

NEOEXODUS

ADVENTURES

ORIGIN OF MAN



LPJ9433



HISTORY

Over eight centuries ago the Arman migrated from Ablis to the mainland of Exodus. Guided by the vision of the shaman Grigori Vyskos, they abandoned their homeland, and resettled in Sametia and later further into Abaddon where they conquered the Sorcerer-Kings. For years, the Arman were content to rule their mainland empire.

In 19 AU, the Arman Protectorate launched an expedition to their ancestral homeland. The expedition was a disaster. Only four of the fifty men survived and returned to the mainland. The men reported tales of intelligent, man-sized insectoid abominations called locari. As if to prove their point, three of the men later died as locari eggs hatched in their chests. Divinations could not confirm any of the men's tales.

After a lot of debate, the Imperial Senate declared the island of Ablis a forbidden zone and blockaded the island. For now, the threat is contained. Any expedition to the island is deemed too dangerous and there is hope that the locari threat will not cross beyond the shores of the island.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Reinhalt von Grumborg, an archeologist from the Royal Academy of Science in Nyssa, intends on proving that the Arman and Nasians share a common heritage. His theories have been vociferously dismissed by a number of rival scholars in Nyssa. Still, he is determined to pursue and vindicate his work. To that end, he has spent years researching ancient migrations, consulting the Kaga whenever he could.

Finally, a year ago, he discovered a book called "Raiding the Sorcerer-King" written in the ancient tongue of the Arman. An Arman raider wrote the book before the great migrations and the subsequent conquest of Abaddon. The book contains the location of Nexus Gateways that led to their homelands.

Full details of the book appear in the *NeoExodus: A House Divided Campaign Book*.

Professor von Grumborg believes he can activate a portal, explore where it leads and prove his theory. Von Grumborg is convinced that the gateway leads not to Ablis, but to another, yet undiscovered land. With the location of those portals in hand, he needs adventurers to protect him.

KNOWLEDGE CHECKS ON THE LOCARI

Because knowledge of the locari is not common across the mainland, all knowledge checks about them are made with a +20 penalty to all DCs.

This penalty persists until the PCs research in the crypt later in the adventure. After that, the penalty goes away.

PROFESSOR REINHALT VON GRUMBORG

The professor's full statistics appear in Appendix 1.

Professor von Grumborg is a mix of a madman, a visionary, and an extremely well-educated man. He speaks in superlatives and is prone to grandiose and entertaining stories. He favors long and complex words over short and direct ones.

FEEL AND PACE

The adventure can be split into three parts. The first part should feel very relaxed and focus on exploring a unique location with a wacky professor. This comedic relief contrasts sharply with the life and death situations around him. The pace should be slow and casual.

Once the PCs are transported to Ablis, the mood changes to one of unfocused fear and worry. The PCs can expect something to happen, like the calm sensed before the storm.

Finally, when the locari arrive and launch their assault on the PCs, the adventure turns into a fast-paced race against the clock. Without supplies, unsure of where they are, and in hostile territory, the PCs must find a way out of this mess. The PCs should constantly feel the locari threat breathing down their necks. The crucial part for the GM is to make them imagine that fear. Frequent attacks and the occasional mishap only enhance the drama. The PCs are not on top of the food chain while on Ablis, and they should both realize and feel it.

INTRODUCTION

The adventure begins with the PCs each receiving a letter from an agent of the Imperial Alliance named Preest. The agent heard about the PCs from their previous adventures. Players may recognize the name, as Preest appears in a number of other NeoExodus adventures.

Give each PC a copy of player handout #1. When the PCs head to the Rusty Helm.

READ ALOUD

The Rusty Helm stands across from the famed Royal Library in Nyssa, capital of the Caneus Empire. The inn is a squat building in Canean style. Hanging over the door is a rusted helmet of ancient design.

Inside a mostly-human crowd of scholars, students, and academics are eating and drinking. Behind the bar, a sasori male serves drinks and gossip to the patrons.

When asked for the Professor's table, the sasori stares at you for a moment before gesturing for you to come behind the bar and down into the wine cellar. Here there is a table, a candle, and a few chairs surrounded by wine casks and dusty bottle racks. It seems that a number of other adventurers are waiting.

The PCs arrive roughly at the same time. Allow the PCs to introduce their characters before continuing.

1: THE CONTACT

READ ALOUD

The PCs wait for a short while and get restless.

Finally, a cloaked man whose face is hard to see walks into the light and greets you simply by raising his left hand and saying "History Awaits." Upon his hand is a signet ring matching the seal on the letter you received.

"My name is Preest, and I have sent for you. Tell me, does the name Reinhalt von Grumborg mean anything to you?" he asks bluntly.

PCs can make a DC20 Knowledge (history or local) check to know he is a professor at the Royal University in Nyssa. His field of expertise is human bloodlines and origins.

"I am no expert myself, but he is a professor of science here in Nyssa. He is building an expedition and is in need of capable adventurers. While many people believe the man is a little cracked, some think he is on to something."

"The man believes he found a clue of "great historical significance" in one of the dusty tomes his kind love to spend their days with. His expedition is to follow up on this lead."

"Meet with him. Find out what he wants to do. And accept any offer of employment he can provide. You must get yourself on that expedition. Keep a good journal of everything you discover and report it to us."

"For the safety of both you and I, you must keep my name out of it.

"Is this acceptable?"

Preest can answer a few questions, but he knows little else. He does not promise any rewards, so he encourages the PCs to "bargain hard."

- **Whom do you work for?** I work for a powerful senator who wishes to remain nameless, but who takes a keen interest in these affairs.
- **Where is he going?** I'm not sure, but I believe he may be going into Sametia, the land of the Janus Horde.
- **What will you pay us?** Depending on the information you bring back and the time you are gone, I will pay each of you up to 100 Imperial crowns (20gp each).
- **What if something happens to the Professor?** Try to keep the man alive, but I am paying you for the information you will gather.
- **Where is he?** I just saw him enter the Royal Library, just across the square from here. Ask for him.
- **Why do you want your involvement to be kept secret?** I have many enemies and anonymity will keep you safe from their curiosity.

- **How do we meet you after the mission is over?** Return here and I'll make myself available.

When the PCs are ready to go, Preest invites them to leave first. He remains behind and leaves later through a secret passage.

2: THE PROFESSOR

READ ALOUD

Roughly octagonal in shape, the Royal Library looks more like a fortified keep than a place of knowledge and research. Spires at each angle reach high into the sky. A thousand gargoyles lie perched on the many balconies looking down upon the passersby.

The inside is dark and cavernous, as the only windows letting in the sunlight are high above the main floor. Statues of the First Venerate Laita holding a lit lamp provide illumination, as she looks benevolently over researchers and readers.

Footsteps echo endlessly between the tall rows of bookshelves. An oppressive silence permeates everything. A young girl with freckles, blonde pigtails, a wide smile and a symbol of Laita around her neck stands near the door ready to help anyone.

If asked, the young initiate takes the PCs to one of the spires where Professor von Grumborg has an office on the fifth floor.

The office is filled with notes, tomes, maps and magic treatises. Professor von Grumborg is balding, with long, unkempt hair giving him a wild appearance. His long graying beard is as wild as the hair on his head.

"Welcome! I assume you came to join our glorious expedition? Excellent, tell me your names and qualifications! And please include a list of people you helped in the past."

Finally, he asks if they came to see him about his poster at the university. However the PCs answer, he thanks them for coming and congratulates them for their bravery and for being part of what will be one the great archeological expeditions in the history of the world.

He keeps pestering the PCs with questions without importance – such as a PCs' height, shoe size, preference between a battleaxe and a sword, whether left-handed wands are more powerful and other such nonsense. Until they stop him and ask details, the Professor continues.

He purchased a very rare tome last year from a Dominion nobleman – Raiding the Sorcerer-King – a book written centuries ago by Arman raiders.

Within the book, he found the locations of many lost Nexus Gateways and their activation keys, including one that should open on the ancestral homeland of the Arman.

He is leading an expedition – his plans seem to indicate it is a large expedition, but as it turns out it only consists of himself and the PCs.

Although he does say it, he is convinced that he is right and that he will be able to prove all of his theories.

The PCs may have a number of questions for the Professor.

- **What about payment?** I offer each of you a share. This share cannot be less than ten imperial crowns. Of course, any item found belongs to me. From the money and grants I will get from these, you will be paid!
- **Can you provide us with an advance?** I will offer you a single pack mule to carry your equipment and will provide each of you with basic supplies.
- **What do you want us to do?** You will protect and assist me. (His definition of “assistance” is left vague.)
- **Where are we going?** Our trek will take us deep into Sametia.

When the PCs agree to help him, he pulls out a series of glasses and offers them a little cherry liqueur. Raising his glass he toasts “To history!”

He invites the PCs to meet him in the morning to “finalize everything.”

WHILE IN THE LIBRARY

Within the library, anyone can make a Knowledge roll if they wish, even those without ranks in a trained-only skill. Such untrained checks do not add any ability bonus – penalties apply normally. While in the library, it is possible for PCs to assist each other on any checks, even if not normally allowed (such as Knowledge checks).

Searching for information in the library takes the PCs 1d6+6 hours. This is because of its sheer size and puzzling system of cataloging its books and scrolls.

NEXUS GATEWAYS (ARCANUM)

The DCs below include a large bonus granted by the library. If attempted outside the library, all such DCs should be increased by 10.

- DC 5** Nexus Gateway portals are extremely ancient magic artifacts used to travel large distances instantaneously.
- DC 8** Every major city of Exodus has a Nexus Gateway around which it was built. Nations defend these sites assiduously.
- DC 9** A few Nexus Gateway portals are lost in the Wyldlands of Bal and the jungles of Sametia. Monsters commonly occupy the areas around them.
- DC 10** Lost portals are extremely dangerous because they only partially respond to commands.
- DC 11** Who created them is a hotly disputed topic. Theories support a divine, extraplanar or infernal origin.

DC 15 Kaga is said to have a very complete knowledge of Nexus Gateways but it is reluctant to share specific information about them – such as their location and activation rituals.

DC 18 There are tales of a group of shadowy individuals who collect information about these portals, known as “the Order”.

DC 20 Activating a portal without the correct ritual is extremely hazardous at best and usually deadly.

DC 22 Each portal has a particular sequence required to activate it.

RAIDING THE SORCERER-KING (HISTORY)

The library possesses only a single copy of the tome, it was gifted – and is checked out – by Professor von Grumborg. Thus the book itself is not available for the PCs to read. Discovering this adds one hour to any subsequent checks.

However, the PCs may find out much about it by searching the accession records and making a Knowledge (history) check.

DC 5 The book is a travel journal kept by an Arman shaman.

DC 8 Within it is a trove of ancient myths and stories about places and lands now unknown.

DC 15 Many scholars consider the book to be filled with fantasy and old sailors’ tales.

CONSULTING KAGA

The PCs may seek to consult Kaga regarding either of those subjects. Kaga can give the PCs the information found in the “While in the Library”. However, any specific information about where they are going or what the Professor asked it receives a “You do not have access to that information.”

WORD ON THE STREET

The PCs can learn the following rumors and information with a successful Diplomacy check with the DCs listed below. The PCs gain all the information at the lower DC’s as well. For every 10gp spent, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus (up to +4).

If the PCs ask for something more specific, feel free to give them information on that topic with a bonus of up to +4 (but not the other information).

DC 15 Some mad professor has been searching for adventurers for months! No one wants to go with him.

DC 18 The mad professor is Reinhalt von Grumborg fancies himself a historian, but his theories have been discredited for years.

DC 20 Professor von Grumborg is trying to prove that both Nasians and Arman are related.

3: ON THE ROAD

Next morning when the PCs meet with the Professor, they find that he has one cart and two pack mules. One mule is for the PCs.

If the PCs wish to examine his cart, they find it filled with research and scientific tools, but grossly lacking in basic adventuring supplies: he has no torches, no kindling, no tent or bedroll, no trail rations and only a single water skin. If the PCs take time to go through his supplies, they can easily recognize this situation.

If brought to the Professor's attention, he looks surprised and thanks the PCs. He asks them to go and find what he needs. He gives them enough money to buy such supplies as they need.

The goal of this scene is to show the PCs that they cannot rely on the Professor for anything that cannot be found in a book of ancient knowledge. In short, unless they seek academic knowledge about history, he is useless, humorously so.

