



THE TEMPLE OF JEWELS AND MIRRORS

SHATTERED HEART ADVENTURE PATH



BY MICHAEL ALLEN

The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors

The second 5th Edition compatible adventure in the *Shattered Heart* Adventure Path, designed for four to five PCs of 7th level.

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Adventure Background

Engineered into a natural cavern at the base of the Great Mountain, the earth temple of the Great Mother testifies to the ancient bond of halfling and dweorg cooperation. Dwarven smiths once worked hand in hand with Devotees of the Four Hearts to build the temple and provide light to the tree of stone and metal within. These craftsmen enlarged natural caverns and fissures to create the shape of a great tree, surrounding a crystal-domed sanctuary, home to the holy tree of the goddess. A complex series of mirrors and reflectors provided light to the holy tree chamber: a tree formed of living stone and graced with a canopy of jeweled and metallic leaves.

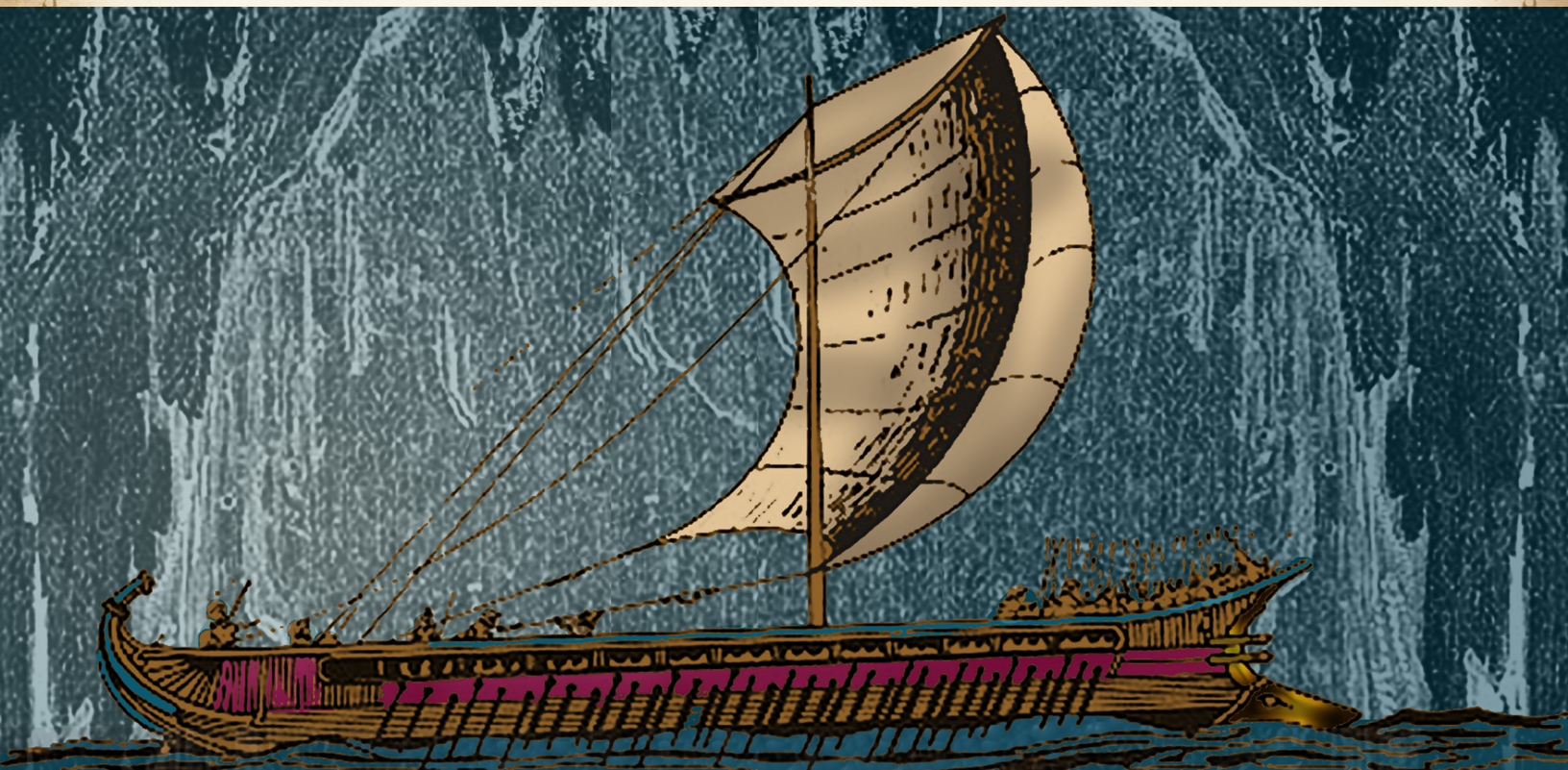
The proximity of the earth temple to Stoneroot, and the primary role the dweorg played in its construction, fostered close ties between halflings and dweorg; many dweorg converted to the worship of the Great Mother in her earthen incarnation. Throughout Picollo's history, the dweorg of Stoneroot have consistently remained the halflings' staunchest allies. Following the Great Schism the other three elemental temples suffered grievous damage, but the earth temple survived. Reverses during the Hoyrall Wars forced the abandonment of this final bastion of the Devotees of the Four Hearts.

During the siege of Stoneroot, priests and laymen sought refuge in the dwarven city. The priests sealed the outer doors and prayed to the Great Mother for an additional guardian to complement the holy tree's natural defenses. The Mother granted these prayers, in the form of a shaitan. Each day, for hundreds of years the shaitan used her stone shape ability to open and seal the light shaft that provided sunlight to the holy tree in the crystal sanctuary by way of a complex system of mirrors. For many years, the temple remained undisturbed save for a lone incursion of Hoyrall raiders slain by the shaitan, the Holy Tree, and the traps left behind by the fleeing priests.

A recent collapse near the back of the temple has introduced threats from another quarter. Denizens of the caverns far beyond the temple have made their way into the complex. Rock trolls penetrated to the inner chamber and tore out a chunk of the Holy Tree while the shaitan was opening the light shaft for the day. She returned to help the wounded tree drive off the trolls, but has since ceased her patrols of all but the outer sanctuary. Other creatures have taken advantage of this and moved in, including a black pudding that has damaged the mirrors bringing essential sunlight to the Holy Tree. A fungal sickness and the damage inflicted by the trolls combine to make both the tree and its attuned guardian unstable.

Carlyetta Wesleigh, flush with victory from the re-establishment of the water temple in the village of Pembroke, assembles a team to re-open the earth temple and repair the tree within. Communing with the goddess forewarns of the corruption within the temple and she has engaged dweorg stonecutters to fashion new root sections for the sacred tree that will sanctify and cleanse the temple.

Though the goddess has blessed Carlyetta, outside forces seek to corrupt her. An advanced tripurasura continues to entice her into heresy, preying on her desire to protect her halfling kin at all costs. The tripurasura, Gratipp Dullhenna, long disguised as Carlyetta's clerk, tempts her with the power of recently discovered cyclopean runes, convincing her that this ancient magic will enhance her connection to the goddess. In fact, the runes are enchantment foci for the tripurasura's new ally, a disaffected halfling wizard named Myghal Weskenver. Grieving over the recent loss of his fiancée, and furious that Carlyetta is becoming more open to fostering a community of inclusion rather than exclusion in halfling society, the wizard falls prey to the tripurasura's whisperings of racial purity for the lands of Picollo. The halfling enchanter plots to trick Carlyetta into unwittingly installing the false runes in the temple. Once these foci are in place, the wizard plans to enchant and turn the revived order of the Devotees of the Four Hearts to his own purposes.



Adventure Summary

In the shadow of the Great Mountain, the PCs restore the Earth Temple of the Great Mother, a living testament to the ancient ties between the dweorg of Stoneroot and the halflings of Picollo.

Dweorg craftsmen in Stoneroot complete the root sculpture required to restore the shrine at the temple while the PCs seek information relating to the recently discovered cyclopean runes. While traveling the city, they unmask an intellect devourer inhabiting Carlyetta's second in command. Heartbroken at the loss of her companion, Carlyetta encourages the incorporation of the cyclopean runes into the earth temple in order to more efficiently tap the power of the goddess to protect her people.

En-route to the temple site, the PCs fight a series of battles with strange insect creatures. These are the zagnatti, a new species evolved from the dormant mind of the half-god Zagn, and distant kin to the hoyrall. The craft and skill of the attacks of these armored bugs increase in intensity as the temple draws near, owing to a primitive hive mind unseen in the spawn of Zagnexis since the Confluence.

At the temple site, climbing the slopes or an aerial reconnaissance provides an alternative entry to a frontal assault at ground level. Otherwise, penetrating the defenses of the temple requires bypassing a vicious trap and a pair of mimics. The outer sanctuary is guarded by the Aspect of the Mother, an insane shaitan, aided by the roots of the Holy Tree. Centuries of solitude and struggle have weakened and corrupted the shaitan. Other monsters reside

in the temple: rock trolls in the archives and a black pudding in the mirror assembly that provides healing light to the central tree, and vermin tucked away in side rooms.

Side tunnels permit exploration of much of the temple before breaching the sanctuary. The tree within is diseased and confused, and must be subdued by force before it can be restored. Exploring the outer caverns containing the mirror assembly brings the PCs into contact with the black pudding, but provides an advantage against the rock trolls and the tree in the inner sanctum. Once the tree is subdued and dormant, sufficient repairs may be made to restore the temple and the tree to good health. These repairs may include etching the cyclopean runes into the inner sanctuary. Doing so grants the PCs a magical boon, tempting them to place the runes in the remaining temples, dupes of the tripurasura and the enchanter.

Adventure Hooks

The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors is part two of a four-part adventure arc that begins with *The Ties that Bind*. The action of the adventure takes place two to three weeks following the restoration of the water temple in the village of Pembroke. If your group is starting with this book, halfling PCs could be native to Picollo; adventurers of other races may have come to work for Carlyetta for the following reasons:

- A PC might be a worshiper of the Great Mother and has heard of Carlyetta's work to rediscover the ancient traditions.
- Picollo is mostly closed to immigration by other races; working with Carlyetta grants access to that hidden land. Officials in the capital city of Picollo allow entry onto the island on the condition that Carlyetta assess the would-be immigrant's "qualities."
- A PC may be a freedman, having served a term of indentureship in Picollo. She might even have been recently freed from service to a halfling in Pembroke, which is quickly becoming a center of tolerance in southern Picollo, due to the activities of Carlyetta's previous team of mixed-race heroes.

Getting Started

The dweorg city of Stoneroot in northeastern Picollo is one of the wonders of the big island. After beating against northeasterly winds for almost two weeks, the caravel Autumn Leaves steers directly for the roots of the Great Mountain, which has obscured the horizon for many days. Sailing into a great sea cave, dweorg galleys tasked to protect the sheltered harbor immediately flank the caravel. Your ship ties up to the wharfs, under the watchful eye of Petrok Tarfingers, the clove-breathed bosun, whose barely-concealed impatience with all things foreign has made the last fortnight a trial.

Fortunately, once safe in port, your patron, Carlyetta Wesleigh, grants shore leave to Tarfingers and some of the crew, so the invitation to dine with her the next day is welcome; thanks to the knowledge that the unpleasant, but sweet-breathed, sailor will not be in attendance. Carlyetta promises to reveal the next part of her mission, the restoration of the earth temple to the Great Mother. As you dress for dinner, you consider the scraps of information gleaned thus far.



The following is the common lore surrounding the temples:



Temples to the goddess center around a great tree. In most villages, the holy tree simply stands in the central green. The leaves of these trees contain the holy writings of the Mother, as well as the stories of her worshipers, scribed on the leaves themselves. Divination and prophetic magic is often tied to or enhanced by the tree of community; to read one's leaf is to gain insight to one's soul.

The Temples of the Four Hearts are no exception. Carlyetta's research, and experience at the water temple indicates that the nature and form of each holy tree relates to the elemental aspect to which the site is dedicated.

Additional **Intelligence** checks reveal the following information prior to the dinner with Carlyetta.



Intelligence (Religion) DC 10: The temple to the earth aspect of the Great Mother is known by many names, Stoneheart, Temple of the Earthen Heart, Temple of the Crucible, but by far the most intriguing name is The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors.

Intelligence (History) DC 14: The earth temple and surrounding village were abandoned during the Hoyrall Wars during the siege of Stoneroot. The dwarves of that cavern city bricked over its entrance tunnels, isolating nearby allied villages from significant aid. Many of the halfling villagers took shelter in Stoneroot, and their descendants live there to this day.

Intelligence (History) DC 18: Prior to abandoning the temple, the earth priests of the great mother installed what defenses they could to protect the temple from raiders. It is rumored that an aspect of the Great Mother herself makes up part of the defenses.

Intelligence (History) DC 20: The original construction of the temple was the "making" of a family of smiths and stonemasons from Stoneroot. The descendants of Alduric Pelfist still ply their trade in the dweorg city. It is said they are the finest goldsmiths in Picollo.



The stewards bring in port, brandy, cheese, and sweet biscuit as Carlyetta gestures to her clerk Gratipp. From a nearby side table the thin, balding, halfling man retrieves a leather portfolio and a small book with front and back plates fashioned from thin shale, and bound with spirals of mithril wire. He places the items on the table and retreats to his pantry. Carlyetta opens the portfolio; inside a series of rubbings detail strange runes.

She speaks, "These rubbings are taken from an ancient cyclopean temple discovered scant miles from the village of Pembroke. They were found on sculptures that hearken back to my faith's earliest understanding of the nature of the Goddess.

Cyclopean mystics often studied and contemplated gods other than their own. It is rumored they even found ways to trap or channel the divine energy of gods they did not worship. The lingering auras at the site seem to indicate that these ancient giants once opened a channel to the Mother Spirit, and these runes may have intensified the divine connection. I am considering including this magic in the re-sanctification process at the Temple of the Earth, in hopes that a more direct connection to the Goddess will empower me and my fellow priests to better shepherd our people through the challenges facing our culture, nation, and race."

Carlyetta requests that the PCs consult with a zwerc mage named Caelis, whose business interests in Stoneroot are handled by Elerin. The zwerc wizard lives in the cloud fortresses at the peak of the Great Mountain, and only rarely visits Stoneroot, as distrust between zwerc and dweorg remains an obstacle to good relations. A meeting is arranged for the following day. The PCs are to retrieve supplies and materials for the incorporation of the runes into the temple.

Carlyetta sets a good table, and the conversation is enlivened by the contributions of an additional guest, a halfling merchant named Elerin Crosseyes. The estranged wife of Digory Crosseyes (a hard-hearted indenture broker in The Nines who may be recognized from Book One), Elerin has moved her house and business to Stoneroot. Her association with her husband has taught her how to get a finger in almost every commercial pie; she has contacts with legitimate and illegitimate concerns in the dwarven city as well as throughout Picollo. Unlike her husband, Elerin's stare is direct and, some say, piercing. Her wit and charm are the same. With Elerin's help, Carlyetta engaged dweorg craftsmen and priests to fashion stone roots imbued with the power of the goddess to restore the central tree of the temple. During the meal, Elerin answers general questions about Stoneroot, including the knowledge checks about the temple **DC 15** or lower. Information on Stoneroot is included in Chapter One. At the end of the dessert course, Carlyetta gets down to business.

Carlyetta's Trust

Throughout the adventure, the PCs will have opportunities to advise Carlyetta who, along with most other halflings in Picollo, is wary of those whose races once betrayed the trust of the wee folk. The adventures earn community points to track how well regarded they are in terms of this inborn halfling prejudice. The higher their total, the more weight Carlyetta gives their opinions. The following modifications are made to interactions with Carlyetta and any halflings encountered during the adventure.

6-9 community points: Trusted – Diplomacy DCs reduced by 5

1-5 community points: Well Regarded – Diplomacy DCs no effect

Less than one community point: Untrusted – Diplomacy DCs increased by 5

If your group played part one of the adventure path, *The Ties that Bind*, use their community point total from that adventure, otherwise the PCs start with 5 community points.

Act One: Stoneroot

The PCs are scheduled to meet Elerin shortly before midday at the shop of the dweorg stonecutter who has been engaged to fashion the stone root required to restore the temple. The adventurers may spend the time prior to their meeting seeking out the descendants of Alduric Pelanfist (**Encounter A**) who has intelligence on the temple, the descendants of the halflings who took refuge in the city (**Encounter B**), who may share rumors regarding the resurgence of the zagnatti near the village site, or investigate the city archives for information regarding the cyclopean runes (**Encounter C**). They may also spend time upgrading arms and armor, or replenishing magical stores in the city.

Maintaining the mystery

Many of the activities presented in Stoneroot allow your players to begin unraveling the mystery of the darker forces at work. These story seeds come to fruition in books three and four of the Adventure Path, but clever players may pick up on the possibility of running down the rumors presented in the lore and role play before then. There are plenty of clues worked into the read aloud text and role-playing notes for your players, even if they fail some of the initial lore checks. Use the Stoneroot encounters to reward direct player requests to follow up on these story threads but don't feel the need to give anything away. If, for example, no one thinks to go to the archives to research cyclopean runes, you need not present it as an option. Likewise, don't worry if the players uncover information, the ultimate reveal will be more rewarding as a result of the foreshadowing.

Stoneroot

LN small city

Qualities holy site, prosperous, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 8,850 (7,000 dweorg; 500 halflings; 1,000 humans (freedmen); 100 indentured humans; 250 other)

Notable NPCs

Rogan Hardamber, Dwarven Council

Rory Bessamer, Freedman Demagogue

Elerin Crosseyes, Merchant

The city of Stoneroot is carved into walls of a great sea cavern at the base of the Great Mountain on the eastern shore of mainland Picollo. The size of the entrance to the cave as well as a great underground river allows a significant amount of maritime trade to pass through the city, and the dweorg keep a harbor fleet of galleys for defense. Tunnels and avenues lead to the surface, as well as deeper into the mountain itself.

The dweorg are excellent smiths; magical arms and armor under the base price are more likely to be available in Stoneroot (85%), but staves, rings, wands, rods, and wondrous items are less likely to be available (65%). Most such items are brokered by halfling middlemen who represent zwerc mages from the cloud fortresses above, or on the black market, due to the friction between dweorg and zwerc. Scrolls and potions can be found normally.

The non-dweorg population of Stoneroot consists of halfling diplomats, merchants, and craftsmen, and their indentured servants (the dweorg do not keep indentures), as well as freedmen. Many abolitionist societies use this city as a base of operations, due to the more egalitarian government of the dwarves.

