there's something wrong with the circle, but hasn't yet managed to confront the source of this corruption. The mystic energies he once relied on are now making him sick and confused even as Zillconnox draws on them to spread the taint of the Abyss. Angry, but also very afraid, he's unsure of what to do, lashing out at anything which comes near, believing it to be the source of his misery. Consequently, he has a starting attitude of hostile and mistakes the PCs as demons in disguise who have come to further torment him in his home. Grumtarr eschews subtlety for outright aggression. Before attacking, he roars a challenge, "You defile my home! You are bad! You hurt me and the land! And now I hurt you!" This should provide a clue that he sees himself as the injured party and the PCs as the wrongful party (see development, below). As a result, the PCs might manage to reason with him if they can weather his assault and calm him down.

The real culprit behind Grumtarr's misery is the derakni, Zillconnox, who watches from the Ethereal Plane while his foul presence tangles and pollutes the ley lines among the standing stones. The demon doesn't have to "do" anything to eventually win this conflict, only maintain the status quo and for the PCs to do nothing. When the PCs arrive, he bides his time, hoping Grumtarr's misplaced aggression unwittingly disposes of them on his behalf. If the PCs reconcile with the durdalis, Zillconnox still stays his hand, focusing on equinox alignment to open an irreversible Abyssal rift. Unfortunately for the derakni, he



doesn't realize the PCs have the means to force him onto the Material Plane (see development, below). Once forced to he manifest, the demon has no choice but to eliminate the heroes in order to put his sinister plan back on track. If the PCs befriend Grumtarr, he joins in battle against the demon.

GRUMTARR CR 8

XP 4,800

Male durdalis (see page 19)

hp 92

TACTICS

Before Combat Grumtarr may disguise himself as a boulder to observe the PCs or wait until they're in a good position to attack.

During Combat The durdalis uses his earth-based powers, particularly *spike stones*, *create pit*, and *wall of stone* to separate the PCs so he doesn't have to fight them all at once. His earth glide ability and tremorsense allow him to reposition himself and control the battlefield if he starts to become overwhelmed.

Morale If reduced to 20 hit points or less, Grumtarr flees.

ZILLCONNOX

CR12/MR 5

XP 19,200

Male [derakni](#) (locust demon)

CE Large outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, mythic)

Init +15^{MA}; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +25

Aura vescavor aura^{MA} (5 ft., DC 18),

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 15, flat-footed 24 (+6 Dex, +15 natural, -1 size)

hp 176 (11d10+116)

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

Defensive Abilities poisonous blood, **DR** 10/epic;

Immune electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +20 (1d4+10 plus poison), 2 claws +20 (1d4+10), sting +20 (1d8+10/19-20 plus poison)

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

Special Attacks drone, mythic spell-like abilities^{MA}, mythic power (5/day, surge +1d8)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12nd; concentration +15)

At will—*contagion* (DC 17), *ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects



only), *gust of wind*

3/day—*enervation*, *quicken summon swarm*

1/day—*insect plague*, *summon* (level 4, 1 derakni or 1d4 vescavor swarms 40%)

TACTICS

Before Combat Zillconnox has no spells prepared ahead of time, and shouldn't anticipate being forced to the Material Plane. But, if the PCs fought Grumtarr, the demon may have identified some of the PCs' powers and abilities, and the GM may wish to adjust the demon's tactics accordingly.

During Combat Zillconnox has several feats and spell-like abilities which allow him to fight very effectively from the air. His Hover feat can extinguish light sources and stir up enough dust to provide concealment while he retreats and regroups. His *gust of wind* proves effective at repelling ranged attacks or pushing smaller opponents into any swarms he manages to summon. He uses such allies along

with his drone attack and vescavor aura to weaken the party with Flyby Attacks, only closing for melee when he senses he has the upper hand.

