



EN5ider Presents:

Revelations from the Mouth of a Madman

Part Three

A 5E-Compatible Adventure for 9th- to 10th-Level Characters



Act Three: The Dragon's Lair

In this act, the party must extract Tinker Oddcog from an industrialized, gnoll-ridden dragon's fortress.

Overview: Beran Reaction

Cavallo de Guerra – either at the command at Shantus or as Bruse himself – gathers a Beran fleet to attack the fifty-mile-long *Isla dolas Focas*.

The ultimate target is the old lair of the (allegedly deceased) dragon Gradiax, an active volcano with several cave entrances. Divinations reveal that somewhere underground is the factory complex that built the duplicants that tried to assassinate the Bruse.

A small city of 10,000 gnolls, called **Karch**, lies along the coast, 5 miles from the peak of the mountain. The Beran military plan is to use a portion of their naval force to circle around the island and stage a landing south of Karch, but this is only a feint. When the gnoll fleet moves to intercept, the rest of the Beran fleet will pincer them. Since the gnolls of Karch are known for their disdain of metal weapons, Cavallo is confident that Beran cannons will provide great tactical superiority.

Once the naval defenses are crushed, Beran marines will make landfall 20 miles from the city and set up a base of operations. Detachments of the fleet will return to Renza to pick up more

troops, making multiple trips over the course of 3 weeks while the fleet's ships of the line bombard Karch. Following the 3-week bombardment, a force of 10,000 will march on Karch and offer the gnolls a chance to surrender. When the offer is refused, de Guerra's forces will raze the city and depart. It will soon thereafter become official Beran policy for settlers to claim land from the gnolls along the southern coast, a policy that will, over time, erase the mostly nomadic gnoll tribes of Ber.

Enemies and Hostages.

One thing the Berans don't know is who exactly is in charge of the gnolls. Their last great chieftain, **Rachi the Silver**, is thought to have been slain several years ago. Divinations reveal that some powerful figure has united the gnolls of *Isla dolas Focas*, and that whoever it is has powers that mark him as a proper ruler. (Remind the players if necessary that rulership has literal advantages in the ZEITGEIST campaign.) For example, teleportation onto the island is entirely impossible without the new chieftain's prior consent, and even the most powerful divinations cannot identify the chieftain.

On the other hand, the Berans are quite certain that Tinker is on the island, along with Kenna Vigilante and probably a large number of other soldiers who were bonded with duplicants, and who are now hostages. Cavallo considers it an acceptable loss if they die while defeating the gnolls, but if possible he'd like to rescue them.

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Beran Fleet.

A large contingent of the Beran navy is tasked with the assault on Isla dolas Focas. This will be the first battle in which the Berans deploy their handful of steam warships. De Guerra's fleet comprises 40 ships:

- 6 ships of the line—250-ft. grand frigates with over 100 cannons and hundreds of marines each.
- 16 frigates—175-ft. warships with 50 cannons apiece and dozens of marines.
- 10 corvettes—90-ft. schooners with 20 cannons each.
- 8 steamships—85-ft. steam-powered, iron-hulled ships with 2 turret-mounted heavy cannons each.

Gnoll Fleet.

Aside from incidental fishing boats and merchant ships, the entire gnoll fleet consists of a mere 24 ships: 4 frigates, 17 corvettes, and 3 caravels.

The gnolls' chief advantage is that many of their larger ships have druids on board who have trained to control the waves and winds of the Silent Storm (see below), letting them capsize small ships, still the sails of large ones, and deny rains to vessels that have caught fire. They also have more magical armaments than the Berans.

Still, they are quite outnumbered and technologically inferior, so barring PC involvement, the Berans will only lose two corvettes and several dozen sailors, while the gnolls will lose their entire fleet.

The Silent Storm.

Another challenge is an odd weather phenomenon that floats near the island. On the west coast, stretching between the island and the mainland, there is a constant storm system that produces incessant rain and erratic winds but, eerily, never any lightning or thunder.

Thousands of years ago, this was the site of the Ziggurat of Avilona, where the Ancients protected this world's connection to the Plane of Air. That connection was damaged two centuries ago – the white pillar on Axis Island containing the *golden icon of Avilona* was exposed to the elements and cracked – which resulted in the downfall of the dragon tyrants. Isla dolas Focas still hosts a few Ancient structures and the party might come across megaliths and primitive carvings of flying beasts.

As for the ziggurat itself, it's several thousand feet overhead, on a floating island hidden in the stormclouds. In *Adventure Twelve, The Grinding Gears of Heaven*, the party finds a path there to the graveyard of the multiverse.

Foreign Aid.

If Lya and the party are offering their assistance, Cavallo would like them to act as a strike force, targeting the duplicant production facility. While the main Beran fleet is luring the gnoll ships away from the city of Karch, the party and Lya should be able to make landfall. From there it's just a 5-mile hike to the volcano, where the adventurers should be able to find Tinker.

Cult of the Steel Lord Defenders.

Two dozen ships – mostly cutters and caravels, with a few galleons – defend the island. Tinker's technological innovations have not been directed at ship-building, so the cult uses traditional

Skyseer Vision of Avilona.

Skyseers feel constantly as if they are on the verge of receiving a vision, similar to when they were at the ziggurat of Apet (in *Adventure Three, Digging for Lies*). If they look upward at the storm, they feel as though they cannot breathe, but can sense the unique energy of the planet Avilona in a precise point in the sky.

When the party reaches the island, any skyseer gets a faint, brief vision:

"The stars that surround you stood here over two centuries ago, so this is a vision of the past. You float, the constellation Draco beside you, and beneath you the planet Avilona is balanced on a pin of white stone. Dense, swift clouds cover its face, and where they part you see glimpses of majestic towers.

"Unseen waves batter you, and the white pin shatters. Its head plunges into a hungry black gyre below, and with no noise, no grand cataclysm, the clouds of Avilona slow, thin, and vanish. You see ruined spires falling to the surface of the lifeless world. To your side, the stars of Draco plummet, and then you too are falling, with no wind to hold you aloft."

sailing vessels. However, the wealth of Gradiax has equipped them with eldritch fusils, magically-charged weapons with as much destructive power as cannons (but that aren't metal, so the cult's taboos don't forbid them).

The city of Karch is unvalled, having never needed to defend against a land assault. The city provides little tactical value for the PCs, and it is easy to bypass. Should they attack, though, the streets have hundreds of warriors, plus several dozen constructs recently crafted in Tinker's forge (CR 6, or thereabouts; re-skinned **flesh golems** are a good fit).

Dozens of caves dot the volcano face, inhabited by families of gnolls or odd megafauna, but it's easy to spot which cave holds the factory. A well-traveled road leads to it, and two long pipes run into and out of the cave. One pipe brings water from a small reservoir uphill; the water replenishes the factory's magma-heated steam turbines and cools manufactured items. The other pipe carries out hot, contaminated water to a toxic sump further down the mountain.

Packs of gnoll warriors patrol the volcano, but they're "unaugmented" – normal gnolls, not duplicants – and thus not a significant threat for the party at this level. They carry horns, though, and might alert other defenders if not quickly neutralized.

Factory Facility.

Gradiax converted his old lair in the underground volcano caldera into a factory for Tinker. The entrance tunnel slopes down gently into the mountain. One water pipe runs along each side of the wall, which is smoothly carved, hung with tapestries, and lit by scented, oil-filled lanterns. A grand carpet, over 100 feet long and enchanted not to rip from casual use by a taloned dragon, covers the ground.

At the tunnel's end, a pump station controls the water flow as well as a hydraulic hatch that leads downward to the factory. A detachment of augmented gnolls guard this checkpoint.

South of the pump station lies an iron mine, where hundreds of minor constructs toil to bring raw materials to the factory. A few side tunnels right at the start of the mine contain a warren of gnoll



warriors. They guard the hostages whose duplicants have been destroyed, as well as those still actively connected to a duplicant.

Down through the pump station hatch, a rail track leads to a massive foundry that sits over the volcano's magma caldera. Rows of completed but inert duplicants line the walls of the track. In the foundry, improbable machines toil at Tinker's direction. Tinker himself sits inside a massive mechanical suit, while Terakalir, the daughter of Gradiax, watches from a perch above the lava.

A room to the south of the foundry holds Tinker's discarded inventions, crafted without Pemberton's approval. At the back of the factory, a room with fans to circulate cool air holds schematics, as well as Tinker's real body, seated in a harness while his duplicant works outside.

Pemberton is here, sifting through stacks of reports on troop allocations and political activities so he can concoct a plan to conquer Ber. This is not the real Pemberton, of course, just a duplicant. His actual body rests in a mansion on a Yerasol island, hundreds of miles away and guarded by elite minions.

Storm-Tossed Battle

Action. Montage.

A small gnoll fleet defends Isla dolas Focas.

To reach the island, the party likely must take a ship, and the island has enough diviners that the gnoll fleet will be able to intercept any attackers. How many defenders the party must face depends on whether they attack alone, where they try to land, and whether they wait for the Beran fleet to draw off the bulk of the gnolls. We present here statistics for a variety of potential foes.

Terrain and Weather.

The naval encounter consists of multiple "stages," areas of the sea roughly a half-mile across — distances are roughly defined to make naval combat simpler to track. It might be optimal to let battle start when the party is two stages away from landfall. They might try to rush to shore, but doing so likely means leaving the rest of their crew in a dangerous situation as enemies try to beach them.

After determining where the battle takes place, sketch out a rough map of the nearby seas with the party's ship in the center of a loose 5×5 grid of different stages. The whole battle has choppy seas, but each stage should have its own mix of terrain to provide tactical options. Bear in mind that the coastline near Karch has gentle beaches, while farther away the steeper the coast gets, making landfall potentially challenging.

For more in-depth naval combat rules, see *Adventure Three, Digging for Lies* (Part Two).

Chop and Rain.

Every stage should have choppy seas, reducing ships speed and maneuverability and posing the risk of waves swamping the deck and washing crew overboard. Rain likely cuts visibility, forcing ships to make vehicle (water) checks with disadvantage, though a good lookout can negate this penalty. The rain might be worse in some areas than other, perhaps changing round by round.

Dragon Affairs.

Contacting the RHC with news about a threat from the Cult of the Steel God gets Harkover Lee to share the secret identity of Gradiax, though he still tries to keep his own draconic nature hidden.

Sharing information that there might be an actual dragon tyrant still alive dramatically alters the mood of the Beran retaliation, shifting it from a civilized response against a strategic threat to an emotionally-charged battle for the identity of the nation. The royal vaults are opened to fund the creation of *dragon-bane balm*, short-lived enchanted oil that when applied to a weapon or implement makes it more deadly against dragons. Up to 10 are available for purchase.

Dragon-Bane Balm

Wondrous item, uncommon

When you spend a bonus action applying this balm to a weapon or up to 10 pieces of ammunition, for the next minute it deals 2d6 extra damage against dragons. In addition, for the duration you gain resistance to damage dealt by dragon breath weapons.

Druidic Weather Magic.

This trait is common to gnoll corvettes and frigates crewed by Beran gnolls. If the druid on board is silenced, incapacitated, or killed, the ship loses this trait.

Druidic Weather Magic. *A gnoll druid stands chanting at the ship's prow, the deck beneath him glowing with a ring of blue runes. The runes flash and dim, and the weather suddenly changes.* This ship gains a +5 bonus on vehicle (water) checks to resist the dangers of choppy seas. Each naval turn during the Terrain phase, this ship can choose its own stage or an adjacent stage and can increase or decrease by one step the intensity of choppy seas or poor visibility caused by weather.

Catch Hazards.

This is Isla dolas Focas, the island of the seals, and the coastline is packed with bleating aquatic mammals, sometimes in numbers so great that ships trying to reach shore might run into a rookery of seals.

Crash Hazards.

Many small rocky islets lie within a few miles of the coastline, often hidden just under the waves. Crashing can damage a ship and possibly even beach it until the crew can push free.

Strike Hazards.

A thin stretch of coastline has spigots of lava that dribble out into the sea. Brash PCs might try to drive an enemy warship against the cliff face and set it aflame with lava.

Possible Foes.

Since there can be a great variety in how much your players enjoy naval combat and how skilled they've been in previous naval engagements, we give you a lot of range for possible defenders. Each gnoll corvette or frigate has a druid on board, granting it the *Druidic Weather Magic* trait (see sidebar).

