

PATHFINDER[®]

ADVENTURE PATH[™]



TYRANT'S GRASP

BORNE BY THE SUN'S GRACE

By Luis Loza



The Gravelands



GALLOWSPIRE

Virlych

RENCHURCH ♦

♦ CASNORIVA

♦ VAISHAU

VIGIL

CASTLE FIRRINE ♦

CASTLE EVERSTAND ♦

HAMMER ROCK

♦ GARDEN OF LEAD

♦ HALLEIN TOWN

DORTROT RANCH ♦

• GALIPHAS

Lastwall

Northern Fangwood

SARENITE TEMPLE ♦

ROSLEAR'S COFFER

THREE PINES FORD

VELLUMIS

THE WIZARD-KING'S PIT ♦

FORT LANDING ♦

The Isle of Terror

60 MILES

0



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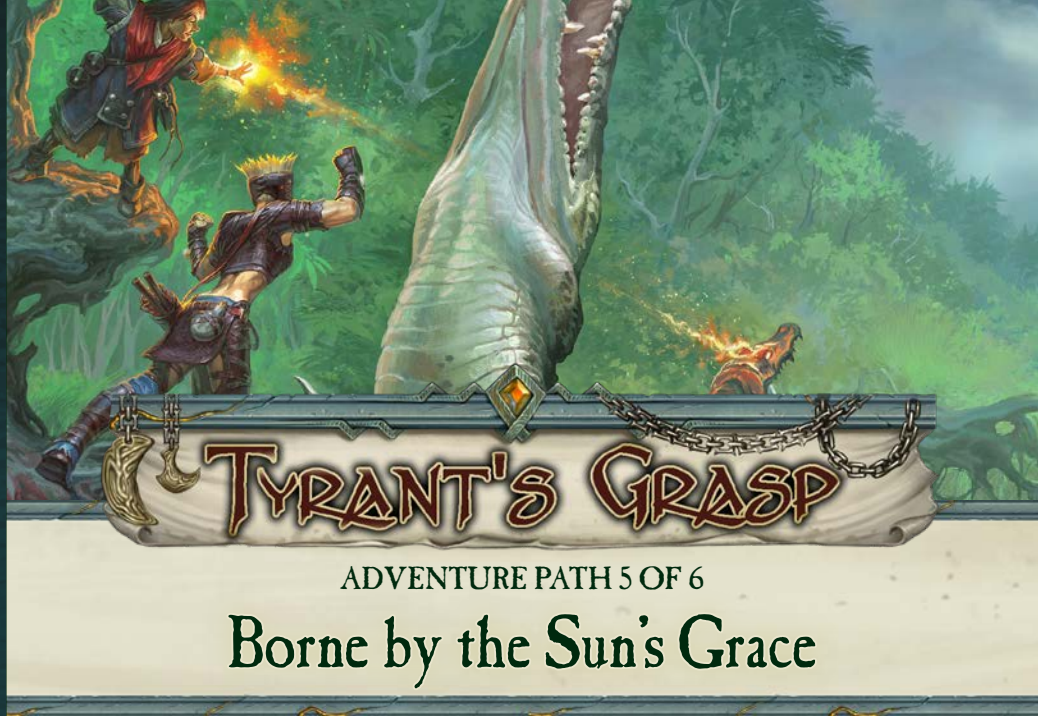
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ON THE COVER



Kess and Yoon receive an unpleasant welcome in Arcadia while the undead dragon Istravek prepares to work his evil master's will in this spectacular cover art by Igor Grechanyi.



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at pfrd.info.

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i>	UE
<i>Book of the Damned</i>	BotD	<i>Ultimate Intrigue</i>	UI
<i>Horror Adventures</i>	HA	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM
<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA	<i>Ultimate Wilderness</i>	UW



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PART 1: CITY OF FLOWERS..... 5

The heroes learn they are in Arcadia, near the city of Jolizpan. As they begin to learn about the *obols* embedded in their souls, agents of a rebel leader attack the city. With Jolizpan's defenders lost to a greater menace, the heroes are the city's best hope.

PART 2: DIGGING UP SECRETS18

The heroes infiltrate the rebels' headquarters to reclaim a magic item that will help them learn about their *obols*. They discover that the leader of the rebels is in the grip of a powerful outsider, stoking his distrust and desperation.

PART 3: INTO THE SACRED MOUNTAIN..... 40

The heroes travel to Tumbaja Mountain, the central nexus of Jolizpan's magical network. The undead dragon Istravek stands between the heroes and the mystical kumaru tree, that provides the clues they need to stop the Whispering Tyrant.

Advancement Track

"Borne by the Sun's Grace" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

14

The PCs begin this adventure at 14th level.

15

The PCs should reach 15th level during their explorations of the Blue Gardens of Tlil.

The PCs should reach 16th level by the adventure's conclusion.





ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Prior to becoming a god, Aroden periodically left Avistan to travel Golarion and study a variety of magical traditions. On one of his visits to the continent of Arcadia, Aroden visited the powerful nation of Xopatl. Ringed by defensive mountains, Xopatl had been founded long ago by hero-gods. Its arcane botanists had mastered the art of guiding the growth of living ley lines, creating unique magical relics and delivering limitless magical power across their nation through a network known as the Veins of Creation. The Veins of Creation provided energy to forges, magical defenses, and even simple lighting within homes. The heart of the Veins of Creation was a magical kumaru tree, descended from the legendary Tree of the Thousand Eyes, growing within an ancient pyramid called Tumbaja Mountain. The city of Jolizpan had been founded near the pyramid to protect and shepherd this kumaru tree, and its citizens were primary arcanists, biologists, and engineers who studied and improved the Veins of Creation.

Aroden was intrigued by tales of Xopatl's fantastic magic and arrived in -1524 AR to study it. He made his way to Jolizpan, but the wary residents wouldn't allow foreigners to enter the sacred Tumbaja Mountain. Nevertheless, Aroden spent several years in Jolizpan learning from the botanists and attempting to gain approval to enter the pyramid. He lived as a farmer and fisherman, earning his keep in the city and slowly building trust. During this time, he met a wizard from Xopatl's capital of Gujaraldi named Arazni. Arazni had studied the ley lines near her home and had made great advancements in applying arcane botany to improve the cleanliness of water in local aquifers. She had come to Jolizpan to deepen her own understanding of the Veins of Creation and expand her research. Aroden saw Arazni's research as an opportunity and offered her his assistance. With their joint research proposal, the two earned limited, supervised access to Tumbaja Mountain.

Aroden and Arazni were voracious in their research of the Veins of Creation, and they benefited from working closely with the botanists directly responsible for care of the kumaru tree. Arazni quickly completed the necessary studies for her project, and she invited Aroden to travel across Xopatl with her as she applied her research. Aroden agreed, and the two returned to Gujaraldi to improve the local cluster of the Veins of Creation. Following this endeavor, the pair traveled throughout Xopatl, applying Arazni's improvements to increasingly distant communities. Xopatl was not wholly tame, even in the days when the direct influence of the hero-gods was stronger, and the two frequently contended with wild beasts. Aroden was impressed to find that Arazni was not only a clever

wizard but a brave warrior. The two journeyed together for several years, earning a reputation as heroes.

Aroden and Arazni returned to Jolizpan in -1505 AR to report on their nationwide improvements. Mere weeks later, the Razatlani warlord, Imictal, led his Army of Fire over the Mildanesi Mountains toward Jolizpan. Imictal hoped to claim Xopatl and its Veins of Creation to bolster the declining Razatlani empire. Aroden and Arazni challenged the warlord, using their extensive knowledge of the Veins of Creation to erect magical defenses while Jolizpan's warriors defeated the Army of Fire. Aroden and Arazni faced Imictal personally, slaying him and ending his threat. As thanks for their aid in defending the city, the botanists of Jolizpan granted Aroden and Arazni unfettered access to Tumbaja Mountain and the kumaru tree at its heart.

Aroden and Arazni spent the next few years studying the kumaru tree as the source of the Veins of Creation. Arazni eventually grew content with her knowledge and left to bring new improvements to Xopatl, but this time, Aroden did not join her. Instead, he remained in Xopatl, performing his own experiments on the kumaru tree. He placed a fragment of his soul within the tree, giving him the ability to manipulate the living ley lines with greater ease than even the most experienced arcane botanists. With this mastery, Aroden grew a branch of the kumaru tree that twisted upon itself several times. He cut this branch free and formed it into the mighty *Shield of Aroden* (which later, when broken by the Whispering Tyrant, came to be known as the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*). Strengthened by his knowledge and his new artifact, Aroden left Arcadia to continue his travels. He went on to achieve divinity and become a living god.

Meanwhile, Arazni journeyed across Xopatl, defending its people and ushering the nation into a golden age. While taming the plains of western Xopatl, the warrior-mage faced a terrible beast named Tlochach, the Serpent of the Seven Hills. She defeated the monster after a titanic struggle, but its venom proved too potent and Arazni perished. Aroden later called upon Arazni's soul to be reborn as his herald—but that part of history is not relevant to Arcadia's.

The Veins of Creation continued to serve Xopatl well. The botanists of Jolizpan originally conducted their research on the Veins of Creation from disparate sites within the city, making pilgrimages to the sacred Tumbaja Mountain as needed. In 4598 AR, the botanists built a central research facility just west of Jolizpan, called the Blue Gardens of Tlil. From this location, Jolizpan's arcane botanists made significant advances. Yet even the most skilled of Jolizpan's arcane botanists didn't realize that the tree's incredible longevity was due to the echoes of Aroden's divine soul still lodged within it. When Aroden perished in 4606 AR, this soul echo released a unique



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Istravek's Arrival

This adventure is intentionally vague about the specific date of Istravek's arrival. This date should correspond with the end of "Last Watch" in your campaign, as the Whispering Tyrant used the *Radiant Fire* to break open his prison almost immediately after destroying Vigil. Considering the pacing of the events of "Gardens of Gallowspire," Istravek's arrival is likely 2 or 3 weeks in the past, but could be a month ago or more. Anyone in Jolizpan can provide the exact timing to the PCs, and the PCs might realize it corresponds to the date of the Whispering Tyrant's release.

magical feedback into the kumaru tree. The tree instantly withered, shutting down the Veins of Creation entirely.

Panic gripped Xopatl. Its people's way of life was badly disrupted, and the nation struggled to survive the sudden loss. Jolizpan's botanists scrambled to bring the kumaru tree back to life, but with the echoes of Aroden's dead soul tainting the tree, they could not. Even preserved seeds from the tree failed to take root. The botanists eventually achieved a breakthrough by replicating the Veins of Creation on a much smaller scale, creating limited, local networks of ley lines that Xopatl still uses today. But the true Veins of Creation were gone, and with them Xopatl's golden age was gone as well. Only now, while reviewing ancient records, the botanists pieced together that Aroden had somehow altered the kumaru tree during his tenure long ago. Now, Aroden's name is spoken with venom as the foreigner whose meddling brought ruin to Xopatl.

THE SCION OF NIGHTMARES ARRIVES

The Whispering Tyrant was well prepared for the destruction of his prison of Gallowspire. He had several agents, long imprisoned with him, poised to perform critical tasks all over the world as soon as they were free. One of these is Istravek, the Scion of Nightmares.

While still a mortal wizard, millennia ago, Tar-Baphon imprisoned the black dragon Istravek. Tar-Baphon bought his prisoner's loyalty with promises of power, and once the captive Istravek agreed to aid the wizard-king in his experiments, Tar-Baphon killed him and reanimated him as a rare form of undead dragon called a ravener. Honored by this gift of unlife, which he wouldn't have been able to achieve on his own, Istravek served Tar-Baphon loyally until the wizard-king was slain. The ravener then retreated to dismal swamps on his former home, the Isle of Terror, and mourned his master's defeat. When Tar-Baphon was reborn as the Whispering Tyrant many years later, Istravek returned to his side to serve him as before. The ravener was the Whispering Tyrant's powerful and loyal commander across Ustalav and


Belkzen, earning the title "Scion of Nightmares" from his master. Upon the Whispering Tyrant's defeat during the Shining Crusade, Istravek was imprisoned with the Whispering Tyrant in Gallowspire along with many other minions. The Whispering Tyrant raged against them all, blaming their incompetence for his losses and visiting horrendous torments upon them. Tar-Baphon devised a particularly insidious and effective punishment for the Scion of Nightmares: he left him alone. Tar-Baphon relegated the ravener to the catacombs level beneath Gallowspire, insisting he had no further use for him. Istravek was wracked with grief and shame for centuries.

When the Whispering Tyrant began planning his escape, he sought out Istravek, who met him like a lonely pet whose master had finally returned home. The Whispering Tyrant described what his studies had revealed about the kumaru tree in Tumbaja Mountain, and its possible connection to the shield fragment lodged in his withered hand. The lich-king gave Istravek an important mission: to travel to Xopatl and find out what he could about the kumaru tree. Istravek wasted no time. Within an hour of Gallowspire's destruction, Istravek had teleported across the world to Tumbaja Mountain, killed or driven off its defenders, and claimed the site as his own. He collapsed the primary entrance to the pyramid to hinder any attempts to retake Tumbaja Mountain and called in reinforcements from the Negative Energy Plane to help him defend the site. Istravek's initial successes aren't surprising, as he was well prepared and desperate to prove his worth to his master.

Istravek was not prepared, however, to find that the kumaru tree within Tumbaja Mountain was dead. The Whispering Tyrant hadn't realized the tree had become dependent upon Aroden's soul and had therefore died with the god. Istravek tried unsuccessfully to restore the kumaru tree to life, but he was no more successful than the generations of arcane botanists who had been trying to restore the tree for more than a century.

Istravek and his forces repelled a few concerted Jolizpani attacks to retake the sacred pyramid, but his most surprising visitor came in peace. The botanist Umbarno Xipali came to propose a trade: if the dragon would provide key cuttings of the dead tree and some important lore left behind in the pyramid, Umbarno would share generations of information about the tree. Istravek agreed, and Umbarno departed the pyramid as an uneasy ally of the undead dragon.

Istravek was still collating Umbarno's information when the kumaru tree shuddered. This was the first sign of life Istravek had seen in the tree—in fact, it was the first sign of life the tree had given in more than a century. Istravek didn't know it, but the kumaru was reacting to the sudden arrival of the PCs, whose *obols* are splinters of it.



Istravek continues to study the tree, eager to learn its secrets, complete his mission, and prove his worth to the Whispering Tyrant.

THE CHILDREN OF KUMARU

No botanists have succeeded in restoring the Veins of Creation, and few have felt this failure as keenly as the gifted priest Umbarno Xipali. Umbarno swore to the people of Jolizpan that he would restore the defunct network, and he spent several years traveling across Xopatl seeking answers. He found only frustration and was prepared to return to Jolizpan in disgrace. Yet Umbarno was hailed as a hero upon his return, as the people of Jolizpan believed he must have found the answers he had sought. In a moment of spiritual weakness born of his desperation and failure, Umbarno lied: he claimed he did indeed have clues to restore the arcane network. This caused his faith to falter and his soul to slip toward evil. Desperate to produce the answers he feigned to have, Umbarno went to work at Jolizpan's primary research facility, the Blue Gardens of Tlil. There, he secretly threw himself into reckless and dangerous experiments, relying upon malignant and dangerous magic in a rash bid to make a breakthrough. He attracted a coterie of other talented but frustrated botanists who, like him, sought glory no matter the cost. Umbarno called his group the Children of Kumaru, and they began meeting in secret to explore unorthodox experiments with malignant flora, soul energy, and blighted evolution. Anticipating that the Blue Gardens' guards would eventually stumble upon these meetings, Umbarno recruited several senior guards to the Children of Kumaru with promises of the "better Xopatl" that the Children of Kumaru were creating. One of them discovered some old masks in storage at the Blue Gardens of Tlil, and the Children of Kumaru distributed these *Tlil masks* among themselves, wearing them during meetings to denote membership in the secretive group.

Umbarno grew more desperate and isolated himself over time, but his secret cult pressed on despite his increasingly erratic directives. Restoring the Veins of Creation remained out of the cultists' grasp, but they met with several notable successes. Chief among these were techniques to rapidly grow loyal servitors out of durable plant matter. Even the least of their creations—wyrwood variants grown to be self-aware but slavishly obedient—were powerful tools. Umbarno told the Children of Kumaru they would have to oust the other botanists from Tumbaja Mountain and the Blue Gardens of Tlil to make their final breakthroughs, but they had to wait for the time to be right.

When Istravek took over Tumbaja Mountain, defeating even Jolizpan's most powerful defenders of, the botanists of Jolizpan were thrown into disarray, and the Children of Kumaru seized the opportunity to strike. Donning their

If the PCs Go Back Too Soon

The PCs might have access to sufficiently powerful magic, such as *greater teleport*, allowing them to return to Lastwall right away, ignoring Arazni's recommendation at the end of "Gardens of Gallowspire." You can refer to the next adventure, "Midwives to Death," to find out what Tar-Baphon is doing after defeating Arazni and how the PCs can intervene, but the PCs are likely to realize the challenges facing them in Avistan are still greater than they can manage. Returning to Arcadia to seek the secrets of the kumaru tree—just as Arazni suggested—is their best hope not only to alter their *obols* to defeat Tar-Baphon, but also to gain the necessary experience to survive to confront him.

Tlil masks, the Children of Kumaru forced their coworkers out and claimed the Blue Gardens of Tlil as their own. This coup was almost entirely bloodless—the Children of Kumaru are reckless and self-centered, but with only a few exceptions, they aren't evil. Meanwhile, Umbarno visited Tumbaja Mountain to negotiate with Istravek for some hastily abandoned lore that might aid in their research. The Children of Kumaru are working diligently with this information, but they've come no closer to their ultimate goal.

Faced with even more failure, Umbarno has elected to take drastic action. With Jolizpan's defenders weakened by their failed attempts to retake Tumbaja Mountain, Umbarno plans to send his wyrwood minions into Jolizpan to cripple its defenses and declare the Children of Kumaru the city's leaders. Once they have control, they can funnel much greater resources to the Blue Gardens to speed their research. Most of the Children of Kumaru are unaware of this plan and would likely oppose it; they would prefer to win honors through their research rather than violence. But Umbarno becomes increasingly unstable as he lurks in the Blue Gardens' underground level, his frustration and distrust stoked by a malignant outsider who claims to speak on behalf of Umbarno's evil god.

PART I: CITY OF FLOWERS

At the end of "Gardens of Gallowspire," the heroes found themselves whisked away by Arazni's powerful magic, ending up in an unknown land. While the PCs see they are in a lush, vibrant rainforest, they likely won't immediately recognize that they are much further from Lastwall than they realize. In fact, the PCs are now in Arazni's homeland of Xopatl, a nation in central Arcadia, far from the Inner Sea region.

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JOLIZPAN

0 180 FEET

Arazni has sent the PCs to Xopatl in hopes that they can discover the link between their *obols* and the kumaru tree, and in so doing continue the battle against the Whispering Tyrant. She suspects they can learn more about their strange connection to the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* in Jolizpan, because she knows Aroden crafted it from the kumaru tree in Tumbaja Mountain long ago. Even if the PCs can't find information about the shield, Arazni reasons, the PCs can likely recover some of Xopatl's powerful and unique magic to strike back against the Whispering Tyrant. Arazni doesn't have much time to impart this to the PCs before sending them away; she's able to give them only the cryptic phrase "Seek the kumaru and learn its secrets." However, Arazni has been gone from Arcadia a long, long time; she doesn't know that a century ago, the kumaru tree died and the Veins of Creation became defunct. She also isn't aware that one of the Whispering Tyrant's agents has taken over Tumbaja Mountain as his personal lair, attempting to learn the same secrets that the PCs seek.

When Arazni teleported the PCs away, she set the city of Jolizpan as their destination. As is often the case with teleportation magic, however, the PCs arrived a little bit off-target. They arrive in the surrounding forest, not far from the city. As the PCs regain their bearings, read or paraphrase the following.

All around are towering trees, rising so high that only small rays of sunlight pierce the canopy. The sounds of singing birds fill the air, and the sudden, cloying humidity is a shocking change from the cold air of Virlych. The enormous flowers and bushes beneath the trees are vibrant but unfamiliar. Nearby, a large river flows lazily as it cuts through the foliage. Off in the distance, past the river, the forest thins to reveal stone structures decorated with flowers.

WELCOMING PARTY (CR 13)

The Jolizpan River flows around the city of Jolizpan on two sides. The PCs have arrived a short walk west of the city, on the opposite side of the river. As the city's buildings are the only nearby landmarks, the PCs' best option is to head in that direction. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Survival check recognizes signs that the plants here are being tended: several of the bushes have been pruned, and the flowers have been planted in locations that maximize their growth. The river is dozens of feet wide, but it doesn't flow particularly quickly and looks easy to cross. As the PCs assess their situation, their first taste of danger in this new land eyes them carefully.

Creatures: Three massive crocodiles lurk in the Jolizpan river, watching the PCs and waiting for them to come close to the water so they can strike. PCs who take

the time to examine their surroundings may spot these crocodiles and can avoid them by going several hundred yards upriver or downriver before crossing. The crocodiles are aggressive but lazy and therefore ignore PCs who don't approach them. In a fight, the crocodiles attempt to swallow their opponents whole and withdraw further into the river to digest the meal. A crocodile reduced to fewer than 50 hit points realizes the PCs are more trouble than they are worth and flees downstream.

JOLIZPAN CROCODILES (3) CR 10

XP 9,600 each

Advanced dire crocodile (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 51)

hp 162 each

Once the PCs deal with or avoid the crocodiles, they most likely make their way to Jolizpan itself. When the PCs arrive, the city is preparing for an upcoming festival (this adventure assumes that the city is celebrating the summer solstice, but you should change the festival to match the appropriate season for your campaign). The city's hundreds of stone buildings are each decorated with large flowers and stylized imagery of the sun.

As the PCs enter the city, they catch the attention of a few citizens decorating a nearby home. The residents are confused by the PCs' appearance but greet them warmly in Razatlani, the common language of Xopatl. Whether or not the PCs overcome this language barrier, after a moment, an elderly woman steps out from the home and also addresses them. If the PCs aren't yet able to communicate, she casts *tongues*. The woman introduces herself as Miraina Olviris (see page 58), a scientist. The bystanders politely defer to Miraina's authority and expertise and let her take the lead in the conversation. Likely questions and Miraina's answers are given below.

Where are we? "You are in the city of Jolizpan, in the Jolizpan Forest. You are currently in the nation of Xopatl, in central Arcadia. You're on the planet Golarion." Miraina recognizes the name of any Inner Sea nations and major locations, and she is quick to reiterate that the PCs are, in fact, in Arcadia.

Arcadia? Are you sure? "Yes, as sure as I am that flowers bloom in spring. I'm not sure how you ended up here, but it's true."

Who are you? "I am Miraina Olviris. Until recently I was a botanist at a facility called the Blue Gardens of Tlil,

in charge of overseeing the growth of Jolizpan's plants and crops."

We're supposed to seek the kumaru. Do you know what that means? "Ah, yes, all of us in Jolizpan know of the kumaru tree. It is a sacred tree, part of our history. This is a long story, which is both happy and sad."

Arazni sent us here.

Do you know where she is?

"Arazni? The warrior-mage? She died millennia ago. Do you mean she somehow lives again?"

How do we get back home to the Inner Sea? "Well, the simplest way I know would be to take a boat,

but that would require several months. Also, you'd have to head north for that. None of the boats

from Xopatl leave for the Inner Sea. You would be most likely to find passage from Segada. Powerful magic can also get you there. I have the connections to arrange for that, and I may even have the expertise to employ it, but it's not magic to undertake lightly."

Miraina takes the time to give the PCs a quick description of both the nation of Xopatl and the city of Jolizpan. She offers her condolences to any PCs upset by the fact that they are no longer anywhere near home and is happy to offer them rooms in her house while they figure out what they plan to do.

While the PCs are speaking with or traveling with Miraina, her permanent *arcane sight* and extensive familiarity with the kumaru tree eventually causes her to take notice of the *obols* embedded within their hearts. When she does, she interrupts the PCs with the following.

Miraina grows distracted and interrupts. "Curious... now, what are those things right there within your hearts?" Miraina peers closer. "Ah, yes, it's not entirely there, but it is... between worlds. Does everyone have one of those where you come from? Hmm, no matter. Let me think for a moment. Yes, curious, curious..." she mutters to herself. After a few seconds of examination, her eyes grow wide with excitement. "My goodness, do you know what you have here? You bear shards of the kumaru! This, this could be the key!" An excited grin grows on her face. "With your permission, I would like to examine you a bit more closely. Such luck that you come now, bearing fragments of the kumaru within your very bodies!"

Miraina explains that the fragments in the PCs' hearts are made of a unique, magical wood called kumaru. Kumaru comes from a special tree that grows in Tumbaja



Miraina Olviris

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Mountain, a pyramid located north of the city. She describes how the city—and, in fact, the entire nation of Xopatl—once used the arcane power of a magical network called the Veins of Creation to improve the everyday lives of all people. Great magic flowed from the kumaru tree throughout the land and helped the nation prosper. Just over a century ago though, the kumaru tree died and the entire network failed.

Miraina and her fellow botanists have worked for decades to bring the kumaru back to life and reactivate the Veins of Creation, only to fail every time. Although the botanists have spent the last century replicating the power of the Veins of Creation on much smaller scales—creating networks just large enough to power a building or a neighborhood—every Jolizpani botanist dreams of being the one to reawaken the kumaru and reignite the Veins of Creation. The PCs' *obols* appear to be made from fragments of living kumaru, something that hasn't been seen in more than a century. Miraina believes that if she were able to study the PCs' *obols*—and perhaps extract one, although she is reluctant to undertake any experiment that would kill or even seriously harm a PC—she could be the one to finally reactivate the Veins of Creation.

Miraina has a simple laboratory in her home, and the rooms she provides to the PCs are near it. The guest rooms are tidy and pleasant, but her office is cluttered. While the PCs make themselves at home, Miraina busies herself with preparing the PCs a meal of chilled stew with seasoned goat meat and vegetables, a fruit salad, and sweet breads. During the meal, Miraina asks the PCs about their journeys. She is excited to hear about their encounters with Arazni, as she is a regional hero, though she is surprised and saddened to hear that Arazni became a lich.

If the PCs detail the Whispering Tyrant and his history, she is appalled at his actions and promises to do her best to get the PCs home as soon as possible so that they can put an end to his horrors. If they mention Aroden while discussing the Whispering Tyrant's history, Miraina scoffs at the name. "Of course, Aroden would be involved. He was always trying to be the center of attention." Miraina explains the history of the Veins of Creation as provided in the adventure's introduction and presents the generally held consensus that Aroden's meddling somehow caused the network's downfall. If the PCs don't link the year of Aroden's death with the year of the kumaru tree's death, Miraina does so and remarks that this foreigner must have linked his energy to that of the kumaru far more closely than anyone ever realized.

Any discussion of the kumaru tree certainly leads to a discussion of the sacred pyramid that houses it, Tumbaja Mountain. Tumbaja Mountain lies outside of Jolizpan, but within the Jolizpan Forest. The pyramid was created


by the hero-gods, known locally as saints, who long ago walked the earth and created the nation of Xopatl. Even at the best of times, access to the pyramid is restricted—only those with Jolizpan's best interests at heart and a thorough knowledge of history and botany are permitted inside. That has been the case for millennia, but the last few weeks have seen another upheaval. A frightful undead dragon calling itself the Scion of Nightmares came to Tumbaja Mountain and killed or scattered the guards. The dragon has since taken over Tumbaja Mountain completely. Jolizpan's greatest warriors entered the pyramid to reclaim it and have not returned; none have gone near the pyramid since. The dragon's motivation puzzles Miraina; the pyramid held few treasures except the kumaru tree, and the kumaru tree has been dead for more than a century. She knows that recovering Tumbaja Mountain is important, but as the city's greatest defenders were already killed trying to reclaim it, she's not sure what else can be done. If the PCs insist on facing the dragon, she nods enthusiastically but insists that they must first learn the city—and she must study the *obols* they bear before they run off and do something so dangerous. In truth, Miraina isn't so certain that the PCs can survive a direct attack against the Scion of Nightmares, as it already is presumed to have killed Jolizpan's greatest warriors. She therefore discourages the PCs from confronting the dragon until she's learned what the *obols* within the PCs can teach her.


Miraina encourages the PCs to take a day or two to tour the city and learn more about Jolizpan and Xopatl. During their downtime, she wants to examine their *obols* more closely, consult some books, and make some notes about the phenomena. She eventually concludes that she lacks the proper equipment and texts to determine the nature of the *obols*, and at the start of Part 2, she asks the PCs to retrieve them from the Blue Gardens of Tlil.

PCs who venture into the city soon learn its layout and key locations, as provided on page 64. The people of the city are fond of celebration, and all are excited about the upcoming festivities. Feel free to use any or all of the events below to deepen the PCs' connection to Jolizpan. Except for the Attack on Jolizpan section, in which the Children of Kumaru make strikes against the city, these events are tangential to the main plot but provide the PCs with helpful items, information, or XP.

SHOPPING IN JOLIZPAN

The PCs are free to buy and sell items in Jolizpan. Though the PCs' coins and gear look different, the people of Jolizpan are more than happy to trade. As the PCs may not have had access to a large city's market since the events of "Last Watch," they may have a lot of leftover loot to sell. In addition, this is a perfect time to provide unusual





or powerful magic items, or ones that the PCs aren't accustomed to seeing. Even common magic items the PCs find for sale might have a unique twist to reflect Jolizpan's affinity with plants, such as a magic weapon with a handle made of living roots that wrap around a PC's hand, or a *cloak of resistance* that resembles an enormous leaf.

QUESTIONING THE LOCALS

If the PCs ask around about recent events, most people are aware that a dragon called the Scion of Nightmares has come to Tumbaja Mountain. They tell of the bravery of the Golden Claws, Jolizpani soldiers who wear ceremonial jaguar skins, chosen for their skill. The Golden Claws went to Tumbaja Mountain, but they have not returned and are presumed dead. Although a dragon in Tumbaja Mountain is worrisome, it isn't considered an immediate threat—the dragon hasn't ever come as far as the city, and it seems content to remain within the pyramid. Since most people aren't allowed into the sacred pyramid anyway, the direct impact on their lives isn't large.

Many people have heard of the Blue Gardens of Tlil—the valuable improvements to daily life made at the facility are usually quite popular, if expensive—but the existence of rebel botanists at the Blue Gardens isn't public knowledge. Further, few common people of Jolizpan understand why one group of scientists might be more or less dangerous than another—although the attacks on Jolizpan will soon show them how this can be.

Many residents of Jolizpan know of Miraina; she is well liked and well respected throughout the city. If the PCs make it clear that they are helping Miraina with some research or that they are subjects of her current research, their reputation automatically grows. A Jolizpani citizen hearing the PCs are staying with Miraina might give a playful jab to the ribs and an assurance that the PCs are sure to be fed well while there.

BLOSSOM PARADE

The summer solstice is Jolizpan's biggest festival, an event known as the Blossom Days. The Blossom Days celebrate the birth of Xopatl—and specifically Jolizpan—after Earthfall. Legends say that one of the countless meteorites that fell from the sky during Earthfall landed nearby and empowered the rapid growth of what is now the great Jolizpan Forest. The ancient Arcadians who sought this fallen meteorite found a beautiful forest circling an enormous tree. These Arcadians gained great power from the meteorite and the surrounding forest, and they went on to become known among the populace as saints.

Jolizpan's celebration is full of brilliant colors, beautiful decorations made from flowers and seeds, decorative masks, and energetic music. The celebration lasts the entire week leading up to the solstice, and citizens plan

and decorate for weeks in advance. The final day of the celebration culminates with a somewhat somber event on the solstice itself wherein Jolizpan's citizens carry thousands of large, carefully dried flowers to the river to commemorate family members and friends who have been lost in past years. The ghostly glow of the flowers' fading bioluminescence is said to carry tiny motes of light into the River of Souls to brighten the souls of departed loved ones and to encourage them to blossom into their final state in the afterlife.

The biggest event during the celebration, however, is the Blossom Parade, a grand spectacle of floats, performers, and music that takes place the day before the solstice. The parade travels through every district of the city over the span of several hours and ends with a large dance in Umbarez Plaza. The parade follows the main thoroughfares of the city, and many vendors set up along these roads, enjoying their busiest sales day of the year. The participants in of the Blossom Parade vary and constantly change as the parade progresses, with members and floats joining and leaving the parade throughout its travel; as a result, the parade at the beginning of the day looks significantly different by the end.

The PCs are unable to avoid the parade if they are in Jolizpan the day before the solstice. If the PCs are interested, they are free to join in the festivities and take part in the parade. The PCs can join in at any point during the parade's travels, even if they just wish to walk alongside one of the floats. Showy PCs can try to perform as part of the parade simply by joining in. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perform check earns the interest of a wealthy nearby vendor. Such vendors know that popular performers attract attention, and ostentatiously offer a gift of a magic item of up to 1,000 gp in value to each remarkable performer.

CLASH OF SAINTS

The ancient saints who founded Xopatl are important figures in Jolizpan, individuals (or amalgamations of individuals) who overcame oppression to rise as heroes. After the saints liberated Xopatl from the grasp of the Razatlani Empire—making it the first nation to break free—they began to work to improve themselves so they might better help their new nation. One way they did so was by developing innovative combat techniques. The saints sparred with each other and with other powerful figures around Golarion, including great warriors from Garund and the hero-gods of Iblydos.

Xopatl's people enjoy recounting these great battles. While many of these tales were written into collections of stories, Xopatl's people also told these stories through reenactment. These battle reenactments quickly became very popular events, as the physical exhibitions



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are typically impressive. Initially, the reenactments re-created known matches between the saints and other notable figures, but the people of Xopatl soon hungered for new stories. The warriors who took part crafted new tales wherein the saints fought against other figures, such as Razatlani generals or powerful fiends. The fact that the saints never actually clashed with such figures historically—or that these foes might not have existed at all—was irrelevant to the dramatic stories that could be told. Over the years, the stories of more recent heroes have been added to the mix, and some of these figures became as popular, if not more so, than some of the original saints. Today, these reenactments serve to retell ancient tales, to honor combat-focused deities like Cihua Couatl and Kazutal, and simply to provide entertaining spectacles. Some of these contests have even made their way outside of Arcadia, with Tian and Garundi visitors taking the tradition of storytelling battles to their homelands and adapting it to local figures and customs.

The city of Jolizpan holds its largest reenactments during the celebration of the summer solstice, in an event called the Clash of Saints. The Clash of Saints is a daylong event that takes place in Couatl Stadium. A large sparring ring stands in the center of the stadium, surrounded by several smaller rings situated across the field. Each ring has a trio of wooden posts on one edge. These posts originally represented the different levels of ascension for the saints, with each post indicating to the audience the saint's power before and after a match. In modern matches, the participants also use the posts to make great, death-defying leaps, a feat that garners great responses from audiences.

If the PCs decide to visit the Clash of Saints, they find the stadium packed with people. The audience fills the stadium seats and mingles on the field, watching the matches up close. Some matches are classical retellings of the saints' exploits or liturgical performances of battles between gods. The main event of the Clash of Saints this year is the culmination of an ongoing tale, detailing the rise of the Midnight Serpent—a more recent Jolizpani hero—in his attempt to put a stop to the Captain of the Lost, a fictional Razatlani pirate. The Midnight Serpent's eventual victory despite the Captain of the Lost gradually stealing his power over the multi-battle event causes the stadium to erupt in cheers.

The Clash of Saints is also popular because it features new entrants in the smaller rings. The PCs can enter the event by speaking with one of the dozens of event managers. These individuals help coordinate matches and make sure each event runs smoothly. While combat-focused PCs make obvious entrants, any PC capable of winning over a crowd with Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Perform skills can flourish in these matches.

Religious PCs representing Inner Sea deities who aren't as well known in Xopatl, such as Cayden Cailean or Iomedae, are particularly popular, as the crowd is intrigued by these new characters.

A PC who elects to participate in the Clash of Saints must commit to three different one-on-one contests, as follows, plus a final confrontation if victorious.

FIRST CONTEST: THE BITING WIND

The first contest is an unarmed fight against a masked foe named the Biting Wind. Once the fight begins, it lasts until a combatant is knocked out or yields. Although this woman is a skilled hand-to-hand fighter, she has never performed before a crowd nearly this large and is particularly easy to rattle. A successful Intimidate check to demoralize the Biting Wind also causes her to drop out of her Snake Style stance and prevents her from reentering this stance for 1 round. A PC can identify this weakness before the fight begins with a successful DC 18 Sense Motive check or by asking around the crowd and succeeding at a DC 18 Diplomacy check to gather information.

THE BITING WIND	CR 8
XP 4,800	
Female human monk 9	
LN Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +7; Senses Perception +13	
DEFENSE	
AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 monk, +1 Wis)	
hp 80 (9d8+36)	
Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +8; +4 vs. being knocked prone, +2 vs. enchantments	
Defensive Abilities improved evasion; Immune disease	
OFFENSE	
Speed 60 ft.	
Melee unarmed strike +10/+5 (1d10+4) or unarmed strike flurry of blows +11/+11/+6/+6 (1d10+4)	
Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (9/day, DC 15)	
TACTICS	
During Combat The Biting Wind deals nonlethal damage with her unarmed strikes. She uses flurry of blows as often as possible to defeat her opponent quickly, relying on her Snake Style to avoid attacks and deliver debilitating strikes when she is missed. She uses Stunning Fist on her first attack each round, attempting to trip an opponent she successfully stuns and using Vicious Stomp against opponents who fall.	
Morale The Biting Wind doesn't yield; she fights until defeated.	
STATISTICS	
Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8	
Base Atk +6; CMB +12; CMD 26 (30 vs. trip)	

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Snake Fang^{UC}, Snake Sidewind^{UC}, Snake Style^{UC}, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Vicious Stomp^{UC}

Skills Acrobatics +15 (+19 to avoid being knocked prone, +36 when jumping), Knowledge (history) +8, Perception +13, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +15, Survival +5

Languages Razatlani

SQ fast movement, high jump, ki pool (5 points, cold iron, magic, silver), maneuver training, slow fall 40 ft., wholeness of body (9 hit points)

Gear *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *cloak of resistance* +1, beaded mask with wind patterns

SECOND CONTEST: GRANDSTANDING AGAINST MICHANO THE LOVELY

The second contest isn't a fight at all. Instead, this match consists of a series of boasts against an elaborately costumed man named Michano the Lovely. The boasting occurs over three phases of several minutes each. In the first phase, Michano and the PC each try to woo the crowd; the winner is determined by an opposed Diplomacy check. In the second phase, Michano and the PC each tell of their own exploits; the PC determines whether to use Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate, and Michano and the PC attempt opposed checks of the chosen skill to determine a winner. In the final phase, Michano and the PC undercut each other's professed exploits with fanciful, mocking embellishments; the winner is determined by an opposed Bluff check. In any tie, the participants repeat the phase to determine a winner. The winner of at least two phases is announced the winner of the boasting contest.

Michano's greatest weakness is that he's not particularly intimidating; therefore, a PC who chooses Intimidate in the second phase has a higher chance of victory. A PC can identify this weakness before the match begins with a successful DC 21 Sense Motive check or by asking around the crowd and succeeding at a DC 21 Diplomacy check to gather information.

MICHANO THE LOVELY

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male dilettante (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 151)

hp 57

Languages Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, Razatlani

THIRD CONTEST: THE DRUNKEN FIEND

The third contest is an unarmed fight against a man named Octarn Juniz dressed as a horned fiend. As with the first contest, weapons aren't allowed, and the fight lasts until a combatant is knocked out or yields. Octarn is a crowd favorite because he sips from a clay jug during fights and acts progressively drunker, although his combat abilities improve rather than suffer. A PC opponent who

succeeds at a DC 26 Perform (act or comedy) check can work Octarn's jug into the act, in which case Octarn passes his jug back and forth with the PC so they each can sip and entertain the crowd with these antics. Octarn intentionally loses against a PC who succeeds at this check, ultimately pretending to pass out to great cheers.

OCTARN JUNIZ

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male human monk (drunken master) 12 (*Pathfinder RPG*

Advanced Player's Guide 110)

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 21, flat-footed 19 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 monk, +3 Wis)

hp 129 (12d8+72)

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

Defensive Abilities improved evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 70 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +10/+5 (2d6+1/19–20) or unarmed strike flurry of blows +11/+11/+6/+6/+1 (2d6+1/19–20)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (12/day, DC 19)

TACTICS

Before Combat Octarn has consumed enough ale before the contest to gain 5 additional drunken ki points.

During Combat Octarn deals nonlethal damage with his unarmed strikes. He prefers to use flurry of blows, shifting around his opponent as a swift action using his drunken ki ability. Whenever he feels like he has the upper hand, he spends a move action to dramatically sip from his jug, to the crowd's amusement, and makes only a single attack.

