

The Elven Entanglement

BY RYAN COSTELLO, JR



Pathfinder Society Scenario #5-05

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Pathfinder Society Scenario #5–05: The Elven Entanglement is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 7th- to 11th-level characters (Tier 7–11; Subtiers 7–8 and 10–11). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world.

This adventure makes use of the following Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products: the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook, Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat, Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment, Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2, and Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3. These rules can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at **paizo.com/prd**.

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The Wardstones failed, the demons of the Worldwound attacked, and Avistan responded. Led by Mendev, whose crusaders specialize in combating and containing abyssal threats, virtually every nation of the Inner Sea region sent aid to the cause; however, amid this altruism and unity exist ulterior motives and secret agendas. The Pathfinder Society aims to take advantage of the narrowing window of opportunity to reach a dwarven Sky Citadel lost within the Worldwound. Despite the society's diverse resources and the distraction of an ongoing war, the Decemvirate prefers to hedge its bets by recruiting additional aid. Fortunately, the ruler of Kyonin owes a considerable favor to a Pathfinder venture-captain.

Well-traveled Venture-Captain Varian Jeggare recently explored the deep forests of Kyonin at the request of its queen, Telandia Edasseril. At the conclusion of Jeggare's adventure in the secretive kingdom of the elves, Queen Edasseril honored him for his contribution with an open-ended favor to be repaid at his discretion. At the urging of the Decemvirate, Jeggare has used that favor to request the queen loan a group of elven rangers to the Pathfinder Society's cause.

Like Mendev, Kyonin has engaged in an ongoing conflict with a demon-infested territory. Known as Tanglebriar, this stretch of thorn-choked swamp and forest has been the domain of the demon lord Treerazer for more than two millennia, and the elves have had just as long to hone their fiend-slaying skills. Although most of the elven soldiers simply guard the border, one particularly zealous group known as the Uprooters sometimes crosses into Tanglebriar to strike at strategic targets. Already en route to the Worldwound for his own purposes, Jeggare can't join the PCs in Kyonin; he instead drafts a formal letter to General Theila Tenasi who not only oversees one stretch of the border but also the Uprooters.

General Tenasi's forces are already stretched thin, because Kyonin sent soldiers north to aid the crusaders upon hearing of the *Wardstones'* failure. Treerazer also

WHERE ON GOLARION?

The Elven Entanglement takes place in Kyonin, the elven nation on the eastern shore of Lake Encarthan. It is populated almost exclusively by elves, with a small contingent of half-elf and gnome denizens. The only exceptions to this segregation are Greengold the port city and Tanglebriar, a twisted wetland overrun by demons and home to the demon lord Treerazer. For more information on Kyonin, see Pathfinder Adventure Path #17: A Memory of Darkness, Pathfinder Player Companion: Elves of Golarion, and Pathfinder Tales: Queen of Thorns, available in bookstores or game stores everywhere, and online at **paizo.com**.



felt the loss of Mendev's defenses, and anticipating the elves would help their allies to the north he initiated a new offensive to expand his territory. General Tenasi recalled the Uprooters, though her orders failed to reach one group already deep in Tanglebriar as part of a salvage mission. With no word from the lost patrol, she made the contentious decision to declare those rangers lost and called off risky rescue missions so her forces could focus on securing the border. Among those missing in action was Lanveral, an inquisitor of Calistria who would certainly seek vengeance for Tenasi's callous disregard for him and his comrades.

GM RESOURCES

This adventure makes use of the following Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products: the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook, Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat (UC), Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment (UE), Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic (UM), Pathfinder RPG Bestiary (B), Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 (B2), and Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 (B3). These rules can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at **paizo.com/prd**.

The general is aware of the incoming letter and request from Jeggare; she would love to refuse, because she believes the Pathfinder Society was wrong to divert resources away from sealing the Worldwound in the name of treasure hunting. Seeing past her own disgust, Tenasi has devised a way of honoring the Pathfinders' monarchbacked request, rescuing Lanveral and the Uprooters, and clearing her name and conscience.

SUMMARY

The PCs carry a letter of introduction and formal request for military aid to Kyonin. There they meet with General Theila Tenasi, who agrees to send the Pathfinders aid as long as they rescue the Uprooters, a band of elven rangers believed to be missing in action in Tanglebriar. Once the PCs agree to her terms, Tenasi arranges for the group to be teleported to Thorngate, a disabled *aiudara* near the edge of Treerazer's domain and the last known location of the Uprooters.

The PCs arrive just as an immense centipede emerges from the tree line to attack the few Uprooter survivors who recently managed to escape back across the border. The PCs must not only fend off the giant vermin but also talk down the elves who believe the newly arrived humanoids are actually demons in disguise. Once combat is over, the elves explain that they have been performing a fighting withdrawal over the past few weeks once they realized the demons had discovered their presence. The demons eventually routed the elves, capturing many of them and sending the few survivors packing. Suspecting the hezrou Fihralaz responsible and believing their comrades will be subjected to unbearable torture, the elves provide the PCs instructions on how to reach Fihralaz's territory as well as knowledge of some of the obstacles they might face and possible havens where the PCs might rest.

Traveling through Tanglebriar requires the PCs endure a plethora of dangerous plants, caustic molds, and other hazards. After pushing a mile into the perilous wilderness, the Pathfinders encounter a large thicket of claw brush, which they can bypass in several different ways, some of which might expose the PCs to disease or alert nearby demons of trespassers. Beyond the claw brush lies the lost elven settlement Kethalia, where the Uprooters recently discovered and attempted to retrieve a cache of cold iron ingots. In the weeks since, a wolf-in-sheep's-clothing has occupied the site and used the remains of an ambitious gnome alchemist to lure in prey. The PCs arrive while a pair of babau demons, wise to the aberration's ruse, torments the ambush predator that has planted itself on top of the cold iron stockpile. Recovering the cold iron and rescuing the "gnome" might draw the PCs in range of the wolf-insheep's-clothing's reach.

Between Kethalia and Fihralaz's lair the PCs could run afoul of a fungus queen and her plant minions. In addition, the PCs cross into the territory of Vinst, a satyr druid who has fought a losing battle to keep Tanglebriar's taint out of his small patch of forest. The PCs might negotiate with the satyr, securing his help as long as they can see past his twisted sense of humor and demonic features.

The elves' directions (and possibly further assistance they can get from Vinst) finally bring the PCs to the hezrou's lair, a murky morass in which humanoid-sized cocoons hang suspended from the tall trees' branches. The PCs must defeat Fihralaz and his minions, saving the elves before the demons begin to slaughter the bound captives out of spite.

GETTING STARTED

Read or paraphrase the following to get the adventure underway:

The Master of Spells Aram Zey waits in a deep subbasement of the Grand Lodge, where he scowls as another group of Pathfinder agents walks into a door-sized tapestry of intricately woven but badly frayed cloth. As the last agent's foot disappears into the *Hao Jin Tapestry*, Aram Zey snaps a quick order for his assistants to reconfigure the tapestry for Kyonin before turning his eyes—weary and bloodshot from long hours of work—to you.

"Pathfinders, let's keep this brief. That was the seventeenth group it has been my grueling duty to send through the tapestry today, and words cannot express my inordinate *pleasure* at understanding there will be an eighteenth," he growls through the gritted teeth of a forced smile. "Nonetheless, this mission is an important one, and the society has few others who are cut out to handle the task." He pauses to take several deep breaths, which do much to alleviate his sour mood.

"One of my colleagues, Venture-Captain Varian Jeggare, spent a considerable amount of time in Kyonin, and in doing so he performed a considerable service for Queen Telandia Edasseril. She owes him a considerable favor in return, and he was gracious enough to use it for the society's benefit. Jeggare is busy elsewhere, so he cannot deliver the message himself. Instead he wrote out a formal request and letter of introduction

for all of you. It seems he thinks you would represent the society well in playing messenger," Zey explains before adding under his breath, "and to his credit I can imagine worse ambassadors.

