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SHADOW OF THE SEEKER

*Adventure in the mysterious elven homeland
of the Iron Kingdoms: Requiem campaign setting*



SHADOW OF THE SEEKER



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May your powder stay dry and your aim be true in all your upcoming adventures.



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KHADOR

GHORD

RHUL

LLAEL

MERYWYN

KORSK

MCGRIN

CYGNAR

PROTECTORATE

MEREDIUS

CRYX



KEY

- CAPITAL
- CITY
- FORTRESS
- FEATURE OF INTEREST
- RAILROAD
- ROAD
- MOUNTAINS
- HILLS
- FOREST (Temperate)
- FOREST (Boreal)
- SWAMP

SCALE (in miles) 25 50 75 100 200 300 400

ALCHI SUBCONT



Ngaloss Mountains

KOH-SAR'S TEARS

Sancater Mountains

Spine of Gargandis

Quilvat Mountains

Grinding Teeth Mountains

BEMOTH

Blasted Desert

Valley of Kornash

Abyss

Helkan's Reward
NORTHERN MARCHES

Chaliv Peaks

TOR-MALPHAS

Shrouded Wall Mountains

Fist of Vurotis

Storlands

TOR-SORTAAN

Michell Lake

TOR-SARIKAAN

BLOODSTONE DESERT

Plains of Sortaan

HALAAK

TOR-KADEME

Vinder's Crossing

TOKRAAS

TOR-HALAAK

Ocean of Grass

Kajarus Mountains

Minga River

Bloodroot River

Glacial Peaks

SHATTERED SPINE ISLANDS

Thine Island

ERC
INENT



INTRODUCTION

YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER THE LAND OF THE IRON Kingdoms, which has just gone through one of the most significant upheavals since the days of the Orgoth Occupation. Following the invasion of hellish infernals into the occupied lands, the elven kingdom of Ios underwent a change that transformed all the living ensouled elves inside its borders into unliving eldritch.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Theryn Eyvreyn was once a devoted member of the cult of the Seekers, who traveled western Immoren in search of anything that could aid the failing condition of the goddess Scyrah. He took particular interest in the legends and histories of the Orgoth Occupation, noting that the Orgoth's ability to capture and manipulate souls set them apart from the other human cultures. He believed their rituals might provide a key to curing the condition of the soulless, thus infusing new spirit essence into the cycle of rebirth and revitalizing the goddess.

Eyvreyn was abroad during the Claiming and nearly lost his life—and soul—many times over. While the armies of the Iron Kingdoms battled against the invasion of the infernals, Eyvreyn moved in increasing desperation, alone and unprotected across the land. Despite the peril, he never relented in his search. From Corvis to Khardov, the Seeker pursued every lead he discovered in ancient archives and great libraries, even as the cities containing them burned around him. It was near the end of the Claiming, when the infernal forces clashed with Immoren's warriors at the Battle of Henge Hold, that Eyvreyn discovered the location of an Orgoth site unlike any other he'd ever encountered, hidden in the Khadoran hinterland.

The location seemed to have been entirely overlooked during the Scourge, when the Orgoth attempted to destroy remnants of their presence in western Immoren. Upon his arrival, the Seeker was rewarded with more challenges: he fought his way through the undead guardians the Orgoth had left behind to defend it. The site seemed to be a temple of some importance and contained relics with no known comparisons anywhere else in western Immoren. Eyvreyn spent months studying its contents and deciphering the runes inscribed into the stones of each chamber in an attempt to unlock its secrets.

In time, he uncovered its unusual purpose. A series of black pillars covered with the grimacing faces of disembodied souls had aided in the revitalization of important Orgoth lords and champions by transferring their souls into new bodies. With it, he believed he could save the ailing goddess Scyrah from death and return her to strength. He believed—perhaps correctly—that many Iosans, including himself, would be willing to give up their own lives in order to restore the goddess and save the future of the Iosan people. Thrilled at the discovery, Eyvreyn raced back to Ios, preparing to bring word of it before the Consulate Court and the Nine Voices of the Retribution.

Eyvreyn was too late.



Shortly after he crossed into Ios, the warcaster Elara and her cohort slew the last Iosan gods. When Scyrach and her brother Nyssor died, a spiritual shockwave radiated from the Iosan capital to the edges of the nation's borders. Apart from the soulless, every living Iosan and Nyss within the nation in that moment either died or transformed into an undead eldritch. Eyvreyn was among the latter.

After the death of the gods, Eyvreyn's purpose changed. If he could not save the gods, he would replace them. Working in secret, the eldritch located allies in Ios and transported the relics he discovered into the City of the Wind, an abandoned city deep in Ios. He then set out to find other candidates among the remaining Iosans whom he believed bore an echo of the former Divine Court's spiritual essences. He believed such figures contained a spark of the gods still, an echo of their souls that he could use to elevate himself to godhood.

In the intervening years, Eyvreyn and his agents have scoured Immoren for these candidates, luring them with promises of great power or abducting them by force. Those who meet his criteria were given promises of standing with him in the Veld in Urcaen as fellow gods—a promise the former Seeker has no intentions of keeping. The others were either consumed to feed Eyvreyn and his allies, or they were transformed into sythys servants to act as agents and protectors.

Now, he stands at the cusp of his apotheosis. In the days and weeks ahead, the Seeker's shadow will fall across the land.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Shadow of the Seeker is an adventure for a group of four to six 1st-level characters set in the borderlands of the Iron Kingdoms and eventually leading into the mysterious elven nation of Ios. Due to the prominence of Iosans in the adventure, it is advised that at least one character be able to speak the language of the elves. Over the course of the adventure, the characters will level up as they face the challenges ahead, culminating in a showdown with Seeker Eyvreyn in the heart of Ios—and the world beyond.

If you plan to GM this adventure, it is advised that you read through it to familiarize yourself with its contents. If you intend to play through the adventure, you should stop reading it now.

If a creature's name is in **bold**, it is a visual reminder that the creature has statistics that you can use. Many familiar creatures come from OGL sources, but those that live only in the Iron Kingdoms can be found in *Iron Kingdoms: Requiem* (where you will find forager light laborjack, gang underboss, man-at-arms, mercenary veteran, and sharpshooter), *Iron Kingdoms: Monsternomicon* (featuring archon, argus, duskwolf, eldritch, feralgeist, gorax, razorbat, and riven), *Borderlands and Beyond* (home to mage hunters), *Borderlands Survival Guide* (land of the aspis, karkinios, and walking fungus), or the appendix of this book.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins in the Rhulic freehold of Yearless, near the border of Ios.

In chapter one, after facing some of the troubles of the small settlement, the characters get entangled in Seeker Eyvreyn's plot. You can also run the characters through another adventure like *Escape from the Mind Slavers* or one of your own creations as long as you offer a reason for them to encounter Eyvreyn's minions and journey into Ios.

From there, the characters are drawn into the elven nation of Ios. The borders of this wooded nation have been closed to outsiders for many years and recently have been shuttered even to the elves who dwell outside its borders. There, the characters will navigate the strange forest, making unlikely allies and confronting unfamiliar monsters and Eyvreyn's loyal servants. Chapter two includes an overview of the trials the characters will face while navigating the forests of Ios.

Chapter three brings the characters to the northern doorway to Ios, the Gate of Storms. In this fortress, the characters have the opportunity to make an ally, provided they can deal with the powerful threat that plagues the Gate: an insane spirit of a former priest who is preying on the population.

In chapter four, the characters can investigate the Moon Arch, an Iosan relic that was once used to scry for signs of the gods. Now it is controlled by an eldritch loyal to Eyvreyn who seeks to use its power to call forth a devastatingly powerful creature.

Chapter five takes the characters into Shaelvas, the City of the Wind. Once, it was an elven metropolis devoted to the goddess Lyliss but has since become a vast ruin populated by feral monsters. Within Shaelvas, the characters will discover the secret lair of Eyvreyn and a cabal of assassins known as the Third Chamber.

Shadow of the Seeker can be played straight through its chapters, but the players should be encouraged to explore Ios at their own pace. You can use the information presented here as a framework to allow for them to go off the beaten path, to seek out other allies or confront other challenges. If they don't head straight to the next location in chapter order, feel free to improvise other communities with their own troubles, using the random encounter tables in chapter two to devise challenges for the adventuring company to overcome. Don't punish the players for wandering and exploring. If you feel like they're moving too far astray of the plot, you can always reel them back in through a confrontation with one of the deadly assassins who obey the orders of the nefarious Seeker.

1

THE YEARLESS CHILD



CHAPTER SUMMARY

“The Yearless Child” is suited for a party of four to six 1st-level characters who will advance to at least 3rd level by the chapter’s conclusion. The chapter’s climax serves as a springboard into the haunted elven homeland of Ios.

On the banks of the Fleetsfill River in the Silvertip Peaks, the Freehold of Yrryryllyss—known as “Yearless” to those not familiar with the language of the elves—is a growing community of Iosans and Nyss who fled the disaster that gripped their homeland. Like any freehold in Rhul, it is home to a diverse population of refugees from the human and elven kingdoms, as well as a number of opportunity-seeking adventurers eager to find their fortune in the homeland of the dwarves.

But all is not well in Yearless. A splinter sect of the now-defunct Retribution of Scyrh operates in secret out of the homes of civilian accomplices. Rhulic criminals exploit the population of the freehold for their own selfish ends. And somewhere in the community, a cursed child is hidden away by a loving—if reckless—family.

At the fringes of the freehold, servants of a greater and darker power cast their hungry eyes upon the remarkable child. Its curse fuels the dangerous plans of an undead creature within Ios’ misty forests, working toward a goal that threatens to upset the cosmological balance of the world.

THE YEARLESS CHILD

Avross, the young eldritch in question, has not indulged in the darker abilities or requirements of his undead nature. In order to retain their undead strength, eldritch must commit a series of ritualistic murders that Avross has not performed—nor would he, if he knew it was required. Thus, his strength has been waning, year after year. Though he possesses the capabilities of the eldritch, his refusal has rendered him frail.

At the end of this chapter, there is a possibility that Avross will intervene on behalf of his family. If he does so and thus unleashes his dark gifts, the boy’s spirit is thoroughly crushed and his course forward alters, as described later in this chapter.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

Before beginning the adventure, read through it to be familiar with its contents. You might want to work with your players to determine what brings them to the isolated freehold. You are free to give them any details about the town as described in “Welcome to Yearless.” This is also an opportunity for you and your players to determine if the characters already know each other or if this is the first time they’ve met. Once the players have their characters in order, start the adventure by reading the text in the “A New Day Dawns” section.

Text that appears like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased to the players, typically at the start of an encounter or when the characters arrive at a location for the first time.

Then, give the players a starting mission (either “Previous Tenants” or “The Wrong Stuff”). At your discretion, you can have the players take on whichever mission they didn’t complete first before proceeding further with the adventure.

WELCOME TO YEARLESS

The freehold started out as a small mining camp several decades ago but was abandoned after the veins of ore played out. Prior to the Claiming, it sat abandoned, occasionally serving as a hideout for gangs of bogrin raiders who plague the Silvertip Peaks of Urgosh-Shiel.

When the Claiming descended on western Immoren and in the years shortly after, the Rhulfolk opened their borders to refugees who sought protection from the infernals—and other supernatural calamities. Stone Lord Rolgrun of Brunder ordered the construction of numerous freeholds within the country, many of which were reclaimed from old border forts and mining camps.

Yearless is one of those freeholds. Predominantly settled by Iosans, who fled their nation during and after the Claiming, the freehold is home to an industrious population from all across western Immoren. What little commerce there is in Yearless comes by way of the Fleetsfill River, which links the modest docks in the hold with Armsdeep Lake in the heart of Rhul and the great Rhulic cities on its shores.

EXPLORING YEARLESS

Yearless is a frontier freehold on the edge of Rhul and located not far from the Gate of Storms, a large military outpost on the border of Ios. Refugees from across western Immoren have come here seeking a new chance at life.

Population. Approximately 300. Iosan majority with ogrun, gobber, Rhulfolk, and Nyss making up the minority.

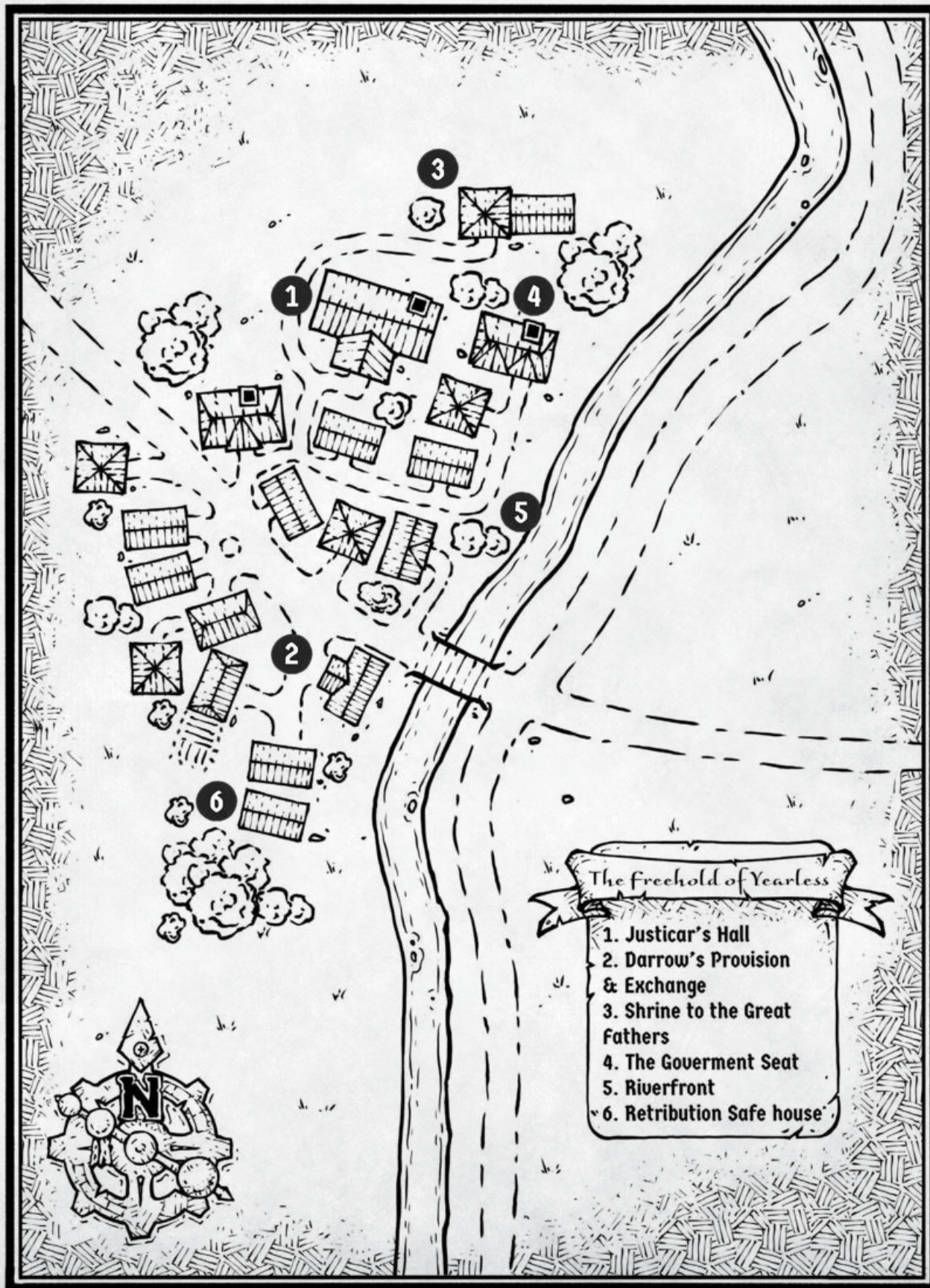
Government. None. The freehold is, in theory, under the oversight of Clan Lord Rolgrun, who lives in the Rhulic city Brunder. Rolgrun isn’t overly concerned with Yearless or the business of its people, and he has sent only a single representative to maintain a presence in the freehold.

Defense. Dira, a Rhulic soldier on assignment to Yearless, acts as an arbitrator in disputes, sheriff, and general keeper of the peace.

The characters might wish to explore key locations within Yearless. Significant buildings are noted on the map of Yearless.

DARROW’S PROVISION & EXCHANGE

The exchange is one of the larger trading posts in Yearless. It stocks common trade goods and tools, and its owner can order materials for the construction of new buildings, weapons, or other items from downriver in Brunder. The owner of the trading post is Dragar Darrow.



The freehold of Yearless

1. Justicar's Hall
2. Darrow's Provision & Exchange
3. Shrine to the Great Fathers
4. The Government Seat
5. Riverfront
6. Retribution Safe house

Services. Dragar sells trade goods and adventuring gear. He controls the import of certain items, like blasting powder, casings, and bullets for a range of different calibers, and his shop is the easiest place to purchase such items in the freehold.

THE JUSTICAR'S HALL

Despite its name, the Hall, as locals call it, has nothing to do with the law. It is a hostelry and tavern located in the north of Yearless. The freehold doesn't have much in the way of visitors aside from the occasional riverboat crew, so the Hall acts more as temporary housing for new freeholders until they can sort out more permanent arrangements and as a meeting place to share drinks. The Hall has eight small rooms to let for 1 sp per day.

The proprietor is a middle-aged gobber (CN male **commoner**) named Voglumtumekkakar, or "Glum." Glum is a clever and enterprising gobber who keeps his ears open for any opportunities to turn a profit. He pays Dragar Darrow protection money and purchases his liquor exclusively from the dwarf.

The Hall is a common meeting place for the folk of the freehold. In its large common room, eclectic groups meet to swap stories, share meals, and start arguments over pints of stout. Two patrons who never seem to leave the Hall are the mercenary Brigat Stiffstone and Duz, a shrewd gobber tinkerer.

A trollkin of the Northkin kriels, Brigat (CN female trollkin **mercenary veteran**) is a wanderer who does odd jobs around Yearless when she is in town. She is often employed by Dragar Darrow to act as an enforcer when he needs to make a statement.

Duz (neutral male gobber **spy**) is actually an agent of Clan Lord Rolgrun, and Duz reports back to Brunder. His cover identity as an itinerant tinkerer lets him stay beneath the notice of significant individuals in Yearless, particularly Dira and Dragar. Characters can sell unwanted items to the gobber for half their listed price.

The characters can encounter a myriad of other patrons from the freehold in the Hall, including any of the other significant NPCs in this section.

THE SMITHY

The freehold's unnamed smithy is owned and operated by Caylyth Nythyl, a Nyss refugee who most recently lived in Ios before fleeing to Rhul during the Claiming. Caylyth maintains the tools, weapons, and armor of his fellow freeholders.

Services. Caylyth carries a modest stock of metal weapons and armor available at the normal cost.

SHRINE TO THE GREAT FATHERS

The Rhulic population of the freehold keeps a well-maintained shrine to the Great Fathers. A pious ogrun named Lagdor Korsuk maintains the shrine and handles any offerings made there.

Services. Lagdor performs religious services for those who come to visit his shrine. He does not charge worshippers of the Great Fathers for these services, but donations are welcomed. For those of other faiths, Lagdor charges 5 gp for healing via *cure wounds*.

THE GOVERNMENT SEAT

Yearless is under the auspices of Clan Lord Rolgrun of Brunder, but it is far enough from the lord's seat of power and minor enough of a settlement that he seldom considers it. His sole representative in Yearless, a soldier named Dira Torgun, works out of this building, which acts as a hybrid storehouse, jail, and town hall. The characters are likely to receive work here, and anyone found acting against the freehold's interest can expect to spend some time in one of the building's iron-barred cells while Dira figures out what to do with them.

FREEHOLDER HOMES

The majority of the freehold is made up of its population's simple homes. Some are converted from buildings left over from the old mine, but the majority are new construction. Without exception, the homes of Yearless are made of wood, including the shake roofs.

Freeholders. Each home has 1d4 adults living in it and 1d4-1 children. The freeholders keep to themselves for the most part, but they are willing to interact with the characters as long as those characters maintain a good reputation in Yearless.

