

# PATHFINDER®

ADVENTURE PATH PART 4 of 6



Kingmaker

## BLOOD FOR BLOOD

by Neil Spicer





## DRAGONFLY CLOAK

**Source:** A traveling cleric.

**Task:** A traveling cleric of Erastil named Berzaki makes a specialty of crafting magic items from giant insect parts. He promises to make a magic cloak for the first person who can bring him a large shipment of giant dragonfly wings.

**Completion:** The wings from no less than 6 giant dragonflies should suffice for Berzaki's needs.

**Reward:** Berzaki uses some of the wings to craft a cloak of resistance +3 as a reward.



## WANTED: SLUG SPIT

**Source:** A local alchemist.

**Task:** Local alchemist and only slightly dangerous eccentric Chesk Umberweed promised a group of dwarves he could deliver some powerful metal-etching acid, but he's run out of supplies! He needs a dozen vials of giant slug acid as soon as possible.

**Completion:** A single giant slug should provide enough acid for Chesk's needs.

**Reward:** Chesk promises to brew up a dozen potions of the user's choice as a reward.



## LI'L HOOKTONGUE

**Source:** A local taxidermist.

**Task:** Although no one's seen the legendary lake monster named Hooktongue in ages, the lake's certainly rife with other monsters. Ambitious taxidermist Quanchy Veeliker wants to stuff one of the freshwater elasmosaurs that live there.

**Completion:** Bring Quanchy a dead elasmosaurus from Lake Hooktongue, and be careful with the body!

**Reward:** Quanchy has promised a reward of 8,000 gp for the first delivery of a usable elasmosaurus body to his shop back in town.



## WANTED: SPEARTOOTH

**Source:** Wanted poster.

**Task:** The saber-toothed tiger Speartooth has long plagued the hills west of the swamp. They say he's killed and eaten a hundred people. So far, no one's managed to bring the beast down.

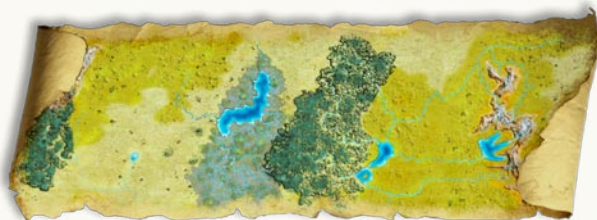
**Completion:** Find Speartooth, kill him, and deliver his 22-inch-long fangs to the captain of the guard in any local city.

**Reward:** The standing bounty for Speartooth's fangs is 8,000 gp.



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ADVENTURE PATH PART 4 of 6



Kingmaker

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FOR BLOOD

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# How Is Your Kingdom Doing?

**A**s I'm writing this, we're still a week or so away from shipping the first volume of *Kingmaker*, "Stolen Land," out to subscribers—and that means we're about a month away from folks seeing the kingdom building rules I designed for *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32. And of course, as you're reading this, that's already happened a couple months ago, and those of you who are ravenously playing *Kingmaker* adventures as each one comes out probably already have some kingdoms to brag about. It's kind of like time traveling, writing these forewords.

Anyway, my point is that I can't wait to see how folks take to the kingdom-building elements of *Kingmaker*. And I'm also incredibly nervous about how these rules will work out, because they are pretty new and I'm certain that there are some areas that are open to rules abuse as a result. I can already envision the threads on our messageboards at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com) where I'm issuing advice and errata and explanations about why it's not a good idea to build a city entirely out of graveyards even though the rules as written

might suggest otherwise, or how it's okay to have a royal assassin in your kingdom even if you're a good guy, or how to handle some out-of-control scores for Economy, Loyalty, and Stability. Or, for that matter, why Loyalty checks are so rare (the answer for that one—wait and see how Loyalty plays into the mass combat fast-play rules we've got coming up next month).

I can imagine those questions, but since only a few people have seen the kingdom-building rules as I write this, I can't really start answering them yet. If you've got some concerns about these rules, then, may I direct you to [paizo.com](http://paizo.com)'s *Kingmaker* messageboards? There's doubtless a lot of traffic going on there. What I can do, though, is give some general advice on how the kingdom-building element of *Kingmaker* should go.

**Rule Adjustments:** As your players build up their kingdoms, keep in mind that the kingdom-building rules are meant to be a storytelling aid first and a mini-game second. If the rules are inspiring you and your players to take your *Kingmaker* game into fun new



directions, then they're working as intended. If they're causing headaches and arguments, then they're not—you should consider switching over to the “Kingdom in the Background” variant if things get too bad. This focuses your game back on the adventures and away from an element of the game that may have ended up not being as fun as you'd hoped. But there's a middle ground as well—if something about the kingdom rules is weird, feel free to make some house rules to address the problems. The best way to do this is to introduce the changes and adjustments as story elements in the game. For example, if you're finding that the players are having a really hard time keeping their kingdom's Unrest score down, maybe a delegation of citizens approaches the PCs and tells them that what's really bothering the town are rumors of those scary boggards in the swamps—if someone could just go into Hooktongue Slough and defeat the biggest boggard tribe, things'll be better. This way, you give the PCs a task to accomplish, and if they succeed, you can reward them by doing something like reducing their nation's Unrest to 0.

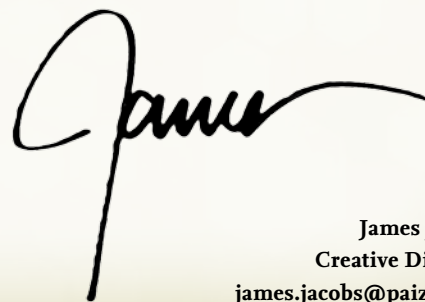
**Alternate Rewards:** You don't have to wait until the rules “break” to use quests to adjust the stats for a kingdom. You'll see these adventures give out awards in the form of Build Points or bonuses to kingdom stats now and then, but that doesn't mean you're limited to those few instances. Feel free to give out additional bonuses to the PCs' kingdom as they accomplish things. For example, if they manage to befriend most of this adventure's spellcasters and recruit them into their nation, maybe they'll gain a few new magic item slots in their marketplace as a reward. Or if the PCs make a practice of defeating monster encounters with *charm monster* effects, maybe their kingdom will gain bonuses to Stability because the monsters that live in the wilds are starting to be a significant defense factor. Get creative!

**Managing the Marketplace:** The method the kingdom-building rules use to present marketplaces gives the PCs a greater level of control over their ability to shop for magic items than normal. This is by design—players LOVE to shop for toys, after all. But it can get out of hand. If you find that your players are abusing the system and are turning it into a huge magic item vending machine (and if this concept bothers you—if it doesn't, by all means run with it!), don't be afraid to adjust the rules. Just do so in a way that doesn't surprise the PCs, and keep them informed as to the changes you're making. You can even justify changes you're making with flavor. For example, if the PCs keep buying and selling items through their city's marketplace in an attempt to build up a huge treasury, perhaps word of the vast amount of magic items being produced by their kingdom spreads and attracts the attention of a group of thieves from a neighboring River Kingdom. As a result,

the kingdom's magic item producers grow more wary and careful, and you can model this adjustment by instituting a house rule that limits the number of times the PCs can cycle through magic items as you wish. Of course, if the players are having fun with their magic item shopping experience, it might be worth letting them have their fun as long as it's not disrupting the game so much that it's ruining things for you!

**It's Okay to Be Powerful:** I deliberately didn't put a cap on how high a kingdom's stats can go or on how high its Control DC can get, because the rate at which each game's kingdoms grow will vary. Also, by the time the PCs get to the end of Kingmaker, they'll be quite high-level—and so it's okay if their kingdoms are equally impressive. Nevertheless, you might find yourself in a situation where the PCs are automatically making every kingdom-related check because their scores have far outstripped their Control DC. In this case, you have a few options. One is to say that any kingdom check automatically fails on a roll of a natural 1, just like it works for saving throws—this adjustment actually makes a lot of sense, as the kingdom's three statistics were originally modeled after the three saving throws. You can also limit the amount of bonuses the PCs can get from buildings (which are easily the best way to increase a kingdom's scores) by saying that bonuses granted by multiple duplicate buildings in the same city don't stack. However you choose to adjust things, though, don't over-adjust!

**Go to War:** Finally, there's one element of the kingdom rules that have yet to be unveiled—the rules for mass combat. Even if a kingdom is winning a war, the terrors and stress of warfare can be debilitating on its populace. If your PCs' kingdom is out of control, chances are good that their neighbors are jealous. And when jealousy reaches critical levels, that's when nations start sending out their armies to take what isn't theirs, after all. You'll have to wait until next month to see the full fast-play rules for mass combat, but check out “Blood for Blood's” opening part, where the PCs defend the town of Tatzlford from an attack. This set-piece encounter serves as a sort of preview for the upcoming mass combat rules, and if you like what you see there, make sure to check out next month's “War of the River Kings”!



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## Blood for Blood

**G**reetings, my liege lords! Would that I had the opportunity to contact you via missive in gentler times. Since its founding, Tatzlford has faced many challenges, but recent rumors of a much more disturbing sort abound. A woman has come to Tatzlford bearing warnings that, if they are to be believed, indicate we may face a terrible threat. She speaks of armies of bandits, hordes of barbarians, and worse organizing to the west beyond Hooktongue Slough. To date we have had no trouble with these elements, but this woman is quite convincing. She tells us an army is marching on Tatzlford. If this is true, we will need your aid in defending our homes. Please come as soon as you can.

—In good faith, your obedient and humble servant, Mayor Loy Rezbin



## Advancement Track

“Blood for Blood” assumes four player characters using the Medium advancement track for XP. The characters should be 10th level when they begin this adventure. The sandbox nature of “Blood for Blood” means that the PCs can encounter any of the locations at any level, although the more difficult encounters are placed such that they’re physically more difficult to reach. By the time the PCs are ready to confront the leaders of Fort Drelev, they should be well into 11th level—and by the time they’re confronting the Tiger Lords and exploring the Tomb of Armag they should be 12th level, ending the adventure as they become 13th level. Remember that PCs gain 100 XP for each hex they fully explore, and that they can earn more XP by completing quests or by building up their nation and cities (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32)!

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Over 40 years ago, when a cabal of Gyronna cultists known as the Black Sisters were humiliated and forced to flee Brevoiy because of its intolerant laws, they foretold the coming of Armag the Twice-Born. According to their prophecy, the Twice-Born would be a child formed from the spirit of the original Armag, a barbarian warlord who terrorized the northern plains during the Age of Destiny. However, because prophecy was no longer a trustworthy source of prognostication after the death of Aroden at the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens, the foretelling of Armag the Twice-Born took shape as little more than a wishful curse uttered against the Black Sisters’ enemies. When no reborn barbarian warlord rose to give flesh and fury to their prediction, they did not remain idle. The Sisters instead vowed to take an active hand in seeing their prediction come true, and retreated into the Stolen Lands where they abducted a baby from the Tiger Lord barbarians. They raised this child in the ways of spite and rage, and gave him the name Armag.

In this way, the mad Sisters convinced the child that the spirit of the original Armag lay within him, and that they would serve as his handmaidens to aid him in setting his ancestral might free. By advising and strengthening Armag, they planned to guide him to his rightful place among the barbarian tribes, uniting them to fulfill their own prophecy and strike back at Brevoiy with an army of barbarians eager to please their reincarnated warlord of old. Armag soon embraced these goals as his own, aspiring to lead the Tiger Lord barbarians. Empowered by the mad touch of Gyronna’s faithful, he slew a Tiger Lord chieftain and assumed the mantle of leadership.

But settlers soon arrived from Brevoiy, spreading south into Tiger Lord lands along the East Sellen River—a group of soldiers and diplomats led by a Brevic nobleman, Baron Hannis Drelev. These men not only established a fort on the shore of Lake Hooktongue, but they also sought out and looted several ancient tombs and burial sites sacred to the Tiger Lords. The final insult came when Drelev’s men tried to establish a peaceful alliance with the Tiger Lords. Armag saw through their trickery and ordered his people to attack, but he underestimated the enemy—he assumed that a people who would open with weak attempts at friendship

would not be able to stand in combat. Drelev’s soldiers proved an able match for Armag’s kin, and after three nights of battle the Tiger Lords fell back, driven west toward the bandit hold of Pitax. Not only did Armag see his destiny of raiding Brevoiy endangered, but suddenly he and his people were on the defensive, losing land to this expansion! But as he fell back deeper into the hills, he found a new ally from an unexpected source—the realm of Pitax.

Lord Irovetti, the bandit king of Pitax, had already dealt with an unwanted intrusion into his territory by the nation of Brevoiy, and when he heard rumors that other Brevic agents were expanding south into more distant borderlands and displacing some of the Tiger Lords (a culture Pitax had often clashed with over borders), his righteous anger saw opportunity. If his forces and the Tiger Lords could work together, they could swiftly defeat these Brevic intruders. And if events could be engineered so that the barbarians were at the front of the battle, the bulk of the losses would be from among their troops, further reducing opposition to Pitax’s northward expansion.

And so Irovetti and his mercenary guards traveled northeast to contact the Tiger Lords and establish a truce. Working together, they descended upon Fort Drelev with a fury and conquered the invaders in a single bloodless wave—for as Hannis Drelev saw the combined forces of Armag’s barbarians eager for revenge and Irovetti’s armies readying their siege engines, he made a choice. Always a realist, he saw immediate surrender as the only option to save his life.

The jaded, craven nobleman sent three riders under a flag of truce to plead with Armag and Irovetti to spare his region, proposing instead to ally with the bandits and to turn control of Fort Drelev to them. His offer to provide information about the holdings and defenses of his fellow countrymen intrigued Irovetti but frustrated Armag, who had hoped for bloodshed and violent revenge. To force the loyalty—and obeisance—of Drelev’s men, and to help appease the frustrated barbarians, Irovetti accepted the surrender but only on the condition that Drelev’s settlers hand over five of their daughters as hostages until Drelev himself could prove his loyalty through servitude to Pitax.

Over the objections of his own men, Drelev did as Irovetti requested, commanding his senior officers to give



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## Kingdom in the Background

If you aren't using the kingdom-building rules and letting the PCs develop the Stolen Lands on their own, you can assume that the nation of Narland continues to grow during this adventure. They've annexed Varnhold to the east and now command a relatively sizable force in the Stolen Lands, with the town of Tatzlford being the westernmost outpost of the nation. By the end of the adventure, Narland has expanded west into the areas around Hooktongue Slough.

their eldest daughters to the barbarian warlord. However, at least one captain—a Lord-Knight named Terrior Numesti—refused. And despite Armag's promises that the girls would eventually be returned unharmed, Drelev had to make an example of Numesti by throwing him in jail and handing his daughter over to the barbarians as well. Drelev justified this action to his people by assuring everyone it would save their lives.

In truth, Drelev cares little for anyone or anything that doesn't advance his personal agenda. Jealous of the success garnered by the neighboring kingdoms (particularly that of the PCs), he believes an alliance with the Tiger Lords and Pitax will finally give him the means to take over the entire frontier, uniting all the buffer states under his control. And with such a large nation under his command, he'll be able not only to strike back against the Tiger Lords and Pitax, but perhaps even to expand his control further, back into Brevo. In an attempt to sweeten the alliance, Drelev has returned several of the artifacts and treasures he and his men looted from Tiger Lord burial tombs, something that Armag quite appreciated.

When Armag returned to his people with these artifacts, though, the Black Sisters recognized them as ancient relics in the style of the barbarians of the original Armag's time. Here was the clue they had been seeking. Rightly assuming the barrow mounds would hold even greater treasures that could legitimize and spread their champion's influence over the barbarians, the Black Sisters advised the Twice-Born chieftain to claim them as his own. For legends also say a Kellid shaman laid Armag to rest within the same hills along with his famous sword, *Ovinrbaane*, a weapon blessed by Gorum to win any war.

Now, while Armag is distracted with attempts to delve the tombs of his ancestors and Irovetti has returned to Pitax to prepare for his next audacity (an attempt to lure the PCs out of their kingdom so he can attack their homes in secret—a treachery detailed in full in the next Kingmaker adventure, "War of the River Kings"), Lord Drelev has spent much of his time plotting and brooding. He hopes the barbarian will meet a terrible fate in his people's

tombs, but unknown to Drelev, Armag intends to convince the barrow mound's guardian to give him the ancient weapon *Ovinrbaane* and Gorum's blessing to fully raise an undead army to serve him. If left unchecked, a mighty champion of war will walk Golarion again, brushing aside all opposition in the River Kingdoms and beyond.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

"Blood for Blood" begins with the PCs having returned home from solving the mystery of the Varnhold Vanishing. Shortly after their arrival, they learn that new problems have developed during their absence—there are rumors of an army marching toward their nation!

The PCs race to the village of Tatzlford, where they help defend the village from an attack by a small but earnest force of bandits, barbarians, and several lumbering trolls after being warned in advance by a troubled woman who has fled from Fort Drelev to the west. Following the skirmish, she pleads with the PCs to save her father and sister from peril.

From there, the PCs strike out into the swamplands of the Slough to the west, exploring new lands and finding opportunities to make new allies and eliminate long-term threats to the region. Their initial goal, though, should be infiltrating Fort Drelev, where they'll have a chance to confront the traitor Drelev with his crimes and rescue the Fort's beleaguered settlers. During this time, the PCs learn where Armag's tribe has been holding the daughters of Drelev's senior officers hostage.

Arriving at the ancient site, the PCs attack Armag's barbarian encampment and overcome the sinister powers of the Black Sisters to free the girls. Then, entering the tomb, they face deadly traps, ancient undead horrors from a war-torn age, and the trials of the tomb's immortal, divine guardian. In the final chamber, the PCs encounter Armag himself, armed with the ancient sword of his namesake.

## QUESTS

The PCs will gather numerous quest opportunities as this adventure unfolds. Eight of these appear on the inside covers of this book, and several more are seeded throughout the rest of the adventure.

All of the Slough Quests presented in this book are worth 12,800 XP when they are completed—this is in addition to any experience points the PCs might earn while attempting to complete the quest.

## PART ONE: TROUBLE IN TATZLFORD

This adventure begins after the PCs have solved the problems facing Varnhold and, hopefully, have not only



rescued many of that village's citizens from the clutches of the cyclops lich Vordakai but have also secured a treaty of peace with the Nomen centaurs. Whatever the resolution of "The Varnhold Vanishing," you should give the PCs some time off—let them expand their nation some more and continue exploring the eastern Stolen Lands as they wish. You can start "Blood for Blood" the day after the PCs solve the vanishing at Varnhold, or you can start a year or 2 or 5 later—whatever works best for your campaign. Of course, if your players seem anxious to get on with Kingmaker's story or are eager to begin exploring to the west, such desires should also trigger the beginning of "Blood for Blood."

In any event, once you begin this adventure, one of the PCs (ideally the ruling PC) receives a short message from Tatzlford's mayor, Loy Rezbin, delivered via messenger bird. This note is reproduced at the start of this adventure on page 6, and tells of treachery and trouble brewing in the village of Tatzlford.

## ANNEXING TATZLFORD

In the second Kingmaker adventure, the PCs were likely approached by an energetic man named Loy Rezbin who offered to establish a village deep in the Narlmarches at a ford on the Skunk River (located at the site where a pair of mated tatzlwyrms dwelt in "Stolen Land" at encounter area U). Whether or not the PCs have bothered to expand their kingdom that deeply into the Narlmarches, as this adventure begins, Tatzlford is a thriving village nearly 200 residents strong.

Before you begin "Blood for Blood," take a moment to examine the PCs' kingdom. If they've managed to claim several hexes in the Narlmarches (including the one containing Tatzlford), everything's already set up for you. If the PCs haven't officially claimed Tatzlford and enough adjacent hexes, then you should inform them that Loy Rezbin has approached the PCs with good news: he's managed to claim a number of hexes between Tatzlford and the PCs' kingdom and wishes to officially bend his knee to the PCs. Assuming the PCs accept his pledge of fealty, this immediately adds a number of hexes to their land so that the PCs' kingdom and the hex containing Tatzlford are connected—you should try to keep this to as few hexes as possible to avoid giving the PCs too much "free" land. As Loy hasn't developed any of these hexes, they contain no roads or farms.

Tatzlford's stats are presented below using the new format for city stat blocks introduced in the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* and summarized in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #33's foreword. If you don't have access to either of these resources, you can simply ignore the three lines between "NG Village" and "Populace." The final portion of the stat block (the "Kingmaker" section) lists all of the building blocks currently built in Tatzlford, along with the total

modifiers to the PCs' kingdom when the village is annexed. Remember that when a settlement is first annexed, the nation must make a Stability check against its Command DC to avoid increasing the nation's Unrest score by 2d4. Note that Tatzlford's base value and available magic items below have been calculated using the Kingmaker city-building rules from *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32, not the less detailed rules presented in the *GameMastery Guide*—the Kingmaker rules create a higher base value than normal but result in far fewer magic items guaranteed to be on sale.

### TATZLFORD

NG Village

**Corruption** -1; **Crime** -2; **Economy** +0; **Law** +0; **Lore** +0;  
**Society** +0

**Qualities** Insular, Strategic Location

**Danger** 0

#### POPULACE

**Government** autocracy (mayor)

**Population** 186 (172 human, 8 half-elf, 3 half-orc, 3 other)

#### Notable NPCs

**Mayor** Loy "Tanner" Rezbin (NG male human ranger 3/expert 2)

**High Priestess** Latricia Evanore (LG female human cleric of Erastil 5)

**Captain of the Guard** Coren Lawry (NG male human warrior 3)

#### MARKETPLACE

**Base Value** 2,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd

**Minor Items** boots of the winterlands, ring of counterspells (currently contains *slay living*); **Medium Items** —; **Major Items** —

#### KINGMAKER

**Kingdom Increases** Economy +8; Loyalty +9; Stability +6

**City Grid Borders** all land

**Buildings** Brewery, Brothel, Houses (4), Inn, Library, Shop, Smith, Tavern, Temple, Town Hall, Tradesman

## ABOUT TATZLFORD

The Tatzlford presented here may conflict with the village as it might have grown in your game—if this is the case, you should adjust elements on the map of Tatzlford and among its inhabitants as necessary so it makes sense for your game. This adventure, however, assumes that the village adheres to the following baseline description.

Tatzlford is a cozy village located in a large clearing deep in the Narlmarch woods, near a ford in the Skunk River. The beginnings of a road lead east and west from the village, but unless the PCs have taken the time to further develop these roads, they do not go far before petering out at outlying homes and farms.

Tatzlford is governed by a mayor named Loy "Tanner" Rezbin, a retired ranger, although many suspect (correctly) that a lot of the important decisions are actually made by his



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longtime companion Latricia Evanore, a priestess of Erastil. Together, they founded Tatzlford with the intent to help build up the PCs' new nation as it rises in the Stolen Lands. The village has attracted settlers from all around, primarily from Pitax, Mivon, and Rostland. A small wooden fort sits at the heart of the village, but the village has outgrown the defense this walled complex can provide. Construction of a larger stone wall around the village has been started but is not yet complete. The map of Tatzlford indicates several locations of interest, each of which is described here in brief.

**1. Able's Inn:** Able Morkentian runs this cozy two-story inn. The building only features five rooms, but they're clean and comfortable.

**2. Gnori's Gems:** Gnori Berwekertan is Tatzlford's only gnome resident. A gifted gemcutter, he's told no one in town that he's on the run from a thieves' guild in distant Tamran.

**3. Ironhand Smithy:** Kole Jhargee, a mountain of a man, provides for all of Tatzlford's smithing needs. He and his family are from Brevoiy, but he has little in the way of kindness to say about his previous home.

**4. River Run Alehouse:** Owned by Killough Margrom, proprietor of Tatzlford's only tavern, this small brewery has already established a reputation for producing fine huckleberry mead and sweet ale.

**5. Skunk River Bridge:** Built over the ford in the Skunk River where once a pair of tatzlwyrms laired, this wooden bridge is sturdy and safe.

**6. Tatzlford General Store:** Karl Roschinder owns and runs Tatzlford's general store. He keeps several chairs on his front porch for locals to gather at, and he often supplies them with free lunches when the mood strikes him.

**7. Tatzlford Library:** This building houses a sizable collection of important works focusing on history, literature, and mathematics. The library also functions as a school for Tatzlford's 16 children—the teacher and librarian is a forlorn (but still generally quite pleasant and kindly) elven woman named **Emraeli Emfaun** (CG female elf wizard 5).

**8. Tatzlford Lodge:** This large wooden temple is devoted to Erastil. Its substantial communal area has seen frequent use for town meetings of late, as the smaller chamber in the town hall can no longer fit enough people. The temple is overseen by Latricia Evanore.

**9. Tatzlford Fort/Town Hall:** This smallish fort at the heart of town is now used mostly as storage and as a residence for the village's mayor, Loy Rezbin.

**10. Tatzlwyrms Tavern:** Primarily serving locally brewed ale and mead, and with a menu that never strays far from



venison and fish, the Tatzlwyrms Tavern's claim to fame is a taxidermied tatzlwyrms that coils above the bar.

**11. Thrillseeker's:** The newest business to appear in town, this gaudy structure presents a facade promising games of chance and fun. It also serves as a brothel, however, and thus is at the heart of many local arguments.

## ARRIVING AT TATZLFORD

The village of Tatzlford does not appear on the map provided in this volume, as it is located in the western portion of the Greenbelt (this map appears in the first two Kingmaker adventures). If you're running "Blood for Blood" as a standalone adventure, Tatzlford should be located about 30 miles southeast from encounter area P.

As soon as the PCs arrive at the village, they immediately gain the attention of everyone in town unless they enter the village via stealth or undercover. Captain Coren Lawry, commander of the Tatzlford guard, meets the PCs on the outskirts of town and quickly offers to escort them to the Tatzlford Lodge so they can meet Mayor Rezbin and speak with the young woman who's brought them news of war. He can also give the PCs a quick tour of the village, pointing out shops and key sites, so they can learn their way around town.

Mayor Rezbin does his best to greet the PCs in a manner befitting their status as the highest dignitaries to ever visit Tatzlford. Short and unassuming, he's put on weight since retiring and seems ill-suited for the stress and rigors of governing a settlement. Despite this, Rezbin comes across as likable, down-to-earth, and loyal. He has no hidden agenda, only a desire to do what's right for those who put their trust in him. He is accompanied by his wife Latricia Evanore, a woman who wears the same outfit every day: a practical gray tunic over a white blouse and green trousers, and a fur-lined cloak with a pair of knee-length boots for tracking about the forest and her farm.

## WARNING FROM THE WEST

Even as the PCs arrive in Tatzlford, a sizable force of bandits, barbarians, and hired giants approach the village from the north, using the banks of the Skunk River to lead them directly to their target. This small group of skirmishers represents Lord Drelev's first attempt to impress Lord Irovetti by launching an attack against the PCs' kingdom.

Yet several days before this small army set out on their march, a woman named **Kisandra Numesti** (NG female human rogue 2/aristocrat 3), the youngest daughter of Lord Terrion Numesti, a knight and aristocrat of Brevo, caught wind of Drelev's plan and realized it was time for her to act. Until recently, her father commanded Fort Drelev's garrison. When he defied the baron's orders and refused to ally with Armag or allow his eldest daughter to serve as a hostage, he was thrown into the dungeon. Now, with her

father jailed and her older sister held by Armag's savages, Kisandra has come to warn Tatzlford.

If the PCs have claimed any of the hexes north of Tatzlford or along the northern Skunk River, Drelev's force will need to pass through areas directly controlled by the PCs' kingdom before reaching Tatzlford. In this case, the PCs have a chance to learn of the attack even before Kisandra's arrival if they can make a Loyalty check against their nation's Control DC. If this check is successful, the PCs learn that a group of mercenaries, barbarians, and several trolls are marching toward Tatzlford and are expected to arrive within a day. The extra time to prepare for the battle gives them a +4 bonus on all defense-related rolls during the Battle of Tatzlford.

It's now only a few hours before Drelev's skirmishers arrive. After the PCs meet with the mayor, Kisandra is brought before them, escorted by several guards. Dressed as a soldier, filthy from travel, and wide-eyed in nervous fear, she presents herself to the PCs and is willing to answer any questions they may have. Her responses to likely questions are listed below.

**Who are you?** "My name is Kisandra Numesti. I come from the Drelev Demesne, west of here on the far side of Hooktongue Slough—it was established by Baron Hannis Drelev of Brevo. My father is Lord Terrion Numesti, a knight who once served the baron but then went against him and was thrown into the dungeon as punishment."

**Who's attacking Tatzlford?** "Baron Drelev's troops, along with a group of Tiger Lord barbarians and some enormous trolls! I pretended to be one of them until they drew near, then slipped away to warn you."

**Why would Drelev attack us?** "To save himself. And so he can claim all you've built for his own gain. Drelev surrendered to the barbarians and the Lord of Pitax so they wouldn't overrun his kingdom. I suspect he sees attacking you as a way to prove his worth to his new master, but he's always been jealous of your success. He covets just about anything he deems more valuable than what he already has. I'm afraid your nation is no exception."

**How do we know you're not trying to trick us?** "Any loyalty I may have once owed to Baron Drelev died as soon as he allowed those savages to take my sister and imprisoned my father for refusing to obey his orders. To tell the truth, I hoped that by warning you I might earn your favor and obtain aid in freeing them, but even if you choose not to help me, I can't sit idly by and watch as that madman attacks this village."

## PREPARING FOR BATTLE

Thankfully, Kisandra's warning affords the PCs enough time (barely) to mount a defense of Tatzlford. She can tell the PCs that the attacking group consists of 25 human mercenaries armed with longswords and composite



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longbows, 10 human barbarians armed with axes, and six immense trolls. The group is commanded by one of Drelev's right-hand thugs—a pig of a man named Ameon Trask.

Kisandra can tell the PCs that the group is somewhat disorganized and sloppy—not only are they unlikely to notice she's missing, but Ameon's not all that great of a leader and his tactics for the attack are likely to be little more than orders to charge the village en masse. The group is approaching from the north along the eastern bank of the Skunk River and should be arriving within a few hours.

This leaves the PCs precious little time to prepare a defense of the village, but if they do so, the battle to come will go much better. Tatzlford has a relatively small militia—only 25 residents are battle-ready (this includes all 11 of the village's guards), and they have no siege engines to help defend the place.

Listed below are several defensive preparations the PCs can undertake—you can have the citizens and leaders of Tatzlford suggest some of these preparations if you wish. The PCs have only a short time to prepare defenses—as a result, they can enact at most three defenses (unless they've got advance warning from their own lands, in which case they can enact up to six defenses).

Each defensive measure grants one or two modifiers to Tatzlford's Offense and Defense. Once the PCs select their defensive measures, total up these modifiers to generate Tatzlford's total Offense and Defense scores—you'll need these numbers once the battle begins.

**Archers on the Bridge:** The Tatzlford Bridge has high railings that could be fortified further to provide cover—a row of archers on this bridge could devastate an army marching along the river bank. *Offense +2, Defense +1.*

**Barricades:** Using lumber, trees, barrels, wagons, rubbish, and some sharpened poles, all of the open gaps in the city wall could be fortified with barricades to prevent easy entry into the village. *Offense +0, Defense +3.*

**Magical Defenses:** None of the locals think of using magic to defend Tatzlford, but if PC spellcasters volunteer to use large area-effect spells to defend the village, the town's Offense and Defense could be significantly increased. In order to utilize magical defenses, a PC must cast one area-effect spell each phase of the battle—the results of the spell are largely irrelevant (but you should certainly be descriptive in telling the PCs how *fireballs* and *entangles* and *cones of cold* affect the attackers). Magical defenses do not add

directly to Tatzlford's Offense or Defense, but each round they are used, add a modifier equal to the level of the spell used in that phase to the PCs' rolls for attacks and defense.

**Snipers on Rooftops/in the Trees:** By placing a few snipers on rooftops or in trees, archers can make pinpoint strikes against the army's leaders or particularly effective soldiers. *Offense +3, Defense +0.*

**Traps in the Woods:** Setting a number of quickly built traps in the woods can not only help to slow the enemy troops' advance through the woods, but can actually injure some of them before they actually reach the village. *Offense +1, Defense +2.*

**Trenches:** Digging trenches in key locations along the village perimeter can help to delay the approach of the aggressors. *Offense +0, Defense +3.*

**Using Local Wildlife:** By using skills like wild empathy or spells like *charm animal* or *speak with animals*, both Latricia and Loy (and perhaps some PCs) can recruit several local wild animals to aid them in striking at the aggressors. *Offense +3, Defense +0.*



Kisandra

## THE BATTLE OF TATZLFORD

Once the PCs have settled on their plans for the battle, total up their Offense and Defense modifiers. The number generated to their Offense is a number that modifies attack rolls in mass combat, while the number generated by Defense should be added to 10 to generate their total Defense Score.

Ameon Trask's group has an Offense Modifier of +8 and a Defense Score of 15.

The Battle of Tatzlford begins as Ameon's army of barbarians, bandits, and 15-foot-tall trolls lumbers into view along the Skunk River. With a roar of challenge, this ragtag group charges. Ameon's plan is simple—rush south along the bank, then cut through the woods and race up into Tatzlford, killing anyone they meet along the way. The battle itself plays out in three phases, as outlined below. During each phase, each side makes an attack against the other by rolling a d20 and adding its own Offense Modifier. If it fails to achieve a result equal or greater than the enemy's Defense Score, nothing happens. Each time a side makes a successful attack, it gains a Battle Point.

**Phase One:** Ameon's forces appear along the eastern banks of the Skunk River, roar their challenge, and charge against the village of Tatzlford.

**Phase Two:** Ameon's forces reach the outskirts of the village and begin their attack in earnest. Ameon's group gains a +2 bonus on its attack roll this round because of its members' ferocity.



**Phase Three:** Ameon's forces penetrate the outer defenses and carry the battle into the streets of Tatzlford. Tatzlford's defenders gain a +2 bonus on their attack roll this round because they're defending their homes.

## MARCH OF THE TROLLS (CR 11)

After you play out the three phases of the battle, Ameon's trolls enter the fray. These six lumbering beasts, all advanced trolls that stand a towering 15 feet in height, stomp out of the woods and effortlessly clamber over the village's partially completed wall, whereupon they immediately begin killing all villagers they come across and tearing apart as many buildings as they can.

The trolls represent a serious threat—one far greater than Tatzlford's defenders can reasonably stand against. While the defenders keep up their fight against Ameon's human troops, the trolls continue their rampage—the PCs will need to step in to defeat the trolls before they can carry the battle for the enemy.

The battle against the six trolls should be resolved with normal combat. For each round this battle continues, the damage the trolls cause to morale and the village's buildings grants Ameon's side a Battle Point. Each troll defeated by the PCs grants the PCs 2 Battle Points—as long as the PCs can defeat the trolls in at least 11 rounds, they'll end up with more Battle Points by the encounter's end. If they're quicker about the defeat, of course, they'll earn relatively more Battle Points and thus may be able to compensate for earlier failures against Ameon during the battle itself.

### TROLLS (6)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Advanced troll (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 268, 294)

hp 75 each

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The trolls attempt to get both claws on opponents so they can rend them. In their ferocity, however, they lack any sense of tactics beyond causing as much damage as possible.

**Morale** The trolls fight to the death.

## VICTORY OR DEFEAT

The Battle of Tatzlford ends once the PCs defeat the six trolls, once all of the PCs are dead, or once the PCs decide to abandon the battle and flee the area. In the latter two cases, the PCs automatically lose the battle (see the Loss paragraph on this page).

**Win:** If the PCs end up with more Battle Points than Ameon's men, they win the battle. No buildings are destroyed, and only a few villagers lose their lives. They may even manage to capture Ameon (see the Aftermath section on this page). Award the PCs 12,800 XP for the decisive victory.

## Not Quite Mass Combat

The Battle of Tatzlford utilizes a new system to quickly resolve mass combat behind the scenes, although these events are presented in this adventure in a more narrative manner than are most combats. Full quick-resolution rules for mass combat are presented in the next adventure, "War of the River Kings," in which the PCs take part in several large-scale battles during the war to defend their homeland and conquer Pitax.

The full rules presented in the next adventure will play somewhat differently and will include rules for damaging armies, tactics, morale, and more. Think of this encounter as a preview of sorts for the PCs for the battles soon to come, for in "War of the River Kings," the PCs will be running their own armies in a variety of battles!

**Tie:** If the PCs and Ameon end up with tied Battle Points, the PCs manage to keep control of Tatzlford, but the village is in a shambles. Only 1d3 buildings (determine which ones randomly) remain intact, and the population of the village is halved. The villagers are distraught, and the Unrest of the PCs' kingdom increases by 2 as a result of the close call. Award the PCs 6,400 XP for the close call.

**Loss:** If the PCs end up with fewer Battle Points than Ameon, they lose the battle. In this case, they can flee the area if they wish—if they allow themselves to be taken captive, they are imprisoned and then executed (hung from the edge of Tatzlford Bridge) the next morning. They lose control of Tatzlford and every surrounding hex, which not only results in the corresponding reductions to their nation's statistics, but also increases national Unrest by 2d6 (note that the loss of hexes as a result of this battle does not further increase Unrest, as these hexes were not voluntarily abandoned). A successful Loyalty check against the nation's Command DC reduces this Unrest gain to 1d4 points.

## AFTERMATH

"Blood for Blood" assumes the PCs win the Battle of Tatzlford (or at least that the battle ends in a tie). If they lose the battle but survive with their lives intact, you can continue the adventure but the PCs will be even further on the defensive and may even attempt a counterattack on Tatzlford to retake the village. Alternatively, they could sneak into the village to try to remove Ameon Trask from control—this causes the troops occupying the town to quickly panic and disband, at which point the PCs can reclaim the village.

Finally, if the PCs win the battle, there's a chance that they could have taken Ameon Trask alive. If they specifically made attempts to capture the leader, you can either rule that their attempts were automatically successful or allow them



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to attempt one final attack roll against Ameon's army's Defense Score; with a success, they capture the enemy leader alive. Otherwise, Ameon escapes into the wild and eventually makes his way back to Fort Drelev. Baron Drelev is displeased with his failure, but not enough to throw the man into the dungeon. In this case, the PCs can encounter Ameon again in Drelev Keep, either in his quarters plotting a new campaign against the PCs' nation, or leading the keep's guards in battle.

If the PCs capture Ameon alive, his attitude is hostile. He remains silent unless made friendly, at which point he can reveal much about Fort Drelev and its baron—see Part Three for more details. If made helpful, Ameon will even agree to accompany the PCs back to Fort Drelev and aid them in putting the baron down.

## AMEON TRASK

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male human fighter 6/rogue 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +9

## DEFENSE

**AC** 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

**hp** 79 (9 HD; 6d10+3d8+33)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3; +2 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2, evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 short sword +13/+8 (1d6+6/19–20), +1 short sword +13/+8 (1d6+5/19–20)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +13/+8 (1d8+2/x3)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +2d6, weapon training (light blades +1)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** Ameon Trask prefers to fight in melee, resorting to his ranged weaponry only as a last resort. If fighting on his own, he uses his *fire elemental gems* to quickly recruit aid to allow him an easier time to flank foes.



**Morale** Ameon tries to flee into the wilderness if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points.

## STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Dazzling Display, Dodge, Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Shatter Defenses, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword)

**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +10, Disguise +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +9, Ride +7, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +10, Survival +5, Swim +4

**Languages** Common, Skald

**SQ** armor training 1, rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

**Combat Gear** *fire elemental gems* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 chainmail, +1 short swords (2), masterwork composite shortbow with 20 arrows, 250 gp

## KISANDRA'S PLEA

Assuming the PCs win (or at least survive) the battle, Kisandra can further explain about the recent developments in the Drelev Demesne, including the imprisonment of her father and the taking of her sister as a hostage by Armag. She pleads for their help, praising their skill and renown for problem-solving while also urging them to overthrow Drelev and save her people from the Tiger Lords. She asks them to repay Drelev for his treachery by forcing him cede control of the kingdom—Baron Drelev is a craven bully who, if left in charge of the Drelev Demesne, will cause the death of hundreds. Furthermore, she asks the PCs to save her father (from the dungeons of Drelev Keep) and her sister (from the clutches of the Tiger Lords) if they can.

Kisandra has little in the way of personal wealth to offer in payment for these requests, but she does pledge her family's loyalty to the PCs if they accept her quests. She also points out that if they can liberate Fort Drelev, its beleaguered citizens will certainly treat them as heroes and join their nation.

Kisandra is no heroine—she fears Baron Drelev, and despite how she worries for her father or sister, she has no desire to return to Fort Drelev. She can certainly sketch a map of the town for the PCs, but she doesn't want to return there until the baron has been dealt with and her family rescued. She does, however, have one more thing to offer the PCs—the name of a possibly ally in the town: Satinder Morne, the proprietor of Fort Drelev's gaming hall and brothel. Kisandra gives the PCs a jade ring worth 200 gp that can prove to Satinder they're friends. While Kisandra is hesitant to admit how she knows Satinder (they are, in fact, secretly lovers, an arrangement that would not sit all that well with her tradition-bound father), she tells the PCs that Satinder is no friend of Baron Drelev despite the fact that the mercenary guards who now serve as the city

## Tripartite Quest: Kisandra's Plea

This three-part quest involves two rescues and the defeat of a local tyrant.

**Source:** Kisandra Numesti.

**Task:** Kisandra asks the PCs to rescue her father Terrior from the dungeons below Drelev Keep and her sister Tamary from the Tiger Lord barbarians, and also to remove Baron Drelev from power and seize control of the city of Fort Drelev, thus liberating its citizens from the baron's despotic rule.