Morale Octarn yields if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, making a comical show of passing out in a drunken daze.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 31

Feats Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Fast Drinker^{APG}, Improved Critical (unarmed strike), Improved Unarmed Strike, Lunge, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +18 (+46 when jumping), Bluff +6, Climb +7, Perception +18, Perform (comedy) +15, Sense Motive +9

Languages Razatlani

SQ abundant step, drunken ki, fast movement, high jump, ki pool (9 points, cold iron, lawful, magic, silver), maneuver training, slow fall 60 ft., wholeness of body (12 hit points)

Combat Gear clay jug with 1 gallon of ale; **Other Gear** *belt of mighty constitution* +2, *bracers of armor* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of inspired wisdom* +2, *ring of protection* +1, horned fiend mask

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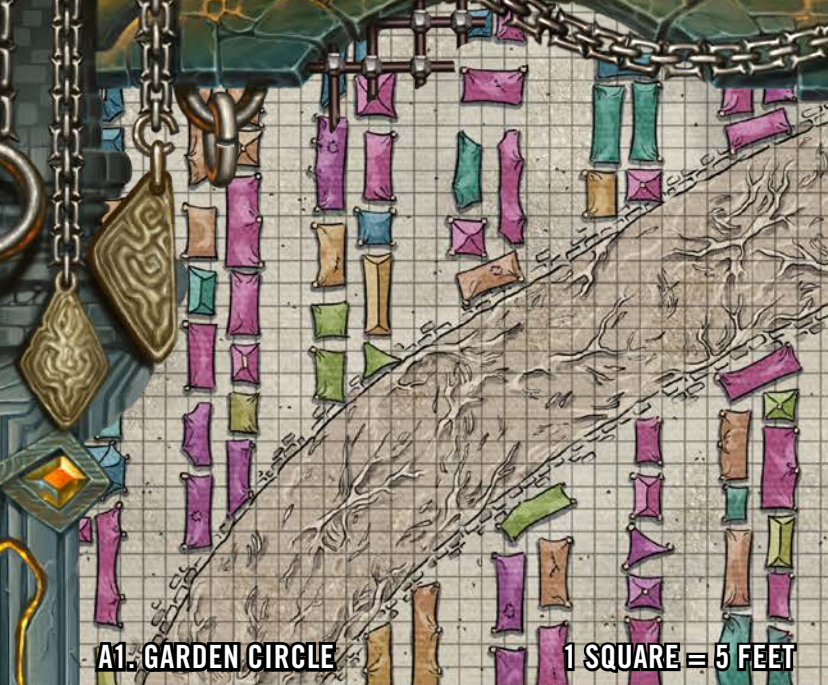
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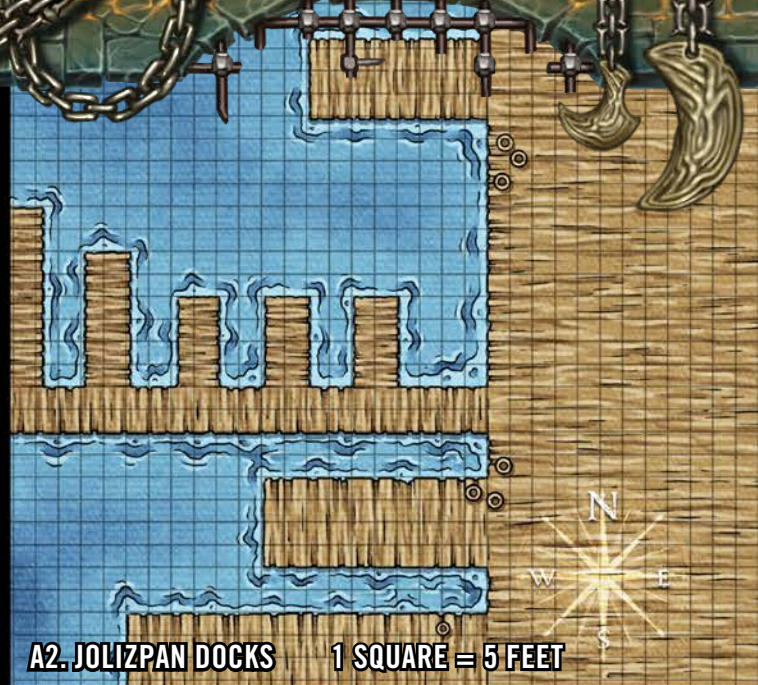
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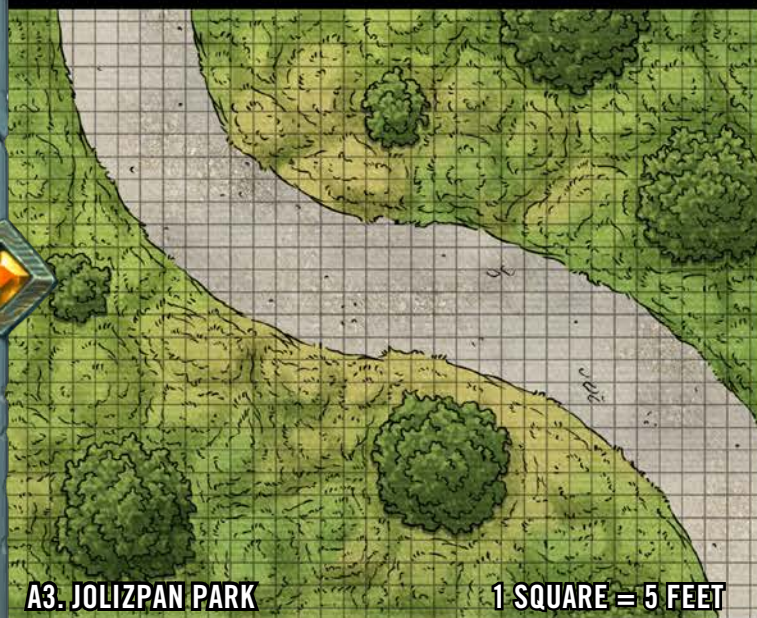
A1: GARDEN CIRCLE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



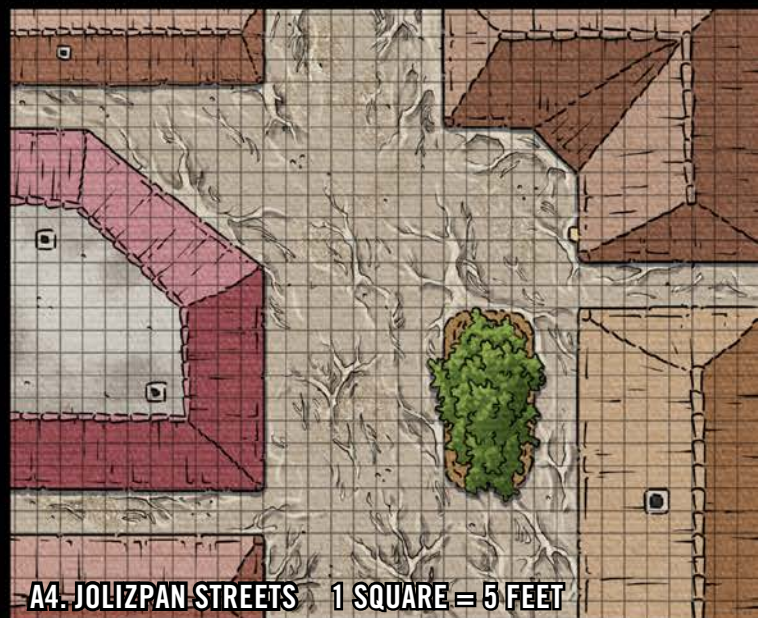
A2: JOLIZPAN DOCKS

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



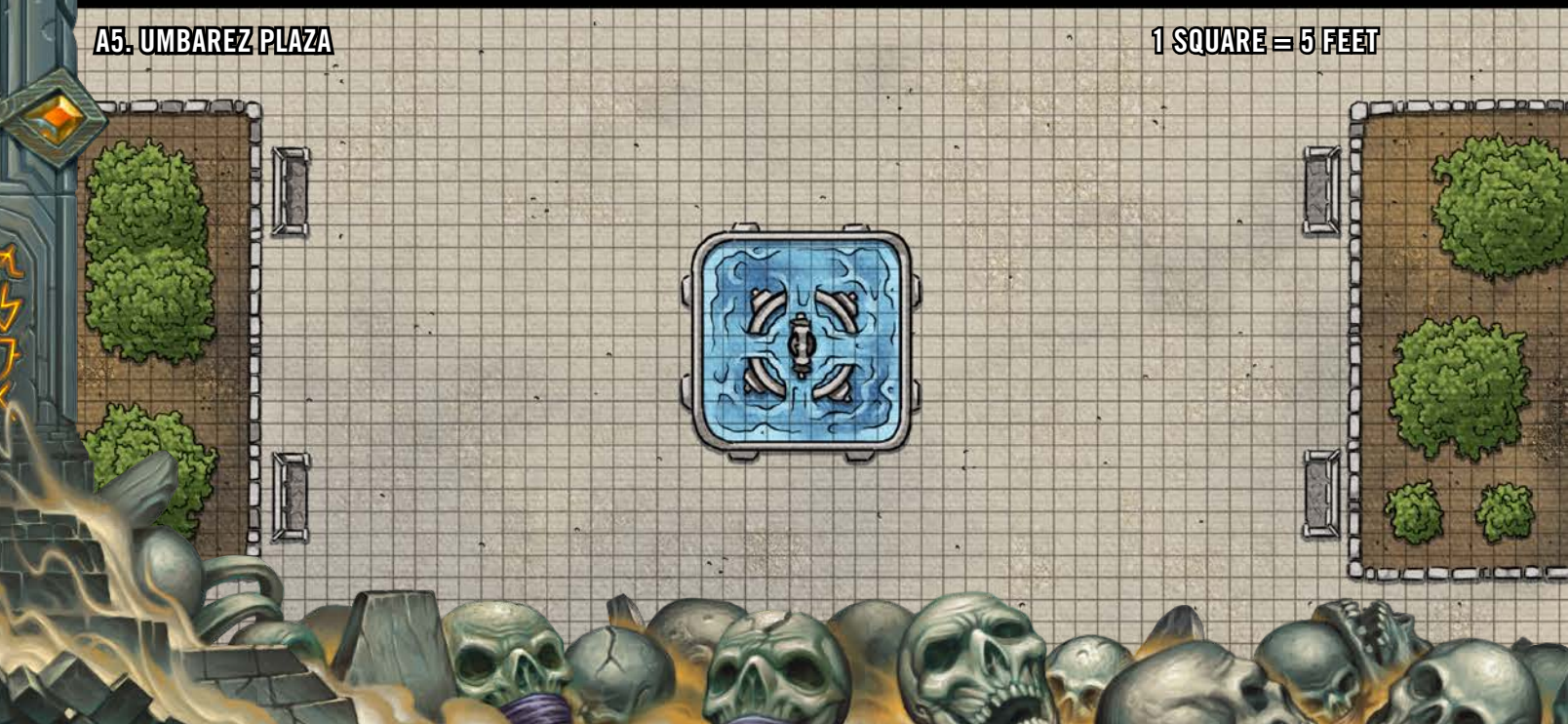
A3: JOLIZPAN PARK

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



A4: JOLIZPAN STREETS

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



A5: UMBAREZ PLAZA

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

FINAL CONTEST: RUDABA

A PC who wins all three of the contests goes on to fight a masked local champion named Rudaba. Rudaba is a lean, powerful halfling woman with a brilliant green mask made of iridescent beetle shells. Spectators like to throw various objects into the ring, such as drinking cups and flower pots, to see Rudaba hurl them at foes. When Rudaba misses with one of these improvised weapons, she wags a finger accusingly at whoever threw it into the ring, as though they were to blame. Despite her antics, Rudaba is a serious fighter and does her best to win; she doesn't throw items if she is hard pressed and a rain of unarmed strikes would be a tactically superior choice.

RUDABA

CR 14

XP 38,400

Female halfling monk (monk of the empty hand) 12/ranger 3
(*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 111)

LN Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 monk, +1 size, +2 Wis)

hp 116 (15 HD; 12d8+3d10+42)

Fort +16, **Ref** +19, **Will** +15; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities improved evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +17/+12/+7 (1d10+4) or
unarmed strike flurry of blows +18/+18/+13/+13/+8
(1d10+4)

Special Attacks combat style (archery), favored enemy
(humans +2), flurry of blows, ki weapons (enchanted
weapons, unarmed damage), stunning fist (12/day, DC 19),
versatile improvisation

TACTICS

During Combat Rudaba deals nonlethal damage with her
unarmed strikes, and she keeps on the move to foil
opponents. She likes to run up the wooden posts at
the edge of the ring and launch herself at opponents,
incorporating these stunts with Spring Attack or as
Acrobatics checks made to jump.

Morale Rudaba yields if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 33

Feats Blind-Fight, Catch Off-Guard, Deflect Arrows, Dodge,
Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike,
Improvised Weapon Mastery, Lightning Stance, Point-Blank
Shot, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Spring Attack, Stunning Fist,
Throw Anything, Toughness, Wind Stance

Skills Acrobatics +30 (+54 when jumping), Climb +11,
Intimidate +18, Knowledge (history) +7, Perception +22,

Perform (dance) +8, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +13, Swim +7;

Racial Modifiers +2 Acrobatics, +2 Climb, +2 Perception

Languages Halfling, Razatlani

SQ abundant step, fast movement, favored terrain
(plains +2), high jump, ki pool (8 points, cold iron, lawful,
magic, silver), ki throw, maneuver training, slow fall
60 ft., track +1, wholeness of body (12 hit points), wild
empathy +3

Combat Gear *elixir of fire breath*, *potion of cure moderate
wounds*; **Other Gear** *amulet of mighty fists* +2, *lesser
belt of mighty hurling*^{UE}, *bracers of armor* +4, *cloak of
resistance* +3, beetle shell mask

Treasure: The presentation of prize money is a popular
part of the Clash of Saints, and is performed to great
cheers from the crowd. Event managers award a PC
500 gp in prize money for each contest she wins, and they
award an additional 5,000 gp in prize money for defeating
Rudaba in the final contest.

Story Award: As the PCs aren't in real danger during
these contests, instead of awarding XP for defeating these
foes normally, instead award the PCs 9,600 XP for each
contest a PC wins (to a maximum of 38,400 XP).

A. ATTACK ON JOLIZPAN

While the PCs are experiencing the sights of Jolizpan, Umbarno Xipali decides to take a risk. Realizing that Jolizpan's elite guards were defeated by Istravek, he's decided he could easily cripple Jolizpan, thus making it easier for the Children of Kumaru to take control of the city so he can use its resources to further his research. Aware that many of the Children of Kumaru might oppose this drastic action, Umbarno plans to use the wyrwoods grown by the Children of Kumaru to destabilize the city without informing the rebels themselves. Unlike wyrwoods of the Inner Sea region, Umbarno's wyrwoods don't have *ioun stones* as their animating force; they instead draw power from the arcane botany of their creation. This causes them to act more like automatons in undertaking their tasks, but ensures their loyalty to the Children of Kumaru.

The wyrwoods make targeted strikes around the city, in the locations described below. The PCs should learn of these attacks while they are out in Jolizpan. At your discretion, the PCs might see Jolizpani city guards (use the statistics for guard officers or watch captains on page 261 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*) bravely attempting to intervene, but the Jolizpani city guard are few in number and are most often stationed at the edges of the city to protect it from dangers from the forest. The city guard is therefore slow to react to dangers within the city itself, and in any case they are outclassed by the dangers Umbarno has unleashed.

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As soon as the PCs intervene in the first attack, the people of Jolizpan realize that the PCs are powerful warriors and capable protectors, and they ask the PCs to follow up on rumors of other attacks as well. The five attacks need not occur in a specific order, and should be instead appear based on where the PCs go in the city. The attacks are spaced out enough that the PCs can take some time to rest back at Miraina's house between them, if required.

Although Umbarno set these attacks in motion, he doesn't capitalize on them right away. Instead, he falls into increasing periods of fearful distrust and second-guessing himself, locking himself in the underlevel of the Blue Gardens of T'ilil. This doesn't affect the wyrwoods' adherence to their original directives, however, and they could cause significant disruption to the city if not dealt with.

The map on page 6 shows the city of Jolizpan and the location of each of the attacks. Use the encounter maps on page 12 to show the terrain of each attack.

A1. Garden Circle (CR 15)

Jolizpan's largest market fills the large circle of the Garden District. During the festivities, hundreds of stalls and stands crowd Garden Circle and the surrounding city blocks with wares of all kinds, ranging from local crafts to magical items. The density of the stalls and the crowds of patrons makes it difficult to navigate the market; Medium and larger creatures treat the crowded market as difficult terrain. Small and smaller creatures aren't impeded, as they can more easily pass between stalls or under tables. The stalls provide cover, and their draped cloths and colorful canopies provide ample places to hide.

Umbarno sent a trio of wyrwoods to infiltrate the market and steal any items that might be of value to the Children of Kumaru. The wyrwoods have been directed to cause as much mayhem as possible to disrupt the market in the event they're discovered. Additionally, they have instructions to eradicate any strangers who might serve as strong defenders of Jolizpan; as soon as the PCs intervene in their thievery, they identify the PCs as defenders they should eliminate.

This attack might occur as the PCs are shopping, or any time they pass through the Garden District during their explorations of the city. It might even occur during the Blossom Parade, as the portion of parade in which the PCs are participating winds its way through the stalls of the Garden Circle.

Creatures: Three wyrwood skulls move through the stands, searching for any valuable wares to steal. They begin hidden among the stands, rummaging through the wares on display. Perceptive PCs might spot the wyrwoods and catch them unawares, or they might catch the wyrwoods trying to steal from the PCs directly.

Otherwise, if the PCs have interfered with any attacks at other locations in Jolizpan, these wyrwoods might decide to eliminate the PCs with a well-placed ambush.

In any fight here, the wyrwood skulls use the crowded stands to their advantage, using hit-and-run tactics for as long as they can.

WYRWOOD SKULKS (3)

CR 12

XP 19,200 each

Wyrwood rogue 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 280)

N Small construct

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 105 each (13d8+43); fast healing 5

Fort +8, **Ref** +16, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities arcane reinforcement, evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +4; **Immune** construct traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +16/+11 (1d4+3/19–20), +1 short sword +16/+11 (1d4+2/19–20)

Special Attacks share space, sneak attack +7d6

TACTICS

During Combat A wyrwood skulk does it best to share a space with a fellow skulk whenever possible to make use of its Outflank feat and opportunist talent. It uses a bead from its *necklace of fireballs* when foes are grouped together, even if it means catching other wyrwoods or even innocent citizens in the blast.

Morale A wyrwood skulk fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 27

Feats Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved

Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Outflank^{APG}, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +22, Climb +18, Disable Device +26, Escape Artist +22, Perception +17, Sleight of Hand +22, Stealth +26, Survival +14, Swim +18, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Dwarven, Orc, Razatlani

SQ rogue talents (befuddling strike^{APG}, fast stealth, fast tumble^{APG}, improved evasion, opportunist, weapon training), trapfinding +6

Combat Gear necklace of fireballs (type II); **Other Gear** +2 leather armor, +1 short swords (2), amulet of natural armor +1, belt of incredible dexterity +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arcane Reinforcement (Ex) A wyrwood skulk is made from

magically grown material that grants it several benefits. The wyrwood gains fast healing 5 and fire resistance 10. It can see through all types of fog and smoke, and it is treated as two size categories larger when determining bonus hit points based on its size.

Share Space (Ex) A wyrwood skulk is specifically designed to fight alongside other skulks. Two wyrwood skulks can share the same square without penalty. If two wyrwood skulks in the same square attack the same foe, they are considered to be flanking that foe. Wyrwood skulks in the same square are also considered adjacent to each other for the purpose of any abilities or effects.

Treasure: The wyrwoods have so far collected a *periapt of wound closure*, a *shifter's headband*^{UE} +4 (Wis), and a *xorn robe*^{UE} from the various stands. If the PCs attempt to return these items to their owners, the owners offer to sell them to the PCs at only a tenth of their price as thanks for stopping the thieves. The owners do so with particularly ostentatious displays, hoping that their praise of the PCs and evidence of generosity earns them additional custom from among the onlookers.

A2. Jolizpan Docks (CR 15)

Jolizpan's river docks are economically vital, acting as a lifeline between the city and the rest of Xopatl, particularly due to the dangers of the Jolizpan Forest. Knowing this, Umbarno directs a pair of wyrwood mages to attack the docks in hopes of denying the city outside resources until after the Children of Kumaru are in control of the city. Since the PCs don't have much reason to visit the docks, this encounter assumes they hear about the fires at the dock after the mages have begun their attack.

Even though the docks are on fire when the PCs arrive, they haven't had much time to burn. If the PCs act quickly, they can prevent any significant damage. When the PCs arrive at the docks, roll 2d4+2 to determine the number of rounds until the docks are significantly and permanently damaged. If the PCs can put out the fire before this time elapses, such as by using spells like *quench* or *control water*, the docks are saved. Note that most mundane means to put out a dock fire take much longer than these few rounds; although the people of Jolizpan can ensure the fire doesn't spread past the docks, the docks are ultimately a loss if the citizens or the PCs must combat the fires by normal means.

The area of the docks is treated as a forest fire (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 426), subjecting the PCs to heat damage and a risk of catching on fire. In addition, the smoke fills the area 60 feet above the docks and obscures sight as *fog cloud*.

Creatures: The two wyrwood mages fly above the burning docks, harrying anyone trying to put out the fires. They prioritize targets that are attempting to quell the fires with spells or other magical effects. The mages can see through the smoke due to their arcane reinforcement, while they still benefit from its concealment. This advantage increases the CR of this encounter by 1.



Wyrwood Skulk

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WYRWOOD MAGES (2)**CR 12****XP 19,200 each**Wyrwood wizard 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 280)

N Small construct

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;
Perception +14**DEFENSE****AC** 26, touch 17, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +4 Dex,
+1 natural, +4 shield, +1 size)**hp** 104 each (13d6+56); fast healing 5**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14**Defensive Abilities** arcane reinforcement; **Immune** construct
traits; **Resist** fire 10**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)**Melee** dagger +7/+2 (1d3/19–20)**Special Attacks** hand of the apprentice (7/day)**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 13th; concentration +17)7th—*mass hold person* (DC 21)6th—*chain lightning* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic*5th—*hold monster* (DC 19), *overland flight*, *waves of
fatigue*, *wall of force*4th—*ball lightning*^{APG} (DC 20), *black tentacles*, *dimension
door* (2), *wall of fire*3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (2, DC 19), *lightning bolt* (DC
19), *slow* (DC 17)2nd—*acid arrow*, *flaming sphere* (DC 18), *mirror image*,
scorching ray (2)1st—*burning hands* (DC 17), *feather fall*, *mage armor*,
magic missile (2), *shield*0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *daze* (DC 14), *prestidigitation*, *ray
of frost***TACTICS****Before Combat** A wyrwood mage casts *mage armor*,
overland flight, and *shield*.**During Combat** A wyrwood mage keeps its distance using
flight, harrying its foes with spells or its wand. It uses
its metamagic mastery ability to maximize or widen a
casting of *fireball* or *lightning bolt* when necessary to catch
multiple opponents.**Morale** A wyrwood mage fights until destroyed.**STATISTICS****Str** 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 21**Feats** Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus
(evocation), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Maximize Spell,
Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness, Widen Spell**Skills** Acrobatics +17, Fly +27, Knowledge (arcana) +21,
Perception +14, Spellcraft +21, Stealth +21, Use Magic
Device +13**Languages** Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Orc, Razatlani**SQ** arcane bond (*ring of protection* +2), metamagic mastery
(3/day), programmed spells**Combat Gear** *scroll of expeditious retreat*, *scroll of grease*,
scroll of hypnotism, *scrolls of invisibility* (2), *scroll of
obscuring mist*, *wand of fireball* (16 charges); **Other Gear**
dagger, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *belt of incredible
dexterity* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of protection* +2**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Arcane Reinforcement (Ex)** A wyrwood mage is made from
magically grown material that grants it several benefits.
The wyrwood gains fast healing 5 and fire resistance 10.
It can see through all types of fog and smoke, and it is
treated as two size categories larger when determining
bonus hit points based on its size.**Programmed Spells (Ex)** A wyrwood mage is specifically
programmed with a number of spells equal to its
Intelligence modifier. The wyrwood mage can prepare
these programmed spells without referring to a spellbook,
and other creatures can attempt to learn a programmed
spell from a destroyed wyrwood mage as though its
body were a spellbook. These wyrwood mages are
programmed with *fireball*, *greater dispel magic*, *mass
hold person*, *overland flight*, and *wall of fire*.**Story Award:** If the PCs stop the fire before it causes
lasting damage to the docks, award them an additional
19,200 XP.**A3. Jolizpan Park (CR 15)**

Jolizpan's citizens enjoy its parks, particularly for
afternoon strolls or for winding down in the evening.
All of Jolizpan's parks once had direct connections to the
Veins of Creation, which once allowed the city's botanists
to create instantaneous bursts of colorful flowers,
sprays of glittering seeds, and other botanical marvels.
Today, the parks are maintained using more mundane
gardening techniques, but Jolizpan's gardeners do their
best to replicate the colorful displays of flowers depicted
in illustrations of those long-gone days. Wide paths
wind all throughout the park, and people having picnics,
strolling casually, or admiring the healthy plants and
brightly colored flowers are common.

Although the Veins of Creation are inoperative,
the city parks still retain these ancient connections.
Jolizpan Park is built on a slight incline, and one of its
attractions is the exposed rootlike structure of the Veins
of Creation. This arcane network is plainly visible; each
of the roots is over a foot across and consists of the
same wood as the kumaru tree in Tumbaja Mountain.
The Veins of Creation are obviously defunct, however;
the roots are dried and withered, and no amount of
rain or careful horticulture can make them look any
different. Past city administrators have suggested that
the dead Veins of Creation should be buried or planted
over, to hide the city's greatest failure, but common

wisdom holds that doing so would be tantamount to burying their legacy.

Though defunct, Jolizpan Park's exposed arcane network provides Umbarno an opportunity to experiment with some of the reckless and dangerous discoveries he's made. From the safety of the Blue Gardens of Tlil, Umbarno channeled uncontrolled energy into the Veins of Creation, hoping to reactivate the arcane network with the sudden charge. The effort is ultimately a failure, as the energy discharges here in Jolizpan Park, where the arcane network lies closest to the surface. The energies find purchase in the ordinary plants of the park, transforming them into monstrous plant creatures with a hunger for flesh.

This sudden mutation might occur as the PCs are passing through Jolizpan Park, whether they are on their way to some other location or taking a look at the defunct Veins of Creation in person. If the PCs are not present when the monstrous plants arise, they might instead hear the screams of citizens fleeing the park in horror, insisting that vines have woven together into massive serpentine creatures.

Creatures: Umbarno's influx of energy through the arcane network causes several flowers and vines to coalesce into a pair of viper vines, which rip themselves free from the ground and attack anyone within reach. Though dangerous, the creatures are slow; most citizens can outrun them and quickly evacuate the park. Once the viper vines find that no prey remains in Jolizpan Park, they slither slowly out into the city in search of prey. The viper vines fight until destroyed.

VIPER VINES (2) CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 190 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 279)

A4. Jolizpan Streets (CR 14)

This encounter can take place at anytime as the PCs move through Jolizpan's streets, and it therefore isn't marked on the Jolizpan city map. In this part of the city, the buildings are two stories tall, rising 20 feet above the streets. A large stone planter in the street contains a profusion of flowers and is a good place to gain cover or concealment from attackers; once combat breaks out, several citizens cower behind it.

Creatures: Umbarno has directed his wyrwood soldiers to walk the city streets, attacking any defenders of the city that they see, such as city guards. They ignore ordinary folk, but the PCs likely bear arms and armor that draw the wyrwoods' notice.

WYRWOOD SOLDIERS (2) CR 12

XP 19,200 each

Wyrwood fighter 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 280)

N Small construct

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 25 (+8 armor, +3 Dex, +1 deflection, +6 shield, +1 size)

hp 132 each (13d10+56); fast healing 5

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9; +3 vs. fear; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities arcane reinforcement, bravery +3;

DR 2/—; **Immune** construct traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.



Wyrwood Soldier

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Melee +2 shortspear +22/+17/+12 (1d4+14), +2 heavy steel shield +23 (1d3+6)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +19 (1d8+1/19–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (spears +3, close +2, crossbows +1)

TACTICS

During Combat A wyrwood soldier initially focuses on confronting melee combatants. It does its best to attack alongside another wyrwood soldier to take advantage of its Shield Wall feat. It uses its shield bash to push foes away before repositioning in combat to avoid attacks of opportunity. If a spellcaster targets a soldier with a spell that damages it or that it fails a saving throw against, the soldier changes its focus to attack the spellcaster instead.

Morale A wyrwood soldier fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 30

Feats Great Fortitude, Greater Shield Focus, Greater Weapon Focus (shortspear), Greater Weapon Specialization (shortspear), Improved Shield Bash, Iron Will, Shield Focus, Shield Master, Shield Slam, Shield Wall^{APG}, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (shortspear), Weapon Specialization (shortspear)

Skills Acrobatics +15, Climb +20, Perception +14

Languages Draconic, Razatlani

SQ armor training 3

Gear +2 agile breastplate^{UE}, +2 heavy steel shield, +2 shortspear, mwk heavy crossbow with 15 bolts and 5 +1 bolts, belt of giant strength +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arcane Reinforcement (Ex) A wyrwood soldier is made from magically grown material that grants it several benefits. The wyrwood gains fast healing 5 and fire resistance 10. It can see through all types of fog and smoke, and it is treated as two size categories larger when determining bonus hit points based on its size.

Armored Defender (Ex) An armored wyrwood soldier can use its armor to gain additional defensive abilities. A wyrwood soldier wearing medium or heavy armor gains DR 2/— and a +2 insight bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities.

A5. Umbarez Plaza (CR 15)

The largest plaza in all of Jolizpan features a stone monument at its center—an ancient, crumbling landmark depicting a blooming flower. The plaza always contains people relaxing and enjoying the sights, particularly during the early evenings when its night-blooming flowers emerge, making it an ideal target for the wyrwoods.

Creature: Umbarno commanded a wyrwood to lure a beast from the Jolizpan Forest into the city proper, and the

wyrwood was particularly effective at its task. By carrying large chunks of meat stolen from a street vendor, the wyrwood attracted the attention of a hungry ypotryll. The creature caught up to the wyrwood here in Umbarez Plaza and, in its haste to gorge itself on the meat, destroyed the wyrwood as well. Confused and overwhelmed, the ypotryll is a menace to anyone in the plaza.

The ypotryll charges and tramples about the plaza, destroying everything in its path and attacking anyone who comes near. Although the stone fountain at the center of the plaza provides cover, the ypotryll simply charges through the water to get at targets on the other side. Alternatively, if the ypotryll lacks a target, it simply charges at the stone fountain in a rage, destroying it. If the fountain is destroyed, its water sprays out in a fine mist, as *obscuring mist*, centered on the fountain's location. The ypotryll is an exceptionally straightforward attacker; it simply focuses on trampling and devouring the last creature that hit it with an attack. The panicked beast fights until slain.

YPOTRYLL

CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 253 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 285)

Story Award: If the PCs pacify the ypotryll or otherwise remove it from the city without slaying it, reward them XP as if they had defeated it in combat.

PART 2: DIGGING UP SECRETS

Once the attacks on the city are over, or any time the PCs rest between attacks, they can try to find the attack's instigators. So long as the PCs have defeated at least one of the wyrwoods, Miraina can help provide information about the attackers. Miraina recognizes the wyrwoods as the type grown at the Blue Gardens of Tlil. She explains that until recently, she worked at the Blue Gardens, but a small splinter group of botanists seized the facility to conduct their own research into regrowing the kumaru tree using radical and dangerous techniques. Miraina is afraid to return to the facility due to her advanced age. None of the other ousted botanists could stand up to the might of the splinter group, and with the region's most powerful defenders lost trying to reclaim Tumbaja Mountain, Jolizpan's government has been reluctant to intervene in what they see as an academic dispute. Called the Children of Kumaru, this group is led by a brilliant but increasingly erratic botanist named Umbarno Xipali. In addition to having suborned some of the Blue Gardens' best scientists and guards, the Children



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of Kumaru have used dangerous techniques to grow servant constructs. Mariana is certain the wyrwoods used in the attacks on Jolizpan were the outcome of their experiments. For the PCs to find out more about the attacks, they should go to the Blue Gardens outside of Jolizpan.

If the PCs agree to visit the Blue Gardens of Tlil, Miraina requests that they retrieve two items she needs to properly complete her study of their *obols*: her notes on the Veins of Creation, found in the facility's library (area **B16**) and her *soulsight goggles*, in her office in the underlevel (area **C11**). Additionally, Miraina confides that she has kept a few kumaru seeds in a safe in her office. She gives the PCs the key to her safe and asks them to retrieve the seeds for safekeeping.

Miraina shares the layout of the Blue Gardens of Tlil with the PCs; she has worked at the facility for years and knows it well. She notes that the rebels wore masks during the takeover, but because the staff all knew each other, she recognized most of those she encountered. In particular, she knows that the group's leader, Umbarno Xipali, has become more reclusive and erratic in the past few months, and she cautions the PCs that he could be dangerous. Miraina asks the PCs to avoid killing any of

the rebels if they can, but she understands that restoring the Blue Gardens isn't likely to be easy or bloodless, and the rebels' attacks on Jolizpan warrant a strong response. The PCs are free to take any valuables they find while at the Blue Gardens; Miraina assures them she will compensate their owners.

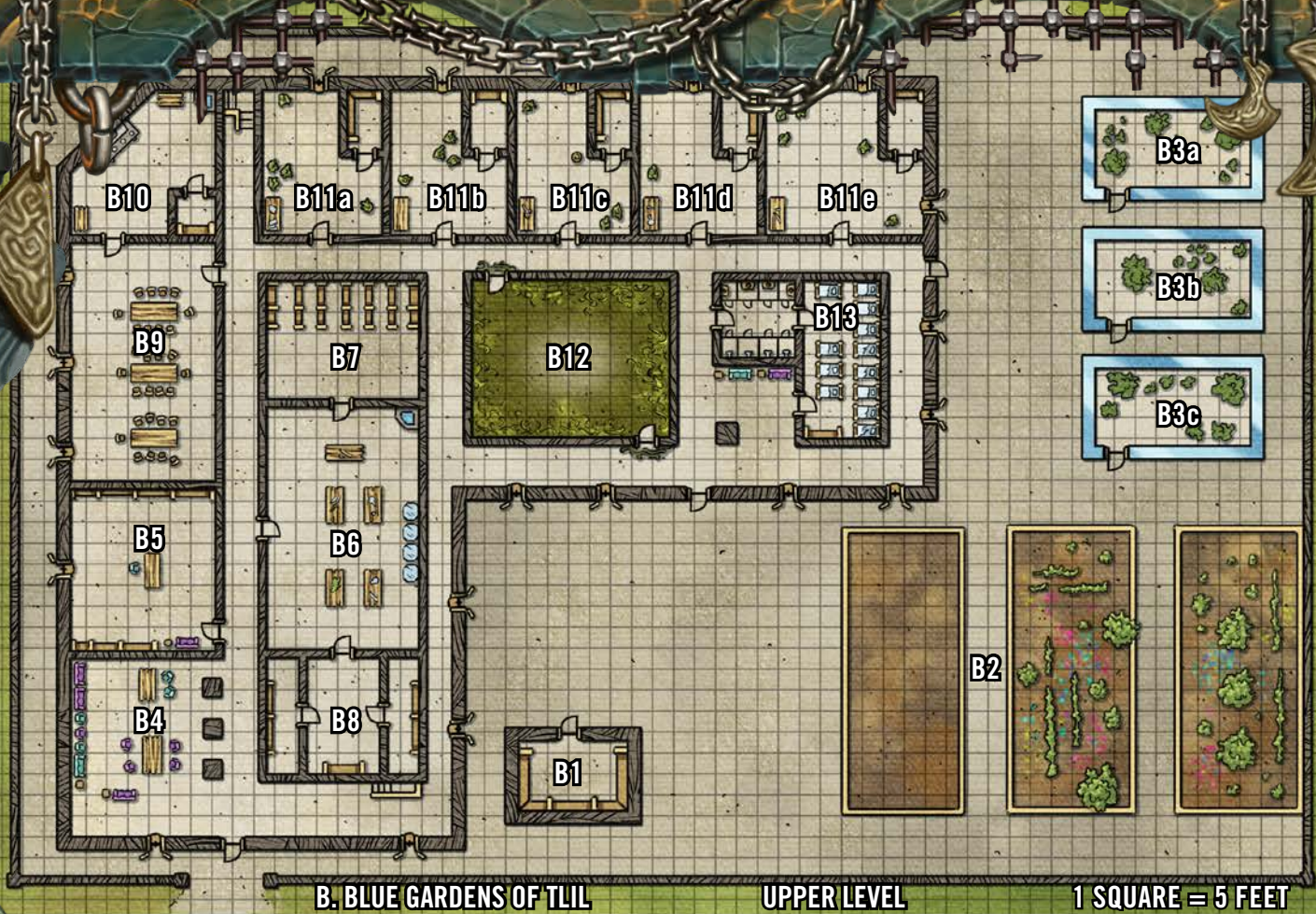
ON THE FOREST PATH (CR 15)

The Blue Gardens of Tlil stand a mile west of Jolizpan, surrounded by the Jolizpan Forest. The forest, which is never safe even at the best of times, is particularly wild around the facility; Jolizpani law prohibits cultivation around the facility to keep its connection to the natural arcane network undisturbed. A single, winding forest path leads to the site, sheltered by the dense canopy 60 feet overhead.

Miraina warns the PCs that while the Jolizpani city guard once worked hard to defend citizens traveling through the forest around the city, including people traveling to and from the Blue Gardens, the attack on Tumbaja Mountain and the more recent attacks on Jolizpan itself have stretched the city guard much too thin to aid the PCs.

Creature: The Children of Kumaru enlisted the aid of a local *alraune* named Finissario to defend the trail to





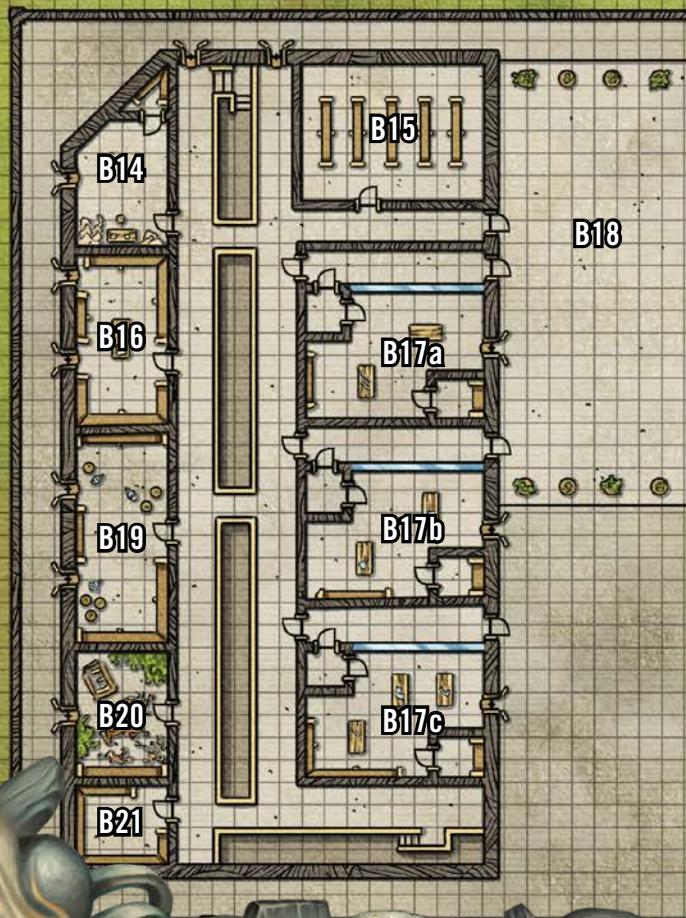
B. BLUE GARDENS OF TLIL

UPPER LEVEL

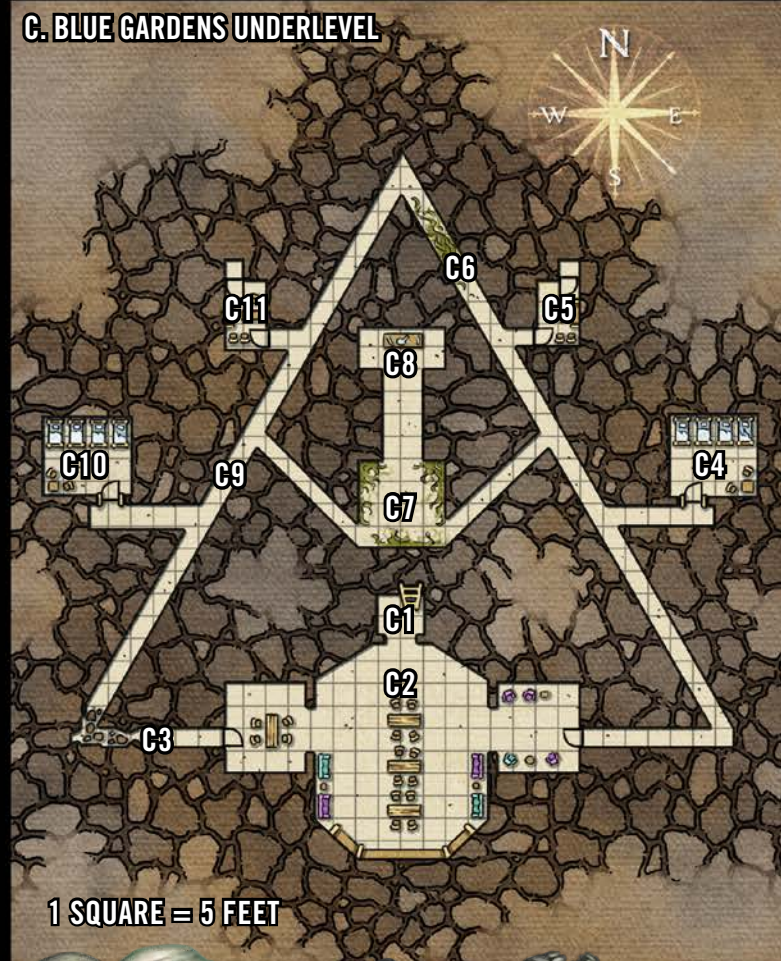
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

B. BLUE GARDENS OF TLIL

LOWER LEVEL



C. BLUE GARDENS UNDERLEVEL



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

the Blue Gardens. In exchange for allowing the alraune feed on volunteers among the Children of Kumaru—a process that is debilitating but not fatal if the volunteer is recovered after an hour—the rebels earned the creature's loyalty. Unfortunately, none of the rebels have come by in the past few days, and Finissario is quite agitated due to hunger. The alraune feels that its agreement with the Children of Kumaru is now void, and thus it is free to feed on any travelers. Finissario believes that an easy meal is likely to come down the trail eventually.

When the PCs encounter Finissario, the alraune threatens to squeeze the PCs like ripe papayas and devour their pulped flesh. This likely leads to a confrontation, although a PC offering himself as a meal to the plant can calm hostilities. If the PCs agree to let Finissario feed on a single PC for 2 hours (or on two PCs for 1 hour each), the alraune allows all of the PCs to pass. If sated, the alraune tells the PCs about its prior deal with the Children of Kumaru and asks that if they see anyone wearing the beaded masks—referring to the *Tlil masks*, although Finissario doesn't know them by that name—to be sure to make them suffer.

FINISSARIO

CR 15

XP 51,200

Alraune mesmerist 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 13, *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 38)

NE Large plant

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +30

Aura calming fragrance (60 ft., DC 26)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 26 (+2 Dex, +17 natural, –1 size)

hp 222 (23d8+119)

Fort +17, **Ref** +14, **Will** +22

Immune plant traits; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 4 vines +25 (1d10+9 plus grab and bleed)

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

Special Attacks bleed (2d6), bold stare (psychic inception), constrict (1d10+13), hypnotic stare (–2), mesmerist tricks 9/day (astounding avoidance, mesmeric mirror, misdirection), painful stare (+2 or +1d6+2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +20)

At will—*charm monster* (DC 21), *detect thoughts* (DC 19), *suggestion* (DC 20)

3/day—quicken *glitterdust* (DC 19), *hold monster* (DC 22)

1/day—*commune with nature*, *mind fog* (DC 22), *wall of thorns*

Mesmerist Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +11)

2nd (3/day)—*enthrall* (DC 19), *mirror image*

1st (5/day)—*command* (DC 18), *faerie fire*, *obscuring mist*, *undetectable alignment* (DC 18)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Finissario implants the astounding avoidance trick in itself. If intruders are obviously approaching, it casts *mind fog* and *mirror image*.

During Combat Finissario blocks the trail by casting *wall of thorns*. Against a flying or particularly dangerous PC, it uses a hypnotic stare just prior to casting *hold monster*. The alraune attempts to snatch a likely PC to feed upon and then uses *suggestion* to convince the rest of the PCs to return to Jolizpan, leaving it with its meal.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, Finissario flees.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 15, **Con** 20, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +17; **CMB** +27 (+31 grapple); **CMD** 39 (can't be tripped)

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Deceitful, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*glitterdust*), Stunning Assault^{APG}, Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +35, Diplomacy +21, Disguise +14, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (nature) +13, Perception +30, Sense Motive +33, Stealth +12

Languages Aklo, Elven, Gnome, Razatlani, Sylvan, Treant

SQ consummate liar +2, feed, touch treatment 10/day (minor)

Story Award: If the PCs offer themselves as a meal to Finissario and continue to the Blue Gardens without conflict, award them XP as if they had defeated the alraune in combat.

B. BLUE GARDENS OF TLIL

A large fence surrounds the grounds of this impressive facility. The fence doesn't appear to have been built for security; it has one wide opening to the north and two openings to the south. The main building's walls are made from a distinctive wood that wraps around itself, giving the impression of twisting vines. Dozens of colorful flowers and verdant plants grow along the outside of this building.

An outbuilding and a few greenhouses stand near a riotous garden in the southeast corner of the grounds.

The Blue Gardens of Tlil is a state-of-the-art scientific facility designed for arcane research and botany. Many of the facility's amenities are as-yet unreleased advancements that the botanists discovered. Although the facility has space for several dozen workers, scientists, and guards, the Children of Kumaru have chased away anyone who isn't part of their organization.

The perimeter fence and buildings are made of magically enhanced wood that is particularly resilient

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Blue Gardens on Alert

If the facility goes on alert, a number of changes go into effect. First, the lighting in the facility increases to bright light, imposing a -2 penalty on Stealth checks to hide. All Children of Kumaru receive a +2 circumstance bonus on their Initiative checks during alerts. Additionally, any attempts to convince members of the Children of Kumaru to depart the facility take a -4 penalty, regardless of what check is used. An alert generally lasts for 4 hours, unless a specific situation indicates otherwise.

(hardness 15, hp 90, break DC 40) and resistant to fire (fire resistance 10). The facility's doors are made from similar wood to the walls (hardness 10, hp 45, break DC 30). The ceilings within the facility rise to a height of 10 feet except where indicated. The natural shape of these walls makes it an easy task to climb them; doing so requires only a successful DC 15 Climb check.

All the doors within the Blue Gardens have durable wooden locks made of intertwining plants that can be magically programmed to open or close for certain individuals. Most locks are currently set to open whenever touched by a wyrwood or anyone wearing a *Tlil mask*. A PC can instead bypass each of these locks with a successful DC 30 Disable Device, Knowledge (arcana or nature), or Use Magic Device check. An appropriate key—such as that in area **B5**—also opens these doors. Umbarno changed the locks to the arcane nexus (area **B12**), the hazardous containment chamber (area **B20**), and the upstairs storage closet (area **B21**); opening those doors is more difficult, as described in those areas.

The windows throughout the Blue Gardens of Tlil are kept closed, but not locked. Opening a window from the outside requires a full-round action, while opening one from within the building is only a move action. Specialized vines with bioluminescent flowers line the ceiling and the outer walls of the grounds. These vines provide normal light inside the facility at all times and dim light to the grounds after sunset. Each room has a small mechanism to control the amount of energy flowing through these vines, allowing anyone to adjust the light level in the room.