**Gnoll Cutter**

Small Vehicle • Level 10 (10,800 gp)

Hull Integrity 2; **Defense** 10**Maneuverability** 10; **Speed** 8**Full Crew** 4; **Minimum Crew** 1*DESIGN***Length** 30 ft. **Beam** 15 ft. **Masts** 1 @ 40 ft. high **Decks** 1*ATTACKS*

Arcane Fusil. A single gnoll at the prow of the ship aims a swivel-mounted wooden spar, tipped with a dimly smoldering red crystal.

Crew: 1. **Attack:** +6 to forward or broadsides.

Gnoll Caravel

Medium Vehicle • Level 12 (21,400 gp)

Hull Integrity 3; **Defense** 10**Maneuverability** 8; **Speed** 10**Full Crew** 8; **Minimum Crew** 2*DESIGN***Length** 60 ft. **Beam** 15 ft. **Masts** 2 @ 60 ft. high **Decks** 2*ATTACKS*

Fiery Brand of the Cult of the Steel God. On the deck, a handful of gnolls aim swivel-mounted fusils, but the real threat flies atop the mainmast. The symbol of a coiled draconic serpent shines a fiery red on the caravel's topsail. Three gnolls atop the mast pull at ropes to adjust its aim, while on deck a warpriest chants to empower it. The brand flashes a brilliant red, then unleashes a blast of flame.

Crew: 15. **Attack:** +8 to forward or broadsides. Attacks can inflict burning instead of immediate damage (DC 10 vehicle [water] check or start burning; each round a burning creature or object takes 1d6 fire damage unless an action is spent putting the fire out).

**Easy Defense.**

If the party has a good plan to avoid defending ships — like if they land far away from Karch after the main fleets have engaged — they'll face only a light patrol: a gnoll caravel backed up by 4 gnoll cutters. The fight won't be too challenging. If the party is racing *Lux Profectusque*, this fight could serve as an incidental complication when the PCs and Lya Jierre's ship are finally forced into combat to see who lands first.

Moderate Defense.

If the party opts for a quicker route to the volcano, they can expect a stronger defense. The above patrol spots them and launches flares to call for reinforcements. About 15 minutes later, a pair of gnoll corvettes that stayed behind to guard Karch enter the battle at long range. A typical party likely can survive this fight, but their ship runs the chance of being destroyed.

Gnoll Corvette

Large Vehicle • Level 14 (46,400 gp)

Hull Integrity 3; **Defense** 15**Maneuverability** 6; **Speed** 14**Full Crew** 16; **Minimum Crew** 4*DESIGN***Length** 90 ft. **Beam** 25 ft. **Masts** 3 @ 70 ft. high **Decks** 2*ATTACKS*

Three Brands. Three fire-breathing topsails pose a great threat. A dozen gnolls aim them while more on the deck chant praises to their dragon god and fire with fusils. **Crew:** 40. **Attack:** +12 to forward or broadsides. Attacks can inflict burning instead of immediate damage (DC 10 vehicle [water] check or start burning; each round a burning creature or object takes 1d6 fire damage unless an action is spent putting the fire out).

Gnoll Frigate

Huge Vehicle • Level 17 (153,000 gp)

Hull Integrity 4; **Defense** 25**Maneuverability** 4; **Speed** 14**Full Crew** 32; **Minimum Crew** 8*DESIGN***Length** 170 ft. **Beam** 35 ft. **Masts** 3 @ 100 ft. high **Decks** 4*ATTACKS*

Bound Fire Spirit. An actual serpent of fire circles the ship, conjured by glowing sigils on the ship's masts and figurehead. Gnoll warmages direct scores of crewmen to bark eldritch cries that send it forth and attack. **Crew:** 100. **Attack:** +16 in any direction, even directly up. Attacks can inflict burning instead of immediate damage (DC 10 vehicle [water] check or start burning; each round a burning creature or object takes 1d6 fire damage unless an action is spent putting the fire out).

DEFENSES

Eldritch Defenses. The ship has advantage on checks against burning. Any spells that originate more than 50 feet from the ship deal 34 less damage to targets within that area.

Daunting Defense.

If the party is reckless and attacks before the Berans draw off the gnoll fleet, they'll likely be spotted by the "easy" patrol, which sends up flares for reinforcements. After 10 minutes, 2 gnoll frigates arrive at long range, and 2 more gnoll corvettes arrive at long range one naval turn later. If the party is backed up by *Lux Profectusque*, they might be able to survive this onslaught together.

Boarding Actions.

Each ship carries enough gnoll marines to pose a threat. Due to numbers and the character level disparity, it's easier to just treat normal sailors as background: brief obstacles the heroes can force their way through. Crewmen never take actions. Each crewman occupies a space, which counts as difficult terrain for hostile creatures. Whenever a creature enters the space of a hostile crewman, it takes 5 damage. Treat a crewman's Armor Class as 10 and its saving throws as +0 if a PC attacks one; if a crewman takes any damage, it is out of the fight, which leaves its space clear.



An officer can spend a standard action to order any 4 allied crewmen within earshot to move (usually traveling 30 feet). If 2 crewmen from opposite sides move adjacent, they each deal 5 damage to the other, taking each other out.

Additionally, the gnoll crews usually have one or more officers per ship who can actually pose at least a slight threat to 10th-level PCs. Cutters usually have 1 gnoll officer, caravels have 2, schooners 4. A gnoll frigate has 8 gnoll officers plus a veteran captain. Remember not to scrimp on roleplaying during this massive sea

battle – enemy captains who get close enough to shout or at least make vulgar hand gestures might be alternately savage or fanatically praising of their steel lord.

Finally, the gnolls are allied with a handful of seal scorpions, giant elemental beasts that lurk beneath the waves. Shortly after the party engages the gnolls, a pair of these creatures land on the deck of the party's ship and cause havoc; even though they probably don't pose much of a threat to the PCs, the crew find them pretty dangerous.

Seal Scorpion

Large elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10+48)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover), swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	6 (–2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws DEX +8, CON +6

Skills Acrobatics +8, Perception +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Auran

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Broken Seal. When reduced below half of its hit point total, a seal scorpion's body darkens, hardens, then turns to stone, traced with glowing threads of lava blood where it has been wounded. It loses its fly and swim speeds as well as Metal Mastery, but it gains a climb speed of 30 feet. The seal scorpion's attacks deal fire damage instead of electricity damage.

Metal Mastery. The seal scorpion has advantage on attack rolls against creatures wearing metal armor, holding metal weapons, or that are made of metal (like an iron golem).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The seal scorpion attacks once with its stinger and twice with its claws, or once with its stinger and once with constrict.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 9 (1d10+4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) lightning damage, and the target makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or reduces its Dexterity by 2 until it finishes its next rest. A creature reduced to Dexterity 0 by this poison becomes petrified.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) lightning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15).

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 13 (2d8+4) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) lightning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the seal scorpion can't constrict another target.

Gnoll Officer

Medium humanoid (gnoll), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 90 (12d8+36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws STR +6, DEX +6, CON +6

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6, Sleight of Hand +9; vehicle [water] +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Evasion. If the gnoll is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the gnoll instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Rope Master. The gnoll gains a climb speed of 30 feet when using a rope to climb and creatures it ties up using rope have disadvantage on checks made to escape their bonds.

Sneak Attack (4d6, 1/turn). The gnoll deals an extra 21 (6d6) damage when it hits a 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 gnoll that isn't incapacitated and the gnoll doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gnoll attacks twice.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Spears. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage or 8 (1d10) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Bolas. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/40 ft., one target.

Hit: The target is grappled. If the gnoll uses a triggered action to throw the bolas while the target is moving, the target is grappled and knocked prone instead.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker that the gnoll can see hits it with an attack, the gnoll can use its reaction to halve the attack's damage against it.



Veteran Gnoll Captain

Medium humanoid (gnoll), neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 164 (14d8+74)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws STR +8, CON +8, WIS +4

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +12, Intimidation +7; vehicle (water) +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Power Attack. When the gnoll makes its first melee weapon attack in a turn, it can choose to take a –5 penalty to its melee weapon attack rolls in exchange for a +10 bonus to melee weapon damage. In addition, the gnoll can use a bonus action to make one melee weapon attack after it uses a melee weapon to reduce a creature to 0 hit points or scores a critical hit with it. The gnoll can only use this feature on its turn.

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gnoll attacks four times.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

+1 Bone Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12+5) magical slashing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage or 9 (1d10+4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. The veteran gnoll captain carries 2 *potions of greater healing* and an *elixir of fire breath* (after drinking this potion, the captain can use an action to exhale fire in a 15-foot cone; each creature in the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 6d6 fire damage; half damage on a successful save.)

Aftermath.

If the party's ship is crippled, gnolls board it and take prisoners. They'll deliver those of high value to Pardo, up at the factory in the volcano, so they can be replaced with duplicants. The adventurers might still have a chance to pull off a victory even if implanted into duplicants: they might reject Gradiax's control and use the extra defenses granted by their mechanical bodies. The bond is not stable without Gradiax's consent though, so after a few hours their duplicants collapse and they return to their own bodies.

A successful assault, however, lets the party take longboats to shore and continue on their way to the volcano. Captive gnolls can be stranded on rocky islets off the main island, putting them out of reach of the action until they are rescued.

Pump Station

Action. Tactical.

Gnolls prepare a deadly ambush and trap at a hydraulic pump station that controls the entrance to Tinker's foundry.

A magic *alarm* at the mouth of the tunnel that leads to the duplicant factory alerts Pardo, who readies his augmented guards to ambush the attackers. The gnoll priest then quickly heads to the warren (the tunnels in the southwest).

This facility has something the party has probably never seen before: electric lighting. A turbine in the foundry beneath the pump station provides alternating current to the pump station. But since Tinker has not invented light bulbs yet, the lighting comes from dozens of tiny spark gaps. As electrical currents jump the gap, they buzz and spark and create an eerie flickering white light from the ceiling.

The gnolls plan a trap. Massive tanks hold water for powering the facility's machines, and have been rigged with explosives. Once the party has engaged in combat, the gnolls plan to explode the tanks, flood the room, and cut the cable providing electricity that runs up from the ground. Once cut, the cable will fall limp into the water, electrocuting anyone who steps into the liquid.

PUMP STATION OPPONENTS.

- 2 duplicant cult-priests
- 10 gnoll cultist archers
- 16 gnoll cultists
- Pardo the lesser duplicant

A duplicant cult-priest leads the archers, who lie in wait in the pump room, perched on the catwalks. The priest prefers to hide in the southwest corner, just north of the west-most tank, so he can attack from cover on the catwalk.

The second cult-priest leads the cultist packs – groups of gnolls sworn to defend the lair of their lord. They wait in the gnoll warren to the southwest, guarding both the hostages and whatever parts

Recurring Villainy.

Pardo's previous duplicant body was custom-made for him, which was why it was so much stronger than typical duplicants. If it was destroyed, he's now stuck in a weaker model, and so won't pose as much of a threat the second time around. However, he'll likely return in later adventures as Pemberton's loyal aide.

Likewise, Pemberton is present in the factory only in duplicant form, and is not threatening as a combatant. As soon as Pemberton learned the Berans were planning to attack, he and Pardo teleported their real bodies (as well as a few other trusted minions) to his mansion in the Yerasol Archipelago. There the dragon is shielded from divinations, and he'll bide his time until later in the campaign, when the shifting balance of power gives him an opportunity to make another power play.

However, Pemberton's prideful daughter Terakalir insisted on staying behind, since she wanted to ensure the island's defenses. Also, current duplicant technology would not let her bond while in dragon form, and she has not yet learned to polymorph into human form.



the PCs would need to effect repairs of the pumps after the gnolls sabotage them. They stay in Area B and fall back to Area C to try to string the party out. Pardo the Lesser hides in the side tunnels, invisible and prepared to strike PCs in the back ranks.

Pacing.

The party might be tempted to rest after dealing with the pump room, before moving on to the mines. To motivate them to keep things moving, start with one group of gnoll cultists on the south raised platform near the mine entrance. When the party gets near, let them overhear the cult-priest shout, "We'll hold them off! Be ready to kill the hostages if we fail!"

Then the cultists run off, which should ratchet up the challenge and tension. If the party chooses not to risk their own lives for those of strangers they can rest, but they'll be giving up a lot of potential good will among the Berans.