A. The Family Tree

Holger Pelanfist (LG Male Dweorg expert 9) is the great, great, great grandson of Alduric Pelanfist, the original engineer of the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors. The Pelanfist clan converted to the worship of the Great Mother, and Holger's wife Elsbeth (Female dweorg cleric 3, expert 10) is an adept of the earth incarnation of the goddess. Over the centuries, the Pelanfist clan has turned from the engineering of large projects such as the temple to the crafting of divine sculpture and fine jewelry. Though they worship the goddess, they do not forget their roots, and religious iconography of both the Mother Spirit and the dwarven pantheon fills their workshop, as well as many items destined for consecration as divine items of power.

A conversation with the craftsmen yields some information; that the front areas of the temple were reserved for visiting pilgrims, while the central sanctuary was surrounded by the living quarters of

the priests. The rear areas of the temple served as religious archives. The Pelanfists can describe the central holy tree's fabrication, and point to replicas in their shop: miniature bejeweled sculptures that are intended for installation in personal shrines in the home. They share that the holy tree within the temple is a living manifestation of the goddess. If asked how it survives underground, they speak with pride about the mirror system that their ancestor designed to channel sunlight into the inner sanctuary.

No schematics of the temple are available, but a **DC 15 Charisma or Intelligence (Investigation)** check encourages an examination of ancient work orders. Over the centuries, the Pelanfists were called on to resurface the mirrors with a special alchemical silver. This alchemical silver is available for sale for 250 gp per gallon. The larger mirrors in the temple required three gallons to resurface, while smaller mirrors required a gallon of the substance. The smaller mirrors in the temple can be heated in a kiln to cure the silver, but the larger mirrors were usually repaired with a *heat metal* spell cast in situ. The work orders also indicate castings of *stone shape* or labor costs for stonecutters to prepare the stone backings of the mirrors. A **DC 18 Intelligence** check also comes across a series of purchase orders that details extensive repairs to the central tree itself; a note in the margin comments on how the priests had to subdue the tree with force following an infection by a malevolent fungus before making the repairs.

If Elerin is present with the PCs during their discussions, the **Charisma** check is made with disadvantage; Elerin did not award

Carlyetta's business to Pelanlist, preferring to use a cheaper competitor. Elerin is visibly cautious about accompanying the PCs to the Pelanlist shop; A **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight)** check prior to entering the shop with Elerin gets the story out of her if the PCs wish to orchestrate the conversation to their advantage.

Development: Discovering the work orders earns the PCs one community point; they are a compelling reminder of halflings working in community with others.

B. Scattered Leaves

Stoneroot contains descendants of refugees fleeing the hoyrall invaders 200 years ago. In the fifty years following the end of the wars, only a scattering of halflings have moved back into the abandoned villages. Most still live in small villages just outside the great tunnels into the mountain. Most of the lore surrounding the temple village has been forgotten by the grandchildren of the villagers that once dwelled there, but they can point the adventurers in the direction of Holger Pelanlist (**Encounter A**) if they seek information about the temple complex.

The more courageous of the homesteaders keep in touch with their urban brethren, often bringing exotic meats from the forest and produce from small farms reclaimed from the wilderness.

A **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals that some of the homesteaders have gone missing in recent weeks. The largest concentration of the missing lies in the direction of the temple. The most outrageous of the rumors flying about is the appearance of a great roc from the heights of the mountain that swoops down and carries off the unsuspecting.

Development: A promise by the party to look into the missing homesteaders must be backed up with a **DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion)** check to convince the halflings that the adventurers are trustworthy. If successful, the PCs earn one community point.

C. The Archives

The dweorg archives contain writings helpful to those who seek independent confirmation on the power of the cyclopean runes. A two-hour search of the archives and a **DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana)** check unearths three sets of theories relating to the cyclopean runes. The tripurasura and his wizard ally have introduced false clues to aid in their deception.

Any research by the party is hampered by imperfect knowledge of cyclopean rune writing, which resists divination magic like *comprehend languages* and *tongues*. There are some scholarly works dedicated to translating the ancient language, but they are incomplete at best. A **DC 18 Intelligence** check allows partial translation of the rune language and grants a +2 circumstance bonus when making any skill checks relating to them. Knowledge of modern giant grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the translation check.

Theory 1: Two hundred years ago a half-elven bard named Jearanne Lightfoot wrote a treatise on cyclopean worship, based on a study of liturgical music. Lightfoot's conclusions indicate that the ancient giants siphoned off divine energy from distracted or weakened gods and goddesses, an act which was a profane insult to the slighted deity. A similar analysis shows how cyclopean music steals the harmonies and melodies from aboriginal races millennia ago.



The Tripurasura and the mage Weskenver have mixed false documents in with Lightfoot's analysis, in an attempt to visibly discredit this theory. A **DC 18 Intelligence** check reveals that the discrediting documents are actually intended to look like forgeries; a failed check validates the disinformation – that some of the supporting music is false, its phrasing is similar to Lightfoot's more popular compositions. An **Intelligence** check **DC 15** discovers a cache of similar compositions in the archives, granting credence to the suspicion that the theory is a deception by a vain bard hoping to establish himself as a legendary scholar.

Theory 2: A three volume set of journals by a gnome archaeologist named Zanpip Lorcyn details two dozen archaeological explorations of cyclopean rune sites all across Aventyr. The digs were quite extensive, and Lorcyn notes that many of the cyclopean sites coincide with centers of regional, racial, and societal advances in religion for local non-cyclopes. Artifacts found in twinned sites seem to indicate some sort of trade between the ancient tribes, and similar iconography and relics support the gnome's thesis that the cyclopes incorporated local religion and gods into their pantheon and rituals, and that this act advanced divine cyclopean and local magic alike, and even fostered community between giants and non-giants.

Theory 3: A biography about a fey monk named Glisseranda describes the creation of a meditation garden based on cyclopean arcane, architectural, and natural principles. Copies of cyclopean design documents are included in the biography, and although the runes scribed on these copies are untranslated, they are very similar to the runes obtained at site mentioned by Carlyetta, and those proposed by the zwerc mage Caelis (**Encounter F**) to modify the temples of the Mother Spirit. The biography goes on to detail a lifetime's search for enlightenment and insight, a strange choice for a chaotic fey, who would not readily be drawn to discipline. The foci in the meditation garden appear to have been instrumental in the fey's journey to greater insight. A commentary appended to the back of the biography details the efforts of an adventuring band to locate the site of the meditation garden – the explorers could find no trace, despite years of effort.

Development: Discoveries made in the archives may influence debate with Carlyetta in **Encounter G**.

D. Twisting of the Minds

This encounter can be run at any time during the PCs' foray into the city proper after they joined Elerin Crosseyes at the stonecutter's who is crafting the root segments for the temples re-consecration. After a short wait, Elerin leads the PCs purposefully into the city center. A series of twists and turns along confusing streets opens into an ongoing altercation:

The road ahead is blocked by dweorg in the armor of the city watch. Throngs of spectators mill about, some holding bloodied rags to knocked heads and puffy eyes. Pushing a bit closer you can see that a brawl in a beer garden spilled out onto the streets. The dweorg have cordoned off half a dozen sailors from the Autumn Leaves from twice as many humans and half orcs – all of these individuals bear the scars of recent combat. One of the humans harangues the guards.

Elerin Crosseyes recognizes the shouting human as Rory Bessamer, a bitter freedman who constantly stirs up trouble amongst the halflings in Stoneroot, and the large population of freedman. The dweorg's more egalitarian society does not indulge in indentureship; most indentures in the city serve in the merchant houses. Bessamer never misses a chance to cause trouble, trouble that he hopes will intensify the tensions between servants, masters, and freedmen across Picollo. Most abolitionists decry his tactics but some of the more radical are known to employ this disreputable speechmaker. In this case, the bard paints the sailors as hardened slavers, just another example of halfling oppression.

Bessamer recognizes Elerin as she convinces one of the guards to grant access to the isolated mariners. Attempting to insult her, the demagogue calls out that she is a pawn of her husband Digory back in The Nines. Elerin responds wittily that if so, she is a pawn that has not been "moved" by her spouse in some time, a comment that draws an appreciative laugh from the crowd. Once Elerin and her companions close with the sailors, the party learns more:

"Greetings, mistress, masters!" softly exclaims a young halfling sailor with a broken nose. "This lot took us by surprise when we were drinking our ales, and the damn dwarves won't let us seek out our mates. Just as the mob was stirred into a frenzy and attacked us, a pair of them knocked the bosun on his head and dragged him into the alley yonder. Jemmy and Karrisa managed to break free from the mob and duck into the alley, but we haven't seen any of them since the troubles died down."

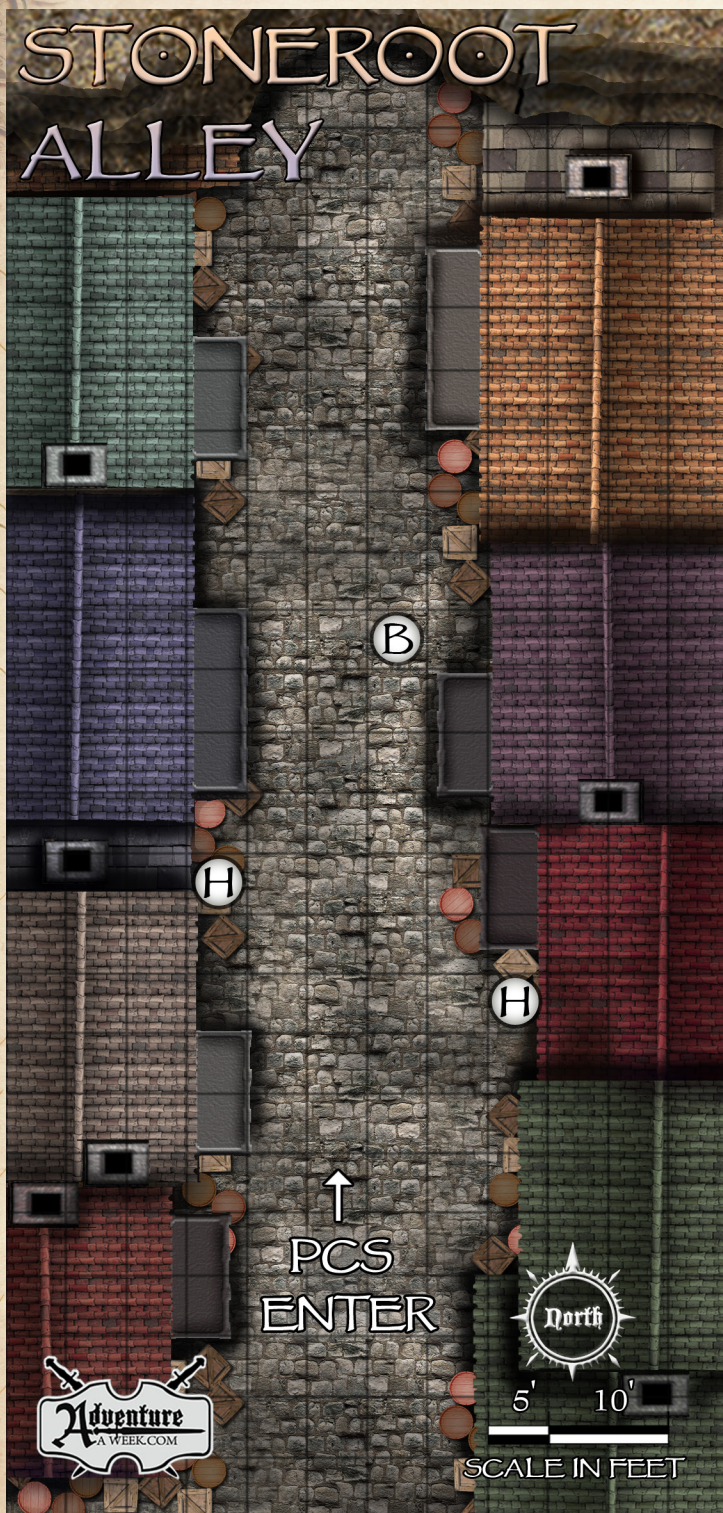
Elerin brokers safe passage for the party and stays behind to negotiate the sailors' release while the party investigates the alley.

Terrain: The blind alley terminates in a cavern wall; the buildings and apartments at the end of the alley die into the cave roof. At ground level crates, trash and other debris make movement close to the buildings difficult terrain. Drainpipes and loose bricks make it a relatively easy **Climb** to the second and third story balconies (**DC 10**, ten feet of travel to each level), but attaining the roof tops from the third floor requires a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check. A **DC 5 Dexterity** check negotiates the steep roofs safely.

Creatures: The bosun, Petrok Tarfingers, met with foul play while on shore leave in Stoneroot. An *intellect devourer* has been at large for some months within the city, most recently inhabiting the body of one of Rory Bessamer's thugs. With the body almost at the end of its usefulness, the intellect devourer helped spark the brawl in the tavern courtyard and, with the aid of one of the rabble rouser's earstwhile companions hustled a stunned bosun into a blind alley. Once there, the monster slew its surprised companion and inhabited Petrok's stunned body. A few moments later, the pair of sailors arrived. Thus far the intellect devourer has been able to bluff it out, suggesting that they stay hidden while the brawl outside dies down. With the party's arrival, the intellect devourer's options become limited.

The two sailors, Jemmy and Karrisa, are glad to see the party arrive in the alley and come out from behind some crates, reluctantly forcing the intellect devourer to do the same. The monster delays as much as possible, readying a death attack on one of the party members. He describes being dragged into the alley after being

STONEROOT ALLEY



The following opportunities exist for the PCs to discover the deception; all checks require active initiation by the adventurers. The only passive information revealed is the heavy reek of death in the alley (the last body stolen by the intellect devourer, seven days dead, has decomposed quickly after the monster's exit). It lies hidden behind some debris; the other rioter's corpse rests, splayed out, in the center of the alley.

- Closing to speak with the bosun puts a PC in range of horrible bad breath (the stench of death) coming from the halfling, quite a contrast to the normal clove-sweetened aroma.
- A DC 14 **Wisdom (Insight)** check reveals that the "bosun" is delaying exiting from the alley for some reason.
- A DC 14 **Wisdom (Heal)** check notes that the human in the center of the alley was slain by a bludgeoning weapon. The bosun is armed with kukris, and according to his story, he is the one who defeated his captor, rather than the slingstaff-armed sailors.
- An easy search for the second rioter permits a DC 15 **Wisdom (Heal)** check to determine that he has been dead for more than five days.
- Pressing the bosun on any specific details of their past relationship requires a **contest [Charisma (Deception) vs. PCs Wisdom (Insight)]** on the part of the intellect devourer to deflect, as it has no specific knowledge of such details. It doesn't even know the other sailor's names.

The intellect devourer attempts to bluff it out until it has set up a death attack, at which point Elerin appears on the scene. She calls out to her halfling cousins, commenting that it looks like they've gotten themselves into quite a mess. The two sailors answer, "Yes mistress!" followed a few seconds later by the bosun. Elerin responds, "Such deference is unlike you brother-in law, next thing you know you will surrender to the dweorg," at which point the intellect devourer suspects the game is up and launches his attack.

The Bosun Inhabited

Use Assassin NPC. See official entry for full statistics.

TACTICS

During Combat: As the intellect devourer/bosun makes its death attack (to paralyze) it cries out to the two sailors that the PCs have charmed Elerin and have it in for them, "Just like the mob!"

Morale: With an appetite for a new experience, the intellect devourer fights until its current host is destroyed.

Halfling Sailors (2)

Use Thug NPC. See official entry for full statistics.

TACTICS

During Combat The sailors are unsure of whether or not to fight; they take defensive postures, but only engage if they or the "bosun" is attacked. Until they enter the fight, a player may use an action to initiate a contest [**Charisma (Persuasion)** check vs,

stunned early in the brawl and that when he regained his senses, he overpowered his captors; the corpses of which lie nearby.

The party may discover the deception while the intellect devourer prevaricates. The monster knows that the halflings will defer to his rank; he instructs them to remain in the alley as the street is not safe, regardless of the party's statements, and as a last resort plans to liken the party to the mob from the beer garden. Though the halflings know the party, they are wary of any non-halflings and susceptible to the intellect devourer's bluffs.

Bosun's **Wisdom (Insight)** check] to return them to neutral status, at which point they move to protect Elerin.

Combat: The Bosun Inhabited plus (2) thug; Encounter Total XP: 4,100 Adjusted XP: 8,200 Deadly;

Development: When the host body is slain advance to **Encounter E**. Once combat with the Intellect Devourer is joined, the halfling sailors stop attacking the party. The PCs gain one community point if they did not attack the sailors; they lose one for each sailor slain.

E. Brains on the Pavement

Creature: When the host body is defeated, the intellect devourer exits. A **DC Wisdom (Perception)** check **DC 14** followed by a **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana)** recognizes the monster for what it is.

Intellect Devourer

See official entry for statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat Once the Intellect Devourer comes out of its host it tries to find the best target to occupy.

Combat: Intellect devourer; Encounter Total XP: 450 Adjusted XP: 450; see official entries for full statistics.

Development: Elerin and the halfling sailors are horrified over the manner of the bosun's death. His shipmates agree to return his body to the *Autumn Leaves*. If the PCs loot the bosun's corpse, they lose one community point.

F. Hidden Prejudice

The zwerc mage Caelis sells magic out of a small storefront in Jeweler's Street. Most of the time, halfling clerks in the employ of Elerin Crosseyes monitor the shop. Because of the tensions between zwerc and dweorg, Caelis is not often in the city, he prefers to delegate the task of inventory transport to trusted halfling highlanders, from whom he occasionally takes an apprentice, a habit that hearkens back to his service in the Hoyrall Wars.

The dwarf mage journeys to Stoneroot under magical duress. Myghal Weskenver (LE Male Halfling Enchanter 11) has hatched a plot with the tripurasua to enthrall the newly resurgent Devotees of the Four Hearts. Since birth, Weskenver has been predisposed to distrust of most non-halfling races. Recently, his engagement to Tryfenna Hayweather, a model of tolerance, acceptance, and progress was shattered when the maiden was slain by hags near the village of Pembroke (Book One - *The Ties that Bind*). The failure of Carlyetta's mixed-race team to protect her has hardened his original position: Picollo should be purified from all but the chosen children of the Great Mother. The tripurasura chortles with glee that he has corrupted another powerful spellcaster's understanding of the goddess, and that the ties of community are yielding under the wedges of his verbal poison.

Weskenver creates a series of magical foci, hidden in cyclopean runes. He hopes to trick Carlyetta into installing them in the temples. The enchanter can then use his magic to suborn unsuspecting priests and seize control of the cult, and turn it toward his own ends. The mage *charmed* the zwerc to bring him in line with the deception he and the asura are perpetrating on Carlyetta.