RIVERFRONT

The small dock on Yearless' riverfront is vital to the survival of the community. From here, a small fleet of riverboats ferry goods and people to and from the city of Brunder to the north.

RETRIBUTION SAFE HOUSE

The Shadowed Path sect of the former Retribution of Scyrah, an organization of mage hunters devoted to claiming vengeance for the elven goddess of Spring, maintains a safe house in Yearless. The senior-most member, Fynn Asir, commands the mage hunters here.

IMPORTANT NPCs

Avross Alcyan. In life, Avross was an Iosan child who appeared to be around ten years of age. His transformation into an eldritch was a tragedy that hangs over his mother and father. He is the target of Evyreyn's current plot. (NE male undead **eldritch**)

Caylyth Nythyl. Nyss blacksmith who secretly crafts weapons and armor for the Shadowed Path mage hunters. (NG male Nyss **commoner**)

Dira Torgun. Rhulic soldier and the closest thing Yearless has to an officer of law and order. She offers jobs to the characters. Wields a maul and hand cannon instead of a Caspian battle blade and repeating pistol. (LN Rhulic dwarf **mercenary veteran**)

Dragar Darrow. Self-styled crime boss of the freehold's criminal underworld. He is a potential employer in the freehold. Wields a repeating pistol in addition to his assassin's blade. (NE male Rhulic dwarf **gang underboss**)

Dunok Turkott. Ogrun labor korune employed by Clan Jhurg. (LN male ogrun **commoner**)

Erys Alcyan. Iosan lumber worker and father of Avross. (NG male Iosan **commoner**)

Fynn Asir. Grim veteran mage hunter who commands the Shadowed Path sect hiding in Yearless. (CN male Iosan **mage hunter**)

The Gravewhisper. A sythyss, or undead servant, who leads the attack on Yearless. The Gravewhisper was once a knight of House Issyen serving at the Gate of Storms but was transformed after an encounter with the eldritch Theryn Eyvreyn. (NE nonbinary undead **sythyss**)

Lagdor Korsuk. Devout ogrun acolyte of the Great Fathers who maintains a shrine to them in Yearless. (LN male ogrun **acolyte**)

Theryn Eyvreyn. A former member of the Seeker sect, Theryn devoted his life to uncovering a way to preserve the waning strength of the goddess Scyrah. He was transformed into an eldritch when tragedy befell his people. His once-noble ambitions left to wither, he has sought out a new purpose in his unlife: to replace the vanished gods with a new Divine Court and himself seated at its head. (CE male undead **eldritch**)

Veryth Alcyan. Iosan farmer and the mother of Avross. (LN female Iosan **commoner**)

A NEW DAY DAWNS

Allow your players to decide how their characters ended up in Yearless, their connections with one another, and the circumstances that brought them together before starting the adventure. When the players are ready to begin, use the text below to summarize the situation:

Western Immoren has changed. The continent endured years of ceaseless warfare that culminated in an invasion of hellish creatures from another realm, monsters intent on consuming mortal souls. In the aftermath, displaced people from across the Iron Kingdoms and beyond have tried to pick up the pieces of their lives or to make new ones.

In pursuit of these new lives, many have come to Rhul to live in one of the freeholds: new homes for the displaced where they can live among others in similar circumstances. People from all races and cultures have come together, living as neighbors in these strange new communities. However, while a freehold presents new opportunities, it can also bring new dangers.

Having set the stage, you can now describe the freehold using the information presented in this chapter and the map of the town, which you can share with the players. The characters would be aware of the town's general layout and key features.

STARTING MISSION: PREVIOUS TENANTS

"Previous Tenants" is one of two missions designed to start off the adventure.

The characters receive this mission from Dira Torgun, a Rhulic soldier who has been tasked with protecting the people of the freehold. Dira hires the characters to deal with a group of particularly vicious mountain bogrin who have been raiding the freehold in recent months. Dira doesn't expect the characters to slaughter the bogrin; she just wants them to move on and stop harassing the townsfolk.



GETTING THE JOB

To begin this mission, read the following text to the players:

Another day in the freehold: elves and humans, trollkin, ogrun, dwarves, and gobbers all crowd each other's elbows in a cramped town clinging to the foothills of the Silvertip Peaks. People call it "Yearless," and the name feels about right; one day blends into the next out here, far from the strife of the Iron Kingdoms.

But the freehold has its own problems. Another raid came in the night, and people are huddled in the town square, demanding answers from a red-haired Rhulic soldier. She pinches the bridge of her nose and motions for quiet.

The dwarf casts an appraising look in your direction before saying, "We're all concerned about the bogrin raids. Return to your homes and stay calm. I'll see this matter sorted right away."

With that, she pushes through the reluctantly dispersing crowd. It seems that she's headed straight for you.

Dira Torgun is a soldier working the unenviable job of maintaining the peace and enforcing the law in an isolated frontier town. A troublesome reputation put her on Clan Lord Rolgrun's short list for the assignment in Yearless. She's a few years in on a ten-year job and wants her remaining time to pass as smoothly—and uneventfully—as possible.

Torgun has been fielding a string of requests from Yearless' population to deal with a group of bogrin that periodically come down out of the Silvertip Peaks to the west. Due to some tension between the freehold's folk, she's reluctant to handle the job herself, especially when she can have some helpful mercenaries deal with it for her. Torgun makes no bones about the matter—she has money and is willing to pay the characters for their help.

Here's what she knows about the bogrin and the situation:

"The bogrin think they own this place. And, I can't exactly blame them—they used to. Clan Lord Rolgrun was too busy feuding with Clan Jhurg to pay the place much mind, and the tribe moved in once the miners abandoned it. We've found evidence that the bogrin were here for years, maybe decades, before we took the place back.

"People are tired of them stealing tools, killing livestock, and making a ruckus. Frankly, so am I. So, I want you to get up into the mountains and sort 'em out for me.

"Don't get me wrong—I'm not asking you to go up into the peaks to kill them all. I don't want a bunch of heads on pikes or anything like that. Just convince them to move on and bother somebody else. Yearless has enough trouble as it is.

"I'll pay a hundred gul to drive the bidders out. Or strike a truce or lead them into a drake den—I don't really care. When you've done the job, come back here to collect your money."

The challenge begins with finding the bogrin, since the tribe has the full run of the Silvertip Peaks, a rough mountain range with plenty of places to hide out. Torgun advises the characters to talk to the locals who were recently raided: Caylyth Nythyl and Veryth Alcyan.

CAYLYTH NYTHYL

If the characters decide to question Caylyth Nythyl, Torgun can give them directions to his place of work. When the characters arrive, read the following:

A slender elf struggles with a blacksmith's hammer as he tries to draw out the length of a piece of red-hot iron. One of his arms is bound up in a sling, and he winces each time the hammer falls.

"Before you ask, I'm not taking any new jobs. It'll be hard enough to get the ones I have done," the elf says to you, gesturing to his immobile arm. "The bastards got me in my good arm."

Nythyl moved to the freehold within the last year and owns and operates the freehold's smithy. He was working late at night to finish a commission for the local merchant Dragar Darrow—who is secretly a crime boss—when the bogrin attacked the smithy. He's wearing a sling to compensate for an injury he suffered while trying to stop the bogrin from making off with ingots of steel.

WHAT NYTHYL KNOWS

Use the following to guide the conversation with Nythyl. Some items are preceded by the DCs for the skills required to get certain pieces of information. Additionally, while Nythyl is speaking, a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that, while what he says is true, he is holding back something (his work for Darrow and the Shadowed Path, specifically).

- The bogrin attacked a few hours before dawn. There were at least a dozen of them.
- The ingots the bogrin took weigh a few hundred pounds combined. If they're taking them into the mountains, they'd need a wagon—or a few burly ogrun—to carry them far.
- Nythyl managed to injure one of the bogrin. Before he could finish the job, a pack of others retaliated and left him with his own injury. The wounded bogrin was bleeding badly and needed to be carried off.
- DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion): Nythyl was up late working on a commission for a demanding client: Dragar Darrow. The dwarf requested a particularly expensive hand cannon be manufactured.
- DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion): Nythyl needed to work longer hours than normal because he was juggling his work with Darrow and another, more important client: the hidden sect of the Shadowed Path.

PECULIAR BLADES

While in Nythyl's smithy, a character who makes a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices an unusually large supply of weapons awaiting delivery. While a smith forging weapons is not unusual, the profile of these blades is; they are the light and elegant blades favored by the former mage hunters of the Retribution of Scyrah.

A character can try to find out more about the weapons from Nythyl with a DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation) or (Persuasion) check. If the check succeeds, he reluctantly tells them the following:

“There’s a group in the freehold that I owe my life—my soul, perhaps. They helped a lot of us out of Ios during the war, before what came next. Whatever that was.

“If they tell me to make them weapons, I will, and happily. I don’t ask why they need them. I think it’s better for us all if I don’t.”

VERYTH ALCYAN

If the characters decide to question Veryth Alcyan, Torgun can give them directions to find her home in the freehold. When the characters arrive, read the following:

At the edge of the freehold, near the base of the Silvertip Peaks, a modest farm stands out against the backdrop of looming stone. A pale Iosan woman works out in the fields, which are torn down to black soil by the clumsy harvesting performed by the raiding bogrin.

Veryth Alcyan and her family are recent transplants to the freehold. When the characters arrive, she’s assessing the damage that was inflicted on her farm and trying to recoup what little she can from the fields. The bogrin made off with the majority of her crops and most of her livestock in the raid.

WHAT VERYTH KNOWS

Use the following to guide the conversation with Veryth. Veryth answers the characters honestly and without hesitation, but a character who makes a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check senses that she’s trying to get the characters to move on. This is because of the secret she harbors (see The Alcyan Family Secret callout).

- Veryth was asleep when the raid started. The sound of her livestock panicking woke her.
- When she looked out to see what caused the commotion, Veryth saw nearly a dozen bogrin ripping up her plots and stuffing them into a wagon. There were two larger figures as well: one pulling the wagon and one moving into the mountains with a goat under either arm.
- The night before the attack, Veryth saw what looked like campfires on the slope of Ironeye Peak, one of the nearby summits of the Glass Peaks.

THE ALCYAN FAMILY SECRET

Though the characters don’t know it yet, Veryth Alcyan has a secret that will become very important later in the adventure. Her son, Avross, was in Ios when the elven gods were killed and, like all elves within the borders who survived that moment, was transformed into an eldritch, a kind of essence-draining undead.

Avross is being hidden by members of the Shadowed Path sect of mage hunters in an unassuming building not far from Veryth’s home. The Shadowed Path are hoping to learn from the child more about what transpired within Ios.

OTHER FREEHOLDERS

In addition to the blacksmith and the farmer, the characters might want to ask around town for any other information that could lead them to the bogrin. The following items can be passed on by any of the freeholders the characters talk to. The freehold’s population is small, so everyone knows (or at least assumes they know) one another’s business.

- “On the night of the raid, I heard someone big bellowin’ orders from the mountains. Sounded like Molgur-talk to me.”
- “Murg Redhammer claims that someone stole his wagon ten days ago. Now he’s blaming it on the bogrin, but if you ask me, he got drunk and ran it off the road.”
- “Bogrin raid, my arse. You ask me, it’s some of these grum elves what did the deed. I see them sneakin’ around at night when they think we aren’t watchin’.”
- “Keep yer eyes to the mountainside at night. Them boppers don’t fear us an’ light fires plain as day. Saw some up t’ Ironeye me’self.”
- “Careful talking with that Alcyan woman. She and her husband, the logger, they’re hiding something. I know it. Too private for comfort, if I say so myself.”
- “Have you looked in Darrow’s storeroom? Everyone knows he’s no better than a Ghord-born Blackheel. If he didn’t keep his boot on the throat of this place, Yearless could make something of itself.”

FINDING THE BOGRIN

Armed with any information they have collected in the freehold, the characters can set off into the mountains after their quarry. If they’ve interviewed both Caylyth and Veryth, they should have a sense that the bogrin were traveling with a heavy load, most likely in a wagon, headed somewhere in the vicinity of Ironeye Peak.

If the characters have this information, the difficulty of Wisdom (Survival) checks to track the raiders is greatly reduced. They will know to look for wagon ruts in the soil and the heavy tread of larger figures—possibly ogrun.

The characters might choose to head straight into the mountains without talking to the freeholders first. In this case, they will need to rely on their own innate skills to follow the path of the bogrin.

Consult the Tracking DC table to determine the DC for Wisdom (Survival) checks to locate the raiders.

TRACKING DC TABLE

DC Information

- | | |
|----|---|
| 16 | The characters did not investigate. |
| 15 | The characters talked to Calyth, Veryth, or other freeholders. |
| 14 | The characters talked to both Calyth and Veryth. |
| 12 | The characters talked to Calyth, Veryth, and other freeholders. |

To find the raiders, the characters must venture into the mountains and search for any tracks or clues that could lead the way. Any character who spends an hour searching for tracks or clues and succeeds on a Wisdom (Survival) check discovers the trail. The characters need to succeed on four of these checks before they locate the bogrin camp.

After every two hours the characters spend in the mountains, check for a random encounter using the Silvertip Peaks Encounters table.

SILVERTIP PEAKS ENCOUNTERS

d20 Encounter

- | | |
|-------|----------------|
| 1–10 | No encounter |
| 11–12 | Dead bogrin |
| 13–14 | Old lookout |
| 15–16 | Wolves |
| 17–18 | Bogrin hunters |
| 19–20 | Wounded argus |

BOGRIN HUNTERS

A pair of **scouts** is ranging on the mountain to hunt for some additional provisions. The scouts fight to defend themselves but will flee if both of them drop below half their

hit point maximums. If the characters let the bogrin escape, their fresher tracks make following the trail easier. The next Wisdom (Survival) roll made to follow the trail is made with advantage.

A captive bogrin can lead the characters to the camp in 1 hour.

DEAD BOGRIN

The bogrin has a partially collapsed skull. He was wounded by Calyth while the Nyss protected his smithy. The bogrin died of his injuries on the trail.

There is only one dead bogrin to discover on the trail. If this result is rolled again, treat it as a result of 1–10.

OLD LOOKOUT

The lookout is a flat portion of the mountain with a clear view of Yearless below. It contains the ashes of an old cookfire and a few scattered animal bones. A character who spends 1 minute searching the camp and succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers 1d4 gp worth of losan nyos.

WOLVES

A pack of 1d6+2 **wolves** ambushes the characters. Choose one wolf to be the pack's leader. The wolves flee if either the pack leader or half of the wolves are killed.

WOUNDED ARGUS

An **argus** that recently attacked the raider camp limps by, with a half-spear still sticking out of its back. The argus has 10 hit points and cannot use its doppler bark.

The creature is not initially hostile to the characters and only attacks if provoked.

Following the wounded creature's blood trail leads back to the raider camp. The next Wisdom (Survival) roll made to follow the trail is made with advantage.





BOGRIN CAMP

After following the raiders' trail into the mountains, the characters discover a modest encampment.

BOGRIN CAMP LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Bogrin hideout.

GENERAL FEATURES

The ground outside the cave mouth slopes gently uphill to the rocky mountain face. A stiff breeze buffets the region. The caverns have the following general features:

Ceilings. The tunnels and caverns have 30-foot-high ceilings.

Faint Light. What little light is present in the cavern filters through the entrance, bouncing faintly off mica deposits in the walls, causing the area to be dimly lit in daytime.

Smells and Sounds. The air in the caverns is musky, warmed by the presence of multiple bodies and the acrid tang of coal fire. The echoing nature of the caves grants creatures advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

LOOKOUT

A crude tent of stitched hides stands next to the mountain face, a thin plume of smoke rising from its center to be whipped away by the mountain winds.

The crude tent contains four bogrin **tribal warriors** at rest. Inside the tent are heavy fur blankets and simple provisions as well as some knucklebone dice the bogrin use to pass the time. One of the bogrin has a ram's horn that can signal a warning to the raiders still in the cave. If they are attacked, the lookouts blow the horn before falling back to make a stand at the mouth of the tunnel entrance.

Bogrin Hunters. If the characters previously encountered the bogrin hunters and allowed them to escape, the hunters warned the tribe about the characters' presence. The lookouts are alert and wary for intruders. They stand outside the tent, sticking to cover by the large rocks near the tunnel entrance.



2 TUNNEL ENTRANCE

Hidden behind large boulders jutting from the mountainside, the mouth of a cave bores deep into the heart of Ironeye Peak.

The tunnel entrance is a simple opening into the mountainside. Many tracks lead to and from the cave entrance.

At the far end of the tunnel from the entrance, a trio of bogrin **bandits** keeps watch. Two actively watch the mouth of the cavern for intruders and listen for a signal from outside while the other rests. If the lookouts manage to sound a warning, the bandits are ready to shoot their crossbows at the first person who comes into their line of sight. If they spot anyone trying to enter the hideout, they attack with their crossbows before ducking back into cover.

Booby Trap. There is a simple trap set up in the center of the tunnel (**marked T on the map**) that collapses a portion of the ceiling on passersby.

COLLAPSING ROOF TRAP

Mechanical trap. This trap uses a trip wire to collapse the supports keeping an unstable section of a ceiling in place. The trip wire is 3 inches off the ground and stretches between two support beams. The ceiling above the trip wire is in bad repair, and anyone who can see it can tell that it's in danger of collapse.

Trigger. A creature that sets off the trip wire triggers the trap.

Effect. When the trap is triggered, the unstable ceiling collapses. Any creature in the area beneath the unstable section must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the character takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Once the trap is triggered, the floor of the area is filled with rubble and becomes difficult terrain.

Countermeasures. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the trip wire. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disables the trip wire harmlessly. A character without thieves' tools can attempt this check with disadvantage using any edged weapon or edged tool. On a failed check, the trap triggers.

Anyone who inspects the beams can easily determine that they are merely wedged in place. As an action, a character can knock over a beam, causing the trap to trigger.



3 LARDER AND STASH

This chamber is where the raiders stow any loot they've gathered. Along with the butchered livestock, produce, and steel taken from Yearless, there are two salted elk carcasses hanging in this chamber, as well as 20 gp, 13 sp, and 5 cp taken as loot during prior raids.

In one corner of the chamber, an air-hole has been bored through the cavern rock to serve as a chimney for a simple forge. Judging by the partially completed weapon left on a nearby anvil, the raiders were planning to use the stolen ingots of steel to fashion new weapons.

Sleeping Beauty. Lying among the stolen goods in the larder is a sleeping ogrun named Brek Stonesoul, a neutral evil male ogrun **thug**. He's currently sleeping off a large meal, having snuck into the larder to feast on the choicest plunder from the recent raid.

If woken by any noise, such as the sound of combat from area 2, Brek moves to investigate. He's grumpy and suffering from indigestion, so he's unlikely to listen to any attempts at persuasion.

4 SLEEPING CHAMBER

Piles of dried plant matter and thick animal pelts coat the floor of this chamber in a haphazard arrangement. This is the raider tribe's shared sleeping space.

The sleeping chamber is where the raiders call home (at least for the time being). Their weapons, personal effects, scraps of food, and favored bits of loot are strewn across the floor.

There are four bogrin **bandits** and three tribal warriors in the chamber as well as Tenka Onetusk, an ogrun **thug**.

If the characters managed to reach the sleeping chamber without raising the alarm, the raiders are occupied with eating and grooming, napping, or gambling with each other for interesting bits of loot.

Dealing with the Raiders. The characters have their choice of how to deal with the raiders. They can fight with them, try to intimidate or persuade them into leaving the region, or engage in any other reasonable course of action.

The raiders likely have the characters outnumbered and are not going to give up their raiding easily. Their leader, Tenka, will require an impressive display of the characters' strength before she's willing to abandon the mountain. If it comes to a fight, though, she's wise enough to consider negotiation if the characters prove they are stronger than her tribe. If Tenka is incapacitated or four or more bogrin are defeated, the remainder of the tribe will be open to surrendering, though the characters will have to initiate any discussion.

CONCLUDING THE MISSION

After finding and dealing with the bogrin and ogrun raiders, the characters can return to Dira to collect their reward. They don't need to provide any evidence that they've done what they say; Dira is willing to take their word for it.