THE TRIP

The route the Professor plans to travel is found in Appendix 3.

From Nyssa, the group is to travel to Macawi. Leaving Macawi, the PCs are to travel southeast towards the ruins of Ardreth, then to the town of Eimhin and from there roughly straight east. The Professor only reveals each of these steps one at a time.

If the PCs have not realized the Professor's lack of practical preparations for the journey, the Survival skill will later be very useful, particularly when they leave the Caneus Empire and enter the wilds of Sametia. Until then, they can sleep at inns and supply themselves easily.

Each of these encounters should take place on a different day.

FROM NYSSA TO MACAWI

The roads and supplies are easy to procure as long as they are in the Caneus Empire. The roads are well traveled, well patrolled and other than the occasional toll – which the Professor pays, the trip is uneventful.

MACAWI

While in Macawi, the PCs can easily find information on where to avoid the Horde and the best places to enter Sametia.

They are warned of the dangers and threat of the Horde and while a single Hordeman may not be much of a threat, they are cunning and dangerous. Macawi is the last point where the PCs can reliably supply themselves with anything they might need; a final opportunity exists through bartering with the Horde, but is not a safe option.

THE PURPLE GIANTS (CR9)

The eastern borders of the Caneus Empire give way to the high hills known as the Purple Giants. It takes about three days to cross the fifty miles leading to the Sametian Highlands.

As the PCs travel through, a gang of trolls, lead by a troll named Jorlack, looking for a meal attacks them.

Terrain: the terrain should be a mixture of rock and light forest.

TROLL (4)

CR5

hp 63 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

THE SAMETIAN HIGHLANDS (CR9)

Leaving the Purple Giants behind, the PCs cross an area known as the Sametian Highlands. The highlands are covered with thick oak forests and are filled with giants and ogres.

The trek through the highlands takes about six days to reach the ruins of Ardreth. A band of Ettins and their pet bears discover them as they head through the forest.

Terrain: the terrain should be a mixture of rock and light forest.

GRIZZLY BEARS (2)

CR4

hp 42 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

ETTINS (3)

CR5

hp 65 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

ARDRETH (CR8)

WHEN THE PCS REACH ARDRETH, READ THIS

The ruins ahead stand as lonely witnesses to massive fires that took place here many years ago. Pikes with banners of horse mane are planted next to the former entrances.

Below the banners, small signs that read "only the brave and learned are welcome, for death awaits all others"

Whether this is meant as a warning or an invitation is unclear.

A DC 15 Knowledge (history or local) check reveals that the city of Ardreth refused to join the Horde and was raided and burned, its people slain and left to rot in the streets, their heads on pikes. No one was spared. Today, only the ruins remain and the signs of the massacre have long vanished.

The Professor is quite curious about the ruins, counting himself among the "learned." He asks the PCs investigate the ruins while he hides and watches the animals and the cart.

A new inhabitant taken up residence; Karendra, a sphinx. She dislikes the hordesmen whom she finds boorish and annoying. Karendra's home is in the old cathedral of the Sanguine Covenant. She rests upon the altar.

As long as the PCs are polite, she has little desire to fight. She offers the PCs a few treasures from the items she collected over the years if they answer her query. "What is worse, a disobedient child or an intransigent parent?"

Though there is no clear answer, but Karendra misses discussing philosophy and ethics, and accepts any sufficiently clever or thought-out response. Assuming the PCs take her questions seriously, she offers them one of the following. The group must pick one of the bundles.

- A scroll of lesser black tentacles, a scroll of deadman's gaze, a scroll of flaming blood and a hand of the mage.
- A hat of disguise and an elixir of fire breath.
- An elemental gem (fire) and a scroll of battle mind.
- A handy haversack.

Terrain: the area is a ruined cathedral.

KARENDRA THE SPHINX

CR 8

hp 102 (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

Treasure: If the PCs defeat Karendra, they may take all of the loot above.

FROM ARDRETH TO EIMHIN (CR 9)

It takes the PCs a little over five days of travel to cross the one hundred twenty odd miles between Ardreth and Eimhin. The terrain is composed of grassland, only occasionally broken by small copses of trees. The land is flat. The occasional herd of wild horses or buffaloes can be seen in the distance grazing peacefully.

Starting with the second day, two horsemen begin to follow the caravan, staying a safe distance away. They never get in bowshot range but their presence is unmistakable.

On the final day of the trip, the PCs see the cookfires of Eimhin in the distance. They can choose to head there or to leave the area. Whatever they decide, a flight of cockatrices spots them and comes to investigate.

They also spot a flight of cockatrices the Horde feeds.

Terrain: the area is open grassland with a number of rocky outcroppings.

6HD ADVANCED COCKATRICES (4)

CR9

hp 51 each (see *Stat Block Section*)

EIMHIN (CR 10+)

How the PCs approach the city dictates what happens next. If they are riding a horse or any mount, they get a +5 circumstance bonus to their check. Everyone who enters the settlement must make one of the checks, but the PCs don't have to make the same check.

If they try to disguise themselves and make a DC 15 Disguise check, they can pass themselves off as hordesmen without difficulty.

If they do not disguise themselves, a DC 15 Intimidate check every hour AND hiding any obvious holy symbols (particularly the Sanguine Covenant, Cult of the Emissary and the Church of Kaga) must be made to keep safe.

The settlement up ahead has no permanent structures. Over a hundred large yurts, crude leather tents and pens made from thorn bushes form the core of the settlement. A few are built on top of large wooden wagon. There are clearly two groups of people: the warriors walk around head high and confident, and the low-castes, who cower, avoiding attention from their masters. This second group is composed of the old, the weak, the lame and anyone who cannot ride or carry a weapon.

Calibans form the majority of the Horde here. The place is filled with wolves roaming freely throughout camp. Many ogres can be seen towering over the yurts.

Assuming the PCs manage to avoid drawing attention to themselves, they may make some final purchases here. They may also get some information about the lay of the land.

Should the PCs fail their check, they do something that draws attention to them, triggering a fight.

The mobs below are the first mobs to react. If the PCs do not attempt to leave as fast as they can, bring more mobs until the PCs get the idea.

Terrain: the terrain should be open grassland.

CALIBAN VETERAN MOB (2)

CR6

hp 140 each (see *Stat Block Section*)

WORG MOB (2)

CR6

hp 130 each (see *Stat Block Section*)

AFTER EIMHIN

The final two hundred twenty miles takes between fifteen and twenty days to traverse. Most of this is done on the Sametian grassy plains. The weather is warmer, rain more frequent and clusters of trees and small woods are common. After a week, the PCs enter the Great Sametian Jungle and their travel speed slows down radically.

Proceed to encounter four when the PCs reach the jungle.

4: THE JUNGLE

READ ALOUD

After weeks of travel, your expedition finally reaches the Great Sametian Jungle. The plains and grasslands give



way to a thick, dark green, leafy canopy.

The Professor is delighted and quite vocal at the idea of studying the gray clawing vines or the whipping willows, or examining the great bear-things that hunt at night.

“Our destination is a ruined town Ulfberg! Ulfberg was the first city the Arman established, over a century before the great migration. From here, we will walk to the coast then search until we find the place!”

There are many paths and trails into the jungle, showing that many people and creatures dwell within. Once in the jungle, the Professor insists on stopping every once in a while to look at a plant, stone or harmless animal. Again, use this to reinforce the man’s lack of outdoors skill and common sense.

FIRST NIGHT (CR 7)

On their first night in the jungle, the PCs have to make camp outdoors. As long as the PCs make watch, they should not be surprised. A DC 15 Perception check reveals that the packhorses are getting extremely nervous. Two rounds later, the owlbears come crashing through the brush and attack the party.

During the night, a pair of advanced owlbears attacks the PCs’ camp.

Terrain: a campsite in the forest.

ADVANCED OWLBEAR (2)

CR 5

N Large magical beast

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60ft., low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +14

DEFENSE

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

hp 57 (5d10+30)

Fort +12, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 (1d6+6 plus grab), bite +10 (1d6+6)

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

TACTICS

Before Combat: If the owlbears do not see anyone standing or on watch, they first target the biggest animals with the party (likely the horses).

During Combat: Each owlbear focuses on a single fighting opponent at a time, ignoring all other, changing targets as soon as their current target stops moving.

Morale: The owlbears fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 16, **Con** 22, **Int** 6, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple); **CMD** 25 (29 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +14, Stealth -1

AFTERMATH

If the PCs wish – against the Professor’s wishes – they may decide to try and track the owlbear’s lair. A DC 20 tracking check and 1d12+6 hours of searching is needed to find the lair. The lair contains bones of many previous meals, coins, rings and bracelets worth 500 gp.

THE VILLAGE

Three days into the jungle, the PCs hear distant drumming. Investigating takes them off-course, as the Professor points out. To find the village, all the PCs need to do is follow the drumming.

READ ALOUD

What you first thought to be a village turns out to be a dalrean patch. High above a large clearing, tree branches hold a village made of circular huts linked by vine bridges.

On the ground, a dozen dalreans stand, enjoying the sun shining down on them. Bright orange and red flowers bloom upon their shoulders. At the center one of them taps on a hollow tree branch, creating the drumming you have been hearing.

Dalreans are known to be isolationist, but rarely hostile.

If the PCs make their presence known, a dalrean approaches and asks what they want in Common. The dalrean does not introduce itself with a name, and if forced to give one, he offers “Speaker.”

Speaker and the dalreans are not interested in outsiders and are initially indifferent to the PCs. If made friendly or helpful they are willing to share information with the PCs. If the PCs mention that they defeated some owlbeats, the dalreans’ reaction improves by one category.

The dalrean know where the ruins are but avoid the area because there is “nothing there anymore since the humans left.”

5: AMBUSH!

A few more days of travel through the thick Sametian jungle brings the PCs to the coast. From there, the Professor says they must head north until they reach a cove forming a natural harbor. At the DM’s discretion, they may encounter some monsters (plant-type creatures, animals and magical beast are common in these parts).

THE PATCH (CR4)

The PCs walk through an area where a band of vegpeygmies set up an ambush with an assassin vine. Before you start this encounter, make sure you get a marching order, including pack animals, the wagon and the Professor.

Terrain: a path in the jungle, vegetation should be heavy and vision limited.

ASSASSIN VINE

CR 3

hp 30 (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat: The assassin vine is hiding among the branches of a very leafy tree. If spotted, it moves to attack.

During Combat: Although not allied to the vegpeygmies, it does not attack them (it like meat, not other plants).

Morale: The assassin vine fights to the death.

VEGEPYGMY (3)

CR 1/2

hp 5 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat: The vegpeygmies hide in the foliage along the road. When the assassin vine engages the PCs, they move to block off the PCs’ retreat.

During Combat: The vegpeygmies use their longspear to form a phalanx and force the PCs to either go through

Morale: Once the assassin vine has been destroyed, any remaining vegpeygmies abandon combat and flee into the jungle.

AFTERMATH

A DC 15 Survival check reveals a path to a village of vegpeygmies nearby. While not individually dangerous, a large number of them with “pets” could prove a threat. Encourage the PCs not to stay around too long.

After this encounter, the PCs see occasional signs of vegpeygmy activity, activated traps, pits and snares. These should convey the hostility of the area, and leave the PCs with a sense of urgency – and a little paranoia.

6: ULFSBERG

Hours later, the PCs reach the cove and the ruins of Ulfsberg. The jungle-choked shores are nearly impossible to travel, but the Professor insists this is the place.

The ruins cover an area roughly one hundred yards squared scattered around the cove. At one time, this must have been an important village.

The Professor attempts to map and look at everything, like a kid in a candy store. The place has been abandoned for centuries. A few bones the occasional broken pottery can be found by searching about.

A DC 15 Knowledge (history) check confirms the ruins to be about eight centuries old, roughly the time of the Arman Migration of the 8th century BU.

While the Professor lists and catalogs everything he finds, the PCs are free to move around. He lets the PCs organize themselves.

INVESTIGATING THE AREA

Here are a few methods of investigation and the means with which the PCs can find them.

Detect magic The whole area around the ruin radiates a faint aura of necromancy. It spikes to strong a moonrise. Dispelling this effect (CL 15) only works until moonrise. At moonrise, the energy returns.

Hunting/gathering food and water: Use the rules in the Pathfinder RPG Core book under the Survival skill.

Looking for the Nexus Gateway a DC 20 Perception check finds the location of the Nexus Gateway. Finding the location of the portal triggers the guardians (see below). Once informed of this find, the Professor abandons everything else and comes to here.

