



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]
2nd Edition

DLA3
Adventure
9294

Dragon Lance

Official Game Adventure

DRAGON'S REST

BY RICK SWAN



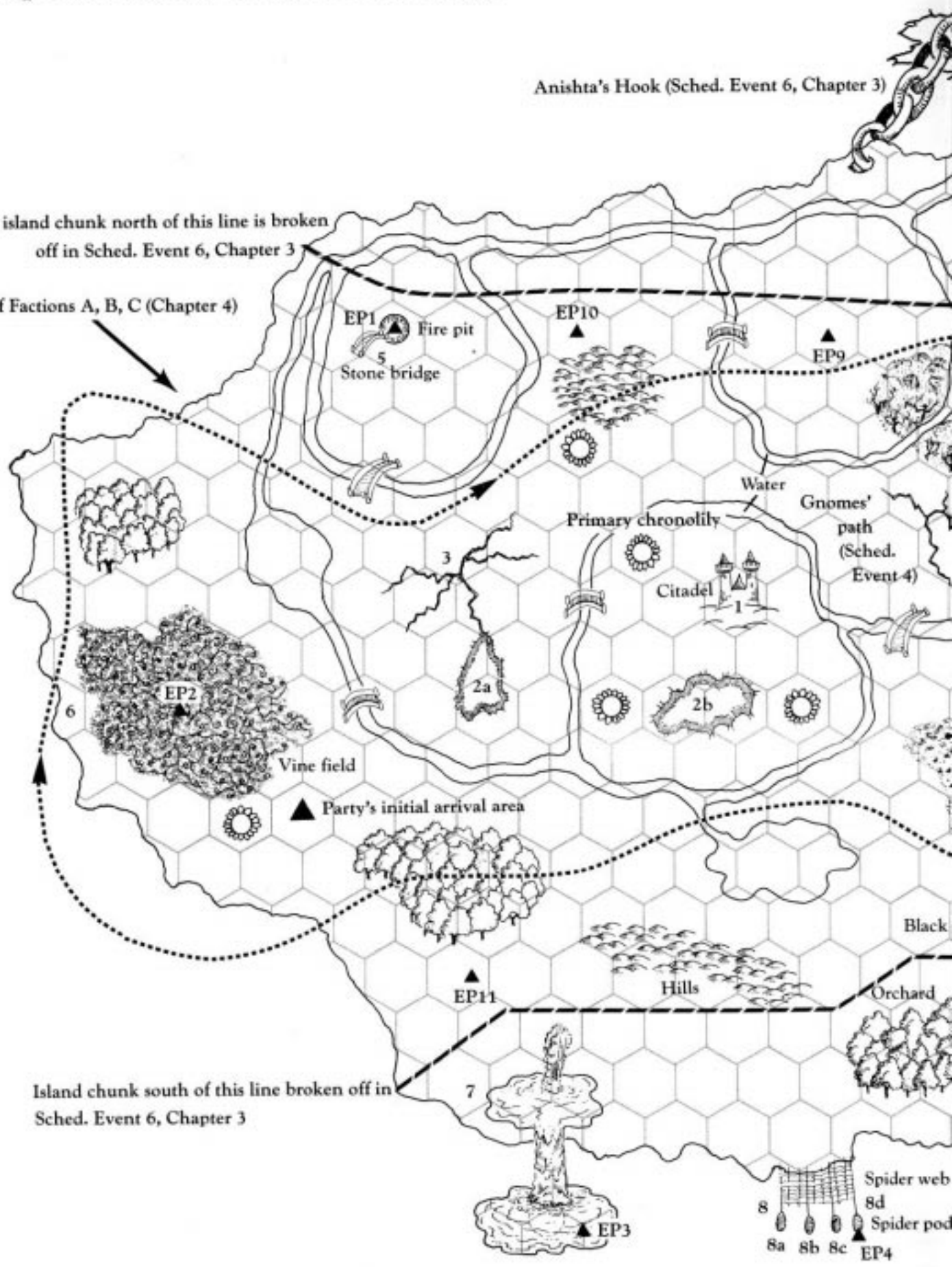
The earth-shaking conclusion to the epic adventure begun in "Dragon Dawn" and continued in Dragon Knight!

DM's Map 3: Eborium (inside cover map)

Anishta's Hook (Sched. Event 6, Chapter 3)

island chunk north of this line is broken off in Sched. Event 6, Chapter 3

Approach of Factions A, B, C (Chapter 4)



Island chunk south of this line broken off in Sched. Event 6, Chapter 3

Spider web 8
8d Spider pod
8a 8b 8c EP4



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INTRODUCTION

Dragon's Rest is the third and final module in an epic DRAGONLANCE® series set in Taladas, the previously unknown continent opposite of AnsaLon on the planet Krynn. The first module, *Dragon Dawn*, began with an investigation into the murder of dragons of Taladas. The second module, *Dragon Knight*, revealed that Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness, was the mysterious master of the dragon killers. The final installment features the exploration of a strange island in the Abyss and concludes with a climactic battle between the forces of good and the evil minions of the Dark Queen.

All of the modules in the series are self-contained and can be played independently. If you plan to play the entire series, however, the modules should be played in order.

The DM should have access to the AD&D® 2nd Edition game rules to run this module. *The Time of the Dragon* boxed set describes the world of Taladas in some detail, while the *DRAGONLANCE Adventures* hardback book features characters and rule modifications specific to the world of Krynn. Though both are helpful resources, neither is necessary to play this adventure.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

Dragon's Rest is designed for five or six player characters of 8th to 9th level, but it's possible to use as few as three or four PCs. However, if only three or four PCs are used, the DM might consider adjusting some of the encounters to make them less deadly.

Eight pregenerated player characters are provided in the appendix of this book. If the players have completed *Dragon Knight*, they can continue with the same characters, retaining any equipment acquired in the previous adventures.

If a PC was killed in the previous module, the player can choose an unused character or change the name and background of a deceased character and use the same statistics and equipment.

With the approval of the DM, players can use their own characters. A good mix of character classes is suggested, but none should be of evil alignment.

NEW CHARACTER TYPES

The *Rule Book of Taladas* in the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set introduced Character Kits to help model the different peoples and cultures of Taladas. Character Kits don't describe new classes; instead, they allow characters who are identical in class but come from different cultures to have special abilities, disadvantages, and knowledge appropriate to their backgrounds.

Dragon Dawn introduced several new character types, two of which return in this module. Tavin Longspear, a non-player character, is a dragon knight. Chyrub, a player character, is a legionary of Erastas. Dragon knights are characters who have a close rapport with dragons and are skilled at riding and handling them. Legionaries of Erastas are members of an elite military unit who excel in combat. All relevant information pertaining to these character types is included in the character descriptions in the text. Those wishing additional information should refer to the *Dragon Dawn* and *Dragon Knight* modules, which also include Character Kit templates for these character types.

ABOUT TALADAS

The differences between Taladas and Ansalon, as well as the differences between Taladas and standard AD&D adventure settings, are explained in detail in the *Time of the Dragon* set. For the benefit of those without access to this material, the key points relevant to this adventure are summarized below. The DM should make this information available to the players.

CURRENCY

As elsewhere on Krynn, the basic unit of currency is the steel piece. One steel piece (stl) has the equivalent purchasing power of one gold piece in a conventional AD&D campaign. A gold piece is equivalent in value to a silver piece.

DRAGONS

The dragons of Taladas, also known as Othlorx ("the Uninvolved"), are physically similar to standard dragons, but their attitudes are markedly different. While the dragons of Ansalon have been deeply involved in the War of the Lance, the Othlorx have remained intentionally neutral and withdrawn.

As is the case on Ansalon, many of the dragons of Taladas are known by two names. A dragon may be known by one name among dragonkind, and by a different name among nondragons. This second name is often derived from a physical feature. For instance, Markellan, the silver dragon from Chapter 3 of this adventure, gets his second name of Starwing from a distinctive birthmark on his wing. In most cases, the text refers to a dragon by his dragon-given name.

DWARVES

The mountain and hill dwarves native to Ansalon are found only in small, widely scattered communities in Taladas. More common are the Nylgai Hadirnoe (also known as the Scorned Dwarves, deep-dwellers who shun the bright sunlight) and the Fianawar (dour, unhappy surface-dwellers). The gully dwarves of Ansalon are virtually unknown in Taladas. Players wishing to use dwarves as PCs are advised to consult the *Time of the Dragon* set.

ELVES

Most Taladas elves are from the Elf Clans (wild and dangerous) and Silvanaes (intelligent and well-bred). A few are hulderfolk (shy and withdrawn) and cha'asii (practitioners of nature magic). Elves common to Ansalon—Silvanesti, Qualinesti, and Kagonesti—are few and far between. Players wishing to use elves as PCs are advised to consult the *Time of the Dragon* set.

KENDER

There are small pockets of kender whose attitudes are similar to those of their Ansalon cousins, although Taladas kender tend to be more suspicious and distrustful. Taladas kender are immune to all types of fear and have the special ability to taunt opponents into reckless attacks by verbally abusing

them. Any creature taunted by a kender must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or attack wildly for 1d10 rounds with a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and a +2 penalty to its Armor Class.

GODS

In most cases, the gods of Krynn are known by different names in Taladas than they are in Ansalon. The Taladas names for the gods are used throughout this adventure. The Taladas Gods Table lists these names.

Taladas Gods Table

Ansalon

Name	Taladas Name(s)
Chislev	Jijin (Uigan), Quoyai (Elf Clan)
Gilean	Graylord (League)
Habbakuk	The Sea Lord (Armach), Han-Yagas (League), Blindel the Dolphin Lord (Baltch)
Hiddukel	Hitech (Tamire/League), Hith (Thenol), Usa the Mighty (Armach), Usk-Do (Hobgoblins)
Highfather	Highgod (Glass Sailors)
Kiri-Jolith	Qu'an the Warrior (Uigan)
Mishakal	Mislaxa (general), Ildamar the Earthspirit (Armach)
Reorx	Reorx (Gnomes, Dwarves)
Sargonnas	Sargonnas (Minotaurs)
Shinare	Nuran (League)
Takhisis	Erestem (Uigan), Mwarg (Hobgoblins)

In Taladas, Lunitari is called Lunias, Nuitari is Angomais, and Solinari is Solais. Lunias, Angomais, and Solais are considered powerful spirits, not deities, in Taladas.

Some gods are not normally worshiped in Taladas. These include Branchala, Chemosh, Majere, Mishakal, Morgion, Paladine, Zeboim, and Zivilyn. (For more about the gods of Taladas, refer to the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set.)

A god often creates a physical manifestation of himself to represent him and conduct his business. This manifestation is called an avatar. In this adventure, the player characters will be dealing with an avatar of Sargonnas; details about the avatar can be found in the Appendix.

ADVENTURING IN KRYNN

Krynn adventures stress a different set of values than are usual in conventional AD&D settings. Instead of exploring mysterious places, accumulating treasure, and fighting powerful monsters, Krynn adventures stress a strong story line. Although players encounter their fair share of mysterious places and powerful monsters, these types of encounters should take a back seat to the story itself. A successful adventure in Krynn has the feel of an epic novel, a sweeping story in which the player characters are vital participants.

Krynn adventures also stress a value system based on strong principles. The most important of these principles are as follows:

- * Persevering forces of good can triumph over evil.
- * Good actions have good consequences; evil actions have evil consequences.
- * Truth, justice, and honor must be promoted over deceit, injustice, and selfishness.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

ORGANIZATION

The adventure begins with the events of the Prologue. The four chapters contain the bulk of the adventure's events and encounters. However, the PCs won't experience the chapters in the order they are presented. For instance, after the PCs experience Chapter 1, they will be sent to a specific episode in Chapter 2. When they finish the Chapter 2 episode, they will experience an event in Chapter 3, and will then return to Chapter 1. Though there are clear guidelines for moving between chapters in the text, the DM should become familiar with the entire module before play begins to become familiar with the structure. The various "DM's Background" and "Notes to the DM" sections provide exclusive information for the DM, including details about the major goals and discoveries in each chapter. The "Troubleshooting" sections give tips for handling problems.

Boxed text may be read directly to the players, or it may be paraphrased by the DM.

MAPS

The enclosed fold-out color map (Map 1) details a demiplanar region called Eborium, which is also known as the Isle of Flames. The map also shows several smaller regions of Taladas, each representing a specific Chapter 2 Interlude. Map 1 can be used as a playing aid as the DM sees fit.

The color map on the module cover (Map 2) shows the area of Taladas where the PCs begin the adventure. On the inside of the cover is the DM's Map (Map 3), a smaller version of the fold-out map. This map shows the locations of the encounters in the text and is exclusively for use by the DM.

ENCOUNTERS

Encounters are adventure episodes keyed to designated locations on the maps. Encounters may be keyed to outdoor areas, rooms of a building, or specific objects. When the PCs cross the border of a new area (indicated on the DM's Map on the inside cover of the module), refer to the corresponding number in the text; the encounter occurs immediately. In many cases, the text explains what happens if the PCs make a return visit. Otherwise, either rerun the same encounter or use common sense to adjust the descriptions.

RETURNING NPCs

Some of the NPCs encountered in *Dragon Knight* return in this adventure. If the PCs participated in the previous adventure, it's possible that one or more of these NPCs met with untimely deaths. There are two ways the DM can handle their return in *Dragon's Rest*.

1. Substitute a similar NPC, preferably a relative or close friend of the indicated NPC, and use the same statistics and equipment. For instance, Tavin Longspear, the courageous warrior who assisted the PCs in *Dragon Knight*, shows up again in this adventure. However, if Tavin was killed in *Dragon Knight*, you might substitute his best friend, Gorris Silverhand, using the same statistics.

2. Invoke the "obscure death" rule to explain an apparent death and subsequent return. The rule states that, as in Saturday afternoon matinees, the circumstances surrounding the death of the character were confused and the body was not recovered. Later, the character reappears with a story of how he or she miraculously survived.



THE STORY THUS FAR

THE HATCHLING MURDERS

It began with a simple request from Baron Leonid Althen, the revered lord of the Rathwyck Marches in the Minotaur League. The baron summoned a group of reputable adventurers to investigate the mysterious killings of the beasts on his private hunting reserve. Particularly troubling was the discovery of three dead hatchling copper dragons of whom the baron had been particularly fond. The adventurers agreed to bring the dragon killers to justice.

Aided by Derry Althen (the enthusiastic but inexperienced daughter of the baron), Tavin Longspear (a rugged and courageous dragon knight), and Gabus (the loyal copper dragon companion of Tavin), the adventurers tracked the dragon killers to a secluded area of the Marak Valleys known as the Pillars of the Moon. The captured Anishta, the leader of the killers, blurted out a confession. "We were hired to kill dragons," she said. "Any and all kinds."

Anishta said she didn't know the name of her employer, "but somebody rich and mighty and far away wants those dragons dead. I think it's to stop the dragons from getting together at a gathering Amanthus set for the fall equinox."

Tavin confirmed that Amanthus had indeed called for a secret conclave in a few months' time. Gabus insisted that Amanthus be warned about the plot to kill the dragons and summoned a team of copper dragons to carry the adventurers to Amanthus's lair in the Steamwall.

AUDIENCE WITH AMANTHUS

Tavin was correct about Amanthus's plan to rally the dragons. Amanthus, an ancient gold dragon, was the only one of his kind who remained neutral in the War of the Lance. Learning that evil dragons were joining the war in Ansalon had finally stirred Amanthus to action. He decided to summon his fellow Othlorx to a conclave in hopes of convincing them to help defend against the evil dragons. But in recent weeks, Amanthus had become increasingly concerned that the forces of evil had learned of his plan to rally the dragons and were plotting to interfere.

Amanthus listened closely to the report from the adventurers, who had been delivered to his lair by his copper dragon allies. Their report seemed to confirm his worst fears. Impressed by the adventurers' skill and courage in defeating Anishta and her aides, Amanthus requested their help again, this time to discover the identity and motive of the mysterious master of the dragon killers. The adventurers agreed to help and were dispatched to await further instructions.

TAVIN'S PLAN

A few weeks later, Tavin summoned the adventurers to a secret meeting in a remote area near the small village of Trilon. He explained that he and some fellow dragon knights had recently intercepted a band of mercenaries on their way to a meeting with Gezele Ella, one of Taladas's most notorious criminals. Ella had been assigned an important job by the master of the dragon hunters. Ordinarily, Ella worked alone, but this job was so tough that she had decided to recruit some help. The mercenaries captured by Tavin and his friends were among the would-be recruits.

"What I suggest," said Tavin, "is that you rendezvous with Ella and pass yourself off as mercenaries. If you can suitably impress her, she'll take you on as hired hands. And if you help her complete her assignment, there's a good chance that she'll take you along when she reports to her master."

ENTER THE DARK QUEEN

In accordance with Tavin's plan, the adventurers rendezvoused with Ella and, posing as mercenaries, were hired to help her hunt dragons in the desolate Steamwall Mountains. Ella's spiritual advisor, a goblin shaman named Grott, also accompanied them.

With the successful completion of their mission, Ella and Grott took the adventurers to Kor Island to collect their reward. There, the adventurers met a draconian named Chorahh and an evil gnome cleric named Drishurocol who served as representatives of the master of the dragon killers. While Ella and Grott negotiated with Chorahh and Drishurocol, the adventurers explored the island citadel and discovered that the wounded Tavin was being held prisoner.

Tavin told the adventurers that shortly after he left them in Trilon, he heard that the dragon killings were being directed from Kor Island. He and three other dragon knights and their copper dragons staged a surprise assault. Of the entire force, Tavin was the only survivor. After the battle, Chorahh and Drishurocol took him prisoner. They tried to find out what he knew of their plans, but he told them nothing.

Tavin overheard snatches of conversation between Chorahh and Drishurocol that led him to believe that the plot against the Othlorx might be more serious than previously assumed. The master of the dragon hunters is none other than Eresem herself, Tavin found out. He told the PCs he believed that Eresem plans to recruit an army of extra-planar creatures to invade Taladas and destroy Amanthus and the other Othlorx leaders. Tavin told the adventurers about a portal in the fortress that Chorahh and Drishurocol used to keep in contact with Eresem. "Once the portal is opened," Tavin told the PCs, "you can enter the Ethereal plane and find out if Eresem is preparing to strike. Return immediately with your information. If there are no signs of a strike force, we will continue to fight the dragon hunters on Taladas. But if Eresem is readying her minions, then we will mobilize our forces and strike now."

PERIL IN THE PLANES

Following their discussion with Tavin, the adventurers confronted Chorahh and Drishurocol, only to discover that Chorahh had learned of the adventurers' deception. "I congratulate you on your charade," said Chorahh. "However, I am not as easily fooled as Ella and Grott. We have been tracking you for some time, and we know who you are." Chorahh revealed that he had imprisoned Ella and Grott in another plane of existence as punishment for being deceived by the adventurers. "Ella and Grott may prove useful in the future. We can always retrieve them if necessary. You, on the other hand, have no value. Your lives are over."

Chorahh and Drishurocol attacked the adventurers, but the adventurers defeated them. The adventurers activated Chorahh's portal and stepped through, arriving on a barren plateau floating in the bleakness of the Ethereal plane.

Shortly after their arrival, the adventurers noticed an island floating several miles in the distance. Hundreds of bizarre creatures roamed aimlessly across its barren expanse. A five-headed dragon hovering above the island commanded the creatures to pay tribute to Eresem. The adventurers realized that Eresem was mobilizing an army of extraplanar creatures for an assault on the Othlorx of Taladas.

Meanwhile, a contingent of dragon knights led by Derry Althen had arrived at Kor Island to rescue Tavin. Searching the citadel, Derry accidentally triggered a defense mechanism that destroyed the portal. From their bleak plateau, the adventurers watched helplessly as the portal disappeared, trapping them in the Ethereal plane.

PROLOGUE: HIGHVALE AND BEYOND



INTRODUCTION FOR CONTINUING PLAYERS

The adventure begins immediately after the events in the Epilogue of the previous module, *Dragon Knight*. Derry Althen accidentally has shattered the gate in Chorahh's citadel on Kor Island, trapping the PCs in the Ethereal plane. A battalion of eyewings is advancing toward the PCs. A long metallic cord is descending from a hole in the sky and the PCs are hearing a voice in their heads.

If both new and continuing players are participating in this adventure, assume that the new PCs were members of the rescue team accompanying Derry Althen at the climax of *Dragon Knight*. The new PCs were the first members of the team to discover the gate in Chorahh's citadel. The new PCs stepped into the still-active gate to join their companions. The gate had deactivated by the time Derry found it. In her efforts to free the PCs, Derry accidentally destroyed the gate, trapping the new PCs in the Ethereal plane along with the members of the original party.

Continue with the "Rising Storm" section.

INTRODUCTION FOR NEW PLAYERS

The adventure begins in a remote region of hills north of Highvale in Southern Hosk. The PCs are friends of the characters who participated in the previous adventure. Recently,

their friends asked them to undertake a mission crucial to the future of Taladas. These friends instructed them to journey north into the hills, where they would meet Tavin Longspear, a warrior who would give them the details of the mission.

THE EMISSARY

For two days, you have marched steadily north through these rolling hills of wild flowers and leafy trees. Though the journey has been pleasant, you grow impatient. Did your friends not plead with you quickly rendezvous with the mysterious Tavin Longspear? Why has Longspear made no effort to meet you?

The clank of metal against metal in the pocket of a companion reminds you of yet another mystery. Your companion carries two silver bracelets that were given to him by your friends. What is their purpose?

You notice a glint of green in the billowing clouds high overhead, the same glint that you've seen repeatedly for two days, and your heart races. You are certain that the glint comes from the scales of dragon. But you remain uncertain as to why the creature has been tracking you.

As you descend the side of a hill, the air before you begins to shimmer and sparkle. You stop short, breathlessly watching the massive form of a copper dragon materialize in the glistening air. In a rasping whisper, she addresses you and your companions by name. "You have come for Tavin," she says. "I am your guide."

The copper dragon is Torris, the sister of Gabus who served as the bonded companion of Tavin Longspear (Gabus died at the end of the previous adventure, *Dragon Knight*). Torris is even-tempered, soft-spoken, and utterly devoted to Tavin. She assumed the role of Tavin's companion and protector in the wake of Gabus's death.

Torris apologizes for the delay in meeting with the PCs. "But Tavin required my attention. His wounds are serious and recovery is slow." If the PCs ask what happened to Tavin, Torris says, "You must ask him yourself."

Torris tells the PCs to follow her into the woods, saying that Tavin is hidden in a clearing about a mile away. If the PCs ask about the silver bracelets or anything else concerning the mission, Torris deflects their questions, saying that it is not her place to speak for Tavin. "He will answer your questions himself."

If the PCs ask if Torris knows anything about the green dragon that's been trailing them, Torris stops and stares at them, clearly concerned. "I know of no such dragon, but our enemies are all around us. We will remain vigilant."

THE FALLEN KNIGHT

Torris leads the PCs to a clearing enclosed by tall trees and bushes. Lying comfortably on a bed of leaves is a young man with sandy hair. His tanned face is covered with scars and bruises, and his leather armor is torn and stained. "Welcome to my home," he says. "I would offer you a chair, but I'm afraid you'll have to make do with the ground."

The man introduces himself as Tavin Longspear, "a dragon knight from the hills of Hosk." He gags on his words, coughing and choking. "All knights are not as helpless as me," he says, "I guess I've had a run of bad luck."

Between shallow breaths and wracking coughs, Tavin explains that a war of unimaginable magnitude is imminent in Ansalon, a continent on the other side of the world. Though the Othlorx had vowed to remain neutral in the war, an ancient gold dragon named Amanthus learned that some of the evil dragons of Taladas were joining the war in Ansalon. Amanthus decided to summon his fellow Othlorx to a conclave in hopes of convincing them to help defend against the evil dragons.

"But the forces of evil, led by none other than Eretem, the Queen of Darkness, plan to interfere with the conclave," says Tavin. "Eretem is recruiting an army of extraplanar creatures to invade Taladas. Her goal is the destruction of Amanthus and the other Othlorx leaders." Tavin explains that this discovery was made by the friends of the PCs, who also informed Amanthus of the impending attack. Amanthus decided to rally the remaining dragons as quickly as possible to prepare a defense against the extraplanar assault.

"However, there has been a delay in rallying the good dragons," continues Tavin. "The Othlorx are stubbornly independent and are not easily organized. While Amanthus continues to mobilize the Othlorx, it's vital for us to know if Eretem is still preparing to strike. That's where you come in."

Tavin motions to Torris, who moves to the side of a vine-covered hill a few yards away from Tavin. Torris brushes away the vines, revealing a huge gray crystal mirror with dark mist swirling inside.

"This mirror was installed in the wall of a citadel on Kor Island in the Indanalis Sea," says Tavin. "The plate is actually a gate to the Ethereal plane. Two of Eretem's minions who operated from the island used it to keep in touch with her. This is also how your friends made their original visit." At Tavin's request, Torris retrieved the plate and brought it here for safe keeping.

"The silver bracelets belonged to Eretem's minions," says

Tavin. "They were taken from the minions by your friends, then given to you on my behalf. To open the gate, you must strike the bracelets together." Once the gate is open, the PCs can enter the Ethereal plane and see for themselves if Eretem is preparing to strike. "Return immediately with your information. If there are no signs of a strike force, we will make other plans. But if Eretem is still readying her minions, then we will mobilize our forces and invade the Ethereal plane."

QUESTIONING TAVIN

At this point, the PCs may have questions for Tavin. He answers as follows.

Who is Eretem? "Eretem is the Queen of Darkness, an evil goddess of nearly unlimited power. She dwells in an alternate plane of existence, promoting her schemes in our plane through a host of evil minions. She can appear in any form she wishes. Her most common form is that of a five-headed dragon."

How did you get involved in all this? How did our friends become involved? Tavin knows all of the information in the "The Story Thus Far" section of the Introduction and answers all questions pertaining to the background of the adventure accordingly.

What happened to you? "It's a long story," he laughs weakly. He explains that the PCs' friends posed as mercenaries in order to discover the identity of the master of the

Torris (mature adult copper dragon; also known as Rustback)

AC -4; MV 9, FI 30 (C), Jp 3; HD 16; hp 82; THAC0 5; #AT 3 + specials (snatch up to L size; kick 1d6 + 7 feet, and 1d6 + 7 points of damage; wing buffet 1d6 + 7 points of damage); Dmg 1d6 + 7/1d6 + 7/5d4 + 7; SA acid breath (70' long x 5' x 5' (Dmg 10d6 + 7, save for half damage), gas breath that slows victim for 15 minutes (30' long x 20' x 20'), can breathe once every three rounds; SD fear within 25 yards (roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or fight with -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls); *spider climb* (on stone), *neutralize poison* (three times per day), *stone shape* (two times per day), *rock to mud* once per day, immune to acid; MR 20%; AL CG; SZ G (63' long body, 50' tail)

Spells (cast at 14th level):

1st Level: *detect magic*, *light*, *magic missile*

2nd Level: *invisibility*

Languages: Copper Dragon, Auric (14), Marak Kender (14), Bronze Dragon (14), Boli Gnomish (14)

Tavin Longspear (6th-level human dragon knight)

AC 5; MV 3 (reduced because of wounds); hp 6 (reduced because of wounds); #AT nil (his poor health currently prevents him from making any attacks); Dmg nil; THAC0 15; STR 15, DEX 9, CON 12, INT 12, WIS 13, CHA 17; SA no penalty when using crossbow or lance from dragon-back; SD immune to dragon awe and dragon fear; AL N

Weapon proficiencies: medium lance (specialized), spear, heavy crossbow (specialized: 1/2)

Nonweapon proficiencies: dragon riding (13), hunting (12), animal lore (12), fire-building (12), mountaineering, weather sense (12)

Languages: Auric, Copper Dragon (12), Hoor (12)

Equipment: *studded leather* +2, leather helm, *medium lance* +1, heavy crossbow, dagger, *five crossbow bolts* +1, 24 normal crossbow bolts, *potion of dragon sight* (gives user three times his normal range of vision and can see as well as a dragon at night, comparable to infravision with twice normal range; while affected by this potion, the user suffers no penalties for long distance attacks with missile weapons; effects last 1d4 hours)

dragon-killers. (Paraphrase the pertinent information in the "The Story Thus Far" section of the Introduction.) Later, Tavin learned from an informant that the dragon killings were being directed from Kor Island. He and three other dragon knights and their copper dragons staged a surprise assault against the island. "But we were unprepared for such a strong defense. Of our entire force, I was the only survivor." Tavin was taken prisoner. He was eventually rescued and brought here to recover.

What are dragon knights? "Dragon knights are humans, elves, or half-elves who have abandoned the civilized world to form permanent bonds with dragons." (Refer to *Dragon Dawn* and *Dragon Knight*, for more information.)

Why choose us to investigate Eresem's plan? Why not some dragon knights? "You were chosen on the recommendation of your friends. We need someone we can trust. All of the dragon knights in the area are occupied rallying the Othlorx for Amanthus."

The Ethereal plane is vast. How will we know where to search for Eresem and her minions? "According to the report from your friends, there was evidence of minions immediately on the other side of the gate."

If we see Eresem and her minions, should we attack them? "Absolutely not! They are far too dangerous. Return at once, and we'll find a way to recruit help."

Can you come with us? "I would like nothing more. But in my condition, it's impossible." (True.)

If the PCs are reluctant to accept the mission, Tavin tells them that the future of Taladas may be at stake.

DANGER FROM THE AIR

When the PCs have finished with their questions, Tavin tells them to all stand within ten feet of the gray crystal and strike the silver bracelets together. Tavin explains that it's not necessary for the PCs to wear the bracelets to activate the gate, nor do the bracelets need to be held by different PCs.

One round after striking the bracelets together, the gray crystal begins to glow with a dim blue light. The swirling mist in the crystal gradually clears, revealing an endless expanse of gray space. A soft cool wind blows from the gate.

The crystal shimmers and vanishes, leaving an open doorway into another world. If the PCs peer into the gate, they see churning gray mists and a vast, barren plain.

Before the PCs can enter the gate, however, they hear the beating of leathery wings overhead. Torris snarls and rises to her feet as a green dragon flutters to a landing.

"Into the gate!" shrieks Tavin to the PCs. "Now!"

Torris charges the green dragon, knocking him down. The dragons claw and snap at each other, rolling on the ground in a tangle of arms, wings, and tails.

Young Green Dragon: AC 1; MV 9, FI 30 (C), Sw 9; HD 11; hp 50; #AT 3 + special; Dmg 1d8 + 3/1d8 + 3/2d10 + 3; THAC0 9 (+2 to claw attack roll if diving); SA chlorine gas cloud (50' long x 40' x 30'; Dmg 6d6 + 3; save for half damage); SD *water breathing* once per day, immune to all gasses; AL LE; SZ G (32' body, 27' tail)

Languages: Green Dragon, Copper Dragon (14)

If the PCs obey Tavin and enter the gate, proceed to the "Into the Ethereal Plane" section.

If the PCs attack the green dragon, ignoring Tavin's instructions to enter the gate, the dragon directs his attacks at the PCs instead of Torris. Torris continues to attack the green dragon, all the while shouting at the PCs to get into the gate and leave the fighting to him. After five rounds of combat (or sooner, if the DM decides that the PCs have suffered an inordinate amount of damage), the green dragon panics and

flees. Torris lets him go. The PCs are now free to enter the gate. Shortly after the PCs enter the gate, the green dragon returns and attacks Torris, and the encounter plays out as described.

INTO THE ETHEREAL PLANE

A tingle ripples through the PCs' bodies as they step through the gate. A moment later, they find themselves standing on a vast island of black dust extending for miles in every direction. The island is flat and featureless. Small chunks of black rock drift silently though the bleak gray sky.

The air is cool and dry. The PCs notice they are no longer breathing, yet they suffer no ill effects. Their bodies seem weightless, as if they were suspended in water.

From their new perspective, the gate now resembles a two-dimensional window. The surface of the gate resembles clear glass, but it is as hard as diamond (assume that it's beyond the resources of the PCs to shatter). The PCs can see through the gate back into the area they just left; Torris and the green dragon continue their bloody battle, razor-sharp claws tearing at leathery wings, long fangs ripping at scaly hides.

The gate no longer glows; if the PCs wish to pass through again, they'll have to activate it with the bracelets. If the PCs examine the opposite side of the gate, they see it resembles a panel of gray crystal showing swirling mist.

A few minutes after their arrival, the PCs notice a disturbance in an immense bank of clouds several miles away.

Silent bolts of red lightning pierce the clouds, and the cloud bank slowly parts to reveal a floating island of black rock. Dark mist shrouds the island, which appears to be thousands of feet long and perfectly flat. Silhouetted against the clouds are hundreds of bizarre creatures roaming aimlessly across the island. Some of the creatures resemble gigantic worms with spindly pincers. Others appear to be huge, egg-shaped eyeballs with long tails and leathery wings. There are also dozens of enormous dragons, their long necks craning into the sky.

A black cloud materializes over the island, pulsating and swelling until it dwarfs the largest creature below. A crack of red lightning dissipates the black cloud, revealing the image of a loathsome five-headed dragon, each head a different color. "Pay tribute to your master!" thunder all five heads in unison. "Bow before the power of Eresem!" The creatures huddle in a mass beneath the five-headed dragon, their heads bowed low, their pincers and tails writhing excitedly. The black cloud swirls and expands, enveloping the entire island in darkness.

Obviously, Eresem has not abandoned her plan; she is continuing to rally an army of extraplanar creatures to invade Taladas. (If the PCs decide to investigate Eresem's island, inform them that the island is receding into the distance, drifting farther from the PCs at every moment. If the PCs still attempt to investigate it, the entire island slips into a gate; the gate then closes and disappears.)

The PCs' attention is drawn to a movement in the gate. Back in the Prime Material plane, the dragons have disengaged. While the green dragon attempts to struggle to its feet, Torris has scooped up Tavin and is soaring away with him into the clouds. The green dragon watches helplessly as his enemies escape, then it turns to the gate. The dragon peers into the gray crystal, pawing at its surface.

If the PCs use the bracelets to activate the gate, the gate surface begins to glow. However, because of the strange nature of time in the Ethereal plane, it takes 15 minutes for the gate to function after it's been activated.



THE DEADLY EYE

Shortly after the green dragon begins clawing at the gate, the PCs notice a bulbous creature approaching them from the enshrouded island. (If the PCs have activated the gate, the creature approaches well before 15 minutes have passed.) As the creature nears, they see that it resembles a fat, egg-shaped ball covered with matted black fur. The five-foot-long body is supported by a pair of leathery wings tipped with razor-sharp talons. A long rat's tail dangles from the back of the body. A single, bulging eyeball nearly four feet in diameter dominates the body. The eyeball is black with a blood-red pupil that continuously leaks thick blue fluid.

Eyewing: AC 4; MV Fl 24 (B); HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d4 (claws and tail) or eyewing tears; SA blinks eyewing tears (normal chance to hit victim within 100 feet; victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 2d6 points of damage (success means only 1d6 points of damage); tears may also splash onto anyone within 10 feet of the victim (splashed victims must roll a saving throw vs. poison—those who fail suffer 2d4 points of damage, those who succeed suffer 1d4 points of damage); SD immune to all cold-based attacks, can see with perfect accuracy for up to 25 miles, has infravision out to 120 feet; AL LE

The eyewing circles the party once, then attacks with a dripping tear. It swoops low, attempting to slash random PCs with its claws. The eyewing intends to fight to the death.

Two rounds after the eyewing's appearance, the party's attention is again drawn to the gate. The enraged green dragon is banging its head against the gate, and a web of cracks begins to spread across the gray crystal. The green dragon soars away from the crystal, then dives straight at it. The impact causes the gate to crumble into thousands of tiny pieces. The pieces dissolve in a puff of smoke, leaving the PCs stranded in the Ethereal plane.

The eyewing continues its attacks. In the distance, the PCs see a swarm of eyewings heading toward them from the enshrouded island. There are dozens, perhaps hundreds, of eyewings in the swarm.

Suddenly, the PCs hear a ripping sound just overhead. The attacking eyewing—if still alive—is startled by the sound and withdraws about 50 yards. A six-foot-diameter hole has appeared in the sky, glowing with a soft green light.

A long metallic cord descends from the hole and hovers over the party. All of the PCs hear the same voice in their heads, a low hissing whisper. "Climb," says the voice, "or die here."

Continue with the "The Rising Storm" section.

THE RISING STORM

The glowing hole (which is actually a gate to the demi-plane of Eborium—see Chapter 1) is about 100 feet above the heads of the PCs. The metallic cord descending from the hole is about 90 feet long. If a PC attempts to bypass the cord and move directly to the gate, he finds the hole to be impenetrable. (For a PC to move through the gate, he must be in physical contact with the cord for at least five consecutive rounds; for instance, he could meet this requirement by climbing the cord or by hanging onto the cord and being pulled through by a character or creature on the other end.)

One round after the cord appears, the PCs hear the howl of a strong wind as dark clouds approach. Two rounds after the cord appears, streaks of red lightning crackle across the surface of the clouds. Streams of golden mist begin to spew from the clouds, slowly billowing toward the party.

Because the clouds are several hundred yards from the party's plateau, it will take about ten minutes for the mist to reach the party. If they wish, the PCs can move toward the mist by mentally willing themselves, by teleporting, or by similar means. A PC in contact with the golden mist feels a stinging over his entire body, as if he were being pricked with thousands of needles. He also suffers damage for every round of exposure. If he rolls a successful saving throw vs. poison, he suffers 1 point of damage per round. If he fails the saving throw, he suffers 2 points of damage per round. Additionally, a PC in contact with the mist has a 5% chance per round of attracting a bolt of red lightning. If struck by this lightning, the PC suffers 3d6 points of damage (no saving throw).

If all of the PCs climb through the gate within ten rounds, proceed to Chapter 1. Otherwise, ten rounds after the cord appears, a bolt of red lightning strikes the cord, as if it were attracted by a lightning rod. A golden halo envelopes the cord, causing it to sizzle and smoke. A moment later, nothing remains of the cord but a column of black ash. The glowing hole at the top of the cord has disappeared. If any PCs are in contact with the cord when lightning strikes it, they suffer no damage (the cord doesn't conduct the lightning). If a PC is climbing the cord when it turns to ash, the PC remains hovering in air (thanks to the weightlessness of the Ethereal plane). Likewise, the ash column remains stationary. The PCs who have not yet escaped through the gate have to deal the mist and the eyewing swarm (assume that two eyewings attack each PC per round; there are dozens of eyewings, all immune to the effects of the mist).

STRANGER'S VOICE

All of the PCs hear the same voice in their heads; the voice is identical to the one they heard when the metallic cord appeared from the green hole. "Gather some of the ash from the cord," says the voice. "Make a circle on the ground. If the PCs gather some of the ash from the column and make a circle on the ground, the hole begins to glow green.

Once the hole begins to glow, the voice again speaks to the PCs. "Close your eyes." A stream of bright white light flashes from the hole, illuminating the entire area. All of the eyewings panic, and fly from the area in random directions as fast as they can. All PCs who ignored the voice's instructions to close their eyes become blind for 1d4 rounds.

When all of the creatures have fled, the PCs hear the voice again. "Enter the gate," it says. "Quickly, before the creatures return." PCs entering the hole feel their skin tingle and their heads throb, then they black out.

Proceed to Chapter 1.

CHAPTER I: EBORIUM



In this chapter, the PCs will explore a demi-planar region called Eborium (also known as the Isle of Flames). They will also meet Ahxa, a member of a bizarre race called the gk'lok-lok that lives on the island. Most importantly, they will meet an avatar of the evil god Sargonnas (disguised as an avatar of the neutral god Udras) and will be recruited for his plot against EreSTEM.

Refer to the color map of Eborium (Map 1) and the DM's Map (Map 3) for this part of the adventure. This chapter begins immediately after the events in the Prologue, starting with the "Black Grass, Red Water" section. The PCs have been unconscious for about 24 hours (subjective time).

DM's BACKGROUND

The evil god Sargonnas has long served as the consort of EreSTEM, but their relationship has been a rocky one. When Sargonnas's appeal to EreSTEM to assist with her invasion of Taladas was dismissed out of hand, Sargonnas decided that he would find a way to force her to accept him as a partner.

Sargonnas recruited a number of accomplished magical entities from the Nine Hells to create a powerful set of magical jewels called *cindergems*. By tapping the power of the *cindergems*, the entities assured him, Sargonnas would be able to bend the will of EreSTEM to do as he wished. And when Sargonnas no longer had use for EreSTEM, he could use the power of the *cindergems* to destroy her.

But before Sargonnas had a chance to use the gems, EreSTEM learned of his scheme and confronted him, demanding to know what he was up to. Sargonnas sheepishly denied that he intended to harm EreSTEM, claiming that he planned

to give the *cindergems* to her as a gift. EreSTEM was not convinced. She snatched the *cindergems* away from Sargonnas and dispersed them into various eras of the future where Sargonnas would not be able to retrieve them.

The humiliated Sargonnas spent the next few weeks observing EreSTEM from a distance, all the while scheming to devise a way to recover the *cindergems*. He noted with interest that a band of intrepid Taladan adventurers seemed intent on thwarting EreSTEM's plans to invade Taladas. When the adventurers became trapped on an island in the Ethereal plane, Sargonnas arranged for their rescue—at this point, any enemy of EreSTEM was a friend of his. Better yet, the timely appearance of the adventurers now gave him the perfect means of retrieving the *cindergems*.


NOTES TO THE DM

ABOUT SARGONNAS

Sargonnas intends to trick the PCs into retrieving the *cindergems*; he will do this by posing as an avatar of Udras the Alchemist, a god of neutrality. As will be seen, Sargonnas will insist that the defeat of EreSTEM is vital to maintain the balance between good and evil and that retrieving the *cindergems* from the future is just the way to do it.

Sargonnas appears as a gnome-like avatar (described in the "Godly Meeting" section and detailed in the Appendix) for most of the adventure; his true identity is not revealed until Chapter 4. To remind the DM of the avatar's dual identity, he is referred to as Udras/Sargonnas in the text; the DM should take care not to reveal to the PCs that the avatar is actually





Sargonnas posing as Udras.

Knowledgeable or especially observant PCs might suspect that the avatar is not actually who he claims to be; in fact, there are a few places noted in the text where the PCs might pick up clues. If confronted with an accusation that he's not who he pretends to be, Udras/Sargonnas flatly denies it. If the PCs continue to insist that the avatar isn't actually Udras, Udras/Sargonnas might respond with any of the following:

* "If I were actually a god of evil, I would kill you now, would I not? And why would I want to assist the forces of good?"

* "I understand your suspicions. We live in uncertain times. But I assure you that I am who I say."

* "This is an nonsensical accusation, not worth the waste of words. While we argue absurdities, the natural balance continues to tip in favor of evil."

While role-playing Udras/Sargonnas, remember that his primary motivation is to get the party's cooperation. He speaks kindly to them in an even, subdued voice, and he strives to suppress his more overbearing tendencies. However, kindness is a strain for him, and he is prone to occasional outbursts of temper. If he throws a temper tantrum (for instance, he might scream, "You dolt! Can't you understand the simplest of instructions?" to a PC who asks him to repeat a direction), he quickly recovers and apologizes, saying he is sometimes overwhelmed by the stress of the situation.

ABOUT EBORIUM

Eborium is an endlessly drifting demi-planar land mass about one and a half miles in diameter, used occasionally by Sargonnas as a personal retreat and a private place from which to conduct his business. It has a breathable atmosphere and a gravity comparable to that of the Prime Material plane. Additional physical details of Eborium are described in the "Eborium Map Key" section in this chapter.

ABOUT AHXA AND THE GK'LOK-LOK

Eborium is the home of a tribe of an unusual race called the gk'lok-lok. The gk'lok-lok have no culture or society of their own; instead, they spend their lives asleep and dreaming, vicariously experiencing the adventures of dead warriors of other races whose spirits are housed in a crystal tree created by the tribe.

The only active member of the tribe, a gk'lok-lok named Ahxa, is the tribe's caretaker, responsible for securing new spirits for the crystal tree when necessary. (See the Appendix for more about the gk'lok-lok.)

At various times in the past when Sargonnas has conducted his business in the form of an avatar on Eborium, he has encountered Ahxa, but for the most part, they have ignored each other. Ahxa respects Sargonnas's power and has been quick to obey Sargonnas's occasional demands, fearing for the safety of his tribal tree. For that reason, Ahxa unquestioningly obeys Sargonnas's instructions described in the text. However, Ahxa knows nothing of Sargonnas's plan. Ahxa doesn't know much about Sargonnas in the first place; whatever suspicions he has about Sargonnas's appearance or methodology he keeps to himself, fearing reprisals from Sargonnas. For that reason, Ahxa will be no help whatsoever in answering the PCs' questions about Udras/Sargonnas's true identity or motives; if asked, Ahxa simply says he doesn't know.

ABOUT THE *Cindergems*

The magic-using entities of the Nine Hells created the *cindergems* from small embers of extraplanar material infused

with beams of light focused through a immense flaming prism.

The *cindergems* are teardrop-shaped jewels resembling polished glass. Each is about three inches long and contains the image of a flickering flame. There are seven different *cindergems*, distinguished by their color: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

Sargonnas believes that each *cindergem* can focus powerful magical energies. When the gems are combined, the magical energies are multiplied a thousandfold. Unfortunately, Erestem intercepted and dispersed the *cindergems* before Sargonnas had the chance to use them. Erestem cast the *cindergems* into different future eras. Sargonnas has located six of them; he believes the seventh—the red *cindergem*, the most powerful of all—has been irretrievably lost.