**Completion:** The three portions of this quest can be completed in any order. Kisandra's father and sister must be delivered to safety from their respective locations—Fort Drelev counts as a safe location once the baron is removed and Irovetti's mercenaries are routed. To liberate Fort Drelev, the PCs must earn 20 Liberation Points in the city and either kill or capture Baron Drelev. See page 36 for how the PCs can earn Liberation Points.

**Reward:** Completing this quest allows the PCs to annex Fort Drelev and its lands without increasing their nation's Unrest; see page 56 for details on how a successful annexation helps the PCs' nation. Furthermore, as this is a three-part quest, its completion earns the PCs three times as many experience points—for completing this quest, they'll earn 38,400 XP.

watch are among her best customers. If they're looking for a safe place to hide in Fort Drelev, they should mention Kisandra's name to Satinder and give her the jade ring with a long-stemmed flower of any kind threaded through the ring itself.

## PART TWO: INTO THE SLOUGH

With Baron Drelev's attack on Tatzlford, the PCs should realize that they have at least one enemy dwelling in the west. Fort Drelev is the obvious foe to focus on, but a second enemy, Armag the Twice-Born, could be even more dangerous. As with every adventure in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, the route the PCs take toward dealing with these foes is left to them. During this time, they're also free to begin exploring the wilderness of the Slough, the region of the Stolen Lands found to the west of the Greenbelt. Certainly, Baron Drelev doesn't attempt another bold move like the attack on Tatzlford, opting instead to focus on defending his own home.

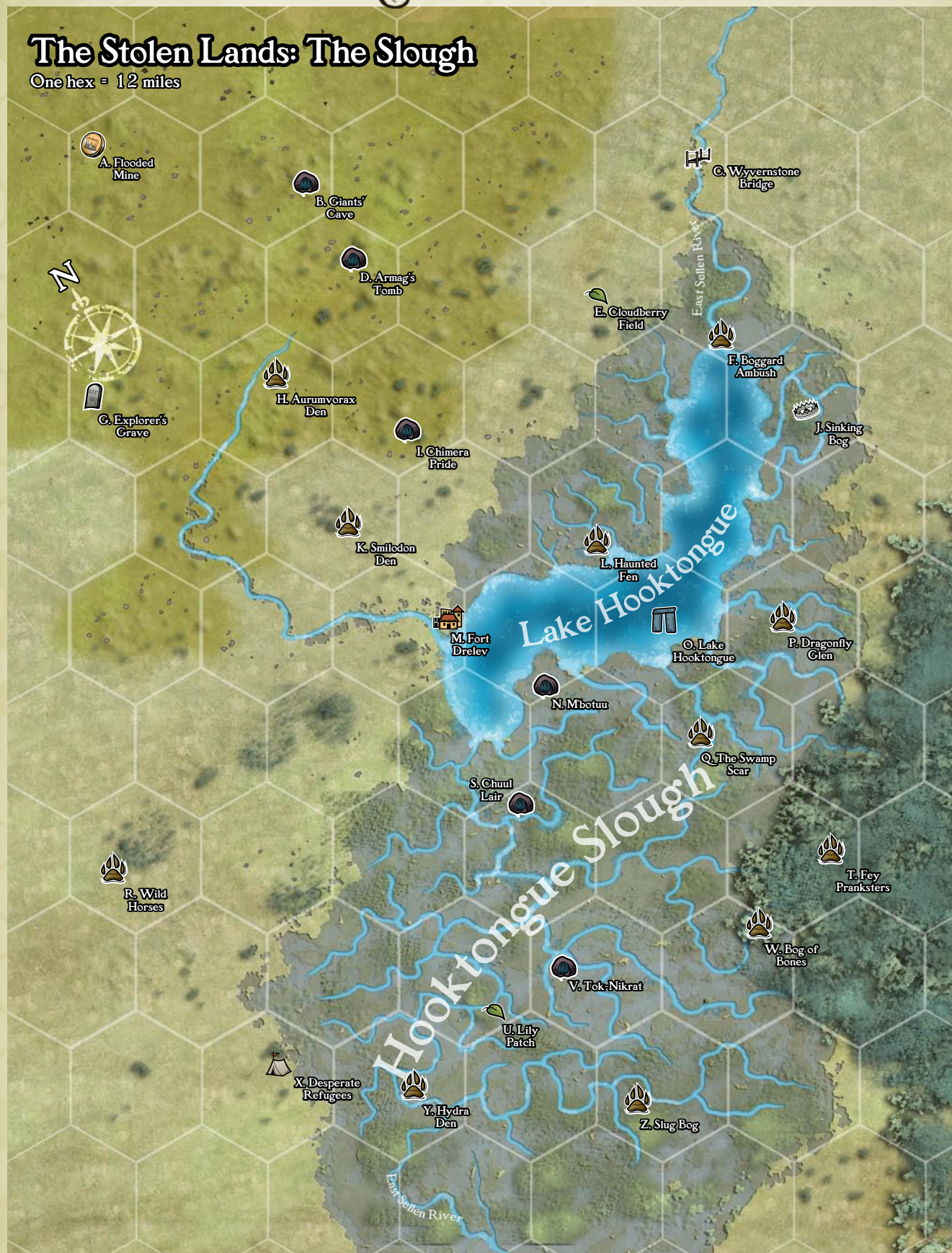
This part of the adventure describes the various locations and encounters awaiting discovery during exploration of



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## The Stolen Lands: The Slough

One hex = 12 miles





## Map Icons



the Slough, a region that consists of the hilly homelands of the Tiger Lord barbarians, the vast Lake Hooktongue, and the trackless expanse of Hooktongue Slough itself.

Let the PCs set their own pace as they explore the Slough. All of the fixed encounter locations in “Blood for Blood” are categorized into one of three categories: landmark, standard, and hidden.

**Landmark Site:** The site is automatically discovered as soon as the PCs enter the hex containing the site.

**Standard Site:** Unless the PCs are traveling specifically to that site, they do not encounter the site until they explore the hex, in which case they encounter the site automatically.

**Hidden Site:** If the PCs don’t already know about the site’s location, they need to make a skill check (the skill and DC required varies with the type of site) to locate it during exploration.

## WANDERING MONSTERS

As the PCs explore the Slough, you can liven things up with wandering monsters generated from the tables on page 79 of this book. There’s a 5% chance of an encounter occurring each time the PCs enter an unclaimed hex, and a 15% chance per day or night spent exploring or camping in an unclaimed hex. These chances decrease to 1% per hex or 5% per day spent exploring or camping in a claimed hex. Take care not to overwhelm the PCs with random encounters, though; it’s usually good to limit wandering monster encounters to only one per day.

Note that while few of the encounter areas detailed below are supported by maps (with the exception of the boggard village of M’botuu), three sample “swamp lair” maps appear on page 22. You can use these maps as you see fit to run encounters in this adventure. Alternatively, consider using a GameMastery Flip-Mat such as *Swamp* or *River Crossing* to stage both wandering and set encounters. The GameMastery Map Packs *Ancient Forest*, *Campsites*, and *Ruins* can also come in handy when running these encounters. All of these are available for purchase online at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com) or at better gaming stores near you.

## A. FLOODED MINE (STANDARD)

A wooden head frame marks the entrance to a mine in the side of a sloped hill; the rope to its joist has long ago

gone missing, and a pair of rusted picks lies discarded on the ground. This mine was recently established by Baron Drelev’s men after some promising assaying revealed silver. Unfortunately, the miners swiftly struck an aquifer that immediately flooded the mine, forcing the men to abandon the site.

A DC 15 Profession (miner) check identifies the problem, while a DC 25 Profession (miner) check suggests methods to work the mine without flooding it. Spells like *control water* can also serve to control the flooding—if the PCs can get the flooding under control, this mine would make an excellent resource.

## B. GIANTS’ CAVE (STANDARD; CR 10)

Several wagons, one entirely overturned and all in various stages of destruction, lie scattered around the entrance of a large cave at the base of a barren hillside here.

**Creatures:** This cave is the den of a small family of inbred hill giants, opportunistic thugs who’ve abandoned an allegiance with Armag’s army in favor of waylaying travelers along the border between the River Kingdoms and Brevoy. The shattered wagons are all that remains of their latest conquest, and they’re currently arguing loudly in their cave over the best way to split their ill-gotten gains (they suffer a –5 penalty on Perception checks as a result).

### DARG, FESL, AND URDA

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Hill giants (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 150)

hp 85 each

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The hill giants have no intelligent strategy behind their attacks. They barely have the sense to throw a couple of rocks before closing with their clubs.

**Morale** Having easily routed defenseless settlers, the hill giants prove far too confident and lacking in common sense to know when to retreat. They fight to the death.

**Treasure:** Among the spoils the giants have gathered from hunters, poachers, pilgrims, explorers, and merchants are several hundred gold pieces’ worth of tools and building material. While only worth 500 gp in all, these tools count as 3 BP if they’re brought back to civilization and dispersed among those who need such supplies.



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In addition to these supplies, the giants' treasure consists of 3,500 sp, 1,040 gp, a masterwork breastplate, a spyglass, a *potion of aid*, a *potion of fly*, and a *golembane scarab*.

## C. WYVERNSTONE BRIDGE (LANDMARK)

A remarkable bridge of stone spans a gorge here through which the East Sellen River flows. This engineering marvel, built nearly 200 years ago just after Choral the Conqueror united Brevoy, offers an easy route over the wide river just before its southern flow empties into the Hooktongue Slough. Although the roads that once extended from the bridge are long gone, the bridge itself remains intact, the stone wyverns that guard each end now home to dozens of birds.

## D. ARMAG'S TOMB (STANDARD)

This area is detailed in Part Four.

## E. CLOUDBERRY FIELD (STANDARD)

A several-acre field of golden cloudberry, a semi-tart fruit usable in pies, jams, and alcoholic drinks, grows in a large meadow that overlooks the northern reaches of Hooktongue Slough here. As the field of berries often attracts local wildlife (and thus, local predators), chances of encountering wandering monsters in this hex increase to 50%, and the first time the PCs enter this hex they automatically have a random encounter. See page 79 for Slough encounters.

## F. BOGGARD AMBUSH (STANDARD; CR 10)

The East Sellen River widens gradually over the course of 3 miles here, slowing to a crawl as it empties into Lake Hooktongue. When the East Sellen trade route was open, this point was often used as a waystation for travelers, with several buildings set up on stilts in the bog. For the past several years, though, the trade route has been closed due to the increased aggression of the boggard tribes of the swampland.

**Creatures:** The mostly collapsed shacks and huts are now little more than camouflage for a group of 14 boggards that have turned the ruins into an ambush site. They've already picked off several of Drelev's explorers, and are eager to spring their ambush on anyone trying to navigate the area. In addition to morningstars, these boggards are also armed with blowguns and 10 darts poisoned by giant wasp venom. These boggards are not part of any particular tribe, and hate the boggards of M'botuu (primarily because of jealousy over their nicer homes).

### BOGGARD WARRIORS (14)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

#### OFFENSE

**Ranged** blowgun +1 (1d2 plus poison [DC 18; 1/rd. for 6 rds.; 1d2 Dex, 1 save])

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** When potential victims reach the area, half the boggards make their presence known by using their terrifying croak ability to intimidate travelers and leave them shaken. The others leap down from the trees to surround their opponents. On the next round, the boggards on the ground use their own terrifying croak to further intimidate anyone affected by the first raucous din to make them frightened. Meanwhile, the boggards in the trees use their blowguns before climbing down to join the melee. The boggards focus their attacks on anyone who doesn't flee, using their sticky tongues to strike and impede them before attacking with their morningstars.

**Morale** The boggards retreat after losing half their number, disappearing into the creek and swimming away underwater while holding their breath. Thereafter, they take to the trees again, trailing after the PCs to attack with poisoned blowgun darts. They rely on hit-and-run tactics and their swamp stride ability to harass the trespassing PCs for the next several days.

## G. DECAYED CORPSE (HIDDEN)

The remains of a long-dead Taldan explorer lie partially buried here in a cleft—a DC 30 Perception check locates the body during exploration of the hex.

**Treasure:** Most of the corpse's gear has rotted or rusted away, but his +1 *bashing heavy steel shield*, decorated with the coat of arms of a long-defunct Taldan noble family, remains usable.

## H. AURUMVORAX DEN (STANDARD; CR 11)

**Creatures:** A twisting set of burrows honeycombs a large granite hillside here, pocking the hillside with dozens of small openings. These mark the entrances to a tangled warren of tunnels that serve as the lair of a mated pair of predators known as aurumvoraxes, or golden gorgers. Native to Numeria to the northwest, this pair wandered down into the northern Stolen Lands and settled here years ago. An aurumvorax appears as a sleek creature that combines features of a weasel and a badger under a shiny coat of golden fur. The creature's jaws are ferociously powerful, as are its eight legs, each of which is tipped in a murderous set of coppery talons. The aurumvorax's hide and muscles are incredibly dense, giving it incredible strength for a beast of its size, as well as inspiring rumors that the creatures are made of metal.

### AURUMVORAXES (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

*Tome of Horrors Revised* 24

N Small magical beast

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +13



## DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 19 (+4 Dex, +8 natural, +1 size)

hp 114 each (12d10+48)

Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +7

**Defensive Abilities** ferocity; DR 10/piercing or slashing;

Immune poison; Resist fire 10

## OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

**Melee** 4 claws +18 (1d4+5 plus grab), bite +18 (1d6+5 plus grab)

**Special Attacks** rake (4 claws +18, 1d4+5)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** These two aurumvoraxes are very territorial, and if they notice any sign of intrusion into the area they come raging out of their burrows to attack. They'll pursue trespassers for miles before giving up the chase.

**Morale** The aurumvoraxes fight to the death.

## STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 11

Base Atk +12; CMB +16; CMD 30

**Feats** Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** Perception +13, Stealth +17

**Treasure:** The aurumvorax warren is a tight fit for any Medium creatures who squeeze in to explore it. The actual den is located at the center of the tangle of tunnels—exploring the warren and finding the den requires hours of exhausting crawling and backtracking and a successful DC 25 Perception check (each check takes 1d3 hours to attempt). The central den, though, contains numerous skeletons and treasure that's survived the aurumvoraxes' tendency to gnaw on things that are shiny. This treasure includes 1,680 gp, a silver and ivory scepter worth 1,200 gp, a gold necklace worth 400 gp, a *ring of climbing*, and a +2 *defending kukri*.

## I. CHIMERA PRIDE (STANDARD, CR 10)

A small cave overlooks the valley floor near the top of a hill here. The cave opening is devoid of vegetation and strewn with bones. Three nearby stone outcroppings bear signs of scratch marks left behind by some unseen animal or beast.

**Creatures:** A pride of three chimeras lair in this large cavern, taking to the air each day to hunt the southern plains. They particularly enjoy raiding the wild horses (area R), as evidenced by the half-eaten carcass lying just inside their simple cave.

## CHIMERAS (3)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 85 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 44)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** The chimeras stay

airborne for as long as possible, using the fiery breath weapon of their red dragon heads to target the opponent who appears the weakest. Then one of the chimeras rushes down to drag the body away while the others hold off any remaining attackers.

**Morale** The chimeras fight until only one remains; the last chimera standing flees the region once it has fewer than 25 hit points.

**Treasure:** Although the majority of the chimeras' prey so far has been horses or other wild animals, they sometimes fly over the swamp as well. Three dead boggards provide proof of this habit, and one of those three was a relatively powerful sorcerer. While the body's been torn to ribbons, its *bracers of armor* +4 and *wand of lightning bolt* (22 charges) have survived.

## J. THE SINKING BOG (STANDARD)

This region of swampland is known to the boggards and other denizens of the area as the Sinking Bog, due to the unusual number of patches of quicksand that fill the area. Merely passing through this hex automatically exposes 1d3 PCs to quicksand (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 427)—actually exploring the hex does the same each hour. Roads cannot be built through this hex, nor can any structures be built in it at all.



Aurumvorax



# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## K. SMILODON DEN (HIDDEN; CR 11)

A narrow valley filled with thorny plants lies nestled between two sharp-sloped hills here. With a DC 25 Survival check, a character exploring the hex discovers evidence that a huge feline predator dwells in the area—a DC 25 Perception check reveals an entrance into a tunnel-like path that leads deep into the thorny valley.

**Creature:** An immense smilodon dwells in this valley. The creature is quite old, covered with scars and bearing fangs nearly 2 feet long, and is notoriously cantankerous. The Tiger Lords call this notorious beast Speartooth and revere it almost as a god; they often leave kills in this area to appease the beast. The denizens of Fort Drelev have come to fear Speartooth as well, for the smilodon has not only eluded all attempts by Drelev's guards to capture or kill it, but has also killed no less than 24 of them. A notorious man-eater, Speartooth's legend is quickly growing throughout the Stolen Lands.

Speartooth is 50% likely to be present the first time the PCs examine his lair—if he's not around, the sabre-toothed tiger returns in 1d4 hours with a dead horse clenched in his jaws.

SPEARTOOTH	CR 11
XP 12,800	
Advanced old dire tiger ( <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 193)	
N Large animal	
<b>Init</b> +8; <b>Senses</b> low-light vision, scent; Perception +15	
DEFENSE	
<b>AC</b> 22, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, –1 size)	
<b>hp</b> 170 (20d8+80)	
<b>Fort</b> +16, <b>Ref</b> +18, <b>Will</b> +12	
OFFENSE	
<b>Speed</b> 40 ft.	
<b>Melee</b> 2 claws +23 (2d4+9 plus grab), bite +23 (3d6+9/19–20 plus grab)	
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft.	
<b>Special Attacks</b> pounce, rake (2 claws +23, 2d4+9)	
TACTICS	
<b>During Combat</b> Speartooth furiously attacks anyone he finds intruding in his lair, preferring to focus his attacks on the largest foe.	
<b>Morale</b> Speartooth fights to the death.	
STATISTICS	
<b>Str</b> 28, <b>Dex</b> 18, <b>Con</b> 18, <b>Int</b> 2, <b>Wis</b> 18, <b>Cha</b> 16	
<b>Base Atk</b> +15; <b>CMB</b> +25; <b>CMD</b> 40	
<b>Feats</b> Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Dodge, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)	
<b>Skills</b> Acrobatics +16 (+20 jump), Perception +15, Stealth +17 (+21 in tall grass)	

**Treasure:** Among Speartooth's 24 victims from Fort Drelev's guards lie several ruined masterwork weapons and pieces armor, but a closer examination reveals some that are still functional, including three masterwork breastplates, four masterwork heavy steel shields, six masterwork longswords, and five masterwork composite longbows (+3 Str). Of perhaps more interest is the body of an infamous hunter Drelev hired from Pitax to take down Speartooth—this dead hunter's +1 *animal bane composite longbow*, *efficient quiver*, and two remaining *arrows of animal slaying* didn't help when Speartooth pounced on him in his camp and mauled him to death.

## L. HAUNTED FEN (STANDARD)

The entire north shore of Lake Hooktongue, ranging from the boggard ambush site down to Fort Drelev, has a reputation for being haunted, but this particular stretch of boggy lakeshore is the most notorious and is known locally as the Haunted Fen. Legends speak of how fishermen and boaters who stray too near the shoreline in this area often hear voices calling out to them, and none dispute the fact that trappers who venture into this area seem to go missing more often than not. The unusual number of bodies found here sans eyes and fingers, as if both were chewed away by something that deliberately left the rest of the body untouched, have done much to increase the region's notoriety.

**Creature:** While will-o'-wisps and actual undead are certainly common enough in Hooktongue Slough, the source of the stories behind the Haunted Fen is in fact a hateful and cruel monster known as an ahuiizotl, an aquatic beast that has a particular fancy for the fingers and eyes of its prey. The ahuiizotl prefers to remain hidden once it notices prey, stalking potential meals and spooking them with its mimicry in hopes of causing one PC to wander off on his own, at which point the ahuiizotl strikes.

AHUIZOTL	CR 6
XP 2,400	
hp 68 (see page 80)	

## M. FORT DRELEV (LANDMARK)

This area is detailed in Part Three.

## N. M'BOTUU (LANDMARK)

The boggard settlement of M'botuu is the largest of its kind in Hooktongue Slough—although there are other boggard communities in the swamp, none are as large as M'botuu. This location is presented here in detail. While M'botuu's boggards don't directly threaten the PCs' nation, they do threaten the passage of trade through the region from the southern River Kingdoms to Brevoy—it's this tribe of boggards who are the primary reason river trade has become too dangerous. Although the exiled



boggard Garuum might request that the PCs seek revenge for him against his old tribe (see inside back cover), or the PCs might seek out the tribe after hearing rumors about them, no one during this adventure specifically tasks the PCs with defeating the M'botuu boggards to reopen the East Sellen trade route. Nevertheless, if they do so, they'll dramatically increase their nation's respect among most of their neighbors.

The word "M'botuu" loosely translates as, "Those Who Swim in Blood." Boggard legend claims their tribe sprang wholly from the marsh itself when Gogunta, their vile, bloated demon goddess, flooded this part of the River Kingdoms by vomiting up a swamp. The boggards then multiplied over the years, waging war against the hated water-walking bog striders, slaughtering human settlers, and eventually dominating the entire region.

With the arrival of Drelev's settlers from Brevo, however, times have drastically changed for M'botuu. Priest-king Sepoko has grown increasingly agitated by the number of interlopers in the region and has been attempting to gather the various boggard families of the outlying region under his banner to form an army—but all that's resulted from this attempt has been a massive civil war, as all of the tribes bickered over who should actually lead the army. Now, having seen their once-feared leader's commands so blatantly mocked and ignored by the other boggards of the Slough, Sepoko's followers question his leadership. As a result, Sepoko has been making secret visits to the hated spirit naga of the Swamp Scar (area Q) in the hope that her magic can turn the tide against those who shamed him on the battlefield. In fact, he's only managed to get himself charmed by the naga, who has been using him to send boggards west to the Scar for her to eat. Rather than sending his own boggards, Sepoko has increased the number of raids on nearby tribes, much to the delight of his followers who see this as proof that their leader has not lost his ferocious side.

There are 51 boggards dwelling in M'botuu, of which seven are Sepoko's most faithful wardens. The majority of the boggards lurk in the wet muddy caves below. The wardens remain completely loyal to Sepoko, but the other boggards in the village are still somewhat unsure of their leader. If Sepoko and all of his wardens are killed, the remaining boggards of M'botuu slink off into the swamp and no longer directly oppose river traffic. This can have significant repercussions on the region, as detailed in *Concluding the Adventure*.

Note that many of the boggards lurking in M'botuu are hardly challenges for the PCs—this is intentional, so you can give the PCs a chance to feel "high level" by fighting lots of foes at once without much danger, and to make the PCs feel tough when swarms of boggards run for cover. Extended fights against lots of CR 2 boggards can quickly get old for a

group of 10th-level PCs—as soon as you feel that this is the case, feel free to have all other boggards cower and flee from the PCs so that you need only play out battles against the boggard wardens and their priest-king.

## N1. BONE ISLAND (CR 9)

Clean-picked bones litter this small island at the lake's edge. Several human skulls line the island's perimeter, some placed just inches deep in the water. They all face away from the lakeshore, staring north across the lake as if watching for intruders from that direction.

The boggards use this mound as a refuse pile for discarded remains from their many victims, arranging the skulls as a warning for anyone approaching from the lake. A pit at the island's center serves as an emergency escape route from the underground boggard lair. A ladder formed of tree roots and lashed femur bones leads down to area N6.

**Creatures:** Sepoko keeps two of his wardens posted here to watch the lake for boats or bog striders. They wear woven reed hats lashed with skulls to better blend with the island's bones as they crouch among the reeds—these measures grant them a +4 bonus on Stealth. Their giant frog animal companions lurk in the nearby water so that only their eyes protrude from the surface. They use their terrifying croak ability on the first round of combat, incidentally alerting all of the community to the trouble.

### BOGGARD WARDENS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Male boggard ranger 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

CE Medium humanoid (boggard)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +9

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+5 armor, +3 natural)

**hp** 85 each (3d8+5d10+45)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk trident +12/+7 (1d8+5), mwk handaxe +11 (1d6+2/x3), tongue +7 (sticky tongue+2)

**Ranged** blowgun +7 (1d2 plus poison [sunray frog venom; DC 10; 1/rd. for 6 rds.; 1d2 Con, 1 save])

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (human +4, animal +2), terrifying croak (DC 12)

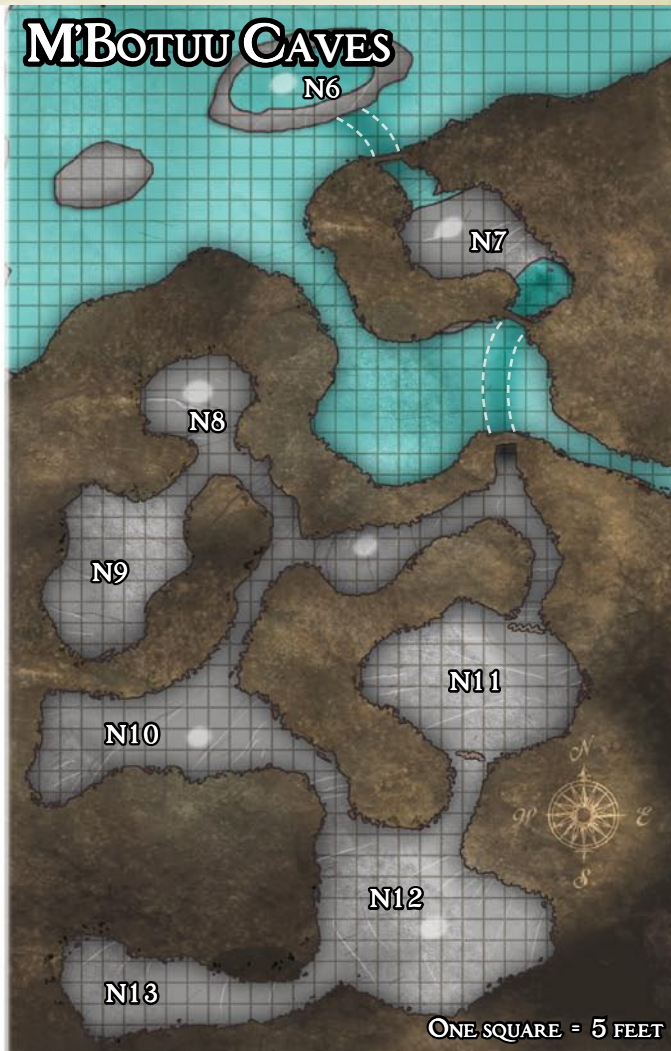
**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +1)  
1st—*entangle* (DC 13), *speak with animals*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The boggard wardens cast *speak with animals* once they fear combat is about to begin so they can more effectively order their frog companions around in battle.



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**During Combat** Boggard wardens prefer to attack humans, dual-wielding their trident and handaxe and preferring to fight while standing in mud or tangled bogs so they can use their swamp stride ability to an advantage.

**Morale** Boggard wardens fight to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 10, **Con** 18, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Endurance, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (trident)

**Skills** Handle Animal +10, Perception +9, Survival +13, Swim +22

**Languages** Boggard

**SQ** favored terrain (swamp), hold breath, hunter's bond (animal companion), swamp stride, track +2, wild empathy +4

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure serious wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +1 hide armor, masterwork handaxe, masterwork trident

## GIANT FROG COMPANIONS (2)

CR —

N Medium animal

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

## DEFENSE

**AC** 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 natural, +1 Dex)

**hp** 25 each (3d8+12)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +4 (1d6+2), tongue –1 touch (grab)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with tongue)

**Special Attacks** pull (tongue, 5 ft.), tongue

## TACTICS

**During Combat** Unless given other commands, a giant frog companion stays near its master and attacks his targets.

**Morale** Giant frog companions fight to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 1, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

**Skills** Perception +5, Swim +10

**SQ** link, share spells, tricks (attack, defend, fetch, perform)

## N2. TREE-FROG SENTRIES (CR 4)

Large cypress trees loom over the surrounding swamplands at each of these locations.

**Creatures:** Each of these trees contains a pair of boggard sentries—but unlike the wardens, these sentries aren't very well trained or motivated. They spend more time watching the sky for birds or flying insects and making faces at one another than maintaining vigilance. As a result, these boggards suffer a –4 penalty on all Perception checks. If alerted to trespassers, they raise a terrifying croak, alerting the rest of the village, and hop down to attack.

## BOGGARD SENTRIES (2)

CR 2

**XP** 600 each

**hp** 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

## N3. FIRE PIT

A wisp of smoke rises from this fire pit's smoldering coals, lazily drifting toward a massive stone statue chiseled to resemble an immense, menacing toad. Five old ropes hang from the statue's open maw.

The boggards use this clearing for rituals dedicated to their corpulent toad-demon, Gogunta. As the tribe's priest-king, Sepoko conducts the ceremonies himself. They mostly involve water torture, hot coals, and tiny, sharpened sticks for bloodletting while the victims are lashed inside Gogunta's mouth by the five bloody ropes. Since the boggards have started sending their victims out to the Swamp Scar, though, they've not used this site for sacrifices—a DC 15 Survival check is enough to note that there hasn't been much activity here recently.

## N4. PRISONER HUT (CR 2)

A large, crude hut stands in this part of the clearing, its circular roof thatched with dry, brown fronds of fern.

**Creatures:** Sepoko's raiders recently captured a bog strider named Ka-Kekt and imprisoned him here. The current plan is to march the bog strider out to the Swamp Scar in a few days. If the PCs free Ka-Kekt, the bog strider thanks them as best he can before making his way back to Tok-Nikrat—if the PCs can communicate with him, he invites the PCs to visit Tok-Nikrat and promises them a reward for their kindness.

## KA-KEKT

CR 2

**XP** 600

Male bog strider (see page 82)

**hp** 15

## N5. EMPTY HUTS

These small, crude huts seem to be built from freshly cut timber and thatching. Originally built to house additional boggards from what was to be the boggard army, none of these huts have ever been used, and are quickly falling to ruin.

## N6. ESCAPE ROUTE

This low-ceilinged room is wet and cramped. Thick ropes of dripping roots hang from the ceiling above, and a large pool of water ripples to the east.



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## Muddy caverns

Areas **N6–N13** of M'botuu consist of a network of caves. Although sized for Medium creatures, these caves are hardly comfortable. Thick mats of roots hang from the ceiling, and the floors are thick morasses of mud, water, and fungus. All of these areas are considered difficult terrain as a result, but boggards, due to their swamp stride ability, can move through these areas with ease.

Additionally, several of these caves can be accessed via holes in the ceiling that open into low mounds above. Each of these holes (indicated on the M'Botuu Caves map as lighter patches) includes a number of knotted roots—a DC 5 Climb check is required to ascend or descend from the caves via these routes, and it's a 10-foot drop to the muddy floor.

This room connects to area **N1** above; the pool of water leads to a submerged tunnel that winds under the lake southeast to area **N7**.

## N7. FROG STORAGE (CR 6)

Two water-filled passageways slope upward into this mud-carved cavern. Along the eastern wall lie a pile of gourds and several covered baskets.

**Creatures:** Three boggards toil in this room. The latched baskets contain several sunray frogs, so-named for the vibrant yellow streak along their backs. As punishment for losing Sepoko's favorite pet snake, these boggards must spend their time here harvesting frog poison, filling each gourd with enough venom to coat the tribe's blowgun darts.

If the PCs enter, the boggards croak in panic. They throw sunray frogs as improvised weapons—if they hit, a sunray frog can make a free bite attack against the target with a +4 bonus on the attack roll. Any boggard that is engaged in melee tries to flee to area **N6** or **N11**—whichever route takes the boggard past fewer enemies.

**BOGGARDS (3)** **CR 2**

**XP 600 each**

**hp** 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

**SUNRAY FROGS (9)** **CR 1/2**

**XP 200 each**

Poison frogs (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 135)

**hp** 4 each

## N8. LARDER

The excited buzz of agitated insects fills this round cavern, emanating from a row of wooden cages. Along the far wall

hangs a variety of leather sacks, harvested roots, and swamp-pickled meats.

The boggards keep several bluewing dragonflies in small cages here. Harvested scorchbulbs, navaroot, and sacks of golden cloudberry hang from sharp hooks hammered into the wall, along with hunks of pickled venison. If the PCs release the dragonflies, they quickly exit the boggard mound, heading for the open leather flap in the ceiling. This causes a flurry of activity among any boggards aboveground as they scramble to recover their favorite livestock. Bluewing dragonflies are large for dragonflies (having 8-inch wingspans) but are harmless.

## N9. FEAST HALL (CR 8)

Two long lines of matted rushes extend down the center of this chamber. Between them rest large, round baskets meant to act as serving platters. Scraps of leftover bones, insect carapaces, and tangled roots lie scattered along the walls.

This area serves as the tribe's primary dining hall. A group of eight boggards can be found in here, sloppily eating dragonflies, swamp fruits, and hunks of red, raw meat. They croak and shriek if the PCs enter, noisily fleeing to area **N12** to seek protection from their king if possible and fighting only if they're cornered.

**BOGGARDS (8)** **CR 2**

**XP 600 each**

**hp** 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

## N10. COMMUNAL QUARTERS (CR 9)

A dozen sleeping pallets woven from dry reeds and grasses line this chamber's floor to the west. Exits include passages to the north and southeast, as well as a large leather flap leading to the surface above.

**Creatures:** The tribe's 12 female members dwell in this chamber, busying themselves with the manufacture of baskets, blowguns, darts, and leather armor.

**BOGGARDS (12)** **CR 2**

**XP 600 each**

**hp** 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

## N11. BARRACKS (CR 11)

Reed curtains hang over the two exits from this cavern. Soggy sleeping mats line the western wall, while three wooden dummies decorated with bits of carapace shells stand to the east.



This chamber serves as a barracks, a training room, and, occasionally, a gaming room for Sepoko's boggards—his wardens dwell here as well. Filthy, woven reed sleeping mats line the western wall, leaving the center of the room open.

**Creatures:** Fourteen raucous boggards (3 wardens and 11 typical boggards) gather here to enjoy their favorite pastime, a game called "Lick Bug." They've placed cages of cat-sized dragonflies throughout the chamber and one of the boggard wardens (designated as the Lick Boss) has secretly coated one of them in a clear layer of scorchbulb (a spicy swampland pepper). If the PCs wait until the game begins, the Lick Boss's assistant (another warden called the Cagekeeper) releases the dragonflies so the remaining boggards can take turns catching and eating them with their sticky tongues. The first boggard to get the painfully spicy dragonfly loses the game and spends hours in pain while his companions laugh at him. The boggards react to interruptions with anger, although the lesser boggards don't actually follow up on their wrath with attacks, leaving the fight to the wardens and their giant frogs (which lurk placidly at the edges of the room until commanded to fight). If the wardens are slain, the remaining boggards panic and flee to area N12.

## BOGGARD WARDENS (3) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 85 each (see page 21)

## GIANT FROG COMPANIONS (3)

hp 25 each (see page 23)

## BOGGARDS (11) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

## N12. CHIEFTAIN'S THRONE ROOM (CR 12)

Two passageways lead into this large cavern with another exiting to the southwest. The vaulted ceiling rises nearly fifteen feet high toward a leather flap leading outside. A skull-decorated throne of leather and lashed wood rests against the eastern wall, flanked by two braziers emitting a cold white light.

**Creatures:** In the throne room waits Sepoko, the embattled priest-king of the M'botuu tribe. Attended at all times by a pair of boggard wardens and their giant frogs, Sepoko has spent the past several weeks under the magical control of the spirit naga Ngara (see area Q), and as a result has had something of a crisis of faith. He still worships Gogunta, but his faith has been shaken by his growing obsession with the "Legless Lady" as he calls Ngara. So far, he's managed to juggle this crisis and

maintain his devotion to Gogunta, but the stress of battle could well see that end (see the morale notes in his stat block for details).

Unless the PCs happen to enter this cave from above, chances are good that they've driven plenty of boggards into this chamber to seek protection from their priest-king. In this case, the boggards cower along the walls of the place, eager to see their leader defend them from the intruders. Sepoko, being somewhat of a coward, hopes that his wardens defeat the PCs before they reach this far, but if that doesn't prove to work, he puffs up his chest and attacks as soon as the PCs enter the cave.

## SEPOKO CR 11

XP 12,800

Male boggard cleric of Gogunta 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)  
CE Medium humanoid (boggard)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +4

### DEFENSE

**AC** 25, touch 13, flat-footed 25 (+6 armor, +3 deflection, +3 natural, +3 shield)

**hp** 133 (13d8+75)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +6, **Will** +12

**Defensive Abilities** death's embrace; **Resist** cold 10

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Melee** +2 icy morningstar +13/+8 (1d8+3 plus 1d6 cold), tongue +5 (sticky tongue)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy (5d6, DC 16, 4/day), terrifying croak (DC 14)

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +14)

7/day—bleeding touch (5 rounds), icicle (1d6+5 cold damage)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 10th; concentration +14)

5th—*flame strike* (DC 19), *insect plague*<sup>D</sup>, *slay living* (DC 19)

4th—*control water*<sup>D</sup>, *cure critical wounds*, *freedom of*

*movement*, *greater magic weapon*, *summon monster IV*

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *water breathing*<sup>D</sup>

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *death knell*<sup>D</sup> (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 16)

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *obscuring mist*<sup>D</sup>, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect poison*, *mending*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Death, Water

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Sepoko casts *magic vestment* on his shield and *greater magic weapon* on his morningstar every morning. If he hears combat in a neighboring room, he casts *insect plague* to place wasp swarms in the northern part of the room and then casts *freedom of movement* and *shield of faith* on himself.

**During Combat** Sepoko initially lets his summoned insects and wardens face the PCs while he hangs back to cast spells. As soon as it becomes apparent that he'll soon be in melee,



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he casts *divine favor*. Whenever possible, he uses Channel Smite to further empower his blows with negative energy. If enemies look like they're about to reach him, he casts *control water* to cause the water level in this area to rise, flooding the entire cavern for 1 round before rushing out into the other caves. On that initial round, anyone who makes a DC 20 Swim check resists the sudden current—all others are knocked prone and washed into area **N10**, **N11**, or **N13** (whichever is closest). Thereafter, the water level in the caves stabilizes at a depth of 1 foot (meaningless to boggards with their swamp stride ability). This tactic immediately disperses any insect swarms still in the area, but it should give Sepoko a chance to disrupt the PCs' tactics quite well.

**Morale** If reduced to 35 hit points or fewer, Sepoko's remaining faith in Gogunta shatters and he drops to his knees and croaks out a prayer to the Legless Lady to save him and smite the intruders. Of course, no divine intervention comes (although Sepoko immediately loses access to all of his spells and cleric abilities), and any surviving boggards who witness

this failure realize that their leader has fallen. Amid a sudden chorus of "Kill the heretic!" in Boggard, the remaining boggards forget about the PCs' presence and swarm forward, eager to tear Sepoko limb from limb in hopes of showing Gogunta, who must surely be watching, that they still fear her.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 10, **Con** 18, **Int** 8, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Brew Potion, Channel Smite, Craft Wand, Extra Channel, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

**Skills** Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +6, Swim +10

**Languages** Boggard

**SQ** hold breath, swamp stride

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure moderate wounds* (3), *potion of sanctuary*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (24 charges), *wand of poison* (9 charges); **Other Gear** +2 *hide armor*, +1 *icy morningstar*, masterwork light wooden shield, spell component pouch, unholy symbol of Gogunta

## BOGGARD WARDENS (2)

CR 7

**XP** 3,200 each

**hp** 85 each (see page 21)

## GIANT FROG COMPANIONS (2)

CR —

**hp** 25 each (see page 23)

**Development:** If the naga's charm on Sepoko is dispelled, the boggard loses a round of actions while he realizes what's happened to him. He then calls for a truce, hoping to recruit the PCs to kill the naga for him. Sepoko is willing to "loan" two boggard wardens to the PCs if they agree to go on this quest for him.

## N13. TREASURE ROOM

This narrow passageway leads to a long, shallow cave whose ceiling never rises more than five feet high. The earth walls to either side glisten with moisture and small pools of excess water gather along the southern wall.

Sepoko uses this cavern to secure the tribe's amassed wealth. The wooden crates, rotting burlap sacks, and several small casks contain 56 pp, 1,287 gp, 2,019 sp, 872 cp, five black opals worth 200 gp each, 10 gold bracelets (each is decorated with a different forest animal motif and is worth 25 gp), a box of 12 Taldan-stamped gold ingots worth 250 gp each, a cask containing three doses of *elixir of swimming*, and a *harp of charming* bearing the likeness of Cayden Cailean.



Sepoko



## O. LAKE HOOKTONGUE (LANDMARK)

The deep, murky waters of Lake Hooktongue make up the largest body of water in the Stolen Lands and serve as the heart of Hooktongue Slough. Countless minor rivers and streams wind through the swamp into this lake, the surface of which is usually rather calm and serene. The lake itself is quite deep, reaching a depth of 900 feet in several places. Yet the lake has a sinister reputation, for many believe it to be the lair of an ancient water orm named Hooktongue—the same creature that gives its name to both the lake and the surrounding swampland. Said to resemble an immense black snake with jaws strong enough to carry a bear and a back decorated with razor-sharp fins, Hooktongue hasn't been spotted in the lake for nearly a decade.