Morale Zillconnox would forfeit his mythic powers and be demoted to a lesser demon if he fails, so he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 23, **Con** 22, **Int** 9, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 37 (41 vs. trip)

Feats Flyby Attack, Hover ^{B, MA}, Improved Critical ^M (sting), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack ^M, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*summon swarm*), Wingover ^{B, MA}

Skills Acrobatics +20, Fly +22, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +25, Survival +17; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drone (Su) The sound of a derakni in flight is a mesmerizing, unsettling drone that causes confusion in all non-demons who hear the sound. A derakni must fly at least 10 feet to activate this ability (which it can do as a free action as part of its move action). Any non-demon creature that begins its turn within 30 feet of a derakni that moved in this manner on its previous turn must succeed at a DC 18 Will save or become confused for 1d4 rounds. A creature that makes this save is immune to the drone of that derakni for 24 hours. Demons are immune to this sonic, mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mythic Spell-Like Abilities (Sp) Zillconnox may cast the mythic versions of *contagion*, *enervation*, *gust of wind*, and *summon swarm*.

Poison (Ex) Bite, blood, or sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 21; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Con; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Poisonous Blood (Ex) Any creature that confirms a critical hit against Zillconnox with a piercing or slashing melee weapon is sprayed with poison (this is considered an injury application, creatures with reach weapons are not endangered by this ability).

Vescavor Aura (Su) Zillconnox is surrounded by vescavors which float around him and envelop his personal space. He is completely unaffected by the swarm, but creatures who start their turn adjacent to Zillconnox take 2d6 points of swarm damage and must make a DC 18 Will save or gain the confused condition for 1 round (save for half damage and negates the confusion). Zillconnox may spend one use of his mythic power to increase the damage to 3d6, which also ignores DR and increases the DC of the Will save by +2. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Development: Grumtarr has a Hostile starting attitude, but if the PCs have a menhir savant (or at GM's discretion, any sort of druid) or a divine caster with the earth domain, they can treat him as Unfriendly for the purpose of improving his disposition with a Diplomacy check—even if he is attacking. A PC who makes a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check can also discern that Grumtarr is more fearful than angry, and he does not know for sure if the PCs are responsible for his suffering. This knowledge also allows his attitude to be treated as Unfriendly instead of Hostile, and grants the party another opportunity to make a Diplomacy check, even if they previously tried and failed. If Grumtarr's attitude improves to Neutral or better, he breaks off his attack to parlay. The durdalis explains that a demon haunts the circle and has “been doing something bad” to corrupt and pollute the “earth force” upon which he survives. He wishes for nothing more than to fight the demon and drive it away, but describes it as “removed from the world” and “beyond my reach.” The PCs may attempt a DC 22 Spellcraft check to surmise the demon may be watching from the Ethereal Plane.

By this point in the *Road to War*, the PCs should possess the means to force Zillconnox to the Material Plane. If a PC openly wears the *Equinox Crown*, Grumtarr immediately recognizes its presence once he's calmed down. The circlet is depicted on several carvings among the stones. And, in many instances the crown's wearer is depicted as facing the sun's last rays as it sets over the tall “heel” stone on the circle's outer perimeter. Grumtarr believes this alignment will flood the circle with enough “earth power” to shove the demon back into phase with the Material Plane. He offers to use his own great strength and earth related powers to set the now leaning heel stone back to its original angle. The PCs can also discover this information themselves by studying the menhirs and making a successful DC 20 Spellcraft check. They can push the heel stone back to the proper angle themselves with a successful DC 25 Strength check (multiple PCs can assist). If a PC wearing the *Equinox Crown* faces the sunset while standing at **G1**, this mini-ritual abruptly forces Zillconnox to the Material Plane without warning (he'll have been observing but will not realize the implications of what they're doing). This surge of energy from the Elemental Plane of Earth also prevents the derakni from using his *ethereal jaunt* spell-like ability for 24 hours. Alternatively, if the PCs cast *consecrate*, *hallow*, or *magic circle against evil* within the stone circle, the spell is consumed but Zillconnox is also forced to the Material Plane, as described above.

If the PCs die or retreat during this battle, Zillconnox swiftly refocuses on opening the Abyssal rift, exerting his own mythic power to rip at the dimensional fabric between the Abyss and Material Plane. If Grumtarr survives,

he sadly abandons his home and flees for the nearest mountains, eventually leaving Ancient Sarkulis altogether. The implications of the Abyssal rift's opening is left for the GM to decide, but Zillconnox may soon coax a vescavor queen to cross into the region, or direct a steady series of demons to infiltrate and subvert the PCs' stronghold.