BLACK GRASS, RED WATER

The PCs awaken in a field of black grass (see the DM's Map) feeling rested and refreshed; each character regains hit points as if he has consumed a *potion of healing*. The soil is warm and has the texture of ash; the air is hot and dry. Wisps of black clouds crawl across the dark gray sky. A brook gurgles beside the party; its waters are as red as blood.

A bizarre creature stands next to the party, gazing at them curiously. About four feet tall, its body is a series of thin tubes that glisten and sparkle like polished steel. The central part of its body is a single tube resembling the stalk of a plant, with two long tubes for legs ending in hooked "feet," and two tubes for arms that curl in seemingly random patterns.

Two thin stalks, which also glisten like steel, extend from the "neck" of the body. Each stalk ends in a bulging eyeball about a foot in diameter. A violet iris surrounds each huge black pupil, and an aura of soft red flames surrounds the entire eyeball. The eyestalks twist and turn like serpents, examining the party from every possible angle.

The creature is a gk'lok-lok. This particular gk'lok-lok is named Ahxa. (For more info, see the Appendix.)

Ahxa (gk'lok-lok): AC -1; MV 9; FI 3 (C); HD 1 + 1; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-2/1-2 (arm needles) or 1d4/1d4 (arm slash); SD *invisible* at will; immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *suggestion*, and *hypnotism*; immune to all fire-based and electrical attacks; *speak with spirits* at will (can mentally communicate with the spirits of all creatures, as well as ghosts, spectres, and all other types of undead; communication is one-way only—that is, the gk'lok-lok cannot receive mental communications from spirits or undead unless that particular spirit or undead is normally capable of mental communication); MR 20%; AL LN

Ahxa has been waiting for the PCs to recover from their trip through the portal; he has been sent by Sargonnas.

Ahxa is fully capable of defending himself—he can make slash attacks with his razor-thin arms to cause 1d4 points of damage, and he can shoot three-inch-long steel needles from each arm at targets up to 25 feet away to cause 1-2 points of damage (he can fire a total of two needles per round; new needles are automatically created inside his tube-arms). He does not initiate no hostile actions against the party; if attacked, he turns invisible and runs away, returning when the PCs have calmed down.

Ahxa communicates by twisting his arms into intricate patterns. Each pattern represents a different word or phrase. As the PCs awaken, Ahxa's twisting arms spell out messages of greeting. Because the gk'lok-lok arm language is so unusual, there is only a 5% chance that a PC will be able to translate it; tongues, speak with dead, speak with animals, and similar spells are no help (the party will have an opportunity to be-

come more fluent in the gk'lok-lok language later.

After all the PCs are alert, Ahxa continues his messages of greetings for about a minute, then takes a few steps away from the party, stops, looks back, wiggles his arms, then repeats this sequence; Ahxa is trying to tell the PCs to follow him. Any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check gets the message. If all of the PCs fail their Intelligence checks, Ahxa wraps both arms around his head (a position gk'lok-lok take when they're thinking). He then extends an arm toward the party, then curls it toward him, beckoning for the party to follow. (Ahxa is attempting to lead the party to the iron citadel of Udras/Sargonnas—area 1 on the DM's Map.)

If the party won't follow Ahxa, or if they attack him or won't cooperate, a cloud of dark mist rises around the party and Ahxa. A moment later, they magically appear in the iron citadel. The adventure proceeds as described in the "Godly Meeting" section.

If the party follows Ahxa, he leads them PCs on the route shown on the DM's Map, across a marble bridge crossing a red stream and past a gaping hole in the ground (area 2a).

GODLY MEETING

THE IRON CITADEL

Eventually, Ahxa reaches a marble bridge that crosses a stream of red water encircling an iron citadel perched on a high hill (area 1). The citadel is featureless, except for twin spires that rise high into the sky.

Ahxa approaches the citadel and waits for the PCs to join him. When the PCs reach the citadel, Ahxa taps lightly on the iron wall. A moment later, an opening magically appears in the wall. Ahxa scuttles through the opening, gesturing for the PCs to follow.

The interior of the citadel is a single room, illuminated by golden spheres imbedded in the walls; the spheres are enchanted with permanent *continual light* spells. Ornate furniture of solid iron with plush velvet cushions fill the room. Heavy velvet drapes decorate the walls, and a thick carpet covers the floor; both the drapes and the carpet are rich hues of red and black.

In the center of the room, comfortably seated on an iron throne, is a gnome-like humanoid about three feet tall with a thickly-muscled body. He has violet eyes, rich brown skin, and a curly white beard and moustache. He wears a long red-and-black silken robe and holds a silver goblet. He sips from the goblet, then places it on the iron table beside him beside him. (This is an avatar of Sargonnas, disguised as an avatar of Udras the Alchemist.)

"Come forward," says Udras/Sargonnas, his voice rustling like the wind in the trees. "I am Udras the Alchemist, the god of neutrality. I welcome you to my home." (Any PC familiar with Udras recognizes the humanoid as a likely manifestation of Udras the Alchemist. However, since red and black are colors not usually associated with Udras—red and black are associated with Sargonnas, while bright reds and yellows are associated with Udras—some PCs may be suspicious that the avatar is that of Udras.)

Udras/Sargonnas introduces Ahxa as a member of a race known as the gk'lok-lok. He gives any of the information on page 59, if asked about the gk'lok-lok.

Udras/Sargonnas settles back in his throne. "I have been following your progress for some time. You have shown much courage in your efforts against EreSTEM. We share a common interest in ending the Dark Queen's plans of conquest. That is why I rescued you from her minions."

If the PCs have any questions, Udras/Sargonnas thunders, "How dare you interrupt a god! This is not the time for your questions!" Momentarily flustered, he apologizes for his out-

burst, then resumes speaking.

Udras/Sargonnas continues. "I am charged with maintaining the balance of good and evil. If EreSTEM and her minions are not stopped, I fear that the balance may be permanently disrupted." (Udras/Sargonnas's proclaimed interest in maintaining the balance between good and evil is, of course, a complete fabrication.) "The future is indeed grim. But perhaps it is better to show you what lies ahead than to tell you. Come with me."

A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

Udras/Sargonnas leads the PCs from his citadel to a clearing behind a hill. Ahxa scuttles behind the group. Udras/Sargonnas pauses at an immense flower nearly 50 feet in diameter (for convenience, this is called the Primary Chronolily; see the DM's Map). Its yellow petals form a bowl filled with golden nectar. Thousands of tiny green leaves surround the base of the flower.

Shimmering images appear in the nectar, the end of one dissolving into the beginning of the next: a herd of deer in a meadow of tall grass, a family of dwarves hauling stone from an open pit, a calm ocean under a moonlit sky. The flower is a yellow chronolily (see the Appendix for details).

"This chronolily," says Udras/Sargonnas, "reveals images of the future. Here is what fate has in store."

Chronolily: AC 10; MV nil; HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 nil; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SD know alignment at will; when reduced to 0 hit points, it instantly decomposes into a poisonous cloud 50 feet in diameter, and all victims either touched by the cloud or within 5 feet of it suffer 3d6 points of damage (roll a successful saving throw vs. poison for half damage); AL N

Udras/Sargonnas kneels and plucks several leaves from the base of the chronolily, a technique that causes the chronolily to display a specific series of images. When he's finished, Udras/Sargonnas tells the PCs to look into the nectar. They see the following sequence of images, the end of one dissolving into the beginning of the next. No sound accompanies the images.

- 1) A vast expanse of rocky mountains stretches as far as the eye can see. (The PCs recognize the terrain as similar to that of the Steamwall Mountains of Taladas.)
- 2) A glowing rip in the sky hovers high above the mountains. The rip appears to be several miles long.
- 3) Dozens of black, red, blue, and green dragons burst through the rip in the sky, followed by a contingent of eyewings and gigantic worm-like creatures covered with black rocky skin (the worm creatures are chulcix—see the Appendix for details).
- 4) An immense gold dragon hovers before the evil horde. (If the PCs participated in the previous adventure, *Dragon Knight*, they recognize the gold dragon as Amanthus.)
- 5) The corpse of the gold dragon lies sprawled on the rocks, broken and bloody.
- 6) Several brass dragons soar toward the army of evil minions. (If the PCs participated in the *Dragon Knight* adventure, they recognize the brass dragons as the children of Marlane, the dragon who helped them in Pirim.)
- 7) The corpses of the brass dragons lie sprawled on the rocks, broken and bloody.
- 8) An image of a five-headed dragon appears in the clouds above the corpses, its jaws open wide, as if roaring triumphantly.

The last image fades to black, replaced by the original images of deer, industrious dwarves, and a peaceful ocean.

Udras/Sargonnas turns to the PCs. "The images in the





chronolily will likely occur approximately two weeks from now. As you can see, a terrible, terrible fate awaits your land. And I fear the future is just as grim for you. Though you are safe now, it is only a matter of time before the minions of Eresem track you here. The minions include many would-be leaders of Eresem's armies, and they intend to impress her by destroying you."

Udras/Sargonnas shakes his head sadly. "Eresem has grown far too powerful. It would seem there is little that we can do."

Udras/Sargonnas sits down in the grass, pretending to think. "I sense you have questions. Ask them now."

UDRAS/SARGONNAS'S ANSWERS

Udras/Sargonnas answers all of the PCs' questions as follows. If the PCs ask questions that the DM can't or chooses not to answer, Udras/Sargonnas says, "I'm afraid I have no answer for that." When the PCs have asked all their questions, proceed to the "Inspiration" section.

Is the scene in the chronolily accurate? Udras/Sargonnas admits that the scene in the chronolily is only one of many possible futures. "But the chronolily always shows the most likely future. The scenes forecast by the chronolily are virtually certain to take place." (This is an exaggeration; there are any number of futures that are just as likely to occur as the one portrayed in the chronolily.)

Can you send us home? "I'm afraid that's beyond the scope of my abilities." (He's lying; he has no intention of sending the PCs home until he's done with them—if then.)

If Eresem's minions track us here, will you help us fight them? "I'm afraid not. I cannot directly violate my oath of neutrality. Nor can I give you refuge." (Again, Udras/Sargonnas is playing up his role as a neutral god in order to make the PCs' situation seem hopeless.)

What is this place? "You are on a demi-planar island called Eborium."

Why are you here? "This is my refuge."

How long have we been here? "As you measure time on your world, approximately one day."

Why is the water red? If the PCs ask about the water or any other physical feature of Eborium, refer to the appropriate section of the Encounter Key; Udras/Sargonnas describes the feature in general terms.

Can you use the chronolilies to see if Eresem is still preparing to assault Taladas? Udras/Sargonnas leads the PCs to the nearest violet chronolily. "This color of chronolily shows images of the present. The yellow chronolilies show images of the future, while the orange chronolilies show images of the past."

Udras/Sargonnas plucks several leaves from the base of the flower, then invites the PCs to peer inside. The PCs see a shimmering image of an island floating in grey space, enshrouded in dark mist. Silhouetted against the clouds are hundreds of dragons, eyewings, and chulcix roaming aimlessly. If the PCs ask to use the chronolilies to look at other images (from the past, present, or future), Udras/Sargonnas refuses. "There is no time for this now."

INSPIRATION

When the PCs finish with their questions, Udras/Sargonnas suddenly brightens. "I have a thought," he says, pretending that an idea has just occurred to him. "There is one possibility for salvation, however remote. It is very dangerous, but if we succeed, then you will have the means to defeat Eresem's minions and I will have the means to defeat the Dark Queen herself." Udras/Sargonnas tells the PCs how a group of neutral wizards centuries ago created a set of magical

jewels called *cindergems*.

"Forged of light and fire, the wizards intended the *cindergems* to be used as an emergency measure to reset the balance between good and evil, should the scales ever tip too far in one direction. Sadly, the *cindergems* were accidentally whisked away by a planar whirlwind and dispersed to random locations in the future."

"Fortunately," he continues, "I know the location of six of the seven *cindergems*. I have the means to send you to these locations. Retrieve the *cindergems* and return to Eborium. When you have retrieved all six, we will be able to defeat our common enemy."

Udras/Sargonnas says that after the PCs retrieve the *cindergems* he can focus the energies of gems to imbue the PCs with powers to defeat Eresem's minions. "And while you defeat the minions, I can fuse the magic of the *cindergems* to create a powerful weapon to defeat Eresem herself."

MORE QUESTIONS

"I am sure you have questions about this plan," says Udras/Sargonnas. Udras/Sargonnas answers the PCs questions as follows. (If the PCs don't ask the right questions, Udras/Sargonnas will offer any of the following information that the DM feels the PCs should have.)

How exactly will all this work? Udras/Sargonnas explains that all of the *cindergems* were dispersed to different locations on Taladas at various points in the future, which he can locate by means of a yellow chronolily. Udras/Sargonnas will then alter the chronolily to create a portal to those particular times and locations. The party will enter the portal and locate the *cindergem*. Once they retrieve the *cindergem*, the party will return to Eborium. When the party has retrieved all the *cindergems*—or made an attempt to retrieve them all—the mission will be over.

Will Ahxa go with us? Ahxa will remain in Eborium, waiting by the Primary Chronolily. Each time the PCs return to Eborium, they are to rendezvous with Ahxa at the Primary Chronolily. Ahxa will accept the *cindergem* and bring it to Udras/Sargonnas in the iron citadel.

How will we get back here? As part of Udras/Sargonnas's enchantment, a metallic cord connected to a green portal will be available in each *cindergem* location on Taladas. When the PCs are ready to return to Eborium, they can climb the cord and enter the portal. "However," warns Udras/Sargonnas, "the cord and the green portal will disappear 24 hours after you arrive at your destination. If the cord and the portal disappear, you will be unable to return here."

How will we know where to look for the *cindergems*? "You won't know exactly. I am able to send you only to the general location; that is the best I am able to do. Once there, it is up to you to locate them." (He's telling the truth.)

What do the *cindergems* look like? "The *cindergems* are teardrop-shaped jewels resembling polished glass. Each is about three inches long and contains the image of a flickering flame. There are seven different *cindergems*, distinguished by their color: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. However, the red *cindergem* has been lost forever—it is up to you to retrieve the remaining six."

What happened to the red *cindergem*? "I don't know. It is lost in the mists of time." (Though Udras/Sargonnas believes it to be lost, Eresem actually has it, as will be revealed in Chapter 4.)

What if we fail to get all the *cindergems*? Udras/Sargonnas says they must try to retrieve as many as they can. "The more *cindergems* you recover, the more powerful the weapon I can create to defeat Eresem." Additionally, each gem can grant special powers to only one PC; therefore, the more gems recovered, the more PCs will be empowered.

Can you send us back to the same location a second time? "No. The enchantment is such that the chronolily allows transport to a specific location only once. After you make all six attempts, I could enchant the chronolily again, but this would take more time than I'm afraid to risk." (He's telling the truth. Udras/Sargonnas has already prepared the chronolily's enchantment; all he needs to do is activate it—see the "Portal to the Future" section.)

Why don't you retrieve the *cindergems* yourself? "I am unable to travel in time. It is a restriction I am not permitted to violate." (Not exactly true. Actually, Udras/Sargonnas won't travel in time, as he does not wish to risk losing contact with his worshipers in the present day.)

What will you be doing while we search for the *cindergems*? "I will be in my citadel, preparing the magic that will draw the power from the *cindergems*." (Udras/Sargonnas intends to keep a low profile so as not to draw Eresem's attention to himself.)

If the chronolily can send us into the future, why can't you use it to send us home? How will we ever get home? "I'm sorry. Such is the nature of the enchantment that the chronolilies can't help you get home. However, I believe I can use the magic of the *cindergems* to open a portal for you—that is, once you bring them here." (Actually, Udras/Sargonnas is capable of sending the PCs home whether he has the *cindergems* or not, but he won't do so until they've completed their mission—if then.)

What exactly are the powers the *cindergems* will give us? What is the weapon you'll create with the *cindergem*? When do we get the powers? "The powers will be revealed when you have returned from your last trip to Taladas. I will also reveal the nature of the weapon to you then."

If Eresem's minions attack us on Eborium, will you help us? "You will have to fight them yourselves. I will be preparing the *cindergem* weapon in my citadel. I won't be able to interrupt delicate preparations of the *cindergem* weapon to assist you." (He doesn't intend to expose himself until Eresem herself makes an appearance and his *cindergem* weapon is ready.)

What if we refuse to accept the mission to retrieve the *cindergems*? Udras/Sargonnas says that the PCs will have no choice but to remain on Eborium indefinitely, "perhaps forever." Meanwhile, Eresem will continue her campaign of terror on Taladas.

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE

Assuming the PCs agree to Udras/Sargonnas's plan, Udras/Sargonnas says they should waste no time in getting started. However, before they leave the citadel, Udras/Sargonnas asks all of the PCs to touch Ahxa simultaneously. Udras/Sargonnas raises his hands to the ceiling. A halo of light surrounds Ahxa and the PCs, then disappears. Udras/Sargonnas explains that he has permanently enchanted the PCs to enable them to understand Ahxa's arm language. "If you have any questions about Eborium, you may ask Ahxa."

Note to the DM: Udras/Sargonnas's enchantment does not allow the PCs to automatically translate Ahxa's arm language. Whenever Ahxa twists his arm in a particular pattern, any PC who rolls a successful Wisdom check understands the general idea Ahxa is attempting to communicate.

If a Wisdom check is successful, don't give the translation in complete sentences; instead, give only a phrase or a few words, leaving the full meaning ambiguous (this simulates the difficulty of understanding the thought processes of a truly alien species).

For instance, if the PCs ask Ahxa to identify a pool of water that Ahxa knows to be poisonous, a PC who rolls a successful Wisdom check might interpret Ahxa's arm twists as "un-

healthful liquid." (Ahxa tends to evaluate things in terms of safety; the sky is "harmless gas," fire is "unhealthful light," and sleep is "healthy inactivity.")

PORTAL TO THE FUTURE

When the PCs finish with their questions and have been enchanted to understand Ahxa's language, Udras/Sargonnas studies the Primary Chronolily for a moment, then begins to rapidly pluck leaves from its base. When he's finished plucking, he tells the party to stand clear. He closes his eyes and extends his fingers toward the chronolily. Beams of multi-colored light flash from his fingertips and envelop the chronolily. When the light subsides, the nectar pool has turned as black as the night sky, with tiny points of light shimmering like stars in the nectar.

Udras/Sargonnas explains that when a PC touches the nectar, it transforms into a portal to specific times and places "somewhere in the future of Taladas." The portal displays a series of images, each representing a different location in Taladas. The PCs are free to visit the various locations in any order. When the nectar displays the image of the location the PCs wish to visit next, touching the nectar a second time causes the image to freeze; the image remains frozen long enough for the party to enter the portal (about 10-15 minutes) and to be delivered to the location in Taladas represented by the image (this is explained in detail in the "Running the Rest of the Adventure" section).

Once in Taladas, the party can try to recover a *cindergem*. When the PCs have retrieved the gem (or after they've failed to do so), they can return to Eborium by climbing a metallic cord (similar to the one they saw in the Prologue); the cord is near their arrival area in Taladas.

Once the party has returned to Eborium, they give the *cindergem* to Ahxa, who is waiting for them at the Primary Chronolily. The PCs then touch the Primary Chronolily nectar and select a new location; touching the nectar again causes it to transform into a portal leading to a different time and place in the future of Taladas. The party then enters this portal and seeks out the next *cindergem*. This process continues until attempts have been made to recover all six *cindergems*.

After the sixth trip to Taladas, the party is to come to Udras/Sargonnas's citadel "at which time I will give you the powers from the *cindergems* that will help you in your struggles against Eresem's minions. And I will make the final preparations to create the weapon that will defeat Eresem."

If the PCs want to know any specific details about their destinations in Taladas, Udras/Sargonnas says he has no helpful information; they'll have to fend for themselves once they get there. If the PCs have other questions, refer to the "Udras/Sargonnas's Answers" section earlier.

RUNNING THE REST OF THE ADVENTURE

The rest of the adventure consists of a number of Interludes, Eborium Encounters, and Scheduled Events.

Interludes are adventure episodes that occur on Taladas. Each Interlude corresponds to a specific attempt of the party to locate one of the *cindergems*. All interludes are contained in Chapter 2.

Eborium Encounters are adventure episodes keyed to specific areas on the DM's Map. The PCs are most likely to experience these encounters when they return to the island after completing an Interlude. Eborium Encounter information is



contained in the "Eborium Map Key" section of this chapter.

Scheduled Events occur in a specific sequence. A particular Scheduled Event occurs each time the party returns to Eborium after completing an Interlude. The Scheduled Events are contained in Chapter 3.

When the PCs have experienced all of the Interludes and Scheduled Events, the adventure concludes in Chapter 4.

ADVENTURE SEQUENCE

When the PCs have completed the "Portal to the Future" section, the remainder of the adventure consists of the following steps, each of which is explained in detail below.

1. Activate the Chronolily
2. Experience an Interlude
3. Return to Eborium
4. Experience a Scheduled Event
5. Repeat the Sequence

ACTIVATE THE CHRONOLILY

Prior to an activation, the nectar pool of the Primary Chronolily is black with tiny points of shimmering light. Any PC can activate the chronolily by touching the nectar. When touched, the chronolily displays a series of images, the end of one blending into the beginning of the next. Each image lasts about 30 seconds.

The images represent locations on Taladas, as if observed from a height. The images are similar to the six small maps on the color map labeled interlude 1 through Interlude 6. Each image corresponds to the indicated Interlude in Chapter 2.

The chronolily displays the images as described in the Chronolily Image Sequence Table. The sequence repeats itself until a PC freezes a particular image (as described below). The Chronolily Image Sequence Table also lists the Interludes from Chapter 2 that correspond to each image. The images are silent and somewhat indistinct; if he wishes, the DM can provide additional details about the images from the information in Chapter 2.

Chronolily Image Sequence Table

Interlude Image

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | A dark, underground cavern. A sea of bones fills most of the cavern. A large group of dwarves stands next to the bone sea. |
| 2 | An immense spiral of green, blue, and white light sits atop a grassy hill. Piles of rubble surround the spiral. |
| 3 | An immense, featureless building of ice stands in a barren wasteland. |
| 4 | A field of rolling hills and wild flowers separates a dense jungle from a village of crude huts. |
| 5 | Night. An iron gate surrounds six featureless marble buildings. |
| 6 | A large arena filled with people. Half of the arena is green, half is red. Several humanoid bodies are piled near the wall of the arena. |

When the nectar displays an image representing a location the PCs wish to visit, any PC may freeze the image by touching the nectar. The frozen image instantly becomes a portal to the location it represents (the image remains frozen long enough for the party to enter, about 10-15 minutes).

Each location can be visited only once. Therefore, when the PCs return to Eborium after an Interlude, the image representing that Interlude is no longer displayed in the nectar. When the party has experienced five Interludes, the chronolily displays only the single remaining image.

EXPERIENCE AN INTERLUDE

After a PC has caused an image to appear in the Primary Chronolily, all of the PCs enter the nectar bowl; the nectar acts as a portal to transport them to the location represented by the image. Proceed to the corresponding Interlude in Chapter 2. The party's arrival area is indicated by an X on the appropriate Interlude map. Once they've arrived in the area represented by the Interlude map, they must search for the *cindergem*.

RETURN TO EBORIUM

When the party completes an Interlude, they can return to Eborium by climbing up a metallic cord leading to a glowing green portal; the portal and the cord are generated by the Primary Chronolily as part of Udras/Sargonnas's enchantment. However, the nature of the enchantment is such that the PCs return to a random location on the island. These locations are called Entry Points (abbreviated EP) and are indicated on the DM's Map.

When the party enters the green portal at the end of an Interlude, roll 1d12 and consult the Entry Point Table to determine the party's Entry Point. You are also free to choose a specific Entry Point if you wish. Entry Points can be used more than once.

If an Encounter Area is given on the Entry Point Table, refer to the indicated area of the Encounter Key and read the "Encounter Information" section. This section gives details about special encounters associated with a particular Entry Point. If no Encounter Area is given for an Entry Point, then there are no special encounters associated with it. (Example: If the DM rolls a 2, the party returns to Eborium at EP2, noted on the DM's Map. Because Encounter Area 6 is indicated, the DM refers to Encounter Area 6 in the Encounter Key and reads the Encounter Information section to find out exactly what happens to the party when they return.)

Entry Point Table

D12 Roll	Entry Point	Encounter Area
1	EP1	5
2	EP2	6
3	EP3	7
4	EP4	8
5	EP5	11
6	EP6	12
7	EP7	14
8	EP8	16
9	EP9	None
10	EP10	None
11	EP11	None
12	EP12	None

After the party deals with the encounter associated with the Entry Point, they must make their way back to the Primary Chronolily in order to deliver the *cindergem* to Ahxa and activate the next image (and experience the next Interlude). Keep track of their progress on the DM's Map; entering or examining certain areas may trigger encounters (as detailed in the Encounter Key).

EXPERIENCE A SCHEDULED EVENT

When the PCs return to Eborium after they complete an Interlude, they experience a Scheduled Event. The Scheduled Events are listed in Chapter 3 and occur in the order indicated; that is, regardless of which Interlude the party completes first or which Entry Point they use when returning to the island, they will experience Scheduled Event #1. After

the second Interlude, they will experience Scheduled Event #2, and so on.

Each Scheduled Event explains exactly when the event occurs, but in all cases, a Scheduled Event won't occur until after the party deals with any special encounters associated with their Entry Point.

REPEAT THE SEQUENCE

Repeat the above sequence until the party has experienced all of the Interludes. After the PCs have experienced Scheduled Event #6 (after the sixth Interlude), proceed to Chapter 4.

MORE ABOUT AHXA AND UDRAS/SARGONNAS

While the PCs are experiencing an Interlude, Ahxa remains next to the Primary Chronolily. After the PCs return to Eborium via an Entry Point (and deal with the Encounter Key encounter, if applicable, and the Scheduled Event), they will rendezvous with Ahxa at the Primary Chronolily. Ahxa will accept the *cindergem* from the party (assuming they were able to retrieve it during the Interlude). After his rendezvous with the PCs, Ahxa returns to the iron citadel; he does this regardless of whether the party returns the *cindergem*. If the PCs haven't yet completed all six Interludes, the PCs can then use the Primary Chronolily to conjure the next Interlude while Ahxa makes his report to Sargonnas. (It's possible that a suspicious PC may attempt to conceal a recovered *cindergem* on his person or somewhere on Eborium, then lie to Ahxa, telling him they failed to find it on Taladas. Such concealed *cindergems* are dealt with in Chapter 4.)

If they like, the PCs can follow Ahxa to the citadel. Ahxa raps on the iron wall of the citadel, after which an opening magically appears. Ahxa scuttles in, and the opening closes behind him. A moment later, having given Sargonnas the *cindergem* (or the report of the party's failure), Ahxa scuttles out, then returns to the Primary Chronolily.

If the PCs ask what's going on in the citadel, Ahxa says, "Healthy thinking." If the PCs follow Ahxa into the citadel, they'll see Udras/Sargonnas deep in thought, concentrating on the *cindergems* that have so far been returned to him. He ignores their questions or comments, insisting that they proceed with their mission. He holds his hands in the air, causing the party to disappear (no saving throw); a moment later, they awaken, finding themselves outside the citadel.

Under no circumstances will Ahxa accompany the party into the Primary Chronolily; he remains on Eborium for the duration of the adventure. If the PCs ask Ahxa about any of the features of Eborium, he responds as described in the Map Key (see below). Likewise, Ahxa will go with the party to any location in Eborium to identify it, if the PCs ask him to. Ahxa will also take the party to the grape orchard (area 10) if they come to him with a PC poisoned by a phase spider (area 8).

If the party is attacked while with Ahxa, Ahxa turns invisible and runs for cover; in no case does he help the PCs defend themselves. Assume that monsters and other opponents are unaware of Ahxa's presence; an opponent who can detect him with *detect invisibility* or similar means attacks Ahxa only after all the PCs have been destroyed.

Currently, Ahxa's tribal tree contains an ample supply of spirits. For that reason, and because he fears reprisals from Sargonnas, Ahxa won't do anything to facilitate the untimely deaths of the PCs. However, should a PC meet his end on Eborium, Ahxa may (at the DM's option) attempt to recruit the PC's spirit for the gk'lok-lok tree. The PC spirit is free to refuse or accept Ahxa's offer.

If Ahxa is killed, one of the slumbering gk'lok-lok (from the

crystal tree in area 13) awakens to assume Ahxa's duties. The rest of the adventure plays out as described.

EBORIUM MAP KEY

Refer to the color map of Eborium (Map 1) and the DM's Map (Map 2).

COMMON FEATURES

The following features are found throughout Eborium and are not designated by numbers in the Encounter Key. If the PCs ask Ahxa about these features, his comments are provided in the "Ahxa's Description" section (remember that at least one PC must roll a successful Wisdom check in order to understand Ahxa's comments).

Eborium has no days or nights; the island is always bathed in a dim light, comparable to that of a sunset on Taladas. The air is hot and dry; the temperature hovers around 90 degrees. Short black grass covers most of the island's surface.

Streams and Pools: Shallow streams of red water wind through the hills and valleys of the island, ending in deep pools. The magical nature of the water gives the streams a slight current. Streams average 10-20 feet deep, pools average 30-50 feet deep.

The water doesn't evaporate; if water is removed, the stream or pool returns to its original level within an hour. The red water is odorless and tasteless; characters can drink it as they would normal water.

Strong electrical charges, such as those produced by lightning bolts or the electricity trees (area 15) trigger a powerful reaction in the red water, causing the surface of the streams and pools to erupt in flames; the bright red flames stretch 50 feet into the sky. So flammable is the red water that if any portion of a stream or pool is ignited by an electrical charge, the flames spread to the surface of every pool on the island. The flames burn for 1d4 hours before subsiding. Any character or creature in contact with the flames suffers 2d6 points of damage per round. The flames burn off one inch of water per hour; the water returns to its original level one hour after the flames subside.

Marble bridges span the streams at various points. The 40-foot-wide bridges are immune to the effects of the flames.

Ahxa's Description: "Harmless liquid."

Orchards: The island contains several orchards of tall trees with black leaves and orange bark. Each tree produces three types of fruit, each with a special magical property. The fruits wither to dust within ten minutes after being picked; therefore, a character must consume the fruit quickly if he is to partake of its magic. A character can experience the effects of each type of fruit only once per day.

The three types of fruit and their effects are as follows:

* Pink grapes: If the character makes a successful saving throw vs. spell, the grapes have no effect. If he fails his saving throw, the grapes have the effect of a *potion of healing*.

* Golden berries: Eating a single berry satisfies all of the character's nutritional requirements for a full day.

* Black apples: If a character eats a black apple, the character feels sick to his stomach; all attack rolls are made with a -1 penalty for the next 24 hours (the effect can be negated by cure disease or a similar spell).

Ahxa's Description: "Healthful eat and unhealthful eat."

Chronolilies: Chronolilies can be found all over the island. All are nearly 50 feet in diameter with petals forming a bowl filled with golden nectar. Shimmering images continually appear in the nectar of a chronolily, the end of one dissolving into the beginning of the next. Yellow chronolilies reveal images from the future, violet chronolilies reveal images from the present, and orange chronolilies reveal images from the



past. The images are seemingly random. A typical image lasts less than 30 seconds before it is replaced by the next.

If the PCs examine any type of chronolily, they see a shifting series of pastoral scenes, none particularly enlightening or interesting. Typical scenes might include a bronze dragon basking in the sun, an elf picking berries in a forest, the reflection of a moon in a still lake, human workers building a barn, or a herd of horses galloping across a prairie. There is no indication of either the location of the images or the time in which they are occurring. All images are silent.

See the Appendix (page 57) for a method by which the PCs can conjure images in chronolilies.

Here are some DM guidelines for determining chronolily images:

Orange Chronolily: The DM can use the orange chronolilies to answer questions about previous game events in Taladas, review previous events of this adventure, or answer other PC questions.

Violet Chronolily: Assume that there haven't been any dramatic changes in Taladas since the PCs arrived on Eborium. If the PCs seek information about Eresem, assume they find out that she's still busy rallying her minions.

Yellow Chronolily: Attempts by the PCs to look into their personal futures reveal only images of their corpses (at this stage of the adventure, death is the most likely fate of the PCs). If the PCs attempt to look into the future of Amanthus, their brass dragon allies (whom they met in the previous module, *Dragon Knight*), or Eresem's minions, they see the same images that Udras/Sargonnas showed them earlier (in the "Look at the Future" section).

If the PCs check the futures of their friends, families, or familiar locations on Taladas, the images can foreshadow future adventures that the DM is planning, or they can reveal general information that doesn't commit the characters or locations to any particular fate. (For instance, if a PC asks about the future of his brother, the chronolily reveals an image of his brother sitting at a table, quietly eating a meal with his family.)

If the PCs attack a chronolily and reduce it to 0 hit points, it decomposes into a poisonous cloud 50 feet in diameter; all those touched by the cloud or within five feet of it suffer 3d6 points of damage (roll a successful saving throw vs. poison for half damage).

If they wish, the PCs can drink the nectar of a chronolily. It tastes like honey, but has no special benefits.

Ahxa's Description: "Harmless plant . . . harmless images."

SPECIAL UNDERWATER RULES

Some of the Eborium encounters may occur in the water. The DM may find the following rules helpful, adapted from the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide* (for those wishing more detail, see page 79 of the DMC.)

Drowning: The base amount of time a character can hold his breath, in rounds, is equal to $\frac{1}{3}$ of his Constitution rounded up. This assumes that the character had the chance to take a deep breath before submerging. If the character did not have the chance to take a deep breath, the base time is cut in half (rounded up). Regardless of any applicable penalties, any character can hold his breath for at least one round.

When his base time expires, a submerged character must roll a successful Constitution check once per round to continue holding his breath, with each check after the first made with a cumulative -2 penalty to his Constitution (for instance, there's a -2 penalty for the second round, a -4 penalty for the third round, and so on). A character who fails a check has drowned.

Fighting in Water: Submerged surface dwellers suffer a -4

penalty to their attack rolls. This penalty is cut in half if the character has a proficiency in swimming. A character not immersed in water attempting to hit an opponent who is immersed also suffers a -4 penalty to his attack roll.

These penalties don't apply to creatures native to an aquatic environment.

ENCOUNTER KEY

The following locations correspond to numbers on the DM's Map (Map 3). Each entry includes the following information.

Initial Impression: These are physical features noticed by the party when they first see the location. Also included are any details that a cursory examination might reveal.

Entry Point: This tells whether or not an Entry Point is present in this location (as explained in the "Adventure Sequence" section). If an Entry Point is present, its number is given in parentheses. All Entry Point numbers are indicated on the DM's Map.

Ahxa's Description: If the PCs ask Ahxa about the indicated location, his comments are provided in this section (remember that the PCs must roll a successful Wisdom check to understand Ahxa's comments).

Encounter Information: This describes the possible risks and rewards if the PCs explore or examine the area in detail. Note that if the PCs arrive via an Entry Point, an encounter may be triggered automatically.

I. IRON CITADEL

Initial Impression: An iron citadel, about 300 feet in diameter and 300 feet tall, sits atop a high hill. A marble bridge crosses a stream of red water encircling the hill. The citadel is featureless, except for twin spires that rise high into the sky there are no doors or windows.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Healthy building."

Encounter Information: This is Udras/Sargonnas's citadel. Following the events of the "Portal to the Future" section, Udras/Sargonnas remains inside the citadel until Scheduled Event 6 (this is explained in Chapter 3). If the PCs bang on the side of the citadel or otherwise attempt to attract his attention, Udras/Sargonnas ignores them. If the PCs teleport inside or gain entrance by some other means, Udras/Sargonnas angrily confronts them, demanding that they leave immediately. If the PCs refuse to leave, Udras/Sargonnas holds his hands in the air, causing the party to lapse into unconsciousness (no saving throw). When they awaken a moment later, they find themselves outside the citadel.

2A - 2C. HOLES

Initial Impression: These are large, gaping holes in the ground. If the PCs peer in, they see nothing but a gray void.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy opening."

Encounter Information: A PC moving within three feet of the side of a hole has a slight chance of falling in. Roll 1d20; on a roll of 1, the PC begins to slip. If the PC rolls a successful Dexterity check, he grabs the side of the hole before falling in. If he fails the check, he falls in and plummets into the void below, never to be seen again (unless he has some means of flying or levitating).

3. CRACKS

Initial Impression: These cracks average about ten feet wide. If the PCs peer in, they see nothing but a grey void.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy breaks."

Encounter Information: As with the holes (areas 2a, 2b, and 2c), a PC within three feet of a crack has a slight chance of falling in and disappearing forever (see the description of areas 2a, 2b, and 2c).

4. WIDENING CRACK

Initial Impression: This crack is similar to the area 3 cracks, except that it is only a few inches wide. The jagged crack is about 500 feet long.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Unharmful break."

Encounter Information: There is no chance that the PCs will fall into this narrow crack. If the PCs examine the crack closely, they see rows of iron blades inside the crack about 20 feet down. Each blade is about 25 feet wide and about ½ inch thick. The vertical length of the blades appears to be about 100 feet. If the PCs were able to follow the length of a blade, they would discover that it ends in a pool of violet light. The portal is inaccessible to the PCs. (The violet light is a portal to a lair of gnomes. The blades are the ends of a bizarre mechanical device operated by a band of gnomes; the gnomes are attempting to pry their way into Eborium—see Scheduled Event 4 in Chapter 3.)

5. FIRE PIT

Initial Impression: Mounds of hot black ash surround this 400-foot-diameter crater. The air shimmers with heat as fingers of steam rise from the crater's mouth. A natural stone incline leads to the rim of the crater.

Entry Point: EP 1.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy heat."

Encounter Information: If the PCs peer into the pit, they see a lake of fire about 100 feet below. The heat is so intense that it threatens to sear the PCs' flesh.

The crater contains a lake of liquified fire. If the PCs stand on the stone incline, there is no chance of falling in. However, if the PCs stand within three feet of the edge of the pit, roll 1d20; on a roll of 1, the PC begins to slip. If the PC rolls a successful Dexterity check, he grabs the side of the hole before falling in. If he fails the check, he falls in; there is a 80% chance that he falls ten feet and lands on the ledge (see below) to suffer 1d6 points of damage, and a 20% chance that he falls into the fiery lake, never to be seen again.

If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 1, they find themselves on a ledge of rock inside the crater. The ledge is 25 feet wide and is 20 feet below the lip of the crater; it winds completely around the crater's interior circumference. Immediately after they arrive, all PCs must roll a successful Constitution check or suffer 1-2 points of damage from the extreme heat; this check must be rolled every five rounds that they remain inside the crater.

Characters who are unable to fly, teleport, or use similar means to escape the crater can climb up the side; there are numerous indentations in the crater wall that are usable as handholds. Any character attempting to climb the wall must roll a Dexterity check once he has climbed ten feet. If the check succeeds, he is able to climb the wall to safety. If he fails the check, he loses his grip and falls to the ledge below, suffering 1d6 points of damage; the fallen character can attempt to climb the wall again, but as before he must roll a successful Dexterity check to safely escape.

A PC who falls while climbing has no chance of falling into the pit.

One round after the PCs arrive on the ledge, two nine-foot-tall creatures rise from the fiery lake and stand on its surface. The creatures have the shapes of large humanoids with fangs and horns. Their bodies are the color of flame, constantly swirling and flickering. Both creatures wield large swords made of fire.

Fire minions (2): AC 3; MV 12; HD 6; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SA fire aura automatically inflicts 1d6 points of damage to all within five feet unless protected from fire in some way; SD immune to fire-based attacks; magical flames (such as *fireballs* and dragon breath) restore hit points equal to the damage normally caused by the attack; suffer 1 extra point of damage per die from water-based attacks; suffer double damage from cold-based attacks; AL LE

The fire minions regard the PCs as potential victims; they aren't interested in how or why the PCs have come to the fire pit and will not negotiate with them.

One round after the minions appear, the fiery lake begins to rise, gradually bringing the minions closer to the party's ledge. Assume the lake rises at a rate of ten feet per round; it will take eight rounds for the lake to reach the level of the ledge. When the lake reaches the ledge, the minions plan to step from the lake to the ledge and attack the PCs with their flame swords; defeated PCs will be tossed into the fire pit.

If a minion is successfully attacked by a PC while the lake is rising (that is, the PC inflicts damage on a minion by a making a missile or magical attack), the minion disappears into the flame; it reappears when the lake reaches the level of the ledge.

If all of the PCs escape from the pit before the lake reaches the level of the ledge, the lake stops rising. The minions disappear into the flames, and the lake begins to subside to its original level.

If the minions reach the ledge before all of the PCs escape, the minions step onto the ledge and attack random PCs with their fiery swords. When all of the PCs have either escaped from the pit or have been defeated by the minions, the minions jump back into the lake, carrying any defeated PCs with them (the defeated PCs are never seen again). Under no circumstance do the minions leave the pit to pursue the PCs.

If the party returns to EP 1 a second time, the encounter plays out again as described. If the minions were defeated previously, assume 1d4 new minions have taken their place.

6. VINE FIELD

Initial Impression: This is a vast field of tangled vines. The vines are black and glistening, one foot in diameter, and range in length from 50-200 feet. A closer examination of the vines reveals them to be made of an iron-like metal; they are similar to the cords used by the PCs to climb through the green portals in the Interludes and in the Ethereal plane encounter in the Prologue. (In fact, Udras/Sargonnas uses these vines as a component of the enchantment used to create the portals.) The vines writhe when the PCs approach, as if reacting to their presence.

Entry Point: EP2.

Ahxa's Description: "Unharmful cords."

Encounter Information: If the PCs walk through the field, or pass next to it, the vines clutch at their feet and legs. The vines reduce the PCs' normal movement rates by half but cause them no harm.

However, if a PC attacks a vine, such as by stomping or hacking it, the vine responds by attempting to wrap itself around the PC like a constrictor snake.



Metallic vine: AC 1; MV nil; HD 6; hp 10 (this is the number of hp necessary to sever it); THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA constriction; MR 20%; AL nil

The vine attacks only the PC who harmed it. A successful attack roll by the vine means that it has encircled the PC. After the first successful hit, it automatically inflicts 2d4 points of constriction damage in each subsequent round. The vine continues to attack until it has been severed (the vine is severed if it suffers 10 points of damage), the PC is out of reach (to determine the length of the vine in feet, roll 1d4 and multiply the result by 50), or it kills the PC. If a vine is severed, it immediately stops glistening and no longer writhes.

If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 2, they find themselves in the center of the vine field. As they make their way through the field, the encounter plays out as described above.

7. WATERFALL

Initial Impression: This is a 400-foot-diameter pool of red water. A geyser in the center of the pool continually spews a 25-foot-diameter jet of water about 50 feet straight up into the air. A halo of white light surrounds the base of the geyser. Chunks of black rock, averaging about two feet wide, float in the pool and are occasionally spewed into the air by the geyser. The spewed chunks plop harmlessly back into the pool.

The pool spills over the edge of the island, forming a waterfall that empties into a second pool of red water about 400 feet below; this second pool hangs suspended in mid-air. The water of the second pool swirls in a clockwise direction, forming an immense whirlpool. The swirling water, along with the rock chunks floating in it, is apparently drawn to a 25-foot-diameter circle of white light in the center of the pool.

Entry Point: EP3.

Ahxa's Description: "Unharmful liquid . . . harmful solids."

Encounter Information: The magical water endlessly circulates between the two pools. Water from the first pool spills into the second pool where it is drawn into the whirlpool portal (the glowing circle). From the whirlpool portal, the water magically returns to the first pool via the geyser; the halo of white light at the base of the geyser indicates the return portal. Both pools are about 20 feet deep.

The PCs are free to enter the water of the first pool, though they discover nothing of interest. The rock chunks have no special properties. If the PCs examine the geyser, they discover nothing special; the light at the base of the geyser is harmless and has no apparent function (the portal circulates the water in one direction only; therefore, the PCs cannot use the geyser portal to travel from the first pool to the second).

For every round a PC spends in the first pool, there is a slight chance (1 on 1d20) that he is struck by a rock chunk spewed from the geyser. A PC struck by a rock chunk suffers 1-2 points of damage. If a PC in the first pool comes within ten feet of the top of the waterfall, roll 1d6. On a roll of 4-6, he is caught up in the rushing water and drawn toward the waterfall. If he rolls a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty, he is able to resist the rushing water and swim to safety (assume that any PC with the swimming proficiency can automatically swim to safety). If he fails the check, he is washed into the waterfall and plummets into the second pool below. He suffers 5d6 points of damage and experiences the effects of the whirlpool, as described below.

If the PCs have just returned to Eborium via EP 3, they find themselves in the center of the second pool, caught in its whirlpool. PCs who can't *fly* or *teleport* to freedom or lack a similar power to help them escape are trapped in the swirling

waters; they are being inexorably drawn to the glowing circle in the center.

Assume that it takes five rounds for a PC to be drawn to the glowing circle. A PC in the whirlpool who rolls a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty is able to swim with enough force to resist the whirlpool and prevent himself from being drawn to the circle (any PC with the swimming proficiency can automatically resist the whirlpool). However, this is only a temporary solution at best; a PC who swims off the edge of the pool will plummet into the emptiness of the gray void below, and swimming up the waterfall to the first pool is impossible under normal circumstances.