"As you can see, the letter is sealed, and it should remain so until you meet General Theila Tenasi and give it to her. In effect, it requests that she provide the Pathfinder Society a contingent of rangers specialized in hunting demons to assist us as we make our way to Jormurdun. So, that's your mission: Go to Kyonin, meet with the general, and make sure the elves don't back out of this favor. We have a contact in Greengold who can secure you quick passage back to Absalom or anywhere else you need to go afterward. You'll be taking the Tapestry to reach Kyonin, and Kreighton Shaine has already contacted the elves to let them know to expect you. Any questions?"

Before the PCs enter the *Hao Jin Tapestry*, allow them an opportunity to ask any questions of Aram Zey. In his present mood, he responds to most inquiries with irritated admonitions ("What do you mean you haven't heard about Jormurdun? That Sky Citadel's the reason we're in Mendev!"), impatient reassurances ("Elven courtesy is simple enough. Don't embarrass yourself. You'll do fine."), and bewildered disappointment ("When I asked if there were any questions, I meant it more as a rhetorical question. Get moving"). With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local or nobility) check, the PCs know that the most polite way to deliver the letter would be to show the missive's unbroken seal, open it, and then read it aloud, giving the recipient an opportunity to parse out lies and judge the visitors' integrity.

THE MEETING

Beyond the novelty of entering a demiplane through a piece of cloth and exiting out of a vine trellis hundreds of miles away, the journey through the *Hao Jin Tapestry* is quick and uneventful. Six elves wearing full plate armor as smooth as pearl silently watch the PCs' arrival before confirming their identities and escorting them into an elegant keep of artfully styled wood and stone. Up several flights of steps, the elves signal that they have reached their destination, knock, and open the doors to admit the PCs to General Tenasi's chambers.

Tenasi's spacious room provides a panoramic view of the surrounding woodlands. General Tenasi, an elven woman with chestnut brown hair and wearing medium armor over fine teal clothing, nods and neutrally invites the PCs to enter and explain their business, saying, "As outsiders in Kyonin, I would appreciate your contemplating the rarity of your positions. As a general in charge of these lands' defense, I expect you to appreciate the gravity of mine. This conversation would not be possible were it not for the letter in your possession." Allow the PCs to introduce themselves and once they open Varian Jeggare's letter, give the players **Player Handout: Jeggare's Letter.** If the PCs attempt to hand her the letter, she examines it, breaks the seal, and then hands it back, only prompting her visitors to read it aloud if they do not know otherwise. Tenasi frowns during the reading, and at its conclusion she disgustedly berates the PCs for asking her to forfeit her every defense to appease spectacularly armed treasure hunters. She explains in no uncertain terms that Kyonin will not give up valuable troops for a secondary objective to a mission it has already supported—especially not when that objective is spearheaded by plunderers. If the Pathfinders protest, cajole, or negotiate, she proposes an alternative means of acquiring military support.

"It seems news of the *Wardstones*' failure reached the Witchbole as quickly as it did ladara, and the demons have renewed their attacks with greater ferocity," General Tenasi explains. "I recalled the Uprooters, but one group has not returned, has not responded, and by all evidence has been lost. I signed the order to discontinue attempts to locate them, for we do not have the resources to commit even a scout to the task.

"As a result, none of my battle plans account for these thirteen lost rangers or their commander Lanverel. Were you to find and rescue them, I would assign them to assist you in reaching the Sky Citadel—after ample recovery time, of course."

Allow them to ask questions of General Tenasi, who welcomes questions about the mission but balks at all inquiries about other subjects.

Who are the Uprooters? "Kyonin has many units that patrol its borders, and the Uprooters are several of the most daring groups. They willingly brave Tanglebriar when the elves must strike a target in enemy territory."

How will we find the Uprooters? "We have their last known location, which was near Thorngate at a feature called Mount Armiya, a rocky hill on the border of Tanglebriar. It, like all *aiudara* in and near Tanglebriar, is shut down to avoid demon exploitation, but I shall have a wizard transport you to Mount Armiya. Any tracks the Uprooters made should originate from there, and any arrows fired could provide clues as to which direction the elves went."

How will we know the Uprooters when we see them? "It is reasonable to assume that any elf in Tanglebriar who does not appear corrupt or insane is an Uprooter. More specifically, the Uprooter emblem is an inverted black tree, roots aimed skyward, against a brown background. Most wear a clasp of the insignia on their cloaks."

What is an *aiudara*? "It is a magical arch outsiders such as yourselves might know as an 'elf gate'. They served as portals."

Why not use divination magic to locate the Uprooters? "Demons are brilliant, tactically. Even the simplest demon knows to use misdirection, and it is far easier to confirm a fact in person than through *scrying*."

What can you tell us about Tanglebriar? "I can say only what you need to know for this mission: Treerazer corrupted this once lush elven land, twisting its plants and inhabitants into abyssal mutants. Treating every plant and every insect as a threat improves your odds of surviving the experience."

What do you think happened to the Uprooters? "Even skilled demon hunters can fall prey to a demon ambush. If Lanverel fell or was captured, any surviving Uprooters know to go to ground. Their last known location is not far from Kethalia, a ruined settlement. There is still a cache of cold iron there according to my records, making it an ideal defensive position to hold. There is a chance they have lost their faculties. Standing orders are to leave Tanglebriar after eight days without contact from an officer. It has been more than twice that."

How do we get back? "If you can teleport yourselves and the Uprooters out of Tanglebriar, by all means do so. Be aware that teleporting in can be unreliable, for the features change frequently enough that the landscape are never truly familiar.

Following the PCs' questions, General Tenasi permits the Pathfinders access to the keep's supply rooms to purchase any other supplies they might need. Afterward, she calls for an elven wizard, who teleports the PCs to Mount Armiya.

Knowledge (geography or history)

PCs already know information about Kyonin and Tanglebriar beyond that which Tenasi shared.

15+ Virtually all of Golarion's elves left Golarion for a refuge called Sovyrian when the Starstone fell. In their absence, an exiled demon lord named Treerazer occupied a portion of Kyonin. Today, Treerazer's portion of Kyonin is known as Tanglebriar, a swampland twisted by his demonic influence.

20+ The elves used the Sovyrian Stone, a powerful relic, to leave Golarion. Treerazer attempted to corrupt the Sovyrian Stone, triggering the elves' return. They fought and defeated Treerazer, reducing his domain in Kyonin to what is now Tanglebriar.

25+ When Treerazer was defeated, he retreated to the Witchbole, a giant fortified thorn tree able to uproot and move about Tanglebriar at Treerazer's command. Lesser demons commonly populate Tanglebriar, as do corrupted animals, fey, plant creatures, and vermin.

30+ Types of greater demons commonly found serving Treerazer in Tanglebriar include hezrous, nalfeshnees, and vrocks. Creatures in the area can be corrupted by Tanglebriar's influence in one of two ways: the vileness of the air, plants, and vermin spreads demon fever and sucks the vigor from living creatures; and centuries of exposure to Treerazer's influence slowly corrupts animals, fey, plant creatures, and vermin, from the tiniest gnat to the most enormous arthropod. Corrupted creatures are more common in Tanglebriar than creatures that have not been corrupted.

Knowledge (planes)

PCs already know information about Treerazer and demons beyond that which Tenasi shared.

15+ Demons are chaotic evil outsiders originally from the Abyss, and Tanglebriar is one of their footholds on Golarion. The demon lord Treerazer is known as the Lord of the Blasted Tarn and worshipped by dark cults within Kyonin.

20+ Tanglebriar's corruption is patterned after Treerazer's former Abyssal realm. Whether Treerazer has any connection to the Worldwound's breach is unknown, but Tanglebriar's reputation as a hotbed of demonic activity is known in the Abyss, and though there's no portal there, it serves as a beachhead for demonic forces.

25+ Demons are immune to poisons exuded by many of the plants in Tanglebriar. Lesser demons are vulnerable to cold iron and good-aligned attacks, though greater demons typically resist all but the latter.

30+ Although most demons are created in and by the Abyss, there are also rituals—typically lengthy—that can transform one or more mortal creatures into demons. If the ritual is interrupted early enough, the victims might escape transformation.