STARTING MISSION: THE WRONG STUFF

"The Wrong Stuff" is one of two missions designed to start off the adventure.

The characters receive this mission from Dragar Darrow. Darrow is a Rhulic crime boss who sees opportunity in working within the freehold, where he is far from the eyes of Moot Judges and surrounded by people who aren't familiar with his reputation or how to deal with Rhulic criminals. Dragar hires the characters to investigate a missing shipment of goods he planned to sell in Yearless' markets.

THE SHIPMENT

Dragar purchased a batch of questionable hollowbite, a potent liquor distilled in the city of Farhollow. He was able to buy the shipment at cost due to a production error: approximately 10 percent of the shipment contains the toxic first run of the batch. There's no way of knowing which bottles contain the harmful stuff.

Dragar plans to combine all the bottles into a single batch, hoping that it will dilute the noxious contents to the point that his clientele won't notice.

GETTING THE JOB

To begin this mission, read the following text to the players:

A grim-faced dwarf standing in the doorway of the freehold's exchange catches sight of you and briskly approaches.

"Oi. You lot look capable. How would you like to earn some coins?"

The speaker is Dragar Darrow, a former member of the Glomring and current crime boss in Yearless. Darrow's operation is a straightforward one: he's willing to do almost anything, to almost anyone, if there is profit in it for him.

Darrow recently expected a shipment from Brunder destined for the freehold. Unfortunately for everyone involved, the shipment never arrived at the Fleetsfill riverfront. He wants the characters to travel downriver to see if they can uncover what happened. Darrow doesn't care about the fate of the riverboat or its crew; the supplies are his top priority.

If the characters express interest, he makes his case:

"I'm a businessman who deals in goods that those Searforge Commission snobs can't—or won't. A boat out of Brunder was supposed to bring me a shipment two days ago, but the bastards never showed. Either they're stuck somewhere down the Fleetsfill River, or something happened.

"There aren't enough problem solvers in this place, and I have to manage my affairs here. Can't go running off to deal with this situation. If you can investigate it for me, though, there's some gul in it for you. Fifty gold, and I'll make sure you are treated fairly in the exchange from here on out.

"What do you say? We have a deal?"





If the characters agree, Dragar gives them what little information he knows. He's plotted out about where the boat might be downriver, give or take a mile, and he explains that there are ten cases aboard that make up the shipment.

The dwarf offers the characters a modest discount of 10 percent at his exchange if they wish to purchase any supplies before heading out and promises to raise it to 20 percent on their successful completion of the job.

TRAVEL TO RIVERBOAT

The fastest way to reach the location Dragar expects to find the boat is to travel down the Fleetsfill River. The current flows north toward Armsdeep in the center of Rhul. The characters can purchase passage with one of the fishing boats at the Yearless docks. The potential location is about 50 miles downriver, and boat pilots will carry the characters for 10 gp: 5 gp to reach the site, 5 for the return trip. Travel by river takes about 8 hours each way.

Characters can also choose to go by land, though the journey will be slower. Characters who choose overland travel can expect to make two long rests before they reach their destination.

ENCOUNTERS ON THE WAY

Characters can expect to have the following encounters as they travel to the site. If the characters hire a boat, they encounter "Killer Cups." If they travel overland, they experience both of the following encounters.

Bear Necessities. About halfway to their destination, the characters hear loud splashing and a low roar near the river bend ahead. A young widow bear (use the stats for a **brown bear**) is thrashing in the water, clinging to the trunk of a tree. The bear was trying to snatch trout out of the river when it fell in and is struggling to get ashore.

The animal is panicking. Every minute, the bear makes a DC 16 Strength saving throw. If it makes 3 successful saves, it manages to haul itself onto shore. If it fails 3 saves, the current carries it away.

If the characters try to help the creature, any reasonable course of action grants the bear advantage on its next saving throw. If it gets free with their assistance, the confused, wet animal treats them as friendly and follows them at a distance of 30 or so feet. Unless the characters mistreat it, attack it, or drive it away, the bear remains friendly and attacks any creatures that are hostile to them.

Killer Cups. About 10 miles from their destination, the characters discover a Rhulfolk camp on the riverbank. Four dead Rhulic trappers lie in the center of the camp.

If the characters investigate the bodies, they will find that none of the trappers has any sign of physical injuries. There are two empty bottles of "Hodur's Hollowbite," a kind of liquor distilled in the distant city of Farhallow, lying near the bodies. A DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the Rhulfolk died from poison less than a day ago.

The trappers carry nothing to indicate who they were, but among their possessions are 10 gp, three large furs worth 5 gp each, and a pair of hunting traps.

RUN AGROUND

When the characters come into spotting distance of their destination, read the following:

At a bend in the Fleetsfill River ahead, the bulk of a Rhulic paddleboat has run aground on the rocky bank. Rhulfolk dressed in mismatched armor crawl like beetles over the vessel, dragging crates off its deck.

On the bank beside the boat, a dwarf levels his carbine at a pair of bound deckhands.

The looters are a group of 4 Rhulic **man-at-arms** led by a Rhulic **sharpshooter**. These mercenaries from the freehold caught wind of Dragar's plans to bring in a large supply of hollowbite and decided to ambush his shipment. Rend Hardwick (CN male Rhulic dwarf sharpshooter) sniped the boat's captain, thus causing the ship to run aground. His companions cut down anyone willing to put up a fight and took captive those who surrendered.

The dwarves are debating their next move. They can't bring the shipment back to Yearless for fear of Dragar's reprisal. They can't commandeer the boat to travel somewhere else, as it was damaged in the crash. The only profit they've found so far was through selling a few bottles to a group of traveling trappers.

DEALING WITH THE MERCENARIES

The characters have a few options for how to approach the situation. They can simply overpower the mercenaries and claim the shipment. If they have the ability to do so, they might offer to repair the damaged vessel in exchange for the shipment—Hardwick is more willing to sell the boat off in Brunder than face Dragar. Or, if the characters investigated the trappers' camp and determined that the hollowbite (or at least some of it) is tainted, they can try to convince the mercenaries to give them the shipment.

A non-violent resolution requires a character to state their case and make a successful DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Hardwick is interested in saving his skin and making some profit out of the ordeal. Any reasonable argument can convince him to leave while he's still somewhat ahead.



CONCLUDING THE MISSION

When the characters return to Dragar with his shipment, he pays them the promised 50 gp in a mixture of coins from Ios, Rhul, and the human kingdoms and grants them their promised discount in his business. If they tell the crime boss who was responsible, or if they bring back proof that the culprits have been eliminated, he increases their reward to 100 gp.

CONSEQUENCES

Actions have consequences. If the characters do return the tainted delivery of liquor to Dragar, he begins to sell it in Yearless. For the most part, his plan of diluting the liquor pays out. There are no deaths that can be immediately traced back to the hollowbite, but the freeholders do begin to suffer from sporadic bouts of illness.

If anyone discovers the source of these illnesses and word gets out that the characters were involved, they find that the freeholders hold them in contempt. Prices in businesses not under Dragar's umbrella increase by 10 percent, and the characters receive a cold shoulder while in the freehold.

The only way the characters will be able to remove this stain on their names will be to demonstrate bravery and selflessness in the days to come.

PROBLEM SOLVERS

Once they've dealt with either of the starting missions, the characters draw the attention of Dira Torgun, the sole figure of authority within the freehold. If the characters completed the "Previous Tenants" mission, Dira views them as potential allies in maintaining peace in Yearless. If they instead completed "The Wrong Stuff," the characters are on her radar as potential troublemakers, though she's willing to give them a second chance to prove that they aren't in the crime boss Dragar's pocket.

Shortly after the characters complete their starting mission and have had time to get settled back in Yearless, Dira seeks them out. After summoning them to her office (or meeting them at their lodgings if they're not the sort to respond to a summons), Dira makes the characters an offer for a relatively simple task.

"Clan Jhurg used to have loggers working in the Mundol Wood not far from here. Clan Rolgrun's staked a claim to the whole Fathers-damned Murgul Woods near Brunder, so they were forced to harvest elsewhere.

"Jhurg's loggers pulled out a few years back. Somethin' in the woods spooked 'em, I suppose. They hired local freeholders to do the work for 'em for a cut of the sales back in Brunder. It's brought some decent money into the freehold and kept these families above water.

"Thing is, we haven't seen a shipment for a few weeks. That rubs me the wrong way. There are over twenty of my people out there with families waiting for 'em. If something happened out there, I want to know about it.

"Go check on the lumber camp for me and bring back news of whatever you find. If you don't see any sign of them, maybe check Farlow just west of the forest. It's an old outpost. If something went south, that's where I would hole up."

Dira gives the characters the following information:

Dunok Turkott, the labor korune, recently mentioned that they were harvesting lumber closer to the Iosan border than normal.

Dira heard something about a worker claiming to have seen strange things in the forest. She didn't give it much thought at the time—people in the woods at night tend to let their imaginations play tricks on them—but during the most recent timber delivery, in Justicar's Hall she overheard one of the loggers talking about having seen strange things in the forest.

Veryth's husband Erys was among the loggers. Dira is particularly concerned about the Iosan woman. When she first came to Yearless a few years ago, Veryth was emotionally devastated and has only begun to open up recently.

Dira offers the characters 200 gp for investigating the lumber camp, provided that, if a situation has arisen, they assist the workers.

CLEAN SLATE

If word has gotten out about the characters' involvement with Dragar and his tainted hollowbite, Dira encourages them to consider her offer seriously. Seeing to the well-being of the freeholders in the lumber camp would go a long way toward wiping out recent blemishes on their reputation.

MUNDOL WOOD

Mundol Wood, an extension of the Archenbough Forest that lies in southern Rhul, is a broad expanse of old-growth trees. When the characters are within sight of the wood, read the following:

The sprawling, verdant expanse of the Mundol Wood unfolds to the west. Wind blowing down from the Silvertip Peaks pulls at the tips of the trees. The long lumber road you've followed to the wood pierces the green veil of its boundary, leading into the darkness among the trees.

Despite being a major source for timber harvested by Clan Jhurg's logging consortium, recent events have caused this place to have a dark reputation among the Rhulfolk. Rumors of strange creatures from Ios, shadowy figures in the forest, and other less credible—and more disturbing—claims have caused Jhurg's loggers to all but abandon the region. The work is now performed by freeholders from Yearless, a group made up of a mixture of humans, ogrun, trollkin, and some hardy Iosans.

TRAVEL IN MUNDOL WOOD

There is a well-established logging trail leading through Mundol Wood to various harvesting sites. The loggers harvest the larger (and therefore more valuable) trees deeper in the woods. The trail starts at the edge of the wood, continues for five miles, and ends at the lumber camp. Travel off the logging trail is more challenging and is difficult terrain.

On the road to the lumber camp, the characters have the following encounters. They have the encounters in whatever order you prefer.

DEAD ELK

The characters encounter the bloated, fly-speckled corpse of an elk lying near the trail. Much of the meat of its chest and throat have been torn out by one of the wolfpacks common to the wood. However, this particular elk has drawn the attention of a hungry **feralgeist**. The feralgeist recently possessed the elk's corpse and rises to attack the characters if they approach it.

If the characters keep clear of the elk, a few minutes later, they see its corpse bounding through the forest, loops of intestines flying like streamers from its torn gut, as it dashes deeper into Mundol Wood.

TRAPPER'S LANE

Near the lumber road, a fur trapper has set up several hidden traps to catch creatures using the trail. The lead character automatically spots the traps if their passive Wisdom (Perception) score is 13 or higher. Otherwise, a character must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the steel-jawed traps concealed in the underbrush along the road.

Failure to spot the trap results in the lead character on the trail needing to make a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (1d10) piercing damage as the trap snaps shut. A character caught in the trap cannot move more than 3 feet due to a chain staking the trap in place, and that character must use an action to make a DC 13 Strength check, freeing themselves on a success or taking an additional 1 piercing damage on a failure.

Searching the area reveals another five such traps, some of which have caught several small woodland creatures. The creatures can be harvested for food, and their pelts can be sold in Yearless for 1 sp each.

WOLVES

Mundol Wood is home to several packs of timber wolves. A group of 2d4 + 2 **wolves** picks up the scent of the characters and stalks them through the forest, launching an attack if the characters let down their guard.

RANDOM MUNDOL WOOD ENCOUNTERS

After every two hours the characters spend in the forest, check for a random encounter using the Mundol Wood Encounters table.

MUNDOL WOOD ENCOUNTERS

d20	Encounter
1–10	No encounter
11–12	2 brown bears
13–14	A nest of venomous insects, agitated by the characters, produces 2 swarms of wasps
15–16	1 gorax
17–18	1 duskwolf
19–20	1 argus

JHURG LUMBER CAMP

A simple collection of tents and a portable mill surrounded by a wooden palisade, the Jhurg lumber camp sits in a manmade clearing in Mundol Wood.

LOCATION OVERVIEW

The lumber camp has operated in Mundol Wood for years now, carefully selecting trees to harvest and mill on site before hauling them back to Yearless and down the Fleetsfill for sale in the city of Brunder. It has provided the most consistent income for the freeholders since Yearless' founding. Crewed by twenty rugged freeholders, labor has been almost nonstop during the years of its operation.

Recently, the labor camp was attacked by a group of Iosans loyal to Theryn Eyvreyn. The force, consisting of soulless warriors led by a sythyss commander, came looking for Erys Alcyan, father of Avross. Theryn wants to acquire the man's son for his own and ordered his soldiers to find out where the boy is hiding.

ARRIVAL AT JHURG LUMBER CAMP

The camp ahead stands at the center of a roughly hundred-foot-diameter circle of stumps: all that remains of the trees that once surrounded it. Ringed with a wooden palisade to protect the loggers from animal attacks, the vast gate facing the logging road sags open.

The camp is in disarray. Several dead loggers lie where they were shot down, crossbow bolts protruding from their bodies. The two laborjacks are both wrecked, one with an arm sheared completely off.

Tracks from the camp lead west in the general direction of Farlow.

BODIES

There are four bodies scattered across the camp. Most were killed by crossbow fire, but one died in a much more brutal manner.

- Colm Wain, a Thurian man in his late 50s, is lying near the broken gate. He was shot through the heart and appears to have died instantly.
- Vog, a young male gobber, fell near a collapsed tent barracks. He was shot three times through the back while trying to flee.
- Lanae Raefyll, a female Nyss who appears to be middle-aged, died while hiding in the mechanic's field workshop. A single crossbow bolt protrudes from what used to be her right eye.
- Galt Blackwood, a male Midlunder of almost 60 years, was crushed to death in the heart of the camp.

Treasure. The dead loggers have various personal items and trinkets on them that, while not worth much, are of sentimental value to the friends and family in Yearless who survive them.

LABORJACKS

Both of the laborjacks—a pair of Forager light laborjacks equipped with scrap saws in place of their left arms—look like they've been through intense fighting. A character who examines them can make a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check to determine the cause of the damage. Long ruptures through their chassis are consistent with some kind of blade wielded by a large beast or steamjack, and scorch marks on them and on the ground nearby suggest some kind of energy-based attack was directed at the machines.

TENTS

There are four tents in the camp, each one large enough to accommodate five loggers. One of the tents was trampled flat in the fighting. Each tent contains five cots and footlockers, a small tent stove, and a small chuck box containing 1d6+1 rations and five mess kits. The logging crews took their axes with them as weapons, but across the four tents there are six handaxes remaining.

Treasure. A character who searches through the footlockers finds minor personal effects, books, suits of common outerwear, and a total of 55 gp, 140 sp, and 210 cp in saved wages.

MECHANIK'S FIELD WORKSHOP

The field mechanic's workshop is a simple wooden structure 30-feet deep and 40-feet long with an open face and single-pitched roof. Inside, it contains a pair of jack hoists, a workbench, and an assortment of patch kits, replacement parts, and a mechanic's toolkit needed for the upkeep of the camp's laborjacks.

DEVELOPMENT

A character proficient with a mechanic's toolkit can use the supplies in the workshop to repair one of the damaged laborjacks. Both of the machines have 0 hit points and suffer from catastrophic damage. The more intact of the two suffers pressure leaks while the other has had its right arm ripped away completely (causing a "debilitated arm" damage result). See *Iron Kingdoms: Requiem* for rules on repairing and replacing parts on the damaged laborjacks.

MILL

The mill is a steam-powered machine used to cut felled trees down to useful planks. A forty-foot-high pile of milled boards, stacked for drying, stands next to the machine.

A character can harvest 100 lbs. of coal from the mill, if needed.



FORT FARLOW

Farlow was once an outpost meant to house Rhulic soldiers watching the border of Ios and, particularly, the large military presence at the Gate of Storms. After the Iosans and Rhulfolk reached an accord in centuries past, the need for a military post here was obviated by ongoing trade and peace. For a time, the outpost served the trade corridor between the two nations, but, when Ios sealed off its borders, the site was left for the wilderness to reclaim.

TRAVEL TO FORT FARLOW

Farlow is two miles west of the lumber camp through the dense forest. The trail left by the loggers fleeing for safety is clear and does not require a check to follow. The characters have the following encounter en route to Farlow.

PINCUSHION

Set the scene with the following:

As you make your way through the dense underbrush, you happen upon a figure sitting against the wide trunk of an ancient tree. A thicket of crossbow bolts protrude from a burly ogrun covered in tattoos that mark him as a bokur of Clan Jhurg.

Without warning, the ogrun breathes a wet, ragged gasp, his eyes flying open.

The ogrun is Gorlu Strongarm (NG male ogrun **commoner**), one of the loggers from the Jhurg camp. He stayed behind to protect his fellow loggers against the Iosan attackers. While he was able to hold them off for a while, they eventually overpowered him and left him for dead while they continued their pursuit.



Treating Gorlu. Gorlu is in danger of dying and cannot communicate with the characters unless treated first. A character who makes a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that he will bleed out in a matter of minutes if not treated. He can be stabilized with a DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check or with one use of a healer's kit or healing magic.

What Gorlu Knows. If he is treated, Gorlu explains through bloody teeth and with some difficulty how he was wounded and relays the following information:

- “We headed to Farlow. 'S safer than the camp. Could hole up there and wait for help.”
- “It were elves what did it. Dead elves, black eyed, coming out of the trees. Didn't say a word as they were killing us but 'Erys.' He's a good man. Don't let them get him.”

Gorlu exhorts the characters to reach Farlow quickly and to leave him behind. Before they go, he offers them one last word of warning: “The elves have a machine. Like a 'jack but worse. Kill the one that tells it what to do or else end up as flat as Blackwood did under its feet.”

ARRIVAL

When the characters come within sight of Fort Farlow, read the following:

Just past the edge of the Mundol Wood, a crumbling stone building sticks out of the ground at an angle, like a bit of broken bone reset incorrectly. Narrow loopholes with rusting iron shutters dot the surface, set at the perfect height for Rhulfolk to see—and shoot—out.

The structure clearly has been abandoned for some time. A few trees have grown on its surface, their dense roots forcing their way through the blocks of carved stone.

Theryn's soldiers pursued the fleeing loggers to Farlow. Gravewhisper, the sythyss, left behind a small group of soulless to hunt the loggers down inside the fort while leading the rest of the force back to Yearless. The close confines of the fort are too small for Gravewhisper's myrmidon to navigate, and Gravewhisper wants to be in position to snatch the child as soon as his hiding spot can be discovered.

The Enemy Roster table adjusts the number of soulless in the fort based on the characters' average level, including any steamjacks that might accompany them.

ENEMY ROSTER

Character Level	Number of Soulless
2nd–3rd	3 soulless thugs per character plus 2 soulless scouts in the southeast and southwest guard posts (area 5), 1 soulless scout guarding the crumbling hall
4th–5th	4 soulless thugs per character plus 3 soulless scouts in the southeast and southwest guard posts (area 5), 1 soulless scout guarding the crumbling hall

When rolling initiative for these foes, roll once for all the thugs and once for all the scouts.

TRAINED OPPONENTS

While the following text provides initial positions for the soulless in Fort Farlow, they are intelligent and well-trained warriors. The soulless move to investigate suspicious sounds, retreat from battles they cannot win, support each other, and generally operate as a coordinated team.