Use the map on page 20 for encounters in the Blue Gardens of Tlil.

OPPOSING THE CHILDREN OF KUMARU

The Children of Kumaru include the facility's most powerful arcane botanists and guards. Nearly all strive to reignite the Veins of Creation and improve Jolizpan's well-being, but they each have their own motives and pursue their own pet projects. They all wear *Tlil masks* as a sign of solidarity, and they assume that anyone wearing such a mask is supposed to be at the facility.

The Children of Kumaru are either ignorant of Umbarno's evil, or are too narrowly focused or deep in denial to see the harm they are causing the city. Most have buried themselves in their work and avoid thinking too much about the ramifications of Umbarno's actions. Each encounter with Children of Kumaru provides the PCs an option to convince the rebels to abandon the group and leave the facility, although the specific methods differ. Ultimately, the PCs need not fight any of the humanoids in the Blue Gardens of Tlil—even Umbarno. If the PCs convince a member of the Children of Kumaru to leave the group, award them XP as if they had defeated that person in combat.

Treasure: Each member of the Children of Kumaru who the PCs peacefully persuade to leave the Blue Gardens soon realizes that the PCs were right to do so. That member contacts the PCs the next time they are in Jolizpan and offers the PCs a single magic item of their choosing worth 24,000 gp or less. The intent is that the PCs can gain a significant amount of useful treasure this way, offsetting the fact that they aren't able to loot these NPCs' gear.

Story Award: If the PCs remove the Children of Kumaru botanists and wardens from the Blue Gardens without killing any of them, award the PCs an additional 51,200 XP, in addition to the awards for convincing individual members to leave.

B1. Storage Shed

This large shed holds a number of tools and supplies for tending to the gardens, such as shovels, sickles, trowels, and fertilizer.

Treasure: In addition to the mundane tools, the botanists of Tlil keep a *staff of earth and stone* here to help with the tilling and landscaping.

B2. Grounds (CR 16)

Large plots of worked land lie in the southeastern quadrant of the grounds, containing a variety of fruits, vegetables, enormous flowers, and tall vines. Several plants rise to a height of a dozen feet, peeking over the fence. The tall plants writhe and squirm slowly, as if attempting to find a comfortable position to rest. Three greenhouses stand to the north of the garden beds, and a shed stands to the west.

These gardens serve as both a food source and testing ground for the facility. The Tlil botanists grow the majority of their food in one of the beds. The other two beds are dedicated to large experimental plants that don't fit in the smaller labs inside; their squirming movements are eerie but harmless. One of the Children of Kumaru visits the garden daily to collect any ripe fruits and vegetables.

Creatures: Four wyrwood soldiers patrol the grounds inside the fence in pairs. They keep a strict schedule, walking among the gardens and then around the other buildings every 10 minutes. They do not leave the grounds unless they hear sounds of intruders in the surrounding forest, in which case a pair of wyrwoods hurries to investigate while the other pair continues to patrol. Every 12 hours (roughly at dusk and dawn), these wyrwoods return to the central greenhouse (area **B3b**) and activate four wyrwood soldiers recharging within it as their replacements, leaving a gap of 10 minutes when the grounds are unguarded.

If a patrolling pair encounters the PCs, they raise the alarm, and the other patrol joins them as soon as possible. As soon as a wyrwood falls in combat, another wyrwood rushes to the southern greenhouse (area **B3c**) to release the moss golem before returning to the fight.

WYRWOOD SOLDIERS (4) **CR 12**
XP 19,200 each
hp 132 each (see page 17)

Story Award: If the PCs sneak past the wyrwoods or otherwise enter the facility unnoticed, award them XP as if they had defeated the wyrwoods in combat.

B3. Greenhouses (CR 16)

A trio of large glass structures, each the size of a house, stands in the northeast portion of the grounds. Each structure has small panels of wooden slats on the rooftop for ventilation. The glass panels are cloudy and obscured with moss and vines growing inside, making it difficult to see inside the greenhouses. Each greenhouse has a door in its south wall.

These greenhouses house smaller experiments and unique plants that would have trouble growing inside the labs of the main building, but the botanists haven't come to the greenhouses recently. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check can get a better look at what's inside a greenhouse through the cloudy glass.

B3a: This greenhouse contains only ordinary plants, including many edible varieties. They have been untended for several days.

B3b: This greenhouse holds vines attached to small humanoids made of rune-marked bark. This is the main storage for the facility's wyrwoods. A total of eight wyrwood soldiers are inside this greenhouse at any point during the day, each connected to a large network of vines that collect sunlight and combine it with their innate arcane energy to power the wyrwoods. When it comes time to swap out patrols, the active wyrwoods return to this greenhouse and remove four of the other wyrwoods from

the network. The process of being removed from the network and reactivated takes 10 minutes, after which the newly activated wyrwoods begin patrolling. Meanwhile, the wyrwoods that just finished their patrol connect to the network to begin recharging their own energy, a process that takes 24 hours and renders the wyrwoods inactive (they are helpless and effectively unconscious). The PCs can tamper with the network here to disable the wyrwoods. A PC who studies the network for at least 10 minutes can attempt a DC 40 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (nature) check to disable the network connection for a wyrwood (a PC can also disable this network connection from area **B12**, as described there). A PC who watches a patrol change gains a +10 insight bonus on these checks. On a success, the wyrwood won't reactivate and stands unmoving when it is removed from the network. If the PCs fails this check by 5 or more, a surge of arcane energy immediately activates the wyrwood, which immediately fights any intruders. If the PCs to disable all eight wyrwoods here, and then disable the four wyrwoods in area **B2** when they return from patrol, the Children of Kumaru don't notice the lack of patrols for 14 days. After this, they restore two sets of patrols (as only eight can be connected at a time) and remain on alert for 24 hours while they wait for the patrols to reactivate.

B3c: This greenhouse contains several varieties of mosses and a large heap of vines, moss, and wood. This heap is a unique type of golem called a moss golem; a successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check is required to identify the heap as a construct rather than a tangle of plant matter.

Creature: The moss golem in area **B3c** is made from special reinforced plant material not unlike that of the facility's walls. The Children of Kumaru consider the creature a failure, as they can't control it as they can the wyrwoods. They therefore set the creature aside in this little-used greenhouse while they research how to correct mistakes in its growing process. The creature remains dormant until the door to the greenhouse is opened or until it detects another creature in the greenhouse with it; it then lurches into action.

MOSS GOLEM **CR 16**
XP 76,800
Variant mithral golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 139)
N Huge construct
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0
DEFENSE
AC 32, touch 16, flat-footed 24 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +16 natural, -2 size)
hp 172 (24d10+40)
Fort +8, **Ref** +15, **Will** +8
Defensive Abilities evasion; **DR** 15/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic; **Resist** fire 10

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OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee 2 slams +33 (4d10+11)

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

Special Attacks quickness

TACTICS

During Combat The moss golem attacks the nearest non-wyrwood creature it can see, using its climbing form

to assault enemies that are hard to reach. The moss golem doesn't attack wyrwoods, but it attacks any other creatures, including Children of Kumaru.

Morale The moss golem fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 33, **Dex** 24, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +24; **CMB** +37; **CMD** 55

Feats Dodge^B, Mobility^B, Run^B, Spring Attack^B

SQ climbing form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Climbing Form (Ex) A moss golem can rearrange its constituent plants into an elongated and extremely flexible form as a swift action. While in this form, the moss golem's reach increases to 30 feet, it gains a 30-foot climb speed, and its DR becomes 15/slashing and adamantine. A moss golem in this form can also move through any crack or hole in a wall or door, no matter how small, without impeding its movement. A moss golem can maintain this form for up to 10 rounds per day, but these rounds do not need to be consecutive. Reverting to its normal form is a free action.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A moss golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against a moss golem, as noted below.

- A *diminish plants* spell cast on the moss golem causes it to lose its quickness ability for 1d6 rounds.
- A *plant growth* spell restores 1d6 points of damage per level of the caster (maximum 10d6) to the moss golem.
- Hitting a moss golem in its climbing form with any spell of 6th level or higher with the acid descriptor causes the moss golem to take 10d6 points of acid damage (no save) and lose the use of its climbing form ability for 24 hours.

Quickness (Ex) A moss golem is incredibly quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round. This means it can move up to its speed and still make a full attack.

B4. Lobby (CR 15)

A set of couches, tables, and chairs are arranged here for guests' comfort. Portraits of distinguished individuals hang on the walls above the couches, each bearing a small plaque with names and dates, and the floors are covered with rugs featuring bands of geometric motifs.

The facility's botanists would normally greet visitors here, but this lobby has gone unused since the Children



Moss Golem

of Kumaru took over. The portraits are of past head researchers and the dates of their tenure. The current head researcher is a middle-aged woman with thin lips and a striking nose; a plaque beneath the portrait gives her name as Hidarra Iznisa and indicates that she has been the head researcher for the past seven months.

Creatures: Two Children of Kumaru wardens patrol the main halls of the facility at all times of the day. Although these are among the most fervent believers in the rebels' cause among the guards, the lack of threats in the past days has caused them to grow lax. They frequently dawdle on their patrols, taking as much as an hour and a half to complete a circuit of the facility's halls. If the wardens spot any unauthorized individuals during their patrol, they immediately raise the alarm, yelling out and alerting as many other Children of Kumaru as possible; see the Blue Gardens on Alert sidebar on page 22. The wardens don't raise the alarm for anyone wearing *Tlil masks*, even if the individuals are not humans, as they don't question Umbarno's authority to recruit other people into the Children of Kumaru.

CHILDREN OF KUMARU WARDENS (2) CR 13

XP 25,600 each

Human brawler 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 23)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +3 dodge)

hp 151 each (14d10+70)

Fort +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +3 *great terbutje* +23/+18/+13 (1d10+12/17-20) or flurry of blows +17/+17/+12/+12/+7 (2d6+5) or unarmed strike +19/+14/+9 (2d6+5)

Special Attacks brawler's flurry, brawler's strike (cold iron, evil, magic, silver), close weapon mastery, knockout 2/day (DC 22), maneuver training (trip +3, disarm +2, bull rush +1), martial flexibility 10/day

TACTICS

Before Combat The warden applies *oil of greater magic weapon* and uses martial flexibility to gain the Lunge, Power Attack, and Staggering Critical feats.

During Combat The warden rushes forward to trip the nearest foe and attempts to make full attacks against prone opponents thereafter.

Morale The warden attempts to flee the Blue Gardens if reduced to 50 hit points or fewer. If unable to escape, the warden surrenders.



Tlil Mask

Tlil masks were once considered no more than useful oddities: masks with traditional floral motifs and imbued with abilities botanists found situationally useful. Several *Tlil masks* sat unused in a storeroom in the Blue Gardens of Tlil facility for many years. When the Children of Kumaru took over the facility, they used *Tlil masks* to mark their allegiance to the group.

TLIL MASK

PRICE
3,700 GP

SLOT head

CL 3rd

WEIGHT 1 lb.

AURA faint divination

This colorful, beaded mask bears floral patterns and attunes the wearer's senses to flora of all varieties. The wearer gains a +3 competence bonus on Knowledge (nature) checks relating to plants, seasons, or weather. The wearer can use a command word to gain the effects of *greensight* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Wilderness* 231), except that the wearer can freely focus her vision to see through plant matter for any distance up to 60 feet (for example, to examine the inner core of a reed) during the effect's duration. The *greensight* ability can be used a total of 10 times; when these uses are expended, the mask loses its magic and becomes a normal beaded mask. Most *Tlil masks* are discovered with 1d10 uses of *greensight* remaining; reduce the price by 300 gp for each expended use.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

COST 1,850 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *greensight*^{uw}

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +19 (+20 bull rush, +21 disarm, +26 trip);

CMD 33 (34 vs. bull rush, 35 vs. disarm, 38 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Critical Focus, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (great terbutje), Following Step^{APG}, Greater Trip, Improved Critical (great terbutje), Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Step Up, Step Up and Strike^{APG}, Toughness, Weapon Focus (great terbutje), Weapon Specialization (great terbutje)

Skills Acrobatics +17, Climb +21, Knowledge (arcana, nature) +8, Perception +10, Profession (gardener) +10, Sense Motive +10, Survival +7, Swim +21

Languages Draconic, Razatlani

SQ brawler's cunning, martial training

Combat Gear *oil of greater magic weapon* (CL 12), *potions of fly* (2); **Other Gear** +3 *chain shirt*, mwk great terbutje^{UE}, *belt of giant strength* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *Tlil mask* (see sidebar)

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Treasure: A visiting wizard lost his bonded ring, a *minor ring of spell storing* containing *nondetection*, among the couch cushions. The PCs can locate this ring with a successful DC 38 Perception check.

Development: If the PCs defeat or drive off the wardens, two more arrive from the dormitory (area B13) after a few hours to take their shift on patrol; reduce the number of wardens in the dormitory accordingly.



Children of Kumaru Warden

B5. Office

A large wooden desk sits in the center of this ample office. A small couch and side table sit in the corner. Several bookshelves line the walls, and carefully pruned vines grow up the west wall in complex geometric patterns around a frosted window. A door stands in the southeast corner.

This office serves the head researcher of the facility, currently a botanist by the name of Hidarra Iznisa. Hidarra is in Jolizpan, having left to demand action from the Jolizpani government after the Children of Kumaru took over. The office has remained empty since and would be a good hiding spot for the PCs as they plan and recover. Unless the facility is on alert, the Children of Kumaru ignore this office entirely. Even during an alert, they give this office only a cursory look and take a –8 penalty on Perception checks to notice creatures hiding inside.

Hidarra kept an extra copy of the facility's master key in her desk in case of emergencies. It resembles a large, ornate key, but it is made of wood with several floral designs carved into its surface. With a successful DC 20 Perception check, a PC finds the key among the desk clutter. This key can unlock any door in the Blue Gardens of Tlil except the doors to the arcane nexus (area B12), hazardous containment (area B20), and the upstairs storage closet (area B21).

B6. Growing Chambers (CR 14 or CR 16)

This large laboratory is filled with counters and tables, all covered in shreds of plant matter and various pieces of equipment, including cutting instruments, stacks of sieves, small prisms, and glass containers. The equipment is scattered about the room, and plant matter is heaped untidily all over the floor. A basin in the northeast corner of the room overflows with water. Four large glass containers, each as tall as the room, rest along the eastern wall. Three of these containers holds wet masses of fronds and thorny vines that writhe and pulse. The fourth contains a smaller shrub with vibrant blue leaves. Doors to the north, west, and south lead out of the room.

This room serves as the facility's main laboratory. Many experiments or projects begun elsewhere in the facility make their way here after earning enough support from the botanists or when they grow too large for the smaller laboratories to comfortably house. The botanists primarily use the specialized equipment here to create new plant material and to create miniature versions of arcane networks to test new plants.

Currently, the Children of Kumaru are using the room to aid in the creation of loyal minions. They initially used the room to create wyrwoods, but they have since relocated the wyrwoods to the greenhouse (area B3b) and moved on to attempting to improve on these models. The laboratory is messy because the Children of Kumaru, eager to prove their rebellion was morally right by quickly achieving success, don't take the time to clean up failed attempts before moving onto their next projects.

Three of the glass containers contain the latest attempts to create new plant life using small fragments of the kumaru tree. The botanists plan to grow heaps of fronds and vines that can take humanoid form, but the project is a long way from completion, and the impatient botanists continually tinker with the nutrients and arcane energies the plants receive. Their latest modification was to grow sharp thorns on vines to better absorb arcane energy, but the thorns are thus far useful only for drawing blood. These plant creatures are likely to escape when the PCs enter the room, as described below. The plant that had been growing in the fourth glass container died recently, so the botanists repotted a magical plant there instead (see **Treasure**).

The west door leads out into the hall. The north door leads to the research supply room (area B7) and the south door leads to the environmental room (area B8).

Creatures: Two Children of Kumaru botanists watch over the plants growing in the containers and stridently insist that any intruders leave them to their important work. If the intruders aren't wearing *Tilil masks*, the botanists assume the facility is under assault and fight to defend themselves.

Whether or not a fight breaks out with the botanists, the three plant creatures in the glass containers—powerful blood brambles—writhe more vigorously when the PCs enter the lab. The presence of the PCs' *obols* causes the kumaru fragments within the creatures to resonate with arcane energy, animating them prematurely. The blood brambles burst from their glass containers 2 rounds after a PC enters the room. In combat, the blood brambles attack the PCs in preference to the botanists. The botanists assume this is because they've established a rapport with the plant creatures, but in fact it's because the blood brambles are drawn to the *obols* within the PCs.

If the botanists haven't already started a fight with the PCs when the blood brambles attack, the botanists don't intervene on either side; otherwise, they fight alongside the blood brambles to defeat the PCs.

ADVANCED BLOOD BRAMBLES (3)

CR 11

XP 12,800 each

hp 150 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 288, 48)

CHILDREN OF KUMARU BOTANISTS (2)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

Human arcanist 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 8)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 108 each (14d6+57)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk sickle +7/+2 (1d6-1)

Ranged acid jet +8 touch (7d6 acid)

Special Attacks arcane reservoir (7/17), arcanist exploits (acid jet, counter drain, counterspell, dimensional slide, lingering acid, quick study, see magic), consume spells

Arcanist Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +20)

At will—*detect magic*

Arcanist Spells Prepared (CL 14th; concentration +20)

7th (2/day)—*plant shape III*

6th (5/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 22), *disintegrate* (DC 22)

5th (5/day)—*blight* (DC 21), *cloudkill* (DC 21), *teleport*

4th (5/day)—*acid pit*^{APG} (DC 20), *contagion* (DC 20), *greater flaming sphere*^{ACG} (DC 20), *stoneskin*

3rd (5/day)—*aqueous orb*^{APG} (DC 19), *blink*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 19)

2nd (6/day)—*blur*, *false life*, *gust of wind* (DC 18), *hideous laughter* (DC 18), *summon swarm*

1st (6/day)—*endure elements*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *vanish*^{APG} (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *detect poison*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat The botanist casts *mage armor* and *false life* every morning. The botanist also casts *blur*, *shield*, and *stoneskin* if expecting combat, but these three spells aren't reflected in the statistics above.

During Combat The botanist tries to keep out of melee, usually by capturing foes in an *acid pit* or an *aqueous orb*. The botanist then makes use of *chain lightning*, *greater flaming sphere*, or the acid jet exploit to attack foes. If forced into melee, the botanist attempts to defensively cast *plant shape III* to transform into a treant.

Morale The botanist flees the Blue Gardens if reduced to 40 hit points or fewer, either with the dimensional slide exploit or the *teleport* spell. If retreat seems impossible, the botanist surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 22, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Empower

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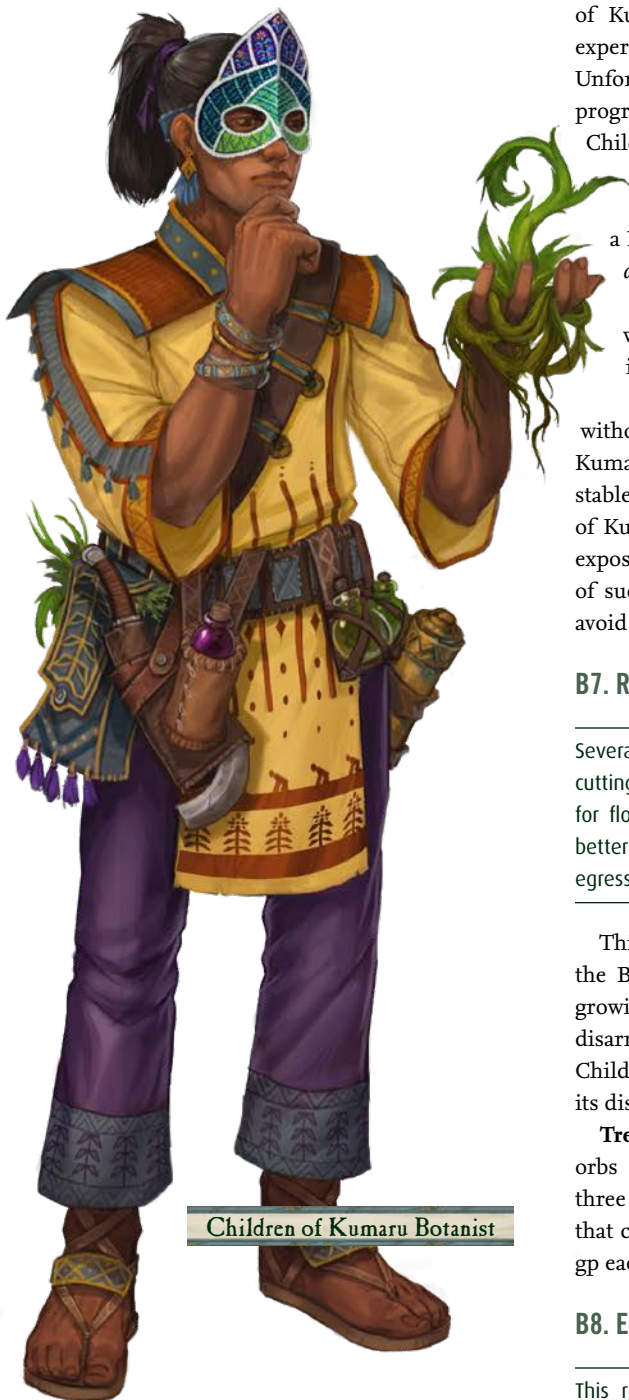
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Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +15, Appraise +23, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (nature) +29, Perception +14, Profession (gardener) +17, Spellcraft +23, Survival +14, Use Magic Device +20

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Razatlani, Sylvan



Children of Kumaru Botanist

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds (2), scroll of greater dispel magic, scroll of summon monster IV, scroll of wall of force; Other Gear* mwk sickle, amulet of natural armor +2, belt of mighty constitution +2, cloak of resistance +2, headband of mental prowess +2 (Int, Cha), Tlil mask (see sidebar on page 25), spellbook, granite and diamond dust worth 500 gp

Treasure: Prior to the takeover by the Children of Kumaru, the botanists of the Blue Gardens were experimenting with mass-producing magic items. Unfortunately, the botanists had made only minor progress when the Children of Kumaru took over. The Children of Kumaru overlooked these items, and they have since become covered by discarded plant matter. With a successful DC 20 Perception check, a PC locates a *belt of spirit vines*^{UW} and a *ring of natural attunement* (leshy)^{ACG}.

The shrub growing in the fourth glass cylinder was recently replanted from a different laboratory; it is a healthy *sheltershrub*^{UW}.

Development: If the PCs defeat the blood brambles without making any attacks against the Children of Kumaru, the botanists realize their creations were less stable than they thought. They decide that the Children of Kumaru are being too reckless in their research and exposing themselves to danger in their desperate pursuit of success. The botanists decide to leave the facility to avoid any future danger.

B7. Research Supply Room

Several shelves here hold basic scientific equipment such as cutting instruments, vials, and sieves, as well as drying racks for flowers, pressing boards, and miniaturized spyglasses to better view small objects. A door in the southern wall allows egress from this room.

This room holds the majority of the supplies used at the Blue Gardens of Tlil, particularly for the adjacent growing chamber (area B6). The supplies here are in disarray due to the carelessness and desperation of the Children of Kumaru, but the room is well stocked despite its disorganization.

Treasure: The equipment stored here includes two orbs of *bottled sunlight*^{UW} and a *hollywreath band*^{UE}. The three miniaturized spyglasses act as magnifying glasses that cannot be used to light fires, but they are worth 150 gp each due to their fine construction.

B8. Environmental Room

This room has two large glass enclosures, one along the

eastern wall and one along the western wall. A glass door allows entry into each partitioned area. The eastern enclosure holds several shelves, each bearing planters containing small plants. A bright light glows above each planter. The western enclosure is similarly equipped, though different plants grow within. Large racks stand along the southern wall, each covered with plants in varying stages of drying. A door to the north leads in and out of this room.

The botanists of Tlil created this room to accommodate plants that require specific growth conditions the region doesn't naturally provide. The glass doors aren't locked and open easily. The western partition draws out humidity to support plants that grow in arid conditions, and its air is noticeably drier. The eastern partition is kept cool for plants from colder climates. The drying racks on the south side of the room are used to dry plants for use as medicines, perfumes, or decorations. A small pile of tools rests on top of this rack; it includes tweezers, pruning shears, and two aprons.

Treasure: The tools on the rack to the south include a pair of goggles with a thin strap made from stretchy plant fibers. These function as *goggles of minute seeing*. The largest of the plants in the western partition is a *salvation cactus*^{UW} bearing 4 doses of fluid and 4 flowers.

B9. Refectory

This large dining area holds three long tables surrounded by chairs. Three narrow windows look out onto the facility's perimeter fence but allow natural light into the room. A sink stands near a door to the east, and a large bin stands near a door to the north.

The workers at the Blue Gardens would often gather here for breakfast and dinner, washing up as necessary in the sink. The Children of Kumaru gather here only sporadically and almost never as a group. Most are too wrapped up in their own experiments to have much time for meals, and they usually just grab something from the kitchen to the north (area B10). The facility's dishes and utensils are crafted from dried leaves that are durable, disease-resistant, and easily composted in the bin here. A few of these plates, covered with the remnants of hastily eaten meals, are scattered on the tables.

B10. Kitchen (CR 3)

This large kitchen has a table in the southwestern corner and another in the northeastern corner, both covered with scraps of food and unwashed dishes. Pots, pans, and other cookware hang from racks in the ceiling. A large basin in the northeast corner holds clear water and a large oven is built into the

angled northwest wall. One door leads south, while another door is ajar and reveals a sizable pantry.

This kitchen is where the facility's cooks created large meals for the workers at the Blue Gardens. The oven is one of the few simple accommodations that does not use the localized arcane network to function. The pantry holds stores of dried meats, grains, vegetables, and other staples, as well as firewood for the kitchen's large oven. Enough stores remain to provide food for the Children of Kumaru for at least a month. The door to the south leads to the dining hall (area B9).

Creature: The botanists hired four cooks to provide the facility with daily meals. Since the takeover, only the chief cook, Ilnizo Junilez, remains. Umbarno promised Ilnizo triple his usual salary to stay and serve the rebels, but he has grown tired of having to do all of the work by himself. He's normally found here or cleaning up the dining hall, in either case muttering under his breath about all the work he has to do. Ilnizo assumes the PCs are supposed to be in the facility whether or not they're wearing *Tlil masks*. He's happy to chat with the PCs for a few moments, but he isn't willing to take a break from his duties for long. The PCs can convince the cook that effort isn't worth the promised payoff. Ilnizo is initially indifferent to the PCs; convincing him to leave his post requires a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check. If attacked, Ilnizo leaves for to Jolizpan and does not return.

ILNIZO JUNILEZ

CR 3

XP 800

Male barkeep (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 303)

hp 23

Skills Profession (cook) +13 (replaces Profession [barkeep])

Development: If the PCs convince Ilnizo to leave the facility, he shuts and locks the only doors that he has the authority to lock: the doors to the dining hall and the kitchen. The Children of Kumaru consider being locked out a puzzling inconvenience the first day, but they grow increasingly hungry and discontent at having to fend for themselves. As Umbarno won't come out of his seclusion in the lower level to change the lock, the Children of Kumaru eventually have to burst the doors or use powerful magic to get at the stores of food. After Ilnizo leaves, the PCs gain a +4 bonus on skill checks to convince members of the Children of Kumaru other than Umbarno to abandon their goals, as the inconvenience of interrupting their experiments to acquire food makes them reconsider their position.

Story Award: Due to the gradual effects on the rebels' morale of the facility's food supply being inconveniently locked away, award the PCs 19,200 XP if they convince Ilnizo to leave.

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B11. Laboratories (CR 16)

These five laboratories are all similar in appearance. In each, scientific equipment and potted plants rest upon a large counter against the west wall. A small closet to the north stands next to a narrow window and across from a wooden door. The botanists use these laboratories for small-scale experiments and personal projects. The same mechanism that controls the light in each room also adjusts its humidity and temperature, although neither can be adjusted significantly enough to be more than mildly uncomfortable.

Creatures: At any time during the day, three Children of Kumaru botanists work in these labs. Each is normally in a separate lab, but they sometimes come together to compare notes or show off their findings to each other. When the PCs first approach this area, and each time they come back after more than an hour or so away, determine the placement of each of the three botanists randomly within these five labs.

These botanists are more interested in their personal research than in Umbarno's crusade and are reluctant to get in a fight unless they're provoked or an alarm has already been raised. If the facility isn't on alert, the botanists are willing to enter into a dialogue with the PCs, even if the PCs aren't wearing *Til masks*. If the alarm has been raised, the botanists still assume anyone wearing a *Til mask* is supposed to be in the facility, and they might make an offhand comment about the alert distracting them from their work. A PC who talks with a botanist and succeeds at a DC 30 Diplomacy, Knowledge (arcana), or Knowledge (nature) check convinces the botanist that their skills are better served helping the people of Jolizpan directly instead of supporting Umbarno's hostile agenda. If a PC fails this check, the botanist considers the PCs dangerous, shouts an alarm, and attacks.

Although the botanists are most likely to be encountered individually in these labs, once a combat begins with one botanist, the others from the other rooms join the fight as well.

CHILDREN OF KUMARU BOTANISTS (3)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 108 each (see page 27)

Development: If the PCs defeat or drive off the botanists here, three more arrive from the dormitory (area B13) after a few hours to work; reduce the number of botanists in the dormitory accordingly.

B12. Arcane Nexus

When the PCs first approach either entrance to this room, read or paraphrase the following.

The door to this room is covered in thick vines in a twisting spiral. The center of the cluster has a deep, empty depression the size of a fist. The vines are calcified and studded with crystals, making the door impassable.

The doors to this room each normally bear a unique lock specifically grown to secure this room, but the lock mechanism is missing from every door; Umbarno extracted the lock cores to make the doors impossible to open by normal means. Furthermore, the vines that cover the doors are particularly sturdy (hardness 20, hp 100, break DC 40). If the PCs recover a lock core in the hazardous containment room (area B20), they can reinsert it into the indentation in either door. When they do, the vines twine around the core and hold it in place. Even with a lock core back in place, the door opens only for Umbarno. A PC can manipulate the lock core to open the door with a successful DC 35 Disable Device, Knowledge (arcana or nature), or Use Magic Device check. If a PCs fails one of these checks, the lock actively works to prevent access via that method, increasing the DC for that check (but not other checks) by 10 for 1 hour. If the PCs successfully restore and manipulate the lock core, the vines on both doors part and allow access to the room.

When the PCs make their way inside, read or paraphrase the following.

A large mass of vines and other large plants grows along the walls of this room. The vines glow with a bright inner light that constantly shifts in hue as they pulse and shake like a beating heart. Doors stand in the northwestern and southeastern corners, and a trapdoor lies open in the center of the floor. The vines wind down the shaft beneath the open trapdoor.

This room is the main hub of the local arcane network that powers the Blue Gardens of Til. A PC who spends at least 1 hour studying the hub and succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (arcana or nature) or Use Magic Device check learns how to manipulate this network. This allows the PCs to alter the light level on the grounds or in the facility, change the locks on some or all of the locked doors in the facility (such as to unlock them all, or to set them to unlock for only a specific person), disable the network inside the greenhouses (see area B3b), and control the lifting vines that lead to the underlevel.

The shaft leads down 100 feet to the landing of the Blue Gardens underlevel (area C1). Although anyone can climb the vines as easily as a ladder, those in control of the facility's arcane network can ascend or descend much more easily. Anyone with control of the lifting vines can direct them to grasp up to 5 willing creatures and transport them up or down the shaft in 1 minute.

Story Award: If the PCs learn to manipulate the arcane nexus, award them 51,200 XP.

B13. Dormitory (CR 19)

The workers at the Blue Gardens rested in this communal dormitory when they chose not to make the trip back to their homes in Jolizpan. Ever since the Children of Kumaru took over the facility, they have slept here or napped at their work stations. A washroom adjacent to the dormitory provides clean, running water and an efficient disposal system that recycles water and waste.

Creatures: Eight members of the Children of Kumaru rest in this room at any given time. Half of them are normally asleep. The Children of Kumaru here are usually tired and prefer to rest rather than evict intruders, although they defend themselves if they believe the facility is under attack. The Children of Kumaru don't pursue enemies who flee this area unless they believe that their enemies will endanger other people in the facility.

If the PCs seem interested in talking rather than fighting, the rebels listen to what they have to say. The PCs can convince the Children of Kumaru here to give up on their misguided work with a successful DC 40 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, as appropriate for the PC's subject (such as by using Bluff to assert that Umbarno has disbanded the Children of Kumaru, Diplomacy to convince them that leaving the Blue Gardens is best for the city, or Intimidate to insist that their present course of action is dangerous and will get them hurt). If the PCs have already peacefully convinced other members of the Children of Kumaru to leave the Blue Gardens of Tlil, those departing members have already stopped by here to gather their things and say their goodbyes. For each such rebel who has already left, the PCs gain a cumulative +2 circumstance bonus on their skill checks to convince the people here in the dormitory to leave as well.

CHILDREN OF KUMARU BOTANISTS (6)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 108 each (see page 27)

CHILDREN OF KUMARU WARDENS (2)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 151 each (see page 25)

Treasure: The Children of Kumaru keep their various personal gear in small footlockers at the base of the beds. Most of this gear consists of mundane clothing, notes, and personal items, but the rebels also keep three spare *Tlil masks* (see page 25) here.

B14. Fungal Lab (CR 7)

This small lab holds a stone table bearing several small containers of mushrooms, toadstools, and other types of fungi. A door to the north is ajar and leads to a small closet filled with blankets and pillows in a makeshift bed. Another door stands in the east wall.

This lab is specifically dedicated to researching the use of fungi, rather than plants, for an arcane network. This endeavor hasn't produced much in the way of significant results and has attracted few champions among the botanists, although the few botanists dedicated to this line of research are very determined.

Creature: Chiyana Bernadez, an ambitious researcher, is one of several botanists who believe that fungus research might unlock new advances in arcane networks. Chiyana isn't part of the Children of Kumaru and was ejected from the facility when the rebels seized control. Rather than wait for the Jolizpani authorities handle the rebels, Chiyana let her impatience get the better of her, and she snuck back into the Blue Gardens only a few days after the Children of Kumaru took over. She stole a *Tlil mask* from among the spares in the dormitory and was pleasantly surprised to find that the rebels didn't pay her much attention when she was wearing it—they assumed she was one of them. Chiyana returned to this lab and has diligently continued her work, leaving only to gather food from the kitchen when she gets hungry. When she grows tired, she rests on the impromptu bed she made in the closet.

When the PCs enter this room, they find Chiyana hard at work, observing fungi and taking notes. Due to her distraction, Chiyana takes a –8 penalty on Perception checks to notice the PCs. Once she's aware she has company, she scrambles to grab her *Tlil mask* and put it on, believing the PCs to be Children of Kumaru. If attacked, she assumes her ruse has been discovered and attempts to flee the Blue Gardens as quickly as possible. If she leaves, she doesn't return.

If the PCs don't attack Chiyana, she quickly deduces that they are not Children of Kumaru and asks about their presence in the facility. She's more interested in whether the PCs are likely to cause any further interruptions to her work than any motivations they have about reclaiming the facility or stopping Umbarno. If the PCs agree to let Chiyana continue her work, she tells them what she knows about the Children of Kumaru and even lets them rest in her lab if they wish (as long as they are quiet). Chiyana is quite friendly and her enthusiasm for her work is obvious. She excitedly raves about the various fungi throughout the lab and answers the PCs' questions about her work in overwhelming detail.

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Chiyana can provide the PCs information about where the Children of Kumaru are usually working within the facility, and she explains that a *Tlil mask* has allowed her to get around unchallenged. She even offers to acquire more *Tlil masks* for the PCs if they ask, making a quick trip to the dormitory (area **B13**) to recover the extra *Tlil masks* stored there.

CHIYANA BERNADEZ

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female human alchemist (horticulturist) 8
(*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 26, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Wilderness* 33)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 47 (8d8+8)

Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 mithral sickle +8/+3 (1d6+2)

Ranged bomb +7 (4d4+4 fire)

Special Attacks bomb 12/day (4d4+4 fire, DC 18)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +12)

3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *summon nature's ally III*, *thorn body*^{APG}

2nd—*barkskin*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *lesser restoration*, *resist energy*, *summon nature's ally II*

1st—*comprehend languages*, *identify*, *summon nature's ally I* (2), *true strike*

TACTICS

During Combat Chiyana fights defensively until she can cast her defensive spells such as *thorn body* and *barkskin*. She summons plant creatures with her *summon nature's ally* spells to aid her in a fight.

Morale Chiyana has no wish to die in a pointless combat; she flees or surrenders as soon as she's injured.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 10, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 14

Base Atk +6; CMB +7; CMD 18

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Expertise, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Appraise +15, Bluff +6, Climb +5, Heal +13, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (nature) +18, Profession (gardener) +13, Spellcraft +15, Survival +13, Use Magic Device +13

Languages Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Razatlani, Sylvan

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +8), discoveries (infusion, precise bombs [4 squares]), herbal bombs, plant familiar (cat), plant voice, seed extract, swift alchemy

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cure light wounds*, tanglefoot bags (2); **Other Gear** +2 leather armor, +1 mithral sickle, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, *Tlil mask* (see page 25), formula book

Story Award: If the PCs befriend Chiyana, award them XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

B15. Herbarium (CR 16)

This large room is filled with shelves, each holding dozens of glass containers. The containers are each neatly labeled and filled with various dried flowers, leaves, and roots. A door stands to the south.

This herbarium holds most of the facility's dried plants, meticulously organized based on species and purpose.

Creatures: Not all the Children of Kumaru share Umbarno's vision; some are self-serving. These three Children of Kumaru wardens are taking advantage of their access to the Blue Gardens to make a profit, secretly stealing valuable plants and passing them to a contact in Jolizpan to sell at exorbitant prices. They were initially subtle about their thefts, but they've realized that none of the other Children of Kumaru care much about the dried plants here, so they've become more overt in taking anything they think might turn a profit.

When the PCs enter this room, the wardens are rummaging through the stores, emptying containers of herbs into sacks and casually discussing the value of each. If questioned, the wardens attempt to spin a tale about collecting the herbs for an experiment elsewhere in the facility, but they aren't very good liars. If their clumsy deception is brought to light and a PC succeeds at a DC 30 Diplomacy or Intimidate check to insist the wardens reform their ways, the wardens decide to give up their scheme and make amends in Jolizpan. Alternatively, the PCs might not care about the theft; if they agree to let the wardens go with as many herbs as they can carry, the wardens leave the Blue Gardens and don't return.

If the PCs attack the wardens or denounce their theft, the wardens attack.

CHILDREN OF KUMARU WARDENS (3)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 151 each (see page 25)

Chiyana Bernadez



B16. Library

Tall bookshelves fill the west wall of this library. The collected tomes range in age from pristine books to weathered volumes. An empty table sits in the center of the room and a door opens in the eastern wall.

This library holds most of the facility's collected knowledge from the past decades, including meticulously filed notes and logs of past experiments. A character who uses the library to research ley lines or magical plants gains a +8 bonus on such checks.

Treasure: Hidden among the countless tomes here is a *book of the loremaster*^{UE} that has been bound in a lead-lined cover, making it impossible to detect with *detect magic* or similar spells. A PC who succeeds at a DC 35 Perception check locates the book.

Development: The PCs can find Miraina's notes here with an hour of searching and a successful DC 25 Perception check.

B17. Sterile Workrooms (CR 16)

These three workrooms are all similar in appearance. Each has a short hall with a glass wall to the south and a pair of doors serving as an airlock. The glass walls are magically reinforced (hardness 5, 30 hit points, break DC 20). The isolated workroom beyond is maintained as a sterile environment where delicate plants can be tended without external influence and arcane experiments can be performed in isolation. Each sterile workroom also contains a small closet with cleaning supplies.

The airlock for each workroom is designed so that only one door can be opened at a time. While both doors are closed, creatures and objects within the airlock are subject to a combination of *prestidigitation*, *purify food and drink*, and similar magic to ensure cleanliness. This process takes 1 round.

Several of the Children of Kumaru use these workrooms to further research into using medicinal plant grafts to strengthen and maintain arcane networks. They are currently testing their methods on miniature networks and have met with initial success treating damage induced on their test networks.

Creatures: One botanist is at work in each of these workrooms at any time of the day. A botanist who spots someone in the hall through the glass partition motions to the airlock; the botanists insist that visitors go through the appropriate sterilization process before they talk. If the PCs take the time to talk to any of these botanists, a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that the botanists have grown more attached to this specific research than Umbarno's goals. A PC can convince a botanist to leave the Children of Kumaru and focus on

their medicinal research with the ousted botanists in Jolizpan with a successful DC 30 Diplomacy, Heal, or Knowledge (nature) check.

If the PCs break into a workroom without going through the sterilization process, the botanist within flies into a rage and attacks. The sound of combat or breaking glass brings the other botanists to join in the fight from the other workrooms.

CHILDREN OF KUMARU BOTANISTS (3)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 108 each (see page 27)

Development: If the PCs defeat or drive off the botanists here, three more arrive from the dormitory (area B13) after a few hours to work; reduce the number of botanists in the dormitory accordingly.

B18. Balcony

Flowers and colorful plants grow in planters on this balcony. A few chairs offer a place to relax and enjoy the view of the grounds and the surrounding forest.

Many workers at the Blue Gardens used the balcony as a place to relax or ponder scientific challenges, though the Children of Kumaru no longer make time for such distractions. The botanists keep many personal plants up here, such as favorite flowers and sweet-smelling herbs, and they grow well in the outside air.

B19. Incubation Room (CR 15)

The smell of fresh earth fills this large room. Several low shelves with long planters line the walls, each planter containing rich, brown soil and tiny, sprouting plants. Beneath the shelves are several watering cans and sacks containing more dirt. A wooden door stands in the east wall.

The main purpose of this room is to allow new seeds to grow to a usable size. Although the dirt in the planters appears identical, each planter's soil has a different origin and chemical composition; the sacks are marked with origin coordinates all over northwestern Xopatl. Many of the seeds here are experimental, specifically bred to allow for greater affinity with the Blue Gardens' localized arcane network. As the seedlings here are used in experiments throughout the facility, this room is considered critical.

Creatures: Two Children of Kumaru wardens are always stationed here to watch over the seedlings in their delicate state, but this job is particularly dull. The wardens jump up from their stools as soon as anyone

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enters; a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Sense Motive check can tell the wardens are grateful for the intrusion, if only to break up the monotony. Canny PCs might use the wardens' boredom to their advantage by convincing the wardens to leave the facility. The attempt requires a DC 30 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Perform (any) check. On a successful check, the wardens realize that "sprout guard duty" isn't worth their time and return to their homes in Jolizpan. On a failure, the wardens suspect that the PCs are here to harm the seedlings and attack.

CHILDREN OF KUMARU WARDENS (2) CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 151 each (see page 25)

B20. Hazardous Containment (CR 15)

Umbarno changed the lock on this door so that he alone can open it; a PC must succeed at a DC 30 Disable Device, Knowledge (arcana or nature), or Use Magic Device check to open the door to this room. The walls of this room are reinforced and have double the typical hit points (180 hit points rather than 90).

This unpleasantly warm room is in a shambles, with shattered glass, dirt, broken trays, and overturned shelves strewn throughout. Large vines and other plants grow throughout the room, overgrown and uncontained. A few piles of bones, decomposing body parts, and the relatively intact carcass of a large goat lie in the center of the room. A wooden door opens in the eastern wall.

This room is designed for containing specifically dangerous materials and plants. It is normally kept at a low temperature to hinder unwanted growth. In one of his fits of irrational distrust, Umbarno removed the lock cores from the doors to the arcane nexus (area B12) and placed them in this room. He then raised the room's temperature and tossed several animal carcasses inside to encourage the plants within to flourish. As a final element of security, Umbarno changed the lock on the door. The resulting mess has led to the room becoming completely overgrown. The floor of the room is difficult terrain for Medium and smaller creatures.

Creature: Hidden among the overgrowth is a dangerous plant known as a corpse lotus. This particular corpse lotus has become enriched with the volatile materials stored here, making it unusually powerful. The corpse lotus hides in the corner among the overgrown foliage, waiting for the PCs to come close before it attacks.