**Creatures:** Hooktongue does indeed exist, but the water orm spends much of his time slumbering in one of dozens of deep caverns on the lake's bed, only rising from slumber once every several years to glut itself on anything it can catch. These feeding frenzies last for several weeks, during which sightings of the legendary beast rise dramatically and lake travelers often go missing. Traditionally, trade on Lake Hooktongue is suspended during these periods. It is replaced by eager (and foolish) fishermen and hunters hoping to catch and kill the monster—those unlucky few who manage an encounter with Hooktongue are rarely seen again.

Although Hooktongue himself does not appear in this adventure (he's deep in one of his several-year slumbers), a number of smaller predators still infest the waters of the lake. The three most dangerous are the giant river eels, blood caimans, and constantly hungry freshwater elasmosauruses—all three of these monstrous denizens are responsible in their own way for perpetuating Hooktongue's myth during the orm's periods of slumber. Wandering monster encounters on Lake Hooktongue involve one of these three types of monsters 75% of the time.

If you want to have Hooktongue waken for your game, statistics for water orms can be found in *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*. If you don't have that book, you can instead use the stats for a Huge sea serpent (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 244*).

### BLOOD CAIMAN CR 2

XP 600

Crocodile (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 51*)

hp 22

### FRESHWATER ELASMOSAURUS CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 105 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 84*)

### GIANT RIVER EEL CR 5

XP 1,600

Giant moray eel (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 119*)

hp 52

## Quest: Sepoko's Revenge

Seek out the "Legless Lady" and kill her.

**Source:** Sepoko, the priest-king of M'botuu.

**Task:** Sepoko, ashamed at falling under the control of the spirit naga, asks the PCs to seek out the naga at the Swamp Scar and slay her.

**Completion:** Return to Sepoko with the naga's severed head as proof of her death.

**Reward:** With the naga slain, Sepoko vows to keep his boggards in line and won't meddle in river traffic—he'll let trade pass by unmolested from his people. Further, he'll give the PCs the box of Taldan-stamped gold ingots from his treasury as a reward.

## P. DRAGONFLY GLADE (STANDARD; CR 10)

**Creatures:** This area of the swamp teems with dragonfly activity and has become a favorite hunting ground for boggards. Dragonflies of all sizes buzz and flit through the air in this unusually beautiful swamp glade—while most of the dragonflies are harmless (ranging from normal-sized up to a wingspan of 2 feet), eight giant dragonflies dwell in the glade as well. Constantly ravenous, these dangerous vermin swoop down to attack anything sizable they notice.

### GIANT DRAGONFLIES (8) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

*Tome of Horrors Revised 169*

N Medium vermin

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+5 Dex, +3 natural)

**hp** 45 each (7d8+14)

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

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** bite +11 (1d10+9)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The dragonflies attack the nearest foe each round.

**Morale** The giant dragonflies fight to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 23, **Dex** 21, **Con** 14, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26

**Skills** Fly +13

## Q. THE SWAMP SCAR (LANDMARK, CR 9)

An immense mound of fallen trees and logs lie in a jagged line here, forming a scar of decaying plant matter created over the course of decades by various river currents. Nearly



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500 feet long and 40 feet high, this swath is known locally as the Swamp Scar. The mound of vegetation is riddled with burrows and nooks, and it is within these hollows that the Scar's dangerous denizen dwells.

**Creatures:** A spirit naga named Ngara has dwelt in the Swamp Scar for years. As unsuspecting humanoids stumble into the area, she slithers out to charm them—those who resist her gaze are killed and eaten, but those who succumb become the naga's agents, prowling the swamp and surrounding lands in a constant search for new victims to bring to the Swamp Scar to serve as meals, slaves, or worse. She has several local woodsmen under her control already and also controls the boggard priest-king Sepoko (see page 25). The naga would love to add the PCs to her little army of gatherers and hunters, but if she's unable to charm them, she's just as happy to kill and eat them—not necessarily in that order.

NGARA	CR 12
<b>XP 19,200</b>	
Female spirit naga sorcerer 3 ( <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 213)	
CE Large aberration	
<b>Init</b> +11; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19	
DEFENSE	
<b>AC</b> 33, touch 20, flat-footed 25 (+4 armor, +7 Dex, +3 deflection, +1 dodge, +9 natural, –1 size)	
<b>hp</b> 136 (13 HD; 10d8+3d6+81)	
<b>Fort</b> +10, <b>Ref</b> +13, <b>Will</b> +13	
OFFENSE	
<b>Speed</b> 40 ft., swim 20 ft.	
<b>Melee</b> 1 bite +12 (3d6+7)	
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft.	
<b>Special Attacks</b> charming gaze (DC 22)	
<b>Spell-Like Abilities</b> (CL 10th; concentration +17)	
At will—fleeting glance (10 rounds/day)	
10/day—laughing touch	
<b>Sorcerer Spells Known</b> (CL 10th; concentration +17)	
5th (4/day)— <i>cone of cold</i> (DC 22)	
4th (6/day)— <i>cure critical wounds</i> , <i>dimension door</i> , <i>poison</i> (DC 21)	
3rd (8/day)— <i>deep slumber</i> (DC 22), <i>dispel magic</i> , <i>fireball</i> (DC 20), <i>water breathing</i>	
2nd (8/day)— <i>acid arrow</i> , <i>detect thoughts</i> (DC 19), <i>hideous laughter</i> (DC 21), <i>invisibility</i> , <i>whispering wind</i>	
1st (8/day)— <i>cure light wounds</i> , <i>divine favor</i> , <i>entangle</i> (DC 18), <i>mage armor</i> , <i>magic missile</i> , <i>shield of faith</i>	
0 (at will)— <i>bleed</i> (DC 17), <i>daze</i> (DC 19), <i>detect magic</i> , <i>guidance</i> , <i>mage hand</i> , <i>message</i> , <i>open/close</i> , <i>ray of frost</i> , <i>read magic</i>	
<b>Bloodline</b> Fey	
TACTICS	
<b>Before Combat</b> Ngara casts <i>mage armor</i> every day and uses <i>shield of faith</i> before battle (quickenning it on the first round	

of combat if necessary).

**During Combat** The naga prefers to stay 20 or so feet away from foes to minimize melee attacks and maximize her charming gaze; she casts her spells at range and uses *dimension door* to retreat out of melee when needed. When melee is unavoidable, she casts quickened *divine favor* and then uses Arcane Strike on all following rounds.

**Morale** Ngara fights to the death.

STATISTICS
<b>Str</b> 20, <b>Dex</b> 24, <b>Con</b> 23, <b>Int</b> 12, <b>Wis</b> 17, <b>Cha</b> 24
<b>Base Atk</b> +8; <b>CMB</b> +14; <b>CMD</b> 35 (can't be tripped)
<b>Feats</b> Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell
<b>Skills</b> Bluff +23, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +19, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +19, Swim +23
<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>SQ</b> woodland stride
<b>Gear</b> headband of mental prowess +2 (Charisma and Wisdom)

## R. WILD HORSES (STANDARD; CR 10)

**Creatures:** A herd of wild horses graze these plains. Their leader, a powerful stallion named Windchaser, once served an elderly druid of the River Kingdoms as an animal companion. Just prior to the druid's death, he dismissed the stallion and cast *awaken* on him before releasing him back into the wild. Now, the intelligent horse defends his herd against predators and anyone who ventures too close, using his knowledge of the local area to keep them safe.

Windchaser can speak, but he generally prefers not to unless he trusts someone—his initial attitude is unfriendly. If the PCs can make him friendly, the awakened horse can tell the PCs about all of the non-hidden encounter areas in the hills or plains of the Slough, including the location of Armag's Tomb and the fact that the Tiger Lord barbarians are hiding out in a hidden valley there. If made helpful, he may even deign to become a player's mount.

WINDCHASER	CR 4
<b>XP 1,200</b>	
Male awakened advanced heavy horse ( <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 177, 294)	
CN Large magical beast	
<b>Init</b> +4; <b>Senses</b> low-light vision, scent; Perception +10	
DEFENSE	
<b>AC</b> 16, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, –1 size)	
<b>hp</b> 46 (4d10+24)	
<b>Fort</b> +10, <b>Ref</b> +8, <b>Will</b> +4	
OFFENSE	
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft.	
<b>Melee</b> bite +8 (1d4+5), 2 hooves +3 (1d6+2)	



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

## TACTICS

**During Combat** Windchaser fights to defend his herd but otherwise prefers to flee combat rather than take part in it.

**Morale** Windchaser fights to the death if protecting his herd.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** 22, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25 (29 vs. trip)

**Feats** Dodge, Endurance, Run

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Escape Artist +8, Perception +10, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +0

**Languages** Common

**SQ** combat trained

## ADVANCED HEAVY HORSES (16)

CR 2

**XP** 600 each

**hp** 19 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 177, 294)

## S. CHUUL LAIR (STANDARD; CR 9)

**Creatures:** A rocky cave marks a steep hillside by the swamp's shore, nearly hidden by the high rushes and cattails screening it from view. This cave is the den of a mated pair of chuuls. One of the creatures hides within the cave to the north, while the other lurks in the water to the south, ready to ambush and surround any creatures venturing near their home. At night, they both reside in the cave, the walls of which are decorated with crude but effective paintings of chuuls eating humans, created from the smeared leavings of their victims' blood.

## CHUULS (2)

CR 7

**XP** 3,200 each

**hp** 85 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 46)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** The chuuls try to flank opponents whenever possible, cooperatively grappling victims and then transferring them to their paralytic tentacles before attacking the next target.

**Morale** The chuuls fight to the death.

**Treasure:** The chuuls also use the cave to compulsively store trophies they've collected from past victims. These items currently include a masterwork quarterstaff shod with silver at either end and decorated with carvings of predatory birds, worth 900 gp, a wide leather belt of mighty constitution +2, a silver ring of jumping, a coral holy symbol of Gozreh worth 250 gp, a stylized mithral brooch in the shape of a gilded leaf worth 500 gp, and an uncompleted, leather-bound spellbook in a waterproof case containing all 0-level spells, as well as control water, fabricate, move earth, stone shape, and transmute mud to rock.

## T. FEY PRANKSTERS (HIDDEN; CR 10)

The swamp gives way to much less waterlogged terrain in this region. Trees grow more frequently, providing plentiful shade along a fast-moving creek. Sunlight streams through the canopy of leaves overhead and birds chirp to one another somewhere high among the boughs.

**Creatures:** After befriending a pack of worgs, a band of particularly sadistic pixies has established this part of the forest as a rendezvous point—the pixies are engaged in a sort of contest to see which of them can wreak the most havoc on the humans who have been infiltrating the Stolen Lands, hoping that their antics will eventually attract the attention and favor of the nymph queen Nyrrisa. None of the pixies have actually met Nyrrisa, but they hope that with a few more months of cruel practical jokes that might change. Their jokes range from the annoying (spiking milk left on porches with hot pepper juice) to the downright cruel (kidnapping babies and leaving dead mites or shaved bear cubs in the crib). For several days, the pixies have been



Windchaser



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resting here, sharing tales of their pranks and plotting new ones. If they notice the PCs approaching, they cast *shield* and become invisible, hunkering down on their worgs and ordering them to attack intruders on sight while the pixies fire arrows or cast spells from their backs.

## PIXIES (5) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

NE Small fey

hp 18 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 228)

## WORGs (5) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 280)

## U. LILY PATCH (STANDARD)

The azure lily is a relatively notorious plant known to grow in Hooktongue Slough—and also one of the most rare. It's unusual to find more than one of these dangerous plants growing in any part the swamp, and they're unheard of beyond its borders. Through chance, a grove of azure lilies has bloomed on a low hummock here, five of the bright blue flowers in all.

An azure lily's pollen is rather toxic, with a single lily producing enough pollen in its short life to swiftly paralyze most creatures. A character that picks one of the flowers or brushes against it causes its load of poisonous pollen to burst in a 5-foot cloud that persists for 1 minute before dispersing. It's possible to harvest the toxic pollen from these lilies with a successful DC 30 Survival check and 10 minutes of stressful work (failure causes the lily to burst), but once taken from the plant, the raw pollen becomes inert after a week unless crafted into refined poison with a DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check.

## AZURE LILY POLLEN

**Type** poison, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

**Frequency** 1/minute for 2 minutes

**Effect** nauseated for 1 minute/paralyzed for 2d4 hours;

**Cure** 1 save

**Treasure:** A successfully harvested dose of azure lily poison is worth 1,500 gp.

## V. TOK-NIKRAT (HIDDEN; CR 9)

The swamp vegetation recedes here, forming a 100-foot-wide ring of open water surrounding a heavily wooded island 200 feet in diameter. The ring of water is 50 feet deep on average.

**Creatures:** Though bog striders are normally solitary creatures, a dozen bog striders have established a community in the center of the island. Their leader, an aging veteran named Tok-Tekt, wages a war of attrition

against the boggards of the swamp. A boggard raiding party recently captured his son Ka-Kekt, but the last time he attempted a rescue, the boggards slew three of his people. Tok-Tekt has all but buried his son as a result and doesn't expect to see him again.

The bog striders themselves are an insular people who do not seek contact with the "landwalker" races, but if the PCs rescue Ka-Kekt and escort him here (or simply travel here after rescuing him and letting him make his own way home), they'll be welcomed as friends. If the PCs approach the bog strider enclave before saving Ka-Kekt, the bog striders greet them with angry shrill chirpings at the edge of their island if they notice the PCs' approach—if the PCs attack, the bog striders fight to the death to defend their home. If, on the other hand, the PCs attempt to establish a more peaceful meeting with the strange insectoid people, they'll need to adjust their initial hostility to a friendly attitude, at which point Tok-Tekt asks them to save his son.

## TOK-TEKT CR 3

XP 800

Advanced bog strider (see page 82 and *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294)

hp 19

## BOG STRIDERS (12) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (see page 82)

## W. BOG OF BONES (STANDARD; CR 8)

An unearthly chill hangs over this low finger-shaped marsh between two higher forested hills. Small eddies of water swirl around bubbling plumes of escaping swamp gas, and the otherwise ubiquitous swampsong of crickets, birds, and frogs falls silent in this eerie area.

**Creatures:** Decades ago, four priests of Urgathoa came to the city of Pitax with plans to establish a cult. Three of the priests, however, grew jealous of the fourth's uncanny skill at commanding undead creatures. They convinced each another that if they joined forces, they could slay him and use their necromantic talents to draw his secrets from his dead flesh, but they underestimated how favored he was in Urgathoa's eyes. After the three lured the fourth into the depths of this swamp, they ambushed and drowned him—it was at this point that Urgathoa's rage poured down on the unworthy priests. She cursed all three, transforming them into bog mummies, and forbade them to ever leave the swamp. The spirit of the fourth she accepted into her realm, secretly quite pleased that he had so conveniently come to her without a long stay on the Material Plane as an undead being.

These three bog mummies attack any living creatures that wander into their territory, moaning unanswered



placitudes to Urgathoa. Initially, they only drowned their victims as a reenactment of their crime, but, recently, they've come to realize they can spread Urgathoa's grace by their touch, and they hope that if they can infect enough of the living with mummy rot, they'll placate Urgathoa and atone for their sins. Bog mummies function as normal mummies, save that they are resistant to fire and vulnerable to cold.

## BOG MUMMIES (3)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

Variant mummy (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)

LE Medium undead

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

**Aura** despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 16 negates)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+10 natural)

**hp** 60 (8d8+24)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

**DR** 5/—; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** fire 10

**Weaknesses** vulnerability to cold

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** slam +14 (1d8+10 plus mummy rot)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** The mummies quickly surround their victims, counting on their despair ability to paralyze the weak-willed. Then they pummel and smash remaining interlopers in an effort to infect them with mummy rot.

**Morale** The mummies fight until destroyed.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 24, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 23

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)

**Skills** Perception +16, Stealth +11

## X. DESPERATE REFUGEES (STANDARD)

A forlorn group of refugees consisting of a mix of merchants, street performers, and a few worshipers of the god Hanspur (a minor god of rivers and river travel) recently snuck out of the city of Pitax and have been making their way east after hearing rumors of a kinder, gentler nation in the eastern Stolen Lands—the PCs' nation. They hoped they would be able to make the journey, but they have come to the edge of the swamp only to meet with violence and defeat—six of their number were slain by the hydra dwelling in area Y and the surviving 18 have returned to their previous campsite here. When the PCs arrive, the refugees are arguing about whether they should head north to Fort Drelev or simply return in defeat to Pitax—when they realize who the PCs are, they desperately fall to their

## Quest: Saving the Bog Strider

Rescue the bog strider Ka-Kekt from his boggard captors.

**Source:** Ka-Kekt (area N4) or Tok-Tekt (area V)

**Task:** Release Ka-Kekt from his prison hut at area N4; the bog strider is resourceful and knows the swamp, so the PCs need not escort him to his home.

**Completion:** Travel to Tok-Nikrat to make sure that Ka-Kekt got home safely.

**Reward:** In thanks for saving his son, Tok-Tekt names the "landwalker" PCs "Bog Friends." The bog striders have no material wealth to share, but Tok-Tekt and his kin are quite knowledgeable about Hooktongue Slough and can inform the PCs of every encounter area in the swamp.

hands and knees before them, begging to be escorted to the promised land to the east.

The refugees are all humans, and all first-level experts or commoners. Escorting them through the dangerous lands safely should be a difficult task, but if the PCs can get them to their nation, the act of kindness will be well repaid over time.

## Y. HYDRA DEN (STANDARD; CR 11)

The foot-deep water of this bog opens into a much deeper pond filled by three small tributaries before draining away into a larger expanse to the west. Solid ground leads along the eastern edge past a line of scraggly trees set back from a thick curtain of cattails. Many of the reeds lie bent or broken, crushed into the underlying mud and murk.

**Creatures:** A huge, 12-headed hydra lairs within this pond—one of the most dangerous predators in the entire swamp. Grown fat on boggards, bog striders, deer, fish, giant herons, and other wildlife, it spends most of its time lurking underwater and monitoring nearby shorelines for passing creatures. It attacks anyone that it sees, lunging out of the water to pounce if possible.

### 12-HEADED HYDRA

CR 11

XP 12,800

N Huge magical beast (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 178)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +13 natural, –2 size)

**hp** 138 (12d10+72); fast healing 12

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

**Melee** 12 bites +13 (1d8+3/19–20)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.



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## Quest: Escorting the Refugees

Escort the Pitax refugees to safety in the PCs' nation.

**Source:** The refugee band at area X.

**Task:** The route the PCs take to get the refugees to safety (either to Tatzlford or another settlement in their nation) is irrelevant, as long as most of the refugees survive.

**Completion:** At least a dozen refugees must live to reach safety.

**Reward:** If the PCs deliver at least a dozen refugees, word of their good deed spreads and they gain a +1 bonus to their national Loyalty. If the PCs deliver all 18, this increase to Loyalty rises to +2, and the PCs earn an additional 6,400 XP.

### Special Attacks pounce

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The hydra targets Small creatures by using its pounce ability and Snatch feat to grab them.

**Morale** The hydra fights to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 28

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Snatch, Toughness

**Skills** Perception +11, Stealth +2, Swim +11

## Z. SLUG BOG (STANDARD; CR 10)

A thunderous crashing of trees and the noise of surging water fills this part of the swamp, startling most animals into furtive attempts to hide or flee. Up ahead, the high reeds part to reveal a large, shallow bog fed by multiple slow-moving waterways.

**Creatures:** Most swamp denizens avoid this region during the current season, as this desolate part of the swamp is used as a mating ground for giant slugs. Two agitated males have already engaged one another, attempting to establish mating rights with the females in the region. Their massive bodies thrash about the bog, and they excitedly spit acid at each other, spraying the nearby trees in the process. They aggressively attack anything passing through the area, their competition forgotten in the wake of fresh prey.

### GIANT SLUGS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 102 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 254)

## PART THREE: FORT DRELEV

Fort Drelev is the seat of power from which Baron Hannis Drelev once governed his chartered holdings on behalf

of Brevoiy. Although he and his companions managed to develop Fort Drelev into an impressive town, times have not been good at Fort Drelev of late, as ever since the baron capitulated to Irovetti and Armag, the town itself has been under a pall of fear and gloom. Many of the fort's original complement of Brevic soldiers are dead, replaced by mercenaries and not-quite-reformed bandits sent from Pitax (morale is made worse by the fact that many of these mercenaries represented the dregs of Pitax's militia in the first place).

## ABOUT FORT DRELEV

Today, the remaining citizens of Fort Drelev are a downcast and desperate lot. There's very little activity in the streets, and while shops and markets remain open and farmers and craftsmen continue to ply their trades, they do so quietly and without much noise. No one wants to draw attention to themselves in Fort Drelev, not with the surly and easily angered mercenary guards patrolling the streets and, increasingly, taking what they want from the citizens, be it food or gold or companionship. The fact that there's little indication from the baron or his guards that things will be changing soon has many of the town's citizens on the edge of revolt—but they lack the courage or conviction to rise up, especially in light of the cruelty often displayed by the guards. The town is under martial law, with a curfew running from an hour before sunset to an hour after sunrise. Those who break curfew are sent to Keep Drelev for punishment. Few have emerged, and whispers of what fate awaits those in the keep's dungeons grow increasingly grim as more and more citizens vanish into them.

Fort Drelev is a sizable town, but the baron has overbuilt. Most of the town's buildings were empty or only partially completed even before he capitulated to Irovetti. Each week since then, the town's population has decreased further as citizens succumb to illness or starvation, are imprisoned or beaten to death by unruly mercenary guards, or manage to build up enough courage to flee the town—those who escape without being noticed by the guards (who take delight in shooting down fleeing citizens) generally don't live for long in the dangerous Slough.

The map of Fort Drelev indicates several locations of interest, each of which is described in brief below.

**1. Drelev Keep:** This large stone and wood structure is the home of Baron Drelev, his family, and his allies. It is presented in detail later in this part.

**2. Bellweather's Soup n' Kettle:** This tavern and eatery is one of the only busy establishments in town—although the mercenaries who frequent it don't pay for their meals. Asaia Bellweather and her four children provide these meals anyway, fearing reprisals should they do otherwise.

**3. The Velvet Corner:** This is Fort Drelev's gambling hall and brothel, a site owned and run by a priestess of





Calistria named Satinder Morne. She does brisk business these days, but an increasing amount of her time is spent making sure her rowdy customers don't cause too much damage to her equipment or hurt her employees. Satinder Morne could be an important ally to the PCs—see below for details.

**4. Iron Steeple Inn:** Once Fort Drelev's largest inn, this building is currently empty.

**5. The Rat's Shrine:** Once a small stone shrine dedicated to Hanspur, the god of rivers and river travel, this shrine now stands abandoned—its only priest fled Fort Drelev the day the baron surrendered.

**6. Secret Escape Tunnel:** A DC 30 Perception check reveals a hidden door at the base of this 30-foot-high bluff. This is the secret entrance to the escape tunnel Satinder mentions to the PCs (see page 35).

**7. Sutton's Stables & Smithy:** Gask Sutton's horses have all been given over to the Tiger Lords and Pitax as tribute. Gask himself spends his days toiling at building more weapons to arm the guards with or to ship to Pitax.

**8. Temple of Erastil:** This large stone building is only a shell—the interior is incomplete and empty. The three priests who were to officiate here were all taken into the keep the day the baron surrendered, and there's been no

sign of them since (all three were fed to the oozes in the caves below the keep).

**9. Watchtower:** This wooden watchtower is staffed at all times by a half-dozen Drelev guards, who spend more time watching the gap in the wall to spot anyone trying to escape the town than they do looking out for anyone approaching. The wall gap itself is merely evidence of the unfinished defense—the baron has promised to finish the job once things “settle down” in town, but most locals assume the job's as finished as it'll ever get.

## FORT DRELEV

NE small town

**Corruption** +4; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +1; **Law** +1; **Lore** +1;  
**Society** −2

**Qualities** Notorious, Strategic Location

**Danger** 10; **Disadvantages** Impoverished

### POPULACE

**Government** overlord

**Population** 1,360 (1,200 human, 44 half-elf, 59 dwarf, 29 elf, 22 halfling, 20 half-orc, 5 other)

### Notable NPCs

**Baron Hannis Drelev** (NE male human fighter 6/rogue 6)

**Baroness Pavetta Stroon-Drelev** (NE female human)



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aristocrat 8)

**Advisor** Imeckus Stroon (LE male human evoker 12)

**Baron's Mistress** "Lady" Quintessa Maray (CN female human bard 10)

**Madam** Satinder Morne (CN female human cleric of Calistria 5/rogue 1)

## MARKETPLACE

**Base Value** 3,150 gp; **Purchase Limit** 3,750 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th  
**Minor Items** +2 *greataxe*; **Medium Items** —; **Major Items** —

## KINGMAKER

**Kingdom Increases** Economy +10; Loyalty +10; Stability +7  
**City Grid Borders** 3 land, 1 water

**Buildings** Barracks, Brothel, Castle, House (2), Inn, Pier, Shop (2), Shrine, Smith, Stable, Tavern, Temple, Tenement (4), Watchtower

**Special** Before Fort Drelev's Kingdom Increases can apply, 20 BP must be spent to hire new workers and rebuild structures to recover from the dreadful condition Baron Drelev left the town in. Paying this BP cost also removes the town's Impoverished disadvantage, which immediately adds two minor item slots, increases the town's base value by 1,750 gp, increases its purchase limit by 3,750 gp, and decreases Corruption and Crime by 1.

## ENTERING FORT DRELEV

While there is much injustice in Fort Drelev, storming into town and attacking the city is a poor choice—the resulting panic and collateral damage could make for further complications if the PCs wish to liberate Fort Drelev (see Liberation Points on page 36).

To reach the baron, the PCs first have to enter Fort Drelev and gain access to his keep. The simplest method involves accessing a secret tunnel along the rocky shores of Lake Hooktongue that leads directly to the dungeons below Drelev Keep.

Alternatively, the PCs may wish to infiltrate the town first so they can gather information and assess the current conditions. Doing so requires a successful DC 20 Bluff or DC 15 Disguise skill check to convince the guards that the PCs already belong in town or have a legitimate reason for visiting. Though Baron Drelev's forces already consider themselves at war, they have orders not to restrict trade or travel, either by land or the river docks. Grant any PCs masquerading as traders a +2 circumstance bonus on their skill checks.

If the PCs want to avoid entering town in broad daylight, they actually run a greater risk of discovery. The baron has instituted a nightly curfew, with hill giants patrolling the town's streets and perimeter, keeping watch for anyone leaving or entering town. To avoid the giants, each PC must succeed on a DC 20 Stealth skill check. Otherwise, a party of six giants soon accosts them.

Once inside Fort Drelev, the PCs can mingle freely with the local citizens and make bardic knowledge, Diplomacy, or Knowledge (local) checks to obtain information about the current conditions. See Talking to the Locals on page 36 for what they can learn. Some of this information may lead them to consider alternate plans for accessing Drelev Keep. For instance, the birthday party thrown by Baroness Pavetta could offer a chance to call upon the keep as disguised guests with forged or stolen invitations. Alternatively, by posing as friends of Imeckus Stroon or Lady Quintessa, they might manage to bluff their way past the guards and request an audience.

The mercenary guards sent by Irovetti to aid Baron Drelev in keeping the town secure are numerous—in all, there are 36 guards assigned to the town itself, and many more up at Drelev Keep. At any one time, a dozen guards are posted at the watchtower and another dozen patrol the city streets in three groups of four. The remaining 12 guards are off-duty, either relaxing at the Velvet Corner, eating at Bellweather's, or sleeping on the ground floor of the watchtower. Canny PCs can use stealth or disguises to prevent themselves from being noticed by the guards. If the PCs simply walk into town, they'll be confronted by a group of four guards within 1d6 minutes—the guards can be tricked with a successful Bluff check into believing that the PCs are "specialists" sent by Irovetti, in which case the guards leave them alone as long as they don't talk with the citizens or cause problems. Claims of being friends of Baron Drelev are met with derisive snorts—"Drelev's got new friends now." The guards are quick to anger, and given any excuse will attempt to "arrest" the PCs (a poor euphemism for "kill and loot"). Sounds of combat draw additional guards to the spot in groups of four once every 2d6 minutes. Killing all the guards assigned to the town is certainly one way to secure an entrance to town, but too many public battles can increase the general panic of the populace and thus reduce Liberation Point totals.

## DRELEV GUARDS

CR 3

### XP 800 each

Human fighter 4

NE Medium humanoid (human)

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

### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +3 shield)

**hp** 34 each (4d10+12)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk longsword +9 (1d8+5/19–20)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +7 (1d8+3/×3)

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** If expecting battle, Drelev's guards each carry



a *potion of shield of faith*, which they imbibe before charging into the fray.

**During Combat** The guards prefer to fight hand-to-hand with sword and shield, maximizing opportunities to flank opponents whenever possible to aid one another.

**Morale** The Drelev guards fight to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

**Feats** Alertness, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

**Skills** Intimidate +6, Perception +5, Ride +4, Sense Motive +7, Survival +6, Swim +5

**Languages** Common

**SQ** armor training 1

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of shield of faith* +3; **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork longsword, 50 gp

## SATINDER MORNE

A beautiful woman dressed better than anyone else in town, Satinder Morne exudes a sense of confidence, bravado, and charm in all she does. She rarely lets her temper show, always smiling and waiting until she has the upper hand on an enemy before releasing her anger and savoring the sweetness of Calistria's revenge. This trait has served her well of late, as her current clientele are growing increasingly hard to manage and control.

If the PCs attempt to contact Satinder, she'll initially assume they're just another batch of mercenaries looking for a good time. Her initial attitude is unfriendly, but if the PCs mention the fact that they're hoping to liberate the town and depose the baron, they gain a +6 bonus on Diplomacy checks to adjust her attitude. Giving her Kisandra's ring and a flower and mentioning her friend's name automatically makes her helpful.

If made friendly, Satinder can help the PCs by giving them much of the information summarized in the previous section. If made helpful, she'll even tell them

something she learned some time back—the baron built a secret escape tunnel from his keep that exits onto the shore of Lake Hooktongue not far north from town. Satinder can give the PCs precise directions to this secret entrance's location. If made helpful, Satinder also agrees to let the PCs use the Velvet Corner as a hideout while they're in town—she has several hidden rooms in her establishment that can house the PCs. She'll even provide free healing for the PCs as long as they're in town.

## SATINDER MORNE

CR 5

XP 1,600

Female human cleric of Calistria 5/rogue 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +5; **Senses** Perception +3

## DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex)

**hp** 31 (6d8+5)

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

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 dagger +5 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Ranged** mwk dagger +5 (1d4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** channel positive energy (3d6, DC 14, 5/day), sneak attack +1d6

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +8)

At will—copycat (5 rounds/day)

6/day—dazing touch

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 16), *inflict serious wounds*, *suggestion*<sup>o</sup> (DC 16)

2nd—*eagle's splendor*, *inflict moderate wounds*, *invisibility*<sup>o</sup>, *undetectable alignment*

1st—*bane* (DC 14), *command* (DC 14), *disguise self*<sup>o</sup>, *entropic shield*, *inflict light wounds*

o (at will)—*detect poison*, *light*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*

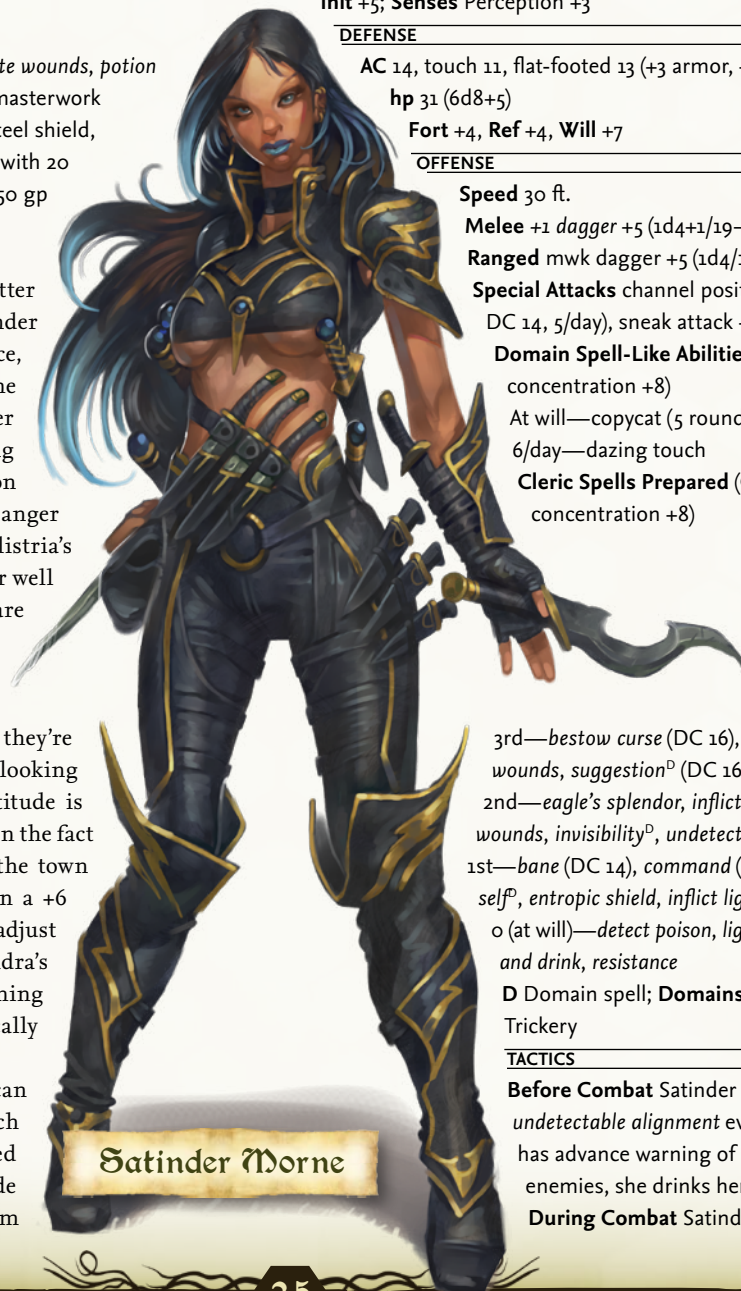
**D** Domain spell; **Domains** Charm, Trickery

## TACTICS

**Before Combat** Satinder casts

*undetectable alignment* every day. If she has advance warning of approaching enemies, she drinks her *potion of aid*.

**During Combat** Satinder likes to turn



Satinder Morne



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enemies against each other whenever possible, relying on *suggestion* or her *wand of charm person* to sway them. She targets remaining opponents with debilitating spells like *bestow curse* and her *inflict spells*.

**Morale** Satinder always looks for ways to escape combat so she can prepare a more fitting revenge for her enemies later. She tries to escape via *invisibility* if brought below 20 hit points.

### STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

**Feats** Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Bluff +10, Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Profession (madam) +8, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +6

**Languages** Common, Elven

**SQ** trapfinding +1

**Combat Gear** *elixir of love*, *potion of aid*, *potions of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of delay poison*, *wand of charm person* (17 charges); **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, +1 dagger, masterwork daggers (5), holy symbol, ruby ring worth 300 gp, spell component pouch, 99 gp

**Story Award:** If the PCs secure Satinder's aid by making her helpful, award them XP as if they'd defeated her in combat.

### TALKING TO THE LOCALS

Fort Drelev's citizens aren't eager to talk to outsiders and their attitudes are unfriendly; they slam doors in the faces of strangers who appear on their stoops or simply look away and ignore those who approach them in public. A hostile citizen attempts to flee or possibly alert the city's mercenary guards to the intruders. It's dangerous to provide aid to strangers, but with a DC 30 Diplomacy check, a citizen of Fort Drelev can offer one of the following bits of information to the PCs. Feel free to pick any of these if the PCs' line of questioning doesn't suggest an answer.

- Things are bad. The baron sold us out to bandits and barbarians, and now he and his favorites never come out of Drelev Keep. They leave the mercenaries to do what they want by day, and at night, hill giant minions patrol the streets.
- Business continues during the day, but no one's buying anything. The tavern and brothel are doing well, but mostly just because of the mercenaries in town. Shipments of food come in every week or so from Pitax, but most of that goes to the guards or up to the keep. The common folk have to beg or scavenge what they can.
- Baron Drelev recently gave shelter to a young foreign noblewoman named Lady Quintessa at his keep. She's a lot younger and prettier than his wife, Baroness Pavetta. I'm sure there's more going on there than mere kindness.

- There are rumors that Baroness Pavetta is throwing a birthday gala for herself at Drelev Keep. Only the wealthiest and those staying up at the keep merited an invitation. That she has the gall to celebrate her birthday when so many are suffering in town is appalling.
- Shortly after the baron surrendered to Pitax and the barbarians, his wife's brother—a rather brusque, foul-tempered wizard named Imeckus Stroon—came to town. Since then, he's sequestered himself in the keep, rarely emerging. No one knows what he's up to.
- No one knows for sure where the barbarian warlord Armag has gone. After accepting Drelev's offer of an alliance in exchange for sparing the town, he took several young women as hostages and marched into the hills. He's supposed to return the hostages once the baron has proven his loyalty to Pitax (whatever that means), but most folk assume the hostages are already dead.

### LIBERATION POINTS

In order to free Fort Drelev, the PCs must accomplish two goals—they must kill or capture Baron Drelev, and they must accumulate 20 Liberation Points (LP) by accomplishing certain actions while avoiding others. Methods of gaining (or losing) Liberation Points are summarized below—note that it's possible to have negative Liberation Points.

**Citizen Death:** −3 LP per citizen killed by the hill giants or the Drelev guards; −10 LP per citizen killed by a PC

**Defeat Guard:** +1 LP for every two guards defeated

**Defeat Hill Giant:** +1 LP per Drelev hill giant defeated

**Kill/Capture Armag:** +6 LP

**Kill/Capture Baron Hannis Drelev:** +6 LP

**Kill/Capture Baroness Pavetta Stroon-Drelev:** +2 LP

**Kill/Capture Imeckus Stroon:** +4 LP

**Languishing:** −2 LP per day spent without liberation (this penalty cannot reduce LP lower than 0)

**Public Destruction:** −5 LP per building partially ruined, −10 LP per building destroyed

**Public Fight:** −1 LP per round combat persists

**Relief Work\*:** Each day the entire party spends helping restore Fort Drelev (by rebuilding, casting healing magic, entertaining, training soldiers, and so on) grants +1 LP

**Rescue Lord Terrion Numesti:** +4 LP

**Rescue Tamary Numesti:** +4 LP

**Stimulate Economy\*:** Spend 1d4 Build Points to gain +1 LP

\*Once Baron Drelev is defeated (and not before), the PCs can use these methods of gaining additional Liberation Points if necessary to raise their total up to 20.

### DRELEV KEEP

Drelev Keep is a monument to Baron Drelev's vanity and self-interest. The corrupt ruler skimmed on the construction of the city's wooden walls in favor of protecting himself with



a keep of solid stone quarried from the nearby hills. The walls of Drelev Keep incorporate numerous watchtowers, including a larger main tower housing the baron and his retainers. Many rooms feature windows looking into the open courtyard. The doors are made of strong wood (hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 23) and are occasionally locked (Disable Device DC 30 to pick the locks). The ceilings reach 15 feet in most areas.

Drelev Keep encompasses almost the entire hill, but the main gates represent the only obvious means of entering the structure. Climbing the outer walls requires a DC 20 Climb check. Unfortunately, all of the outer windows are secured with wooden shutters and an *arcane lock* spell courtesy of Imeckus Stroon (hardness 5, hp 10, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30 [20 if *arcane lock* is dispelled]).

While Drelev Keep contains numerous rooms and areas, not all of them are particularly important—many could serve as places to hide or areas for combat to spill over into, but not all receive fully detailed descriptions. Certain encounter areas in the keep, however, warrant additional detail and are described after the room summary below.

**M1. Front Gate:** The iron gate across the entrance to the keep is kept closed and locked at all times (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30)—all of the Drelev guards posted at the keep carry a key to the gate.

**M2. Watchtowers:** A pair of Drelev guards mans each of these watchtowers.

**M3. Courtyard:** This area, which is guarded by several hill giants, is detailed below.

**M4. Barracks:** Six off-duty guards sleep in beds here. The stairs lead up to area **M22**.

**M5. Stable:** Since all of the horses once kept here have been fed to the hill giants, this stable is now empty. A ladder in the northwest corner leads to area **M20**.

**M6. Meeting Room:** Once used by Lord Numesti to meet with his followers, this room hasn't seen much use since he was thrown in prison.

**M7. Inner Courtyard:** The gate into this inner yard is identical to the one at area **M1**.

**M8. Storage:** This side building is used to store grain, firewood, and other supplies.

**M9. Washroom:** This building houses several large tubs serving double duty for bathing and laundry.

**M10. Servants' Quarters:** The keep's six beleaguered and frightened servants (all human commoner 1) live here.

**M11. Armory:** This chamber is used to store weapons and armor—most of these supplies are currently utilized by the Drelev guards, but two masterwork longswords, three masterwork breastplates, and 120 arrows are stored here.

**M12. Foyer:** The stairs lead down to area **M43**. Two Drelev guards stand duty here.

**M13. Storeroom:** This storeroom holds a collection of unused linens, tapestries, and seasonal decorations.

**M14. Cloakroom:** This side chamber provides access to a series of secret passages on each level of the main tower. Hidden trapdoors (DC 30 Perception check) in the floor and ceiling provide access to ladders leading up and down—the trap door leading down is locked (DC 35 Disable Device to pick).

**M15. Kitchen:** This large room contains a stone fireplace set with roasting spits and a hanging cauldron.

**M16. Pantry:** This storeroom contains cluttered shelves and stacks of crates and casks holding all manner of foodstuffs, seasonings, cooking oils, and preserved goods.