For every round a PC spends in the whirlpool, roll 1d20. On a roll of 1, he is struck by a rock chunk that is either swirling in the water with him or has dropped into the pool from the waterfall. A PC struck by a rock chunk suffers 1-2 points of damage.

The easiest way to escape from the second pool is via the glowing circle. If a PC allows the whirlpool to draw him to the circle, or if he voluntarily swims to the circle, he is instantly transported to the geyser in the first pool (observant PCs may notice that rock chunks caught in the whirlpool disappear as soon as they reach the circle). The geyser sprays him into the air, after which he plops harmlessly into the water below. While he travels through the portal and the geyser, there is a 1 in 20 chance that the PC is struck by a rock chunk for 1-2 points of damage; otherwise, the procedure is harmless.

8. DANGLING PODS

Initial Impression: An immense spider web hangs over the edge of the island, dangling into the emptiness of the gray void. Four slender strands hang from the bottom of the web, each ending in a circular pod about 30 feet in diameter. The pods appear to be made of dense layers of spider web.

Entry Point: EP 4.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy cords . . . unhealthy pods."

Encounter Information: The circular pods are phase spider egg pods. The second and third pods (8b and 8c) each contain a pair of immature phase spiders. The first pod (8a) contains an immature phase spider and the mother spider. The fourth pod (8d) contains only decaying spider eggs. (Ordinarily, spider pods like these could contain many more developing spiders, but a cloud of poisonous vapors destroyed most of the eggs after they were laid.)

Should the party wish to examine the pods, they find the net-like web easy to climb. The web is as tough as thick rope and can easily support the weight of the entire party. The web is also quite sticky; though its stickiness causes the party to move at half their normal rate and make all attack rolls at a -1 penalty, it also prevents them from losing their grip and plummeting into the emptiness of the gray void. Assume that the PCs must climb 100 feet of net to reach one of the strands.

The strands leading to the pods are as tough and sticky as the rest of the web. Each strand is about 60 feet long. The pods are translucent; when a PC is within five feet of a pod, he can look inside.

Immature phase spider (5): AC 9; MV 3, Wb 9; HD 2; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; AL N

Mother Phase spider: AC 7; MV 6, Wb 15; HD 5 + 5; hp 40; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA poison (if victim fails saving throw vs. poison, he dies; if victim is successful with saving throw vs. poison, he suffers 20 points of damage); phasing in gives it a -3 modifier to its initiative roll (if it wins the initiative roll by more than 4 points, it attacks and phases out be-

fore its opponent gets the chance to strike back); if it phases in behind victim, it gets a +4 modifier when attacking; AL N

Just as the PCs can see into the pods, so can the phase spiders see out. One round after a PC is within five feet of pod 8b or 8c, the immature spiders spot him and begin to chirp in a high, piercing whistle. Five rounds later, the mother phase spider climbs out of her pod through an opening in the top and attacks as described below.

The immature phase spiders are incapable of freeing themselves from their pods. However, should a PC destroy the pod—assume the pod has an AC of 5 and that 10 points of damage is sufficient to destroy it—the immature phase spider scuttles out and attacks. An immature phase spider attacks with its bite only; it has no poison, nor can it phase between planes like an adult phase spider. While attacking, it continues to shriek for its mother, who arrives in five rounds. Once its mother arrives, the immature phase spider withdraws, allowing its mother to proceed as described below.

If a PC comes within five feet of pod 8a, the immature spider inside begins to chirp and the mother spider scuttles out, attacking as described below.

The party can be rid of a pod by severing the strand that holds it to the main web. Assume that the web has an AC of 5 and that 10 points of inflicted damage severs it.

If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 4, they find themselves inside pod 8d, a 30-foot-diameter sphere made of thick layers of webbing. In the pod with them are dozens of dried-out eggs (any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check recognizes them as some kind of insect or spider eggs). The PCs can see through the translucent sides of the pod to examine their immediate surroundings. Below them sprawls the infinite emptiness of a gray void. Above them, a strand of webbing connects the pod to an immense spider web. The spider web hangs from the edge of the island. To escape the pod, the PCs have to climb the strand to the web (a distance of 60 feet), then climb the web to the island (an additional distance of 100 feet).

The pod has an AC of 5; 6 points of inflicted damage cuts a hole large enough for the PCs to crawl through.

If a PC is foolish enough to cut a hole in the bottom of the pod and step through, he plummets into the emptiness below, never to be seen again. Otherwise, if the PCs cut an opening in the side or top of the pod, they can exit the pod, move to the connecting strand, and begin to climb the strand to the web.

Three rounds after the first PC emerges from the pod, the immature phase spiders in pod 8c, peering through the translucent wall of their pod, see the PC emerging from pod 8d. The immature phase spiders begin to chirp, and continue to do so for the duration of this encounter. (Even if the PCs manage to silence the immature spider, the encounter will play out as described.)

Two rounds later (that is, five rounds after the first PC emerges from the pod), the mother spider scuttles through the opening in the top of her pod (8a) and climbs up her strand of web to the main web, heading for the PCs.

The mother spider scrambles across the web to intercept the PCs. As long as the party remains on the web, she will fight to the death to defend her brood; however, the mother spider withdraws if all of the PCs reach the top of the web and return to the island.

While on a strand or the web, PCs move at half speed and attack with a -1 penalty.

If the party returns to EP 4 a second time, the encounter plays out again as described (presuming the mother spider wasn't killed earlier). If pod 8d was destroyed, EP 4 is no longer an option; roll for a different Entry Point.

Poisoned PCs: If any PC died as a result of the phase spider's poison and the party goes to Ahxa for help, Ahxa exam-

ines the poisoned PC, then bends his arm to form a phrase that translates into "healthful liquid." Ahxa beckons the PCs to follow him. If the PCs choose not to follow Ahxa, Ahxa makes no further efforts to help the poisoned PC. However, if the PCs choose to follow Ahxa, he leads them to the fruit grove in area 10; see the area 10 encounter description for what happens next.

9. SPONGY AREA

Initial Impression: This area consists of gray, spongy soil. When the PCs step onto it, they sink up to their knees, cutting their normal movement rate in half. Owing to his light weight, Ahxa doesn't sink, and he walks across the surface at his normal movement rate.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy ground."

Encounter Information: For each round spent in the area, each PC has a 1 in 6 chance (roll 1d6) of stepping in a section of ground with the consistency of quicksand; the PC begins to sink at the rate of two feet per round. If the PC succeeds in a Dexterity check, he grabs a section of solid ground and stops sinking. If he succeeds in a Strength check, he pulls himself free.

Any PC can pull a sinking PC free if he rolls a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty. Any two PCs working together can pull him free with no problem.

If the PC sinks below the surface, he can still be rescued as long as his companions can feel around and find him. However, the PC continues to sink at the rate of two feet per round. If he isn't rescued before he sinks out of reach, he will never be seen again. (To determine when a submerged PC suffocates, see the "Special Underwater Rules" section earlier; the drowning rules also apply to this encounter area.)

10. GRAPE ORCHARD

Initial Impression: This orchard of tall trees with black leaves and orange bark is similar to the orchards found elsewhere on the island (see the "Common Features" section). However, these trees produce only plump crimson grapes, each about four inches in diameter.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Healthful eat."

Encounter Information: The juice of the grapes has the effect of neutralizing poison; if a poisoned character consumes the juice of a single grape, he recovers all hit points lost as a result of the poison (for instance, if a PC lost 10 hit points after drinking a poisoned brew, he recovers 10 hit points after eating a crimson grape). If the character died as a result of the poison, the juice of a grape brings him back to life; the revived character has 1 hit point.

The grapes are effective only if the character was poisoned within the last 24 hours. The grapes wither to dust within ten minutes after being picked; therefore, a character must consume the fruit quickly if he is to benefit from its curative properties. A character can experience the effects of the grapes only once per day.

If a PC died as a result of the phase spider's poison (from encounter 8) and Ahxa has led the party to this location, Ahxa picks a grape and squeezes the juice between the lips of the dead character. One round later, the character's eyelids flutter, and he returns to life (having recovered to 1 hit point). If the other party members interfere with Ahxa while he attempts to revive the dead PC, Ahxa responds by extending both arms straight up in the air, then allowing them to collapse toward the ground, a gk'lok-lok expression of frustration. He points to the fruit and then to the dead PC, repeatedly bending his arm to form the phrase "healthful



fruit." until the PCs get the message. If the PCs still refuse to allow their dead companion to be treated, Ahxa gives up and respects their wishes.

II. ASH VALLEY

Initial Impression: High hills surround this valley of black ash. Leafless black trees dot the valley, their spindly branches stretching to the sky. Centered in the valley is a hill containing a 50-foot-diameter opening to a cave. Trails of bony footprints wind throughout the ash; each footprint is four to five feet long. The trails of footprints lead to the opening in the hill.

Entry Point: EP 5.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy valley."

Encounter Information: The layer of ash is only a few inches thick and does not impede movement. The trees have no special properties. If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 5, they find themselves in the valley, about 50 feet from the opening of the cave.

If the PCs come within 100 feet of the cave opening (or they have just arrived via EP 5), a creature the size of a small dragon charges out, bones protruding from its rotting flesh. It has a great horned head, and its ribs are bare and barbed, forming a massive cage. The beast rears on its hind legs, balancing on its stubby tail, and hisses at the party.

Stahnk (undead beast): AC 6; MV 9; HD 12 + 12; hp 65; THAC0 7; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4 + 1/2d4 + 1/3d8; SA victim struck by claw must roll successful saving throw vs. death magic or be flung for an additional 1d20 points of damage; can trample victim for 3d8 points of damage if victim fails a saving throw vs. death; trample victim must also roll successful saving throw vs. wand or be ensnared in rib cage for 1d4 points of damage from the barbs for each round the beast moves (an ensnared victim can break free from the rib cage if the beast loses 50% of its hit points; a stahnk that has already lost half its hit points cannot ensnare victims; victims ensnared in the rib cage can continue to attack the beast, but they do so with a -3 penalty to both attack and damage rolls); SD unaffected by flame and suffers only minimum damage (1 point plus bonuses) from edged or pointed weapons; turned as a special undead; MR 20%; AL NE

The stahnk is a mindless killer that has claimed this valley as its own and intends to destroy all living creatures who trespass. It attacks by charging and trampling; trampled victims who are not ensnared in its rib cage are attacked with its claws and horned head. The stahnk fights to the death, but it does not pursue the party from this valley; if all of the PCs escape the valley, the stahnk returns to its cave.

An elderly human man is trapped inside the stahnk's rib cage. He is dressed in filthy, tattered rags; his gray hair spills in greasy curls about his shoulders, and his beard is long and matted. He thrusts his arm through the rib cage when he sees the party, as if trying to reach them.

Colegeera (7th-level human mage): AC 10; MV 9; hp 22 (when fully healed; he currently has 15 hp); THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; Str 4, Dex 7, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 11; AL NG

Spells: 1st Level— *comprehend languages, dancing lights, detect magic, read magic*; 2nd Level— *continual light, detect invisibility, ESP, whispering wind*; 3rd Level— *clairaudience, clairvoyance*; 4th Level— *detect scrying*

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, staff sling

Nonweapon proficiencies: Ancient history (12), astrology (13), navigation (11)

Languages: Auric, Panak (13), Hoor (13)

Equipment: *Colegeera's headband of protection.* (The headband is attuned to Colegeera's body chemistry and is usable only by him. It enables him to survive without food, water, or air, and automatically resurrects him when he is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points; when resurrected, he also regains the use of all his spells. The headband's enchantment lasts one year and one day, after which time its magical properties no longer function; currently, ten days of enchantment remain. The headband cannot be recharged, nor can it be adapted for use by any other character or creature.)

Colegeera is a human mage from Krynn who is also an experienced extraplanar traveler. A defective magical device led him to believe that this valley contained a vast treasure. But instead of treasure, Colegeera found a hostile stahnk, which trampled him and ensnared him in its rib cage. In the process, Colegeera dropped his equipment bag; the stahnk stomped the bag, burying it the ash.

Colegeera has been trapped in the beast's rib cage for nearly a year. Thanks to his *headband of protection*, he suffers no ill effects from the lack of food and water and automatically resurrects whenever the stahnk's movements reduce him to 0 or fewer hit points. However, Colegeera is unable to escape from the rib cage; his weapons are buried in his equipment bag, and he isn't strong enough to damage the stahnk himself.

As soon as Colegeera sees the party, he uses *whispering wind* to send them a message. "Please help me," whispers the desperate voice. "I'll give you my all my treasure if you get me out of here!" If the PCs get close enough to the stahnk to speak with Colegeera or find a some other way to communicate with him, he continues to plead for their help, but he won't answer any questions until they free him ("Get me out of here, and I'll tell you anything you want to know!").

If the party declines to rescue Colegeera and leaves the valley, the stahnk returns to its cave. Colegeera will continue to wait for help. (If the PCs return to this area within ten days, he pleads for help as before. If they return after ten days has passed, Colegeera's *headband of protection* has lost its enchantment and Colegeera is dead, finally succumbing to the damage caused by the stahnk's movement.)

If the party attacks the stahnk and one or more of the PCs is ensnared in the rib cage with Colegeera, Colegeera thanks them for their courage, but he still declines to answer questions until they're freed. Ensnared PCs can attack the stahnk from the inside (under the restrictions described above). If an ensnared PC has an extra weapon he's willing to share with Colegeera, Colegeera also attacks the stahnk from the inside. If the movement of the stahnk causes Colegeera to be reduced to 0 hit points, his body lies comatose for one round, and is then enveloped in a burst of white light; he revives with all his hit points intact, thanks to the enchantment of his *headband of protection*.

If the stahnk loses half or more of its hit points, all ensnared characters are freed, including Colegeera. If the party continues to battle the stahnk, Colegeera fights with them if they loan him a weapon.

If the party flees to the safety of the hills, Colegeera goes with them; he then answers their questions (he knows nothing about Udras/Sargonnas, but he can give them general information about the physical features of Eborium; for instance, if asked about the strange-looking forest in area 15, he says the trees discharge electricity and warns them to stay away from it).

Colegeera tells them his name and that he came to Eborium in search of treasure. "There was no treasure—only this monster. I have been trapped inside it for nearly a year. Thanks to this headband, I have not suffered any harm, but I lacked the strength to escape. The headband's enchantment lasts for only another ten days. If you had not come, I would

have surely died." If the PCs ask to use the headband, Colegeera explains that it magic is attuned to his body chemistry and functions only for him.

Colegeera says his treasure bag is buried near the mouth of the cave. ("The monster stomped it, shoving it beneath the surface of the ash layer.") The bag contains *Colegeera's rod of planar travel*, a magical item that will enable Colegeera return home. Like the headband, the rod functions only for Colegeera, but if the PCs help him retrieve it, he promises them the rest of the treasure in the bag.

The only way to retrieve the bag is to destroy the stahnk; the stahnk continues to attack any and all intruders.

If the PCs decline to help Colegeera retrieve his treasure bag, Colegeera thanks them for rescuing him, then announces that he'll attempt to defeat the stahnk himself. If the PCs allow Colegeera to fight the stahnk alone, the stahnk will destroy Colegeera over and over again; thanks to his *headband of protection*, he resurrects each time. If the PCs abandon this area, Colegeera will continue to fight and die; at the end of ten days, he will die for the final time.

If the PCs agree to help Colegeera fight the stahnk, Colegeera joins the attack by breaking off a tree branch and using it for a club; if the PCs loan him a weapon, he'll use the weapon instead. (As always, Ahxa declines to fight; he'll wait for the PCs in the safety of the hills.)

If the party destroys the stahnk, Colegeera answers their questions (assuming he hasn't done so already prior to the battle), then takes them to the mouth of the cave and digs beneath the ash. Buried beneath the ash is a leather bag containing six obsidianstones (worth 15 stl each), a blue diamond (worth 800 stl), a *dagger +2*, a flask containing two doses of *potion of fire breath* and an iron rod about a foot long with a small white pearl set in one end; this is *Colegeera's rod of planar travel*. The rod enables Colegeera to plane shift and fly at will. The rod is attuned to Colegeera's body chemistry and functions only for him; physical contact with another creature prevents the rod from functioning, Colegeera gives the party all of the items in the bag except for the rod.

Before he leaves, Colegeera offers to provide the PCs with information about the island. He knows nothing about Udras/Sargonnas, but he can give general information about any of the island's locations. (For instance, if the party asks him about the vine field in area 6, Colegeera says the vines are harmless unless they're damaged. If they ask about the dangling pods in area 8, Colegeera identifies them as a phase spider's egg pods: "They're very dangerous. Don't go near them.") As far as Colegeera knows, there is no safe way to leave the island.

If the party invites Colegeera to accompany them, he declines, saying he's had enough experiences in the outer planes to last him a lifetime. If the PCs ask him to deliver a message or send for help when he returns to Krynn, he promises that he will (although his intentions are good, trouble at home will prevent him from carrying out the party's request). When Colegeera finishes answering the party's questions about the island, he touches the rod to his head and disappears.

If the party defeats the stahnk, they can explore its cave to discover a pile of chewed bones, a bag containing four onyx stones (worth 60 stl each), a *battle axe +2*, and a *ring of feather falling*, all remnants of the creature's previous victims. If Colegeera is with them when they search the cave, he doesn't ask for a share of the treasure, but he graciously accepts anything they care to offer.

If the party returns to this area via EP 5 a second time, and they previously defeated the stahnk and recovered Colegeera's treasure bag and the items in the cave, nothing special occurs.

12. ISLAND OF GRAY EARTH

Initial Impression: This is a still pool of red water, about 500 feet in diameter and about ten feet deep. An island of gray earth rises from the center of the pool. The island is about 150 feet in diameter and appears to be featureless.

Entry Point: EP6.

Ahxa's Description: "Unharmful liquid." (Ahxa is unaware of the fetch in the island of gray earth—see below.)

Encounter Information: If the PCs swim across the pool of red water or otherwise make their way to the island of gray earth, they discover a second pool of water in the center of the island. This 75-foot-diameter pool is filled with clear water. The water is identical to normal water, except that it never evaporates. The pool of clear water is about ten feet deep.

If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 6, they find themselves on the island of gray earth, adjacent to the pool of clear water.

The pool of clear water is used as a portal by a fetch that dwells in another plane. The fetch stares upward from the bottom of the pool, waiting for victims.

Fetch: AC 4; MV 6; HD 9; hp 52; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg drains 2 levels of experience per successful attack; THAC0 11; SD *invisible* to all but its intended victim, even when attacking (*true seeing* will reveal it, but not *detect invisibility*; intended victim suffers penalties of -2 to his attack roll and +2 to his AC; victim's companions suffer a -4 penalty to their attack rolls and a +2 penalty to their ACs; AL CE

The fetch duplicates the appearance of the first PC who looks into the pool. If two or more PCs gaze into the pool at the same time, the fetch assumes the appearance of the PC closest to the pool. If several are equally distant, the fetch chooses a random PC (however, the fetch will never assume the appearance of a person or creature taller than seven feet or shorter than four feet).

Once a victim is chosen, the fetch springs from the pool. (Only the intended victim can see the fetch; the intended victim can always see the fetch in the pool.) It breaks into an evil grin as it approaches the victim. The fetch appears to be a haggard and deathly pale imitation of its victim, its eyes dull and lifeless.

The fetch intends to kill its selected victim, then return to its home plane with the victim's body via the portal in the pool. The fetch attacks with an exact replica of the weapon of its intended victim (if the victim has more than one weapon, the fetch chooses a random weapon; if the victim has no weapon, the fetch attacks with its hands). The fetch directs all attacks at its selected victim.

Each successful attack causes the victim to lose two levels of experience. (Roll the Hit Dice appropriate to the victim's class two times and subtract that number of hit points from the victim's total, also subtracting the victim's Constitution bonus for those levels. If a lost level is one in which the victim received a fixed number of hit points instead of a die roll, subtract the appropriate number of hit points. These points are permanently lost; the adjusted hit point total is not the victim's maximum. All powers, spells, and abilities associated with the lost levels are also lost.)

If the victim is reduced to 0 level, the fetch pulls him through the pool and into its home plane. The victim's companions cannot follow the fetch into its plane; only the fetch can activate the portal. Once the victim is brought to the fetch's layer, he turns into a fetch. If the victim is reduced to 0 level, but the fetch is killed or otherwise prevented from taking the victim to his layer, the victim becomes an ordinary person (assuming he's still alive) and his adventuring days are



over. He can continue his career if a *wish* or *restoration* is cast on his behalf. If a 0-level PC suffers another successful hit from the fetch, he is slain instantly, regardless of whether he has any hit points remaining. Unlike other energy-draining creatures, a 0 level PC slain by a fetch does not return as an undead.

The fetch will not go into the pool of red water surrounding the island of gray earth for any reason, not even to pursue its intended victim; the fetch is repulsed by the red water in much the same way as a vampire is repulsed by garlic. If the PCs splash or fling this water three times at the fetch (make a normal attack roll to see if the splash or fling is successful), the fetch retreats into the clear pool, vanishing through the portal and returning to its home plane, never to be seen again. Likewise, the fetch immediately retreats if the PCs pollute the fetch's pool with the equivalent of at least three cups of red water. (Disturbing the surface of the fetch's pool by throwing rocks in it or casting *darkness* does not cause the fetch to stop attacking; he can pull his defeated victim into the pool even if its surface is disturbed or *darkened*.)

Unless the fetch is forced to retreat, it continues to attack its victim until it is killed, it is reduced to half or less of its hit points (at which time it retreats into the pool, returning to its home plane, or its victim retreats to the safety of the red water (at which time the fetch also retreats).

If the party returns to EP 6 a second time (or voluntarily returns to the gray island later), the encounter plays out again as described; however, if the original fetch was killed, no new fetch has taken its place.

13. CRYSTAL TREE

Initial Impression: An immense tree made of green crystal grows here, its hundreds of branches stretching to the sky. The tree is nearly 500 feet tall. A shimmering aura of soft red flames surrounds the tree. Thousands of thin creatures similar to Ahxa dangle like fruit, clinging to the branches with their hooked feet.

Ahxa's Description: "Healthful family tree."

Encounter Information: This is the crystal tree of Ahxa's tribe. The gk'lok-lok are dreaming contentedly, reliving the experiences of the spirits dwelling in the trunk of the tree.

To deposit a new spirit to the tree, Ahxa approaches the base of the tree and makes a quick slash against the trunk with his hand, causing a small opening to appear. The spirit slips inside the opening, and Ahxa fires a series of needles at the opening from his extended hand; the needles seal the opening shut.

Contact with the flames surrounding the tree causes 1d6 points of damage (roll a successful saving throw vs. spell for half-damage). If a PC (or other creature or character) attacks or otherwise disturbs the slumbering gk'lok-lok, or if he attempts to damage the tree, the entire tribe awakens. Unless the intruder immediately withdraws, thousands of gk'lok-lok scramble down the tree (there are 6,000 in all) and charge the PC. The gk'lok-lok swarm over him, attacking him with arm slashes and blasting him with needles (assume that the interloper suffers 10d10 points of damage per round; there are so many tribesmen that any gk'lok-lok casualties are not important). The tribe continues to attack as long as the PC holds his ground; if the PC retreats, the tribe watches until the PC is a safe distance away (at least 100 yards), then climb back up the tree to resume sleeping.

14. COLOR RINGS

Initial Impression: Two concentric rings of colored stone surround a circle of black stone (14h). The outer ring (14i) is yellow, while the color of the middle ring (14g) changes

color from black to blue to yellow to green, then continuously repeats.

Six black circles, each 50 feet in diameter, are evenly spaced around the color rings. Three of the circles (14a, 14c, and 14e) are solid black stone. The remaining circles (14b, 14d, and 14f) appear to be bottomless holes.

Entry Point: EP 7.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthful circles."

Encounter Information: If a PC touches the outer yellow ring (14i), an icy chill ripples through his body and he must roll a Constitution check; if the check is successful, he suffers 1 point of chilling damage; if the check fails, he suffers 1d4 points of damage. He must roll additional Constitution checks for every subsequent round he is in contact with the yellow stone, suffering damage as indicated. Boots, gloves, armor, or other physical objects offer no protection against the chill from the stone.

The circles of black stone (14a, 14c, 14e, and 14h) have no special properties. If a PC climbs inside or otherwise enters one of the black holes (14b, 14d, and 14f), he disappears, reappearing a moment later on the center circle of black stone (14h).

If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 7, they find themselves on the center circle (14h). Characters transported to the center circle (14h) who are unable to fly, teleport, or use similar means to escape will have to move across the middle ring (14g).

The middle ring (14g) changes color every round in this sequence: black to blue to yellow to green (this sequence continually repeats). Each color has a different effect. Any physical contact with the colored stone instantly triggers the effect; boots, gloves, armor, or other physical objects offer no protection from the effects.

The effects of the various colors are as follows:

Black: The PC is instantly transported to one of the solid black circles outside the color rings. (To randomly determine the destination, roll 1d6: 1-2 = 14a; 3-4 = 14c; 5-6 = 14e).

Blue: This color has no special effect.

Yellow: An icy chill ripples through the PC's body and he must roll a Constitution check; if the check is successful, he suffers 1 point of damage, and if the check fails, he suffers 1d4 points of damage. He must roll additional Constitution checks for every subsequent round he is in contact with the yellow stone, suffering damage as indicated.

Green: The PC disappears, reappearing a moment later on the center circle of black stone (14h).

If the party arrived in the center circle via EP 7, Ahxa waits until all of the PCs have safely traversed the surrounding rings (14g and 14h) until he makes his escape attempt; he waits for the middle ring (14g) to turn black, then touches it and is transported to one of the outer black circles.

The black holes (14b, 14d, and 14f) are actually a type of *portable hole*. If a PC picks up one of these holes by the edge, he can take it with him and use it as a normal *portable hole*. Once a hole is removed from the ground, it permanently loses its function as a portal to the center circle (14h) and thereafter functions as a normal *portable hole* in every respect.

15. ELECTRIC FOREST

Initial Impression: This is a forest whose trees have rubbery green bark and dark velvet leaves that sparks and crackles. Bolts of electricity arc between the branches of the trees.

Entry Point: None.

Ahxa's Description: "Unhealthy trees."

Encounter Information: The bark of these trees continually generates electricity (the trees have glass roots; the rubbery bark and the glass continually generates strong static

electrical charges). Any character making physical contact with a tree must roll a Constitution check; if the check is successful, he loses 1-2 points of damage, and if the check fails, he loses 2d4 points of damage.

For every round the PCs spend in the forest, roll 1d20 and consult the Electric Forest Table.

Electric Forest Table

D20 Roll Result

1-9	No result
10-14	A bolt of electricity arcs between two trees, narrowly missing the party.
15-16	A bolt of electricity arcs from a tree, striking the ground in front of a random PC, starting a small grass fire that burns for 1d4 rounds.
17-18	A bolt of electricity arcs between two trees, singeing the head of a random PC, inflicting 1-2 points of damage.
19-20	A bolt of electricity arcs from a tree, striking a random PC, inflicting 5d6 points of damage (half damage if the PC rolls a successful saving throw vs. spell).

16. REVERSED WATERFALL

Initial Impression: This is a pool of red water with a geyser in the center similar to the pool in area 7. However, this pool empties over the edge of the island to form a waterfall that rises straight into the air (gravity is reversed where the pool meets the edge of the island). The waterfall empties into a second pool of red water that hangs suspended in mid-air, about 400 feet straight up (the waterfall and the second pool are also subject to the reversed gravity). The water of the second pool swirls in a counter-clockwise direction, forming an immense whirlpool. The swirling water, along with the rock chunks floating in it, is apparently drawn to a 25-foot-diameter circle of white light in the center of the pool.

Entry Point: EP 8.

Ahxa's Description: "Unharmful liquid . . . harmful solids." (Ahxa is unaware of the crystal ooze in the lower pool.)

Encounter Information: The magical water endlessly circulates between the two pools. Water from the first pool spills upward into the second pool where it is drawn into a whirlpool portal (the glowing circle). From the whirlpool portal, the water magically returns to the first pool via the geyser; the halo of white light at the base of the geyser indicates the return portal. Both pools are about ten feet deep.

The PCs are free to enter the water of the first pool, though they discover nothing of interest. The rock chunks have no special properties. If the PCs examine the geyser, they discover nothing special; the light at the base of the geyser is harmless and has no apparent function (the portal circulates the water in one direction only; therefore, the PCs cannot use the geyser portal to travel from the first pool to the second).

For every round a PC spends in the first pool, there is a slight chance (1 on 1d20) that he is struck by a rock chunk spewed from the geyser. A PC struck by a rock chunk suffers 1-2 points of damage.

There is a crystal ooze swimming in the first pool.

Crystal ooze: AC 8; MV 1, Sw 3; HD 4; hp 17; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 4d4; SA if successfully attacked, victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or becomes paralyzed and automatically suffers 4d4 points of damage in each subsequent round; SD immune to acid, cold, heat, and fire attacks; suffers full damage from *magic missiles* and electricity; blows from weapons inflict only 1 point of damage per hit (wooden weapons must roll a successful saving throw vs.

acid or they dissolve and break); AL N

The translucent crystal ooze is 75% invisible while immersed in the pool. Five rounds after one or more PCs enter the first pool (regardless of whether they enter voluntarily or are spewed into the pool by the geyser after arriving at Entry Point 8—see below), the crystal ooze attacks a random PC. The ooze continues to attack until it is destroyed or until all of the PCs leave the first pool.

If a PC in the first pool comes within ten feet of the edge where the waterfall begins, roll 1d6. On a roll of 4-6, he is caught up in the rushing water and drawn toward the waterfall. If he rolls a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty, he is able to resist the rushing water and swim to safety (assume that any PC with the swimming proficiency can automatically swim to safety). If he fails the check, he is washed into the waterfall and plummets into the second pool above. The violent shift in gravity fields wrenches his body; he must roll a successful Constitution check or suffer 1d4 points of damage. He then plummets into the pool above, suffers 3d6 points of damage from the impact, and experiences the effects of the whirlpool (see below).

If the party has just returned to Eborium via EP 8, they find themselves in the center of the second pool, caught in the whirlpool; they are immediately aware of the reversed gravity operating here, evidenced by the entirety of Eborium hovering above them. PCs who can't fly or teleport to freedom or lack a similar power to help them escape are trapped in the swirling waters; they are being inexorably drawn to the glowing circle in the center.

Assume that it takes five rounds for a PC to be drawn to the glowing circle. A PC in the whirlpool who rolls a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty is able to swim with enough force to resist the whirlpool and prevent himself from being drawn to the circle (any PC with the swimming proficiency can automatically resist the whirlpool). However, this is only a temporary solution at best; a PC who swims off the edge of the pool will exit the reversed gravity field, enter the original gravity field, and plummet straight down to the surface of Eborium (a distance of 400 feet; the PC suffers 20d6 points of damage when he strikes the ground). Swimming up the waterfall to the first pool is impossible under normal circumstances (if a PC manages to find a way to swim the waterfall, the violent shift in gravity fields wrenches his body when he reaches the island; he must roll a successful Constitution check or suffer 1d4 points of damage).

For every round a PC spends in the whirlpool, roll 1d20. On a roll of 1, he is struck by a rock chunk that is either swirling in the water with him or has dropped into the pool from the waterfall. A PC struck by a rock chunk suffers 1-2 points of damage.

The easiest way to escape from the second pool is the glowing circle. If a PC allows the whirlpool to draw him to the circle, or if he voluntarily swims to the circle, he is instantly transported to the geyser in the first pool (observant PCs may notice that rock chunks caught in the whirlpool disappear as soon as they reach the circle). The geyser sprays him into the air, after which he plops unharmed into the water. While he travels through the portal and the geyser, there is a 1 in 20 chance that the PC is struck by a rock chunk for 1-2 points of damage. Additionally, the violent shift in gravity fields wrenches his body when he reaches the geyser; he must roll a successful Constitution check or suffer 1d4 points of damage. (If the PCs have not yet dealt with the crystal ooze, the ooze attacks as soon as the first PC plops into the water—see above.)



CHAPTER 2: INTERLUDES



This chapter contains six Interludes, each corresponding to a specific attempt to locate one of the *cindergems*. All Interludes take place at various locations in Taladas; the party arrives at these locations via the Primary Chronolly on Eborium (refer to the "Adventure Sequence" section of Chapter 1 for details). The title of each Interlude indicates the general area where the Interlude takes place. Refer to the appropriate Interlude map, shown on both the large color map and the DM's Map. The DM can use the color map as a player's aid if he wishes, but the DM's Map is for his eyes only.

NOTES TO THE DM

ENDING AN INTERLUDE

When the party arrives in each Interlude location, they notice a metallic cord dangling from a six-foot-diameter portal suspended in the sky. The cord is about 50 feet long and dangles within three feet of the ground. To use the portal, a PC must be in physical contact with the cord for at least five consecutive rounds; the easiest way to meet this requirement is to climb the cord.

The cord and the portal both vanish 24 hours after the party arrives in the interlude location. Though 24 hours should be ample time to complete each Interlude, the PCs might run into trouble if they experience a run of bad luck or are unusually incompetent. In such a case, a benevolent DM might have Sargonnas transport them back to Eborium with a stern warning that he will not help them again.

MORE ABOUT *Cindergems*

The powerful enchantment that created the *cindergems* automatically negates *detect magic*, *locate object*, and similar spells; in order to find the *cindergems*, the PCs will have to rely on other, nonmagical methods. The *cindergems* cannot be destroyed, nor can they be altered by any physical or magical force available to the PCs.

Though the power of the *cindergems* is potentially immense, the PCs lack the means to draw on that power; for the purposes of the Interludes, treat the *cindergems* as ordinary gemstones.

INTERLUDE I:

RING MOUNTAINS

DM'S BACKGROUND

The Nylgai Hadirnoe, also known as the Scorned Dwarves, are a race of deep-dwelling dwarves who have shunned the surface world since the days of the Cataclysm. One clan of the Nylgai Hadirnoe, called the Shiudro, lives in a network of deep caverns located in a remote section of the Ring Mountains just south of Lower Panak. Over the years, the Shiudro gradually lost contact with the rest of the Nylgai Hadirnoe and now exist as a self-contained, independent faction. Over the years, the Shiudro have divested themselves of the trappings of formal civilization, gradually reverting to a primitive state. While they have retained the warrior tradition of the Nylgai Hadirnoe, they are peaceful and pacifistic by choice.

For generations, the Shiudro have maintained a close relationship with a silver dragon named Markellan (also known as Starwing). The clan provided Markellan with companionship, and Markellan provided them with protection. But now, Markellan has reached the end of a long life. The Shiudro have accompanied Markellan to a subterranean dragon graveyard where the noble creature will be laid to rest in a ceremony that will assure him of an afterlife of peace.

Markellan wears the orange *cindergem* as an earring, created as a gift for him by Shiudro craftsmen. A Shiudro explorer discovered the gem in a subterranean rock pile, where it was dispatched from the past by Eresterm.

Shiudro tribesmen (1st-level dwarf fighter): AC 8 (leather armor); MV 6; HD 1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear or club); SA and SD as per dwarf (assume that the tribesmen have a +3 bonus to saving throws against all poison, as well as magical wands, staves, rods, and spells); infravision to 90 feet but suffer a -1 penalty to all actions when in full sunlight; AL LG

THE CHOSEN PC

As will be seen, the Shiudro assume that one of the party members is the legendary "Spirit Rider." It's up to the DM to choose which PC is chosen by the tribe. The chosen PC can be any dwarven player character. If there are no dwarves in the party, choose any PC whom you want to take a more active role in the adventure.

ARRIVAL

A moment after the PCs enter the Primary Chronolily, they find themselves in a rocky cavern, indicated by an "X" on the DM's interlude 1 Map (the cavern is about a half-mile inside the earth, beneath the Ring Mountains). The cavern is about 100 feet in diameter and has an 80-foot-high ceiling. Patches of luminous fungi on the rocky walls and floor bathe the cavern in a soft, green glow. The air is cool and musty.

A metallic cord about 50 feet long hangs next to the party. The cord descends from a six-foot-diameter hole in the sky. The hole glows with a soft green light (the glowing hole leads back to Eborium).

A sloping passage (2a) leads from northern side of the cavern.

RITUAL OF THE DYING

After the PCs have traveled about 50 yards along the passage, they hear the sounds of chanting and singing coming from deep inside the earth. The party cannot determine the meaning of the chants, but any PC rolling a successful Wisdom check can tell that the language is dwarven (any dwarven PC will know this automatically).

As the party descends farther into the descending passage, the chants and songs grow louder and more comprehensible; any PC who speaks dwarven and rolls a successful Intelligence check realizes that the chants and songs are part of a funeral ceremony.

After the party has descended about 100 yards, the passage ends in an immense cavern, nearly 700 feet in diameter with a 200-foot ceiling (2b). Concealed behind a large boulder near the end of the passage, the PCs can observe the interior of the cavern without being seen.

About a hundred dwarves are gathered in the cavern, holding hands and swaying from side to side as they sing in low, eerie tones. The dwarves are about four feet tall, lean and large boned. Their skin is pale brown, tinged with red, their hair flame red and straw blonde. They wear animal

hides, bone necklaces and bracelets, and rope belts.

The dwarves surround a silver dragon. The dragon weakly sways his thick neck back in forth in time to the dwarven song. His left wing bears a dark birthmark in the shape of a star. A silver earring containing an orange jewel in the shape of a teardrop hangs from his left ear.

Markellan (great wurm silver dragon; also known as Starwing): AC -11; MV 3, Fl 10 (C) (movement rate reduced due to age and condition); HD 23; hp 82 (hit points reduced due to age and condition); THAC0 5; #AT 3 + specials (snatch up to three L size; kick opponents 1d6 + 12 feet away for 1d8 + 12 points of dmg; wing buffet 1d8 + 12 points of dmg; tail slap up to 12 creatures for 2d8 + 16 points of dmg, victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or be stunned for 1d4 + 1 rounds); Dmg 1d8 + 12/1d8 + 12/5d6 + 12; SA cone of *cold* (80' long x 5' x 30', Dmg 24d10 + 12; save for half damage), *paralyzation* gas cloud (50' long x 40' x 20', Dmg 20d12; victims caught in gas must roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or become paralyzed for 1d8 + 12 rounds), can breathe once every three rounds; SD *fear* within 50 yards (roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or fight with a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls); can communicate with all intelligent creatures; immune to cold; *cloud walk* at will; *feather fall* twice per day; *polymorph self* and *control winds*, each three times per day; *wall of fog*, *control weather*, and *reverse gravity*, all once per day; MR 60%; AL LG; Size G (140' body, 63' tail)

Spells (cast at 18th level): 1st Level— *dancing lights*, *magic missile*, *protection from evil*, *remove fear*; 2nd Level— *darkness 15' radius*, *ESP*, *resist fire/resist cold*, *speak with animals*; 3rd Level— *clairaudience*, *Melf's minute meteors*, *plant growth*, *protection from fire*; 4th Level— *detect scrying*, *ice storm*, *tongues*; 5th Level— *passwall*, *wall of stone*; 6th Level— *chain lightning*

Markellan lies next to a 400-foot-diameter depression filled to the top with bones (2c). There are all variety of bones in the depression—rib cages, skulls, femurs, and wings—but no intact skeletons. All of the bones appear to be part of the skeletons of immense creatures; any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check recognizes them as dragon bones.

If the PCs call out to the Shiudro or otherwise make themselves noticed, proceed to the "The Coming of the Spirit Rider" section below.

If the PCs attack the Shiudro, the dwarves scramble for cover while Markellan blasts *Melf's minute meteors* in front of the PCs, followed by *ice storm* in the next round; Markellan intentionally aims *Melf's minute meteors* and *ice storm* to frighten the party, but not to harm them. After the *ice storm* attack, a plump dwarf with a flowing red beard and wearing a silver necklace and a thinner dwarf with a short white beard and a bald head step forward. Markellan stops attacking, and the dwarves cautiously come out of hiding; proceed to the "The Coming of the Spirit Rider" section.

If the PCs remain behind the boulder and take no actions, Markellan sniffs the air five rounds after their arrival and alerts the dwarves. A plump dwarf with a flowing red beard and a thin dwarf with a short white beard step forward; proceed to the "The Coming of the Spirit Rider" section.

THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT RIDER

A plump dwarf with a flowing red beard and wearing a silver necklace approaches the party. A thinner dwarf with a short white beard accompanies him. "You have come," says the plump dwarf, eyes wide in disbelief as he stares at the chosen PC. "The prophecy was correct. All glory to Dolensias!" (Any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check rec-



ognizes that Dolensias is another name for Solais, the spirit of good, used by obscure dwarven cults).

The plump dwarf is Hortaht, cleric of the Shiudro. As the tribe's religious leader, he is in charge of conducting the final rites for the dying Markellan. The dwarf with the short white beard is Corro, the Storysmith of the Shiudro, who is charged with keeping the traditions and history of his people.

Hortaht (7th-level dwarf cleric): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 6; HD 7; hp 49 #AT 1; THACO 16; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe); SA and SD as per dwarf and bard (assume that he has a +3 bonus to saving throws against all poison, as well as magical wands, staves, rods, and spells), plus spells; has infravision to 90 feet but suffers a -1 penalty to all actions when in full sunlight; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16; AL LG

Spells: 1st Level— *detect evil, invisibility to undead, purify food and drink*; 2nd Level— *know alignment, silence 15' radius, slow poison*; 3rd Level— *protection from fire, remove paralysis*; 4th Level— *repel insects*

Weapon proficiencies: Battle axe, club, knife

Nonweapon proficiencies: Herbalism (11), ancient languages (13), musical instrument (13), reading/writing dwarven (14), religion (16)

Languages: Dwarven, Gnomish (13), Panak (13)

Special possession: *Pendant of tongues* (when rubbed, grants the wearer the powers of a *tongues* spell cast at 9th-level; the pendant has 12 charges)

Corro (6th-level dwarf bard) *: AC 7 (leather armor and shield); MV 6; HD 6; hp 25; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe); SA and SD as per dwarf and bard (assume that he has a +3 bonus to saving throws against all poison, as well as magical wands, staves, rods, and spells), plus spells; has infravision to 90 feet but suffers a -1 penalty to all actions when in full sunlight; has a 42% chance of knowing some facts about any magical item (when examining a magical item of dwarven make, can roll a second check if the first succeeds to name the specific powers and properties of the item); gains a +2 bonus to all encounter reactions with dwarves and gnomes; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 15; AL LG

Weapon proficiencies: Battle axe, spear, club

Nonweapon proficiencies: Ancient history (13), artistic ability (16), etiquette (15), read/write dwarven (15)

Languages: Dwarven, Gnomish (14), Panak (14), Auric (14)

Bard abilities: CW 70%, DN 40%, PP 30%, RL 45%

* Corro is based on the Nylgai Hadirnœ Storysmith character kit. The Nylgai Hadirnœ are the only dwarves allowed to be bards. Because of the nonmagical nature of dwarves, however, they can neither learn nor cast magical spells. See the *Rule Book of Taladas* in the *Time of the Dragon* box for more information.

Hortaht turns to his people. "Our time of sorrow is also a time of joy," he cries. "The Spirit Rider has come!" The dwarves—drop to their knees and reverently bow to the chosen PC.

If the PCs have questions for the dwarves, Hortaht turns to his people as soon as they begin to speak. "The Spirit Rider and his aides bless us with their words!" he says. The Shiudro respond by clasping their hands to their chests, staring adoringly at the chosen PC. "Please forgive the interruption," Hortaht says to the chosen PC. "Ask us anything, and we shall answer."

Hortaht and Corro answer as follows. To any questions they can't answer, Hortaht says, "Forgive me, Spirit Rider, but we have no answer for this."

Who are you? Who are these people? "I am Hortaht, the leader of the Shiudro," says the plump dwarf. "And I am

Corro, the Storysmith of the Shiudro," says his companion. "We are sons and daughters of the earth," adds Hortaht. "We are your servants."

Where are we? Hortaht seems puzzled by this question. "Beneath the OdderRhing, of course." (Any PC rolling a successful Intelligence check recognizes OdderRhing as a Nylgai Hadirnœ name for the Ring Mountains; roughly translated, it means "Land Beneath the Mountains.")

Who is the dragon? "His given name is Markellan," says Hortaht. "He is Starwing to us. He is our brother. A companion of the Shiudro for generations." If asked, Hortaht says that Markellan is dying of old age. No option available to the PCs, including *cure disease* and *cure serious wounds*, can affect Markellan's condition.

What are you doing here? "Starwing has reached the end of his days. We have accompanied him to this sacred burial ground of the silver dragons and are performing the Ritual of Passage to ensure a peaceful afterlife for our beloved friend and companion."

Why do you call me "Spirit Rider"? "The Spirit Rider tests the faith of his servants," says Hortaht. "It is prophesied in the Parchments of Ghorrah," continues Corro, "that when the dragon of the Shiudro reaches the end of his days, an emissary of Dolensias will appear to ride the spirit of the dragon into the afterlife. The emissary will be known by his light, which will shine as brightly as Dolensias's moon."

What are the Parchments of Ghorrah? "The sacred words of Dolensias," says Corro. When the PCs have asked all their questions, continue with the "Dragon's Touch" section.