Looking for Tracks a DC 20 tracking checks reveal that only animals and vermin have been in the area. No intelligent life forms have come here in a long time.

Searching the Ruins a DC 15 Appraise check finds a few knickknacks worth 20 gp.

THE GUARDIANS (CR7 AND 4)

When the PCs uncover the portal OR night falls on the first night spent in/near the ruins, the guardians rise and attack. Until that time, the magic creating the undead is not active and the undead effectively do not exist.

To notice the wights before they attack, the PCs have to succeed at a DC23 Perception check.

Suddenly, from the ground, three large brutish creatures partially covered with flesh coalesce out of the dust, their eyes glowing with a malevolent crimson light..

In an ancient tongue, they scream a single word as a war cry.

The brute wights all scream: “DEFILERS!” as a war cry in Ancient Arman. Although at some point they were compelled to respond less aggressively to anyone of clear Arman descent, their bonds have grown weak and they attack everyone in sight.

Terrain: The terrain is a mix of jungle and ruins.

WIGHT, BRUTES (3)

CR 5

LE Large undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities undead traits

Weakness resurrection vulnerability

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +8 (1d6+5 plus energy drain)

Special Attacks energy drain (1 level, DC 16)

TACTICS

Morale: The wights fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Blind-Fight, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +13, Stealth +13 Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth

Languages Ancient Arman

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Resurrection Vulnerability (Su) A raise dead or similar spell cast on a brute wight destroys it (Will negates). Using the spell in this way does not require a material component.

AFTERMATH

A lost ritual channeling the magic of the Nexus Gateway created the guardians. Using local ogres, the ancient Arman shamans bound them to this place. The ritual means that the wights rise up again every night. Draining the power of the Nexus Gateway will break the magic.

PCs camping here for a prolonged period of time will have to face the wights over and over. The wights never reforms at the same place.

7: ACTIVATING THE PORTAL

Once found, it takes the PCs and the Professor one full day of work to clear the two stones that make up the Nexus Gateway. Normally the rune-covered stones would be standing, but those here are lying on their side. The reason for those delays is that before moving anything, the Professor takes notes of every minute detail in his notebook. Anyone trying to move faster gets an earful about the “reason for coming here.” He orders the PCs to take the supplies nearby because once he opens the portal there will be a short window when they can cross, and he does not want anyone and anything left behind.

READ ALOUD

Finally, the twenty-foot wide Nexus Gateway has been excavated, and everything arranged to the Professor's liking. After spending another hour copying the runes in his notebook, he declares himself satisfied.

Using a small crate as a podium, the Professor rifles through his pockets to he pull out a crumpled parchment.

“Friends and member of the Academia,” he says while clearing his throat. “We stand here on the threshold of history, at the very gates of one of Exodus’ most

important times! Beyond this portal lays the key and the answer; that which I have searched for all my life."

"At last! We will know if the Arman people and the Nasians share a common origin. No less, myself and the members of this expedition will rediscover, explore and catalog the ancestral lands of all of humankind! No more shall we squabble and argue over unproven and ultimately vain theories. Now! Now!"

"With the help of stalwart and unflinching companions I undertake this journey."

"O History! I accept the responsibility and the glory that comes with such a burden. To my fellow academics, I promise this, as I take the first step of this journey, that through whatever lay beyond this portal, the light of knowledge and truth will shine through in the journals, in these notes and in the testimonies I and those brave souls will proffer."

"In closing, I will say this. May the spirit of friendship that has animated us thus far serve as a model to our brave and benevolent Imperial Alliance! To you my friends, I say "thank you!" with a true heart and sincere emotion."

With that he folds his notes back into his pocket. "Not too bad, was it?" He asks himself. Turning to you, he adds. "Are you ready to step into history?"

If the PCs ask him what will happen, the Professor explains the following.

A vertical portal will open and any material sent through will find itself on the other side.

There will be but a few seconds to send material through, so everyone should be close by and begin to carry the supplies through.

Supplies should just be thrown through to gain time.

He will stay here and keep the portal open while the PCs cross back and forth, carrying all the supplies, coming in last.

He says the portal can be used from the other side using a similar ritual (which he does not know, but does not admit this).

Unless compelled through magic or intimidation, the Professor refuses to teach the ritual to the PCs.

When everyone is ready for the Professor to activate the Nexus Gateway, read.

The Professor stands in the center of the portal and begins to intone words of power. The air around you fills with static. A moment later, the portal opens between the stones. The sound of rushing air pulls you and everything nearby as everything is pulled into the glowing vortex.



It automatically sucks in anyone and anything standing upon it. Anyone within 50 feet must make a Reflex save DC 20 or be sucked in also. The save drops to DC 15 for the next 100 feet. Any object passing through the portal is taken and anything it is connected to (PCs tied by a rope are all taken in, without saving throw).

Those who are not sucked into the portal have the choice of what to do, allow them two rounds of action before the Nexus Gateway begins to close.

Three rounds after it is opened, the portal closes, trapping those PCs behind. Such PCs may attempt to activate the portal blindly (requiring a DC 25 Use Magic Device check) to keep it open it for another 3 rounds. After that, the portal closes forever, its magic spent.

TROUBLESHOOTING: SPLIT PARTY

It is possible that some PCs decide not to cross the portal. The Professor may try to re-open the portal – but it only opens on the side of the mainland. Like the first time, the portal remains open of three rounds then closes. Players who refuse this second chance do not participate in the rest of the adventure.

These PCs have a solitary trip home.

END OF PART 1

B: IT CAN'T GET WORSE

The following assume the PCs activated the portal during the day.

READ ALOUD

For an instant you are stretched a million miles and compressed to less than an inch at the same time. Then you fall onto soft grass. A gentle salty sea breeze reaches your nostrils as you stand among a veritable junkyard of shattered crates and groaning allies.

You stand in a clearing filled with the ancient ruins of a small coastal village.

Unlike the one you entered, the Nexus Gateway here stands upright. It is covered with runes and plants. Many of its symbols are broken and the stones themselves are cracked.

The PCs have no way of knowing right now, but they are standing on the island of Ablis.

Appendix two has a map of the village and a location key to the locations nearby. Allow the PCs to set up camp and explore the area before proceeding to the next encounter. If you feel generous, you may allow them a full night's rest before the locari attack.

The goal of this encounter is to show the PCs that something terrible happened here and get them to realize it slowly, like a good horror story. So when the locari appear later, the PCs know and recognize the threat for what it is: a relentless force that destroys everything in its wake.

THE PROFESSOR

It is important to know where the Professor is at all times. He walks around taking notes and drawing what he finds to comments of "fascinating" and "marvelous".

He does not enter any of the locations until the PCs have explored them and have made sure it is safe. The Professor is too much of a coward to take the lead.

LOOKING AROUND FROM A HIGH PERCH

Anyone looking around from high point (such as a tree or using levitation magic) can see no columns of smoke, and no roads. However, they can see a hill with a stone castle on its top a few miles away (this is important for later).

They also see a number of flying creatures to the south. The creatures are too far to identify at this time.

LOOKING FOR TRACKS

A DC 15 Survival check reveals that no one came through the portal in a very long time. A DC 20 reveals the presence of many ants. The ant tracks lead to the cemetery (area F). There are no other tracks in the area.

A: NEXUS GATEWAY (CR4)

The description of the Nexus Gateway can be found in the introduction to the encounter.

SEARCHING THE NEXUS GATEWAY PORTAL

Searching the Nexus Gateway reveals a number of interesting facts.

A DC15 Perception reveals that the symbols have been chiseled out long ago.

A DC 22 Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft reveals that the crack on the portal was done magically. A more powerful version of the shatter spell is a likely culprit. A follow-up DC 25 check reveals that pieces are missing and that it could not be possible to repair using a mending or make whole spell (actually it could be extremely dangerous to do so).

OPENING THE PORTAL

Trying to open the portal on this side has no apparent effect.

TOUCHING OR REPAIRING THE PORTAL

It is not possible to repair the archway as part of this adventure.

Doing so would require many days of careful work and activates a trap. This trap activates whether the repairs or touching are done through magic or more conventional means.

ELECTRICITY ARC TRAP

CR 7

Type magic; Perception DC25; Disable Device DC25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (special); **Reset** Automatic

Effect electricity arc (10d6 electrical damage, DC 25 Reflex save for half); multiple targets (all targets within 30ft. of the Nexus Gateway)

Special the trap activates if the gate is targeted by repair-type magic or if someone touches it. If repair magic is applied, the trap activates from the caster. Disabling this effect allows the archway to be repaired, but its magic cannot be reactivated.

B: THE WAREHOUSE

READ ALOUD

This building collapsed rather recently because the stones are not overgrown with plants. The landscape left is irregular and broken.

This used to be a warehouse. The odd landscape is due to the crates and boxes below the rubble. The PCs spending time digging through the wreckage find ancient silverware worth 50 gp and an ancient short sword +1.

C: RUINED HOUSE

READ ALOUD

Only a few stones stacked on top of each indicate that a building once stood here. Now tall grass sprouts from between the rocks.

This “building” contains nothing of interest. Although, in a fight, one could take cover behind the ruins of the walls.

D: THE CHURCH (CR5)

READ ALOUD

This building was made of stone and is in better shape than the rest of the town. Its walls stand high. The double doorway is covered with vines and overgrown.

The vines hide the door. To enter, the vines have to be ripped off or the doors forced in. Either triggers the collapse of part of the wall.

COLLAPSING WALL

CR 5

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20 (special)

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (special); **Reset** None

Effect Atk +15 **Melee** (6d6); multiple targets (all targets within 10ft. of the door)

Special anyone spending time examining the structure and making a DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) may detect this “trap”.

Special the trap activates if the vines are removed, if someone tries to break down the door or by someone trying to scale the walls.

INSIDE THE CHURCH

The inside of the church has not survived as well as seemed. Vines, mosses and lichens grow everywhere, none of which are dangerous. A thorough search reveals twenty human skeletons under the plants. They have lain here for centuries.

A DC 20 Heal check reveals only that the bones show signs of violence (though pre- or post-mortem is impossible to discern).

If a speak with dead spell is attempted, all are Neutral in alignment and have a +4 Will save. The bodies have ancient Arman names, and reveal that “monsters” killed them. They can give description of the locari if asked.

The church makes for a good campsite. The Professor suggests that if the PCs do not.

E: THE CHIEF'S HOUSE (CR7)

READ ALOUD

Most of his house fell to the ravages of time long ago. The few remaining details still visible on the woodwork indicate that this was once a high status abode. Grass is growing in patches. Towards the back of the house, stones form a tall mound.

This was the chief’s hut. Searching the house reveals a lot of jewelry worth about 750 gp.

The mound at the back leads to the former wine cellar. Anyone approaching and making a DC 15 Perception check can hear a voice that comes from below. If the PCs start to remove the stones, a specter come out of the cellar and attacks the PC. This specter was once the chief’s wife who died trapped in the cellar during the locari attack.

SPECTRE

CR 7

hp 52 (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Morale: The specter fights to the death.

IN THE CELLAR

After defeating the specter, the PCs may decide to continue digging. Doing so takes about an hour before anyone can enter the cellar.

In the cellar are the body of a female human (from the clothes) and a single scythe like talon. This talon is from a locari. At this time, the PCs (and the Professor) have no chance of identifying it. A DC 15 Heal check confirms that blade-like claw killed her.

Although there are twenty bottles of wine, all have turned to vinegar and are now poisonous. Each bottle could be sold for 20 gp each on the mainland.

ARMAN WINE GONE BAD

Type ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 12

Frequency 1/round for 6 rounds

Effect 1 Dex and nauseated for 1d6 rounds; **Cure** 1 save (failed saves add one round to the duration of the nauseated condition).

Special the taste is so potent that no one will take another sip without making a DC 12 Will save.

F: THE CEMETARY (CR7)

The low wall, the standing stones, and the occasional statue clearly indicate this to be a cemetery.

The cemetery is home to a swarm of army ants. The ants are extremely territorial and attack as soon as they detect an intruder.

ARMY ANT SWARM (2)

CR 5

hp 49 (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

During Combat The swarms follow anything that moves, except in the water. The ants do not go into the water or near the chief's house.

Morale: The swarms fight to the death.

AFTERMATH

The swarms defeated, the PCs can explore the cemetery without issue. There is little to find. However the few inscriptions found are all in ancient Arman. The dates and names are all about ten centuries old.