Treasure: Neither Grumtarr nor Zillconnox keep material wealth, but if the PCs reconcile with the durdalis and he survives, he uses his earth glide ability to venture deep beneath the earth and retrieve a proper gift in gratitude. By locating the tomb of an ancient druid buried deep beneath the circle, he returns with a suit of +1 *wild wood armor*.

Story Award: The defeat of Zillconnox unlocks the Selective Metamagic ability of the *Equinox Crown*. If the PCs convince Grumtarr to cease his attack, award them XP as if they defeated him in combat and an additional 1,000 XP if he survives the battle against Zillconnox.

Conclusion

By the adventure's end, the righteous heroes should have traversed the *Road to War*, putting themselves in the thick of an extra-dimensional battle with conflicts both martial and political. With luck they acquired the *Equinox Crown* and added it to their growing arsenal of legendary weapons and legacies dedicated to ending the Demonic Incursion once and for all.

APPENDIX ONE: NEW MONSTER

DURDALIS	CR 8
XP 4,800	
N Medium outsider (earth, elemental, native)	
Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +14	
DEFENSE	
AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (-1 Dex, +12 natural)	
hp 92 (8d10+48); earthborn (fast healing 2)	
Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +7	
Defensive Abilities elemental traits;	
Immune acid, electricity; Resist fire 10	
Weaknesses vulnerable to sonic	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft., earth glide 30 ft.	
Melee 2 slams +16 (2d6+8)	
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration	

+10)

3/day—*create pit* (DC 14), *spike stones* (DC 16), *wall of stone* (DC 17)

1/day—*move earth*, *stone shape*, *transmute rock to mud* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 8, **Con** 21, **Int** 10, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +16 (+18 bull rush); **CMD** 25 (27 vs. bull rush, drag, reposition, and trip)

Feats Improved Bull Rush^B, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Appraise +9, Craft (sculpting) +9, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (nature) +11, Knowledge (planes) +11, Perception +14, Stealth +0 (+12 in natural rocky areas and boulders); **Racial Modifiers** +12 Stealth in natural rocky areas and boulders.

Languages Common, Terran

SQ steady

ECOLOGY

Environment Elemental Plane of Earth or any naturally rocky area

Organization solitary, pair, or clan (3–6)

Treasure Incidental

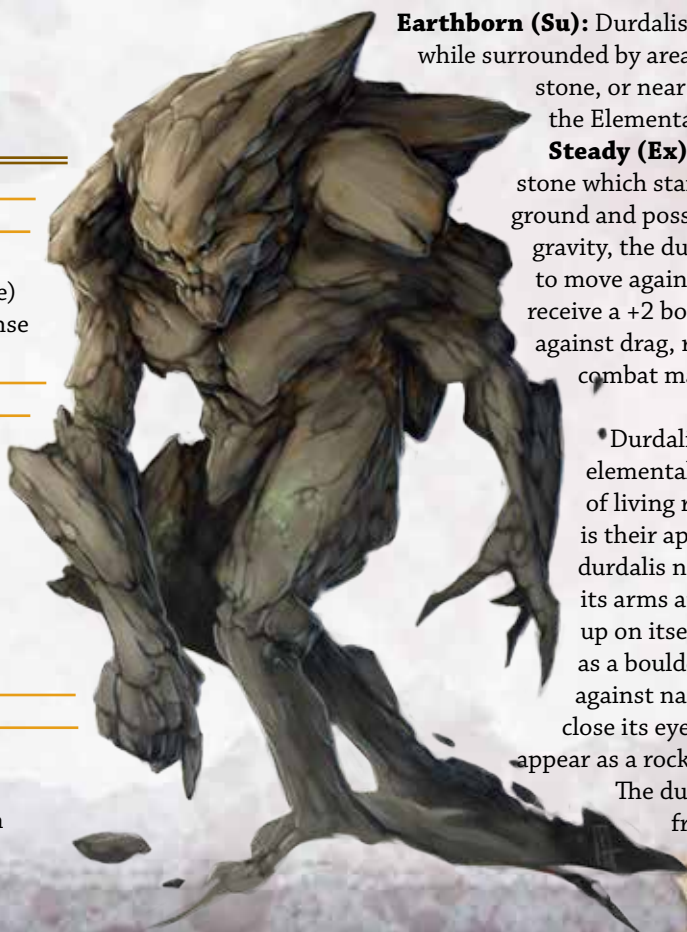
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Earthborn (Su): Durdalis have fast healing 2 while surrounded by areas of rough, natural stone, or near any connection to the Elemental Plane of Earth.