Duplicant Cult Priest

Medium humanoid (gnoll), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 120 (16d8+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws CON +6, WIS +4

Skills Arcana +3, Perception +7

Damage Resistances fire; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities disease, exhaustion, sleep

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Blindsight. If the duplicant is able to hear, it is aware of the location of any hidden or invisible creature within 30 feet of it.

Constructed. The duplicant's constructed nature gives it advantage on saving throws against mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, and the stunned condition.

Metal Shell. The duplicant has a hard metallic exoskeleton that protects it from harm but when badly damaged it cracks open to reveal the creature's sensitive inner machinery. When reduced to half its hit points or less, the duplicant loses its damage resistances to weapon damage and takes a -2 penalty to both its AC and saving throws.

Spellcasting. The duplicant is an 6th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks).

The duplicant has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *prestidigitation*, *resistance*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *faerie fire*, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *fireball*, *protection from energy*

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Gnoll Cultist Archer

Medium humanoid (gnoll), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws dex +5, con +4

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

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

Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d8+2) slashing damage or 7 (1d10+2) slashing damage if wielded in two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Gnoll Cultist

Medium humanoid (gnoll), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Power Attack. When the gnoll makes its first melee weapon attack in a turn, it can choose to take a -5 penalty to its melee weapon attack rolls in exchange for a +10 bonus to melee weapon damage. In addition, the gnoll can use a bonus action to make one melee weapon attack after it uses a melee weapon to reduce a creature to 0 hit points or scores a critical hit with it. The gnoll can only use this feature on its turn.

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage or 7 (1d10+2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Pardo the Lesser Duplicant

Description. As Pardo duplicant (see page 2 in Part Two), but with a -2 penalty to all ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws (and Challenge Rating).





Terrain.

The pump station is illuminated by the ceiling spark-gaps, which buzz quietly above the deep thrumming of water pumps. However, shortly after combat begins, the gnolls intend to shut off the lights and plunge the room into darkness. The hatch that leads down to the foundry below is raised 5 feet off the ground, and the control panels around the room handle its operation. A platform to the south leads to the mine and the gnoll warrens. Catwalks connect the other platforms of the room. The gnolls here wear shoes and gloves so they don't touch metal.

The southwest portion of the room contains 3 metal water tanks, which hold the water that provides hydraulic power to operate the hatch and other devices. Three pipes connect these tanks to the blue control panel, one pipe connects the blue control panel to the red control panel, and one pipe connects the blue control panel to the Archimedes screw in the northeast.

The Archimedes screw helps carry water out of the facility. Its top is uncovered, so any creature that falls into the Archimedes screw is churned by its rapidly spinning mechanism. It takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage at the start of its turn and must make a DC 22 Strength (Athletics) check to climb free of the device. Each round the creature is pushed 1 square toward the outflow pipe, and if it reaches the east end of the screw, intense pressures shatter its bones in order to squeeze it through the pipe, dealing 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage at the end of each round.

Control Panels.

There are three control panel stations, marked with blue, red, and green dots. The green panel controls the electric power, and can toggle the overhead lights and the pumps. The blue panel controls the flow of water to the Archimedes screw and to the red panel. The red panel can open and close the hatch if it is receiving water from the blue panel and if the pumps are toggled on at the green panel. A character standing at one of the panels can use a bonus action to toggle something off or on.

When the party arrives, the green panel has been set to have the lights and pumps on. The blue panel is set such that water is flowing to the Archimedes screw but not to the red panel.

Bomb Trap.

Just to make things interesting, a bomb is attached to the back of the central tank, and if it takes any fire damage it explodes, shattering all 3 tanks and flooding the room to a depth of 6 feet. (The platforms and catwalks are all at least 15 feet above the floor.) Each creature within 3 squares of the back of the tank takes 14 (4d6) piercing damage and 14 (4d6) fire damage, and is knocked prone and pushed 2 squares. Creatures can make DC 17 Dexterity saving throws to halve the damage and avoid the push and prone effects.

After a few rounds of combat, preferably when a few of the PCs are on the ground floor of the pump room, the cultist priest uses *scorching ray* to ignite the bomb, destroying the tanks and flooding the room. The lack of water flow means the Archimedes screw won't push creatures down the pipe, but it still spins. To further complicate matters, the power cables circling the room at a height of 5 feet are not properly insulated, so the entire flooded area

becomes electrified. Thereafter, each creature standing in the water takes 14 (4d6) lightning damage at the start of its turn. The power can be turned off at the green station as a bonus action.

Mine.

Through the south exit is an abandoned iron mine. Aside from a few mine carts and some impressive machinery, there's nothing of value. Indeed, 20 feet south of the start of the mine cart rails, there is a trap of sorts. A pair of levers (marked by brown icons on the map) can activate or deactivate a latch on the floor. If any significant weight is placed on the rails in the space between the levers, the ground splits open and dumps the victim 50 feet down a shaft and onto a conveyor belt 80–90 feet south of the grinder in the Foundry Access Chamber (Area A on the Foundry map on page 13). What happens at the end of the conveyor belt is described under "Welcome to My Volcano Lair," below.

Gnoll Warren.

A side tunnel off the mine entrance leads to a gnoll warren that once held miners before Tinker replaced them with steam-powered machines. Now the area is filled with dozens of gnoll warriors who guard the hostages. This whole area is lit by small firepits with smoldering coals, providing dim light with patches of darkness.

Communal Chamber (Area A). A group of 4 cultists linger here, ready to shout a warning and then flee. The walls are adorned with educational cave paintings, telling the history of Gradiax the Steel Lord and his cult. This area is used for communal gatherings, cooking, and prayer.

Sleeping Chambers (Area B). The remaining cultists wait here with the second priest behind them. The tunnels here are lined with more paintings of famous members of the cult, including a primitive depiction of Tinker standing atop a giant cog. Pardo lurks in the side tunnels to the west, which have no illumination.

Mural Room (Area C). The wall here is painted with a grand mural of Gradiax's treasure hoard surrounded by a ring of lava. The painting on the north wall conceals a secret door, discovered with a DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Secret Chamber (Area D). The hostages are kept here: Kenna Vigilante, several dozen soldiers, and a handful of other important Berans. If there are any personal NPCs that perhaps the party has allied with that the GM wants to have been replaced, perhaps they're here, or just one of their personal effects, so the GM can still have the ally act as an enemy.

Tactics.

Shortly after the party arrives, a gnoll archer at the green panel kills the lights, dropping the whole area into darkness (remember the gnolls all have 60-ft. darkvision). Then the gnolls scatter and ready actions to attack. The cultist priest uses *faerie fire* to illuminate a target, and the gnolls all fire at anyone who is caught in the light projected by the spell. They keep this up until the PCs introduce some light.

That's probably the point when the cult-priest blasts the bomb at the water tank, flooding the place and electrocuting those on the ground.

When the fight ends, or if any PC reaches the south platform



Getting the Hostages to Safety.

The hostages in Area D lie on cots adorned with shamanic beads and ritual paint. Each wears a blindfold and on their chest sits a small flat piece of stone that holds a drop of witchoil. They have no weapons and only rags for clothes but Kenna Vigilante, once awakened, can rally them to pick up fallen gnomish weapons and prepare to either march for the sea or fight alongside the party.

Those useful in a fight consist of Kenna and 25 soldiers. Statistics for these makeshift allies are presented in Appendix Two, with the soldiers equivalent to Cantabriglia guards. They won't be much use against the enemies the party is about to face, however.

that leads to the mine, a cultist in the warren shouts, "They're coming! Quickly, kill the hostages!"

The gnomish cultists try to swarm the intruders and form living shields between the PCs and the cult-priest. Meanwhile Pardo emerges from invisibility, uses *command*, then drinks another potion, becoming invisible again and moving into darkness, attacking every other round. If forced into combat he uses *inflict wounds*, then promises he will forever be at his master's side.

Aftermath.

Before the party can open the hatch to the lower level, they must make sure there is water and power. If the gnomes blew the tanks, there is enough salvageable wreckage, spare parts, and other components to jury-rig repairs to one tank, pump enough water out of the room to uncover the hatch, and get the hatch open. Ladders lead down from the pump room hatch to the Foundry Access Chamber (Area A on the Foundry map).

The needed repairs likely require about an hour, by which time gnomish patrols have noticed something amiss and run to Karch. If the party dallies much longer, a small army arrives. Impatient or careless adventurers might just fall into the pit trap at the entrance of the mine and use the conveyor belt to reach Area A on the Foundry map, bypassing the hatch entirely but risking the grinder (see "Mine," above).



Welcome to My Volcano Lair

Social. Real-Time.

Tinker speaks with the party as they approach.

The Foundry Access Chamber at the bottom of the hatch (Area A on the Foundry map) is unoccupied. If the PCs arrive here using the ladders leading from the pump station hatch, they've climbed down past the conveyor belt and grinder, which are 20 feet above the floor.

The PCs might instead be arriving here via the conveyor belt, which is moving north at 5 feet per round. A creature that moves into the conveyor belt space adjacent to the grinder's space takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and might fall prone (Dexterity saving throw DC 12). A creature that enters the grinder's space takes 70 (20d6) bludgeoning damage and falls 20 feet into the mine cart waiting below. Leaping over the grinder also leads to a 20-foot fall into the mine cart. Alternately, a character can step off the conveyor belt to the left or right and grab one of the ladders on the wall (Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check DC 15) to avoid both the grinder and the fall altogether.

The mining cart sits on the rails where it can be fed by material from the grinder above. A tiny steam engine attached to the cart is pattering happily, as if it's waiting to give the party a ride. The severed head of a duplicant, mostly featureless aside from eyes and an articulate mouth, lies in the cart.

The rails lead to a massive metal door on the north wall, currently closed. When the party arrives, the duplicant head activates and begins to speak in Tinker's voice. The duplicant's appearance shifts to match Tinker's face.

"I wondered when I'd see you again. Please, please, get in the cart. It will be a pleasant ride, and my subterranean domicile is far, far too large for you to have to walk all the way. So, so vast. You could get lost in it. Certainly your mind could. I have an inkling you're going to get quite violent toward me, and our previous interactions were much, much too brief. So please, please: into the cart."

If at any point the party gets into the cart, the door starts to grind open, controlled from afar by Tinker. The cart then starts to roll along, moving just a bit faster than walking speed. It travels down a long, winding tunnel that slopes gently downhill. The air in the tunnel grows progressively hotter as the cart continues. Occasional spark-gap lamps on the ceiling provide flickering light. After a few hundred feet a number of niches large enough to hold a standing Medium-sized creature begin to appear on each wall; each contains an inert duplicant.

The pathway is at least a quarter-mile long but feel free to stretch it for as long as the conversation is interesting. Tinker can hear them through the duplicant head, so this is an opportunity for them to convince him to join their side.

If the party walks, the cart follows them and the head keeps talking. It's easy enough to stop the head functioning by stomping on it for a couple of rounds, which the PCs might actually find cathartic, but this annoys Tinker, and the duplicants along the route simply pick up the conversation. Use the following text as a



template for Tinker's erratic conversation, which lasts until the much more polite Pemberton interrupts.

"You're here about Borne, yes? I'd love to tell you all about him. His design, his structural flaws, and his personality. Such a nice boy. Smartest one of the lot. Not like you. You, if you'll pardon me, are fools. You've walked into a trap.

"Not that I wanted to trap you. It's odd to be affected by a type of mind control you built. Built when no one else could, I'd remind you. I can tell someone else is in charge, but I don't mind so much. Much better than to be mind controlled and not remember. Remember what I said about not wanting to trap you? You upset my employer, and as long as I'm still in this—I remind you—masterful invention, I won't be agreeing to any of your overtures, short or brief or long or huge.

"You should meet my boss. Gnomes and dragons are natural allies. We gnomes love to speak to burrowing animals, burrowing animals love caves, and who loves caves more than dragons?! Well...dwarves, I suppose. And they do have more hair. And they are smaller. I wish I had a pet dwarf."

A new voice butts in now, the memorable deep tones of Risuri industrialist Benedict Pemberton. The duplicant's head transforms to match his face.

"All right, there. That's quite enough of that, son. Time to let the people with functional minds have a conversation.

"Greetings. Some people used to call me the Steel Lord Gradiax, but these days I do prefer Benedict Pemberton. Welcome to my volcano lair. Now if you don't mind, kindly either leave the premises or put your weapons away so we can talk in peace."