FEATURES OF FORT FARLOW

The old Farlow outpost is spread over two levels (see map, p. 30). Only the uppermost level is aboveground; the lower floor is buried beneath the surface. Sets of stairs at the four corners of the outpost's central hall connect the two levels.

Doors and Gates. The areas of the fort are separated by iron doors. Each door has an interior sliding plate set at the eyeline of a Rhulfolk. The doors are corroded with age and have AC 15, 20 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Unless otherwise stated in the description, all the doors in the outpost are unlocked. The doors open with a loud scraping sound and squeal of rusted metal.

Ceilings. Unless otherwise indicated, corridors and rooms in the outpost have ten-foot-high ceilings.

Light. Gaps in the ceiling and walls on the first level allow light to filter through, providing dim light. In the lower levels, there is no light except what the characters bring with them.

Loopholes. Around the perimeter of Farlow, every 15 feet or so, are loopholes the occupants could use to shoot at attackers. These loopholes are too small for even a Small creature to fit through but do allow visual inspection of the rooms beyond.

If one of the soulless inside the first floor of the fort discovers the characters, the Iosans use the loopholes to shoot at them.

Roof Holes. There are several holes in the roof of the top level that grant access to the interior. If a character climbs on top of Farlow, the gaps are obvious. There are three large enough to accommodate a Medium-sized or smaller creature leading into areas 2, 3, and 6.

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?!

As they come into combat with the soulless, the characters might have questions about what, exactly, it is they are facing. The soulless are, as their name suggests, losans who were born without souls. This condition has become alarmingly more common in los. Those born without souls have a flat manner and are often seen as being cold and emotionless. They were often found among the ranks of the Retribution of Scyrah, acting as soldiers and escorts.

A character who sees one of the soulless can attempt a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (History) check to correctly identify the soulless as such. losan characters do not need to make this check: the existence of the soulless is an inescapable truth of the elves' existence.



1. FARLOW ENTRANCE

There is one entrance into the outpost immediately visible: A pair of heavy iron doors leading into the stone building's top story. At some point in the past, scavengers managed to pry the doors open. As the characters approach, read the following:

The entrance to the outpost leads into a gloomy hallway littered with dead leaves from the nearby forest and the droppings of vermin that have made the place their home.

2. CRUMBLING HALL

The entrance hallway opens up into a vast, dilapidated hall once used as a mustering point for the Rhulfolk stationed at the fort. Two rows of cracked pillars run through the chamber. Rubble and pools of standing water are scattered across the floor, and the roots of a tree growing on top of the building hang through a hole in the ceiling.

A soulless **scout** stands guard in this hall keeping watch on the entry, hiding in the shadow of one of the columns supporting the stone roof. If alerted to the presence of the characters, the scout attempts a sneak attack before falling back deeper into the fort to regroup with his allies.

Stairs. Stairs in the corners of the hall lead down to the lower level. The stairs are slick with algae.

3. WEST BARRACKS

Two identical barracks flank the crumbling hall to the east and west. Each is large enough to house twenty Rhulic soldiers. When the Rhulfolk abandoned Farlow, they took nearly everything they could manage, leaving the chambers bare.

Weak Floor. In the western barracks, the flooring in the center of the room has been weakened (marked T on the map) by constant exposure to water from the hole in area 2's ceiling. If more than 100 lbs. of weight is put on the floor, it lets out a loud crack a moment before collapsing into the lower level. A character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher notices the floor sagging in the middle. Otherwise, a character examining the chamber needs to make a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice its precarious state.

A creature standing in the barracks when the floor collapses can make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to jump clear of the collapsing portion. On a failed save, a creature takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall and lands in the storeroom in area 7.

4. EAST BARRACKS

The east barracks is identical to the west barracks, barring the weakened floor. A colony of 4 **small walking fungus** occupy the barracks, having traveled to Farlow from within Ios. The colony remains dormant and motionless unless exposed to arcane energy, like that produced by mechanika, magical items, or spells cast. If exposed to arcane energy, the colony begins to glow a bright blue and advance on the source of the energy, attacking with their fibrous roots.

5. GUARD POSTS

Four identical guard posts stand at the corners of the fort. The southern two guard posts contain soulless **scouts** keeping watch on the surrounding area (see Enemy Roster table). These scouts attack the characters if they see them outside the fort and investigate any commotion that occurs within it.

Floor Hatches. Set in the center of each guard post, a hatch in the floor opens to a ladder to the lower level. When the fort was still used, these hatches provided quick access to the storeroom and armory kept below.

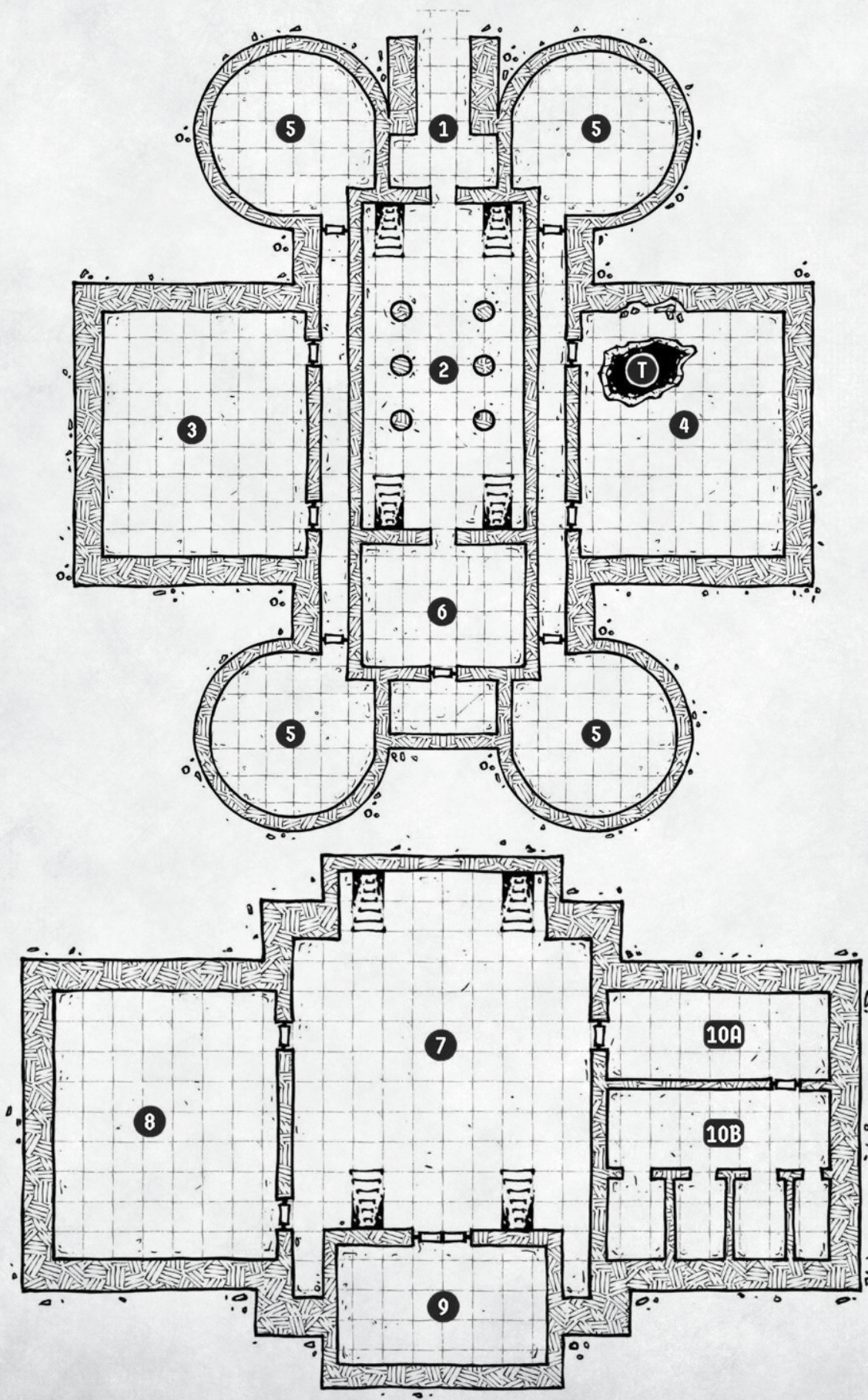
Northeast Guard Post. The northeast guard post has fully collapsed. Rubble piled up in the doorway prevents it from being used to exit the fort, but the stone can be cleared away with an hour of work.

6. DINING HALL & KITCHEN

South of the crumbling great hall in area 2, the dining hall is a large chamber where the Rhulfolk once took their meals. Doors on its south side lead into a cramped and dusty kitchen area.

Treasure. Most valuable items were taken when the Rhulfolk left the fort or by scavengers over the intervening years, but there are still a few items that the characters can find. Dropped behind the cookstove in the kitchen are several silver utensils, worth a collective 5 gp, and a bottle of pure hollowbite (used to cook a Rhulic flambé) still sits on a pantry shelf.





7. UNDERGROUND HALL

The purpose of this large chamber is no longer clear. It has been emptied of contents, though chips and scratches in the stone walls and floor suggest that at one time intense combat occurred here.

8. STOREROOM

Behind a locked door, the storeroom on the lower floor contained all the fort's necessary supplies that were not stored in the armory. This included food, water, spare uniforms and blankets, medical supplies, lamp oil, and coal. Most of the supplies that could be carried out were taken when the fort was abandoned, but there is still a supply of 500 lbs. of coal, 500 gallons of water in barrels, and 25 gallons of lamp oil stored in wooden casks. Unlocking the door requires a DC 12 Dexterity check and thieves' tools to open.

A pair of loggers, a human named Torven Caster and a trollkin named Burl Stonehands, tried to hide in the storeroom. Unfortunately for the pair, a nest of giant centipedes already claimed the chamber as their own. There are 4 **giant centipedes** feasting on the bodies of the dead loggers. The centipedes will attack anyone who enters the storeroom.

Treasure. In addition to the coal, oil, and water in the storeroom, one of the loggers wears a silver ring worth 20 sp. In leather pouches on their belts, the loggers have 13 gp and 30 sp between them. Amid the rubble and other supplies, an iron key that unlocks the armory was accidentally left behind. A character searching the storeroom discovers the key with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check.

9. ARMORY

Behind the most secure doors in the structure, which require a DC 15 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools to unlock, the armory once held ammunition, spare weapons and armor, blasting powder, and the facilities for the maintenance and upkeep of the arms and armor.

A trio of loggers have locked and barred the door to the armory. Just outside its doors, a group of half of the soulless **thugs** is working to defeat the lock. They will attack the characters if they notice them.

Treasure. Like much of the fort, many useful items were taken when the Rhulfolk abandoned Farlow, but there are several items of interest still present in the armory.

- Two damaged carbines with the Misfire (2) property
- A dented suit of infantry armor sized for Rhulfolk
- A box of 20 rounds for the carbines
- A chipped and rusted mechanical handaxe worth 50 gp. The axe does not have a runeplate or capacitor presently attached but has sockets that can accept any runeplate suitable for melee weapons and an alchemical capacitor

10. PRISON

Other than the armory, the prison is the most secure location in the fort and is where the majority of the surviving loggers are hiding.

10A. WARDEN'S OFFICE

When the characters enter this chamber, read the following:

Within this small chamber that was once some form of office, a group of cloaked figures gather near a door in the opposite wall. With a flat, cold voice, one of the figures speaks through the door.

"Give us Erys. Don't prolong the inevitable."

From behind the door, a deep ogrun voice growls back, "Try it. I'll pull the head off the first one of you to step inside."

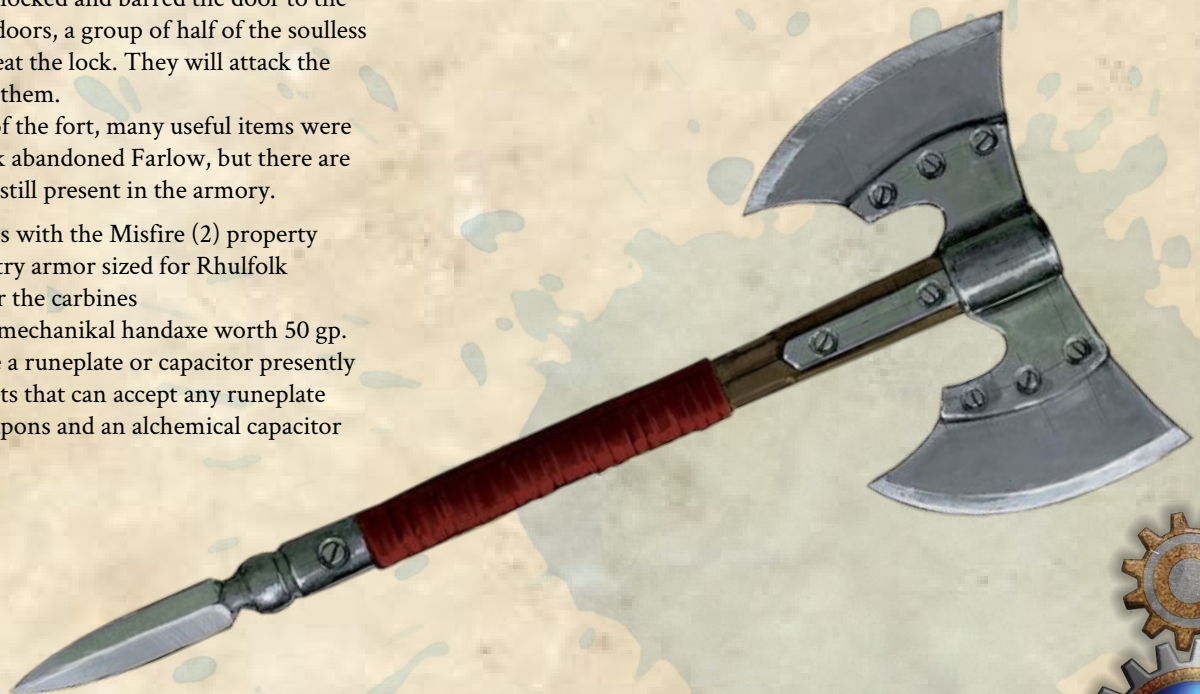
Half of the soulless **thugs** are in the office, trying to force their way into the holding area to reach the people sheltering within. The soulless do not hesitate to fight anyone who enters the office, but their primary goal is to get to Erys.

10B. HOLDING AREA

The holding area contains four small cells and a post for the guard on duty to watch over any prisoners.

There are fifteen loggers taking refuge in the holding area, including Dunok Turkott, the labor korune of the work party, and Erys Alcyan, husband to Veryth. The loggers are all commoners armed with handaxes. Dunok has wedged the blade of his axe into the door's frame and has placed his weight against it, temporarily barring the door from opening. Forcing it open requires a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check, made at disadvantage due to Dunok's makeshift wedge.

The loggers will not exit the holding area while they are convinced that their soulless attackers still present a threat.



DEVELOPMENT

Once the characters deal with the soulless in Fort Farlow, they can gather any surviving loggers and escort them back to the lumber camp. The trip back is uneventful, and, if Gorlu is still alive, the loggers help bring their companion back safely.

During the journey, the survivors confirm Gorlu's version of events, if the characters spoke with him earlier. Otherwise, they convey similar information, describing the attack as a sudden and unprovoked event.

Use the following to guide any information the loggers provide in addition to the earlier description of the attack.

- The Iosans broke through the main gate. They had a swift warjack (at which point Erys softly corrects a speaker, saying, "They are called myrmidons") that trampled through the gate. Lanae marshaled the laborjacks to fight it, but the machine made quick work of them.
- Most of the attackers had black eyes, "like the ones back in Farlow." One of their number was different, though: an ashy-skinned Iosan with glowing eyes. That one seemed to be in command.



RETURN TO THE JHURG LUMBER CAMP

Upon returning to the lumber camp, the survivors thank the characters for rescuing them. Their leader, Dunok Turkott, pulls the characters aside.

"We'd be dead in Farlow if you hadn't come along. You have my thanks. You should return to the freehold. Tell Dira what happened out here. We'll be along after we see to our dead."

The ogrun casts his gaze at one of the workers picking through the remains of the camp. "Take Erys with you. Those things were after him, not us. He's safer with you than he is here."

"If you can find out what they wanted with him, it might explain why any of this happened. But be gentle. He's a good worker and a decent man who's seen more than his share of bad days."

With that, the ogrun thanks the characters once more before setting to work.

ERYS ALCYAN

To the best of his ability, Erys Alcyan explains why the soulless might have been seeking him specifically.

- Erys and his wife and son fled Ios a few years ago. After the infernal invasion and the subsequent war between Ios and the once-allied skorne, his family decided that it would be wise to accept the offer of the Rhulfolk to make a new life in one of the freeholds.
- They were nearly free of Ios, near the Gate of Storms in the Archenbough Forest, when tragedy struck. Erys isn't sure exactly what transpired, but a great occult force ripped through the kingdom. His family fled as fast as they could. He and his wife Veryth made it past the border in time, but his son did not. They watched as their son transformed into an undead creature—an eldritch.
- He and Veryth have been hiding the child in Yearless while searching for any way to undo the transformation. A few weeks ago, he received a message from someone claiming to be Seeker Theryn Eyvreyn. The Seeker had gotten word of their search and said he had a solution.
- Erys' hope turned to fear when he heard of similar messages that went out to other Iosans in similar situations. They spoke of a Seeker sending agents to claim their transformed family members, who were never to be heard from again.

CONCLUDING THE MISSION

After confronting the dangers of the Mundol Wood and Farlow, the characters might want to rest before journeying back to Yearless. If they haven't gained enough experience to increase to 3rd level by this point, consider running them through a few of the Mundol Wood encounters on their return journey. Once the characters have reached at least 3rd level, continue to the next part of the adventure.

YEARLESS IS BURNING

While the characters crept through the ruins of Fort Farlow, Gravewhisper, the sythyss, was not idle. Gravewhisper and half of the cohort of soulless, along with their myrmidon, made their way toward Yearless. When the group assigned to recover Erys did not return swiftly, the sythyss made the decision to strike at the freehold in force. While a subtle operation would have been preferable, Gravewhisper is not willing to compromise their master's goals.

ATTACK ON YEARLESS

Gravewhisper launches the attack on Yearless without mercy. Soulless archers rain down alchemical warheads that set the roofs of several buildings ablaze, hoping to drive Veryth and her child out of hiding. On the heels of the initial barrage, Gravewhisper leads their forces into the streets of Yearless, using the Gorgon light myrmidon they marshal to overcome the freehold's defenders.

The soulless split up into groups of three, sweeping the streets. They are concerned only with discovering and extracting the young eldritch. While they engage with any freeholders who stand in their way, they do not seek fights and avoid them where possible.



When the characters are close enough to catch sight of the freehold, read the following:

As you draw close enough to the freehold to see it on the horizon, you're met with a scene of devastation.

The rooftops of a dozen buildings within the freehold are aflame, sending pillars of black smoke into the air. Even from a distance, the sound of a massacre—the crack of gunfire, the ring of steel on steel, and the screams of the terrified and wounded—carry on the wind.

GENERAL FEATURES

The attack is well underway by the time the characters arrive at the freehold. During the battle, Yearless has the following features:

Light. Depending on the time of day the characters arrive at Yearless, it is either brightly lit from the sun, or the burning structures provide dim light throughout the freehold.

Din of Battle. Shouts of panic fill the freehold along with the sounds of battle. The heavy tread of the Gorgon can be heard from anywhere in Yearless.



Smoke. Unless otherwise stated, thick clouds of smoke fill the streets, burning the lungs and making it difficult to discern friend from foe at a distance. In areas with smoke, creatures and objects beyond 60 feet are heavily obscured. Additionally, while the fires burn, for each hour spent in the freehold, a creature that breathes in the smoke without some form of protection must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, gaining 1 level of exhaustion on a failed save.

PARTY CRASHERS

Battle unfolds all around the streets of Yearless. The characters come under immediate attack when they enter the freehold. The characters must deal with a group of 4 soulless **thugs** standing guard to prevent the freeholders from escaping. When the characters enter, read the following:

Passing into the streets of the freehold is walking into a scene of chaos. Stinging clouds of smoke billow through the streets, and the heat radiating from burning buildings hits you like a branding iron. From the black haze, a swift and silent group rushes at you, weapons drawn.