Steady (Ex): A creature of stone which stands low to the ground and possess a low center of gravity, the durdalis is difficult to move against its will. Durdalis receive a +2 bonus on their CMD against drag, reposition, and trip combat maneuvers.

*Durdalis are short, squat, elemental beings composed of living rock. So earthen is their appearance that a durdalis need only tuck in its arms and legs and curl up on itself to be mistaken as a boulder, or sit up against natural stone and close its eyes and mouth to appear as a rocky outcropping.

The durdalis originate from the Elemental



Plane of Earth but occasionally migrate to the Material Plane when opportunity permits, especially to locales rich in mineral resources, natural ores, or in some cases—areas with abundant ley lines, fey magic, or Inner Plane elemental vertices. Despite appearances, durdalis do not subsist on actual rock, but rather energy which flows from the Inner Planes to Material Plane. Druids and naturalists speculate that while the Elemental Plane of Earth provides for their needs, the mixture of other elemental forces creates a richer, more satisfying habitat—hence their rare planar migration.

Naturally peaceful, durdalis rarely trouble other races. Some sages liken them to treants, but even more reticent. They dislike stone buildings and dungeons, since they feel no connection with quarried and worked stone. Typically, dwarves come to an accord with durdalis by respecting their territories, which presents little hardship on either party as durdalis communities tend to be small on the Material Plane. Adventures and explorers report the hulking stone creatures rarely concern themselves over small amounts of precious metals and gemstones removed from their lairs, reserving their greatest anger for unscrupulous miners with whom they cannot negotiate.

Occasionally, durdalis leave their mountainous or cavern homes to take up residence near menhirs, standing stones, and other sites sacred to druidic worship. This results not from a sense of piety, but to draw from the rich backwash of ambient mystical energies between the planes. Druids seldom discourage this practice, as the durdalis fall quite easily into the role of guardians and caretakers of such sites.

Typical durdalis are 5 feet tall and weigh 800 lbs. Larger durdalis use the giant simple template and can reach 9 feet tall and over 2000 lbs. An elder durdalis is the base creature with both the advanced and giant simple template, taking on a more hardened, rough exterior glistening with unique—and some say magical—mineral deposits. Unlike other elementals, durdalis which migrate to the Material Plane automatically receive the native subtype, but have the extraplanar subtype on any other plane besides the Elemental Plane of Earth.

APPENDIX TWO: NEW LEGENDARY ITEM

EQUINOX CROWN—LEGENDARY ITEM

Aura strong abjuration and universal; **CL** 20th

Slot headband; **Weight** 1 lbs.

Prior to the fall of Ancient Sarkulis, a terrible Demon Lord of Locusts supplanted himself as a nature spirit, albeit a destructive one, in the pantheon of spiritual beings

alternately venerated or propitiated to maintain the balance of natural forces. This subversion grew uncontrolled, and on more than one occasion, led to great suffering before the demonic infestation was driven off by more benevolent divinities. Although learned druids and shamans exposed the Demon Lord as having no part in the natural order, the culture and people of Ancient Sarkulis lacked a central authority and strong, universal belief system to remain free of his influence. Destructive and harsh forces were often viewed as part of the cycle of nature. And, when times grew hard, small clans often returned to the old ways of appeasing and beseeching demonic powers as a means to insure themselves from harm. These lapses in faith allowed the Demon Lord's evil to creep back into Ancient Sarkulis again and again, always in search of the wicked and foolhardy.