Pemberton is fiercely angry and nervous, but he restrains it and covers with genteel politeness, for a moment at least. He's furious that years of planning might be ruined in a few moments, and he's also worried that he won't be able to protect his daughter.

Pemberton therefore tries to convince the party that they'll profit more by aiding him than by fighting him. He points out that he has no affiliation with the Obscurati, and hints that as long as this factory remains in production he can produce war machines that the PCs could use against their enemies. In exchange for the party agreeing to back off, he'll let them speak to Tinker as long as they like and get whatever information they can about the Obscurati and the colossus.

If they want to actually take the gnome with them, though, Pemberton needs more. As recompense for what they've already done to his forces, he'll request the party's aid to attack the Beran fleet. He suggests they wait until the first detachment of soldiers have landed, then attack the transports that are sailing back to mainland Ber. By delaying reinforcements and stranding the Beran soldiers, Pemberton thinks he'll be able to crush the attackers and hold the island. Ber would treat that as an act of war, but Pemberton smoothly assures them the war would be brief, since he'd complete his conquest within the year.

Make sure the players understand that, strategically, it's probably a net minus to Risur to leave a war-torn Ber under Pemberton's control compared to having a united Ber that feels it owes the PCs a great favor. And there's no guarantee Pemberton, bolstered by conquest, won't eventually choose to use the strength

he's describing against Risur or to ally with the Obscurati. Smart parties will decline this offer.

Assuming they do decline, Pemberton snarls, then laughs once, saying he's glad actually, because he was hoping he'd get to kill them. As the mine cart finally reaches the foundry, Pemberton orders Tinker to seal the exit and to kill them all.

Oddcog's Magma Emporium

Action. Tactical.

Step into the gnome's parlor.

The foundry lies in a magma chamber, which contains run-off from the molten heart of the volcano. The ceiling is about 120 feet high, and tiny fissures circulate air, but there are no paths large enough for creatures to find their way to the surface. A few stony perches lean out from the walls high above, and any character familiar with stoneworking can easily discern that they were carved by massive talons.

The whole area is dramatically lit by the glow of a vast pool of lava. Metal columns hanging from the ceiling support several grated metal platforms upon which sit various industrial machines. A conveyor belt runs past a series of giant metal limbs, and eventually into a small side chamber. Higher up at the far end of the room, a building with darkened windows watches over the whole area.

Foundry Access Chamber (Area A). The PCs probably reached this point either by descending through the hatch in the pump station or by being dumped onto the conveyor belt, depending on how the encounters in Pump Station, above, worked out.

The tunnel to Area B is a quarter of a mile long (but it might be longer depending on the needs of the story; see Welcome to My Volcano Lair, above). Normally, a cart traversing the tunnel is unloaded into smelters and then reloaded by the duplicants standing in the tunnel, but Tinker has deactivated these for now. Instead, there is a duplicant head in the mine cart as described in Welcome to My Volcano Lair.

Rail Cart Trap (Area B). Here the rail cart reaches the end of the line. Normally a solid barricade stops the cart, but Tinker has unlocked the hinge. A PC who examines the barricade for something unusual might notice (DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check) that it's been rigged to fall away. If the party remains in the cart all the way, it slows down toward the end, but when it hits the barricade it doesn't stop. Creatures in the cart can make a DC 17 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to jump out and grab onto the ledge as the cart reaches the edge and begins to go over.

Creatures still in the cart as it tips over the edge take 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and have one round to get out, or else they land in the lava and take 99 (18d10) fire damage.

Assembly Line (Areas C through G). These articulated metal arms operate under Tinker's control, using enchanted hammers, clamps, and blades to shape, grasp, cut, and assemble raw metal rolling down the conveyor belt into components for Tinker's various inventions. On their own they do nothing, but Tinker can attack with them. This area is difficult terrain.





The east-west conveyor belt moves 2 squares west each round, but a character can use a bonus action to adjust the lever at the east end, choosing between normal, stop, or backwards. At the west end of the conveyor belt, arm C pushes completed projects onto the north-south belt, which deposits them in the storage cave (Area L). Projects with flaws are instead tossed into the lava.

Steam Turbine (Area H). Pipes from above feed water into a cistern just above the lava, which produces massive clouds of steam that spin this turbine fan. Large swaths of the walls and ceiling above the turbine have total concealment, but air currents sometimes shift, reducing it to normal concealment. Cables providing electrical power run from the turbine to the upper facility. Terakalir conceals herself here when the PCs enter.

Schematics Room (Area I). Pemberton waits here, watching over Tinker's real body and observing the battle. The walls and tables are covered with schematics and charts of potential supply chains necessary for more advanced devices.

Beam Cannon Controls (Area J). Currently the cannon hanging from the beam points directly down into the lava. A character standing at these controls can use an action to aim the cannon and use it to attack. The beam can target a 5-foot radius burst within 150 feet, dealing 16 (3d6+6) force damage (a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage). Until someone changes the cannon's targeted area, a creature that ends its turn in the area takes 16 (3d6+6) force damage (no save).

Beam Cannon (Area K). Why is there a giant ray gun in a foundry? It's actually the vile third eye of a fallen dragon tyrant, which was said to slay whoever saw it (see "The Tyrant's Eye" in Appendix Three for more details.) Pemberton recovered it long ago and finally found a use for it here, attaching it to a gimbal and focusing its power into a perpetual stream of destructive energy that keeps the lava in this chamber molten. This has the twin advantages of providing heat for Tinker's turbine and pleasing Pemberton's aesthetic sensibilities.

Invention Storage (Area L). Assembled devices are stored here awaiting finishing touches. Currently the chamber is mostly empty, since everything even remotely dangerous was sent to Karch to help drive off the Beran invasion. A group of 4 inert duplicants lacking witchoil reservoirs sit here, posed as if they're having a conversation across a table. The table is actually a small scale model of a zeppelin. Alas, Tinker has not managed to make one that flies.

FINALE OPPONENTS.

- Tinker Oddcog's suit
- Tinker Oddcog duplicant
- Terakalir, steam-augmented dragon
- Pemberton duplicant

Tinker's duplicant, driving his metal suit, waits atop the west platform that overlooks the foundry (near Area J). Pemberton's daughter Terakalir perches on a ledge high up above the turbine (Area H), hidden in the steam and noticed only with a successful DC 26 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Guns on the Floor.

Tinker is not the tidiest of technologists, and so the floor of the area is littered with a bizarre array of firearms. In any given square one can likely find a pistol or rifle, though they're often strangely-designed. Also scattered about are some experimental weapons that might come in handy (see Appendix Three).

For example, there is a lightning gun built into the length of a discarded bicycle, a half dozen grenades set around a wheel that looks as though it was intended as a gear, and a pair of experimental rocket launchers mounted on the shoulders of a half-assembled breastplate.

Gunsmith PCs can use these weapons proficiently.

Pemberton watches over Tinker's actual body, which lies on a cot in the schematics room (Area I). He's occupying a relatively weak duplicant body (AC 10, 5 hit points) – it's not useful in a fight, but if things are going badly, or if the party is close to killing his daughter, he'll threaten to slit Tinker's real throat.

If destroyed, Pemberton's duplicant doesn't become an inert piece of metal like the others. It maintains Pemberton's face, and though it's in no condition to fight, he hoists himself up using whichever limbs he still maintains control over and glares at the party. Try to make it clear to the party that Pemberton is not a combat threat. Hopefully they won't smash him to bits, because that would prevent him from making snide villainous promises after the fighting ends.

Tactics.

Tinker wants to keep the party at range. He fires down from the western platform with his suit's chain guns and uses his own ray gun to throw someone into the arms of the assembly line. He uses time bomb launchers to force the party to stay on the move, ideally after immobilizing someone with the entangling option of his ray gun.

If dangerous warriors get close he'll shrink them, and if snipers lurk in cover he'll use his caustic shot to either destroy their cover or dissolve the ground beneath them. He's not afraid of a brawl, though, especially since his suit can easily hurl foes into the lava.

Terakalir watches from on high, waits for a round to see what tactics the party deploys, and then descends to disrupt them. She might swoop in, breathe on a group of enemies, then try to knock a foe into the lava with her steam-powered claw. Alternately, she might simply use her breath weapon and normal attacks to deal as much damage as possible, forcing the party to split its attention.

Tinker preferentially stays up on the western platform, and Terakalir responds by harrying PCs who stay on the lower east platform, occasionally withdrawing to the concealment of the steam over the turbine. In a pinch, Tinker's suit has enough jumping distance and reach to leap from the platform, grab the bar that the beam cannon hangs from, and then swing over to the lower platform, though it would take quite a lot of falling damage in the process.

If it is clear the party is going to win, Pemberton offers to spare the gnome. He asks that the party let his daughter leave the facility. When he's confident she's safe, he'll release Tinker.



Saving a Dying Gnome?

If the party won't relent, Pemberton uses a folding pocket knife to slice open Tinker's throat, which ends his link to his duplicant. This renders both the duplicant and his suit inert. At this point, Tinker is at 0 hit points and making death saves, giving the party a short window to save him with magical healing or a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check. Terakalir will take advantage of the PCs' response to flee if she can.

Terrain.

The whole area is hellishly hot. Outside of the Schematics Room (Area I) and Invention Storage (Area L), creatures in this area must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each minute or gain 1 level of exhaustion from the extreme heat. Exhaustion from extreme heat is removed at a rate of one level each minute a creature is no longer in extreme heat.

Platforms that overlook the lava are edged with railings, which grant a +2 bonus to saving throws made to avoid being pushed off the ledge. A creature that fails its save can attempt a DC 13 Athletics (Strength) check to grab onto the edge and dangle over the lava.

Tinker Oddcog's Suit

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10+48)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	1 (–5)	10 (+0)	1 (–5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Chain Guns. On any round when the suit uses the Attack action to make only ranged weapon attacks on its turn, it has advantage on attack rolls for its Integrated Chain Guns. The weapons automatically reload, never run out of ammunition, and are destroyed when the suit is destroyed.

Escape Launch. When destroyed, the suit's torso hatch pops open. Tinker's seat launches into the air and deploys glider wings. Tinker may then fly up to 50 feet as a reaction. Opportunity attacks made against Tinker during this movement have disadvantage, and he must land at the end of this movement. The destroyed suit begins to emit a rapid ticking noise. One round later, the suit explodes. All creatures within 30 feet of the suit take 35 (10d6) fire damage (a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage).

Power Armor. Tinker controls this machine's actions from inside it. When the suit moves, he moves with it, and he cannot otherwise move on his own without exiting the machine. He can exit it using his movement, opening a hatch and emerging in any space adjacent to it, and can continue to control it even while not inside it. The sealed hatch grants Tinker total cover from attacks, but Tinker can still see normally. When the suit is reduced below 60 hit points, the hatch cracks open partially, so Tinker only has three-quarters cover.

The Showdown with Lya Jierre.

For optimal drama, the party will have had détente with Lya Jierre until this point. Lya, Rush, and Merton will join the party in the assault on Pemberton's factory, but once they see Tinker their focus is on finding the gnome's actual body. They try not to draw Tinker's or Terakalir's attention, but they will fight to defend themselves. None of them dare use a *gatecrasher charm* here, because the platforms over the lava don't exist in the Bleak Gate, but the lava certainly does.

If they can locate Tinker, Rush straps the gnome to his chest and brachiates away with his *immovable rods*. Lya and Merton try to make a fighting retreat, and if cornered Merton will throw his sonic bomb, which shatters the platform and causes it to slowly crumple into the lava. Barring some grand persuasion by the party, Lya fights to the end, though if she goes down first her bodyguards abandon their mission.

Should Lya be captured, eventually the leader of the Obscurati, Nicodemus the Gnostic, seeks her out and makes her an offer similar to the one he offered Macbannin at the end of Adventure Two, *The Dying Skyseer*: die and become part of the Ghost Council, so that whatever secrets she knows will not be discovered by the RHC.



Technological Quirks. When the suit takes 5 or more cold damage from an attack or spell, the suit is slowed (as the *slow* spell) for 1 round (no saving throw). When the suit takes 5 or more fire damage from an attack or spell, the suit's Speed increases by 10 feet for 1 round. Tinker's suit is affected normally by lightning damage but Tinker takes half the damage the suit takes from lightning.