A. HOLD MOUNT ARMIYA (CR 9 OR 12)

The elven wizard's teleportation magic deposits the PCs on the southern edge of Mount Armiya, a partially wooded hill with numerous rocky outcroppings, including one large stone spur that juts out from the hill to create a relatively flat surface. A shallow but swift-moving stream hugs the contour like a castle moat that separates the ascent from the twisted landscape that begins about 60 feet to the south. There, in a span of several dozen feet, the pristine wilderness transforms into Tanglebriar, a mass of pus-weeping trees, serrated bark, twisted nettles, and growling clouds of gnats.

Creatures: The six surviving Uprooters managed to straggle back to Mount Armiya less than an hour ago, and they have spent this time recovering and keeping an eye out for any more of their number who might escape Tanglebriar. After spending more than two weeks narrowly avoiding death in Tanglebriar, the elves are exceedingly cautious and are more likely to respond with a volley of arrows than with words.



SCALING ENCOUNTER A

To accommodate a party of 4 PCs, the titan centipede has already suffered 30 points of damage, and its poison is less potent. Reduce the save DC of its poison by 2, and reduce the Dexterity damage dealt to 1d4.

The PCs arrive mere seconds before an enormous centipede, spurred northward by the hezrou Fihralaz, bursts from Tanglebriar in pursuit of the Uprooters. The titan centipede wears Lanverel's magical belt around one of its frontmost legs. Fihralaz strapped the item onto the vermin as a mocking reminder of the elves' loss. Seeing the PCs, the centipede bears down on them. In Subtier 7-8 this is a *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, and in Subtier 10-11 it's a *belt of physical perfection* +2.

The elves, suspecting the PCs are demons in disguise who just teleported into battle, fire a volleys of arrows at the PCs (accompanied by shouting in Elven "Down the invaders" or "Another demon trick!"), attacking each PC once a round on initiative count 15. In Subtier 7–8 the elves each have a +15 bonus to hit (1d8+3/x3), and in Subtier 10-11 this increases to a +18 bonus (1d8+4/x3). As a standard action, a PC can make a special DC 24 Diplomacy check to convince the elves to stop shooting. On a successful check, reduce the number of arrows the elves shoot each round by 1. Reduce it by 1 more for every 5 points by which the PC exceeded the skill check DC. Speaking in Elven grants the PC a +2 circumstance bonus on this check. Once the number of arrows shot per round is reduced to o, the Uprooters perceive the PCs as allies and instead fire at the centipede, dealing 8 points of damage to it each round (bypassing all damage reduction). If the PCs attempt to attack the elves directly, use the orc slayer stats (Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 131), substituting favored enemy (evil outsider) for favored enemy (orc).

During Combat The titan centipede bites a creature the round after it tramples or any round it can't trample three or more creatures. If the PCs flee from the centipede, it snatches and kills one elf from the rock ledge each round.

Morale The titan centipede fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Other Gear belt of incredible dexterity +2

Subtier 10–11 (CR 12)

BRIARBORN JUGGERNAUT

N Colo	ossal vermin
Init +	3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6
DEFEN	ISE
AC 26	, touch 5, flat-footed 23 (+3 Dex, +21 natural, –8 size)
hp 17	4 (12d8+120)
Fort +	-18, Ref +7, Will +6
DR 10	/good; Immune mind-affecting effects; Resist cold 15,
fire	e 15; SR 17
OFFEN	ISE
Speed	d 60 ft., climb 60 ft.
Mele	e bite +19 (4d6+27 plus poison)
Space	2 30 ft.; Reach 30 ft.
Speci	al Attacks smite good (+0 to hit, +12 damage), poison,
tra	mple (6d6+28, DC 34)
TACTI	CS

CR 12

During Combat The briarborn juggernaut bites a creature the round after it tramples or any round it can't trample three or more creatures. It uses its smite good ability against the first creature it bites. If the PCs flee from the centipede, it snatches and kills one elf from the rock ledge each round.

Morale The briarborn juggernaut fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 47, Dex 17, Con 31, Int —, Wis 14, Cha 4 Base Atk +9; CMB +35; CMD 48



Skills Climb +26, Perception +6, Stealth –5; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +8 Stealth SQ compression

Other Gear belt of physical perfection +2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 26; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Dex; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Development: Whether or not the PCs successfully take down the elves during combat, once the centipede is dead, the Uprooters hail the PCs to initiate dialogue. The interim leader Cecilla speaks for the six elves, and she apologizes for her company's attack on the Pathfinders, claiming "a tired mind plays the best tricks." She asks about the PCs' reasons for being in Kyonin, and willingly shares news of how demons harried the Uprooters, successfully cutting them off from their few safe hiding places before attacking almost two days ago. In the ensuing skirmishes, three of the Uprooters died, and the demons captured Lanverel and four others before the other Uprooters got away. They made their way back to Mount Armiya in the hope of regrouping and then returning to save their commander; however, upon reaching the hill, the Uprooters found trail signs left by other elves reporting that further forays into Tanglebriar were forbidden.

Upon seeing Lanverel's belt, the Uprooters briefly confer and report that using it to taunt them matches the style of Fihralaz, a hezrou demon that only recently carved out a lair for itself nearly a day's journey into Tanglebriar. As they explain, Fihralaz not only enjoys sending other creature to do his dirty work but also delights in sending trophies of his victims back to their loved ones as a calling card. The elves know how to reach the hezrou's territory, and can draw out a rough map complete with several important landmarks (such as the lost settlement of Kethalia, which the elves identify as a relatively safe place to rest), but they caution that even with good directions Tanglebriar is a difficult place to navigate.

The Uprooters are conflicted about wanting to aid in Lanverel's rescue and honoring the commands of General Tenasi, but it is difficult to convince any of them to join the PCs in exploring Tanglebriar. As long as the PCs seem interested in mounting a rescue, the elves allow the PCs use of Lanverel's belt and give them 6 antitoxins, 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of lesser restoration,* and 20 cold iron arrows; in Subtier 7–8, the elves give the PCs an additional 3 *potions of lesser restoration.* Although the Uprooters are inclined to rejoin the other elven rangers along the border, the PCs can convince Cecilla to accompany them part of the way into Tanglebriar with a successful DC 24 Diplomacy check. Otherwise, the

TRAVERSING TANGLEBRIAR

Tanglebriar is aptly named not only because the dense plant growth hinders movement but also because much of that growth secretes dangerous poisons or is covered in horrifyingly cruel thorns. Characters travel through Tanglebriar at 1/4 the normal overland rate, meaning to travel 1 mile it takes a group with a 30-foot move speed 1 hour and 20 minutes, and a group with a 20-foot move speed 2 hours. Due to the thick growth at all heights, flying offers no noticeable advantage while navigating Tanglebriar beyond a higher base speed. When navigating from one encounter area to the next, one PC may attempt a Survival check (with a DC listed in the Development section of each area) to avoid getting lost while following the elves' map. Getting lost adds 1 hour to the time spent navigating from one area to the next. Other PCs may use the aid another action to improve the PC's skill check.

In addition, every hour spent exploring Tanglebriar exposes the PCs to myriad poisons and diseases that deal 1d4 Strength damage unless a PC makes a successful DC 14 Fortitude save. Immunity to poison or disease reduces the damage dealt by 2, and immunity to both completely negates the ability damage.

Finally, the branches of trees in Tanglebriar are thick with leaves that block out most light. Except where otherwise noted, there is only dim light during the day, and the thick branches form a "ceiling" of difficult terrain about 20 feet from the ground.

Because the captured Uprooters are being subjected to a torturous transformation ritual, the GM should take special care to track how much time the PCs spend traveling.

Uprooters wish the PCs luck, thank them in advance, and prepare to withdraw further into Kyonin.

The trip from Mount Armiya to the claw brush is 1 mile and requires a successful DC 16 Survival check to avoid getting lost. If the PCs convinced Cecilla to accompany them, she automatically succeeds at this skill check for them.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat the titan centipede, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 7–8: Reduce the gold earned by 1,225 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce the gold earned by 1,738 gp. *Subtier* 10–11: Reduce the gold earned by 2,250 gp.