DRAGON'S TOUCH

"Come forward," says Hortaht to the chosen PC. "Allow me the honor of leading you to your mount." The crowd of Shiudro parts, creating a clear path from the chosen PC to Markellan. If the chosen PC hesitates, Corro says, "Have no fear, Spirit Rider. Starwing is pure and noble. He has waited a lifetime for this moment of transcendence with the emissary of Dolensias."

Markellan's gaze meets that of the chosen PC; the chosen PC senses kindness and trust in the eyes of the dragon. If the chosen PC still declines to go near Markellan, the dragon proceeds to the burial grounds as described in the "The Sea of Bones" section, and the rest of the Interlude plays out as described (except for the details pertaining to the chosen PC). The end result of the PC's refusal is that the PCs do not obtain the orange *cindergem* at the conclusion of this Interlude.

If the chosen PC approaches Markellan, the dragon lowers his neck so that the chosen PC can climb on. The Shiudro resume their chanting.

THE SEA OF BONES

Once the chosen PC has climbed onto the dragon's back, Markellan stares into his eyes. The chosen PC hears soft, soothing words in his head; this is the voice of Markellan. "You are not the emissary of Dolensias," says the voice. "I know you are confused. Listen, and you will understand."

"Today, I am 1,500 years and a day in age. I have reached the end of my natural life. The Sea of Bones before you is a sacred burial ground for silver dragons. When death is near, we seek such a place to assure an afterlife of peace."

"For hundreds of years, the Shiudro people have been my family. Today, they honor me with a service reserved only for the most noble of dwarven kings. They believe you are the Spirit Rider prophesied in their sacred poems. Though I know the prophecy to be only a myth, I do not wish to disappoint them."

"I know why you have come. You seek the orange gem, a gift to me from my people. The gem is yours, but first, I ask you to ride with me into the Sea of Bones. I sense your fear, but I promise you will not be harmed."

"I cannot insist that you accompany me, of course, but if you decline, please dismount now. If you agree, acknowledge your decision with a nod of your head."

Markellan has no further information for the chosen PC. If the chosen PC wishes to consult with the rest of his party, Markellan agrees, but tells him that only the chosen PC is allowed to ride him, nor does he allow the chosen PC to bring a companion with him.

If the chosen PC declines to ride Markellan, the dragon proceeds into the Sea of Bones, and the rest of the Interlude plays out as described (except for the details pertaining to the chosen PC); the PCs do not obtain the orange *cindergem*.

If the chosen PC agrees to go with Markellan, the dragon begins to wade into the Sea of Bones, gradually sinking deeper and deeper as he moves farther into the depression. The chosen PC feels the bones rise around him, bruising his flesh and filling his mouth and nostrils with dust. As his head sinks beneath the bone pile, darkness enshrouds him, and he lapses into unconsciousness.

While Markellan and his rider sink into the bones, the Shiudro sing louder and louder, their voices rising to an ecstatic crescendo as the dragon and Spirit Rider vanish beneath the surface.

One round after the dragon vanishes into the Sea of Bones, a sphere of light appears near the party. The sphere swells and pulsates, then bursts in a bright flash, revealing the chosen PC. The chosen PC is dazed but unharmed. He has no memory of what happened to him after he disappeared beneath the bones.

SLIMY INTRUDERS

Shortly after the reappearance of the chosen PC, the party's attention is drawn to the sounds of shuffling feet coming an opening near the west side of the cavern. Eight hunched humanoid creatures with rubbery flesh coated with slimy jelly stand at the entrance, four of them carrying a makeshift stretcher of woven vines. The corpse of a humanoid lies in the stretcher. The corpse resembles the living humanoids, except that its gelatinous secretions have dried to a crust.

The creatures are disir.

Disir (8): AC 3; MV 12; HD 5; hp 26 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/2d6; SA pain (victims struck by bite or claw must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison, each claw causing a -1 penalty to the saving throw while a bite gives a -2 penalty; the modifiers are cumulative, so if victim is struck by all three attacks, he has a -4 penalty to his saving throw; if saving throw fails, victim is paralyzed in 1d4 + 1 rounds; each round until victim is paralyzed, he suffers a +1 cumulative penalty to his THAC0, which is removed when the pain is neutralized; pain has a duration of 1d4 turns); SD +4 saving throw bonus against fire-based attacks; 1 point less per die of damage from fire-based attacks; AL LE

The Shiudro recoil in terror when they see the disir, their mortal enemies. One of the disir raises its clawed hands. "You have nothing to fear from us this day," it says. "Today is a day of mourning. Our great leader, Ojtrijor, has died. We have come to put him to rest. Step aside."

Hortaht looks to the PCs. "We will abide by your decision," he says. "But I beg you not to allow this desecration."

The PCs must decide whether to allow the disir to bury their dead leader in the Sea of Bones. The disir refuse to answer any of the party's questions; they aren't interested in

coming back at a later time, making a token payment to the Shiudro, or compromising in any other way.

If the PCs allow the disir to bury their leader in the Sea of Bones. Barely concealing his anger, Hortaht asks the PCs to explain their decision. Because Hortaht respects the PCs as emissaries of the gods, he accepts whatever explanation they care to offer. The disir haul their dead leader to the Sea of Bones and set him gently on the surface. The corpse refuses to sink.

A moment later, the sea begins to quake. A fountain of bones spews into the air, and as the quaking subsides, the ghostly image of Markellan appears, hovering over the sea. "Leave this place!" roars the image. The terrified disir drag their leader's corpse from the Sea of Bones and scramble from the cavern, never to be seen again.

Proceed to the "Markellan's Gift" section.

If the PCs don't allow the disir to bury their leader in the Sea of Bones. "You defy us!" snarls one of the disir. "Then die for your decision!"

The disir gently place their slain leader on the ground, then charge the party, attacking with their teeth and claws. The disir intend to fight to the death; they do not negotiate with the PCs.

Five rounds after the disir attack, the Sea of Bones begins to quake. A fountain of bones spews into the air, and as the quaking subsides, the ghostly image of Markellan appears, hovering over the sea. "Leave this place!" roars the image. The terrified disir cease their attacks, grab their leader's corpse, then scramble from the cavern, never to be seen again.

Proceed to the "Markellan's Gift" section.

MARKELLAN'S GIFT

If the chosen PC did not ride Markellan into the Sea of Bones the image of Markellan dissipates, completely disappearing within a few seconds. The PCs will have no chance of recovering the orange *cindergem*, lost forever in the depths of the dragon burial grounds.

If the chosen PC rode Markellan into the Sea of Bones, the image of Markellan remains behind after the disir have been chased from the cavern. "I have not forgotten our agreement," says the image. "Farewell, my friends." The image recedes into the Sea of Bones.

A soft light begins to glow at the feet of the chosen PC. A moment later, the light fades. In its place is the orange *cindergem*.

RETURN TO EBORIUM

The Shiudro bid farewell to the PCs. "Until now, I have never felt worthy of adding my own verse to the Parchments of Ghorrah," says Corro, "but I shall record these events so that future generations may share in the blessings of this day."

If the PCs denied the disir permission to bury their dead leader in the Sea of Bones, Hortaht removes his silver necklace and offers it to the chosen PC. "A token of our honor," he says. (The necklace is a *pendant of tongues*, described earlier.) Hortaht snaps his fingers, and a Shiudro tribesman runs to his side, carrying a small basket of woven weeds. "For you and your aides," says Corro, presenting the basket to the chosen PC. The basket contains nine chunks of turquoise, each worth 15 stl.

The PCs can return to Eborium by leaving the cavern through the passage and returning to their original arrival point. They may then use the cord and portal to return to Eborium.

When the party passes through the portal, follow the in-



structions in the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1, rolling for an Entry Point and running the appropriate Scheduled Event from Chapter 3 as directed.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the PCs ask Hortaht or Markellan for help in their struggle against EreSTEM. Hortaht is sympathetic to the party's cause, but he has no help to offer, nor do the Parchments of Ghorrah have any advice; in no case will Corro or any of the Shiudro return to Eborium with the PCs. Likewise, Markellan expresses concern if the party shares their story but he can do nothing except offer his encouragement.

If the PCs take the northern passage from the cavern. The northern passage branches in two directions; the western branch (2d) leads to the lair of the disir, and the eastern branch (2e) leads to the Shiudro village. If the PCs follow the branch to the disir lair, their progress is discouraged by repeated attacks by increasingly high numbers of disir. The branch leading to the Shiudro village is several miles long, requiring more time than the PCs have before the portal and cord disappear.

INTERLUDE 2: CLETAN HILLS

DM's BACKGROUND

Dirryl Pekk was an eccentric wizard who conducted research into the essence of magic from his home in a remote area of the Cletan Hills, east of New Styrlia in the League of Minotaurs.

Dirryl believed that if he could unravel the mysteries of the mind and learn how memories, thoughts, and emotions are generated and processed, he could learn to cast spells at staggering levels of power. Unfortunately, his investigation of the *mindspin* spell backfired and killed him, destroying his home in the process. The spirit of Dirryl has been trapped in a physical manifestation of the *mindspin* spell for nearly a century.

Dirryl acquired the yellow *cindergem*, sent here from the past by EreSTEM, from a travelling jewelry dealer. Though he was unable to determine its nature, Dirryl felt the gem might come in handy some day for his magical research and buried it near a tree to keep it safe.

ARRIVAL

A moment after the PCs enter the Primary Chronolily, they find themselves on a grassy hill, surrounded by piles of rubble (indicated by an "X" on the DM's Interlude 2 Map). The green hills extend for as far as the eye can see. The sky is bright and clear, and the air is as warm as a spring day. A metallic cord about 50 feet long hangs next to the party, descending from a six-foot-diameter hole in the sky. The cord dangles about three feet from the ground. The hole glows with a soft green light (the glowing hole leads back to Eborium).

Not far from the party's arrival area stands an immense cylinder of white light, nearly 300 feet in diameter and 50 feet high. Near the base of the west side of the cylinder is a ten-foot-diameter circle filled with violet light.

SEARCHING THE RUBBLE

If the PCs search the rubble pile, they find scraps of rotten wood, shattered bricks and glass, and remnants of tables, chairs, and other furniture (this rubble is what remains of Dirryl's home). For every 15 minutes a PC searches the rubble, there is a 25% chance he finds one of the following items (roll 1d6; no object can be found more than once).

Rubble Search Table

D6 Roll Discovery

- 1 A diary with scrawled notes concerning Dirryl's research; any PC rolling a successful Intelligence check can determine that the research had something to do with understanding human thought processes.
- 2 A black silk bag containing two black pearls, each worth 150 stl.
- 3 A *dagger* +1.
- 4 A *ring of blinking*.
- 5 Three giant centipedes scuttle from the debris, attacking the nearest PC. (**Centipedes, giant (3)**: AC 9; MV 15; HD 2; 10 hp; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA paralytic poison (victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or become paralyzed for 2d6 hours; victims are permitted a +4 bonus to their saving throws); SD receives a -1 penalty to all its saving throws; AL N)
- 6 A small tin box filled with chunks of hard candy. Anyone eating a piece must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer stomach cramps for the next hour, making all attack rolls at a -1 penalty during that time. (Dirryl was a candy-maker; this is a spoiled batch that he kept to analyze later so he could improve his recipe.)

ENTERING THE CYLINDER

The cylinder of light is a spiraling, physical manifestation of a *mindspin* spell. The white light acts as a permanent wall of force. The party can enter the violet circle (2a), which acts as a portal to the center of the cylinder (entering the cylinder through the white light is impossible unless the PCs can breach the wall of force with *disintegrate* or a similar spell. In that case, they find themselves in the third section of the cylinder and experience the effects of the third level of the *mindspin* spell, as described below.)

If the party passes through the violet portal, they find themselves in area 2b at the center of the spiral, experiencing the effects of the first level of the *mindspin* spell as described below (area 2b-2c).

If the party doesn't enter the cylinder, or doesn't manage to free the image in the third section—see below—it's unlikely that they'll locate the yellow *cindergem*. In that case, they can climb the cord to the portal, and return empty-handed to Eborium.

JOURNEY THROUGH THE CYLINDER

As the party follows the path, they experience the effects of the various levels of the *mindspin* spell, as described below. Unlike regular *mindspin* spells, all PCs experience the effects of the spiral's *mindspin* spell.

The spiral walls are made of light, which act as walls of force. Though the path created by the spiral is continuous, the walls of the spiral divide it into three sections, each section representing a different level of the *mindspin* spell.

The walls of the first, innermost section of the spiral glow green; this section represents the first level of *mindspin*. The walls of the middle section glow blue; this section represents the second level of *mindspin*. The final, outermost section of the spiral glows white; this section represents the third level of *mindspin*.

The PCs can attempt to disbelieve any of the illusionary effects created by the *mindspin* spiral (pertinent rules are provided at the end of this Interlude). However, they cannot disbelieve the spiral itself. They can breach the glowing walls with *disintegrate* or a similar spell; otherwise, they must work

their way to the violet circle at the end of the spiral in order to leave.

When a PC on the outside of cylinder touches the violet circle, he is automatically teleported to the center of the cylinder (to area 2b). When a PC on the inside of the cylinder touches the violet circle, he is instantly transported back to the hill just outside the cylinder.

All damage suffered in the spiral is illusionary, equal to 1 point of real damage per 4 points of illusionary damage; for instance, if a PC suffers 8 points of illusionary damage, he experiences it as 2 points of real damage. While in the spiral, characters believe illusionary damage to be genuine; therefore, a PC will drop lifelessly to the ground if he suffers what he believes to be a fatal amount of damage. The illusionary damage is apparent only after he is physically removed from the spiral.

The path through the spiral is 40 feet wide. The ceiling is 50 feet high.

FIRST SECTION (2B-2C)

The first section of the spiral represents the first level of mindspin: an altered perception of the physical terrain (unlike regular *mindspin* spells, the spiral manifestation doesn't alter a character's perception of space and time). The walls bordering the path of this section glow green.

The path appears to be made of tall green grass in which various flowers grow freely. The soothing chirps of songbirds can be heard in the distance. (The grass, flowers, and chirps are all illusionary.)

After the PCs have followed the path for about 30 yards, they encounter a withered old man sitting in the grass, sobbing to himself. The man turns to the party, tears streaming down his cheeks; he has bloodshot eyes, deep scars crisscrossing his face, and a mouth filled with rotting teeth.

The man is actually a dreamwraith, spawned from the subconscious of one of the PCs.

Dreamwraith: AC 3; MV 12; HD 8; hp 42; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (chilling touch; damage is illusionary); SA -1 bonus to initiative roll; cause *despair* (see text); SD takes normal damage from a character's weapons and spells, ceasing to exist when reduced to 0 hit points; AL CE

The dreamwraith ignores all comments and questions from the party, assailing them with his tale of woe. "I've lost everything," he sobs. "The dragons came and killed my family, my friends, my neighbors, then they destroyed my village. I have nowhere to go. Everyone is gone. What's the use of living?"

The dreamwraith directs his story at a specific PC (choose randomly), attempting to cause despair. The chosen PC must roll a saving throw vs. spell; if the throw succeeds, the PC resists the hypnotic effect of the dreamwraith's words. The dreamwraith then directs his story to another PC, and so on until one of the PCs fails his saving throw (if all of the PCs roll successful saving throws, the dreamwraith attacks as described below). The PC failing his throw is overwhelmed with despair and joins the dreamwraith, repeating words of hopelessness. Only *dispel magic* or a convincing speech from the unaffected PCs about hope and courage can negate the despair. (There is a base chance of 30% that any such speech negates the despair. The DM has the option of modifying the base chance by as much as +70% if the speech is particularly inspiring.)

If the PCs negate the despair, attack the dreamwraith, or attempt to flee, the dreamwraith attacks random PCs with its chill touch. The dreamwraith fights to the death, pursuing the party to any location in the spiral (though it does not leave the spiral). If the dreamwraith is disbelieved before it

conducts its first attack on a PC, the PC suffers no illusionary damage. However, a PC cannot disbelieve it once he has suffered illusionary damage from it or after he has succumbed to its despair power.

Fifty yards beyond the location where the party first encounters the dreamwraith, the path is blocked by what appears to be a lake of molten lava. Wisps of steam rise from the lava lake, which extends to the walls and stretches out for 50 feet ahead. The lake is illusionary; not only can it be disbelieved, but any character who comes in physical contact with the lake sees it disappear before his eyes (this is the only illusion in the spiral that can be dissipated by physical contact). Characters who have not yet touched the lake (or who haven't disbelieved it) still perceive it as real, regardless of whether their companions who have disbelieved it are matter-of-factly moving through it.

SECOND SECTION (2D)

The second section of the spiral represents the second level of mindspin: a character can no longer tell if his companions are real. The walls bordering the path of this section glow blue.

The path appears to be made of stone. A howling wind can be heard in the distance. (The stone and the howling wind are illusionary.)

As soon as the party enters this section, the PCs all perceive each other as monstrous humanoids (assign random visages to the PCs from the following choices: an ogre with blood oozing from its pores, a man-sized chulcrix walking on two human legs, a female elf with snake scales and a forked tongue, a mound of quivering gelatin in the shape of a man, a female human with a single huge eyeball resting on her neck instead of a head, and a normal woman with tentacles instead of arms). Each PC perceives himself as retaining his normal form. The altered forms are illusionary; the PCs retain their normal statistics and abilities. Aside from being disconcerting, the altered visages have no ill effects. (The PCs also retain their normal voices, useful in discouraging panicked comrades from attacking.)

THIRD SECTION (2E)

The third section of the spiral represents the third level of mindspin: the characters have altered perceptions of themselves (unlike regular *mindspin* spells, the spiral manifestation doesn't require characters to use the attack and saving throw tables of another class, nor are any classes required to make ability adjustments). The walls bordering the path of this section glow white.

The path appears to be made of brown dirt. The sounds of a thunderstorm can be heard in the distance. (The dirt and the thunderstorm are illusionary.)

If a PC hasn't yet disbelieved the hideous visages of his companions (from section two), he continues to see them here. Additionally, he begins to perceive his own arms and legs to be constantly changing from tentacles to bones to wisps of smoke to thick stumps of woods. These changes are illusionary but extremely disorienting; all PCs make their attack rolls with a -2 penalty and move at half their normal rates until they disbelieve this illusion.

After the PCs have moved 30 yards into this section of the spiral, a flock of bizarre black creatures appears in mid-air before them (the number of creatures equals the number of PCs). The creatures resemble gothic gargoyles, thin and reptilian, with long prehensile tails, great wings, and terrible claws. Each creature has the face of one of the PCs. The creatures swoop toward the party, laughing and jeering.

The creatures are actually dreamshadows, spawned from



the subconsciousnesses of the party.

Dreamshadow black abishai: AC 5; MV 9, FI 12; HD 4 + 1; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4 + 1 (illusionary damage); SA successful tail hit injects poison into victim, requiring a saving throw vs. poison (failure results in illusionary death); aerial charge causes double damage (illusionary damage) from both claws (this attack roll is made with a +2 bonus); *change self*, *command*, *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, and *scare*, all once per round; SD 2d4 points of damage from holy water; regenerates one hit point per round unless the damage was done by holy water or a holy magical weapon; MR 30%; AL LE

The dreamshadow abishai attack the PCs with their tears, tails, and claws, each attacking the PC who shares its features. They fight to the death, pursuing the party to any location in the spiral (though they do not leave the spiral). The dreamshadow abishai cannot be disbelieved into nonexistence. However, if a dreamshadow abishai is disbelieved before it conducts its first attack, the creature cannot inflict any damage (not even illusionary). A PC cannot disbelieve a dreamshadow abishai once he has suffered damage from it (though he can still disbelieve dreamshadows who have not successfully attacked him).

At the end of the white path is a ten-foot-diameter circle filled with violet light. A huge ghostly face fills the violet circle. The face has a bushy white beard and kind eyes. When the face sees the party, it begins to silently and urgently mouth words; any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check interprets the words as "Touch me." (This is the face of Dirryl Pekk; his spirit is trapped in the violet circle.)

If any PC touches the violet circle, the face vanishes. A moment later, the ghostly image of a thin human male wearing a long robe hovers beside the PC who freed him; the image has the same features as the face that was in the circle. The image darts toward the circle, disappearing as soon as it touches the violet light.

If a party member touches the violet light, he is instantly transported back to the hill just outside the cylinder.

THE GRATEFUL SPIRIT

Once the PCs are transported from the cylinder, they see the spirit hovering over the debris. The spirit floats toward the party as soon as it sees them. The spirit lacks the ability to communicate orally or mentally with the PCs, but it smiles and bows.

The spirit's face beams with gratitude. If the PCs ask what happened to him, the spirit gestures to the debris, pantomiming the act of pouring flasks into one another, then shaking his head sadly. (Any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check realizes the spirit is trying to explain that the debris and the cylinder are the results of an experiment gone awry.)

If the PCs ask the spirit about the *cindergem*, the grateful spirit leads them to a tree and points to the ground. If the PCs dig down about four feet, they'll find the teardrop-shaped *cindergem*, golden yellow with the image of a flame flickering inside it.

If the PCs ask the spirit questions, he shares all of the information in the DM's Background, answering in pantomimes. The spirit has no knowledge about Eretem, the nature of the *cindergems*, or anything else of interest to the PCs.

DISBELIEVING ILLUSIONS

The PCs can attempt to disbelieve the illusions, the dreamwraith, and the dreamshadows in the spiral as follows: 1) The disbelieving PC announces how many rounds he intends to concentrate on the illusion. The PC can perform no other actions while concentrating.

2) The modifier for the disbelief check is determined, based on the length of uninterrupted concentration.

Concentration Modifiers for Disbelieving Illusions

Time	Modifier
1 round	+1
2 rounds	+2
3 rounds	+3
4-6 rounds	+4
7-9 rounds	+5
1-3 turns	+6
4-6 turns	+7
7+ turns	+8

3) Determine the Disbelief Number by adding the concentration modifier to the PC's Intelligence. Add 1 for every other PC who has successfully disbelieved during any previous round. If the PC is attempting to disbelieve a dreamwraith, there is a -5 penalty.

4) The DM secretly rolls 1d20. If the result is higher than the Disbelief Number, then the illusion still appears to be real and its effects are perceived as real. If the result is lower than the Disbelief Number, the illusion is disbelieved.

5) Ordinarily, a PC can make a disbelief check only once per hour against any particular illusion. However, the PC can make another check if a fellow PC makes a successful check.

RETURNING TO EBORIUM

The PCs can return to Eborium by using the cord leading to the green portal. When the party passes through the portal, follow the instructions in the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1, rolling for an Entry Point and running the appropriate Scheduled Event from Chapter 3 as directed.

INTERLUDE 3: UPPER PANAK

DM's BACKGROUND

Hogar Shuum was the shaman of a small Ice People clan in Upper Panak. Hogar urged the clan to mobilize for an invasion against their more prosperous neighbors to the south, but the clan was reluctant to become involved in a prolonged war. Hogar proceeded anyway, erecting a temple of ice in honor of Eretem (called Ysoruh by the clan), whom Hogar was certain would support their invasion plans. Additionally, Hogar began work on a prototype golem that he envisioned as the first of an invincible army of obedient soldiers.

However, the clan put an end to Hogar's plans when they discovered he was murdering innocent citizens and unwary travelers to finance his projects. The clan executed Hogar, then abandoned their village, relocating to a distant area of Upper Panak. Fearing the wrath of Ysoruh, they left the temple standing.

Shortly before his death, Hogar had discovered the green *cindergem* stuck in an ice floe, where it had been sent from the past by Eretem. Hogar found a way to focus the magic of the *cindergem* to keep the magical ice of the temple frozen year round and to give life to the golem.

ARRIVAL

A moment after the PCs enter the Primary Chronolily, they find themselves on a broad expanse of wasteland (indicated by an "X" on the DM's Interlude 3 Map). Withered weeds, spindly trees, and dilapidated shacks dot the wasteland. The sky is gray, the air oppressively hot and dry. A metallic cord about 50 feet long hangs next to the party, extending about three feet from the ground. The cord dangles from a six-foot-diameter hole in the sky. The hole glows with a soft green light (the glowing hole leads back to Eborium).

Near the party's arrival area is a large building of solid ice. The structure is about 120 feet square and nearly 20 feet tall. It sits atop five columns of ice about 50 feet high and 20 feet thick; a column supports each corner of the building, and a fifth column supports the center of the building. A stairway of ice leads from the ground to an open doorway in the center of the southern side of the building; the doorway is about 25 feet square. Aside from this opening on the south side, there are no other doorways or windows. Despite the oppressive heat, the ice shows no signs of melting.

If the PCs attempt to chip or otherwise damage the ice temple, the ice magically regenerates, healing itself in one round (thanks to the enchantment of the glass sphere in room 3m). If the PCs investigate the building, they see a five-foot-square area on the bottom, near the center column. This square area is a lighter color than the rest of the temple. If they damage this area, it regenerates like the rest of the temple (the discolored section can be damaged if the party destroys the glass sphere—see the "The Shattered Sphere" section).

There is nothing of interest in the shacks; all items of value were taken by looters long ago.

SECRET PURSUERS

Unknown to the party, EreSTEM has sent one of her lieutenants to follow and destroy them. The lieutenant, a blood-thirsty minotaur named Gurroch (see the Appendix for background and statistics), picked up the party's trail in Eborium, then entered the Primary Chronolily before the Interlude 3 image faded. A chulcrist accompanied Gurroch.

Gurroch and the chulcrist don't arrive in Upper Panak until after the party has entered the ice temple. The chulcrist deposits Gurroch on the northeastern corner of the roof of the temple. The chulcrist lingers near the entrance on the southern side of the building. While the party explores the temple, Gurroch attempts to hack his way through the roof (see the indicated area of the map), planning to surprise the party and chase them out the front door where the chulcrist can intercept them. However, the magical nature of the ice (see the "About the ice Temple" section) prevents Gurroch from breaking in; Gurroch's situation changes later, as explained in the "The Shattered Sphere" section.

Assume that while the party explores the temple, they won't be aware of Gurroch's break-in attempt. The text also assumes that the party won't discover Gurroch or the chulcrist until the events of the "The Shattered Sphere" section. If the PCs discover Gurroch and the chulcrist before the party breaks the crystal sphere, however, Gurroch and the chulcrist commence their attacks as described in the "Outcomes" section. Both will pursue the PCs; Gurroch fights to the death, and the chulcrist fights until it loses half its hit points, at which time it escapes by plane shifting. The party can then retrieve the green *cindergem*; note, however, that when they shatter the glass sphere, they'll still have to deal with the golem.

If the PCs leave one or more of their number on guard duty while the rest of the party explores the temple, Gurroch and the chulcrist attempt to subdue the guard(s) as quickly and

quietly as possible, then proceed with their plan as described later.

ABOUT THE ICE TEMPLE

All of the following conditions and features apply to the ice temple. Note that some of these change if the PCs destroy the glass sphere in room 3m; these changes are explained in the "The Shattered Sphere" section.

* The floors, walls, and ceilings are made of thick blocks of solid ice. The ice is opaque and cold to the touch. Long, thick icicles hang from the ceiling. The magical ice is unaffected by all forms of heat and fire. Each blow from a weapon chips away a small sliver of ice; thanks to the enchantment of the glass sphere in room 3m, each chip magically regenerates in one round.

* The interior of the ice temple is about 10 degrees below zero. At this temperature, characters move at $\frac{2}{3}$ of their normal rate, and all attack rolls are made with a -1 penalty. For every 15 minutes a character is exposed to this temperature (without the proper protective clothing), he must roll a Constitution check, suffering 1-2 points of damage if he fails. A character can regain hit points lost to cold at the rate of 1 per hour if he rests or performs only minimal physical activity in an environment with a temperature above freezing.

* The icy floors of the temple are very slippery. A character who's attacking or otherwise exerting himself must roll a Dexterity check or fall down (no damage, but he takes a round to get up).

* Areas 3e, 3f, 3i, and 3j are 45-degree slopes of ice. The slopes aren't perfectly smooth; small ridges and indentations enable characters to climb up and down. For convenience, the DM can use the following guidelines to determine each PC's chance of falling:

- A thief's Climbing Rating is equal to his climb walls score +10%.
- A non-thief who is an unskilled climber has a Climbing Rating of 50%.
- A skilled climber (as decided by the DM) has a Climbing Rating of 60%.
- If the optional proficiency rules are used, add 10% per proficiency slot.
- In no case can a Climbing Rating exceed 95%.
- The DM is free to modify these scores for encumbrance, special tools, or other variables if he wishes.

When a character is attempting to climb up or down an ice slope, roll percentile dice. A result greater than the character's Climbing Rating indicates failure (results of failure are explained in the Map Key), and a result equal to or less than the Climbing Rating indicates success. A PC held by a rope or who is otherwise assisted has no chance of falling under normal circumstances.

ICE TEMPLE MAP KEY

Refer to the DM's Interlude 3 Map. For the DM's convenience, dotted lines divide the map into areas.

3a. Stairway: This stairway of ice rises 50 feet, leading to a 25-foot-wide entryway.

3b. Offering Room: Just inside this room is a small altar made of ice. The altar contains three stl and a loaf of frozen bread (all are offerings to Ysoruh from the clan before they left the area; looters have passed up these items because they've been afraid to enter the temple). There are openings in the western and eastern walls.

3c & 3d. Empty Areas: There is nothing of interest here.

3e & 3i. Slope: This is a 20-foot-long ice slope that slants down 45 degrees toward area 3g. From the top of the slope,



the party can see that the ice floor of area 3g is a lighter color than that of the rest of the temple.

If any character stands within one foot of the top of the slope, he must roll a Dexterity check. If he fails, he slips and slides down the slope and into the pit below (see area 3g); he is not allowed a Climbing Check. A character attempting to climb down the slope must roll a successful Climbing Check or fall down the slope and into the 3g pit.

3f & 3j. Slope: This area is identical to the 3e slope. Falling characters land in the area 3h pit.

3g. Pit Trap: A thin layer of ice covers a pit ten feet square and six feet deep; the ice layer hides the spikes of ice that line the bottom of the pit. A character who slides down either of the adjacent slopes (3e or 3i) crashes through the ice covering and falls on the spikes, suffering 2d6 points of damage (unlike the ice elsewhere in the temple, the ice covering the pit is easily broken).

Characters who successfully climb down a slope can attempt to cross the ice covering without breaking it. If the character moves carefully, he has a 25% chance of breaking the ice and falling into the pit (suffering 2d6 points of damage from the spikes). This chance is cumulative; if two PCs are crossing the ice at the same time, there is a 50% chance of the ice breaking. If three PCs are crossing, there is a 75% chance. If four or more PCs cross at the same time, there is a 100% chance.

A PC who successfully climbs down the side of the slope can break a hole in the surface (assume the ice surface has an AC of 10; 10 points of damage creates a man-sized hole), lower himself into the pit, cross the bottom while avoiding the spikes, break a hole in the opposite side of the pit covering, then pull himself free of the pit. Remember that as long as the glass sphere in room 3m functions, the ice heals in one round.

3h. Pit Trap: This is nearly identical to the pit trap in area 3g, but the frozen remains of an unfortunate human explorer are impaled on the spikes. If the PCs search the remains, they find a short sword and a flask containing two doses of *potion of healing*.

3k. Hallway: There is nothing of interest here.

3l. Ice Door: A huge chunk of ice is set loosely in the doorway to room 3m. Any PC who rolls a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty can move the block far enough to allow the party to slip through. Two or more PCs working together whose Strength totals 30 or more can move the block automatically.

3m. Sphere Room: Centered in the northern end of this room is a rectangular block of ice, 8' x 4' x 4'. The ice block encases a hideous creature, which can barely be seen through the translucent ice. The creature resembles a blend of a human and a walrus, with huge padded feet, webbed toes, and huge tusks. Its gray flesh looks as if it has been stitched together from mismatched pieces.

The creature is a flesh golem. Hogar created the golem from the corpses of thanoi recovered from a glacial region of the Ring Mountains. As long as the glass sphere remains intact, the golem remains dormant. (If the PCs detect the presence of the golem and destroy it before they shatter the glass sphere, run the rest of the Interlude as described, ignoring the references to the golem.)

Flesh golem (derived from thanoi): AC 9; MV 9; HD 9; hp 40; THAC0 11; #AT 4; Dmg 2d8/2d8/1d8/1d8 (fists and tusks); SD can be struck only by magical weapons; immune to all cold-based attacks; fire-based attacks slow it for 2d6 rounds; any electrical attack restores 1 point of damage for each die of damage it would normally have inflicted; AL CN

In the center of the room is a five-foot-square area that is a lighter color than the rest of the temple. If the PCs damage

this area before they destroy the glass sphere, it regenerates like the rest of the temple.

A 20-foot-diameter transparent glass sphere lies near the southern wall of the room. A soft, greenish glow emanates from the sphere. (The magical sphere maintains a constant temperature in the temple by tapping the energy of the green *cindergem* contained inside.)

If the PCs inflict 20 points of damage on the sphere (assume it has an AC of 9), it shatters. Among the shards of the shattered sphere lies a green teardrop-shaped jewel with the image of a flame flickering inside; the PCs can take the *cindergem* with them. If the PCs break the sphere, continue with the "The Shattered Sphere" section.

If the PCs don't shatter the sphere, they can't recover the green *cindergem*. Proceed to the "Outcomes" section, ignoring all references to the effects of the shattered sphere.

THE SHATTERED SPHERE

As soon as the PCs shatter the glass sphere, the following events occur immediately:

* The temperature begins to rise; the PCs no longer suffer damage from the freezing temperature for the rest of the Interlude. The walls, floors, and ceilings begin to melt, along with the ice block containing the golem. (Not only is the ice temple responding to the heat of the outdoors, but also to the disruption caused by the shattering of the glass sphere.)

* Though there is no noticeable change in the blue-colored area in the center of the room, the party can use it as an exit from the temple with relative ease. Once the glass sphere is shattered, the blue section of the floor collapses if the PCs inflict 10 points of damage on it (assume the area has an AC of 10). The party can exit through the opening, grab the center support column (which is adjacent to the opening), and slide down the column to safety.

EVENTS

Regardless of the party's strategy (options are detailed in the "Outcomes" section), the following sequence of events occurs as described. The DM is free to vary the time between events or to overlap them (for instance, the golem might arise in Round 2, at the same time Gurroch shatters the ceiling). Note that the PCs should have plenty of time to escape the temple before the end of the sequence.

Round 1 is the first round after the sphere is shattered, and so on.

Round 1: The temperature drops, and the ice begins to melt, as described in the "The Shattered Sphere" section. The ice block containing the golem begins to crack. (The golem is now active and is attempting to escape.)

Round 2: Gurroch shatters the section of ceiling indicated on the DM's Map and enters the temple. (If the PCs are still in room 3m, they hear a disturbance coming from area 3k. Gurroch waits in area 3k, to the west of the 3l doorway; he plans to ambush the party as soon as they leave room 3m.)

Round 3: The golem bursts free of its ice block. The golem pursues the PCs relentlessly, attacking them with its fists and tusks. (The golem has no interest in Gurroch.)

Round 5: The temple begins to shake.

Round 8: Icicles begin to fall from the ceiling and continue to fall until the temple collapses (round 30). For every round the party remains in the temple, roll 1d6; on a roll of 1, a random PC is struck by a spike-like icicle, suffering 1d4 points of damage. (Assume that the effects of the icicles on Gurroch and the golem are negligible.)

Round 10: The shaking becomes more severe. Large cracks appear in the walls, floors, and ceilings.

Round 30: The entire temple collapses. All characters in-

side the temple fall through the floor to the ground below in an avalanche of ice, suffering 6d6 points of damage from the impact of the fall as well as being struck by chunks of the temple. If he's still inside the temple when it collapses, Gurroch also suffers 6d6 points of damage. It takes the party 1d6 rounds to dig themselves free of the debris (assume it takes Gurroch a full six rounds to dig himself out). The chulcric attacks only the party members who have freed themselves.

OUTCOMES

Once the sphere has been shattered, there are two likely ways the party can try to escape the temple. If they come up with a different way, base the strategies of Gurroch, the golem, and the chulcric on the following information.

Escape Method #1: The party attempts to escape through the hole in the floor of room 3m. If the party breaks the blue ice in room 3m to reveal the escape opening, they can exit through the opening, grab the center support column (which is adjacent to the opening), and slide down the column to safety. One round after the party begins to slide down the column, Gurroch enters room 3m; he and the golem attack all PCs who have not yet left the room. If all the PCs escape, Gurroch also slides down the column; the golem also attempts to slide down the column, but it loses its grip and falls to the ground, suffering 5d6 points of damage. The golem and Gurroch then pursue the PCs, fighting to the death if they manage to catch them. The chulcric attempts an *attract victims* attack (see following for explanation), if possible; otherwise, it attacks with its claws. If the chulcric loses half or more of its hit points, it plane shifts to another plane of existence, never to be seen again.

Chulcric: AC -2; MV Fl 18 (B); HD 13; hp 68; THAC0 7; #AT 2; Dmg 3d6/3d6; SA *attract victims* (see following); SD plane shift at will, regenerates 1d4 points of damage per round, immune to normal and magical fire, immune to all cold-based attacks, immune to dragon breath; MR 20%; AL CE

The chulcric's *attract victims* attack consists of the following steps:

- 1) The creature unhinges its jaws to a 50' diameter, a process taking two rounds.

- 2) While hovering in place, it radiates an invisible cone of force 100 feet long with a 25-foot radius (victims in the area of effect must roll a saving throw vs. spell. Those who are successful are unaffected by the *attract victims* power. Those who fail must roll a saving throw vs. paralyzation or they are paralyzed and float toward the creature's mouth at a rate of ten feet per round; those succeeding with this second saving throw also float toward its mouth, but they are able to make missile attacks, cast spells, and take similar actions).

- 3) A victim drawn into the chulcric's mouth passes through a valve leading to the creature's stomach; the valve closes behind him. Once in the stomach, victims are no longer paralyzed. Victims inside the stomach suffer an automatic 1d4 points of damage per round from acidic digestive gasses (no saving throw). Victims in the stomach can attempt to hack themselves free, but because of the churning movement of the stomach and the debilitating effect of the acidic gasses, all attacks are made with a -2 attack roll penalty; maximum normal damage is 1 point per round (plus magical and Strength bonuses).

If the PCs make it to the metallic cord, proceed to the "Escape" section.

Escape Method #2: The PCs leave through the northern door of room 3m. Gurroch attacks the PCs with Deathstriker (see Gurroch's entry in the Appendix for details about Deathstriker); he tries to drive the PCs to area 3b so that they can be

attacked by the waiting chulcric. Meanwhile, the golem continues to follow and attack the PCs wherever they go.

If the PCs leave room 3m and flee down the western side of the building (through areas 3i, 3g, 3e, and 3c) or the eastern side (3j, 3h, 3f, and 3d), Gurroch and the golem pursue. Gurroch has no trouble climbing up and down the slopes and pits, but it takes him two rounds to climb either up or down a slope.

When the PCs reach area 3b, the chulcric appears in the doorway. The chulcric attempts to make a single claw attack (it can only maneuver one claw through the doorway) on any PC it can reach. Meanwhile, Gurroch continues to attack the PCs from behind with Deathstriker. If the PCs retreat to a different area of the temple, Gurroch pursues, but the chulcric stays in place to guard the door. Gurroch fights to the death. If the chulcric loses half or more of its hit points, it plane shifts to another plane of existence, never to be seen again.

If the PCs remain in room 3m and manage to defeat the golem, Gurroch withdraws to area 3j, breaks a hole in the surface of 3h, and climbs into the pit to wait for the PCs. If the PCs enter area 3j, Gurroch attacks them with Deathstriker, using the pit for cover. If the PCs attempt to leave through the western side of the building (that is, through areas 3i, 3g, 3e, and 3c), Gurroch climbs out of the pit and waits in area 3d; when the chulcric attacks the PCs when they reach area 3b, Gurroch joins the fight with Deathstriker.

ESCAPE

The PCs can climb the cord to the green portal to return to Eborium. Gurroch will try to follow the PCs up the metallic cord and into the green portal. If Gurroch is unable to follow the PCs—for instance, if the party has knocked him out, tied him up, or otherwise subdued him—the metallic cord disappears when 24 hours have passed, leaving Gurroch stranded in Upper Panak and he does not return in Chapter 4.

Otherwise, Gurroch climbs the metallic cord and enters the green portal. Gurroch returns to Eborium via a different Entry Point than the party and the spirits; he is eventually retrieved by a minion of Eresem. In this case, Gurroch returns in Chapter 4.

When the party passes through the portal, follow the instructions in the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1, rolling for an Entry Point and running the appropriate Scheduled Event from Chapter 3 as directed.

INTERLUDE 4: NERON


DM's BACKGROUND

The Irroi, a primitive human tribe related to the Payan Mako of Syldar, have lived in peace in the jungles of Neron for centuries. About ten years ago, an explorer from the distant League of Minotaurs stumbled upon the Irroi village of Tennak and was received by the tribesmen with a mixture of awe and curiosity. The villagers held a feast in honor of their visitor, but accidentally served him a plate of spoiled meat. The visitor ate the meat and died.

Consumed with guilt, the tribal medicine men worked feverishly to revive the visitor but succeeded only in animating his skull, trapping his spirit inside it. Out of respect, they lodged a sacred gem in an indentation in its forehead (the gem is the blue *cindergem*, which the medicine men found in the jungle; the medicine men believe it must have some godly significance, though they're not sure what kind), then perched the skull atop a high pole in the center of the village, a place of honor.

Encouraged by Nimkop, a tribal elder who believed the skull represented some higher power, the tribesmen sang to





it, offered it prayers of forgiveness, and bowed when they passed by. The skull came to relish the attention. As it settled into its new role as the Irroi totem, the skull began to jabber constantly, telling stories of its adventures to anyone who listed, offering unsolicited advice about tribal affairs, and generally making a nuisance of itself night and day. The Irroi grew increasingly irritated by the obnoxious skull, and gradually gave up making tributes to it. Though they longed to be free of the skull, tribal law prevented them from disturbing it—only someone from outside the tribe could take it away.

Irroi tribesmen: AC 10; MV 12; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short bow or dagger carved from wood); AL LN

Assume the Irroi speak an understandable dialect of a language known by the party. The Irroi tend to avoid violent confrontations. If attacked by the PCs, they defend themselves feebly, retreating at the earliest opportunity.

ARRIVAL

A moment after the PCs enter the Primary Chronolily, they find themselves on the edge of a dense jungle (indicated by an "X" on the DM's Interlude 4 Map). The sounds of chirping birds and chattering monkeys drift from the jungle's towering trees and waist-high grasses. A lush field of rolling hills, leafy bushes, and wild flowers stretches east of the jungle. Just beyond the field lies a small village of thatched huts. The air is humid and warm, the sky blue and clear. A metallic cord about 50 feet long hangs next to the party near several tall trees; the cord descends from a six-foot-diameter hole in the sky. The cord dangles about three feet from the ground. The hole glows with a soft green light (the glowing hole leads back to Eborium).

Shortly after the party arrives, a purple globe hurled from a high tree bursts near the feet of a random PC, splashing nauseating fluid over a five-foot-radius area. All characters in the area of effect vomit and retch for three rounds, and their Strengths are reduced by half for the next hour; no saving throw is allowed.

Any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check can identify the fruit as a retch plant globe; any PC with the herbalism proficiency can identify it automatically.

The PCs cannot locate the creature that threw the globe. If the PCs wish to head west and explore the jungle, they'll find that the dense foliage and the buzzing insects make the journey difficult (normal movement rates are cut in half). There is nothing of interest in the jungle; if the PCs persist in heading west, their progress is blocked by a deep swamp that extends for miles in every direction, filled with snakes, alligators, and other deadly creatures.

HUNTERS AND PREY

If the PCs head east, they find the field to be filled with juicy grapes and plump strawberries. The weeds and grasses are about waist-high. The PCs are free to eat their fill of the fruit.

After the PCs have journeyed about 75 yards into the field, four giant weasels scurry from the weeds and attack; the weasels have been attracted by the scent of the retch globe stench.

Giant weasels (4): AC 6; MV 15; HD 3 + 3; hp 24, 21, 21, 19; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SA blood drain (if bite attack is successful, weasel locks its jaws onto victim and begins to suck blood, resulting in an automatic loss of 2d6 points of damage in each subsequent round); AL N

Each weasel attacks a different PC; the weasels prefer PCs

covered with retch fluid. The hungry weasels attempt to lock their jaws on their victims and suck their blood. If a weasel loses half its hit points, it flees west into the jungle. If three of the weasels flee (or are killed), the remaining weasel runs into the jungle, regardless of how much damage it has sustained.

If the PCs pursue the weasels into the jungle, the weasels have vanished into the thick underbrush, and the PCs won't be able to find them (nor do the weasels attack the PCs again).

If the PCs retreat east, the weasels pursue. However, if the PCs come within 25 yards of the village, the weasels withdraw, returning to the jungle (the weasels are afraid to go near the village).

VILLAGE OF THE IRROI

If the PCs approach the village, they see a large group of humans gathered at the outskirts. The humans are less than five feet high. They have deep bronze skin and large brown eyes. The males have bald heads, and the females' hair is less than an inch long. The men wear leather loincloths, the women wear simple smocks. Rolls of fat surround their ample bellies. (The humans are members of the Irroi tribe.) As the people mumble excitedly to each other, two tribesmen break through the crowd, each wearing an ornate necklace of colorful stones and feathers. The younger of the two smiles and waves at the party. The elder scowls at them.