Time Bomb Launchers (1/day). Tinker's suit can use a bonus action to launch 2 time bombs from its torso at two separate targets. The suit can automatically hit any inanimate object within 100 feet. It can also target any construct or creature wearing metal armor within 30 feet, but it must succeed on a ranged touch attack to hit a creature. If it misses, the bomb lands in the creature's space. The bombs begin ticking loudly once per second. After 1 round they begin ticking twice as fast, and after 2 rounds they tick four times per second. At the end of the third round the bombs explode, dealing 35 (10d6) bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage in a 30-foot radius burst (a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw reduces this damage by half). Before it explodes, a time bomb can be detached with a DC 18 Strength check, and the countdown can be stopped with a DC 22 Intelligence (thieves' tools check).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The suit attacks twice.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 18 (2d10+7) magical bludgeoning damage.

Integrated Chain Guns. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 200/1,000 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) magical piercing damage.



Tinker Oddcog Duplicant

Small humanoid (duplicant gnome), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 150 (20d6+80)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (−1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	24 (+7)	3* (−4)	13 (+1)
*normally 7 (−2)					

Saving Throws DEX +5, CON +8, WIS +0

Skills Acrobatics +5, Arcana +11, Deception +5, Nature +11, Perception +0, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities disease, exhaustion, sleep

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarvish, Elvish, Gnomish, Giant, Infernal, Orc, Primordial, Sylvan

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Blindsight. If Tinker is able to hear, he is aware of the location of any hidden or invisible creature within 30 feet of him.

Constructed. Tinker's constructed nature gives him advantage on saving throws against mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, and the stunned condition.

Experimental Ray Gun. Tinker has crafted a special carbine that fires glowing bolts of chaotic magical energy. While in his suit, he can fire this ray gun through a special nozzle on the machine's arm.

Friend of Machines. As a bonus action, Tinker can command one of the machines in the foundry to attack the target of his choice. One of the assembly line arms (C, D, E, F, G on map) makes a slam attack against a target within 30 feet (+10 to hit). On a success, the target takes 13 (2d6+6) bludgeoning damage and is grappled (escape DC 20). While the target is grappled, at the start of Tinker's turn, the arm moves the target 10 feet west into the grasp of the next arm. That arm repeats this attack, and if it succeeds, the previous arm lets go of the target. If arm C attacks the target, instead of grappling it pushes the target 15 feet south off the edge of the assembly line.

Gnome Cunning. Tinker has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

Metal Shell. Tinker has a hard metallic exoskeleton that protects him from harm but when badly damaged he cracks open to reveal the creature's sensitive inner machinery. When reduced to half his hit points or less, Tinker loses his damage resistances to weapon damage and takes a −2 penalty to both its AC and saving throws.

The Gun Whisperer. The firearms of enemies within 30 feet of Tinker are more difficult to reload. Increase the reload time by one step, from free to swift action, to move action, to standard action, to full-round action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Tinker attacks twice.

Wrench. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 1 (1d4−1) bludgeoning damage.

Beam Cannon. The beam targets a square within 150 feet of the cannon, unleashing destructive energy in a 5-foot-radius of that point. Creatures in the area take make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d6+6) force damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. Until Tinker changes the beam cannon's targeted area, creatures that end their turn in the burst take 16 (3d6+6) force damage (no save).

Experimental Ray Gun. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100/500 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (3d6+1) acid, bludgeoning, force, or necrotic damage plus an additional effect.

- **Acid: Caustic.** The target makes a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or takes 10 (3d6) acid damage each round for 3 rounds. This damage can be prevented if the target spends a full round washing the acid off with water. A 5-foot space beneath the target starts to melt, and 1 round later any grating there falls away.
- **Bludgeoning: Entangling.** The target must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled by glue stuck to the floor. A creature that is glued to the floor can break free with a DC 19 Strength check or by dealing 15 points of slashing damage to the goo. The goo becomes brittle and fragile after 2d4 rounds, cracking apart and losing its effectiveness.
- **Force: Gravity.** The target must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or be hurled up to 30 feet in a direction of Tinker's choice, including upward but not beyond 60 feet. Until the end of Tinker's next turn, the creature is restrained in his telekinetic grip. A creature lifted upward is suspended in mid-air.
- **Necrotic: Shrinking.** The target must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or be reduced in size for 1 minute (as the enlarge/reduce spell).

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. Tinker carries 2 *potions of invisibility* and the *godmind urn* (Appendix Three).

Aftermath.

The party's ultimate goal should be to take Tinker alive, which means either negotiating with Pemberton or killing his daughter. If the former, Terakalir flees to Karch, boards a merchant ship, and makes her way to the mainland. From there she links up with another tribe of gnolls who hide her until Pemberton can get a wizard there and teleport Terakalir to Pemberton's island. It might even be possible eventually for Pemberton to aid the party against the Obscurati later, though until things get truly desperate, Harkover Lee will advise the king against any such offers.

If the latter, Pemberton in his duplicant is powerless to protect her. If she dies, he seethes with anger and quietly explains to the party that he has lived for centuries, and so his wrath will not be swift, but it will be absolute. Then he severs his connection to his duplicant, and begins plotting to destroy everything each PC cares about.

Tinker, for his part, will gladly let himself be recruited by the party, though he's sad to leave behind his damaged steam suit. However, he insists on bringing his *godmind urn* with him.



Terakalir, Steam-Augmented Dragon

Large dragon, neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10+85)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws DEX +5, CON +9, wis +4, cha +8

Skills Deception +8, Insight +8, Intimidation +8, Perception +8, Stealth +5

Damage Vulnerabilities cold

Damage Immunities fire

Condition Immunities paralysis, sleep

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Enchanted Eye. The dragon has a *gem of seeing* embedded in its left eye socket (3 charges, action to expend 1 charge, truesight 120 feet for 10 minutes).

Experimental Prostheses. Terakalir's prosthetic claw and wing are prone to malfunction as she takes damage.

- **Threshold 1 (below 80 hit points).** The skin around Terakalir's prosthetic wing tears. A failsafe triggers, and a jet of fire blasts out beneath her wing, rocketing her across the battlefield. Terakalir flies up to 50 feet. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. Any creature that she flies over during this movement takes 33 (6d10) fire damage (DC 17 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage). Until she is healed above this threshold, Terakalir cannot end her turn in mid-air and must land at the end of her movement.
- **Threshold 2 (below 40 hit points).** Terakalir's two metal limbs crack from the stress of combat, and searing steam pours out from the devices. Terakalir gains an aura of searing steam out to a range of 15 feet. The area covered by the aura is heavily obscured, and any creature that enters into or begins its turn in the area takes 3 (1d6) fire damage. Until she is healed above this threshold, the dragon cannot fly or attack with her steam-powered claw, and her Speed is reduced by half.

Innate Spellcasting. The dragon's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *detect magic, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, true strike*

3/day each: *shield*

Power Attack. When the dragon makes its first melee weapon attack in a turn, it can choose to take a –5 penalty to its melee weapon attack rolls in exchange for a +10 bonus to melee weapon damage. In addition, the dragon can use a bonus action to make one melee weapon attack after it uses a melee weapon to reduce a creature to 0 hit points or scores a critical hit with it. The dragon can only use this feature on its turn.

Quick. The dragon has advantage on initiative checks.

Smoke Vision. Terakalir can see perfectly through clouds, fog, mist, and smoke.

Steam-Powered Claw. Terakalir's left arm and claw have been replaced by a prosthesis of steel and steam. Her weapon attacks with this claw score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes six attacks: one with its bite, one with its claw, one with its steam-powered claw, one with its steam-powered wing, and one with its tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 17 (2d10+6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.

Steam-Powered Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) slashing damage and the target is moved up 20 feet away.

Steam-Powered Wing. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) bludgeoning damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 13 (2d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Defeat?

Should the party fall to Pemberton, he holds any survivors hostage and exerts leverage through Risur and the RHC to get Ber to slow their assault long enough for him to evacuate a few vital resources. The surviving PCs spend a few months in a gnoll prison camp, then are freed when Ber finally takes Isla dolas Focas.

Consequences

As long as the PCs don't intentionally sabotage the Beran military, they defeat Pemberton's forces sooner or later. The aid the PCs lent earns Risur the favor of Ber's ruler, whoever that may be, and they might become heroes to the nation as a whole.

Pemberton, having been forced from his volcano lair, settles instead for a secret island base in the Yerasol Archipelago, plotting

revenge against the newest addition to his long list of those who have earned his ire. After his anger cools down, his attention turns to the Obscurati, and their colossus, and how he might seize it to use as the tool of his vengeance.

A live Tinker aids Risur's military industry; a dead one leaves behind schematics that engineers will obsess over for decades. And if he lives he explains, in his erratic demented way, the powers and weaknesses of the colossus (see Tinker's Secrets in Part One). Then he shares his most guarded secret, the true coup of this mission: he has been contacted via *sending* by the mindmaker, Alexander Grappa, who after dying in Adventure Five implanted his consciousness in the steelshaper, Leone Quital.

Grappa's consciousness lurks – very, very small, and only surfacing occasionally – but if the party can find and rescue him he'll be perfectly placed to let them infiltrate the heart of the conspiracy. 🐉

Appendix One: Light and Progress

Herein the stats for Lya Jierre, her entourage, and her steam frigate the *Lux Profectusque*.

Lux Profectusque, Danoran Steam Frigate

Huge Vehicle • Level 17 (129,000 gp)

Hull Integrity 4; **Defense** 29

Maneuverability 4; **Speed** 12

Full Crew 32; **Minimum Crew** 8

Hearty Crew. The crack crew is of peak morale, which grants the captain, Lya Jierre, a +7 bonus to Command checks and the ship +4 to Defense, already factored in above. Most of the crewmen are trained musketeers.

Improved Hull. *Lux Profectusque*'s metal hull and components are resistant to fire, granting it advantage on checks against burning. Its hull is resistant to *passwall* and similar effects.

Stones of Methia. White stones line the edge of the ship's hull, creating a field that weakens magic. Any spell that originates more than 50 feet away from the ship has any damage it deals to creatures aboard the ship reduced by 34. If two ships enter each other's protective auras (i.e., they get within short range), they effectively merge into one larger aura. The two ships can then affect each other, but are still protected from without.

DESIGN

Length 170 ft. **Beam** 35 ft. **Masts** 1 conning tower @ 30 ft. high
Decks 4

ATTACKS

Turrets. A pair of massive two-barrel turrets lie forward of the ship's conning tower, staggered atop each other like steps of a staircase.
Crew: 8. **Attack:** +16 to forward or broadsides.

TOTAL COST 110,000 GP

Basic Hull (base level 11, engine, improved speed ×4, Level 17): 65,000 gp

Armaments (huge, forward turret, Level 16): 45,000 gp

Hull Improvements (greater fire charm, Level 12; copper sheathing, Level 5): 14,000 gp

Shield Defense (Level 10): 5,000 gp

STANDARD CREW COMPLEMENT

- Captain Lya Jierre
- Rush Munchausen and Merton Goncala, bodyguards
- Ulrik, porter (noncombatant)
- Inez, teleporter (noncombatant)
- 150 expert crewmen (Lux musketeers)
- 15 Obscurati ambush mages
- 30 Obscurati skulks

Notable Equipment.

Lya, Merton, and Rush each carry a *contingent gatecrasher charm*. The characters should get the hint after their encounters with the pair of bodyguards that if they want to actually capture or kill Lya, they'll need to thwart her charm. Various spells could do this, as could pickpocketing, or destroying the charm (AC 14, 40 hit points).

Contingent Gatecrasher Charm. This one-use token triggers automatically when the bearer first loses hit points, or can be activated as an action. It transports its holder most of the way into the Bleak Gate, effectively removing them from the real world. Unless special magic completes their transition to the Bleak Gate, 5 minutes later the holder returns to the real world, but they have time to move to a safer location. When activated, and again if the holder is pulled back to the real world, the holder takes 17 (5d6) necrotic damage.

Lya Jierre

Medium humanoid (tiefling), lawful neutral

Armor Class 20 (Intelligence, studded leather)

Hit Points 130 (20d8+40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws DEX +9, CON +6

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +5, Deception +8, Insight +9, Perception +9, Performance +8, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Infernal

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Bravery. Lya has advantage on saving throws against fear.