B. CLAW BRUSH

The trek through Tanglebriar weaves between trees drawn into moaning visages whose cracked bark sweats black sap. Tortured howls punctuate the constant buzzing of bloodred flies, and at times the ground itself seems to spasm as if alive. Approximately a mile from Mount Armiya, a twisting briar patch of arm-thick vines with thorns like armor spikes

impedes further travel south, leaving only narrow gaps that a creature might step through.

This dense but potentially navigable briar patch is one of the features marked on the elves' map, which notes that it is possible to negotiate one's way through the half mile of thorns to the other side. By the illustration, the PCs can judge that the briars seem to stretch for 1-1/2 miles to both the east and west. The briars have strangled many of the trees in this area, so the light levels are normal, and the tree branches do not obstruct flight. With a successful DC 25 Perception check, a PC notices a vrock (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 69) lazily scanning the top of the briar patch for victims.

There are three likely means for the PCs to bypass this obstacle. First, the PCs might elect to travel around the briars, which is equivalent to 3 miles of travel. Second, the PCs might fly over the briars, which might betray their presence to the vrock unless they take care to be stealthy; due to distance and other circumstances, the vrock's Perception modifier is only +8 to spot the PCs (+11 in Subtier 10–11). If the vrock spots the PCs, it quickly assesses its odds of defeating them, barely manages to suppress its bloodthirstiness, and flies away to find other demons that might join it in an assault later. This modifies later encounters in small ways.

Finally, the PCs can attempt to pick their way through the thorns. This requires one PC to succeed at a DC 22 Survival check to avoid getting lost (DC 25 in Subtier 10–11). Further, everyone who travels through the briars takes 25 damage minus the result of that character's own Survival check and minus the character's armor bonus. Anyone who takes damage in this way is exposed to demon fever (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 557).

If Cecilla accompanies the PCs, she advises the PCs of the possible drawbacks of any tactic. When traveling this direction, the Uprooters typically elect to go through the claw brush if they are in a hurry or travel around it if not rushed. If none of the PCs has a Suvival bonus higher than +16, Cecilla volunteers to lead the way through the brambles.

Development: Flying over the briar patch takes a negligible amount of time. Moving through the brambles is the equivalent of 1 mile, thanks to the plants' dense growth. Traveling around the claw briar involves traveling 3 miles. The elven settlement of Kethalia lies another half mile beyond the northern edge of the claw briar patch, and traveling from the briars to Kethalia requires a successful DC 20 Survival check to avoid getting lost; if Cecilla accompanies the PCs, she automatically succeeds at this skill check for them. As a result, the PCs should need to travel between 2 and 5 more miles to reach Kethalia.

C. WOLF-IN-GNOME'S-CLOTHING (CR 10 OR CR 13)

What was once the settlement of Kethalia is now a vinechoked ruin. Shattered white marble structures now stained with sap and filth still reflect what little light filters in. Rubble from collapsed levels obscures much of the ground, and, like ghouls from a grave, trees have tenaciously clawed their way through the debris, their roots expanding in all directions to buckle paving stones and crack mortar.

If Cecilla with the PCs, she takes her leave and wishes the PCs luck once they are in sight of Kethalia. As evidenced by the rubble, the settlement once covered a large area, but the only remaining buildings stand near its center. Exploring Kethalia in its entirety takes only half an hour (during which time the PCs don't need to attempt Fortitude saves against Tanglebriar's many perils), and it becomes quickly apparent that demons or other beings stripped the settlement of anything valuable long ago. However, the PCs do discover signs of an inhabitant in an old temple of Findeladlara, the elven goddess of art, architecture, and twilight. Inside they find a bedroll sized for a Small creature, several unfinished potions, and a portable alchemist's lab. There are also stale bread crumbs in a nearby gallery. A trail leads from these buildings to a partially collapsed meeting hall.

Creatures: The gnome, an alchemist named Tesli, sneaked from Greengold into Tanglebriar to collect rare and exotic reagents. Her wiles kept her alive and out of trouble for weeks, although not without close calls. Although she stayed alert for demons and beasts, she failed to notice a wolf-in-sheep's clothing that had also established itself among the buildings. It has since used the gnome as its lure, hoping to attract bigger prey.

In fact, it recently lured in a pair of babau demons that had hoped to torment the gnome. Before stepping in range of the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing's tendrils, though, the demons saw through the ruse. Since then, the babaus have tormented the ambush predator out of spite, though neither side has quite figured out what the other one truly is. The one time that the shapeshifter grabbed a babau, the demon's acid singed the tentacle, convincing the aberration to fend off the demons instead of eating them.

If the babaus hear the PCs nearby, they begin cackling and howling, hoping to attract the attention of someone too distracted to notice the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing. The aberration inadvertently does its part by manipulating the gnome as if it is warding off attackers. The humanoid's mouth is agape with what looks like horror but is in fact a lack of finer control by the puppet master.

If the vrock from area \mathbf{B} spotted the PCs, these babaus know of their approach in advance. Each retrieved a



potion of cat's grace before teleporting to Kethalia, and upon perceiving the PCs, each drinks its potion in preparation for combat.

Subtier 7-8 (CR 10)

BABAU DEMONS (2) CR 6

hp 73 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 57) TACTICS

- **During Combat** The babau demons attempt to lure the PCs toward the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing by moving to flank it and swatting at the gnome. They avoid entering the reach of the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing unless doing so would be to their advantage; they correctly suspect that the aberration doesn't want to attack them, especially not if there is other food available.
- Morale If one babau dies, the other flees if reduced to 20 hp or fewer.

GIANT WOLF-IN-SHEEP'S-CLOTHING (CR 9)

hp 123 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 285, 291) TACTICS

- **Before Combat** The wolf-in-sheep's-clothing stops swatting at the babaus and lies still in the hope of luring in better prey.
- **During Combat** The aberration waits until a non-demon has entered its reach, at which point it lashes out. If presented with multiple victims, the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing implants one with an egg and then attempts to eat another.

Subtier 10–11 (CR 13)

BABAU ROGUES (2)

Babau rogue 2

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*; Perception +21

CR 8

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +8 natural)

SCALING ENCOUNTER C

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a party of 4 PCs.

Subtier 7-8: Remove one babau from the encounter. The wolf-in-sheep's-clothing has sustained 20 points of damage and lost two tentacles over the course of its fight with the babau.

Subtier 10-11: Replace the babau roques with standard babau demons.

hp 103 (9 HD; 7d10+2d8+56)

Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, protective slime; DR 10/cold iron or good; Immune electricity, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; SR 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +15 (1d6+7), bite +15 (1d6+7), or mwk longspear +16/+11 (1d8+10/×3), bite +15 (1d6+3)

Ranged chakram +11/+6 (1d8+7)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)

Constant—see invisibility

At will-darkness, dispel magic, greater teleport (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only) 1/day—summon (level 3, 1 babau 40%)

TACTICS

During Combat The babau demons attempt to lure the PCs toward the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing by moving to flank it, swatting at the gnome, and attacking the PCs with chakrams. They avoid entering the reach of the wolf-in-sheep's clothing unless doing so would be to their advantage; they correctly suspect that the aberration doesn't want to attack them, especially not if there is other food available.

Morale If one babau dies, the other flees if reduced to 30 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 17, Con 22, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14

Base Atk +8; CMB +15; CMD 28

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +14, Climb +19, Disable Device +15, Escape Artist +15, Perception +21, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +15, Stealth +26, Swim +14; Racial Modifiers +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ roque talents (bleeding attack +3), trapfinding +1

Other Gear mwk longspear, chakrams (4)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Protective Slime (Su) A layer of acidic slime coats a babau's skin. Any creature that strikes a babau with a natural attack or unarmed strike takes 1d8 points of acid damage from this slime if it fails a DC 19 Reflex save. A creature that strikes a babau with a melee weapon must make a DC 19 Reflex save or the weapon takes 1d8 points of acid damage; if this damage penetrates the weapon's hardness, the weapon gains the broken condition. Ammunition that strikes a babau is automatically destroyed after it inflicts its damage.