ADVANCED CORPSE LOTUS CR 17

XP 102,400

Variant corpse lotus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 60)

N Huge plant

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +25

Aura preserving mists (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 26 (+5 Dex, +18 natural, -2 size)

hp 220 (21d8+126)

Fort +18, **Ref** +14, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities all-around vision; **DR** 10/slashing;

Immune plant traits; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee 4 vines +27 (2d6+13 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 25 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+13), swallow whole (4d6 acid damage, AC 18, 22 hp)

TACTICS

During Combat The corpse lotus attacks multiple opponents with its vines to grab as many meals as possible. Once it has all of its targets within reach grabbed, it constricts them until they stop moving and swallows them one at a time, starting with the largest. If badly injured, the corpse lotus consumes the goat carcass in this room to grant itself fast healing.

Morale The corpse lotus fights until it is destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 36, **Dex** 20, **Con** 23, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +30 (+32 bull rush, +34 grapple); **CMD** 45 (47 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

Feats Awesome Blow, Blind-fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (vine), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (vine)

Skills Perception +25

SQ camouflage, digest corpse, preserving mists

Treasure: In addition to the lock cores in the detritus, a *greater monkey belt*^{UE} hangs on a hook behind the door.

B21. Storage Room

As with the door to the hazardous containment chamber (area B20), Umbarno changed the lock on this door so that he alone can open it; a PC must succeed at a DC 30 Disable Device, Knowledge (arcana or nature), or Use Magic Device check to open the door to this room.

This large closet is jammed with shelves full of scientific equipment, tools, protective clothing, and other supplies. A wooden door stands in the east wall.

The botanists keep most of their spare equipment and supplies in this closet. Umbarno scoured the facility immediately after the takeover and collected

all the magic items he could find. He did so under the pretense of keeping the Children of Kumaru from becoming distracted from their work, but he in fact he was motivated by his growing sense of isolation and a fear that the Children of Kumaru might use the items against him, even though most of these items are not offensive in nature.

Treasure: The treasure here includes an *all tools vest*^{UE}, a *broom of flying*, *dryad sandals*^{UE}, *ghostvision gloves*^{UE}, and six +2 *undead bane arrows*.

C. BLUE GARDENS UNDERLEVEL

Using their magic, the botanists of the Blue Gardens of Tlil carved out a level deep beneath the facility where fragments from the kumaru tree from Tumbaja Mountain could be protected and studied. As the Veins of Creation run only a few dozen feet beneath the surface and the botanists didn't want their experiments interfering with that network, they built their new chambers significantly deeper. Their first and most significant breakthrough was creating arcane power networks similar to the Veins of Creation on a much smaller scale, which allowed Jolizpan and other communities throughout Xopatl to function even though the Veins of Creation were inactive. As research led to many breakthroughs that each stimulated further study, the botanists continually expanded these chambers into the underground facility used today for long-term studies of the kumaru fragments. The most recent advances have been made by the Children of Kumaru, who use the energy of the kumaru fragments to create arcane constructs made of plant matter (including the wyrwoods who attacked Jolizpan and who defend the facility). The leader of the Children of Kumaru, Umbarno Xipali, works alone in the center of the underlevel.

The ceilings in the underlevel are 10 feet high except where indicated. Crisscrossing networks of blossoming vines wind throughout the ceilings of all halls and chambers, supplying power. Some of the blossoms emit light, so the underlevel is in normal light at all times except where noted otherwise. The doors are made of sturdy wood and are unlocked except where noted.

Use the map on page 20 for encounters in the Blue Gardens underlevel.

C1. Landing

The ladder from the arcane nexus (area B12) descends 100 feet before arriving in this small room carved out beneath the facility. Vines wind along the ladder, but they don't impair its use. In fact, these vines can gently grasp creatures and then quickly and safely move them along the ladder, if the PCs reactivated the lifting vines as described in area B12. This room is otherwise empty. A door leads south into the common rooms (area C2).

C2. Common Rooms (CR 17)

These three large, connected rooms each contain tables, chairs, and couches. The western room contains comfortable lounging chairs, the central room contains three bookshelves along the south wall, and the eastern room holds shelves stocked with dried food and a small basin of fresh water. A network of leafy vines with glowing flowers extends across the ceiling in all three rooms, leading out of the room in gaps above doors to the north, west, and east.

The oldest area of the underlevel, these rooms were originally used for research but were repurposed into a common area when the underlevel was extended. The botanists now use these rooms to relax and discuss their findings. The books are an eclectic collection of texts brought in by botanists over the years, ranging from exciting adventure tales to scientific journals. The eastern room holds basic food stores to avoid the constant need to visit the refectory upstairs and to feed the botanists in case of a collapse. The botanists mostly use the western room for reading.

Creature: A dark fog roils against the bookshelves at the south end of the central room, obscuring the bottom half of the shelves. This is the room's occupant, the ximtal sahkil Palderren, in its miasma form. Palderren has been fueling the fires of Umbarno's paranoia over its long association with the troubled priest, but it knows that it must frequently stay away from Umbarno to enhance his feelings of loneliness and isolation. Palderren therefore usually remains here, where it can intercept any Children of Kumaru who make it to the underlevel and might undo its delicate corruption.

A PC can recognize the miasma in the room as a ximtal sahkil with a successful DC 32 Knowledge (planes) check. Whether the PCs recognize it or not, the fog surges toward them, attempting to cover as many PCs as possible and use its isolation ability. During combat, Palderren does its best to separate the PCs with its spell-like abilities. It attempts to flee if reduced to 100 hit points or fewer, either using its skip between ability or passing through area C3 or C6 as a miasma if necessary to deter pursuit. It then finds a good hiding spot from which to ambush the PCs; the second time around, it fights to the death.

PALDERREN CR 17

XP 102,400

Ximtal sahkil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 244)

hp 279

Development: Even when Palderren is defeated or absent, a stain like a dark haze remains in the air at the south end of this room. This haze disperses in a few days

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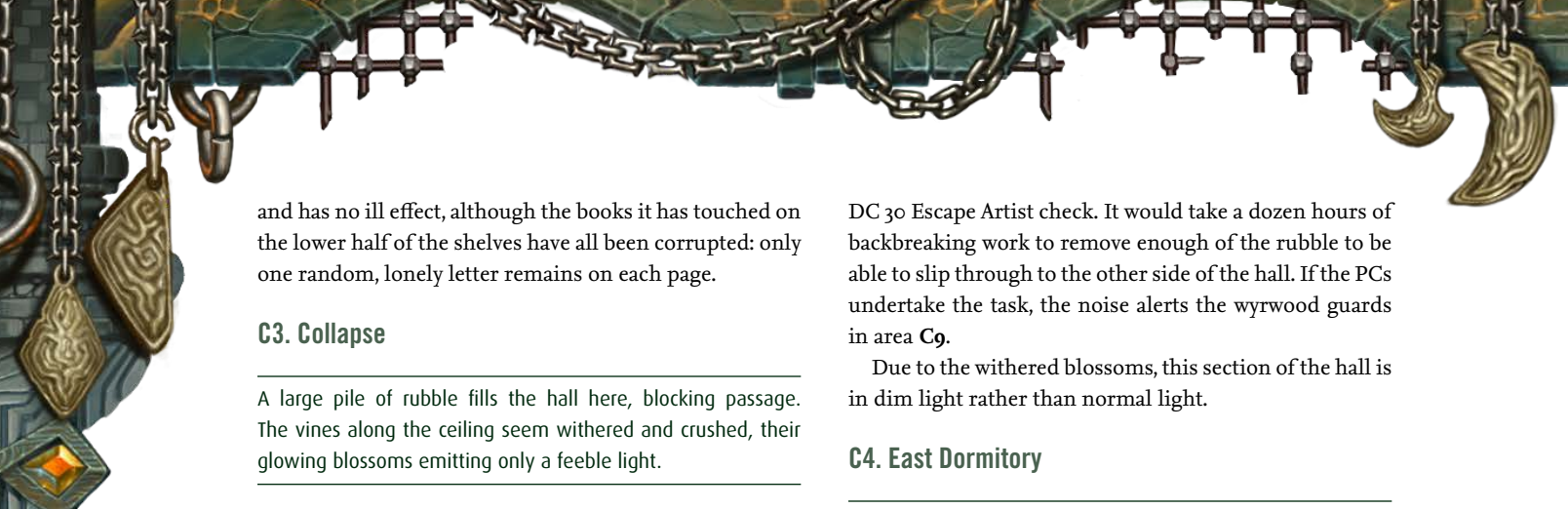
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and has no ill effect, although the books it has touched on the lower half of the shelves have all been corrupted: only one random, lonely letter remains on each page.

C3. Collapse

A large pile of rubble fills the hall here, blocking passage. The vines along the ceiling seem withered and crushed, their glowing blossoms emitting only a feeble light.

As Umbarno experimented with the network core in the underlevel, he caused sizable disruptions in the arcane network. One of these disruptions caused the network's plants to convulse in this part of the hall, triggering a major collapse. The rubble prevents creatures larger than Diminutive in size from passing through, although a Tiny creature can squeeze through with a successful

DC 30 Escape Artist check. It would take a dozen hours of backbreaking work to remove enough of the rubble to be able to slip through to the other side of the hall. If the PCs undertake the task, the noise alerts the wyrwood guards in area C9.

Due to the withered blossoms, this section of the hall is in dim light rather than normal light.

C4. East Dormitory

Bunk beds line the north wall of this large chamber. A table and pair of comfortable chairs sit in the corner. The room's only door stands in the south wall.

This dormitory is large enough to hold a dozen inhabitants, although it has never been full and the bunks were rarely in use for more than a few days at a time. It is currently unused.

C5. Bare Office

A bare wooden desk stands in the center of this office. An empty shelf is built into the eastern wall and several chairs sit along the southern wall. Doors lead to the north and west.

The botanists of Tlil use this office as needed, either to complete notes and logs on a study or as a meeting room. The west door leads to the hall, while the north door leads to a sizable closet filled with writing supplies such as paper, scrolls, quills, and the like.

C6. Overgrown Vines

Several thick, overlapping vines block the hall here, growing up through the ceiling and into the floor.

Umbarno's manipulation of the network core created several disruptions in the arcane network powering the facility. One of these disruptions caused the vines here to grow to a tremendous size, filling the hall. Diminutive and smaller creatures can move through the dense jumble of vines unimpeded, and a Tiny creature can squeeze through with a successful DC 30 Escape Artist check. Larger creatures need to find another way around or cut through the vines (300 hit points, DR 10/slashing). Clearing the vines



Palderren



is relatively simple, if tedious, but the noise alerts the wyrwoods in area C9.

Due to the oversized blossoms, this section of the hall is bright light rather than normal light.

C7. Network Core (CR 17)

Large flowering vines run along the length of the ceiling here, coming together in a tight, coiling mass in the center of the ceiling twenty feet overhead. The coiling mass pulses with light that alternates in hue between azure and gold. Vines hang freely from the ceiling; a few even reach the floor. Hallways extend from the southwest and southeast corners from this room, and a wide hall leads north.

The coiling mass in the center of this room holds a piece of the kumaru tree taken from Tumbaja Mountain. This kumaru fragment serves as the primary energy source for the Blue Gardens of Tlil, even though it is long dead, and studying it directly has always been a high honor for the botanists who work here. The piece is woven so tightly into the facility's power network that it can't be removed without destroying it—although that hasn't stopped Umbarno from trying as part of his increasingly desperate experiments.

The exits to the southeast and southwest lead to hallways of the underlevel, while the exit to the north leads to the underlevel's laboratory (area C8).

Creatures: Umbarno has spent the last several days here studying the nexus. His continual encounters with Palderren have left him in a poor state, and he believes that he is utterly alone in his goal of reactivating the Veins of Creation. Due to his feelings of isolation, Umbarno's last few days of experimentation and tinkering have been focused on creating a living body for the kumaru tree fragments locked into the arcane network here. While he has yet to succeed in finding a way to fully animate the plants surrounding the fragments, he has achieved a significant breakthrough. Using some of the other plant matter in the room, he's created a construct powered directly by the kumaru fragments Istravek gave him, called a verdant bombardier. Unfortunately for him, the verdant bombardier can't leave this room, although Umbarno is working hard to overcome this limitation and further empower his creation.

When the PCs encounter Umbarno, they find a troubled man, unsure about his decisions. The past weeks have caused him to realize that fault for his failure may not lie with his former deity, Kazutal, after all. The PCs have an opportunity to convince him to abandon his goal of taking over Jolizpan and to return control over the Blue Gardens of Tlil to the ousted botanists. This requires a successful DC 45 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, though the PCs may have an easier time doing so depending on their previous

actions in the facility. Each time they convince one of the Children of Kumaru to abandon their mission, that member might mention some bit of Umbarno's history (as detailed in pages 60–61), allowing the PCs to gradually piece together his story. This grants the PCs a cumulative +1 bonus on checks to convince Umbarno to give up his plans for each of the Children of Kumaru they convince to leave the Blue Gardens. If the PCs slay Palderren before meeting Umbarno, the sahkil's oppressive pall lifts, and the DC of checks to sway Umbarno is reduced to 40. If the PCs convince Umbarno to stand down, he realizes the error of his ways and commits himself to the long, arduous road to redemption. Otherwise, he sees the PCs only as obstacles to his often-frustrated research and attempts to eliminate them as quickly as possible.

Should Umbarno enter into a fight with the PCs, he instructs the verdant bombardier to interpose itself and attack the most dangerous foes. Umbarno considers the construct to be valuable, but ultimately expendable.

UMBARNO XIPALI CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 139 (see page 60)

VERDANT BOMBARDIER CR 15

XP 51,200

Variant cannon golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 135)

N Large construct

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 16, flat-footed 24 (+7 Dex, +15 natural, –1 size)

hp 140 (20d10+30)

Fort +6, **Ref** +13, **Will** +8

DR 15/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +29 (2d10+10)

Ranged arcane mortar +26/+21 (6d6+10/19–20/x4)

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

Special Attacks arcane mortar

TACTICS

During Combat The verdant bombardier follows Umbarno's orders, entering melee to prevent enemies from reaching Umbarno. It uses its arcane mortar liberally, even if doing so provokes attacks of opportunity from its foes.

Morale The verdant bombardier fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 24, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 48

Feats Improved Critical (arcane mortar)^a

SQ arcane munitions, blasting critical, reinforced mortar

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SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arcane Mortar (Ex) An arcane bombardier's mortar has a range increment of 50 feet and deals 6d6 points of bludgeoning and force damage on a hit with a $\times 4$ critical modifier. The bombardier must spend a swift action to charge an arcane munition; this allows the golem to take two shots per round with the mortar.

Arcane Munitions (Ex) A verdant bombardier's slam and mortar attacks count as adamantine, cold iron, magic, and silver for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Blasting Critical (Ex) When a verdant bombardier confirms a critical hit with a slam attack, it can make one mortar attack against that target as a free action (as long as the mortar is loaded).

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A verdant bombardier is immune to spells and spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. Certain spells and effects function differently against it, as noted below.

- Any spell with the electricity descriptor that affects a verdant bombardier renders its arcane mortar unusable for 1 round (no save).
- A *shocking grasp* spell additionally causes the bombardier's mortar to instantly backfire, dealing 6d6 points of damage to the bombardier and staggering it for 1 round (no save).

Reinforced Mortar (Ex) A verdant bombardier adds its Strength modifier to the damage dealt by its mortar.

Story Award: If the PCs are able to convince Umbarno to end his mission to take over Jolizpan, award them XP as if they had defeated him and his verdant bombardier in combat.

C8. Laboratory

Long tables line the eastern and western walls of this laboratory. Shelves line the northern wall, each filled with arcane and scientific equipment. Small planters sit on the lower shelves, though the planters currently hold no plants and are filled only with soil. A hallway extends south from the room.

The botanists used this lab to conduct specific experiments focused on fragments of the kumaru tree.

The lab has mostly fallen into disuse in the past years, as most the facility's botanists have moved on to improve on the current version of the network rather than seek new breakthroughs with the dead kumaru fragments.

The hallway extends a short distance to the network core (area C7).

C9. West Hall (CR 15)

This long hall is mostly isolated, due to the collapse at the south end and the vines blocking the north end.

Creatures: The Children of Kumaru assigned three wyrwoods to guard the halls of the underlevel, but the three have confined themselves to the west hall since Umbarno's tampering blocked off the passage's north and south ends, as they seek to avoid disturbing Umbarno by entering the network core (area C7). A soldier and a mage generally remain in the passage leading to the west dormitory (area C10), while the other soldier remains in the passage leading to Miraina's office (area C11). These guards quickly respond to signs of intrusion in areas C3 or C6, but they won't enter the network core (area C7). Palderren delights in their unwillingness to disturb Umbarno, as it

Verdant Bombardier



only exacerbates the botanist's loneliness and isolation. The wyrwoods fight until destroyed.

WYRWOOD SOLDIERS (2)

CR 12

XP 19,200 each

hp 132 each (see page 17)

WYRWOOD MAGE

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 104 (see page 16)

C10. West Dormitory

This dormitory is virtually identical to area C4, except that Umbarno spends 1 or 2 hours of restless sleep in the easternmost bed each night.

C11. Miraina's Office

Bookshelves line the walls of this tidy office, each stocked with of journals, notes, and tomes. A large wooden desk stands in the center of the room, with several comfortable chairs scattered around it. A door opens in the southeastern corner opposite another door to the northwest.

Miraina maintained this office for her regular studies of the kumaru fragment within the network core. Like the bare office (area C5), this room was supposed to be shared between any researchers currently working in the underlevel, but Miraina used it for so long that it was widely considered her personal office.

The southeastern door leads to the hall, while the northwestern door leads to a small closet. This closet contains a small safe. Unlocking the safe requires a successful DC 35 Disable Device check, but the PCs most likely have Miraina's key.

Treasure: The safe contains a few mundane records and Miraina's *clear spindle ioun stone*, *ring of mind shielding*, and *soulsight goggles* (see sidebar), as well as a small packet of precious kumaru seeds.

RETURNING TO MIRAINA

Once the PCs have recovered Miraina's notes (from area B16) and the *soulsight goggles* (in area C11), they can return to her Jolizpan and allow her to study their *obols* in closer detail. This process takes a few days but doesn't occupy the PCs entire time, leaving them the opportunity to explore Jolizpan further and bask in the gratitude of citizens thankful for the PCs' timely intervention in the attacks on the city and recovery of the Blue Gardens.

Eventually, Miraina has a breakthrough on her study of the *obols* and theorizes that they might help reactivate the Veins of Creation. She gathers the PCs and explains

Soulsight Goggles

Miraina has spent a large portion of her life tinkering and creating different types of magical items. She created the following goggles to better study the leftover soul energy within the kumaru tree.

SOULSIGHT GOGGLES

PRICE

15,000 GP

SLOT eyes

CL 15th

WEIGHT 1 lb.

AURA strong divination



This set of goggles is engraved with geometric patterns and arcane runes. The wearer can immediately see and discern magical auras within 60 feet, as *arcane sight*. In addition, the wearer is more clearly able to see the animating forces of incorporeal creatures and can therefore harm incorporeal creatures with nonmagical attacks, though these attacks deal only half damage. If the wearer uses a magic weapon to attack an incorporeal creature, the attack deals full damage instead. The goggles have no effect on attacks made with *ghost touch* weapons. Once per day on command, the wearer can amplify the goggles' ability to sense animating forces for 1 hour. This amplification allows the wearer the ability to notice, locate, and distinguish between living and undead creatures within 30 feet, just as if she had a psychopomp's *spritsense* ability (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 308). The goggles do not grant the wearer the ability to discern magical auras while amplified.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

COST 7,500 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *arcane sight*, *true seeing*

that Aroden infused the tiniest fragment of his soul into the kumaru tree at the center of Tumbaja Mountain. This allowed him to create his shield, which eventually became the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*. A piece of this shield must have shattered when the PCs were nearby—specifically, during the destruction of Roslar's Coffin during the initial test of the Whispering Tyrant's superweapon—and its slivers found purchase in the PCs' hearts. Without the echo of Aroden's soul energy within the shield, the slivers would have simply killed the PCs. Instead, the slivers and the PCs' souls shared a similar "metaphysical frequency," allowing the slivers to embed themselves not only in the PCs' hearts, but in their very souls. The slivers were attuned to the overwhelming positive energy of the *Radiant Fire*, becoming the *obols* and providing the PCs with the protections against negative energy they have enjoyed since the campaign's beginning. This process occurred within a

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We Have to Die?

Miraina's revelation about reversing the *obols* is likely bittersweet for the PCs. While they may be excited to learn they have a path to defeat the Whispering Tyrant and deny him the destructive power of the *Radiant Fire* forever, the cost of their own souls may seem too high. The events of the rest of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, and particularly its final volume, "Midwives to Death," proceed with the fatalistic assumption that the PCs are consciously and intentionally planning the ultimate sacrifice for victory against evil.

If this is too high a cost for your PCs, and they seem likely to hide rather than face their obliteration as the cost of a truly heroic ending, you might decide that Miraina can offer to lock a portion of their souls in the kumaru tree, just as Aroden did millennia ago. These soul echoes allow the PCs to be resurrected here in Xopatl after their climactic battle against Tar-Baphon, although such a resurrection might take months or years. In this event, the PCs can face the Whispering Tyrant secure in the knowledge that it's not the end of their road.

fraction of second, something that Miraina believes is a minor miracle or evidence of the PCs' great destiny.

The *obols* allow the PCs to help Xopatl in a way they may never have expected. The kumaru tree in Tumbaja Mountain was tainted by Aroden's death, and therefore it cannot live and grow again—even seeds taken from it won't sprout. But the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* wasn't a living thing when Aroden died, and therefore neither are the *obols* within the PCs. The *obols* represent a source of "pure" kumaru energy that Miraina can use to flush out the echoes of Aroden's death and restore the Veins of Creation to their original unaltered state. Assuming the PCs can defeat the evil forces in Tumbaja Mountain, the process would likely take several days of work with the PCs, once they plant new kumaru seeds in the soil of the pyramid, but Miraina is both excited and optimistic that this could be the breakthrough Xopatl's botanists have been seeking for a century.

Regarding the *obols* themselves, however, Miraina has only grim news. Removing an *obol* from a PC is absolutely impossible without tearing the PC's soul apart. This would be worse than mere death, as it would render the PC unrecoverable by any form of resurrection; the PC would simply have no soul to enter the River of Souls and receive a final judgment. An *obol* could be overwhelmed and destroyed if the PC experienced an intense amount of either positive or negative energy, such as detonation of the *Radiant Fire*. Instead of protecting the PC against such a blast, the *obol* would be obliterated along with the PC's body and soul.

Although the PCs' *obols* can't safely be removed, with enough time and access to Tumbaja Mountain, Miraina can "flip" their metaphysical frequency. Doing so removes an *obol's* ability to absorb negative energy damage and grant spell resistance against necromancy spells, although the PCs retain the ability to treat natural and melee weapon attacks as magic, cold iron, and silver for the purpose of overcoming the damage reduction of undead opponents. The PCs instead gain a measure of positive energy amplification; they treat all healing spells and effects that rely on positive energy (such as *cure* spells and channeled positive energy) that they benefit from as automatically maximized, as *Maximize Spell*. More importantly, the PCs' *obols* emit an inverse attunement that affects the metaphysical arcane frequency of the *Radiant Fire*. If the Whispering Tyrant were to detonate a blast of the *Radiant Fire* in an area containing the PCs, its positive energy would be amplified and reflected back to the source. The explosive positive energy would destroy the PCs' *obols*, but it would also destroy the Whispering Tyrant and the fragment of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* within his hand. The PCs could thus ensure the Whispering Tyrant's destruction (which is unlikely to be permanent, as his phylactery would eventually restore him) but, more importantly, it would deny him the *Radiant Fire* forever after. Stopping the Whispering Tyrant and stripping him of his powerful superweapon would be a truly heroic task, but the need to be within a blast of the *Radiant Fire* to do so means this victory would come at the cost of the PCs' bodies and souls.

Story Award: Once the PCs learn about their *obols* and how they can use them to stop Tar-Baphon, award them 51,200 XP.

PART 3: INTO THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

Once Miraina has completed her study of the PCs' *obols*, she seeks to clear out the dead kumaru tree and plant new kumaru seeds in the presence of the PCs' *obols*. Accessing Tumbaja Mountain won't be easy, however, as the undead dragon Istravek has foiled all attempts to reclaim the sacred pyramid since his arrival. If anyone can do so, however, Miraina is convinced it is the PCs, so she asks them to perform this second great favor. Once the PCs rid the pyramid of the Scion of Nightmares, Miraina can reactivate the Veins of Creation and give the PCs a vital tool to foil the Whispering Tyrant.

Tumbaja Mountain lies on the northern edge of Jolizpan Forest, near the Mildanesi Mountains. The pyramid is approximately 30 miles northeast of Jolizpan. The PCs can travel through the forest, following an

overgrown path alongside the Jolizpan River, to reach the pyramid. This takes a little over a day of travel for most groups. Feel free to make use of the Xopatl Encounters table on page 80 to add some encounters to the journey if the PCs haven't yet reached 15th level.

D. TUMBAJA MOUNTAIN

Shortly after Earthfall dropped a destructive trail of meteorites across Arcadia, the people who investigated the fallen debris found themselves infused with great divine energy. These empowered saints used their newfound power to found Xopatl. When this task was done, the saints used the recovered meteorite fragments to build a large temple they named Tumbaja Mountain. This temple was originally a meeting place where the saints shared their knowledge with each other and honed their abilities. As the saints ascended to divinity after the Age of Darkness, the temple was left unattended.

Several decades later, Xopatl travelers found the pyramid and realized that the structure itself was still infused with great power. While, they initially lacked the ability to tap into the power contained within the pyramid, they saw that the flora growing within the cracks of the stone—particularly in the pyramid's innermost chamber—was infused with the same magical energies of the pyramid. Over the next several years, they learned to grow plants specifically to tap into these energies, creating the prototype for the Veins of Creation. These first arcane botanists used this knowledge to build Jolizpan, using the orderly and geometrical architecture of Tumbaja Mountain as a basis for engineering buildings and cities. The most powerful of the plants they grew within Tumbaja Mountain, the kumaru tree, grew in the pyramid's high central chamber, nourished by the pyramid's magic rather than sunlight.

When Istravek arrived at Tumbaja Mountain a few weeks ago, his first order of business was to secure the site. He realized there were two methods to enter the pyramid: the ground-level entrance through a narrow tunnel, and the hole at the top of the pyramid. As the former was too small for him to navigate and might allow attackers easy access, he collapsed it with *transmute rock to mud*. The mud has dried in the weeks since, and now only the stone posts that once marked the entrance stick out of the ground

(see area D1). Istravek now comes and goes through the hole in the pyramid's roof (see area D2). Istravek further supplemented the pyramid's defense by opening a rift to the Negative Energy Plane, just as he had seen on his home of the Isle of Terror many years ago. However, though the rift allowed several powerful minions through, it is currently unstable (see area D16).

Use the map on page 42 for encounters within Tumbaja Mountain.

TUMBAJA MOUNTAIN FEATURES

The pyramid is primarily built of mythically reinforced stone with veins of empowered djezet (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Technology Guide* 56) and gold. The stone is nearly impossible to destroy (hardness 30, hp 500, break DC 60); only a mythic creature or attacks that count as mythic for the purpose of damage reduction can affect the stone. The djezet veins branch out endlessly throughout the stone, creating an effect similar to a *wall of force* all around the structure. These veins glow a bright crimson, illuminating the exterior and interior of Tumbaja Mountain with dim red light at all times. Except for the central chamber (area D8), which extends up through the center of Tumbaja Mountain, the ceilings inside the pyramid are 20 feet high.

Several rooms in Tumbaja Mountain contain mirrors. These mirrors are all constructed of durable, polished

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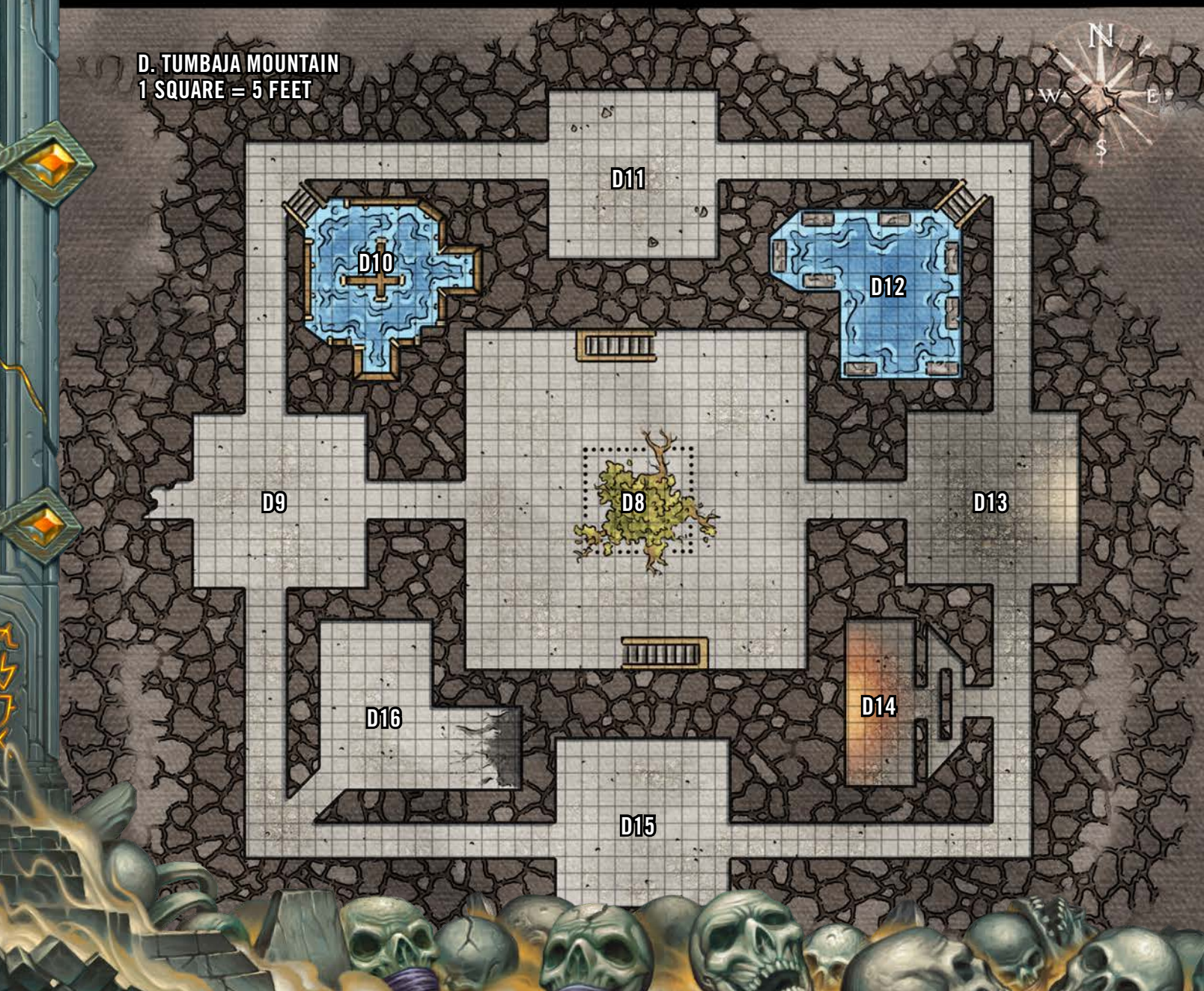
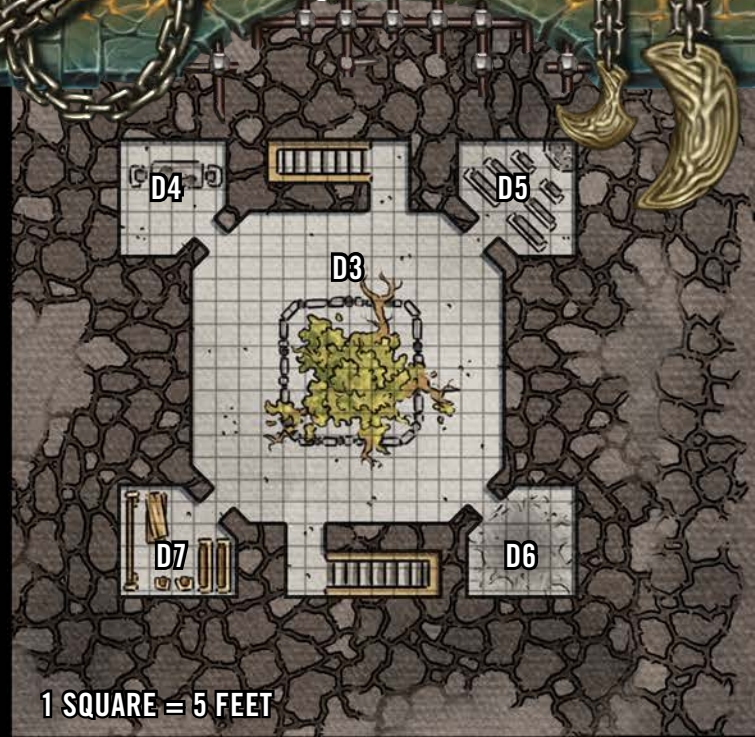
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Tumbaja Mountain





steel, and once acted as a communication system within the pyramid. Although the mirrors can no longer be used to communicate with each other, they still radiate faint auras of divination magic. Each mirror has a hardness of 10 and 10 hit points. A damaged mirror slowly regenerates over the course of 24 hours unless all its pieces are removed from the pyramid.

The saints who created Tumbaja Mountain incorporated a powerful, specialized *forbiddance* effect (CL 20th) on the entirety of the structure to prevent magical ambushes and impede thieves. The effect targets only evil creatures that enter Tumbaja Mountain (12d6, Will DC 35)—including the invaders from the Negative Energy Plane that currently occupy the pyramid's lowest level.

D1. Tumbaja Grounds (CR 17)

A large multi-tiered pyramid made from a dark blue stone veined with red streaks stands in the soft earth of this expansive clearing. The pyramid sides sink deep in the ground, suggesting a larger structure beneath. Flights of stairs rise along the four sides of the pyramid, each rising to its top level. To the west of the pyramid, a few old stone posts rise a few feet from the dirt.

Tumbaja Mountain was the location of many local celebrations, including major religious events and holidays, over the millennia since its creation. Over time, the pyramid slowly sank into the soft earth of Jolizpan Forest. Initially, Jolizpan's botanists did their best to combat this sinking, but they soon realized that this process seemed to empower the Veins of Creation and allowed it to proceed. Even partially sunken, Tumbaja Mountain remained an important fixture in Jolizpan traditions.

Currently, the only entrance to the pyramid is through the platform at its top (area D2). The stone posts once marked a subterranean tunnel into the pyramid, but Istravek collapsed it soon after he arrived. If excavated, it leads to the History of the Sufferers chamber (area D9).

Creature: Weeks ago, Istravek discovered the ancient remains of a destroyed tzitzimitl among the Mildanesi Mountains while out hunting. Istravek undertook the

slow process of restoring and reanimating the tzitzimitl, hoping to use it as a guardian here and, ultimately, as an ally when he rejoined Tar-Baphon. The ravener's progress was interrupted when the kumaru tree responded to the PCs' presence, so he only got as far as animating the creature in its partially completed state and placing it as a guard. The creature's head is fully animated, but its body is atrophied and dangles from its neck as the tzitzimitl floats around the pyramid watching for intruders.

INCOMPLETE TZITZIMITL

CR 17

XP 102,400

Unique variant tzitzimitl (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 276)

NE Huge undead

Init +8; **Senses** *arcane sight*, darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 12, flat-footed 28 (+4 Dex, +20 natural, -2 size)

hp 256 (19d8+171); fast healing 10

Fort +14, **Ref** +10, **Will** +16

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, light to dark;

DR 15/bludgeoning and good; **Immune** cold, electricity, undead traits; **Resist** fire 15; **SR** 28

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee bite +25 (2d8+19 plus 3d6 electricity and energy drain)

Ranged eye beam +16 touch (8d6 electricity and 8d6 force)

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

Special Attacks eclipse, energy drain (2 levels, DC 27)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +24)

Constant—*arcane sight*, fly, *true seeing*

At will—*bestow curse* (DC 22), *deeper darkness*

3/day—*animate dead*, *contagion* (DC 22), *greater teleport*, *haste*

1/day—*wail of the banshee* (DC 27)

TACTICS

During Combat The tzitzimitl casts *haste* and moves closer to intruders on the first round of combat. It thereafter casts *wail of the banshee*, then attacks with its bites and eye beams.

Morale The tzitzimitl fights until reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, at which point it retreats long enough for its fast healing to restore it before seeking



Incomplete Tzitzimitl

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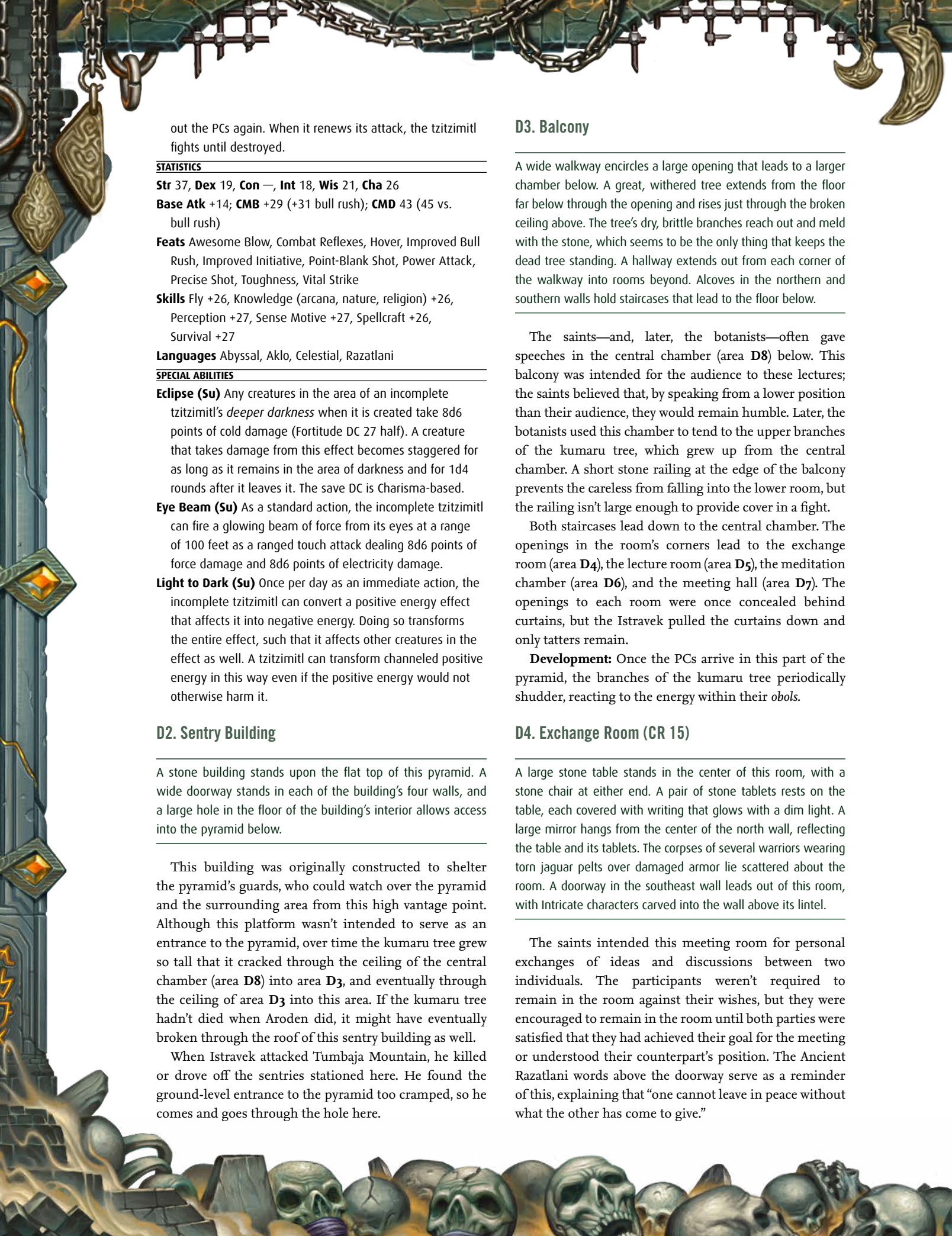
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out the PCs again. When it renews its attack, the tzitzimil fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 37, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 18, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +29 (+31 bull rush); **CMD** 43 (45 vs. bull rush)

Feats Awesome Blow, Combat Reflexes, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Fly +26, Knowledge (arcana, nature, religion) +26, Perception +27, Sense Motive +27, Spellcraft +26, Survival +27

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Razatlani

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Eclipse (Su) Any creatures in the area of an incomplete tzitzimil's *deeper darkness* when it is created take 8d6 points of cold damage (Fortitude DC 27 half). A creature that takes damage from this effect becomes staggered for as long as it remains in the area of darkness and for 1d4 rounds after it leaves it. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Eye Beam (Su) As a standard action, the incomplete tzitzimil can fire a glowing beam of force from its eyes at a range of 100 feet as a ranged touch attack dealing 8d6 points of force damage and 8d6 points of electricity damage.

Light to Dark (Su) Once per day as an immediate action, the incomplete tzitzimil can convert a positive energy effect that affects it into negative energy. Doing so transforms the entire effect, such that it affects other creatures in the effect as well. A tzitzimil can transform channeled positive energy in this way even if the positive energy would not otherwise harm it.

D2. Sentry Building

A stone building stands upon the flat top of this pyramid. A wide doorway stands in each of the building's four walls, and a large hole in the floor of the building's interior allows access into the pyramid below.

This building was originally constructed to shelter the pyramid's guards, who could watch over the pyramid and the surrounding area from this high vantage point. Although this platform wasn't intended to serve as an entrance to the pyramid, over time the kumaru tree grew so tall that it cracked through the ceiling of the central chamber (area **D8**) into area **D3**, and eventually through the ceiling of area **D3** into this area. If the kumaru tree hadn't died when Aroden did, it might have eventually broken through the roof of this sentry building as well.

When Istravek attacked Tumbaja Mountain, he killed or drove off the sentries stationed here. He found the ground-level entrance to the pyramid too cramped, so he comes and goes through the hole here.

D3. Balcony

A wide walkway encircles a large opening that leads to a larger chamber below. A great, withered tree extends from the floor far below through the opening and rises just through the broken ceiling above. The tree's dry, brittle branches reach out and meld with the stone, which seems to be the only thing that keeps the dead tree standing. A hallway extends out from each corner of the walkway into rooms beyond. Alcoves in the northern and southern walls hold staircases that lead to the floor below.

The saints—and, later, the botanists—often gave speeches in the central chamber (area **D8**) below. This balcony was intended for the audience to these lectures; the saints believed that, by speaking from a lower position than their audience, they would remain humble. Later, the botanists used this chamber to tend to the upper branches of the kumaru tree, which grew up from the central chamber. A short stone railing at the edge of the balcony prevents the careless from falling into the lower room, but the railing isn't large enough to provide cover in a fight.

Both staircases lead down to the central chamber. The openings in the room's corners lead to the exchange room (area **D4**), the lecture room (area **D5**), the meditation chamber (area **D6**), and the meeting hall (area **D7**). The openings to each room were once concealed behind curtains, but the Istravek pulled the curtains down and only tatters remain.

Development: Once the PCs arrive in this part of the pyramid, the branches of the kumaru tree periodically shudder, reacting to the energy within their *obols*.

D4. Exchange Room (CR 15)

A large stone table stands in the center of this room, with a stone chair at either end. A pair of stone tablets rests on the table, each covered with writing that glows with a dim light. A large mirror hangs from the center of the north wall, reflecting the table and its tablets. The corpses of several warriors wearing torn jaguar pelts over damaged armor lie scattered about the room. A doorway in the southeast wall leads out of this room, with intricate characters carved into the wall above its lintel.

The saints intended this meeting room for personal exchanges of ideas and discussions between two individuals. The participants weren't required to remain in the room against their wishes, but they were encouraged to remain in the room until both parties were satisfied that they had achieved their goal for the meeting or understood their counterpart's position. The Ancient Razatlani words above the doorway serve as a reminder of this, explaining that "one cannot leave in peace without what the other has come to give."

The bodies here were savaged by monstrous felines: the nightprowlers who now stalk the pyramid's lower levels. Their equipment has been ruined and is now valueless.

Haunt: The bodies in the room belong to an elite squadron of Jolizpani soldiers who were sent to defeat Istravek mere days after the ravener took over the pyramid. Known as the Golden Claws, these soldiers were handpicked for their skill and wore ceremonial jaguar skins over their armor. The Golden Claws were prepared to face Istravek, but not for his undead reinforcements. Hard-pressed and separated from their leader, Numoz Yantis, the Golden Claws made their last stand in this room. Their unfulfilled task has caused them to arise as a single, collective haunt.