Decoy Ring. Whenever she takes the Withdraw action or becomes incapacitated (including falling unconscious), Lya instantly becomes invisible for 3 rounds. The ring creates four illusory duplicates that either run off in opposite directions or perform other plausible actions that could draw enemy attention away from her. The duplicates last for 3 rounds before disappearing, but they instantly pop out of existence if struck by an attack (AC 10) and can be disbelieved with a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. Lya's allies always know her true location and can freely provide aid or assistance to her.

Escape Contingency. If reduced below 20 hit points or incapacitated by any means, Lya triggers a magical *contingency*, crafted at great expense, and travels to the Bleak Gate.

Improved Critical. Lya's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.



Infernal Legacy. Lya knows the *thaumaturgy* cantrip and she can cast the *hellish rebuke* spell as a 2nd-level spell once with this trait, regaining the ability to do so when she finishes a long rest. In addition, Lya can cast the *darkness* spell once with this trait and regains the ability to do so when she finishes a long rest. Charisma is her spellcasting ability for these spells (spell save DC 12, spell attack +4).

Precise Strike (1/turn). Lya deals 7 (2d6) extra damage with a melee weapon attack.

Quick. Lya has advantage on initiative checks.

Seducer's Bane Bracelet. Lya has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks and saving throws against enchantment effects. If she makes a successful saving against an enchantment, the caster of that spell incorrectly senses the effect has succeeded. Additionally, Lya knows an enchantment targeted her and the enchantment's source. The bracelet creates an aura on its wearer (visible to *detect magic*) matching the failed enchantment spell or effect, and lasting as long as the intended enchantment's duration. If Lya attacks the caster or its allies, or otherwise acts in a way that's contradictory to the failed spell's effect, the caster of that spell immediately realizes the enchantment was ineffective.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lya attacks four times.

Razorbust Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6+6) magical piercing damage and if the target has fewer than 5 hit points remaining, the weapon shrieks as mechanism of bladed teeth unfold from the hilt to saw back and forth. The target makes a Constitution saving throw (DC equal to the attack's damage). On a success, the target loses an extremity of its choice—hand, foot, arm, or leg. On a failure, the attacker chooses which extremity the target loses. Creatures without extremities are unaffected. A severed arm or hand prevents use of anything that the creature was holding or carrying. A severed foot slows the target's speed by 10 feet. A severed leg renders the target prone.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range (20/40 ft.), one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d4+6) magical piercing damage.

Tactician (1/day). Lya calls out to her companions and grants herself and all allies within 30 feet the following ability, which lasts for 6 rounds. *Tactical Gambit.* Whenever the target makes a melee attack and hits, the target can grant its opponent a +2 bonus on attack and damage rolls against it until the end of the target's next turn or until its opponent attacks it (whichever happens first). An opponent that uses this bonus to attack the target provokes opportunity attacks.

REACTIONS

Combat Parry. Lya adds 4 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, Lya must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon. If the attack misses, the attacker provokes an opportunity attack from Lya.

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. Lya carries 2 *potions of superior healing*, 1 *potion of speed*, 1 *potion of vitality*, and a *handy haversack*.

Rush Manchausen

Medium humanoid (half-elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (+2 studded leather, ring of protection)

Hit Points 130 (20d8+40)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover; must have *immovable rods*)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (–1)	9 (–1)

Saving Throws STR +4, DEX +8, CON +6, INT +2, WIS +3, CHA +3

Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +5, Intimidation +5, Perception +5, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish, Primordial

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Contingent Gatecrasher Charm. This one-use token triggers automatically when Rush drops below half of his hit points, or can be activated as an action. It transports its holder most of the way into the Bleak Gate, effectively removing them from the real world. Unless special magic completes their transition to the Bleak Gate, 5 minutes later the holder returns to the real world, but they have time to move to a safer location. When activated, and again if he's pulled back to the real world, Rush takes 5d6 necrotic damage.

Dirty Trick (1/round). A creature that Rush hits with a melee weapon attack makes a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or gains one of the following conditions until the end of its next turn: blinded, deafened, or poisoned.

Fey Ancestry. Rush has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Immovable Combat Style. Rush has trained extensively in a strange fighting style, wielding an *immovable rod* in each hand so much that they have practically become extensions of his own arms. On his turn, Rush can activate or deactivate immovable rods without spending any actions to do so, even able to gain a fly speed by rapidly brachiating through the air.

In addition, if subjected to an effect that forces him to move while he has an *immovable rod* in hand, Rush may choose to ignore it. As a bonus action when Rush hits an opponent with an *immovable rod*, he can anchor the target to the rod, preventing it from moving away from the rod. The target is not paralyzed or restrained; it simply cannot move from its location without first destroying the rod or using an action to make a successful DC 30 Strength check to move with the rod up to 10 feet. The rod remains motionless and cannot be used to attack while it is anchoring a creature. Rush cannot use this ability against amorphous or incorporeal targets.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Rush attacks four times with his immovable maces.

Immovable Maces. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+5) magical bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage.

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. Rush carries two *immovable rods* that double as +2 maces; he also carries a *contingent gatecrasher charm*.



Merton Goncala

Medium humanoid (half-orc), lawful neutral

Armor Class 19 (+1 *platemail*)

Hit Points 97 (13d8+39)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws dex +3, con +6, wis +4, cha +2

Skills Animal Handling +4, Arcana +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Giant, Orc

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Contingent Gatecrasher Charm. This one-use token triggers automatically when Merton drops below half of his hit points, or can be activated as an action. It transports its holder most of the way into the Bleak Gate, effectively removing them from the real world. Unless special magic completes their transition to the Bleak Gate, 5 minutes later the holder returns to the real world, but they have time to move to a safer location. When activated, and again if he's pulled back to the real world, Merton takes 5d6 necrotic damage.

Felling Staff. When Merton uses Power Attack and successfully hits, or when he successfully hits with an opportunity attack, his target must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Power Attack. When Merton makes his first melee weapon attack in a turn, he can choose to take a –5 penalty to his melee weapon attack rolls in exchange for a +10 bonus to melee weapon damage. In addition, Merton can use a bonus action to make one melee weapon attack after he uses a melee weapon to reduce a creature to 0 hit points or scores a critical hit with it. Merton can only use this feature on his turn.

Relentless Endurance (1/long rest). When Merton is reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, he can drop to 1 hit point instead.

Savage Attacks. When Merton scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, he can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Merton attacks twice.

Sonic Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 8 (1d6+5) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) thunder damage, or 9 (1d8+5) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) thunder damage if wielded with two hands.

Resonance Bomb. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/40 ft., multiple targets (all targets in a 20-foot radius). *Hit:* 14 (4d6) thunder damage. Objects in the area take double damage. A successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage.

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. Merton carries a *contingent gatecrasher charm*, resonance bomb, and *sonic staff*.

Obscurati Ambush Mage

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 16 (*mage armor, ring of protection*)

Hit Points 65 (10d8+20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws STR +0, DEX +6, CON +6, INT +5, WIS +6, CHA +2

Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Perception +8, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elvish, Primordial

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Feat: War Magic. The Obscurati ambush mage has advantage when it is concentrating on a spell and has to make a Constitution saving throw from taking damage, it can wield weapons or a shield in both hands and still make somatic components for spellcasting, and the Obscurati ambush mage can use its reaction to cast a spell (maximum casting time: 1 action) at a creature that provokes an opportunity attack from it.

Spellcasting. The Obscurati ambush mage is a 7th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The Obscurati ambush mage has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): chill touch, light, mage hand, shocking grasp

1st level (4 slots): detect magic, disguise self, mage armor, unseen servant

2nd level (3 slots): blindness/deafness, darkness, invisibility, knock, mirror image

3rd level (3 slots): dispel magic, displacement, lightning bolt, vampiric touch

4th level (2 slots): black tentacles, dimension door

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

**Obscurati Skulk**

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather, shield)**Hit Points** 52 (8d8+16)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws DEX +4, CON +4, CHA +1**Skills** Athletics +5, Intimidation +3, Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +6**Senses** passive Perception 15**Languages** Common**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

Evasion. If the Obscurati skulk is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the Obscurati skulk instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the Obscurati skulk deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a 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 Obscurati skulk that isn't incapacitated and the Obscurati skulk doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker that Obscurati skulk can see hits it with an attack, the Obscurati skulk can use its reaction to halve the attack's damage against it.

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. The Obscurati skulk carries a potion it can drink to gain darkvision 60 feet for 1 hour.

Lux Musketeer

Medium humanoid (any), lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 78 (12d8+24)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws DEX +7, CON +4**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Athletics +4, Intimidation +1, Perception +6, Survival +6**Senses** passive Perception 16**Languages** Common, Infernal**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

Improved Critical. The musketeer's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Precise Aim. When making a ranged weapon attack the musketeer ignores anything less than total cover.

ACTIONS

Bayonet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Musket (20 bullets). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12+5) piercing damage.

Appendix Two: Berans

 herein are the statistics of Beran NPCs the party might end up either fighting or fighting alongside.

Brakken of Heffanita

Large monstrosity, lawful good

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 102 (12d10+36)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Animal Handling +6, Deception +7, Insight +6, Intimidation +7, Perception +6, Persuasion +7, Survival +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Gnoll, Giant, Orc, Primordial; telepathy 100 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Charge. If Brakken moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Innate Spellcasting. Brakken's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *detect thoughts*

3/day each: *calm emotions*, *charm person*

Labyrinthine Recall. Brakken can perfectly recall any path he has traveled.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Brakken can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls he makes during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 8 (1d8+4) bludgeoning damage or 9 (1d10+4) bludgeoning damage if wielded in two hands.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 13 (2d8+4) piercing damage.

Bruse Shantus

Large monstrosity, lawful good

Armor Class 17 (splint mail)

Hit Points 170 (20d10+60)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +7, Deception +6, Insight +5, Intimidation +6, Perception +5, Persuasion +6, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Giant, Orc

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Charge. If Bruse moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Labyrinthine Recall. Bruse can perfectly recall any path he has traveled.

Power Attack. When Bruse makes his first melee weapon attack in a turn, he can choose to take a -5 penalty to his melee weapon attack rolls in exchange for a +10 bonus to melee weapon damage. In addition, Bruse can use a bonus action to make one melee weapon attack after he uses a melee weapon to reduce a creature to 0 hit points or scores a critical hit with it. Bruse can only use this feature on his turn.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Bruse can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls he makes during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bruse attacks three times.

+1 Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) magical bludgeoning damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) piercing damage.

**Glaucia Evora**

Medium humanoid (gnoll), lawful good

Armor Class 17 (studded leather, shield)**Hit Points** 150 (20d8+60)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws CON +7, WIS +7, CHA +6**Skills** Insight +7, Perception +7, Religion +5**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17**Languages** Common, Giant, Gnoll, Orc**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)**Channel Divinity (2/short rest).** Glaucia can channel divine energy to fuel one of two magical effects.

- **Preserve Life.** As an action, Glaucia presents her holy symbol and evokes healing energy that restores 40 hit points. She chooses creatures within 30 feet and divides the hit points among them. This feature can restore a creature to no more than half its hit point maximum and it cannot be used on undead or constructs.
- **Turn Undead.** As an action, Glaucia presents her holy symbol and speaks a prayer censuring the undead. Each undead within 30 feet that can see or hear her must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes any damage. Undead of CR 1 or less that fail are destroyed. A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from Glaucia as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of her. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Rampage. When Glaucia reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on her turn, she can take a bonus action to move up to half her speed and make a bite attack.**Spellcasting.** Glaucia is a 9th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following spells prepared from the cleric's spell list:**Cantrips (at will):** mending, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying**1st level (4 slots):** *bless, command, cure wounds, healing word, sanctuary, shield of faith***2nd level (3 slots):** *lesser restoration, silence, spiritual weapon, zone of truth***3rd level (3 slots):** *beacon of hope, dispel magic, magic circle, protection from energy, revivify, spirit guardians***4th level (2 slots):** *death ward, freedom of movement, guardian of faith***ACTIONS****Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.*Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.**+1 Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) magical bludgeoning damage or 5 (1d8+1) magical bludgeoning damage if wielded in two hands.**Kenna Vigilante Duplicant**

Medium humanoid (half-dragon), lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (*barkskin*)**Hit Points** 119 (14d8+56)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws DEX +4, CON +8, CHA +6**Skills** Intimidation +6, Nature +5, Perception +9, Persuasion +6, Survival +9**Damage Resistances** fire**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19**Languages** Common, Draconic, Giant**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)**Favored Enemy.** Kenna has advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track dragons and gnolls, as well as on Intelligence checks to recall information about them.**Natural Explorer: Coasts.** When Kenna makes an Intelligence or Wisdom check related to the grasslands or mountains, her proficiency bonus (+4) is doubled if she is using a skill that she's proficient in. While traveling for an hour or more in her favored terrain, Kenna gains the following benefits:

- Difficult terrain doesn't slow her group's travel.
- Kenna's group can't become lost except by magical means.
- Even when she is engaged in another activity while traveling (such as foraging, navigating, or tracking), Kenna remains alert to danger.
- If traveling alone, Kenna can move stealthily at a normal pace.
- When she forages, Kenna finds twice as much food as she normally would.
- While tracking other creatures, Kenna also learns their exact number, their sizes, and how long ago they passed through the area.