As the party approaches, many of the tribe scatter back into the village, cupping their hands over their noses and mouths, repulsed by the stench of the retch fluid that emanates from one (or more) of the PCs. The young man in the necklace mutters to one of the tribesmen, who then scuttles away into the village. "Wait," says the young man to the party. "We will give you something to help with the smell."

A moment later, the tribesman reappears with a large wooden bowl filled with a violet liquid. Holding his nose, he cautiously approaches the party, sets the bowl in front of them, then quickly retreats. "Wash with this," says the young man in the necklace.

The bowl contains a wine made from fermented grapes and strawberries; the PCs can use the wine to wash themselves and neutralize the stench of the retch globe fluid. (If they decline to clean off the stench, the rest of the Interlude plays out as described, except that the villagers keep their distance from the smelly PCs; Jyrrok and Nimkop still speak with the PCs, but they'll keep their noses pinched shut while doing so.)

THE OBNOXIOUS SKULL

The young tribesman beckons the PCs to enter the village, introducing himself as Jyrrok, one of the leaders of the Irroi. He introduces the scowling elder tribesman as Nimkop, another leader. "It is an honor to welcome you to Tennak," says Jyrrok graciously. "Outsiders," mumbles Nimkop. "I have no time for outsiders."

Jyrrok leads the party to the center of the village, making conversation by asking them where they come from, why they're here, and why one of them glows like the sun. Jyrrok accepts any answers the party cares to offer. "I don't like outsiders," mutters Nimrod, tagging along behind the party. "Never did. Never will." If the PCs have questions, Jyrrok and Nimkop respond as described in the "Questions and Answers" section below.

In the center of the village stands a 30-foot-tall pole. A human skull with glowing blue eyes sits atop the pole. A blue gem in the shape of a teardrop is imbedded in the center of the skull's forehead (this is the blue *cindergem*). "Bow before

me!” rants the skull. “Pay tribute! How about a prayer? A song? Do you want me to curse you? Don’t tempt me!”

Jyrrok sighs, ignoring the blathering skull. “This skull used to belong to a human—one of your people,” he tells the PCs. “Please take it out of here. Please?” While the obnoxious skull continues its ranting, the PCs may question Jyrrok.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Jyrrok answers the PCs questions as follows. Where indicated, Nimkop mumbles his opinion as well.

Where did the skull come from? Jyrrok gives the information in the DM’s Background at the beginning of this Interlude. Nimrod mumbles, “I don’t see how this is the concern of outsiders.”

Why do you want us to take it? “The skull should be in the possession of a human family. Not us.” In truth, Jyrrok and the Irroi just want to be rid of the obnoxious skull; if pressed, Jyrrok admits this. “The skull rants and raves all day and all night. We can stand it no longer.” Nimkop says, “Outsiders should keep their hands off the possessions of our people.”

Why don’t you want us to take it? The PCs might ask this of Nimkop, who answers, “It is a sacred totem of the Irroi.” Jyrrok laughs. “It is no such thing.” (Though Nimkop has tried to promote the skull as a sacred totem, this idea has met with increasing resistance. If asked, Jyrrok explains that the Irroi tried to worship it for a while, but lost interest as the skull became more obnoxious.)

Is it dangerous? “No,” says Jyrrok. “It might curse you,” says Nimkop. (It can’t.)

Will you help us get it? “We would like to,” says Jyrrok. “No we wouldn’t,” says Nimkop. “But,” continues Jyrrok, “tribal law prevents us from touching it.”

Who threw the retch globe at us? Jyrrok has no idea, but suspects it may have been one of the many dangerous creatures dwelling in the jungle west of the fruit field.

What’s it worth to the village for us to take the skull off your hands? Greedy PCs might want to bargain with the tribe to see if they can get paid to take the skull away. If asked for a fee, Jyrrok agrees to pay the party five turquoise chunks (each worth 20 stl). If the party asks for more, Jyrrok adds a small black diamond worth 300 stl, but that’s his final offer (this pretty much exhausts the village treasury).

ABOUT THE SKULL

The animated skull is arrogant but cowardly. It has the ability to move by hovering above the ground (movement rate of 1), but it never leaves its post. It has no special powers. It longs to be honored as a god and continually whines for tributes and prayers. The skull ignores all questions and comments from the party.

RELUCTANT SPIRIT

As soon as the PCs attempt to climb the pole, or attack it with missile weapons or spells, or molest it in any other way, the skull rocks itself back and forth, topples from its perch, and plummets to the ground. The impact causes the skull to crack and the light in its eyes to vanish. The ghostly image of a skull squeezes through the crack and rises into the air (freed from the skull, the spirit can now fly). Unlike the skull, the *cindergem* retains its material form; it goes with the spirit, secured by the supernatural energies of the ghostly skull. The ghostly skull soars into the air and circles the party and the dumbfounded Irroi, then swoops into a crevasse in the ground just outside the village (see map).

Jyrrok and Nimkop race to crevasse and peer inside. The three-inch-wide crevasse extends deep into the earth; there

is no sign of the spirit. Jyrrok smiles. “At last, we’re free of the thing,” he says to the party. “I don’t know what you did, but it’s gone now. You have our thanks.” Nimkop sighs. “I suppose we can get along without it,” he says resignedly, then scowls at the party. “I just hope it doesn’t curse us.”

The PCs cannot find any sign of the ghostly skull; the crevasse is essentially bottomless. If the PCs give up, they cannot retrieve the *cindergem*; proceed to the “Returning to Eborium” section, ignoring all references to the skull.

If the PCs approach Jyrrok for help in retrieving the spirit, he offers no suggestions. Though he’s sympathetic to the party, he’s not interested in bringing back the skull.

However, Nimkop approaches the party and says he might be able to help them. “For a price, I have a device that can entrap the spirit.” If the PCs ask Jyrrok what Nimkop is up to, Jyrrok just shrugs (neither Jyrrok nor any of the other tribesmen are of any help to the party henceforth).

Nimkop demands payment in advance. He wants 500 stl in coins, jewels, magical items, or weapons (he prefers gems and magical items). If the PCs balk at the price, he cuts his price by no more than half. Nimkop won’t respond to threats or force, and none of the other tribe members are aware of his device. If the PCs refuse to pay him, Nimkop withdraws his offer; proceed to the “Returning to Eborium” section, ignoring all references to the skull.

If the PCs pay Nimkop, he gives them what appears to be a common fishing net. In fact, it is a *net of spirit snaring*, a magical device created by cha’asi (Wild Elf) mages and found by Nimkop in an abandoned cha’asi village. When used on normal creatures and characters, the net has no special effect. When cast on a spirit (make a normal attack roll; assume that spirits have an AC of 10 when attacked by the *net of spirit snaring*), the net freezes the spirit in place and prevents the spirit from moving, attacking, casting spells, or removing the net; however, the spirit is still able to converse. (Regardless of the outcome of the Interlude, the party may keep the *net of spirit snaring*.)

Nimkop suggests the party take the *net of spirit snaring* to the crevasse and coax the skull spirit to come out. If the party asks him how to accomplish this, Nimkop becomes exasperated. “Do all outsiders have the brains of apes? Flatter it. Pray to it. Appeal to its arrogance.” Nimkop then returns to his hut; he is of no further help to the PCs.

Whether the PCs lure the skull from the crevasse depends entirely on how adept they are at flattering it. If the PCs spend at least 15 minutes at the crevasse coaxing and appealing to the ego of the skull (the DM determines if the party’s appeals are sufficiently flattering; it is suggested that he insist on an impressive performance from the PCs), the ghostly skull tentatively rises from the crevasse. One of the PCs can make a normal attack roll and attempt to ensnare the skull with the *net of spirit snaring*. If he fails, the PC can make a second attempt before the skull swoops back inside the crevasse. If the PCs spend another 15 minutes coaxing the skull, it rises again and the party can make another ensnaring attempt. The PCs can coax it out three times (for a total of six attempts) before the skull refuses to rise again (if the PCs make exceptionally compelling appeals to the spirit’s ego, the DM may allow the skull an additional appearance or two).

If the PCs snare the spirit, they can reach through the netting and pluck the *cindergem* from its forehead. The skull spirit screeches and demands to be set free, swearing it will never bother anyone again. If the PCs release the skull spirit, it swoops back into the crevasse and disappears.



RETURNING TO EBORIUM

When the PCs return to the edge of the jungle where they first arrived (marked with an "X" on the DM's Map), there is no sign of the metallic cord. A band of curious banderlogs hauled the cord into the trees about 50 feet from the ground.

Banderlogs (4): AC 6; MV 6, 12 in trees; HD 4; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1 (bite); SA hurl coconuts (1d4 + 1 points of damage) or retch plant globes (burst to splash nauseating fluid over a five-foot radius with a 25% chance for splash contact at a distance of 1d6 + 3 feet; splashed creatures vomit and retch for three rounds, and their Strengths are reduced by half for the next hour; no saving throws allowed); AL N

One round after the party returns to area X, the banderlogs begin to hurl coconuts and retch plant globes at them from the safety of the trees (assume two banderlogs hurl coconuts and two hurl retch globes). The banderlogs continue to hurl their missiles as long as the party remains within 50 feet of the tree. Because of the protective foliage, all attacks made against the banderlogs suffer a -2 penalty to the attack rolls. If a PC engages a banderlog in melee combat, the banderlog attacks with its bite. The banderlogs fight until one of them is killed or all have lost half or more of their hit points, at which time the surviving banderlogs retreat into the trees, leaving the cord behind.

The PCs can return to Eborium by using the cord leading to the green portal. If the skull spirit is with them, it passes through the portal simply by touching it.

When the party passes through the portal, follow the instructions in the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1, rolling for an Entry Point and running the appropriate Scheduled Event from Chapter 3 as directed.

INTERLUDE 5: RAINWARD ISLE

DM's BACKGROUND

About 50 years ago, a powerful wind of deadly fumes blew in from Hitehkel, poisoning the inhabitants of a cluster of six villages located on the western peninsula of the northernmost Rainward Isle. The survivors brought their dead to a central cemetery, the funeral services overseen by a priest named Awahn Baz who had congregations in all six villages.

Eventually, the poison claimed all the villagers as victims. Awahn, too, succumbed to the poison, but he lives on as a spectre, guarding the cemetery from blasphemers. Before he died, Awahn asked the gods to grant special powers to the dead in the cemetery to help them defend themselves against grave robbers.

One of the corpses buried in the cemetery has the indigo *cindergem* in its pocket.

Use the following statistics for the normal zombies in this Interlude. Feel free to vary the hit points.

Zombie: AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *cold*-based attacks; AL N

ARRIVAL

A moment after the PCs enter the Primary Chronolily, they find themselves standing outside of an iron gate enclosing a cemetery (indicated by an "X" on the Interlude 5 Map). The night sky is cool and dry. The cemetery, consists of six huge cairns of black marble surrounded by tall leafy trees.

A metallic cord about 50 feet long hangs from the sky next to the party about ten yards from the gate. The cord descends from a six-foot-diameter hole in the sky and dangles about three feet from the ground. The hole glows with a soft green light (the glowing hole leads back to Eborium).

The fence surrounding the cemetery is made of iron grating and is about 15 feet tall. The front gate is locked. Characters with the open locks ability have their regular chance of opening the gate. Otherwise, the party can break the lock if they inflict 7 points of damage on it (assume the lock has an AC of 5). The PCs can also attempt to climb the fence (this requires a successful Dexterity check; if the check fails, the PC falls to the ground outside of the cemetery and suffers 1d4 points of damage).

There is a message engraved in an iron plate on the front of the gate in several languages, including at least one language understood by the party. The message reads: "Let No One Disturb the Rest of the Dead."

COMMON FEATURES

All of the cairns (5a-5f) are identical. Each contains the dead of a particular village, interred according to their individual customs. The exterior portion of each cairn is a featureless rectangular entryway made of black marble with a single door. The door has no handle, but it can be pried open by any PC rolling a successful Strength check with a -2 penalty; two or more PCs working together whose Strength totals 30 or more can open the door automatically.

The interior of each cairn is dank and dark; the PCs have to provide their own light sources. The doorway leads to a marble stairway that winds 75 feet into the earth. The stairway is about ten feet wide.

The stairway opens to a 100-foot-square burial chamber with the walls, floor, and ceiling made of packed earth. The dead of a particular village are interred in the chamber.

The party may explore the cairns in any order they wish. The DM should run the First Meeting and Second Meeting encounters any time after the party explores the first cairn of their choice, so long as the First Meeting encounter occurs before the Second Meeting encounter and each encounter occurs at a different cairn.

It is suggested that the First Meeting encounter occur after the party has explored the second, third, or fourth cairn of their choice (the most interesting situation occurs if the First Meeting takes place while the party is leaving cairn 5d). The best time for the Second Meeting encounter to occur is after the party has explored the sixth cairn of their choice.

FIRST MEETING

As the PCs leave the cairn and move about 50 feet up the stairway, they see a pair of floating eyeballs and a pair of floating, skeletal hands. Both the eyeballs and the hands glow with a greenish color. Those using *detect invisibility*, *true seeing*, or a similar spell can see the creature's entire form: the blackened skeleton of an elf draped with shards of rotting flesh.

Wichtlin: AC 2; MV 9; HD 4 + 4; hp 31; THAC0 15; #AT 2 (hands); Dmg left hand causes victims to become paralyzed for 2d4 rounds unless victim rolls successful saving throw vs. paralyzation, right hand inflicts 2d6 points of poison damage unless victim rolls successful saving throw vs. poison (victims protected by *slow poison* or its equivalent are unaffected by the poison attack); if wichtlin successfully paralyzes an elf, the wichtlin's gaze can implant a *suggestion* (as the 3rd-level wizard spell) unless elf rolls successful saving throw vs. spell; an elf killed by a wichtlin becomes a wichtlin in seven days

unless the elf is resurrected or otherwise revived; non-elves killed by wightlin do not become wightlin; SD unaffected by poison and paralyzation; immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *cold*-based spells; can only be hit with +1 or better magical weapons; holy water causes 2d4 points of damage; opponents who can see the entire wightlin make normal attack rolls, but all others suffer a -2 penalty to their attack rolls; wightlin are turned as spectres; AL CE

Compelled to kill victims as a result of the curse that formed it, the wightlin intends to destroy every member of the party. Advancing steadily toward them, bony hands extended, the wightlin attacks any PC it can reach. The wightlin fights to the death and pursues the party anywhere in the cemetery; it walks down the stairs leading to the burial chambers of the cairns, but it does not enter the actual burial chambers. If the PCs hide in a burial chamber, the wightlin waits at the top of the stairs for them to come out.

SECOND MEETING

As soon as the party exists the cairn and is back in the cemetery, an image of an old man shimmers into view before them. The semitransparent image floats ten feet from the ground and is dressed in a billowing robe. The image has long hair and tiny, glowing eyes.

This is Awahn Baz, keeper of the cemetery, in his manifestation as a spectre.

Awahn Baz (spectre): AC 2; MV 15, FI 30 (B); HD 7 + 3; hp 50; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA touch drains 2 life levels from victim; any human totally drained of life energy becomes a half-strength spectre under the control of the spectre that drained him; SD unaffected by *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, or *cold*-based spells; can only be hit by +1 or better weapons; *raise dead* destroys it unless it succeeds with a saving throw vs. death; AL LN

Awahn's eyes blaze with anger, but he takes no hostile actions against the party. "Who are you?" he demands. "Why have you come here? Answer!" If the party attacks him, Awahn defends himself, but otherwise he continues to hover in place, repeating his questions until the party responds.

If the PCs refuse to cooperate with Awahn or they persist in attacking him, Awahn says, "I will not waste another moment here. May the dead have their way with you." Awahn disappears; he won't be seen for the rest of the Interlude. The PCs are free to continue exploring the cemetery, but they aren't likely to find the *cindergem* without Awahn's help.

If the PCs identify themselves and tell Awahn about their mission, Awahn says that they had no right to trespass in his cemetery without permission, "but I suppose that under the circumstances, your discourtesy is understandable."

Awahn then introduces himself and tells the party the significance of the cemetery (paraphrase the information in the DM's Background). "I believe the item you seek is in my cemetery. I will take you to it if you complete a task for me."

Awahn says that the villagers of Turio, who are interred in cairn 5f, believed that their spirits would be purified if the hair from their corpses were cut off. "The leader of the village, a young woman named Leslyla, had long black hair that reached to her waist. When she died, the undertakers declined to cut her hair, as they believed she would have preferred to be buried with her hair intact. But in fact, the spirit of Leslyla is miserable because she was denied the same purification ritual enjoyed by the other Turio citizens."

"Only a living person can perform this ritual," explains Awahn ("A living person always performed the ritual, and

that is what Leslyla expects"). If the PCs trim the hair of Leslyla's corpse, Awahn takes them to the *cindergem*. To accomplish the ritual, the PCs must enter the cairn (5f) and call out Leslyla's name until she rises.

"Cut three swatches of her hair," says Awahn. "You may use any of your bladed weapons to do this." However, he cautions, they are forbidden to harm any of the corpses in the cairn, even those that attack them for trespassing.

"There is a harmless way to dissuade an attacking corpse in Leslyla's cairn," he says. "Each of you should cut a leafy branch from any of the trees in the cemetery. If a corpse threatens you, brush the filth from its clothes with the branch. The corpse will bother you no more." (This technique works only in cairn 5f. If a PC brushes the filth from a zombie with a leafy branch from one of the trees in the cemetery—make a normal attack roll to determine success—the zombie stops in its tracks, then returns to the grave; that zombie won't bother the party again. If a PC brushes Leslyla, she also stops attacking and returns to her grave. The PCs can dig her up if they haven't yet cut her hair; assume it takes a PC one round to remove enough dirt to uncover her head.)

Awahn says he will meet the party at the front gate in exactly one hour. That said, he disappears. The party cannot communicate with Awahn until they meet him at the gate.

If the PCs decide to attempt to trim the hair of Leslyla's corpse, proceed to area 5f. If they decline, they can continue to explore the cemetery. Proceed to the "Rendezvous with Awahn" section when an hour has passed.

CEMETERY MAP KEY

Refer to the DM's Interlude 5 Map.

5a. First Cairn: This cairn contains the dead of the village of Huggew. The corpses have been laid out on the ground and covered with sticks and dried grass. A bell, a rattle, or similar noisemaker has been placed in the hands of each corpse. (The Huggew people believe that the noisemakers will drive away ghosts and other trespassers.)

As soon as the party passes through the doorway, they hear the sound of counting ("1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . .") drifting from the depths below. The number sequence endlessly repeats; the voice is low and halting. The farther the party descends, the louder grows the voice.

When the PCs enter the burial chamber, they see dozens of corpses arranged in neat rows, covered with mounds of sticks and grass. Muffled sounds of rattles and bells can be heard from beneath the mounds.

A small stone altar sits against the west wall. A rusty iron chest rests on the altar. About ten feet east of the altar stands a man-sized humanoid, its back to the PCs. Shards of filthy clothing hang limply over its rotting gray flesh; sections of its flesh appear to be wiggling and writhing. The creature clutches a section of human leg bone in its left hand; it swings the bone in jagged motions, as if conducting an invisible orchestra, counting "1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . ."

The creature is a juju zombie covered with rot grubs.

Juju zombie: AC 6; MV 9; HD 3 + 12; hp 31; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SA attacks as 6 HD monster and climbs walls like a thief (93%); SD affected only by +1 or better magical weapons, fire has only one-half normal effect, piercing and blunt weapons do half damage, immune to *illusion*, *charm*, *hold*, *magic missile*, *cold*, poison, and electricity; AL NE

Rot grubs: AC 9; MV 1; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 19; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA burrow into flesh and into heart in 1d3 turns to kill victim unless flames applied to wounds (1d6 points of damage per application) or *cure disease* is cast; AL N





If the PCs disturb a mound, the juju zombie, or the chest in any way, the following events occur:

1) The juju zombie stops counting and turns to the party. It extends its arms and begins to lurch toward them. The juju zombie intends to kill all of the PCs for trespassing. If a PC touches the juju zombie, or if the juju zombie makes a successful attack, the PC is also attacked by the zombie's rot grubs. The juju zombie fights to the death, though it does not leave the burial chamber.

2) One round after the juju zombie stops counting, the corpse beneath a random mound sits up and begins to ring its bell (or shake its rattle). Treat the corpse as a normal zombie. However, the zombies beneath the mounds do not attack except to defend themselves.

3) One round after the first zombie sits up, 1d4 more random corpses rise from their mounds, and begin to shriek and shake their noisemakers. An additional 1d4 corpses rise for every round thereafter. As soon as five zombies are sitting up, all PCs must roll saving throws vs. spell; those who fail suffer the effect of a fear spell. (One of the corpses has the indigo *cindergem* in its pocket; assume that at least 50 zombies must rise before the zombie with the *cindergem* sits up. However, even if this zombie rises, it's unlikely that the PCs will be aware of the *cindergem* since they won't be able to see it; their best way of retrieving the *cindergem* is to follow Awahn's instructions in the "Second Meeting" section.)

Even if the juju zombie is destroyed, the corpses remain active. The corpses shriek and shake their noisemakers until all of the party members leave the burial chamber.

The iron chest contains clay tablets inscribed with the sacred songs of the Huggew people. The tablets have no value to the PCs.

5b. Second Cairn: This cairn contains the dead of the village of Ovvin. The corpses have been cremated, their ashes placed in large clay pots.

As soon as the party passes through the doorway, they smell the aroma of burning flesh, growing more powerful as they descend the stairs.

When the PCs enter the burial chamber, they see dozens of coverless green clay pots clustered in the center. A yellow clay pot, similar to the green pots except for the color, stands in each corner. (The yellow pots contain the ashes of the village elders.)

If the PCs disturb any of the green pots or any of the four yellow pots, humanoid creatures that appear to be made entirely of black ash pull themselves free of the yellow pots.

Ash zombies (4): AC 4; MV 6; HD 3; hp 17; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA victims must successfully save vs. spell or suffer an additional 1d4 points of heat damage; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *cold*-based; immune to all forms of fire; can only be struck by +1 or better weapons; AL N

The ash zombies advance toward the party, intending to kill as many PCs as possible for violating the sanctity of their burial chamber.

Two rounds after the ash zombies pull themselves from their pots, thick clouds of ash begin to rise from the green pots and spread throughout the room; all PCs must roll a Constitution check or lose 1 point of damage from choking on the noxious fumes. All PCs, including those who roll successful Constitution checks, make all attack rolls with a -1 penalty as long as they remain in the burial chamber, resulting from the debilitating effects of the ash clouds. Five rounds after the ash clouds first appear, the air becomes so thick with ash that normal vision is reduced to three feet. The ash zombies suffer no ill effects from the ash clouds; their vision remains unimpaired.

The ash zombies fight until destroyed, though they do not leave the burial chamber. If the ash zombies are destroyed,

the ash clouds begin to recede; it takes five rounds for the air to clear. Otherwise, once the party leaves the chamber, each ash zombie returns to its pot (or takes the shape of an ash pile in its corner if its pot has been destroyed) and the ash clouds recede as described.

There is nothing of interest in the pots or in this chamber.

5c. Third Cairn: This cairn contains the dead of the village of Quissell. The corpses have been buried in shallow graves with thorns scattered over the top.

As soon as the party passes through the doorway, they see long, sharp thorns littering the stairs. The thorns crunch harmlessly beneath their feet, but aside from reducing their normal movement rate by half, the PCs suffer no ill effects. (The thorns are too brittle to make useful weapons.)

A layer of long thorns covers the entire floor of the burial chamber. The thorn layer is about six inches deep and reduces the party's normal movement rate by three-fourths. If a PC falls into the thorns (for instance, as a result of combat), he suffers 1-2 points of damage.

As soon as any PC steps into the thorns, six humanoid creatures rise from their graves (assume the creatures rise from random points around the chamber). The creatures resemble zombies with sharp thorns protruding from every point on their body, piercing their clothes and splitting their flesh.

Thorn zombies (4): AC 7; MV 6; HD 2; hp 14; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 (damage results from sharp body thorns); SA any opponent in physical contact with the body of the thorn zombie has a 50% chance of suffering 1-2 points of damage from scraping against its sharp thorns; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *cold*-based; AL N

The thorn zombies shamble toward the party, intending to kill as many PCs as possible for violating the sanctity of their burial chamber. Unlike the PCs, the thorn zombies suffer no damage if they fall into the thorn layer. The thorn zombies move at their normal rate through the thorns.

Two rounds after the thorn zombies rise, the thorns on the floor begin to rise and swirl throughout the chamber, as if being carried by a whirlwind. For every round a PC spends in the chamber once the thorn whirlwind begins, he has a 25% chance of being slashed or pierced by the thorns for 1-2 points of damage. The thorn whirlwind does not harm the thorn zombies. The thorn whirlwind persists as long as the party remains in the chamber, even if the thorn zombies are destroyed.

The thorn zombies fight to the death but do not leave the burial chamber. Once the party leaves the chamber, the thorn zombies lie on the floor and sink beneath the surface of the thorn layer. If the PCs return to this cairn, any surviving thorn zombies attack again as described above (replacement thorn zombies are generated 24 hours later, but the party isn't likely to be here then).

There is nothing of interest in this cairn.

5d. Fourth Cairn: This cairn contains the dead of the village of Garrethire. The corpses have been laid on the floor of the burial chamber. Each corpse has its right thumb tightly tied to its right big toe, a procedure believed to prevent the corpse from leaving the burial chamber.

When the PCs enter approach the cairn, they see the door slightly ajar; the space is big enough to allow a human-sized character to pass through. As soon as the PCs pass through the doorway, they hear the sounds of shrieking and moaning echoing from the burial chamber below. As the party passes through the doorway, they hear the sound of guttural groaning, becoming louder as they descend the stairs.

When the PCs approach the burial chamber, they see three disfigured humanoid creatures with filthy claws and long fangs kneeling in the center of the chamber; the creatures are ghosts. The ghosts are feasting on the remains of a zombie.

About 50 active zombies, their toes tied to their thumbs, paw ineffectually at the ghosts who continually swat them away. (Treat the zombies as normal zombies, except that their tied thumbs and toes give them a movement rate of only 1. Additionally, they are able to inflict only 1-2 points of damage per successful attack.)

Ghosts (3): AC 4; MV 15; HD 4; hp 25 each; THACO 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; SA radiates stench in a 10' radius, causing those who fail a saving throw vs. poison to retch and make their attack rolls with a -2 penalty; touch causes victims to become paralyzed for 1d6 + 4 rounds; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; cold iron weapons inflict double damage on ghosts; AL CE

As soon as the party peeks into the burial chamber, the ghosts sniff them out. Attracted by the prospect of fresh meat, the ghosts abandon the zombie and growl at the PCs. They rise to their feet and lurch toward the party. The active zombies follow, dragging themselves along the floor, their dead eyes locked on the faces of the PC intruders.

Both the ghosts and the zombies attempt to kill the PCs. The zombies won't leave the chamber, but the ghosts pursue the party anywhere in the cemetery; if the ghosts follow the party into a different cairn, the occupants of the cairn attack the ghosts as well as the PCs.

If the PCs return to the cairn after they've dealt with the ghosts, all of the active zombies begin to crawl toward the party. The zombies attack the PCs for violating their burial chamber (assume that two zombies attack each PC every round). The zombies fight to the death, but they won't leave the burial chamber. Once the party leaves the chamber, the zombies lie on the ground and remain still.

There is nothing of interest in this cairn.

5e. Fifth Cairn: This cairn contains the dead of the village of Iweel. The corpses have been placed in individual wooden coffins that are not buried, but placed on the floor of the burial room. A live serpent is laid on the chest of each corpse, and a heavy stone is placed atop each coffin.

Once the party enters the doorway, they may experience a variety of supernatural phenomena. For every five rounds the party is on the stairway or in the burial chamber, roll 1d4 and consult the Iweel Cairn Phenomena Table; all PCs immediately experience the indicated phenomenon (you are free to alter the frequency or to choose specific phenomena as you see fit).

Iweel Cairn Phenomena Table

D4 Roll Phenomenon

- 1 The PCs hear loud hissing, as if produced by hundreds of serpents.
- 2 The PCs feel something thick and heavy slither across their feet, as if they have encountered a huge, invisible serpent. The sensation quickly fades, and the PCs suffer no ill effects.
- 3 Tiny bites prickle the PCs' skins for 2d4 rounds. There is no apparent source of the bites, but the sensation is so distracting that the PCs make all attack rolls with a -1 penalty for the duration of the phenomenon.
- 4 No phenomenon.

When the PCs enter the burial chamber, they see rows of wooden coffins in neat rows, a heavy stone atop each. Intricate pattern of geometric designs cover two of the coffins near the center of the chamber; any PC who rolls a successful Intelligence check recognizes the symbols as designations of authority (these coffins contain the corpses of the mayor of Iweel and her husband; however, the contents of the coffins



are identical to all of the other coffins in this chamber). A pile of sticks, rotten vegetation, and other debris rests in the northwest corner of the chamber.

As soon as a PC removes the stone from any coffin a zombie opens the coffin lid and climbs out, a process taking two rounds to complete. Replacing the stone on the coffin lid does nothing to prevent the zombie from attempting to leave the coffin, but any PC who rolls a successful Strength check can hold the lid closed; two or more PCs whose Strength totals at least 20 can automatically hold the lid shut. The zombie won't escape as long as the PC (or PCs) holds the lid down. (The lid can also be held shut by tying it closed, nailing it, etc.)

A bony serpent with shards of flesh hanging from its decaying body is fused to the chest of each zombie. The serpent hisses continually, striking mindlessly into the empty air.

Serpent zombie: AC 8; MV 6; HD 2 + 6; hp 20; THACO 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d6 (hands and snake bite); SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *cold*-based spells; AL N

If released from its coffin, the serpent zombie shambles toward the party, intending to kill as many PCs as possible for violating the sanctity of the burial chamber. The serpent zombie fights until destroyed, but it does not leave the burial chamber. Once the party leaves the chamber, all active serpent zombies return to their coffins; the stones aren't replaced (if the PCs return to this cairn, the zombies without stones on their coffins will rise automatically).

The debris pile is actually the nest of a dozen giant rats. If the PCs come within five feet of the rat nest (or otherwise disturb it), the rats spill out.

Giant rats (12): AC 7; NV 12, Sw 6; HD 3 hp each; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA disease (each successful attack has a 5% chance of infecting victim with a respiratory disease that lingers for the next 1d4 days; infected victim rolls all Constitution checks with a -2 penalty during that time); AL N

The ravenous rats attempt to kill and eat the PCs, fighting to the death if necessary. The rats pursue the PCs anywhere in the cemetery; if the PCs lead the rats into a different cairn, the occupants of the cairn attack the rats as well as the PCs. However, the serpent zombies in this cairn ignore the rats (they're used to them); additionally, the rats don't experience any of the supernatural phenomena (from the Iweel Cairn Phenomena Table), nor do they bother the serpent zombies.

There is nothing of interest in any of the coffins. However, if the PCs search the rat nest, they find three stl, a silver earring worth 35 stl, a black opal worth 150 stl, and a *ring of warmth*.

5f. Sixth Cairn: This cairn contains the dead of the village of Turio. The corpses have been shaved bald and buried in a mass grave.

About halfway down the stairs, a gauzy spider web blocks the passage. The web extends from the ceiling and ends about three feet from the floor. Two large spiders cling to the ceiling on the east side of the web.

Large spiders (2): AC 8; MV 6, Wb 15; HD 1 + 1; hp 7, 8; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA type A poison (failed saving throw vs. poison, means 15 points of damage); AL N

If the PCs crawl beneath the web, nothing happens (the spiders ignore them). However, if the PCs tear the web or otherwise damage it, the spiders attack. Likewise, if the PCs crawl beneath the web and disturb the spiders on the ceiling (if the PCs look up, they'll see them), the spiders also attack.

What happens to the PCs when they enter the burial chamber depends whether they've experienced the Second Meet-

ing encounter:

If the PCs have not experienced the Second Meeting encounter: The PCs see nothing unusual in the chamber. If the PCs disturb the earthen floor in any way, a bony hand extends from the dirt and begins to pull itself free. It takes one round for the creature to pull itself free (the creature is a normal zombie).

The zombie shambles toward the party, intending to kill as many PCs as possible for violating the sanctity of its burial chamber. One round after the first zombie rises, 1d4 more random zombies pull themselves from the grave and begin to advance toward the party to attack. An additional 1d4 zombies rise every round thereafter. Five rounds after the first zombie makes its appearance, dozens of ghostly images rise from graves and begin to soar madly around the room, shrieking and wailing. The soaring images don't attack, but they are so distracting that the PCs suffer a -1 penalty when making attack rolls against the zombies.

The zombies fight to the death but neither they nor the soaring spirits leave the burial chamber. Once the party leaves the chamber, the zombies return to the mass grave and cover themselves with dirt.

If the PCs have experienced the Second Meeting encounter: If the PCs call out the name, "Leslyla," two rounds later a zombie with flowing black hair pulls herself free from the mass grave and shambles toward the party (treat her as a normal zombie).

She intends to kill as many of the PCs as she can. One round after Leslyla rises, 1d4 more random zombies pull themselves from the grave and begin to advance toward the party to attack. An additional 1d4 zombies rise every round thereafter. Five rounds after the first zombie makes its appearance, dozens of ghostly images rise from the ground and begin to soar madly around the room, shrieking and wailing. The soaring images don't attack, but they are so distracting that the PCs suffer a -1 penalty when making attack rolls against the zombies. (A PC is never attacked by more than two zombies in the same round.)

The PCs can deter the attacking zombies by brushing them with a leafy branch (as explained in the "Second Meeting" section above). A PC can trim Leslyla's hair by making a successful attack roll with any edged weapon. If Leslyla's hair is trimmed three times, all of the zombies stop attacking and return to their grave.

RENDEZVOUS WITH AWAHN

If the PCs return to the front gate one hour after experiencing the Second Meeting encounter, they find Awahn waiting for them. If the PCs have failed to trim Leslyla's hair, Awahn reluctantly gives them another hour ("But no more!"). If the PCs still haven't trimmed Leslyla's hair after the second hour, or if they harmed any of the zombies in the cemetery after Awahn warned them not to, Awahn says, "You did not do as I asked. I have no obligation to help you now." Awahn disappears. The PCs can continue to explore the cemetery if they wish, but they'll probably have a hard time locating the *cinder gem*. When the PCs are finished exploring the cemetery, proceed to the "Returning to Eborium" section.

If the PCs have trimmed Leslyla's hair and didn't harm any of the zombies after Awahn warned them not to, Awahn says, "You have completed your task as requested. Follow me."

Awahn leads the party to the first cairn (5a). When Awahn approaches the burial chamber, the zombies begin to sit up and shake their noisemakers. "Silence!" thunders Awahn. The zombies immediately become still.

"Lorrann! Come forward!" A female zombie rises and approaches Awahn. "She found the gem in a field. She believed it would grant her a long life"

Awahn extends his hand. "Lorrann, give me your gem." The zombie fishes in her pocket and produces an indigo teardrop-shaped gem with the image of a flame flickering inside it; this is the indigo *cindergem*. Awahn accepts the gem, then gives it to the party.

"You no longer have reason to remain in my cemetery," Awahn says. "Go." Awahn vanishes, and the zombie returns to its grave.

RETURNING TO EBORIUM

The PCs can return to Eborium by using the cord leading to the green portal. When the party passes through the portal, follow the instructions in the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1, rolling for an Entry Point and running the appropriate Scheduled Event from Chapter 3 as directed.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the PCs harm a zombie in spite of Awahn's warning: If the PCs unnecessarily harm a zombie, Awahn refuses to take them to the *cindergem*. However, if the PCs accidentally harmed one or were forced to harm one in order to rescue a friend, Awahn overlooks their transgression if they justify their actions to his satisfaction.

INTERLUDE 6: THENOL

DM'S BACKGROUND

Two sisters, a warrior named Xenneh and a mage named Asta, share the rule of Gannor, a militaristic community in southern Thenol. The intense competition between the sisters is never more evident than in the weekly gladiatorial contests staged in the municipal arena. Each sister chooses gladiators to represent her and fills her side of the arena with spectators from her half of the city. The gladiators fight to the death while the spectators cheer them on.

One of the contestants just killed by Xenneh's gladiators wears a belt with the violet *cindergem* imbedded as a good luck charm.

Use the following statistics for the spectators and guards in this Interlude. Feel free to vary the hit points.

Guard (3rd-level fighter): AC 5; MV 12; HD 3; hp 15; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword or battle axe); AL N

Spectator (0-level human): AC 10; MV 12; HD ½; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (knife) or 1 (fists); AL N

ARRIVAL

A moment after the PCs enter the Primary Chronolily, they find themselves in the center of a 150-foot-diameter arena (indicated by an "X" on the DM's Interlude 6 Map). The brick walls of the arena are 30 feet tall. Half of the arena is painted red and the other half is painted green. Hundreds of spectators sit in the stands surrounding the arena. The spectators are long-necked, narrow-eyed humans dressed in peasant clothes. (The spectators in the red section are from Asta's district. The spectators in the green section are from Xenneh's district.)

A metallic cord about 50 feet long hangs from a six-foot-hole in the sky, dangling about three feet from the ground. The cord dangles next to the party near the center of the arena. The hole glows with a soft green light (the glowing hole leads back to Eborium).

Two ornate thrones, one red and one green, rise over the

northern end of the arena. Seated in the red throne is a middle-aged woman with long white hair, wearing a robe of bright yellow silk (this is Asta). Next to her in the green throne sits another middle-aged woman with short black hair, wearing a robe of rich purple silk (this is Xenneh).

Xenneh (6th-level human fighter): AC 5; MV 12; hp 41; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); Str 15, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 5, Cha 11; AL LE

Weapon proficiencies: long sword (specialized), spear, dagger, long bow, javelin

Nonweapon proficiencies: armorer (4), endurance (15), set snares (5)

Languages: Thenolian

Asta (6th-level human mage): AC 10; MV 12; hp 17; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger) or by spell; Str 6; Dex 10, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 9, Cha 11; AL LE

Weapon proficiencies: dagger, staff sling

Nonweapon proficiencies: astrology (15), herbalism (13), religion (9), spellcraft (13)

Languages: Thenolian, Auric (15), Panak (15), Hoor (15)

Spells: 1st Level— *affect normal fires*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*; 2nd Level— *irritation*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 3rd Level— *gust of wind*, *lightning bolt*

Dozens of solidly-muscled guards are evenly spaced around the floor of the arena, standing alert next to the wall. The guards have their swords raised, prepared to charge at a moment's notice.

About 30 feet away from the party are six lizard-like humanoids with leathery wings and carrying short swords. The creatures snarl at the party, then lick their blades, coating them with thick saliva. (The creatures are Kapak draconians, hired by Xenneh to represent her in the arena.)

Kapak draconians (6): AC 3 (natural armor plus scale mail); MV 6, Run 15 (when the kapak runs on all four and flaps its wings), Glide 18; HD 3; hp 21 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (bite) or 1d6 (short sword); SA victims bitten by a kapak or struck by a venom-coated weapon (a kapak can coat his weapon with venomous secretions by licking it, a process taking one round; venom evaporates from the weapon in three rounds) must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or become paralyzed for 2d6 turns; SD move silently (15%), hide in shadows (10%), find/remove traps (20%); when reduced to 0 hit points, its body instantly dissolves into a ten-foot-wide pool of acid (all within the pool suffer 1d8 points of damage per round from the acid with no saving throw allowed; the acid evaporates in 1d6 rounds); MR 20%; AL LE

On the arena floor just below the thrones are six bloody human bodies. These were gladiators hired by Asta to represent her in the arena; they were just killed by the draconians.

As soon as the party appears in the arena, all of the spectators in the red section rise to their feet and cheer; they assume that the PCs are Asta's new gladiators (she's had her gladiators make similarly dramatic entrances in the past).

Xenneh also rises, shouting accusingly at her sister. "There were no more contests scheduled for today! What is the meaning of this?"

Asta is surprised by the appearance of the party, but because they look like extremely able fighters, she's willing to take credit for them. "Are your feeble gladiators too spineless to stand against my . . . er . . . my Warriors of the Golden Light? What do you say we double the day's bet?"

Xenneh studies the PCs, then looks at her own snarling gladiators. "Done!" she says. "Let the battle begin!"

As the crowd explodes in wild cheers, the draconians charge the party.



THE BATTLE

The draconians attack ferociously, running on all fours to charge the PCs whenever possible, then attacking with their bite and poisoned weapons. The draconians lick their weapons again when the poison evaporates. If a PC succumbs to the poison, the draconians all descend on him, thrusting their weapons in his paralyzed body until he's dead. Xenneh has promised the draconians a handsome reward if they triumph in the arena and a painful death if they fail; for that reason, the draconians intend to fight to the death.

The guards ensure that the PCs make no escape attempts. Should the PCs try to scale the wall or otherwise flee from the arena, enough guards swarm over them to convince them that escaping is futile. Likewise, if the PCs attempt to address or attack Asta and Xenneh, dozens of guards charge at them with swords swinging until the PCs withdraw.

At any point in the battle, the PCs are free to make an attempt to climb the metallic cord and escape. Neither the draconians nor the guards make any effort to follow them, though the draconians continue to attack the PCs until they've vanished through the portal (or at least out of reach).

There are six dead bodies lying below the sisters' thrones. Five are male, one is female; the female wears a leather belt with a broad iron buckle. A teardrop-shaped violet gem with the image of a flickering flame inside is imbedded in the buckle; this is the violet *cindergem* (the warrior bought the *cindergem* from a rare gem dealer and had it made into a belt buckle which she believe would bring her good luck). If a PC spends one round examining the body pile, he will spot the *cindergem*. Assume that it takes one round for a PC to either pry the *cindergem* from the buckle or to remove the entire belt from the corpse.

INTERRUPTIONS

Three interruptions occur during the battle. The DM can stage these interruptions earlier or later if he wishes, but the first interruption should occur within the first three rounds, and the third interruption should occur before the PCs defeat the draconians (or the draconians defeat the PCs).

First Interruption: Three rounds after the battle begins, one of the PCs (choose randomly) notices his draconian opponent begin to twitch and jerk. The draconian begins to scratch himself so violently that it is unable to attack.

Xenneh leaps to her feet. "Stop the contest!" she shrieks. Dozens of guards swarm over the draconians and PCs, restraining them from continuing the battle.

"You did that!" Xenneh cries accusingly at her sister. "That was a spell!"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Asta says innocently. (Xenneh's right; Asta cast *irritation* on the draconian to give her PC gladiator an edge.)

"I'm sure you don't," says Xenneh sarcastically. "I'll be watching you." She returns to her throne. "Resume the battle!"

Second Interruption: Two rounds after the battle resumes, one of the PCs (choose randomly) notices his draconian opponent begin to look shaky. The draconian's weapon falls from his hand, dropping to the ground. The draconian struggles to remain standing and is unable to attack.

Again, Xenneh leaps to her feet. "Stop the contest!" she screams. Dozens of guards swarm over the draconians and PCs, restraining them from fighting.

"You did it again!" Xenneh screeches at Asta. "You cast another spell! Cheater!"

"How dare you accuse me!" replies Asta indignantly. "Your pathetic fighter can't hang on to his weapon!" (Xenneh's right; Asta cast *ray of enfeeblement* on the draconian.)

"Do it again, and I'll kill you," says Xenneh. "Resume the battle!"

Third Interruption: Two rounds after the battle resumes, Xenneh shouts, "Stop the contest!" Dozens of guards swarm over the draconians and PCs, restraining them from fighting.

Xenneh turns to Asta, he eyes blazing with anger. "I saw what you were about to do," she hisses.

Asta looks innocently as her sister. "I don't know what you're talking about." (Yes she does; she was about to cast another spell on the draconians.)

"I'll kill you for this!" shrieks Xenneh. She dives for her Asta's throat, and the two sisters tumble to the ground, clawing and swatting each other. Proceed to the "Riot in the Arena" section.

RIOT IN THE ARENA

As soon as Xenneh dives for Asta, the spectators begin to pour into the arena. The startled guards release the PCs and the draconians, attempting to stop the rival spectators from attacking each other, but it's a hopeless effort. In a matter of moments, a tangle of red and green spectators have filled the arena, punching, stabbing, and swearing. The frenzied spectators attack not only each other, but the guards, the draconians, and the PCs as well.

Every round, the PCs are attacked by a random number of guards and spectators, along with the occasional draconian. For convenience, assume that each PC has a 50% chance of suffering 1d6 points of damage per round from random attacks; if the PC is actively defending himself, he has a 20% chance of suffering only 1-2 points of damage per round. Impress upon the party that there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of potential opponents, far too many for them to subdue.

If the PCs haven't yet located the violet *cindergem*, assume that in the chaos of the battle, the body pile has been disturbed; the female corpse has flopped toward the party, clearly revealing the teardrop-shaped violet gem in her belt buckle. Assume that a PC can move at 1/3 of his normal movement rate to fight his way through the crowd to get to the corpse.

The PCs can return to Eborium by climbing the cord leading to the green portal. Once a PC has climbed the cord about 15-20 feet, he is out of range of the rioting crowd and is no longer attacked by them. Neither the spectators, the draconians, nor the guards try to climb the cord.