The soulless are prepared to die and feel no fear of it. They fight to their last breath.

ERYS, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Erys is likely with the characters as they enter the freehold. The losan isn't a fighter but tries to help the characters in any way possible.

The most common tactic Erys employs is to use the Help action to aid a character's attack. He can also pull downed characters out of a dangerous situation.

EXPLORING THE BATTLE

After dealing with the group at the gate, the characters are free to move around Yearless as they wish. Depending on where the characters choose to go, you can have them play through one of the set encounters presented in "An Evolving Situation," but no matter where they choose to go, they should encounter situations where their abilities will prove useful. Some examples include the following actions:

- Treating freeholders who have been injured in the fighting
- Helping the freeholders extinguish fires
- Rescuing freeholders who are trapped in burning structures

You can expand any of the events in "The Chaos of Battle" into encounters in their own right. Use the commoner stat block for any freeholders, if necessary.

THE CHAOS OF BATTLE

The fighting unfolds as a chaotic assault on the senses with the potential for many near-misses and unexpected discoveries.

At your discretion, as the characters move through Yearless, you can have an event occur. Some of these events present hazards that the characters must try to escape while others give them an opportunity to provide assistance to the embattled freeholders.

To determine an event, roll on the Battle Events table or choose a result.

BATTLE EVENTS

d10 Event

- 1-3 A family of 1d4+1 freeholders runs blindly through the smoke. Roll 1d6. 1-3, the family is headed for the shrine to the Great Fathers; 4-6, the family is fleeing toward the docks.
- 4 A volley of arrows and crossbow bolts hisses through the air overhead.
- 5 The rattle of gunfire echoes through the freehold as its inhabitants try to fight back.
- 6 A burning freehold commoner emerges from a fiery building, screaming for help. The commoner takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of their turns unless a character uses an action to smother the flames.
- 7 One of the freeholders the characters is familiar with, such as Caylyth or Duz, lies slain in the street, shot down by a soulless' crossbow bolt.
- 8 A group of five freehold commoners work as a bucket brigade to douse the flames engulfing one of the buildings. The characters hear the desperate cries of another freeholder trapped within.
- 9 A burning building collapses, filling the street with a gout of flame and a cloud of scorching sparks. Creatures in the area must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw to get clear of the blast or take 2d6 fire damage on a failed save.
- 10 A wild shot from the Gorgon's polarity cannon rips through a nearby building, hurling a spray of burning debris. Creatures in the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d8 force damage on a failed save.

AN EVOLVING SITUATION

The sequence of events that follow is up to you and the characters. You can present them with as many of the encounters as you want, in any order. The only exception is “Surrender the Child,” which should be the final encounter the characters experience in this part of the adventure.

As the characters complete encounters, surviving freeholders can give them information about other areas nearby that require their assistance.

EMPTY HOUSE

Erys begs the characters to check the Alcyan family farm with him. This event occurs if they agree to check on Veryth at the farm. As the characters approach Erys’ farm, read the following:

Racing to the outskirts of the freehold, Erys cries out when he sees the door of his home hanging open. Just beyond the door in the home’s main room, a group of pale, black-eyed figures ransack the interior.

The group of soulless are looking for anywhere Veryth might be hiding herself and her son. The group consists of 1 soulless **bandit** per player character led by 1 soulless **houseguard**.

Soulless Tactics. The soulless halt their search as soon as they become aware of the characters. Two of the soulless hang back inside the doorframe of the house to maintain cover and attack with their crossbows. The houseguard and any remaining soulless move to intercept the characters outside the house.

Nobody’s Home. After dealing with the soulless, the characters can look for Veryth. Searching the farmhouse reveals that the Iosan woman is nowhere to be found. If Erys is still conscious, read the following:

With a ragged sigh, the Iosan man’s shoulders fall. His voice trembles as he says, “If she isn’t here, she’d be near the river. That’s where we were hiding Avross. I pray we can reach them before these things do.”

DOCKSIDE MASSACRE

As the attack progresses, freeholders seeking safety begin to flee to the riverfront, hoping to escape the carnage. Rhulic captains scramble to load families onto their boats to bring them safely downriver, but Gravewhisper’s soldiers are keen on eliminating any potential witnesses.

At some point, the characters hear the steam engines of riverboats roaring to life. If they investigate, read the following:

The freehold’s small riverfront is a scene of pure bedlam. A throng of panicking freeholders swarms two waiting boats. Standing in the street less than sixty feet away, a group of bow-wielding elves releases a torrent of arrows into the crowd with detached, mechanical precision.

Boats. There are two boats moored at the riverfront. Each one is capable of holding twenty passengers, though they will be cramped shoulder to shoulder. Each boat has an AC of 13 and 50 hit points and is immune to psychic and poison damage.

Freeholders. There is a mob of about fifty freeholders crowding the dock, pushing through each other to reach the riverboats. The jostling, frightened mob fills the entirety of the dock and is difficult terrain. It will take at least two minutes to load as many people as possible on the riverboats—though some will be left behind.

Don’t worry about tracking the entire mob’s actions: they don’t participate in any combat. On Initiative count 20, a few more freeholders manage to get aboard the boats. You might also describe as people are knocked down beneath the feet of the mob or are accidentally shoved off the dock into the river.

Foes. Five soulless **scouts** focus their attention on the mob of freeholders. If they are not engaged in combat or otherwise distracted, the scouts stay back and release a steady volley of arrows into the crowd. Assume that each round, a scout manages to kill a single freeholder with its attacks.

Rewards. In addition to experience awarded for defeating the scouts, the characters gain 100 XP for every 10 freeholders who manage to escape on the boats.

GLUM PROSPECTS

Dozens of freeholders have barricaded themselves in the Hall to take shelter from the attackers, but the building is now surrounded by soulless. The attackers are preparing to burn the defenders out. Those who remain within will be burned alive, and the soulless plan to cut down any who flee the fire.

Foes. Six soulless **bandits** and one soulless **houseguard** comprise the forces attacking the Hall. The houseguard is preparing an incendiary grenade to throw through one of the windows, but his ogrun companion Brigat attempts to suppress him with her repeating pistol. The houseguard is waiting for the trollkin mercenary to reload in 6 rounds before he hurls his grenade.

If the houseguard throws the grenade, it engulfs the interior in flames. The freeholders inside try to rush past the attackers, resulting in a bloody massacre. Unless the characters intervene, each soulless kills one freeholder per round.





SURRENDER THE CHILD

Before the attack on Yearless is complete, the sythys champion of the Seeker confronts those who attempt to protect the eldritch child. After resolving the previous encounters, the characters hear the thunderous report of the Gorgon's polarity cannon. Read the following:

The roar of a warjack's weapon cuts through the sounds of fighting. For a moment, all other sound seems to fall away, leaving a strange stillness in its absence. That sliver of quiet shatters as a clear voice calls out, "We've come for the child."

Across the freehold, the attackers halt their fighting. The rumble of many feet converging on the voice is unmistakable.

Gravewhisper has located Avross' hiding place, a storehouse used by the Shadowed Path sect. Destroying the doors to the storehouse with their Gorgon's cannon, Gravewhisper stands at the ready as the remaining soulless come to join them.

When the characters are in sight of the storehouse, read the following:

A twisted ruin is all that remains of the gate to the riverfront storehouse before you. A towering machine of pale metal stands before the structure, scraping the blades on its forearms together in a shower of sparks.

Standing next to the looming construct is an Iosan with the pallid complexion of the dead. The heavy armor the elf wears and the enormous sword in their grip mark them as some manner of knight. The figure is quickly joined by a throng of the black-eyed soulless. The armored elf calls out to the occupants of the storehouse.

"The child is all I'm after, fair cousins. My master's purpose is as great as the one you swore an oath to uphold. Turn it over so that we may be done here, and he might show mercy to you when he achieves his great purpose!"

The speaker is **Gravewhisper**. The sythyss knight is accompanied by their **Gorgon light myrmidon**, 2 soulless escorts, and 4 soulless **scouts**. Inside the storehouse, Fynn Asir and 2 other **mage hunters** shield the child, Avross.

If the characters don't intervene, Gravewhisper and their forces surge into the storehouse. Though the mage hunters put up a fierce fight, they are outnumbered and have little to combat the Gorgon. If the characters move to intercede or attack, read the following:

With a hum of building power, the elven war machine shifts into a protective stance. Turning their attention to you, the pale Iosan smiles a thin, predatory smile. With a hiss, the dead elf says, "I was afraid that there would be no worthy opponents in this place. Thank you for proving me wrong."

Gravewhisper and their Gorgon focus attacks on the characters while the remaining soulless attempt to overpower the mage hunters and claim the child.

ROLEPLAYING GRAVEWHISPER

In life, Gravewhisper was a stalwart protector of Ios serving House Issyen at the Gate of Storms. Though they retain some of the martial discipline of their former life, becoming a sythyss has replaced nobility with mercilessness. This combination of martial skill and ruthlessness makes Gravewhisper a useful weapon in their master's arsenal. Driven by a desire to appease their master, Gravewhisper is an unshakable servant who would rather face destruction than disappoint Seeker Eyvrey.

Ideal. "Death has unshackled my mind to let me reach my true potential."

Bond. "My master has given me a new purpose. His designs will allow our people to thrive once again and take our rightful place as the undisputed leaders of Immoren."

Flaw. "I must make my creator happy. Failure to do so means that I have no more purpose. I would rather be cut down in battle than entertain the thought of failing him."

THINGS TO DO IN YEARLESS WHEN YOU'RE DEAD

Gravewhisper and the Gorgon should be a challenge for the characters to overpower, even with the support of the mage hunters. However, if the battle looks like it is turning against them, young Avross moves to intervene. The following text assumes the characters have taken a fair bit of damage from the sythyss and construct. Feel free to adjust it if the characters are handling the battle without too much trouble to have Avross come in to take down the grim sythyss knight.

With an indignant cry, a small hooded figure erupts from the gaping wound in the storehouse. Rushing toward you, the hood falls away to reveal a face, once youthful, ravaged by the taint of undeath.

"Stay away from them!" The voice is still that of a child, despite his ghastly appearance. Raising a splayed hand at your opponent, the boy releases a surge of darkness that seems to reach inside your foe's armored chest.

Using his Aura of Desecration ability to strip away Gravewhisper's immunity to necrotic damage, Avross then uses his Dread Touch attack on the sythyss.

After doing so, Avross is stunned. This is the first time the child has used the dread powers of the eldritch on anyone. He has trouble fathoming what he's done—and finally realizes what he's become.

AFTERMATH

When the battle concludes, Avross' parents rush to embrace him. If forced to use his Dread Touch ability, Avross is in shock as his mother and father hold him tight, eventually repeating, "I had to. I'm sorry. I had to." Erys and Veryth try to comfort their son to little avail.

Any surviving freeholders in Yearless eventually arrive at the scene. Within moments, the characters overhear a quiet murmur among the freeholders, especially any Iosans, pointing out the undead child in their midst. Before long, Veryth pulls her son's hood back up to hide his face and ushers the family away, back to their home.



CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

When Gravewhisper is defeated, either by the characters or by Avross, any remaining soulless try to escape the combat. They know their master Eyvreyne will want to know what transpired. The Gorgon stops fighting as well and moves to protect the sythyss' fallen body. The Gorgon only attacks if a creature approaches Gravewhisper.

REBUILDING & REWARDS

Though many freeholders may have lost their lives or homes, Yearless is not finished. Those who survived will rebuild to the best of their ability, and new people arrive at the town with each passing season.

For their part in fending off the attackers, the characters are rewarded handsomely. They are forgiven for any misdeeds they have committed in Yearless and given 150 gp each from a mixture of the town's coffers and contributions from the folk of the freehold. They are welcome guests at any establishment or home in Yearless and will seldom need to pay for a drink while in town—though they would be wise to give any shots of hollowbite a wide berth for a few weeks at the minimum.

SECRET REVEALED

The Shadowed Path does not take long to make contact with the characters following the defeat of Gravewhisper. The mage hunters explain what they can: what an eldritch and its sythyss creations are, how they hoped to learn more about the supernatural calamity in Ios from studying Avross, and general information about the Retribution of Scyras as an organization.

The hunters are still wary of any spellcasters among the characters, but as long as the characters do not act against the Shadowed Path, that wariness does not reach the level of hostility.

AVROSS IS MISSING

A day or two after the attack on Yearless, as the freeholders work to rebuild and the characters are preparing to go about their day, Veryth appears in the center of the freehold in a state of panic.

The morning is split by the anguished wail of Veryth Alcyan. Clutching at her dress, she calls out for her son.

"Avross! Please, it wasn't your fault! Avross, where are you?"

The Iosan woman turns in place, her desperate eyes flicking across your faces as she searches for her son.

Veryth is in a state of panic, but a character can calm her immediately with a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Otherwise, she moves through Yearless, overturning possible hiding places and throwing open the doors to buildings for another several minutes before coming to her senses.

Use the following information to guide a conversation with Veryth.

- Her son was almost catatonic after getting home. She thought that the panic of fighting had shaken him and he just needed time to regain himself.
- The boy asked her if he was going to be "like this" forever. When she couldn't give him an answer, he wept through the night.
- When she rose in the morning, her son was gone. He left behind a short message, but she couldn't believe it. She tried to tell herself it wasn't true and went looking for him.

Veryth hands the characters a crumpled note she clutches in one hand. If they ask to keep it, the woman hands it over without argument.

AVROSS' NOTE

*Mother,
You told me that I would always be your child. But I'm not that anymore. I'm not anything anymore. At least not Avross. I'm a husk where he used to live. A corpse that doesn't want to stay dead.*

You and Father should stay here. I'm going where my kind belong. Back where it started. Don't follow me.

—Avross

A character who examines the note can make a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check to discover that there is something off about the handwriting in the letter. Certain strokes seem to be pressed deeper into the page, almost as if something—or someone—were forcing the boy's hand.

After the characters have examined the letter, wrap up the chapter by reading or paraphrasing the following:

With that, the mother turns her wet eyes from your faces to the south, to the misty wall of ancient trees beyond the valley.

To Ios.

"My son is going home," she whispers.

CHARACTER XP

In addition to XP gained from defeating monsters, the characters gain an extra 200 XP (to be divided evenly among the entire adventuring company) if they managed to incapacitate or destroy the Gorgon.



2



INTO THE ARCHENBOUGH



SCATTERED AMONGST THE MIST-BLANKETED TREES OF the Archenbough and Mistbough Forests are the ruins of the once-great Iosan people. Even prior to the Sundering, the elves were a people in decline. Whole cities were abandoned to the forest as their inhabitants moved deeper into the nation, consolidating in cities like Shyrr or the strongholds of the Great Military Houses, the aeryths.

The forest has not yet fully reclaimed the land from its previous inhabitants. The roots of trees embrace cracked and weathered statues of the elven gods. The foundations of buildings rise up from the undergrowth, and fragments of aqueducts stand between the towering trees. Across the forest, the occasional patch of white flagstones is still visible in the soil. While the Iosans no longer dwell across the entirety of their nation, the evidence of their past is written across every acre of it. As the GM, you can use these fragments of the past to reinforce just how far the nation of Ios has fallen and how little of what the elven people once were remains.

Once the characters enter Ios, they find themselves in a strange new world. The forest and the mystical stain upon it make travel between locations in the Archenbough Forest difficult. This chapter presents guidelines for the characters' travels as they visit locations detailed in other chapters of the adventure.

The vast forests of Ios are the main backdrop for the rest of the adventure. Hidden away among the trees are many sites important to Eyvrey'n's larger schemes, populated by those who have sworn allegiance to him or who hope to use him to achieve further greatness.

FEATURES OF THE ARCHENBOUGH

The following features apply to the general region of the Archenbough.

Light. The dense trees shade the ground beneath them, allowing only occasional shafts of sunlight through. During the day, the Archenbough experiences dim light.

Forest Canopy. The understory of the forest creates a "ceiling" with an average height of 50 feet above the ground. The canopy blocks the view of objects beyond it, making it impossible to spot landmarks while beneath it.

Sounds. The gentle susurrus of wind through the trees; the occasional cry of a hunting Iosan hawk; the crackle of underbrush as a creature disturbed by passersby flees.

Foraging. Food and water are abundant in the Archenbough. Wisdom (Survival) checks to forage for supplies are DC 10.

Dead Mists. The mists of Ios have long been a strange, albeit natural, phenomenon. This is no longer the case. During the Sundering, the mass deaths of Iosans who did not become eldritch infused the land with a lingering necromantic energy. These mists coalesce where great numbers of Iosans perished in the Sundering and linger as a spiritual stain on the world.

A creature takes 3 (1d6) necrotic damage for each minute spent in a dead mist. Undead and soulless creatures are immune to this damage.

EXPLORING THE ARCHENBOUGH

For characters who are not Iosan or Nyss, the journey into the Archenbough will be their first time within the borders of Ios. Without someone native to the area to act as a guide, the characters will need to explore the wooded nation on their own, discovering its many hidden sites and perils at their own pace.

The first and most obvious location is the Gate of Storms (see chapter 3), the large border fortress of House Issyen that watches over Rhul to the north. Passage through the gate leads to the Knot (page 43). Characters who travel on the Knot eventually locate the Moon Arch (chapter 4) or the ruins of Shaelvas (chapter 5). At both of these locations, allies of Seeker Eyvrey'n work toward the eldritch's goals and can provide information to the characters about where to journey next.

ARCHENBOUGH TRAVEL

The Archenbough is a dense forest of irregular terrain, thick underbrush, enormous trees, and omnipresent mists that stretches for many miles in every direction. Characters traveling through the forest will have to deal with these natural impediments, as well as a lack of true roads, threats both arcane and mundane, and the presence of hostile Iosans who do not wish to see their territory intruded upon.







OVERLAND TRAVEL

If they are not traveling on the main roadway of Ios, the Knot, characters will have to blaze their own way overland. The rough terrain and many natural obstacles present their own challenges and result in a slower pace than normal overland travel.

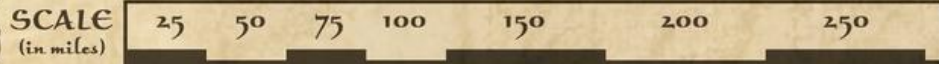




IOS

-  CAPITAL
-  CITY
-  FORTRESS
-  FEATURE OF INTEREST
-  RAILROAD
-  ROAD

-  MOUNTAINS
-  HILLS
-  FOREST (temperate)
-  FOREST (boreal)
-  SWAMP



TRAVEL PACE

Pace	Distance Traveled per Minute	Distance Traveled per Hour	Distance Traveled per Day	Effect
Fast	300 feet	3 miles	24 miles	-5 penalty to passive Wisdom (Perception) scores
Normal	200 feet	2 miles	16 miles	-
Slow	100 feet	1 mile	8 miles	Able to use stealth

Note that this lower travel pace only affects characters not using the Knot. While on that roadway, the characters travel at a normal pace.

THE KNOT

The Knot is an impossibly complex, mist-shrouded roadway from the Gate of Mists that loops back and forth across itself as it travels throughout Ios. Ingeniously devised by House Aiesyn as both a defense and a trade route, the winding Knot is so complex, even many Iosans are unable to navigate it. Only the builders and highly trained scouts of House Rhysslyr know the secrets of its passage, and trespassers quickly find themselves lost.

The Long and Winding Road. While traveling along the Knot, characters without familiarity with its complex and overlapping route can quickly lose their way. For each hour spent on the Knot, a character who is navigating must make a DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check, becoming lost on a failure.

Due to House Aiesyn's construction techniques, this effect is considered magical for the purposes of abilities like Natural Explorer. The unusual methods employed in the Knot's construction defy the assumptions of normal travel.

NARRATING THE JOURNEY

As the characters travel through Ios, it helps to improvise descriptions of the environment to spice up the expedition. Keep the following in mind as the characters travel.

First, the trip is not an easy one. The Archenbough is filled with dense underbrush, towering trees, and rough terrain. Navigating a path through the forest is a challenge, and there are few routes beyond meandering game trails for the characters to follow. The single well-maintained route through the region is the Knot, a mystifying and complex path on which even native Iosans can become lost.