Caelis provides the PCs with a template of cyclopean runes to inscribe into the central tree of the temple. A scroll of *stone shape* and powdered diamond dust worth 500 gp complete the "kit" to perform the ritual. Caelis warns the PCs that the *stone shape* spell is primarily used to set the diamond dust in place; the fine detail of the runes will require skillfull **Spellcraft** to be scribed by magic. He recommends that a stonemason prepare the surface if at all possible.

If asked about the history and provenance of the runes, Caelis ascribes to **Theory 2** from **Encounter B** due the enchantment he is under. He has knowledge of the other two theories, but discredits them as bad scholarship.

A **DC 18 Wisdom (Insight)** check reveals that the zwerc is under the effects of an enchantment, but Weskenver has covered his tracks well. If the party manages to dispel the enchantment, Caelis' position is that no one has proven conclusively what the cyclopean runes do.



Regarding the enchantment, the zwerc remembers a series of dreams about his past apprentices debating the nature of the runes, and wonders if he might have been influenced by them. The mage is very embarrassed, and revealing any information about past apprentices (see **development** below) is considered an important secret (advantage on Charisma checks against the mage). Once the conversation turns in this direction the mage attempts to excuse himself, leaving the ritual kit on the counter as he exits into the back room (where he teleports to the amber road leading back to his cloud fortress).

Convincing the dwarf he is charmed is a delicate operation; he starts as hostile (Charisma checks at disadvantage) to any such suggestion (**Charisma (Persuasion) DC 18** to shift attitude). Track the number of requests made during such negotiations, as it may influence what the dwarf reveals once the *charm* is broken. Casting a spell without seeking permission is considered a hostile act, and the dwarf immediately attempts to escape, using *teleport* or *dimension door* to get away (if statistics are required – use the Deep Marshal Wizard statblock from the NPC codex, replacing telepathic bond with teleport in the spells prepared section). In this case, Elerin demands explanations from the party, and safeguards the wizard's shop, muttering that she will have a hard time smoothing things over.

Development: If Caelis reveals the identities of his apprentices, a **DC 17 Intelligence (History)** check reveals one of them to be Myghal Weskenver's father, who was slain at the end of the Hoyrall wars. Myghal, the Second Speaker of the halfling Eldermoot is well insulated from further action by the party; inquiries at this time simply serve to make him more cautious as he advances his plans.

Gathering the proof that the cyclopean runes may not be what they seem earns the Party one community point (for advocating a pure worship of the goddess) and permits a **DC 18 Intelligence(Arcana)** check to determine that some kind of magical focus is woven into the runes.

4. Convincing Carlyetta

When the party reports back to the Autumn Leaves, they discover Carlyetta very disturbed over recent events. The loss of the bosun to an unforeseen and horrible threat hardens Carlyetta's resolve to be a model guardian for all halflings, and the whisperings of the tripurasura encourage her down this path, the path of a fallen leaf (separatist archetype).

Carlyetta intends to use the cyclopean runes in the restoration of the temple, but if the party expresses concern she will hear them out. She is hostile to the idea of not incorporating them (**Charisma (Persuasion) DC 22** to shift attitude) – although her arguments appear reasoned and measured. This Charisma check may be reduced depending on the current community point total, and the party gains advantage for discovering the forgeries in the archives (**Encounter C**), or if Caelis' *charm* effect is discovered and countered.

Convincing Carlyetta to exercise caution is considered a difficult task, and any Charisma checks to convince her otherwise are made with disadvantage; the party's community point standing applies to this check. Regardless of the failure or success of the check, Carlyetta recognizes that she should consider

the PCs warning to maintain cordiality. She expresses doubts, and makes the following request,

"Your caution may be well founded, perhaps a compromise is in order. Take the materials provided by the zwerc sage. Use them to re-consecrate the small shrine within the temple. If no untoward effects occur, we may take it as a sign that the goddess will bless incorporation of the runes into the main sanctuary when I arrive to perform that duty. I will reserve a final decision until I see the results of your efforts. I thank you for your continued concern."

Development: Success on the check to exercise caution earn the PCs one community point for keeping Carlyetta on the true path of the goddess. Failed persuasion permits a **DC 18 Wisdom (Insight)** check to reveal the failure to convince her to exercise caution. Exceeding this check by 5 or more reveals that Carlyetta may be influenced by forces or arguments as yet undiscovered. The adventures are certain that the restoration of the temples is a



good and worthy cause, but that the cleric bears watching in the coming weeks until this mystery can be resolved. Note Carlyetta's current attitude following the conversation for use in adjudicating the conclusion of the adventure.

Act Two: Resurgence

The temple lies three day's journey from the gates of Stoneroot. As the party nears their destination they cross into the territory of a swarm of zagnatti, who are responsible for the disappearance of the local homesteaders. This is a young swarm, recently migrated from tunnels under the eastern beaches of Picollo. The swarm faces troubles at the moment. A white dragon down from the high peaks hunts the young queen. As a result, the swarm's frenzy yields more activity than a simple migration and territorial push would normally indicate.

H. Carters' Demise

The journey from Stoneroot remains uneventful for almost two days. Your path takes you past small halfling villages and hamlets that grow more scattered the farther you get from the city. The road becomes a set of wagon tracks in the grasslands, and in wooded groves little more than a game trail. While traveling through one such woodland, you spot a two-wheeled cart abandoned in a small clearing ahead, one wheel is broken in half; the cart rests askew.

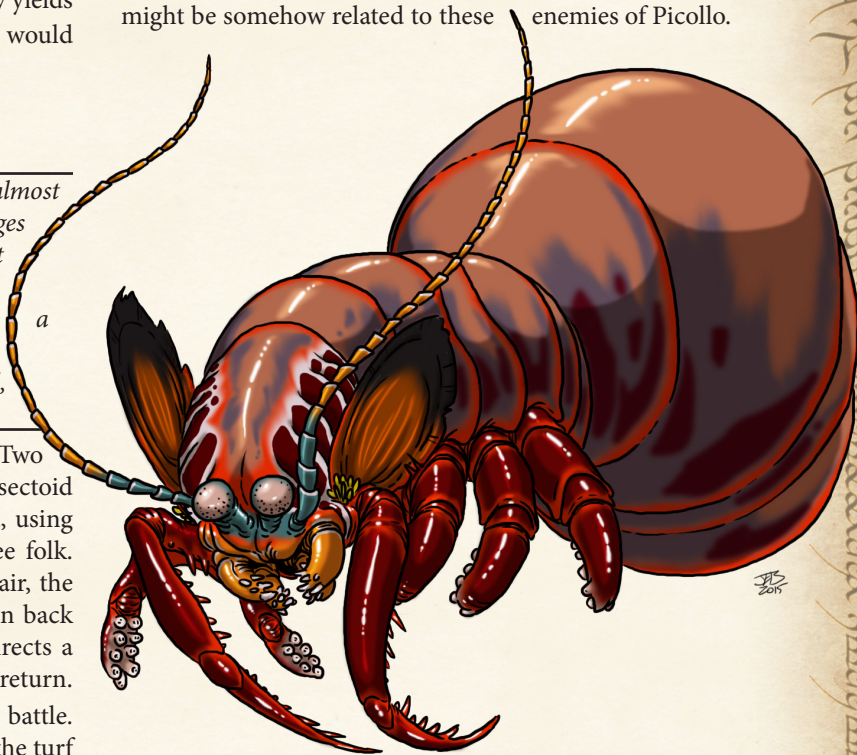
A halfling family of four was set upon by a pod of zagnatti. Two managed to flee into the woods, two were subdued by the insectoid creatures, who informed their queen. The queen appeared, using her stinger to suck the knowledge from these strange wee folk. Before she could direct her minions to seek the escaped pair, the prowling white dragon appeared and chased the queen back into the earth. The following day, the zagnatti mistress directs a second pod to wait in ambush, hoping the two escapees will return.

The southern area of the clearing exhibits signs of battle. Uprooted trees lean drunkenly into the open space, where the turf is torn to shreds. A **DC 11 Wisdom (Survival)** check reveals that Small, Medium, Large and Huge creatures were involved; some burrowed up from the ground, tipping the trees. Exceeding the check by 5 or more divulges that the huge creature was wormlike, while the large creature had significant claws at the end of its four legs, and sported a spiked tail. Following the claw tracks to the edge of the clearing (**DC 14 Wisdom (Survival)**) permits a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception)** check to discover a pale blue and white scale the size of a hand covered in dried mud and dirt. **Intelligence (Arcana)** **DC 14** identifies it as a white dragon scale, a **DC 18** result reveals its likely age as adult. A nearby group of leafy branches are damaged, the leaves dead and brittle (**Intelligence (Nature)** **DC 15** indicates they underwent a snap freeze), and portions of the torn up turf are brown, as if burned, although no scorch marks are evident (**Intelligence (Nature)** **DC 15** indicates acid damage).

Two corpses a day old (**Wisdom (Heal)** check **DC 15**) lie near the cart. Both were slain by large puncture wounds in the chest, although the clothing of one is split to ribbons as if the body outgrew them in an instant; the tunic and breeches appear sized for an adolescent halfling. Strangely both of the corpses appear to be that of very old men, who would normally have no business out in

these woods, and it seems dubious that they could pull the cart, even though one wears a leather harness intended to aid in just that task.

Creatures: Two zagnatti drones and four blood pustules wait for the refugees to return. Three of the pustules are hidden just under the dirt near the cart (**Wisdom (Perception)** **DC 18**). The drones and the remaining pustule (who rides one of the drones) advance to the edge of the wood and attack (**DC 14 passive Perception** spots them, allowing action in the surprise round.) The zagnatti are unusual creatures hardly known in Picollo (or indeed greater Aventyr) at this time, and a while an **Intelligence (Arcana)** check of **DC 17** grants useful knowledge (derived from similar creature's abilities), it does not reveal the name of the creatures at this time. No knowledge check is required to note the similarity between the upper torso of the drones to that of the hoyrall, allowing the party to conclude that these creatures might be somehow related to these enemies of Picollo.



Zagnatti Blood Pustule (4)

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat: One of the dug-in pustules spits acid, but the other two remain hidden unless spotted, the second of the two "land mines" uses *transference* on one of the drones, while the second drone relies on *transference* from its rider. The "mine" pustules can burrow 5 feet per round to shift position while maintaining their full stealth bonus.

Morale: The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Zagnatti Drone (2)

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat The drones attack in tandem, using the Cohesive Claws ability to aid each other if their opponents prove too difficult to hit.

Morale The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Combat: (4) Zagnatti Blood Pustule plus (2) Zagnatti Drone;
Encounter Total XP: 2,200 **Adjusted XP:** 4,400; **Hard;**

Development: Once the battle ends, a closer examination of the cart reveals a change of clothing for a family of four. Two of the halflings (mother and adolescent daughter) are missing – their tracks are discovered leading into the woods near the frost damaged foliage.

Treasure: The cart is full of fine brandies worth 500 gp that were being delivered to Stoneroot. In an upturned tree near the halfling tracks leading into the wood, a dragon claw (DC 14 **Intelligence (Arcana)**) is buried in the bark. The claw sports a *minor ring of energy resistance (acid)*.






I. Spell Seekers

The refugees' trail is easy to follow. About a quarter mile into the woods, the adventurers discover Annik Penberry and her mother Rhianna. Rhianna, a moderately skilled ranger, managed to get her daughter away from the initial conflict and hidden in a



ENCOUNTER H

LEGEND

-  BLOOD PUSTULE
-  DRONE
-  DRONE w/BLOOD PUSTULE RIDER

PCS
ENTER

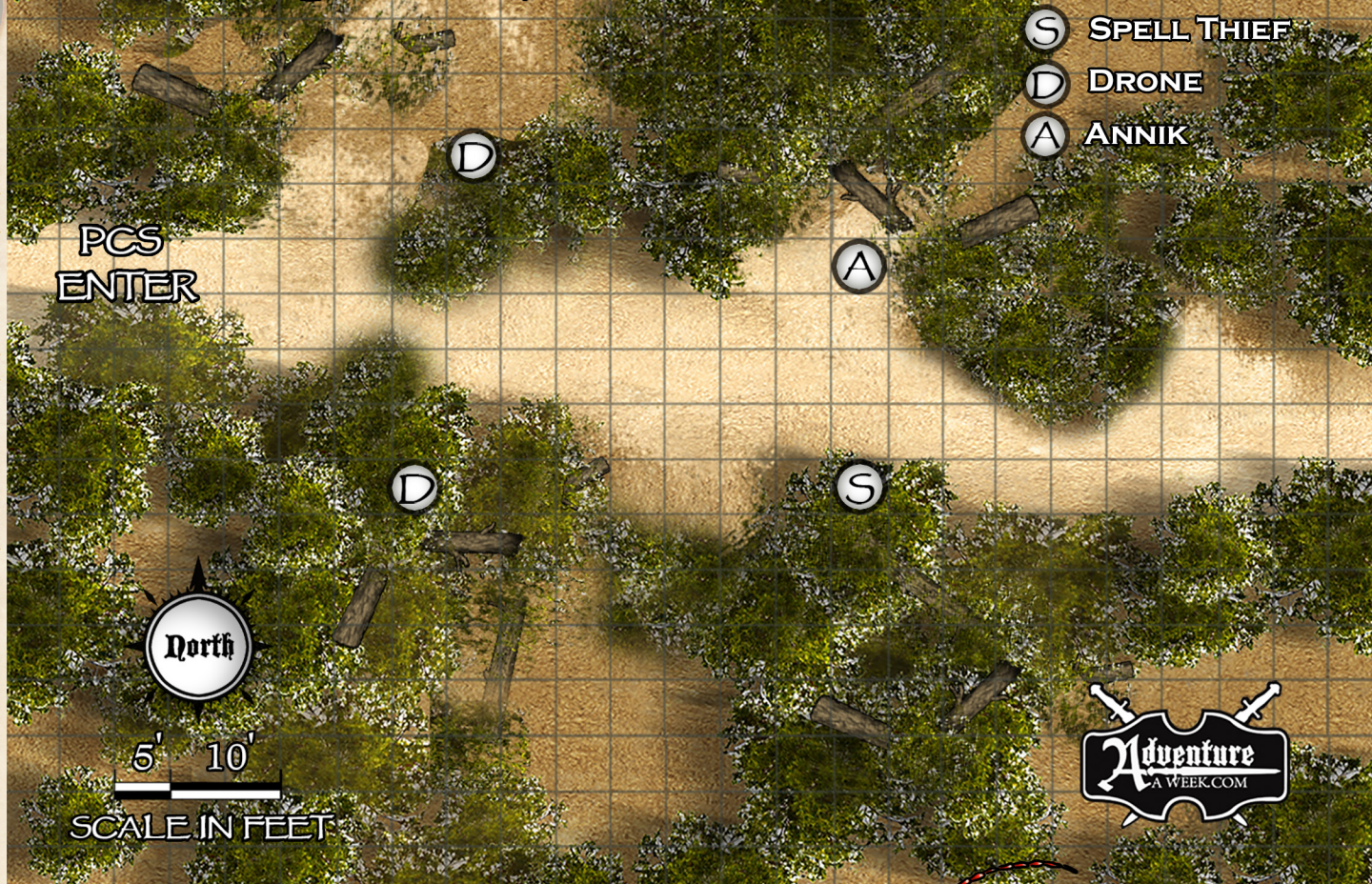
North

5' 10'

SCALE IN FEET



ENCOUNTER 1



dense thicket. Overnight, she succumbed to her wounds, and now lies unconscious. Her daughter stands vigil, still in shock from the events of the last 24 hours.

As the party nears the site, A **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** check spots some disturbed earth about ten feet off the trail, and tracks similar to those made by the drones in **encounter H**.

As the party approaches the thicket read the following,

A soft keening can be heard from a thicket to the left. Through the dense undergrowth, you can barely make out an adolescent halfling maiden hugging her knees as she rocks back and forth over the body of an unmoving, older halfling woman. The girl keeps repeating, "Don't grow old like poppa and Jemmy, mamma, Don't grow old!"

Creatures: A zagnatti spell thief, disguised as a colorful array of flower blossoms (**Wisdom (Perception)** DC 22) in the brush on the far side of the thicket directs two drone companions to work their way around to the far side to cut off any further retreat by the halflings. Unless the party approaches stealthily after seeing the nearby tracks, the two drones hear them and likewise have taken cover (**Wisdom (Perception)** DC 15).

Zagnatti Drone (2)

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat The drones attempt to draw warriors away from any casters until the spell thief engages, and then work to provide flanks for each other and the spell thief.



Morale The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Zagnatti Spell Thief (4)

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat From its hidden position, the spell thief works its way stealthily into position to execute a sneak attack against spell casters identified during the party's approach.

Morale The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Combat : (2) Zagnatti Drone plus Zagnatti Spell Thief; **Encounter Total XP: 3,200 Adjusted XP: 6,400; Hard;**

Development: Annik remains terrified following the combat, but eventually the adventurers calm her. She, and her mother if restored to consciousness (-4 hp and stable), describe the initial attack by the zagnatti in the clearing. The most intriguing part of the tale is a description of the queen, a huge worm-like creature. When the great worm struck with its stinger, its victims aged instantly before the horrified eyes of the women; the halfling wearing the torn clothes was Annik's twin brother, who aged a hundred years from multiple stinger strikes.

Rhianna is certain, that with some healing and weapons (hers were lost during the flight) she can get the two to the safety of Stoneroot. If the PCs restore her to full health (30 hp) and provide her with a melee weapon and a ranged weapon with 10 pieces of ammunition, they earn one community point. If they later return the full load of brandy to Rhianna and Annik, they earn a second. Rhianna can use a medium-sized short bow as a long bow, or can fashion a sling if 10 sling bullets are provided if no small weapons are available.

If the PCs ignore the tracks from **encounter H**, and proceed on to the temple, run this encounter as a roadside ambush without the halflings. Rhianna makes it back to Stoneroot after all, and when word gets out that the party might have been able to provide assistance, they lose one community point.

J. Hunters, or Prey?

Linked telepathically to the ambush at the cart and the patrol in the woods, the queen now sends heavier reinforcements to deal with this new threat. These are her last reserves, the white has found her tunnels and she and the remaining swarm are retreating (as coincidence would have it) towards the temple.

Creatures: Blood pustule scouts lurk along game trails and paths in party's line of march. They call out telepathically to the nearby attack group.

Zagnatti Blood Pustule (2)

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

Before Combat A single blood pustule remains hidden (**Wisdom (Perception)** DC 15) as the party passes. Check this DC against the party's passive Perception as they move past the scout. One blood pustule rides the sub-queen, disguised as an armored node, and does not attack, granting *transference* to the sub-queen; the pustule in the road spits acid after using *transference* on one of the drones.