G: THE BEACH (CR4)

READ ALOUD

This beach opens onto a cove not unlike the one where you found the first Nexus Gateway portal. The beach is made of river stones that are difficult to walk quickly on. Small crabs scurry about.

A shark-eating crab established itself in the cove. It attacks if the PCs spend any length of time on the beach (which includes the copse of trees).

Anyone moving more than its base speed on the beach must make a DC5 Acrobatics check or fall prone. The beach does not impede movement further. The crab is immune to this effect.

SHARK-EATING CRAB

CR 7

N Huge vermin (aquatic)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +10 natural, -2 size)

hp 84 (8d8+48)

Fort +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d8+9 plus grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+9), darting claw

TACTICS

During Combat: The crab attacks anyone on the beach. However it does not pursue beyond the beach. If left alone, it returns to the water.

Morale: The crab fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 14, **Con** 22, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +17 (+21 grapple); **CMD** 29 (41 vs. trip)

Skills Perception +5, Swim +17; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception

SQ water dependency

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Darting Claw (Ex) Evolved for snatching fast prey, a shark-eating crab is exceptionally quick with its claws. When making a full attack, if a shark-eating crab misses with both of its claw attacks, it can make an additional claw attack at a -2 penalty against any creature within its reach.

H: THE TREES BY THE BEACH

READ ALOUD

This copse of willow trees stands by the water. The willows are different from the rest of the trees surrounding the ruins of the village.

The glint of metal can be seen shining through the thick foliage.

The trees hide an old Arman ship. At the time of the village's destruction it held seeds from trees normally found in coastal areas of Abaddon. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check identifies those willows as growing in northwestern Abaddon. These willows are still cultivated today in the Protectorate.

Lost among the trees are human skeletons. Like those in the church, a DC 20 Heal check reveals only that the bones show signs of violence (though pre- or post-mortem is impossible to discern).

PCs with the Profession (sailor) or making a DC 25 Survival check ascertain that this must have once been a ship.

Searching the area attracts the crab from area G, but also uncovers three feather tokens, two anchors and a fan. A DC20 Appraise or Knowledge (arcana) check on those identifies them as being of ancient Nasian make. If brought to the Professor, he revels over this.

9: IT'S WORSE!

When the PCs are about to leave the village or after they had a night to rest and prepare their spells is the time to drop the bomb on them. The locari locate the PCs and swarm the position.

The goal of this encounter is for the PCs to realize that they have to run. Until they do, wave after wave of locari keep coming.

FIRST WAVE (CR7)

READ ALOUD

An unnerving clicking draws your attention to the forest. Swarming out of the underbrush, five arachnid horrors come out clicking and hissing. As they see your group, they turn towards you menacingly.

"All is lost! WE WILL ALL DIE!" The professor screams as he heads towards the beach.

Upon seeing the locari, the Professor realized what the creatures were and give in to panic. For the continuation of the adventure, it is important that he escapes and runs free.

If the PCs defeat all the locari, an identical wave arrives from the south.

LOCARI DRONE (3)

CR 2

hp 25 (see Stat Block Section)

LOCARI SCOUT (2)

CR 3

hp 30 (see Stat Block Section)

THE PROFESSOR

While the Professor runs around and the PCs are busy fighting the locari, a locari princess captures the Professor. On the first round after it appears, it merely flies in, on the second round, it swoops down and grabs the professor. On the third round, it flies away. Assume it succeeds at any roll it is required to make.

FIRST ROUND

Above the jungle, a large, winged abomination with a long snake-like tail appears. It surveys the area, staying well away from combat.

SECOND ROUND

READ ALOUD

The large abomination swoops down toward the Professor and grabs him with its tail.

The Professor screams "I HAVE BROUGHT YOU ALL TO YOUR DOOM! Make peace with the Sanguine Lord now, for you will meet them very soon! Great Laita! Forgive me! Forgive this old man's hubris!"

THIRD ROUND

The serpentine creature flies away, taking its prey with it. The Professor screams towards you. "It's too late for me! Save yourselves!"

TROUBLESHOOTING: INTERRUPTING HER

The PCs may try to interrupt her. For her full statistics, use a locari princess with the following hive niches: blinding breath, serpentine, winged. Attacking the princess may be risky. Anyone attacking or threatening the princess immediately becomes the target of every locari in range.

Should the PCs succeed in stopping the Princess, another princess comes in 1d3 rounds later with a group of locari (roll 3d6 on the "Next



Waves” table, below). Repeat the encounter until the locari princess captures the Professor.

NEXT WAVES (CR4-6)

1d3 rounds after the PCs defeat a previous wave, more locari emerge from the forest and move to engage the PCs. When placing them, put them so they leave the path into the forest open. This encounter is a marathon more than a sprint and the PCs should not feel like they will get any respect. The locari will bring constant pressure on the PCs.

If the PCs decide to escape or hide in the water, then a force of flying locari, giant crabs and crab swarms or sharks (everyone loves sharks) move to cut off their escape.

If the PCs cannot be coaxed and continue to attempt and escape by sea, they will be killed as they attempt to cross the blockade. The Imperial Alliance forces shoot to kill and are under strict orders not to let anyone escape Ablis.

Only hunters skulk around and move to ambush. The others emerge and head for the closest opponent. Every wave is composed of two rolls on the following table.

1d6	Locari
1	3 drones
2	2 scouts
3	2 hunters
4	1 soldier
5	1 giant soldier
6	Roll 2d4 on this chart

Tactics: All of the locari swarm at targets and focus on targets they can hit.

Hive Niches: Do not hesitate to mix and match the hive niches of the creatures present to keep the PCs on their toes.

10: THE CHASE

Finally, the PCs should realize there is to be no respite from the locari assault in the small village. The only open avenue of escape is through the forest.

As they leave, read the following.

From all around the village, arachnid creatures come flooding out of the forest. Though some of them begin to chase you, many rifle through anything left behind.

You have the impression of a swarm of locusts descending upon a field of wheat. And yet more keep coming out of the forest.

As the PCs abandon the village and the Nexus Gateway, a few locari give chase. To represent this scene, the PCs run for about an hour. Every ten minutes (so a total of six times), each PC must make their choice of an Acrobatic, Climb, or Stealth check, all DC 15 (+1 for each previous check, all speed penalties apply, the Endurance feats applies to this).

Locari catch up to PCs who fail. Use the “Next Wave” table from the previous encounter to determine the composition of the locari contingent. When placing the PCs, those who fail their check should be placed at the back of the party. PCs that succeed may abandon their comrades behind or fight with them.

After 6 such checks, the PCs reach the stone castle atop the hill. When they do, proceed to the next encounter.

TROUBLESHOOTING: KEEP RUNNING

Some PCs may prefer not to stop at the castle, but keep running. Doing so only leads them to more locari. Repeat the “Next Wave” from the previous encounter until they get the hind.

11: THE KEEP

READ ALOUD.

Yellowing grass covers the one hundred and fifty feet between the edge of the forest and the keep at the summit. Like a king upon its throne, the keep sits atop this hill, overlooking the surrounding countryside. The walls have crumbled. The gate rotted away. Only a few towers and internal structure still stand.

The place is highly defensible and appears devoid of the insectoid horrors that have been following you for the past few hours.

THE PRINCESS (CR9)

As the PCs begin to cross the clearing, a locari princess flies down and attacks them.

LOCARI PRINCESS

CR 9

hp 126 (see Stat Block section)

TACTICS

During Combat: The princess follows the PCs but breaks off combat when all the PCs have entered the fortress.

THE KEEP

The PCs can easily enter the fort. When they enter, read aloud.

The buildings inside the walls did not fare better than the walls surrounding them. Along with the walls, the rubble suggests, that long ago, this keep would’ve served as the house of some powerful lord and his retinue.

In the center of the fort a keep stands defiantly, apparently unaffected by the passage of time. To the southeast an old church resembles a decrepit skeleton. Behind the church, a low wall overgrown by ivy surrounds half-hidden mausoleums.

The creatures seem to break off their pursuit for now. Though whether they only granted this respite to gather their forces for a final massive push is unknown.

Most of the PCs' supplies remained behind in the village, including food and water (outside of personal canteens). Make an inventory of everything they would have on them. Do not be overly nice about it, but do not be overly heartless. Give the PCs the impression that they are in for a protracted siege and that they need to account for everything.

By now the PCs should be worried and trembling, expecting the locari to mount an assault on their position. Paranoia is your friend.

The PCs may explore the keep without being harassed by the locari, at least for now. Anyone looking out of the keep towards the forest cannot fail but spot the occasional locari skulking around. The locari do not enter the keep unless the PCs attack them. Use the "Next Wave" above to see the locari that comes charging in, each time adding one more dice to the group (to a maximum of 5d6).

When the PCs investigate one of the towers, proceed to encounter 12. When they investigate the walls, proceed to encounter 13. When they explore the dungeon, proceed to encounter 14. When they head to the cemetery, proceed to encounter 15. Finally, when they head to the church proceed to encounter 16.

KNOWLEDGE CHECKS

A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering or history) recognizes the construction style as that of the ancient Arman.

A DC 15 Knowledge (history or religion) reveals that the Arman migrated to the continent centuries ago from the island of Ablis because of a prophecy that would bring death and destruction to all who stayed behind.

A DC 10 Knowledge (geography, history or local) tells the PCs that the island of Ablis is blockaded and that anything trying to leave is killed without trial.

TIME PASSING: FOOD & WATER

One important aspect of the adventure from this point on has to do with starvation and thirst. Be sure to review the rules in the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook. This adds another reason for the PCs not to delay or waste too much time in the keep.

THE LOCARI

Every other hour, a wave of locari launches itself at the keep. If the PCs set up a watch (the top of the dungeon or one of the towers are good position) they will have a 2 minute warning before the wave reaches the fort. When the PCs enter the crypt in the church, the locari stop their assaults and wait.

THE RUINED BUILDINGS

These buildings serve only to provide the PCs with additional information about what happened to the civilization on the island. Unless they are shown on the map as having an encounter linked to them, then there is nothing to find there.

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

Long ago, this keep belonged to a powerful Arman king who sent his fleet to raid the mainland. This brought him fame and power.

When the locari appeared, they besieged his keep. The Arman were mighty and powerful, but faced with the growing number of locari and constant losses, it was not long before the keep was the last bastion of humanity.

For a few days, the Arman fortified the keep, hoping to hold back, and praying to turn the tide on the locari. The locari swarmed the keep in a massive assault and overwhelmed the defenders.

Time has since erased most of the signs of the Arman's horrible fate, but the GM should feel free to add the occasional clue as to what happened: broken weapons, shattered pieces of armor, and severed bony limbs.

After they investigate a few locations, the PCs should figure out what happened. The goal is to have the PCs know that they cannot stay here indefinitely.

12: THE TOWERS

The towers are in good shape. The PCs may rest here without issue. Searching a tower takes 15 minutes, once any inhabitant has been dispatched.

However, each tower is home to some creatures that have taken refuge from the locari.

1d6	Hazard
1	False Alarm
2	Indoor Garden
3	Spiders
4	Unstable
5	Wasp Nest
6	Wild dogs

FALSE ALARM

The tower's encounter is identical that described as "Unstable". However the pit has collapsed. Anyone falling into the pit falls six feet into a wet muck for no damage.

INDOOR GARDEN

READ ALOUD.

The tower ahead is filled with lush and attractive multi-colored flowers. The flowers sprout from thick vines that climb its interior walls.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the plants as ungol plants. The pollen can be refined to make ungol dust, a powerful narcotic and poison. A DC 15 Survival check reveals that the plants are dangerous and that one should avoid them if possible.

PCs who wish to do so can attempt to gather the pollen to sell or refine it themselves, requiring a DC 20 Profession (herbalist) or Survival check. Doing so requires entering the tower and at least 1 minute of gathering (ten rounds). Unprocessed flowers can fetch up to 100gp per dose (a dose takes 1 minute to harvest). The ungol flowers affect anyone entering the tower.

UNGOL FLOWERS

Type poison, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 14

Frequency 1/round for 4 rounds

Effect 1d2 Cha damage; **Cure** 1 save

Special the frequency of the poison only kicks in when someone leaves the tower. While within the tower, the target must make a save each round or take the poison's damage.

SPIDERS (CR 6)

READ ALOUD.