The forest also contains hidden perils. Concealed within the foliage, bizarre and unfamiliar beasts are seemingly ever-present. The characters should feel as if they are constantly being observed by hidden watchers that scurry away into the undergrowth whenever the characters approach.

Last, Ios is a beautiful, if tragic, place. Scattered throughout the forest are the remnants of graceful elven architecture that has been abandoned for centuries, left to be reclaimed by the trees. As they journey, the characters should encounter many such sites, which stand like silent memorials to the kingdom that once was. The long and tragic downfall of Ios is on display everywhere the characters go.

ARCHENBOUGH FOREST RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The Archenbough Forest, like all of transformed Ios, is filled with dangerous creatures and other supernatural perils. As the characters travel within the forest, they are likely to encounter wandering creatures, patrols of scouts, and other unusual events.

Roll a d20 once during the day and once each night; an encounter occurs on a roll of 18–20 during the daylight hours and on a roll of 15 or higher at night. Determine the encounter by rolling on the table below or choose an encounter. Random encounters are described after the table.

You can increase the number of random encounters the characters experience, but try not to overdo it. Too many encounters can slow the players' progress through the story and bog down their experience.

ARCHENBOUGH FOREST ENCOUNTERS

d12 Encounter

1–2	Soulless houseguard (1 per character)
3	Razorbat swarm
4	Aspis pair
5	Iosan manticore
6	Arcantrik force mines
7	Damaged force generator
8	Hollowthorn thicket
9	Tree fisher (karkinos)
10	Forgotten shrine
11	Dead travelers
12	Battle site

ARCANTRIK FORCE MINES

As the characters travel, they stumble upon a field of arcantrik antipersonnel devices. Lying in wait, these devices respond to nearby movement and produce powerful arcane explosions. An arcantrik field can be a relic of the War of the Houses that has lain undisturbed for many years, but it might also be a more recent installation from a power struggle between two eldritch factions.

Noticing the mines requires a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. A creature moving within the minefield must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or trigger one of the force mines. A creature moving at half-speed does not need to make a saving throw. When a mine is triggered, it shoots out of the ground to a height of six feet before detonating. Choose a point 10 feet away from the triggering creature. A 15-foot diameter sphere centered on that point detonates in a flash of arcantrik energy. Creatures in the area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 7 (2d6) force damage and is thrown 15 feet away from the center of the explosion. On a successful save, a creature takes half-damage and isn't thrown.

ASPIS PAIR

The characters disturb a mated pair of **aspis** as they move through the forest. The aspis are in the process of building a nest and defend the construction fiercely but do not pursue any characters who attempt to flee.

BATTLE SITE

The characters discover a site of recent battle between rival factions in Ios. There are roughly a dozen bodies scattered across the area. Most of them are soulless, garbed in the uniforms of the houseguard, Dawnguard, or mage hunters of the Retribution of Scyrah. A 30-foot-wide cloud of dead mist lingers over the bodies.

Sites like these are alarmingly common in Ios in the present day. As the Iosan eldritch jockey for control or argue over the fate of the nation, disagreements and rivalries often boil over into battles. The victor often absorbs the soulless who survive their eldritch masters, replenishing any forces who were lost in battle.

If the characters search the bodies of the slain, you can reward them with Iosan firearms and ammunition as well as simple supplies like healer's kits, rations, or equipment.

DAMAGED FORCE GENERATOR

While passing through a tangle of undergrowth, the characters encounter an arcantrik force generator at the bottom of a deep depression. The force generator was once part of a larger abandoned structure, which has been pulverized to a layer of fine white stone across a wide area. It is clearly malfunctioning, pulsing out increasingly dangerous waves of arcantrik force.

The generator will go critical in 1d4+2 minutes after the characters encounter it. At the start of each minute, the generator releases a pulse of force energy. The pulse begins as a 20-foot diameter sphere centered on the generator and increases in diameter by 10 feet for each minute that passes. A creature in the area of the pulse must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed to the edge of the area.

If the generator goes critical, it detonates in a massive blast. A 100-foot diameter sphere centered on the generator is impacted by the force of detonation, which snaps trees and flattens the undergrowth. A creature in the area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 14 (4d6) force damage

on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful save.

Deactivating the generator requires a DC 12 Intelligence check made with a mechanic's toolkit or tinker's tools and 1 minute of uninterrupted work. Alternatively, the generator can be destroyed, prematurely releasing its arcantrik energy. The generator is AC 17, has 20 hit points, and is immune to poison and psychic damage. If it is destroyed, the detonation area is reduced to the most recent diameter of its force pulse.

DEAD TRAVELERS

The characters come across evidence of previous intruders into the Iosan interior—dead travelers' bodies left to rot. If searched, the bodies may still carry useful gear or crude maps of the region's layout. One may even annotate the location of the Moon Arch with the note "Find Seeker Hallyr. She might be able to help if she's still alive."

A close inspection reveals that the travelers were attacked with a wickedly sharp blade—the weapon of the assassin known as the Shadowblade. However, not all of the injuries resulted in death right away. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check notices signs of blood poisoning radiating from several of the wounds.

FORGOTTEN SHRINE

The characters stumble upon an abandoned shrine to one of the Divine Court. Smaller shrines like this dot the Iosan countryside, often erected as places of rest along the Knot or in the abandoned ruins of an Iosan village.

Many of the shrines still have a small token or gift left as an offering to the gods. You can consult the Gift to the Gods table to determine what (if any) offerings are left behind.

GIFT TO THE GODS

d6 Offering

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | No offering. Either there is no offering in the shrine, or what offerings were left there have been destroyed by the elements or taken away by wildlife or scavengers. |
| 3 | A small silver locket embellished with jewels worth 25 gp. |
| 4 | Potion of healing |
| 5 | Potion of climbing |
| 6 | Potion of heroism |

HOLLOWTHORN THICKET

While passing through an overgrown patch of underbrush, the characters disturb a **hollowthorn** that grows between the other, more mundane plants. Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher spots the hollowthorns. Other characters are surprised.

IOSAN MANTICORE

The characters encounter a prowling **manticore**, one of the beasts of legend in Ios long thought to be extinct. Alternatively, the manticore descends on the characters as they camp for the night.



RAZORBAT SWARM

The characters enter the territory of a swarm of **razorbats** that dwell in the trees overhead. If this encounter occurs during daylight hours, the bats are slumbering and only awaken if the characters make significant noise while traveling through their territory. If the encounter occurs at night, the bats are awake and on the prowl for a meal; they do not hesitate to attack.

SOULLESS HOUSEGUARD

The characters cross paths with a force of **soulless houseguard** and **soulless houseguard gunners** traveling between locations. The soulless are split roughly evenly between halberdiers and riflemen. The soulless are hostile but can be calmed with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check or a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check if at least one of the characters is of Iosan or Nyss descent.

If combat ensues, the soulless retreat if the situation looks dire or if more than half their numbers fall. The soulless travel to the closest location in the forest to warn of the characters' presence.

TREE FISHER (KARKINOS)

The characters are ambushed by a **karkinos** while walking beneath the canopy of trees. Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 16 or higher spots the tree fisher, but all others are surprised by it. Alternatively, if this encounter occurs at night, the karkinos ambushes the characters while they make camp, trying to pull a likely meal from the firelight and into the trees.

In either case, the tree fisher is interested in a meal, not a prolonged battle. If reduced to fewer than half its total hit points, the karkinos scurries away.

SET ENCOUNTERS

You can use the following encounters when your characters travel between locations in the following chapters. These encounters are more detailed than random encounters and can help the characters get a better idea of what Ios is like in the aftermath of the Sundering.

Note that one of the set encounters includes contact with an assassin who is loyal to Seeker Eyvreyn. This is the first opportunity to encounter this NPC but is by no means the last.

“WELCOME TO IOS”

Within the first twenty-four hours of their time in Ios, the characters encounter a fragment of what used to be the Retribution of Scyrah. This particular cell has taken it upon themselves to monitor the actions of some of the more ambitious eldritch in Ios and deal with any rising threats that could further afflict the Iosan people. They have caught word of Seeker Eyvreyn bringing outsiders into the forest but do not yet know the full scope of his plans.

By the time the Retribution cell encounters the characters, they have been using camouflage to monitor the party for a short while. Their leading member decides to have a face-to-face meeting with the characters before they can get too much deeper into the forest.

Set the scene by reading the following text:

As you make your way through the forest, you hear the crack of a crossbow firing. The bolt thuds into the trunk of a tree a few yards ahead.

Before the bolt has stopped trembling in the tree trunk, a group of hooded figures emerge from the foliage all around you. One of them raises a hand and speaks.

“That was a warning, and your only one. What are you doing in Ios?”

The speaker is Renyll Syvas, a chaotic neutral female former mage-hunter assassin turned **eldritch**. She is accompanied by a group of **soulless escorts** armed with heavy crossbows and short swords (one soulless for each character plus any NPC companions).

Renyll is wary but not hostile. She isn't interested in outright slaughter, having left her old profession behind her. She listens attentively to any explanation the characters offer. If they mention Seeker Eyvreyne or the attack on Yearless, she becomes visibly interested and asks for more details.

SPEAKING WITH RENYLL

If the characters are not hostile, she answers questions they have about the region. Use the following details to guide interactions with her:

- Eyvreyne was a member of a sect called the Seekers. While her former sect hunted down human mages in an effort to prevent the death of the goddess Scyrah, the Seekers sought more esoteric means of preserving her.
- Since the Sundering—the name the elves have given the mass death and transformation of their people—Eyvreyne has been forging alliances with other influential eldritch.
- Renyll suspects Eyvreyne is responsible for bringing abductees to Ios. These captives are given to those eldritch who are loyal to him to provide sustenance.
- Renyll can give directions to any nearby locations in the forest.
- Renyll knows the location of a Retribution safe house in the forest not far away: Scylshen Fasthold (see page 49). If she believes the characters are trustworthy, she shares this location with them.
- She doesn't know what caused her to become an eldritch while so many others died. But it seemed to have had something to do with the spirits of those who were in Ios when it happened.

FIGHTING RENYLL

If the characters are hostile, Renyll and her soulless fight back without hesitation. Renyll lets the soulless engage in close combat while she keeps her distance, taking shots with her crossbow.

Fighting the mage hunter marks the characters as enemies of her sect of the Retribution. They will not be able to use the safe house to rest or resupply. Renyll or other eldritch from her cell begin to hunt the characters through Ios and can be a thorn in their side for days to come.

AVROSS' CAMP

As the characters travel into the forest, within the first forty-eight hours they spend in Ios, they discover a recent campsite where the child Avross rested overnight.

The woods ahead open into a strangely peaceful dell spread out in the shadow of an ancient, gnarled maple tree. Someone used this place as a roadside camp, judging by the circle of soot-blackened stones near the maple's trunk.

This encounter can be used in one of two ways. If the characters are getting close to either the Moon Arch or Darsael, it can be a breadcrumb on the trail to reinforce that they're headed the right way. If, on the other hand, they are not moving to one or the other location, then you can use the encounter with the camp as a way to get them back on the right track.

EVIDENCE OF AVROSS

There is a small fire pit containing a bed of ashes in the center of the campsite. While Avross does not require warmth anymore, the firelight helped to keep some of the wild creatures of Ios at bay overnight.

A character who searches the area and makes a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers one of the following pieces of evidence. Each check requires a character to spend 1 minute examining the area.

- A small dagger with a cracked blade that has been left stuck in a piece of wood. The dagger's design is similar to those fabricated by the Nyss smith in Yearless. The blade cracked when Avross used it to split wood for his fire, and he was unable to pull it free.
- Childish scribbling in the dirt next to the fire. The scratches depict the myrmidon that was used in the attack on Yearless.
- On the southern side of the encampment, a set of light tracks in the damp soil leads south toward the Knot—the clearest tracks the characters will have been able to find up until this point.
- A log was dragged closer to the fire pit. There are some woolen fibers stuck into the log, but they are of a deep crimson color. The last time the characters saw Avross, the boy wore no garments of such a color. It's possible he did not travel alone.

THE ASSASSIN STRIKES

Shortly after the characters discover Avross' camp, one of Eyvreyne's lieutenants ambushes them. The assassin is the Shadowblade, one of Eyvreyne's most potent agents in Ios.

Read the following to set the scene:

Before you can move on from the eldritch child's modest campsite, there is a whisper in the air. A gleaming silver blade attached to a chain erupts from the forest, slashing down at you.

Your attacker is a lean elf wearing a mask that completely conceals her face. Crouching in the branches of the trees overhead, the elf twitches the chain and snaps the blade back into her waiting hand, ready for another strike.

The Shadowblade attacks the characters not necessarily looking to slaughter them but instead to test their respective capabilities. The Shadowblade intends to bring any information gathered from the fighting, such as spellcasting ability, quality of weapons and armor, and so forth, back to Seeker Eyvreyne.

After a round of fighting, the Shadowblade retreats. The assassin uses her chain blade to grapple away through the trees before going into hiding. If a character attempts to restrain or pursue the Shadowblade, the assassin fights to incapacitate them before resuming her escape. In truly dire circumstances, the Shadowblade activates a *teleport* spell engine to escape any pursuers. Since the Shadowblade is soulless, she does not run the risk of infernal interference with this teleport.

THE ASSASSIN'S SIGIL

Hanging conspicuously from the assassin's neck is a silver pendant with the symbol of Lyliss inlaid in topaz. A character who sees this pendant can attempt a DC 10 Intelligence (History or Religion) check to identify the symbol. A character who recognizes it can attempt a DC 12 (History or Religion) check to recall that the goddess Lyliss was worshipped in the city of Shaelvas, an abandoned ruin said to be hidden somewhere in the forests south of the Gate of Storms along the Knot.

DEAD AND DEADER

On the third day of their time in Ios, characters encounter forces of two rival elves. This encounter is best if placed somewhere along the Knot south of the Moon Arch, such as on the road to the Forbidden Temple.

Leading one group of elves is Ayred, an eldritch knight formerly of House Issyen and the Gate of Storms. Ayred brokered a deal with Seeker Eyvreyne to give the Seeker free movement through Lylisthyl, the province containing the Gate of Storms. In return, Eyvreyne sets aside prisoners whom he has deemed unsuitable for his plans. When Ayred's commanding officer learned about his feasting on living souls, the knight was banished from the fortress and forced to find refuge with the seekers at the Moon Arch.

When the characters encounter these groups, Ayred is blocked on his return to the Moon Arch by Revalor Ellowuyr. The Ellowuyr warrior does not trust the Seeker and wishes to oppose his efforts, despite not knowing fully what Eyvreyne plans to do. Revalor plans to stop Ayred and set the captives free.

When the characters spot the two groups on the road ahead, read the following to set the scene:

Two undead elves backed up by a tangle of soldiers face each other in the road, weapons drawn. One of the pair, clad in brassy plate armor, levels a heavy sword at the other.

"We've been following you since you stepped onto the Knot, Ayred. We know you've thrown in with the mad Seeker. Ios has enough trouble without his...arrogance."

The accused lets out a derisive snort. "Don't blame him because of your lack of ambition. He judged you and deemed you unworthy of apotheosis. Now stand aside before I cut you down."

The sword-wielding elf brings his blade up in a high guard, and then calls to the soldiers behind him, "Blades of Ellowuyr, I want these traitors' heads."

The characters don't need to participate in the ensuing combat. The purpose of the encounter is to give the characters perspective on the tensions in Ios and that not everyone—even eldritch—agree with Eyvreyne or his methods. It also provides an opportunity to rescue some captured mortals and attempt to extract extra information from them.

If the characters choose not to fight, the two forces engage in a bloody melee with heavy casualties on both sides. The battle is quick and brutal, and, without the participation of the characters, is over within a single minute. Roll 1d6 and consult the Battle Outcome table to determine the victor.

BATTLE OUTCOME

d6 Victor

- 1 Revalor Ellowuyr is the victor but loses his entire force and is badly injured.
- 2 Ayred is the victor but is the sole survivor of the battle.
- 3 The Ellowuyr swordsmen win the fight, losing about half their total numbers.
- 4 Ayred's forces are victorious, losing about half their total numbers.
- 5 The Ellowuyr swordsmen emerge victorious, losing about a quarter of their numbers.
- 6 Ayred's forces cut down the Ellowuyr soldiers, losing a quarter of their numbers in the process.

Regardless of how the battle plays out, the prisoners Ayred's group is escorting survive the battle. See "Captives" below for more information.

GETTING INVOLVED

The characters might choose to participate in the clash. Unless they make their presence known ahead of time, the characters surprise both of the elven combatants—the two forces are too focused on each other to notice a group of adventurers!

How the opposing forces respond depends on the characters' actions. If they attack one group and not the other, the characters' erstwhile allies treat them as friendlies in the upcoming fight. If, however, the characters attack more than one group or try to interfere with the fighting, then it becomes a three-way free-for-all.

CAPTIVES

Ayred's forces are leading three captives, Dayn Larisar (NG male Iosan **commoner**), Nyana Waelyn (LN female Iosan **commoner**), and Almar Hayllith (CG female Nyss **acolyte**). The trio are shackled at the hand and wrist to prevent their escape. The captives' shackles have AC 19, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

The three captives were taken from elven communities to the west. Seeker Eyvreyne's soulless warriors scoured the countryside beyond the Mistbough Forest looking for individuals like them. The trio were part of a larger group being held captive at the Forbidden Temple.

During the journey, the prisoners overheard conversations

between Ayred and the soulless. Ayred mentioned how “the Seeker” had no use for them, and that the others at the Gate of Storms would be happy to see a new meal.

If Ayred’s forces are victorious, they continue on to the Gate of Storms with the captives who will eventually be fed on or transformed into sythys.

If Revalor is victorious, the swordsman moves to free the prisoners and escort them out of Ios. The Ellowuyr swordsman does not speak with the living elves, but simply hacks through their chains and commands them to leave.

AFTERMATH

The aftermath of this encounter depends on the outcome of the battle and if the characters chose to participate or not.

Helping Revalor. If the characters fought against Ayred—thereby assisting Revalor—read or paraphrase the following text:

Though his heavy helmet conceals his face, the elven swordsman seems to look you over, weighing his options. After a momentary pause he speaks, his voice muffled by his heavy armor.

“I do not know if you are friend or foe, but you’ve done good here, strangers. I am Revalor of House Ellowuyr.” He indicates the bodies on the ground. “And these misguided creatures will stain our homeland no longer.”

Revalor is not hostile to the characters if they helped him, but he does remain guarded. The swordsman is doing his best to preserve order in Ios, as are many others from his house. He isn’t quick to offer the characters any information but can be convinced to tell what he knows with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Most of the information Revalor can offer relates to recent clashes with eldritch like Ayred: those who have been taken in by Eyvreyn’s promises and offerings of captives. Revalor distrusts the Seeker and has tried to sway others away, with mixed results.

Revalor has been trying to convince others in House Ellowuyr that Eyvreyn presents a greater danger to all in Ios. He has personally watched the Seeker amassing a greater force at the Forbidden Temple, southwest of Aeryth Ellowuyr. If the characters indicate that they might travel there, Revalor cautions them:

With a sharp shake of his head, the swordsman cuts you off. “Do not go there. Not unless you’re ready to face an army. The mad Seeker has many under his thumb or chained to him through poisoned promises. Before you approach the temple, you would be wise to weaken that snake. He has allies working for him across this region. If you wish to confront the Seeker, cut off his network of support first.”

The swordsman can then point the characters to one of these allies’ locations, either the Moon Arch (chapter 4) or the ruins of Shaelvas (chapter 5).

Helping Ayred. If the characters fought against Revalor and the Ellowuyr swordsmen, read or paraphrase the following text:

The undead elf favors you with an appraising look before breaking into a wide—and predatory—smile.

“Well, well, what have we here?” the eldritch murmurs. “Newcomers to Ios, are you? You’ve aided me in dealing with a troublesome rival. Though perhaps you didn’t realize exactly who it was you were helping, hm?”

The actions of the characters amuse Ayred. He presents himself as an affable, agreeable elf—as much as an undead creature that thrives by consuming the spiritual essence of the living can do so—and doesn’t move to attack them, though he does inquire about their presence in Ios. If the characters mention the child Avross, Ayred does his best to conceal his surprise and interest in the topic. A character who makes a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check discovers that the eldritch pays particular attention to mentions of the child while trying to come off as only casually interested.