Power Attack. When Kenna makes her first melee weapon attack in a turn, she can choose to take a -5 penalty to her melee weapon attack rolls in exchange for a +10 bonus to melee weapon damage. In addition, Kenna can use a bonus action to make one melee weapon attack after she uses a melee weapon to reduce a creature to 0 hit points or score a critical hit with it. Kenna can only use this feature on her turn.**Spellcasting.** Kenna is a 5th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following spells prepared from the ranger's spell list:**1st level (4 slots):** *hunter's mark, longstrider***2nd level (2 slots):** *barkskin, spike growth***ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Kenna attacks five times: twice with her bite and three times with her claws.**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.*Hit:* 10 (1d8+6) piercing damage.**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.*Hit:* 9 (1d6+6) slashing damage.**Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6).** Kenna exhales fire in a 15-foot cone.

Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



Rescued Soldiers

Medium humanoid (any), lawful neutral

Armor Class 14 (tattered armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	8 (–1)	9 (–1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws CON +4

Skills Insight +1, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Paranoid Awareness. The rescued soldier has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rescued soldier attacks twice and if making melee attacks, can use a bonus action to attack a third time with its scavenged battleaxe (it does not gain its ability score modifier to damage rolls with this attack).

Scavenged Battleaxes. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10+3) slashing damage.

Scavenged Bow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Cantabrilla Guards

Medium humanoid (any), lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (chainmail)

Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	8 (–1)	9 (–1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws STR +2, CON +3

Skills Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Bayonet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Musket (20 bullets). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12+3) piercing damage.

Appendix Three: Technological Revelations

By defeating, capturing, or enlisting Tinker, Risur gets access to many possible technological innovations that might otherwise take decades to be developed. GMs that don't want to introduce advanced technology to the campaign might re flavor his innovations as completely magical, or can instead assume that any aid Tinker offers Risur comes over the course of years or decades, not months.

Building the Future

Tinker is demented, and even if working under orders he'll find the time to draft tons of possible designs, not all of them viable for mass-production. The party might want long-range communication via spark-gap radios and antennae, but Tinker's first design would attach the transmitter to a lightning gun, and use the signals to control exploding three-legged clockwork robots. It takes a more rational mind to ratchet down his grandiose ideas, making Technologist PCs invaluable.

Similarly, if Tinker dies and the party merely manages to collect his mad scribbles of schematics, it will take another genius to figure out which designs should be pursued. Even with his eccentricities, though, Tinker is valuable alive.

Areas of innovation include vehicle tech, personal weapons, and various types of groundwork science.

Seeking Breakthroughs.

At the end of this adventure have the party choose one of the following innovations for Tinker to pursue. At the start of adventure seven, the party must make a DC 17 Intelligence check and a DC 17 Wisdom check. The result determines whether the innovation is fully operational, or if there remain some kinks to work out.

One PC can make both checks, or two different PCs can make them. A Technologist has advantage on the checks, but if Risur doesn't have access to Tinker the party have disadvantage on these checks.

At the end of Adventure Seven, *Schism*, have the party choose another innovation, which will be ready by the start of Adventure Eight, *Diaspora*, and likewise choose an innovation at the end of

Adventure Eight that will be ready at the beginning of Adventure Nine, *The Last Starry Sky*. When the party rolls for the effectiveness of a new innovation, they may also roll again for any unfinished prior innovations.

Some innovations have mostly background flavor effects. For instance, the advanced explosives innovation simply means that Risuri ships have higher-powered (and thus higher-level and higher-cost) gunnery components than Danoran ships. It doesn't lower the cost, though it offers the chance for secondary innovations.

Advanced Explosives.

Risur can load its ships' cannons with explosive rounds, which increases the attack bonus of Risuri ships by +2, with attendant increases in cost. Additionally, PCs can get access to advanced grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, and demolition charges.

Failed INT Check. The poorly quality-controlled ship weapons sometimes explode before they reach the target. Instead of adding +2 to their attack bonus, add +1.

Failed WIS Check. The overly elaborate advanced personal weapons instead have a 25% chance of blasting 3 rounds in a row, each time doing half the normal damage. Each time they explode, they bounce 2 squares in a random direction.

Analytical Engine.

(Requires *Magic Interference Breakthrough*.) Computers would normally be impossible, because magic interferes with such small-scale technological operations, but with the proper research that problem can be eliminated. These heavy machines take up 4 squares, but can quickly calculate extreme range weapon trajectories. Risuri ships can fire up to Long range, with attendant increases in cost.

Failed INT Check. The device fails to take into account the rocking of the firing ship, and so attacks at Long range have disadvantage or the ship's speed is reduced by -5 for that round, whichever is worse.

Failed WIS Check. The device is massive, taking up 25 squares and requiring a staff of 20 crewmen to operate.

Battle Armor.

Similar to Tinker's own battle armor and the experimental steam suit in Adventure Three, *Digging for Lies*, these suits make foot soldiers resilient and dangerous. See the Battle Suit, below.

Failed INT Check. The suits lack certain structural reinforcements, and they easily break down. After being damaged in combat, the wearer has disadvantage on saving throws.

Failed WIS Check. The viewport is correctly located for a gnome or other Small creature. Medium creatures wearing the suit have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks while inside it, and Medium or smaller creatures adjacent to the suit benefit from half cover against attacks made by the suit or its wearer.



New Weapons	Cost	Dmg (M)	Range	Capacity	Weight	Type	Special
Lightning prod	100 gp	2d8	—	—	5 lbs.	lightning	charged
Lightning gun	100 gp	2d10	50 ft./150 ft.	—	8 lbs.	lightning	charged
Advanced grenade	50 gp	3d6	20 ft./60 ft.	—	1 lb.	bludgeoning	See description
Advanced rocket-propelled grenade launcher	1,000 gp	3d6	60 ft./200 ft.	1	10 lbs.	bludgeoning	See description

Electrical Breakthrough.

In addition to allowing electrical lights and the production of wired power, this innovation results in lightning prods, lightning guns, and Tinker coils.

Failed INT Check. If the attack misses, the weapon instead discharges into its wielder, dealing 11 (2d10) lightning damage.

Failed WIS Check. The weapon requires a 20-pound backpack capacitor that crackles with harmless but awesome looking threads of electricity, like carrying a Tesla coil.

Magic Interference Breakthrough.

Precise measurements reveal that ambient magical energies interfere with complex technological devices (i.e., “gremlins”). Very fine instruments are thus capable of detecting the presence of magic due to increased failure rate. This effectively creates magical detectors, and allows for anti-magic mines.

Failed INT Check. The devices sometimes register false positives (about once every 10 rounds). Fine for detectors, bad for mines.

Failed WIS Check. The detectors have a magical light to make them easier to read. This light is integral to the design, and removing it requires a complete rework.

Rockets.

(Requires: Advanced Explosives.) Risur gets access to rocket weaponry. It is far too large for personal use, but allows for ships to bombard from much farther away than cannons. Warfare is forever changed.

Failed Intelligence Check. The rockets tend to explode on launch.

Failed Wisdom Check. The chemical propellants are unstable, and can only be mixed within 30 minutes of the launch. If you mix and then don’t launch, the rocket explodes.

Spark-Gap Transmitter.

(Requires Electrical Breakthrough.) Risur gains access to radio communication, albeit limited typically to one-way messages, since receiving can be done without electricity, but transmitters need a power station. Distance is currently limited to about 50 miles under average conditions, but weather and terrain can greatly reduce that.

The party also gains access to remote-detonated explosives if they have the Advanced Explosives innovation.

Failed Intelligence Check. Transmitters cannot be used for more than 1 minute at a time before the spark-gap generator overheats and has to cool off for 5 minutes.

Failed Wisdom Check. Broadcast frequency is exceedingly hard to change, so no more than one transmitter can be active in a given area without causing interference.

New Weapons

The following weapons might become available to the PCs during the course of this adventure or future adventures in the ZEITGEIST Adventure Path. See the table above for weapon statistics.

Weapon Property: Charged. If the target is wearing metal armor or carrying a large quantity of metal, the attacker gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll. After firing, the weapon is depleted and takes an action to “reload” by cranking a mechanism to generate sufficient charge.

Advanced Grenade. This device appears to be little more than a metal cylinder tapering to a handle containing a spring-loaded lever. To detonate the device, you disengage the safety pin while depressing the handle’s lever, which releases the firing pin when thrown. As an action, you can throw this cylinder up to 50 feet. The device detonates at the beginning of your next turn, creating a concussive blast in a 20-foot radius starting in the square you threw it into. Creatures in the area make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage.

Advanced Rocket-Propelled Grenade Launcher. This launcher fires advanced grenades at much greater speeds. Unlike thrown grenades, those fired from the launcher detonate immediately upon impact. Reloading an advanced rocket-propelled grenade launcher is an action.

Lightning Prod. This is a two-handed martial melee weapon about the same size and shape of a spear.

Lightning Gun. This is a one-handed martial ranged weapon.

New Technological Items

The following items might become available to the PCs during the course of this adventure or future adventures in the ZEITGEIST Adventure Path.

Anti-Magic Mine. *Cost 50 gp.* When a creature with any spellcasting ability, magical powers, or magic items steps over the mine, it detonates. A creature using magic in any space adjacent to the mine likewise triggers it, as does a spell that affects a space adjacent to the mine. Some extremely powerful magical manifestations might detonate the mine from farther away.

The mines are inert normally. They must be activated as an action. A round later the mine is active, so spellcasting mine-layers are encouraged to move quickly.

When the mine detonates it deals 10 (3d6) bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage in a 5-foot radius (a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage).

Demolition Charge. *Cost 1,000 gp.* These can be timed precisely for detonation, anywhere from a few seconds to an hour (specialized ones can instead range from an hour to 4 days.) Each charge can blow up most materials in a 30-foot radius. Creatures



in the area take 35 (10d6) bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage (a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage). Preparing them for detonation requires three DC 10 Dexterity or Intelligence checks, each made as an action. If all succeed, the charge detonates exactly as desired. Failing one or two causes the device to detonate slightly early or late (in a cumulative range of 25% of the intended time). Failing three checks in a row immediately detonates the charge.

Magical Detector. *Cost 10 gp.* This remarkably simple device is integrated with a pocket watch. By tracking how much the precision of the clockwork is maligned, it can detect and locate magic. A silver triangle on a track around the perimeter of the clock face spins to point like a compass at the strongest source of magic within 30 feet. If there is no magic present, it simply turns in alignment with the clock's second hand.

The item is fairly useless to high-level adventurers, but it will quickly become a common item in households, shops, and government checkpoints, often taking the shape of ornate clocks.

Tinker Coil. *Cost 1,000 gp.* If linked to a power source, this 10-foot tall pylon hums with electrical energy. A conductive surface on the ground within 10 feet causes creatures that enter the area to complete a circuit. Any creature that enters the area or ends its turn there takes 14 (4d6) lightning damage (but no more than once per round).

Battle Suit. *Cost 5,000 gp, Weight 1,000 pounds.* The techs assure that they've got all the kinks worked out, and that the thrum of the steam engine strapped to a wearer's back is meant to be reassuring.

A Medium-sized creature can climb into or out of this suit by spending its movement across 2 consecutive rounds. The suit is normally inert and too heavy to move, causing the creature to be treated as restrained. However, the creature gains a +6 bonus to AC that stacks with its regular armor bonus. Even though the suit is effectively super-heavy armor, no proficiency is required to use it.