Morale: The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Zagnatti Drone (2)

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

Morale The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Sub-queen

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

Morale The Zagnatti fight until slain, the sub-queen uses her charm ability as a last resort to try to convince the PCs it will surrender, even suborning a charmed PC to provide armed protection for it against its companions.

Combat: (2) Zagnatti Blood Pustule plus (2) Zagnatti Drone plus Zagnatti Sub Queen; **Encounter Total XP: 4,100 Adjusted XP: 8,200; Deadly;**

Development: The battle between the dragon and the swarm carries on below. Fifteen minutes later the survivors make a last ditch effort to escape the dragon.

K. The Queen

The attacks of the insect creatures have grown in intensity, but the temple site is only a few minutes away. You hope that the abandoned village will provide some shelter to rest and recuperate before entering



the holy site. Without warning, the earth disgorges more of the bizarre creatures, a pair of the centaur-like insects and a huge bloated worm whose front end terminates in three bony ridges surrounding a vast maw. The tail end sports a wicked stinger. In between, glistening egg sacs are cradled in a lattice of chitinous armor.

Creatures: The queen, supported by a blood pustule and two damaged drones, attempts to slay the puny humanoids in her way so she can escape the dragon's wrath.

Zagnatti Blood Pustule

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat The blood pustule spits acid from the queen's back, already having used *transference* on her.

Morale: The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Frost-Damaged Zagnatti Drone (2)

hp halved; See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat The drones protect the queen to the best of their ability.

Morale: The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Zagnatti Queen

See Appendix A for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat The queen fights with a fierceness born of desperation, full attacking and relying on her Aging Strike to weaken her opponents.

Morale: The Zagnatti fight until slain.

Combat : Zagnatti Blood Pustule plus (2) Injured Zagnatti Drone plus Zagnatti Queen; Encounter Total XP: 4,500 Adjusted XP: 9,000; Deadly;

Development: The white dragon, after tracking the queen through the earth, bursts upon the scene at your discretion. If the party is having a difficult time with the combat, the dragon may appear earlier, dispatching the queen before turning on the party.

L. Frozen in Fear

The turf erupts in a shower of dirt and rock. Like a newborn wriggling out from a muddy birth canal, a dragon streaked with mud and dirt escapes and lunges at the worm-creature's tail. With a sickening crunch, the powerful jaws snap off the rear segments and the stinger, a shower of acid and entrails spraying all those nearby as the great beast rears back, its mouth full of bloody detritus.

Hazard

Any creature within 10 feet of the dragon as it appears adjacent to the queen takes 10 (3d6) points of acid damage and is entangled in bloody viscera (**Dexterity saving throw DC 14** for half damage)

Creature: The white has tracked the queen through the tunnels, and claims its prize, ripping the stinger from her body. It is easy to see how the dirt-streaked beast might have been mistaken for a Roc by the uninitiated.

Adult White Dragon (1)

See official entry for statistics.

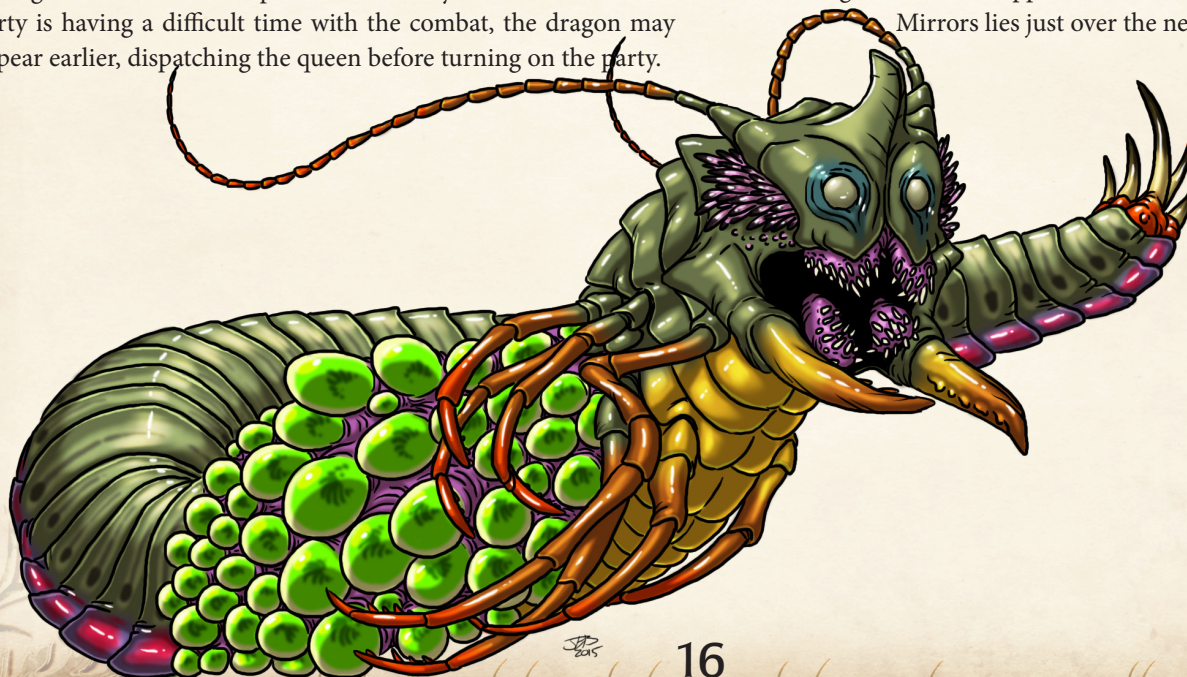
TACTICS

During Combat The dragon immediately takes to the sky with its prize, withdrawing if needed. It does not hesitate to strike those who attempt to close with it before it can get away, although it cannot make a bite attack or breath weapon attack while it has the stinger in its mouth.

Morale A DC 15 **Wisdom (Insight)** check reveals that the dragon is trying to get away with the stinger and is not interested in killing the PCs. If the PCs interfere with it taking the stinger, it will certainly act to get it back, but it will then retreat again. If reduced to half health, and it still does not have the stinger, it attempts to slay the party to achieve its aims.

Combat: Young White Dragon; Encounter Total XP: 2,300 Adjusted XP: 2,300; Easy;

The village that once supported the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors lies just over the next ridge.



Treasure: A dead spell thief zagnatti and a sub-queen corpse lie just inside the dragon's exit tunnel. An **Intelligence (Arcana)** check **DC 14** allows a character to collect samples and make drawings and schematics of each of the species of zagnatti, including notes on their tactics and abilities discovered during the combats. These notes are valuable to those who study the arcane, as well as naturalists and other adventures. The value is determined by the success on the check, every five points, or portion thereof earns 1,000 gp. If the check result exceeds 20, the party earns a community point for confirming the zagnatti's similarity to the hoyrall. To earn the community point only, any member of the party may aid in the check, even untrained.



Penetrating the defenses of the ground level of the temple requires bypassing a vicious trap and the guardians and monsters infesting the lower level. The holy tree in the sanctuary is diseased and confused, and must be subdued by force before it can be restored.

Exploring the outer and upper caverns containing the mirror assembly brings the PCs into contact with a black pudding, but may help to heal the holy tree, and may also provide an advantage against the rock trolls in the archives. Once the tree is subdued and dormant, sufficient repairs may be made to restore the temple and the tree to good health. These repairs may include utilizing the cyclopean runes.

M. The Village

Nestled in the embrace of the Great Mountain stands a long abandoned village. Most of the structures are decrepit and decayed, although a few stone buildings have survived the ravages of time more robustly than their fellows. What was once a central green has been overtaken by weeds, although all of the brush in the area is brown and sickly. A dead tree in the center of the village stands in mute testimony to the silence of this once vibrant community.

The village is truly abandoned. The hoyrall raiders killed the central tree of the village that served for daily worship. The land itself is sick as a result. An exploration of the few remaining structures reveals them as dweorg construction with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation)** check. While most of these stone

Act Three: The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors

Following the cross-country battles with the zagnatti, the abandoned village at the front entrance of the temple provides a safe haven. Prior to investigating the temple layout, climbing the slopes or making an aerial reconnaissance provides an alternate method of entry through the light shaft and mirror assembly.

ENCOUNTERS J-K-L



SCALE IN FEET



abodes contain carvings and decor influenced by halfling art and sensibility, exceeding the check by 5 or more identifies some as having been the personal abodes of dweorg families. The entrance to the earth temple is clearly visible behind a fold in the mountain as the PCs make their way through the village.

N. The Temple - Lower Level

1. Temple Entrance

A fifty foot long staircase rises twenty feet to a huge set of double doors embraced by a great stone carving of twin oaks whose branches meet to form an arch. Flanking the stairs at the base of the mountain, two collecting pools filled with stagnant rainwater reek of decaying vegetable matter. On either side of the grand double doors, and following the contour of the mountainside, the oak tree motif continues. What was once a grand colonnade overlooking the pools and village below is filled in with solid tone; no grout or tool marks are visible in the rocky surface

The original stonework is dwarven in execution, halfling in design (**Intelligence (History)** check DC 15). The great stone doors contain a relief carving of roots, complete with barked texture, and are barred from the inside with a great stone slab. The stone doors are 6" thick (**Strength DC 22** to force), while the stone shaped infill between the colonnade columns are 12" thick. A **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception)** check discovers the secret door in the western colonnade

The entrance foyer contains arches to the colonnades to the left and right and another pair of double doors to the north (locked, **DC 16 Dexterity** check). The lock has taken damage at some point in the past. Four smaller doors are visible on the interior walls of the colonnades.

No other entrance is visible at ground level, but PCs climbing the mountain, or making an aerial reconnaissance might discover the Oculus (**Area 27**).

2. Guest Quarters

A bulbous shaped room, contains a four poster bed, rich carpeting and what looks like the shattered remains of a sitting desk, wardrobe, and other similar furnishings. The carpet is shredded, but the pieces have been carefully laid next to each other. Indeed, all of the shattered furniture in this room has been carefully collected and pieced back together, or stacked neatly in pieces. No other repair work has been done to these odd piles of debris, all of which are covered in a fine layer of dust.

After the incursion by the Hoyrall raiders, the shaitan guardian made her best effort to repair (or at least organize) the damaged pieces. The portions of the temple which have not been taken over by the new denizens all bear witness to her efforts.

The PCs may notice (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 14**) that the few pieces of undamaged furniture, a number of jugs, a chamber pot, and a writing console, are all made of stone. The doors on the stone console are stuck. An **Intelligence (Arcana)** check DC 18 indicate the piece was likely repaired by means of a *stone shape* spell (the shaitain was unable to master the fine control needed to make moving parts when she repaired the piece). A **DC 15 Intelligence** check can repair the doors.

Inside the console is an amulet, a bronze oak leaf with silver chasing on the edge. Strung on a lanyard carved from tiny stone links, the leaf radiates a faint aura of enchantment, although the

aura flickers on and off. One side of this leaf medallion is bent back on itself. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Religion)** reveals that wearing an intact amulet allows the holy tree to recognize a follower of the Great Mother (**Area 12**). This leaf can be restored to full function by a single casting of *mending*, but trying to bend back the leaf - even with jeweler's tools - causes the crease to break.

3. Lay Administration Office

The dusty stone racks in this room originally housed many more scrolls and documents than are currently contained within. The shattered furniture here identifies it as an administrative workroom. Ten minutes and a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check deciphers one pile of shredded documents as a guest ledger. Each of the names contains a note reading either "true leaf" or "chaperone". The "chaperone" entries are further labeled with a rota of repeating halfling names - the indicated individuals were to be escorted when on the temple premises. An **Intelligence DC 15** check reveals that ninety percent of the "true leaf" entries are halfling, the rest are dwarven, with a very rare entry for fey or other names.

4. Barracks

Three pairs of bunk beds line the far walls of these semi-circular chambers. Some of the bunks are intact, some are merely stacked box frames with uprights laid on top. The remains of straw-filled mattress ticking crumbles away at the slightest touch. Broken arms racks contain tarnished and rusty weaponry, carefully hung in place. Stone chests with damaged locks or pry-bar marks contain rotting clothing and other personal effects, although one chest in the eastern barracks is undamaged (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 18**). This chest was overlooked by hoyrall looters and is locked with a special lock (**DC 16 Dexterity** check). Prior to disabling the lock a successful search for traps reveals the trap to be previously disarmed. If the **Dexterity** check exceeds the DC of the lock by 5 or more an immediate **Wisdom(Perception)** check may be made to discover the trap when it is armed. This check is rolled in secret by the GM

Poisoned Needle Trap

Mechanical Trap

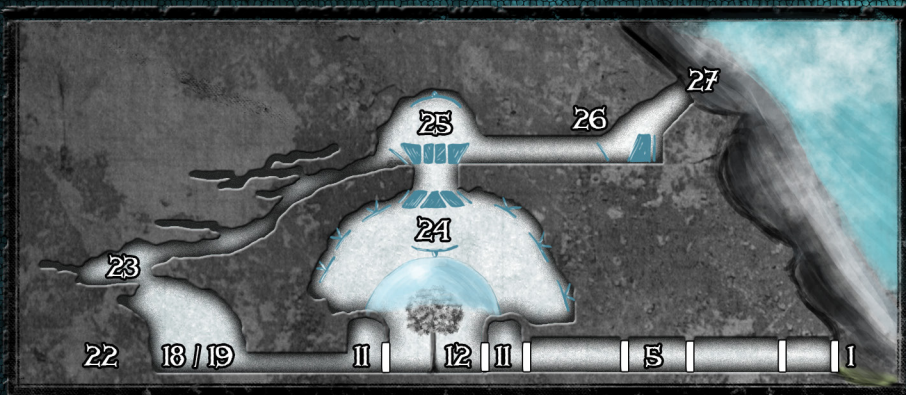
When the trap is triggered, the needle extends 3 inches straight out from the lock. A creature within range takes 1 piercing damage and 11 (2d10) poison damage, and must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

A successful **DC 15 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools disarms the trap, removing the needle from the lock. Unsuccessfully attempting to pick the lock triggers the trap.

Treasure: Inside the chest a wooden box contains 3 bottles of *silversheen*.

5. Grand Hallway

The grand hallway is divided into three sections. The foliated mineral pattern on the stone pocket doors (which rotate as they slide) evokes the growth rings found on a section cut of a tree. The walls are mostly natural stone,



TEMPLE OF JEWELS AND MIRRORS



although the eastern wall bears tool marks, where the original passage was enlarged. Like all of the floors in the complex, the floor is natural undressed stone, worn smooth by the feet of countless visitors. Oak trees in bas-relief decorate the walls and form a leafy frieze at the top, curving into vaulted, leafy ceiling; the natural ores and minerals in the uncarved stone walls in between the oak trunks resemble an endless forest in glittering luminescence.

The southern chamber of the great hallway is empty, the doors leading to the middle chamber are locked (**DC 16 Dexterity** check). Once the doors are open read the following:

This 30-foot wide hallway glows with an amber light emanating from channels cut into the western wall. Polished marble ridges run vertically on the edges of each channel protruding three to nine inches into the room, perpendicular to the chamber's wall

The walls of this room contains narrow channels driving into the mountain. The channels are dug out of veins of amber marble, the interior of each is polished and lit with a *continual flame* spell which reflects into the hallway. The entire sculpture recalls stepped fungus growing on the trunk of a tree.

Trap: The marble fungus sculpture conceals a trap for the unwary. The trap is triggered by a pressure plate on the far side of the unlocked northern doors, undetectable until the doors are opened. Exiting the chamber to north activates the pressure plate, putting those still in the middle halls at risk. If a creature enters the middle chamber from the north and activates the pressure plate before opening the doors, the trap delays for two rounds. While the trap is activated the middle hall is considered difficult terrain.

Chamber of Blades Trap

Mechanical Trap

A pressure plate on the far side of the unlocked northern doors controls this trap (**Wisdom(Perception)** check **DC 16**). Once a character of small size or larger steps upon the pressure plate, the trap is set in motion. The trap lasts for 3 rounds and resets, or until it is disabled using thieves tools and a **DC 16 Dexterity** Check. Once reset normally, an audible click can be heard as the pressure plate sets back into place. If anyone still is standing on it, the trap can be triggered again.

Each round everyone in the room must succeed on a **Dexterity saving throw DC 14** or take 10 (3d6) slashing damage (half on a successful save) from multiple spinning blades that come from hidden openings in the walls and floor.

Development: When the party enters the northern section of the hallway, read the following:

The northern section of the great hall contains standard stone doors to the east and west and another pair of pocket doors to the north. The smaller doors are damaged; one is blown completely off its hinges. Additional rubble piles up near the pocket doors. The dust in this chamber is disturbed, as if something large was dragged across the hallway from the smaller halls to the east and west. The tracks of many rodent sized creatures are also visible, including some rather large vermin tracks.

A **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation)** check warns the PCs that the quantity of rubble near the pocket doors is more than would be caused by just the damage to the smaller portals.

Creatures: The pocket door is actually a pair of giant, twin mimics. Extremely rare, these twins formed when a solitary, but ancient, mimic surprised a rock troll that was looking for a snack and mistook the mimicked foliations of the pocket door to be an ore deposit. The troll y consumed a chunk of the mimic he tore off before realizing he was being attacked. When the mimic digested the portion of itself within the gullet of the troll, a second mimic was born and split off from the first.

A **DC 25 Wisdom (Perception)** check identifies the pocket door as living creatures: the seam in the swirl of carved age rings where the twins meet is barely visible.

Mimic

See official entry for full statistics except as noted here:

hp: 74 and add 1 damage die to all attacks (2d8);

Combat: (2) Giant Mimic; Encounter Total XP: 1,400 Adjusted XP: 2,100; Easy;

Development: The horyall raiders reached and battered down the door to the outer sanctuary, where they were defeated by the shaitain and the holy tree. The shaitain used her stone shape ability to seal the opening and prevent a repeat occurrence. The smaller doors were also sealed shut but the mimic, and later, rock trolls battered them down. Behind the mimics, the northern stone face remains in place, blocking entrance into the outer sanctuary from the main hallway



6. Shrine

This chamber is a small chapel to the Mother Spirit for private services. Shaped like an abstract oak leaf, pilasters of carved trunks soften the points of leaf and branch to form a solid canopy of stone leaves above. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check spots trace elements of gold, silver, bronze, and many other metals glittering in the relief carving of the ceiling, which was once covered in precious metals. Great claw marks mar the ceiling; rock trolls stripped the metallic leaf from the stone substrate.