RAGE OF THE GOLDEN CLAWS

CR 15

XP 51,200

NE persistent haunt (area D4)

Caster Level 15th

Notice Perception DC 35 (to hear distant shouting of soldiers)

hp 67; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect A horde of shimmering shortspears made of force appear in the room, each held by a spectral soldier wearing armor and jaguar skins. On the haunt's initiative count, it attacks each creature in the room with a shortspear (Atk +21 melee, 4d6+3 points of force damage). The spectral soldiers and force shortspears cannot be attacked or harmed, but they disappear when the haunt is dispersed.

Destruction The Golden Claws can rest only once the nightprowlers in Tumbaja Mountain are destroyed. Alternatively, if Numoz Yantis enters this room, he can command the Golden Claws to stand down and relieve them of duty, ending the haunt once and for all.

Treasure: The two tablets are each variants of a *codex of conversation*^{UI}. Unlike normal *codices of conversation*, these tablets can't duplicate other books, only similarly sized stone tablets. Further, the tablets don't have typical pages; instead, the user "turns a page" by tapping the right side of the tablet to advance the recorded text or by tapping the left side to move back through the text. The writing on the tablet glows like a candle and is legible even in the dark. The two tablets are currently filled with the agonizing screams and desperate last words of the Golden Claws.

D5. Lecture Room

This large room holds stone benches lined up in rows with a small dais in the northeast corner. A small, stone podium bearing complex geometric carvings stands on the end of the dais. Several armored corpses lie slumped about the room, each wearing cloaks of acid-pitted jaguar fur. A hallway leads out of the room to the southwest, next to a large mirror.

The saints of Xopatl used this room for intimate lectures on magic or history, and the Jolizpani botanists later used this room for similar purposes. Several injured Golden Claws retreated to this room, where Istravek killed them. Their corpses retain gruesome evidence of Istravek's sharp claws and acidic breath.

Treasure: The armor and gear of the soldiers are too damaged to be useful, except for an acid-scarred +2 *shortspear* and a dented iron *ring of protection* +2.

D6. Meditation Chamber (CR 16)

The floor of this room is shallowly indented, like a large bowl. Eight large mirrors line the walls at slightly different angles, each reflecting the others. A short passage leads out of this room to the northwest.

This chamber was once used for personal reflection. The mirrors not only allow anyone sitting or standing in the room's central depression to see themselves from multiple angles but also, more importantly, served as a reminder to evaluate any difficulties from multiple perspectives.

Creature: Numoz Yantis, an inquisitor of Cihua Couatl (see page 66), was the leader of the guards stationed at Tumbaja Mountain. A serious and pious man, Numoz was well respected by the guards of Jolizpan and Tumbaja Mountain alike. When Istravek first arrived, Numoz was one of the few survivors to make it to Jolizpan and raise the alarm. He was also one of the first warriors to return, leading the Golden Claws in their ill-fated expedition to retake the pyramid. Unfortunately, even with the blessings of Cihua Couatl behind him, Numoz was no match for Istravek. Mortally wounded, Numoz retreated to this room before dying. His soul could not move on, however, due to his twofold failure to protect the sacred pyramid, and his restlessness and shame caused him to rise as a ghost. Once driven by duty and faith, Numoz is now obsessed with revenge. Numoz sees only his failures reflected in the mirrors of this room; they capture his thoughts, and he can't work out how to leave so long as they reflect his image.

When the PCs enter this room, Numoz materializes to demand that the PCs release him so he may face Istravek once more. In his desire to make up for lost time, Numoz is abrasive toward anyone who doesn't immediately aid him with his cause. The PCs most likely have little understanding as to what is keeping Numoz in this room, but a PC can mollify the ghost with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check (increase the DC to 30 if the PC doesn't speak Razatlani). If the PCs don't attempt to calm Numoz down, or if they fail the Diplomacy check to do so by 5 or more, the ghost attacks.

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If the PCs can calm Numoz, he becomes friendlier and explains his predicament to them. He is a short-tempered and serious man, viewing the world as a series of conflicts to overcome. The easiest way to allow Numoz to leave is to cover or destroy all eight mirrors in this chamber. Alternatively, the PCs might allow Numoz to possess one of them to exit, or use more powerful magic such as *antimagic field* to suppress the supernatural compulsion that keeps him bound to the room. Finally, a PC can help Numoz overcome the feelings of guilt that entrap him with a successful DC 35 Diplomacy check.

Once he is free of this chamber, Numoz heads directly to area D8 to fight Istravek; without the PCs' help, however, he's likely to fail and rejuvenate in this room, where he is trapped by the mirrors yet again.

NUMOZ YANTIS CR 16

XP 76,800

Male human ghost

inquisitor of Cihua Couatl

15 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144,

Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide

38, see page 66)

N Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +34

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +1 Dex)

hp 161 (15d8+90)

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

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation, stalwart; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee +2 *ghost touch holy shortspear* +15/+10/+5 (1d6+3 plus 2d6 vs. evil) or corrupting touch +12 (16d6)

Special Attacks corrupting gaze (DC 21), exploit weakness, frightful moan (DC 21), greater bane (15 rounds/day), judgment 5/day (2 simultaneous), malevolence (DC 21), might of the gods (+15, 15 rounds/day), telekinesis (DC 21)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +19) 6/day—strength surge (+7)

Inquisitor Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +19) At will—*detect alignment*, *discern lies* (15 rounds/day)

Inquisitor Spells Known (CL 15th; concentration +18) 5th (3/day)—*flame strike* (DC 19), *greater*

command (DC 18), *mark of justice*, *spell resistance* 4th (5/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *hold monster* (DC 18), *holy smite* (DC 18), *spell immunity* 3rd (6/day)—*cure serious wounds*, *daylight*, *heroism*, *keen edge*, *prayer* 2nd (6/day)—*aid*, *cure moderate wounds*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *see invisibility*, *spiritual weapon* 1st (6/day)—*bane* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *protection from evil*, *remove fear*, *true strike* 0 (at will)—*detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *resistance*, *stabilize*, *virtue*

Domain Strength

TACTICS

During Combat Numoz identifies a capable warrior and attempts to possess her with his malevolence ability. If unable to find a suitable target or if the attempt fails, Numoz uses his *greater command* spell to compel his foes to locate Istravek and defeat him. If these strategies fail, Numoz attacks his opponents with a combination of his shortspear attacks and his offensive spells, augmenting his melee attacks with his

greater bane ability.

Morale Numoz fights until destroyed, only to re-form in this room in 2d4 days.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +12 (+14 disarm); **CMD** 26 (28 vs. disarm)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Enforcer^{APG}, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Lookout^{APG}, Outflank^{APG}, Shield Wall^{APG}, Shielded Caster^{APG}, Swap Places^{APG}, Toughness, Weapon Focus (shortspear)

Skills Climb +14, Diplomacy +22, Fly +9, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (religion) +20, Perception +34, Sense Motive +33, Stealth +22, Survival +22, Swim +14; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Celestial, Razatlani, Sylvan

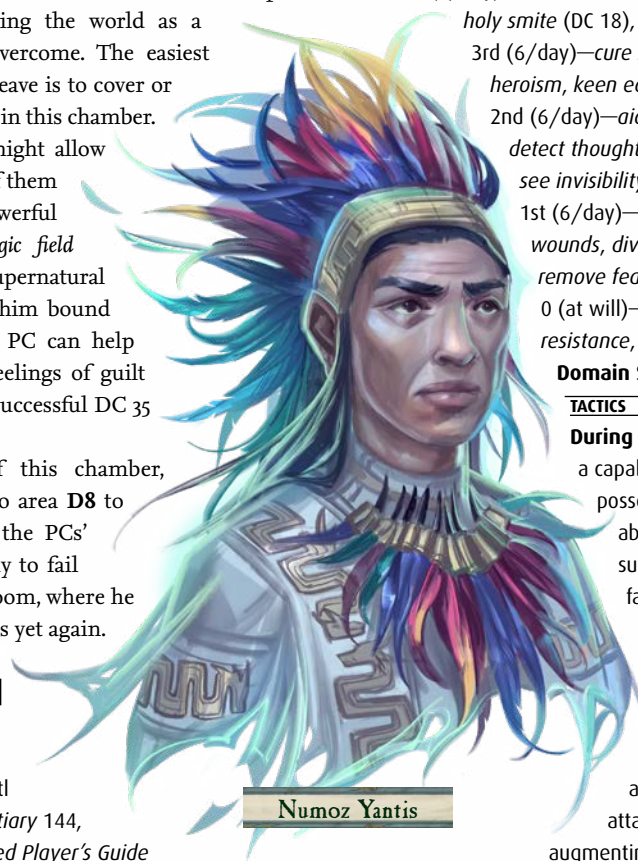
SQ monster lore +4, solo tactics, stern gaze +7, track +7

Gear +2 *ghost touch holy shortspear*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rejuvenation (Su) Numoz is doomed to remain a ghost until Istravek is destroyed.

Story Award: If the PCs are able to win over Numoz and release him from this room, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.



Numoz Yantis

D7. Meeting Room

Several stone benches are stacked against the southern wall of this room. Two small stone tables sit beside the stack and a large mirror rests against one of the tables. A hallway leads out to the northeast.

Never knowing when a lecture or meeting might take up one of the other chambers, this room was designed to serve the needs of anyone at any time. The benches and tables allowed those who needed the room to arrange the furnishings as required. This room went unused for the majority of the saints' time here, and as a result, the mirror was never hung up.

D8. Central Chamber (CR 18)

A great, dead tree stands in an open plot of earth in the stone floor of this enormous room. The tree rises through a hole in the roof eighty feet above ringed by a balcony, and its branches splay out across the ceiling and upper floor. The floor is flooded with muddy waters. Hallways lead away from the room to the east and west, and steep stairs in the northern and southern ends of the room lead up to the balcony.

The saints originally used this chamber for large meetings, lectures, sermons, and ceremonies. Once the citizens of Jolizpan claimed the structure, they left the chamber unused for some time. When they learned that the local plants were drawing upon Tumbaja Mountain's power, they dedicated this room to serve as the central hub of their attempts to tap into this energy. With exceptional difficulty, the botanists removed several of the floor's stones, exposing the ground beneath. They then planted the seed of a kumaru tree descended from the legendary Tree of the Thousand Eyes in the southern Jolizpan Forest. The tree began to grow, nourished by the red glow of the pyramid's stones, even in the absence of sunlight. The kumaru tree empowered the Veins of Creation for millennia, but it withered instantly when Aroden died.

The kumaru tree's branches limit visibility between this room and the upper floor. Creatures in the main chamber have partial cover from attacks originating on the upper floor, and vice versa.

The dead tree visibly stirs in the presence of the PCs' *obols*, drawing strength from the artifact shards lodged within them. This presence causes the tree to constantly attempt to reconnect with the Veins of Creation, a process it can never complete due to a blockage created by the echo of Aroden's dead soul energy still lodged within the arcane network.

Both staircases lead up to the balcony (area D3). The western hallway leads to the entry chamber known as the

History of the Sufferers (area D9), and the eastern hallway leads to the History of the Rising (area D13).

Creatures: Istravek has spent the past few weeks studying the dead kumaru tree. Given the tree's recent quivering, Istravek is certain that some outside force is causing the tree to react. He suspects that mastering this outside source might allow him to derive some genuine insights from the tree.

When Istravek meets the PCs, he eyes them curiously. Like Miraina, Istravek has a permanent *arcane sight* spell in effect and a deep knowledge of the kumaru tree, which allow him to notice the PCs' *obols*. If the PCs don't immediately attack, Istravek takes some time to question the PCs about their *obols*. He is willing to provide information to the PCs in exchange; Istravek is proud of his association with the Whispering Tyrant and pleased he was able to reach an arrangement with Umbarno Xipali. He offers to remove the *obols* from the PCs, citing his millennia seeking knowledge and his unsurpassed magical prowess as guarantees of his inevitable success. This is a mere ploy on Istravek's part to convince the PCs to trust him, and he's genuinely surprised if the PCs fall for his ruse. He intends to use the time this ploy buys to determine what magical effects the PCs have in place, before attacking. If the PCs take Istravek up on his offer, he does his best to hide his surprise and asks to examine each PC individually so that the "emanations of the *obols* don't unduly influence each other." Once they are separated, Istravek attacks.

ISTRAVEK CR 18
XP 153,600
hp 297 (see page 56)

Development: Once the PCs defeat Istravek, they may consider their task done. However, the negative energy of the nearby rift (area D16) suppresses the life-giving energy needed to grow the kumaru seeds, which Miraina quickly realizes if she is brought here. The PCs must therefore close the rift and clear out the remaining dangers of Tumbaja Mountain before they can proceed.

D9. History of the Sufferers

This large room features large bas-relief carvings in each of its four corners. The reliefs depict several humans crouched over, crying tears. The tears grow into corn, squash, and other crops at the ground. Standing over each of these humans are different individuals clad in regalia adorned with great feathers and large flowing cloaks. Open passages lead in all four directions.

The saints created this entry chamber to remind anyone visiting Tumbaja Mountain of their earliest,

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humble history. This relief depicts the life of the people of Xopatl before Earthfall, when they lived as slaves of the Razatlani Empire. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (history) check understands that this carving refers to this ancient time of servitude. Each of the other rooms around the exterior of the lower level (areas **D11**, **D13**, and **D15**) continues the history of Xopatl.

The passage to the west leads to a wall of natural earth. This passage once led out of the pyramid, through its guardians had to repeatedly dig it deeper as the pyramid slowly sank. Istravek collapsed the passage with *transmute rock to mud*, and the mud has dried to ordinary dirt in the few weeks since. Although it's possible to dig out of the pyramid from this direction, doing so takes many hours.

D10. Ancient Library (CR 16)

Several tall stone bookshelves stand against the walls of this room and crisscross in its center. Books bound in metal or thick leather fill the shelves, although the books on the lowest shelves appear badly damaged from the shallow pool of dirty water in the room. A doorway in the northwest corner leads out of the room, with a large mirror hanging nearby.

The books here all recount adventures or fables, each written by a saint or by a mortal companion of a saint. The books are made of exceptionally durable materials, and many have been treated with *unguent of timelessness* to extend their ability to survive the ages. All of these stories have since been reproduced and distributed throughout Xopatl, but the originals remain here. The water in the room is recent, due to the gradual sinking of the pyramid and Istravek's soddan efforts to seal the passageway to the pyramid's lower level.

Creature: When Tar-Baphon was imprisoned in Gallowspire, many of his agents fled to distant parts of the world to escape the wrath of the Knights of Ozem. One of these—a unique rawhead from the Shadow Plane who calls herself Cucuy—fled to Arcadia long ago. Istravek reached out to Cucuy as soon as he arrived in Xopatl, insisting that the rawhead return to Tar-Baphon's service by helping Istravek in Tumbaja Mountain. Cucuy had since built a fearful reputation in her own right and was reluctant to accept any master, but she didn't want to risk angering Tar-Baphon, even half a world away. Cucuy therefore reluctantly serves Istravek, primarily assisting the dragon with planar lore about the Void Rift in area **D16** and the creatures that have emerged from it.

Cucuy is currently scouring the library on Istravek's orders, seeking information that can be used to stabilize the rift. Although Cucuy seemed eager to engage in this tedious task, she's actually planning to betray Istravek; in addition to seeking information about planar rifts, Cucuy

is looking for information that might help her wrest control of the planar rift away from Istravek.

Cucuy is tall and gaunt, with clothing and limbs that occasionally fade away into shadow and back to reality again. Although she's intent on her research when the PCs arrive, she's alert for danger and quickly hides if she suspects intruders.

CUCUY

CR 16

XP 76,800

Female shadow rawhead assassin 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 238, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 241)

NE Medium outsider (augmented monstrous humanoid)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, see in darkness; Perception +26

Aura frightful presence (120 ft., DC 24)

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 19, flat-footed 21 (+3 armor, +8 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural)

hp 253 (19 HD; 3d8+16d10+152)

Fort +14, **Ref** +20, **Will** +15; +1 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities *blur*, *freedom of movement*, negative energy affinity, shadow blend, uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/magic, 15/good and silver; **Immune** bleed, fear; **Resist** cold 15, electricity 15; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.; *air walk*

Melee *Hushing Blade* +29/+24/+19/+14 (1d6+10/17-20), bite +22 (1d6+4), claw +22 (1d4+4 plus 1d4 Cha damage) or bite +27 (1d6+9), 2 claws +27 (1d4+9 plus 1d4 Cha damage)

Special Attacks create bloody bones, death attack (DC 17), sneak attack +5d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +20)

Constant—*air walk*, *blur*, *freedom of movement*

At will—*command undead* (DC 18), *suggestion* (DC 19)

3/day—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *deeper darkness*, *hold person* (DC 19), *phantasmal killer* (DC 20)

1/day—*gaseous form*, *greater scrying* (DC 23), *shadow walk*

TACTICS

During Combat Cucuy keeps to the shadows to hide and uses her death attack against obviously dangerous targets like well-armored foes. Once she is spotted, she uses *phantasmal killer* and Improved Feint to dispatch her foes as quickly as possible. Cucuy prefers to attack the youngest-looking target in any group last, muttering "I'm saving you for later, sweet one."

Morale If reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, Cucuy retreats to find allies to join her in the fight, starting with the voidbones in area **D12** but asking for aid from the nightshades if the voidbones have already been defeated. She then returns to attack the PCs, preferably by making a death attack while the PCs are occupied with fighting her allies. She thereafter fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 27, **Con** 26, **Int** 18, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 46

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Greater Feint, Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +27, Bluff +25, Disguise +18, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (local, planes) +23, Perception +26, Sense Motive +23, Stealth +36

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Razatlani

SQ bloody bones mastery, hidden terror, poison use

Gear +2 padded armor, *Hushing Blade* (a mithral sword of *subtlety* that provides a +2 enhancement bonus to the wielder's Dexterity)

Development: If the PCs attack Istravek and retreat, Istravek likely sends Cucuy out to hunt them down and eliminate them. Pleased with the break from tedious research, Cucuy patiently seeks out the PCs and awaits a good time to strike.

D11. History of the Fallen Sky

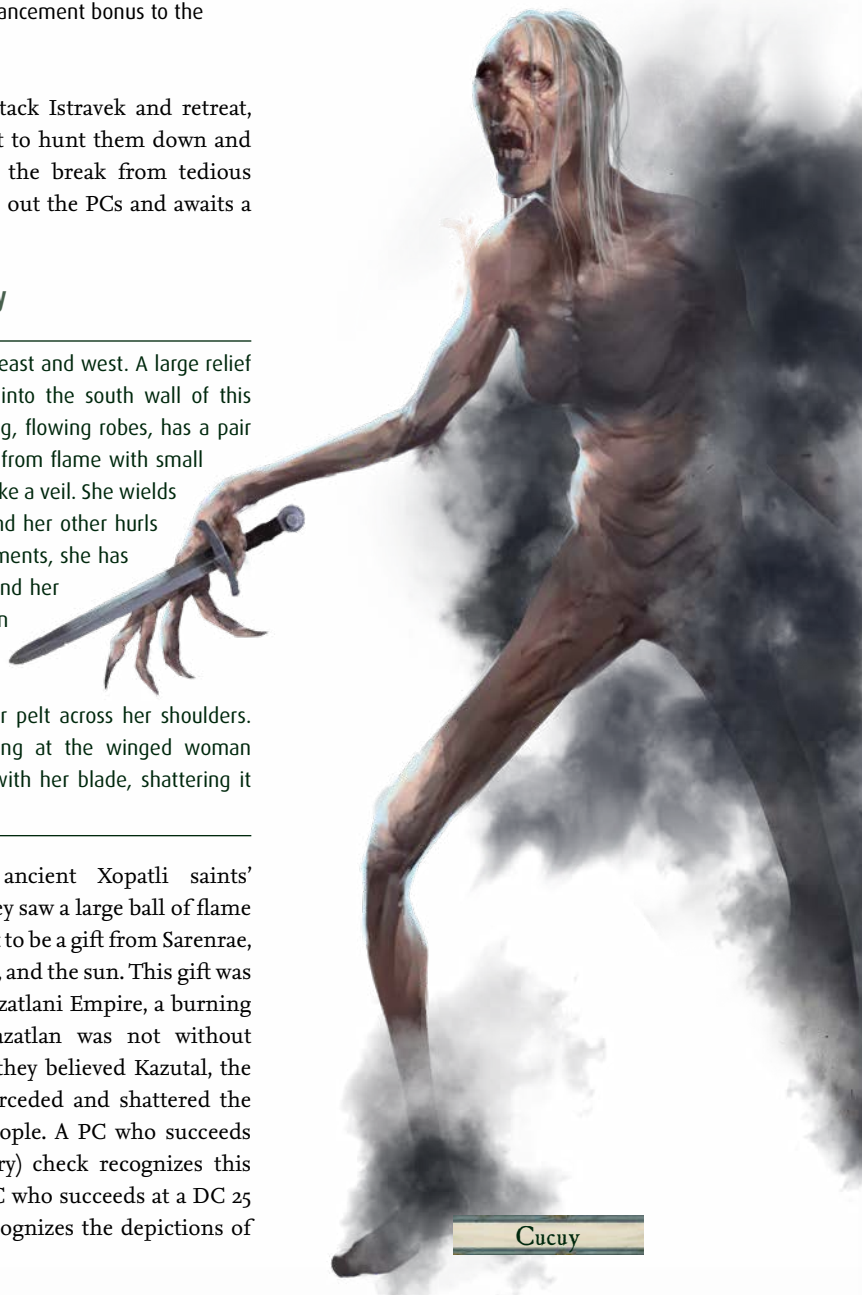
Halls lead out of this room to the east and west. A large relief depicting two women is carved into the south wall of this room. One woman is wearing long, flowing robes, has a pair of wings, and bears a halo made from flame with small embers dropping before her face like a veil. She wields an elegant sword in one hand, and her other hurls a ball of flame. Despite her armaments, she has a pleasant, caring demeanor behind her veil of embers. The other woman has dark hair in a massive braid. She carries a thick blade and wears leather armor and a jaguar pelt across her shoulders. This armored woman is screaming at the winged woman as she strikes the ball of flame with her blade, shattering it into pieces.

This room depicts the ancient Xopatli saints' understanding of Earthfall. They saw a large ball of flame appear in the sky and believed it to be a gift from Sarenrae, the goddess of cleansing, dance, and the sun. This gift was to be the destruction of the Razatlani Empire, a burning away of their oppressors. Razatlan was not without their own gods, however, and they believed Kazutal, the Razatlani goddess of war, interceded and shattered the mighty flame to shield her people. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (history) check recognizes this depiction of Earthfall, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check recognizes the depictions of Sarenrae and Kazutal.

While the saints' explanation for Earthfall was incorrect, Earthfall ultimately heralded the end of the Razatlani Empire. The event led to the rise of the saints and of Xopatli, the first nation to successfully fight back against Razatlan.

D12. Haunted Guest Room (CR 15)

Stone slabs line the walls of this L-shaped room, each about seven feet long and three feet wide. Large mirrors hang in the centers of the north, east, and south walls, their frames bearing elaborate carvings of jungle creatures. Muddy water pools on the floor. A hallway leading northeast is the room's only exit.



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The saints mostly used this temple during the day, returning to their homes or attending to other duties in the evening. On the rare occasion that a saint or a guest remained overnight, they slept here. The stone slabs served as beds, although their once-comfortable coverings are now only tattered scraps, and the curtains that once provided privacy are long gone.

Creatures: When Cucuy came to Tumbaja Mountain to aid Istravek, the rawhead brought a trio of bloody bones with her to serve as her minions. The bloody bones happened to be near the Void Rift in area **D16** when it opened, and the rift's energy imbued them with strange powers. These negative energy-charged bloody bones—which Cucuy calls her voidbones—now hide in the mirrors in this room, waiting for Cucuy to call on them.

If the voidbones notice the PCs entering this room, they wait until a PC examines a mirror before they all attack. If no PC does so, the voidbones instead monitor the PCs as they travel around Tumbaja Mountain, using their mirror jump ability to travel from mirror to mirror throughout the pyramid. The voidbones might later attack from some other mirror, if they can do so with surprise. If the voidbones don't detect a PC near a mirror within the next several minutes, they start to worry that the PCs might leave the pyramid entirely; in this case, the voidbones leap out of the mirrors here and hunt the PCs down.

The rawhead Cucuy in area **D10** knows as soon as any of the voidbones take damage, and she comes stealthily over to investigate.

VOIDBONES (3)

CR 12

XP 19,200 each

Negative energy-charged bloody bones (*Advanced Bestiary* 213, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 49)

NE Medium undead

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 25, flat-footed 22 (+6 Dex, +2 dodge, +5 natural, +7 profane)

hp 161 each (14d8+98)

Fort +9, **Ref** +17, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, obscuring energy, strong resistance; **DR** 10/bludgeoning, 5/good; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** positive energy 10

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee bite +20 (1d8+10 plus 1d6 negative energy, bleed, and energy drain), 2 claws +20 (1d8+10/19–20 plus 1d6 negative energy and bleed)

Ranged searing darkness +16 touch (7d8 negative energy)

Special Attacks bleed (1d6), energy drain (1 level, DC 24), mirror jump (DC 24), negative energy attacks, rend (2 claws, 1d8+15), searing darkness

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +17)

At will—*dimension door* (via reflective surfaces only)

3/day—*mass inflict moderate wounds* (DC 23)

TACTICS

During Combat The voidbones prefer to flank foes in melee, abandoning foes who are bleeding to move on to other enemies. They use their searing darkness ability against foes they can't reach in melee.

Morale A voidbones reduced to fewer than 50 hit points uses its mirror jump ability to flee, then waits to ambush the PCs the next time a PC approaches a mirror anywhere in Tumbaja Mountain.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 23, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 45

Feats Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Lunge, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Stealthy

Skills Acrobatics +20, Climb +27, Escape Artist +24, Intimidate +38, Perception +20, Stealth +27

Languages Razatlani

SQ hide in plain sight, unholy grace

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Negative Energy Attacks (Su) A voidbones deals an additional 1d6 points of negative energy damage with its natural attacks. Its natural attacks are treated as evil-aligned weapons for the purpose of damage reduction.

Obscuring Energy (Su) Flickering shadows and wisps of black smoke surround a voidbones, granting it concealment (20% miss chance). When the voidbones stands still, the shadows grow stronger and it benefits from total concealment (50% miss chance).

Searing Darkness (Su) Three times per day as a standard action, a voidbones can blast a creature with a dark ray of negative energy as a ranged touch attack. This ability has a range of 240 feet and deals 7d8 points of negative energy damage. This ray instead restores double this amount to undead creatures.

Strong Resistance (Su) If a voidbones takes enough positive energy damage in a single attack to destroy it (such as from a cleric's channeled energy), it can attempt a Will save (the DC is equal to the damage dealt by that attack) to reduce the damage taken by half. Against other effects that can banish or destroy a voidbones outright, it can attempt a Will save, even if that effect normally wouldn't allow a save. If the effect normally allows a save, the voidbones rolls twice and uses the better result, and on a success, the voidbones is unaffected by the effect.

D13. History of the Rising

A carving in this room's wide eastern wall depicts an enormous mountain with several tiny humans standing on and around it.

The humans at the base of the mountain appear weak and emaciated, while the humans higher on the mountain are healthier, stronger, and larger. At the top of the mountain stand a man and a woman. They are holding hands, and their free hands rise to the sky, holding what appears to be a mote of pure light. Passages lead out of this room to the north, west, and south.

The saints carved the depictions in this room to immortalize the power they received after Earthfall. It was this power that granted them their mythic abilities. A PC who succeeds at a DC 35 Knowledge (history) check realizes that the human figures are the saints who gained the power to found Xopatl.

The relief conveys two important lessons that the saints wanted to instill in any visitors to Tumbaja Mountain. The first is that anyone can achieve greatness through sufficient effort; the second, that no one can achieve true success alone. Even PCs who do not understand the historical significance of the carving understand these inspiring lessons with a successful DC 15 Perception check.

The mote of light glows brightly, as a permanent *continual flame* effect, and it cannot be suppressed or dispelled by non-mythic magic; as a result of this tenacious illumination, the creatures from the Negative Energy Plane that inhabit the pyramid avoid this room if possible.

Treasure: Because the glow here keeps other creatures in the pyramid at bay, Istravek placed his hoard in this room. A combination of treasures Istravek brought from Avistan and those taken from the defeated guards of Tumbaja Mountain, the dragon's hoard consists of 60,040 cp; 8,500 sp; 4,650 gp; and 931 pp. In addition there is a large diamond worth 5,000 gp, an opal statuette in the shape of two serpents twisting around each other worth 3,500 gp, two dozen masterfully carved silver statuettes of rearing dragons worth 350 gp each, a +2 *shock shortbow*, a pair of *arachnid goggles*^{UE}, a *chime of opening*, a suit of dragonhide plate made from the scales of a bronze dragon, a *potion of gaseous form*, a *ring of sustenance*, a *rod of negation*, a *scroll of banishment*, a *scroll of disrupting weapon*, a *scroll of greater teleport*, a *scroll of prismatic wall*, and a *summon-slave crystal*^{UE}.

D14. Sauna (CR 15)

A series of floor-to-ceiling walls crack a winding entrance to this large chamber, which the saints used as a sauna for hygiene and ritual purification. The thick, close walls were designed to keep the heat of the room safely contained. The botanists considered this room dangerous, however, and rarely entered it.

Hazard: The west wall of the main chamber ignites as soon as any living creature passes through the narrow halls and enters the sauna, quickly glowing red-hot and putting out intense waves of heat, as a permanent *wall of fire* (CL 17th). The wall cools just as quickly once the room is empty of living creatures. The buckets of water once found in this room—which, when thrown on the wall, created steam—are long gone, as are the comfortable reclining benches that could be moved to varying distances from the heated wall for comfort.

Several purple crystals, like tumorous crystalline growths, sprout from the corners of the room near



Voidbones

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the western wall. These are the budding forms the sceaduinars in this room are carefully tending. Each has only 20 hit points, and therefore quickly overheats and shatters if the heated wall burns for long.

Creatures: The Void Rift pulled in four crystalline natives of the Negative Energy Plane called sceaduinars. Passionately hateful of life and undeath alike, the sceaduinars fought against the nightshades caught up in the rift with them. Hopelessly outclassed by the nightshades, two of the sceaduinars were quickly slain, and the two survivors were driven away. These survivors however, were geotrophoses—geometer-midwives among the sceaduinars—who carried with them crystals that will eventually hatch other sceaduinars. They are undertaking the gradual process of rebuilding their numbers to overwhelm the nightshades and return home to the Negative Energy Plane.

The sceaduinars are paranoid, but they consider themselves well defended here because the passages are too small for the nightshades to easily fit through, and they know the *forbiddance* effect prohibits dimensional travel. In actuality, the nightshades don't particularly care where the sceaduinars have gone and don't intend to pursue them.

The sceaduinars don't count as living creatures for triggering the heated wall in the room and, in fact, don't realize the danger they've put their fragile crystals in by placing them up against that wall. If living creatures enter this room and the heated wall ignites, the sceaduinars fly into a frenzy and attempt to kill intruders, seeking to save or avenge their crystals.

If the PCs parley with the sceaduinars without stepping into the sauna—such as by calling out to them from the narrow halls—the sceaduinars respond with their harsh, grating voices. The sceaduinars want the fragments of purple crystal near the rift in area D16; these are the remains of their fallen kin and can be used to force the crystals here to develop more quickly. The sceaduinars know that living creatures value riches, so they offer exorbitant sums that they don't have—such as fist-sized rubies or heaps of platinum coins—in an effort to secure the PCs' cooperation. Of course, these offers are all lies, and the sceaduinars betray and attack anyone who brings them the shattered purple crystals once they have the coveted crystals in hand. The sceaduinars don't pursue any foes who flee the sauna, out of fear of being led into a trap by the nightwalker or the nightprowlers they know are lurking nearby.

SCEADUINAR GEOTROPHOSES (2)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

Advanced sceaduinar witch 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 292, 239, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., lifesense, low-light vision, *see invisibility*; Perception +32

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 18, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +7 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 179 each (18 HD; 9d6+9d10+99)

Fort +14, **Ref** +16, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities entropic flesh, negative energy affinity, void child; **DR** 10/adamantine or good; **Immune** cold, death effects, disease, energy drain, poison; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10, sonic 10; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Melee bite +20 (1d6+7), 2 wings +18 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks energy drain (1 level, DC 21), entropic touch, hexes (blight, evil eye, misfortune, slumber, tongues)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +16)

Constant—*entropic shield*, *hide from undead* (DC 18)

At will—*bleed* (DC 17), *dimension door* (self only), *dispel magic*

3/day—*death knell* (DC 19), *deeper darkness*, *enervation*, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 20), *silence* (DC 19), *stone call*^{APG} (DC 19)

1/day—*antilife shell*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *harm* (DC 23), *slay living* (DC 22)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +15)

5th—*feeblemind* (DC 22), *waves of fatigue*

4th—*black tentacles*, *crushing despair* (DC 21), *wandering star motes*^{APG} (DC 20)

3rd—*glyph of warding* (DC 19), *rage*, *screech*^{APG} (DC 19), *vampiric touch*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *daze monster* (DC 19), *fog cloud*, *glitterdust* (DC 18), *see invisibility*, *web* (DC 18)

1st—*beguiling gift*^{APG} (DC 18), *lesser confusion* (DC 18), *ill omen*^{APG}, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*guidance*, *mending*, *message*, *resistance*

Patron Entropy^{HA}

TACTICS

Before Combat A geotrophos casts *mage armor* and *see invisibility* if it suspects trouble.

During Combat A geotrophos uses *enervation*, *ill omen*, and its evil eye hex to impair its opponents' saving throws, then uses more powerful effects such as *feeblemind* and *harm*. Geotrophoses avoid melee and cast *antilife shell* to keep determined melee opponents at a distance.

Morale Enraged with their predicament, the geotrophoses fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 24, **Con** 20, **Int** 22, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 38

Feats Dodge, Improved Familiar, Mobility, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Perception), Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Penetration, Step Up, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +25, Bluff +28, Escape Artist +28, Fly +23, Heal +26, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (planes) +31, Perception +32, Sense Motive +26, Stealth +36; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Knowledge (planes), +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Protean, Terran

SQ witch's familiar (isitoq [*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 159] that resembles a purple crystalline eye with wings)

D15. History of the Aspirants (CR 16)

A relief carved into the north wall of this room depicts two groups of humans. One group consists of bald men and women with their hands outstretched and beams shooting from them. The beams travel across the relief towards the hearts of the humans in the other group. This group is clad in resplendent cloaks and headdresses marked with beautiful feathers, but they weep, and their tears grow into flowers at the ground beneath them. Openings to the east and west lead out of this room.

The saints believed that cooperation was the greatest virtue of all. When one works and learns with another, it improves the self. This relief depicts a hopeful image of forgiveness. The saints hoped that there would be a time that the people of Xopatl would forgive the Razatlani and work together. The flowers represent the new life this possibility could hold. This time has not yet come to pass, even after millennia, but the saints carved it among their histories out of hope.

Creatures: Three powerful feline nightshades called nightprowlers were among the creatures drawn through the rift in area D16, along with their master, a nightwalker named Kalhezzar.

Curious and stealthy, the nightprowlers occasionally skulk around the other chambers of Tumbaja Mountain looking for intruders—which is why they were in the upper levels of the pyramid to help Istravek repel the Golden Claws—but they lair here, near their master, and they are most often encountered in this chamber.

ADVANCED NIGHTPROWLERS (3)

CR 13

XP 25,600

Advanced nightprowler nightshades (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #102: *Breaking the Bones of Hell* 90)

CE Large undead (extraplanar, nightshade)

Init +10; **Senses** darksense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., *detect magic*, low-light vision, scent; Perception +25

Aura desecrating aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 179 (18d8+98)

Fort +12, **Ref** +16, **Will** +17

DR 10/good and silver; **Immune** cold, undead traits; **SR** 24

Weaknesses light aversion

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +23 (3d6+11/19–20 plus creeping dark and grab), 2 claws +23 (1d8+11 plus creeping dark)

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

Special Attacks channel negative energy (7d6, DC 26, 7/day), creeping dark, rake (2 claws +23, 1d6+11), shadowpounce

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +17)

Constant—*detect magic*, *greater magic fang*

At will—*deeper darkness*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3/day—*contagion* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, quickened *invisibility*

1/day—*air walk*, *confusion* (DC 18), *cone of cold* (DC 19), *haste*, *hold monster* (DC 19), summon (level 4, 2 shadows)

TACTICS

Before Combat The nightprowlers cast *invisibility* if they suspect intruders.

During Combat One nightprowler casts *haste* on itself and its allies while the others attack with their shadowpounce. They thereafter alternate using their channeled negative energy, spell-like abilities, and physical attacks to keep their foes off-balance.

Morale Relentlessly fierce and bloodthirsty, the nightprowlers fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 39 (43 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Command Undead, Dodge, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*invisibility*), Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Acrobatics +27 (+35 when jumping), Climb +29, Knowledge (religion) +23, Perception +25, Stealth +29 (+37 in dim light and darkness), Survival +25; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in dim light and darkness

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Creeping Dark (Su) The nightprowlers' natural attacks leave a stain of dark shadows that linger in and around the wound, known as the creeping dark—this condition can be resisted with a successful DC 23 Fortitude save. If the victim fails, it becomes staggered for 1 round, after which the creeping dark affects the victim further by preventing healing and hampering vision. A character attempting to use magical healing on a creature damaged

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by a nightprowler's creeping dark must succeed at a DC 26 caster level check, or the healing has no effect on the injured creature. As long as a creature suffers the creeping dark, its vision is obscured with shadows as well—all creatures gain a 20% miss chance from attacks by the victim. The creeping dark is a curse effect that lasts until removed or until all damage to the victim is healed. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Shadowpounce (Su) Nightprowlers have the pounce ability, and when they use this ability, they can also make rake attacks. Up to three times per day when a nightprowler pounces from an area of dim illumination, it generates a shimmering aura of false images that grants it a 50% miss chance, as if under the effects of a *displacement* spell, for 1d4 rounds.

D16. Void Rift (CR 16)

A large, shuddering rift of darkness fills an alcove on the east side of this large, L-shaped room, emanating a numb cold. Small chunks of purple crystal litter the floor near it. A small hallway in the southwestern corner connects with the larger hallway outside.

To solidify his control over Tumbaja Mountain, Istravek created a portal to the Negative Energy Plane just as he had seen his mother, Karamorros, do during his youth. Istravek lacked his mother's knowledge and control, however, and his erratic rift ripped several denizens of the Negative Energy Plane from that realm and deposited them here when it opened. With a combination of promises and bullying, Istravek gained the extraplanar creatures as allies, although few feel any true allegiance to the dragon.

Furthermore, the Void Rift that Istravek created is erratic, opening and closing the portal to the Negative Energy Plane at random. When the PCs first arrive, the rift is open. The rift thereafter opens (if it is closed) or closes (if it is open) every 1d10 minutes. If the PCs return here after an extended period of time, simply determine randomly whether the rift is open or closed.

The rift can be permanently closed or permanently opened with a successful DC 40 Knowledge (planes) check or a successful DC 30 Use Magic Device check. Up to two other characters can assist on this check. The use of *antimagic field*, *gate*, *mage's disjunction*, or similar powerful magic lowers the DC to manipulate the rift by 10. On a success, the rift is permanently opened or closed, as desired by the character making the check. On a failure by 5 or more, the rift becomes even more unstable; it alternates between remaining open or closed for 1d10 × 10 minutes, and the DC to manipulate the rift further increases by 5.

The chunks of purple crystal on the floor are the remains of two sceaduinars who faced the nightshades here and lost; the surviving sceaduinars in area D14 desperately want their return and falsely promise extraordinary amounts for them.

Creatures: The most powerful creature the rift pulled into Tumbaja Mountain is Kalhezzar, a nightwalker whose mastery over her powerful hunting cats—the nightprowlers in area D15—is well-known among her kind. Kalhezzar dislikes the confining stone and magical wards of Tumbaja Mountain, but she's concerned that some of her rivals in the Negative Energy Plane might discover the beachhead in the Material Plane and put it to use. Determined to deny them the opportunity, she watches the gate warily, particularly while it is open, to ensure that no other creatures come through it. When the rift is closed, she makes short excursions around the pyramid's lowest level, but she never goes far, as she's concerned the rift will open in her absence and her enemies will sneak through it.

Kalhezzar wants the rift permanently closed, preferring to forever deny her rivals access, but she's hesitant to attempt to do so on her own for fear of the unstable rift trapping her on this side of it. Istravek has already offered to help close the rift in exchange for a year of Kalhezzar's servitude, but the nightwalker is too proud to take the dragon up on his offer. If the PCs seem competent and knowledgeable, Kalhezzar offers to withdraw through the rift with her nightprowlers if the PCs agree to permanently close it behind her. Kalhezzar certainly makes this offer if reduced to fewer than 60 hit points—not only does she respect the PCs' prowess, but she realizes that a negotiated retreat might be her only chance of survival. If the PCs agree, Kalhezzar aids them in closing the rift from the other side, lowering the DC of checks to manipulate the rift by 10. If the PCs fail to close the rift, however, Kalhezzar assumes treachery and hunts the PCs down to enact revenge.

KALHEZZAR

CR 16

XP 76,800

Nightwalker nightshade (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 201)

hp 241

Development: So long as the rift remains open, Tumbaja Mountain isn't safe. If the PCs point out the problem to Miraina, she offers to help them by preparing *antimagic field* and using her Knowledge (planes) or Use Magic Device skills to help the PCs close the gate (or to close the gate herself, if the PCs lack these skills). Miraina is particularly suspicious of Kalhezzar, however, and she refuses the nightwalker's aid unless the PCs negotiate on Kalhezzar's behalf.



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CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs clear out all of the enemies from Tumbaja Mountain, the hardest part of their work in Xopatl is done. Miraina heaps praise upon the PCs for the tremendous tasks they've accomplished. She and several other botanists from Jolizpan—which might include Children of Kumaru botanists whom the PCs convinced to leave the Blue Gardens—get to work on clearing out the dead kumaru tree and preparing the soil for the seeds that the PCs recovered from Miraina's safe in the Blue Gardens.

Once this work is complete, Miraina and the botanists ask the PCs to be the ones to plant the kumaru seeds in the soil, so the energy of their *obols* can recharge them. The botanists enact a ritual as the PCs do so, using their arcane botany to encourage the seeds' viability. Almost immediately, the seeds sprout and show new life. The sprouts are too fragile to survive further accelerated growth, but they are just powerful enough to reactivate the Veins of Creation. The network must regrow naturally over the following years, but the PCs have granted Jolizpan

and all of Xopatl a great boon, and their gift goes down in legend. The PCs can feast, celebrate, and rest as much as they would like—the people of Jolizpan are in no hurry to see their new heroes leave.

Before the PCs depart, however, Miraina reminds them that she must invert the energy of their *obols*, to give them an unexpected weapon against the Whispering Tyrant and his *Radiant Fire*. The process is fairly straightforward, but it requires them to spend a few days in the presence of the kumaru seedlings in Tumbaja Mountain. Their *obols* thereafter amplify positive energy rather than absorbing negative energy, as described on page 40. This may allow them to survive long enough to confront the Whispering Tyrant and goad him into using the *Radiant Fire* against them. These events are addressed in the next adventure in the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, "Midwives to Death."

Returning to the Inner Sea region on the other side of the planet is likely straightforward for heroes of the PCs' power. If they lack the magic to reach the other side of the world (such as *greater teleport*, or a pair of *plane shift* spells), Miraina acquires a *scroll of greater teleport* and, if necessary, casts the spell herself. In any case, Miraina gives each PC a mighty hug and wishes them good luck in the dangerous journeys ahead.



Istravek

The vile black dragon ravener Istravek has committed his life and his unlife to serving the Whispering Tyrant. He is intent on finding any knowledge that can aid his master in retaking Avistan.