**M17. Workshop:** This dry, dusty chamber holds a variety of tools and supplies for carpentry, leather-working, sewing, and mortaring.

**M18. Washroom:** This chamber features a privy and a large tub for washing.

**M19. Keep Walls:** The tops of these walls are fitted with battlements that provide cover to archers posted here—the guards make good use of these walls in defending the courtyard. It's a DC 20 Climb check to scale these walls.

**M20. Hay Loft:** Several moldering bales of hay lie forgotten in this loft. Stealth checks made in the loft gain a +2 bonus due to the numerous hiding spots.

**M21. Storage:** The upper floor of this storeroom is used to store extra furniture and tools.

**M22. Barracks:** Six off-duty guards are here, polishing weapons, playing cards, and eating.

**M23. Mess Hall:** The Drelev guards take their meals at their posts or in area **M22** these days—this room hasn't been used since the keep's surrender to Pitax. A stairway leads up to area **M30**.

**M24. Briefing Room:** Stairs lead down from this room to area **M11** and up to area **M29**.

**M25. Banquet Room:** This area is detailed below.

**M26. Secret Room:** The secret doors and trapdoors here can be noticed with a DC 30 Perception check.

**M27. Library:** This area is detailed below.

**M28. Washroom:** This chamber features a privy and a large tub for washing.

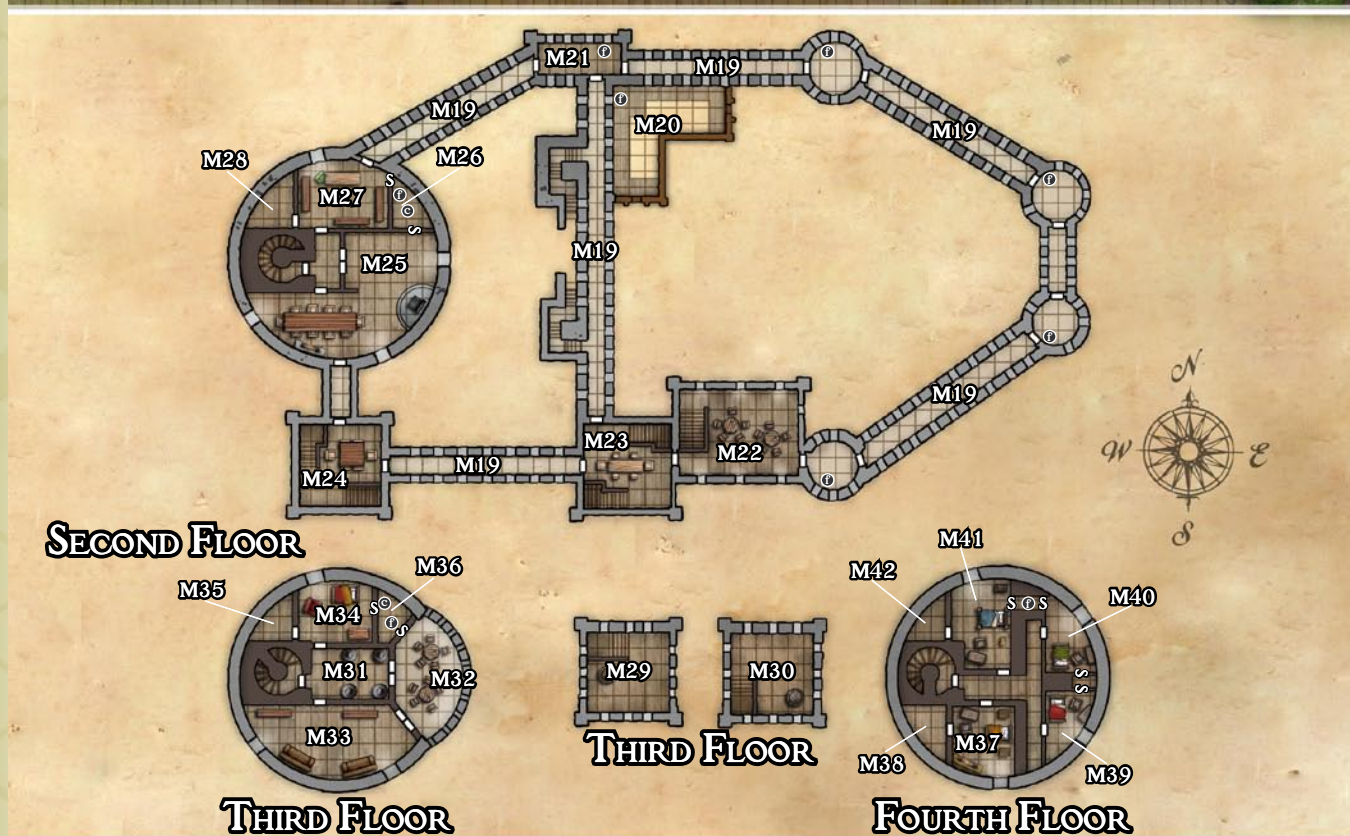
**M29. Ameen's Chambers:** This bedroom belongs to the captain of the guards, Ameen Trask. If he managed to escape the PCs' justice after the Battle of Tatzlford, he can be encountered here—he emerges to defend the keep with the rest of the guards if an alarm is raised. If Ameen is dead or captured, this room is empty—Drelev has no plans to replace him. The stairs lead down to area **M24**.

**M30. Guard Tower:** Four guards are stationed here—they use the windows to fire arrows down upon foes in area **M7**, but if a battle erupts to the east, they'll descend to area **M23** and exit onto the walls to join the battle there.

**M31. Art Gallery:** The walls here hold several recessed stone ledges containing small sculptures and a few paintings. Baroness Pavetta filled this small antechamber



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with works of art brought from Brevo. Her favorite pieces include the ceremonial armor and garb decorating a statue of Choral the Conqueror (worth 500 gp) and a sculpture of the two-headed red dragon Veylmalourne (worth 350 gp).

**M32. Balcony:** Two wrought-iron tables and outdoor chairs dominate this expansive balcony 30 feet above the inner bailey. Baroness Pavetta is particularly fond of taking her meals at one of the outdoor tables rather than in the dining hall. At night, Drelev's guards lock the double doors (DC 30 Disable Device) leading into areas **M31** and **M33**.

**M33. Ballroom:** Several tapestries hang from the walls of this wide chamber, depicting a variety of distinctive floral patterns. This chamber once saw frequent use by Baron Drelev and Baroness Pavetta for throwing parties, hosting visiting dignitaries, or entertaining guests from town. When not spending time in her room, the baroness spends several hours a day here making notes and decorating for her upcoming birthday.

**M34. Imeckus's Bedchamber:** This area is described below.

**M35. Washroom:** This chamber features a privy and a large tub for washing.

**M36. Secret Room:** The secret doors and trapdoors here can be noticed with a DC 30 Perception check.

**M37. Baroness's Bedchamber:** This area is described below.

**M38. Closet:** This closet contains nearly two dozen royal outfits and gowns, complete with a collection of accompanying foot-gear, headdresses, scarves, and decorative shawls. Baroness Pavetta stores her elaborate wardrobe here. She considers most of the outfits already woefully out of fashion, but she keeps them for their sentimental value. The entire collection is worth 5,000 gp.

**M39. Guest Bedroom:** This currently unoccupied bedroom includes a large bed draped in rose-pink blankets.

**M40. Lady Quintessa's Bedchamber:** This area is described below.

**M41. Baron Drelev's Bedchamber:** Baron Hannis Drelev claims the largest bedroom of the upper tower as his own. During the day, he rarely spends time here, while at night, he often sneaks over to area **M40** to spend time with his mistress, Lady Quintessa, using the secret passage to the east (DC 25 Perception check to detect it).

**M42. Washroom:** This chamber features a privy and a large tub for washing.

**M43. Cellar:** This cold, earth-floored cellar helps keep food from spoiling as quickly as it would in the upstairs pantry.

**M44. Wine Cellar:** Baron Drelev keeps a wide selection of spirits on hand in his personal wine cellar. Something of a connoisseur, he has collected Taldan fire-brand, hard liquor from Andoran, and even delicate berry wines out of the elven homeland of Kyonin. In all, his wine cellar holds 119 bottles representing 48 separate vintages. The entire collection is worth 6,000 gp.

**M45. Treasure Vault:** The baron always keeps the iron door to this room locked (Disable Device 40, hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28). Much of his treasury, of course, has already gone to Irovetti or Armag as tribute—what remains here consists of 200 pp, 986 gp, 2,460 sp, 815 cp, and 30 silver ingots bearing the baron's personal seal, each worth 25 gp.

**M46. Dungeon:** This area is detailed below.

**M47. Washroom:** This chamber features a privy and a large tub for washing.

**M48. Secret Vault:** This area is detailed below.

**M49. Limestone Cavern:** When Baron Drelev designed his keep, he purposefully built it over these natural limestone caverns to take advantage of their access to the lakeshore as an emergency evacuation route in the event of an attack. He also uses it occasionally to smuggle in goods or visitors he wishes to keep away from prying eyes.

**M50. Storage Cave:** Drelev has stored several days of trail rations, three vials of foul-smelling skunk musk, four *potions of fly*, and four *potions of cure moderate wounds* in a *bag of holding* (type I) in this cave—emergency supplies should he need to flee the keep. The skunk musk can be used to avoid the black puddings in the next chamber (see area **M51**). Finding the bag, which is hidden, requires a DC 25 Perception check. A lever on the wall opens and closes the iron gate into area **M51**.

**M51. Underground Pool:** This area is detailed below.

## M3. COURTYARD (CR 12)

A winding gravel path tracks through this grassy courtyard, leading past the windows of a two-story barracks and a large stable before ending at the inner wall's fifteen-foot gate.

**Creatures:** Irovetti left a group of six hill giants with the baron, both as a "gift" to help him defend his keep and as an implied threat should he try to betray Pitax. These giants are relatively well-behaved, as far as hill giants go, partly because they're amused by the idea of living in a "person house" but primarily because Baron Drelev has managed to keep them happy with lots of food (mostly horses and cattle, but now and then an unruly prisoner). In their spare time, they like harassing and frightening the guards. At night, the baron turns the giants loose on the city streets, allowing them to prowl at will—the giants have orders to not break any houses (an order that, somewhat miraculously, they've obeyed so far), but anyone they find out after dark is fair game.

**HILL GIANTS (6)**

**CR 7**

**XP 3,200 each**

**hp 85 each** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 150)



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## M25. BANQUET ROOM (CR 12)

Decorative yellow and brown tile inlays cover the floor of this immense chamber, presenting a rich scheme of royal appointments leading to a raised dais and throne against the far wall. A pair of windows flanks the throne, looking down into the inner bailey below.

In this room, the baron and baroness host feasts for visiting dignitaries or special guests. Baron Drelev has taken to having his meals here with Lady Quintessa, though the Baroness refuses to sit at the table with them and has her dinner delivered to her room or to the balcony at **M32**. When Drelev entertains entreaties from his subjects, he sits on the throne. Lately, however, he has

refused all appointments, growing more withdrawn as he considers his gamble to ally with Armag and the Tiger Lords to crush the neighboring kingdoms. Only Lady Quintessa (area **M40**) helps ease his mind, sometimes keeping him company as he consults Imeckus Stroon and his remaining senior officers for advice. Out of paranoia, he now keeps eight guardsmen with him at all times as bodyguards—if the alarm is raised, he sends six of them to area **M37** to guard his wife while he takes the other two up to **M40** to guard his mistress.

Hannis Drelev comes across as a sullen, greedy, conceited man, never satisfied with his lot in life, but always disdainful of anyone who has less than him. Though primarily skilled at politics, the baron fancies himself a skilled swordsman, destined to follow in the footsteps of the Aldori swordlords. He loves dueling and often spars against his own guardsmen and senior officers. He likes to show off, taunting and belittling those he overpowers, but reacts angrily to situations where others get the best of him.

### BARON HANNIS DRELEV

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male human fighter 6/rogue 6

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; Senses Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 18, flat-footed 23 (+9 armor, +2 defending sword, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 130 (12 HD; 6d10+6d8+66)

Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +5; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2, evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 defending longsword +17/+12 (1d8+10/17–20)

Ranged mwk throwing axe +14 (1d6+5)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6, weapon training (heavy blades +1)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** Drelev always uses his sword's *defending* property to enhance his AC against more proficient warriors. He likes to disarm opponents in the course of a duel or battle to force surrender. While fighting alongside his bodyguards, he also takes advantage of their flanking and his Mobility and Spring Attack feats to make quick work of foes by sneak attacking them.

**Morale** If reduced below 20 hit points or disarmed during a duel, Drelev flees, trying to escape using the caverns below Drelev Keep. If he has no escape route, he drops his weapons and begs for mercy in a cowardly display.

#### STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 14

Base Atk +10; CMB +15 (+19 disarm); CMD 31 (33 vs. disarm)



Baron Drelev



**Feats** Combat Expertise, Dodge, Greater Disarm, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Whirlwind Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Perception +6, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +18, Stealth +16

**Languages** Common, Skald

**SQ** armor training 1, exceptional resources, rogue talents (combat trick, surprise attack, weapon training), trapfinding +3

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure serious wounds* (3); **Other**

**Gear** +3 *breastplate*, +2 *defending longsword*, masterwork throwing axes (3), *belt of physical might* +4 (Constitution and Strength), *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *rod of splendor*, key ring (contains keys to all locks in the keep)

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Exceptional Resources (Ex)** Drelev has the gear of a PC rather than an NPC to account for his greater resources as the leader of a small kingdom. This equipment increases his CR by 1.

## DRELEV GUARDS (8)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 34 each (see page 34)

## M27. LIBRARY

Three large bookcases dominate this room. A reading desk and chair sit by the window and a woolen rug covers the floor. Three doors exit the chamber.

Not particularly enamored with his role thus far, Stroon has taken to researching and experimenting with the black puddings in the caverns below Drelev Keep (area M51). Stroon's been using an open book on the desk to study oozes and aberrations. An examination of Stroon's notes and a DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check reveal that he's experimenting with a method to preserve small portions of black pudding as hurled weapons—but so far he hasn't made much progress.

A folded piece of parchment under this book contains a map of the Slough, on which Stroon has marked the location of Armag's current campsite. Scribbled notes in the margins summarize the original Armag's legend and the possibility that one of the barrow mounds might serve as his tomb.

**Creatures:** Stroon's dust mephit familiar, Lintwirth, has made a nest for himself on the top shelves of the library. He hides when the PCs enter the room, then attempts to summon another dust mephit to distract the PCs he flees out the window and up one level to warn his master.

## LINTWIRTH

CR

Dust mephit familiar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 202)

hp 52

## M34. IMECKUS' BEDCHAMBER (CR 10)

This small bedroom contains only the barest amount of furnishings. A plain bed faces the room's only window along the north wall. A simple bookshelf stands to the west and a small table and wooden chair sit next to the entrance.

**Creatures:** Imeckus Stroon, the older brother of Baroness Pavetta, uses this room as his temporary sleeping quarters. At his sister's invitation, he journeyed to the River Kingdoms to help the Drelevs against the Tiger Lords. For now, he only casts daily *screaming* spells to follow Armag's activities in the hills as part of the baron's strategy of letting the horrors of the burial site claim the warlord first.

The skilled wizard brings a level of organization and structure to every task he undertakes. Very detailed and analytical, he speaks softly and listens carefully. Like his sister, Stroon also enjoys the finer things in life, frequently relying on his magic to conjure or provide them. But having traveled widely, he also knows how to bear temporary inconveniences while treading a path to greater gain.

## IMECKUS STROON

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male human evoker 12

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +6; **Senses** Perception +1

## DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2

Dex, +4 shield)

**hp** 105 (12d6+63)

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

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk dagger +7/+2 (1d4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** intense spells (+6 damage)

**Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 12th; concentration +16)

At will—elemental wall (12 rounds/day)

7/day—force missile (1d4+6)

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 12th; concentration +16)

6th—*chain lightning* (DC 21), *disintegrate* (DC 20), *greater dispel magic*

5th—*empowered lightning bolt* (DC 18), *sending*, *teleport*, *wall of force*

4th—*enervation*, *fire shield*, *ice storm*, *resilient sphere* (DC 19), *screaming* (DC 18)

3rd—*extended false life*, *fly*, *gaseous form*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *protection from energy*, *slow* (DC 17)

2nd—*alter self*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *extended mage armor*, *levitate*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 16), *scorching ray*

1st—*burning hands* (DC 16), *magic missile* (3), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *shield*



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o (at will)—arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, read magic

**Opposition Schools** Enchantment, Illusion

## TACTICS

**Before Combat** Imeckus casts extended *mage armor* and extended *false life* every morning. Just before combat, he casts *shield*.

**During Combat** Imeckus prefers to prevent enemies from approaching him easily through tactical use of wall spells and effects. He then uses his spells to pick foes off one at a time.

**Morale** Imeckus serves Drelev only as a courtesy to his sister, the baroness, not because he has a great deal of loyalty to the baron. If reduced below 20 hit points, he casts *teleport* in an effort to escape to his home in Pitax—if he escapes, he'll use *sending* to

warn his sister. He won't return to Fort Drelev.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Combat Casting, Craft Staff, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness

**Skills** Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +19, Knowledge (geography) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (local) +19, Knowledge (nobility) +19, Spellcraft +19

**Languages** Auran, Common, Giant, Hallit, Skald

**SQ** arcane bond (dust mephit), contingency (*dispel magic* on himself if he ever fails a Will save)

**Combat Gear** *staff of fire*; **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +2, spellbooks (contain all spells prepared plus an additional 6 spells of each level from 1st to 6th)

## Imeckus Stroon

## M37. PAVETTA'S ROOM (CR 6)

Silk hangings cover most of the wall space in this elaborately decorated bedroom, as well as the large window looking south. A canopy bed takes up the center of the room, with teak end tables placed to either side. A small desk and cushioned stool also stand along the north wall, and a large fireplace in the south corner heats the room comfortably.

**Creatures:** Baroness Pavetta Stroon-Drelev is a creature devoted to excess and comfort, and her bedchamber reflects her personality in every way. Long before Hannis Drelev was chosen to lead a colonization attempt of the Slough, she was a master of the game of social politics and quite enjoyed life in Brevoy. Originally, she balked at the idea of joining him in the gods-forsaken frontier. But since arriving, Pavetta has discovered the pleasing advantages of holding the highest social stature of anyone within hundreds of miles. She enjoys lording over the simple folk of the Drelev Demesne and now grows agitated over the possibility of losing control of the region to the barbaric warlord, Armag.

Baroness Pavetta has made her wishes well known to her husband but senses he's too weak to know how to handle the Tiger Lords. Recently, she encouraged the baron to contact her brother, Imeckus Stroon, a powerful and well-traveled wizard. She hopes to use Imeckus's arcane skills to undo her husband's mess for him. But now that Drelev has shown such an eye for the pretty young Lady Quintessa, the baroness has quietly encouraged her brother to find the means to "accidentally"



remove the baron and his mistress from the picture as well, and she is preparing to assume complete control of the colony herself.

The baroness is rarely seen without Jewel, her shrill, obnoxious, and almost unbearably noisy little dog. Although ferocious and brave, Jewel is little more than a nuisance in combat. This doesn't prevent the baroness from attempting to use the dog for defense. If anyone kills the dog, Pavetta flies into a shrieking, murderous rage, abandoning all pretense of diplomacy.

## BARONESS PAVETTA STROON-DRELEV CR 6

XP 2,400

Female human aristocrat 8

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +14

### DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 36 (8d8)

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +9

### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +6/+1 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged thrown object +6 (1d4-1)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Baroness Pavetta views physical combat as a job for paid underlings, but if any handy objects like vases, small sculptures, or serving trays lie nearby, she uses her Throw Anything feat to attack from range.

**Morale** Baroness Pavetta surrenders to any legitimate show of force.

### STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 15

Base Atk +6; CMB +5; CMD 15

**Feats** Alertness, Iron Will, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Throw Anything

**Skills** Bluff +13, Diplomacy +15, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (nobility) +12, Perception +14, Perform (Dance) +13, Sense Motive +14

**Languages** Common, Skald

**Gear** masterwork dagger, stone of alarm, diamond crown worth 1,500 gp, diamond necklace worth 500 gp, emerald ring worth 250 gp, Jewel (annoying dog; treat as a cat with no claw attacks), royal outfit worth 300 gp, sapphire earrings worth 400 gp, signet ring worth 300 gp

## M40. LADY QUINTESSA'S ROOM (CR 6)

This richly-appointed bedroom includes a decorative, handmade bed with a carved headboard depicting satyrs and nymphs at play. Lavender curtains trim a massive window that overlooks the inner courtyard and match the bed's blankets.

**Creatures:** This bedchamber belongs to Lady Quintessa Maray, Baron Drelev's lover and a spy from the River Kingdom of Daggermark. She's used her natural talents to convince Baron Drelev that she's a poor, exiled noblewoman from Galt in need of shelter. Since moving into Drelev Keep, she has maneuvered to become his mistress—a fact that sits none too well with Baroness Pavetta. Drelev often uses the secret passage between their rooms to visit her at night. And it has become clear to everyone that even during the day, the baron dotes on her far more than a married man should.

Quintessa knows the arrival of Imeckus Stroon serves as a harbinger for new developments in the Drelev Demesne. So far, however, her charms have proven fruitless in enticing the mage to share any of the plans he's made with his sister. Quintessa also instinctively senses the disdain Baroness Pavetta holds for her, but she hopes that she'll be able to ride out this storm for at least a few more weeks to learn more information for her contacts in Daggermark.

## "LADY" QUINTESSA MARAY CR 9

XP 6,400

Female human bard 10

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +13

### DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 75 (10d8+30)

Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +8; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

### OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee mwk silver dagger +10/+5 (1d4-1/19-20)

**Special Attacks** bardic performance 26 rounds/day (move action, countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +3, inspire courage



Baroness Stroon-Drelev



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+2, inspire greatness, suggestion)

**Bard Spells Known** (CL 10th; concentration +14)

4th (2/day)—*dimension door*, *modify memory* (DC 18)

3rd (4/day)—*confusion* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *gaseous form*, *glibness*

2nd (5/day)—*animal messenger*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *tongues*

1st (6/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *disguise self* (DC 15), *grease* (DC 15), *obscure object*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *summon instrument*

## TACTICS

**During Combat** Quintessa has no interest in fighting on her own; her first act in a battle if caught alone is to cast *dimension door* to flee to wherever she suspects Baron Drelev is so she can both warn him and recruit his aid.



"Lady" Maray

If she has allies, Quintessa activates inspire courage and casts *confusion* on her enemies, following up each round thereafter with her other offensive spells and avoiding combat entirely if possible.

**Morale** Quintessa surrenders immediately if she has no escape route and no allies left—she also surrenders if brought below 30 hit points.

## STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Dodge, Fleet, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Disguise +21, Escape Artist +14, Knowledge (local) +19, Perception +13, Perform (dance) +17, Perform (sing) +17, Perform (wind) +17, Stealth +14

**Languages** Common, Elven

**SQ** bardic knowledge +5, jack-of-all-trades (use any skill), lore master 1/day, versatile performance (dance, sing, wind)

**Combat Gear** *deck of illusions* (contains both jokers and all hearts and spades), *scroll of dispel magic*, *scroll of locate creature*, *scroll of neutralize poison*, *scroll of speak with animals*; **Other Gear** +1 glamered chain shirt, masterwork silver dagger, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, gold and mithral necklace worth 1,500 gp

**Development:** If the PCs depose Baron Drelev and gain control of the keep or if she surrenders to the PCs in combat, Quintessa turns her affections on the most charismatic PC (preferably a ruler) or, failing that, on someone who has that person's ear. She feigns dismay at being held a veritable hostage in the tower while the baron and baroness allowed barbarians and giants to control things. She then works at developing a relationship with the PCs to ensure she is close at hand to keep tabs on them. Daggermark isn't scheduled to play a major role in the rest of Kingmaker, but it could become an important player if you intend to keep playing this campaign beyond the conclusion of the Adventure Path—in this event, Quintessa could become a key NPC.

## M46. DUNGEON (CR 6)

Behind this locked door lies a cold, musty dungeon. Five cells, complete with meticulously crafted iron bars and doors, fill most of the space. A wooden door also leads east to a functioning latrine, judging by the smell.

The middle cell along the eastern wall rarely holds prisoners since it also includes a secret door (DC 25 Perception to detect) into the baron's prized treasure vault and the caverns below the keep.

**Creatures:** Currently, the largest cell along the northern wall contains Kisandra's father, Lord Terrion Numesti. The other cells stand empty since Baron Drelev released the



former prisoners and pressed them into service as part of the army that attacked Tatzlford. He fed those who refused to go to the giants that stayed behind to guard the town.

Terrion himself is in poor health but remains determined to defy Drelev to the bitter end. He would like nothing more than to take up arms against the corrupt baron, but his responsibilities to his family weigh more heavy on his mind. If the PCs rescue him (DC 30 Disable Device to pick the cell's lock), he thanks them by pledging his life to their service. He would prefer to escape the keep as soon as possible to seek out his daughter Kisandra at Tatzlford, but if armed and armored, he'll agree to aid the PCs with their remaining tasks in the keep.

## LORD TERRION NUMESTI CR 8

XP 4,800

NG male human fighter 6/rogue 3

hp 79 (currently 2, as Ameon Trask on page 14, but currently has no gear)



Lord Numesti

## M48. SECRET VAULT

An L-shaped table sits in the southeast corner of this dusty chamber, its velvet-lined surface displaying a number of small, precious stones and pieces of jewelry. A couple of large, ornately carved cedar trunks take up the other corners of the room.

Baron Drelev keeps this vault hidden from all but his most trusted senior officers, as it contains priceless treasures collected over his many years. Accessing the room requires entry through one of three secret doors (DC 25 Perception to detect) or the hidden trapdoor from the cloakroom (area M14). All of these doors are locked (DC 35 Disable Device to pick).

**Treasure:** Upon the L-shaped table rests a golden yellow topaz worth 500 gp, a deep blue spinel worth 400 gp, an amethyst worth 300 gp, a chrysoberyl worth 100 gp, five freshwater pearls worth 100 gp each, and eight moonstones worth 50 gp each. The display table also holds a golden circlet worth 750 gp, which the baron no longer wears since acquiring his *rod of splendor*. Two more dust-free indentations indicate a couple of necklaces once rested here as well, but Drelev gave Baroness Pavetta and Lady Quintessa each one.

In one of the cedar chests, Drelev has stored the valuable gear taken from Terrion Numesti. It includes a suit of +2 *breastplate*, a +2 *longsword*, a masterwork composite longbow (Str +3), 20 arrows, a masterwork dagger, and potions of *cure serious wounds*, *darkvision*, and *lesser restoration*.

In another chest, the baron has stored a variety of artifacts taken from the Tiger Lords' barrow mounds worth a total of 2,500 gp. Among these artifacts is a *ring of evasion* made of green wood carved to depict a snake and a lizard locked in a tangle. This ring is a companion ring to the *ring of swimming* found in the barbarian cairn back in "Stolen Land" (see area B of that adventure, page 16). If worn together on one hand, these rings both work and count as only 1 ring slot for the purposes of determining how many magic rings a creature can wear.

## M51. UNDERGROUND POOL (CR 10)

The stone walls of this massive cavern bear signs of discoloration from occasional flooding, no doubt due to water from Lake Hooktongue entering through the eastern passage when the lake rises during the rainy season. Stagnant runoff has collected in a natural limestone basin to the north. An iron gate rimed with rust blocks a tunnel to the west.

The iron gate can be opened from the west side by pulling a lever on the wall in area M50 or by destroying it (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30). The tunnel to the east eventually ends at a secret door that opens at the base of a ridge just outside of Fort Drelev onto the beach of Lake Hooktongue (see the map on page 33).

**Creatures:** This cavern (and the tunnel leading from it to the east) existed before the castle was built above, so Drelev incorporated it into the design as an escape tunnel. The cavern has also long been the lair of a pair of particularly dangerous black puddings. Originally the baron intended to slay them, but when he recruited Imeckus Stroon to aid in burning the deadly oozes out, the wizard came up with a better idea. Having studied oozes for many years, he devised a special concoction that consists mostly of skunk musk and, after working for some time with his fire magic, has conditioned the two black puddings to avoid targets that reek of the stuff. The oozes furiously attack anyone not wearing a dose of the musk (a few vials of which can be found in area M50), fighting to the death. The oozes will even pursue fleeing PCs; canny players can use the puddings' tenacity to lead them up into the keep and loose them on the guards.

## ADVANCED BLACK PUDDINGS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 125 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 35, 294)



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## PART FOUR: THE TWICE-BORN WARLORD

The Tomb of Armag was built unknown ages ago to inter the bones of Armag, one of the Tiger Lords' greatest heroes, and his legendary magic sword *Ovinrbaane*, a weapon sacred to the faith of Gorum. Today, this tomb serves as a testing ground intended to reveal the God of War's next champion.

### THE BARBARIAN CAMP (CR 10)

Currently, Armag's favorite companions and bodyguards have settled in a small box canyon to the north of Lake Hooktongue at area **D**. The PCs could well stumble across this camp on their own, but it's more likely that they'll seek it out after defeating Drelev Keep and learning of the camp's location. The camp itself is located at the edge of a small forest, against the side of a 50-foot cliff in the hills. The encampment consists of only the vanguard of Armag's army, including several of his best barbarian kinsmen and the Black Sisters of Gyronna. The rest of his tribe camp to the east and north in small groups, waiting until Armag gives the call to join and rise as one. Armag took several of his kin with him into the tomb several days before the PCs finally reach this site, and the remaining barbarians wait in this camp for his return while keeping watch over their five hostages (including Kisandra Numesti's sister, Tamary). The campsite consists of 11 circular tents, a fenced-in area for horses, and a wooden cage with a roof made of leather.

**Creatures:** In all, there are a dozen barbarians waiting at the campsite. At any one time, four of them are sleeping, four are relaxing in various tents, and four are on guard duty, hidden in nearby trees or standing sentry at the campsite's edge. A barbarian who notices any sort of intruder raises an alarm by giving a powerful roar—the Tiger Lords are not interested in talking and quickly attack any intruders into their territory.

#### TIGER LORD BARBARIANS (12)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Human barbarian 4

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, -2 rage, +2 shield)

hp 50 each (4d12+24)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +4

Defensive Abilities trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

#### OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee mwk battleaxe +11 (1d8+5/×3)

Ranged throwing axe +6 (1d6+5)

**Special Attacks** rage (14 rounds per day), rage powers (powerful blow +2, surprise accuracy +2)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The Tiger Lords prepare for battle by drinking their *potions of barkskin*.

**During Combat** These barbarians always begin battle by throwing axes and then charging into melee.

**Morale** The Tiger Lord barbarians fight to the death.

#### STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +4; CMB +9; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Toughness, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Perception +6, Ride +4, Survival +6, Swim +7

Languages Hallit

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of barkskin* +2; **Other Gear** masterwork hide armor, masterwork heavy wooden shield, masterwork battleaxe, throwing axes (6)

**Development:** The large cage at the center of the campsite contains the five hostages that Armag took from Baron Drelev—while these young women (Anjana, Galine, Marinda, and Sophelia, along with Tamary Numesti, Kisandra's sister) are all terrified, they've been treated relatively well—not because the barbarians are particularly interested in honoring the wartime tradition of taking hostages, but because they see these soft, squealing “city women” as relatively pitiful and unattractive creatures. All five hostages are 2nd-level aristocrats and thus relatively useless in a fight; they'll need to be escorted to safety.

### ARMAG'S TOMB

In the earliest days of the Tiger Lords' history, the original Armag led his people out of the Realm of the Mammoth Lords and into southeast Numeria. They clashed repeatedly with other barbarian tribes, eventually pushing through the Rostland plains to clash against the Iobarian warlords and centaur tribes of Casmaron. These conflicts hardened Armag, forging him into a timeless champion who earned the direct favor of Gorum, the Iron Lord and God of War.

Pride was Armag's weakness. He boasted he would live forever—that death herself could never slay him. Pharasma heard his boasts and was offended. She sent several of her powerful minions, aeons of the Boneyard, to aid Armag's enemies or to lay him low on his greatest battlefield. This angered Gorum, who had come to enjoy Armag's audacity and brutal nature, and as Armag fought against his enemies on the Material Plane, Pharasma and Gorum engaged in a battle of wits in the Great Beyond over the ultimate fate of Armag's soul. When Armag finally succumbed and died on the field of battle, laid low by a mighty red dragon, Gorum intervened and infused Armag's soul into his



sword *Ovinrbaane*, preventing his soul from entering the Boneyard. He then sent visions to a Tiger Lord shaman named Zorek, inspiring him to construct a fitting tomb for the Iron Lord's champion—a tomb that would be sufficiently protected with traps and guardians to test any who might come to claim the legendary sword. Gorum also elevated Zorek into a divine guardian to watch over the tomb, charging him with slaying the unworthy and adding their souls to the ranks of those keeping Armag out of Pharasma's reach. Pharasma, in her own inscrutable way, brooded for an eon and then lost interest, and Gorum moved on to other distractions as well. And so for several centuries, just as the Tiger Lords themselves became estranged from their own past, Armag's legacy dwindled into obscurity among the minds of man and god. This history of Armag's Tomb is obscure—a DC 35 Knowledge (history) check is needed to recall the legend. Alternatively, a PC who uses *legend lore* in Armag's Tomb could learn fragments of this history, depending upon what legends he seeks.

The walls, floors, and ceilings in Armag's Tomb are carved from pale stone heavy with iron ore, a feature that gives the entire complex streaks of oxidized brown, not unlike long dead flesh streaked in dried blood. Except where otherwise noted, the rooms and corridors are 12 feet high, and the walls themselves are infused with ancient magic and the tiniest fraction of Gorum's wrath—as a result, the walls resist any attempt at manipulation via magic (such as *passwall*, *stone shape*, or *transmute rock to mud*). In order to affect the stone of the tomb with such a spell, the caster must make a DC 30 caster level check as if attempting to overcome spell resistance—if this check fails, the spell is wasted and the magical backlash of energy causes the caster to bleed painfully from the eyes, mouth, and fingertips, suffering 2 points of damage per level of the spell she attempted to cast.

The tomb is still watched over by Zorek (see area D11). As soon as the PCs move beyond area D1 of the tomb, Zorek uses *guards and wards* to create additional barriers and complications for the PCs exploring the complex. Thick fog fills every corridor (but not the rooms), obscuring all sight (including darkvision) beyond 5 feet. Webs fill all stairs from top to bottom as per a *web* spell, and every intersection creates a minor *confusion* effect that causes explorers to constantly question their sense of direction. Lastly, a *silent image* hides all of the doors, making them appear as part of tomb walls (DC 20 Will save to disbelieve if interacted with). The iron doors (hardness 10, hp 45, Break DC 28) are all sealed with *arcane locks* (DC 30 Disable Device to pick) that reactivate within 10 minutes of being bypassed—but several rooms include tests and tricks that can cause the doors to open.

## D1. THE WAY OF THE WARRIORS THREE (CR 11)

Three alabaster statues stand along the western wall of this large square chamber. The statues depict well-proportioned Kellid men, each set in a different war-like pose.

**Creatures:** Armag's hateful advisors, the Black Sisters, have come to this chamber and await him there while he finishes his communion with Gorum and the sword *Ovinrbaane*. Not worshipers of Gorum themselves, they are wary about moving further into the complex and instead have chosen to wait for Armag's return here to ensure that none enter the complex to meddle with Armag's awakening.

The Black Sisters know of the PCs, having kept tabs on their nation after a failed attempt by one of the Sisters to establish a cult in their capital city (see "Rivers Run Red"). More than anyone, the Black Sisters recognize the danger the PCs pose to Armag's successful completion of the trials. Both of the Black Sisters are actually quite young—they view their youth as a mark of shame, though, and dress in hooded clothes with high collars to hide their faces. They hope that as a reward for helping to achieve vengeance against Brevoy by leading a horde of barbarians north, Gyronna will care for them in their old age to come. Both have abandoned their personal lives and even their names in pursuit of this singular goal.

### THE BLACK SISTERS (2)

CR 9

#### XP 6,400 each

Female human cleric of Gyronna 10

CE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +4

**Aura** aura of madness, destructive aura (+5, 10 rounds/day),  
aura of madness (DC 19, 10 rounds/day)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor)

**hp** 85 each (10d8+40)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +11; **SR** 22

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +2 *keen dagger* +8/+3 (1d4+1/17–20)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy (5d6, DC 16, 4/day),  
destructive smite (+5, 7/day)

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +14)  
7/day—vision of madness

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 10th; concentration +14)

5th—*shout*<sup>D</sup> (DC 19), *spell resistance*, *summon monster V*

4th—*chaos hammer* (DC 18), *confusion*<sup>D</sup> (DC 18), *cure serious wounds*, *greater magic weapon*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*,  
*protection from energy*, *rage*<sup>D</sup>



# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## ARMAG'S TOMB





2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (3), *hold person* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*, *touch of idiocy*<sup>o</sup>

1st—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (2), *divine favor*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*<sup>o</sup>

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect poison*, *light*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Destruction, Madness

## TACTICS

**Before Combat** The Black Sisters cast *magic vestment* and *greater magic weapon* every morning. If they notice intruders approaching from the north, they cast *spell resistance* on themselves.

**During Combat** The Black Sisters cast *summon monster V* on the first round of combat to conjure babau demons to engage the PCs in melee while they hang back and use their spells or selectively channeled negative energy to provide ranged support. They'll activate their auras of madness as soon as any PC enters melee with them, at which point they fight in adjacent squares against a wall to thwart flanking attempts.

**Morale** The Black Sisters fight to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 15, **Int** 13,

**Wis** 18, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Combat Casting, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Selective Channeling, Toughness

**Skills** Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Sense Motive +12, Survival +9

**Languages** Common, Hallit

**Gear** masterwork breastplate, +2 *keen dagger*, unholy symbol of Gyronna, spell component pouch

## D2. TEST OF STRENGTH (CR 10)

Four boulders of varying size lie within this long chamber. At the far end, progressively larger steps rise toward another set of iron doors. Each step bears a round depression corresponding in size to one of the boulders below.

This chamber presents a Test of Strength to challenge those who seek to enter the Tomb of Armag. Properly weighting each step with the appropriately sized boulder

opens the iron doors at the far end of the hall. Rolling the boulders into place requires progressively harder Strength checks due to their size and the height at which they need to be placed. From smallest to largest, the DCs to move each boulder are DC 18, DC 20, DC 22, and DC 24. Up to two characters can work together with the aid another action on these checks. It takes 1 minute to move a boulder into place. PCs can retry failed checks, but if they take 20, the room's trap soon activates.

**Trap:** Placing any boulder into a depression begins a time-triggered trap—6 minutes later, the steps pitch forward into a steep slope, releasing the boulders and sending them crashing back down the hallway. This happens on the sixth minute after the first boulder is moved into place. If the PCs successfully move all four boulders into the correct position before the trap activates, the doors to the south open, shutting again once the trap itself triggers. Disabling the trap does not disable the mechanism to open or close the doors.

## ROLLING BOULDER TRAP CR 10

XP 9,600

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 25

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location (6 minute delay);

**Reset** automatic

**Effect** rolling boulders (12d6 bludgeoning damage; DC 25 Reflex save for half); multiple targets (all targets on the ground in area D2)

## D3. TEST OF ENDURANCE (CR 10)

Columns of fused iron weapons emerge from a sheet of iron on the chamber floor.

A single iron wheel protrudes from the floor in the middle of the room.

The iron wheel in the middle of the room can be turned to cause the locks on the doors in this room to deactivate for 12 minutes, but only after the iron wheel is rotated for seven complete revolutions—a single revolution takes one full-round action to complete, and if someone releases the wheel before the seventh revolution occurs, it unwinds and the process must be started again.

**Trap:** As soon as anyone steps onto the iron sheet supporting the columns, a magical trap activates, forming a 1-foot-thick *wall of ice* along every wall (effectively





# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

blocking both doorways) and reducing the temperature in the room to  $-30^{\circ}\text{F}$  for 12 minutes. Once the trap runs its course, both doors unlock, but the *walls of ice* blocks remain for 12 minutes.

## ICEBOX TRAP

CR 10

XP 9,600

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** proximity (*alarm*); **Duration** 7 rounds; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** spell effect (*wall of ice* covers every wall of entire room; CL 12th); extreme cold (1d6 cold damage/minute; creatures in contact with exposed metal take an additional 1d6 points of cold damage per round); multiple targets (all targets in area D3)

## D4. THE TACTICIAN'S WAY

An alabaster statue of a barbarian stands in this antechamber against the north wall. Two five-foot passageways open to either side.

This alabaster statue's unwavering gaze stares at a secret door on the south wall (DC 30 Perception check to notice).



## D5. TEST OF TACTICS (CR 12)

Sigils mark the walls of this dark passageway. Judging by the dust and abandoned cobwebs, it appears to have lain unused for centuries. A heavy fog restricts vision to just five feet.

The sigils crafted on these walls represent a personal rune for all the champions who once fought in Armag's armies on the plains of Rostland. Gorum himself wove the magic contained in them to deny Pharsma's victory when her avatar struck down Armag and his followers. Now, each sigil magically attunes itself to a bloody skeletal champion in the Cavern of the Slain (area D10). The power of the runes ensures that the undead serve only the wielder of *Ovinrbaane*. An *erase* spell can disrupt the magic of one sigil at a time (as can physically destroying that section of wall—hardness 8, hp 60), removing the deathless ability from one of the skeletal champions in area D10—there are 16 such sigils in all.