DIRE WOLF-IN-SHEEP'S-CLOTHING

Development: The wolf-in-sheep's-clothing has settled over a stone trapdoor that leads to a hidden storage area. Finding the trapdoor requires a successful DC 22 Perception check, though if the shapeshifter never moved from its starting location and the PCs don't specifically search its body or immediate area, the DC to find the trapdoor increases by 3. The storage area contains Kethalia's cache of cold iron, which the Uprooters didn't have the opportunity to uncover before being attacked. In Subtier 7-8 there are 170 lbs of cold iron ingots; in Subtier 10-11 there are instead 440 lbs of cold iron. In both subtiers there are six flasks of deepsheen, a dull, metallic paste that behaves in all ways like silversheen except that it grants the affected weapon the properties of cold iron instead of silver.

The distance from Kethalia to area E is 1-1/2 miles and requires a successful DC 16 Survival check to avoid getting lost. Resting in Kethalia is relatively safe, but the PCs risk losing a great deal of time—and the wellbeing of the captive Uprooters-by doing so.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat the babaus and wolf-insheep's-clothing, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

D. In Defense of Her Throne x <

Subtier 7–8: Reduce the gold earned by 941 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce the gold earned by 1,074 gp. Subtier 10–11: Reduce the gold earned by 1,208 gp.

D. IN DEFENSE OF HER THRONE (CR 9 OR CR 12)

As the PCs push deeper into Tanglebriar, they cross into territory under the unofficial control of plants and fey rather than demons. Place the PCs at the northern end of the map.

Creatures: The Uprooters rarely go farther into Tanglebriar than Kethalia, and as a result the elves were unable to warn the PCs of Eukalia, a fungus queen—an amalgamation of succubus and intelligent plant—that considers this area her domain. Using her *veil* spell-like ability, she watches the PCs cut their way through her territory. She then employs her sporepod ability to quickly transport herself ahead of the PCs, rally any allies that she can, and set an ambush. To prepare the ambush site, she creates several sporepods along the PCs' likely path and positions any allies nearby. Placed among the other bizarre flora of Tanglebriar, the sporepods are difficult to distinguish as out of the ordinary. A PC can identify a sporepod as a hazard with a successful DC 24 Knowledge

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

In Defense of Her Throne is an optional encounter. If fewer than 2 hours remain in which to complete the scenario, skip this encounter.

(nature) check upon approaching within 20 feet of one, and exceeding the check's DC by 5 or more also allows the PC to identify it as the creation of a fungus queen.

In Subtier 7–8, Eukalia is unable to find allies. In Subtier 10–11, she cajoles a pair of fiendish treants into joining her attack.

CR 9

Subtier 7-8 (CR 9)

EUKALIA

Fungus queen (Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary 12)

CE Medium plant (extraplanar)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18 DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (+3 Dex, +10 natural) hp 114 (12d8+60) Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +7

DR 10/cold iron or good; Immune electricity, plant traits; Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 20

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +14 (1d6+5), 4 tentacles +12 (1d4+2 plus grab)

Special Attacks compel plants, constrict (1d4+5), create spawn, energy drain (1 level, DC 23), sporepod

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

- Constant—detect good, tongues
- At will-veil (DC 23, self only)
- 3/day— charm monster (DC 21), detect thoughts (DC 19), suggestion (DC 19)
- 1/day—dominate person (DC 22), mind fog (DC 22), slow (DC 20)

TACTICS

Before Combat Eukalia hides in plain sight using *veil*. During Combat Eukalia strikes through her sporepods and with

magic, only closing into melee range if necessary.

Morale Eukalia attempts to flee with judicious use of her sporepod ability if reduced to 25 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 24

Base Atk +9; CMB +14 (+18 grapple); CMD 27

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Disguise)

- **Skills** Bluff +19, Disguise +25, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +18, Sense Motive +15, Use Magic Device +19
- Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Orvian, Undercommon; tongues, telepathy 100 ft.

SQ plant empathy +23

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Compel Plants (Su)** A fungus queen's mind-affecting powers and spell-like abilities (and spells, should the fungus queen gain the ability to cast them) affect plant creatures (but not mindless plant creatures) as if they weren't immune to mind-affecting effects.
- Create Spawn (Su) A creature that would normally be slain by a fungus queen's energy drain attack is not killed—instead, it immediately loses all negative levels imparted by the fungus queen and transforms into a fungus-infested minion of the gueen. Such creatures gain the fungoid simple template (granting it all of the plant traits, telepathy 100 ft. with other fungoid creatures, and the chaotic evil alignment), which must be removed using heal, limited wish, miracle, or wish before the end of the scenario, otherwise the character is removed from Pathfinder Society Organized Play. Fungoid creatures are under the control of the fungus creature that created them, and remain enslaved until their mistress is destroyed or until they are cured of the infestation. A fungus queen can communicate telepathically with her fungoid spawn at any range as long as they are on the same plane, and may have

a number of Hit Dice worth of enslaved spawn totaling no more than twice her own Hit Dice; any spawn she creates that would exceed this limit become free-willed fungoid creatures. A fungus queen may free an enslaved spawn in order to enslave a new spawn, but once freed, a fungoid creature cannot be enslaved again (although it can still be influenced by the fungus queen's compel plants and plant empathy abilities).

- **Energy Drain (Su)** A fungus queen's energy drain functions identically to that of a succubus (*Bestiary* 68). Creatures killed by this attack do not die—they instead become infested with the fungus queen's spores (see Create Spawn). The save DC is Charisma-based.
- Plant Empathy (Ex) This ability functions as the druid's wild empathy, save that a fungus queen can use this ability only on plant creatures. A fungus queen gains a +4 racial bonus on this check. Mindless plant creatures are imparted a modicum of implanted intelligence when a fungus queen uses this ability, allowing her to train such creatures as guardians.
- Sporepod (Su) As a standard action, a fungus queen can cause a Medium pod of fungal material to burst out of the ground at any point within 60 feet of her current location. Once created, a sporepod cannot move. If the fungus queen travels more than 120 feet from a sporepod, it is destroyed. A fungus queen can maintain a number of sporepods equal to her Charisma modifier (7 for the typical fungus queen). As a move action, she can instantaneously travel to one of her sporepods as if using transport via plants. She can also choose to spread out her tentacle attacks among her sporepods, attacking a creature within 5 feet of any sporepod with a tentacle she is still limited to making only four tentacle attacks as part of a full-attack action, or one as a standard action. A sporepod is an object that has an AC of 15 and 20 hit points; damage dealt to a sporepod does not harm the fungus queen.

Subtier 10–11 (CR 12)

EUKALIA

Fungus queen (Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary 12)

hp 114

TACTICS

Before Combat Eukalia studies the PCs with *detect good* and telepathically informs her treant companions so that they can make effective use of their smite good ability. She hides in plain sight using *veil*.

CR 9

During Combat Eukalia strikes through her sporepods and with magic, only closing into melee range if necessary.

Morale Eukalia attempts to flee with judicious use of her sporepod ability if reduced to 25 hp or less.

1 square = 5 feet

FIENDISH TREANTS (2)

CR 9

hp 114 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 266, 294)
TACTICS

E. Satyr Stand-Off

Actics

Before Combat The treants use stealth to hide among the other trees.

During Combat One treant engages the PCs in melee while the other animates trees before joining the fray.

Morale The treants are loyal to Eukalia and fight to the death.

Development: This encounter takes place on the way to area **E**, and doesn't contribute to the PCs' travel time.

E. SATYR STAND-OFF (CR 10 OR CR 13)

A clearing meant for mystical rites interrupts the ongoing riot of disfigured flora and fauna. Under the shadow of a mighty oak, eleven large stones engraved with runes form a circle around untainted grass. One stone is far larger than the rest. The green blades are young and weak, but nonetheless natural.

This respite from the madness of Tanglebriar is the work of Vinst, a satyr druid who has thumbed his nose at Treerazer's corruption for decades. The stone circle helps to anchor the druidic magic that shields the immediate

SCALING ENCOUNTER D

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a party of 4 PCs.

Pathfinder Map Pack: Ancient Forest

Subtier 7–8: Eukalia only recently sprouted and matured, and she does not yet have the confidence or strength of an established fungus queen. Reduce her Charisma by 4 (decreasing her spell-like abilities' save DCs and number of sporepod) and her Strength by 2.