ISTRAVEK

CR 18

XP 153,600

Male ancient black dragon ravener (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 92, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 230)

NE Huge undead (water)

Init +4; **Senses** *arcane sight*, blindsense 120 ft., darkvision 240 ft., dragon senses, *true seeing*; Perception +44

Aura cowering fear, frightful presence (300 ft., DC 28)

DEFENSE

AC 41, touch 11, flat-footed 41 (+3 deflection, +30 natural, -2 size)

hp 297 (22d8+154)

Fort +21, **Ref** +14, **Will** +21; +2 resistance vs. good

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, soul ward (22 hp);

DR 15/good; **Immune** acid, undead traits; **SR** 29

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +34 (2d8+19/19-20 plus 4d6 acid), 2 claws +33 (2d6+13/19-20), tail slap +31 (2d6+19/19-20), 2 wings +31 (1d8+6/19-20)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks acid pool (50-ft. radius, 20d6 acid), acidic bite, breath weapon (100-ft. line, 20d6 acid plus 2 negative levels, Reflex DC 28 half), corrupt water, crush (Small, DC 28, 2d8+19), soul consumption (DC 28), soul magic

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 22nd; concentration +29)

Constant—*Speak with animals* (reptiles only)

At will—*darkness* (100 ft.), *insect plague*, *plant growth*

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 16th; concentration +23)

8th—*horrid wilting* (DC 25)

7th—*finger of death* (DC 24), *greater teleport*

6th—*acid fog*, *greater dispel magic*, *true seeing*

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 22), *telekinesis* (DC 22),

transmute rock to mud (DC 22), *waves of fatigue*

4th—*acid pit*^{APG} (DC 21), *black tentacles*, *fear* (DC 21), *remove curse*

3rd—*gaseous form*, *haste*, *hold person* (DC 20), *ray of exhaustion* (DC 20)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 19), *blur*, *false life*, *invisibility*

1st—*cause fear* (DC 18), *ear-piercing scream*^{UM} (DC 18),

expeditious retreat, *hold portal*, *protection from good*

0—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 17)

TACTICS

Before Combat Istravek casts both *protection from good* and *true seeing*.

During Combat Istravek keeps to higher ground as best as he can. He uses spells like *acid fog* and *black tentacles* to block the pyramid's exit, intent on keeping his foes inside, then casts *baleful polymorph* and *horrid wilting* on them. Istravek resorts to physical combat only if he has no other way to prevent a foe from slipping out of the pyramid.

Morale Istravek fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 37, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** 22, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +22; **CMB** +37; **CMD** 50 (54 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Greater Spell Penetration^B, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Spell Penetration^B, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Fly +17, Handle Animal +29, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana, geography, history, nature) +31, Perception +44, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +31, Stealth +31, Swim +46, Use Magic Device +32; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Intimidate, +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Necril, Orc, Razatlani

SQ arcane plates, swamp stride, water breathing

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arcane Plates (Su) While wearing his golden plating, Istravek's natural attacks count as magic for the purpose of bypassing DR and striking incorporeal creatures. Istravek treats his sorcerer level as 2 higher for the purposes of determining spells per day, spells known, and effective level of spellcasting. Once per week, he can replace one of his spells known with any other spell on the sorcerer spell list of the same level. The plating also grants him Spell Penetration and Greater Spell Penetration as bonus feats. It crumbles to dust if removed.

Permanent Spells (Sp) Istravek has used *permanency* to gain the effects of *arcane sight* and *resistance*.

Long before his battle with Aroden, the necromancer Tar-Baphon identified the Isle of Terror as an ideal place for his capital, but he was stymied by three powerful natives of the Isle of Terror: the black dragon Karamorros and her children, Istravek and Naraga. With honeyed words and promises of arcane power, Tar-Baphon lured Istravek and Naraga into his service away from the island. Although both dragons served the wizard-king loyally for several years, the arrangement was in fact Tar-Baphon's ploy to claim the Isle of Terror from their mother. When he deemed the time right, Tar-Baphon imprisoned the draconic siblings in one of his laboratories and demanded Karamorros's obedience. At first, the dragon resisted, but when Tar-Baphon presented her with flayed strips of skin from her offspring, she relented, and the Isle of Terror fell to Tar-Baphon's control at last.

Despite his promises to Karamorros to leave Istravek and Naraga unharmed, Tar-Baphon continued his experiments and transformed both of them into undead dragons called raveners. Naraga fought the transformation, but Istravek recognized the power undeath could offer and willingly accepted Tar-Baphon's "gift." He knew that Tar-Baphon surpassed his mother in power and decided his future was better spent serving the wizard-king rather than his kin. When Tar-Baphon called for a powerful servant to test a passage to the Negative Energy Plane he had crafted on the Isle of Terror, Istravek craftily nominated his sister. Tar-Baphon took Naraga to the Isle of Terror and returned with a helm crafted from her horns—the only parts of the undead dragon to survive.

The Whispering Tyrant gave Istravek very explicit instructions about what he must do once Gallowspire was opened and the ravener and his master were free. Within moments of release, Istravek sprang into action. He teleported to Tumbaja Mountain and slew or drove off its defenders. Istravek eagerly began studying the kumaru tree within the pyramid, but he was stymied by the fact the tree was long dead. Even the unexpected aid of the traitorous botanist Umbarno Xipali didn't provide Istravek with answers. Only once the dead tree began quivering in the presence of the PCs did Istravek believe he might be able to serve his master's will after all.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Istravek is the main antagonist of the adventure, putting into motion several events that the PCs will deal with directly. The dragon is entirely irredeemable, obsessed only with serving the Whispering Tyrant and advancing his master's knowledge. Istravek desperately wants to understand the connection between the PCs' *obols* and the kumaru tree, and he plans to rip the answers from the PCs' hearts.

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Miraina Olviris

Jolizpan's most experienced arcane botanist, Miraina Olviris is a kind-hearted figure with a great love for her home. She is intent on doing what she can to help the people of Jolizpan with her knowledge and her arcane skill.

MIRAINA OLVIRIS

CR 16

XP 76,800

Female old human expert 6/transmuter 11

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** *arcane sight*, see *invisibility*; Perception +23

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +4 shield)

hp 114 (17 HD; 11d6+6d8+45)

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +21

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +20)

At will—change shape (*beast shape II* or *elemental body I*, 11 rounds/day)

12/day—telekinetic fist (1d4+5 bludgeoning)

Transmuter Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +20)

6th—greater *dispel magic*, *mage's lucubration*, *move earth*

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 24), *break enchantment*, *elemental body II*, *plant shape I*, *wall of force*

4th—*charm monster* (DC 23), *confusion* (DC 23), *dimensional anchor*, *mnemonic enhancer*, *remove curse*, *stone shape*

3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *deep slumber* (DC 22), *dispel magic*, *fly*, *haste*, *secret page*, *tongues*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *darkvision*, *detect thoughts* (DC 21), *false life*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray*

1st—*burning hands* (DC 20), *charm person* (DC 20), *feather fall*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *read magic*

Opposition Schools conjuration, illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat Miraina casts *cat's grace*, *mage armor*, and *shield* in anticipation of any combat.

During Combat Miraina does her best to separate herself from her foes through the use of spells like *stone shape* and *wall of force*. If she finds herself in unavoidable melee, she resorts to *elemental body* or *plant shape* to fight.

Morale Miraina attempts to escape from combat as soon as possible. She remains only if others are in danger; in that case, she fights to the death so that others may live.

Base Statistics Without her preparations, Miraina's statistics are **Init** +2; **AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11; **Ref** +7; **Dex** 7; **CMD** 25; Fly +8.

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 11, **Con** 12, **Int** 28, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 27

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Defensive Combat

Training, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Counterspell Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration, Toughness

Skills Appraise +19, Diplomacy +23, Fly +10, Heal +13, Knowledge (arcana, geography, history, local, nature, planes) +29, Perception +23, Profession (gardener) +23, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +29, Use Magic Device +23

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, Orc, Razatlani, Sylvan, Treant

SQ arcane bond (ring), physical enhancement (+3)

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of dimension door*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (19 charges); **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance* +4, *headband of vast intelligence* +6, *ring of protection* +3, spellbook

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Permanent Spells Miraina used *permanency* to gain the effects of *arcane sight* and *see invisibility*.

As a child, Miraina grew up hearing stories of a better time—a time when the Veins of Creation, a gift of the saints, provided for Xopatl. People in Xopatl, and in Jolizpan especially, had come to rely in their daily lives on the arcane power that coursed through the network. Determined to help her people reclaim these past glories, Miraina studied botany and magic, just like the legendary arcane botanists from her parents' stories.

The botanists of the renowned Blue Gardens of Tlil achieved a breakthrough when Miraina was a teenager, exhibiting the first miniaturized arcane network to the people of Jolizpan. This new development inspired Miraina even more, as she saw there were concrete advances to be made, and she applied at Kimanéz University to continue her studies. Miraina was an excellent student and joined the ranks of the botanists

of the Blue Gardens a few years later. There, she provided significant contributions to further the development of the smaller, more limited arcane networks. While she helped restore much of Jolizpan's power, she still believed that there must be a way to restore the original network.

Miraina spent the next several years visiting Tumbaja Mountain and studying the defunct network and the dead kumaru tree directly. After many years, Miraina identified a peculiar energy echoing within the dead kumaru tree—the first breakthrough in understanding what happened to the Veins of Creation in many years. She studied this energy and the sacred pyramid's history, eventually piecing together Aroden's part in deactivating the network. She hoped to expel the spiritual echo caught in the tree and restore it to life, but she did not know how.

Miraina eventually married a local farmer from Kimanéz Farm, a local farm that collaborated with the Blue Gardens and Kimanéz University. She took a break from her work at the Blue Gardens to focus on her family, but she continued her research at home. Once her children became adults and set off on their own, Miraina returned to the Blue Gardens.

When Istravek came to Tumbaja Mountain and proved too powerful to drive off, Miraina was devastated. Without access to the kumaru tree, there was little hope for restoring the Veins of Creation. Miraina attempted to improve her magical repertoire in hopes of facing the dragon herself, but realistically she is far too old to confront a dragon directly. Rather than risk her life, Miraina resigned herself to aiding the next generation of botanists, spellcasters, and warriors.

Miraina is a jovial soul who always puts others before herself. She is known for her generosity and her love of socializing. She frequently invites people she meets to her home for food and pleasant conversation. Miraina is a gifted academic and a natural teacher. When she is out of her depth, she calls upon her expansive contacts to find the right person to help with a given situation.

Miraina is a short, stout, grandmotherly woman in her early seventies. She has a deeply lined, expressive face and keen eyes. She likes wearing the traditional floral patterns of Jolizpan and often adorns her gray hair with flowers.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Miraina acts as the PCs' guide in an unfamiliar land. She warms to the PCs almost immediately and treats them as if they were family, but this is not due to her natural kindness alone—she recognizes that the PCs represent the first significant chance of reclaiming Tumbaja Mountain and possibly restoring the Veins of Creation. She offers the PCs rooms in her house to use while they are in Jolizpan and gladly shares what she knows. Miraina

can also escort the PCs through the city to help them find whatever they may need by way of equipment or information. If the PCs need magical aid, Miraina is happy to cast any spells within her power or direct the PCs to another spellcaster who can. If the PCs are kind to Miraina in turn, she's likely to cover any costs for such spellcasting.

Miraina is a valuable source of information for the PCs throughout their time in Arcadia. She can detail the layout of the Blue Gardens of Tlil and Tumbaja Mountain, as she has spent a great deal of time in both locations. During downtime, Miraina asks the PCs to recount stories of their endeavors and of the Inner Sea region. She gladly sits for hours trading stories of her life in Jolizpan and of Xopatl's legends.



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Umbarno Xipali

Umbarno Xipali is a misguided scientist swept up in an imprudent commitment to his people. His unbridled dedication has led him to slip into immoral acts for the sake of his goals.

UMBARNO XIPALI

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male human cleric of Ah Pook 16 (see page 72)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** *true seeing*; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 23 (+10 armor, +2 deflection, -1 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 139 (16d8+64)

Fort +16, **Ref** +6, **Will** +19

Defensive Abilities *freedom of movement*; **SR** 28

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 *terbutje* +18/+13/+8 (1d8+6/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 21, 8d6), scythe of evil (8 rounds, 3/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +23)
10/day—touch of darkness (8 rounds), touch of paranoia (8 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 16th; concentration +23)

8th—*death clutch*^{HA} (DC 25), *fire storm* (DC 25), *unholy aura*^D (DC 25)

7th—*blasphemy* (DC 24), quickened *cure serious wounds*, *destruction* (DC 24), *power word blind*^D, quickened *searing light*

6th—*antilife shell*, *blade barrier* (DC 23), *greater dispel magic*, *harm* (DC 23), *phobia*^{D, HA} (DC 23)

5th—*flame strike* (DC 22), *greater command* (DC 22), quickened *shield of faith*, *spell resistance*, *summon monster* ^V (1d3 shadows), *true seeing*

4th—*air walk*, *dismissal* (DC 21), *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *they know*^{D, UI} (DC 21), *tongues*

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 20), *blindness/deafness* (DC 20), *cure serious wounds*, *deeper darkness*^D, *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *prayer*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *haunting mists*^{D, UM} (DC 19), *hold person* (DC 19), *lesser restoration*, *resist energy*, *spiritual weapon*

1st—*bane* (DC 18), *cause fear* (DC 18), *command* (DC 18), *divine favor*, *protection from good*^D, *remove fear*, *sanctuary* (DC 18)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*

D domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Evil (Sahkil subdomain, see page 61)

TACTICS

Before Combat Umbarno casts *magic vestment* on his armor each day. Prior to combat, he casts *bear's endurance*, *freedom of movement*, *spell resistance*, and *true seeing*.

During Combat In the first round of combat, Umbarno casts quickened *shield of faith* on himself and *unholy aura* on himself and his verdant bombardier. He thereafter keeps his distance and uses his spells to harm or disable his foes, resorting to melee only if cornered.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, Umbarno casts quickened *cure serious wounds* to recover. If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points again, he surrenders, fighting to the death only if there appears to be no other option.

Base Statistics Without his spells, Umbarno's statistics are **AC** 20, touch 11, flat-footed 20; **hp** 123; **Fort** +15; **Con** 12.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 24, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Extra Channel, Great Fortitude, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), Toughness, Weapon Focus (*terbutje*)

Skills Diplomacy +20, Knowledge (arcana, religion) +21, Knowledge (nature) +24, Profession (gardener) +18, Spellcraft +21

Languages Abyssal, Infernal, Razatlani

SQ eyes of darkness (8 rounds/day)

Combat Gear *potion of displacement*, *potion of spider climb*, *scroll of slay living*; **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, +2 *terbutje*^{UE}, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical might* +2 (Str, Con), *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of inspired wisdom* +4, *ring of protection* +2, *Tlil mask* (see page 25), *verdant boots*^{UE}, 375 gp

Once a priest of Kazutal, Umbarno Xipali set out a decade ago to travel through Arcadia and find what he could to help restore the Veins of Creation. He left Jolizpan to great fanfare and great promise, vowing he

would not return without the knowledge to restore the defunct arcane network. Instead, Umbarno found only frustration and despair, spiraling into a malaise that caught the attention of Ah Pook, god of death and destruction. As Umbarno's despondency twisted into an unhealthy mixture of insecurity and pride, Ah Pook sent a powerful servitor—a sahkil named Palderren—to shepherd Umbarno's gloom and to entice him to evil.

Umbarno became convinced Kazutal had failed him when he was facing his peoples' greatest problem. He returned to Jolizpan dejected, and was surprised to receive a hero's welcome—the people there remembered the confidence and faith of the priest who had left, and they were confident he would not have returned without success. Feeling trapped, Umbarno lied, insisting that he had newfound knowledge about the Veins of Creation when he in fact had none. This desperate falsehood compelled him to push on in his research, taking dangerous risks with the plants at the Blue Gardens of T'ilil and with the remnants of the kumaru tree in Tumbaja Mountain. He soon attracted a group of like-minded scientists fed up with decades of fruitless research. This group dubbed themselves the Children of Kumaru, and they shared techniques of radical botany in their private meetings. Umbarno never shared that he'd first heard whispers of these techniques from Palderren.

When Istravek took over Tumbaja Mountain, the Jolizpani botanists were overcome with dismay. Umbarno made a secret trip to the pyramid to speak with the undead dragon, offering his knowledge of the Veins of Creation and Tumbaja Mountain in exchange for the opportunity to plunder the lore and materials left behind in the researchers' hasty flight. Yet even with this ill-gotten knowledge and a successful takeover of



SAHKIL SUBDOMAIN

You tap into the fear inherent to the soul of every mortal to further your will.

Associated Domain: Evil.

Associated Deities: Ah Pook, sahkil tormentors.

Replacement Power: The following granted power replaces the touch of evil power of the Evil domain.

Touch of Paranoia (Su): You can imbue a target with great suspicion and doubt as a melee touch attack. A creature affected by your touch does not have allies and is not considered to be an ally to any other creature, including other creatures affected by this effect. The affected creature cannot move freely through its allies' spaces, flank creatures with them, cooperate with them using teamwork feats, or give or receive benefits from the aid another action or any spells or effect that affects only allies. This ability lasts for a number of rounds equal to 1/2 your cleric level (minimum 1).

You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

Replacement Domain Spells: 2nd—*haunting mists*^{UM}, 4th—*they know*^{UI}, 6th—*phobia*^{HA}.

the Blue Gardens, Umbarno remains stymied in his research.

Convinced he needs more resources to reach a breakthrough, Umbarno has begun plans to take over all of Jolizpan.

Umbarno drives himself hard and sleeps little, and it shows. once well groomed, he has since spiraled downward into an unfortunate lack of self care. He wears the armor and weapons from his traveling days out of habit, not out of genuine worry that he might face combat, and this equipment is as neglected and worn as Umbarno himself.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

As leader of the Children of Kumaru, Umbarno is the PCs' ultimate foe in the Blue Gardens. Compassionate PCs might work to redeem the traitorous priest.

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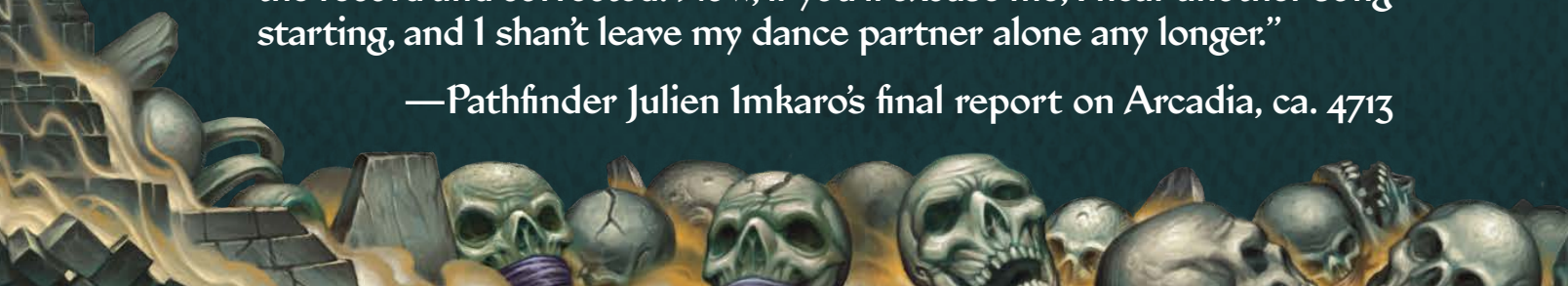
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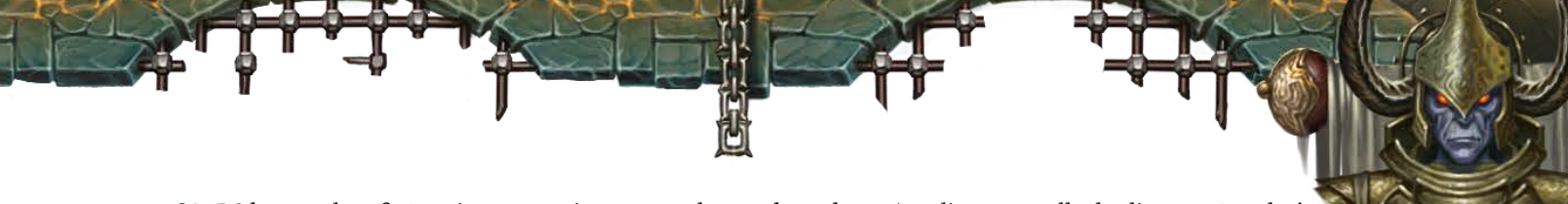


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“I’ve never seen anything like it. The land is beautiful, and the people just as much. It took some time for them to warm up to me, as they seem very wary of outsiders. After a few months, I was able to win them over, and let me tell you, being included in all the local customs was the most rewarding experience I’ve had. Daresay, it was... fun! The people of Xopatl know how to celebrate, and it must be something they have lots of practice doing, as it seems they have some kind of festival every week. I’m happy to say that the initial reports of Arcadians being some kind of savage people or Arcadia being a land lost to time are severely incorrect. I believe these previous accounts should be stricken from the record and corrected. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I hear another song starting, and I shan’t leave my dance partner alone any longer.”

—Pathfinder Julien Imkaro’s final report on Arcadia, ca. 4713





The Lands of Promise are unique, even by Arcadian standards. Nestled securely between the Mildanesi Mountains and Lake Tapipallati, Xopatl (so-PAH-tul) has had very little in the way of unwanted outside contact, allowing the nation to focus on its own endeavors undisturbed. Xopatl is a land of kind, helpful people with a distinctive culture and, at least until recently, unbridled magic. The direct access to the power of the Veins of Creation in Tumbaja Mountain has allowed the nation to prosper and craft unique magical relics that both help keep the nation safe and make everyday life simpler. This common reliance on magic has come at a cost, however, as the loss of this magic at the beginning of the Age of Lost Omens caused major disruptions in Xopatl. Over the last century, everyday life in the nation has shifted significantly, and most people have now adapted to this vastly different lifestyle, but whether this is just another trial for the people of Xopatl or the beginning of a major decline for the great nation remains to be seen.

HISTORY

The history of Xopatl, like that of most regions of Arcadia, is tied to the nation of Razatlan and the ancient Razatlani Empire. This great empire once stretched across the entirety of the continent, from the Land of the Northern Lakes all the way to the southernmost point of Arcadia. Thousands of years ago, the people of Razatlan forcibly subjugated dozens of other nations, and the empire used its influence to claim resources, technology, and cultural aspects wherever it saw fit. Razatlan's hold over Arcadia went unchallenged for centuries, until Earthfall marked the start of the mighty empire's decline.

When the *Starstone* fell on Golarion, Arcadia saw its share of the devastation. Many small fragments rained down upon the continent, bringing skymetals, raw magical essence, and other mysterious energies with them. One such fragment fell deep into the Mildanesi Mountains, crashing in the land now known as Xopatl. Locals of the nearby land of Innazpa sought out this fragment and discovered that a vibrant forest had sprung up in the mountains where the fragment had crashed. At the center of the forest was a mystical stone not unlike the *Starstone*. Albeit significantly less powerful, this stone still had enough potency to grant these explorers great mythic power and elevate them into hero-gods. These hero-gods, referred to as yans and yantis in local legend, used their newfound power to fight back against their Razatlani oppressors.

These hero-gods swiftly pushed Razatlan out of Innazpa and established their own independent nation. Though the loss of the region was relatively minor for the Razatlani Empire as a whole, this initial uprising served as inspiration for several other nations

throughout Arcadia, eventually leading to Razatlan's slow decline over the following centuries.

Freed from their oppressors, the new hero-gods sought to learn more about the mysterious stone fragment, and some settled in the new forest. They soon learned to control the plants around them—a foundational knowledge that later became a unique form of arcane botany. This great power allowed the hero-gods to weather away the surrounding Mildanesi Mountains and carve out their own new land, a process they were able to complete in mere decades. The hero-gods named their new land Xopatl, meaning Land of Promise, to represent both the empire they had recently escaped and the gifts that had allowed them to do so. The name, they hoped, would serve as a reminder to be cautious with this power, lest they become like Razatlan and use their might for greedy or selfish reasons.

Over the following centuries, the power of the hero-gods waned, but their might allowed Xopatl to flourish while most of Golarion suffered during the Age of Darkness. When the last of the hero-gods died or ascended, at the start of the Age of Anguish, Xopatl was left to survive on its own. The legacy of the hero-gods remains, however, with many of Xopatl's citizens now referring to these hero-gods as living saints, easily recognized by their unique names beginning with the title of Yan or Yanti. While the saints left Xopatl in a prosperous state, the nation's prosperity has ebbed and flowed over millennia, much like that of other Arcadian nations. Its unique geography allowed Xopatl to remain relatively intact to the present day, but when the Veins of Creation failed upon Aroden's death just over a century ago, everyday life in Xopatl had to suddenly adapt to unimagined changes.

GOVERNMENT

Xopatl's national government is a democracy, with major elected officials selected in semiannual elections. No central figure acts as the nation's leader; instead, this responsibility falls to a council of 19 elected officials, one from each of Xopatl's major settlements. This Chosen Council is the final arbiter of major decisions for the nation, while a second body called the House of Elders handles everyday matters throughout the nation, such as building roads and providing education. All cities are free to govern themselves as they wish, but they are required to provide at least one representative to the House of Elders to advocate on behalf of that city's populace—though smaller settlements may instead designate a neighboring city's representative to act on their behalf.

Xopatl is relatively isolated, geographically speaking, but the nation maintains favorable relations with its neighbors. Xopatl borders Razatlan to the north, Innazpa to the east, and Nalmeras to the south, all of which are

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major trade partners. The common exchange of resources between these four nations has only strengthened their relationships in the past centuries. With the decline of Xopat'l's magical production over the past century, economic relations have grown somewhat strained, but Xopat'l still remains among the greatest exporters of magical relics in Arcadia. Tourism between the nations is at an all-time high, with many traveling to cheer on their local teams in the regional boundball league.

NOTABLE SITES

The following are some of the more notable locations found in Xopat'l.

Apertan: The city of Apertan is home to Xopat'l's largest market. Merchants from across the nation travel the land's rivers to reach Apertan in hopes of selling in the market circle. The market is a dizzying, open-air tower with stands lining every floor of the structure. Visitors use a system of platforms raised via pulleys to reach their desired stand to purchase wares.


Bundózo: This small town rests beside the Lake of the Blessed Prince, itself home to a massive underwater keep. The keep was once home to a hero-god who chose to submerge the structure upon his ascension, and Bundózo's economy is based on dives into this sprawling fort. The fort

seems to be dozens of storeys tall, and Bundózan divers have yet to fully scour the keep for all of its treasures.

Chilémby: Most know the town of Chilémby as the origin of the greatest steeds in Xopat'l. The town tames the tunbaros of the Xopat'l grasslands to sell as mounts. These large, feathered lizards are able to outrun a horse with ease, which makes the capture of a tunbaro a difficult feat, let alone the taming of one. Tunbaros roam constantly, so Chilémby locals follow them for weeks in hopes of an opportunity to capture one of the elusive creatures.

Clear Waters: The city of Clear Waters floats on the lake of the same name, deep in the center of the Forest of the Sacred Eye. Traversing this beautiful city requires constant use of small boats or other personal vessels. Most of these boats are decorated with colorful flowers that bloom every new moon. The city sees a surge of visitors every full moon, as the lake begins to glow with brilliant light when the moon's reflection reaches the center of the lake.

Footprint of the Lost Saint: Located deep among the arid grasslands, the Footprint of the Lost Saint is the name of a massive cenote—a hole in the bedrock exposing the groundwater beneath—believed to be created after the death of one of the hero-gods. Few who



have explored this cenote have returned, but those few surviving spelunkers tell stories of enormous creatures made from living crystal. These reports suggest that the sinkhole connects to a large, abandoned vault in the Darklands, though some instead believe it to be a prison.

Garizés City: This city is home to Xopatł's most prominent musical style. Garizans travel through Xopatł playing lively music using a combination of common instruments like flutes, guitars, and trumpets, along with unique local instruments like the garizan, a compact instrument made from intertwining plant matter that produces different notes as it is squashed and stretched. The instrument is so central to garizan music that the entire musical style is named after it. Garizés City is the primary city that produces this instrument, and garizans purchased outside of Garizés are considered inferior.

Grand Pass: The small city of Grand Pass originally grew from a small watch point overlooking the mountain pass between Xopatł and Innazpa. When the threat of the Razatlani Empire was no more, many of the watch point's soldiers established this city, which today is home to one of the most prestigious fighting schools in Xopatł. The school holds a biannual tournament that draws combatants from across Arcadia and culminates in a spectacular fight on the peak of the nearby Panischo Mountain.

Gujaraldi: Said to be the location of the hero-gods' final ascension, Gujaraldi now stands as the capital of Xopatł. This large city is built among the ruins of ancient hero-god settlements and now houses tens of thousands of citizens. In addition to serving as the seat of the nation's government, Gujaraldi is known for its fine arts and crafts. Its textile production is particularly notable, with many popular Arcadian clothing styles finding their origins in Gujaraldi. The other major feature of the city is Xopatł Stadium, a large boundball stadium that can hold thousands. Gujaraldi is commonly among the seven cities hosting Arcadia's yearly boundball tournament, and the stadium was built centuries ago to hold the thousands of people who travel the continent to watch the event.

Hidden Lake: The city of Hidden Lake is a curiosity, as one can only visit when they are not wishing to do so. The magic of the surrounding Forest of Thieves causes anyone traveling through it to find their way out of the forest in the span of an hour. Only an explorer who clears their mind and chooses to get lost within the woods has a chance of locating the city. The city is home to many great alchemists who use the forest's magical plants to create especially potent concoctions.

High Isle and Low Isle: The sister cities of High Isle and Low Isle are Xopatł's primary source for fish, shellfish, and other seafood. High Isle fishers are known for weeks-long expeditions into Lake Tapipallati to

Denizens Of Xopatł

The demographics of Arcadia vary greatly from those of Avistan or Garund. Humans form the majority of the populace, with different ethnicities including Balveris, Calani, Caldaru, Kansari, Kurosha, Mahwek, Razatlani, and Ouerfaseans. Additionally, halflings, rougarous, skinwalkers, and wyrwoods are relatively common in parts of Arcadia. Other races common to the Inner Sea region, such as dwarves, elves, gnomes, and orcs, are also found throughout Arcadia, though they are less common, and their general cultures and habits differ greatly from those of their Avistani and Garundi cousins.

The majority of the humans in Xopatł are Razatlani, with some Balveris and Caldaru among them. Xopatł is also home to a large number of dwarves, halflings, orcs, skinwalkers, and wyrwoods. Beyond these populations, Xopatł is a dangerous land. Monsters and other creatures inhabit the wilds, making it impossible to travel with a guarantee of safety. Many common creatures can be found here, including aurochs, coyotes, deer, eagles, giant crabs, mountain lions, reefclaws, snakes, tunbaros, and wolves. In addition, dangerous creatures common throughout Xopatł include bulettes, chupacabras, death worms, megafauna of all kinds, saguarois, and thunderbirds. Less common creatures include chaneques, couatls of all kinds, drakes, encantados, lloronas, dark nagas, sayonas, tunches, water nagas, and xtabays.

search for giant catfish, lake monsters, or other massive creatures. The fisherfolk of Low Isle instead remain close to their home, capturing giant crabs, freshwater eels, and various sea creatures.

House of Yanti Purnállo: The hero-god Purnállo is the only one of her kin who still lives. Instead of meeting death or ascending to divinity, Purnállo began to meditate while ritually wrapping herself in leaves and vines. This process eventually caused the hero-god to mummify within her wrappings, though her heart continues to beat at an extremely slow rate. The people of Xopatł built a temple around her body, and thousands make the pilgrimage every decade to listen to her next heartbeat.

Isle of the Dreamers: A thin veil between planes on this island allows easy access to the Dimension of Dreams. The dimension's planar energies constantly seep through, transforming much of the local wildlife into radiant creatures known as alebrijes. These creatures are said to be able to travel into dreams to guide or inspire individuals.

Jolizpan Forest: This rich jungle grew around a fragment of raw magic that fell in the Mildanesi Mountains during Earthfall. Local legends claim that the fragment struck a chicome couatl in flight, and the forest

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Cihua Couatl

The War Children

NG god of childbirth, protection, and warfare

Domains Good, Healing, Protection, Strength, War

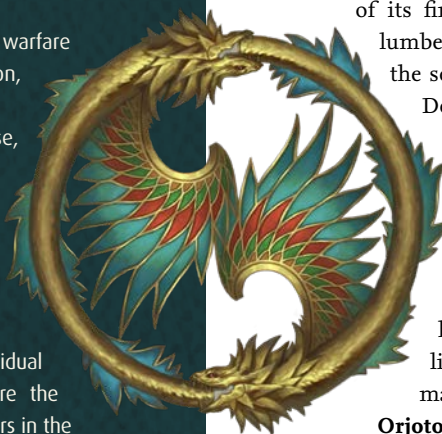
Subdomains Agathion, Defense, Ferocity, Resolve, Restoration, Tactics

Favored Weapon shortspear

Symbol two couatls consuming each other's tails with their wings overlapping in the center

Sacred Animal hawk

Cihua Couatl, a dual being of two individual couatls joined in their divinity, are the patron god of those who defend others in the name of righteous causes. Cihua Couatl take the form of a chicome couatl and a tletli couatl that share one body. Each has a distinct head and tail, but the two share a pair of arms, one holding a shortspear and the other holding a shield. These items represent the combative and protective aspects of the god. Cihua Couatl teach that conflict is an inevitability, and that one must be ready to defend those who cannot defend themselves. This can take the form of teaching kindness, to encourage helping those in need, or taking arms against those who would cause harm to innocents. They encourage quick and decisive action in combat, and their warrior priests are masters of strategy and tactics. This prowess allows Cihua Couatl's followers to efficiently bring an end to combat while limiting the number of injuries and fatalities on both sides of a conflict. Outside of combat, Cihua Couatl teach that to care for one's self and others only makes everyone stronger. They also serve as a patron god of midwives, encouraging their followers to learn how to care for children. The two couatls are of fluid gender and constantly shift between roles as attacker and defender, symbolizing Cihua Couatl's message that anyone can care for others and rise to defend them when needed. Their common servitors are healers, warriors, and all types of couatls.



grew from its body. Local botanists use magical energies radiating from Tumbaja Mountain to grow plants infused with great arcane power.

Manzinago Forest: This thick, coniferous forest was once the main source for much of Xopatli's lumber, which helped the nearby cities of N arula and Zilpatzi to flourish. In recent years, the forest has become extremely dangerous to traverse. A terrible change within its heart has led to the rise of several monstrous carnivorous plants, and local coalitions patrol the outskirts of the forest in hopes of containing the force locals have dubbed the Deepweave.

N arula: The local logger's guild here accrued most of its finances by exporting much of their lumber to Nalmeras and other nations to the south. With the rise of the dangerous Deepweave infestation in the nearby forest, the loggers have turned to other ways of life. Most recently, the logger's guild has borrowed arcane research from Jolizpani botanists to create something akin to ley lines near their ranches. This has led to a boom of super-sized livestock, though some locals fear they may grow too large to control.

Orjotoro: As the center city of the three Follower's Rests, Orjotoro is the home of the merchant's guild that coordinates trade between Innazpa, Razatlan, and Xopatli. The guild is in charge of tracking imports and exports up and down Follower's River, and the city acts as a large way station with constant traffic from the river stopping to pick up or deliver the latest shipments.

Quldari's Vault: One of the last hero-gods to remain in Xopatli was a skinwalker man by the name of Quldari. Understanding that the time of hero-gods in Xopatli had come to an end, he created an enormous obsidian vault and buried it deep in Xopatli's grasslands. He declared that the vault held all that Xopatli would need to survive in the new upcoming age. Xopatli mages successfully opened the vault door in -2311 AR, only to find additional doors and arcane locks. To date, 33 doors have been opened, but none have revealed anything more than additional obstacles.

Ruins of Ch idanza: The city of Ch idanza was once Xopatli's greatest farming settlement, providing much of the food for the nation. Originally nestled beside the Arpretz  River, the town began to struggle as the river began to mysteriously dry up in 4622 AR. As the river dried, fewer and fewer farmers could sustain their families, and they moved away. Today, an overgrown riverbed is the only sign of the Arpretz 's existence. The ruins of the city are now overrun with magical beasts, but a few farmers remain, seemingly able to continue to grow crops even without the river's waters.

Tal ipas: While Tal ipas was originally a fishing settlement by trade, it has branched out into the business of distillation in the last centuries. The lake plants growing around Tal ipas and its surrounding islands are ground into a paste that is then fermented for weeks to create a highly intoxicating drink, named tal ipas after its home. The process of producing tal ipas is a highly guarded secret, and the local distillers are even willing to kill to protect their trade.

Tree of the Thousand Eyes: This towering tree rises far above the other treetops of Jolizpan Forest and is marked with countless eyes resembling a peafowl's spots. The Jolizpani locals believe this tree grew from the heart of the chicome couatl that birthed the forest as it died. Legends say that the couatl's heart remains intact in the tree's center and that it could be made to beat once more, bringing the couatl back to life.

Tulaupan: One of the three Follower's Rests, the city of Tulaupan is pivotal to Xopatli trade with Innazpa. The city is home to innovative smiths who build clockwork engines to power boats, allowing them to travel upstream on the Follower River. The smiths' guild has begun working on a new engine that could possibly propel carts across the great distances of Xopatli.

Valley of the Chosen Children: This sprawling canyon lies where the Naurepzi River branches from the Follower's River. Locals claim that the laughter of dozens of children echoes through the canyon every night, and that the children grant their blessing to those who travel the length of the canyon in one trip from sunset to sunrise.

Xopatli Mountain: This large volcano is the only mountain that remains after the hero-gods carved out the lands of Xopatli from the Mildanesi Mountains. The hero-gods intentionally manipulated the mountain to never erupt except by their own command, should Xopatli ever need to be destroyed due to an invading force. The volcano has since built up ten thousand years' worth of explosive force, but the magical command has been lost to time.

Yahuima's Spring: The hero-god Yahuima wept as her lover ascended to divinity, and her tears created this large geyser. The geyser is suffused with divine energies, and its eruptions cause the grasslands around it to bloom in an explosive, verdant display. These blooms last for up to a week and draw many visitors during the geyser's active season in winter. Lately, though, the geyser has been creating only blighted fields and corrupting animals with its eruptions.

Yan Tlomil: Resting at the end of the Naurepzi River, the city of Yan Tlomil is now Xopatli's greatest agricultural center. The superior land produces large, plentiful bounties of that year's crop. Unfortunately, the local farmers are never sure which crop will yield in a given year and must plant several different crops at the start of the season. Eventually, one crop thrives, and the farmers scramble to sow more of that year's plant in a wild dash for land and seeds. The inconsistent nature of this harvest has kept Yan Tlomil from rising to the heights of production that Chidanza once had.

Yan Ulvedro's Fort: Fearing additional attacks from Razatlan, the hero-god Ulvedro built this fort high on

JOLIZPAN

NG small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +4; **Law** -1; **Lore** +5; **Society** +7

Qualities broad-minded, magically attuned, prosperous, unique magic

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 7,840 (5,500 humans; 700 skinwalkers; 500 halflings; 300 orcs; 200 dwarves; 200 wyrwoods; 150 half-orcs; 290 others)

NOTABLE NPCs

Head Botanist Miraina Olviris (NG old female human expert 6/wizard 11)

High Mediator Jesolis Olviris (LG male human aristocrat 4/investigator^{ACG} 9)

Lady of the Divine Blade Amircia Moldanos (NG female skinwalker fighter 12; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 233)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 8,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 100,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 9th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Broad-Minded: The citizens of Jolizpan are open, friendly, and tolerant, and they react positively toward visitors. (*Lore* +1; *Society* +1)

Unique Magic: Jolizpan's rare and distinct form of magic draws a large amount of economic interest. (*Economy* +1; *Lore* +4; *increase base value by 50%; increase purchase limit by 30%; increase spellcasting by 2 levels; there is a 50% chance that any item up to twice the community's base value or lower and a 25% chance that any item up to triple the community's base value or lower can be found for sale in the community*)

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the peaks of the Mildanesi Mountains. While the fort did help during the few attacks the nation saw, it soon became a place more akin to a monastery. Today, travelers from Xopatli and Innazpa both visit the fort to learn mystical techniques from the resident sages in a process that requires temporarily drawing an individual's soul from their body in hopes of achieving enlightenment.

Yanti Iñulde: The hometown of the last hero-god born in Xopatli, the city of Yanti Iñulde is now a religious center for the nation's people. The city holds dozens of temples to various deities and hero-gods, some whose names have been lost over the ages. The city holds a week of festivities every year to revere all gods and demigods with a temple or shrine in the city, whether they have active worshippers or not.



Yllaldo Castle: Built during the Age of Darkness, this enormous structure was designed to act as a watch point against any threats from Nalmeras to the south. A sprawling network of tunnels extends beneath the castle, containing dozens of rooms and passages that haven't been explored in millennia. Today, an order of monks tends to the crumbling structure, doing their best to keep the castle intact while constantly patrolling stretches of the tunnels beneath to clear out those terrors that still remain.

Zilpatzi: As the nearby Manzinago Forest became too dangerous to log, much of Zilpatzi's economy has suffered. The city originally focused on floating caravans, using magically enhanced boats to travel the rivers of Xopatl and sell lumber. These caravans have now turned to offering delivery services that span the continent, leading in some cases to months-long voyages. Within the city, local legends claim that a smoke dragon lives beneath the local church of Cihua Couatl. Some residents have gathered to visit the church catacombs in hopes of finding the dragon and convincing it to destroy the Deepweave infestation in the nearby forest.

Ziplatna: This city is the northernmost of the three Follower's Rests that act as trade checkpoints between Innazpa, Razatlan, and Xopatl. Ziplatna is a hub of

labor, and anyone in need of work can visit the city to be assigned to one of the countless vessels that travel to and from the port. The local laborer's guild takes on the massive task of providing every shipment with enough hands to complete a successful delivery.

JOLIZPAN AT A GLANCE

Jolizpan, the City of Flowers, is wholly unique among the cities of Xopatl. While it still is composed of the typical stone structures found in all other Xopatl cities, Jolizpan's proximity to Tumbaja Mountain and the Veins of Creation means plant life is an important focus for the city. Arcane botanists used their abilities and the power of the Veins of Creation to manipulate the plant life in and around the city to create a settlement that can function independently from the rest of the region.

Unique networks of large roots, vines, flowers, and other plants allow the delivery of water to Jolizpan's citizens. These networks draw water from the nearby Jolizpan River and transport it beneath the city to specialized wells and artificial lakes, making access to water easy for all. These same networks continually filter waste and contaminants from Jolizpan's water, negating the need for a sewer system—which would be impossible anyway, as digging beneath the city poses a risk to these networks and the Veins of Creation. This filtration

network is highly sophisticated, drawing whatever nutrients and beneficial components it can from the waste and returning them to feed the network's plants or serve as fertilizer for the city's gardens. Any toxins and detrimental elements are rushed beyond the city into specific locations throughout the Jolizpan Forest where unique plants can break down such substances into usable components that are then cycled back into the forest.

A large canal surrounds the city, filled with water from the nearby Jolizpan River. This canal helps channel water in and out of the city and serves as a natural barrier against the terrors of Jolizpan Forest.

The city itself consists of stone structures based on Razatlani architecture, but each building stands on a unique foundation constructed from plants. While these foundations originally allowed the city's botanists to uproot and move buildings around as needed to maintain the Veins of Creation, they have now fallen inert, as the city lacks the proper arcane resources for such undertakings.

The majority of Jolizpan's economy is based around their exclusive wares. Though the Veins of Creation no longer function, local botanists have found ways to replicate the network on far smaller scales. These small networks allow for the creation of plants capable of receiving arcane programming similar to that of a construct. These plants enable the Jolizpani locals to craft unique objects, like boats with self-paddling oars and shields that subtly move to protect the wielder's heart in the heat of battle. These unique creations give Jolizpan a significant amount of economic influence, and outside traders frequently visit or send shipments to the city in hopes of earning an opportunity to commission one of these wares. The breakdown of the Veins of Creation has prevented Jolizpan from increasing production of these magical items, however, and they remain a rarity outside of the City of Flowers.

The people of Jolizpan are unlike those found within the rest of Xopatl. As many people remain either in the city or Jolizpan Forest for the majority of their lives, most citizens learn to get along with their neighbors. Neighboring homes create tight-knit communities that freely support each other, both emotionally and financially. Many homes find themselves stuffed with two, three, or even more families as some communities grow exceptionally close and move freely through each other's homes. In cases where tensions run high or particular citizens find that their community is not a suitable fit, multiple communities come together to

find them a better home. In some cases, entire families exchange homes to find a better fit for themselves among other communities.