Webs cover the walls of this tower. By the back wall, one of the insectoid horrors you faced earlier rests on the ground and does not react to your presence.

The tower is home to a giant spider and its offspring. When the PCs arrive, the spider swarms infesting the body of a locari they killed burst out. There are two swarms in the body.

Because of its compression ability, the ogre spider can easily squeeze through an area fit for a medium-sized creature without penalty.

OGRE SPIDER

CR 5

N Huge vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -2 size)

hp 52 (7d8+21)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +8 (2d8+7 plus poison)

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

Special Attacks web (+5 ranged, DC 16, hp 7)

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24 (36 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +29, Perception +5, Stealth -2; Racial Modifiers +16 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth
SQ compression

TACTICS

Morale: The ogre spider fights to the death.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save **Fort** DC 18 (includes +2 racial bonus); **Frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds; **Effect** 1d4 **Str** and 1d4 **Dex**; **Cure** 1 save.

SPIDER SWARM (2)

CR 1

hp 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat: The swarm is devouring the body of a locari drone killed by the mother spider.

During Combat: The swarm does not affect the ogre spider and may freely share a square with it.

Morale: The swarm fights to the death.

UNSTABLE (CR 3)

READ ALOUD.

The tower before you is empty except for moss growing in patches on the walls. Under one patch of moss, you see the glint of metal.

When the keep was in use, this tower served as a jail. There is a pit below the tower. Originally it has a smooth bottom, but as rocks broke off and fell down, creating spikes and making any fall more dangerous. If something heavier than 60 pounds (25kg) enters the town, the floor collapses.

CAMOUFLAGED SPIKED PIT TRAP

CR 8

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

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect 50ft. pit (5d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 each); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in the tower)

Special this trap can be disarmed with a DC 25 Knowledge (engineering).

Treasure: The glint of metal comes from a pile of forgotten gold. A DC 20 Knowledge (history or nobility) identifies them as minted by the Sorcerer-Kings, thus more than nine centuries old. The total value of the coins is around 75 gp, but sold to a collector – such as the Royal Academy of Science in Nyssa or the Arman University in Mureath, they are worth ten times their face value.

WASP NEST (CR 3)

As they approach this tower, a DC 20 Perception success hears the buzzing of insects. These can be identified with a DC 13 Knowledge (nature) check.

If the PCs enter the tower, the wasps swarm and attack to defend themselves.

WASP SWARM

CR 3

Thousands of small spiders crawl forward.

hp 31 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

During Combat: The swarm does not pursue PCs once they pass 100 feet from the tower.

Morale: The swarm fights to the death.

Treasure: in the remains of the tower, the PCs can find a +1 longsword and two potions of cure moderate wounds.

WILD DOGS (CR 4)

The tower is home to a pack of wild dogs. These mutts do more posturing, but are neither brave nor dangerous.

As you approach the tower, you first hear something growling. Then a mangy dog comes out growling menacingly at you. The dog is no bigger than a salon pet, but it stands its ground. A second later, three more dogs appear.

DOGS (4)

CR 1/2

hp 13 (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat: The dogs are wild and posture menacingly. They can be intimidated into fleeing.

During Combat: The dogs attack randomly.

Morale: Each dog flees if brought to less than half hit points. When more than half the dogs are down, the rest flees into the forest.

13: THE WALLS

READ ALOUD

Long ago, these walls stood fifteen feet high and five feet wide at the top forming a walkway. The many collapsed areas make it treacherous today. Ivy and moss grow in many places.

Returning them to their former glory would take months. PCs with masonry or stone crafting skills spending time investigating them ascertain that the walls were deliberately broken down, prior to the final defeat of the citadel's inhabitants – beat down by the force of many large creatures.

TRAPPING THE WALLS

Due to their poor state of repair, PCs can mine them and make a DC 20 Craft (stonemasonry or traps) to turn the walls into collapsing wall traps. Creating such a trap takes one hour. The next time the PCs have to face a wave of locari, the traps take care of the locari.

14: THE DUNGEON

READ ALOUD

The thick gray stone dungeon survived the passage of time better than the rest of the keep. No vegetation grows on or near the structure. The entrance is open with no sign of a door. The inside is dark and quiet.

The dungeon used to have three stories but now all that is left is a stone box. The floors above have collapsed. The ceiling has partially collapsed but still remains. Water falls from high above whenever it rains.

THE INHABITANT (CR 5)

A gray ooze makes its lair here and in time has grown sizeable and bloated. It lies waiting among the rocks where it is hard to see. It patiently waits.

GIANT EBONY GELATINOUS CUBE

CR 5

N Huge ooze

Init -4; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; **Perception** -3

DEFENSE

AC 6, touch 4, flat-footed 6 (-4 Dex, +2 natural, -2 size)

hp 66 (4d8+48)

Fort +13, **Ref** -1, **Will** -2

Immune electricity, ooze traits

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee slam +6 (1d8+6 plus 1d6 acid)

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

Special Attacks engulf, paralysis

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 3, **Con** 34, **Int** -, **Wis** 5, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 18 (can't be tripped)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex) An ebony cube's acid is more powerful than a common gelatinous cube's and able to dissolve even metal. Any melee hit or engulf attack deals 1d6 acid damage and the opponent's armor and clothing dissolve and become useless immediately unless he succeeds on a DC 20 Reflex save. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes an ebony cube also dissolves immediately unless it succeeds on a DC 20 Reflex save. The cube's acidic touch deals 20 points of damage per round to wooden or metal objects, but the ooze must remain in contact with the object for 1 full round to deal this damage.

Engulf (Ex) although it moves slowly, a gelatinous cube can simply engulf Large or smaller creatures in its path as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. The gelatinous cube merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the cube, but if they do so they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity can attempt a DC 18 Reflex save to avoid being engulfed - on a success, they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the cube moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to the cube's paralysis and acid, gain the pinned condition, are in danger of suffocating, and are trapped within its body until they are no longer pinned. The save DC is Strength-based.

Paralysis (Ex) A gelatinous cube secretes an anesthetizing slime. A target hit by a cube's melee or engulf attack must succeed on a DC 24 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 3d6 rounds. The cube can automatically engulf a paralyzed opponent. The save DC is Constitution-based.

SEARCHING THE TOWER

Searching the tower takes one hour, spent clearing debris. Among the debris, the PCs can find four potions of cure moderate wounds and one potion of resist fire energy (CL 3rd) in antique ceramic vials. The vials can be sold for 3 gp each back on the mainland.

15: THE CEMETERY

READ ALOUD

The low-lying wall barely hides the few still-standing tombstones and mausoleums beyond. Ethereal vaguely humanoid shape wander aimlessly within, either unconcerned or unaware of the rest of the universe.

The shades are not dangerous and move about avoiding contact with any living thing. If touched, any living creature feels a cold chill, but there is no effect. They are neutral-aligned, incorporeal undead creatures. Animals, vermin and those with a strong connection to nature are disturbed and avoid this area if possible.

A thorough search of the cemetery takes two hours and reveals nothing.

LAYING THEM TO REST

To give these souls peace, a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check tells the PCs that they must channel positive energy or a consecrate spell cast on the cemetery. If the PCs do so, read the following.

The energy radiates outwards all of the shades disappear. Everything is silent, peaceful and calm.

A flash of light, the sound of a celestial choir and an extremely attractive beautiful woman appears. She is scantily clad with large pure white feathery wings and an air of peace and serenity.

"Greetings from the Heavens above! You have mercifully released souls that were trapped here for centuries. My name is Rododentoriazeth. I am one of the celestial messengers of all the good deeds done in the world."

"I come asking for your name so that I may whisper them to Sanguine Lord's ear."

'Rodo' waits for the PCs to give her their names. She does not answer questions until her task is complete.

A DC 24 Knowledge (planes or religion) identifies the creatures a trumpet archon, a messenger from the good and order.

LYING TO THE ARCHON

If the PCs lie to her, she allows the others one chance to encourage his companion to correct himself. If no one says anything, she bows her head in sad resignation and says.

It is unfortunate that you do not care enough to tell the truth. So I will tell you the truth. Had you told the truth I would have shared with you some of the wisdom to which I am privy. But lies and deceit will not be rewarded. Look deep within yourselves and ask: why did no one set foot on this island in decades..."

With that the winged messenger is gone.

TELLING THE TRUTH

If the PCs tell her their names, she adds.

"I know you seek a way to leave this island. Now is not the time for the Alliance to retake this island. But the time will come."

"Take this scroll and use it on whatever means you find to leave this place. The ways must be closed for now."

"Farewell"

With that, Rododentoriazeth is gone, leaving only a feeling of peace in the former cemetery.

The PCs are handed a godly scroll of shatter (LG). This scroll is unique because it can be used by anyone of lawful good alignment in addition to those who have access to the spell. See godly scrolls in appendix 2.

16: THE TEMPLE

READ ALOUD.

A one time, this temple boasted a tall spire over its entrance. The remains of the walls give a feeling of broken might and military power. The roof and entryway collapsed long ago and are now overgrown with ivy and vines enhancing the sad, broken look of this temple.

Time erased any symbol that would allow you to identify who was worshipped here. Like the walls, this building can be trapped by the PCs if they wish (see encounter 12).

INSIDE

Searching the inside of the temple takes 1d4 hours and the PCs find a large trapdoor on the floor behind the altar. The trapdoor is 10 by 10 ft. Clearing it takes 4d6 minutes and opening it requires a DC 24 Strength check.

The trapdoor opens onto a set of stairs descending 40 feet in the ground. When the PCs reach the bottom of the stairs read the following.

Dust, more than an inch thick in places, shows that no one has come down here for centuries. The air is dry and stale down here.

At the bottom of the stairs many ever-burning torches light a large room. The walls are lined with alcoves where long-dead warriors lay. Ancient scrolls and books rest by the dead warriors. Stone desks covered with even more scrolls and books fill the center of the room.

Drawing your attention is the large tarnished bronze throne in the center of the room. Upon it sits a large-size dust-covered warrior wearing a horned helmet and holding a great axe on his lap. The warrior sits still, its blank gaze unfocused.

A DC 23 Knowledge (arcana) recognizes the creature as an iron golem.

A DC 15 Knowledge (history or nobility) check identifies its shape as that of a traditional Arman warrior.

A DC 15 Knowledge (history) check indicates that the Arman were not known for creating golems. This one must be a unique or a very rare specimen. Unknown to the PCs, beneath its bronze covering, is an iron golem. The Arman covered the golem with bronze to give it an Arman aesthetic.

ROUSING THE WARRIOR

There are three ways to rouse the warrior. The first is to defile the bodies or robbing them. The second is to damage the golem itself. The third is to confront it with a locari.

The golem only attacks those who perform such action, ignoring all others. Its target dead, the golem returns to its throne.

Locari are ALWAYS the golem's primary targets.

ARMAN GOLEM

CR 13

hp 129 (use iron golem in *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

During Combat: The golem targets any locari it sees first, then any other threat facing it.

RESEARCHING

As stated before, there are moldering books everywhere. The books are written in Ancient Arman. A few are in other language such as archaic Common, Exodite, or Sorcerous. As long as the PCs remain in the crypt, no locari enter the area; perhaps the temple sanctity or its solidity cloak them from locari senses. Research takes a lot of time because there are many books and most are old and brittle.

For every six hours spent searching the library, a PC can make a DC 20 Knowledge (history, or nobility) or Linguistics check. Unlike most Knowledge or Linguistics checks, another PC can assist with it these checks can be assisted (by someone using the same skill).

Each success gives the PCs some information. In all, the PCs have to gather a total of 6 successes to find all the documents. Each success reveals an additional clue in the following order:

Success #	Handout
1	History of the Keep
2	Travel Journals
3	Map of the Kingdom and scrolls
4	The Opening Ritual
5	Map of the Treasury
6	Tax Document

It is possible for the PCs to leave and follow up one of the leads, return and continue their research. Those side treks are left to the GM to expand upon.

Failure only turns up information that seems interesting but it turns up a dead end or the important parts are missing.

Third success in addition to the map, the PCs find two scrolls of accelerate magic, one scroll of comprehend languages and one scroll of magic vestment.

Fourth success it is possible the PCs believe they can open the Nexus Gateway portal in the village where they came from to travel back. The portal is broken and unusable. A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) proves the PCs do not have enough information.

If the PCs return there, they are pursued by the locari, just like in Encounter 9.