Development: Carlyetta's team may test out the cyclopean runes at this shrine if they consider it prudent. The test is costly; Carlyetta must replace the 500 gp of diamond dust and the *stone shape* scroll if the PCs cannot cast it themselves. Failure to test the runes costs the adventurers one community point

As per Caelis' warning, the *stone shape* spell normally cannot replicate the fine detail of the runes, although a **DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana)** check, working in conjunction with the templates provided by the Zwerc mage, manages the task. Otherwise a **DC 20 Intelligence** check prepares the runes, allowing the spellcasting to set them in place. On a failed casting of *stone shape* the runes can be refined with a simpler **Intelligence (Arcana)** (DC 14).

Treasure: Once the runes are in place, fifteen minutes of prayer at the shrine grants advantage on the next Wisdom or Constitution saving throw within the next 24 hours. This boon may be received no more than once every 10 days. A **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** or **Intelligence (Arcana)** check suggest that were the runes to be installed in the more powerful divine focus of the central tree, the inherent bonus might last longer, or be more powerful. No ill effects can be determined at this time.



7. Dean's Quarters

The private chambers of the dean of the temple have been ransacked, although unlike the furniture in the rooms at the front of the temple, the shattered pieces have not seen any other attention and lie strewn about the room. Even so, the remains of the furnishings and tapestries indicate the wealth or importance of the former occupant. There is not a scrap of precious metal in any of the shattered parts, although it is plain that both metal and enamel inlay as well as jewels have been torn from some pieces.

Development: A secret door (**Wisdom (Perception)** DC 17) leading to the high priest's chambers is located near the hallway to the dean's quarters.

8. Sacred Administration Office

Stone work stations and bookshelves similar in design to the consoles and storage units in **area 3** fill this room. Like the lay administrator's office, the room has been ransacked. Examining the stone furniture reveals that claw and bite marks scraped off the metallic or bejeweled décor of religious themes once gracing the furniture. The papers scattered about the room are mostly blank; a series of empty ledgers are wedged

in one corner of the room. Most of the important records were removed to the archives (**area 22**) when the priests departed; only raw materials were left behind. A **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check discovers one ledger that was missed; this book describes stone and metalworking details and holy rituals made over the years to repair and maintain the holy tree in the inner sanctuary (**area 12**). One entry stands out from the rest: extensive repairs were made following the Great Schism relating a fungus that infested the tree. The notes describe the repairing of weapon and spell damage to the tree.

A **DC 15 Intelligence** check reveals that the damage this room sustained is much more recent than the damage to the main doors in **area 5**, and that it was caused by natural weapons rather than tools or battering rams.

9. Dormitories

The simple lock on the door to this chamber is sealed with an *arcane lock*, increasing the **Dexterity** check to pick the lock from 16 to 26 and the **Strength** check DC to force the door open to 24. The priests sealed it prior to their evacuation, and the trolls avoid it because they smell no metal within. The leaf-shaped chamber is subdivided by carved wooden screens with built-in beds and furniture; the room is a representation of a peaceful grove with the screened areas providing privacy from the central common area.

Development: Breaking the door down puts the shaitan on guard in **area 11** (see her tactics block).

Treasure: Hidden under the mattress of one of the neatly-made beds is a journal detailing the last attack of the hoyrall two hundred years ago. Pressed between the pages are 2 scrolls of *resist energy (acid)*, and a scroll of *cure critical wounds*.



10. Storeroom

The wooden door to this room rest akimbo in its frame; what looks like melted stone seals it in place. Ribbons of rock weaving back and forth bulking up its strength. (**hardness 8, hp 60**). Once the door is bypassed, read the following:

A foul stench emanates from this room, the source if which is readily apparent. A large creature with stony skin flecked with small crystalline flakes putrefies ten feet from the doorway, drowning in its own liquefied viscera.

The troll corpse can be identified with a **DC 16 Intelligence (Nature)** check (the decay makes it more difficult than normal). The rest of the room contains stores too bulky to move during the evacuation. Most are dry goods, but two dozen barrels of fine wine and apple brandy are racked near the troll's body.

Creatures: During one of the early engagements with the rock trolls, the shaitan guardian, trapped a troll part way in the wall with her Stone Curse and then broke a barrel of vinegary wine over it. The weak acid was strong enough to retard the troll's regenerative abilities, and as it pulled away from the wall, a significant portion of its back remained imbedded. The guardian sealed the mortally wounded monster in the room to die. Decay set in and maggots infesting the corpse mutated into rot grubs, feasting on the remains. A **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check spots them squirming and feasting in the shards of the corpse.

Giant Rot Grubs (4)

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 60 (8d6+32)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone

Senses blindsense 30 ft. (Blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Burrow Into Flesh. If the grub hits with a bite attack it burrows into the victim's flesh. A creature can use its action to remove the grub with a Strength check DC 12. If the grub starts its turn attached to a creature it deals normal bite damage and an additional 10 (3d6) poison damage as it begins to digest its meal.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

Hit: 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage plus burrow into flesh..

Combat : (6) Giant Rot Grub; Encounter Total XP: 1,200 Adjusted XP: 2,400; Easy;

Trap: The corpse is juicy with decay, disturbing it in any fashion, such as attacking a rot grub on it, or being included in an area of effect spell causes the remains to explode, spraying a filthy sanguine flood.

Ripened Corpse Explosion

Mechanical Trap

The bloated and decaying corpse is filled with writhing rot grubs and excrement gasses. Any forceful effect that disturbs the corpse or a creature on it causes it to explode. A **Wisdom (Perception)**

check DC 15 identifies the danger. Once disturbed, the corpse explodes in a postulent, puss-filled rain of putrescence. All creatures (except the grubs) within 15 ft. of the corpse must make a **Constitution saving throw** DC 14 or become "sickened" as the poisoned condition for 5 minutes.

Development: The rat king in the kitchens (**area 16**) sends scouts to examine the storeroom from time to time, but the rot grubs keep him from expanding his colony into this area. Breaking down the door draws the attention of scavenging rats in the small access cracks leading to the tunnels back to the kitchens, putting the rat king on his guard.

Treasure: Two barrels of apple brandy have matured quite nicely in the last 200 years. Each is worth 250 gp.

11. Outer Sanctuary

A twenty-foot wide hallway circumvallates an inner chamber with double doors at the cardinal compass points. Oak trees with branches leafed with gold, silver and inlaid with precious gems decorate the inner and outer walls as in the grand hallway, but the leafy vault is replaced by crystal panels mounted into the branchy lattice. Hallways radiate out to other portions of the complex.

A large open cavern is evident beyond the crystal ceiling, which supports the framework of another crystal dome capping the inner sanctuary. Light reflects from shiny points with in the outer cavern back down into the crystal-roofed perimeter. The rock trolls damaged the oak tree décor carvings in the north-west quadrant of the outer sanctuary. The metal and jewel work has been stripped bare, and chunks of rubble and shards of crystal litter the hall. The entire hallway emits a moderate aura of divination.



Hazard

The Temple Tree's Runesight allows it to cast some spells (through the oak tree sculptures) in the outer sanctuary; it may not target creatures in the north west quadrant where the damage from the trolls is evident. The vines attack on initiative count 20.

The Temple Tree can cast grasping vine (**Dexterity saving throw DC 14**) in this room if it detects intruders. The vines try to pull creatures into the inner sanctuary (**Area 12**).

Creature: The temple guardian, a shaitan serving as the Mother Spirits' earthen incarnation, has gone mad from the stone fungus infecting the holy tree, and the depredations of the rock trolls. She patrols the outer sanctuary constantly, attacking all who enter.

Shaitan

Large elemental, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 171 (18d10+72)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13(+1)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+3)

Skills Athletics +8

Condition Immunities prone

Damage Immunities lightning

Senses darkvision 60 ft. tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Ignan, Terran, Telepathy (100ft.)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The shaitan's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The shaitan can innately cast the following spells requiring no material components:

At will: *detect good and evil*, *detect magic*, *stone shape*

1/day: *passwall*, *move earth*, *wall of stone*

Stone Glide. The shaitan can burrow through unworked, non-magical earth, crystal, and stone as well as worked metal.

Sure Footed. The shaitan has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shaitan makes two scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Stone Crush. The shaitan must move at least 20 ft on its turn and land a slam melee weapon attack +8, 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage and initiating a Shove (opposed Strength or Dexterity contest). If the shaitan wins this contest the creature is shoved up to 10ft back in a straight line. If the creature would hit a stone wall during or at the end of this movement it is affected as if a meld into stone spell was cast upon it. The creature may then use its action on its turn to remove itself from the stone.

TACTICS

Before Combat If forewarned by the breaking down of the door to area 9, she positions herself in a wall along the party's approach, and uses her Stone Crush ability to shove enemies into an opposite wall during the surprise round.

During Combat The guardian continues to look for opportunities to use her Stone Crush and spells along with her Stone Glide to provide additional mobility while hampering intruders.

Morale The desperate shaitan fights until destroyed, which returns her to the plane of earth.

Development: The shattered crystal roof in the northwest quadrant permits access to the outer cavern (**area 24**), as do four hidden hatches in the crystal roof (**Wisdom (Perception) check DC 18**). The oak tree wall relief serves as ladders to these hatches.

12. Inner Sanctuary

This circular chamber is almost 70 feet in diameter, a magnificent crystal dome peaks 70 feet above an unworked stone floor. A tree of stone with leaves of bronze, gold, silver, tin and all manner of metals stand in the center of the sacred circle. Rocky roots form an altar around the perimeter of the granite trunk.

Light reflects off of mirrors beyond the dome, but the metallic leaves of the tree are tarnished, and the stone branches and roots black with a moldy fungus. The inner face of the chambers walls are once again decorated with the standard oak tree motif prevalent throughout the complex.

Creature: The earthen manifestation of the goddess, a tree of stone and metal, attacks any but the shaitain who enters the chamber. In its madness, the tree barely remembers that worshipers and holy folk of the goddess once tended it. If the tree attacks anyone wearing a visible leaf medallion it suffers disadvantage on the attacks. The tree may be weaker or more easily engaged in diplomacy if the PCs repaired to the mirror array (see **Tactics**).

Temple Tree

Huge plant, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 138 (12d12 +60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	8 (-1)	21 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Damage Immunities lightning, fire

Senses darkvision 120 ft., runesight, passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Legendary Resistance 3/day. If the temple tree would fail a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Runesight. The temple tree may observe any area in the temple through the oak-tree sculpture and runes carved in the decoration as if using clairvoyance. It can use this ability on any

number of runes in the area. Although the temple tree does not need line of sight to establish this link.

Spell Absorption. Whenever the temple tree uses its Legendary Resistance ability to succeed on a saving throw against a spell effect, it does so by absorbing that spell energy instead of evading the spell. This grants the temple tree a stored cache of magical energy it can use to activate its Leaf Storm ability.

For each spell absorbed it gains 1 spell charge. Spell charges last for 1 week.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The temple tree makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus Stone Fungus.

Leaf Storm. The temple tree can use one stored spell charge to creating a swirling mass of slicing leaves in a 10 ft. area surrounding it. Any creature caught within the burst must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw DC 16 or take 21 (6d6) slashing damage, or half on a successful save. In addition the swirling mass protects the tree against all ranged attacks from projectiles and provides disadvantage on all melee attacks made against the temple tree. If the temple tree has reserve spell charges it can use them to extend the storm as a bonus action.

Stone Fungus. Whenever one of the temple tree's stony roots hits with a slam attack the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

TACTICS

Before Combat Diplomacy is possible from within the sanctuary if hostilities do not break out. The tree starts as hostile during such diplomacy requiring a **Charisma (Persuasion)** check DC 18 to open dialogue. permitting re-consecration is considered aid. If the tree grants this request, award experience as if the PCs defeat the encounter, although until the tree is wholly repaired (requiring material brought by Carlyetta), any who enter without the protection of the *leaf medallions* may initiate combat.

Combat: Temple Tree; Encounter Total XP: 5,000 Adjusted XP: 5,000; Hard;

Development: Repairing the main reflector in **areas 24** and **25** feeds healing sunlight to the tree; during the daytime the black fungus visibly dries up and flakes off restoring the tree to full mental capacity

13. Catalogs Room

Stone cubbies, wooden flat files and study cubicles fill this room, which once housed the catalog system for the archives. The records were removed to the hidden archive storage (**area 22**). Metallic inlay in the stone furniture here is mostly intact – the rock trolls are not interested in such a paltry meal.

14. Scriptorium

The work stations in this area are full of empty drawers, save one (**Wisdom (Perception)** check DC 16). This locked drawer (**Dexterity** check DC 20) was overlooked when the priests removed the tools to storage.

Treasure: The drawer contains a set of masterwork jeweler's tools as well as an intact *leaf medallion* that bears a stable aura of enchantment matching the damaged leaf from **area 2**. This medallion allows the tree in the inner sanctuary (**area 12**) to recognize a believer. The drawer also contains half a dozen gold, silver, and platinum leaves with jeweled illuminations. The runes on the leaves are epitaphs, short biographies, or genealogies of departed halflings. A **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** check identifies the magical leaf, as well as revealing the bejeweled leaves as holy writings of the mother and records of her followers. At birth halflings have their leaf grafted onto the holy tree, the tree and the priests record significant events in their lives, and when they pass, the leaf is illuminated with jeweled illustrations and stored for posterity.

These six leaves represent exquisite examples of the art, worth 1,500 gp. If offered to the tree in the sanctuary as part of Charisma check, grafting the leaves on the tree with the jeweler's tools grants advantage on the Charisma request. All six leaves must be surrendered

Development: Returning the leaves to the holy tree, either before or after it is subdued, earns the PCs one community point.

15. Meditation Chamber

This once peaceful retreat is now a whirlwind of smashed wooden furniture, torn pillows and a defaced floor pattern of stone, wood, and metal inlay that works in harmony no longer.

16. Kitchens

Overtured cupboards, butcher's blocks, barrels, and crates line the walls of this chamber, which sports three huge fireplaces with cast-iron ovens. A ripe covering of mushrooms and fungus stretches from the smashed containers into the far corner where a feeble trickle of water barely dampens an empty cistern.

The rock trolls found nothing tasty in this room, and prefer to avoid the rat king and his colony.

Creatures: Feeding on the fungal growth in this room, and with tinny tunnels and cracks back into the underworld through the partially blocked cistern is a rat king, who holds a huge swarm at his command.

Rat King

See official **wererat** entry for full statistics.

TACTICS

During Combat If forewarned by activity in **area 10**, the swarms and the king are well hidden (**Wisdom (Perception)** check DC 22) and await the best chance to swarm, else they spring to the attack when the PCs enter. .

Morale: The rat king fights until reduced to 12 hp. When he is slain or flees, the remaining swarms do so as well, skittering into the cracks in the cistern.

Rat Swarms (6)

See official entry for full statistics;

Combat: Rat King (Wererat) plus (6) swarm of rats; **Encounter**
Total XP: 750 **Adjusted XP:** 1,875; **Easy;**

17. Refectory

The eastern part of this large cavern contains long tables and benches for communal dining, while the western nooks contain private sitting areas for more intimate affairs. The walls are lined with sideboards, wine chest and buffets. All of the furniture in this room is overturned or out of place, the drawers have been rifled by rock trolls hungry for cutlery. China and earthenware place settings are scattered in shards about the rooms. The large double doors on the eastern wall stand ajar.

18. Western Archives

Stone bookshelves fill this great cavern, askew and out of formation. Far to the east, a soft flicker of light is visible through the darkness.

The vast cavern at the rear of the temple existed in almost its present form, very little was done to modify the cave. The western wall is a deliberate addition; a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana)** check

reveals that the bulk of the wall was formed with a series of stone shape spells, and the fine detail carved afterward, including the installation of the double doors to the refectory (**area 17**). Nearest the refectory are a number of sitting areas that once stood at the end of the stack. The rest of the space is filled with empty shelves; some have been moved slightly out of position or lean into one another, creating stone “tunnels”. A **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check notes something odd about the bookshelves; confirming that they are spaced out more than would be expected to fill the space – about half of the shelving is missing.

A **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check notes that the northern wall of this area does not perfectly match the natural formations of the cave: it is an added partition disguised to blend in with the original cavern and reveals the secret door after a 5 minute search.

Development: The trolls in the eastern archive ignore intermittent light in the stacks, but a patterned search with light puts them on their guard. It is likewise possible for a stealthy scout to spy out their encampment while hiding in the stacks. The trolls do not like to fight in the enclosed areas of the stacks, but will if required.

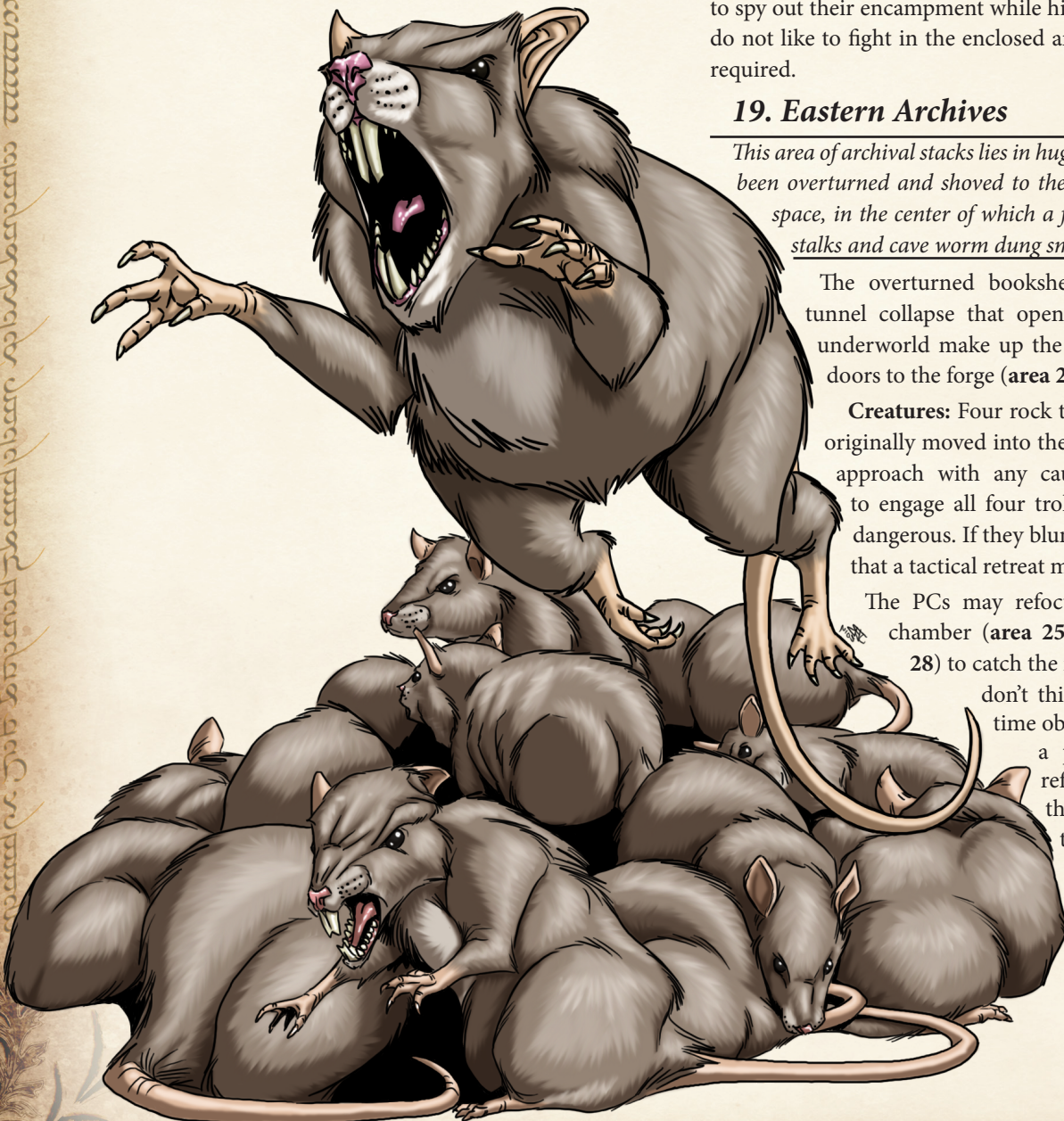
19. Eastern Archives

This area of archival stacks lies in huge disarray. Stone shelves have been overturned and shoved to the walls, creating a large open space, in the center of which a fire made of giant mushroom stalks and cave worm dung smokes pungently.