Subtier 10–11: Remove one fiendish treant from the encounter.

area, and the largest stone has a slight hollow on its top that makes a comfortable seat. With the exception of the untainted oak tree, no other branches obscure the sky; lighting conditions here are normal. Approximately 5 feet beyond the stone circle (that is, anything off of the map), Tanglebriar's pervasive flora dominates.

Creatures: Despite his magical maintenance of this small glade, Vinst has gradually succumbed to 'Tanglebriar's corruption. Physically, he has sprouted a small second set of horns, some of his hair has twisted into quills, and his irises have turned a fiery red. His personality is still typical

PRESENTING VINST

Even a satyr in less threatening surroundings can be raunchy, risqué, and crude, and Vinst tends to push those boundaries even further without intending malice. Converting a coarse joke or a questionable limerick into an insult certainly fits the satyr's style, but as a GM it's important that you determine whether Vinst's unbridled antics are appropriate for your players and the setting. If not, tone it down a bit; Vinst can still be very engaging without being rated R.

of a healthy satyr—for example, he loves music, cracks jokes, and appreciates a good drink—but

many of his behaviors have taken a darker turn. His pipe music is still enchanting, despite his inclusion of jarring, atonal notes, and his sense of humor ranges wildly from charming to morbid to crass. For all his quirks, Vinst still sees himself as a force of good (or at least a force of "better") in an expansive thicket of evil. He rarely intends to harm non-demons, but he can hardly control his impulse to tease, harangue, and insult.

Vinst cast *tree shape* and stored Brouce, his bear animal companion, into his *hosteling armor* several hours before the PCs arrive, and he drops his disguise as soon as the PCs step within a few paces of his realm. Even in greeting he is abrasive while intending levity, saying, "Have you heard the one about what would happen if you despoil Tanglebriar's only unmolested grass? It would leave you in stitches!" As long as the PCs don't threaten violence, Vinst happily

converses with them, shares snippets of local lore, and teases any PCs who strike him as easy targets, although his commentary becomes increasingly morbid over time. If anyone protests, he snaps out of his downward spiral and resumes his lighthearted banter, only to gradually resume the dark commentary, going so far as to speculate what everyone might look like were he to flay his guests and dress them in each others' skins. If the PCs reciprocate with insults or threats, Vinst escalates the antagonism, seeing the back-and-forth as a very amusing game.

Starved for good conversation, Vinst verbally nettles the PCs if they try to depart without staying to talk and revel for at least a few hours. He even activates his *hosteling armor* to deposit Brouce on the grass, pointing out that the bear is

his only companion (and not much of a conversationalist). Despite his protests, Vinst doesn't directly prevent the PCs from departing, but he does stalk them and subtly mislead them, attempting to lead them back to his home for more fun (see Development). The satyr fights the PCs only if they initiate hostilities.

Appeasing Vinst requires the PCs succeed at a DC 25 Diplomacy check to convince him to let them pass. Vinst might also challenge a musically inclined PC to a musical duel; as long as the PC doesn't fail by 10 or more on an opposed Perform check, Vinst graciously accepts defeat and congratulates the PC on his accomplishment. The

> satyr has a love of strong drink, and offering him at least 2 gp worth of alcohol grants the PCs a circumstance bonus +2 on all Charisma-based skill checks to influence Vinst. The satyr also enjoys raunchy humor and lyrics, and a PC who incorporates such things into his appeal or performance gains an additional +2 circumstance bonus on these checks. It is also possible to trick Vinst, but as a result of dealing with the denizens of Tanglebriar, he is suspicious of most claims and treats all bluffs as though they were at least far-fetched. Finally, the PCs can simply indulge Vinst and converse with him for 4 hours, after which he grows weary of their attention and sends them on their way.

Subtier 7-8 (CR 10)

VINST CR 10
Male satyr druid 8 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 241)
CN Medium fey
Init +6; Senses low-light vision; Perception +34
DEFENSE
AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex,
+1 dodge, +5 natural)
hp 128 (16 HD; 8d6+8d8+64)
Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +17; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects
DR 5/cold iron
OFFENSE
Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk spear +15/+10 (1d8+6/×3), horns +9 (1d6+2)
Special Attacks pipes, wild shape 3/day

V

VINST

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

- At will—charm person, dancing lights, ghost sound, sleep, suggestion
- 1/day—fear (DC 19), summon nature's ally III

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)

- 4th—arboreal hammer[™], dispel magic, flame strike (DC 19) 3rd—cure moderate wounds, protection from energy, remove disease, speak with plants
- 2nd—barkskin, lesser restoration, tree shape, warp wood
- 1st—charm animal (DC 16), cure light wounds, endure elements, faerie fire, frostbite[™], goodberry
- 0 (at will)—create water, detect poison, know direction, purify food and water

TACTICS

During Combat Vinst uses his spells to attack the PCs while augmenting himself and Brouce, who he sends into battle. The satyr prefers to use wild shape before attacking in melee. Morale Vinst flees with Brouce once reduced to 35 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 21 Base Atk +10; CMB +14; CMD 34

- Feats Combat Casting, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Natural Spell, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness
- Skills Bluff +20, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nature) +11, Perception +34, Perform (wind) +25, Stealth +23, Survival +20; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Perform (wind), +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Druidic, Sylvan

- **SQ** nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, wild empathy +13, woodland stride, trackless step
- **Other Gear** +1 hosteling hide armor, mwk spear, ring of protection +1

BROUCE

Bear animal companion

N Medium animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

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

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hp 52 (7d8+21)
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Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d6+6), 2 claws +11 (1d4+6) **STATISTICS**

Str 22, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +5; CMB +11; CMD 24 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Power Attack, Toughness

- Skills Climb +10, Perception +8, Stealth +8
- SQ devotion, link, multiattack, share spells, tricks (attack [all], defend, down, guard, heel, perform, seek, stay)

Subtier 10-11 (CR 13)

VINST

Male satyr druid 11 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 241)

CN Medium fey Init +6; Senses low-light vision; Perception +37

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 23 (+6 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

CR 13

hp 172 (19 HD; 8d6+11d8+95)

Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +18; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects DR 5/cold iron; Immune poison

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk spear +17/+12/+7 (1d8+6/×3), horns +11 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks pipes, wild shape 4/day

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

At will—charm person, dancing lights, ghost sound, sleep, suggestion

1/day—fear (DC 19), summon nature's ally III

- **Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 11th; concentration +16)
 - 6th—*greater dispel magic*
 - 5th—animal growth, baleful polymorph (DC 20), wall of thorns
 - 4th—arboreal hammer[™], atavism[™] (DC 19), dispel magic, flame strike (DC 19)
 - 3rd—cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang, protection from energy, remove disease, speak with plants
 - 2nd—barkskin, gust of wind (DC 17), lesser restoration, tree shape, warp wood
 - 1st—charm animal (DC 16), cure light wounds, endure elements, faerie fire, frostbite^{um}, goodberry
 - 0 (at will)—create water, detect poison, know direction, purify food and water

TACTICS

CR –

During Combat Vinst uses his spells to attack the PCs while augmenting himself and Brouce, who he sends into battle. The satyr prefers to use wild shape before attacking in melee. Morale Vinst flees with Brouce once reduced to 45 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 21

Base Atk +12; CMB +16; CMD 38

- Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Natural Spell, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness
- **Skills** Bluff +23, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nature) +14, Perception +37, Perform (wind) +28, Stealth +26, Survival +20; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Perform (wind), +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Druidic, Sylvan

- **SQ** nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, wild empathy +16, woodland stride, trackless step
- **Other Gear** +2 hosteling hide armor, mwk spear, belt of mighty constitution +2, ring of protection +2

SCALING ENCOUNTER E

To accommodate a party of 4 PCs, Vinst has partially succumbed to the corruption of Tanglebriar. He is sickened, and he treats all creatures as if they had concealment. These penalties affect him even when he is using his wild shape class ability.