When the party passes through the portal, follow the instructions in the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1, rolling for an Entry Point and running the appropriate Scheduled Event from Chapter 3 as directed.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the PCs attack Asta and Xenneh: If the PCs manage to circumvent the guards and attack Asta and Xenneh (for instance, if a PC wizard attacks them with *magic missile* or other spell that can be cast from a distance), the sisters accuse each other of encouraging the attack, then begin to fight. Their fight triggers the crowd reaction described in the "Riot in the Arena" section.

CHAPTER 3: SCHEDULED EVENTS



After the party has experienced an Interlude, returned to Eborium via an Entry Point, and dealt with the encounter (if any) associated with the Entry Point, they then experience a Scheduled Event. The Scheduled Events occur in the order indicated here; that is, regardless of which Interlude the party completes first or which Entry Point they use when returning to the island, they experience Scheduled Event No. 1. After the second Interlude, they experience Scheduled Event No. 2, and so on.

SCHEDULED EVENT I:

TEAR DROPS

DM'S BACKGROUND

Following the encounter in the Ethereal plane (in the Prologue), Eresem ordered a flock of eyewing minions to locate the PCs. The eyewings tracked the PCs to Eborium.

DEADLY FLOCK

Shortly after the party returns to Eborium, they notice a flock of huge, winged creatures darting through the wispy clouds overhead. There are dozens of the creatures, flying in a single line. The bulging eyeballs and the rat-like tails identify the creatures as eyewings.

The eyewings soar in the sky about 100 yards overhead, crossing the island in a fixed pattern. The eyewings steadily drip tears that splash on the ground below.

The eyewings follow the Eyewing Flight Path exactly as

shown on the DM's Map, flying as fast as they can, randomly dripping tears as they fly. The tears are not directed toward any specific target; they are intended to harass the PCs.

The eyewings won't leave the flock to attack the PCs. If the PCs attack the eyewings, the eyewings defend themselves to the death (see page 8 for eyewing statistics); however, make it clear to the party that there are dozens, perhaps hundreds, of eyewings in the flock, and that attacking a flock of this size is likely to be suicidal.

For every round the party is within ten feet of the Eyewing Flight Path, there is a 5% chance that a random PC is hit by an eyewing tear (see page 8).

The eyewings continue to drip tears until the end of Scheduled Event 3, at which time they are recalled by Eresem (when the PCs return from the Interlude following Scheduled Event 3, the eyewings are gone).

HARDENED TEARS

The eyewing tears harden into rubber-like lumps within 2d6 hours after being shed. The hardened tears accumulate along the Eyewing Flight Path and remain on the island for the rest of the adventure.

The hardened tears create a low, irregular ridge along the Eyewing Flight Path. The ridge is low enough to step over. The ridge doesn't extend across streams — the hardened tears are too heavy to float in the red water and instead sink to the bottom.

Any PC who touches or otherwise comes in physical contact with a hardened tear must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 1 point of damage.





WHAT NEXT?

The party may now proceed to the Primary Chronolily to experience another Interlude.

SCHEDULED EVENT 2:

HOT TIME

DM's BACKGROUND

In recent weeks, Erestem has been using intermediaries to hire dragon hunters on Taladas to disrupt the plans of Amanthus to rally the Othlorx (see the "Story Thus Far" section in the Introduction). Among the most skilled of the dragon hunters were a notorious criminal named Gezele Ella and her partner, an outcast goblin shaman named Grott. Ella and Grott inadvertently hired a group of good adventurers as aides. Their mistake was discovered by their employers, a draconian named Chorahh and an evil gnome named Drishurocol, who banished Grott and Ella to the another plane of existence.

However, shortly after their banishment, Ella and Grott were retrieved by Erestem, who recognized their value as potential leaders of the evil minions she was organizing to raid Taladas. Anxious to prove themselves, Ella and Grott have eagerly volunteered to eliminate the intruders on Eborium.

Ella and Grott are waiting on the island for the party to return. Ella, along with Kahh (also known as Darkheart), her new black dragon ally, is hovering inside a deep hole (area 2b), out of sight. Grott, waiting near the Primary Chronolily, is to engage the party in conversation, distracting them so that Ella and Kahh can attack by surprise.

STUDIOUS GOBLIN

When the party approaches the Primary Chronolily (after having arrived on Eborium via an Entry Point), they see a goblin peering in the nectar bowl, lost in thought. The goblin is barely three feet tall. He has deep red skin, tiny yellow eyes, and a flat face with pointed ears and a wide mouth. He wears a floor-length robe and a narrow headband, both made of black leather. A claw-shaped silver pendant hangs around his neck. If the PCs participated in the previous adventure, *Dragon Knight*, they recognize him as Grott, an evil goblin shaman whom they presumed was lost forever in another plane of existence (see the Appendix for Grott's statistics and background information).

As soon as the PCs call out to Grott, or otherwise make themselves noticed, Grott rises to his feet and calmly waits for their approach. He is unarmed.

If the PCs met Grott in *Dragon Knight*, he greets them by name. If the PCs haven't met him before, he says nothing, but nods and smiles. In either case, he asks them, "Will you accept the word of Angomeith?"

THE MOON READING

While waiting for the party to arrive, Grott passed the time by watching the shifting images in the chronolily nectar. Much to his delight, he saw an image of Kryn's moons hovering in the night sky. Grott did a quick moon reading to divine Angomeith's instructions. Grott interpreted the reading as a command for him to ask the next heathen (or group of heathens) he sees to accept the word of Angomeith.

Grott persists in asking the party if they accept Angomeith. He ignores their comments and questions until he gets a "yes" or "no" answer from at least one PC. If he gets a "yes"

answer (or a mixture of “yes” and “no” answers), he seems visibly disappointed (according to Grott’s faith, if a heathen accepts the word of Angomeith, then Grott must be truthful with him). If he gets a “no” answer, he seems relieved.

The party can question Grott if they like; he responds as described in the “Conversation with Grott” section. Proceed to the “Death from Below” section when any of the following conditions occur:

* The PCs finish questioning Grott.

* The PCs are on the verge of abandoning Grott to search for accomplices elsewhere on the island.

* The PCs are on the verge of conjuring a new image in the Primary Chronolly (to trigger another Interlude).

CONVERSATION WITH GROTT

Grott answers the party’s questions as follows. If one or more of PCs answered “yes” when Grott asked them if they accepted the word of Angomeith, Grott always gives a true response. If none of the PCs answered “yes,” Grott gives a false response. If the PCs ask a question not listed, the DM can have Grott give a true response (if applicable), make up a false response (if applicable), or shrug and say he doesn’t know.

Who are you? True: “I am Grott, exiled shaman from Crouk in the Ilquar Mountains, loyal disciple of Angomeith.” False: “I am Grott. Weary traveler of the outer planes. I am thinking of building a home here.”

Where did you come from? True: “A distant island of the Ethereal plane that Erestem is using as a staging area for an assault on the Othlorx of Taladas.” False: “I came from Taladas.”

How did you get here? True: “Erestem sent me.” False: “By pure accident. I was trying to find the Seven Heavens.”

What are you doing here? True: “My partner and I have come to destroy the champions of good.” False: “Exploring the many mysteries of the demi-planes.”

What happened to Ahxa? The PCs will have to describe Ahxa before Grott knows who they’re talking about. True: “I don’t know.” (Ahxa turned invisible and scampered away when he saw the approach of Grott; he’s hiding nearby.) False: “He entered a portal and disappeared.”

Who’s your partner? Where’s Ella? True: “I am here with Gezele Ella, my friend and ally. She is searching elsewhere on this island.” (Grott doesn’t know where she is.) False: “I am here alone.”

Who’s Ella? True: “The mightiest dragon hunter on Taladas. A loyal servant of Angomeith.” False: “A fellow shaman and traveler.”

Who is Angomeith? True: “The lord of life and death. The spirit of the dark moon.” False response: Same as true response (Grott won’t lie about his deity.)

How did you survive your expulsion from Kor Island? True: “We were rescued by Erestem.” False response: “I don’t recall. The shock must have stricken the experience from my memory.”

DEATH FROM BELOW

A thunderous roar fills the air, as a huge black dragon soars upward from a gaping hole in the island (area 2b) and swoops toward the party. A massive woman wielding a club rides the back of the dragon.

The woman is over seven feet tall and weighs nearly 300 pounds. Long gray hair frames her beefy face and dangles in thick curls around her shoulders. She has thin lips, dark green eyes, and plump cheeks. She wears a bulky cloak made of dragon scales of various colors. A claw-shaped silver pendant hangs around her neck. If the PCs participated in the

previous adventure, *Dragon Knight*, they recognize her as Gezele Ella (also known as Big Ella), who they presumed was lost along with Grott in another plane of existence (see the Appendix for Ella’s statistics and background information).

Kahh (young adult black dragon; also known as Darkheart): AC 0; MV 12, Fl 30 (C), Sw 12; HD 13; hp 77; THAC0 7; #AT 3 + specials (snatch up to L size; kick 1d6 + 5 feet away and 1d6 + 5 points of damage); Dmg 1d6 + 5/1d6 + 5/3d6 + 5; SA acid stream (60’ line from dragon’s head; Dmg 10d4 + 5; successful saving throw for half damage), can breathe once every three rounds; SD *fear* within 15 yards (successful saving throw vs. petrification or fight with a –2 penalty to attack and damage rolls), *water breathe* at will, *darkness* in 50’ radius three times per day, *corrupt water* once per day (stagnate 50 cubic feet of water, making it too foul to support life; when used against potions or elixirs, they become useless if a 15 or better is rolled on 1d20), immune to acid; MR 10%. AL CG; Size G (38’ body, 30’ tail)

Spells (cast at 10th level): *color spray*, *magic missile*

If the PCs participated in *Dragon Knight*, Ella addresses them by name, then snarls, “You humiliated me on Taladas. You will pay for that offense with your lives.” If the PCs didn’t participate in *Dragon Knight*, Ella says nothing, eying them with contempt.

Before the PCs can take any actions, Ella thumps Kahh twice on the neck. Kahh raises his head and blasts *color spray* straight into the sky. The *color spray* alerts the eyewing flock soaring overhead (see Scheduled Event 1). One of the eyewings swoops away from the flock and dives straight toward the electricity trees (area 15). The impact of the eyewing knocks down a tree, and it splashes into the adjacent stream. The electrical charge of the tree triggers a reaction in the red water, causing the surface of the stream to erupt in flames. The flames instantly spread to the streams and pools throughout the island. The flames stretch 50 feet into the sky (the flames will burn for 1d4 hours before subsiding). The flaming stream encircles the PCs, Grott, Ella, and Kahh, effectively cutting them off from the rest of the island (see DM’s Map). Any character touching the flames suffers 2d6 points of damage (no saving throw).

Kahh lands, and Ella dismounts. “You will die by my own hands,” she says, advancing toward the PCs.

THE BATTLE

Ella intends to kill all of the PCs and take their heads back to Erestem as proof of her combat skill. She attacks with her steel-needed club to inflict 1d6 + 3 points of damage. Though she is clearly outnumbered, the arrogant Ella believes she can subdue the entire party, counting on Kahh to help her if she gets in trouble. She plans to fight to the death; she does not negotiate.

Kahh hangs back, remaining behind Ella. Kahh’s job is to prevent PCs from flying over or otherwise leaving the circle of flame. If it looks like the PCs are overwhelming Ella, Kahh attacks random PCs with his kick, claws, and bite; he uses his breath weapon only to prevent PCs from leaving the circle (he won’t use his breath weapon while Ella and the PCs are engaged in melee combat, out of fear of hitting Ella).

At Ella’s request, Grott remains hidden throughout the battle. He fights only to defend himself.

Five rounds after the battle begins (or sooner at the DM’s discretion—for instance, if the PCs are losing the battle), Kahh decides to take a broad view of the battle, and moves adjacent to the flaming stream. A moment later, two nine-foot-tall creatures rise from the stream, standing comfortably amid the flames. The creatures have the shapes of large hu-



manoids with fangs and horns. Their bodies are the color of flame, constantly swirling and flickering. Both wield large swords made of fire. These are fire minions from area 5.

Fire minion (2): AC 3; MV 12; HD 6; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SA fire aura automatically inflicts 1d6 points of damage to all within five feet, unless protected from fire in some way; SD immune to fire-based attacks; magical flames (such as fireballs and dragon breath) restore hit points equal to the damage normally caused by the attack; suffer 1 extra point of damage per die from water-based attacks; suffer double damage from cold-based attacks; AL LE

The fire minions attack whoever happens to be within ten feet of the stream, the dragon in this instance. The minions first attack the dragon with their flaming swords, laughing and screeching. The startled dragon turns to face the minions, but they vanish into the flames. A moment later, the minions reappear and attack again. This is more than the dragon bargained for; he soars into the air and vanishes into the distance, leaving Ella to fend for herself.

If any character comes within ten feet of the stream, a fire minion abruptly appears, attacking the character with its flaming sword. The minion attacks until the character withdraws from the stream, at which time the minion vanishes.

Any character touching the flames of the stream suffers 2d6 points of damage per round (no saving throw).

The battle continues until one of the following occurs:

* In the DM's estimation, the PCs are on the verge of losing the battle; for instance, all of the PCs have lost half or more of their hit points, or one of the PCs is about to be killed. Proceed to the "Ella Triumphant" section.

* In the DM's estimation, the PCs are winning; for instance, if Ella has lost $\frac{3}{4}$ of her hit points or Ella is about to be killed by the PCs. Proceed to the "Ella Subdued" section.

* The PCs conjure a new image in the Primary Chronolily or otherwise elude Ella. Proceed to the "Escape" section.

ELLA TRIUMPHANT

A thunderous roar is heard from the sky; Kahh has returned, hovering about 100 feet overhead. Kahh snarls and shakes his head anxiously. Ella backs away from the PCs. "Grott!" she yells to the goblin. "Come!" Grott scrambles to Ella's side as the dragon descends.

"You are fortunate this day," says Ella, and she and Grott mount Kahh. "Erestem has an urgent need for us elsewhere. We shall return to finish our work here another time." Kahh uses his *darkness* ability to enshroud the area in blackness. The dragon rises into the air with Ella and Grott clinging to her back, disappearing into the void.

Ella and Grott return in Chapter 4.

ELLA SUBDUED

Ella falls to her knees, begging for mercy. "Please," she gasps. "Do not kill me. I concede defeat." She tosses her steel-needle club aside.

If questioned, Ella tells the PCs everything she knows, which includes all the true information in the "Conversation with Grott" section, along with the information in the Ella and Grott NPC entries in the Appendix. If asked why she surrendered, Ella says, "I am a mercenary. I fight for whoever pays me. But my service does not include my life." If asked if there are any other mercenaries hunting for them, Grott says, "There are two that I know of. One is a minotaur warrior whose horns drip venom. The second is a priestess with long black hair who carries a mace she calls Shadowcaster.

Before the PCs decide what to do with Ella, Grott steps for-

ward and approaches her. "I warned you this would happen," he scolds Ella. "You put Erestem before Angomeith and now we reap the results of your blasphemy. If you beg Angomeith for forgiveness, perhaps our souls may still be saved."

"You're right," Ella says. "I renounce my allegiance to Erestem. May Angomeith forgive me."

"Praise be to Angomeith," says Grott. He turns to the PCs. "With your permission, I will ask Angomeith to take us from here. We will trouble you no more."

If the PCs ask Grott exactly what he has in mind, Grott explains that he will pray to Angomeith to take him and Ella to his moon, where they will spend the next year atoning for their sins. If the PCs ask if Angomeith can help them as well, Grott says that Angomeith grants such favors only to his most loyal disciples. If the PCs ask Grott why they should trust him, Grott seems genuinely offended. "I would not lie about petitioning Angomeith."

The PCs must now decide what to do with Ella and Grott. Udras/Sargonnas will not help them. If the PCs take them along to an Interlude location via the Primary Chronolily, Grott and Ella escape at the earliest opportunity, and then conduct the prayer service described later. Likewise, if the PCs secure Grott and Ella somewhere on Eborium, they'll manage to escape (while the PCs are experiencing an Interlude) by conducting their prayer service. If the PCs consider executing Grott and Ella, you might point out that the principles of good-aligned (and even neutral-aligned) characters preclude the murder of surrendered prisoners.

If the PCs allow Grott to petition Angomeith, Grott joins hands with Ella, and they begin to hum in low tones. Grott mumbles a prayer, and a moment later, a circle of gray light appears over their heads. The circle descends around them, and they disappear. (Grott and Ella are transported to the moon of Angomais, where they will spend the next year.) Ella and Grott do not return in Chapter 4.

ESCAPE

If the PCs escape, Kahh appears as described in the "Ella Triumphant" section and returns Ella and Grott to Erestem.

Ella and Grott return in Chapter 4.

WHAT NEXT?

If they haven't done so already, the party may now proceed to the Primary Chronolily to experience another Interlude. If the red stream is still aflame and the party needs to return to the Primary Chronolily area, the party can either wait until the fire burns itself out, or they can cross the marble bridge (the bridge resists the effects of the flames).

SCHEDULED EVENT 3:

WIDENING CRACK

DM'S BACKGROUND

The gnomes of Schymonarke are making progress in their efforts to invade Eborium (see Scheduled Event 4 for details).

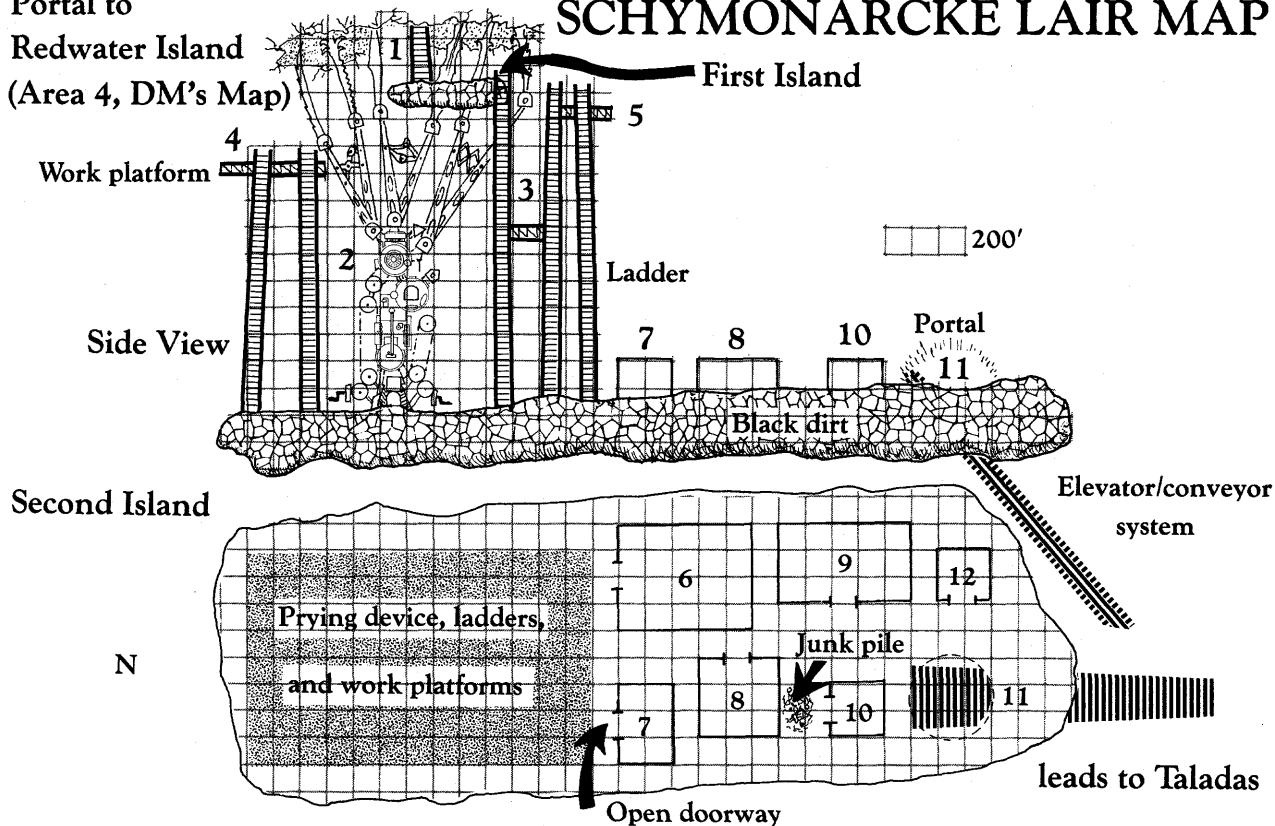
A CHANGE IN THE TERRAIN

The PCs become aware of this event only if they come within 100 yards of area 4 (on the DM's Map).

The party hears the sounds of cracking and crunching as if the ground were splitting apart. If the PCs investigate the source of the sounds, they see that the crack at area 4 has

Portal to
Redwater Island
(Area 4, DM's Map)

SCHYMONARCKE LAIR MAP



widened. If the PCs examined area 4 previously, they may recall that the crack was only a few inches wide. It is now nearly ten feet wide.

If the PCs peer into the crack, they see rows of iron wedges about 20 feet down. Each blade is about 25 feet wide and about ½ inch thick. The blades rise from a pool of violet light. If the PCs descend into the crack, they find that the violet light is as dense as soft earth; it is impossible for them to move through it. (The violet light is a portal to the gnome's base; see Scheduled Event 4 for details.)

WHAT NEXT?

The party may now proceed to the Primary Chronolily to experience another Interlude.

SCHEDULED EVENT 4:

GNOME LAIR

DM'S BACKGROUND

About ten years ago, the gnomes of Schymonarke, a city near the western shore of the Indanalil Sea, lost their great ruler, a wise counselor and brilliant engineer named Hutikfuredin who died peacefully in his sleep. Unknown to all of the Schymonarke gnomes except his private advisors, Hutikfuredin was fascinated with other planes of existence and, aided by his wizards, visited them frequently. It was on one of these extraplanar trips that Hutikfuredin discovered the gk'lok-lok tree on Eborium and learned of their existence as dreamers experiencing the lives of the spirits of dead warriors. Hutikfuredin decided that when his life reached an end, he would return to Eborium and offer his spirit to the

slumbering gk'lok-lok.

When Hutikfuredin succumbed to an incurable disease, he ordered his wizards to create a gate to transport him to Eborium. He died on Eborium, at which time Ahxa recruited his spirit for the crystal tree. Hutikfuredin's spirit continues to reside in the crystal tree to this day.

However, Hutikfuredin left no word of his plans to his fellow gnomes. When the Schymonarke priests discovered that he had disappeared, they were furious, convinced that their leader had been kidnapped. The priests rejected Hutikfuredin's wizards' insistence that Hutikfuredin had voluntarily left the Prime Material plane for Eborium.

Though the gnomes were unable to reach the island directly, the gnomish priests found a way to create a portal leading from Schymonarke to a different demi-plane. The gnomes established a base there and constructed an elaborate device to pry their way into Eborium. When the device created a sufficiently wide crack, a horde of gnomes swarmed into Eborium, searching for their lost leader. They found no sign of Hutikfuredin, instead finding a panicking wire-like creature (Ahxa) whom the gnomes accused of kidnapping their leader. The gnomes overwhelmed Ahxa and returned with him to their demi-planar base for questioning. (The abduction of Ahxa occurred while the PCs were experiencing their current Interlude.)

Use the following generic statistics for the Schymonarke gnome workers and leaders. Feel free to vary the hit points and weapons.

Schymonarke worker (1st-level fighter): AC 10; MV 6; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (hammer, crowbar, or other tool); SA and SD as normal gnome (gnomoi); AL LN

Schymonarke leader (3rd-level fighter): AC 5; MV 6; HD 3; hp 15; THAC0 17; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SA and SD as normal gnome (gnomoi) AL LN

WHERE'S AHXA?

After the party has returned to Eborium and made their way to the Primary Chronolily, they find no sign of Ahxa. However, they notice torn grass, numerous footprints, and other signs of a scuffle near the Primary Chronolily. They also notice a path leading from the Primary Chronolily, made by the impressions of hundreds of small humanoid feet. The party has no trouble following the path, which leads across the marble bridge, then east to area 4 (see the DM's Map).

When the PCs near area 4, they see that the crack has widened to 20 feet. The light in the bottom of the crack has turned green. Dozens of metal ladders are hooked to the sides of the crack and dangle into the opening below. The fleeing gnomes climbed down these ladders and disappeared as soon as they reach the green light.

The PCs can also enter the crack by climbing a ladder. As soon as the PCs reach the light, they lapse into unconsciousness and disappear (because of the nature of the enchantment, the gnomes don't lose consciousness when they enter the portal).

Note to the DM: If the PCs are reluctant to enter the crack to retrieve Ahxa, remind them that they may risk the wrath of Udras/Sargonnas if they allow harm to come to his aide (actually, Udras/Sargonnas isn't concerned with Ahxa's welfare; if the PCs attempt to alert Udras/Sargonnas about Ahxa's disappearance, he ignores them as always).

If the PCs fail to rescue Ahxa, a contingent of gnomes later brings Ahxa back to the PCs on Eborium; they have decided he is innocent of any crime, but they demand a 1,500-stl fine from the PCs. The gnomes accept any combination of coins, gems, jewelry, weapons, or magical items. If the PCs refuse to pay, Ahxa is never seen again, and the party does not receive the benefit of the gnome cannon described in Chapter 4. (If Ahxa is lost, one of the slumbering gk'lok-lok from the crystal tree in area awakens to assume Ahxa's duties. The rest of the adventure plays out as described.)

AWAKENING

When the PCs awaken, they find themselves lying on a barren island of black dirt (this is the First Island on the Schymonarke Lair Map). The party has all of their equipment with them. Nine gnomes (generic worker gnomes) stand over them, wielding hammers, crowbars, and other tools as weapons. A tenth gnome holds a short sword (generic leader gnome).

The leader gnome, whose name is Burukoymible, eyes the party suspiciously. "Why have you followed us here?" he asks (the gnome assumes the PCs have come after their kidnapped friend, but he's curious to see if they'll admit it). If the PCs decline to answer, or give an answer that is obviously false (such as, "We accidentally fell down the crack while we were exploring.") the gnome says, "You'll stay right here until we decide what to do with you." If the PCs mention anything about Ahxa, the gnome says, "The fate of the criminal is up to Trushigimolus." The gnome refuses to answer any of the PCs' questions, other than to identify Trushigimolus as the gnomes' commander.

What happens next depends on the PCs' response to these gnomes, as explained in the "Strategy Options" section.

STRATEGY OPTIONS

The PCs have two general strategies available to them to rescue Ahxa. They can pursue a Negotiation Option, involving nonviolent persuasion, or a Prison Break Option, in which they will attempt to free Ahxa against the wishes of the gnomes, using violence if necessary. Staging notes for each

option follow. Note that it's possible for the PCs to change options at any point; for instance, they may initiate the Negotiation Option by asking Burukoymible to take them to see Trushigimolus, then switch to the Prison Break Option by overpowering the gnomes who are accompanying them.

Negotiation Option: If the PCs ask Burukoymible to take them to see Trushigimolus, Burukoymible agrees, as long as the PCs keep their hands in sight at all times. Burukoymible, accompanied by six of the worker gnomes, lead the PCs down the metal ladder (3) and east across the Second Island until they arrive at Trushigimolus's quarters (12). If the PCs subdue the gnomes before they arrive at area 12, switch to the Prison Break Option. Otherwise, proceed to the "Audience with Trushigimolus" section.

Prison Break Option: If the PCs attack Burukoymible and the workers, the gnomes defend themselves feebly, fighting to the death if necessary. Once the PCs have dealt with the gnomes, they can climb down the ladder (3) to begin the search for Ahxa. The Map Key includes island exploration encounters.

Groups of gnomes constantly roam the island. However, because there is little natural light (the sky is always dusky here), and there are plenty of hills and shallow crevasses, the PCs won't be spotted if they move cautiously. However, certain actions (described in the Map Key) may alert the gnomes to the party's presence, triggering the Incarceration Routine. When an Incarceration Routine is triggered, a band of gnomes surrounds the PCs, sufficient in number to convince them that resistance is useless. The PCs are then taken to the storeroom (area 10) and imprisoned. You may also run the Incarceration Routine if the PCs draw undue attention to themselves, such as by casting a spell with a dramatic effect (like *fireball*).

MAP KEY—SCHYMONARKE LAIR MAP

Common Features: The Schymonarke lair consists of two stationary hovering islands. The smaller island hovers about 500 feet above the larger island. Both islands are made of black rock and sand-like dirt. About 1,000 gnomes live here.

1. Ladder: This is an iron ladder leading up to the green portal hovering about 50 feet overhead. The ladder passes through the green light of the portal and leads to the crack on Eborium. A PC passing from the First Island through the green light does not lose consciousness (this only occurs when a PC travels from Eborium to the gnomes' island).

2. Prying Device: This gigantic device was constructed by the gnomes to pry open the portal to give them access to Eborium. It consists of a series of flat metal prongs at the top, leading to a complex series of gears, cranks, and pulleys. The prongs have been permanently enchanted by Schymonarke wizards, enabling them to affect the portal as they would a physical object. Winding the cranks near the bottom of the device causes the prongs to spread. If they wish, the PCs can render the device inoperable by inflicting 100 points of damage on it (the device has an AC of 1), but doing so will have a significant effect on the rest of the adventure; the PCs will not be able to use the device to close or open the portal above the First Island.

3. Ladder: This metal ladder leads to the surface of the First Island. A ramp halfway down the ladder leads to the east work platform (5).

4. Western Work Platform: This platform is supported by two iron ladders. The gnomes use the platform to work on the prying device. A series of pulleys, ropes, and cranks leads from the platform to the support beams; by turning the cranks, the gnomes can move the work platform up and down. There are always 25 workers and three leaders on the platform; these gnomes scream for help if they see the PCs

climbing the platform ladders, triggering the Incarceration Routine.

5. Eastern Work Platform: This is essentially the same as the western work platform (4), with the same chances of triggering the Incarceration Routine.

6. Work Room: The PCs hear the sounds of hammering, pounding, and grinding coming from this large building. If they peer through the open doorway, they see hundreds of gnomes working on complex mechanical devices (actually, replacement parts for the area 2 prying device)—some of the devices resemble metallic trees with tiny gears plastered from top to bottom, others look like gigantic scissors with multiple blades, each blade covered with ropes and pulleys. An immense portrait of an aged gnome hangs on the north wall; the gnome has sparkling eyes and a friendly smile. Occasionally, a gnome passing by the portrait stops to gaze at it, then bursts into tears. (This is a portrait of Hutikfuredin, the gnomes' lost leader.)

There is nothing in this room of interest to the PCs (except for a number of crowbars, hammers, and other tools that could be used as weapons to inflict 1d4 points of damage). If the PCs enter the building or otherwise draw attention to themselves, execute the Incarceration Routine.

7. Cannon Room: This building houses an immense weapon mounted on wheels. The weapon resembles a long tube with multi-colored glass rods coiling around it. All types of wheels, gears, and levers are mounted on the weapon. (The weapon is a prototype planar-matter cannon, based on the design principles of the gnomish steam cannon. The cannon is designed to absorb planar matter from the atmosphere and focus it into powerful pebble-like streams.)

The PCs cannot operate the weapon, but if they wish, they can damage it in an attempt to render it inoperable. (The PCs' damage attempts are unnecessary; the cannon is already inoperable. Any damage done by the PCs is repaired by the time the events of Chapter 4 occur.)

8. Supply Room: This room contains fungi, water, and other supplies for the gnomes. There are no gnomes here.

9. living Quarters: This is where the gnomes rest. There are always hundreds of gnomes present here. Most of the room is filled with bunk beds, stacked 12 units high. A small platform attaches to the side of each stack of beds. By operating a series of levers and cranks, a gnome can lift himself to the proper bed; however, the system malfunctions as often as not, dumping the hapless gnome to the floor before he reaches his destination.

If the PCs enter the building or otherwise draw attention to themselves, execute the Incarceration Routine. The room contains nothing of interest.

10. Storeroom: A pile of stones, metal plates, and assorted junk blocks the entrance to this small building. A gnome worker slumbers next to the pile.

This is where Ahxa is incarcerated. Because the gnomes weren't anticipating prisoners, the storeroom serves as a makeshift cell, the junk pile blocking the only entrance. If the PCs subdue the slumbering gnome and remove the junk (it takes one PC 30 rounds to remove it, two PCs 15 rounds to remove it, three PCs 10 rounds to remove it, and so on) they find Ahxa inside, eager to return to Eborium. If asked why the gnomes kidnapped him, Ahxa reveals the information in the DM's Background, insisting that he's innocent (which he is). Proceed to the "Escape from Schymonarke Island" section.

If the PCs are incarcerated in the storeroom before they get a chance to free Ahxa (most likely as a result of an Incarceration Routine), the gnomes place extra junk in the doorway, wedging it so tightly that the PCs cannot move it. However, Ahxa shows them an area near the eastern wall where he's been attempting to dig his way out. It takes one PC 30 rounds to dig a hole under the wall large enough to allow the party to escape; two PCs can dig a hole in 15 rounds, and so on. Pro-

ceed to the "Escape from Schymonarke Island" section. (If the PCs are incarcerated a second time, the gnomes haven't yet noticed the original escape tunnel, which is concealed in the shadows of the building.)

11. Golden Portal: This pool of shimmering golden light is a portal leading to Schymonarke in Taladas. On the opposite side of the portal is a complex elevator system the gnomes use to transport materials from Schymonarke to the island. The portal responds only to the body chemistry of the gnomes; the party members cannot use it.

12. Commander's Quarters: This is the personal quarters of Trushigimolus, the commander of the Schymonarke gnomes (generic gnome leader.) Inside is a desk, a bed, a large stone bin used as a file cabinet, and a portrait of Hutikfuredin hanging on the wall. If the PCs enter this building or otherwise draw attention to themselves, Trushigimolus shouts for help. If the PCs beg Trushigimolus to hear their defense of Ahxa, proceed to the "Audience with Trushigimolus" section. Otherwise, execute the Incarceration Routine.

ESCAPE FROM SCHYMONARKE ISLAND

After the PCs have freed Ahxa from the storeroom (10), the party can attempt to escape from the Second Island by climbing ladder 3 to the First Island, then climbing ladder 1 to the green portal. If the PCs draw attention to themselves, execute the Incarceration Routine; otherwise, the PCs make it as far as ladder 3 before they're discovered.

Once the PCs are halfway up ladder 3, the gnomes spot them and begin to yell and wave their arms, scrambling in every direction. Instead of pursuing the party, the gnomes head for the cannon room (7) and wheel out the weapon, pointing it at the party. The gnomes activate the cannon, but it backfires, spewing clouds of noxious dust in all directions; neither the PCs nor the gnomes are harmed.

When the party reaches the First Island, they have to subdue nine worker gnomes and one leader (use generic leader and worker statistics), who fight to the death to prevent the party from escaping. If the party subdues the gnomes, they can climb ladder 1 to the green portal and return to Eborium. Once the party reaches Eborium, they may proceed to the Primary Chronolily to experience another Interlude (see the Adventure Sequence in Chapter 1 for details). For the purposes of Chapter 4, the DM should note that the PCs rescued Ahxa with the Prison Break Option.

AUDIENCE WITH TRUSHIGIMOLUS

Trushigimolus asks the PCs why they wish to see him; he listens impassively to whatever they have to say. He then summons a worker to fetch Ahxa.

When Ahxa arrives, Trushigimolus asks him why he stole the spirit of their great leader, Hutikfuredin. With the PCs acting as interpreters, Ahxa explains about his tribe's crystal tree, stressing that Hutikfuredin's spirit came to the tree voluntarily. Once Ahxa finishes, Trushigimolus says, "The only way to verify your story is to ask Hutikfuredin himself. Will you take me to his spirit?" Ahxa agrees.

With Trushigimolus leading the way, the party climbs ladder 3 to the First Island, then climbs ladder 1 to pass through the green portal, returning them to Eborium. Ahxa leads the party and Trushigimolus to the crystal tree (area 13).

Ahxa approaches the base of the tree and makes quick slashes against the trunk with his hand, causing a two-foot-wide opening to appear. He sticks his eye stalks in the opening, then silently *speaks with spirits* to locate Hutikfuredin. A few minutes later, Ahxa emerges from the opening, followed by the ghostly image of an aged gnome.

"Hutikfuredin!" gasps Trushigimolus. "Are you all right?"



"Of course I am!" says the exasperated spirit. "Why have you disturbed me?"

Sheepishly, Trushigimolus says that the Schymonarke people were concerned that his spirit had been kidnapped. The spirit says he came to the crystal tree voluntarily, "and I intend to go back inside right now. If you don't mind."

"Oh, absolutely not," says Trushigimolus. "May you continue to enjoy your afterlife." The spirit vanishes inside the tree, and the vindicated Ahxa fires a series of needles at the opening to seal it shut.

The clearly embarrassed Trushigimolus offers profuse apologies to the party and Ahxa. "This has all been a most unfortunate misunderstanding," he says. "Perhaps some day we can repay you for your trouble." With that, Trushigimolus returns to the crack and disappears into the green portal. For the purposes of Chapter 4, the DM should note that the PCs rescued Ahxa with the Negotiation Option.

Note to the DM: Trushigimolus has no useful information for the party, but because the gnomes are worshipers of Udras the Alchemist, he may be able to answer some of the party's questions about Udras/Sargonnas. Depending on what the party asks, Trushigimolus's answers may either confirm or cast doubt on the party's suspicions about Udras/Sargonnas's identity.

* If the PCs describe Udras/Sargonnas, Trushigimolus says the description matches a typical manifestation of Udras the Alchemist.

* Asked if Udras would be inclined to interfere with the plans of Eresem, Trushigimolus says it's quite unlikely. "Udras is pledged to neutrality."

* If the PCs describe the decorations in the iron citadel, Trushigimolus seems puzzled. "Udras prefers bright reds and yellows, not red and black. Very strange."

* Asked if Udras is prone to outbursts of temper, Trushigimolus says, "The Udras I know is even-tempered and in control of his emotions."

WHAT NEXT?

The party may now proceed to the Primary Chronolily to experience another Interlude.

SCHEDULED EVENT 5: OMINOUS RUMBLES

DM's BACKGROUND

Anishta, an evil priestess from Thenol, was among the mercenaries originally hired by Eresem to hunt dragons on Taldas (see the Appendix for Anishta's statistics and background). Impressed with her skill, Eresem recruited Anishta to help lead her army of evil minions. Like Ella and Grott before her, Anishta volunteered to locate and destroy the troublesome intruders on Eborium. To accomplish this, Anishta (with the help of Eresem) has forged two magical chains to shake the island apart, thus causing the intruders to plummet into the emptiness of the gray void.

TREMBLING GROUND

As soon as the party returns to Eborium, the PCs notice that the ground is trembling slightly. Unless the party is within 100 yards of either of Anishta's hooks (see DM's Map), there is no noticeable source of the tremors.

If the party comes within 100 yards of either of Anishta's hooks, the trembling becomes stronger, growing more intense as they approach the edge of the island. The party sees

an immense iron hook imbedded deep in the ground. The hook connects to a thick chain extending to a hole of violet light about 100 yards distant. The chain tugs forcefully at the island, each tug sending tremors rippling through the ground. An aura of crackling energy surrounds the hook and the chain. (The chain leads through the violet portal into another plane where Anishta's minions are pulling it.)

If a PC touches the hook or the chain, he must roll a successful Constitution check, or suffer 1d6 points of damage from the energy aura. The chain can be damaged only by magical weapons; assume that the chain has an AC of -6 and can be severed if it suffers 100 points of damage. However, the magical chain has the ability to repair itself; assume it repairs itself after the party leaves the area, at which time the tugging resumes.

If the PCs ask Ahxa about the chain, he says he knows nothing about it. If the PCs linger too long at the chain, Ahxa urges them to continue with their mission.

WHAT NEXT?

The party may now proceed to the Primary Chronolily to experience another Interlude.

SCHEDULED EVENT 6: CRUMBLING ISLAND

DM's BACKGROUND

Anishta continues to tug at Eborium with her chains from another plane, a process begun in Scheduled Event 5. If the PCs damaged either chain in Scheduled Event 5, the chain has since repaired itself.

RETURN TO THE IRON CITADEL

Having completed all of the Interludes, the party must now rendezvous with Udras/Sargonnas at his iron citadel (area 1). The ground still trembles as it did in Scheduled Event 5, but Ahxa urges them to ignore it so they can keep their appointment with Udras/Sargonnas.

As the PCs approach the iron citadel, a tremor of staggering proportions rocks the island, knocking the PCs to the ground (no damage). The hooks have ripped away two large chunks of the island (refer to the DM's Map), including the waterfalls (areas 7 and 16), the phase spider pods (area 8), and the ash valley (area 11). The chunks crumble to dust. The hooks, chains, and holes of white light disappear. But the bulk of the island remains intact (this is not what Anishta had in mind). There is no more trembling.

A reddish mist rises around the party. All PCs lapse into unconsciousness (no saving throw).

Proceed to Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: THE FINAL BATTLE



This chapter begins immediately after the end of Scheduled Event 6 in Chapter 3. If the PCs defeated Grott and Ella in Scheduled Event 2 in Chapter 3, ignore all references to them in this chapter. If Gurroch was left in Taladas in Interlude 3 in Chapter 2, ignore all references to him in this chapter.

NOTES TO THE DM

MODIFICATIONS

This chapter assumes that the PCs have delivered at least one *cindergem* to Udras/Sargonnas prior to the events of the "Reunion" section below. If the PCs have not yet delivered a *cindergem* to him, but they are bringing the first one to him now (that is, they weren't successful in locating a *cindergem* until the sixth Interlude) or if they've hidden all their retrieved *cindergems* on their persons or somewhere on Eborium, ignore the references to the *cindergems* in the "Reunion" section. Instead, Udras/Sargonnas causes the concealed *cindergems* (along with the *cindergem* retrieved from the sixth Interlude) to magically appear as described in the "Coming Battle" section; the rest of the adventure plays out as described.

If the PCs have failed in all their attempts to locate *cindergems* in the Interludes, ignore all references to the *cindergems* in the "Reunion" and "Coming Battle" sections. Instead, Udras/Sargonnas is furious at the party's incompetence, but realizing that EreSTEM's minions are on the way, he quickly devises an alternate plan. He tells the PCs and the dragons to fight the minions while he remains in his citadel

and puts together a different weapon (actually, he's just trying to buy time). When EreSTEM appears (in the "Wrath of EreSTEM" section), she summons Udras/Sargonnas from his citadel, reveals his true identity, and destroys the citadel and the island using the power of her red *cindergem*; the rest of the adventure plays out as described.

AHXA'S ROLE

Ahxa does not take an active part in this chapter. Sensing impending danger, he remains near his crystal tree, fleeing with his tribe when the tree is destroyed in the "Wrath of EreSTEM" section.


REUNION

The PCs wake up on the floor inside the iron citadel (area 1 on the DM's Map). Udras/Sargonnas sits cross-legged on his iron throne in the center of the room. All of the *cindergems* that the party has returned so far to Udras/Sargonnas hover in front of his face, suspended in mid-air. The *cindergems* have expanded in size and are now nearly two feet in diameter. A halo of dazzling light surrounds each gem, so bright that it stings the eyes. Udras/Sargonnas, however, stares at the gems as if hypnotized, oblivious to his surroundings. If the PCs speak to him or otherwise interrupt him, he breaks out of his trance and snaps, "Silence!"

Several copper and brass dragons are huddled near the back of the citadel.

One copper dragon is Torris (see the Prologue for his statistics). Torris has no idea how they got here or what Udras/





Sargonnas is doing. "One minute, I was flying over the hills of Highvale," he says, clearly confused. "The next minute, I'm here." If the PCs don't recognize Torris (depending on which sections of the Prologue they experienced, they might not have met him), he introduces himself.

The largest brass dragon is Marlaine. Next to her are her children, young brass dragons named Tryff, Corriya, and Bronsos. If the PCs participated in the *Dragon Knight* adventure, they'll recognize Marlaine and her children.

Marlaine (mature adult brass dragon; also known as Sun-scale): AC -3; MV 12, FI 30 (C), Br 6; HD 15; hp 90; THAC0 5; #AT 3 + special (snatch; kick 1d6 + 7 feet away and 1d10 + 7 points of dmg; wing buffet 1d10 + 7 points of dmg; tail slap up to seven creatures for 2d6 + 7 points of dmg each, victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or be stunned for 1d4 + 1 rounds); Dmg 1d6 + 7/1d6 + 7/4d4 + 7; SA cone of sleep gas (70' long x 5' x 20', victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or fall asleep for 70 rounds) and cloud of blistering heat (50' long x 40' x 20', dmg 4d4 + 2, roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon for half damage), can breathe three times per day, once every three rounds; SD *fear* within 25 yards (roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or fight with a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls), *speak with animals* at will, *create or destroy water* three times per day, *control temperature* three times per day in a 70' radius, *dust devil* and *suggestion* once per day; MR 25%; AL CG; Size G (50' body, 45' tail)

Languages: Brass Dragon, Auric (14), Copper Dragon (14)
Spells: 1st Level— *detect magic*, *light*; 2nd Level— *detect evil*, *ESP*

Tryff, Bronsos, and Corriya (very young brass dragons; also known as Windsong, Longwing, and Darkeye): AC 2; MV 12, FI 30 (C), Br 6; HD 8; hp 45; THAC0 13; #AT 3 + special (kick 1d6 + 2 feet away and 1d10 + 2 points of damage); Dmg 1d6 + 2/1d6 + 2/4d4 + 2; SA cone of sleep gas (70' long x 5' x 20'; victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or fall asleep for 20 minutes) and cloud of blistering heat (50' long x 40' x 20', dmg 4d4 + 2, roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon for half damage), can breathe three times per day, once every three rounds; SD *speak with animals* at will; AL CG; Size G (12' body, 10' tail)

Languages: Brass Dragon, Auric (13)

If Marlaine recognizes the PC, she greets them by name; if not, she introduces herself and her children. She echoes Torris's puzzlement regarding their current predicament. "We were sunning ourselves on a mountainside," she says. "A moment later, we found ourselves in this citadel."