**Creatures:** The infusion of battle and war in the walls of this hallway long ago attracted the attention of a deadly outsider—an insectoid derghodaemon from the realm of Abaddon. Personifying death from being eaten alive by predators, derghodaemons are looming, five-armed monstrosities that are often encountered as scavengers on battlefields in the outer planes—or in places where violence and death create compelling lures. This particular derghodaemon was drawn through and bound to this hallway with the aid of Gorum's magic during the tomb's creation, and it has dwelt here ever since.

## DERGHODAEMON

CR 12

XP 19,200

Tome of Horrors Revised 80

NE Large outsider (daemon, evil, extraplanar)

**Init** +5; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., *detect magic*, see invisibility; Perception +28

**Aura** feeblemind (DC 20)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 27, touch 14, flat-footed 22 (+5 Dex, +13 natural,  $-1$  size)

**hp** 161 (14d10+84)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +14, **Will** +7

**DR** 10/good; **Immune** acid, death effects, disease, poison;

**Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 23

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** 5 claws +21 (1d6+8/19–20)

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

**Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 1d8+12 plus 2 Constitution damage)

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

Constant—*detect magic*, see invisibility



At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)  
3/day—*fear* (DC 17), quickened *summon swarm*  
1/day—*creeping doom*, *insect plague*, *summon daemon* (level 4,  
1 derghodaemon 30%)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** The derghodaemon attempts to summon another of its kind on the first round of combat and then casts *insect plague* and *creeping doom* on the following rounds, supplementing its swarm creation each round with quickened *summon swarm* attacks. It changes to melee attacks if surrounded.

**Morale** The derghodaemon fights to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 27, **Dex** 20, **Con** 22, **Int** 7, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +23; **CMD** 38

**Feats** Cleave, Critical Focus, Improved Critical (claws), Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (summon swarm), Sickening Critical, Vital Strike

**Skills** Intimidate +20, Perception +28, Sense Motive +20, Stealth +18

**Languages** Abyssal, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

**SQ** swarmwalking

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**All-Around Vision (Ex)** A derghodaemon's multiple eyes grant it a +8 racial bonus on Perception checks. It cannot be flanked.

**Feeblemind Aura (Su)** By grinding and clicking its mandibles and chitinous plates together (a free action), a derghodaemon can affect all creatures within 30 feet as if by a *feeblemind* spell. Daemons are immune to this effect, but all other creatures must make a DC 20 Will save to resist the effects. A subject that succumbs to this effect remains affected by it as long as the derghodaemon continues to maintain the aura and the subject remains within 30 feet of the derghodaemon. Once either condition ends, a victim of this effect can attempt a new DC 20 Will save once per hour to recover from the effect; otherwise, it can be cured by a *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell. A derghodaemon cannot use its spell-like abilities or its gnaw attack in any round in which it uses its feeblemind aura. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Swarmwalking (Su)** A derghodaemon is immune to damage or distraction effects caused by swarms.

## D6. TILTING FLOOR (CR 8)

The ceiling of this circular room rises from the floor in an arc, reaching a height of ten feet. The floor is highly polished and smooth.

**Trap:** Despite its appearance, this chamber is actually spherical—the “floor” is the smooth upper portion of a circular disc balanced on a pivot in the center of the room below. When any creature steps into the room, the floor

underfoot shifts downward under the creature's weight while rising up at the far side of the room. By moving around the room, one can control the angle of the floor's tilt. Standing exactly in the center allows the floor to return to level, as would placing two objects of equal weight on opposite sides of the room, in theory. Unfortunately, the pivot on which the disk balances is itself unstable, causing the floor to wobble and shake even when the characters take care to keep things as balanced as possible.

Navigating the room when the disc isn't balanced is nearly impossible without flight. The walls and floor offer no handholds for climbing—only by moving along the edges to manipulate the floor's angle can creatures move through the room. Doing so requires a DC 20 Acrobatics check each round, and the floor is treated as difficult terrain. Further complicating the issue is the fact that spiked pits lie in wait to the north and south—anytime a creature moving through the room fails its Acrobatics check, it must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid rolling into one of these two pits. Each pit is 50 feet deep and lined with spikes.

## TILTING FLOOR

CR 8

XP 4,800

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

## EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** pivoting floor (see above); 2 50-ft.-deep spiked pits (5d6 falling damage; pit spikes Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage each); DC 15 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all creatures in area D6)

**Treasure:** Lying among a number of ancient bones in the north pit is a +3 *handaxe*, while the south pit contains a scroll case within which is a *scroll of blade barrier*, a *scroll of magic vestment* (CL 16th), and a *scroll of lesser planar ally*.

## D7. TEST OF AGILITY (CR 10)

The hall ends at a precipice overlooking a natural stone cavern, the earthen floor of which lies thirty feet below. The ceiling arches another thirty feet overhead. Throughout the chamber, pillars of rounded rock rise at varying levels like uneven stepping stones leading to another tunnel opening on the far side.

Creatures that cannot fly or easily climb the walls of this chamber (DC 25 Climb check to move along the relatively smooth walls) can navigate the chamber by making Acrobatics checks to jump from one pillar to the next—note that the rounded tops of these stones impart a –5 penalty on Acrobatics checks made to jump from point to point. Further complicating the navigation of this room is the fact that Zorek's *guards and wards* effect generates a *gust of wind* here that could knock creatures off walls or



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## OVINRBAANE, ENEMY OF ALL ENEMIES (MINOR ARTIFACT)

**Aura** Strong evocation; **CL** 20th

**Slot** none; **Weight** 12 lbs.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Alignment** CN; **Ego** 25

**Senses** 60 ft. vision and hearing

**Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

**Communication** empathy

**Lesser Powers** *aid* 3/day (CL 17th), *modify memory* (DC 16, affects wielder only) 1/day

**Special Purpose** defeat/slay all; **Dedicated Power** wielder gains *freedom of movement* and *dispel magic* (CL 20th) against opposing attacks and effects (the *dispel magic* attempts to dispel any offensive effect once only as it first takes effect on the sword's wielder)

### DESCRIPTION

*Ovinrbaane* (literally translated as "enemy of all enemies") is a cursed, intelligent +3 *wounding greatsword*. When *Ovinrbaane* succeeds at a contest of will, it uses *modify memory* to mislead its wielder into believing he's the real Armag and that anyone around him who isn't obviously a member of his tribe is a mortal enemy. The cursed greatsword also slowly changes the features of the wielder over the course of several days or even weeks to appear as those of the original Armag. If left unchecked, these powers seemingly bring the warlord back to life—it's the wait for this subtle transformation to be complete that's kept Armag in "meditation" in this chamber for so long.

### DESTRUCTION

To destroy *Ovinrbaane*, its wielder must bring it to the Boneyard and strike three blows against his own gravestone, causing the sword to shatter.

stones if they fail a DC 16 Fortitude save. The wind only blows for 1 round, but it activates as soon as someone stands on the southern hallway after navigating the room, likely affecting the rest of the party still within.

**Creatures:** Anyone who falls into the pit, walks across the ground, or otherwise disturbs the soil awakens this chamber's nightmarish guardians—swarms of bright red army ants, each the size of a person's finger. In all there are five army ant swarms—once roused, they'll climb up pillars or walls to attack foes, pursuing creatures as far as area D6 or D9.

## ARMY ANT SWARMS (4)

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 49 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 16)

## D8. EMPTY CHAMBERS

**Treasure:** Each of these chambers previously served as living space for those who helped construct the

tomb. Now they contain a variety of historical relics and curious minor art objects from Armag's age. Each chamber contains 2d8 × 100 gp worth of valuable but forgotten treasures.

## D9. TEST OF PROWESS (CR 13)

Four massive pillars hold up this large dome-shaped chamber's ceiling, which rises to a height of fifty feet. At the room's center stands a towering suit of spiked armor.

**Creatures:** The statue at the center of the room is an iron golem crafted to resemble Gorum himself (the imagery can be recognized with a DC 15 Knowledge [religion] check). This iron golem can receive a *make whole* effect from Gorum up to three times per day as a swift action, repairing 5d6 points of damage per use. The golem animates as soon as anyone enters this chamber, and it fights until destroyed, pursuing foes throughout the tomb if necessary.

## IRON GOLEM

CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 129 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 162)

## D10. CAVERN OF THE SLAIN (CR 11)

The corridor emerges into a huge natural cavern supported by a single, immense pillar of stone. To the west rises a twenty-foot-high ridge capped by a small forest of stalagmites. The ceiling rises to a height of forty feet above.

Gorum's followers and the Tiger Lords refer to this chamber as the Cavern of the Slain. Legend says it contains an army of undead forever bound to the Kellid warlord—these rumors are true. The ridge to the west can be climbed with a DC 20 Climb check.

**Creatures:** A small army of undead skeletons stands at eternal attention in the western part of this room, hiding among the spires of sharp stalagmites and watching for intruders into the Cavern of the Slain. Each of these is a skeletal champion, once a fighter devoted to the original Armag, empowered still by echoes of Gorum's rage against Pharasma for slaying his favored champion. While this magic yet binds the souls of the dead to Gorum's undying service, the wielder of *Ovinrbaane* (currently Armag) can also command the obedience of these undead—Armag has called eight of the champions to his side in area D12, but the other eight still remain here to protect the cavern.

## BLOODY SKELETAL CHAMPIONS (8)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each



Human bloody skeletal champion fighter 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250–252)

NE Medium undead (human)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

## DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 shield)

**hp** 72 each (8 HD; 2d8+6d10+30); fast healing 4

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/bludgeoning;

**Immune** cold, undead traits

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *greatsword* +12/+7 (2d6+12/19–20)

**Ranged** +1 *composite longbow* +10/+5 (1d8+11/x3)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** These bloody skeletal champions open combat with their bows and then split into two groups as the PCs approach, allowing at least half their number to hang back and continue firing arrows while the others engage in melee. They always use Deadly Aim and Power Attack when attacking (their statistics above reflect this tactic).

**Morale** These undead fight until destroyed.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 18, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 10,

**Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +11;

**CMD** 24

**Feats** Deadly Aim, Improved

Initiative, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (*greatsword*), Weapon Focus (*composite longbow*), Weapon Specialization (*greatsword*), Weapon Specialization (*composite longbow*)

**Skills** Intimidate +13, Perception +10, Ride +7, Stealth +11

**Languages** Common

**SQ** armor training 1, weapon training (heavy blades +1)

**Gear** breastplate, +1 *greatsword*, +1 *composite longbow* (+4 Str) with 20 arrows

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Deathless (Su)** A bloody skeletal champion is destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points, but it returns to life 1 hour later at 1 hit point, allowing its fast healing to resume healing it thereafter. A

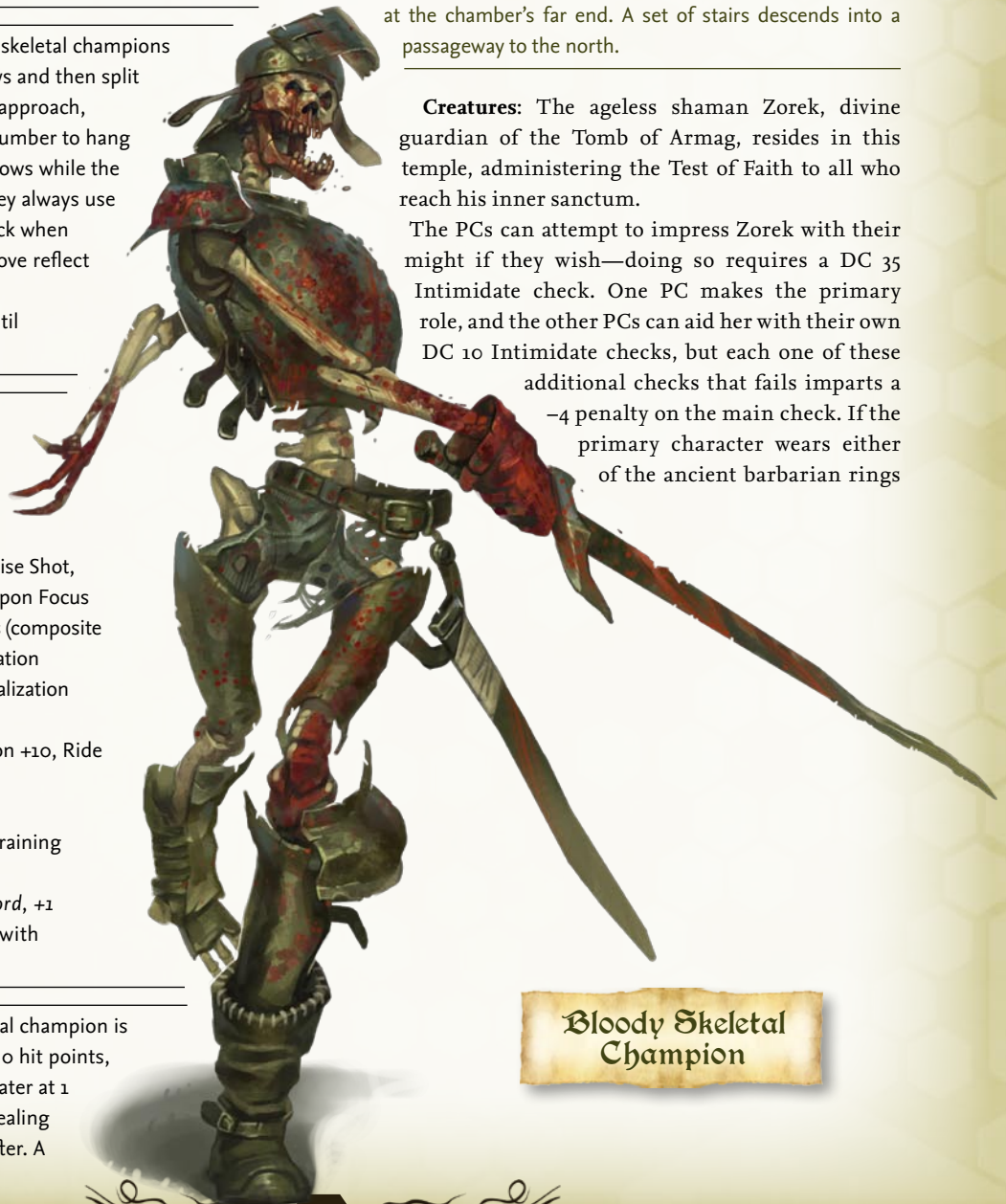
bloody skeletal champion can be permanently destroyed if it is destroyed by positive energy, if it is reduced to 0 hit points in the area of a *bless* or *hallow* spell, or if its remains are sprinkled with a vial of holy water. Destroying the runes inscribed on the wall at area **D5** removes the deathless quality from these undead.

## D11. TEMPLE OF GORUM (CR 12)

Two churning fountains take up alcoves to the east and west of this immense chamber, their water cascading down the faces of beautifully rendered maidens as if they were crying for the souls lost in battle. Directly ahead, four rows of intricately carved columns reach deeper into the chamber, resembling armed soldiers kneeling in honor of the massive statues of Gorum at the chamber's far end. A set of stairs descends into a passageway to the north.

**Creatures:** The ageless shaman Zorek, divine guardian of the Tomb of Armag, resides in this temple, administering the Test of Faith to all who reach his inner sanctum.

The PCs can attempt to impress Zorek with their might if they wish—doing so requires a DC 35 Intimidate check. One PC makes the primary role, and the other PCs can aid her with their own DC 10 Intimidate checks, but each one of these additional checks that fails imparts a –4 penalty on the main check. If the primary character wears either of the ancient barbarian rings



**Bloody Skeletal Champion**



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(such as the *ring of evasion* from area **M48**, or the *ring of swimming* from “Stolen Land”) she gains a +5 bonus on her Intimidate check per ring worn, but if the wearer of the rings is not the primary roller for the check, every ring present among the PCs imparts a –5 penalty on the check. With a successful Intimidate check, Zorek nods silently and steps aside, allowing the PCs to proceed to area **D14**—otherwise he shakes his head sadly and attacks.

## ZOREK

CR 12

XP 12,800

Male human divine guardian cleric of Gorum 12 (*Advanced Bestiary* 60)

CN Medium humanoid (chaotic, human)

Init +4; Senses Perception +16

### DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +4 deflection, –1 Dex, +2 natural, –1 size)

hp 150 (12d8+96); fast healing 5

Fort +16, Ref +3, Will +13

**Defensive Abilities** ability healing; **DR** 5/evil; **Immune** disease, mind-affecting effects, poison

**Weaknesses** bound to the faith

### OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

**Melee** +3 *anarchic spear* +19/+14 (2d6+13/19–20/x3)

**Special Attacks** channel positive energy (6d6, DC 19, 6/day), might of the gods (+12, 12 rounds/day), weapon master (12 rounds/day)

### Divine Guardian Spell-

**Like Abilities** (CL 12th; concentration +15)

At will—*dimension door* (to any location in Armag’s Tomb)

3/day—*alarm*, *knock*

1/day—*arcane lock*, *augury*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *commune*, *dismissal* (DC 18), *guards and wards*, *hold portal*

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 12th; concentration +17)

8/day—*battle rage* (+6 damage), *strength* surge (+6)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 12th; concentration +17)

6th—*antilife shell*, *blade barrier*<sup>D</sup> (DC 21), *heal*

5th—*flame strike* (2; DC 20), *greater command* (DC 20), *righteous might*<sup>D</sup>, *wall of stone*

4th—*air walk*, *chaos hammer* (DC 19), *divine power*<sup>D</sup>, *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon*

3rd—*dispel magic* (2), *invisibility purge*, *magic vestment*<sup>D</sup>, *searing light*, *wind wall*

2nd—*bear’s endurance*, *bull’s strength*<sup>D</sup>, *hold person* (DC 17), *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*

1st—*command* (DC 16), *divine favor*, *enlarge person*<sup>D</sup>, *obscuring mist*, *protection from law*, *sanctuary*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *light*, *mending*, *stabilize*

**D** Domain spell; **Domains** Strength, War

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Zorek casts *magic vestment* and *greater magic weapon* daily. His status as divine guardian allows him to track the PCs’ movements through the tomb, and as they approach this chamber, he casts the following spells in this order: *freedom of movement*, *air walk*, *bear’s endurance*, *bull’s strength*, *shield of faith*, *righteous might*, and *divine favor*.

**During Combat** Zorek’s first acts in combat are to cast *antilife shell* and to moves to the top of the stairs leading down to area **D12**. He then uses his ranged spells to soften up the PCs for 4 rounds (favoring *blade barrier*, his *flame strikes*, and *chaos hammer*) before negating his *antilife shell* by stepping up to engage the PCs in melee. Zorek casts *heal* on himself whenever he drops below 60 hit points.

**Morale** Zorek fights to the death—if he’s slain by mortals, he is granted the true freedom of death as certainly as if his charge to guard the tomb had been completed (although Zorek doesn’t realize this).

### STATISTICS

**Str** 24, **Dex** 8, **Con** 23, **Int** 8, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 16  
**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 30



Zorek



**Feats** Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (spear), Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (spear)

**Skills** Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +16, Sense Motive +0, Survival +11

**Languages** Hallit

**SQ** blessed life, sacred site

**Gear** +1 light fortification hide armor, +1 anarchic spear

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Ability Healing (Ex)** As a divine guardian, Zorek heals 1 point of ability damage per round in each damaged ability score.

**Blessed Life (Ex)** Zorek does not age or breathe, and he doesn't need to eat, drink, or sleep.

**Bound to the Faith (Ex)** A worshiper of Gorum with the Command Undead or Turn Undead feat can use the effects of these feats on Zorek as if he were an undead creature. Zorek suffers a –4 penalty on his Will save to negate the effect.

**Sacred Site (Ex)** Zorek is bound to guard Armag's Tomb by Gorum himself, and he cannot leave the tomb complex. Should Zorek ever leave the tomb, he immediately takes 6d6 points of Constitution drain as the years of lost food, drink, and sleep return tenfold.



## DEFENSE

**AC** 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, –2 rage)

**hp** 204 (14 HD; 5d12+9d10+117)

**Fort** +16, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8; +2 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2, trap sense +1, improved uncanny dodge

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** Ovinrbaane +24/+19/+14

(2d6+21/17–20 plus 1 bleed)

**Special Attacks** rage (18 rounds per day), rage powers (no escape, rolling dodge +1)

## TACTICS

**During Combat** At the beginning of combat, Ovinrbaane casts *aid* on Armag and modifies his memory to make him believe that the PCs are his greatest enemies.

He then rages and charges the strongest enemy in sight, using Improved Vital Strike and Power Attack—he continues using Power Attack throughout the battle. If surrounded by multiple foes, he uses Great Cleave. Against spellcasters, he counts on Ovinrbaane's *dispel magic* power to shield him from debilitating effects, preferring to take down a spellcaster's protectors before turning the blade on her.

**Morale** Even before he succumbed to the bloodlust of Ovinrbaane, Armag never retreated or surrendered—he fights to the death.

## STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 35

**Feats** Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

**Skills** Intimidate +18, Perception +10, Survival +13, Swim +15

**Languages** Hallit

**SQ** armor training 2, weapon training (axes +2, heavy blades +1)

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure serious wounds* (3); **Other Gear** +3 breastplate with masterwork armor spikes, +2 keen battleaxe, Ovinrbaane (see sidebar), *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical might* +2 (Strength and Constitution), *ring of protection* +2

## D12. ARMAG'S ARMORY (CR 14)

Ten flickering braziers cast long shadows across this huge chamber, their wavering light gleaming from walls spattered with blood. The air reeks of decay, for the violently hacked bodies of a dozen men lie strewn about the chamber.

The dead bodies are all that remains of Armag's honor guard—once he claimed Ovinrbaane, the cursed weapon forced him to attack and slay his men as proof of his devotion.

**Creatures:** Armag the Twice-Born may have slaughtered his men, but he is not alone—he is accompanied and protected by eight of the undead skeletal champions from area D10. Already warned by Zorek of the PCs' presence in the tomb, Armag eagerly awaits their arrival—another chance for him to prove his worth to his new weapon. He and his skeleton minions attack as soon as the PCs arrive.

### ARMAG THE TWICE-BORN

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male human barbarian 5/fighter 9

CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +10

### BLOODY SKELETAL CHAMPIONS (8)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 72 each (see page 53)

**Treasure:** If you aren't comfortable with giving the PCs a powerful weapon like Ovinrbaane, simply play up its disadvantages—if you wish, you can even treat the weapon as a cursed *berserking sword* (see page 543 of *Pathfinder RPG*)



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## Slough Rumors

d10

Roll Rumor

- 1 The Tiger Lord barbarians have a new warlord who seeks a powerful weapon long thought lost—if he finds this weapon, he may become a dangerous foe.
- 2 Baron Drelev has taken on a beautiful young lover, much to his wife's dismay, and with good cause—for this lover is in fact a succubus who has dominated the baron and is behind all of Fort Drelev's problems. (Partly false—the baron's lover is human.)
- 3 There's a secret tunnel between the dungeons of Drelev Keep and a hidden exit somewhere near the city.
- 4 Baron Drelev was a plant from Pitax from the start, and he's only now showing his true colors—"surrendering" to Irovetti was just a sham. (False)
- 5 The most powerful boggard tribe in the swamp has found a strange new god to worship.
- 6 Giants have been spotted to the north—they say they're part of a larger force moving in from Numeria and carry with them strange weaponry. (False)
- 7 People say the black dragon Ilthuliak has returned to the Stolen Lands and has recently moved into Hooktongue Slough.
- 8 An old but dangerous saber-toothed tiger called Speartooth lives somewhere in the hills north of the swamp. Baron Drelev hired some sort of hard-case hunter to seek the tiger out and kill it, but the tiger must have eaten him since no one's heard of the hunter since.
- 9 A tribe of strange, intelligent insects known as bog striders live in the swamp. They're said to be at war with the much more prolific boggards.
- 10 Old Hooktongue, the lake monster, hasn't been sighted in many years—maybe he died?

*Core Rulebook*). You should certainly play up the artifact's personality if the PCs keep it—its power will certainly come in handy as the Kingmaker Adventure Path enters the final two adventures, but you should never let the PCs feel fully comfortable in the chaotic artifact's presence.

## D13. ARMAG'S TOMB

A massive raised dais supports a coffin of black stone to the west in this large austere chamber, while the walls to the east are decorated with a bas-relief of a stern barbarian dressed for war and wielding a greatsword.

This chamber serves as the final resting place for the original Armag's body, which lies within the sarcophagus. The wall carving is actually a secret door (DC 30 Perception to detect) that lifts upward to provide access to area D14.

**Treasure:** Armag's body measures just over 6-1/2 feet tall and is dressed in +3 *hide armor* with dragon bone +2 *armor spikes*. A +3 *heavy steel shield* decorated with chasings of dire tigers lies over his chest.

## D14. HOLY SEPULCHER

Within this octagonal chamber, a five-foot-square alabaster pedestal sits inside a ring of brilliant light shining from the ceiling.

**Treasure:** Piled around the pedestal lies a treasure hoard of immense value. Altogether, it contains 599 pp, 11,378 gp,

23,617 sp, and 48,832 cp. The gems and jewelry include a 5,000 gp diamond, a 1,000 gp fire opal, three 500 gp violet garnets, an electrum crown with a blue star sapphire worth 2,500 gp, a ruby-encrusted silver armband worth 1,250 gp, and a malachite-adorned gold necklace worth 900 gp.

Also included among these items are a *bag of holding* (type I), a *belt of giant strength* +2, *horseshoes of speed*, a *necklace of fireballs* (type II), a *pearl of power* (2nd level), a dose of *restorative ointment*, a *ring of counterspells* (contains *enervation*), and a *wand of heroism* (50 charges).

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

As with all Kingmaker adventures, "Blood for Blood" doesn't really have an end point as much as it has a point where the next adventure begins. Even after the PCs depose Baron Drelev and defeat Armag, they can continue exploring the Slough and expanding their kingdom into this realm as long as they wish. Still, there are three elements to this adventure in particular that the PCs should seek to address.

The East Sellen River has been closed to trade for several years due to the aggression of the boggards of M'botuu. If the PCs manage to either defeat these boggards or secure their cooperation in allowing river trade, this important economic link between Brevoiy and the south reopens. As long as the PCs control at least nine hexes that include a portion of the East Sellen River or Lake Hooktongue as part of their nation, they gain a +4 bonus on their nation's Economy.





Without Armag or the Black Sisters stirring the pot, the Tiger Lords cease to be a true threat to their neighbors, but their raiding parties continue to be an annoyance. Handing over the greatsword *Ovinrbaane* to the barbarians as a peace offering is one way to appease them—in this case, the sword works at remaking a new barbarian in Armag's image, but without the Black Sisters, this new Armag focuses his anger not at the PCs or Pitax but north and east at Numeria and Brevoy. While the Tiger Lords don't actively serve as allies to the PCs, their presence helps to strengthen the northern border, granting an increase of 4 to the nation's Stability.

Finally, if the PCs manage to liberate Fort Drelev and push back Lord Irovetti's presence in the Slough, not only can they add a sizable city to their nation (once they expand far enough into the Slough, of course) but they are also well on course to becoming the largest and most successful nation in the Stolen Lands. This increase in national pride and accomplishment increases their nation's Loyalty by +4.

As the PCs' successes grow, however, Lord Irovetti of Pitax grows ever more jealous and wary. While there's no hard evidence to suggest he encouraged Baron Drelev to attack the PCs, the political situation should certainly suggest it. And while Irovetti would certainly love to annex the PCs' nation, he knows that they've grown far too powerful to defeat in a fair war. And so, as the PCs settle in to their newly expanded nation, Lord Irovetti sets in motion the first of several treacheries as he makes his move to claim the Stolen Lands. For what at first may seem like an idle invitation to a local tournament is destined to erupt into a war of the River Kings.

## APPENDIX: SLOUGH RUMORS

You can use rumors to encourage exploration or foreshadow coming events in the Kingmaker Adventure Path. The table on the previous page presents 10 such rumors and bits of news. A "(False)" following a rumor indicates that rumor is a red herring intended to spur further exploration of the Slough while not actually being legitimate news.



## Kingmaker Part 4 of 6



## Ecology of the Boggard

“I can’t believe I escaped—if one can call this leaking hell any kind of salvation. Were it not for the crudeness of their cages and the recent dryness that left them so brittle, I might never have made it out alive. Even now, I fear I must wade through this stinking bog for days before truly being free. Yet I would face any trial to avoid the fate of those caged alongside me, undoubtedly soon to be buried beneath the layers of mud that cake the toad-beasts’ crude idols, or in the belly of that thing they hide at the village’s edge and endlessly praise with their blasphemous croaks. And yet, even as I know my heart may never stop pounding, and as I still hear their wart-covered drums echoing in my mind, I can’t help but wonder why these things came for me, and what I might possibly do if they ever chose to come again.”

—Pathfinder Chronicler Trugarr Hammerlok



**L**airing on the fringes of civilized lands, dwelling in impenetrable swamps, diseased marshlands, and the inundated ruins left in the wake of greater civilizations, boggards embody the brutishness and superstition of primitive life. Existing in far greater variety than the races who merely consider them barbaric and uncouth “toadfolk,” the contempt most civilized races hold for them is far from unfounded. In their marshy realms boggards raise croaking prayers to merciless priest-kings, ravenous idiot demigods, and their fecund demon goddess Gogunta. Yet for all their overtures of piety and culture, among boggards the strongest rules and the weakest become slaves or, worse, meals for their bestial kin. Few know much of the mysterious and murderous ways of boggards, but those who have survived their encounters tell of violent hunts, cannibalistic feasts, ancient things sleeping amid the muck, and much, much worse.

## BOGGARD ECOLOGY

Just as humans possess different races, boggards exhibit different regional subtypes as well, oftentimes bordering on being distinct subspecies, arising through adaptation to different semi-aquatic habitats. For instance, boggards native to the Mushfens of southern Varisia possess various shades of green and brown, with a toad-like appearance. Those native to the River Kingdoms appear more frog-like, with a greasy green hue to their skin, while in the Sodden Lands and Mwangi Expanse boggard clans possess large levels of variation amid the more tropical environment. These latter boggards segregate themselves into different warring tribes, each with unique traits and colors, including those with the vibrant colors of tree frogs and strange abilities similar to the diverse frogs native to the same region.

Despite displaying a wide range of regional attributes, boggards in general begin their lives in a manner little different from normal toads. Boggards produce anywhere from four to 12 eggs in a single spawning, each roughly the size of a ripe orange. The eggs retain the thick layer of mucus and the transparent, gelatinous form of frogs’ eggs, but with a much tougher consistency, firm enough that they can be easily transported for their parents’ convenience. Boggard gestation takes 1 month on average. Largely colorless and translucent for their first week, boggard tadpoles eat their way out of their eggs, then rapidly develop immature versions of their adult pigmentation and color patterns upon exposure to sunlight. For 6 months they compete within their pools against one another and smaller swamp denizens, then progress to an intermediate form with arms and legs, maturing for another 3 months until they emerge from the water in mostly adult forms. These young still retain a number of immature features

for their first year: a stubby, vestigial tail as a relic of the tadpole stage, a series of hard cartilage ridges rather than true teeth, and stubby limbs that quickly elongate once they begin to walk.

## LIFE OF A BOGGARD

Life within boggard society is, above all else, pragmatic. Lairing in swamps or alongside forested rivers, they live among a multitude of rival races and natural predators. Faced with such perpetual dangers, their society, rather than rewarding strength, simply expects it. The weak and sick receive little sympathy, and any young with visible or even perceived defects never progress past the tadpole stage—being culled and left to dry for use in religious ceremonies or other rites. Those that do survive begin their training as members of boggard society, and finally go through a series of trials to reach the ritualized passage into true adulthood.

For their first 9 months of life, most immature boggards are largely sheltered from harm, kept within the confines of their spawning pool and within the clan’s village. After they emerge, however, they immediately begin their rapid ascent to adult responsibilities and expectations. Roughly a year after emergence, they develop adult teeth and receive a blessing from the tribe’s priest-king, as well as a ritual meal to mark their visible ascent to adulthood. This feast tends to be cannibalistic, when possible, being prepared from the flesh of those among the current year’s newborns judged too flawed or weak to survive. The rite serves to cull the clan of its weakest members, their meager lives going to join and increase the strength of their greater brethren.

For 2 years after their emergence from the spawning pools, boggard young live in gangs overseen by more experienced warriors, where they actively learn to hunt beyond the sheltered confines of the village periphery, gaining the practical skills and physical prowess needed for their and the clan’s survival. Regardless of gender or bloodline, all boggards receive virtually identical training, the only exception being those rare individuals with an inborn talent for sorcery.

Already considered adults, boggards’ final rite of passage confers membership within the clan, but the task is far from easy, with failure resulting in dire consequences. Each potential clan member is provided 1 month to find and single-handedly kill a sentient humanoid, be it a boggard from a rival clan, a lizardfolk, or any other humanoid traveling through their domain. At the end of that month—and not before—all hunters must return. Those who bring a corpse back to their village are welcomed as true warriors. Those who return empty-handed furnish the feast of those who succeeded with their flesh, being cannibalized to nourish the heroes



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of the tribe. Many simply never return, but due more to the dangers of the swamp than out of fear of failure's fatal price—though a rare and exceptional few do use this opportunity to flee their brutish culture. Boggard society enforces reliance on the community and the whims of the priest-king so thoroughly that thoughts of abandoning the tribe or disobeying the will of the group rarely enters the minds of individuals—often to fatal effect.

The life of a common adult boggard is simple, with males serving as expendable warriors and hunters—boggards making no distinction between the two—and females serving as domestic defenders of the village and young. Any more specialized task is decided wholly at the whim of the priest-king. Life varies little from day to day for the common boggard, as he fulfills the duties the tribe demands of him and participates in daily worship. This cycle continues until life ends, typically as a result of violence brought about by the attack of an enemy, strife within the community, or when age and infirmity prevents a boggard from defending himself from the

greed and impatience of his children and neighbors. The dead, like most flesh left for the community to dispose of, is either cast into the swamp or made part of an offering to boggards' foul goddess.

## BOGGARD SOCIETY

Boggards live at the whim of their tyrannical priest-kings, every day, act, and decision following the whims of these crazed, demon-worshiping dictators. No boggard has a profession or cultivates a skill, as any day their duties might change and even the work one boggard has completed with aplomb for years might become the responsibility of another at their leader's fickle command. Thus, few skills are mastered and few ambitions cultivated in this society of loutish slaves. The only constants a boggard can rely upon is the violence of the hunt and daily veneration of Gogunta.

Stalking the swamp and murky waterways provides boggards with all they require to survive, and whatever they find—from animals to use as food to supplies washed upon the banks—they view as gifts from their demon goddess. Very rarely do boggards hunt alone—a salient point for outsiders unfortunate enough to have to travel through their lands—a typical hunting party comprising from four to seven boggards, led by the most senior in their group. Such hunts track both swamp beasts and those who trespass upon boggard lands, making little distinction between the two other than favoring pursuit of the latter. Relying on ambush tactics, aided by the camouflage afforded by their earthy hides, boggards can often surround and capture unwary travelers, always preferring to take such prey alive to later offer in their profane rituals.

Inside their village, dwelling in huts built on decorated mounds of piled mud, boggards generally arrange structures in an order that matches the clan's loose social hierarchy. All mounds are arranged around the priest-king's, with larger mounds closer in and smaller mounds radiating outward. Sculpted to resemble figures from myth and legend, boggards decorate larger mounds with reeds, shells, pebbles, and animal bones. Beyond the central mound of a priest-king, the other mounds are themselves arranged along a very loose concept of family, with a mound-ruling patriarch giving away younger or distant family members to other mounds for service or mating. This in effect creates something of a mobile underclass that often shifts between mounds with the ebb and tide of social rank between the various mounds' ruling families. While the members of this underclass often possess less comfortable lives than their more skilled and higher ranking peers, they often have significantly more freedom to do as they wish since their social status makes them largely unremarkable.





Often maligned as uncivilized, boggard society simply lacks the industrial base present in most human and many non-human cultures to produce any refined materials beyond those produced naturally. Their swampy environments rarely provide the minerals needed for alchemy or metalworking, and the lack of political unity between various clans hinders trade and cooperation. Metalwork, be it weapons, armor, tools, or jewelry, must be brought into boggard possession by either trade or pillage—typically the latter. Even when metal makes itself available, boggards show little interest on a purely pragmatic level, given that their environment proves ill suited to its long-term use, rust and corrosion being common in their marshes. Magical weapons fare better and as a result are fiercely coveted, with the most powerful warriors and priest-kings invariably possessing one or more.

Beyond what metals and glass might be appropriated by raids or theft, most crafting materials common to boggard life are grown locally or produced from the hide, bone, sinew, and scales of local fauna. Most boggards wear little clothing, their warty hides providing most of the protection they require, with guardians and hunters donning a patchwork of leather or hide armor for their respective duties. Only the most powerful decorate themselves with jewelry, such as carved stone amulets, feathers, and polished scales. While the priest-king and his immediate cadre of guardians and advisors are afforded the trappings of wealth and power, most boggards are content to adorn themselves with patterns of daubed and smeared mud that dry to a whitish tan against their darker hides. Despite the crudeness of boggard crafts, where garb for their leaders and religious icons are concerned, they exhibit a flair for the grandiose, with priest-kings often wearing crowns, mantles, and accoutrements crafted generations ago and elaborated on over the years into regal panoplies of bones, fetishes, and imitations of royal wardrobes.

## BOGGARD RELIGION

Gogunta is the spiritual patron of boggardkind, the immortal devourer of boggard souls, and, according to her worshipers, their literal mother and racial creator. From her realm of Mephizim she casts her protection over those who feed her endless hungers for both the souls of heretics—also known as all non-boggard races—and ever more unusual sacrifices. Of course, the patron goddess of all boggards is not actually a proper divinity at all. Rather, the corpulent Mother of Swamps ranks among the demon lords of the Abyss, and one of the lesser members of their fiendish ranks. The foul Frog Mother dwells in a shared realm, her swamp of unimaginable foulness floating above the vast depths of Ishiar, the crushing Abyssal ocean of Dagon. Yet, despite her relative

## Boggard Variations

Boggards prove quick to adapt, both culturally and physiologically, to the challenges of their wetland environments. In many areas this has led to boggards developing distinct regional characteristics, some proving wholly cosmetic, others granting whole tribes significant advantages. Noted here are just a few variations documented among boggards. Except where noted, this additional abilities do not increase a boggard's Challenge Rating.

**Camouflage (Ex)** The boggard's coloration grants it a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks, increasing to a +8 bonus in forest, jungles, or swamps.

**Leap Attack (Ex)** As a standard action, a boggard may make a single attack during a jump. It can make this attack at any point along the course of the leap—the start, the end, or while in mid-air. While jumping, a boggard does not provoke attacks of opportunity for leaving a threatened square.

**Poison Skin (Ex)** The boggard secretes poison through its skin. Any creature that comes in contact with the boggard—as part of an unarmed strike or to attempt a grapple—or that is struck by the boggard tongue attack must make a Fortitude save or be poisoned. The save DC is Constitution-based. The following save DCs apply to a standard boggard. Poison skin increases a boggard's CR by 1.

*Boggard Poison:* Tongue or touch—contact; save Fort DC 22, frequency 1/round for 6 rounds, effect 1 Dexterity, cure 1 save.

**Sticky Limbs (Ex)** The boggard produces a viscous film along the pads of its hands and thighs. The boggard gains a climb speed of 10 and a +4 bonus on CMB checks made to grapple.

weakness and myopic concerns over the cruel amphibious life of the planes, Gogunta's influence is such that she can grant divine magic to those on the Material Plane who pay her worship. Most boggards remain ignorant and utterly uncaring of such distinctions between demon lord and true goddess, genuinely worshipping her as their race's patron deity out of both tradition and fear.

Each day, a clan's priest-king leads two hour-long croaking liturgies, one just before dawn and another just as the sun sets. These pounding, dirge-like choruses echo across the swamps and are often the first exposure many have with the race, filling their heads with dire images of just what their worship might entail. At each appointed time, swamp grass and flowers are burned, and the blood of small sacrifices are used to slowly extinguish the flames. Weekly, boggards provide a blood sacrifice of an intelligent humanoid, preferably from a rival race, but as needed, potentially another boggard (of a rival clan, or one of their own sick or previously exiled). Of course,



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should quarry present itself, no priest-king turns aside the opportunity to further curry Gogunta's favor with additional sacrifices.

While divine magic is restricted to the priest-king and the refined arts of wizardry are effectively unknown, sorcery is valued and feared, both as a suggestion of being an unholy gift from their patron Gogunta and as a threat to the status quo as these individuals might come to rival the power of the priest-kings themselves. Thus, boggard communities are quick to react to any suggestion of sorcerous power, quickly and often violently snatching such suspects away and sequestering them in cramped huts, caves, or tiny enclaves outside the village. There they are kept weak and hungry, force-fed only the strange, dream-bringing blue dragonflies holy to Gogunta and hearing only the daily rituals of the tribe. After months of such treatment, the "unworthy" die off, while survivors are brought before the priest-king. The priest-king judges the captive's faith, deciding whether to kill him outright, return him to seclusion, or give him the chance to rejoin the tribe as holy slaves to the priest-king. Those who accept live in a haze of dragonfly-fueled delirium, serving the priest-king's whims as sorcerous enforcers and mad oracles whose blatherings are said to be dreams for the goddess.