BROUCE

CR –

Bear animal companion N Medium animal Init +3; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +9 DEFENSE AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +8 natural) hp 67 (9d8+27) Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +6 OFFENSE Speed 40 ft. Melee bite +12 (1d6+6), 2 claws +12 (1d6+6) STATISTICS Str 23, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6 Base Atk +6; CMB +12; CMD 25 (29 vs. trip) Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness Skills Climb +10, Perception +9, Stealth +9

SQ devotion, link, multiattack, share spells, tricks (attack [all], come, defend, down, guard, heel, perform, seek, stay)

Development: Once appeased, Vinst thanks the PCs for their visit, and as long as he learned of their intention of finding Fihralaz, the satyr offers the PCs helpful directions that grant them a +5 competence bonus on Survival checks to navigate Tanglebriar. He can also share rumors he has heard about the hezrou's lair, such as its swampy nature and the prevalence of leeches. If any of the PCs appears injured, Vinst offers to cast his few restorative spells for free.

If the PCs fail to appease Vinst, he uses his magic and woods lore to mislead them as they travel toward Fihralaz's lair. The PCs suffer a -5 penalty on their Survival checks to avoid becoming lost, and failing the check by 5 or more causes them to wander back to Vinst's home after 1 hour. There he awaits them, innocently exclaiming, "Well fancy seeing you again" and once again attempts to cajole them into entertaining him.

Vinst's home is 1 mile from Fihralaz's lair, and the PCs must succeed at a DC 20 Survival check to avoid getting lost. Any time spent with Fihralaz doesn't require the PCs to make Fortitude saves to resist the effects of Tanglebriar.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to bypass or defeat Vinst, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 7–8: Reduce the gold earned by 1,081 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce the gold earned by 1,539 gp. Subtier 10–11: Reduce the gold earned by 1,997 gp.

F. HOME OF THE HEZROU (CR 11 OR CR 14)

The damp yet firm ground of Tanglebriar gradually descends toward expanses of standing water. Although suspended sediment and matted heaps of decaying plant material obscure the swamp's bottom, trees and reeds are still numerous here, suggesting the water cannot be terribly deep. In places, concentrations of plants have trapped silt and organic matter to create miniature islands amid the dark expanse of water.

The elves' directions indicate that Fihralaz claims this section of the swamp as his own, and his lair is likely several hundred feet from the shore. Except where noted otherwise, treat all of the water-covered area as shallow bog (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 427). The PCs might cast spells or perform other preparations before entering the water. After traveling through about 400 feet of swamp, the PCs arrive on the western edge of the map depicted, where Fihralaz has initiated a transformation ritual in mockery of the elves and in homage to his master Treerazer.

An immense slab of rock covered in algae and lichen protrudes through the suffocating canopy of leaves. The trees that grow near it sway intermittently as if pushed by a strong wind, but the movement is actually caused by the convulsions of a half dozen four-foot-long chrysalises of gooey, gray silk that hang from the tree boughs. Hanging from other branches are pieces of elven armor, broken weapons, and other trophies from battlefields. Several mementoes are still slick with partially congealed blood and buzzing with flies.

Each of the chrysalises contains a Medium creature undergoing a slow and agonizing transformation as Fihralaz channels Tanglebriar's abyssal influence into the mortal's body. Most die as a result, emerge crippled by the chaotic infusion, or emerge as fiendish versions of their former selves. A rare few-particularly strong individuals-are transformed into half-fiends or full demons. Soon after capturing a handful of Uprooters, Fihralaz dragged their unconscious bodies back here to initiate the metamorphosis. A chrysalis hangs 10 feet above the surface of the water and has 20 hit points and DR 10/slashing; the strand that connects it to a tree branch has 5 hit points and DR 10/slashing. If a chrysalis is destroyed, the creature within drops onto the ground below. Four chrysalises contain Uprooters (each with -2 hit points and 11 Constitution), and the other two contain deer. The chrysalises each weigh approximately 150 pounds. They aren't watertight and don't float.

Dark green areas on the map are silty hummocks that are not difficult to navigate. Likewise, the rock in the southeastern corner easily supports a PC's weight and



doesn't restrict movement. Areas marked on the map are deep bog (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 427). All remaning squares are considered shallow bog.

Creatures: The hezrou Fihralaz enjoys a comfortable existence as one of Treerazer's favored interrogators, an unofficial title that gives him plenty of time to laze about and savor slothful indolence. He has a particular fondness for transforming captives into demonic creatures, likely a relic of his own transformation into a hezrou from an Osirian concubine who was subjected to a similar procedure. The demon rarely leaves his territory. By dressing his minions and surroundings with the belongings of his captives, the hezrou lures Treerazer's enemies to willingly walk into Fihralaz's clutches.

As an outsider, Fihralaz doesn't need to sleep, but he often does. His preferred bed is either atop one of the composting hummocks or in a part of the bog where the water is at its deepest. Dredging a healthy collection of these deep, boggy areas for personal enjoyment and defense is one of the few tasks that the hezrou can bring himself to do.

Fihralaz has attracted a number of minions and hangers-on through no action of his own. Several quasits flit about his territory, keeping the

hezrou informed of invaders in the hope of earning their own transformations into stronger types of demons. In addition, the hezrou routinely tosses any failed transformations into the bog to rot, which has attracted all sizes of leeches

area.

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These parasites shy away from the stinky demon, who has developed just enough of an empathic rapport with the creatures to let them know when dinner is served.

If the vrock from area **B** spotted the PCs, the quasits here learned of the PCs' approach and warred Fihralaz. The larger demon began chumming the swampy water in anticipation of the PCs' arrival to lure more leeches to the area. In Subtier 7–8, add three fiendish giant leeches (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 187, 294) to the encounter. In Subtier 10–11, add three more vile giant leeches to the encounter.

Hazard: Tanglebriar contains countless species of dangerous plants, and Fihralaz's abode has an abundance of cnidarililies, lily-pad-like carnivorous plants that trail stinging filaments in the water beneath them to capture prey. Any Small or larger creature that enters or begins its turn in a square containing these plants must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d3 rounds. One round after failing the first saving throw, the creature must succeed at a second DC 16 Fortitude save or be staggered for 1 round. A Tiny or smaller creature also takes 1d6 piercing damage and must make a DC 16 Reflex save or be entangled. Escaping the tendrils requires a successful DC 14 Stength check

or DC 20 Escape Artist check. Creatures with the swarm subtype can't be entangled by cnidarililies.

> The sickening and staggering effects are poison effects. Identifying cnidarililies requires a successful DC 20 Knowledge (nature or planes) check.

FIHRALAZ

Subtier 7-8 (CR 11)

FIHRALAZ CR 10

Young hezrou (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 62, 295)

hp 125 OFFENSE

Ranged harpoon^{ue} +12 (1d8+9/×3)

TACTICS

Before Combat Fihralaz crouches down and hides in the deep bog, waiting in ambush.

- During Combat Fihralaz wades into combat, attempting to tear apart lightly armored targets before turning on heavily armed combatants. He uses his spell-like abilities to hinder and damage large groups of enemies. He strongly prefers using his natural attacks, employing the harpoon only to skewer foes who are out of reach.
- **Morale** Fihralaz prefers failure to death and attempts to flee when reduced to 15 or fewer hp.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poor Diction (Ex) Fihralaz casts blasphemy at CL 11th.

LEECH SWARM	CR 4	
hp 39 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 187)		
TACTICS		
During Combat The leeches attack anything on or adjacent to		

the water, though they avoid Fihralaz and try to maneuver around cnidarililies.

QUASITS (2)	CR 2
hp 16 each (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 66)	

TACTICS

Before Combat The quasits use *invisibility* and hide among the tree branches.

- **During Combat** The quasits gang up on any lightly armored spellcasters that appear to be inconveniencing Fihralaz. If the quasits have no suitable target or see that Fihralaz is sustaining attacks from many foes, the quasits fly over to the chrysalises and begin attacking the strands that suspend them; in this way they hope to draw away several of the PCs to save the elves, allowing the hezrou to divide and conquer.
- **Morale** A quasit turns invisible and attempts to take cover if reduced to 3 or fewer hp, though it flees the combat entirely only if the PCs defeat Fihralaz. Once a quasit heals back to 7 hp, it returns invisibly and continues to cut apart chrysalises.