Fifth success a treasure map leading to the first king's treasure stash. Though this has nothing to do with the adventure, it is nonetheless something adventurers consider worthwhile.

PCs heading out to the cave have a three-hour trek before they reach the cave. Within are four chests weighing a thousand pounds each. They contain over 500 gp in copper pieces and other small coins, all about a thousand years old.

Sixth success Give information about the two Nexus Gateway portals found nearby. With this information the PCs learn of another Nexus Gateway portal.

OTHER TOPICS

The PCs may decide to research other topics. The crypt contains information about a lot of things. But most of that information is ten centuries old.

TAKING THE BOOKS

As long as they do not desecrate the bodies, the PCs can take any book, manuscript, or scrolls without rousing the room's guardians.

17: BREAKING THE SIEGE

The PCs head to the second Nexus Gateway portal to see if they can activate it and return home.

BREAKING THE SIEGE (CR3)

Before they can leave the keep, the PCs have to fight through a group of locari. Although many more locari lurk around the keep, it is assumed that the PCs attempt a sortie.

LOCARI DRONES (2)

CR 2

hp 25 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

LOCARI HUNTERS (2)

CR 4

hp 42 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

LOCARI SOLDIERS (2)

CR 5

hp 59 each (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

THE NEXUS GATEWAY

This group defeated, the PCs can run in the forest and leave the keep behind. The locari do not invade the keep and give it a wide berth. PCs can come back if they want or need to.

USING STEALTH

The PCs may try to avoid a confrontation with the locari and leave without combat. Evaluate the PCs plan and provide appropriate bonuses. The locari are not constantly vigilant and the PCs can find holes in their siege. Creativity should be rewarded.

THE VILLAGE

An hour or so later, the PCs come to a wide river. From the map they found in the crypt, they should be heading

upstream. If the PCs begin to relax, send a group of locari (as above) to remind them of where they are and what they are doing.

Be merciless.

Finally, when they reach the village, read aloud.

Across the river is a gathering of ruined houses surrounding a Nexus Gateway. The village is a beehive of activity. From a dense thicket, you observe the following scene.

A dozen drones are busy working on the Nexus Gateway, removing debris and vegetation. It seems they are clearing the gateway with a surprising clarity of purpose.

But the biggest surprise comes in the form of a man standing around, barking orders to the workers in a harsh and domineering voice. A few short moments later, there is no doubt: Professor Reinhalt von Grumborg is commanding the creatures! His clothes are torn and slightly bloody, but he seems in good health.

Next to him is a woman dressed in a stud-covered leather corset. Her skin is sickly white and covered in stitch scars. She looks over the proceeding with a conceited, content smirk on her face.

How the PCs react to this news greatly influences what they do next. Here are three course of action.

OBSERVING

The PCs stay back and watch. Because of the cover and distance, the PCs get a +10 bonus to their Stealth checks if they remain where they are. The locari, the woman, and the Professor pay little attention to their surroundings.

After an hour, the Professor stands before the Nexus Gateway portal and activates it. Then he steps through, followed by a number of the drones. The other drones head into the forest. The woman laughs out loud then vanishing (using boots of teleportation).

The PCs may do what they want at this point. The way to the gateway is clear and the Gateway remains open for about twenty minutes.

If the PCs wish to get involved, proceed to either "Talking" or "Fighting".

TALKING

The PCs approach the Professor and the woman attempting to talk.

The locari move to protect the Professor and the woman, but they are immediately shooed aside before barking orders. Without hesitation, the drones return to their

previous tasks, ignoring you.

"So glad to see you! I returned to the village to find you but you were gone! You would never believe what happened to me... I... I can barely believe it myself."

"That creature took me to their hive where I was certain I would be the next meal. The flying and the millions of locari were too much for me and I passed out."

"I woke up to see this huge queen approaching me. She hissed and clicked like all the other, but she suddenly started making sense. In spite of the alien way to speak, I understood that she spoke Khaynite! What a surprise and a shock."

"So I began talking to her and explaining what I was doing and why I was here. She has a limited intelligence, but understood that I had no hostile towards her or her hive. So she gave me these drones to open the Nexus Gateway portal and get back home."

"To think that you went about hacking and killing those poor little things, we could have had a war on our hands!"

The Professor's clothes are torn and ripped but he seems to be in good health. He has taken a few points of damage. Making a DC 20 Heal check reveals that he is infested with tiny grubs moving just under his skin.

The Professor refuses treatment from the grubs stating that "they're just a few ticks". If the PCs insist or force him to submit to surgery, the locari move in to fight. Proceed to "Fighting".

THE WOMAN

The woman is a Khaynite named Arem'Shehr. The Professor, however, only refers to her as "the divine vessel". She does not respond to the PCs, but examines them as pieces of meat.

If targeted by an attack or forced to make a saving throw, a contingency activates and dimension doors her away. She leaves and does not return.

FIGHTING (CRB)

If fighting breaks out, the Professor runs for cover and stays out of any fighting. He responds to any threat by whimpering and groveling.

Of the twelve drones, three flee as soon as hostile action is taken, to warn the local hive. The final four engage without fear.

Terrain: The area is a ruined village with scattered foliage.

LOCARI DRONES (9)

CR 2

hp 25 each(see Appendix 1)

Hive Niches: (one each) paralysis blood splatter, reinforced carapace, spikes, and web.

TACTICS

During Combat: The drones swarm a single target, maneuvering to flank if needed.

Morale: The locari fight to the death.

AFTERMATH

Once the locari are defeated, the Professor offers no threat to the PCs. They can do with him as they please. He cowers, begging for his life.

If the PCs attempt surgery, the professor has lost 3 points of Constitution when they meet him.

19: BACK TO EXODUS

READ ALOUD

Once more you feel your body expand and contract at once. Then you feel yourself thrown into the air then a short fall to the ground. You find yourself back in the ruins of Ulfsberg.

As the other members of your party arrive one by one, the Nexus Gateway remains open, the runes on the arch emitting a strange warbling sound.

If the PCs waited for the Professor and the locari to come through, the locari attack now (see "Fighting" in the previous encounter). Use the same map uses for the original battle with the brute wights.

THE NEXUS GATEWAY (CR 7)

The PCs now have to decide what to do with the Nexus Gateway. Make sure the PCs remember they are still in hostile territory.

LEAVING IT INTACT

If the PCs leave the Nexus Gateway portal in the Sametian jungles intact, nothing happens. Though nothing happens in the short run, the PCs later realize that they have left a backdoor where the locari could reach the mainland.

USING A SHATTER SPELL

Using the shatter spell or Rododentoriazeth's scroll, the portal shatters into a thousand pieces. It does not explode.

BEATING ON IT

Destroying the Nexus Gateway is time consuming. The portal has a hardness of 8 and 800 hit points. Depending on the time of day the PCs arrive here, they may have to face the cairn wight again.

When destroyed, the gateway explodes in a blast of fire. If the PCs try to break it while it is still active, every hit on the gateway triggers the explosion.

FIRE ARC

CR 7

Type magic; Perception DC25; **Disable Device** DC25
Effects

Trigger touch (special); **Reset** Automatic
Effect fire blast (10d6 fire damage, DC 25 Reflex save for half); multiple targets (all targets within 30ft. of the Nexus Gateway)
Special the trap activates when it is finally destroyed.

THE PROFESSOR (CRE)

The Professor is still infested

If the PCs do not discover that the Professor is infested with Locari Withering, a few days later, when the PCs are still the jungles of Sametia, the Professor bursts into an advanced locari larvae swarm, killing the man instantly.

ADVANCED LOCARI LARVAE SWARM CR 7

N Fine aberration (Locari, swarm)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 20, flat-footed 16 (+6 Dex, +2 natural, +4 size)

hp 67 (9d8+27)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

Immune Magic (divination), swarm traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.; climb 20ft.

Melee swarm (2d6 plus infest plus venom)

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 23, **Con** 16, **Int** 1, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +5; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 15

Skills Climb +6, Perception +11, Stealth +18 (+23 in dark areas); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Infest (Ex) when a target is hit, it must make a DC17 Reflex save or be infested with Locari larvae. While infested, the target takes swarm damage every round, until the larvae are removed. Removing the larvae requires a full-round action that causes 1d6 points of damage to the target.

Venom (Ex) Swarms have a DC17 necrosis venom.

THE PROFESSOR IS KILLED

Whatever the reason, if the PCs return to the Royal Library, they receive the promised payment if they turn in at least some of sort of scrolls or academic works to the library. The quality is not as important as simply giving the scrolls.

THE WAY BACK

The quickest way back from the gate in Sametia is along the same route. Proceed to the conclusion when they reach civilization.

CONCLUSION

This adventure can end a number of ways. Here are a number of major loose ends.

THE PROFESSOR

LIVES

If the Professor still lives; read aloud.

Before you reach the relative safety of the border of the Caneus Empire, the Professor grows somber.

"You know we can never tell anyone of where we have been... If we do the Imperial Alliance will hunt us down and kill us..."

"Ablis is under quarantine and any trip there is forbidden and the only penalty is death... Are you willing to keep everything we saw and all we witness quiet and secret."

"I'll pay you what I can once we reach Nyssa, assuming we have a deal here."

Allow the PCs to answer the Professor. Assuming they agree, the Professor offers them each the sum of 150 Imperial Crown (total value 3,000 gp).

DEAD

The Professor's estate offers each PC 100 Imperial Crowns and considers their business concluded.

PREEST

If the PCs go back to meet with Preest, he meets them at the Rusty Helm. He asks for any notebooks and maps drawn by the PCs. He also demands a full debriefing of everything the PCs have done. Preest knows where the PCs have been, but does not say. If the PCs lie to him, he merely nods.

No matter what they tell him, he listens without interruption. When the PCs are done, read.

As Preest leaves, he turns back to you. "I would not go about talking about where you have been and what you've done. It's the kind of place that gets people killed."

He throws a purse in your direction, then he is gone,

The purse contains 1,000 gp in small gems for each PC.

EPILOG

This is the epilog of the adventure. Read this once all of the loose ends are handled.

Within the Royal Library of Nyssa, during a cloudless night, a shadowy figure moves unnoticed between the

candlelit researchers.

Entering an office a smirk appears on her scarred face. Silently she reaches for a hidden safe and opens it in one go. From within, the figure draws a thick tome.

Her deep, raspy voice whispers to herself "It has been a long time, my dear; a long time indeed." The shape opens the book as moonlight hit her pale, cruel and merciless face. "Now Exodus will tremble as they did in the Golden Age."

Her quiet laugh dies as she makes her way out of the Library.

* * *

In the morning a young student stands before the head librarian. Nervously playing with her robe and not raising her gaze to meet the librarian's, she appears shamefaced and guilty..

"It is gone, sir. It is nowhere to be found. I... I... I looked everywhere. I searched everywhere in the office. Raiding the Sorcerer-King is simply not there! "

THE END



APPENDIX 1: STAT BLOCKS

Professor Von Grumborg
Reinhalt von Grumborg CR 4
Male Nasian expert 6
NG Medium humanoid (human)
Init -1; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+3 armor, -1 Dex); **ACP** +0
hp 28 (6d8+0)
Fort +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee cane +3 (1d6-1)

TACTICS

During Combat: runs to the safest place possible, and hides.

Morale: the professor has no intention of dying on this expedition. That's why he hired the PCs.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 9, **Con** 10, **Int** 17, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 12

Feats Skill Focus (Knowledge (history)), Skill Focus (Knowledge (geography)), Skill Focus (Knowledge (nature))

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Knowledge (engineering) +13, Knowledge (geography) +16, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nature) +16, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +16, Profession (archeologist) +10, Ride +4

Languages Ancient Arman, Common, Khaynite, Nasian

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds Other Gear cane (counts as a club), old masterwork studded leather armor

DANGERS OF SAMETIA

CALIBAN VETERAN MOB

Caliban veterans lead bands of calibans in combat, relishing in the mayhem and destruction. Their love of chaos is particularly valued by the Horde.

CALIBAN VETERAN MOB

CR 6

Male caliban fighter 3
CE Medium Humanoid (caliban)
Init +5; **Senses** Darkvision 60ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, -2 size); **ACP** -1
hp 170 (3d10+9)
Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1
Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE**Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** swarm (2d6)**STATISTICS****Str** 20, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 25 (cannot be grappled or tripped)**Feats** Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)**Skills** Survival +6**Languages** Balite, Common**SQ** armor training 1

Combat Gear mwk falchion, 3 handaxe, mwk hide

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Light Sensitivity (Ex) A caliban is dazzled in bright light.