JOLIZPAN'S DISTRICTS

Jolizpan's unique position as the main nexus for the Veins of Creation required careful planning and plenty of changes over the centuries. As botanists' understanding of the arcane network improved, so did the arrangement of the city to accommodate the specific needs of the Veins



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of Creation. As the needs of the network grew, Jolizpan rearranged its layout and that of the outgoing Veins of Creation to maximize output and prevent any blockages or arcane mishaps. When the Veins of Creation failed after the death of Aroden, the arcane botanists found themselves unable to further move the city, and so Jolizpan remains in its current arrangement. These five distinct districts

are all approximately equivalent in size, separated by large thoroughfares made from the manipulated roots of the kumaru tree.

The Bloom: The city's westernmost portion is its main residential district, where most people live within small hub communities. These communities are centered around shared green spaces filled with gardens, which provide fruits and vegetables while also serving as perfect gathering spots for local festivities.

The Garden: The Garden district lies between the Grove and the Topiary. The Garden houses the primary markets of the city, including general stores and more specialized shops. These shops usually sell wares imported from greater Xopatl as well as certain wares from local artisans and crafters. Having an item for sale in the Garden is a great honor, as the specialized shops must pay the crafter a fee to sell their products, and therefore shop owners tend to pick what they consider the best of the best to put up for sale.

The Grove: The central district serves as the home for much of Xopatl's entertainment. Bars, dance halls, and gathering places of all types fill the Grove. While there are usually minor festivities taking place on any given day, the Grove comes to life on notable holidays, with businesses keeping their doors open for several days straight during weeks of celebration.

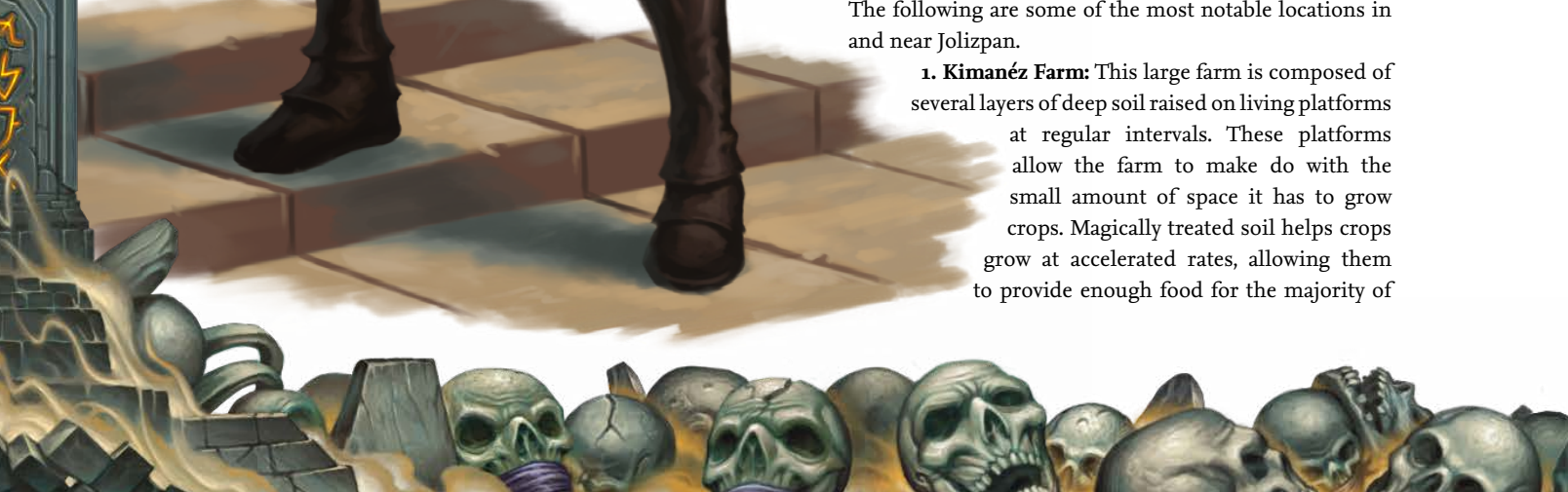
The Hive: Located between the Bloom and the Grove is the city's main commercial district, the Hive. The Hive is home to vendors of all kinds, including artists, cooks, crafters, and smiths. Vendors' wares spill out into the streets, allowing passersby to inspect a potential purchase or sample a bit of food that catches their attention.

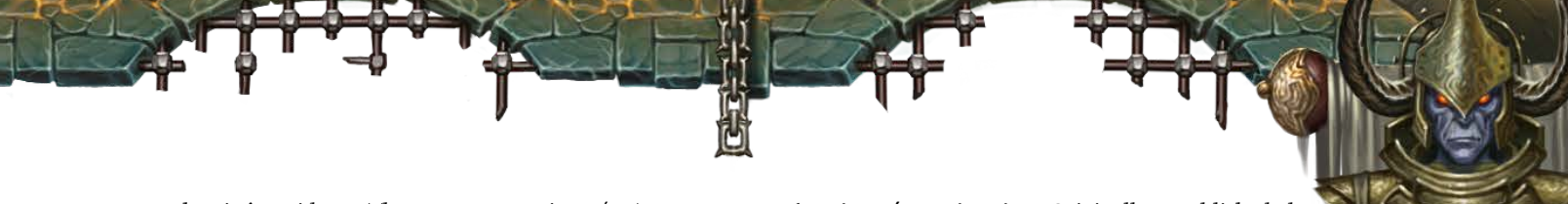
The Topiary: The city's easternmost district is the seat of its government. In addition to the city hall and other government structures, the Topiary is also where many of the city's churches and shrines are located. Of particular note are the churches of Abadar, Cihua Couatl, Kazutal, Pharasma, Sarenrae, and the various shrines to Xopatl's saints.

CITY LOCATIONS

The following are some of the most notable locations in and near Jolizpan.

- 1. Kímanéz Farm:** This large farm is composed of several layers of deep soil raised on living platforms at regular intervals. These platforms allow the farm to make do with the small amount of space it has to grow crops. Magically treated soil helps crops grow at accelerated rates, allowing them to provide enough food for the majority of





the city's residents. The structure at Kimanéz Farm was originally designed to watch and oversee production, though local botanists have recently turned into a makeshift laboratory for their research. As the botanists have recently lost access to their main facility at the Blue Gardens of Tlil (see page 5), they are making do with what they have at this location.

2. Almidro Park: The largest park in the city hosts hundreds of visitors daily. In addition to nearby residents visiting the park, many locals from other districts come here to walk among the amazing trees and plants that grow exclusively in Almidro Park. A monthly gathering at the park encourages locals to visit and learn about the plants currently in bloom as well as the fauna that live within the park. Children in particular are fond of visiting the park, especially with the recent claim that a magical flower near the lake takes them underground to visit a beach filled with colorful sand.

3. Jolizpan Docks: Resting on the western Jolizpan River, the city docks are the city's safest connection with the rest of Xopatl. Using boats made from magically treated wood, the local fisherman and ship captains can travel downstream to Lake Tapipallati and reach the rest of the western part of the nation. Traveling the lake to reach the rest of the region is a lengthy process, however, and many captains have formed a union in hopes of gaining traction with the city council to create new inland waterways.

4. Limariz Academy: While Jolizpan has many schools throughout the city to serve its several districts, the Limariz Academy is the largest. This preparatory academy focuses primarily on the sciences, with a clear emphasis on botany and biology. Many of the academy's graduating students continue their education at the local Kimanéz University. The academy holds a semiannual exhibition where all students are encouraged to present a project of their choosing, ranging from art pieces to science experiments. The academy sees this an opportunity for the greater community to learn from the up-and-coming youth, and several students have found their projects heralded for their creativity and innovation.

5. Jolizpan Commune: Local artists tend to share their tools and materials freely, but some intentionally choose to share spaces and work together. This set of buildings is constantly filled with artists of all kind, rotating in and out at their muses' whims. Several sets of tools are available for anyone to use, left here over the decades by names now forgotten. Of particular note are a group of artists known as the Sundown Disciples, who have been hard at work on a single piece for several years, though no one outside of the group knows anything about what it is.

6. Kimanéz University: Originally established by Rimarino Kimanéz, one of the early botanists who helped establish the techniques used to manipulate the Veins of Creation, this large school still teaches the magical botany techniques that are important to Jolizpan. Since the deactivation of the Veins of Creation, the school's curriculum has shifted to the small-scale plant networks that are currently in use, while expanding to other focuses like arcane theory and mathematics. The dean of the botany department is Head Botanist **Miraina Olviris** (see page 58). Olviris has her own small laboratory on campus that she uses to further her research, where she allows her top students to experiment as they see fit.

7. Umbarez Plaza: This plaza is the largest gathering spot in the city, populated by visiting individuals, families, and partners on most evenings. The plaza's unique plants bloom in the evening, attracting thousands of fireflies that light the plaza. Local vendors stroll through selling snacks and treats to the visitors. On holidays, the plaza fills and the air rings with the chatter of locals, songs of musicians, and the sound of dancing feet.

8. The Free Oven: This large, open-air kitchen is the pinnacle of glory for the cooks of Jolizpan. A monthly vote by locals and critics determines which local restaurant earns the honor of taking the Free Oven for the upcoming month. Locals trust these votes as a sign of the food's quality, and hundreds flock to the Free Oven at the beginning of every month for a taste from whichever restaurant currently occupies the coveted spot. Particularly high-quality or popular restaurants can hold the Free Oven for several months in a row, but regardless of how long an establishment holds the Free Oven, it usually sees a large boost in customers for several months afterwards.

9. Couatl Stadium: This lush field is home to the local boundball team, the Couatls. The stadium seats up to a thousand fans, though it has not seen that many in decades, as the dangers of the Jolizpan Forest make it difficult for any other teams to visit for matches. The stadium has fallen to disrepair over the years, but rumors of the creation of new teams and a local league are inspiring hope for the revival of the stadium.

10. Jolizpan Gardens: The largest botanical garden in the city is constantly filled with beautiful flowers and foliage. The plants in the garden are specifically chosen to always have at least one species in bloom at any point during the year. The garden is angled at a downward slope, sunken far into the ground, creating a unique formation that allows visitors to see a small part of the now-inactive network of the Veins of Creation running beneath the city. The gardens are also the main location for the city's largest festival, the Festival of Blossoms, where thousands of flowers bloom at once on the spring equinox, to much joy and celebration.

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Ah Pook

The Destroyer

NE god of death, destruction, and the moon

Domains Darkness Death, Destruction, Evil, Void

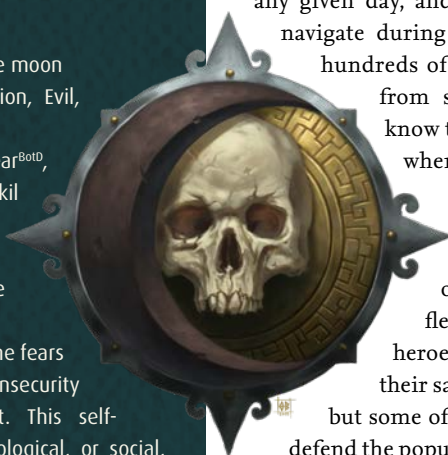
Subdomains Catastrophe, Fear^{BotD}, Isolation^{BotD}, Loss, Moon^{BotD}, Sakhil (page 61)

Favored Weapon terbutje^{UE}

Symbol a skull with a crescent eclipse

Sacred Animal maggot

Ah Pook is a vile god who preys on the fears of mortals, twisting their doubt and insecurity until they ultimately self-destruct. This self-destruction can be physical, psychological, or social, with many victims ruining the lives of others around them alongside their own. This process usually results in victims losing their loved ones, leaving them even more isolated and miserable, a result Ah Pook revels in. Ah Pook has many followers throughout Arcadia, each committed to corrupting the thoughts of others on their god's behalf. Many sakhils also serve the Destroyer, as it allows them greater opportunities to further the fears of mortals. Arcadians are well aware of Ah Pook's machinations, and even less destructive fears are seen as the god's work. Common anxieties and worries are usually countered by small prayers to ward off Ah Pook, in hopes of relieving these thoughts. The commonality of such fears has earned Ah Pook several names throughout Arcadia, with those living near Xopatl and Innazpa referring to him as Ohachtsik.



11. Museum of the Saints: This ancient building is reinforced with hundreds of pounds of pure adamantine and is believed to have been created by a hero-god shortly after Xopatl's creation. Jolizpan's citizenry is in constant disagreement as to whether they should dismantle the building for its precious adamantine, but so far, the structure has remained intact. The building houses artworks, relics, writings, and other historical artifacts held from as far back as the establishment of the Veins of Creation. The exhibits here are on constant rotation, trading out with exhibits from other museums across Xopatl. The current exhibit is the Blade of Vinarimos, an intelligent dagger that once belonged to the mighty Xopatli general, Junatsi Vinario, who used the dagger at Yan Ulvedro's Fort against an army of sahuagin raiders. The former owners of the blade explained that it had expressed its desire to visit every city in Xopatl and have relinquished their ownership to help the dagger achieve its goals.

12. Garden Circle: The center of the Garden district is a large, open-air market. Stands clutter the circle on

any given day, and it becomes almost impossible to navigate during the weekly Garden Market, when hundreds of local vendors' stands fill the circle from sunrise to sunset. Savvy shoppers know to wait for the final hours of the day, when haggling becomes most effective.

13. Statue of the Lost Heroes: With the end of the Age of Darkness, Xopatl lost many of its saints, and ordinary heroes rose to guide the fledgling nation. In most cases, these heroes were merely mentors, providing their sage advice to help the nation prosper, but some of these heroes gave their very lives to defend the populace of Xopatl. The large statue in the center of Humbartlí Park stands in honor of one group of these heroes. A half-dozen adventurers known as the Band of the First Couatl traveled much of Xopatl slaying dangerous beasts and keeping natural menaces away from the citizenry. They met their greatest challenge in the form of a vile creature named the Lord of Stolen Flame, a terrifying horseman with a cockatrice's head that rode a cauchemar nightmare. The Lord of Stolen Flame traversed the countryside, unleashing Hell's minions in his wake; many stories claim that he was in fact Asmodeus in disguise. The Band of the First Couatl struck down the horseman just outside of Jolizpan, and as the Lord of Stolen Flame was pulled into a Hellish rift, he cursed the band. The group was turned to stone, and all attempts to restore them have failed. The six were placed within the city to honor their bravery and in hopes that some day they might yet be restored.

14. Jolizpan Bank: The largest bank in the city also acts as the local church of Abadar, god of charity, commerce, and trading. The bank houses large vaults as well as personal security boxes to hold the majority of Jolizpan's valuables. While this includes the likes of gold, jewels, and other objects of monetary value, the city's large artistic and scientific communities also keep many of their personal belongings in the bank's vaults. This includes incomplete works of art with sentimental value, research notes, and valuable local recipes. The rise of dangers in Jolizpan Forest has made it difficult to trade outside of the city, and the Abadaran clerics are doing their best to expand the city's reach beyond the forest. The most successful attempt so far has been a unique conjuration network through magical gates that allow the bank's customers to access their funds and valuables from great distances. Slowly, this functionality has begun to expand to other banks throughout Xopatl, allowing exchange without the need for travel, though the security concern of allowing constant access to personal safes has prevented the system from becoming widespread.

15. City Hall: This large building serves as the city's civic center, with the majority of bureaucratic processes taking place within its walls. The city hall holds monthly open forums for the citizens to voice their opinions on important local matters and a weekly meeting to handle smaller issues. Each district has five volunteer councilors who act on behalf of that district's desires, and the process of councilors presenting issues relevant to their districts and proposing arguments or solutions forms most of these weekly meetings. The ultimate decision as to how to act upon these issues falls on the three high council members, themselves elected by the volunteer councilors from among their own ranks. High councilors are free to retain their positions for as long as they remain elected. The three current high councilors are the leader of the guard, Amircia Moldanos, who represents the city's security and stability interests; Head Botanist Miraina Olviris, who represents the city's infrastructure interests; and Miraina's son, High Mediator Jesolis Olviris, who acts on behalf of the citizens.

16. Jolizpan City Guard: Jolizpan's city guard makes its headquarters here. Led by Lady of the Divine Blade Amircia Moldanos, the guard members patrol the city to contend with any local crimes, while also keeping watch over the outskirts of the city and the nearby Jolizpan Forest. As danger from the forest's monsters has outpaced criminal activity within the city itself, the city guard was stretched too thin to handle both, and has since elected to limit its activity to only areas within the city borders. The guard's headquarters also holds a prison to manage Jolizpan's criminal elements. This prison has a large focus on the rehabilitation of its prisoners, and many of these prisoners are put to work during their sentences. The work can range from manual labor to local apprenticeships or even as a speaker in local schools, and it is compensated at a full living wage, though a prisoner receives only a portion of this wage during their sentence. This portion can be used to purchase small amenities for a prison cell, such as a personal library or art supplies. The remainder of the

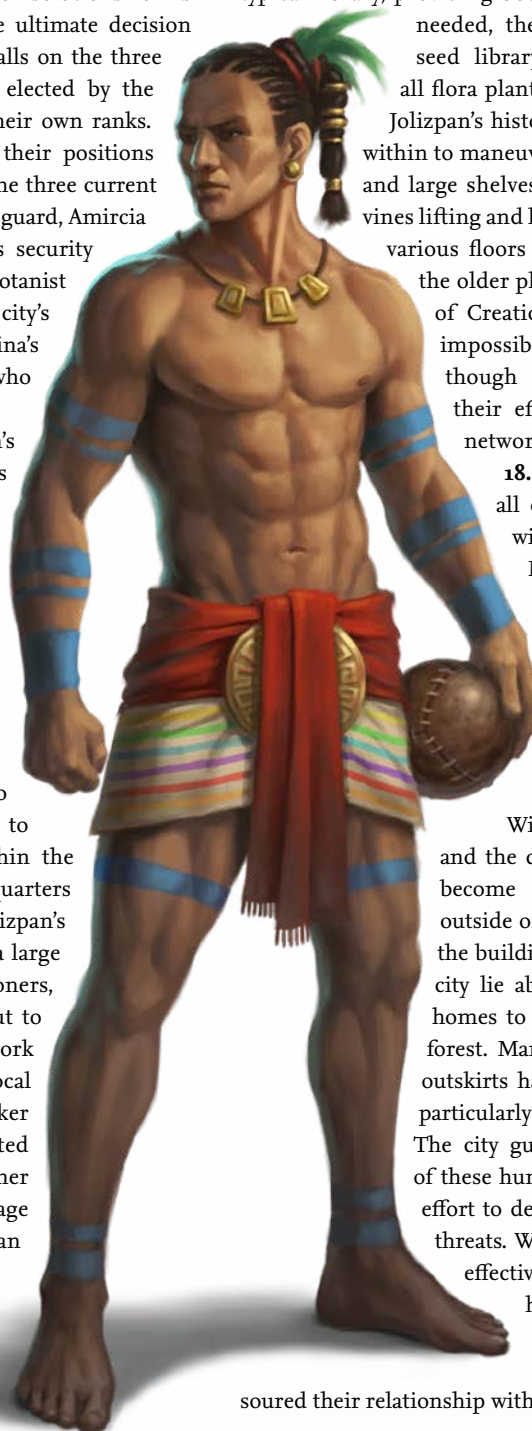
wages are given to the prisoner upon their release to allow for an easier reintegration into society. In the unfortunate case where a prisoner perishes during a sentence, the wages are given to the prisoner's family or, in cases of prisoners without beneficiaries, donated to a local scholarship.

17. Library of the Roses: The largest library in the city serves a dual purpose. In addition to its role as a typical library, providing books, records, and tomes as needed, the building also acts as a seed library—a living repository of all flora planted and grown throughout Jolizpan's history. Visitors use the plants within to maneuver the towering bookcases and large shelves of the library, with large vines lifting and lowering visitors across the various floors as needed. Unfortunately, the older plants' reliance on the Veins of Creation has made many seeds impossible to grow at present, though local botanists continue their efforts to restore both the network and these plants.

18. Jolizpan Outskirts: Not all of Jolizpan's residents live within the city boundaries. Many citizens are content to make their homes just outside of the city's surrounding canal and travel in and out as necessary. This quieter lifestyle has become rarer in recent years.

Without the Veins of Creation and the defenses they provided, it's become more dangerous to live outside of the city. As such, many of the buildings on the outskirts of the city lie abandoned or have become homes to creatures from the nearby forest. Many who still reside on the outskirts have gained a reputation as particularly skilled monster hunters. The city guard has even hired some of these hunters to aid in the constant effort to defend the city from outside threats. While this tactic has proven effective, the monster hunters have begun to increase the cost of their services, a development that has

soured their relationship with the guard.



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Barzahk, The Passage

The death rattles pried from dry lips shine bright as lighthouses to those who walk between life and death, offering navigation sure as stars to those who know the old routes. The Dead Roads between life and death are contemptuous things that defy the purpose of the cosmos, and yet they must exist if psychopomps would reap their grim harvests. But the Hands of Death guard their secret paths jealously and banish trespassers with apparent ease. Few realms of creation are so tightly monitored or so effortlessly secured as the domain of Barzahk the Passage, psychopomp usher of vigils. There is, I can surmise, only one explanation for this efficacy: Barzahk is not merely the keeper of the Dead Roads. Barzahk *is* the Dead Roads.

—Tabris the Chronicler, *Concordance of Rivals*



While every soul in creation instinctively knows the tug of the River of Souls—strange tide and home shore all at once—few have cause to know

the Dead Roads, which psychopomps travel to reach the mortal planes and attend to their duties. These cosmic pathways, which guide souls away from the Boneyard, are antithetical to creation, and their existence and maintenance falls to a small army of psychopomps, atypical outsiders, fey, and their ultimate master, the psychopomp usher Barzahk.

Despite their meandering and their wandering attention, Barzahk is a uniquely powerful usher, capable of shedding travelers from their domain as a dog might shake water from its fur. While the established Dead Roads lead to distinct times and places in the Material Plane, the Passage can open new paths as well—either creating new roads or revealing long-forgotten pathways hidden from all other eyes. Hidden doors into the Boneyard would normally leave the plane vulnerable, but Barzahk's oversight and the relative obscurity of these winding routes have thus far kept most invaders at bay. More powerful outsiders are able to cast *plane shift* at will, while lesser agents cannot escape the watching eyes of the Roads' innumerable crows and whippoorwills, who, stories claim, trade their gossip and findings to the usher.

Barzahk's origins remain a mystery even among psychopomps. Most ushers spawn from a mortal need or fear related to death, but Barzahk instead spawned from the needs of psychopomps. Most believe that the distant usher is a manifestation of the Dead Roads themselves, a consciousness that can focus itself in only one or two places at a time along its impossibly large cosmic scale. More esoteric scholars believe Pharamasma wove the Dead Roads from the veins and vessels of a god that died in a previous incarnation of the cosmos, and Barzahk is all that remains of the predecessor's divine nature. Whatever the truth, the Passage is intimately bound to the paths they protect and rarely journeys beyond them, even exhibiting a unique agoraphobia when pressed beyond familiar roads by threat or duty.

PERSONIFICATION AND REALM

Barzahk manifests as an enormous corvid—a crow, raven, or jay—with arms, swathed in a ragged cloak and carrying

a key and keyhole. Their voice changes frequently, often sounding like a chorus as they speak. Many believe they present this form as a simple puppet, crafting it from

the countless ravens and other birds that watch the Dead Roads, and that Barzahk himself is either the entirety of the Dead Roads or a force that manifests in that strange place, similar to a genius loci.

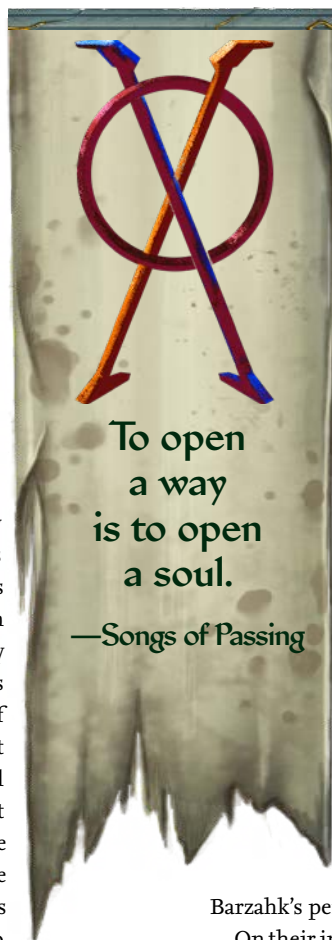
The Dead Roads are an unusual realm. Like a Transitive Plane, they snake through creation, connecting the Boneyard to various points on the Material Plane. The appearance of the roads varies heavily, with stretches of humble packed dirt, paved highways, and marvelous bridges that span impossible distances. To either side of any path, steep, fog-shrouded banks drop away and deposit anyone who wanders from the path back at their point of departure. Way stations across the winding ways act as anchors to maintain the routes and as guardians against trespassers; creatures without the approval of a way station's guardian cannot pass a length of the Dead Roads, instead finding themselves returned whence they began. This network of guardians and informants helps secure this vulnerable route into the Boneyard, and after countless millennia of existence, no outsiders have learned to trace the Dead Roads back to the Boneyard without

Barzahk's permission.

On their infrequent travels to the mortal world, Barzahk manifests as a stooped-over traveler of indeterminate gender, bent beneath the weight of a heavy pack and leaning on a willow branch. They often beg charity from roadhouses and inns, leaving rewards for those who offer even a pittance and delivering harsh curses for those with no room or mercy for wanderers fallen on hard times. Ustalavic custom encourages inns to set aside a bowl of porridge or pottage each night for the weary traveler, though this just as often goes to satisfy local fey appetites instead. Either way, the result is good fortune and grateful gifts as often as ants.

DOGMA AND WORSHIPPERS

As a servitor of psychopomp needs, Barzahk has few mortal worshippers, though they have many admirers, servants, and even worshippers among psychopomps and duskwalkers. Most of their honor and worship comes secondhand through the faithful of Pharamasma. This arrangement serves the itinerant usher well, as priests demand attention and spells granted—commitments Barzahk finds troublesome



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and frustrating. Those few mortals who pray to Barzakh directly must make peace with the fact that their god may sometimes not reply to prayers for days at a time, as these obligations are often forgotten in favor of new sights and sounds that have caught Barzakh's attention.

Barzakh accepts only clerics and other faithful who have both been lost and experienced loss themselves. This loss may be literal—former caravaneers, sailors, or travelers who lost their way and lost crewmates in their travels—or more figurative. Many clerics and inquisitors hail from those who lost their own way, such as their faith, their place in the world, their will to live, following the death or disappearance of a loved one. This experience encourages personal growth and defining of the self by one's own metrics, rather than by relationships with the world. All things die, after all.

Barzakh's mortal worshippers take time to tend to travelers and lost things, often feeling a need to step in and assist when their deity loses track of their responsibilities. Most have returned from the dead, and many of their duties involve tending to others raised from the dead. More grimly, Barzakh's warpriests and inquisitors hunt those who return from the Boneyard unbidden; some of the few evil worshippers among those faithful to Pharasma and her ushers are drawn to this role.


TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Worshippers of the Passage establish small roadside shrines where travelers can pray. The best supplied of these hold stores of blankets, clean water, firewood, flint, rations, and other necessities for weary and desperate travelers, alongside curious bird-shaped carvings and key-shaped walking sticks. Many large temples of Pharasma feature small chapels to the ushers, with Barzakh among them, and those praying for a lost friend's safe return or to draw a departed soul back from the Great Beyond select these shrines for their meditations. Few freestanding temples to the Passage stand on the Material Plane, though many dot the Dead Roads themselves, erected by zealous way station guardians hoping to earn the usher's favor. On rare occasions, Barzakh has found these creations awkward or revolting and shuddered them from their domain, dropping them haphazardly into lost reaches of the Boneyard or onto the Material Plane.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Those who lead Barzakh's worship on the Material Plane often serve within temples of Pharasma, acting as special liaisons for those who arrive from the Boneyard. They greet, inform, and tend to psychopomps who arrive on the Material Plane to enact the Gray Lady's will. They also counsel souls returned from the dead via *resurrection* and other magic, easing their transition





back into the living world. Few realize that death causes a bevy of changes in the living world, from consequences for property rights and legal identity, to the mourning, resolve, and ultimately growth in survivors, and a Barzetic is expected to help the resurrected navigate these complex waters as they reacclimate to life. Despite the importance of these roles, these worshippers are rarely called upon; the arrival of death's servants or resurrected souls is a rare and momentous occasion, and most faithful of Barzakh attend these duties perhaps once or twice in a lifetime.

With their primary duties also among their rarest, priests of Barzakh busy themselves organizing vigils and pilgrimages on behalf of Pharasmins. Cartography and surveying are common pastimes, with priests leading pilgrimages and long journeys or taking sabbaticals to serve as navigators. Many also dabble in investigations, given their god's purview and patronage of lost things, and they may assist individuals or law enforcement in finding missing persons. Most are well travelled, journeying between major cities and small towns annually, or else giving in to wanderlust every few years and pulling up roots to move to a new location entirely.

Barzakh supports an entirely different caste of faithful in the Great Beyond. The Passage appoints various outsiders—primarily psychopomps, but occasionally various “fallen” outsiders of other realms, fey, and even the rare mortal—as guardians over the way stations scattered throughout the Dead Roads. Way stations are minor realms all their own, growing and changing over time to mirror the needs of their masters, who can bar creatures from traveling their stretches of the Dead Roads. Most of these way station masters are little more than toll collectors watching seldom-traveled paths, and consequently they tend to be creatures who take solace in isolation. Many can be cantankerous or slow to receive visitors, demanding strange favors in exchange for the stamp of passage that allows a traveler to continue. A rare few are powerful outsiders in their own right, using their position to gather ephemeral power and over the eons grow to rival even yamaraj psychopomps.

HOLIDAYS

Barzakh views time as relative, as they do space; everywhere on a world is simultaneously another day and time. With this perspective, the celebration of specific dates is anathema, and most clerics of the Passage recuse themselves from celebrating holy days, anniversaries, and other recurring events. This dictum does not extend to the casual faithful, and clerics in residence at a Pharasmin temple are still expected to contribute to preparations for the Day of Bones and the Procession of Unforgotten Souls.

APHORISMS

While Barzakh is an inconstant divinity, some sayings and philosophies remain consistent through their teachings.

No road ends, so long as it is trod: Faithful of Barzakh respect the journey far more than the destination, and they commonly use this phrase to acknowledge that any movement on a difficult task—even despite temporary setbacks—is better than nothing at all. It is also commonly used to respect a departed soul's legacy by continuing the individual's work.

What will be lost today?: A humble greeting among Barzakh's faithful encourages those they meet to be mindful of whatever they hold precious. The assumption is that all roads demand tolls—whether coin or time or blood—and to pay mind to those things valuable to you, lest they serve as payment for passage. It also encourages faithfuls to appreciate what they have, for fate can snatch away anything without warning.

HOLY TEXT

The Passage has no formal holy text, but most of Barzakh's faithful find their deity's wisdom in the Songs of Passing, a rambling epic poem penned by the pilgrim and priest Sister Chiemelie Umbar, who spent her life walking overland from the southern tip of Garund to the Crown of the World in a journey she claims was inspired by the usher. The poem describes not only the people and places she visited, but also weather conditions, dreams, and wisdom she gleaned from the experience, ultimately providing a valuable example of finding relevance in all things and appreciating what exists as time imposes a constant cycle of change—in effect, every moment is death for what came before. Umbar's final fate is never recorded in the Songs, but most agree she became a powerful psychopomp upon death and continues her endless sojourn across the cosmos, collecting wayward souls for the Boneyard.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Barzakh travels and shirks their duty as a matter of course, so they have few permanent ties. They respect and honor the goddess of death, Pharama, and exist because of her. The Lady of Graves seems to be the only being in creation capable of drawing Barzakh's attention on command and holding it for more than a few minutes. Despite this adoration, the Passage exhibits little responsibility or fealty to even Pharama's needs when not in her presence. Among their fellow ushers, Barzakh works alongside Ceyannan and the Pale Horse—the servants of both tread the Dead Roads more than most, so the ushers convene from time to time to ensure those creatures' passage is swift and unfettered. Barzakh also holds some personal fascination with Mother Vulture and visits her frequently.

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Some claim that the Passage asks their flesh-devouring sister to occasionally prowl the Dead Roads and sweep away way station guardians who no longer serve their intended function.

Barzakh shares some kinship with other demigods of travel, lost things, and those afflicted with wanderlust, such as the Black Butterfly and Ssila'meshnik, though these relationships are just as often adversarial. Ssila'meshnik in particular is an object of frustration to the Passage, as the unbound freedom of the protean lord and their coming and going in the Boneyard without respect to the established paths smacks of a snub.

The only being in creation Barzakh holds any permanent and unchanging relationship with is the Horseman Charon, whom the Passage deplors and works to undermine whenever the opportunity presents itself. The usher resents this dark traveler and the corruption of movement he represents. Barzakh believes travel should encourage growth and maturation, but Charon's ministrations funnel souls into corruption and destruction. This enmity extends—as it does for most ushers—to undead and daemons, which represent vile corruptions of the soul's journey and fulfillment.

SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Barzakh can cast *tireless pursuit*^{APG} as a 1st-level spell, *teleport* as a 5th-level spell, and *teleport circle* as a 9th-level spell. In addition, worshippers of the Passage have access to the following spells.

KEYHOLE

School transmutation; **Level** cleric

1, sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1

Casting Time 1 round

Components V, DF

Range touch

Target one touched door or portal

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw special (see text);

Spell Resistance no

By touching a single door, gate, or other portal, you create a keyhole where none existed before or double the size of an existing keyhole. A conjured keyhole allows you to peer through the door, though the limited perspective imposes a –10 penalty on Perception checks to spot anything beyond. It also allows a sealed door to be locked or picked if it could not be before. Locking or unlocking such a door requires a successful Disable Device check with a DC equal to the barrier's break DC + 10. Enlarging an existing keyhole allows viewers to peer through to whatever lies beyond, even if the preexisting keyhole did not allow it, and it reduces the Disable Device DC to open or lock the door by 5.

This spell does not normally allow a saving throw, but magic doors and barriers can resist the effect with a successful Will saving throw, as if they were carried by their original creator.

OPEN THE DEAD ROADS

School conjuration; **Level** cleric 6

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target up to one touched creature/level

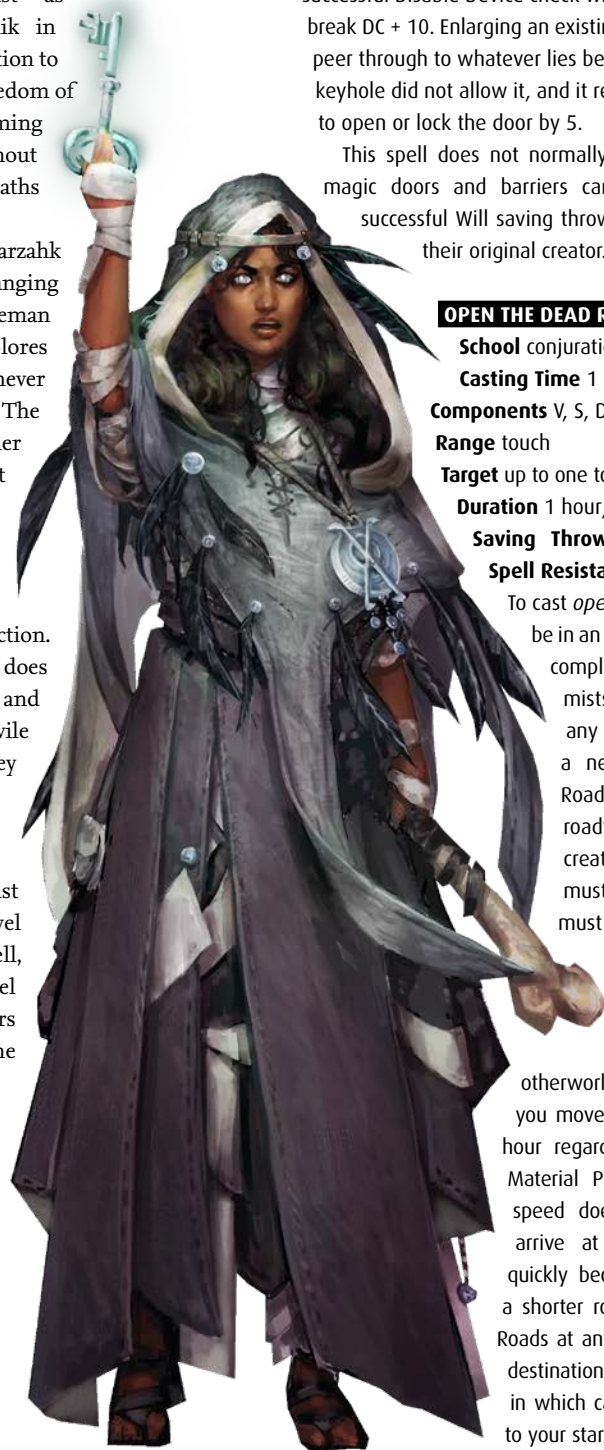
Duration 1 hour/level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless);

Spell Resistance yes

To cast *open the Dead Roads*, you must be in an area of fog or dim light. Upon completion of the spell, swirling mists part and deposit you and any creatures you touched on a nearby stretch of the Dead Roads, a network of extraplanar roadways. You can take up to one creature per level, but all targets must be touching each other. You must specify a location known to you or one of your travelers as your destination when casting this spell.

When traveling the otherworldly paths of the Dead Roads, you move at a speed of 50 miles per hour regardless of the terrain on the Material Plane. Your own movement speed does not change; you simply arrive at distant destinations more quickly because the Dead Roads offer a shorter route. You can exit the Dead Roads at any point before reaching your destination by wandering off the path, in which case you are usually returned to your starting place. If this would place



you within a solid object, you (and any creatures with you) are shunted to the nearest empty space available.

Because the Dead Roads occupy another plane, it is impossible to spy on the Material Plane while using this spell without additional spells or supernatural abilities.

Open the Dead Roads can be used to travel to or from the Shadow Plane, the Ethereal Plane, the Astral Plane, or the Boneyard; any of these destinations requires 10 hours of travel. Thanks to their unique nature, the Dead Roads can be used to travel from any plane to the Material Plane—a trip likewise requiring 10 hours—unless that plane normally bars all extraplanar travel.

Creatures you bring with you to the Dead Roads are not obligated to follow you. If they wander off, there is an 80% chance they arrive at a random point on the Material Plane within 2d6×10 miles of your starting point, otherwise they arrive in the Boneyard.

OBEDIENCE

The following describes the daily rite Barzakh's followers must perform to take full advantage of the Deific Obedience feat, as well as the boons for the prestige classes found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods*.

OBEDIENCE (BARZAHK)

Walk a road for an hour and keep a constant eye out for signs of fallen travelers or roadside graves. Tend to any of either you find. Gain a +4 insight bonus on Knowledge (geography) and Survival checks to find locations and avoid becoming lost, as well as on saving throws against magic effects that would force you to become lost (such as the *maze* spell).

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Know Who Passed (Sp)** *alarm* 3/day, *perceive cues*^{APG} 2/day, or *speak with dead* 1/day
- 2: Wings of the Wanderer (Su)** As a standard action, you can assume the form of a giant raven (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 240) as if using the spell *beast shape II*. While in this form, you gain the raven's scavenger extraordinary ability, a +2 insight bonus to AC, and a +3 insight bonus on Perception checks. You can retain this form for 1 hour per HD you have; this time does not need to be consecutive, but it must be used in 1-hour increments. While in raven form, you can increase or decrease your size as a standard action, as if you had cast *reduce person* or *enlarge person* (self only); these spells have their normal duration, treating your Hit Dice as your caster level, but casting either consumes 1 hour of your daily shapeshifting allotment.
- 3: Terrain Dominance** Your passage is rarely impeded by landscapes or weather. For every 5 HD you have, you gain one terrain dominance (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 266) as if you were a horizon walker; you do not need to have the terrain mastery class feature to select a terrain dominance. If you do not have a favored terrain bonus from

Customized Summon List

Priests and clerics of Barzakh the Passage can use their *summon monster* spells to summon the creatures listed below, in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spell's description.

Summon Monster III

Entropic giant raven (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 288, 240)
Nosoi (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 220)

Summon Monster V

Catrina (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 218)

Summon Monster VII

Shoki (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 222)

another source, treat your favored terrain bonus as +2 when dealing with creatures native to the terrains over which you have dominance; you do not otherwise gain the benefits of favored terrain.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Prepared Traveler (Sp)** *adjuring step*^{UC} 3/day, *animal messenger* 2/day, or *phantom steed* 1/day
- 2: Seasoned Traveler (Ex)** You no longer take nonlethal damage from moving at a hustle overland. You gain Endurance and Nimble Moves as bonus feats.
- 3: Into the Dead Roads (Su)** Once per day as a full-round action, you can open a door to the Dead Roads and guide others with you to cross huge distances or travel the planes. This duplicates the effects of a *shadow walk* or *plane shift* spell, with a caster level equal to twice your Hit Dice. In the case of a *plane shift* spell, the effect is not instantaneous, instead requiring 2d6 hours of travel by foot to arrive at a random point on the target plane.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Find the Lost (Sp)** *tireless pursuit*^{APG} 3/day, *locate object* 2/day, or *follow aura*^{APG} 1/day
- 2: Studied Hunter (Ex)** You are adept at tracking, understanding, and assisting a specific kind of creature. Select a creature type from the ranger's list of favored enemies. You gain a +2 bonus on Survival checks to track creatures of this type or subtype, and on Diplomacy, Heal, Knowledge, and Sense Motive checks regarding them. You also gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks from creatures of this type. For every 5 Hit Dice you have, you can select one additional type or subtype to apply these bonuses to, and at each such interval, the bonus gained regarding any one studied type or subtype increases by 2 for skill checks and by 1 for AC.
- 3: Warden of the Ways (Su)** You no longer need to drink, eat, or sleep to survive, though you must still rest with only light activity for at least 2 hours a day to renew your spells. While on a road, pathway, or tunnel, you gain DR 4/—; your GM has final approval over what qualifies as a road, pathway, or tunnel.

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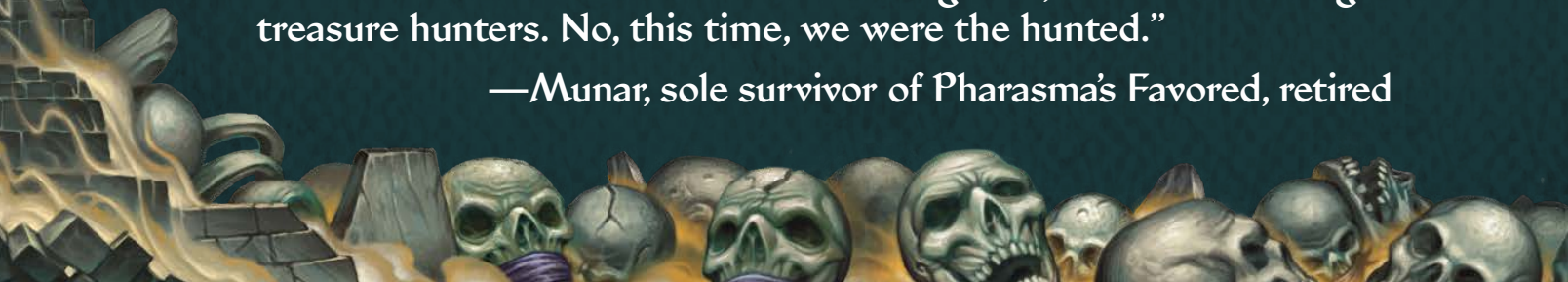
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“We held Pindle’s wake near the tomb’s entrance. We’d come too far to go back to Ipeq for a proper funeral. Besides, Pindle would have wanted it this way, for us to make our fortune in their honor. So we trudged in once more, certain that the accident—a ceiling tile that crushed our rogue—was just that: an accident.

“How wrong we were.

“We came to know the true nature of the labyrinthine death trap we were in when the floor suddenly gave way beneath Rodrigo’s feet—beloved Rodrigo, may Pharamasma guide him—and afterward we heard that dry, mocking laughter echo down the halls. It soon became clear that within this crumbling ruin, we were no longer treasure hunters. No, this time, we were the hunted.”

—Munar, sole survivor of Pharamasma’s Favored, retired



The bestiary for this Adventure Path volume includes two new couatls—the verdant chicome and the vengeful tletli—a new mortic (a type of undead humanoid first introduced in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #139: The Dead Roads*) combining the ruinous magic of mummies and the architectural love of dwarves, the musically inclined consoler of survivors known as the calaca psychopomp, and the legendary psychopomp usher and warden of the Dead Roads, Barzakh the Passage. For convenience, Barzakh’s psychopomp usher traits are included on this page.