Vorian, a respected hierophant, made it his mission to travel Sarkulis to educate the clans on the peril of mistaking infernal entities for the destructive spirits in nature. Time and again he would expose the veneration of the Lord of Locusts and scour his cults from the countryside. His unquestioned zeal became legendary and his followers dubbed him the "Autumn Lord" whose chilly wrath spelled a season's end for all tiny and loathsome things which crawl, slither, and fly. When Vorian passed away, the silver circlet he wore upon his brow became an extension of his personal legend and cause. Known as the *Equinox Crown*, it was placed in a shrine in a village named after Vorian's only daughter. When Demonic Incursion sundered the world, the relic had already fallen far from memory. And, after centuries of neglect, the crown became inert and tarnished. Yet, with the growing proximity of the demonic forces, the crown has begun to stir once more, driven by Vorian's zeal even well after his death.

When first handled by any character capable of casting spells, the tarnish on the silver circlet abruptly vanishes as if the metal were polished clean. When worn, it grants a +2 sacred bonus to whatever ability score the wearer uses to cast spells (Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom—or, Charisma for non-spellcasters). The circlet does not grant additional skill ranks as with a *headband of vast intelligence*, even if it grants the wearer a bonus to Intelligence. Certain events and tasks can further awaken the *Equinox Crown*, eventually transforming it into a powerful magic item. One such event—and its corresponding power—are described in the *Road to War*, but more powers are listed below with suggestions for suitable triggers to unlock them.

In addition, the *Equinox Crown* is a legendary item which bonds with a mythic wearer when worn in any battle

against an insect or insect swarms (such as the swarms in Encounter C.). The circlet has two daily uses of legendary power which recharge each day, but requires additional powers to be unlocked first in order to use them.

It is left to the GM's discretion whether the *Equinox Crown* can be further upgraded by the legendary item universal path ability, but it is recommended the *Equinox Crown's* existing powers be fully unlocked as a requirement before doing so. As the *Equinox Crown* is already a legendary item, if the wearer takes the legendary item universal path ability it should transform into a minor artifact, and a major artifact if taken a second time.

Legendary Surge: If the wearer defeats an evil outsider capable of mental control over evil outsider swarms, the *Equinox Crown* unlocks its legendary surge ability. This ability permits the wearer to add the result of a d6 to their concentration or caster level check. A mythic wearer can use her surge die type in place of a d6. If she's bonded to the circlet, she can increase that die type by one step. This ability is fueled by the circlet's uses of legendary power or by a bonded wearer's own mythic power (on a one for one basis).

Selective Metamagic: If the wearer defeats a derakni demon (such as Zillconnox in Encounter F), the *Equinox Crown* unlocks a new ability. The wearer gains the Selective Metamagic feat provided she meets the feat requirements (10 skill ranks in Spellcraft). The wearer must also wear the circlet for 24 hours to use the feat, unless she is also bonded to it. The wearer may also spend one use of legendary power (or her mythic power, if bonded) to apply the Selective Metamagic feat to one of her spells spontaneously and without changing the casting time.

Repel Vermin: If the wearer slays a coloxus demon (as opposed to permitting it to flee, which coloxus are prone to do), the *Equinox Crown* unlocks another ability. The wearer may spend one use of the circlet's legendary power to cast *repel vermin* as a spell-like ability. The caster level of the spell is equal to the wearer's character level and uses the wearer's relevant spellcasting ability score (or Charisma by default). A mythic wearer may spend a second use of the circlet's legendary power to cast the spell as a swift action. Finally, a mythic bonded wearer adds their mythic tier to

their character level to determine the caster level, and may spend uses of their own mythic power on a one for one basis. The *Equinox Crown* does not modify *repel vermin* when cast from the wearer's own spell slots.