COCKATRICES, 6HD ADVANCED

These hideous creatures are bred as pets by many in the Janus Horde. They are overfed and frequently allowed to roam freely around areas the Horde wishes to protect.

6HD ADVANCED COCKATRICE**CR 5**

N Small magical beast

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60ft., low-light vision; Perception +13**DEFENSE****AC** 20, touch 18, flat-footed 13 (+6 Dex, +1 size, +2 natural, +1 dodge)**hp** 51 (5d10+18)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)**Melee** bite +13 (1d4)**Special Attacks** petrification (DC 16)**TACTICS****Morale** a cockatrice flees if brought down to less than 10 hit points.**STATISTICS****Str** 11, **Dex** 22, **Con** 16, **Int** 2, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 12**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 22**Feats** Dodge, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse**Skills** Fly +9, Perception +13, Stealth +10**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Petrification (Su) Each time a creature is damaged by the cockatrice's bite attack, it must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Dexterity damage as its flesh and bones stiffen and harden. A creature reduced to 0 Dexterity by a cockatrice's bites immediately turns completely to stone, as if petrified by a flesh to stone spell. See the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* for full details.

WORG MOB

This large group of angry black canines with malevolence clearly readable in their eyes approaches, growling angrily.

WORG MOB**CR 6**

NE Huge magical beast (mob)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +11**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)**hp** 130 (4d10+4)**Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3**Defensive Abilities** mob traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 50 ft.**Melee** swarm (2d6)**Space** 15ft; **Reach** 0ft.**STATISTICS****Str** 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 6, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25**Feats** Run, Skill Focus (Perception)**Skills** Perception +11, Stealth +9, Survival +5; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception, +2 Stealth, +2 Survival**Languages** Common, Goblin**THE LOCARI**

The locari resemble human-sized insect-like abominations, their chitin mottled with dark browns and grays giving them great camouflage abilities. Their physical features combine elements of insects, reptiles, and arachnids. They are only known to occupy the island of Ablis.

The locari are some of the Khaynites' most recent creations, being less than a few centuries old. Their origins and creator are unknown. The Khaynites themselves are not sure who among them created them. The locari are engineered to be apex predators. Utterly, unbreakably loyal to their masters, the locari rest in a niche between weapon, tool, slave and pet. These vile abominations, created from the worst aspects of reptile, insect and arachnid, pose a threat to all other forms of life. Some believe the locari are the result of Khaynite breeding program with bebilith and common insects.

The locari are organized in a complex network of hives that instinctively cooperate. Each locari has a unique task for which it is adapted and evolved. These adaptations are called hive niches by the Khaynites. This makes each locari unique and that much more dangerous.

Locari are not known to communicate with other species. Scholars speculate they communicate by means of a complex language of sounds, gestures and pheromones. No one has managed to communicate with them or decode their alien language. All communication spells fail, yielding only gibberish.

The few who encountered them commented on the danger they pose to all life on Exodus. After seeing the fate of the surviving visitors to Ambis, the Imperial Alliance set up a blockade of the island. Anyone caught attempting to leave the island is killed without trial or questioning. The island is simply off-limits.

For all their adaptability, the locari have fortunately never been seen in the water.

LOCARI ENCOUNTER

Encounters with the locari involve wave after wave of creatures. The locari have no regard for their own life and commit to battle without fear or regards for their own safety.. Their sole tactic are huge swarming assaults.

Locari never withdraw or flee, and they always fight to the death.

LOCARI SUBTYPE

For all their varied appearances and abilities, all locari share a number of common traits.

- Climb speed equal to their land speed.
- Darkvision 60 feet and low-light vision.
- Immunity to divination magic
- Hive niches special abilities. The save DC is equal to 10 plus half the locari's HD plus its Constitution bonus.
- Racial bonus of +5 Stealth in dark or shadowy areas.
- Unless hive niches changes them, all locari are considered to have six legs.
- Locari eat, drink, sleep and breathe.
- Locari instinctively understand the Khaynite language, though only the leaders can speak it.
- **Immunity to Magic (Su)** All spells of the divination school automatically fail when targeted against the Locari. In the case of information gathering spells, such as augury, the spell appears to succeed but returns false and misleading information.

LOCARI DRONE

CR 2

N Medium aberration (locari)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +6

DEFENSE

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

hp 25 (3d8+9)

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

Immune Magic (divination)

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.; climb 40ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+2 plus trip), tail stinger -1 (1d6+1)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18 (26 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +10, Perception +6, Stealth +8 (+13 in dark areas), Survival +6; Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas

Language Khaynite (understand only)

SQ Hive niche

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hive Niche (Ex) Locari Drone can choose one Hive Niche. If the niche allows, the save is DC 14. This save DC is Constitution based.

Recommended niches: flesh hooks, oversize jaw, very resistant, web, or winged.

LOCARI SCOUT

CR 3

N Medium aberration (locari)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +8

DEFENSE

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

hp 30 (4d8+12)

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

Immune Magic (divination)

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.; climb 40ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d6+3 plus trip), tail stinger +1 (1d6+1 plus drag)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19 (27 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +12, Perception +8, Stealth +10 (+15 in dark areas), Survival +8; Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas

Language Khaynite (understand only)

SQ Hive niche (winged)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hive Niche (Ex) Locari scout can choose one Hive Niches. If the niche allows, the save is DC 15. This save DC is Constitution based.

Recommended niches: acid breath, blinding breath, explosive death, increased agility, spikes, or web.

LOCARI HUNTER

CR 4

N Medium aberration (locari)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +9

DEFENSE

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

hp 42 (5d8+20)

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

Immune Magic (divination)

OFFENSE**Speed** 40 ft.; climb 40ft.**Melee** bite +8 (2d6+4 plus trip), tail stinger +5 (1d6+2)**STATISTICS****Str** 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21 (29 vs. trip)**Feats** Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Climb +14, Perception +9, Stealth +12 (+17 in dark areas), Survival +8; Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas

Language Khaynite (understand only)

SQ Hive niche (oversize jaws)**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Hive Niche (Ex)** Locari hunter can choose any two Hive Niches. If the niche allows, the save is DC 16. This save DC is Constitution based.**Recommended niches:** blinding breath, flash hooks, spikes, venomous stinger, or web.**LOCARI SOLDIER****CR 5**

N Medium aberration (locari)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +11**DEFENSE****AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 Dex, +5 natural)**hp** 59 (7d8+28)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7**Immune** Magic (divination)**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.; climb 40ft.**Melee** bite +11 (1d8+5 plus trip), 2 scything talons +8 (1d6+5), tail stinger +8 (1d6+2)**STATISTICS****Str** 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23 (31 vs. trip)**Feats** Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Climb +14, Perception +11, Stealth +14 (+19 in dark areas), Survival +8; Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas

Language Khaynite (understand only)

SQ Hive niche (scything talons)**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Hive Niche (Ex)** Locari soldiers have scything talons, each locari soldier can choose one additional Hive Niches. If the niche allows, the save is DC 17. This save DC is Constitution based.**Recommended niches:** acid breath, extra limbs, extra scything talons, large, paralysis blood splatter, reinforced carapace, spikes, or venomous talons.**GIANT SOLDIER****CR 6**

N Large aberration (locari)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +13**DEFENSE****AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)**hp** 73 (7d8+42)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7**Immune** Magic (divination)**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.; climb 40ft.**Melee** bite +12 (2d6+7 plus trip), 2 scything talons +9 (1d8+7), tail stinger +9 (1d8+3)**Space** 10ft.; **Reach** 5ft.**STATISTICS****Str** 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 25 (29 vs. trip)**Feats** Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Climb +15, Perception +13, Stealth +9 (+14 in dark areas); Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas

Language Khaynite (understand only)

SQ Hive niche (scything talons)**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Hive Niche (Ex)** Locari soldiers have scything talons, each locari soldier can choose one additional Hive Niches. If the niche allows, the save is DC 19. This save DC is Constitution based.**Recommended niches:** as soldier.**LOCARI PRINCESS****CR 9**

N Large aberration (locari)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, Perception +13**DEFENSE****AC** 23, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)**hp** 126 (11d8+77)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9**Immune** Magic (divination)**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.; climb 30ft.**Melee** bite +15 (2d6+8 plus trip), 2 scything talons +12 (1d8+8), tail stinger +12 (1d8+4)**Space** 10ft.; **Reach** 5ft.**STATISTICS****Str** 26, **Dex** 16, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 29 (33 vs. trip)**Feats** Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Climb +16, Perception +13, Stealth +10 (+15 in dark areas); Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +5 Stealth in dark areas
Language Khaynite
SQ Hive niche (scything talons)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hive Niche (Ex) Locari princesses have scything talons, each princess can choose two additional Hive Niches. If the niche allows, the save is DC 21. This save DC is Constitution based.

HIVE NICHES

Every locari has a specific task, be it to die in defense of the hive, or to produce the next generation. The locari's designers created hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of different type of locari, and ensured that each would have the tools it needed to do its job. Each category of locari can choose powers from this list.

All DCs can be found in the individual Locari entry. Unless specified, locari are immune to hive niches abilities of other locari.

Acid Breath (Ex) A locari can breathe 15 foot cone of acid that deals 1d8 points of acid damage per hit dice of the locari, Reflex half. A locari can use this ability one every 1d6 rounds.

Blinding Breath (Ex) A locari can breathe 30 foot cone of venom. Targets must make a Fortitude save or be blinded for a number of rounds equal to the locari's Constitution bonus. A locari can use this ability one every 1d6 rounds.

Explosive Death (Ex) When the locari is killed, it explodes. Everything within 10ft. of the locari takes 1D6 points of damage per two HD, Reflex halves. If the killing blow is a critical hit, this damage is doubled. Locari This damage is half acid and half fire.

Extra Limbs (Ex) The locari gains the pounce ability.

Extra Scything Talons (Ex) Requires Scything Talons. The locari gains two extra scything talon attacks. This enhancement may be taken multiple times, each costing one hive niche.

Flesh Hooks (Ex) When the locari hits a target with its stinger, it can make free grab attempt. Requires a stinger.

Increased Agility (Su) The locari gains the benefit of evasion. May not be taken if the locari has reinforced carapace.

Large (Ex) Apply the Giant template to the locari.

Long Talons (Ex) The locari's scything talons gains an additional 5 feet of reach.

Oversize Jaw (Ex) The locari's jaws are massive, they inflict damage as though the locari was two sizes larger.

Paralysis Blood Splatter (Ex) When a locari takes a critical hit from a piercing of slashing weapon, all non-locari within 5ft. of the locari must make a Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds.

Reinforced Carapace (Ex) The Locari has a strengthened carapace. The extra weight also slows it greatly. The locari gains +4 AC and +2 to Strength. All of its movement forms are reduced by 20'.

Scything Talons (Ex) The Locari has two long talons that inflict 1d6+Strength points of piercing damage. They are secondary attacks. Obtaining this enhancement costs two hive niches.

Serpentine (Ex) The locari's lower half is like a serpent. The locari cannot be tripped, replaces its stinger. A locari with this niche can make a slam attack with its tail and gains the grab special ability. May not take venomous stinger.

Spikes (Ex) Anyone making a melee attack without a reach weapon that successfully strikes the locari takes 1d6 points of piercing damage.

Venomous Stinger (Ex) On a successful Tail Slap attack, a Locari may opt to use its stinger to inject venom into the target (see Locari Venom). Unless a locari has a withering stinger, they cannot use Locari Withering.

Venomous Talons (Ex) Requires scything talons and a poisonous stinger attack. The locari can deliver its poison when making a successful talon attack.

Very Resistant (Ex) The locari gain resistance 5 to all forms of energy (acid, cold, electrical, fire and sonic).

Web (Ex) the locari gains a web attack per web universal monster rule. A locari is immune to its own web and can make a DC (per locari) Climb check to ignore the web of other locari.

Winged (Ex) The Locari has large wings, which allow it to take flight. The Locari gains Flight speed of 60ft. with average maneuverability, and ranks in Fly equal to their HD.

Withering Stinger (Ex) With a successful stinger attack, the locari can implant locari grubs into a victim. If the locari also has a venomous stinger, a successful strike can impart both poison and withering. This is only available to locari princesses and queens.

LOCARI VENOM

Here is a number of locari venom. The DCs of any locari poison is dependent on the locari.