A huge copper dragon, the last of the group, steps forward and introduces himself. "I am Quarr," he says proudly. "I, too, was snatched from my home without warning. There had better be a good reason for this." Quarr is an aide of Amanthus. He is hot-tempered, conceited, and courageous.

Quarr (young copper dragon; also known as Slycer): AC 0; MV 9, FI 30 (C), jp 3; HD 12; hp 61; THAC0 9; #AT 3 + special; Dmg 1d6 + 3/1d6 + 3/5d4 + 3; SA acid breath (70' long x 5' x 5', Dmg 10d6 + 3, roll a successful saving throw for half damage) and gas breath that slows victim for nine minutes (30' long x 20' x 20'), can breathe once every three rounds; SD *spider climb* (on stone), *neutralize poison* (three times per day), *stone shape* (two times per day), immune to acid; AL CG; Size G (25' body, 17' tail)

Languages: Copper Dragon, Auric (14), Bronze Dragon (14)

THE COMING BATTLE

A flare of white light fills the room, then subsides; the *cindergems* have swollen to nearly four feet in diameter.

Udras/Sargonnas breaks into a wide grin. "The power of the gems is staggering!" he cackles to no one in particular. "Erestem will rue the day she crossed me!" The gems flare again; if the PCs have a *cindergem* with them from the sixth Interlude, it suddenly appears next to the other gems, hovering alongside them. Likewise, if the PCs hid any *cindergems* from previous Interludes, these gems also abruptly appear in the air next to Udras/Sargonnas's gems. The new gems quickly expand to four feet in diameter and are engulfed in auras of dazzling light.

Udras/Sargonnas turns to the PCs. "The enchantment of the gems nears completion. Erestem will soon be mine." If the PCs were unable to retrieve all of the *cindergems*, Udras/Sargonnas says that the additional gems would have made the weapon more powerful, but even without them, the weapon should still be strong enough to defeat her.

If the PCs have questions, Udras/Sargonnas declines to answer. "There is no time for questions. Much is left to do." Udras/Sargonnas says that Erestem's minions have located the PCs and are on their way to Eborium.

It is up to the PCs and dragons to battle the minions; Udras/Sargonnas must remain in the citadel to continue formulating the *cindergem* weapon. If the PCs want to know why they can't also stay in the citadel, he says that the powerful energies released as the *cindergem* weapon is formulated would destroy them.

Udras/Sargonnas says that he retrieved the dragons from Taladas for the party's use as mounts. If the PCs participated in the *Dragon Knight* adventure, Udras/Sargonnas adds, "I believe most of you know each other." If the PCs didn't participate in *Dragon Knight*, he says, "Most of the dragons were known by your friends."

THE GIFT OF THE GEMS

Udras/Sargonnas then says, "I have not forgotten my promise to imbue you with powers from the gems."

Each gem grants one set of powers to one PC. A PC receives a set of powers by touching a gem. It's up to the party to decide which PC touches which gem. When a PC approaches a gem, he must squint or otherwise shield his eyes from the dazzling light; otherwise, he will be blinded for 1d4 rounds (he still receives the powers). After a PC touches a gem, he receives the powers detailed below; the gem dims slightly, indicating that it can't be touched again. Once a PC has received a set of powers, he can't touch another gem.

Dragons cannot receive powers from the *cindergems*.

If there are more PCs than gems, some of the PCs do not receive a set of powers.

If there are more gems than PCs, the PCs must decide which gems to touch; a PC can't receive powers from more than one gem.

Udras/Sargonnas doesn't know the exact nature of the powers granted by the gems, but believes the powers derive from the locations on Taladas where the gems were found.

The powers are temporary magical abilities. The powers associated with each Interlude are as follows:

Orange cindergem: The PC gains the AC and flying abilities of a great wyrm silver dragon: AC -11, FI 30 (C)

Yellow cindergem: The PC gains two light-associated abilities. He can flash a beam of white light at the eyes of an opponent up to 100 feet away; if the attack is successful (make a normal attack roll), the victim is blinded for 1d4 rounds, fighting with a -4 penalty to his attack roll during that time. Alternatively, the PC can flash a beam of golden light at an

opponent up to 50 feet away; if the attack is successful (make a normal attack roll), the victim suffers 2d6 points of damage. Either ability can be used at will in place of a normal attack.

Green cindergem: The PC gains several temperature-associated abilities. He can blast either a narrow cone of extreme cold or a cone of extreme heat at a target up to 50 feet away (make a normal attack roll); in either case, the victim suffers 2d4 + 10 points of damage. Either temperature blast can be used in place of a normal attack, but a blast can be attempted only once every other round. Additionally, the PC gains complete immunity to all cold-based, heat-based, ice, and fire attacks (magical or otherwise).

Blue cindergem: The ghostly image of a four-foot-diameter human skull with sharp fangs appears beside the PC, hovering near his shoulders. The PC can mentally command the skull image to move in any direction within a 100-foot radius. The PCs can also command the skull to attack victims with its fangs (this is in addition to any attacks normally allowed the PC). If the skull is destroyed, it disappears, but a new skull takes its place five rounds later.

Skull: AC 0; MV Fl 30 (C); HD 5; hp 40; THACO 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SA can be hit only by spells, magical weapons, or dragon's breath; AL N

Indigo cindergem: The PC gains several abilities associated with spectres and ghosts. His AC is 0; he can fly at a rate of 30 (B); he becomes immune to all *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold-based attacks, as well as poison and paralyzation attacks; and his touch inflicts 1d8 points of damage and drains two life energy levels. He retains all of his other normal abilities, including his hit points, and can still make all of his normal attacks; he does not become immaterial, instead retaining his normal physical form.

Violet cindergem: The PC gains several abilities associated with the mightiest of warriors. Any weapon attack he makes always inflicts two points beyond its maximum damage (for instance, a short sword that normally inflicts 1d6 points of damage now inflicts 8 points of damage with every successful blow). He can make two attacks per round. Finally, he acquires 10d6 temporary hit points; damage sustained is taken first from these temporary points.

The PCs who receive these powers also gain full knowledge of how to use them. The powers last for two hours.

After the PCs have received their powers from the gems, Udras/Sargonnas tells them to make any necessary preparations for the battle. When they're ready, he'll transport them to the battlefield. "In your absence, I discovered a way to return you home." When the battle has ended, he says, he'll transform a violet chronolily into a portal to return them to Taladas. Udras/Sargonnas urges them to make their preparations quickly.

If the PCs mistrust Udras/Sargonnas and are reluctant to battle the minions, one of the dragons tells the party that even if Udras/Sargonnas has ulterior motives, he seems sincere in his efforts to thwart Erestem. "If we can stop the minions here, then who knows how many Taladan lives we will save, dragon and human alike?" The dragon will also add that unless they cooperate with Udras/Sargonnas, there seems little chance of their safe return to Taladas.

BATTLE PREPARATIONS

Marlaine steps forward and says that she believes the best strategy for fighting the minions is to divide themselves into teams, each team consisting of a dragon and a PC rider. If the PCs have an alternative plan, Marlaine and the dragons will consider it, but the PCs must be especially convincing.

Further, Marlaine says that she and the other dragons will obey all of the commands given to them by their PC riders.

The dragons are adamant about the PCs commanding the teams and will not consider other options.

The following preparations must be made before the battle begins.

ASSIGN RIDERS

The choice of riders is largely up to the PCs, subject to the following conditions:

* If there are more PCs than dragons, no more than two characters can ride the same dragon. If there are more dragons than PCs, the PCs must decide which dragon (or dragons) will fight alone.

* None of the dragons except Quarr has any preference as to who rides them. Quarr refuses to allow dwarves or kender to ride him; the other dragons, who are usually reluctant to allow these races to use them as mounts, are willing to make an exception for this battle.

* All of the dragons except Quarr have well-crafted saddles, complete with stirrups. Each saddle can hold two characters. It's up to the party which PC (or PCs) will ride the saddle-less Quarr (which will significantly increase the rider's chance of falling; see below).

WORK OUT SIGNALS

Any PC who won't always be in physical contact with his dragon (a PC with the ability to fly, for instance) might wish to work out special signals so that his dragon can understand his orders from a distance.

DETERMINE CHANCE OF FALLING

A PC may fall off his mount in the heat of battle. The base chance of a PC falling is 70%; this presumes that the mount is participating in combat and that the PC's hands are free to use a weapon. The base chance is modified as follows:

-50% if the rider has a proficiency in airborne riding (for dragons).

-20% if the rider is using a saddle (PCs cannot tie themselves to their mounts; the dragons feel this is too restrictive to their movement).

-2% for each point of the rider's Dexterity and Strength above 12 (considering 18 as maximum Strength).

+2% for each point of the rider's Dexterity and Strength below 12.

All modifiers are cumulative. A PC's chance of falling can't be more than 90% or less than 10%.

BEGINNING THE BATTLE

When the PCs have completed their preparations, Udras/Sargonnas raises his hands in the air, causing all of the teams to instantly and simultaneously appear on the hill just outside the citadel. The teams can see the approach of the evil factions from the northwest and southeast (see following); assume the evil factions start at the edges of the island.

EVIL FACTIONS

The following are descriptions, statistics, and tactics for the evil minions. The minions are grouped into factions; each faction fights as a team. Factions A, B, and C approach Eborium from the northwest, while Factions D, E, and F approach from the southeast (see the DM's Map).



FACTION A

This faction consists of Gurroch (see the Appendix for his statistics) and a chulcrix.

Chulcrix: AC -2; MV FI 48 (B); HD 13; hp 75; THACO 7; #AT 2; Dmg 3d6/3d6; SA *attract victims**; SD *plane shift* at will, *regenerates* 1d4 points of damage per round, immune to normal and magical fire, immune to all cold-based attacks, immune to dragon breath; MR 20%; AL CE

* This attack consists of these steps: 1) The creature unhinges its jaws to a 30' diameter, a process taking two rounds; 2) While hovering in place, it radiates an invisible cone of force 100' long with a radius of 25' (victims in area of effect must roll a saving throw vs. spell. Those who succeed are unaffected by the *attract victims* power. Those who fail must roll a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or they become immobile and float toward the creature's mouth at the rate of 10' per round; those succeeding with this second roll also float toward its mouth, but they are able to make missile attacks, cast spells, and take similar actions); 3) A victim drawn into the chulcrix's mouth passes through a valve leading to the creature's stomach, and the valve closes behind him. Once in the stomach, victims are no longer paralyzed. Victims inside the stomach suffer an automatic 1d4 points of damage per round from acidic digestive gasses (no saving throw). Victims in the stomach can attempt to hack themselves free, but because of the churning movement of the stomach and the debilitating effect of the acidic gasses, all attacks are made with a -2 penalty to the attack roll; maximum damage caused is 1 point per round (plus magical and Strength bonuses)

Gurroch stays mounted on the back of the chulcrix throughout the battle (no chance of falling), using Deathstriker to attack from a distance. The chulcrix uses its attract victims ability in an attempt to consume the good team. However, the chulcrix does not use its attract victims ability against Marlaine or Torris, as these dragons are too big to digest easily; the PCs riding these dragons won't be subject to attract victims either. If the chulcrix faces Marlaine or Torris (or if its intended victims successfully resist its attract victims ability), it makes claw attacks.

If the opportunity presents itself, Gurroch uses Deathstriker to ignite the red stream to prevent the withdrawal of an opponent. Any character touching the flames suffers 2d6 points of damage (no saving throw).

Gurroch is willing to fight to the death, but the chulcrix isn't. If the chulcrix loses half or more of its hit points, its plane shifts away, leaving Gurroch behind; Gurroch falls to the ground, suffering 1d6 points of damage for each ten feet he falls (maximum 20d6 points of damage).

If Gurroch was left behind in Taladas in Interlude 3, he isn't present here; the good team has only the chulcrix to face. The chulcrix is motivated solely by the prospect of having something interesting to eat. If the PC and his dragon resist the chulcrix's attract victims powers, the chulcrix attacks with its claws.

FACTION B

This faction consists of a blue dragon named Jhad. Vain, arrogant, and supremely confident, Jhad petitioned Eresem to make him a leader of her blue dragon minions; in spite of his youth, Jhad was certain he could do the job. Eresem dispatched him to Eborium to deal with the PCs; she'll consider his petition depending on his success at Eborium.

Jhad (young blue dragon; also known as Bloodclaw): AC 1; MV 9, FI 30 (C), Br 4; HD 12; hp 75; THACO 9; #AT 3 + special (kick 1d6 + 3 feet away and 1d8 + 3 points of dmg); Dmg 1d8 + 3/1d8 + 3/3d8 + 3; SA 5' wide bolt of lighting that streaks 100' in a straight line from the dragon's mouth for 6d8 + 3 points of damage; roll a successful saving throw for half damage); SD create or destroy three times per day, immune to electricity; AL LE; Size G (30' body, 23' tail)

Languages: Blue Dragon, Green Dragon (11)

Jhad charges straight at his intended opponent, using his breath weapon immediately, then attacking with his teeth and claws in fierce melee. He fights to death.

FACTION C

This faction consists of two red dragons, Hox and Rhuzu, who are sisters. Like Jhad (Faction B), the sisters are also vying for leadership positions in Eresem's army and hope to impress her with their success at Eborium.

Hox and Rhuzu (young red dragons; also known as Pyra and Deathflare): AC -1; MV 9, FI 30 (C), Jp 3; HD 11; hp 70 each; THACO 9; #AT 3 + special (kick 1d6 + 2 feet away and 1d10+2 points of dmg); Dmg 1d10+2/1d10+2/3d10+2; SA cone fire (90' long x 5' x 30', dmg 8d10+2, roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon for half damage), can breathe three times per day, once every three rounds; SD *affect normal fires*, three times per day; AL CE; Size G (20' body, 18' tail)

Languages: Red Dragon, Green Dragon (15), Blue Dragon (15), Auric (15)

The dragons prefer to attack as a team, soaring at their intended opponent from opposite sides. They use their breath weapons in tandem, reserving one of three breath weapon attacks for emergencies. Otherwise, they attack with teeth and claws.

If either red dragon loses half or more of her hit points, she panics and flees. The remaining sister continues to fight the death. She does not accept surrender.

FACTION D

This faction consists of a green dragon named Affkon, another would-leader of Eresem's army who seeks to impress her with his performance at Eborium. Affkon is a vicious, brutal combatant.

Affkon (young green dragon; also known as Verdigris): AC 1; MV 9, FI 30 (C), Sw 9; HD 11; hp 77; THACO- 9; #AT 3 + special (kick 1d6 +3 feet away and 1d8 +3 dmg); Dmg 1d8 + 3/1d8 + 3/2d10 + 3; SA chlorine gas cloud (50' long x 40' x 30'; Dmg 6d6 +3; save for half damage); SD water breathing once per day, immune to all gasses; AL LE; Size G (32' body, 27' tail)

Languages: Green Dragon, Red Dragon (12)

Affkon's attacks are always accompanied by sneering insults about his opponent's inept defenses. He prefers diving attacks whenever possible, followed by a breath weapon blast. Affkon will fight to the death.

FACTION E

This faction consists of Ella (see the Appendix for his statistics) and a black dragon named Fyex, the brother of Kahl, whom the PCs met in Scheduled Event 2 in Chapter 3. (Grott, Ella's partner, is sequestered in another plane of existence

and does not participate in the battle.)

Fyex (young adult black dragon; also known as Shadow-back): AC 0; MV 12, FI 30 (C), Sw 12; HD 13; hp 75; THACO 7; #AT 3 + specials (snatch up to L size; kick 1d6 + 5 feet away and 1d6 + 5 dmg); Dmg 1d6 + 5/1d6 + 5/3d6 + 5; SA acid stream (60' line from dragon's head; Dmg 10d4 + 5; save for half damage), can breathe once every three rounds; SD fear within 15 yards (roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or fight with -2 to attack and damage rolls); *water breathe* at will, *darkness* in 50' radius three times per day, *corrupt water* once per day (stagnate 50 cubic feet of water, making it too foul to support life; when used against potions or elixirs, they become useless if a 15 or better is rolled on 1d20), immune to acid; MR 10%; AL CE; Size G (40' body, 33' tail)

Spells (cast at 10th level): 1st Level— *magic missile* x 2

Ella stays mounted on the back of Fyex (no chance of falling). As soon as the good team arrives, Ella challenges the PC to dismount and meet her on the ground. "Let the dragons fight, while you and I resolve our personal dispute." If the PC declines the challenge, Ella stays mounted on Fyex throughout the battle.

If the PC accepts the challenge, Fyex lowers Ella to the ground at the same time the PC dismounts from his dragon. The PC can then engage Ella in combat while the dragons fight above. If Fyex defeats the PC's dragon (Fyex prefers magic missile and breath weapons, using melee attacks as a last resort), Fyex joins the attack against the PC. If the PC's dragon defeats Fyex, the PC's dragon attacks Ella only if the PC orders him to.

Ella fights to the death (Grott told her that if she surrenders, she will shame herself in the eyes of Angomeith), but Fyex won't (he is no braver than his brother). If Fyex loses half or more of his hit points, he panics and flees, never to be seen again. If Fyex loses half or more of his hit points while Ella is riding him, Fyex sets Ella on the ground before fleeing.

FACTION F

This faction consists of Anishta (see the Appendix for her statistics), a gargantua eyewing, and three normal eyewings.

Gargantua eyewing: AC 1; MV FI 30 (B); HD 10; hp 70; THACO 11; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d4 (claws and tail) or eyewing tears; SA blast eyewing tears (normal attack roll; victim must be within 300 feet; can blast tears in any direction); victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 3d6 points of damage (success means half damage); SD immune to all cold-based attacks, can see with perfect accuracy for up to 50 miles, infravision out to 300 feet; AL LE

Eyewings (3): AC 4; MV FI 24 (B); HD 3; hp 18 each; THACO 17; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d4 (claws and tail) or eyewing tears; SA blinks eyewing tears (normal attack roll; victim must be within 100 feet); victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 2d6 points of damage (success means only 1d6 points of damage); tears may also splash onto anyone within ten feet of the victim (splashed victims must roll a saving throw vs. poison; those who fail suffer 2d4 points of damage, those who succeed suffer 1d4 points of damage); SD immune to all cold-based attacks, can see with perfect accuracy for up to 25 miles, has infravision out to 120 feet; AL LE

The gargantua eyewing is a 60-foot-long version of a normal eyewing. It can blast its projectile-like tears in any direction at targets up to 300 feet away; however, because its tears

are more cohesive than those of normal eyewings, there is no chance of splashing.

Anishta stays mounted on the back of the gargantua eyewing throughout the battle (no chance of falling). Because the gargantua eyewing isn't particularly intelligent, Anishta must tell it where to fly and where to direct its attacks; she makes no attacks herself as long as she stays astride the gargantua eyewing, unless an opponent comes close enough for her to use her mace. The normal eyewings attack with their claws and tails, making teardrop attacks by flying above the good team when the opportunity arises.

Anishta and the gargantua eyewing are willing to fight to the death; should the gargantua eyewing lose half or more of its hit points, it flutters to the ground (thus grounding Anishta). The grounded gargantua eyewing cannot move, but it can still make tear attacks. If the gargantua eyewing is destroyed, the normal eyewings panic and flee, never to be seen again.

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect during the battle:

- * The good dragons move, attack, and cast spells as ordered by the PCs. Both the riders and the dragons may attack in the same round, not necessarily at the same target. PCs with gifts from Udras/Sargonnas can use them in place of normal attacks.

- * If there are fewer than six PCs, there are one or more good dragons fighting without riders. The DM can either determine the actions of these solo dragons himself or allow one or more of the players to decide them.

- * Once combat begins, a PC's chance of falling is checked every six rounds. The DM may increase or decrease the frequency of these checks as he sees fit; for instance, checks might occur more often if an airborne dragon is fighting several opponents, and less often if the dragon is not under direct attack.

If the dragon is on the ground when his rider falls, there is a 50% chance the PC suffers 1d4 points of damage. The dragon remains stationary if he loses his rider, but continues to defend himself with his claws and breath weapons. It takes a rider one round to remount.


A rider slipping from his airborne mount can roll a successful Dexterity check to grab the saddle (or the dragon) and prevent himself from falling. If he then rolls a successful Strength check, he pulls himself back aboard the dragon (this takes one round, during which time he can take no other actions). If he fails the Strength check, he falls. A PC falling from an airborne dragon suffers 1d6 points of damage for every ten feet he falls (maximum damage of 20d6 points). An airborne dragon immediately descends to the ground to retrieve his fallen rider; it takes the rider one round to remount.

SPECIAL EVENT

If the PCs rescued Ahxa from the gnomes with the Prison Break Option (Scheduled Event 4, Chapter 3), this Special Event does not occur.

If the PCs rescued Ahxa from the gnomes with the Negotiation Option, three rounds after the battle begins, dozens of Schymonarke gnomes begin to spill from the crack leading from their lair (area 4), hauling a large gun with them (this is the cannon that misfired at the end of Scheduled Event 4; if the PCs damaged it earlier, the gnomes have repaired it). The gnomes set up the gun (which takes two rounds), then begin to fire it at the nearest evil faction dragon; this is how the gnomes are repaying the PCs for their unjust accusation against Ahxa.





The gun has a range of 150 yards. Assume it attacks as a 12-Hit Dice monster; a successful hit inflicts 3d6 points of damage (the gun fires a fine spray of pebble-like matter). The gnomes fire the gun once each round for five rounds; on the fifth attempt, the gun backfires and explodes (no damage to the gnomes). The gnomes then scramble back into their crack, and the event is over.

The DM decides which end of the crack the gnomes appear from, where they set up their gun, and which evil faction is targeted. He also makes the attack rolls for the gun. The evil factions do not attack the gnomes; presumably, they have their hands full with the good teams. If a good team approaches the gnomes, the gnomes ignore them; they have their hands full with the gun. If the battle ends before the gnomes can make all five shooting attempts, they scramble back into their crack and disappear. (If the PCs pursue them, the gnomes tell them their reason for bringing their gun to the island.)

ENDING THE BATTLE

The battle continues until one of the following conditions occurs:

- * All of the PCs are dead. Proceed to the "Defeated" section.

- * All of the evil factions have been defeated or driven away. Proceed to the "The Wrath of Eretem" section.

DEFEATED

Eretem appears and destroys Eborium as described in the "Wrath of Eretem" section. About a week later, Eretem and her minions, fueled by their victory at Eborium, invade Taladas and soundly defeat Amanthus and her allies. The good Othlorx of Taladas are so devastated by Eretem's assault that they decline to involve themselves in the War of the Lance on the other side of Krynn. The Othlorx may yet rally to join the forces of good against Eretem, but it will require the efforts of heroes more able than the PCs.

THE WRATH OF ERETEM

The sky begins to rumble and dark clouds swirl high overhead. A crack of lightning slices through the clouds, illuminating the image of a loathsome five-headed dragon. This is an image of Eretem. Only the heads of the dragon are visible; clouds conceal its body. "Coward!" the five heads roar in unison. "Come forward!" A sizzling bolt of red lightning flashes from the image, striking the iron citadel below.

While the five-headed dragon image roars in anger, a pulsating ball of multi-colored teardrop-shaped gems passes through the wall of the iron citadel and rises slowly into the air. Each of the gems exceeds 20 feet in diameter and emits blinding streams of light. The gem ball swells in size as it ascends closer to the dragon image.

A moment later, an immense image of a gnome-like humanoid shimmers into view in the clouds next to the dragon image; the gnome image is that of Udras/Sargonnas.

"Why the masquerade, Sargonnas?" thunders the five-headed dragon image. "What have you to fear?"

"I fear nothing!" cries Udras/Sargonnas. The gnome image fades, replaced an instant later with the visage of a steely-eyed humanoid with a bald head and snarling lips, his dark skin etched with lines of hatred—Sargonnas has at last revealed his true identity.

"You are mine now, Eretem," says Sargonnas. "Do as I say, or the gems shall destroy you."

"You have misjudged the power of the gems," say the dragon heads. "just as you have misjudged me." The clouds

part, revealing the body of the dragon. A huge red gem in the shape of a teardrop dangles on a steel chain from one of the dragon's necks.

Sargonnas's eyes widen in disbelief. "The red gem!"

A stream of brilliant red light flashes from the red *cindergem* to the hovering gem ball. The gem ball stops rising and its light dims. It jerks and shudders, then begins to drop, falling faster and faster toward the ground, finally crashing into the iron citadel in an explosion of fire and sparks that rocks the entire island.

Sargonnas watches helplessly as magical flames consume his citadel, melting it away in streams of molten metal. "My queen," Sargonnas sputters. "You misunderstand. . . ."

"I misunderstand nothing!" she roars. "Now be gone! I will deal with you later!" The image of Sargonnas dissipates as if swept away by a powerful wind. The dragon image and the clouds vanish a moment later.

The island continues to rock and quake, cracks spreading across the surface and chunks splitting from the edges and tumbling into the gray void below. Flames flare up from the red streams and the electric forest (area 15) sputters and sparks. The chronolilies burst open, spilling their nectar across the ground.

The nectar of the violet chronolilies stains the ground in pools about 30 feet across; soft violet light begins to shine from these pools like beacons. The disruption of the island caused by the red *cindergem* has frozen their images and transformed them into portals to Taladas; the image in each pool is that of a Taladan location in the present time (the exact location is up to the DM; if he has no preference, assume the pools are portals to an isolated region in the hills of Southern Hosk). If the PCs step into one of the violet pools, they are instantly transported to the indicated location. (If the PCs don't think to investigate a violet pool, one of the dragons points it out.) The last thing the PCs see as they leave the now-crumbling Eborium is a flock of thousands of now-awakened gk'lok-lok soaring into the void, beginning the search for a more hospitable land to construct their new tree.

AFTERMATH

In the weeks ahead, the PCs will learn that, following the defeat of Eretem's lieutenants at Eborium, morale among the minions became low and defections were high. Amanthus held the conclave as planned and managed to rally a sizeable army of good Othlorx to defend against Eretem. Eretem's invasion occurred as expected, but her meager forces were repelled by Amanthus and her allies.

The party's reputation as heroes quickly spreads among the Othlorx of Taladas. Shortly after their return to their homelands, each PC is visited by a copper dragon aide of Amanthus, who brings the PC a steel chest (valued at 500 stl) containing the following items:

- * A *staff of thunder and lightning*. The staff contains 20 charges.

- * A *whistle of dragon summoning* that, when blown, creates a silent signal that can be heard by any good dragon within 50 miles. A good dragon who hears the signal may voluntarily respond to the summons (evil and neutral dragons cannot hear the whistle).

- * A *pendant of true seeing*. This is an emerald pendant in the shape of dragon with tiny diamond eyes. When rubbed, it enables the user to use *true seeing* as per the 7th-level wizard spell. The *true seeing* enchantment can be used five times. The pendant cannot be recharged, but it has a value of 6,000 stl.

- * A silk bag containing six opals, each worth 1,200 stl.

Chronolily



CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Ethereal plane
FREQUENCY: Very rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Special
INTELLIGENCE: Semi- (2-4)
TREASURE: Nil
ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 10
MOVEMENT: Nil
HIT DICE: 3
THACO: Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS: Nil
DAMAGE/ATTACK: Nil
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil
SIZE: G (50' diameter)
MORALE: Nil
XP VALUE: 65

Chronolilies are sentient flowers whose nectar reveals images of the past, present, and future.

The chronolily is an immense flower nearly 50 feet in diameter, its petals forming a bowl filled with golden nectar. It has a short stalk at the base and a thick stamen and pistil centered in its bowl. Thousands of tiny green leaves surround the perimeter.

There are three types of chronolily, distinguished by the color of their petals: yellow, violet, and orange. Except for the petal color, the three varieties are indistinguishable.

Shimmering images continually appear in the nectar of a chronolily, the end of one dissolving into the beginning of the next. Yellow chronolilies reveal images from the future, violet chronolilies reveal images from the present, and orange chronolilies reveal images from the past. The images are randomly generated. A typical image lasts less than 30 seconds. No sound accompanies these images.

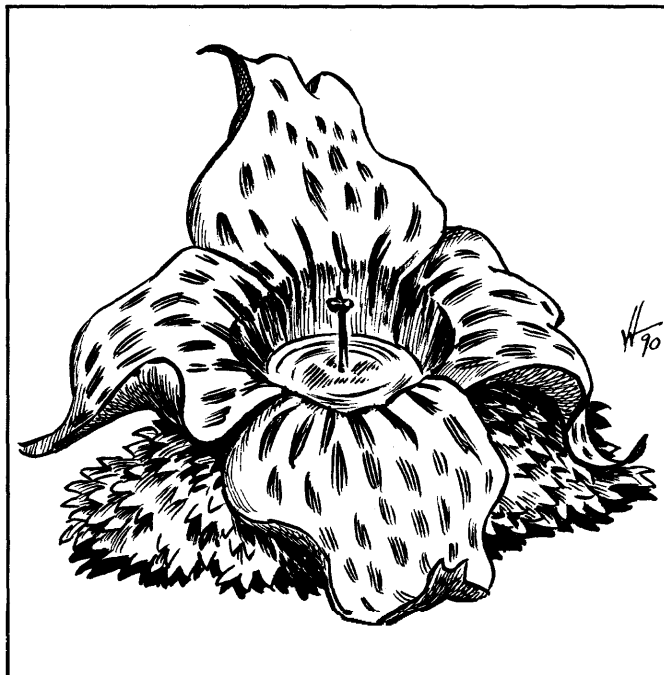
Combat: When a chronolily is reduced to 0 hit points, it instantly decomposes into a poisonous cloud 50 feet in diameter. All victims either touched by the cloud or within 50 feet of it suffer 3d6 points of damage (roll a successful saving throw vs. poison for half damage).

Chronolilies can use *know alignment* at will. In the presence of a character of evil alignment, chronolilies cause their nectar to turn black, thus denying such characters the opportunity to conjure specific images (as described in the "Using Chronolilies" section here).

Habitat/Society: Chronolilies can grow in any solid material, including rock, so long as they are exposed to any type of light. They are self-pollinating, generating tiny seeds that resemble black spheres.

Ecology: Chronolilies can absorb all necessary nutrients from any type of light. Their nectar, which tastes like honey, can be used as a component for *potions of clairvoyance*.

Using Chronolilies: A few exceptionally skilled wizards who study extraplanar plants have learned to use chronolilies to conjure images of specific events. This technique involves plucking the plant's leaves in a precise sequence and is extremely difficult to master.



However, there is a second, less dependable technique available to less-skilled users, usually taught by those who have had previous experience with chronolilies. This technique requires the user to immerse his hand in the nectar of the chronolily (or otherwise make physical contact with the nectar) and concentrate on the event he wishes to observe. The event appears in the nectar in 10d6 rounds, subject to the following restrictions:

- * The user must not be of evil alignment.
- * The user must be using a chronolily of the appropriate color (that is, if he is attempting to view an event from the past, he must be using an orange chronolily).
- * The user must concentrate on a specific image. For instance, if he concentrates on the country of his birth, the attempt will fail. However, if he concentrates on a specific house in a specific village of that country, the attempt may succeed.
- * Only one attempt per day can be made on any given chronolily using this method, regardless of whether the attempt succeeds or fails.

Success with a chronolily is not automatic. A user's base chance of success is 20%. The base is modified as follows, up to a maximum of 90% or a minimum of 5%.

Apply modifiers from any of the following:

- +25%—The character is a wizard or priest.
- +20%—The character has observed the event in the same chronolily before.
- +5%—Per point of Wisdom above 15.
- 20%—The event occurred, is occurring, or will occur on a plane of existence different from the home plane of the character making the attempt.

Apply only one of the following modifiers (past and present events only):

- +20%—The character participated in the event (past events only).
- +10%—The character is well-informed about the event.
- +5%—The character is slightly informed about the event.

Chulcrix



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Ethereal plane
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil

NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	-2
MOVEMENT:	Fl 18 (B)
HIT DICE:	13
THACO:	7
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3d6/3d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	20%
SIZE:	G (100' long)
MORALE:	Steady (12)
XP VALUE:	18,000

The chulcrix is a vicious, repugnant carnivore that dwells primarily in the Ethereal plane.

The chulcrix resembles a gigantic worm, its plump body covered with black, chitinous skin that secretes glistening mucus that reeks of rotten meat. The chulcrix is typically 100 feet long and 20 feet thick, but some have been known to grow to lengths of 300 feet or more.

The entire front end of the chulcrix consists of a round valve that functions as its mouth. When the chulcrix is preparing to feed, its mouth can expand to a diameter of 30 feet (for larger specimens, the mouth can expand to a diameter equal to half its body length). Small tendrils lining its toothless mouth serve as sensory organs. The tendrils can sense motion, odor, and body heat up to ten miles distant.

Two 30-foot-long arms extend from the creature's neck; these end in writhing and snapping pincers.

The chulcrix is moderately intelligent and can communicate telepathically in simple phrases, though it does so only rarely.

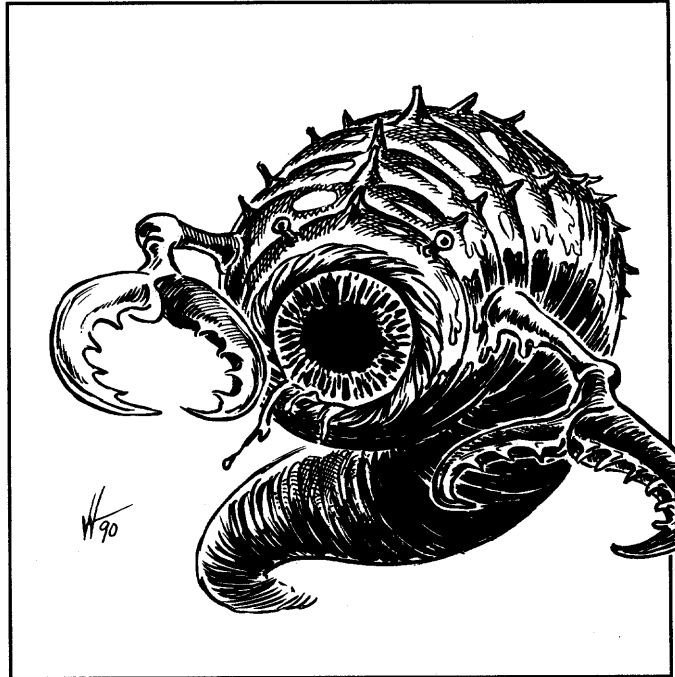
Combat: A voracious carnivore, the chulcrix is motivated primarily by its desire to eat. It seldom makes physical attacks against potential prey, as it prefers its victims intact and undamaged when it eats them.

When a chulcrix encounters potential prey, it unhinges its jaws, causing its mouth to expand to a diameter of 30 feet. This process takes two rounds. Once its mouth has expanded, the chulcrix activates its attract victims power.

While the chulcrix continues to hover in place, an invisible cone of force radiates from its open mouth; the cone is 100 feet long with a 25-foot radius. All victims within the cone must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell. Those rolling successful saving throws are unaffected by the attract victims ability.

Victims failing their saving throws begin to float toward the chulcrix's mouth at a rate of ten feet per round. These victims must also roll a saving throw vs. paralyzation. Those failing their throws are paralyzed, unable to move or take any other actions as they float toward the chulcrix's mouth. Those rolling successful saving throws vs. paralyzation can make missile attacks, cast spells, and take similar actions; however, they continue to move inexorably toward the creature's mouth.

Those affected by the chulcrix's attract victims ability continue to move toward the creature's mouth until they are consumed by the chulcrix, the chulcrix withdraws, or they are



rescued by a companion.

Victims drawn into the chulcrix's mouth pass through a valve leading to the creature's stomach. Once in the stomach, victims are no longer paralyzed. Victims inside the stomach suffer an automatic 1d4 points of damage per round from acidic digestive gasses (no saving throw). Victims in the stomach can attempt to hack themselves free but, because of the churning movement of the stomach and the debilitating effect of the acidic gasses, all attacks by swallowed victims are made with a -2 penalty; maximum damage is 1 point per round (plus magical and Strength bonuses).

If a chulcrix in the process of consuming victims loses half its hit points, it turns itself inside out, instantly plane shifting to another location. All victims inside its stomach are left behind. When the chulcrix arrives at its new location, it automatically resumes its normal shape.

The chulcrix can also attack with its pincers, each inflicting 3d6 points of damage on opponents who either have resisted its *attract victims* ability or aren't desirable as food.

The chulcrix regenerates 1d4 lost points per round. It is immune to normal and magical fires, all cold-based attacks, and all forms of dragon breath.

Habitat/Society: The chulcrix has no permanent lair, instead spending its days roaming the Ethereal plane in search of prey. It has no formal societies and does not collect treasure.

The chulcrix lives to be about 10,000 years old. Once every thousand years, the asexual chulcrix lays a single egg, resembling a sphere of black crystal about 25 feet in diameter. The egg grows and expands for a century until it reaches a diameter of 100 feet, at which time the egg bursts open to release a fully mature chulcrix.

Ecology: The chulcrix is solitary by nature, though it occasionally associates with eyewings that serve as its scouts and aides. Chulcrix are sometimes employed as servitors by dark gods and their more powerful minions, usually in exchange for a promise of new and unusual prey. No prey is too small for a chulcrix and few are too large; chulcrix have been seen consuming small dragons.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Ethereal plane
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Tribe
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	See below
DIET:	See below
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (8-10)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful neutral

NO. APPEARING:	1 (active) and 1,000-6,000 (hibernating tribe)
ARMOR CLASS:	-1
MOVEMENT:	9
HIT DICE:	1 + 1
THACO:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-2/1-2 (arm needles) or 1-4/1-4 (arm slash)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	20%
SIZE:	S (4' tall)
MORALE:	Elite (13)
XP VALUE:	420

The gk'lok-lok are a race of extraplanar creatures that spend their lives sleeping and dreaming, vicariously experiencing the lives of dead warriors of other races.

A gk'lok-lok stands about four feet tall. Its body is a series of thin tubes that glisten and sparkle like polished steel. Its torso is a single tube resembling the stalk of a plant, with two long tubes for legs ending in hooked "feet," and two tubes for arms that curl in seemingly random patterns.

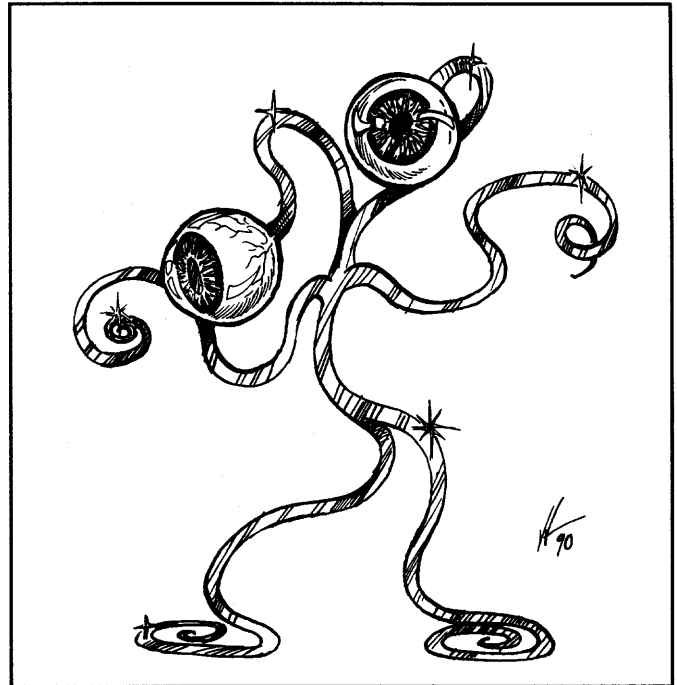
Two thin stalks, which glisten like steel, extend from the "neck" of the torso. Each stalk ends in a bulging eyeball about one-fourth the size of the body. A violet iris surrounds the huge black pupil, and an aura of soft red flames surrounds the entire eyeball. The eyestalks twist and turn like serpents, enabling the gk'lok-lok to examine its surroundings from all angles.

A gk'lok-lok does not communicate orally. Instead, it "speaks" by twisting its arms into intricate patterns, each pattern representing a different word or phrase. Additionally, a gk'lok-lok can *speak with spirits* at will. This ability enables it to mentally communicate with the spirits of all creatures, as well as ghosts, spectres, and all other types of undead.

Gk'lok-lok are adept at understanding the oral communication of other intelligent creatures: a gk'lok-lok has a 90% chance of understanding any spoken language.

Combat: Gk'lok-lok are normally docile and nonviolent. In hostile situations, the gk'lok-lok's typical reaction is to turn invisible (which it can do at will) and retreat. However, when necessary, the gk'lok-lok can attack by shooting three-inch-long steel needles from the end of each arm at targets up to 25 feet away to cause 1-2 points of damage (the gk'lok-lok can fire a total of two needles per round; new needles are automatically created inside its tube-arms). It can also make slashing attacks with its razor-thin arms to cause 1d4 points of damage. The wiry body of a gk'lok-lok is exceptionally difficult to hit (thus the low Armor Class). Gk'lok-lok are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *suggestion*, and *hypnotism* spells. They are also immune to all types of fire-based and electrical attacks.

Habitat/Society: A gk'lok-lok tribe consists of 1,000-6,000 members. All of the tribesmen except two are dormant. One of



the nondormant tribesmen is called the "stem" member. The stem member plants itself in the ground and transforms itself into an immense tree of green crystal with hundreds of branches. A shimmering aura of soft red flames surrounds the tree (contact with the flames causes 1d6 points of damage to non-gk'lok-lok; roll a successful saving throw vs. spell for half damage). All of the dormant members hang from the branches of the crystal tree, where they spend the rest of their lives asleep.

The second nondormant tribesman is called the "active" member. The active member is responsible for ensuring a steady supply of fresh experiences for the dreaming gk'lok-lok. Extraplanar travelers who meet untimely demises are good sources of new spirits. Because a single spirit can provide experiences for the slumbering tribe for a century or more (the gk'lok-lok enjoy reliving experiences over and over again), the active gk'lok-lok's job is not particularly demanding.

New spirits can only be recruited voluntarily. In general, spirits find association with a gk'lok-lok tribe to be a safe and pleasant way to spend a portion of their afterlives. The spirits are protected from all hostile forces and are free to mingle with the other spirits in the tree.

If the active tribesman is killed, a dormant tribesman awakens to take his place. If the slumber of one or all of the dormant tribal members is disturbed, or if their crystal tree is threatened, all of the dormant members wake up and attack until the opponent withdraws or is killed.

All members of the same tribe have identical life spans, typically about 100,000 years. When they reach the end of their natural lives, all of the dormant tribesmen, along with the active tribesman, crumble to dust. The crystal tree splits open and blasts 1d4 spore balls into the air. The spore balls drift for about a century, at which time they release 1,000-6,000 spores; the spores from the ball comprise a new tribe. One of the spores grows into the stem member, another grows into the active member, and the rest become dormant members.

Ecology: Gk'lok-lok absorb all necessary nutrients from the atmosphere. They have no natural enemies.

PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

SELECTED NPCs

Explanation of abbreviations:

AL = the god's alignment

WAL = alignments of those worshipping the god

AoC = area of control (that is, the aspects of nature over which the deity exerts influence)

SY = the symbol used by the deity's worshippers

SARGONNAS

God of Evil

AL = LE

WAL = any evil

AoC = deserts, volcanoes, vengeance, fire

SY = a stylized red condor or a red fist

MANIFESTATION OF SARGONNAS (CLERIC, 30TH LEVEL)

Strength: 24

Dexterity: 20

Constitution: 18

Intelligence: 20

Wisdom: 20

Charisma: 18

MV: 18

AC: -7

HD: 30

hp: 240

THAC0: 5

of Attacks: 4

Damage/Attack: 2d20/2d20/2d20/2d20

Size: 3' *

Magic Resistance: 95%

* Refers to size as the manifestation appears in this adventure.

Sargonnas is an evil god who serves as the consort of Erestem, the Dark Queen. He longs to share in Erestem's schemes but is rebuffed as often as not, since she considers him to be weak and untrustworthy. Sargonnas spends a good deal of his time participating in plots against his queen.

Sargonnas is the god of vengeance. He grants major access to the Astral, Charm, Combat, Healing, and Summoning spheres. He grants minor access to the Sun sphere. He has limited powers to grant access to the Creation and Protection spheres. His followers often dress in red and black, his preferred colors.

Sargonnas is worshiped in both Taladas and Ansalon. In Ansalon, he is also known by the names of Argon (Istar, Ergoth), the Firebringer (Hylo), Misal-Lasim (Tarsis), Gonnas the Willful (Icewall), Sargonax the Bender (Thorbardin), Kinthalas (Silvanesti), and Kinis (Qualinesti).