## CREATION MYTH

According to the boggard priest-kings, when Golarion was still forming, Gogunta rose from her reeking home in Mephizim and seeded the world with her eggs, each brimming with strange life of her own making. She spawned these first glowing eggs in a divine act of parthenogenesis, and from the greatest of these spilled the first mobogos. Pleased with her creation she slumbered for thousands of years. Upon awakening, Gogunta saw that the other gods had seeded the world with creations of their own, and in time they might drain the swamps for farmland and burn away their forest-cover with flame if left unchecked. While her mobogos were still favored, she spawned a second clutch of eggs and thus created the boggards, still cast in her image, but provided the same quickness to reproduce as the races the other gods had granted their subjects. Yet when she looked where to place her children, she saw that all but the swamps were filled. Yet, confident in her creations' ability to raise wonders from the bogs, she set them amid the muck. Countless aeons later, Gogunta stills waits for her children to impress.

Another legend claims that Gogunta was not always a demon lord but began her life as a mobogo and was elevated to her exalted status as a result of having lived a mortal life spent slaughtering just the right creatures and devouring just the right parts of their bodies—fueling her own apotheosis by unnatural prescience. Contrary to the boggard view of her origins, scholars believe more

likely she was a hezrou in service to Dagon (not precluding having once been a mortal mobogo before becoming a demon), and that she was ascended to her current status by the demon lord of the sea. Bolstering the academic view, Gogunta favors hezrous, and has been known to send them to guard or even lead boggard clans.

## BOGGARD PRIEST-KINGS

Cruel tyrants and mouthpieces of Gogunta, the Song of the Swamp, priest-kings are both masters and slaves of boggard culture. Priest-kings do not rise from among lesser boggards, but are trained and abused from birth to embody the savagery and zealotry their followers expect. All eggs laid by a priest-king's harem of wives are regularly exposed to a slurry of blue dragonfly pulp, the psychotropic properties of which cause death in nearly all young. Those males who survive emerge into a life of violent luxury, while females are quietly slain—propagating a racial lie that priest-kings give birth only to strong male offspring. These princelings receive constant coddling from their harem of mothers and the best their brutish race has to offer, yet also suffer being force-fed dragonflies to the point of near-constant overdose and the regular violent scrutiny of the existing priest-king. While the priest-king lives, his few offspring reside with his queens, attending him only during the day's religious ceremonies, performing as acolytes and, in times of greatest hardship, vaunted sacrifices. Upon the priest-king's death, whether by nature or more typically, violence, the eldest scion of the departed priest-king attempts to assume the throne. Such transitions usually prove tumultuous, as lesser scions seek to fight their way to ascendancy through unsubtle assassination attempts. When one does manage to take and hold the throne for a matter of days, he is accepted as the new priest-king, with his first act of leadership often being a mass sacrifice both to cement his rule and clear his home of any remaining siblings and all who offended him in his youth.

Due to their lives of sloth and dragonfly-fueled haze, boggard priest-kings often grow much larger than their common kin. While some can only be told apart by their adornments of rule, other priest-kings swell to such prodigious sizes as to appear like some wholly other amphibious monstrosity, moved from royal hut to worship grounds by a host of slaves. Regardless of their girth, boggard priest-kings have slightly different statistics than their kin, noted below, and often have levels in druid, cleric, or oracle.

•+2 natural armor

•+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, +4 Wisdom.

•**Swamp Magic (Sp)** While in the confines of a swamp, a boggard priest-king can call on the following spell-like abilities once per day: *fog cloud*, *jump*, and *summon swarm*.



## RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

Self-proclaimed lords of the swamps, marshes, and rivers they occupy, boggards are by no means the only race to inhabit their favored environment, and in many cases they rank among the less powerful despite their claims to the contrary. The swamps are dangerous places filled with many predators and rival races.

**Black Dragons:** True lords of the swamp, black dragons find boggards nuisances and typically kill them simply to keep their numbers down. Occasionally, though, they might strike bargains with clans led by especially canny and intelligent priest-kings, replacing Gogunta or local mobogoes as the focus of an entire tribe's worship. Only the presence of a patron hezrou makes for a legitimate threat to a mature dragon.

**Lizardfolk:** Of all their enemies, boggard clans come into conflict with lizardfolk more frequently than with any other. Due to both proximity in swamplands and racial hatred of one another, any state beyond open warfare is a rarity. Virtually all boggard clans will decorate the mound of their priest-king with lizardfolk bones, and likewise most lizardfolk villages sport impaled and broken boggard skulls raised high in the air.

**Mobogoes:** Unholy heralds of Gogunta, said to be the children of the demoness, mobogoes are degenerate toad-like brutes revered by boggardkind. Related to boggards in some blasphemous fashion—likely being demonically tainted throwbacks to a time of even greater savagery—these creatures are often served by their lesser kin. Although most prove less wise than boggard priest-kings, their strength and place in the toadfolk's mythology see them treated as demigods and living conduits of the goddess's word. In truth, though, mobogoes know and care little of Gogunta beyond what they glean from those who revere them, though they eagerly accept the sacrifices they're regularly offered. The cagiest priest-kings acknowledge the dull-wittedness of their supposed prophets, learning to manipulate the powerful beasts to serve their needs while using fear of the beast to control their tribe. Boggards usually live in close proximity to the caves and reeking dens mobogoes construct, but prove wise enough to keep a distance from the easily irritated and ever hungry beasts.

**Humans:** While less commonly encountered than lizardmen, humans do occasionally clash with boggards, and when they do, it tends to be on a large scale. Usually at the whims of ambitious priest-kings, boggard clans might suddenly strike en masse on human settlements bordering their homelands. Thankfully for both species, they're both prone to ignoring one another save when individuals trespass beyond their traditional lands, with such losses considered an acceptable price for maintaining peace.



## Dragonflies

All boggard tribes breed a strange insect found only in and around their communities: the swampseer dragonfly, or merely, the "blue dragonfly." Raised in captivity in boggard villages, blue dragonflies are fed a sickening slurry of rare molds, fatted insects, and boggard secretions—including blood—thrown directly into pools covered over with fine netting. While many dragonflies escape into the wild, those that linger gradually grow too fat to fly for more than a few moments, and even then only in weird darting spirals suggestive of some mental defectiveness. Although short lived—adults rarely surviving for more than a month—blue dragonflies prove highly fecund and just a few can turn into hundreds in the span of weeks. Boggard priest-kings also hold some secret means of creating blue dragonflies should their tribe's supply be destroyed, but whether this proves some alchemical transformation, magical summoning, or the will of Gogunta herself, no non-boggard can say.

The value of blue dragonflies comes not from their use as a food source, but rather as an entheogen. Producing a potent toxin, any creature that consumes the body of one of the insects is exposed to its dangerous effects, which include a haze of wild, colorful visions—usually featuring monstrous insects and amphibians. Boggard priest-kings and others of their communities forced into religious service frequently ingest a pulp made from these insects, experiencing reality-blurring visions the most cunning among them interpret as visions and prophecies from their goddess, or simply inspiration to guide their own goals under the guise of zealotry.

Should any creature ingest a blue dragonfly, a slurry made from its body, or anything tainted with such foulness, treat it as being affected by the following poison.

### SWAMPSEER POISON

**Type** poison, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 18

**Onset** 10 minutes; **Frequency** 1/minute for 3 minutes

**Initial Effect** 1d4 Wis damage; **Secondary Effect** 1d2 Wis damage and confusion; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves



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# The Spoils of Kings

**Y**ou see that skull over there? That was King Imec, or so he styled himself, when he rode into the Kingdoms to seek a throne for himself. You've never seen such pomp and fool heartiness—gems and gilt, banners and baubles dripping off every ol' thing in all the places they aught never be. He lasted a whole four days, I'm told, before centaurs chased his men right into the thick o' the swamps. Some kobolds picked the slowest of them off along the way. The boggards and what's worse took care of the rest.

"What's that, now? You didn't come here for history? Well, then. See this circlet here? It was to be old Imec's crown. They found it in... well, you don't wanna know that, do ya? The sword's twelve gold shivs. Fifteen with the baldric. Hurry up and decide, though. Dinner's on."

—Thun Agurias, Pitax Merchant



## THE PRICE OF A THRONE

The River Kingdoms are littered with the remains of petty kings, would-be tyrants, and adventurers who thought themselves worthy of more than what was within the reach of their sword arms or spells. And though they did not live to enjoy them, some of these heroes of old still guard great treasures, held tight in bony fingers. As explorers and would-be rulers again turn their attentions to the Stolen Lands, stories and legends of such relics, in many cases long forgotten, rise again, sparking adventure-seekers' lust for power and treasure.

## LEGENDS AND LEGACIES

The Stolen Lands have not known a single, unified culture, much less a government or civilization, in any living memory. It is a place of fey inhabitants, humanoid monsters, bandits, Numerian barbarians, and adventurers who would be lords over the region, to say nothing of the agents of Brevoy, from whom the lands were "stolen" in the first place, and who seek to reclaim the region for their nation. Given all the various powers and creatures struggling for influence and survival in the Stolen Lands, it's no surprise that many of them fail—and often, fail spectacularly. The remains of these heroes litter the River Kingdoms, in the form of both legends and the storied magical items that yet lie forgotten in unmarked graves. Usually the stories surrounding the rise or fall of legendary figures are wildly inaccurate, but often there is enough of a kernel of truth—a name, a famous battle, or a favored weapon—that evidence of such happenings can still be found in the present day.

What follows is an array of items that belonged to some of these figures, along with the histories that accompany them. As your players adventure through Kingmaker, you may want to drop some of these items into their path, either as rewards for their efforts or as tools to be used against the party and then claimed in victory. Whether they're engaging in some of the side tasks for the Adventure Path or pursuing goals of their own devising, any of these items might make appropriate spoils for their efforts.

Don't feel constrained to these items, either. If you have an item you'd like to introduce into the campaign but can't quite figure out a way to do so, just attach the name of a legendary bandit or failed conqueror to the item. A +2 *battleaxe* might be fun, but the *Axe of Vernok*, named after a warlord who centuries ago led a small band of warriors as far eastward as Heibarr before he was finally defeated, has both a history and a name, and perhaps even a long-lost heir waiting to claim it back from the players.



## BLACKWICK CAULDRON

Not all witches come from Irrisen, and it would be foolish for any resident of Golarion to believe that the witches of other lands and traditions are any less powerful or capable than those who descend from Baba Yaga. In the swamps of the River Kingdoms, the followers of Gyronna often weave themselves pots of flexible reed and cattail wicker, imbue them with immunity to fire, and use them as cauldrons for brewing, cooking, and divining.

The *blackwick cauldron* is one such item, but despite its association with worshipers of the Angry Hag, its powers are far less malicious than those of the witches, priestesses, and madwomen who are said to use them. Indeed, it's entirely possible for good-aligned witches to use the cauldron's powers as well, but with citizens of the River Kingdoms always looking over their shoulders for Gyronna's faithful, such good-natured users get little attention in local folklore.

Rumors persist of more powerful versions of the *blackwick cauldron* that enable even the least powerful user to scry on her enemies, transform creatures placed inside from one form into another, or even use the cauldron as a portal to an extradimensional space. While it is certain that some variations on the *blackwick cauldron* exist, most scholars caution that it is the user, and not the simple reed pot itself, that should be feared.

### BLACKWICK CAULDRON

**Aura** moderate divination and transmutation; **CL** 7th

**Slot** none; **Price** 8,850 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

Crafted from cattail wicker, rendered magically immune to fire, and blackened by years of use, *blackwick cauldrons* are but one variety of a number of similar items. Designed to aid in the crafting of potions and admixtures, a *blackwick cauldron* grants a +5 competence bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks and a +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to create magic potions with the Brew Potion feat. Additionally, a *cauldron* allows a user to craft multiple potions at a faster rate than normal. The user can craft a single potion with a value of 300 gp or less in 2 hours and can make any combination of potions totaling 1,200 gp or less in value in a single day.

In addition to its crafting uses, a *blackwick cauldron* can cast *identify* once per day on an item placed inside of it.

A *blackwick cauldron* can also be used as a focus or inexpensive material component for spells of the divination school, such as *clairaudience/clairvoyance* or *prying eyes*, as long as such focus or material component has a cost of 5 gp or less.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *identify*, *scrying*; **Cost** 4,425 gp



# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## CHADA'S HARPOON

Nearly a thousand years ago, the Kellid chief Chada stalked the borders of Numeria, Ustalav, and the River Kingdoms, followed by a loyal cadre of a dozen warriors whom she kept as guardians, brothers, and—according to some of the more scandalous stories—lovers. Although many thought of her as little better than a raider and a thief, Chada's band had a strict code of behavior and attacked no one who did not first offer them offense, insult, or violence.

Chada's most famous acquisition during her adventures was a chained spear, which she called her harpoon because of its ability to draw an enemy toward her from great distance. She believed it whispered to her, calling her to the sea from whence it came. In the end, this belief may have proved her undoing, for it's widely recorded that the illustrious barbarian met her death plunging from a cliff top into a rushing river, having drawn a nearly unstoppable enemy down with her in order to save her men. From there, it's believed that both her body and that of her foe were eventually carried downstream to the sea, leaving the harpoon waiting on the river's bottom for its next bearer, calling quietly from the mud and muck in hopes that it will one day be recovered—and perhaps lead yet another brave heroine to her death.

### CHADA'S HARPOON

**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 11th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 50,302 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

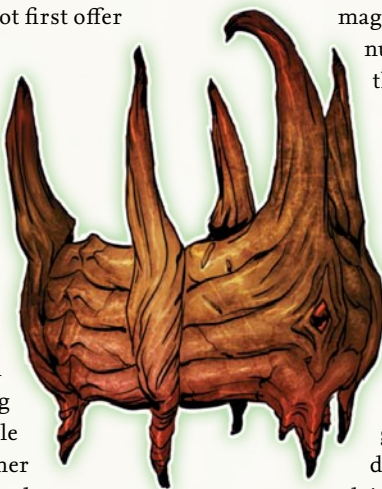
#### DESCRIPTION

This +2 *keen returning spear* is adorned with feathers and fur, as well as with a bright steel chain that trails down from the top of its haft.

On a critical hit, *Chada's harpoon* lodges into the target's flesh or armor, and the wielder can choose to pull the target toward him, reeling the victim in by use of the magically extended chain. This functions as the pull universal monster ability (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 303) with the following exceptions. Compare the initial attack roll (instead of a new CMB check) to the target's CMD to determine success. Success pulls the target 20 feet closer to the wielder. The wielder can make additional attack rolls each round (instead of new CMB checks) to pull the victim closer. Unlike the normal pull ability, *Chada's harpoon* can pull creatures of any size. Once the target is pulled adjacent to the wielder, the bull rush ends.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *keen edge*, *telekinesis*; **Cost** 25,302 gp



## CROWN OF ASH

Some fey style themselves as chieftains or lords over others of their kind, and these, like the kings and queens of other races, require symbols of their status to display to those who may not be initiated in their ways. The *crown of ash* is just such a piece of regalia. Crafted to impress not merely the fey of a particular court, but all those who might be visiting it, a *crown of ash* is simple in its physical appearance. Its magic, however, is quite powerful, coercing and nudging witnesses' minds and enhancing the wearer's own natural charisma.

The last reported sighting of a *crown of ash* by a non-fey being appears in the story of Cheirt, an unassuming pixie who had wandered from his home, flitting up and down the countryside speaking to flowers and otherwise keeping himself out of trouble. When he returned home, however, he found that his fellow fey had been cruelly murdered. Following the killer's trail, he at last located the culprit, a greedy human bandit named Enyso. Cheirt discovered that the man's goal had been to claim the fey chieftain's *crown of ash*, hoping to use it to charm the nymphs and dryads he encountered into acceding to his lecherous demands.

Appalled by the very idea, Cheirt attacked, first with *sleep* arrows, then with charm spells. It was a hard battle, for Enyso was a sorcerer, but in the end Cheirt overcame the murder and exacted the ultimate punishment, slitting the man's throat while he lay defenseless in magical sleep. Enraged by the object that had caused so much strife, Cheirt destroyed the *crown of ash*, and now travels the woods and fields seeking out any other crowns that remain, urging their wearers to destroy such focuses for mortal greed—and taking matters into his own hands if they refuse.

### CROWN OF ASH

**Aura** strong divination and transmutation; **CL** 12th  
**Slot** head; **Price** 29,900 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

This crown gives a +4 competence bonus on Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with creatures of the fey type. When dealing with creatures associated with fey but not fey themselves, such as gnomes, the wearer gains a +2 competence bonus on these checks.

The wearer can speak, read, and understand Sylvan. If the wearer of the *crown of ash* is not a fey, he gains low-light vision, a +4 bonus on saves against enchantment spells, and DR 5/cold iron.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Items, *comprehend languages*, *eagle's splendor*; **Cost** 14,950 gp

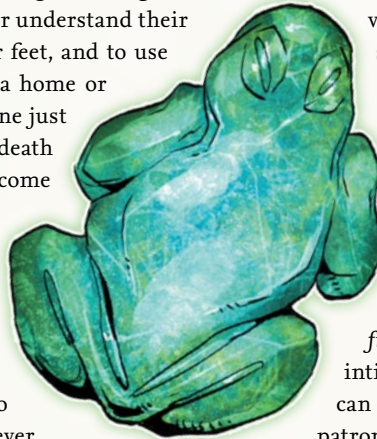


## STAFF OF STONEWEAVING

Named by its original creator, an inventive dwarf wizard by the name of Zackna, the *staff of stoneweaving* was designed as a means of allowing dwarves to better understand their relationship to the stone beneath their feet, and to use the rock as a tool rather than simply a home or source of wealth. While it may have done just that, in the generations since Zackna's death the *staff of stoneweaving* has instead become the hallmark of eccentric individuals with a penchant for stone-themed spellcasting.

One such individual was the notoriously daring Unjack Threerock, who found a *staff of stoneweaving* early in his career and used its powers to protect himself while attempting ever more dangerous exploits, often employing the *stoneskin* power of the staff to help him defeat monsters well beyond his normal abilities. According to legend, this series of adventures came to an abrupt end when Unjack found himself trapped in a dragon's lair and used the *statue* spell, only to be placed underwater by the dragon as it redecorated. He subsequently drowned when the spell wore off.

While it's possible that Unjack's staff still remains undiscovered at the bottom of a dragon's bathing pool, additional examples of this item likely exist in far more accessible locations.



## EMERALD FROG

*Figurines of wondrous power* are common enough magic items to scholars of the arcane and those well-versed in the wonders of spellcraft. Tales of such items even fill the stories of common folk, and over the ages, as they have passed on their stories, others have learned of such magic—sometimes to terrible ends.

According to some stories, the boggard clans native to Hooktongue Slough in the Stolen Lands have learned to craft a new kind of *figurine of wondrous power* unique to their people, an item known as an *emerald frog*. They do this not just for the power and intimidation these magical allies and servitors can bring, but also to honor their demonic patron, Gogunta. Some local folk with knowledge of such things fear that an exceptionally powerful boggard shaman might one day craft a figurine that can be animated into a mobogo or froghemoth, but thankfully that day has not yet come.

Though the boggards appear to be the original inventors of this variant *figurine of wondrous power*, its utility is in no way limited to members of their race, and the created frogs serve whoever wields the item. As a result, more than one deep-swamp trapper or explorer has happily rifled through the belongings of a slain boggard, hoping to add one of the magical figurines to his own arsenal.

### STAFF OF STONEWEAVING

**Aura** strong abjuration and transmutation; **CL** 13th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 63,180 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

A *staff of stoneweaving* is a staff of rough-hewn obsidian with a glowing ruby floating between the forked branches of its top end. It allows the use of the following spells:

- *Spike stones* (1 charge)
- *Statue* (2 charges)
- *Stone shape* (1 charge)
- *Stone to flesh* (2 charges)
- *Stoneskin* (2 charges)

Additionally, the *staff of stoneweaving* acts as a +1 *halfling sling-staff*. The staff creates its own ammunition—ruby sling bullets which disappear after striking or missing their target. These bullets are created by tapping the head of the staff against the ground (a move action). The user cannot pick up bullets after firing them or otherwise harvest them; at the end of the round after a bullet is created, it disappears from existence.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Staff, *minor creation*, *spike stones*, *statue*, *stone shape*, *stone to flesh*, *stoneskin*; **Cost** 31,430 gp

### EMERALD FROG

**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 8th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 7,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

This *figurine of wondrous power* appears as a small, innocuous frog carved of cloudy emerald. On command, it transforms into either a giant frog with the advanced template or 3 poisonous frogs—the user makes this choice at the time of activation. The frog (or frogs) can be animated up to 3 times per week, for a maximum total duration of 12 hours per week. If the advanced giant frog is slain, the *emerald frog* cannot be activated again for 1 full week. Each poisonous frog that is slain in combat reduces the total duration that the figurine can be activated for the week by 4 hours.

Either the giant frog or the poisonous frogs can be used as combatants or as small, unintelligent servant-creatures, performing minor tasks or fetching small objects. The giant frog can be used by Small or smaller creatures as a makeshift mount, although it is not equipped with a saddle or similar equipment, and its slick hide imposes an additional –4 penalty on Ride attempts.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects*; **Cost** 3,500 gp



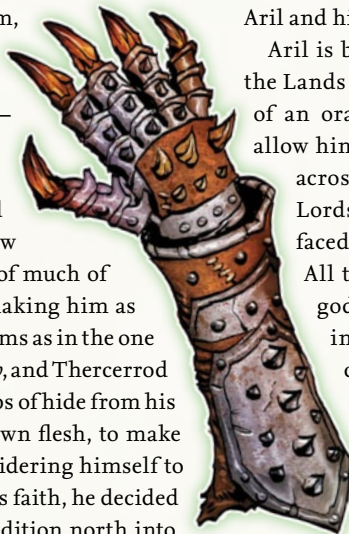
# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## GORECLAW OF THERCERROD

A powerful druid and worshiper of Lamashtu, the twisted man known as Thercerrod searched his whole life for ways to become like the animalistic beings he attempted to emulate. As he grew older, he spent more and more of his time in animal form, always seeking out new ways of understanding hunting beasts and adopting those traits they possessed—usually the violent ones—that he found most admirable.

After years of study, Thercerrod finally stumbled upon a design for a new magic item that would at last rid him of much of his dependence on his human form, making him as effective a combatant in his assumed forms as in the one he was born to. This was the first *goreclaw*, and Thercerrod not only donned it readily, but used strips of hide from his latest kill to stitch the thing into his own flesh, to make sure he'd never be parted from it. Considering himself to have just achieved a major advance to his faith, he decided to reward himself with a hunting expedition north into the forests of Kyonin, after which he would take word of his achievements to the rest of his cult.

One night, as he stalked prey within the forest, Thercerrod came upon a great stag. Both faith and an animalistic hunger called on him to kill it, yet as he leapt from hiding, he found himself transfixed by half a dozen arrows fired by hidden hunters. The arrows struck through him to hit the stag as well, and though it was sorely wounded, the great hart carried him northward across the West Sellen into the River Kingdoms, where they both succumbed to their wounds and died, leaving the *goreclaw* to be quickly hidden by falling leaves.



### GORECLAW OF THERCERROD

**Aura** moderate evocation; **CL** 10th

**Slot** hands; **Price** 23,305; **Weight** 1 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

These leather gauntlets and bracers are trimmed, backed, and studded with metal, and yellowed bear claws cap each of the fingers. Although it incorporates metal, use of the *goreclaw* does not violate a druid's prohibition against wearing metal armor.

The *goreclaw of Thercerrod* is a +2 *wounding spiked gauntlet*. If worn by a druid while wild shaping, the druid retains the +2 enhancement bonus and the *wounding* weapon property for any natural claw attack she gains during the transformation. Any effect that would improve or enhance such natural attacks suppresses the magic of the *goreclaw* for the duration of the effect.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bleed*, *greater magic fang*; **Cost** 11,500 gp

## MOLVĚNN

The Stolen Lands have many tales of conquerors and warlords—most of them meeting ignoble ends—yet one story even older than Brevoy itself still gets told around campfires. This is the story of the barbarian champion Aril and his famed warhammer, *Molvěnn*.

Aril is believed to have fought his way eastward from the Lands of the Linnorm Kings centuries ago, in search of an oracle who would reveal the secret that would allow him to claim his throne. As he traveled eastward across Irrisen and the Realm of the Mammoth Lords, down through Ustalav and Numeria, he faced strange beasts and inscrutable opposition. All this he had expected, but it was as though the gods themselves had told these creatures to stand in his way, preventing him from succeeding at claiming his birthright. The shamans among his ragged band of followers confirmed this fact. Each time the fates thwarted him, Aril's anger and frustration grew, and with his rage grew his power.

By the time Aril reached the eastern edge of Numeria, he had earned the name Thousandslayer. It was there, standing alongside the shining waters of the Sellen, that Aril realized the truth: the oracle he sought was *Molvěnn*, and the only secret he needed was that of his own power. At the urging of his shamans, he built a temple deep in the forest, and there enshrined *Molvěnn*, that its gifts might inspire heroes throughout the ages. Then, armed only with his own courage and strength, he turned back westward toward victory and destiny.

### MOLVĚNN

**Aura** strong necromancy and transmutation; **CL** 15th

**Slot** none; **Price** 63,312 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

This heavy warhammer is capped with steel spikes on both ends of its massive head, and a leather thong prevents it from falling from the wielder's hand. *Molvěnn* is a +3 *warhammer* that deals both piercing and bludgeoning damage. Yet although it is already a formidable weapon, its true potential is only realized in the hands of a barbarian.

Wielded by a barbarian, *Molvěnn* becomes a +5 *thundering warhammer*. The barbarian gains an additional 1 hit point per barbarian level when raging and can add twice her Strength modifier (instead of half again her Strength modifier) to damage rolls while wielding *Molvěnn* two-handed. Additionally, while *Molvěnn's* wielder is raging, she cannot be disarmed, nor can *Molvěnn* be sundered.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *blindness/deafness*, *rage*; **Cost** 31,812 gp



## PLUMED MANTLE

For generations, the centaurs of the River Kingdoms have made a pastime of shooting down great golden eagles with blunted arrows, then training them as hunting birds in order to pursue wolves and other big game. Occasionally, however, a modern centaur is surprised to find that the bird he has just brought down is, in fact, some foolhardy mercenary with a feathered coat and magical ambitions far beyond his ken.

While it's unknown where the first *plumed mantle* originated—having literally fallen out of the sky along with the first such unfortunate victim—a few centaurs now actively replicate and distribute the items. Though largely uninterested in the ability to fly, the centaurs are able to trade the cloaks for hefty sums useful in procuring items of more use to them, such as magical horseshoes or *handy haversacks*. Whatever deal they make, the centaurs are traditionally unwilling to promise safe passage to anyone who flies above their lands; after all, such foolishness is how the centaurs acquired the design in the first place, and more than one former customer has become an unwilling supplier after failing to heed a centaur's warning.

### PLUMED MANTLE

**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 6th  
**Slot** shoulders; **Price** 39,550; **Weight**

#### DESCRIPTION

This simple woolen cloak is trimmed across the shoulders with the feathers of eagles and other raptors, and permits the user to *fly* (as the spell) for a total of 30 minutes each day. These 30 minutes need not be consecutive, but each use of this ability that lasts for fewer than 5 minutes reduces the daily limit by 5 minutes. While flying under the power of the *plumed mantle*, the wearer has a +2 bonus on Fly checks, in addition to any bonuses from speed or maneuverability.

In addition to its powers of flight, the *plumed mantle* protects its wearer with a continuous *feather fall* effect, and makes him appear as a golden eagle to viewers on the ground. The wearer can suppress either effect by force of will as a free action.

While at a height greater than 40 feet, the wearer of the *plumed mantle* receives a +2 competence bonus on Perception checks involving vision or sight.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *feather fall*, fly, minor image; **Cost** 19,775 gp



## QUIEMA'S BRANCH

Perhaps a century ago, tales began emerging from the Stolen Lands of a dryad named Quiema, a fey creature of singular courage, strength, and conviction. An accomplished druid, Quiema was bonded to a tall oak near the center of the Narlmarches. One day, while exploring the forest, the dryad doubled over in pain. The tree, her home and friend, had contracted a disease, and it—and she—would soon die if she did not do something.

Using her magic, Quiema awakened the oak, giving it sentience so that together they could figure out a solution. Yet to her surprise, the oak did not despair over its fate. Since it had no mind before the druid's spell, it reasoned that it had nothing to fear for its loss; the tree would wither and die, as all trees do, and rejoin the soil soon thereafter.

Before it did so, however, the tree wished to see the river, and so it slowly uprooted itself and began walking toward the Sellen. As it went, it tore free one of its branches and gave it to Quiema, begging her to stay behind.

From this branch, Quiema crafted a powerful staff. She discovered that with its aid, she did not need to bind herself to a new tree, and continued to defend her forest, extinguishing fires and blunting axes, until she finally despaired of life and passed from this world. Her staff, however, remains somewhere within the Narlmarches, waiting for someone to take up the dryad's charge.

### QUIEMA'S BRANCH

**Aura** strong abjuration, conjuration, and transmutation; **CL** 15th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 72,750; **Weight** 2 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

This staff is crafted out of interlocking woods, woven together and knotted with holly leaf and mistletoe, with a cloudy purple gem resting atop it. *Quiema's branch* allows the use of the following spells:

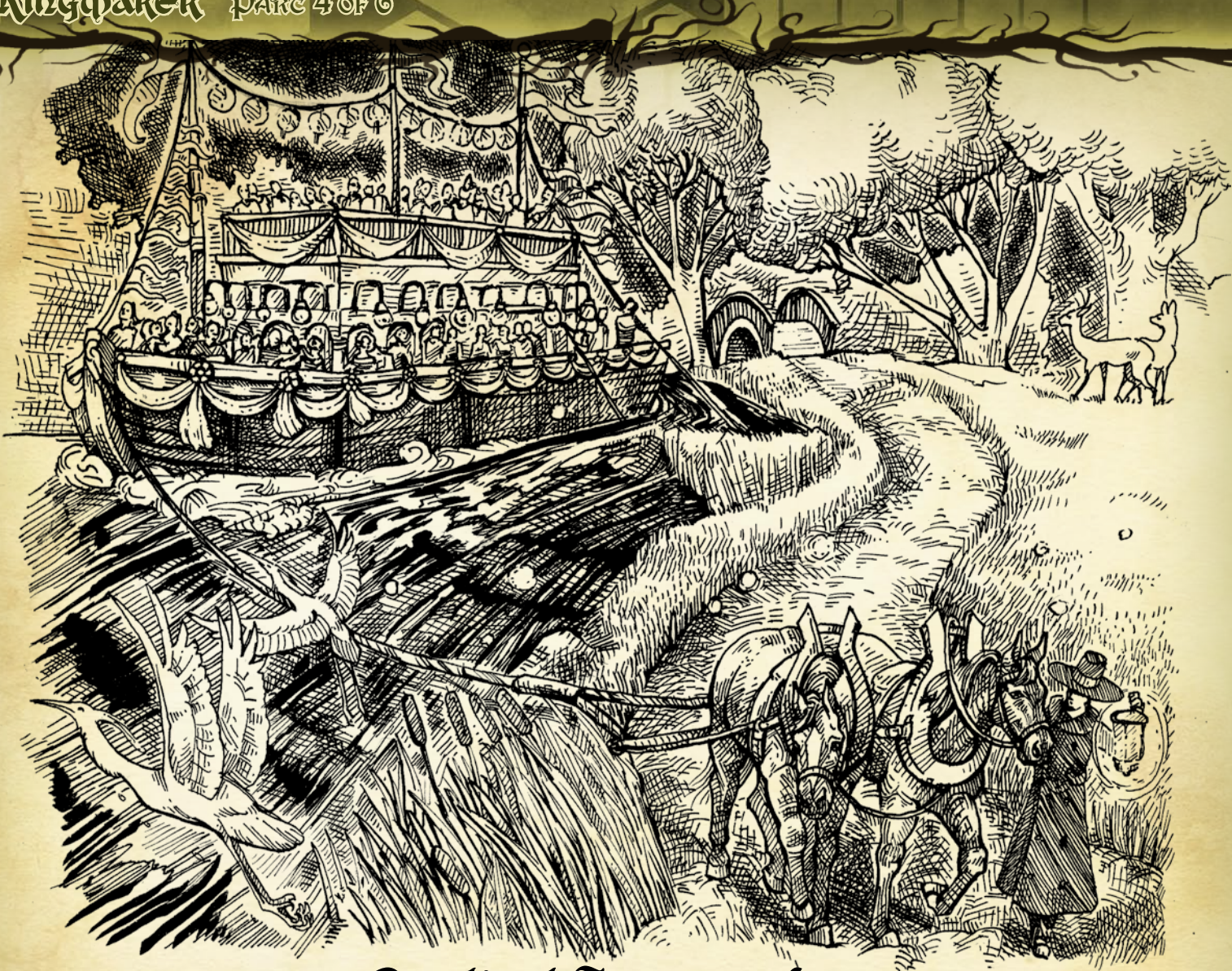
- *Changestaff* (2 charges)
- *Quench* (1 charge)
- *Repel metal or stone* (4 charges)
- *Transmute metal to wood* (1 charge)
- *Tree stride* (1 charge)

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Staff, *changestaff*, *quench*, *repel metal or stone*, *transmute metal to wood*, *tree stride*; **Cost** 36,375 gp



## Kingmaker Part 4 of 6



# Prodigal Sons: 4 of 6 The Fifth River Freedom

That could have gone better," Phargas stated. I shrugged, stepping down the road a half day from Jedda. "We have our wealth, our health, our freedom, and a good story besides. What more could a Pathfinder want?"

"Food," Phargas grumbled, "and a foot massage."

"You have me there, Phargas," I laughed, "but you, old man, will never be a Pathfinder."

He looked offended, then rolled his eyes. "Like you are..."

My companion grumbled, but it was to be expected. He was older, heavier, and less favored in all ways than I. Whereas I am Ollix Kaddar, sole heir to the throne of Kadria, finest of the River Kingdoms, and a fine figure of a man if I say so myself.

And I do. 'Tis the duty of a Pathfinder to chronicle truth, even if it seems immodest. And while I may not have been formally accepted by the Pathfinder Society, such niceties are immaterial. I have my wayfinder, I have my journal, and I have had adventures that would set tongues wagging and maidens blushing throughout the land.

"We have no cause for complaint. We rescued a beautiful woman from an unhappy marriage to a boor, and—"

"We missed the boat," Phargas finished.

"Easily remedied." I stepped onto a trail down to the riverbank and a copse edging alongside. "The bards say the finest way to see the Sellen is by raft, and I was raised to expect the finest in life."

Unfortunately, while bards tell wondrous tales of carefree vagabonds traveling by raft, they say very little



## The Fifth River Freedom

about building one. I was stumped, or I should say, stumpless. I had no means to fell trees and no skill with which to fashion a raft once I did. My father raised me for finer pursuits. But among these was making diplomatic requests. "Perhaps you might use your priestly magic to obtain us a raft, Phargas?"

He shook his shaven pate wearily but did go over to a willow. "Cayden Cailean provides," he muttered, snapping a withe and stripping the leaves. It looked a little small for a raft, and forked, but it wasn't me doing the magic.

He took it in both hands and the far end began to twitch like he had a fish on an invisible line. Muttering charms or perhaps curses, he set off, stumbling through curtains of willow.

I followed a bit more carefully until we stepped onto the bank of the Sellen.

It wasn't a raft so much as a small dock carried away by floodwaters, two-thirds rotten and half-sunk in the mud. Waterflowers grew through the cracks. I jumped to it easily, keeping my feet dry, and walked to the sound end, surveying the river.

Phargas squelched up. "Anything else, your highness?" he asked sarcastically.

It was then I heard the whistling. Pipes and flutes and warbling trills blended together into a harmonious polyphony echoing off the banks.

"No, this should do splendidly, Phargas." I waited at the end of the dock.

My companion was not from the River Kingdoms and so did not recognize the sound. I admit I relished his expression as the dragon's head hove into view, great jaws agape, laughing like a linnorm ready to devour its meal.

Sunlight glinted from the monster's scales. This one's were a beautiful cornflower blue, and once it rounded the bank, I could see that its name was indeed the *Cornflower*. The prow cut the river, the calliope at the crown played, and I waved the mask I'd kept from Jedda's festival in lieu of a hat.

I looked at my companion, still laughing. "What, you were expecting something less than one of the famed pleasure barges of the Sellen?"

Phargas grumbled a reply, but I grinned. "Cheer up, old man. As you said, Cayden Cailean provides. And he has."

Leaping to the boat was simplicity itself. I have danced the Unicorn's Charge, and a dock is nothing more than an ill-tended dance floor. Phargas, on the other hand, was less adept, landing half in the Sellen and half out, clinging to a towrope for fear of being left behind.

Blue-liveried stevedores grabbed hold of the line. One produced a gaffing hook and snagged the hem of the priest's robe. In this manner he was dragged onboard and unceremoniously saved.

"Old Hanspur nearly got you, yes?" the one with the hook hissed with the atrocious accent of the swamps. "Give sacrifice or old one take you yet..." He pointed to a shrine tucked underneath a flight of stairs. The others nodded, then left, pointedly averting their eyes.

Phargas looked at the shrine dubiously. "Who's Hanspur?" As I said, he's a priest, but not one from the River Kingdoms.

I jerked my head. "That's Hanspur." The icon sat in the shadows, an old man with a long beard fashioned from the inverted knee of a cypress. Upon his brow he wore a crown of cattails, shadowing bog opal eyes. Like swamper, Hanspur is everywhere in the River Kingdoms, but not spoken of in polite company—or at all, for that matter.

"What is the appropriate sacrifice?"

I avoided the opalescent gaze but still felt a chill. "Drowning someone." One did not speak of Hanspur if one could avoid it, but more important than that, one did not lie before a god. Especially this god. My old nursemaid Laraen had told me horrible tales of those who'd lied before the eyes of Hanspur only to have his brides come up from the depths in all their moss-green glory.

Hanspur's brides are something else the well bred do not speak of if they can avoid it. The vulgar term them hags, with skin the color of pond scum and hair like trailing lichen, at least when not disguised as beauteous maidens by means of their ensorcelments and charms. But not wishing to offend the crafty beldames, most simply call them Hanspur's brides.

Phargas looked at me, considering. "Your father would never forgive me if you drowned," he said at last.

"My father is not the forgiving sort," I agreed, glancing to the idol. "Hanspur, however, has been known to excuse those who escape his realm if they host a feast in honor of his brides." I paused. "That's coming out of your purse, otherwise it's not a sacrifice."

The Third River Freedom is "Walk any road, float any river." While this mostly means that no lord can hold the Sellen, it also means each riverboat is its own floating fiefdom with its captain as king. The *Cornflower's* captain, a dwarf sporting the latest fashion in braids, was displeased until he saw we'd brought money. Booking passage was less expensive than arranging a feast, but soon enough, both were settled and the captain was all smiles.

Phargas was less so, his purse now empty, and mine less half its weight. To make amends, I introduced myself as Pathfinder Ollix, but gave my companion a grander introduction, describing him as His Grace Phargas, former Abbot of the Shrine of Desna in Cheliah, forced to flee by devil worshipers. It was a story lifted from popular melodrama, but it made clear what I wanted implied: Phargas was a man of wealth traveling incognito, and I the same.



# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

"I thought you'd never been out of Kadria before," my companion objected. We stood on the Festival Deck, the edges strung about with Tian lanterns in blue, gold, and white, giving the appearance of a string of unusually tractable will-o'-wisp limned against the night sky—a string, of course, being the proper collective noun for a group of Hanspur's night lights, or however else you wish to term the demon's lanterns.

"No," I explained, "but sometimes the pleasure barges dock there, and I know them well..."

I should probably explain, as I did for Phargas: Nothing on a Sellen pleasure barge is what it seems. What seems a linnorm or river drake is in fact a boat. What appears to be an ignis fatuus is merely a bit of rice paper and a tea light. What seems like an unusually harmonious chorus of shrieking mushrooms is in fact a keyboard attached to a clever arrangement of whistles. And what seems a lovely debutante or daughter of a merchant prince may very likely be something else: a maid exchanging clothes with her mistress, a tavern wench who pulled The Cricket, The

Peacock, and The Crows—the Three Center Keys—in a Harrow lottery, an aged sorceress wearing charms to give herself the seeming of youth, or even one of Hanspur's brides crawled up from the river, disguised as the fairest maid of all. And, of course, there are always the resident harlots for the guests' enjoyment.

As was the custom, the ladies were allowed first access to the feast. Laid out on a snowy bier of boiled tubers and hard-cooked eggs was one of the great Sellen sturgeons known as Hanspur's steeds, almost four ells long if it was an inch. I have seen larger, but not many. This specimen was beautifully cooked, its plates replaced with artful slices of cucumber. Its eyes were carved radishes.

The obsequious swampers came forward bearing jugs brimming with green sauce such as my old nurse used to make. Blended with cultured cream were nine sacred herbs: three good—parsley, lovage, and chervil; three neutral—borage, dill, and salad burnet; and three evil—chives, cress, and sorrel. Ground fine, they gave the appearance of pond scum. As the sauce was poured down the sides, the sturgeon looked as if it were rising from the Sellen itself.

This recipe is also known to be irresistible to Hanspur's brides since, as old Laraen used to tease me, the sauce goes just as well with children as it does with fish. But this was the test: Which of the bevy of beauties lined up for the feast would reveal herself by taking the first taste?