The overturned bookshelves and rubble from the tunnel collapse that opened up the complex to the underworld make up the trolls’ bedding. The double doors to the forge (**area 20**) are smashed open.

Creatures: Four rock trolls remain of the clan that originally moved into the temple complex. If the PCs approach with any caution, they determine that to engage all four trolls at once would be highly dangerous. If they blunder into the trolls, it is clear that a tactical retreat might be the order of the day.

The PCs may refocus the mirrors in the foci chamber (**area 25**) through the fissure (**area 28**) to catch the rock trolls in the sun. If they don’t think of this, but spend some time observing the trolls, eventually a pair of them head to the refectory (**area 18**) to see if they missed any cutlery. It is then possible to engage the trolls two at a time.



Rock Trolls (4)

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 92 (8d10+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	13 (+1)	22 (+6)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +1

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Giant

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Keen Smell. The rock troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. The rock troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the rock troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The rock troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and does not regenerate.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The rock troll takes 20 radiant damage if it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

TACTICS

During Combat This is a straight up slug-fest.

Morale If three of the trolls are slain, the third tries to flee out of the exit tunnel (area 23).

Combat:(4) Rock Troll; Encounter Total XP: 9,200 Adjusted XP: 18,400; Deadly;

20. Forge and Jewel shop

Blank leaves for the holy tree were fabricated in this chamber, which contains a pair of forges and various work stations full of templates and molds. Stonecutting stations also edge the chamber with patterns and samples used to repair the decorations in the temple. A gem-cutting bench and polishing tray are sectioned off by a smashed wooden screen.

Development: The secret door on the southern wall can be discovered with a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** or **Intelligence (Investigation)** check.

Treasure: A large stone chest with a smashed hasp and lock contains a jumble of tools used to repair and adjust the mirror array in the outer caverns. A **DC 20 Perception** check discovers slide marks at the base of the chest; three gallons of alchemical sliver rest in jugs in a hole in the floor covered by the chest. The troll has hidden this tasty "hard liquor" from his mates. Along with this liquid, which can be used to resurface the mirror arrays in area 24 and 25, is a gold ingot 12 inches long by 8 inches wide and 6 inches deep. Troll teeth marks mar one end (he has been eating it like candy). The remainder weighs 300 lbs. and is worth 15,000 gp.

21. High Priest's Chambers

Wooden screens and tapestried curtains subdivide this leaf-shaped chamber into three sections. A thick layer of dust covers everything in the room.

The high priest's quarters contain a sitting/work area, a bedchamber and a private shrine to the Mother Spirit. The furniture here is intact, guarded from time by dust covers placed over the lot, and two woven rugs are rolled up in the center of the room. Similar protection was not granted to the tapestries, the dust here requires a firm beating to reveal the detail beneath.

Trap: The preservation spell intended to keep the tapestries clean was miscast, and undead dust mites remain in the thick covering. The infestation is particularly deadly on the tapestries hiding the shrine from view.

Undead Dust Mite Cloud Trap

Magic Trap

The magic that was supposed to mend and maintain the tapestries was never cast correctly. But in all its years of use, the



temple attendants never noticed the failure. Over years the subtle magic grew and grew and the foulness compounded. Soon, dust mites that fed on the tapestry became warped by magic and began excreting foul smelling fumes. If anyone disturbs the tapestry, examines it by hand, or moves it, or if it is sufficiently moved by a wind or spell, it instantly disintegrates into a noxious, foul smelling, befouling cloud.

Treat the effect as the same as stinking cloud with a save DC of 14.

Development: The tapestries near the shrine are embroidered with story panels recording an earlier infestation of stone fungus on the holy tree (**area 12**). The panels graphically depict the tree sickening with the disease, and the conduit to the goddess being disrupted. Holy warriors and priests subdue the tree my main force, and then priests (halfling and dwarven) restore the damage, including a refocusing and cleaning of the mirror array above. The tapestries reveal the cross section details of the mirror array and entrance through the oculus (**area 27**) and note the access panels in the crystal hatches in the area 11 leading to the great cavern (**area 24**).

Treasure: A lead reliquary in the shrine contains a *scroll of heat metal* and a *scroll of stone shape*.



22. Hidden Archives

The leaf records of the temple are stored behind the false wall. Half of the archive bookshelves have been dragged into the room to help maintain some order, but sorting out the priceless stash of bejeweled leaves will be a task of many months. A *detect magic* spell, in conjunction with a **DC 20 Perception** check discovers four leaf medallions in the jumbled records.

23. Cave-in Fissure.

The cave-in at the rear of the temple opened up a tunnel to the depths of the underworld, from whence came the current brood of invaders. It also opened up a fissure to the mirror arrays. Fifty feet above (**Climb DC 15**) the entrance to the underworld tunnel, a ledge from this fissure hooks back to the outer caverns. A refocused mirror assembly from this ledge can reflect a 120' cone of sunlight into the archives below, although the cavern walls cut off some of the width of this beam, granting the rock trolls below some respite from solar attack.

O. The Temple - Upper Level

24. Outer Cavern

The crystal arcade (**area 11**) and the inner sanctuary (**area 12**) dominate this huge cavern. A complex mirror array is bolted into the roof of the cave, its focal point: a huge reflector mounted on the apex of the sanctuary dome. In conjunction with the mirror surrounding an opening into the foci chamber (**area 25**), the reflector dish dispersed the healing sunlight to the cavern roof mirrors and then down into the sanctuaries below. When fully functional, daylight graces the heart of the temple. Damage and lack of focus in the mirror assemblies currently feeds only dim light into the area during the day.

Ladders provide access to the roof mirrors, including the center array, and the branchy lattice of the crystal dome is climbable half way up and then walkable, although a creature on the dome who

takes damage from an attack must make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** or fall.

Creature: A black pudding sits in the main reflector at the peak of the dome, after falling in from above. So rich was the slivering of the layer, the ooze has been dormant for almost a week digesting its meal.

If the PCs are looking down from the Foci chamber (**area 24**), a **DC 21 Intelligence (Nature)** check identifies the monster; it otherwise appears as a pile of sludge in the bowl. If attacked from above, the pudding sloshes out of the reflector, working its way down to the levels below; the PCs may encounter it later on the lower level if it escapes

Black Pudding

See official entry for full statistics;

TACTICS

During Combat If investigating from below, the pudding attacks as the PCs climb the dome. It moves normally on the dome.

Morale: Unless fleeing ranged attacks, the ooze fights until destroyed.



Combat : Black Pudding; Encounter Total XP: 1,100 Adjusted XP: 1,100; Easy;

Development: Resurfacing the reflector dish (along with repairs in **area 25**) brings light back into the heart of the temple. Polishing the reflector can temporarily restore use. Alternately, the three gallons of alchemical silver from **area 20** and the scrolls from **area 21** can be used to permanently complete the repairs, earning the PCs 1 community point. A **DC 15 Intelligence** check reveals the process and 8 man hours of work can serve in lieu of the stone shape spell, or the alchemical silver can be baked on in place with *heat metal*.



25. Foci Chamber

Parallel hallways from the entrance cavern (**area 26**) terminate in this chamber. A semi-circular array of angled mirrors direct sunlight up to a bowl shaped reflector dish and then down a 25 ft. wide opening into the outer cavern (**area 24**). Three of the panels are devoid of any mirroring; a black pudding stripped them clean before being attracted by a much more concentrated application of silvered mirroring in the reflector dish on top of the crystal dome below.

A crack in the northern wall leads to a tunnel back to **area 23** overlooking the rock troll camp in **area 18**.

Development: The damaged mirrors must be repaired or replaced and refocused to redirect the sunlight below. A sufficient clean and polish of each mirror is sufficient to make temporary repairs until the mirrors can be resurfaced, or the alchemical silver from **area 20** or the Pelanfirst workshop in Stoneroot, along with a casting of stone shape and heat metal can permanently repair them, earning the PCs one community point. Redirecting the sunlight into the lower cavern partially heals the holy tree in **area 12**.

The sunlight can also be directed down the northern tunnel to create a sunlight beam to strike the rock trolls in the archives. Sufficient mirrored panels must be scavenged from **area 26** to accomplish both tasks if the materials to make repairs are not available. If enough panels are not to hand and the PCs attempt to accomplish both tasks (staggering the rock trolls and healing the fungus on the tree) it takes a full 48 hours for enough sunlight to heal the fungus below (clouds on the second day delay recovery).

26. Entrance Cavern

A natural cavern enlarged centuries ago by dweorg architects contains mirrors that capture the sun streaming in through the light shaft (**area 27**). The array on the southern end redirects the light down two parallel hallways with mirrored panels set into the floor, walls and ceiling. The mirrors are intact, but somewhat dirty with age.

Development: The hallway mirror panels are a source of additional reflectors to direct sunlight into the sanctuary (**area 23**) and the rock troll encampment (**area 19**). Enough panels can be safely removed to accomplish one of these tasks without a skill check; a **DC 15 Intelligence** or a **DC 18 Dexterity** check allows for both tasks to be completed.

27. Light Shaft Oculus

The opening to the light shaft feeding the holy tree sunlight lies almost 180 feet above the valley floor, obscured from the ground by an overhang; it is visible from the air. The first 60 feet of the mountainous ascent is walkable (although difficult) follow by a 50-ft. **DC 16 Strength (Athletics)** check to an easier slope that rises another 20 feet. A 35-ft. **DC 14 Strength (Athletics)** check reaches the overhang, which requires a **DC 20 Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check to negotiate. A fall from this second leg of the climb drops a mountaineer on the higher slope, a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw** is required to avoid rolling down the mountain to a second 50-ft. fall to ground.

Once at the ledge, access is simple. The circular opening of the light shaft contains tiny ridges of stone that look like they were melted in place (from thousands of daily castings of stone shape by the shaitan guardian over the years).

Sanctifying the Temple

Two days following clearing the temple, Carlyetta arrives with three dozen fellow priests, dweorg craftsmen, and halfling homesteaders eager to rebuild the village at the foot of the mountain. Rhianna and Annik are among these villagers, their vineyard and apple orchard are within a half-day's march. Their arrival provides an opportunity to return the brandy and earn the additional community point from **encounter I**.

Carlyetta and the PCs must resolve the question of installing the cyclopean runes in the main sanctuary. In the days since the PCs last saw the priest, the tripurasura convinces her that using the runes will aid in the re-establishment of the Devotees of the Four Hearts, even if the PCs earlier swayed her opinion. If the PCs are now not opposed to the idea, they are invited to witness the ritual. The priests and craftsmen scribe the runes into the holy root alter and all within gain a +1 bonus to Wisdom or Constitution.

Development: Actively supporting the use of the runes costs the PC's one community point.

If the adventurers still think using the runes is a bad idea, check the current community points total to determine the adventurer's standing in Carlyetta's eyes.

15 or more community points: Trusted – Diplomacy DCs reduced by 5

10-14 community points: Well Regarded – Diplomacy DCs no effect

Less than 10 community points: Untrusted – Diplomacy DCs increased by 5

Carlyetta's starting attitude remains the same as at the end of **encounter G**. If the PCs did not test the runes out in the shrine, Carlyetta is annoyed that she must do so, and her attitude shifts two steps towards hostile to the idea of caution. If the PCs offer to pay for the test (500 gp and a casting of *stone shape*) her attitude shifts only one step. If the PCs pay for the test, they can be present in the shrine when it occurs, and gain the bonus indicated in encounter 6, which may provide reason for them to support the use of the runes.

Once the test is performed, and prior to the final determination of the rune question the party gets one chance to shift the Priest's attitude further in their favor. Then the request to forgo implantation of the magic is considered dangerous aid.

Development: If the adventures still oppose the idea after the test and fail to convince Carlyetta not to use the runes they lose one community point and are excluded from the ritual.

Following the discussion, or at the end of the ritual, further conversation with Carlyetta and a **DC 16 Wisdom (Insight)** check reveals a portion of the tripurasura's involvement. The hints and clues Carlyetta drops during the discussion reveal that much of the research on the runes was accomplished by her clerk, Gratipp Dulhenna. If pressed, an addition request can be made of Carlyetta with a **Charisma (Persuasion)** check **DC 18**: success convinces her to turn over the body of documents for examination. A **DC 18 Intelligence** check reveals that a fair number of the documents supporting the theory that cyclopean magic enhances the divine connection are forgeries, although it is still unclear when these forgeries were made (it is possible they are hundreds of years old), and by whom. Grattip is unavailable for questioning; he is on



Carlyetta's business back in Stoneroot; she agrees to make her clerk available the next convenient time to look into the forgeries.

Conclusion

The heroes' activities continue to shape the future of Picollan society. Read the following based on their final community points total. The Community Point Total also determines the final amount of pay awarded by Carlyetta to the PCs (the treasure they kept from the exploration likely affects their total community points).

16 or more community points – each PC receives 3,000 gp

In the week following the sanctification of the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors, the village at the base of the mountain transforms into a hub of activity. The nature of village life is different than in those you have seen throughout Picollo thus far. Freedman and halfling seem to be working harmoniously together, and indeed there is not an indentured servant to be seen in the village. Part way through the week, Carlyetta delivers a sermon in which she re-embraces the community tenets of the Mother Goddess, acknowledging that seeking power even for the protection of one's flock is not the way of the Great Mother. Many villagers, and not a few acolytes make a similar conversion in the following days and the week's-end festivities and merriment seem genuine rather than a rote activity based on dry and forgotten traditions.

11-15 community points - each PC receives 2,250 gp

In the week following the sanctification of the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors, the village at the base of the mountain begins to see growth. The nature of village life holds some promise for the future of Picollo. As in Pembroke following the re-sanctification of the water temple, many halfling masters submit bills of emancipation to the Eldermoot and Board of indentures to free their servants. The small number of freedmen who move to the village set up house side by side with their halfling neighbors, in contrast the ghettos usually seen in larger settlements. Memories of the hostile words of the demagogue Rory Bessamer in Stoneroot are regretted and ridiculed amongst the tightly knit group of freedmen hopefuls.

Less than 11 community points - each PC receives 1,500 gp

Much of the work done to repair the village is completed by indentured servants shipped in from across Picollo. One such group is brought in by Digory Crosseyes, who coincidentally runs into his wife Elerin, about to return to Stoneroot after delivering supplies. No love seems lost between the couple, but after a moment Elerin shrugs and says, "Up to your old tricks boyo? At least give them some decent clothing before they start their terms. I'll cut you a deal that will eat into my profits a bit, but won't hurt your purse more than you can bear you old skinflint."

The villagers view your presence with fear and distaste, but Carlyetta and the other priests reassure them that they have your measure. You are not certain if you should be insulted, but Carlyetta's gold is balm enough for whatever wounds hurtful words inflict; after all is this not what it is to be a sword for hire?"

Experience Point Awards

The PCs earn experience based on the encounters and challenges faced. The adventure path is designed to advance the PCs one level

per adventure, although with the scaling notes there is some wiggle room to speed up the progression.

A party of 5 PCs on the medium progression track should advance from 7th to 8th level at the conclusion of the adventure. A party of four will advance more quickly, so feel free to use the slow progression, or simply artificially advance the PCs to 8th level in preparation for Book Three: *The Breath of the Goddess*.

New Monsters

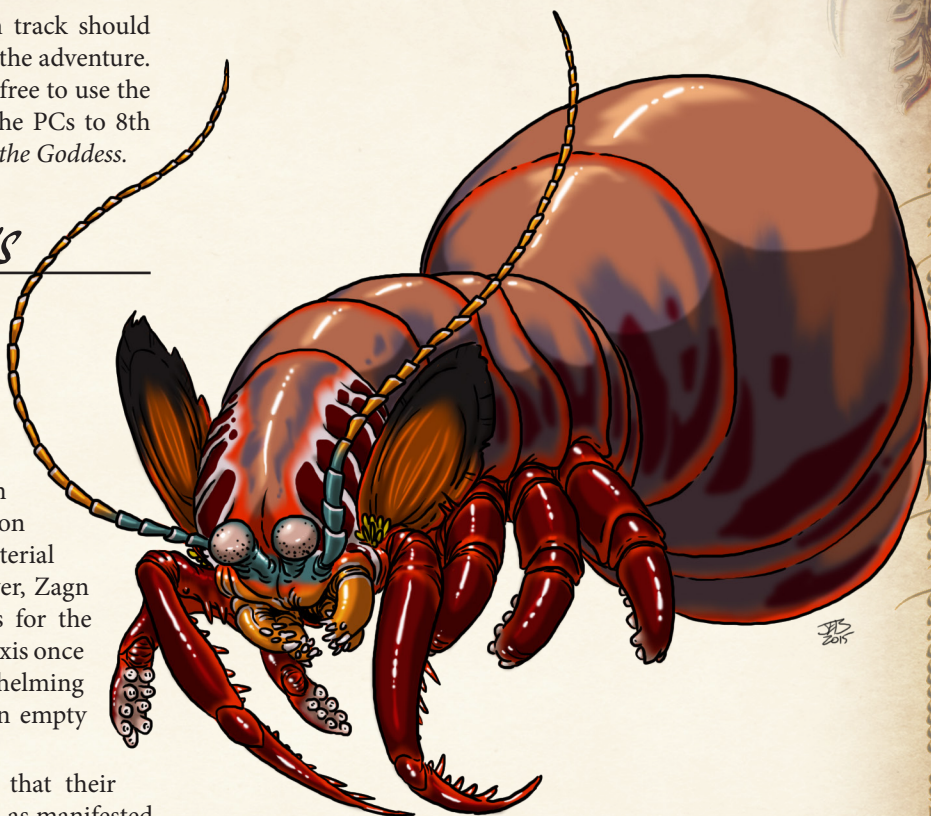
Zagnatti

For a little over a century, the half-god Zagn has mindlessly roamed the ocean depths. The disaster of the Confluence shattered the bond between the physical form of the god (Zagn) on Aventyr and the divine essence of the deity (Exis) on its home world in the far reaches of the prime material plane. Now a monstrous sea creature of vast power, Zagn remembers that it was once more, and it longs for the connection of a hive mind, as the whole god Zagnexis once shared with the Hoyrall. Other than this overwhelming desire, the brain of the monstrous Zagn has been empty and unfocused.