XOPATL ENCOUNTERS

“Borne by the Sun’s Grace” takes the PCs to the distant continent of Arcadia, specifically the nation of Xopatl, Land of Promise. A gazetteer of Xopatl, including more details on its inhabitants and the treasure to be found in this ancient country, can be found starting on page 62.

The following random encounter table can be used anytime the PCs are exploring the region of Xopatl. You can use this table to roll random monster encounters for PCs who may be lingering in Xopatl and require a bit more treasure or XP in order to reach the recommended level by the end of this adventure.

Xopatl Encounters

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–2	1d6 muhurus	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 6 196
3–4	1 animal lord and	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 14,
	1d6 smilodons*	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 265
5–7	1d4 thunderbirds	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 264
8–10	1 ketesthius	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 150
11–14	1d8 couatls	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 49
15–18	1 fastachee and	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 114,
	2d12 swan maidens		<i>Bestiary</i> 4 257
19–23	1 wakandagi	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 273
24–28	1d4 giant sundews	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 6 258
29–33	1d3 psoglavs	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 6 215
34–39	1d6 taotiehs*	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 260
40–46	1 tletli couatl	14	See page 84
47–53	1d4 titanoboas	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 6 185
54–60	1 isonade	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 147
61–67	1d8 lukwatas	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 187
68–73	2 royal nagas	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 198
74–79	1 gold golem	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 6 140
80–84	1 ypotryll	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 285
85–89	1 chicome couatl	16	See page 82
90–93	1 sun giant	16	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 123
94–97	1 saurian	16	<i>Bestiary</i> 6 247
98–100	1 tunche	17	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 265

*Use the statistics for these creatures as written, but present the creatures as jaguars or cougars.

PSYCHOPOMP USHER TRAITS

An usher rules a domain in the Boneyard. Ushers are neutral outsiders with a minimum CR of 25. Ushers share the following traits and have the psychopomp subtype unless otherwise noted.

- An usher’s natural weapons, as well as any weapon it wields, are treated as epic and as though they have the *ghost touch* special ability for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance and immunities.
- Immunity to ability damage, ability drain, charm, compulsion, death effects, energy drain, and petrification.
- **Frightful Presence (Su):** An usher can activate its frightful presence as a free action as part of any attack, special attack, spell-like ability, or by speaking aloud.
- **Summon Psychopomps (Su):** Three times per day as a swift action, an usher can summon a psychopomp or combination of psychopomps whose total combined CR is 20 or lower. This otherwise functions like the summon universal monster rule with 100% chance of success, and it counts as a 9th-level spell effect.
- **Walk with Death (Su):** Ushers share an intimate bond with Pharasma, goddess of death, and they cannot be reduced below 0 hit points while in the Boneyard. Any usher killed beyond the Boneyard dissolves into mist and feathers, leaving behind any gear it carried, and it is immediately restored to life (as *true resurrection*) in a location of its choice within its domain. An usher can’t use this ability again for 1 year.
- Telepathy 300 feet.
- An usher can grant spells as if it were a deity. Each usher has a favored weapon and grants the Repose domain, plus three other domains and four subdomains.

In addition, a psychopomp usher gains the following powers while in its realm (the statistics presented on the page 90 do not include these abilities):

- **Heightened Awareness (Ex):** An usher gains a +10 insight bonus on Sense Motive checks and initiative checks.
- **Mythic:** An usher functions as a 10th-rank mythic creature, including having the mythic power ability (10/day, surge +1d12). It can expend uses of mythic power to use the mythic versions of any spell-like ability denoted with a superscript “M,” as if the ability were a mythic spell.
- **Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*discern location*, *fabricate*, *polymorph any object* (when used on objects or creatures that are native to the realm, the polymorph duration factor increases by 6), and *rest eternal*^{APC}; 1/day—*miracle* (limited to physical effects that manipulate the realm or to effects that are relevant to the usher’s area of concern), *true resurrection* (the usher can use *true resurrection* to restore slain outsiders to life).

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Couatl, Chicome

The feathers of this winged serpent are hues of verdant green, save for the crimson feathers on its head and crest. Its wings let forth thin clouds of golden pollen and showers of dew.

CHICOME

CR 16



XP 76,800

LG Huge outsider (native)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., *detect chaos/evil/good/law*; Perception +36

Aura resplendence (1/2 mile)

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 14, flat-footed 25 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +17 natural, -2 size)

hp 250 (20d10+140)

Fort +13, **Ref** +19, **Will** +21

DR 10/cold iron or evil; **Immune** acid, disease, poison; **Resist** cold 15, electricity 15, fire 15; **SR** 28

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 120 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +28 (2d8+15 plus grab and poison)

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

Special Attacks constrict (2d8+10)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +26)

Constant—*detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law*

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 19), *ethereal jaunt, invisibility, plane shift* (DC 24)

1/week—*reincarnate*

Spells Prepared (CL 18th; concentration +27)

9th—*antipathy* (DC 28), *regenerate, summon nature's ally IX*

8th—*control plants* (DC 27), *mass cure serious wounds, repel metal or stone, whirlwind* (DC 27)

7th—*animate plants, control weather, heal, transmute metal to wood*

6th—*greater dispel magic, liveoak, move earth, transport via plants, wall of stone*

5th—*animal growth* (DC 24), *awaken* (DC 24), *commune with nature, control winds* (DC 24), *hallow, wall of thorns*

4th—*antiplant shell, command plants* (DC 23), *control water, dispel magic, freedom of movement, repel vermin*

3rd—*daylight, dominate animal* (DC 22), *neutralize poison, quench* (DC 22), *remove disease, speak with plants*

2nd—*animal messenger, gust of wind* (DC 21), *lesser restoration, soften earth and stone, warp wood* (DC 21), *wood shape* (DC 21)

1st—*calm animals* (DC 20), *charm animal* (DC 20), *detect animals or plants, entangle* (DC 20), *faerie fire, obscuring mist, speak with animals*

0 (at will)—*create water, detect magic, know direction, purify food and drink* (DC 19)

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 20, **Con** 25, **Int** 18, **Wis** 29, **Cha** 27

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +32 (+36 grapple); **CMD** 48 (can't be tripped)

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials⁸,

Hover, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Natural Spell, Spell Penetration, Widen Spell, Wingover

Skills Bluff +31, Fly +20, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (geography) +27, Knowledge (nature) +27, Perception +36, Sense Motive +36, Spellcraft +24, Stealth +20, Survival +32

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Druidic; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ natural form, wild empathy +32

ECOLOGY

Environment warm badlands or ruins

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Resplendence (Sp) A chicome constantly radiates an aura of *plant growth*, as the spell, providing enrichment to plants within a half-mile radius. The chicome can suppress or resume the aura as a free action.

Natural Form (Sp) Once per day as a standard action, a chicome can take the form of any animal, dragon, magical beast, or vermin with 18 Hit Dice or fewer. This functions as if using *beast shape IV*, *form of the dragon III*, *magical beast shape^{uw}*, or *vermin shape II*, as appropriate, and otherwise counts as a druid's wild shape ability for the purposes of abilities and prerequisites. The chicome can maintain this form indefinitely and can end the transformation as a free action.

Poison (Ex) Injury—bite; *save* Fort DC 27; *frequency* 1/minute for 10 minutes; *effect* 2d4 Str; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Spells A chicome casts spells as an 18th-level druid, but cannot swap out prepared spells to cast summon spells.

Wild Empathy (Su) This works like the druid's wild empathy class feature, except the chicome has a +6 racial bonus on the check. The chicome's effective druid level is 18 for the purpose of determining its total modifier to the check.

Chicomes are a powerful but gentle variety of couatl—winged serpentine outsiders who act as agents of lawful good deities—whose purpose is to reestablish nature in destroyed and ravaged lands, especially those that have been recently cleansed of evil. Chicomes accomplish this by way of powerful druidic magic and the cloud of restorative pollen and dew that constantly drifts from their wings.

Like other couatls, chicomes have varicolored feathers and beautiful, glossy scales. The couatls' wing feathers are typically shades of green or brown, but their crests are always a brilliant crimson. Like for other couatls, the feathers of chicomes are incredibly powerful magic items when bestowed upon chosen mortals. Such a freely given feather can be used as the material component for a *planar ally* spell (see page 48 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* for more details). In addition, if buried in at least 6 inches of soil and undisturbed for 24 hours, the feather can be used

as the material component to cast a *hallow* spell; the spell effect tied to the hallowed site is always the enrichment version of *plant growth*. By using a chicome feather in this way, the caster need not expend the typical payment of gold or other valuables required by the spell.

A typical chicome is 40 feet long with a wingspan of 30 feet and weighs 5,500 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Chicomes typically show themselves only in the aftermath of an incredible act of devastation or widespread destruction, such as a massive battle or the razing of a large settlement, and even then only if the couatl deems the area in question worthy of being restored. Their exact criteria for worthy lands are unclear; what is known is that badlands chosen by one of these blessed sky serpents are enormously enriched by the outsider's presence. When a chicome restores the balance of nature to a ruined area, it cleanses the land of any residual toxins and contagions, such as contaminated earth or water, and plants the seeds of new life. If the restoration of healthy biomes is not enough to draw nearby wildlife back to the region—or if all the local fauna has been exhausted—the couatl uses its magic to coax animals from other corners of the world to the fledgling environment.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Chicomes are strictly solitary creatures who dwell in the lands that need their help. While they are purifying a particular region, chicomes periodically take flight to survey the area and determine whether their presence is still justified. The couatls also scout for worthy guardians in the vicinity to take over stewardship—typically a powerful awakened animal, but sometimes a nemophilist in a nearby settlement. These individuals typically become druids who learn their abilities from the chicome, though anyone the couatl deems worthy may serve as a steward of such lands, regardless of the individual's magical prowess. Those who have received a chicome's blessing are sometimes referred to as Children of the Chicome. If ever one such steward is slain while protecting her pocket of wilderness, her host chicome will return its child to life using its powers of reincarnation. The steward is typically reborn as the animal it most identified with in life.

Though they may serve a range of lawful and good deities, chicomes are typically agents of those gods with an aspect of nature or life, such as Erastil or Cihua Couatl (see page 66), or empyreal lords like Cernunnos or Valani. Some chicomes may even serve neutral-aligned

deities such as Gozreh or Feronia. Chicomes never serve deities, no matter how noble, whose portfolio includes the destruction of nature or the spread of civilization, such as Torag. Many chicomes serve no deities at all and are dedicated only to the primordial forces of nature.

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Xopatl C



Couatl, Tletli

This massive flying serpent's iridescent scales glimmer like opals, and white-hot flames dance along the feathers of its burning wings.

TLETLI

CR 14

XP 38,400

NG Huge outsider (native)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., *detect chaos/evil/good/law*; Perception +30

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 13, flat-footed 25 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +17 natural, -2 size)

hp 200 (16d10+112)

Fort +12, **Ref** +16, **Will** +17

Immune fire; **Resist** acid 15, cold 15, electricity 15; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 120 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +25 (2d8+11/19-20 plus grab and poison), 2 wings +20 (1d8+5 plus burn and stoke fire)

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

Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone, 12d6 fire, Reflex DC 25 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), burn (2d6 fire, DC 25), constrict (2d8+11 plus burn)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +18)

Constant—*detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law*
At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 17), *ethereal jaunt, invisibility, plane shift* (DC 22)

1/day—*sunburst* (DC 24)

Spells Known (CL 12th; concentration +18)

6th (4/day)—*holy word* (DC 22)

5th (6/day)—*dismissal* (DC 21), *flame strike*

4th (7/day)—*dispel evil* (DC 20), *holy smite, wall of fire*

3rd (7/day)—*daylight, dispel magic, fireball* (DC 19), *searing light* (DC 19)

2nd (8/day)—*castigate*^{APG} (DC 18), *eagle's splendor, flaming sphere* (DC 18), *gust of wind* (DC 18), *scorching ray*

1st (8/day)—*burning hands* (DC 17), *charm person* (DC 17), *comprehend languages, magic missile, protection from evil*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights, daze* (DC 16), *detect magic, flare* (DC 16), *light, mage hand, message, read magic, resistance*

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 19, **Con** 24, **Int** 17, **Wis** 24, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +29 (+33 grapple); **CMD** 44 (can't be tripped)

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Eschew Materials^B, Hover, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +25, Fly +15, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (planes) +22, Perception +30, Sense Motive +30, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +15

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ holy fire

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or revelation (3-6 plus 1-2 angels and 1 chicome couatl)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Holy Fire (Su) Fire damage dealt by a tletli, including that of its breath weapon and spells, is infused with divine energy. Half the damage of such attacks is fire damage, but the other half is the result of holy power and thus not subject to being reduced by resistance to fire-based attacks. Fire damage dealt by a tletli is considered good-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Poison (Ex) Injury—bite; *save* Fort DC 25; *frequency* 1/minute for 10 minutes; *effect* 1d6 Str; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Spells A tletli casts spells as a 12th-level sorcerer, and can cast spells from the inquisitor (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 38) and paladin spell lists as well as those normally available to a sorcerer. These divine spells are considered arcane spells for the tletli, meaning that the creature does not need a divine focus to cast them.

Stoke Flames (Ex) Once per round when a tletli attacks with its wings, it can cause areas of active fire within 30 feet to spread as a free action. An affected 5-foot square of fire spreads to one adjacent square that is not on fire, possibly burning objects or creatures in that space. The tletli determines which adjacent squares are set on fire.

Of all the couatls, tletlis are among the most vengeful and easily the most actively destructive, channeling their righteous fury to rid Golarion of large swaths of evildoers. While some couatls may offer redemption to evil individuals, a tletli withholds salvation and exacts punishment on whole sects of people whose crimes they deem warrant oblivion. Tletlis do not hunt down individuals, instead targeting gangs, corrupt governments, and even entire settlements that they believe have fallen beyond redemption.

The tletli is a terrifying sight to behold. Its wings are continually shrouded in flame, ranging from warm orange at the base to hot blue at the tips, causing the air around the couatl to radiate with an ominous light best described as apocalyptic. Further magnifying the effect, the beast's opalescent scales seem to reflect a divine light.

A typical tletli is 35 long with a wingspan of 25 feet. It is one of the heaviest couatls, weighing nearly 6,000 pounds.

ECOLOGY

The tletli has a unique connection to the powers of the firmament, even compared to other couatls. The divine intensity of a tletli's fire is so great that it can penetrate the defenses of even creatures made from flame, and its conflagration is infused with holy power that can wreak devastation among evil outsiders, dragons, and undead.

Tletlis rarely gift their sacred feathers to mortals, but when they do it is a true honor, and one that bestows great power upon the recipient of the holy item. A tletli's freely given feather acts in all ways as a couatl's feather (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 49), allowing a spellcaster to use it as an additional material component to cast *planar ally* to conjure that specific tletli without expending the typical payment of gold or other valuables—provided the tletli approves of the service asked for by the spellcaster. Alternatively, a tletli's feather can be used as an additional material component while casting any damage-dealing spell with the fire descriptor; in this case, the spell gains the benefits of the Maximize Spell metamagic feat, and the spell uses up a spell slot 3 levels higher than the spell's actual level.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

A tletli appears only as a last resort, when a particular settlement or area has become filled with irredeemably evil individuals. Ghost towns overrun with undead, blighted forests plagued by evil fey, and interplanar portals that act as gateways for devils or demons are all likely targets for a tletli's wrath. In addition to their worship of righteous deities such as Sarenrae and Torag, tletlis serve a disproportionate number of empyreal lords, enacting swift justice on behalf of mighty angels and archons like Ragathiel, Olheon, and Damerrich. Like their masters, they assume the role of divine executioners, meting out the most extreme discipline possible to agents of vileness.

Although tletlis are near legendary in terms of their scarcity, those who recognize these massive creatures for what they are quickly understand the destruction soon to come. Legend tells that tletlis were more prominent on Golarion shortly after Earthfall as they worked to fight the evils that arose during the Age of Darkness.

If and when a tletli is called upon to obliterate an irredeemable region, the couatl enlists mortals to aid its efforts, typically in the form of envoys and delegates who extend a final chance for redemption to the sinners in question. A tletli's prerogative, however, is punishment, not

mercy, and woe be unto any who cavort with the wrong kind of company at the wrong time in a tletli's presence. If there are genuine innocents within a group or settlement on which the tletli has set its sights, the couatl may send an emissary, such as a charmed person, to forewarn the pure of heart, but it otherwise does not hesitate to incinerate the entire locale. Their deific masters understand tletlis' unrivaled propensity for holy retribution all too well, and

they typically send other couatls or celestials

like angels to accompany the tletlis in case there are a number of individuals in a settlement that should be evacuated or protected during the razing.

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Mortic, Relictner

This withered, decrepit dwarf has crumbling skin and wears ancient leather armor but moves with eerie agility.

RELICTNER

CR 12



XP 19,200

LE Medium humanoid (dwarf, mortic)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., ruin sense; Perception +23

Aura weathering aura (60 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 13, flat-footed 23 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural); +10 vs. environmental effects and traps within bonded ruin

hp 162 (17d8+85)

Fort +14, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10; +10 vs. environmental effects and traps within bonded ruin

Defensive Abilities death gasp, negative energy affinity; **DR** 5/—; **Immune** curses

Weaknesses vulnerable to consecration

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee adamantine warhammer +16/+11/+6 (1d8+6/×3)

Special Attacks fatal accident (1/day, 12d6 or 6d6 plus maneuver, DC 21 half)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th; concentration +20)

At will—*meld into stone*

3/day—*spike stones* (DC 17), *stone shape*

1/day—*wall of stone*

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16 (+20 bull rush, +20 sunder); **CMD** 29 (31 vs. bull rush, 31 vs. sunder)

Feats Dodge, Greater Bull Rush, Greater Sunder, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Craft (traps) +20, Knowledge (engineering) +19, Perception +23, Stealth +21

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ ruin bond, unliving nature

ECOLOGY

Environment any ruins

Organization solitary, family (2–6), or clan (7–12)

Treasure standard (studded leather armor, adamantine warhammer, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fatal Accident (Su) Once per day as a standard action, a relictner can focus its deteriorating curse to wreak havoc around them. When using this ability, a relictner chooses a structure or manufactured object within 60 feet no larger than 15 feet by 15 feet, such as a statue, treasure chest, or support pillar. The chosen object falls, crumbles, or is otherwise compromised in such a way that it damages any

creature adjacent to it, dealing 12d6 points of damage to each creature, or half as much damage to each creature that succeeds at a DC 21 Reflex save. Alternatively, the relictner can deal only 6d6 points of damage and also attempt a ranged bull rush, trip, or sunder maneuver check as a free action with a +4 racial bonus against each target that fails its Reflex save (sundering in this way deals 6d6 points of damage). This attack may deal more or less damage depending on the object chosen and the GM's discretion, and it typically creates difficult terrain in the area around it. The DC is Charisma-based.

Ruin Bond (Su) A relictner forms a bond with the structure it calls home. Single relictners form bonds with huts or houses, families of relictners bond with castles or temples, and clans can bond with entire ruined cities. All structures in a relictner's bonded ruin lose 1 hit point per day and can be reduced to a minimum of 10 hit points. Within its bonded ruin, a relictner gains a +10 bonus to AC and on saving throws against environmental effects and any traps. A relictner can have only one bonded ruin at a time but can create a new one by living in a suitable structure for at least 1 week. A relictner who spends more than 24 hours away from its bonded ruin becomes fatigued and shaken until it returns to the ruin.

Ruin Sense (Su) A relictner is instantly aware of any creature that dies within its bonded ruin, as well as the direction and approximate distance of the dead creature.

Weathering Aura (Su) A relictner radiates an entropic aura of decay and disrepair. All objects within 30 feet of a relictner, including held and worn nonmagical objects, have their hardness reduced by 5, to a minimum of 0, as long as they are within the area of the weathering aura and for 1 round after leaving the area. This is a curse effect.

A relictner mortic is two entities in one: a vicious, grasping curse and its half-undead dwarven host. The hosts resemble gaunt, prematurely aged dwarves, their hair gray and ragged, their faces nothing but masses of wrinkles. The curse, however, is a strong and subtle thing, rotting and weathering everything the relictner sees or touches until only ruins are left. Outcast and eternally bitter, most relictners remove themselves to abandoned halls and forgotten ruins that they remake into shrines of mortal despair, filling their new homes with traps and pitfalls to snare the unwary.

A typical relictner stands about 4 feet tall and weighs 125 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Sometimes, when a dwarf survives the affliction of a mummy's curse, a sliver of that dread power remains in her blood, lying dormant for years or even generations. The curse mutates, and its host mutates in turn to become

the half-dead creature known as a relictner. The two grow together in a kind of twisted symbiosis, until it becomes hard to tell where the relictner ends and its curse begins. Removing a relictner's curse (possible only with *wish* or *miracle*) kills it instantly, as the curse has long since taken over the host's vital biological functions.

Soon after its curse manifests, a relictner feels an urge to claim some kind of structure or building as its own. A relictner considers its home a vital part of its being, much like a hermit crab's shell, and few relictners willingly leave their chosen lairs. A relictner forced to leave its home experiences bouts of twitchy, agoraphobic mania interspersed with melancholic lethargy. This is not to say that relictners don't sometimes grit their teeth and travel—a relictner is an intelligent creature, after all—but it takes quite a lot of motivation.

A relictner's curse encompasses its chosen home, weakening it, desecrating it, and turning even the greatest example of dwarven architecture into a barely standing ruin within a matter of months. Relictners' ruins are places where terrible accidents can happen with little warning, and where lives can be lost in sudden structural collapses. Relictners themselves are almost never in any danger, however. The mortic's curse may not be alive in any conventional sense, but it does have some tiny spark of awareness, enough to make a point of never harming its host.

Whenever someone dies inside the cursed ruins of a relictner, the mortic feels a sudden rush of energy and confidence as its curse fulfills its true purpose. The more painful, agonizing, and despair-ridden the death, the greater the subsequent high. The same ability also makes it easy for relictners to stalk prey within their domiciles, as they can usually find survivors nearby.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

A few relictners try to hide in larger dwarven society, though their destructive aura makes it difficult—people tend to notice when fine dwarven workmanship falls to pieces in a matter of weeks, and to dwarves, relictners are nothing less than abominations, horrific blasphemies that by their very nature destroy everything that dwarves strive to create. Those relictners who manage to hide do so by pretending to be older than they are and by living in slums or shantytowns, places where one more ruined building won't be remarked upon. More often, though, relictners are

exiled or forced out. These bitter outcasts seek existing ruins, where they either live alone as hermits or in small, orderly clans, and from which they plan their revenge on the living.

Relictner ruins tend to be terrifying places to visit. Relictners generally seek out the most impressive ruins they can find, ideally those with curses or undead residents of their own—relictners are immune to other jinxes, and they get along very well with lichs or mummies, offering service in exchange for residence. They are expert trapmakers and delight in devising creative ways to violently mutilate and kill their victims.

Of course, creating traps that never get triggered is boring, so relictners routinely lure visitors to their ruinous homes. Particularly duplicitous relictners have even been known to hire adventuring parties as unwitting meat for their grinders, finding these capable targets a satisfying test for their skills.

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Psychopomp, Calaca

This figure wears a fine suit, vest, gloves, and ascot and has a guitar at the ready. The creature's face is hidden by an intricately decorated skull mask.

CALACA

CR 8

XP 4,800

N Medium outsider (extraplanar, psychopomp)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, spiritsense; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 103 (11d10+44)

Fort +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +11

DR 5/adamantine; **Immune** death effects, disease, poison; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +11 (1d8)

Ranged pistol +14 (1d8/*4)

Special Attacks bardic performance, show stopper

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +15)

At will—*deathwatch*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *invisibility* (self only)

3/day—*good hope*, *heroes' feast*

1/day—*irresistible dance* (DC 20), *modify memory* (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 16, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +11 (+13 disarm); **CMD** 24 (26 vs. disarm)

Feats Combat Expertise, Ensemble^{UM}, Improved Disarm, Iron Will, Lingering Performance^{APG}, Persuasive

Skills Bluff +18, Diplomacy +22, Disguise +18, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +17, Perception +16, Perform (string instruments) +18, Profession (musician) +16, Sense Motive +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal; *tongues*

SQ antique weapon, spirit touch

Gear pistol with 1 bullet^{UC}, guitar

ECOLOGY

Environment any (the Boneyard)

Organization solitary, pair, or band (3–5)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Antique Weapon (Ex) Each calaca carries a single antique weapon, typically a pistol. Only the calaca knows how to use its antique weapon properly, and is treated as proficient with it; all other creatures treat the weapon as if it were broken. If the weapon is already broken, then it does not work at all for any creature other than the calaca. If the weapon is a firearm, the calaca carries only a single bullet.

Bardic Performance A calaca has the bardic performance ability of an 11th-level bard, granting it access to the

countersong, distraction, dirge of doom, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire competence, inspire greatness, and suggestion performances.

Show Stopper (Sp) As a standard action, a calaca can destroy its guitar, creating a deafening boom of sound that immediately halts each other creature within 30 feet that fails a DC 19 Will save. Any creature that fails its save is affected as if by *mass hold person*. Without its guitar, the calaca loses access to its bardic performance special ability. A calaca who returns to the Boneyard for 24 consecutive hours acquires a new guitar to replace the one that it has destroyed. This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Calacas are unusual psychopomps in that their purview is not the dead, but the survivors who must carry on in the dead's absence. A calaca's purpose is to abate the sorrow of family members and loved ones of the recently departed. It accomplishes this by way of soothing wisdom and its celebration of the deceased's life through song. Although mortals who know calacas' true nature may think them simply magnanimous spirits, these psychopomps have a very pragmatic reason for soothing the aggrieved, which is to dissuade any with the know-how or desire from attempting to raise the dead using necromancy or other foul means.

In order to mingle with mortals without alerting them to its nature, a calaca disguises itself from head to toe in local finery, wearing gloves and colorful masks to hide its true nature. Beneath its facade, a calaca resembles a large skeleton, its bones a somber gray. A typical calaca stands around 6 feet tall and weighs only 40 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Many cultures speak of kindly strangers or masked wanderers who appear in the wake of a beloved's death to offer words of consolation and songs of catharsis, and calacas are often the root of these myths. A calaca typically arrives at the door of a widow, widower, or next of kin by mysterious means and always claims to be a distant friend or admirer of the dead. The calaca may show up during a wake or other funeral procession—as long as doing so would not be disruptive or insulting—bearing food and drink for the mourners. While they treat the bereaved to sustenance and music, calacas use their social charms to get to know the grieving and to learn more about the deceased so that they can tailor their consolations to each individual. Because they use no compulsion magic and cannot speak with the dead like some psychopomps, calacas must rely on their natural graces and aptitude for conversation while interacting with mortals.

Far from mere charlatans, calacas do in actuality feel the sympathy they express so strongly to survivors of the dead. However, their grief stems not from the departure of the individual to the afterlife (in fact, most calacas never

meet the spirits of the dead for whom they are sharing consolations), but from the pain of knowing that mortals will never fully understand the beauty or necessity of the transition from life to death. They are a forlorn race of psychopomps who express their sorrow in the form of joyful music and mirthful laughter.

A calaca's role is not in combat, and most retreat if a fight seems inevitable, returning another day to give peaceful mediation another try. In spite of calacas' pacifistic nature, each bears on its person an antique weapon such as a pistol or an exotic sword, which is perhaps the creature's most mysterious detail. Even the calaca does not know the purpose of this weapon—whether it is a relic from the creature's past as a mortal or just part of its disguise. However, if asked, a calaca replies that its weapon is an item gifted directly by the gods, and its use will become obvious when the appropriate time has come.

A calaca's second-most important belonging is its instrument (typically a guitar or fiddle), which is capable of unleashing powerful magic if destroyed as a last resort.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

A calaca's prime directive is to discreetly dissuade any survivors who might consider necromancy or other unnatural means of reviving the dead. Calacas accomplish this through tact and persuasion, not magic or trickery, and by instilling the belief that death is simply a second chapter in the story of one's life. If a calaca cannot sway a mortal from trying to revive the fallen, it calls upon other psychopomps more suited to handling the threat.

Because death is common on Golarion but necromancy is not, calacas do not appear before just anyone who has lost a loved one. Their typical targets are the rich and powerful; after all, individuals with the resources to bring the living back from the dead often need more dissuasion than peasants without means, who simply resign themselves to their loss. For particularly difficult cases or in the instance of mass casualties and thus multitudes of mourners, a number of calacas may band together to combine their efforts, appearing as a troupe. Such troupes typically throw elaborate performative feasts, with each calaca taking up a different instrument or part in the act. As long as their disguise holds, calacas will perform for mortals for days if necessary. Other psychopomps like catrinas may also join them in larger groups, as their abilities complement the calacas' by calming distraught family members and angry mobs.

When not performing their core duty consoling the aggrieved, calacas accompany other psychopomps on missions to the Material Plane, either as heralds or to

provide support. A calaca typically reports its success or failures to a nosoi, who scribbles details of the calaca's latest encounter with a mortal. When a morrigna has been given a target for assassination, several calacas may be sent in advance to soften the morrigna's prey before the attack. Calacas can also be found in the backs of the ranks of vanth forces, maintaining the pace of the psychopomps' march with their haunting battle dirges. Truly, wherever there are psychopomps, the somber songs of the calaca are never far behind.



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Psychopomp Usher, Barzakh

Feathered arms emerge from the shoulders of this hunched raven, clutching a key of bone.

BARZAHK THE PASSAGE

CR 28



XP 4,915,200

N Medium outsider (extraplanar, psychopomp, shapechanger)

Init +20; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *detect thoughts*, *detect undead*, low-light vision, *spiritsense*, *true seeing*; Perception +47

Aura frightful presence (120 ft., DC 37), loneliness unbroken (100 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 46, touch 26, flat-footed 35 (+4 armor, +5 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 dodge, +16 natural)

hp 676 (33d10+495); regeneration 30 (deific or mythic)

Fort +33, **Ref** +23, **Will** +31

Defensive Abilities *freedom of movement*, improved evasion, ominous bird of yore, uncertain rustling, usher traits, walk with death; **DR** 20/adamantine and epic;

Immune ability damage, ability drain, acid, charm, compulsion, death effects, disease, energy drain, necromancy effects, petrification, poison; **Resist** cold 30, electricity 30; **SR** 39

OFFENSE

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

Melee *Surcease of Sorrows* +43/+38/+33/+28 (2d6+15), bite +43 (2d6+5)

Special Attacks toss thee here ashore

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 33rd; concentration +44)

Constant—*detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *detect thoughts* (DC 23), *detect undead*, *freedom of movement*, *mage armor*, *true seeing*

At will—*beguiling gift*^{APG} (DC 23), *calm spirit*^{OA} (DC 23), *dimension door*^M, *dimensional anchor*, *greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport*, *mage's magnificent mansion*, *major image* (DC 24), *mirage arcana* (DC 26), *mirror image*^M

3/day—*banishment* (DC 28), *empowered circle of death* (DC 28), *dimensional lock*, *interplanetary teleport* (DC 30; *The Inner Sea World Guide* 295), *quicken maze*, *empowered undeath to death* (DC 28)

1/day—*freedom*, *phase door*

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 31, **Con** 40, **Int** 31, **Wis** 32, **Cha** 33

Base Atk +33; **CMB** +43 (+47 disarm); **CMD** 69 (71 vs. disarm)

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Empower Spell-Like Ability (*circle of death*), Empower Spell-Like Ability (*undeath to death*), Greater Disarm, Improved

Disarm, Improved Iron Will, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*maze*), Spring Attack, Stand Still, Wind Stance, Sidestep^{APG}

Skills Craft (mapmaking) +46, Diplomacy +47, Fly +54, Knowledge (arcana) +46, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +46, Knowledge (geography) +46, Knowledge (history) +43, Knowledge (local) +43, Knowledge (planes) +46, Linguistics +43, Perception +47, Sense Motive +57, Spellcraft +43, Stealth +46, Survival +44, Use Magic Device +44

Languages all; telepathy 300 ft.

SQ change shape (humanoid or bird, *polymorph*), entreating entrance, spirit touch

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Entreating Entrance (Su) While in the Boneyard, the Dead Roads, or the Material Plane, Barzakh can open new routes through the Dead Roads up to three times per day. This functions as if they had cast *teleportation circle*, but this new route lasts for only 1 hour unless Barzakh appoints a master for the route. A master can be any willing humanoid, monstrous humanoid, fey, or outsider with at least one neutral component to its alignment, who must thereafter reside permanently along that length of the Dead Roads. A master gains Barzakh's toss thee here ashore ability while in her domain, and creatures must gain a stamp of approval from the master to use that length of the Dead Roads. A length of the Dead Roads vanishes if its master dies or is absent for more than 1 hour.

Loneliness Unbroken (Su) As a master of ways and lost things, Barzakh can decide when and if creatures leave their presence. Creatures that approach within 100 feet of Barzakh cannot leave that radius unless the usher wills it, always looping back if they flee and returning to a random point within 100 feet.

Ominous Bird of Yore (Ex) If slain within their domain, Barzakh immediately re-forms—growing from a random bird somewhere along the Dead Roads—with full hit points. They cannot use this ability for 1 month afterward.

Toss Thee Here Ashore (Su) While on the Dead Roads, Barzakh can cast *banishment* at will, treating all creatures as if they had the extraplanar subtype. Creatures successfully banished are sent either to the Material Plane or the Boneyard, at Barzakh's discretion.

Uncertain Rustling (Su) Barzakh never stands exactly where they seem to, their mastery of travel slightly displacing them even when at rest. They gain a +5 deflection bonus to AC, and all attacks targeting them have a 20% miss chance. *True seeing* and similar effects negate this miss chance, but not the deflection bonus to AC.

Barzakh the Passage is among the youngest of Pharasma's ushers, having been born alongside (or, some suggest, as) the transitive Dead Roads that psychopomps use to

travel the planes. Despite this relative youth, they still number among the oldest beings in creation, predating many archdevils, demon lords, empyreal lords, and even gods. Barzakh sees little new in this world, and a powerful boredom drives them to find wonder in small and personal things—the blooming of a flower, the rattle of a last breath, the tears of love that fall at a funeral. Whimsical and distracted, the usher rarely attends to their appointed duties for long and instead takes to wandering the planes to find new small wonders they can experience.

Even with their disregard for duty, the Passage is obsessively protective of their domain, the Dead Roads, and most of their wanderings use this realm as a path. Barzakh's awareness extends along the length and breadth of these extraplanar routes, and the usher can cast trespassers from their realm as easily as a dog shakes off water—and often with the same dispassion.

Enigmatic and distracted, Barzakh seems to have trouble recognizing individual servants and worshippers. It is appropriate that the usher of lost travelers and vigils for missing things likewise seems so lost at all times. With their master prone to long wanderings, those psychopomps who serve under the Passage enjoy an unprecedented level of freedom in how they carry out their duties, with many even establishing their own small domains like more powerful outsiders.

In addition to the usual army of attendant psychopomps, Barzakh commands a unique resource: the way stations and their masters that pin the Dead Roads in space and time. As such, Barzakh can call upon a strange menagerie of outsiders, fey, and experts for specialized tasks. While the various entities Barzakh appoints have no compulsion to obey the Passage, the usher can easily retract the authority they grant, denying these servants an isolated, secure home and relative power.

Barzakh normally wanders the Dead Roads among the faceless flocks of ravens, jays, vultures, and whippoorwills that infest the Dead Roads, but they sometimes assume a larger, more humanoid form. In this form, they stand just over 5 feet tall and weigh 200 pounds.

Surcease of Sorrows

The Passage is never seen without their prized artifact.

SURCEASE OF SORROWS

MAJOR ARTIFACT

SLOT none

CL 27th

WEIGHT 6 lbs.

AURA overwhelming all

Surcease of Sorrows is a +4 adamantine impact repositioning heavy mace that resembles a simple, key-shaped walking stick of bone. A gift from Asmodeus to the fledgling usher Barzakh—and subsequently purged of a devastating curse by Pharasma—the humble-seeming weapon is a beloved sign of the usher's station.

Surcease of Sorrows can function as a *chime of opening* with unlimited charges. Three times per day, it can be used to dismiss any sort of magical barrier or wall. This functions as *greater dispel magic*, but affecting only abjuration spells and spells whose names contain "wall of," and it uses an attack roll with the weapon in place of a caster level check. If the spell to be broken is affecting a specific creature, the result of the attack roll to dispel it must equal or exceed the target spell DC or the creature's AC, whichever is higher.

DESTRUCTION

Asmodeus must crush the mace with his bare hands, but only if Barzakh is first slain.

BORNE BY THE SUN'S GRACE

Part 1:
City of Flowers

Part 2:
Digging Up
Secrets

Part 3:
Into the Sacred
Mountain

NPC
Gallery

Xopa's Gallery

Barzakh's The
Passage



MIDWIVES TO DEATH

By John Compton

The Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path reaches its world-shaping conclusion! The heroes return to Lastwall to confront the Whispering Tyrant but discover that he has led his army to the Isle of Kortos. There, the Whispering Tyrant plans to blast his way through the city and crack the Starstone Cathedral open, transforming himself into a true god! The PCs must battle the lich's most powerful allies, turn the power of the *Radiant Fire* back on the Whispering Tyrant, and end the threat he poses to the world.

DEVELOPER SHOWCASE

By the Paizo Staff

It's the final Adventure Path volume for the First Edition of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game! To celebrate the end of an era and close out First Edition with a bang, we've put together a 28-page mega-collection of two-page articles, mini-adventures, monsters, and new rules, each written by a different Paizo developer. Each article delves into one of our favorite parts of the game or gives a proper send-off

to a particular part of the Pathfinder world before we transition to Second Edition. This showcase includes:

- Full stat blocks and write-ups for PCs run in staff games, including Ostog the Unslain, by Erik Mona, and Thalestris Mytilinos, by Robert G. McCreary.
- Deity descriptions, including obediences and boons, for the dwarven god Angradd, by Owen K.C. Stephens, and the newly redeemed Noctacula, by James Jacobs.
- New monsters, including the folk art-inspired alebrije, by Luis Loza, and the memory-sapping chelarac, designed by PaizoCon 2018 attendees and written by Adam Daigle.
- New class archetypes, a new prestige class, Ildydan hero-gods, advice for GMs, and much, much more!

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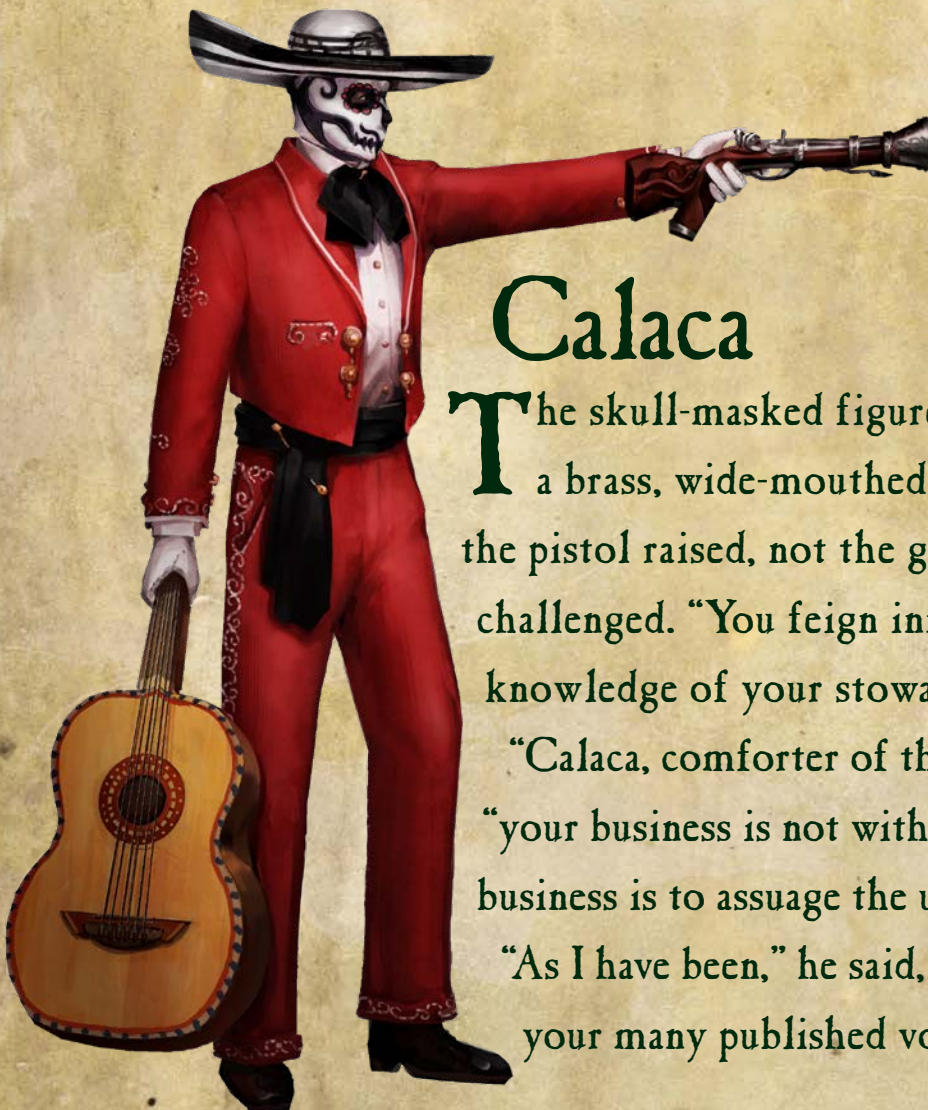
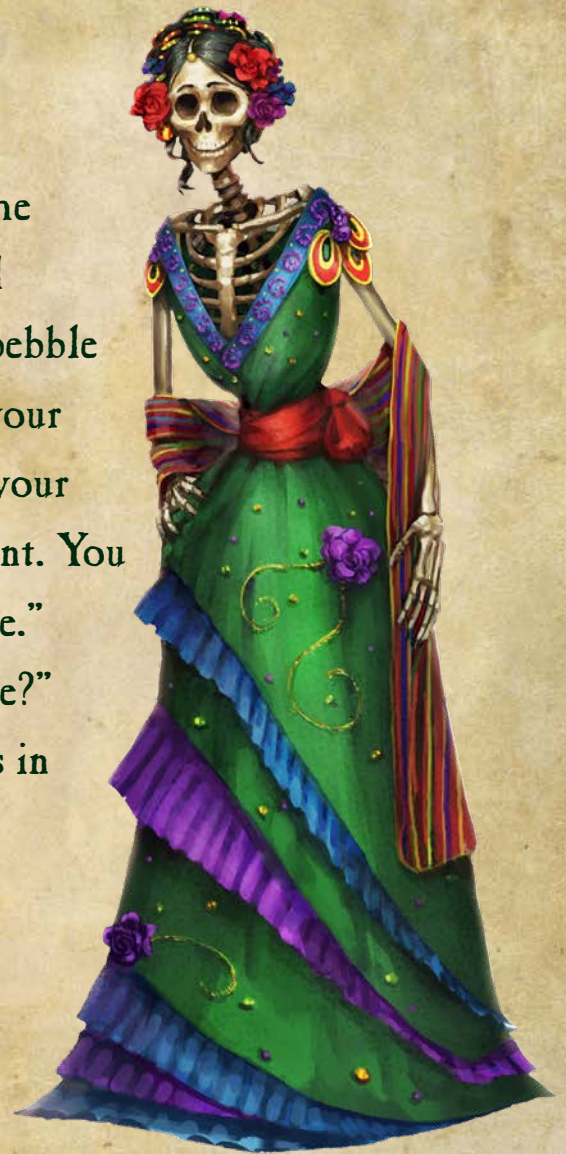
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Catrina

All flower and bone, the woman spoke to me softly. "You unknowingly carried a sahkil intruder here into the lands of the dead, like a pebble in your shoe or a seed in your hair. It knew of your scholarly fascination. It lurked quietly behind your eager interest and earnest questions. It was patient. You were not. And thus you brought our enemy here."

"O catrina, comforter," I whispered, "Is it gone?"

"Gone, as in removed from you? Yes. Gone, as in escaped? Alas, also yes."



Calaca

The skull-masked figure held a guitar in one hand and a brass, wide-mouthed pistol with the other. He held the pistol raised, not the guitar. "Deceiver and defiler!" he challenged. "You feign innocence. You claim to have no knowledge of your stowaway that escaped us!"

"Calaca, comforter of the living," I said, stammering, "your business is not with me; I have passed on. Your business is to assuage the unease of those I left behind."

"As I have been," he said, furious, "and it is where I saw your many published volumes on the lore of sahkils."



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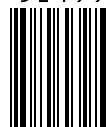
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