Of course, green sauce is hard to resist even for those who aren't moss-colored beldames. Two slightly drunk halfling twins ornamented with starred tiaras and gauze butterfly wings in imitation of Desna, who either did not know the custom or else were amazingly petite brides, went up and began serving themselves, pronouncing it delicious.

"Do you hear that?" said the fish. "I am delicious! Eat me! Eat me or sacrifice yourself to Hanspur!"

One of Desna's barflies squealed and dropped her fork. It clattered across the deck. The other picked it up, then jabbed underneath the tablecloth.

Two half-elven children—likely older than me—ran out, laughing, and with that, the rest of the maidens descended on the banquet. And if Hanspur's brides were among them, who could tell?

Other dainties were brought out as well: a roast swan stuffed with a goose, stuffed with a duck, and so on with a chicken, a pheasant, a partridge, a pigeon, a woodcock, and finally a gilded hazelnut known as "the foolish lich's phylactery"; succulent cardoons (fancifully presented as the frittered heart of a shambling mound); an effigy of marchpane tinted, gilded, and silvered to be the very image of The Rabbit Prince and his broken sword; and even a brace of peacocks basted with saffron butter. They reminded me of Laraen's nursery story, how the peacock tricked the cockatrice out of his beautiful tail, and why it is thus unlucky to wear peacock feathers, for even a single

**"Oaths or not, never trust a leucrotta."**





## The Fifth River Freedom

eye from the stolen plumage can send the monsters into a frenzied rage.

Phargas loaded up a trencher, even having the temerity to break off the gilded hilt of the Rabbit Prince's sword (the maidens having already made off with the tail and both ears), but as he'd paid for this largesse, I wasn't going to begrudge him a bit of gold-dusted almond paste.

I myself was partial to peacock, so had snagged a wing as my right as Pathfinder. But with privilege come expectations, and I found myself face-to-face with one of the maidens. She had a lovely form and features so long as you overlooked the horned hennin headdress and long skirts commonly used to disguise the horns and the tail of a tiefling. "So," she said with the accent of the Chelish aristocracy—another damning clue, likely one of Chelias's devilborn bastards sent out on a grand tour in hopes that she'd find a less discerning or more financially strapped lordling and not come back—"you are a Pathfinder, yes?"

"Indeed." I nodded. "You may call me Ollox, milady."

"You may call me Belshabba." Her brief smile revealed small fangs and confirmed my suspicions of infernal parentage. "I have a question, O Pathfinder: What do you call more than one of those?" She pointed to the roast swan.

I breathed a mental sigh of relief. Venery is a common pastime among the aristocracy, and as such, I have memorized a good number of collective nouns. Or at least more than enough for flirtation purposes, since "the venereal game" is also a euphemism for an even more amusing pastime, and is in fact one of the reasons my father kicked me out.

I imagined his expression if I came back with a tiefling bride, but knowing my father, he would simply sneer and make some tart remark about me doing things by halves.

That said, one of my few duties as heir had been to attend to the annual swan-upping, an excuse to go boating, find as many cygnets as possible, and nick their beaks with the royal sigil of Kadria. As such, I knew the answer: "That is a trick question, dear lady. On water, 'twould be a drift. In air, a wedge, but on earth, a bank. Following that, while any swanning is an eyrar, roasted 'twould be a banquet."

"But there is more than one type of bird there."

"Then 'tis either a flock, as 'twould be for any number of birds, or, if it is to be considered one fowl, then a flight as for chimeras."

She nodded, tapping one red fingernail to her lips, then pointed to the crisped wing still in my hand. "And what would more than one of that bird be?"

"Two of any bird or beast is always a brace, milady."

"But more than two?"

I wasn't certain if she was propositioning me to disport myself with herself and another tiefling, or if this was simply more testing me as Pathfinder. "Well," I said slowly, "more than two peacocks are a muster."

"What if they were cockatrices?"

I racked my brain. With all apologies to Hanspur's green-faced brides, I knew it was a coven of hags but a covey of quail, a cete of badgers but a deceit (or pack) of leucrottas, and a pride of lions but a shame or cult of lamias. But cockatrices? "Well, were it a basilisk, 'twould be a colony..."

"If it were a basilisk, there'd be eight drumsticks and we'd stuff it with royal morels so it would shriek for the Feast of Asmodeus." She laughed lightly. "But cockatrices, O Pathfinder?"

I have to admit I was momentarily stumped.

"It would be another trick question, as a flock of cockatrices is simply a flock," said Phargas, sweeping forward.

Belshabba laughed. "I take it you are Ollox's senior Pathfinder?"

"Nay, milady," Phargas said quickly, "merely a humble cleric of Irori, Master of Masters, Bringer of Knowledge, and Keeper of all History that is, was, and is yet to be."

"Not so humble if you could host this banquet," she pointed out.

"Render unto Hanspur what is Hanspur's, and when in the River Kingdoms, do as the Sellenese do." He laughed like a man who'd spent his last copper on a lavish feast. "Besides, I have no desire to be devoured by a swamp god's green-toothed brides."

"Oh?" she said. "What about a humble daughter of Asmodeus?"

I was uncertain whether to be relieved at escaping a tiefling gold-digger or slighted at being passed over for someone older, uglier, and in all ways less favored than myself. I suppose it was a bit of both. But I took some small satisfaction in knowing that, apart from a feast and a diddling, there was nothing more Belshabba was likely to get from my traveling companion.

I was also intrigued. My friend Phargas changed which god he said he worshiped more often than he changed hose—which from what I'd seen was never, as he simply prayed for them to be washed and dried without the usual step of taking them off first. I was beginning to suspect he in fact worshipped none of them, and while likely not a cultist of Hanspur—his unfamiliarity with the forbidden god of the Sellen more than enough clue there—he was likely priest of some foreign god no one spoke about in polite company either, even if you got the appropriate ambassador exceedingly drunk and then had courtesans ply their trade.

I knew because I'd heard my father ranting about this on more than one occasion.

However, just because Phargas was not a cultist of Hanspur did not mean there weren't others, since it is said old opal-eyes grants absolution in advance for those



# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

who sacrifice early, and not everyone can afford sturgeon with green sauce. Pushing someone else into the Sellen, however, especially a drunken sybarite leaning on the rail of a pleasure barge?

I insinuated myself into countless conversations, using all my wit and charm to tease out stories of mysterious disappearances, tragic drownings, even outright sacrifice. However, from everything I was able to gather, Phargas's half-dip in the Sellen and feast in honor of Hanspur's brides was the closest anything came on the *Cornflower* to forbidden cults. Those from the River Kingdoms thought Phargas's propitiation only common sense, while those from outside found the whole business quaint and charming.

There are many words to describe the Drowning King, but these are not the ones.

It was then I realized there was something missing. "Where are the children?"

I had seen some about earlier, taking treats and sweetmeats, threatening to topple what was left of the Rabbit Prince as they tore off his lucky left foot, in general getting underfoot and doing all the things noble and wealthy children do at court. But now they were gone. And, as old Laraen told me, just as cygnet is finer meat than swan, so is it with humans, halflings, and all the others: Hanspur's brides find them more toothsome young. "The children?" I asked again, to the crowd at large.

"Oh," said one the drunken Desna devotees, "they're in the hold watching the puppet show. They wouldn't miss it for the world."

The children's hold was illuminated by magical torches with smokeless flame. Rows of benches were affixed in front of a blue-and-white-striped puppet theater, and transfixed in the former and by the latter were a multitude of uneaten children of every civilized race.

The proscenium arch framed a beloved scene: Nella the rogue, Baby Zora the mandragora, and Grizzlebane the wicked leucrotta, who was in the process of eating a rolling pin.

I stood transfixed myself. It was a Clever Nella show!

"You're out of weapons, girl!" declared Grizzlebane. "Now give me the baby and I won't eat you!" His hinged badger head was painted wood, as were his gangly stag legs, but his lion's torso and tail were stitched from tawny rabbit fur. He was a beautiful puppet and spoke with the classic voice for Grizzlebane: a cultured courtier with just the hint of a hyena's mad laugh.

"Swear it?" asked Nella. She looked like a human rogue forced to dress as a kitchen wench, which is exactly what she was.

"I swear it on my mother's heart," laughed Grizzlebane.

"Your mother's Lamashtu," Nella countered. "The Demon Queen has no heart!"

"Touché," said Grizzlebane. "What if I swear it on the Sixth River Freedom?"

"That's 'You have what you hold,'" said Nella. "I've got a baby." She swung Baby Zora by the hem of her gown, walloping the leucrotta over the head.

The mandragora shrieked, as did the children in the audience, but the latter with laughter.

"Ow!" yelled the leucrotta. "Is that baby made out of wood?"

"Maybe," said Nella, smacking him again. "She has a very hard head."

"Ow!" wailed Grizzlebane. "Then the First River Freedom?"

"Wrong again!" Nella smacked him with Baby Zora a third time.

"Children," begged the leucrotta. "Have pity on a poor monster! Which freedom is it?"

The children suggested one then the other, always the wrong freedom until at last the leucrotta did the math through his concussions and came up with the Second Freedom—"Oathbreakers die"—a lesson driven home in the first act when Nella swears to repay the Great Ga'zard, a gnomish wizard, for a timely teleport, only to find that, rather than gold or other services, what he really wants is a housekeeper, since it's hard for the Great Gizzard to find help who won't quit. But an oath is an oath, and the Second River Freedom is the only way around the Fifth—"Slavery is an abomination"—for while you cannot be sold into slavery in the River Kingdoms, you can willingly swear yourself into indentured servitude.

Nella then battles Tor Whitemane, an Aasimar paladin who is stupid to the border of delusional; Tor's long-suffering steed, Jenny the Burro (who Tor insists is a white palfrey); and Lily or "Pickle Lily," an elven sorceress who was a great beauty in her day, but whose day is centuries past, and who is angling for the horrified Ga'zard as her latest husband. Nella plays matchmaker for Lily and Tor, then maid of honor at their wedding, which mostly consists of Pastor Jackal, a gnoll cleric, and Nella beating each other over the head with a bishop's crozier and the bride's bouquet respectively. Then Nella finds her contract transferred as a nuptial gift. She's forced to babysit Baby Zora, Pickle Lily's spoiled mandragora familiar, which only Tor believes is a real baby. Or rather, only Tor and his arch-nemesis, Grizzlebane the leucrotta.

Which was the scene where I'd walked in. I took a seat and watched as Grizzlebane ate the shrieking Baby Zora then coughed up the baby bonnet and gown, for as is well known, a leucrotta cannot digest anything that is not flesh.

"That didn't taste like any baby I've ever eaten..."

"That's because it was a baby mandragora! A mandrake root soaked in demon blood!"



## The Fifth River Freedom

"You ate a vegetable!" I called out from the back row and the children took up the taunt: "You ate a vegetable! You ate a vegetable!"

"A poisonous vegetable!" Nella agreed. Grizzlebane, horrified and sickened, proceeded to vomit up the rolling pin, the mop, the broom, and the carpet beater. Nella caught the last, beating the sickened leucrotta offstage as I laughed and laughed.

The rest followed the familiar script: Next came Giddy the goblin clown, perpetually late to the baby-eating party. Nella beat him until he put on Zora's gown and bonnet, then presented him to Tor, returning from his honeymoon, with the classic line: "And look how she's grown!" Tor rewarded Nella by releasing her from her contract, pronouncing her a fellow paladin, and giving her his holy sword. Finally, the Devil appeared, trying to get Nella to sign another contract, but our heroine had had enough, repeating the first and foremost River Freedom—"Say what you will, I live free!"—while beating him over the head with Tor's sword.

"This will never play in Cheliakh!" yelled the Devil, an amusing line I'd not heard before.

But soon enough, Nella beat him to death, crying out her final line: "Huzzah! Huzzah! The Devil's dead! Now we can all do as we like!"

A little black dog in a harlequin suit ran out the puppet theater's front flap with a basket in his teeth to collect the children's tips. I saw all manner of gold and trinkets thrown in, even the marchpane left foot of the Rabbit Prince, but it was another foot that paralyzed me with horror: a cloven one visible just before the blue-and-white-striped cloth fell back down. The puppeteer was a devil!

My father told me to make something of myself, and though never the best student at the blade, I had been trained. While the children might have nothing to fear from Hanspur's brides, the heir of Kadria wasn't about to stand by while a devil preyed on children.

At least that's what I thought. It was like a puppet show: I found myself walking forward, stepping past children, pulling aside the curtain behind the proscenium arch. Then I cried out, my shock and horror turning to confusion, then back to horror as I revealed not the sinister horned head of a devil, or even the ghastly green visage of one of Hanspur's brides, but the head of a large badger with a mummified hand on a golden chain around its neck. Looking past, I saw the body of a lion and the legs of a stag. The puppeteer was not a devil or a hag, but a monstrous leucrotta!

"Would you mind?" the beast said dryly, in the same slightly mad but cultured voice he had used for the puppet Grizzlebane.

I found my voice. "Stand back, children! It's a leucrotta!"

"Look everyone!" The Clever Nella puppet floated in the air. "A wealthy prat!"

"I'm a Pathfinder!"

"The two are not mutually exclusive," said the Devil, alive again, dancing on the tip of the leucrotta's lion tail. "Daddy bought you a wayfinder, did he?"

It was then that I felt something hot and wet running down my leg. I looked. The little dog with the basket was lifting his against mine.

The children all laughed—human, halfling, gnomish, even the half-elven brats who'd been playing under the buffet. I felt a hot blush steal into my cheeks, but I knew noble children, having been one myself. They soon tired of my humiliation and left to find other amusements, leaving me with my shame, the dog, and the monster in the puppet show.

"So," said the leucrotta, ducking out under the flap. "Lord Ollix of Kadria, I presume?"

It was a great beast, but moved with the stiffness of age. I felt compelled to look at it as it spoke. The last thing you want is a leucrotta to know your name, for it gives it power over you. But at this point, I knew there was no use in lying. "How did you know who I am?"

"I have an excellent ear for both accents and gossip," the leucrotta explained. "I hear the rounded vowels of the Kadrian court, and I've heard its lord has kicked out his only heir..."

"I'm sorry," I said. "I'm at a loss. I don't know your name."

"Nor shall you." The monster grinned, revealing black gums and long razor-sharp ridges of bone. "But for stage purposes 'Professor Grizzlebane' has sufficed."

"Erm snuffles," said the dog, in a voice that was more growl than speech.

"Snuffles?" I repeated. First a leucrotta, now a talking dog named Snuffles?

"Shuffle," Professor Grizzlebane corrected. "Shuffle the Harrow-Reading Dog, my oldest friend here." He looked to the little dog, which sat up and panted expectantly. "Shhhh..." the leucrotta enunciated precisely. "It's pronounced with front teeth gritted, like baring them at something who wants your kill."

The dog's teeth showed briefly beneath his whiskers. "Wuffle!" He then looked in the basket, wagged his tail, and yapped.

"No, you may have it," said Professor Grizzlebane. "I don't care for marchpane."

Shuffle the Harrow-Reading Dog began happily gnawing the left foot of the Rabbit Prince while the leucrotta turned back to me. "You must pardon my friend's diction. Speech does not come naturally to his breed." He paused, then added, "And do not fret yourself. Just as I don't care for marchpane, I'm too old and wise a leucrotta to eat mandrake babies either."



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"What do you mean?"

"Simply think," scolded Professor Grizzlebane. "I don't expect your father holds any love for you, but were his heir to die, would he avenge that death, if just to keep up appearances?"

The beast was trying to get inside my head, twisting its word around my feelings, for while leucrottas are known to relish the kill, what they truly savor is tormenting their victims with every imaginable cruelty. "You lie, leucrotta!"

The monster laughed. "Perhaps. Perhaps your father despises you so much he would not even use your corpse as a political chit, refusing to shed even a single crocodile tear over something he truly regards as a tragic mistake. Who am I to say?"

Half of me wanted to say my father loved me, which I knew to be untrue, and the other half wanted to say my father hated me, but not so much that he'd spite his own ambition, which was probably closer to the truth. But mostly I was torn, and I hated Professor Grizzlebane like I hated my old tutor Doctor Birkaius because he made me think.

"Or perhaps you ran away," opined the leucrotta. "Perhaps your father tired of courtes—"

"If I tell the truth, will you stop the speculation?"

"Everyone wants something, little lordling. What would you wish in exchange?"

"You tell me your tale, I'll tell you mine." I stated the bargain as plainly as I could. "How does a monster known to eat children end up on a Sellen pleasure barge performing 'Clever Nella' for their amusement?"

The leucrotta grinned. "Did you watch the show?"

"Yes, but I—"

"Well then," said the old leucrotta, "quote for me the Second and Fifth River Freedoms."

Professor Grizzlebane's tale was simple yet interesting: When he had grown too old to lead his pack, he had gone off to die, a lone leucrotta, content to indulge in whatever petty cruelties Lamashtu sent his way until the Mother of Monsters granted him the final cruelty and the final kindness. Instead, she sent a leucrotta's worst nightmare: laryngitis. Thus afflicted, he was trapped, beaten, and as one last indignity, mistaken for a base crocotta and sold to the *Cornflower's* menagerie, an error akin to mistaking a naked gnome for a mangy monkey.

But as is said, even a leucrotta may quote the law. Once he recovered his voice, Professor Grizzlebane did: specifically the Fifth River Freedom, that slavery is an abomination. While his owner was wise enough to invoke the Sixth—you have what you hold—Professor Grizzlebane compromised by invoking the Second: oathbreakers die. While wise enough to avoid indentured servitude, he swore to work

for the *Cornflower's* betterment and to not devour, kill, or even harm any of her crew or passengers.

Of course, while this remained true in the literal sense, in the figurative, he was eating us alive, partnered with Shuffle the Harrow-Reading Dog for high-stakes Towers two days later.

Shuffle riffled the cards, and I still have no idea how little black dog paws could manipulate pasteboard so dexterously. We were playing Towers of Sellen. Unfortunately, this was not Towers as Phargas knew it, so my partner had not only lost the stakes I'd lent him, but most of the money I'd wagered besides.

Phargas and I played The White Tower, Shuffle and Grizzlebane The Black. The Black Tower currently led, having captured the neutral cards that flowed down The River many times, as the marks on the score sheet mutely attested.

I discarded two cards and gestured for Shuffle to hit me. Little black nails flipped me a brace. I moaned: The Fiend and The Snakebite again. They kept coming to me hand after hand, and when playing The White Tower, evil was evil.

"Ah, The Fiend again, young Ollox." Professor Grizzlebane chuckled. "Are you certain that is not your papa in the picture, devouring his own child?"

"I think it's you, Professor Grizzlebane. You're the only child-eater here."

"Tch!" The old leucrotta made a disparaging noise. "Leucrottas do not devour their young. And the little ones here? I feel like they're my own cubs: their cruel little eyes, their gleeful appreciation of torture, the bad advice they so freely give. Really, what's not to love?"

I should have considered it earlier, but the leucrotta's talent for getting under one's skin made him an excellent Harrow player.

"And The Snakebite," Professor Grizzlebane continued. "Perhaps the cards are trying to warn you? A false friend, perhaps?" His crafty eyes flicked to Phargas, then back. "Or mayhap an ungrateful child? That's the classic omen."

If I'd begotten an ungrateful bastard somewhere, I'd hardly be surprised, but as any of mine could scarcely be out of swaddling clothes, I wasn't worried. The envenomed dagger worn by the faceless assassin, however? There could be no clearer omen for the Daggermark Poisoners Guild. "Maybe we should just play the game, Professor Grizzlebane?"

"Of course," said the leucrotta. "Care to raise your wager or should we just call it now?"

Towers of Sellen is played with one's wealth on the table, and you aren't allowed to wager more than you obviously have. If we lost this hand, Phargas and I would be destitute. But I still had one bit of wealth visible. "Would you accept



# The Fifth River Freedom

this?" I asked, placing my wayfinder on the table. The magic compass glittered in the lantern light.

"What say you, Shuffle?" the leucrotta asked his partner.

"Woof!" declared the Harrow-Reading Dog, wagging his tail.

"Well then," said Professor Grizzlebane. "We accept. But since we are now open to items of magic, you know this is worth twice that." The mummified hand the aged leucrotta wore as a necklace uncurled two digits. It was a grisly thing, the hand of an elven mage, but it let him manipulate puppets and even deal cards. Without it, he was merely a very clever magical beast. "You will understand if I do not remove the talisman until the game is complete, but I assure you, it is on the table." He grinned again. "But now, if you cannot see my wager, you must fold and forfeit, no matter how good your hidden cards might be."

Phargas looked at his. Of the ones he had face up, only The Wanderer, the card that portended a Pathfinder, did us any good. But Phargas glanced to me, nodded, then turned to the leucrotta. "We do not fold."

"Oh?" asked Professor Grizzlebane. "What do you wager? Another wayfinder, mayhap?"

Phargas's eyes narrowed. "I wager my service. A gold a day, or at standard rates for more hazardous duties. Enough to make up the difference. As this is the custom, you must allow it, so call the cards."

"If you'll allow, I'd like to do the same, enough to take this back." I placed my hand on my wayfinder. I did not wish to make Clever Nella's bargain, but I am the heir of Kadria, and I would be damned before I let myself be upstaged by an aging priest.

Professor Grizzlebane glanced to Shuffle, then nodded. "Done and done. Let us call it."

The White Tower goes first. I had nothing, but Phargas revealed his cards: The Hidden Truth and The Joke combined with The Wanderer already showing, giving us the Three Good Books. But more than that, they not only gained control of The Inquisitor and The Vision, which had previously been floating unclaimed in The River, but also transmuted The Snakebite from baleful to beneficent and captured The Rakshasa from Shuffle's up cards,

multiplying the points for the set—Seven of Nine Books, scored for The White Tower. Combined with the other good cards, it could be enough for us to win, assuming The Black Tower had no eleventh-hour treachery.

Shuffle turned his cards first. Two unmatched Evil cards, then The Cyclone, which magnified The Fiend before me, but not enough to outweigh the good there was before Phargas. But then Professor Grizzlebane grinned. His cards turned over one by one. The Foreign Trader appeared in The River, completing the set of the Three Neutral Books and raising our score. But then The Idiot, the last of the Three Evil Books, robbed us of all the Books so far, raised the score, and put all eighty-one points in contest.

With what was showing, The White Tower and The Black Tower were matched, the game balanced on The Rabbit Prince's broken sword.

But the last card had not tipped. If it was good, or even the right neutral or evil, it could hand us the hand—even the mummified one around Professor Grizzlebane's neck.

The final card flipped over: evil. And not just any evil, but *The Beating*. The card showed a man assaulted on all sides, ghoulish hands rising up from the ground. It completed the set of the Three Evil Hammers and claimed the Nine Books. The Black Tower had won.

The final card rose in the air, manipulated by the hand of the mage around the wily old leucrotta's neck. "It appears you shall have a beating in your future as well as your present, O Heir, though I predict this one will be a good bit more physical."

"What, are you a Varisian fortuneteller now, in addition to a Clever Nella puppeteer?" I did my best to sneer as I clutched my wayfinder.

"Hardly." Professor Grizzlebane grinned, showing his black gums and razor-sharp ridges of bone. "I merely know the *Cornflower's* next stop is the Toll Tower of Tymon. And Tymon's lord is fond of his gladiator pits." He laughed like a jackal. "And just because I'm too wise to eat a mandrake baby doesn't mean that there isn't an idiot somewhere who will."

**"How does he do that?"**





# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6



## Bestiary

One night while drinking with the hearty people of Kirya—their suspiciousness dispelled by our honest enjoyment of their honeyed nalewka—we heard it called Varlet Well and the Devoted Drown. Their stories say that long ago, by her father's greed, a local beauty came to be betrothed to a despicable old man. Rather than feel his clutches, she stole her own dowry and offered it to the god of the pool if he would save her from her fate. The wicked spirit agreed and bid her cast herself into his waters, where she promptly drowned. They say that ever since then, the maiden has sobbed, filling the pool with her tears, and has offered her hand to any man who nears, pulling him in to join her in death. Tomorrow, I would meet this maid myself.

—From *The Record of Truan Solavai*

### Creature Type

- Aberration
- Animal
- Construct
- Dragon
- Fey
- Humanoid
- Magical Beast
- Monstrous Humanoid
- Ooze
- Outsider
- Plant
- Undead
- Vermin

### Climate

- Cold
- Extrplanar
- Temperate
- Tropical

### Environment

- Desert
- Forest/Jungle
- Hill
- Mountain
- Plain
- Ruins
- Swamp
- Sky
- Underground
- Urban
- Water



Creatures of the tangled bogs and murky waterways of the north fill this month's entry into the Bestiary. Emerging from these fetid depths come the ahuizotl, the leshy, and the nuckelavee, creatures long warned of in the folklore of the real world, while Neil Spicer's savage bog strider makes its deadly debut in this volume's adventure. Ed Greenwood's calathgar, a frosty, flowering menace of Iobaria, also creeps in from the frigid frontier, threatening all who encounter it with a freezing death. Any of these creatures might rise from the bogs featured in this month's adventure or emerge from the depths of Iobaria to visit new menaces upon the people of Avistan.

## SWAMP THINGS

The Slough, the third region of the Stolen Lands that the PCs explore and the setting of "Blood for Blood," is both dominated by and named for the Hooktongue Slough. A vast pit of mud and mystery, home to tales of monstrous creatures and dark magic, the Slough hides all manner of dangers, both natural and drawn there by the foul things that fester within its depths. While many of the creatures found in this Bestiary fit well, and others included in "Blood

for Blood" might see multiple uses, GMs have a variety of other options to add danger and flavor to their adventures. Foremost, Chapter 13 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* presents useful details on marsh terrain, with the rules for bogs and quicksand being of particular use. GMs might also look to the rules on suffocating found on page 445 of the *Core Rulebook* to recreate hazards with the risk of drowning. As several of the creatures in this volume's Bestiary live beneath the sea or within the muck of reeking bogs, their tactics often rely upon attempts to grapple air-breathing creatures and drag them down to watery ends. While many PCs possess options to avoid the gradual death of drowning, NPCs often make perfect targets to help inspire a bit of fear of what lurks beneath the waves. Several creatures from previous volumes of the Kingmaker Adventure Path might prove helpful, specifically the tendriculos from page 28 of volume #32 and the mudmen from page 15 of volume #33. Finally, GMs expecting to run combat encounters in this region, either as part of this volume's adventure or from the random encounter table presented below, might also consider using the *GameMastery Flip-Mat: Swamp*, specifically designed to supplement battles in this boggy terrain.

## The Slough Random Encounters

Hills	Lake/River	Plains	Swamp	Encounter	CR	Source
—	—	—	1–6	Quicksand	—	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 427
1–6	1–8	1–3	7–10	1d4 constrictor snakes	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 255
7–15	—	4–11	11–13	2d6 zombies	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 288
16–25	—	12–20	14–15	1 basilisk	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 29
26–39	9–21	21–36	—	1d6 elk	5	<i>Pathfinder</i> #31 80
—	22–27	—	16–17	1 ahuizotl	6	see page 80
40–48	—	37–47	—	1 ettin	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 130
—	28–35	—	18–22	2d4 giant leeches	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 187
—	36–42	48–52	23–30	2d6 boggards	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 37
49–53	—	53–55	31–35	1d6 calathgars	7	see page 84
—	—	—	36–43	Camouflaged spiked pit trap	8	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 421
54–61	43–46	56–62	44–47	1 dark naga	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 211
—	47–53	—	48–53	1 giant slug	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 254
—	54–63	—	54–59	1d6 swamp eels*	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 119
—	—	—	60–62	3 green hags	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 167
62–65	—	—	63–66	1d6 basidironds	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 28
—	64–69	—	67–71	2d8 bog striders	8	see page 82
66–72	—	63–71	72–74	1d4 dracolisks	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 170
73–78	70–77	72–76	75–77	1 nuckelavee	9	see page 88
79–87	78–84	77–84	78–82	1d6 will-o'-wisps	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 277
—	85–89	—	83–85	1d6 chuuls	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 46
88–93	90–95	85–90	86–89	1d8 shambling mounds	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 246
—	—	91–93	90–91	1d4 treants	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 266
—	—	—	92–93	1 hezrou	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 62
94–98	96–98	94–98	94–96	1d6 spirit nagas	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 213
99–100	99–100	99–100	97–100	1d4 adult black dragons	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 92




\* Same stats as giant moray eel



# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## AHUIZOTL

*This lean creature looks like an oversized otter, though much more powerfully built, with a maw of wolfish teeth and lengthy claws extending from unnervingly human-like hands. A thick tail lashes behind the creature, ending in a fifth dexterous hand clicking its long black nails.*

<b>AHUIZOTL</b>	<b>CR 6</b>	  
<b>XP 2,400</b>		
NE Large magical beast (aquatic)		
<b>Init</b> +7; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
<b>AC</b> 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +7 natural, –1 size)		
<b>hp</b> 68 (8d10+24)		
<b>Fort</b> +9, <b>Ref</b> +9, <b>Will</b> +4		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft., swim 50 ft.		
<b>Melee</b> bite +12 (2d6+5), 2 claws +12 (1d6+2), tail claw +12 (1d8+5/19–20 plus blinding strike or grab)		
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft. (10 ft. with tail)		
<b>Special Attacks</b> blinding strike (Fort DC 18)		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
<b>Str</b> 20, <b>Dex</b> 17, <b>Con</b> 17, <b>Int</b> 9, <b>Wis</b> 14, <b>Cha</b> 16		
<b>Base Atk</b> +8; <b>CMB</b> +14 (+16 disarm, +18 grapple); <b>CMD</b> 27 (31 vs. trip)		
<b>Feats</b> Blinding Critical <sup>B</sup> , Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (tail claw) <sup>B</sup> , Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Stand Still		
<b>Skills</b> Bluff +9, Stealth +10, Swim +13; <b>Racial Modifiers</b> +6 Bluff		
<b>Languages</b> Common		
<b>SQ</b> amphibious, tenacious grapple, voice mimicry		
<b>ECOLOGY</b>		
<b>Environment</b> warm lakes and swamps		
<b>Organization</b> solitary		
<b>Treasure</b> standard		
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
<b>Blinding Strike (Ex)</b> Ahuizotls have an especial taste for eyes, and they gain the Improved Critical and Blinding Critical feats as bonus feats when attacking with their tail claws.		
<b>Tenacious Grapple (Ex)</b> An ahuizotl does not gain the grappled condition if it grapples a foe with its tail claw.		
<b>Voice Mimicry (Ex)</b> An ahuizotl can perfectly mimic the sound of humanoid sobbing and can even attempt to mimic voices it has heard. When mimicking a voice, an ahuizotl must make a Bluff check opposed by its listener's Sense Motive check. If the listener has never heard the voice the ahuizotl is attempting to mimic, he takes a –8 penalty on this check.		

Carnage-hungry denizens of the swamp, at a glance ahuizotls look little different than overlarge otters or a variety of other water-dwelling mammals. Their hindquarters reveal them to be far stranger beasts, though, as each possesses a powerful tail ending in a fifth hand with deadly claws. From the depths of their aquatic

homes, ahuizotls look skyward, watchful for any boat or intruder that might trespass into their territories. Upon sighting such prey, their tentacle-like tails burst from the murk, dragging their victims down to meet death amid their powerful jaws and the drowning mire. Yet for all their ferocity, ahuizotls are blasphemously wasteful, for all they desire from their meals are the crunch of dismembered teeth and nails and the cool slime of freshly extracted eyes. What remains they release forth to the waves, to other aquatic predators, and to their victims' shocked mourners.

Ahuizotls measure roughly 8 feet long, with a powerful build causing their weights to average around 1,300 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

An ahuizotl's most distinctive feature is easily its tail. Measuring double the length of the creature's body, this prehensile fifth appendage exhibits just as much strength, dexterity, and precision as any of the creature's other limbs, with the added benefits of both extended range of motion and its own sharply clawed hand. The claw at the tail's end is leaner and more nimble than an ahuizotl's other simian hands, with long and bone-hard nails. This gives the creature the nimble adroitness it requires to gather its favorite and most revolting meal—humanoid eyes. In addition to its use as both a weapon and tool, this powerful limb also proves highly useful in locomotion, aiding ahuizotls in moving through the water at surprising speeds.

Aside from ahuizotls' fearsome fifth limb, their voices also serve as exceptionally deadly weapons. Through practice and memories of past cruelties, ahuizotls exhibit a shocking capacity to mimic the sounds and voices of other creatures. While they find the sobs of the lost and imperiled the easiest to reproduce and the most useful in coaxing other creatures into aquatic ambushes, most also practice mimicry, granting them mastery over locally used languages and voices to impersonate and allowing them to create more subtle deceptions. To this end, an ahuizotl that manages to take a victim alive and that fears no threat of attack or of its prey's escape might spend as much as an hour tormenting and mocking its captive. As it does so, it listens intently, usually shooting its victim's words back in mockery until it feels it has adequately impersonated its victim's speech. The end usually comes swiftly for those an ahuizotl feels it has nothing more to gain from. This method of trickery proves most dangerous for swamp-dwelling humanoids, as an ahuizotl might swim along below boats or beneath stilt homes and spend hours listening and practicing, eventually mastering enough voices to launch a campaign of deception and murder.



Ahuizotls prove exceptionally long-lived, with a single individual living and feeding in an area for several human generations. Generally solitary creatures, they have few opportunities to encounter others of their kind or breed, contributing to the creatures' rarity in most regions.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Ahuizotls can move about on both land and in the water, yet they far prefer the freedom and safety of murky rivers and pools to crawling upon the earth. Leaving the depths only to when shifting to other waterways, when pursuing prey, or when something else on land captures its interest, an ahuizotl spend most of its life lurking just below the surface, watchful for any prey that ventures close enough to grab with its tail and drag down to a drowning death. While capable of surviving in seawater, few ahuizotls have ever been found along the coast; they seem to possess a kind of race-wide aquatic agoraphobia, shunning oceans and seas for more confined and predictable waterways. Occasionally ahuizotls might be found along the coasts of great freshwater lakes, but even then most keep to shallow bays or bayous.

Although ahuizotls might range through the waterways of a territory several miles in diameter, most have a favored pool, pond, or bog. Not only does the creature spend much of the day resting in a shelter—either natural or constructed—at the bottom of this body of water, but the area often takes on significance among cultures dwelling in the area as a place of ill omen or the home of a deadly drowning spirit. Aside from the stories that both draw and deter investigators to such sites, over time, the remains of dozens of victims accumulate amid the rock and mud of the pool's floor. Depending on the age and deadliness of an ahuizotl, its home might become a waterlogged charnel treasure trove, scattered not only with heaps of bones, but also with the wealth and equipment of all who have fallen prey to the beast.

On rare occasions, ahuizotls might come to mutually advantageous arrangements with other pernicious denizens of the swamps. Will-o'-wisps and ahuizotls often find themselves in such cooperative relationships, with the will-o'-wisp coaxing creatures near the ahuizotl's lair and then lingering to feed upon the victim's fear as the ahuizotl drags it into the depths. Some wily humanoids who fall into an ahuizotl's clutches—typically lizardfolk, goblins, or swamp-dwelling humans—have successfully managed to bargain away the lives of others in exchange for their own. Such might lead to a series of vicarious murders, as the aquatic predator's proxy coaxes new victims into the swamp for its fearsome partner to dine upon.

## Ahuizotls in Mythology

Among the best known creatures drawn from the ancient legends of Central American mythology, the ahuizotl is a strange and deadly menace to any who near its favored pool. Described in Aztec lore as a dog-like creature with the hands and feet of a monkey, the creature was most recognizable for its lengthy tail ending in a fifth deadly hand. By making sounds like a crying baby or other wounded creature, the ahuizotl would coax victims close to the water and, as they neared, attack, pulling them down to drown and then dragging them back to its underwater lair to consume at its leisure. Inevitably, when the body reemerged, survivors would find it missing the eyes, teeth, and nails, features supposedly consumed by the ahuizotl. The existence of such a creature might have originated as a way to explain why the bodies of those drowned and left in the water for long periods are so often found missing pieces, or merely as a way for people to warn others of the many dangers associated with the region's waterways.





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## BOG STRIDER

A narrow, beetle-like creature glides across the water's dark surface on four brown, spindly legs. It stands just over five feet tall, holding its head and thorax upright while clutching an intricately carved hunting spear in two clawed forelimbs. Powerful mandibles click in rhythm with the reed-thin antennae waving upon its head as if testing the air for the scent of prey.

### BOG STRIDER

CR 2



XP 600

N Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 120 ft. (in water); Perception +6

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

**hp** 15 (2d10+4)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., water stride 50 ft.

**Melee** spear +4 (1d8+3/x3), bite –1 (1d6+1) or  
2 claws +4 (1d4+2), bite +4 (1d6+2)

**Ranged** spear +4 (1d8+2/x3) or  
mwk net +5 ranged touch (entangle)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 11, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

**Feats** Dodge

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +7, Survival +6, Swim +11; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Swim

**Languages** Aquan; tremor tap 120 ft.

**SQ** hold breath, water sprint

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** temperate or warm swamps

**Organization** solitary, pair, band (3–12), or tribe (13–60)

**Treasure** NPC gear (masterwork net, spear, other treasure)

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Hold Breath (Ex)** A bog strider can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

**Tremor Tap (Ex)** Bog striders can send and receive messages by creating and sensing silent vibrations on the surface of any body of water they currently tread. The range of communication extends outward 120 feet to all other bog striders within line of effect on or under the water. Because the ripples created on the water prove omni-directional, bog striders can communicate with multiple targets at the same time. Only bog striders can understand this form of communication. This ability also grants bog striders tremorsense in water at a range of 120 feet.

**Water Sprint (Ex)** Once per hour, a bog strider can move up to 5 times its normal speed (250 feet) on water when making a charge or retreating from an enemy. Once it decides to increase its movement in this fashion, the effect lasts for up

to 4 rounds, after which a bog strider becomes fatigued for as many rounds as it chose to move at a higher speed.

**Water Stride (Su)** A bog strider can tread upon rivers, lakes, and flooded swamplands or marshes as if under the effects of the *water walk* spell. It also gains an increased movement rate by using the surface tension and its multiple legs to propel itself across the water.

Bog striders call themselves Ses'h in Aquan, but the first explorers to encounter them named the reclusive bug-men after their ability to stride on water like solid ground. Individual bog striders resemble upright beetles with four legs, two arms, and powerful mandibles. They depend on their waterborne speed to quickly chase down prey and flee from predators. Otherwise, they care little for civilizations other than their own, rarely venturing from the swampy rivers and lakes they call home.

The long, spindly legs of bog striders give the impression of a greater size than their relatively fragile frames actually account for. Although their limbs are in most cases more than double, even triple, the length of other humanoids, their inflexible joints grant them little more mobility, range of motion, and capability to reach than others. Regardless of gender, nearly all bog striders stand 5 feet tall and weigh approximately 150 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Bog striders reproduce during specific seasonal and astrological cycles that occur only two to three times during their entire lifespan—detecting their moment of peak fertility through changes in the weather and tidal effects upon large bodies of water. Thereafter, pregnant females lay a clutch of four to 10 eggs, keeping them submerged and guarding against predators until they hatch 6 months later. The younglings then cling to their mother for the next 3 months as they learn the rudiments of survival and socialization within the tribe.

Unfortunately, predators (intelligent or otherwise) often view bog strider eggs and younglings as easy prey. Hatcheries suffer attacks by crocodiles and giant frogs, while birds of prey, boggards, and human hunters pick off younglings who stray from their mothers on the open water. As a result of these reproductive challenges, bog striders struggle to keep pace with other swamp-dwelling cultures, suffering through periods of decline and near-extinction. These difficulties make them increasingly insular and territorial, meeting interlopers with spears more often than diplomacy.

A bog strider's diet consists almost entirely of meat. They routinely hunt for fish, crustaceans, or snakes, and occasionally hunt for birds, giant wasps, or dragonflies. They particularly excel at spearfishing and snaring airborne prey with thrown nets.



The wide stance of a bog strider's four legs displaces its weight over any body of water by maintaining the surface tension with a cushion of air trapped beneath several small ridges on each foot. While not dissimilar to the motion of minute water-striding insects, for bog striders the motion is aided by some manner of innate magic or other supernatural relationship with the water. Regardless of the source of this ability, it allows them to literally walk on water, though they can also fully submerge and hide below the surface if they desire.

Bog striders who survive into adulthood can live up to 60 years. Each youngling develops a varied pattern of mottled gray and brown coloration across its carapace, uniquely distinguishing it from others. These spots tend to fade as bog striders age, causing their elders to all look much alike.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Bog striders can survive in all but the coldest of climes, living their entire lives on the rivers, lakes, and bogs where they make their homes. Their society focuses primarily on survival due to the depredations of natural predators and wars with lizardfolk and boggards. Each member of a bog strider tribe, both male and female, learns to defend the tribe at the earliest possible age. In addition, everyone must develop a skill that contributes to the community's prosperity, and by extension, the continued survival of their species.

Females serve as the builders of bog strider society. They weave large mats of reeds, rushes, and netting that they coat in waterproof tree sap to trap pockets of air below the water's surface where they can safely build and hide their villages. When not looking after their young, the females continuously expand or replace flooded sections of these communities. Meanwhile, male bog striders act as hunters and gatherers, bringing back enough food to last through harsh winters and times of drought. They also scout the waterways for threats to their community, leaving those who pass through their territory unmolested but fighting off those who attempt to stay or exploit the same resources they depend upon. Frequently small bands also venture far from their native lands, seeking to find new, uninhabited waterways where their imperiled communities might be left in peace.