In this adventure, the manifestation of Sargonnas takes the appearance of a manifestation of Udras the Alchemist (though he still retains the powers and abilities of the manifestation of Sargonnas). He appears as a gnome-like humanoid about three feet tall with a thickly-muscled body, violet eyes, rich brown skin, and a curly white beard and mous-

tache. (A more likely manifestation for the manifestation of Sargonnas would be a steely-eyed humanoid, six feet tall, with a bald head and snarling lips.)

ABOUT MANIFESTATIONS

A manifestation is a physical manifestation of a god. A manifestation embodies just a small portion of the god's power, but he still remains an entity of awesome abilities. A manifestation may take many different forms, and a god can create many different manifestations. The number that can be created and the frequency with which they may be replaced depends on the stature of the god.

Manifestations are unaffected by the restrictions that apply to normal characters. They can have attribute scores exceeding 18 and can be any class without regard to alignment or other normal restrictions. Their hit points are always calculated at 8 points per die, and they use the saving throw and other statistical tables for monsters (always use a manifestation's listed THAC0). A manifestation always has access to any spell in his relevant schools or spheres, providing it is of the appropriate level for his level of expertise. He may cast the same number of spells of a given level that a wizard or priest of comparable rank would be able to cast.

For more about manifestations and gods in general, refer to the *Legends and Lore* hardback book. For more about the gods of Krynn, refer to the *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* hardback book and the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set.

GEZELE ELLA

9th-Level Fighter, human female

Str 18/13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 9; AC 1; MV 12; HD 9; hp 55; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA +3 damage adjustment (from exceptional Strength); AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: Club (specialized), dagger, battle axe, sling, short sword

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind-fighting, endurance (14), survival (17)

Languages: Thenolian, Auric (17), Boil Gnomish (17), Ilquar Goblin (17), Hoor (17), Kothian (17)

Equipment: banded mail armor and cloak of dragon scales (cloak and mail armor combine to give her an AC of 1), club imbedded with steel needles (dmg 1d6 + 3), *dagger +1*, battle axe

Also known as "Big Ella," Gezele Ella is one of the most notorious and cunning criminals in all of Taladas. Originally from Thenol, Ella began her life of crime at the age of 12, with the murder and robbery of her uncle, a Thenol priest. Before she could be apprehended, Ella fled into the wilderness, embarking on a crime spree that lasted nearly 20 years.

Five years ago, Ella was finally captured in Kristophan, charged with poisoning the horses belonging to the New City livestock dealers. Ella had planned to corner the market in horse trade by eliminating the competition; she killed more than 800 horses before she was caught. Prior to her execution, Ella bribed her guards and escaped. The Kristophan authorities conducted a search but were unable to locate her. To avoid embarrassment, the authorities manufactured a story that Ella died in prison from a fever plague.

Ella kept a low profile for the next few years, terrorizing small communities throughout Northern and Southern

Hosk. She acquired a partner along the way, an exiled goblin shaman named Grott, who shared both her religious convictions and her love of wealth.

A few months ago, Ella and Grott were hired by intermediaries of EreSTEM, the Dark Queen, to hunt dragons in order to disrupt Amanthus's plan to rally the Othlorx. Ella inadvertently hired a group of good adventurers as aides. The mistake was discovered by EreSTEM's intermediaries, who banished Grott and Ella to another plane of existence. Shortly after their banishment, Grott and Ella were retrieved by EreSTEM, who recruited them as potential leaders of the evil minions she was organizing to raid Taladas.

Ella is a solidly built woman over seven feet tall and weighing nearly 300 pounds. She has long, gray hair that frames her beefy face and dangles in thick curls around her shoulders. She has thin lips, dark green eyes, and plump cheeks. She wears banded mail armor covered by a bulky cloak made of dragon scales of various colors. She carries a huge club studded with steel needles. A silver pendant hangs from her neck, molded in the shape of a bony claw, a symbol of Angomeith, her deity.

Some years ago, Ella extorted the secrets of mind control from an elven wizard. After she'd mastered these secrets, she murdered the wizard so his secrets would be hers alone. Ella's mind control makes her completely resistant to ESP, magical scrying devices, and all other types of mental probes.

Ella is ruthless, cunning, and indifferent to the suffering of others. Though she has the appearance of a barbarian, she is surprisingly eloquent and cultured, with a particular fondness for poetry and art. She is deeply religious, utterly devoted to Angomeith, her name for Angomais (or Nuitari), the spirit of evil.

GROTT

7th-Level Cleric, male goblin

Str 8, Dex 7, Con 7, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 6; AC 8; MV 6; HD 7; hp 30; THACO 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; SA *spook* up to five times per day (functions as the 1st-level spell); SD see below; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger (specialized), sling

Nonweapon Proficiencies: agriculture (12), astrology (12), cooking (12), religion (14), spellcraft (10)

Languages: Ilquar goblin, Thenolian

Equipment: leather cloak (functions as leather armor), dagger, sling, 20 sling bullets

Spells: 1st Level— *bless*, *detect magic*, *endure cold/endure heat*; 2nd Level— *detect charm*, *speak with animals*, *spiritual hammer*; 3rd Level— *feign death*, *protection from fire*; 4th Level— *tongues*

A goblin shaman originating from the village of Crouk in the Ilquar Mountains, Grott is a loyal disciple of Angomeith (another name for Angomais or Nuitari, the spirit of evil). As is the tradition in his family, Grott studies the positions of Krynn's three moons every night to receive prophecies and information from Angomeith. About ten years ago, Grott perceived a message in the moons directing him to poison the water supply of his village; Grott believed Angomeith had decided that the citizens of Crouk were no longer worthy of his protection. Grott followed his reading, resulting in the death of the entire population of Crouk.

Grott then headed south, as directed by the moons, eventually forming a partnership with Gezele Ella who shared his religious convictions and love of wealth. Along with Ella, Grott was banished to another plane of existence when they mistakenly hired a group of good adventurers to help them hunt dragons. They were rescued by EreSTEM, who recognized their potential as possible leaders of the evil minions she was organizing to raid Taladas.

Grott is barely three feet tall. He has deep red skin, tiny yellow eyes, and a flat face with pointed ears and a wide mouth. He wears a floor-length robe and a narrow headband, both made of black leather. He wears a claw-shaped silver pendant around his neck.

Grott is soft-spoken, anxiety-ridden, and indecisive, totally dependent on Ella (and Angomeith) for guidance. His love of Angomeith is matched only by his love of money. In spite of his evil tendencies, Grott has a strong sense of honor; he always keeps his promises.

GURROCH

10th-Level Fighter, male minotaur

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 7; AC 1; MV 12; HD 10; hp 65; THACO 10; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA butt an opponent who is at least six feet tall to inflict 2d4 points of damage; can bite an opponent who is shorter than six feet tall to inflict 1d4 points of damage, gains a +1 bonus to encounter reactions when he identifies himself (a result of his formidable reputation); poison horns and teeth (see below); SD can track prey by scent with 50% accuracy when following a

OPTIONAL PLAYER CHARACTERS

COBOS THE LAME *Elf, Level 9 Ranger*

STR 16, **DEX** 14, **CON** 15, **INT** 10, **WIS** 14,
CHA 17; **AC** 8; **HD** WA9, **hp** 64;

#AT 3/2, Dmg by weapon (+1 for STR); AL CG; THACO 12; HS 66%, MS 75%.

Weapon Proficiencies: composite short bow, light lance, saber, thrown dagger, javelin, mace, dagger.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: horsemanship (17), navigation (8), survival (10), tracking (16), hunting (13), animal lore (10).

Languages: Tamire Elvish, Auric (10), Uigan (10).

Cobos wears leather mail and a small metal cap in the form of a falcon's head, the spirit totem of his clan. His padded armor is reinforced with leather at critical points (AC 8). He is equipped with four throwing javelins, a dagger, a composite short bow of layered horn, a mace and a *saber* +2. Cobos wears *boots of varied tracks* and has a *potion of superheroism*. As a nomadic elf of northern Hosk, Cobos' exceptional skill with the bow and on horseback are reflected in his ability roll adjustments, included in the scores above.

HARLIN REIVER *Half-Elf, Level 8 Fighter*

STR 10, **DEX** 17, **CON** 13, **INT** 14, **WIS** 12,
CHA 7; **AC** 1; **HD** WA6, **hp** 47; **AL** CG;
THACO 13.

Weapon Proficiencies: long bow (specialized), short sword, hand axe, halberd, sling.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind fighting, bowyer/fletcher (16), dancing (17), charioteering (19).

Languages: Thenolian, Auric (14), Hoor (14), Kothian (14).

Harlin wears *chain mail* +1. He is equipped with a long bow and 10 +1 arrows, a short sword, a hand axe and a sling. Harlin wears a *ring of free action* on his left hand, and carries a *rope of climbing* in his pack.





trail that is one day old or less (for each day after the trail was made, subtract 10%); AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: double-edged axe (specialized), flail

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind-fighting (NA), endurance (17), hunting (9)

Languages: Kothian, Auric (15), Panak (15), Thenolian (15)

Equipment: double-edged axe (dmg 1d10) named Deathstriker (when wielded by a minotaur, the weapon can discharge a bolt of lightning, either forked or straight as per the wizard spell, *lightning bolt*, to cause 6d6 points of damage; saving throw is applicable; the weapon has an initiative modifier of +2; each use consumes one charge; currently has 25 charges); flail (dmg 1d6 + 3; includes +2 bonus for use by minotaur)

Born to a tiny minotaur tribe in the Darchika Woods, Gurroch moved to Kristophan when he reached maturity and sought a career as a fighter in the arenas. A merciless and savage combatant, Gurroch became a favorite of the crowds and seemed destined for an easy life when it was discovered that he was arranging for his opponents to be poisoned in advance of their matches, thus ensuring Gurroch of victory. The disgraced Gurroch was banished from Kristophan.

The bitter Gurroch turned to a life of crime, hiring himself as an assassin to whomever could pay his hefty fee. Word of his brutality eventually reached Eresem, who recruited him to lead her evil minions on a planned raid against the Othlorx of Taladas.

Gurroch is about seven feet tall and weighs nearly 400 pounds. Short black fur covers his body. He has a broad snout, beady red eyes, and two 12-inch-long, razor-sharp horns sprouting from his head. A birthmark resembling a large gray star covers most of his chest. Thanks to a magical treatment given to him at birth by an evil wizard, Gurroch's skin is as hard as metal, giving him a natural Armor Class of 1. He coats his horns and teeth with a poisonous clear liquid; victims who are butted or bitten must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison, suffering an additional 2d4 points of damage if they fail, and 1d4 points of damage if they succeed.

Gurroch is soft-spoken and thoughtful but quick-tempered. Though not particularly strong for a minotaur, his agile body and quick mind make him a formidable opponent.

OPTIONAL PLAYER CHARACTERS

Harlin is a Thenolite. He is in his mid-30s, standing tall and straight-limbed, with straight red-brown hair and squinting brown eyes. This fighter is the cast-off bastard son of a Thenol lord, denied by his family because of the embarrassment his existence would bring to their political marriage ties. Resentful of his circumstances, Harlin left Thenol when he was threatened with conscription as a common soldier.

For the past several years he has made a living as an arena fighter in Kristophan in the Minotaur League, where he learned to drive a chariot and fight blind. In spite of his arena experience, Harlin considers himself an accomplished bowman, and he uses the long bow as his weapon of preference.

This fighter is constantly gambling away his earnings, for he loves gaming but is not highly skilled at it. Harlin is unreligious, with no interest in Bishop Trandamere, internal Thenolite cults, or political affairs. He is reluctant to speak of his homeland to others, and he angrily overreacts to anti-Thenolite comments.

Harlin is evasive about his personal history. He is especially fond of the entertainments to be found in taverns, but he is otherwise content with life and lives in harmony with himself. He is unflappably calm in the midst of hectic events, and is most comfortable following rather than giving orders.

ANISHTA

9th-Level Cleric, female human

Str 13, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 12; AC -1; MV 12; HD 9; hp 50; THACO 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: flail, horseman's flail, mace

Nonweapon Proficiencies: horsemanship (20), animal handling, ancient history (12), weather sense (16), hunting (16)

Languages: Thenolian, Auric (13), Sesk (13)

Equipment: *splint mail +2, mace +2* (this weapon is called Shadowcaster and is engraved with a symbol of Hith; can create *darkness* in a 15' radius once per day affecting everyone in area except the wielder); *iridescent spindle ioun stone* (sustains holder without breathing; gives immunity to dragon breath); scroll containing two *pass without trace* spells and two *hallucinatory terrain* spells

Spells: 1st Level— *bles*, *detect good*, *command*, *cure light wounds*, *protection from good*, *purify food and drink*; 2nd Level— *enthrall*, *silence 15'*, *wyvern watch*, *spiritual hammer*, *obscurement*, *speak with animals*; 3rd Level— *animate dead (x2)*, *feign death*, *speak with dead*; 4th Level— *detect lie*, *spell immunity*; 5th Level— *raise dead*

A native of Thenol, Anishta's attempts to rise in Bishop Trandamere's temple hierarchy were thwarted by local politics. She left the temple and turned to a mercenary life. A natural leader, Anishta assembled a group of bloodthirsty aides and became notorious as one of Taladas's most ruthless dragon-killers. Though eventually defeated by a band of good adventurers, Anishta's skills did not go unnoticed; she was recruited by Eresem to help lead an army of evil minions on a planned assault of the Othlorx of Taladas. Her enthusiasm for battle enabled her to quickly rise in the ranks.

Anishta stands 5'10" and has long black hair, rich brown eyes, and lightly tanned skin. She is not afraid of physical confrontation and uses her height to intimidate smaller opponents. Strong-willed and self-assured, Anishta has little patience with the opinions of those she considers inferior; reasoned argument only makes her angry and all the more determined to pursue her original intent. However, she is an accomplished liar and will attempt any ruse to get out of a tight spot. Extremely superstitious, Anishta wears a variety of amulets and talismans around her neck; these charms have no special properties.

This fierce nomad warrior is a native of northern Hosk. Cobos left his tribe in disgrace when he lost his temper and accidentally slew an opponent he was dueling to first blood. Cobos has spent years wandering the grasslands of Hosk, selling his services to traders and merchants, and guiding the occasional party of adventurers into the steppes.

Cobos is in his early adulthood, but he has finally lived long enough that he is beginning to long for home and family, the roots he has eschewed for so long. He believes that if he proves his worthiness and atones for his earlier dishonor, his clan will have no choice but to take him back. The unlikelihood of this is evident to all but Cobos himself. The elf is fierce, arrogant, proud, and stubborn. He is easily angered, quick to fight, and loves foolhardy risks, which he believes prove his bravery.

Cobos is 5' 5," 140 pounds, with honey-tan skin and brown-blond hair. He wears his hair in a single braid behind, with side braids by each temple. A poorly mended ankle, once broken, gives him an awkward limp and is the source of his nickname.

PALISSARA *7th-level Human Bard, female*

STR	11	DEX	16	CON	14	AC	7	THACO	17
INT	15	WIS	12	CHR	15	AL	NG	HP	29

Weapon Proficiencies glass darts, sling, short sword.

Nonweapon Proficiencies Shining Land history (15), reading/writing (16), gaming (15), chimeboard (musical instrument) (15), juggling (15), singing (15).

Languages Panak, Auric (15), Boli Gnomish (15).

Bard Abilities CW 95%, DN 40%, PP 30%, RL 15%.

Spells 3 1st, 2 2nd, 1 3rd.

Special possessions Shining Lands indoors sandsuit (AC 9), outer sandsuit (in pack), obsidian darts, chimeboard (horax shell with suspended obsidian chips), *potion of healing*, *decanter of endless water*.

See back of card for more information.

CHYRUB *9th-level Minotaur Fighter, male*

STR	18/20	DEX	12	CON	14	AC	3	THACO	12
INT	16	WIS	8	CHR	11	AL	LG	HP	51

SA #A 3/2, Dmg 2d4 (butt foes over 6'), 1d4 (bite) or by weapon (+3 for ST); Size L (7' 5"); THACO includes +1 for ST.

Weapon Proficiencies heavy crossbow (specialized: 1/1), battle axe, hand/thrown axe, two-handed sword (specialized: 2/1), long sword.

Nonweapon proficiencies Armorer (14), weaponsmithing (13), hunting (7).

Languages Kothian, Auric (16).

Special possessions armor (hurduskin; AC 6 without it), and oversized sword (one-handed, 2d4 (2d8 vs. L); two-handed, 3d4 (3d8 vs. L)) both of which he made.

See back of card for more information.

BUCKERAN *7th-level Kender Thief, male*

STR	16	DEX	14	CON	11	AC	6	THACO	18
INT	12	WIS	12	CHR	16	AL	NG	HP	27

Weapon Proficiencies hoopai, bo stick, dart. Listed THACO includes ST +1.

Nonweapon Proficiencies juggling (13), jumping (16), ventriloquism (10), cooking (12).

Languages Marak Kender, Auric (12), Fianawar Dwarvish (12).

Thief Abilities PP 80%, OL 80%, FRT 20%, MS 45%, HS 60%, DN 25%, CW 70%, RL 5%.

Special Possessions *studded leather +1*, *dart of homing*, *potion of speed*.

See back of card for more information.

SULDRUN *8th-level Elf Cleric (Elf Clan Shaman), female*

STR	13	DEX	10	CON	12	AC	4	THACO	16
INT	17	WIS	17	CHR	13	AL	NG	HP	37

SA able to change into a black bear at will, but suffers 1d6 damage each time she does so. As a bear, AC 7; MV 12; HD 3 + 3, 24 HP; Size M; #AT 3, 1d3/1d3/1d6 (claws and bite); SA if a claw hits with an 18 or better, also hugs for 2d4; THACO 17.

Weapon proficiencies lasso, sling, staff, mace.

Nonweapon proficiencies ancient history (16), animal lore (17), elf clan history (13), singing (13), herbalism (15), spellcraft (15).

Languages Ancient Elvish, Tamire Elvish (17), Ilquar Goblin (17), Auric (17), Uigan (17), Hoor (17).

Spells 5 1st, 5 2nd, 4 3rd, 2 4th.

Spheres Major: All, Animal, Charm, Divination, Healing, Plant; Minor: Combat, Protection.

Special possessions *gauntlets of swimming and climbing*, *colorful cloak of protection +4*.

See back of card for more information.

DALEMONT HALF-HAND *5th-level Human Thief/3rd-level Mage (Dual Class), male*

STR	12	DEX	15	CON	15	AC	7	THACO	18
INT	17	WIS	16	CHR	17	AL	NG	HP	24

Weapon Proficiencies thrown dagger, staff.

Nonweapon Proficiencies appraising (17), disguise (16), religion (16), spellcraft (15), acting (16).

Languages Auric, Kothian (17), Hoor (17), Thenolian (17).

Thief Abilities PP 30%, OL 20%, FRT 40%, MS 50%, HS 50%, DN 25%, CW 75%, RL 20%.

Spells 2 1st; 1 2nd

Special possessions druid's priestly robe which functions as a +2 *ring of protection*, *ring of mind shielding*, *philter of glibness*, *silver dagger +1*.

See back of card for more information.

LIVIA THE SHREWD *8th-level Gnome (gnomoi) Mage (Illusionist specialist), female*

STR	14	DEX	16	CON	8	AC	4	THACO	18
INT	14	WIS	8	CHR	8	AL	LG	HP	24

Weapon Proficiencies dagger, sling, thrown dagger.

Nonweapon Proficiencies rope use (16), brewing (14), ancient history (13), engineering (11), direction sense (9), ancient languages (14).

Languages Boli Gnomish, Auric (14), Panak (14).

Spells 5 1st, 4 2nd, 4 3rd, 3 4th.

Specialist Can learn no Necromancy, Abjuration, or Invocation/ Evocation spells; is +1 to save vs. Illusions; others are -1 to save vs. her Illusions.

Special Possessions *necklace of missiles*, *wand of illumination*, scroll of *protection against plants*, scroll containing three 1st-level spells, bracelets which function as *bracers of defense AC 6*.

See back of card for more information.

Suldrun is from one of the Wolf Clans, among the vainest and most savage of all elves. From birth she proudly followed the ancient way of the Wolf—until a vision from a Bear *quoyai* changed her life. The Bear told her that her clan has no other *quoyai*, and that the shaman who pretends to guide her people is a fake; she had to flee for her life when she tried to relate that message to her people.

Now the Bear has told her that she must grow strong before returning; that when she is sufficiently powerful, she will be able to atone for her clan and drive the false shaman out.

Ever looking forward to that day, she has sacrificed much for the Bear, denying herself more than one love and an easy living elsewhere. The Bear has insisted that she not eat any female flesh, as a sign of her devotion; on those occasions when she has done so accidentally, her powers have left her until the Bear felt she was sufficiently chastened.

Suldrun is always adorned with a colorfully conspicuous elf clan wardrobe, defying those who would deny her calling, and proudly proclaiming her heritage. She often dons what seem to be a pair of bear paws while adventuring; they are actually her gauntlets. (If she has them on when she transforms into a bear, she is able to use their powers in her ursine form as well.) Beneath her bright red and black patterned tunic and cloak, she wears leather armor. What she tells no one is that the cloak, like the gauntlets, is a gift from the Bear.

She stands 5' 4", with burnished tan skin and sleek black hair, which is tied into a bun.

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Dale began his career as a wizard, but he became disenchanting with the amount of work required to become a great mage. After a workshop accident caused the loss of two fingers on his right hand, he resigned that profession to become a rogue. Dale, a dual-classed human, now uses his rogue skills to convince others he is a priest. The wizard-rogue likes the awe and special privileges accorded to magic-wielding clerics; in fact, he would actually like to be the druid he pretends he is. Dale Half-hand poses as a druid dedicated to Habbakuk.

Half-hand's con game is a convincing one. If called upon to spellcast, he laments that his spells are exhausted for the day, or that he is performing penance and may not spellcast. If pressed, he creates magically glowing auras while going through the motions of priestly mumbo-jumbo, then bemoans the fact that his spell apparently misfired, or the target saved against its effects.

Dale's adventuring companions do not realize that he is not the druid he seems to be. He acts as a druid in all regards, and is he quick to claim he has performed magic without obvious effects. For example, he may declare that he knows a person's alignment, or has just cast a bless spell on the party, enhancing this claim with *dancing lights* glowing briefly on the "blessed" targets.

Half-hand is daring and loves risks, but he is unhappy about his continuing deception of partners he has come to like and respect. Yet he is fearful of confessing the truth, so for the time being he continues his ruse.

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Livia is one of the Bilo gnomes, those of the pillar country near the Shining Land. She came to the western lands on the same trading expedition that brought Palissara out of the Shining Lands. The two have traveled together for years.

Livia is stern of demeanor, with a dry sense of humor and cutting wit. She is a respected figure in the group and influential in decision making. She seldom mentions it, but Livia searches for knowledge that will help her people capture the Tower of Flame in the midst of Hitehkel.

Livia is adventuresome at heart, holding herself out of fights only with an effort. The illusionist stays back to survey a situation and see how her magic can be of most assistance. Often her shouted warnings and observations (e.g., "you can flank him from the side!") have helped her comrades win the day.

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Palissara is a sandwoman from the Shining Lands desert wastes. Her inquisitive nature keeps her traveling among strange folk and distant lands, although she plans one day to return to the Shining Lands. Her travels have broadened her perspectives; she is easily adaptable to strange circumstances and is very difficult to offend. She is a friendly, outgoing person who is eager to speak with strangers, and quick to diffuse trouble with a joke or a song.

Palissara's appearance is all the more striking because few sandpeople are seen outside the Shining Lands. Like her kinfolk, Palissara is tall and slender, standing 5' 10" and weighing 130 pounds. Her arms are exceptionally long, with hands reaching almost to her knees. Her high cheekbones are prominent, her nose small but sharp. Palissara's skin is a deep red-brown, her eyes bright blue. Her white hair is worn tied back in a long ponytail. She is unused to armor or protective clothing of other sorts, and wears none.

Palissara naturally assumes men will treat her as an equal and considers herself their peer in all ways. The bard works constantly on expanding her repertoire of song, lore, and oral history. Palissara prefers to sleep in small enclosed spaces and becomes noticeably uneasy when weather clouds move in and she is exposed out in the open.

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Chyrub, third son of a Horned House, was quite happy as a blacksmith until the day a beautiful heifer strolled into his smithy—one look into those soft brown eyes, and he knew he was in the kind of trouble that he would never get out of. Much to his dismay, she turned out to be a princess of the Imperial Family, and the Emperor was not impressed when a blacksmith sought his daughter's hand.

To get rid of Chyrub, he sent him for a very specific bride price—a gnomoi *instant fortress*, a Thenolian *vampiric regeneration ring*, and something called a *gateway whistle* or *whistle of the planes*. With few resources of his own, Chyrub decided the best way to travel would be to join the Legions of Aragas.

It was a mistake. He served his hitch, then set off on his own. Stealing is out of the question; to compromise one's integrity, even for love, is beneath any right-thinking minotaur. He was able to acquire an *instant fortress* as thanks for a favor he recently did the gnomes; he had just left that for safe-keeping with his true love when he received Baron Rathwyck's call.

Chyrub is not overly tall for a minotaur, but his years at the forge developed even further his already massive muscles—he weighs over 380 lbs. His fur is a deep, almost shiny black. Chyrub's horns are each 26" long, and are one of his greatest sources of pride. While helping the gnomes, he stood too near a (barely) controlled explosion; all sense of taste and smell has temporarily left him. He is the epitome of the best and worst of Taladas's minotaurs: arrogant and haughty, yet fair-minded and absolutely honest.

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Buckeran is called Bucker for short, or "Bicker" by his much-put-upon companions. This Marak kender from the Steamwall region is full of gloom and doom, always foretelling ominous events and unhappy consequences. When new to this group of adventurers, the kender was at first suspicious and reserved, but over time has come to accept his companions. Now Bucker eagerly argues with them to convince them of their imminent failures. In spite of his pessimism, Bucker does his utmost to save his fellows from themselves, with the result that the kender's efforts and daring often make the difference between the party's success and failure.

Bucker is taller and more slender than a gnome, with a pointed chin, sloping nose, and straggly long hair braided in a topknot. His innate pessimism wars with a kender's natural cheerfulness, giving Bucker an expression constantly suspended halfway between worry and hopefulness. His high arched brows emphasize this dubious expression; strangers often mistake the look for a personally questioning one. Bucker refuses to talk to such people, leaving his companions to intercept irate strangers intent on pounding respect into the kender.

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Underground cavern/passageway



Interlude 1



Sea of Bones



EBORIUM—ISLE OF



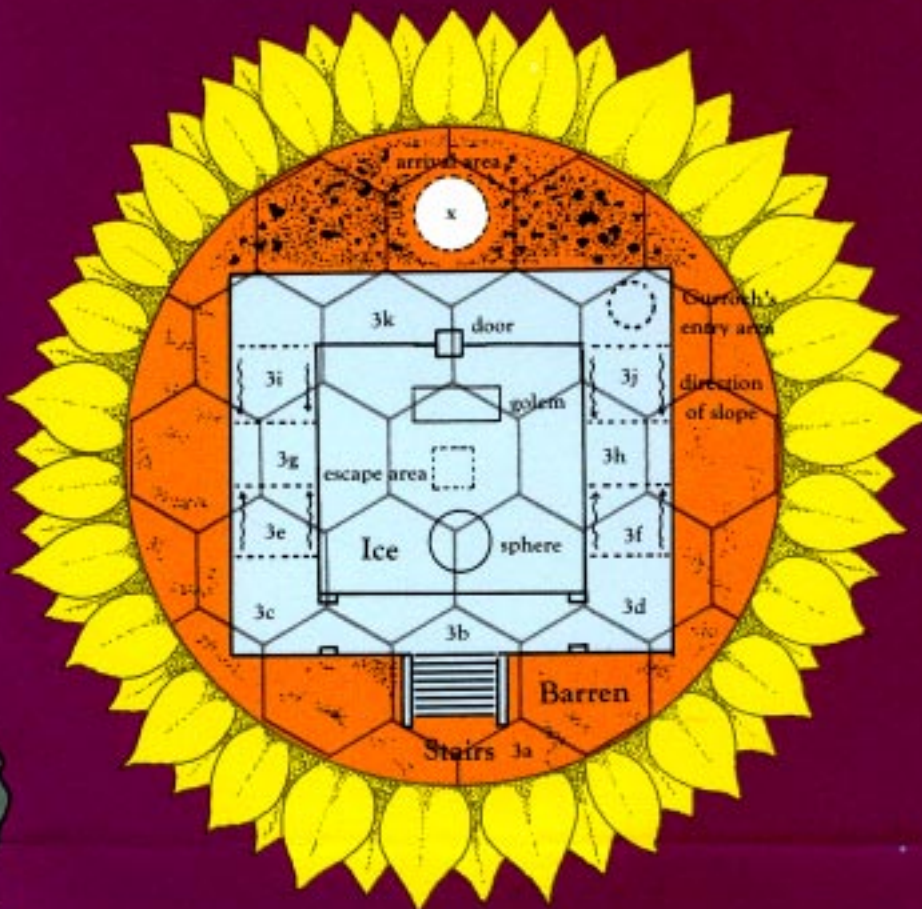
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Interlude 2

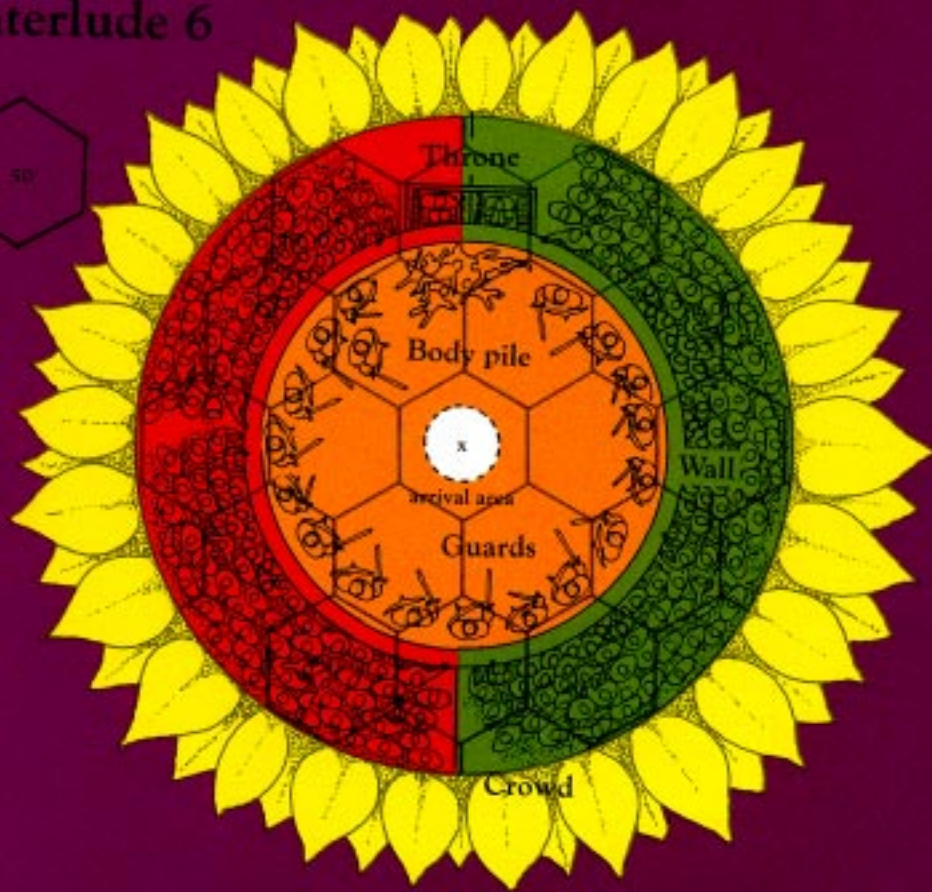
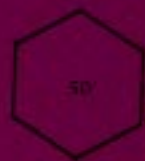


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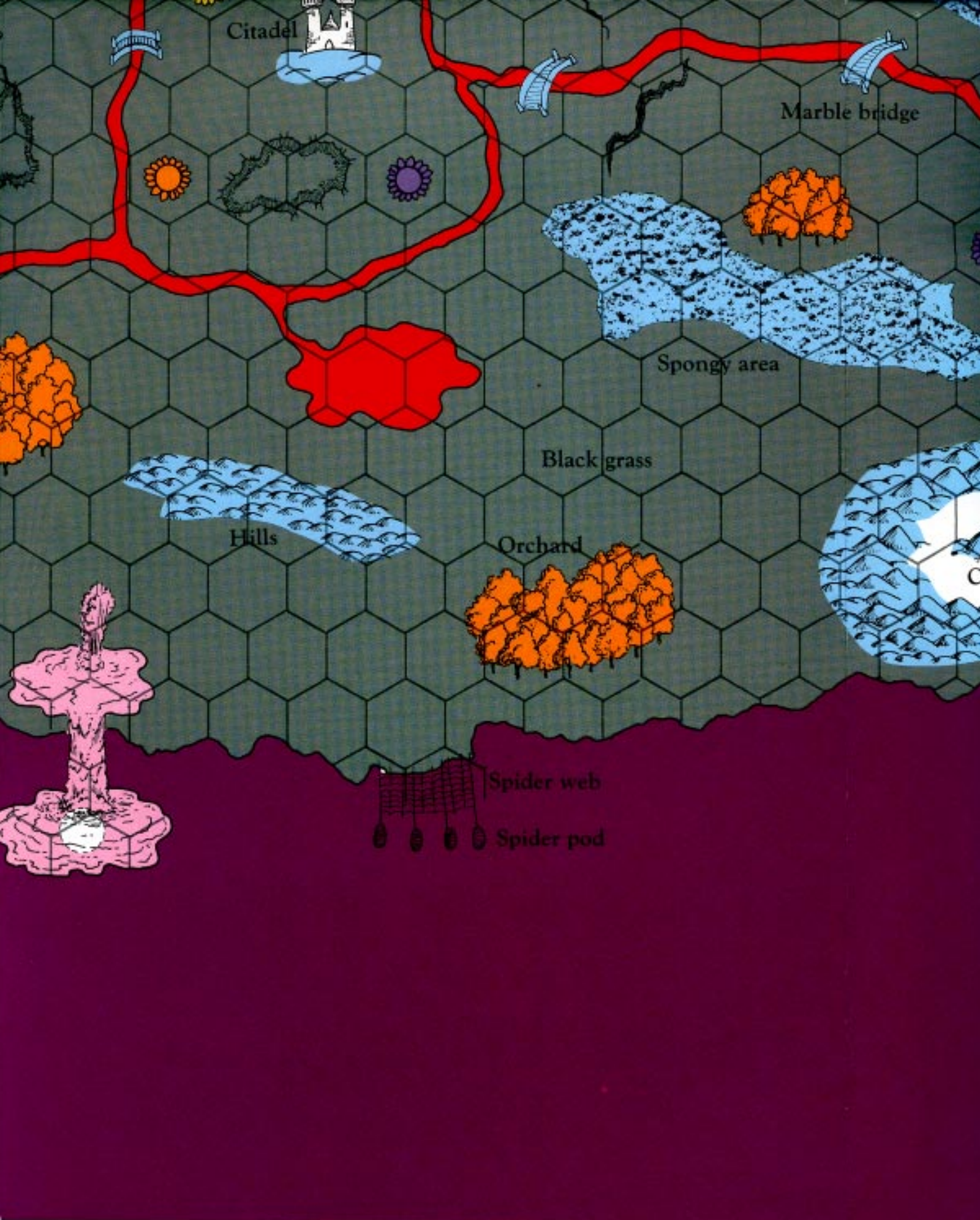




Interlude 6



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Citadel

Marble bridge

Spongy area

Black grass

Hills

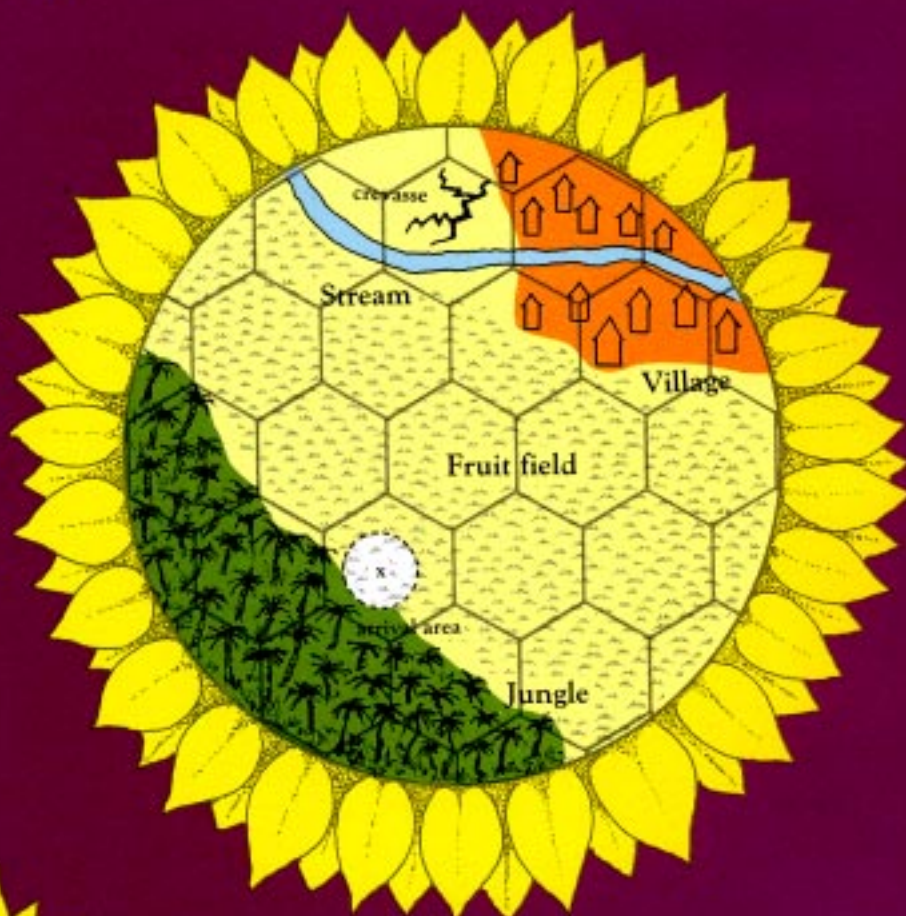
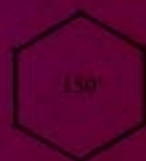
Orchard

Spider web

Spider pod



Interlude 4



Interlude 5

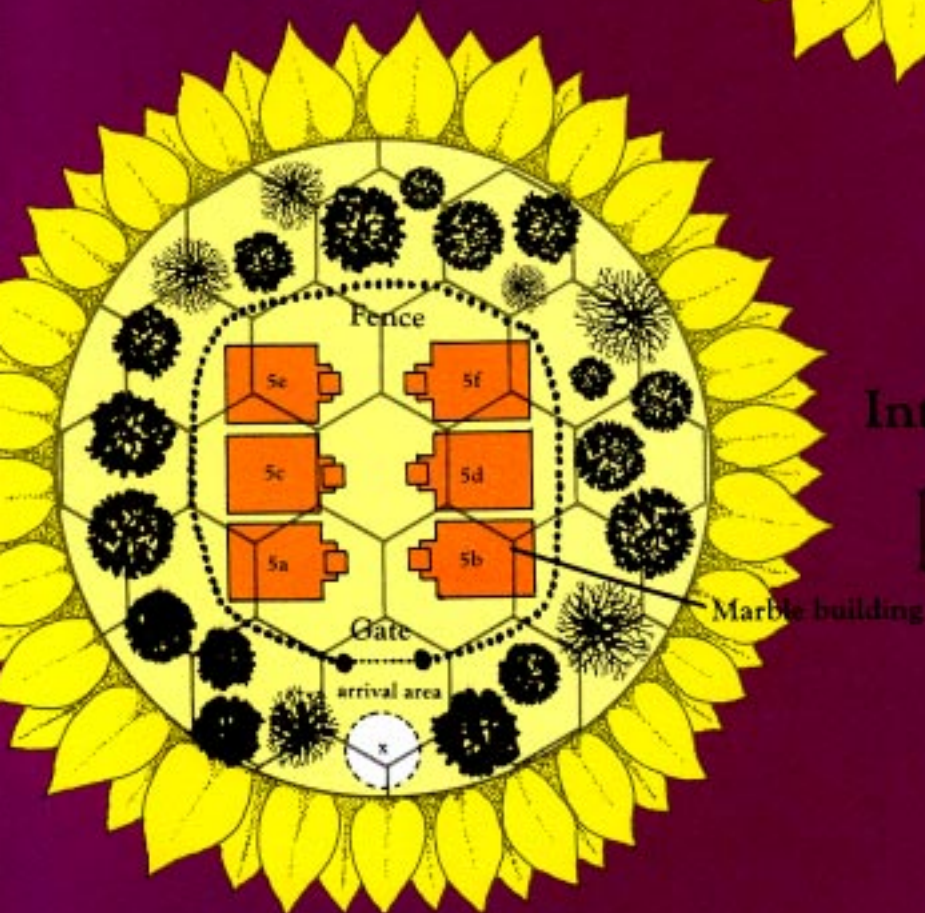
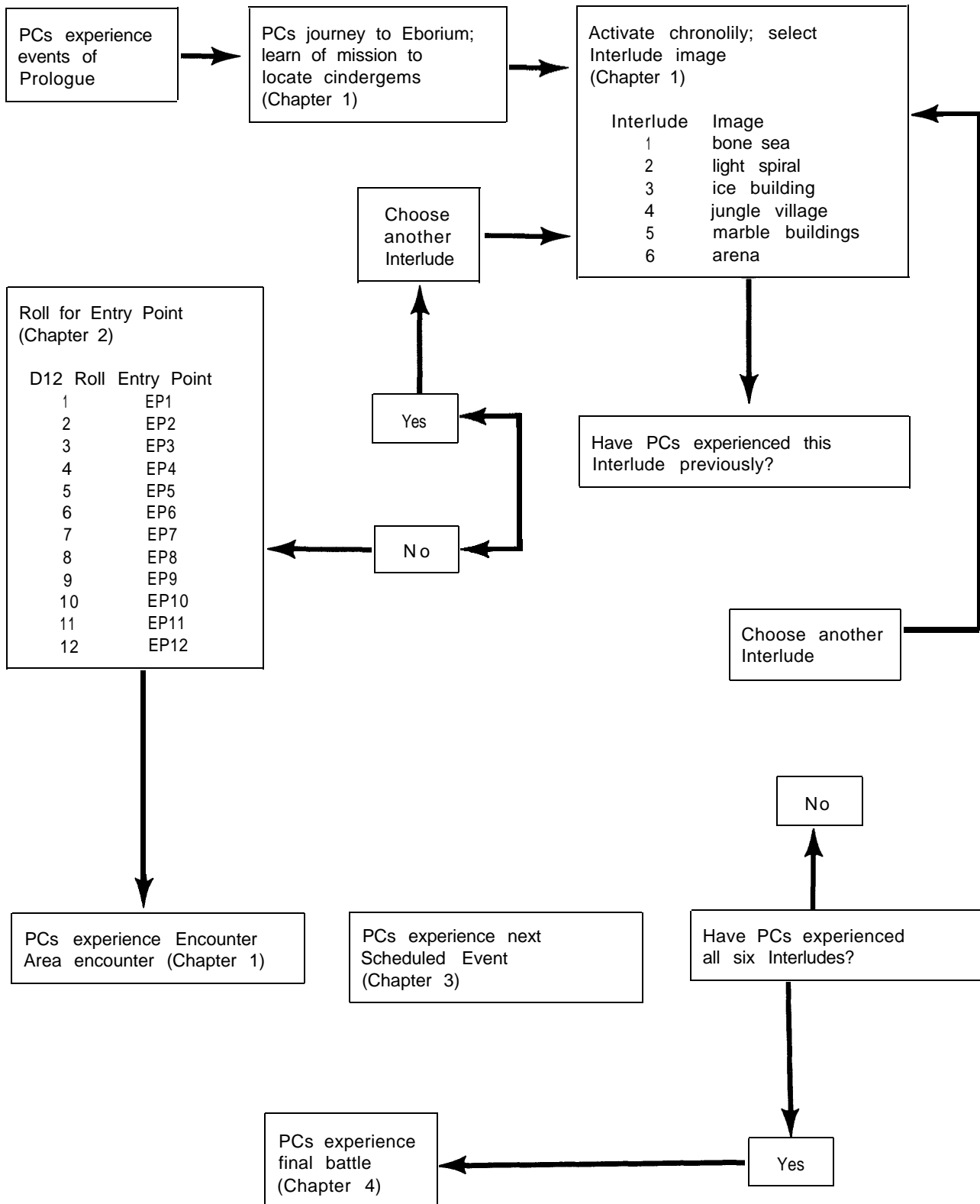


Figure 1: ADVENTURE FLOW CHART (See indicated chapters for details)





THE LEAGUE OF THE MINOTAURS

STEAM VALLEYS

SOUTHERN HO...
NEW MOUNTAINS

ARMACH...

Bay of A...

Trilon

The Conquered Lands

Highvale

Vilans

Bok

New Vilanost

New PCs' Starting Point

Evole Riv...



Approach of Factions D, E, F (Chapter 4)

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®
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