ASSIMILATION VENOM

Type injury; Save Fortitude DC (per locari)

Onset 2 rounds; **Frequency** 1/minute for 4 minutes.

Effect 1d3 Wisdom damage, target must make a Will save or be subject to a compulsion to serve the Locari

hive. The victim of assimilation venom gains the ability to understand the locari language, but only when the venom remains active. This effect lasts until the subject is rendered unconscious; Cure two consecutive Fortitude saves.

LOCARI WITHERING

Type injury; Save Fortitude DC (per locari)

Onset 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day.

Effect 1d3 Con; **Cure** Surgery; A DC 24 Heal check is required to remove the grub. Surgery deals 2d6 points of damage to the target per points of Constitution lost to the grubs. A failed surgery roll inflicts 1d3 Con damage to the target.

Special Locari Withering acts like a poison but it is not. Those **Immune** to poison can be affected by it. The grubs cannot be affected by a neutralize poison spell, though a heal spell removes them.

Special Once the sufferer reaches zero Constitution, because of Locari Withering, the grubs have fully matured.. Locari erupt from the host forming a locari swarm and killing the host.

Special A DC 20 Heal is required to detect the presence of the parasite. A victim feels tired and weak, but otherwise in good health.

NECROSIS VENOM

Type injury; Save Fortitude DC (per locari)

Onset 1 hour; **Frequency** 1/day for 6 days.

Effect 1 Con damage + cumulative 5% chance of Slow Death Rot; Cure can be cured by taking electricity damage equal to or greater than the Locari's HD.

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

GODLY SCROLLS

Aura varied; CL varied

Slot -; Price quadruple the cost of a scroll

DESCRIPTION

Godly scrolls were originally created by the angelic hosts of the gods to allow them or trusted mortals to use abilities such as spell knowledge they did not normally

possess. Godly scrolls are extremely rare and only given by churches to favored or important lay worshippers. Godly scrolls are all linked to one deity and can be used by those of the same alignment as the deity itself.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, creator must be able to cast the scribed spell; Cost quadruple the cost of a scroll.

NEW RULES

MOBS

Sometime it is more convenient (and quicker) to represent a group of low-level combatants by have them swarm or form into a mob. Such a group usually contains individuals with similar abilities, such as a mob of peasants or an enuka tribe. A mob obeys mob mentality and surges forward striking with whatever weapons it has handy. This creates a "creature" that resembles a swarm in many aspects.

Except where mentioned below, a mob is considered to be a single creature.

A mob can move without penalty into any area that its member could fit through.

Mobs never use spells or special abilities requiring activation (but a mob of rangers would gain bonuses from the favored enemy ability and a mob of p'tan does additional damage to creatures with the First Ones subtype).

Although not immune to weapon damage, any attack that targets only a single creature cannot deal more than 10% of the mob's starting hit point in damage.

A mob is vulnerable to area of effect attacks the same way a swarm is. Any area of effect attack deals half again its damage to the mob.

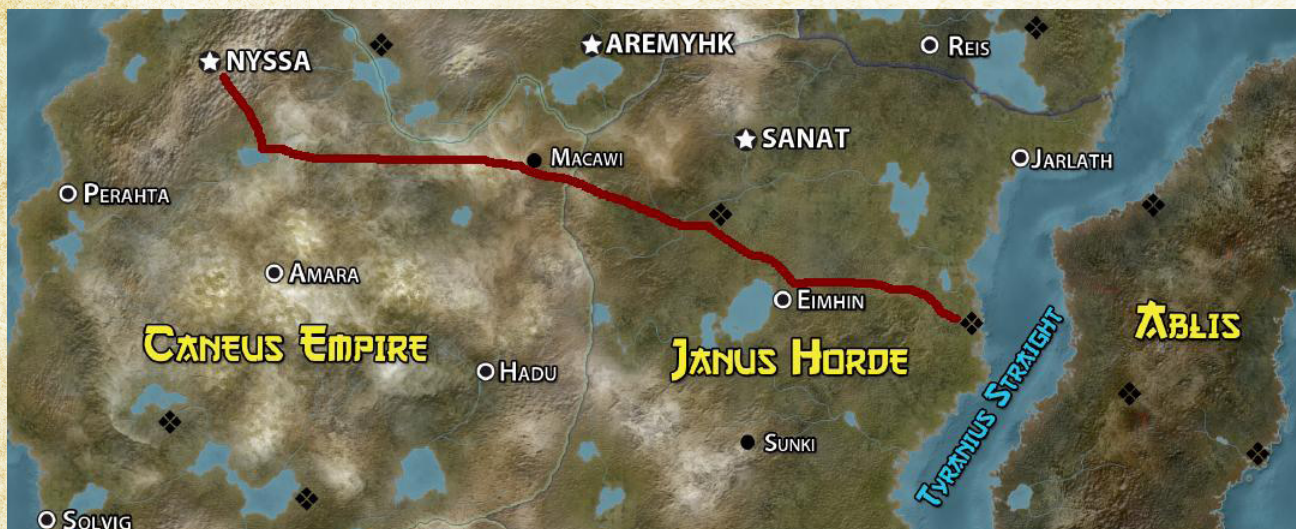
Deals damage like a swarm.

A mob is immune to any spell that targets a finite number of creatures with the exception of those dealing damage, those spells act like weapons (deal a maximum of 10% of the mob's starting hit point).

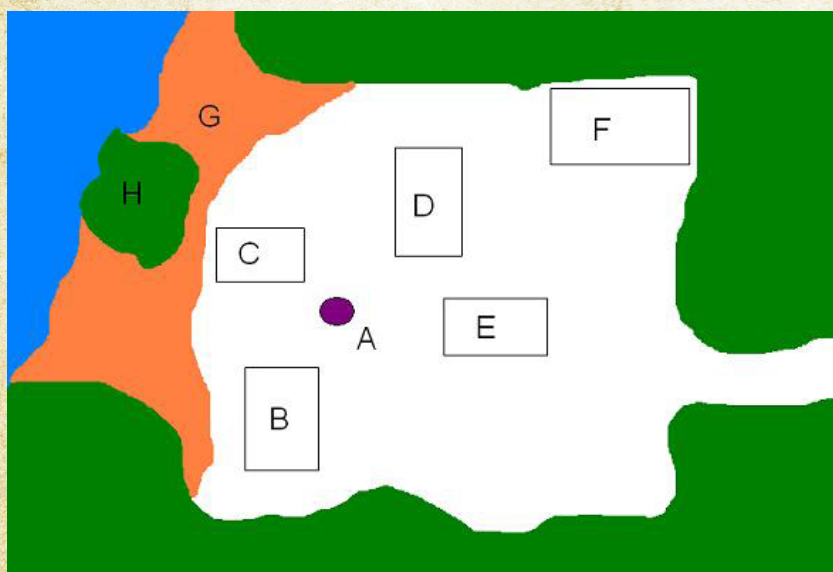
A mob that reaches zero hit points is dispersed, leaving one third for dead, one third injured or unconscious and one third still alive. However the creatures have lost the will to fight and flee as fast as they can.

APPENDIX 3: MAPS

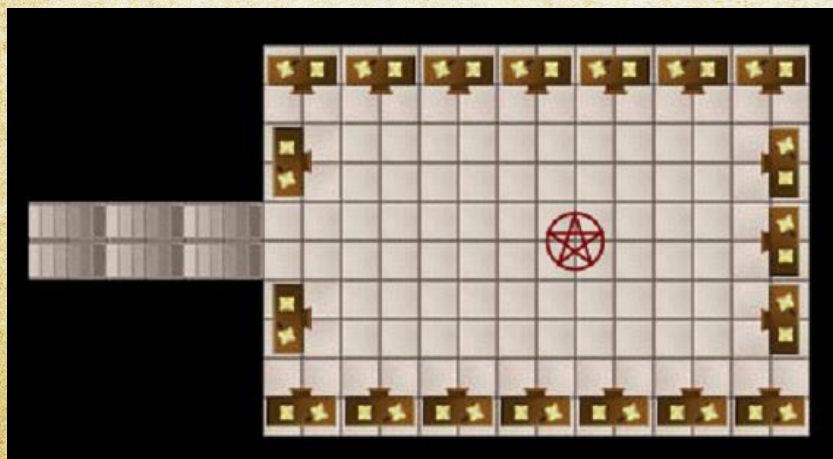
THE PROFESSOR'S OVERLAND JOURNEY



THE ARMAN VILLAGE



THE CELLAR



**CUT OUT EACH SECTION AND HAND THEM OVER
TO THE PCS AS THEY FIND THE APPROPRIATE HAND OUT.**

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: THE LETTER

<Your proper name>,

Meet me at the Rusty Helm in Nyssa tomorrow at noon. Ask for the Professor's table. The password is "History Awaits."

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: RESEARCH

1: HISTORY OF THE KEEP

You found a number of historical documents relating the founding of the hold of Gregorheim.

According to the records, Gregor Utaliov was a powerful captain who led dozens of expeditions against the lands of the Sorcerer-Kings. He was also known as a great slayer of beasts.

As he returned from an expedition to the North, he landed his ship in the nearby cove. There, his crew was set upon by a horde of horrible creatures.

After an epic battle – the text is quite explicit about the death Gregor inflicted on the creatures – Gregor entered a lost keep where the master of those horrors has his lair. Without mercy, Gregor proceeded to behead the Khaynite alchemist and claimed the land as his own.

The chronicles detail Gregor's descendents and the expansion of his domain over the next two hundred years. During this time, the Gregorov family grows powerful.

The most recent documents, dated about ten centuries ago deal with the Arman migration and how the family lost many of its territories due to depopulation.

The final entries deal with arachnid horrors they call "locari." The scribes detail the sudden appearance of the creatures and the rapid defeat of the Arman armies. Although the warriors killed thousands, more kept coming in seeming endless numbers.

The scribe marvels as the many different adaptation of the creatures. He comments that each is adapted for some alien purpose and that they cannot be clearly categorized.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: RESEARCH

2: THE TRAVEL JOURNALS

You found a number of travel journals and ships logs. These log information about rich settlements along the coast of mainland Exodus. From the mountainous coast of Abaddon to the northern jungles of the Wyldlands of Bal, there are few settlements whose names sound familiar.

The journals lead you to believe that the locals had access and understood at least partially how to use and activate the Nexus Gateway portals.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: RESEARCH

3: THE MAP OF THE KINGDOM

You found a map of the king's domain. On it are a number of villages and a larger settlement. Their precise function is unclear, however a number of them seem to have been military in nature.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: RESEARCH

4: THE OPENING RITUAL

You discovered a scroll that details the ways of activating a Nexus Gateway portal to a friendly settlement. Exactly where that settlement is not clear, but should it be clear that such a settlement is located on the mainland.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: RESEARCH

5: MAP OF THE TREASURY

You discovered a treasure map! The map shows the location of Gregor Utaliov's personal treasure. The content is not clear, but based on your previous readings, it is a fortune. The secret word and how to activate the hidden door is fully described.

The map would lead you a short distance from the keep, a few hours at most.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: RESEARCH

6: TAX DOCUMENT

You found a tax document that detailed the all that was gathered over a couple of years. Though of limited interest, your attention is drawn to a 'Nexus Gateway' usage tax. Further research convinces you that the local kings controlled not one but two Nexus Gateways!

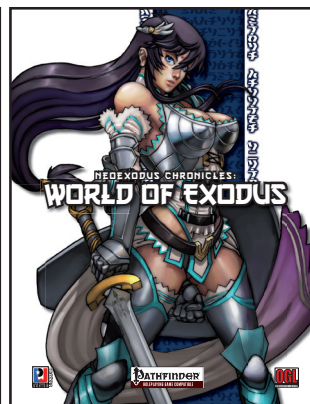
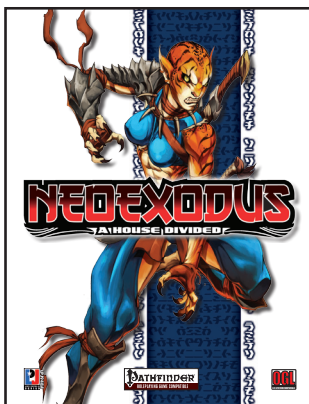
Further research reveals its location: about an hour's walk to the southwest of the keep, by a strong-flowing river.

With any luck, the Nexus Gateway portal is still intact and you might use it to return home.

NEOEXODUS

A HOUSE DIVIDED

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