Following a brief exchange of pleasantries, Ayred announces his plan to return to the Moon Arch. If the characters try to interfere with him or to free his prisoners, he becomes hostile and fights to the death. Otherwise, he heads to the Moon Arch to confer with Seeker Shaelvas about his encounter with the characters and to plan his next move.



Staying Out of It. In the event the characters play no part in the battle, what happens next is up to who survives. Ayred will gather any remaining soldiers from both sides and his prisoners before continuing back to the Moon Arch. Revalor frees the prisoners and, together with any surviving swordsmen, escorts them free of Ios, leading them to a pass through the Iosan Peaks near Aeryth Ellowuyr.

THE SHADOWBLADE

After their first, brief encounter, Eyvreyn's assassin continues to pursue the characters during the rest of their time in Ios.

The Shadowblade is a cautious individual who takes the time to set up ambushes, strike from hiding, and retreat after a quick initial attack. The assassin's presence should hang over the characters while they remain in Ios.

Following the first encounter, any time you roll to determine if a random encounter occurs and the result is a 20, the Shadowblade is also present. In addition to the normal encounter result, the assassin will be hiding from view in the vicinity. The assassin participates in the encounter at the least convenient moment for the characters.

Through the rest of the adventure, there are callout boxes offering suggestions of how the Shadowblade might be used during the encounter.

KILLER IS DEAD

If the characters manage to destroy the Shadowblade, their assassin-related troubles aren't at an end. The Seeker has other soulless **assassins** at his disposal, and will not hesitate to send them against the characters. These other assassins are not as dangerous as the Shadowblade on their own but operate in teams of two or more to make up the difference.

SCYLSHEN FASTHOLD

The fasthold was once a hidden encampment of the Retribution of Scyrah in Ios, back before the sect was embraced by some of the leading hallytyr of the Consulate Court. It is a small camp hidden by both natural camouflage and concealing magic, making it all but impossible to stumble into unless one already knows the destination.

GETTING TO THE FASTHOLD

There are only two ways the characters are likely to enter the fasthold: either by the invitation of Renyll Syvas or as captives dragged there by hostile mage hunters.

If the former, the fasthold is about three days' travel southwest of the Gate of Storms in a dense region of the Iosan forest. Should Renyll have given them directions to the Scylshen Fasthold, the characters will need to follow them precisely during the course of the journey or else go astray and get lost in the forest.

If the characters end up wandering in the region too long, after a day or two, a patrol of mage hunters will discover them.

SCYLSHEN FASTHOLD OVERVIEW

Population. 75.

Leader. Mage Hunter Commander Renyll Syvas (CN female **eldritch**) commands the fasthold. She tries to maintain a sense of order and purpose among the soulless and other eldritch, but her orders mostly involve patrolling the forest to keep intruders away from more dangerous eldritch in the interior.

Garrison. The entire population of the fasthold are able to defend it from an attack. The majority of the defenders are soulless **mage hunters**. Renyll marshals a **Griffon Shyeel light myrmidon** during a defense of the fasthold.

The fasthold is little better than a small forest camp with a half-dozen wooden structures surrounding a single watchtower built against an ancient redwood tree. Aside from the shacks that act as homes for the hold's population, the fasthold includes a bowyer and smith, a provisioner, and a small practice field where the residents can practice their archery and marksmanship.

Characters can purchase any goods in the fasthold, but, due to scarcity, the prices of all items increase by 10%. Residents will not sell goods to the characters if the characters are at odds with Renyll or the Retribution of Scyrah.





3

THE GATE OF STORMS



THE GATE OF STORMS IS EASY TO SPOT, AS IT IS located in a broad opening in the Archenbough Forest across the border from Rhul. The fortress has clear sightlines across the nearby landscape with at least a quarter-mile of open marshlands and grasslands in every direction, all offering minimal cover to approaching creatures. Beyond that range, the green wall of the Archenbough blocks vision except along the Knot, the Iosan highway that runs south of the fortress toward Aeryth Ellowuyr and east to the capital city of Shyrr.

KEEPERS OF THE GATE OF STORMS

For much of Iosan history, the Gate of Storms housed a significant garrison of House Issyen soldiers and attendant houseguard. Struggles against the skorne, the Claiming, and the subsequent Sundering have all reduced the soldiers here to a fraction of their prior strength.

Consul Jylvan Issyen, the former commander of the Gate of Storms and Consul of House Issyen, passed away during the Sundering, leaving Arsyrr Kelycis Issyen as the senior officer in charge of the remaining garrison. The arsyrr embraced his eldritch transformation and oversees the remainder of House Issyen's defenders.

IMPORTANT NPCs

When the characters visit the Gate of Storms, they can meet one or more of the following defenders.

GATE OF STORMS NPCs

Arsyrr Kelycis Issyen. Leader of the Gate of Storms. (NE male **eldritch**)

Dylain Voss. Soulless soldier and assistant to the arsyrr. (N male **soulless escort**)

Kaelon Vyrik. Spirit of a former priest of Scyrah haunting the Gate of Storms. (LE Male **riven**)

Emrys, Gwilym, Lestyn, Rhydian. Sythyss under the control of Kelycis Issyen, who oversee the soulless soldiers.

DENIZENS

The Gate of Storms Roster table summarizes the locations of the fort's occupants and indicates common activities of those individuals.

The garrison of the Gate of Storms maintains an unfriendly, if not hostile, demeanor to anyone escorted in by the riders in area 3. If the characters engage in combat with the riders or are spotted trying to sneak into the Gate of Storms, the Iosans raise the alarm. While there are only a few defenders left, they are largely skilled soldiers who fight with a great deal of coordination.

GATE OF STORMS ROSTER

Area	Creature(s)	Notes
1	—	No defenders wait here, but there is a trap by the gate.
2	4 soulless houseguard gunners	Two riflemen keep watch on the third floor while the others rest on the second floor.
3	2 Issyen knights	If the gunners in area 2 spot the characters, the knights waiting in the courtyard ride out to meet them. Otherwise, they maintain a vigil in the courtyard during daylight hours.
4	1 soulless houseguard gunner	A rifleman patrols across the top of the central gate and aids in any combat that occurs in area 3.
5	—	No defenders are posted here.
6	1d4 soulless commoners , 5 soulless houseguards , 5 soulless houseguard gunners , Emrys	The commoners work in the armory and the workshop on the ground floor. The soulless alternate between patrolling the area in teams of two or resting on the second floor. Emrys wanders through the area during the night.
7	Gwilym, Lestyn, Rhydian	The sythyss remain on the second story of the officer's quarters unless the alarm is raised. In that case, they head to area 3.
8	2 Issyen knights , 1d4 soulless commoners	At least 2 knights are here at all times. The commoners stay on the ground floor, tending to the horses.
9	Arsyrr Kelycis Issyen	Arsyrr Kelycis Issyen remains in his quarters.
10	5 soulless houseguard gunners , 5 soulless houseguard	The soulless patrol the battlements along the fort's perimeter and act as reinforcements for any fight that occurs within the Gate of Storms.

MILITARY RANKS



Lieutenant



Captain



Thane



Scyir



Issyr



Arsyr

These symbols designate the ranks used within houseguard military forces.

ROLEPLAYING THE DEFENDERS

The elves in the Gate of Storms are not welcoming to strangers. In life, it was their sworn duty to prevent intrusion into the Iosan interior, and their new status has not done much to make them more open to foreigners. Eldritch and sythyss are quick to judge if an outsider is a threat—or a potential asset—and the soulless seldom interact with others unless given explicit instruction.

Despite the defenders' unfriendliness and overall grim outlook, events have transpired that make them more open to contact with outsiders. The once-impressive garrison of the Gate has been cut down to a mere handful of defenders; those who remain had to watch their comrades-in-arms die suddenly while undergoing a drastic physical transformation into the undead. Even the dispassionate soulless know the direness of their situation.

Depending on how the characters interact with them, the remaining soldiers at the Gate of Storms can become powerful enemies or the characters can earn the grudging respect of these elves.

SERVANTS

In addition to the garrison, there are a small number of soulless **commoners** who see to the needs of the fortress. They are not skilled in battle but can raise the alarm if they notice a threat. These soulless maintain the kitchens (for those who still require traditional nourishment), feed the horses, repair and maintain equipment, and perform other mundane duties.

When the need arises for one of the eldritch to feed, it is from this population that a soulless is selected if no other mortals are available to fill the need.

GATE OF STORMS OUTSKIRTS

The lands surrounding the Gate of Storms were once home to a modest community of merchants and traders who passed goods between Rhul and Ios. When the elves cut off contact with the outside world, this community dried up quickly, and now only a few scraps of it remain: half-buried wagon wheels, sun-bleached scraps of a tarp, and the occasional wooden sign marked with the faded inventory and prices of a trader's shop.

Before the Sundering, the soldiers of the Great Military House Issyen kept the fields surrounding the Gate of Storms clear of vegetation for hundreds of yards, but nature has begun to reassert itself in the past several years. Young trees, fields of wild grasses, and creeping weeds cover the landscape, concealing perimeter defenses and embrasures. A few roads cut through the region, deeply worn down by the trampling hooves of knights on their patrols.

GATE OF STORMS APPROACH

When the characters first approach the Gate of Storms, use the unusual atmosphere to enhance its otherworldliness. As the characters pass into Ios, a strange quiet settles on them. The absence of sounds from civilization or wildlife exists as an unsettling hole in the air. During the day, the light

THE SHADOWBLADE

While not likely this early into the adventure, it isn't impossible for the characters to have had their first encounter with the Shadowblade before entering the Gate of Storms.

If that is the case, the assassin monitors the characters from a distance, keeping hidden on the rooftops and battlements. The killer looks for opportunities to strike when the characters split up or are otherwise vulnerable. If she has the chance, the Shadowblade favors a target among the characters: whichever character presented the most significant challenge during their first encounter.

How you have the Shadowblade strike in the Gate of Storms should be flexible and responsive to the characters' actions. For instance, if they choose to deal with the riven in area 6b, the assassin waits for them to enter the chamber before barring the door behind them. If the characters leave a steamjack unattended, the Shadowblade contaminates the machine's coal with an alchemical solution, transforming the coal into low-quality fuel.

The assassin's goal here is not to eliminate the characters but to weaken them. The Shadowblade uses every resource at hand to achieve this goal, and you are free to be as devious as you want. The Shadowblade can move among the soulless of the Gate of Storms without fear of recognition and might even have a face-to-face meeting with one or more of the characters—without its unusual helmet and weapons visible, the assassin can easily be mistaken for one of the commoners who serves the Gate.

shines warmly on the edge of the forest in strange contrast to the stillness within. At night, mists creep up from the soil. Standing alone in a broad field of wildflowers, young trees, and grasses stirred by the breeze, the fortress rises like a solitary and artificial mountain.

You can initially describe the Gate of Storms as follows:

The Gate of Storms rises from a sea of grass and wildflowers, a blocky compound of smooth white stones and glinting silver. Despite its clearly defensive purpose, the elves seemed incapable of abandoning artistic flourishes during its construction. Ornate, blade-shaped crescents and polished spheres of black marble stand out on the face of its high walls.

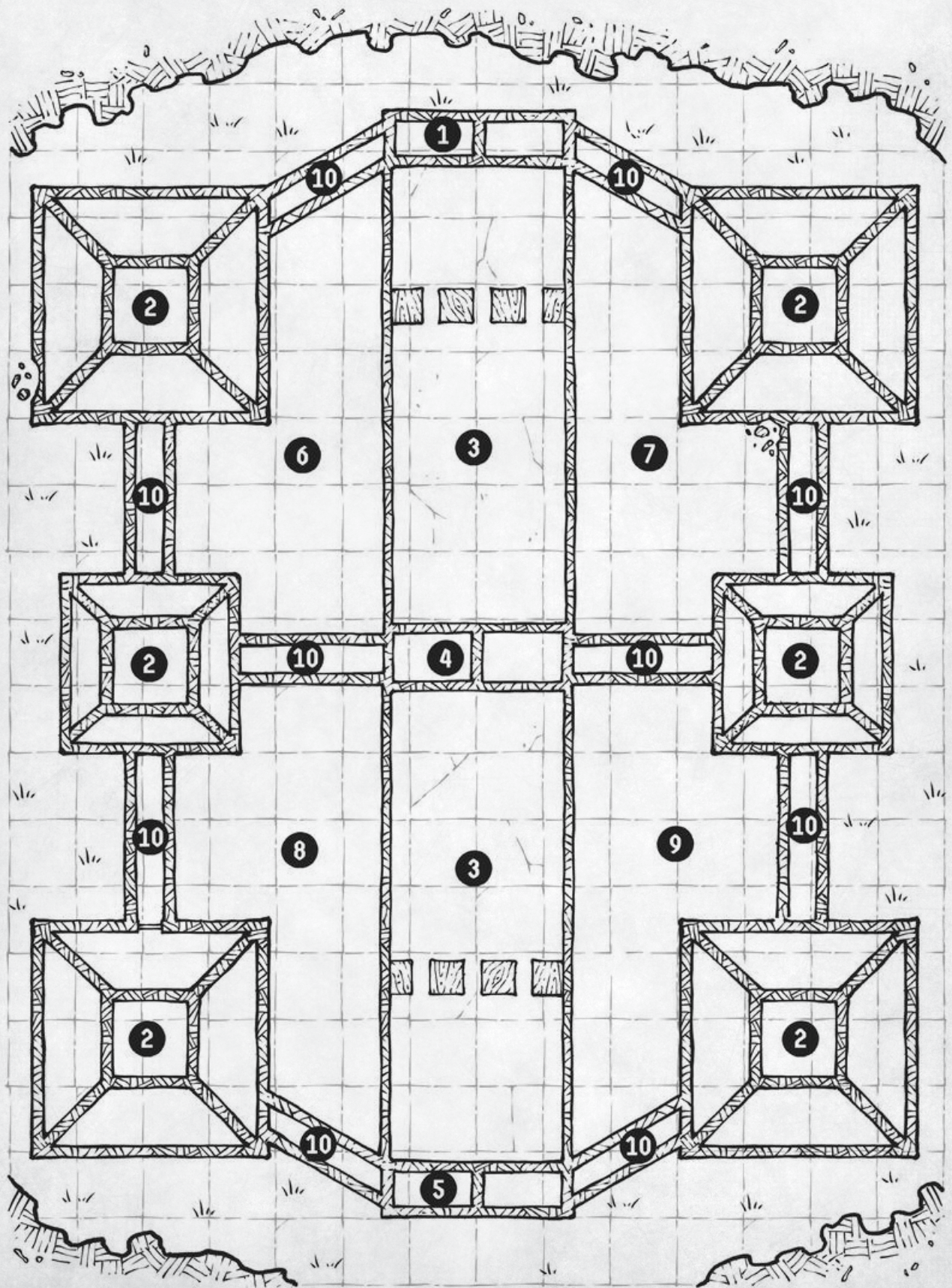
Set high on the two towers that flank the open door, windows look down on the winding, beaten path through the rolling field of grass.

Two **Issyen knights** are on guard at all times in the courtyard (area 3), riding out to meet any who approach the Gate of Storms. A pair of **soulless houseguard gunners** are stationed in each of the towers flanking the gate. During the daytime, the soulless have an excellent view of the field and can raise the alarm in the event of an attack, and the keen-eyed elves are likely to spot an approach across the fields well before the characters can reach the Gate of Storms.

How the elves respond to the characters depends significantly on the nature of their approach. If they are openly hostile, they face stiff resistance from the Gate's defenders. However, if the characters come to parley, they can avoid a physical confrontation.

If the characters reveal that they are looking for the child Arvoss, the knights decide that Arsyry Issyen should hear what they have to say. The knights escort them to meet with the arsyry in area 9.





FEATURES OF THE FORTRESS

The entire structure of the Gate of Storms was erected early into the occupation of Ios. It was among the first sites built in the nation and has stood for thousands of years. Over time, areas of the Gate have undergone renovations, giving it a well-worn, if not precisely well-planned, layout. It maintains some of the artfulness of standard Iosan architecture but has a focus on defensibility over aesthetics. The structure is large enough to house a garrison of thousands but much of it has fallen into disrepair and disuse, especially in recent years.

Ceilings. Unless otherwise stated, the chambers and hallways within the Gate of Storms are 10 feet high with stone ceilings.

Doors. Most doors in the Gate are wood with steel hinges and fixtures. Some doors are locked, as noted in their area descriptions. A locked door can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check made using thieves' tools, or it can be forced open (loudly!) with a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check.

Light. Much of the fortress allows ample natural light during the day through metal-shuttered windows. Soldiers prepare arcantrik torches throughout the fort at dusk, including bright lamps set on the upper concourse to sweep the surrounding terrain.

Sound. There is an uncommon quiet in the Gate of Storms. The soulless here do not engage in idle chatter and speak only in response to a direct inquiry or to give a report to someone. The eldritch in the fortress are a bit more animated, but even they keep relatively quiet. In the courtyard and stables, the horses occasionally snort or stamp their hooves—one of the only natural sounds of life found in the entire fortress.

Exterior Defenses. The region outside the Gate of Storms is heavily trapped. Creatures wandering outside the Gate of Storms run the risk of stumbling into one of these defenses.

For each minute a creature moves outside the Gate's walls, roll 1d20. On a roll of 15 or higher, the creature encounters one of the following:

- **Pit Trap.** The fields are dotted with numerous spiked pits that the defenders of the Gate of Storms have marked by planting bright red hollyhocks nearby. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check allows a character to notice the pit before encountering it. A thin layer of creeping vines covers each pit. More than 5 lbs. of weight causes the vines to break free. A creature standing in the area must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to grab the edge of the pit or to leap clear of it. On a failed saving throw, the creature falls into the pit and takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes plus 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. After encountering one of the pits, a creature can avoid the pits by looking for the red hollyhocks.
- **Force Minefield.** Force minefields outside the Gate of Storms are identical to those presented in chapter 2.

LOCATIONS AT THE GATE OF STORMS

Each key location of the fortress is detailed here.

1. THE NORTH GATE

Rising high enough to allow a colossal to stride through unimpeded, the metal doors of the fortress hang open.

The enormous gate is opened by a mechanism powered by a sizeable arcane condenser. It is usually kept closed and barred except to release a group of riders out of the fortress. When the characters arrive, the gates are open.

Behind the gate lies a long courtyard cobbled with white stone that shows patches of weeds growing up between the rocks. The south end of this courtyard leads to the south gate and the Knot beyond.

TRAP

If the characters enter the Gate of Storms without an escort, an arcanikal trap triggers after they pass through the doors of the north gate. The doors of the north and central gates close and lock, leaving them trapped in the northern half of the courtyard. Then a deep chime sounds to raise the alarm throughout the Gate of Storms. A force of **soulless houseguard** gunners arrives within 1d4 minutes on the courtyard's upper balcony to demand the characters' surrender. There are 2 gunners for each character and NPC ally accompanying them.

The trap is triggered by a pressure plate centered in the gate that responds to 50 lbs. of weight or more. The trap is 10 feet wide and spans the entire breadth of the gate. A character who makes a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the flagstones of the pressure plate protrude higher than those surrounding it. Wedging an iron spike or other object under the pressure plate prevents the trap from activating.

Once the trap has been activated, the gates can only be opened by deactivating their arcanikal locks. Deactivating the locks requires a DC 18 Intelligence check made with a mechanic's toolkit or thieves' tools and 1 minute of work. The chimes are housed in the bottom level of the towers on either side of the gate.

2. TOWERS

A pair of identical towers flank the northern gate on either side. The south towers mirror the north towers, though they do not contain the alarm chimes found on the ground floor of the north towers. The southern set of towers is not as actively used as those that overlook the border with Rhul.

Creatures. During the day, four **soulless houseguard gunners** occupy each tower: two keeping watch on the third floor while the remaining pair rests on the second floor. At night, a single soulless gunner maintains a watch in each tower.