Hoyrall clerics who worship Zagnexis know that their connection to the divine was once much stronger, as manifested in the hive-mind connection, but their divine magics are still powered by a connection to the raw and unfocused power of the physical body of Zagn. The prayers of the hoyrall have stimulated divine and mental receptors in the half-god's body for a hundred years, and with no connection to Exis to serve as a pressure release, a backlog of magic overloaded Zagn's isolated brain. In the far deep of the ocean trenches, this divine backlash gave birth to a child race of the half god, the Zagnatti.

From the depths, the first born of the zagnatti made their way to shore, some swimming along the ocean currents, some burrowing into the sea bed and thence to the underworld and then to points on the surface. All the while, very primitive form of telepathic communication linked the queens of the increasing swarms back to the half god Zagn. For the first time in a century, the god felt connection to other than itself.

The strength of that connection grows as the population of zagnatti increases. The telepathic trunk of a queen's spinal cord terminates in her stinger, and the strong energies pulsing through it suck the knowledge and wisdom of sacrificial victims, enhancing not only the power of the individual queens, but the mental and divine capacity of Zagn itself. The god feeds on this knowledge, the capacity of its brain is infinite, and from the void once contained within, it takes much stolen wisdom to ascend to higher levels of consciousness. The god encourages its children to expand and prosper, all the while taking new territories as their hunting grounds. Like a plague, the zagnatti spread out, and it is fortunate that the void of Zagn's mind is as infinite as its potential, for as more and more wisdom is returned to the god, surely the zagnatti will become more directed and mindful of their expansion and control of Aventyr. For now, they are a plague in its early years.



Zagnatti are rare creatures, known only to a scant few underwater races, as well as the odd underworld race. This is changing as new swarms pierce the surface of southern Aventyr, in a migration that is a shadow of the hoyrall expansion of some three centuries past.

Zagnatti, Blood Pustule

Blood Pustule

Tiny beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 14 (3d4+6)

Speed 15 ft., burrow 5 ft., climb 5ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14(+2)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Telepathy 120 ft. (Zagnatti only)

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Amphibious. The Zagnatti can breathe air and water.

Blood Burst. When the blood pustule is reduced to 0 hit points, gasses inside it expand and explode the creature from the inside dealing 5 (2d4) acid damage, Dexterity saving throw DC 14 for half damage, to all targets within 10ft.

Transference. The blood pustule can establish a telepathic and empathic link to another Zagnatti within 10 ft. as a bonus action. It can only choose one Zagnatti to be in transference with at a time and if that Zagnatti dies or leaves its range the pustule must spend a bonus action to choose a new target. While the transference is active, any damage the target takes is transferred to the blood pustule.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage plus attach.

Spit Acid. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) acid damage.

Attach. The blood pustule can attach itself to a creature it bites and remain attached for as long as it chooses.

It can also attach to a creature without doing damage by making a melee weapon attack, +2 to hit as an action. Once attached the blood pustule does not need to make any more checks to stay attached. A victim may use a Strength check DC 14 to remove a blood pustule. The pustule may also be dealt damage directly or indirectly. A pustule will only unlatch itself if it chooses.

Barely perceptible in its surroundings, the many legs of this tick-like creature hold fast to whatever surface they grasp.

The weakest of the zagnatti, blood pustules perform important ecological tasks in the hive, and in numbers can be quite deadly.

Most of the blood pustule's lifespan is spent in service to its larger brethren, tiny suckers on its feet allow it to cling to the armored skin of the insect-like creatures. The acidic secretions in the mouth of the tiny creature clean, repair, and harden zagnatti natural armor. A blood pustule riding a larger zagnatti often grants the benefits of its transference ability directly to its host, although the mobile nature of the perch often hampers the rider. Blood pustules tend to rely on their natural camouflage to appear as an armored nodule when attached to another zagnatti.

Blood pustules are often placed as "land mines" in zagnatti hives, ambush sites or battlefields. Burrowing into the ground with just their camouflaged backs exposed after using

transference, they explode when the damage to their companion becomes too great to bear.

Zagnatti, Drone

Drone

Medium beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (8d8+16)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances acid

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30ft, passive Perception 13

Languages Telepathy 120 ft.(Zagnatti only)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amphibious. The Zagnatti can breathe air and water.

Pack Tactics. The Zagnatti drone has advantage on melee attacks against a creature if at least one of the drone's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drone can make 2 claw attacks. If both hit the same target it may rend.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (2d4+1) slashing damage.

Rend. If the drone hits with all both claws it can choose to dig those claws into its victim and rip at its flesh dealing an additional 9 (2d6+2) slashing damage.

Six legs support a segmented body and an armored torso with four arms of varying length terminating in snapping claws. On a triangular head, the edges of a brain sac peek out from under an armored nodule set behind six eyes; the veins on the sac throb with blood.

The common origin of the zagnatti and hoyrall is most evident in the zagnatti drone, which looks surprisingly like a hoyrall centaur, with a lobster-like lower body and hoyrall torso. The head is more triangular and elongated than the pug-faced hoyrall, but the pulsing of the brain sac under its armored carapace is something wholly unseen in Zagnexis' original children.

Drones are the hunters and soldiers of a zagnatti swarm, and are often encountered in patrols, known as pods. When a sub-queen expands the territory of an existing swarm, in preparation for her transformation into a queen in her own right, a spell thief often accompanies a drone pod in its scouting missions. Blood pustules are commonly found bolstering the health of drones as they go about their tasks.

The primitive telepathy of the zagnatti hive mind enhances the combat style of drone pods. Two or more drones often work in concert, timing the attack of their claws to distract their prey, allowing them to hit even well-armored target, or avoid even the most perfectly aimed blow. This advantage serves them well, for when a zagnatti drone succeed in rending an enemy grasped by two or more claws, they leave behind horny serrations that leak



acid into the wounds. After extended combat, drones often need the healing repair of blood pustules to restore their claws to full function.

Zagnatti, Spell Thief

Spell Thief

Medium beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 72 (16d6+16)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14(+2)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Damage Resistances acid

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30ft, passive Perception 13

Languages Telepathy 120 ft.(Zagnatti only)

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Amphibious. The Zagnatti can breathe air and water.

Nimble Escape. The Zagnatti spellthief can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). The Zagnatti spellthief deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits its target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spellthief and isn't incapacitated and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Innate Spellcasting. The Zagnatti spellthief's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The spellthief can innately cast the following spells requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*

3/day each: *counterspell*, *dispel magic*

Spell Drain. When the Zagnatti spellthief hits a creature with its sneak attack or bite, it can attempt to drain an available spell slot. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or lose the highest available spell slot and the spellthief gains a spell charge equal to the level of the drained spell slot. The spellthief cannot have a spell charge higher than its hit dice. Drained spell slots return after a long rest.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage plus spell drain.

Spell Blast. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., *Hit:* 1d10 magical damage per expended spell charge to all creatures in a 10 ft. burst, Dexterity saving throw DC 13 for half damage.

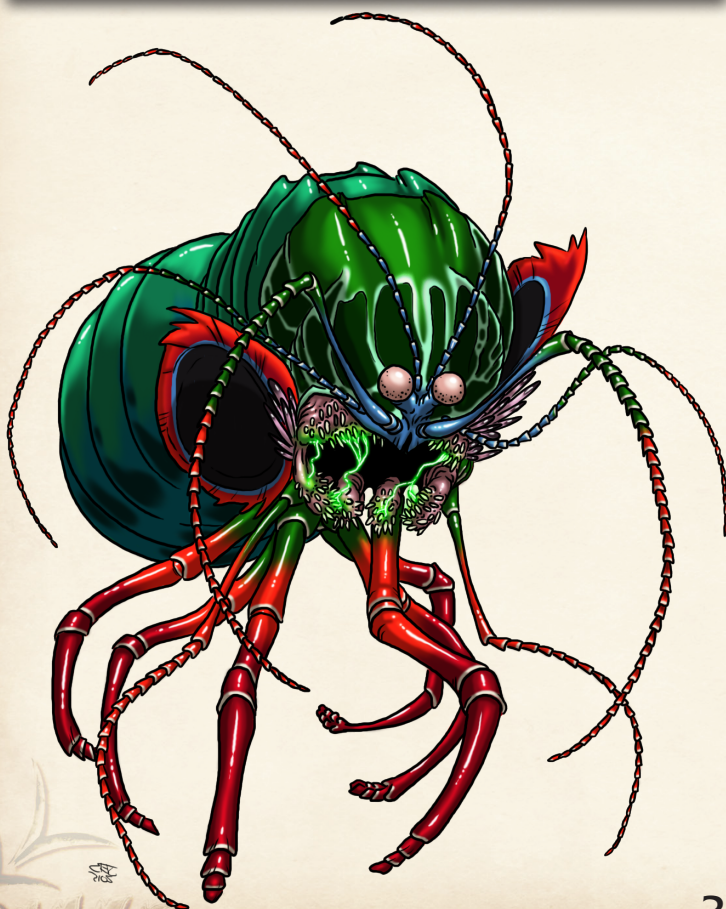
The head and mouth of this shrimp-like creature terrifies; arcane energy crackles between three sets of razor-sharp teeth set in a grinning maw surrounded by six pincers. A shortened abdomen sprouts six legs that drive the creature speedily across the landscape.

The chaos of their birth from the mind of a broken god grants about one in ten zagnatti the ability to capture and reflect back magical energy, both arcane and divine. The most striking of the insect-like species, the colorful mottling of the carapace and other body armor intensifies when the spell thief holds a stolen spell charge. When hiding, the spell thief's colorful plumage is often mistaken for fungal growth underground, flowers on the surface and corals and other colorful sea life beneath the waves.

The spell thief relies on its stealth to choose its moment of attack, but once combat is joined, strikes swiftly and speedily, often dodging away from any retributive strike from its target. The spell thief uses its magical sensors to determine likely targets before making its move.

The spell thief's need to feed on magical energy is one of the pressures driving zagnatti swarms to expand their territory. Though a spell thief can go for some months without feeding on the currents of magic channeled through spellcasters, a longer period of denial causes them to begin the transformation into a sub-queen, who then directs the expansion of the colony. Entombed in a cocoon of hardened dirt and rock, vestigial pincers grow to full size, while at the same time the abdomen grows and distends. Swimmerets meld into the new lower body, forming additional armor on the underbelly. The most striking transformation is in the head, where the mouth pincers meld into a bony ridge, and eyes migrate to the rear as the snout elongates to its final shape.

Disturbing the cocoon is dangerous. Unless carefully dismantled, the cocoon explodes in a burst of acid. This is a magical trap (Wisdom(Perception) check DC 16; Dexterity Check DC 18 to disable; Effect: spell effect, fireball (acid damage instead of fire) 7d6 acid, Dexterity saving throw DC 15 for half damage to all targets in a 20 foot radius.



Zagnatti, Sub-queen

Sub-queen

Large beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d10+54)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Damage Immunities acid

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30ft, passive Perception 14

Languages Telepathy 120 ft.(Zagnatti only)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Amphibious. The Zagnatti can breathe air and water.

Pounce. If the subqueen moves at least 30 feet straight towards a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a Strength saving throw DC 15 or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the subqueen may make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Innate Spellcasting. The Zagnatti subqueen's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The subqueen can innately cast the following spells requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*

1/day: *dominate monster*

Telepathic Assault. The subqueens psychic powers are as formidable as her physical prowess. When the subqueen casts dominate monster the target does not have advantage on the saving throw.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sub-queen can make 2 claw attacks and a tail swipe but the tail attack cannot be against the same target as claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) acid damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (4d6+4) bludgeoning damage and the creature must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

The upper body of this creature sports a pair of huge claws, two bulbous eyes set behind a plow-blade-shaped snout, and a mouth filled with broad, flat teeth. Half a dozen rear legs struggle to drag a distended abdomen that resolves into a powerful tail.

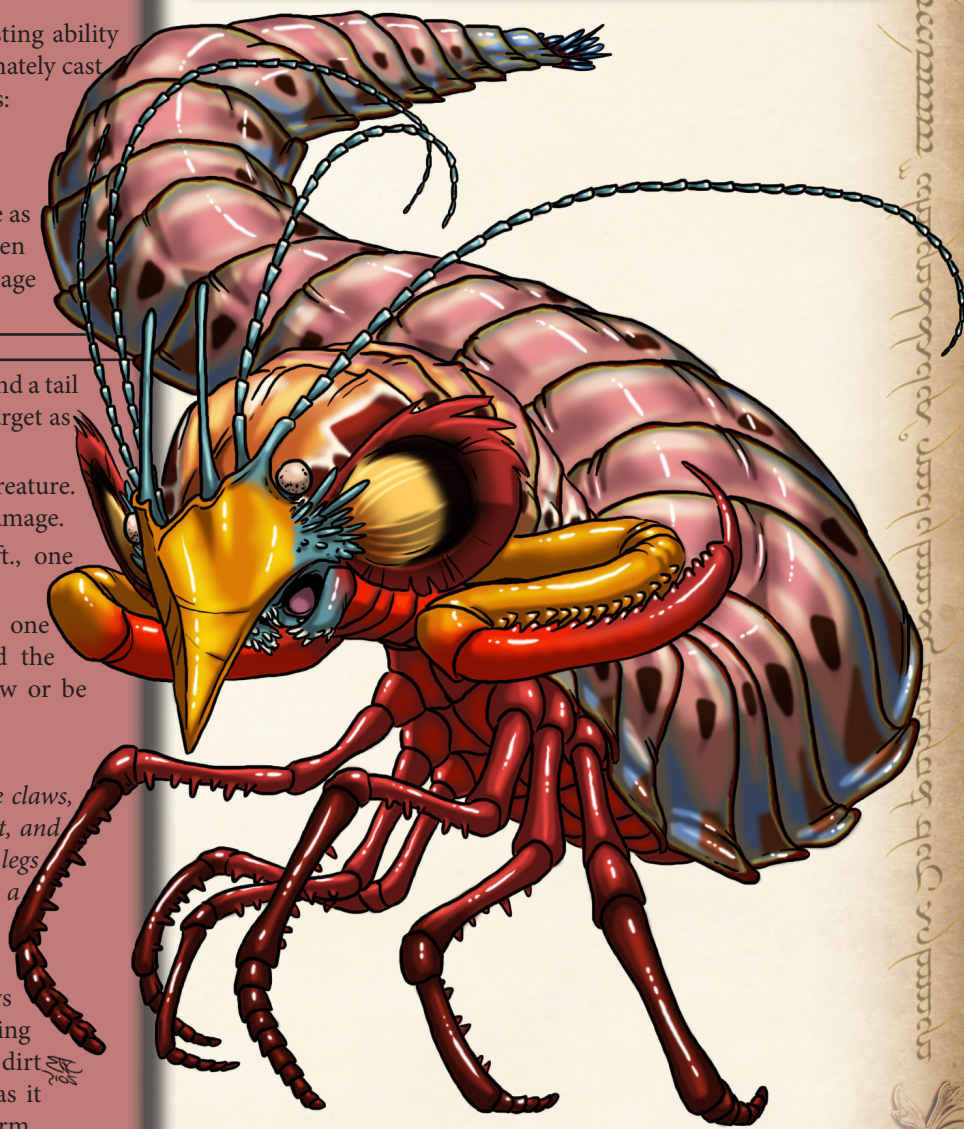
The bony head of the zagnatti sub-queen plows through rock and dirt swiftly, aided by stone-crushing mastication of its hardened teeth. Powerful claws shift dirt and debris efficiently into the wake of the creature as it opens up new tunnels in its quest to plant its own swarm.

In all but dire circumstances, the sub-queen is the most powerful zagnatti encountered away from the nest, leading patrols on behalf of her queen, or migrations on her own behalf. Lesser

zagnatti communicate with each other through the hive-mind telepathy and a series of chittering clicks, but the sub-queen can also vocalize a limited vocabulary in terran. Her most efficient mode of communication is her telepathic assault, and the zagnatti uses it to gain intelligence on new territories, as well as to bring back sacrificial victims for her queen's aging strike. The sub-queen's arguments often revolve around the granting of great wisdom to those who accompany her back to the nest, to the disaster of the charmed creature.

In combat, the sub-queen relies on two slicing claw attacks, and a powerful tail slap that often knocks its victim's off their feet. The threatening mien of the zagnatti's response to such an opportunity often leaves prone victims shaken, even if they find the courage to regain their feet.

Sub-queens usually travel with an entourage, and 90% of the time a dedicated blood pustule tends to the armor and protection of the creature. Sub-queens transform into full-blown zagnatti queens when enough distance is gained from her original hive.



Zagnatti, Queen

Queen

Huge beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d12+72)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities acid

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30ft, passive Perception 15

Languages Telepathy 120 ft. (Zagnatti only)

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Amphibious. The Zagnatti can breathe air and water.