Seer-queens rule over multiple bog strider communities to form secluded tribal unions, acting as religious leaders and reading the river currents or tides to divine the will of Gozreh. Many become clerics or

druids worshiping the nature god in its feminine form, though they interpret Gozreh more as a great body of water than a likeness of themselves. Because seer-queens lose their personal markings like any other elder, they are difficult to distinguish from the rest of their community. They often use this advantage to hide among their own people, both to thwart those who would target them and to mingle more freely among their subjects.

## BOG STRIDER SEER-QUEENS

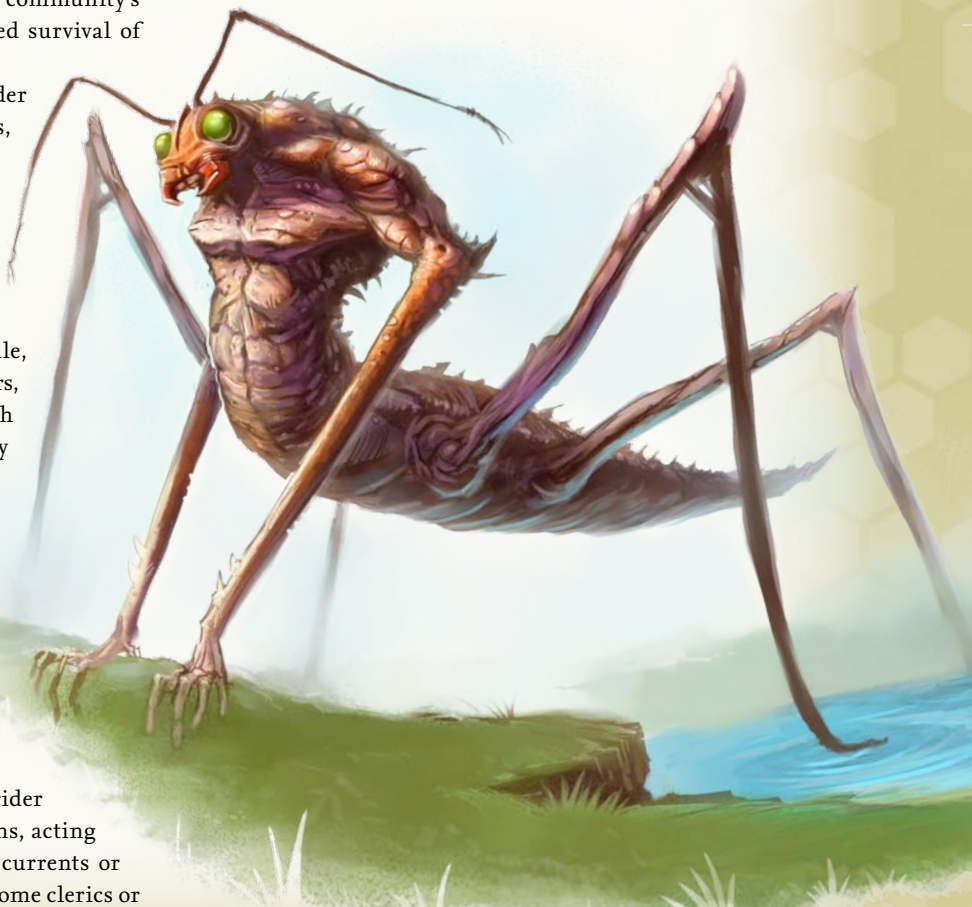
Leaders of multiple tribes of bog striders, seer-queens help organize and coordinate efforts to stave off the extinction of their species and interpret the will of nature.

The following adjustments to a standard bog strider represent a seer-queen. Many also pursue a deeper faith in Gozreh, attaining class levels as a cleric or druid.

**+5 natural armor.** This replaces the standard bog strider natural armor bonus.

**+4 Intelligence, +4 Wisdom, +6 Charisma.** Seer-queens are smarter, wiser, and more regal than normal bog striders.

**Water Magic (Sp)** While standing upon the water's surface, bog strider seer-queens can cast the following powers as spell-like abilities: 3/day—*create water*, *purify food and drink*; 1/day—*delay poison*, *fog cloud*, *quench*.








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## CALATHGAR

*The acrid scent of vinegar wafts from this shield-sized blossom. Amid shocking blue petals slowly twitches a cluster of sharp stamens arranged like a ring of teeth within a leafy muzzle.*

<b>CALATHGAR</b>	<b>CR 4</b>	  
<b>XP 1,200</b>		
<b>N</b> Small plant		
<b>Init</b> +8; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 30 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +2		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
<b>AC</b> 16, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)		
<b>hp</b> 39 (6d8+12)		
<b>Fort</b> +6, <b>Ref</b> +6, <b>Will</b> +4		
<b>Defensive Abilities</b> cold healing; <b>Immune</b> cold, plant traits		
<b>Weaknesses</b> fire vulnerability		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
<b>Speed</b> 20 ft., climb 20 ft.		
<b>Melee</b> flower +7 (1d6+2 plus 1d6 cold), 2 tendrils +7 (1d4+2)		
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft. (10 ft. with tendrils)		
<b>Special Attacks</b> seed spray (15-ft. cone, 4d6 cold damage, Reflex DC 14 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds)		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
<b>Str</b> 14, <b>Dex</b> 19, <b>Con</b> 14, <b>Int</b> 6, <b>Wis</b> 15, <b>Cha</b> 12		
<b>Base Atk</b> +4; <b>CMB</b> +5; <b>CMD</b> 19 (21 vs. trip)		
<b>Feats</b> Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative		
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +17		
<b>Languages</b> Sylvan (cannot speak)		
<b>SQ</b> mold mulch		
<b>ECOLOGY</b>		
<b>Environment</b> cold forests		
<b>Organization</b> solitary, growth (2–8), garden (9–25)		
<b>Treasure</b> standard		
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
<b>Cold Healing (Ex)</b> Calathgars are healed by cold. Anytime a calathgar is subjected to cold damage, it regains 1 hit point (regardless of the amount of cold damage dealt). When in areas of severe cold (such as arctic regions or near brown mold), a calathgar gains fast healing 1.		
<b>Mold Mulch (Ex)</b> Upon being reduced to 0 hit points, a calathgar withers and swiftly decays, transforming into a 5-foot patch of brown mold. If a calathgar is killed by fire, the mold immediately grows into a 10-foot patch. If it is killed in a space already occupied by brown mold, that mold patch doubles in size just as though fire had been brought near. The area within 30 feet of brown mold is cold enough to activate a calathgar's cold healing and the persistent effect of its seed spray. Brown mold deals 3d6 points of nonlethal cold damage to all creatures within 5 feet of it. See page 416 of the <i>Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook</i> for additional details.		
<b>Seed Spray (Ex)</b> Once every 1d4 rounds, up to 3 times per day, a calathgar can expel a blast of thorny, frozen seeds in a		

15-foot cone. All creatures in this area take 4d6 points of cold damage (Reflex DC 15 for half). In frigid climes—areas where the temperature is 40 degrees or colder—these seeds cling to those they strike, dealing an additional 1d6 points of cold damage on the following round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Known to grow in the depths of the densest frozen forests, realms where icicles rarely melt from the snow-cloaked trees, calathgars, or “hail lilies,” grow to a size and possess an alien beauty that make their cuttings greatly desired in civilized lands. Yet, what few beside the wariest hunters and most knowledgeable denizens of the forests realize is that hail lilies are more than mere flowers—their fully grown varieties possess not only a deadly way of spreading their frozen seeds but also an even more dangerous trait: thought. Known among their own kind as calathgars, these ice-tinged plants move slowly and possess little in the way of society, yet they perceive their surroundings, know when their frigid gardens are threatened, feel pain, and—most tenaciously—seek a chilling revenge when their young are despoiled.

The blooms of a fully grown calathgar measures 3 feet in diameter, though some have reported flowers up to 5, 8, and even 10 feet wide. Able to crawl on three tendrillike roots, one of these plants might stand as high as 4 feet off the ground, and when heavy with seeds might weigh as much as 50 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Calathgars are immediately identifiable, even from a distance, by their sky-blue petals, a color repeated by few other forms of plant life in such size or brilliance. Yet typically, these blooms only unfurl during the brightest hours of the day or when the plants feel threatened. At all other times, calathgars keep their flowers closed, defending the sensitive structures within and presenting large, blue-gray sepals to the outside world. Calathgar young look little different from tall blue flowers—hence many horticulturists identify them merely as hail lilies. It takes nearly a year for a juvenile calathgar to display any kind of concerted movement, aside from the opening and closing of their petals and a few markedly un-plant-like twitches. Their sense of scent and ability to communicate function as soon as their buds first grow—typically within 2 weeks of sprouting from the cold earth.

Two rings of sensory organs help calathgars remain aware of their surroundings: a cluster of lobes at the base of the flower and another situated around the stamen within. Both are capable of not just deciphering light in an approximation of visual sight, but also receiving information via a highly developed kind of scent. This sense of smell is much more developed in the plants than their ability to see—though at close ranges their sight can prove just as accurate as most



humanoids. To this end, most communication between the plants is scent-based, utterly silent, and often imperceptible to non-plant creatures. At times when the plants feel threatened, however, they exude a smell like vinegar or, if angry, a coppery odor.

For all their developments as a species, calathgars possess a strange connection, even symbiosis, with a far less complex type of growth: brown mold. Notorious for its ability to drain the warmth from an area and freeze the unwary, brown mold not only benefits calathgars—allowing them to grow comfortably in areas they might otherwise find inhospitably warm—but it also pervades the roots and internal structures of the plants. Some suggest that calathgars might be some advanced form of brown mold, yet the idea is typically dismissed, as such mutually beneficial relationships are well documented in the world of mundane flora. As a calathgar grows to maturity, brown mold thrives within its flower and internal structures, aiding in keeping the growth cool and providing it with frigid defensive abilities and a way to spread its seeds—freezing and clinging to creatures that come near before dropping off later. The flowers provide the mold ample places to grow, and defense from creatures that might threaten it. The adult plants also prove so riddled with nutrients upon which the fungus flourishes that should a calathgar violently die amid brown mold, the fungal patch instantly explodes with growth—typically to the detriment of whatever ended the calathgar's life.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

Calathgars have little in the way of society, other than grouping together for mutual defense. Despite their intellects, the plants' psyches prove distinctive and alien in comparison to those of animals and sentient creatures. They have little interest in emotions, culture, or ambition, yet they possess nearly flawless memories and an understanding of experiences which they can share with other calathgars by scent as easily as (and far more effectively than) humanoids can pass on information by speech. Yet where calathgars do seem most like humanoids is in their capacity to care for their young and seek reprisal should any harm befall them. Should an immature calathgar be trampled, plucked, or otherwise ruined, adults do all they can to pursue and deal vengeance upon those who murdered their young, planting a new generation in the killer's frozen flesh. While calathgars can be reasoned with and most prove generally accepting of honest apologies from those capable of communicating with them, like most enraged parents, an incensed calathgar is rarely in a mood to speak.

## On the Calathgar

Slithery vines, smarter than jungle cats, that hunt (and retreat, and lure) just as human adventurers do sound like great monsters to me. There's something deliciously menacing about oversized plants, and there's also something chilling about a good, patient hunter. Add artillery fire in the form of the freezing darts these critters spit and you've got a nice handful of features to make a monster memorable.

The formidable-as-humans angle also makes them the sort of monster ideal as a recurring foe, as the kin of slain calathgars might even come seeking revenge on PCs who don't realize they did anything more wicked than stamping on a particularly deadly pansy. Until the PCs triumph (or fall), a campaign might come to include an ongoing grudge match of PC party versus an unknown number of calathgars who have become determined foes, lurking patiently in every wilderness and attacking whenever they have the advantage.

—Ed Greenwood








# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## LESKY, FUNGUS

*A mushroom come to life trundles forward on multiple ungainly stumps. Uneven, growth-like eyes dot its thick mushroom cap, while below works an overlarge maw set with pale fungal teeth.*

<b>FUNGUS LESHY</b>	<b>CR 2</b>	  
<b>XP 600</b>		
<b>N</b> Small plant (leshy)		
<b>Init</b> +2; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
<b>AC</b> 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 size)		
<b>hp</b> 15 (2d8+6)		
<b>Fort</b> +6, <b>Ref</b> +2, <b>Will</b> +2		
<b>Immune</b> electricity, sonic, plant traits		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
<b>Speed</b> 20 ft.		
<b>Melee</b> bite +1 (1d6–1)		
<b>Ranged</b> puffball +4 (1 plus spores)		
<b>Special Attacks</b> spores		
<b>Spell-Like Abilities</b> (CL 4th; concentration +6) Constant— <i>pass without trace</i>		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
<b>Str</b> 8, <b>Dex</b> 15, <b>Con</b> 16, <b>Int</b> 7, <b>Wis</b> 14, <b>Cha</b> 15		
<b>Base Atk</b> +1; <b>CMB</b> –1; <b>CMD</b> 11 (15 vs. trip)		
<b>Feats</b> Blind-Fight		
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +6 (+10 in swamps or underground), Survival +2 (+6 in swamps or underground); <b>Racial Modifiers</b> +4 Stealth and +4 Survival in swamps or underground		
<b>Languages</b> Sylvan; plantspeech (molds and fungi)		
<b>SQ</b> change shape (Small plant, <i>tree shape</i> ), verdant burst		
<b>ECOLOGY</b>		
<b>Environment</b> any swamp or underground		
<b>Organization</b> solitary or cluster (2–16)		
<b>Treasure</b> standard		
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
<b>Change Shape (Su)</b> All leshys can transform into plants, which works similarly to the spell <i>tree shape</i> . Unlike the spell, however, these plants are always Small and appear to be of the same type of growth the leshy is related to. The plant a leshy transforms into always looks the same and, despite being Small, is typically unusually large for a plant of its size. It is a swift action for a leshy to turn into or from a plant. Fungus leshys commonly turn into large mushrooms, puffballs, polypores, earthstars, or clumps of mold.		
<b>Plantspeech (Ex)</b> All leshys can speak with plants as if subject to a continual <i>speak with plants</i> spell, but only with species they're related to. Fungus leshys can communicate with molds and fungi as if they were plants.		
<b>Spores (Ex)</b> A fungus leshy is riddled with molds and spores. Anytime a fungus leshy takes damage, a cloud of spores bursts from its body, forcing all adjacent creatures to make a DC 14 Fortitude save or have their vision reduced to 10 feet for 1 minute. Spending a full-round action to wash		

one's eyes with water ends this effect. A fungus leshy may also spit a puffball riddled with spores as a ranged attack. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Verdant Burst (Su)** When slain, a fungus leshy explodes in a burst of fertile energies. All plant creatures within 30 feet of the slain leshy heal 1d8 points of damage. All normal plants in the area are affected as per the enrichment aspect of the spell *plant growth* (CL 4th).

Keepers of cavernous mushroom forests and rotting compost pits deep within the swamp, fungus leshys preside over subterranean growth and the rot that fertilizes new life. Among the most alien and monstrous looking of all leshys, the appearance of these tiny rot farmers has more to do with the asymmetrical eeriness intrinsic to molds and fungi than an outward expression of evil. Like all their kin, fungus leshys vary widely in appearance, often adopting the colors and shapes of the mushrooms and other large fungi common to the areas they tend.

Fungus leshys rarely stand taller than 2 feet high and weigh a mere 25 pounds—their interiors being full of hollows and fluffy spores.

## ECOLOGY

Fungus leshys are spawned from realms of underground wonder or the rotting places of the natural world. They perform an important service in the lands they keep, encouraging the growth of fungi, transporting rotting material to fertilize other plants and making the most use of growth that has died off. Fungus leshys are most active at night and spend the day in the forms of plump fungi amid their ripest compost heaps or fungal glens.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

As is true of all leshys, fungus leshys are allies of treants and other guardians of nature. Given their fondness for overgrown and subterranean environments, they often bring news to the surface plant life of doings affecting the world beneath their roots. Although not shy, their preference for working at night means that fungal leshys are rarely seen. Their nocturnal doings combined with their frightening appearances means they often startle humanoids who encounter them—an effect they often put to use should they have to defend their lands.

## LESKY SUBTYPE

Servants of treant elders and their kin, leshys are among the least of the forest folk, intelligent plants who look after their rooted brethren and obey the wisdom of nature's verdant watchers. Several breeds of leshy exist, each being kindred to a form of natural life (typically plants). Among the best known are superstitious gourd leshys, clever root leshys, and wary leaf leshys, though others are rumored to exist.



Regardless of their kind, all leshys share the following traits in addition to those granted by the plant type.

- Darkvision 60 feet.
- Immunity to electricity and sonic attacks.
- *Spell-Like Abilities* All leshys have *pass without trace* as a constant spell-like ability (CL equal to twice the leshy's HD).
- Leshys speak Sylvan.
- *Plantspeech* (Ex) See stat block.
- *Change Shape* (Su) See stat block.
- *Nature's Ally* All leshys can be summoned via the *summon nature's ally* spell. Fungus leshys are conjured via *summon nature's ally II*.
- *Verdant Burst* (Su) See stat block. Caster level is equal to twice the leshy's HD.

## AWAKENING A LESHY

Leshys embody the natural energies and spirits of nature given sentience and wills of their own. Powerful, intelligent plant creatures like treants and other allies of the natural world can cultivate physical frames and invite these forces to inhabit them, thus creating various types of leshys. The rites and special materials required to create such a body varies from leshy to leshy. These materials are then cultivated in an area of natural power, such as a treant's grove, a druidic circle, or site of pristine natural wonder. Once created, a leshy is a free-willed, neutral being interested only in serving the needs of the wilderness in which it resides. It is under no compulsion to follow commands, but should its maker share its goals and provide it with aid in its tasks, the leshy might come to cooperate with its creator. A leshy does not fear death and will see its body destroyed before doing harm to nature or natural creatures, though it proves quite cunning when it comes to driving off monsters or destructive humanoids.

A fungus leshy is usually grown amid the compost of a treant's groves, in moldy groves deep underground or in eerie hillocks at the heart of dense swamplands. A fungus leshy with more than 2 Hit Dice can be created, but each additional Hit Die adds +2,250 gp to the cost to create.

### FUNGUS LESHY

CL 8th; Price 2,500 gp

#### RITUAL

**Requirements** Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, *plant growth*, *summon nature's ally II*, creator must be druid or plant type; **Skill** Knowledge (dungeoneering) or (nature) or Profession (gardener) DC 14; **Cost** 1,250 gp

## Leshys in Mythology

In Slavic myths and legends, a leshy is a woodland spirit that protects and defends the animals and plants of the wild places. The myths also speak of the wives of the leshy (leshaika), as well as their children (leshonky). The name leshy comes from the common Slavic term *les*, meaning "forest," hence the leshy is "of the forest." Leshy are roughly analogous to the woodwose of Western Europe and the basajaun of the Basque country.

In some legends, a leshy can take the form of any plant or animal and also that of a human. In other legends, they appear as tall as giant trees in forests, only to become tiny dwarves or blades of grass when outside a forest. There are many contradictory tales about a leshy's appearance, but as they are shapeshifters, this is perhaps understandable.

To outwit an offended leshy, a traveler could immediately turn his clothes inside out and put them on backwards, or present a holy symbol to confuse the leshy. One could also set a forest fire and not look back, for the leshy would be more concerned with putting the fire out than with performing mischief against travelers.






# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6

## NUCKELAVEE

*A mounted horseman gallops forth, soaked head to toe in gore and waving a blade with wild abandon. Yet as he moves, it becomes clear that horse and rider are joined as one—a humanoid torso sprouting from equine withers—and the gore is a grisly vision of naked muscle and leaking veins.*

<b>NUCKELAVEE</b>	<b>CR 9</b>	
<b>XP 6,400</b>		
<b>NE</b> Large fey (aquatic)		
<b>Init</b> +7; <b>Senses</b> low-light vision; Perception +17		
<b>Aura</b> frightful presence (30 ft.; DC 20)		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
<b>AC</b> 23, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural, –1 size)		
<b>hp</b> 104 (11d6+66)		
<b>Fort</b> +9, <b>Ref</b> +16, <b>Will</b> +10		
<b>DR</b> 10/cold iron; <b>Immune</b> disease, poison		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
<b>Speed</b> 50 ft., swim 50 ft.		
<b>Melee</b> mwk longsword +10 (1d8+5/19–20), 2 hooves +4 (1d6+2) or 2 claws +9 (1d6+5 plus disease), 2 hooves +4 (1d6+2)		
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft.		
<b>Special Attacks</b> blight wave (30-ft. cone, 10d6 damage plus disease, Reflex DC 21 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), trample (1d6+7, DC 20)		
<b>Spell-Like Abilities</b> (CL 9th; concentration +14) 3/day—control water, diminish plants, obscuring mist		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
<b>Str</b> 20, <b>Dex</b> 24, <b>Con</b> 22, <b>Int</b> 13, <b>Wis</b> 17, <b>Cha</b> 21		
<b>Base Atk</b> +5; <b>CMB</b> +11; <b>CMD</b> 29 (33 vs. trip)		
<b>Feats</b> Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Lightning Stance, Mobility, Spring Attack, Wind Stance		
<b>Skills</b> Appraise +12, Escape Artist +21, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (nature) +15, Perception +17, Stealth +17, Swim +27		
<b>Languages</b> Common, Sylvan		
<b>SQ</b> amphibious, undersized weapons		
<b>ECOLOGY</b>		
<b>Environment</b> cold aquatic and coastlines		
<b>Organization</b> solitary		
<b>Treasure</b> standard		
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
<b>Blight Wave (Su)</b> Once every 1d4 rounds a nuckelavee can unleash a 30-foot cone of withering foulness. All living creatures in the area take 10d6 points of damage (DC 21 Reflex save for half). This damage is caused by pure corruption and only affects living creatures. In addition, any creature that fails its Reflex save must make an additional DC 21 Fortitude save or contract the disease mortasheen. Every plant within this area is also affected as per the spell <i>blight</i> (CL 9th).		
<b>Disease (Su)</b> <i>Mortasheen</i> : Blight wave or claw—contact or injury; <i>save</i> Fort DC 21; <i>onset</i> immediate; <i>frequency</i> 1/day; <i>effect</i> 1d4 Con damage and target is fatigued; <i>cure</i>		

3 consecutive saves. Anyone who comes in contact with a creature infected with mortasheen must also make a DC 16 Fortitude save (the base DC –5) or contract the disease. Animals take a –2 penalty on saves against this disease. Creatures who make their saves cannot contract mortasheen from the infected creature. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Undersized Weapons (Ex)** Although a nuckelavee is Large, its upper torso is the same size as that of a Medium humanoid. As a result, they wield weapons as if they were one size category smaller than their actual size (Medium for most nuckelavees).

Among the cruelest and most monstrous of fey, nuckelavees ride forth from black waters to wreak bloody vengeance upon those who despoil nature despoilers. Horrifying, fleshless amalgams of man and horse, these monstrous avengers embody every wound and wickedness suffered by the wilds, their bodies loosing trails of gore and the pounds of their webbed hooves beating an inescapable threnody for all who earn their ire. Once they emerge from their refuges beneath cool waves or rivers, only destruction satisfies their merciless crusades, either that of their victims or their own.

Nuckelavees are strongly built and stand nearly 6 feet tall at their horse heads and about 9 feet at their humanoid heads, with a weight of nearly 2,000 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Nuckelavees spend most of their days asleep in flooded hollows and sea caves, waking only to gnaw on bitter sea plants and algae, their primary form of sustenance. With their unnatural metabolisms, nuckelavees can survive for weeks on only a few bites of aquatic plant life, and are content to lie in torpor for months or even years.

Possessing a supernatural relationship with the waterways in which they reside, these bloody fey know when harm has befallen their home or its denizens. Often the damage proves obvious—the dumping of wastes or toxic runoff, overfishing or kelp harvesting, or even less egregious offenses, like the construction of dams or waterwheels. Regardless of what sparks a nuckelavee's wrath, once one of these avengers' ire is garnered, it gallops forth not just to correct the offense, but repay the pain. Only once blood and tears have quenched the fires of a nuckelavee's rage does it willingly return to the water, often carrying with it some grisly trophy of its vengeance.

Nuckelavees have no capacity to reproduce. The appearance of most proves a complete mystery and grim surprise, and the majority of their kind dwell in areas of pristine nature where rifts to the First World are known or likely. Thus it's supposed that most nuckelavees form and develop among the enigmatic mists of that alien realm, passing on to Golarion for their own inscrutable reasons.



All nuckelavees are infected with mortasheen, a highly infectious wasting disease capable of wiping out the populations of whole islands. Despite the monsters' obsession with defending natural waterways and the life therein, their interest seems to end at the shoreline. Nuckelavees have no interest in or apparent love for terrestrial beasts, especially those tamed and kept by the objects of their anger. Horses, cattle, and other livestock often prove the first casualties of a nuckelavee's rampage, with those that aren't left slaughtered in gory tableaux being infected with mortasheen and inevitably passing it on to their owners.

## HABITAT & SOCIETY

The tales of many lands tell of nuckelavees, typically emerging from seas and lakes to smite those who abuse nature or harm innocents—depending on the storyteller's point of view. The majority of such tales arise from coastal and island communities, though the residents of many lake towns and those who live in lush river countries often warn of these deadly water monsters, blaming them for all manner of hardships. Such tales often include proscriptions for avoiding the bloody riders' wrath, local remedies for afflictions bestowed by the avengers, and ways one might banish a nuckelavee should they come face to face. In most cases, folktales tell of talismans to carry or prayers to recite to convince a nuckelavee that one is a friend—or, at least, innocent of wrongdoing. Such talismans typically take the form of seaweed garlands, horsethair soaked in brine, or vials of sanctified seawater. Druids and priests of nature deities also supposedly possess the power to calm a nuckelavee's fury and convince it to return to the sea—though typically only after it has dealt with those guiltiest of whatever offense roused it. When a nuckelavee first furiously emerges from the water, though, nothing short of the creature's destruction can compel a nuckelavee to return to its rest without taking a life.

It's rare for more than one nuckelavee to be found in the same region, as the creatures have little interest in one another. However, in cases of extreme natural ruin or corruption, multiple nuckelavees have emerged from the waters in a terrifying charge, working together to sow slaughter of legendary magnitude. It remains a mystery whether such rare cavalries form from a single instance of mass despoilment independently rousing the concerns of multiple fey, or whether nuckelavees can call upon the aid of their brethren to mete out punishment for the most extreme crimes against the waves.

## Nuckelavees in Mythology

The nuckelavee originates from the northern coast of Scotland and the rich folklore of the Orkney Islands, along with trows, hogboons, finfolk, and selkies. A horrifying elf that lives in the sea, the grotesque, skinless monstrosity gallops from the waves on hoof and fin to spread terror and disease. Blamed for a multitude of calamities, from foul weather to drownings, the nuckelavee's malicious repertoire made it an all-purpose bogeyman. Yet the most notorious weapon in its callous arsenal was mortasheen, a disease that would spread through the islands, sicken horses and cattle, and blight crops. Then only the power of The Mither o' the Sea, the regional goddess, could drive the monster back to the waves and restore peace to the islands.





# Kingmaker Part 4 of 6



## Amiri

### FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY Gorum  
HOMELAND Mammoth Lords

### CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Barbarian 10  
ALIGNMENT Chaotic Neutral  
INITIATIVE +1  
SPEED 40 ft.

### ABILITIES

STRENGTH 21  
DEXTERITY 13  
CONSTITUTION 16  
INTELLIGENCE 10  
WISDOM 12  
CHARISMA 8

### DEFENSE

HP 105  
AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +3 deflection, +1 Dex, +2 natural)  
Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +7  
Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; DR 2/—

### SKILLS

Acrobatics +12, Climb +16, Intimidate +12, Perception +14, Survival +14

### FEATS

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Extra Rage, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bastard sword), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

### OFFENSE

Melee +2 Large bastard sword +16/+11 (2d8+9/17–20)  
Ranged +1 composite longbow +12/+7 (1d8+5/x3)  
Base Atk +10; CMB +15 (+17 bull rush); CMD 29 (31 vs. bull rush)  
Special Abilities damage reduction 2/—, fast movement, rage 31 rds/day, rage powers (clear mind, knockback, powerful blow +3, renewed vigor, strength surge)

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of fly*; **Gear** +2 hide armor, +2 Large bastard sword, +1 composite longbow (+5 Str) with 20 arrows, javelins (2), spiked gauntlet, throwing axe, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical might* (Str, Con) +2, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of protection* +3, 235 gp

Amiri never quite fit into the expected gender roles of her tribe, and when the tribe attempted to send her on a suicide mission, she returned with an enormous trophy—a frost giant's sword. She has since abandoned her people, and has come to value her oversized sword (even though she can only truly wield it properly when her blood rage takes her). She never speaks of the circumstances that forced her to flee her homeland. Some things are better left unsaid.



## Harsk

### MALE DWARF

DEITY Torag  
HOMELAND Druma

### CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Ranger 10  
ALIGNMENT Lawful Neutral  
INITIATIVE +4  
SPEED 20 ft.

### ABILITIES

STRENGTH 14  
DEXTERITY 18  
CONSTITUTION 16  
INTELLIGENCE 10  
WISDOM 14  
CHARISMA 6

### DEFENSE

HP 93  
AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 natural)  
Fort +13, Ref +14, Will +10; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities  
Senses darkvision 60 ft.  
Defensive Abilities evasion

### SKILLS

Handle Animal +10, Heal +14, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +14, Stealth +15, Survival +14

### FEATS

Endurance, Far Shot, Improved Critical (heavy crossbow), Improved Precise Shot, Iron Will, Pinpoint Targeting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow)

### OFFENSE

Melee +2 greataxe +14/+9 (1d12+5/x3)  
Ranged +1 flaming burst heavy crossbow +15 (1d10+1 plus 1d6 fire/17–20)  
Base Atk +10; CMB +12; CMD 28 (32 vs. bull rush and trip)  
Special Abilities favored enemy (humanoid [giant] +6, fey +4, humanoid [human] +2), favored terrain (mountains +4, forest +2), hunter's bond (companions), swift tracker, track +5, wild empathy +8, woodland stride  
Spells Prepared (CL 7th, concentration +9)  
2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure light wounds*  
1st—*entangle* (DC 13), *longstrider*, *resist energy*

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potions of pass without trace* (2), *screaming bolts* (4), *antitoxin* (2), *smokesticks* (2), *tanglefoot bags* (2), *thunderstones* (2); **Other Gear** +3 studded leather armor, +2 greataxe, +1 flaming burst heavy crossbow with 30 bolts, masterwork silver dagger, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *boots of the winterlands*, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of protection* +2, backpack, rations (4), signal whistle, teapot, 260 gp

Harsk is, in many ways, not your standard dwarf. Much of his anger stems from the slaughter of his brother's warband, slain to a man by giants. Harsk's hatred of giants has fueled him and shapes his life. He prefers strong tea over alcohol (to keep his senses sharp), the wildlands of the surface world (where giants can be found), and the crossbow over the axe (which allows him to start fights faster). His companions value his skill at combat even if they're somewhat afraid of him.





## Lini

### FEMALE GNOME

DEITY Green Faith  
HOMELAND Linnorm Kings

### CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Druid 10  
ALIGNMENT Neutral  
INITIATIVE +1  
SPEED 20 ft.

### ABILITIES

STRENGTH 6  
DEXTERITY 12  
CONSTITUTION 16  
INTELLIGENCE 10  
WISDOM 19  
CHARISMA 15

### DEFENSE

HP 75  
AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 size)  
Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +13; +2 vs. illusion; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects  
Senses low-light vision  
Immune poison

### SKILLS

Handle Animal +14, Heal +16, Knowledge (nature) +14, Perception +18, Ride +9, Spellcraft +12

### FEATS

Augment Summoning, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (conjuraction)

### OFFENSE

Melee +1 sickle +7/+2 (1d4-1)  
Ranged mwk sling +10 (1d3-2)  
Base Atk +7; CMB +4; CMD 17  
Special Abilities gnome spell-like abilities, nature bond (small cat named Droogami), nature sense, trackless step, wild empathy +12, wild shape 5/day, woodland stride  
Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +14)  
5th—stoneskin, wall of thorns  
4th—air walk, dispel magic, flame strike (DC 18), ice storm  
3rd—call lightning (DC 17), daylight, neutralize poison, remove disease  
2nd—bull's strength, barkskin, flaming sphere (DC 16), resist energy, spider climb  
1st—cure lt. wounds (3), entangle (2; DC 15)  
0—detect magic, know direction, light, stabilize

**Combat Gear** elemental gem (water), scrolls of call lightning (2), wand of cure moderate wounds (33 charges), wand of flame blade (44 charges); **Other Gear** +2 wild leather armor, +1 sickle, masterwork sling with 20 bullets, cloak of resistance +2, druid's vestment, headband of inspired wisdom +2, ring of protection +2, belt pouch, mistletoe, spell component pouch, sunrods (2), collection of de-barked sticks, 99 gp

Lini always seemed to possess a certain affinity with various creatures of the woodlands near where she grew up—particularly with larger predators like bears and snow leopards. In the years since her departure from the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Lini has collected more than a dozen sticks—one from each forest or wood she visits. These sticks are to Lini a roadmap of her experiences, and while they may look indistinguishable to others, each holds a wealth of memories to the gnome druid.



## Sajan

### MALE HUMAN

DEITY Irori  
HOMELAND Vudra

### CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Monk 10  
ALIGNMENT Lawful Neutral  
INITIATIVE +3  
SPEED 60 ft.

### ABILITIES

STRENGTH 16  
DEXTERITY 16  
CONSTITUTION 14  
INTELLIGENCE 10  
WISDOM 12  
CHARISMA 8

### DEFENSE

HP 75  
AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 insight, +3 monk, +1 Wis)  
Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +10; +2 vs. enchantment  
Defensive Abilities improved evasion;  
Immune disease

### SKILLS

Acrobatics +16 (+38 jump), Climb +16, Perception +14, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +16

### FEATS

Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (temple sword), Gorgon's Fist, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Scorpion Style, Snatch Arrow, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist

### OFFENSE

Melee unarmed strike +10/+5 (2d6+3 plus 1d6 electricity) or  
flurry of blows +11/+11/+6/+6 (2d6+3 plus 1d6 electricity) or  
+2 temple sword +12/+7 (1d8+5/19-20)  
Base Atk +7; CMB +13 (+15 grapple); CMD 34 (36 vs. grapple)  
Special Abilities fast movement, high jump, ki pool (6 points, lawful, magic), maneuver training, slow fall 50 ft., stunning fist (11/day, DC 16, fatigued, sickened), wholeness of body

**Combat Gear** potion of bear's endurance, potions of cure moderate wounds (2), potions of fly (2); **Gear** +2 temple sword, shock amulet of mighty fists, bracers of armor +4, cloak of resistance +2, dusty rose prism ioun stone, monk's belt, ring of protection +2, wooden holy symbol, belt pouch, 250 gp

Sajan Gadadvara and his twin sister Sajni were separated when the lord they served was shamed and forced to cede half his army to the victor—among them Sajan's sister. Sajni was taken away from Vudra by her new master, and Sajan abandoned his own responsibilities to follow. He spent years trying in vain to find her, but has not yet given up. Sajan knows he cannot return to Vudra, for the padapranja there would execute him as a deserter. He cares not for his home country, however, and continues to seek out any clue that might point him toward his sister.



## Next Month



### WAR OF THE RIVER KINGS

by Jason Nelson

The rulers of the Greenbelt have faced rampaging monsters, forgotten evils, and barbarian incursions, but when Irovetti, Lord of the River Kingdoms domain of Pitax, invites them to his capital for diplomatic negotiations and neighborly festivities, a whole new host of challenges and dangers awaits. Will the PCs snub Irovetti's strange and brutal attempts at hospitality, or will they forge an alliance with the tyrant? After all, there are more ways to build a kingdom than by the sword. Or are there?

### GORUM

by Sean K Reynolds

Every battle cry a prayer, every warrior's life an offering, every blood-drench battlefield an altar to Our Lord in Iron. Learn the steel-shod doctrine and simple but brutal ways of Gorum, god of strength, battle, weapons, and war.

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by Mike Ferguson

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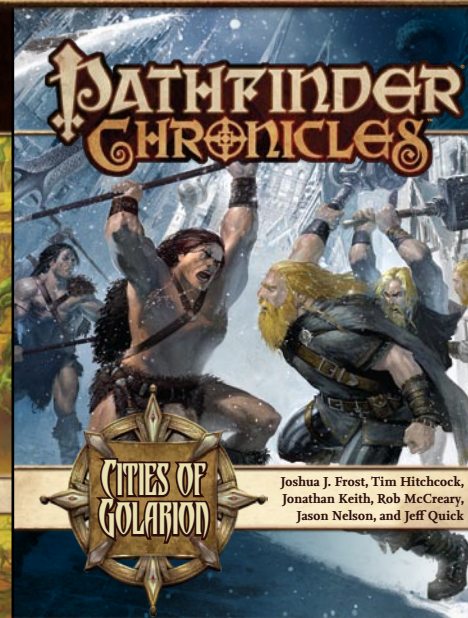
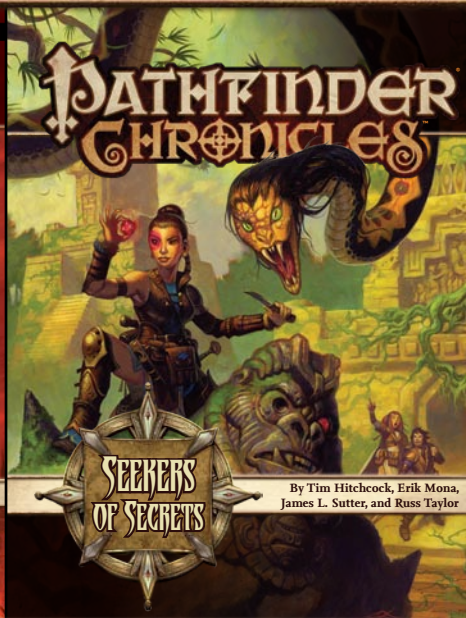
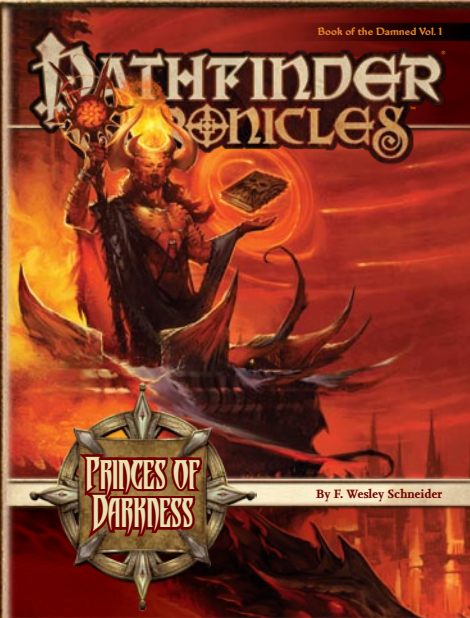
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## ROAD TO WYVERNSTONE

**Source:** Ley Rezbin, mayor of Tatzlford.

**Task:** The mayor of the village of Tatzlford wants to increase traffic and trade. He's drafted plans for a road between his village and Wyvernstone Bridge over the East Sellen River, but he doesn't have enough workers to start building the road.

**Completion:** Build a road that connects Tatzlford to Wyvernstone Bridge.

**Reward:** Not only will building this road help travel and trade, but the influx of business from the East Sellen also increases the nation's Economy by +1.



## BOG MUMMY TERROR

**Source:** Local swampers.

**Task:** Numerous families of local swampers and rural folk claim that something bad haunts the bogland on the border between the Northmarches and Hecktengue Slough. Stories claim that bog mummies are rising from the muck to drown the living!

**Completion:** Track down the source of these tales about bog mummies. If there's any truth to the tales, destroy the bog mummies.

**Reward:** With the threat of the bog mummies removed, the nation's Stability increases by +1.



## CHASING THE WIND

**Source:** Jennavieve Kensen.

**Task:** Although public opinion is that Jennavieve Kensen is a spoiled princess, no one denies that she's rich. Her latest obsession is a story about a herd of wild horses led by a magnificent stallion named Windchaser that's said to live west of the swamp. She's promised a sizable reward if someone can bring her one of Windchaser's herd to add to her stable.

**Completion:** Deliver one of the wild horses of the western Slough to Jennavieve, alive and well.

**Reward:** Jennavieve will pay 8,000 gp for the horse.



## GARUUM'S REVENGE

**Source:** Garuum, exiled beggard.

**Task:** Since he was exiled from his tribe, Garuum's festering anger has reached its breaking point. He claims to have found a magic bug and promises to give it to whoever can seek out the beggard tribe of M'betuu in Hecktengue Slough, kill its priest-king Sepcke, and bring his head to Garuum to feed to his pet slark.

**Completion:** Kill Sepcke and bring his severed head back to Garuum.

**Reward:** Garuum's "magic bug" is in fact an ebony fly figurine of wendrous power.







# Blood on the Water

Even with the PCs' kingdom growing at their heart, the Stolen Lands are far from tame. An incursion by merciless barbarians spills blood on the PCs' lands and begins a search for a legendary artifact in the depths of the region's most infamous wilderness. Amid the perpetual shadows and bottomless bogs of the Hooktongue Slough lie long-mired secrets and terrors eager to consume any who intrude upon their fetid realm. Yet what powers that lurk beyond the swamp seek to end the PCs' reign? And how might a single, bloodthirsty blade mean the difference between their kingdom's ruin and its survival?

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