Subtier 10–11 (CR 14)

FIHRALAZ

CR 13

Male hezrou rogue (chameleon) 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 71)

CE Large outsider (aquatic, chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +28 Aura stench (60 ft., DC 26, 10 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+3 Dex, +16 natural, -1 size); +1 dodge vs. traps

hp 199 (14 HD; 10d10+4d8+126)

Fort +17, Ref +10, Will +11

Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge; DR 10/good; Immune electricity, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; SR 22

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee +1 keen harpoon^{UE} +23/+18/+13 (2d6+16/×3), bite +17 (4d4+5 plus grab) or

bite +22 (4d4+10 plus grab), 2 claws +22 (1d8+10 plus grab) **Ranged** +1 keen harpoon^{uE} +16 (2d6+16/×3)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks nausea, sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13)

At will—*chaos hammer* (DC 19), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *unholy blight* (DC 19)

3/day—gaseous form

1/day—blasphemy (DC 22)

TACTICS

- **Before Combat** Fihralaz crouches and hides in the deep bog, waiting in ambush and concealing his position using 3 points of his misdirection class ability and his camouflage rogue talent.
- **During Combat** Fihralaz wades into combat, attempting to tear apart lightly armored targets before turning on heavily armed combatants. Upon grabbing a target with a natural attack, he tosses aside his harpoon to better sustain the grapple. He uses his spell-like abilities to hinder and damage large groups of enemies, and he throws his harpoon at foes out of reach in the hope of skewering them and dragging them into a grapple. If overwhelmed by enemies, Fihralaz doesn't hesitate to duck underwater, drink his *potion of haste*, and swim or teleport to a more advantageous position.
- **Morale** Fihralaz prefers failure to death and attempts to flee when reduced to 30 or fewer hp.

STATISTICS

Str 31, Dex 16, Con 29, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 20 Base Atk +13; CMB +24; CMD 37

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (harpoon), Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Improved Stench^{DR}

Skills Bluff +14, Climb +23, Escape Artist +20, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (planes) +8, Linguistics +6, Perception +28, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +16, Swim +31; Racial Modifiers +8 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ amphibious, effortless sneak (swamp), misdirection (6 points), rogue talents (fast stealth, camouflage^{ue})

SCALING ENCOUNTER F

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a party of 4 PCs.

All subtiers: Treat the PCs as though they had arrived 2 hours earlier when calculating how many elves have perished.

Subtier 7–8: Remove the cnidarililies and leech swarm from the encounter.

Subtier 10–11: Remove one leech swarm, two vile giant leeches, and the cnidarililies from the encounter.

Combat Gear potion of haste; **Other Gear** +1 keen harpoon^{UE}, longarm bracers^{UE}, 27 pieces of amber worth 80 gp each.

VILE GIANT LEECHES (3)

CR 3

Advanced fiendish giant leeches (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 187, 294)

hp 25 each

TACTICS

During Combat The leeches attack anything on or adjacent to the water, though they avoid Fihralaz and try to maneuver around cnidarililies.

LEECH SWARMS (2)	CR 4
hp 39 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 187)	
TACTICS	

During Combat The leeches attack anything on or adjacent to the water, though they avoid Fihralaz and try to maneuver around cnidarililies.

QUASITS (3)	CR 2
hp 16 each (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 66)	
TACTICS	

Use the tactics from Subtier 7–8.

Development: Upon defeating Fihralaz and his allies, the PCs are able to cut open the chrysalises and extract the elves within. The elves' status depends largely on whether they survived the earlier encounter and how many hours have passed since the PCs set off from Mount Armiya. After 12 hours have passed, one elf has either died during the transformation or has irrevocably transformed into a fiendish mutant. When an elf succumbs to the ritual in this way, determine randomly whether it was Lanverel or one of the other Uprooters. If Lanverel transforms, he becomes a half-fiend with full recollection of his past life and escapes into Tanglebriar.

If the PCs free Lanverel before he becomes a halffiend, he offers thanks before questioning them about why anyone permitted "mercenaries" into Kyonin to perform a rescue mission rather than sending "proper elves." He further demands to know the name of every officer responsible for abandoning him and his comrades. Although it should be obvious that he is angry, a PC can determine with a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check that Lanverel is plotting some form of revenge. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can deduce that as a follower of Calistria, Lanverel's vengeance is likely to be painful but not intentionally lethal.

How the PCs handle Lanverel determines how he behaves upon escaping Tanglebriar. If the PCs do nothing to calm the elf, he seethes but quiets his temper long enough to help everyone return to Mount Armiya. The PCs can attempt to pacify him either by lying about General Tenasi's involvement with a successful DC 25 Bluff check or by gradually talking down the Uprooter with a DC 20 Diplomacy check. In this case, Lanverel is placated and quietly accompanies the PCs as they lead the way out of Tanglebriar.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat Fihralaz, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 7–8: Reduce the gold earned by 1,208 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce the gold earned by 1,750 gp. Subtier 10–11: Reduce the gold earned by 2,292 gp.

CONCLUSION

With Fihralaz defeated and with the assistance of any surviving elves, the PCs have little difficulty escaping from Tanglebriar and reuniting with the Uprooters at Mount Armiya. Another group of elves arrives soon thereafter to receive a report of the PCs' success and escort the victorious outsiders safely out of Kyonin. Waiting for them at the border is a messenger who informs them of General Tenasi's appreciation of their service and the promise of elven allies at a time and place to be named by the Pathfinder Society. The society also rewards the PCs by paying a monetary bonus for a job well done. As long as Lanverel survived and either never learned of General Tenasi's decision to call off a rescue or was calmed by the PCs, the story ends there.

If Lanverel returned to Kyonin with thoughts of revenge, he orchestrates a series of embarrassing revelations and debacles that tarnish General Tenasi's reputation in Queen Telandia Edasseril's court. Lanverel then informs Tenasi that justice has been served, and he abandons any further animosity toward her.

If Lanverel transformed into a half-fiend, he eventually learns of General Tenasi's betrayal (at least as he sees it) and exacts revenge in a similar way; however, he does not abandon his anger, and he includes the Pathfinder Society—the callous looters who would use the elves as tools—among his enemies.

If Lanverel survived, was not transformed, and did not seek revenge, check box A on the reporting sheet. If Lanverel

survived, was not transformed, but did seek revenge, check box B. If Lanverel turned into a half-fiend, check box C.

Primary Success Condition

The PCs successfully complete their main mission as long as they successfully rescued at least seven of the Uprooters found in areas A and F. Doing so earns each PC 1 Prestige Point.

PLAYER HANDOUT

Most Honorable General Tenasí,

As you may have been informed, soon after making your acquaintance at the Midsummer Masquerade, I enjoyed the privilege of performing a service to the Viridian Crown. Her Majesty's generous tokens of appreciation included her counselors' intimation that you might aid me in an urgent endeavor.

When the demon horde breached the wardstones surrounding the Worldwound, the nations of the Inner Sea region responded with unprecedented unity. Both the Kyonin rangers and the Pathfinder Society have provided support to the latest Mendevian Crusade in an effort to halt the invasion and to repair the breach.

The Worldwound horde is not, however, the only emerging concern. A long-lost dwarven Sky Citadel has recently reappeared. Within its ancient chambers lie millennia of previously unobtainable history. While the Pathfinder Society has already devised plans for a campaign to explore the Sky Citadel, the citadel remains within the region of the Worldwound.

No warriors in Avistan can boast the experience of your rangers, who have fought with such valor against the demonic forces of the Witchbole. If you can spare but a score of these peerless fiend-slayers, your assistance would be long remembered not only by the Society but by one to whom Queen Telandía has favored with her gratitude.

Hopeful of your assistance, I present the bearers of this message as capable Pathfinders and beseech you to aid their endeavor.

Count varian Jeggare

Secondary Success Condition

If the PCs successfully accomplish two of the following three objectives, they impress the elves and Pathfinder Society alike: recover and retrieve the entire cold iron stockpile from Kethalia, rescue Lanverel, or rescue all nine of the Uprooter elves aside from Lanverel. This earns the PCs 1 additional Prestige Point.



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