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If the queen fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Sting of Life. When the queen hits with a sting attack on a creature it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw DC 14 or take 21 (6d6) points of psychic damage as the queen feeds on the victims psychic essence. The creature remains attached (Escape DC 17) and takes the psychic damage at the start of the queen's turn until they escape, die, or are removed by an ally with an action (Strength check DC 14). Any victim reduced to 0 HP in this way instantly dies (no death saving throws) and has its psychic essence utterly consumed, its brain is sucked from its body and is added to the queen's unique life force, restoring half the queens hit points and refreshing any spent uses of legendary resistance. This process allows the queen to instantly absorb the victims memories and life experiences and recall them at will, telepathically communicate with the victim's voice, and take advantage of any special knowledge that victim has. This also means that any victim slain in this manner cannot be resurrected until the victim's soul is retrieved from the queen

either by destroying the queen and releasing all the stored souls, or by powerful magic such as wish or miracle.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sub-queen **Melee** bite +18 (2d6+12), sting +18 (1d8+12 plus aging strike)

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 32(4d12+6) piercing damage.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) piercing damage plus Sting of Life

REACTIONS

Acidic Incubator. The queen is covered in acid filled birthing sacs. As a reaction when a melee attack hits the queen she shifts slightly to make the attack strike one of these sacs, releasing a spray of acid onto the attacker who must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw DC 14 or or take 7 (2d6) acid damage, or half on a successful save.

The front end of this bloated worm terminates in a three bony ridges surrounding a vast maw, while the tail end sports a wicked stinger. In between, glistening egg sacs are cradled in a lattice of chitinous armor.

The population of any given zagnatti swarm depends on the telepathic presence of the queen; these energies keep sub-queens from the transformation in to a full queen and the rest of the swarm connected. As the population grows past the point of a queen's control, part of a swarm breaks off, and a sub-queen leads a migration to new lands. When new territories are staked out, the sub-queen becomes more worm-like; claws and legs meld into the body, and the tail grows a wicked stinger. This transformation takes place over the course of three days,



during which three-quarters of the migrating drones feed their life energy telepathically into the nascent queen to fertilize the eggs. The drones become dormant during the process, putting the onus of defense on the remaining 25% of the migratory wave. When the new queen completes its metamorphosis, it immediately gives birth to a large amount of new drones who feed on their dormant cousins. Over the course of the next week, the reborn queen and her progeny slay and replace the rest of the migratory wave's population with their own numbers. Only blood pustules escape the slaughter: the new queen easily exerts control over the weaker minds of these lesser creatures.

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A queen usually resides in a protected nest underground; tunnels lead to burrowed out chambers which store food and allow newly hatched zagnatti time to grow. The queen's chamber is crafted of a size that she can usually reach all corners of it with bite and tail.

While the bite of the queen does significant damage, the stinger is by far the more dangerous weapon. In addition to the brutal barbs tearing into flesh and bone, the spinal cord of the queen terminates in the stinger. When the victim's psychic essence is consumed, it is added to the queen's essence and she can then access all knowledge and memories. This gives most queens a wide range of knowledge and experience.

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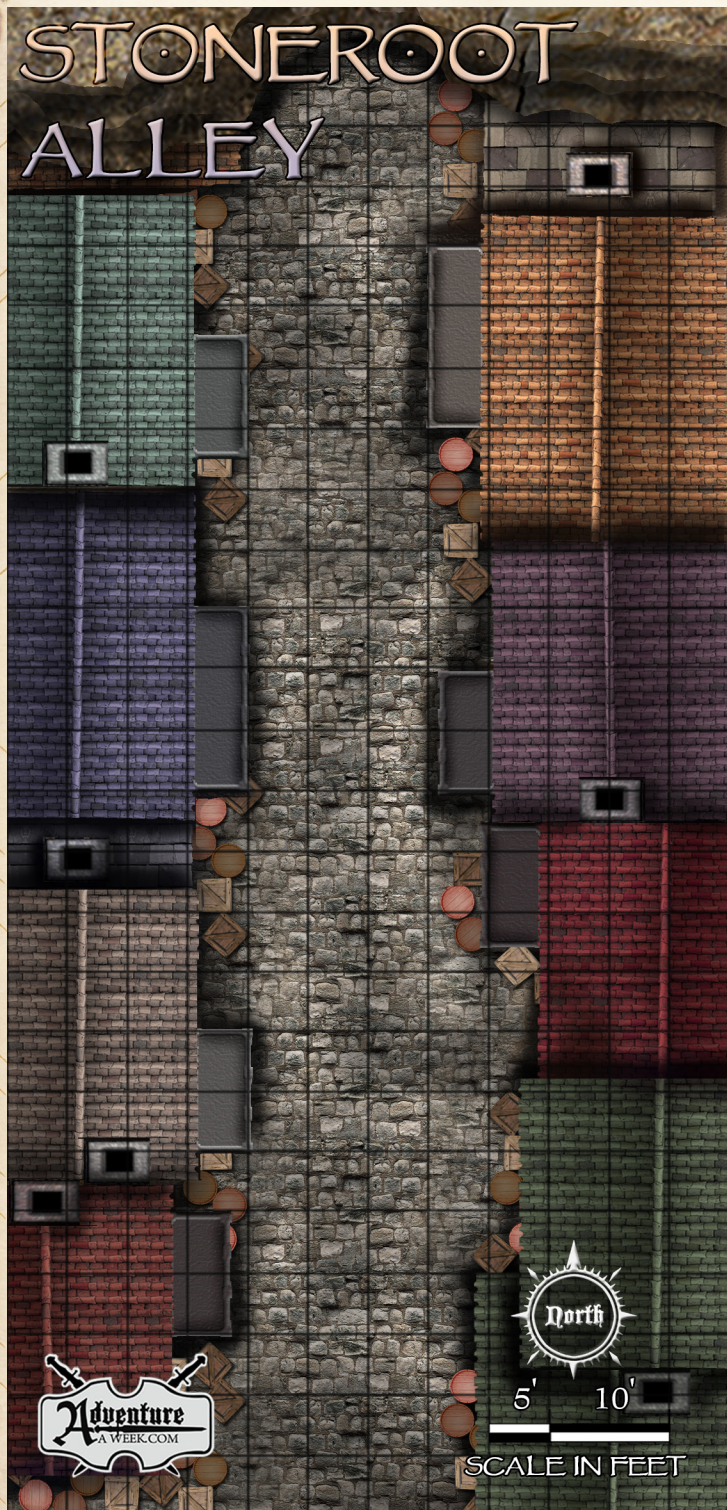
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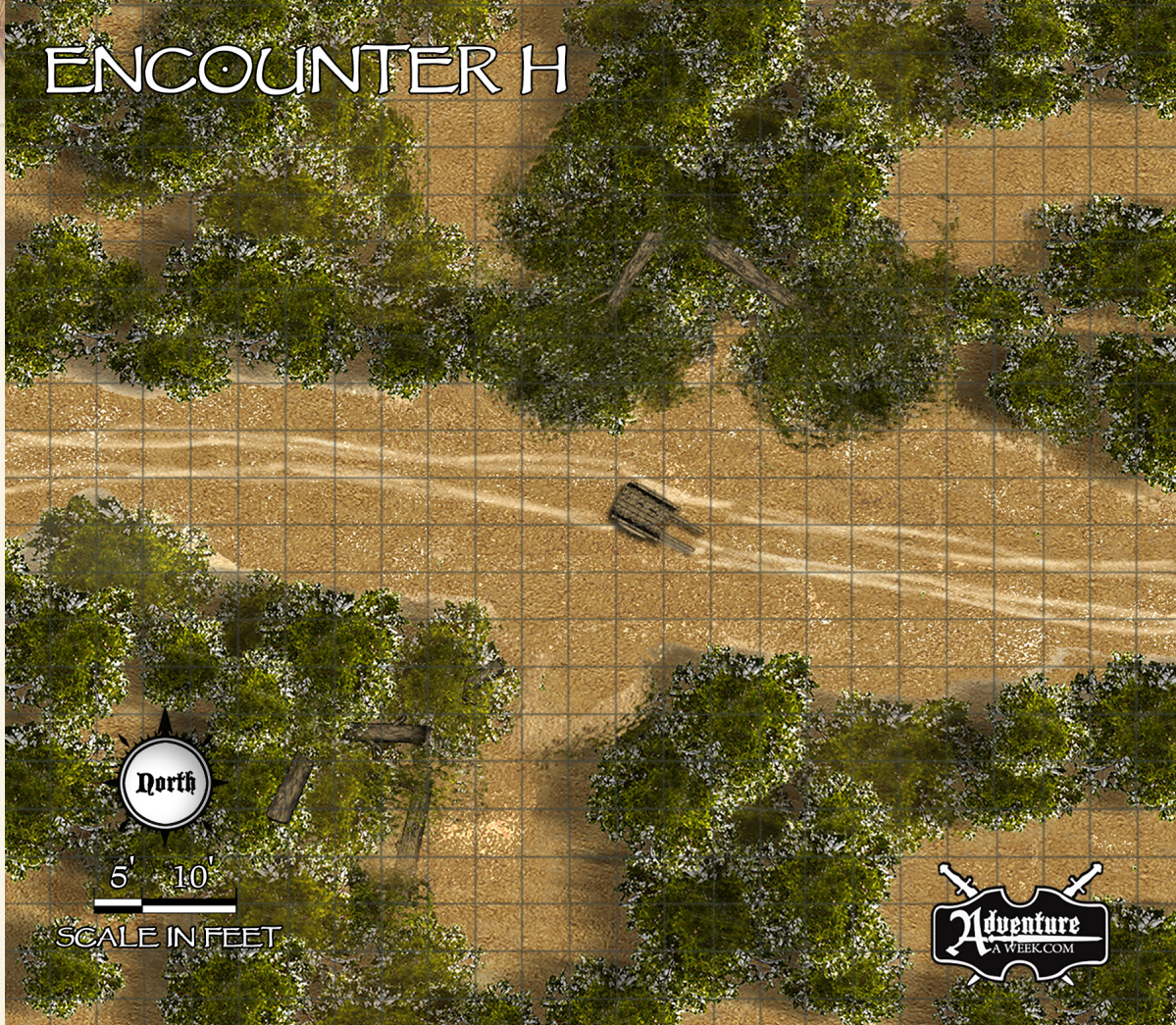
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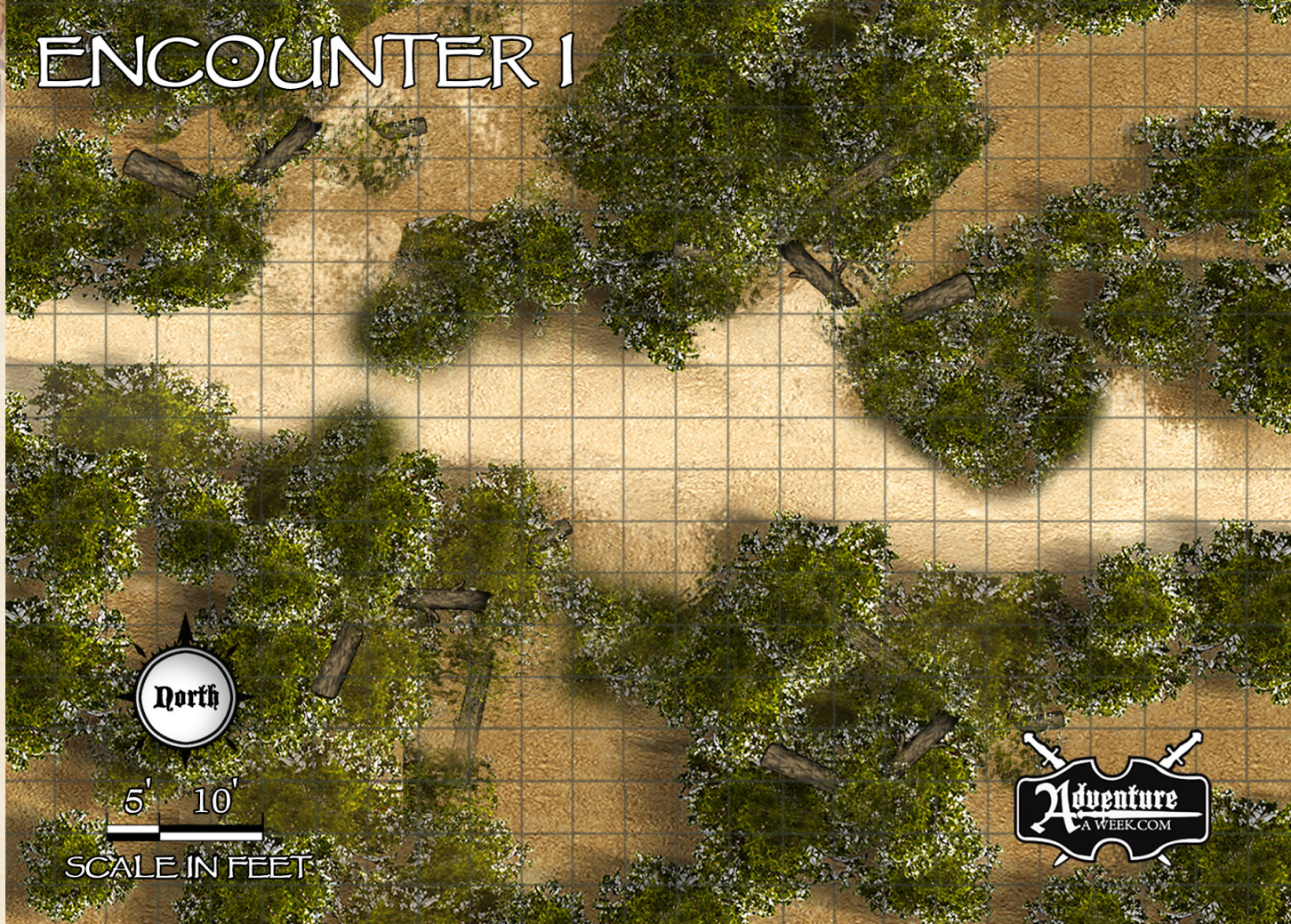
STONEROOT ALLEY



ENCOUNTER H



ENCOUNTER 1

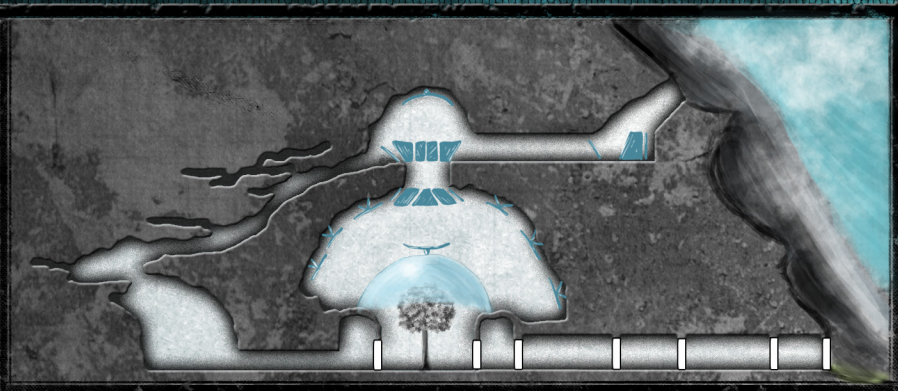


ENCOUNTERS J-K-L



SCALE IN FEET



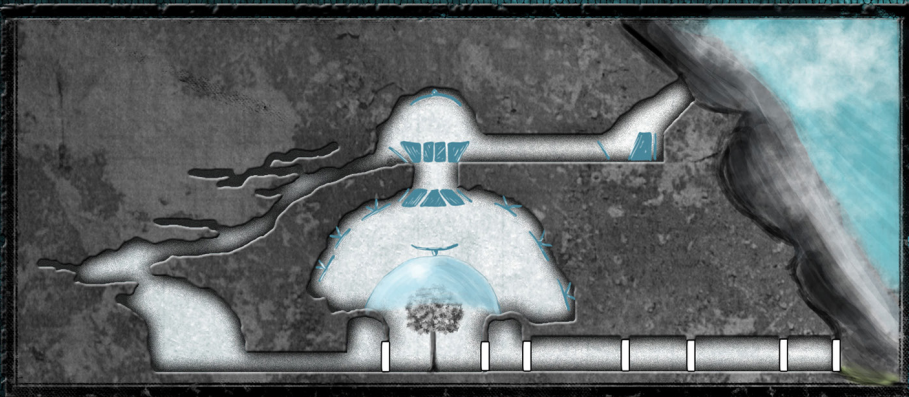


TEMPLE

OF JEWELS AND MIRRORS



1 SQ = 5 FEET



GM AID - COMMUNITY POINTS TRACKER

PCs start with the community points total from the end of Book One, *The Ties that Bind*. If your group did not start with Book One they begin with 5 community points.

Their starting total influences interactions with halflings during Act One

6-9 community points: Trusted – Diplomacy DCs reduced by 5

1-5 community points: Well Regarded – Diplomacy DCs no effect

Less than one community point: Untrusted – Diplomacy DCs increased by 5

Encounter A

Discover work orders: +1

Encounter B

Promise to look into homesteaders' disappearance (Diplomacy check): +1

Encounter D

No use of lethal force against halfling sailors: +1

Each sailor slain: -1

Encounter E

Loot the bosun's corpse: -1

Encounter F

Gather information casting doubt on cyclopean runes' authenticity: +1

Encounter G

Use current community points total during Diplomacy with Carlyetta to determine DC adjustment on table above.

Convince Carlyetta (Diplomacy) to exercise caution: +1

Note Carlyetta's final attitude

Encounter I

Heal and equip Rhianna: +1

Return Brandy: +1

PCs do not seek the two halfling refugees: -1

Encounter L

Confirm Zagnatti's kinship with the Hoyrall (Knowledge Check): +1

Encounter N6

Fail to test Runes: -1

Encounter N14

Returning all six jeweled leaves to the Holy Tree: +1

Encounter O24

Effect permanent repair of the mirrors: +1

Encounter O25

Effect permanent repair of the mirrors: +1

Sanctifying the Temple Supporting the use of the Runes in the inner sanctuary: -1

PCs oppose the use of the runes but fail to convince Carlyetta: -1

FINAL COMMUNITY POINTS TOTAL:



THE TEMPLE OF JEWELS AND MIRRORS

BY MICHAEL ALLEN

A tale of power and corruption for 4-5 7th level player characters.

Carlyetta Wesleigh once again seeks the PCs' help to restore the earth temple of the Great Mother, which stands as testament to the ancient bond between the halflings and dweorg of Picollo.

The last temple of the goddess to be abandoned during the Hoyrall Wars, the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors, has been sealed for hundreds of years. From the nearby dweorg city of Stoneroot a team of brave companions sets forth to prepare the site for sanctification by the priests of the newly-revived Devotees of the Four Hearts. Ignorance, deception, and the resurgence of a threat long thought eliminated from the shores of Picollo combine to frustrate the efforts of the intrepid band.

Also included in this adventure:

- Richly detailed relationships with recurring NPCs.
- Five new monsters, the Zagnatti: a race spawned from the mind of an alien god.
- A method to track the PCs' influence on the future development of Picollan society.
- Notes on scaling for parties of 6 or more.