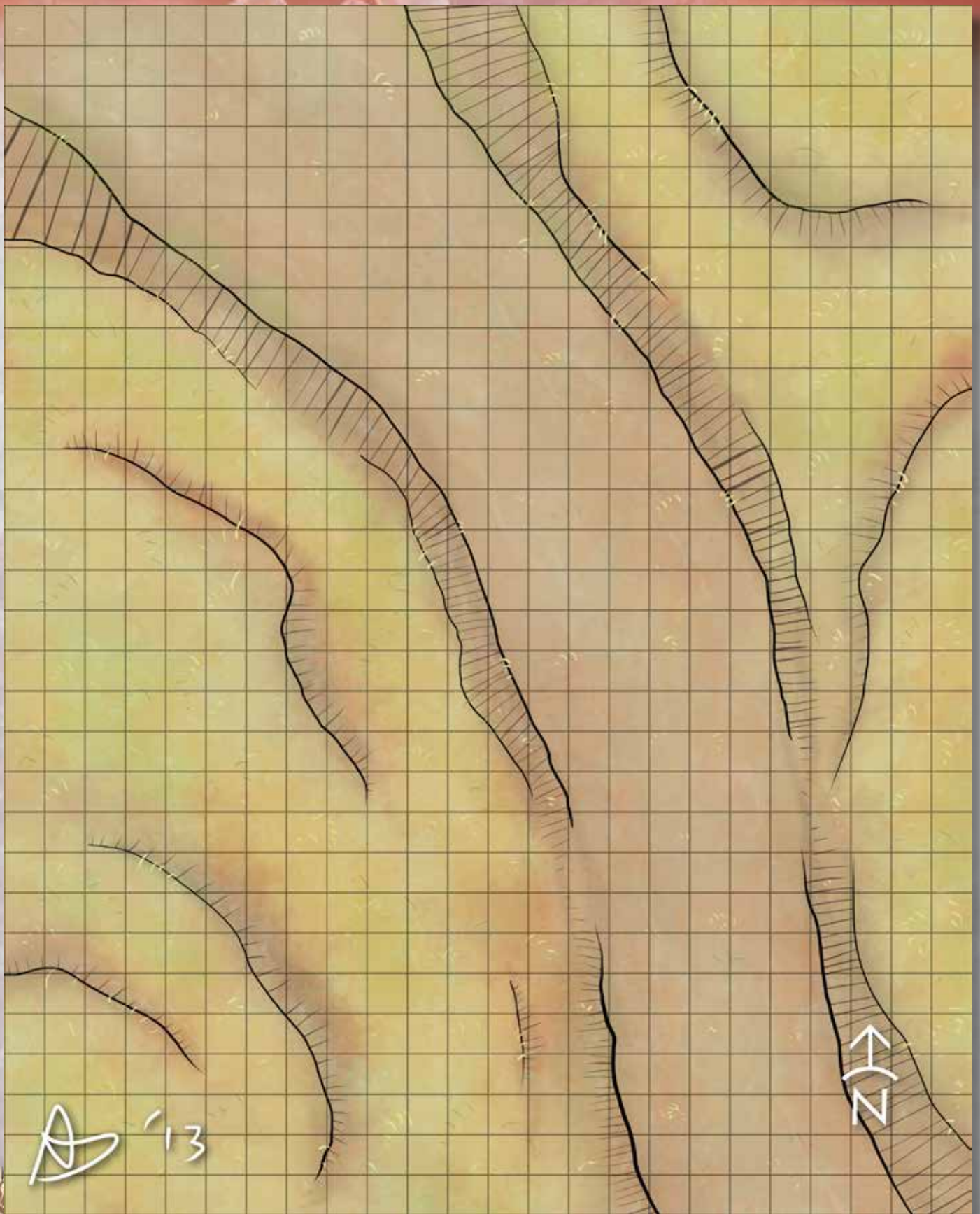
Cannibalize: If the wearer defeats a worm-that-walks, a final ability is made available. The wearer may spend two uses of legendary power (and/or mythic power if the wearer is bonded) to command a swarm to cannibalize upon itself instead of any other creature. The swarm must be within sixty feet and line-of-sight of the wearer and make a Will save equal to $10 + 1/2$ the wearer's character level + the wearer's spell-casting ability modifier (or Charisma by default), bonded wearers also add their mythic tier. Failure means the swarm deals its swarm damage only to itself and no other creature for one round. At the end of swarm's turn it may make another Will save to end the effect. Once

a swarm (or creature) successfully saves against this effect it cannot be affected again for 24 hours. The swarm is unaffected by any of its own secondary effects, such as distraction, disease, or poison, and its movement can still be controlled by a creature that summoned it. Any creature with the swarm type is affected by this ability, including outsiders, undead, and creatures that have temporarily gained the swarm type through shapeshifting, however swarms that are mechanical constructs are immune.

DESTRUCTION

The circlet must be sundered by a legendary or artifact weapon wielded by the Demon Lord of Locusts.









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Road to War

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