Once per day, the inhabitant of a suit can activate it as an action. When the suit is activated, the wearer is no longer restrained, but cannot climb, jump, or swim. The wearer's carrying capacity is quadrupled, and the wearer gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls with melee attacks.

Whenever an attack hits the wearer, the suit must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw (it has no bonus to this save). If the suit fails 3 saving throws in this way, it breaks down and must be repaired before it works again. Repairs can be done over the course of 8 hours.

What Does the Future Hold?

In the final four adventures of the campaign, the party will gain access to additional arcanoscientific innovations that are not listed above, including an airship and limited instantaneous communication. By the end of the campaign, though, the party's actions at the Axis Seal determine whether technology can continue to advance, as it has in reality, or if the world will adopt a different set of physical laws under which technology is restricted in function or even nonfunctional.

New Magic Items

The following magic items might become available to the PCs during the course of this adventure or future adventures in the ZEITGEIST Adventure Path.

Bracer of Liberty

Wondrous item, rare

Dozens of links from the chains of slaves were shattered apart and half-melted into the shape of this bracelet. If you lose control of your own will, the links sear with heat and bring you to your senses. While wearing this bracer, if you use an effect or spell to charm another creature, you take 18 (4d8) fire damage. Once per day, when you or an ally within 60 feet fails a saving throw against a charm or compulsion effect, you can use your reaction to activate the bracer. You take fire damage equal to one-quarter of your total hit points, and the charm or compulsion effect immediately ends. The creature that responsible for the charm or compulsion effect takes 18 (4d8) fire damage.

Godmind Urn

Wondrous item, legendary

Did it change shapes when you picked it up? You think...perhaps it looked different when the gnome possessed it. But no matter. It looks perfect now, just like you would want. And its whispers are oh, so soothing. If no creature owns this urn, when you touch it choose the type of creature, object, or action you are most interested in (such as death, fey, guns, machines, music, revenge, ships, snakes, or writing). This becomes your domain. If you lose possession of the urn for at least a day or if you die, you are no longer considered its owner.

While you own the device you constantly hear barely-perceptible whispers telling what occurs related to your domain throughout the world. You have advantage on ability checks directly related to your domain.

Ownership of the urn slowly drives you insane, and as you are drawn closer to your domain you develop delusions and withdraw from the rest of the world. Adventurers not roleplayed as slowly going crazy have managed to shake free of the urn's influence and can no longer use it. A spirit medium can communicate with the urn without needing to go crazy.

You can control unattended inanimate objects and non-hostile creatures with Intelligence 2 or less that are related to your domain, as long as you are Huge or smaller. You spend your own actions to direct them (action to Attack, movement to take your movement, etc.). GMs are encouraged to adjudicate this broadly.

Razorburst Weapon

Weapon (any), very rare

Pairing Drakran magic and Danoran science, this weapon's blade is edged with hovering, jagged teeth that glint in the light. Upon activation these teeth saw back and forth in a keening blur, as though hungry to slice through something vital. When you use this weapon to damage an enemy that has fewer hit points than double the weapon's bonus to attack and damage (minimum 1) the weapon shrieks as its bladed teeth saw back and forth, a



mechanism unspooling near the hilt. The target must make a Constitution saving throw (DC = damage dealt by the attack). On a success, the target loses an extremity of its choice – hand, foot, arm, or leg. On a failure, you choose which extremity the target loses. Creatures without extremities are unaffected.

A severed arm or hand prevents use of anything that a target was holding or carrying. A severed foot slows the target. A severed leg renders the target prone.

Skull of Cheshimox

Wondrous item, rare

This 40-pound, 6-foot-long skull freezes the skin off anyone who touches it. Bone hinges hold its jaw on, and a bone crank can force its maw open, unleashing a blast of frost.

Creatures that touch the skull take 14 (4d6) cold damage each round. Prolonged contact destroys most organic materials, so the skull is best mounted on a scaffold – one such has been made from the dead dragon Cheshimox's own bones. Typically it is then carried on a sled which can be turned 90 degrees as a bonus action.

The crank to activate the skull can be touched without risk. Putting the skull in a *bag of holding* or similar container ruins the container.

If a creature uses an action to activate the *skull of Cheshimox*, freezing cold fills an area extending from the skull in a straight line that is 60 feet long and 5 feet wide. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the area takes 14 (4d6) cold damage. The spray continues until the start of the next turn, at which point, if the skull's cold has not killed a creature during this activation, the skull deals 14 (4d6) necrotic damage to the creature that activated it.

Sonic Staff

Weapon (quarterstaff), very rare

This metal polearm has complex flanged baffles along its haft and ends with a faintly glowing two-tined cap not unlike a tuning fork. When struck it reverberates near-deafeningly and by adjusting its components you can tune it to the destructive resonance of an object.

You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It constantly emits a high-pitched whine that is uncomfortable to animals. Animals do not willingly approach within 10 feet of the staff without a successful DC 22 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. Attacks with this weapon deal double damage against doors and other objects.

Once per day, you can use an action to slam the *sonic staff* against the ground and generate a wave of thunder and force, either in a 10-foot radius burst centered on you or in 30-foot cone. Creatures in the area take 10 (3d6) thunder damage and are pushed 15 feet away. This effect cannot penetrate a silence spell (or any similar magical silence effect).

The Tyrant's Eye

Wondrous item, rare

You get only a glimpse of this pale scarred orb – a giant, withered eye – and then your whole body feels like it's burning away. To be used safely, this orb must be kept tightly wrapped and covered with a rune-stitched black cloth at all times. It seems to twitch while held, as if the eye is looking for enemies. Uncovering the orb is a bonus action. Covering it securely is an action.

While being held, the eye can be used an additional focus for any spell that deals force damage. Using the eye in this way causes the spell to function as though it were cast with a spell slot one level higher.

If the eye's wrapping is uncovered or even loosened, intense magical force blasts out and tears the covering away, making it nigh impossible to "aim." Any creature that starts its turn within line of sight of the uncovered orb takes 16 (3d6+6) force damage. The eye cannot affect creatures it can't see, so darkness and hiding can protect creatures. The eye has a +10 bonus on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Tyrant's Teeth

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

Dagger-sharp fangs ripped from the skull of a tyrant lizard clatter around this necklace's cord. When you attack while wearing it, a ghostly reptilian head appears and snaps down on your target. You can only attune to this item if you have survived being bitten by a Huge or larger reptile or dragon.

While wearing this item your footsteps make the ground tremble slightly and you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

When you take energy damage, your attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage of the same type until the end of your next turn. If you are damaged by multiple energy types, you only deal bonus damage of the most recent type.

Once per day, when you hit an opponent with a melee attack, you can use a bonus action to cause a spectral tyrannosaur to appear and bite the target, dealing 4d6 force damage.

Vigilante Sprint

Martial training

Run straight at the guy with the gun. Well, not quite straight.

Requirement: Characters with the Martial Scientist theme who spend time jogging with Kenna Vigilante can learn this ability. Alternatively, those researching her thesis, *How Not to Be Shot*, can learn this technique.

Description: While running, you gain a +2 bonus on AC against ranged attacks, and you gain a +2 bonus on Dexterity saving throws against area effects.

DM Handouts

Cantabrilla Route Map

Locations include number of miles from Seobriga. Parentheticals list miles to the mid-point of the 36-mile range used in the Bruse's challenge.

- **Mile 128 (-18).** Starting point for Liss Rail Construction.
- Mile 129 (-17).
- Mile 130 (-16).
- Mile 131 (-15).
- **Mile 132 (-14).** Rio la Heffa. River requires a bridge.
- **Mile 133 (-13).** Serra Malex. Small mountain ridge. Tunnel already completed.
- Mile 134 (-12).
- Mile 135 (-11).
- Mile 136 (-10).
- **Mile 137 (-9).** El Fuerte Toro. Military garrison, fort, and walled village. +2 Morale.
- **Mile 138 (-8).** West edge of Cheshimox territory.
- Mile 139 (-7).
- Mile 140 (-6).
- Mile 141 (-5).
- Mile 142 (-4).
- **Mile 143 (-3).** Rio Gelado. River requires a bridge.
- Mile 144 (-2).
- Mile 145 (-1).
- **Mile 146 (+0).** Target point for each team, in an open field.
- Mile 147 (+1).
- Mile 148 (+2).
- Mile 149 (+3).
- **Mile 150 (+4).** 10 Money bonus to whoever reaches here first.
- Mile 151 (+5).
- Mile 152 (+6).
- Mile 153 (+7).
- **Mile 154 (+8).** East edge of Cheshimox territory.
- **Mile 155 (+9).** Rio dola Lapisa. River requires a bridge. Lizardfolk bandits prowling river demand a bribe worth 2 Material. If not bribed, they attack each day, costing 1 Morale. Bridge construction goes at half speed.
- Mile 156 (+10).
- Mile 157 (+11).
- Mile 158 (+12).
- Mile 159 (+13).
- **Mile 160 (+14).** Serra Degaspere. Small mountain ridge, requires two days for grading. The route calls for several tunnels totalling a mile in length, but spellcasters performing stone shape are just 3 days away from completion.
- Mile 161 (+15).
- Mile 162 (+16).
- Mile 163 (+17).
- **Mile 164 (+18).** Starting point for Griento Railways.

Starting Resources.

- **Griento** starts with 0 Money, 1 Material, and 6 Morale. Lya provides 10 Money.
- **Liss** starts with 2 Money, 2 Material, and 2 Morale. Pemberton might sell a Steam Crew, at the cost of 10 Money. The Steam Crew can build 1 extra mile per day without costing any Morale.

Player Handouts

Hostage Letter

A Desperate Plea for Assistance, to whosoever may read this:

I trust that my goblin captors' literacy is insufficient to comprehend the contents of this missive. I bade them deliver this correspondence under the ruse that I require additional medical supplies for treating an epidemic they are suffering. Indeed, if you could kindly trade with this courier and pay him in gold coins, it would help maintain the deception and stave off what I fear is my inevitable execution should my usefulness to his tribe falter.

Thereafter, I heartily implore you to pass this letter along to the proper authorities so that they might effect my extraction from imminent bodily harm.

These goblins, which I understand to have been recently relocated from the caldera of Lago Fuego, reside some forty-eight kilometers from Citado Cavallo, compass heading 317 degrees. Alas, I lack a sextant to provide more accurate coordinates, but I believe once one nears the area, the confluence of insectile traffic should act as sufficient guidance to locate the Ω -shaped valley they control.

While I am currently bereft of the ability to offer pecuniary compensation, I trust that as gentlemen and ladies of the Revolution, you will appreciate the debt of gratitude and service I shall owe to my rescuers.

Please come with the swiftness of the Avery Coast Railroad, for I dread what may befall nearby Beran settlements if the goblins continue to pursue satisfaction of their grievances.

—Dr. Elías Malapropism, visitor from Rísur



Cantabrilla Challenge

Liss starts at Mile 128 (-18). Griento starts at Mile 164 (+18). They're competing to reach mile 146 (+0).

- **Miles:** To build a mile, you must expend 1 Material. Each mile after the first in a given day also costs 1 Morale.
- **Money:** Each day you acquire 1 Money per mile made the previous day. (You can spend 25,000 gp as if it were 1 Money.)
- **Material:** Each day you can expend Money, and the next day you acquire an equal amount of Material. For each 1 Money spent beyond the first on Material, there is a 5% chance of a mishap. A mishap causes 1d4 of the Material you ordered not to arrive.
- **Morale:** Certain events add or subtract Morale. If Morale goes below 0, you cannot build. You can buy 1 Morale for 2 Money.
- **Obstacles:** Bridges are required at miles 132, 143, and 155. Bridges cost (and earn) as much as 5 miles of track.
- **Disruptions:** A delayed train keeps Money and Material from arriving. A destroyed train eliminates the Money and Material. Rebuilding a destroyed bridge is equivalent to building 5 Miles of track. Attacks cost 1 Morale per day (or more at the GM's discretion, if they're very disastrous). Key personnel typically cost 1 Money to replace.





DAY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Starting	Mile										
	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
Spent	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
Acquired	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
Ending Mile Count											
Miscellaneous Notes											

DAY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Starting	Mile										
	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
Spent	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
Acquired	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
Ending Mile Count											
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Starting	Mile										
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	Material										
	Morale										
Spent	Money										
	Material										
	Morale										
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