2A. GROUND FLOOR

The ground floor of each tower is a simple room with stairs leading to the upper floors. A large arcane condenser in the center of the chamber powers one of the two gates and the arcanikal locking mechanism. A complex series of chimes is attached to the generator that sound when the gate trap is triggered.

Arcane Condenser. The arcane condensers that power the gate are large, complex devices that draw arcane energy from the environment. A character can attempt to disable the machines with a DC 16 Intelligence check made with mechanic's tools or tinker's tools.

2B. SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of each tower comprises a modest resting place for off-duty soldiers. In addition to cots set on the walls, it includes footlockers for the storage of personal goods, a small larder and food preparation area, and midden.

The door from the first floor is typically locked. A ladder set in the center of the chamber rises to the tower's third floor.

Treasure. In addition to the equipment of the soulless here, the footlockers contain a combined total of 85 sp, 52 gp, 2 potions of healing, and a bottle of fine Iosan wine worth 10 gp.

2C. THIRD FLOOR

The third floor of each tower contains a shooter's post. Slit-shaped windows on each wall allow soldiers to fire down on the area outside the walls, and a fixed spyglass mounted in each position allows for surveillance of the surrounding territory.

3. COURTYARD

The white-stone cobbled courtyard of the Gate of Storms cuts through the center of the fortress, a narrow canyon through the structure. Arches overhead create bridges spanning the courtyard from the tops of the buildings on either side.

The courtyard of the Gate of Storms is a long, narrow corridor. It was once a place where prospective merchant traders would be searched and processed before being permitted to travel on into Ios.

At its height, the Gate of Storms included numerous facilities to expedite this process and allow traders to feed and water their livestock or pack animals. These stations were maintained by the trading families of House Yrryel. Now they are only disused remnants of this time littered through the courtyard: cracked troughs to water animals, a small free-standing gatehouse by the central gate (area 4), and tables where the Iosans would examine goods being brought into the nation.

Overpasses. A pair of overpasses span the width of the courtyard. 30 feet off the ground, these 10-foot-wide stone bridges allow patrolling soldiers to cross over the enclosure without entering it at the ground level and offer an elevated firing position into the "kill box" of the courtyard.

3A. SOUTH COURTYARD

The southern half of the courtyard can be cut off via the central gate.

4. THE CENTRAL GATE

The central gate of the structure cuts the courtyard into two halves. It was a part of the defense structure of the Gate of Storms, allowing the defenders to lock unwanted intruders into a kill box.

If the trap at the north gate triggers, the central gate swings shut as well.

5. THE SOUTH GATE

The south gate opens onto the Knot and leads into Ios proper. It is functionally identical to the north gate but lacks the pressure-plate trap.

6. HOUSEGUARD QUARTERS

The northwest quarter of the Gate of Storms is the barracks for houseguard soldiers.

6A. GROUND FLOOR

Much of the ground floor is taken up by an armory and arcanists' workshop. Soulless workers maintain the weapons, armor, and myrmidons of the Gate of Storms here. If the characters are in good standing with the arsy, they can purchase supplies from the armory or have repairs affected in the workshop.

6B SECOND FLOOR

Rows of dormitories and a large shrine to the Divine Court take up the second floor of the houseguard barracks. When they are not patrolling the grounds, the soulless spend their time resting here. There are numerous abandoned chambers among those the soulless occupy. Each of these abandoned rooms once belonged to a now-deceased individual or one who remains alive but beyond Ios. Five years of dust and cobwebs have built up in these otherwise featureless rooms.

Ladders on the second floor reach to the roof of the houseguard quarters.

The Shrine to the Divine Court. The doors to this chamber are locked, but the characters may have an opportunity to explore it later (see "Unholy Ghost").

Treasure. In addition to the minor personal effects of the houseguard, this area contains 170 cp, 50 sp, and 40 gp in Iosan currency. There is a 25% chance that each room contains an art object or jewelry worth 2d6×10 gp. Characters can attempt to steal items from the workshop or armory, but doing so requires a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Stealth) check for each attempt. The soulless are not angry if they catch a character stealing but demand the return of stolen items.



7. OFFICERS' QUARTERS

Across the courtyard from the houseguard quarters, the officers' quarters once housed the houseguard officers of the Gate of Storms. Those ranked thane and lower lived together here, discussing orders from their superior officers among the Issyen knights and the Consul himself.

7A. GROUND FLOOR

In addition to the scullery, kitchen, and officer's dining hall, the ground floor of the officers' quarters includes a large planning hall where ranking individuals would meet to discuss patrol routes and to disseminate orders from the Consul.

The floor of the planning hall is a mosaic depicting Ios, made of colored glass fragments mortared into the stone floor. The map accurately represents Ios, and a character who replicates it has a reliable map of the region.

7B. SECOND FLOOR

The second floor comprises six large private chambers for the former officers of the Gate of Storms.

Treasure. The private chambers contain a combined 400 sp, 846 gp, five bottles of fine Iosan wine, and a platinum necklace worked in the symbol of Scyrah worth 200 gp. There is also a suit of houseguard armor in fine condition in one of the unused rooms.

8. KNIGHTS' QUARTERS

Southwest of the central gate, this area was once home to the famed riders of House Issyen and their trained battle mounts. Like the rest of the Gate of Storms, the knights' quarters lie primarily empty, with only a few chambers still in use.

8A. GROUND FLOOR

The whole of the ground floor is taken up by the stables. In addition to stalls sufficient to house almost a hundred horses, it contains a large training field, storage for barding, a farrier's workshop, and a massive loft to store food for the animals.

Following the Sundering, the remaining soldiers at the Gate of Storms did their best to maintain the horses here, but without an extensive enough roster of stable hands to care for the animals, many horses had to be released into the wilderness. There are fewer than a dozen horses left in the stables.

8B. SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of the southwest quarter is taken up by numerous dwellings for the Issyen knights. In addition to dozens of dormitories for the knights, this floor includes a larder, kitchen, and shared dining area.

9. CONSUL'S QUARTERS

The southeastern quadrant of the Gate of Storms was the home of Consul Jylvan Issyen and his family. The exterior of this section maintains the stark, military look of the rest of the Gate of Storms, but its interior is much more refined. Rugs imported from Shyrr line its hallways, and each of its rooms is furnished with elegant wooden fittings.

9A. GROUND FLOOR

The ground floor of the Consul's quarters includes the great hall, where Consul Issyen would hold an audience with visitors, and the servants' quarters, kitchens, scullery, and private stable for the Consul's family. Aside from the kitchens and stable, most of this floor has fallen into neglect and is seldom used.

9B. SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of the Consul's quarter is a multiroom mansion with a dozen bedrooms, dining room, parlor, and other appointments appropriate for an individual of Consul Issyen's station. Arsy Kelycis Issyen has moved into the Consul's old home, sharing the space with a handful of soulless who act as his personal servants.

10. BATTLEMENTS

Battlements run atop the walls of the Gate of Storms, facing in at the courtyard and out into the surrounding countryside. Embrasures in the walls allow patrolling soldiers to fire on targets from behind heavy cover.

MEETING WITH THE ARSYR

If the characters agree to be escorted into the Gate of Storms, they are led to the Consul's quarters in the southern half of the fortress. The ranking arsy awaits them in a sitting room on the second floor.

If the characters fought their way into the Gate of Storms, they could discover the arsy on their own. The arsy is willing to overlook any killings the characters may have performed on their way to him, writing off the deaths of his soldiers as "Regrettable, but I'm not in a position to argue with anyone who can kill my soldiers."

ROLEPLAYING KELYCIS

Arsy Kelycis Issyen is a confident young eldritch whose measured way of speaking belies his quick and scheming mind. He talks to the characters as if their arrival was an unexpected but delightful surprise. When the characters enter his chamber (either under escort or fighting their way through the Gate of Storms), he maintains a calm and gently pleasant demeanor.

Kelycis gives the characters the following information:

- Like most of his fellow Iosans, he can't say precisely what happened to cause his alteration or why he was only one of those at the Gate of Storms who underwent it. Regardless, he's doing the best he can with what "life" he has left.
- He used to guard the border against intruders. Currently, he sees himself as a caretaker of the outside world; Kelycis is aware of the hunger of the eldritch and knows that others of lesser willpower wouldn't be able to resist the urge to feed.
- There are only a few protectors left at the Gate of Storms. Between patrolling the border on horseback and keeping the fortress itself safe, there are several tasks that the arsy has been forced to put aside.

The arsy seems to have a revelation and summons a servant to bring food and drink while he lays out a plan.

"You know, we might be able to provide one another with a bit of assistance," the eldritch says. Folding his arms behind his back, the eldritch looks out a window overlooking the courtyard below. "If you would agree to deal with a few of my...problems here in the Gate of Storms, I could offer you safe passage along the Knot. Are you interested in my proposal?"

The arsy tries to play up his position as an embattled but ultimately well-intentioned undead person. A character who succeeds on a Wisdom (Insight) check contested by the arsy's Charisma (Deception) check can sense that he's holding something back. If confronted in private, a character can attempt a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check to have him reveal that he is concerned about recent rumors coming from the south: that the keepers of the Moon Arch have thrown in their lot with a heretical Seeker who claims to have found a way to reawaken the gods.

If the characters agree to his proposal, Kelycis lays out a task he would like them to complete in the Gate of Storms. He also gives them one of the abandoned barracks in the Gate of Storms, where they can rest and recuperate between tasks for the duration of their time in the fortress.

The task he needs the characters to perform is to evict the spirits of deceased Iosans from the Gate of Storms. The shades are causing trouble for the resident soulless.

GHOSTED

If the characters accept his offer, the arsyf quickly gives them their task.

“Fantastic. As you can judge by my charming appearance, things in Ios aren’t as they used to be. A few years ago, I watched as my superior and the vast majority of my fellow soldiers dropped dead before my eyes. I, and a few others, were spared death—in a way.”

“Whatever it was that killed them all, not all of my brothers and sisters passed on peacefully. Some linger still in the walls of the Gate of Storms, their troubled spirits unable to pass on to, well, to whatever awaits my people now.”

“I doubt their shades would be able to harm me or others like me, but they’re causing a bit of trouble for our soulless companions. They flee whenever I approach them, but I suspect you might be a bit more attractive to them.”

Give the characters the chance to ask questions. Below are the arsyf’s answers to some common questions the characters may ask:

How many spirits are there? “At least two, but it is hard to say for a certainty. They go scurrying before I’m able to lay eyes on them. All I can go off of is what the soulless tell me.”

How are we more attractive to them? “Your hearts still beat; your blood still pumps. You would be like moonlight to a moth.”

Where and when were the spirits last seen? “Five nights prior, they entered the stables. We lost too many good mounts that night.”

How should we begin? “A fine question. I’m not certain—the ways of spirits are unknown to me. They show up mostly at night-time. Often as the torches are being lit. Perhaps wander around the halls looking like juicy, vulnerable souls?”

DEAD AIR

When the characters head off to undertake the task, Kelycis sends Dylain Voss to accompany them. Dylain has a set of keys that will allow them access to the locked areas of the Gate of Storms. Dylain escorts them to one of the abandoned barracks in the southwest quarter of the Gate of Storms, where they can recuperate and plan.

Nothing transpires before the sun begins to set. As the sky darkens overhead, read or paraphrase the following:

A mournful note sounds over the fortress, ringing through its empty halls to signal the change to the first watch of the night. Scattered through the Gate of Storms, soulless silently go about the business of changing posts.

It isn’t long before the first disturbance occurs. Assuming the characters keep alert for any disruption, the first trouble begins about an hour after sundown.

The eerie quiet of the night splits with the flat crack of a rifle. An oddly flat, emotionless voice calls out, “A spirit is here. It just killed Jyresh.”

The voice calls from the northern courtyard, where a pair of soulless named Shyrel and Jyresh were patrolling the grounds. A character who makes a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check can pinpoint the location of the call. In this case, go immediately to “Hungry Ghost” below.

If no character makes the check, they still locate the ghost, but it takes longer to do so, and it has killed both of the patrolling soulless by the time they arrive. Modify the text below in “Hungry Ghost” accordingly.

HUNGRY GHOST

When the characters arrive on the scene, read or paraphrase:

The body of a slain elf lies on the courtyard cobblestones. Hovering in the air above it is a pair of wispy, spectral figures, their bodies wrapped in smoky tatters that twist about in a wind you cannot feel. Their dead eyes are turned on the companion of their victim, who slashes ineffectually at them with his weapons.

Elf Spirit. A pair of elven spirits are attacking the patrolling soulless. The lead spirit is Ayla Paryth (use the stat block for a **banshee**), a former knight of House Issyen. The second is a weaker spirit (use the stat block for a **specter**). When the characters arrive, Ayla turns and shrieks at them to stay away from Iosan. Unless the characters leave the spirits to feed on their prey, the spirits attack the characters.

Soulless. If the characters arrived before the spirit could kill him, the soulless Shyrel is on the scene. Shyrel uses the Dodge action to avoid the spirit’s deadly touch until the characters begin fighting—his weapons aren’t effective in dealing damage to the spirit.

Because his attacks won’t do much to the ghost, Shyrel does what he can to aid the characters. The soulless will pull incapacitated characters away from the spirit and attempt to stabilize them as needed.

ONE MORE GHOST

When the characters defeat the two spirits, either Dylain or Shyrel can give them some further information that can help to complete the mission.

The soulless speaks with a flat affect, looking down at the spot where the final spirit vanished.

“That was Ayla. She was a healer here once, who spent all her free hours listening to the words of the priest of Scyrath. The other one was her assistant. A young man whose name I never thought to ask. May they both have found something better now than we face here on Caen.”



If the characters inquire, their companion explains Ayla was a Lys healer who spent most of her time in the Gate of Storms' small sanctuary, taking comfort in the company of the priest who saw to the spiritual needs of the elves in the fortress. Since the moment of the Sundering, none in the Gate have had any urge to pay respect to the deceased pantheon, and the chamber has lain unused for years.

Once that information has been relayed, an angry cry echoes through the Gate of Storms.

As the last vestiges of the destroyed spirits fade away into the air, a shrieking voice calls out with enough rage and loneliness you can feel it in the pit of your stomach. The pained sound lingers, far louder than a mortal's voice could hope to muster.

UNHOLY GHOST

The sanctuary lies in the northwest quarter of the Gate of Storms on the second level. The door is locked, but Dylain can open it.

This room was once a holy place with lovingly carved representations of the gods lining its four walls and a shrine built in the heart of the chamber. It has been locked away from the rest of the fort for many years, allowed to become the home of vermin, mold, and shadows.

A sinister presence waits in the darkness, hungry to escape from its prison in this forgotten place.

The sanctuary has become the home of a **riven**, created by the sudden death of Scyrah. Her priest, Kaelon Vyrik, went mad and tore through the sanctuary, defacing the statues of the Divine Court and defiling the shrine before taking his own life.

As a riven, Kaelon cannot cross the threshold of the sanctuary without first gaining permission. Since the riven is a powerful undead creature, it might be in the characters' interest to offer him permission. Doing so will allow Kaelon to move unbidden in the region of the Gate of Storms, but it is the quickest and easiest way to deal with the mad spirit.

TAINTED SHRINE

The shrine Kaelon desecrated before taking his life can be restored, which would provide the characters a measure of extra protection against the riven.

The shrine in the center of the room drips with black runes that seem to wriggle under examination as if trying to crawl out of sight of prying eyes. The runes cover the surface of the shrine in vertical columns.

A character who examines the shrine can attempt a DC 11 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a successful check, the character recognizes the runes painted around the perimeter of the shrine as having some corrupting influence on it.

A character can use an action to deface one of the runes. A character who defaces a rune takes 1 point of necrotic damage.

Defacing 6 or more of the runes causes the shrine to be purified.

Once the shrine is purified, Kaelon's spirit cannot bear the sight of it. At the start of each of its turns, the riven must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) psychic damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one.

TREASURE

Resting on the shrine is a relic sacred to the Iosan people. The Sprig of Scyrah's Touch is a +1 staff of healing that was once used by Kaelon as a part of his duties as a healer and spiritual guide to those at the Gate of Storms. The staff radiates a soft, golden-green glow and appears to be made of a living cherry limb. At its head, buds and blossoms indicate the number of charges the staff of healing currently has.

If a character enters the shrine to claim the staff, Kaelon attempts to possess the character. He uses the character's body to demand release from the shrine and will harm the host body in an effort to force an agreement from any other characters.

CONCLUDING THE MISSION

When the characters deal with all three spirits, they can return to the arsyr with news of their success.

When the characters return to Kelycis, he's grateful if the characters succeeded—though he becomes quite unsettled if they choose to release the riven into Ios and inform him of such actions. The eldritch is not, however, in a position to argue with their methods.

The arsyr offers to let them shelter in the Gate of Storms until morning. Before they proceed on their journey, Kelycis sees that they have sufficient food and water for five days travel and offers them access to the armory to resupply ammunition as needed.

Before they leave the Gate of Storms, Kelycis takes them aside for a private conversation.

"You aren't the only strangers to pass by the Gate of Storms of late. There was a boy and an older eldritch, too swift and slippery for my riders to chase down. But there have been others as well. Some we saw traveling north into Rhul—though I suspect you already know about them.

"There was something about that eldritch that set my teeth on edge. One of my knights, Ayred, said he'd seen that one with the Seekers who keep the Moon Arch. That was before I learned what Ayred had been up to and banished him from the Gate. They're a dangerous lot, and if the eldritch keeps company with them, I expect he's dangerous too."

Arsyr Kelycis encourages the characters to explore the Moon Arch and cautions them that there are more perils in Ios than those they've faced so far. He concludes their conversation by offering them a secure place to stay, should they need it, and wishes them luck in the days ahead.

With that, the eldritch orders his soldiers to open the southern gates, leaving the way open to the Knot and the rest of Ios.

4

THE MOON ARCH



STANDING IN THE ARCHENBOUGH OF LYLISTHYL, south of the imposing Gate of Storms and not too distant from the ruins of the city of Shaelvas, there is an arcane relic dating back to the days when the Iosans believed their gods were merely vanished and not yet dead.

The Moon Arch was a great scrying device first built to locate the Vanished. It consists of a great arch spanning an enormous pool of water. As the moons move over the arch, they pull the water in various directions, creating pictures and scenes of far-off places, and the power of the arch waxes and wanes with the tides. Over many long generations, the Iosan people constructed a small village around the lake to serve the needs of the diviners who gazed into the water night after night.

The arch was abandoned after thousands of failed attempts to locate the gods. Still, a sect of the Seekers continued to believe that it might yet prove helpful in locating the missing gods. The Sundering dashed all such hopes. The sect remained to keep watch over the Moon Arch, not hoping to find the Divine Court but because they understood the usefulness of a site that could allow them to scry at whim.

Upon his return to Ios and transformation, Eyvreyn was quick to journey to the Moon Arch. As a Seeker, he knew of the scrying pool's capabilities. He planned to use it to locate suitable candidates for his new court of gods.

SEEKERS OF THE ARCH

Eyvreyn discovered fellow former Seekers still watching over the Moon Arch. Though many of the sects died in the Sundering, a handful of them continued on as eldritch. Without the purpose that drove them in life, the Seekers were easy for Eyvreyn to sway to his way of thinking.

The highest-ranking Seeker of the area is Shaela Hallyr. In life, she was unswerving in her faith and devotion, spending countless hours peering into the waters beneath the arch to catch any glimpse that would foretell the fate of the gods. In it, she saw flashes of Nyssor, Scyir of Winter, in his icy encasement among the Nyss elves of the far north. When the waters turned black as ink, she caught a glimpse of a tortured figure amid an immense nothingness, standing out like a hole in reality.

Hallyr has agreed to aid Eyvreyn in his task, provided he honors her contribution by allowing her to rise as one of the gods, second in greatness only to Eyvreyn himself.

ROLEPLAYING SEEKER HALLYR

The eldritch transformation has fundamentally altered Seeker Hallyr. She was once a devoted acolyte who spent her life searching for any aid she could provide to the ailing goddess Scyrah and held onto the hope she would one day discover the Vanished pantheon. Now, she is a calculating opportunist who seeks only to keep and grow her personal influence in Ios.

Ideal. "I wasted my life in pursuit of a lost cause. I will spend my death growing mighty so I can take what I deserve."

Bond. "The Seekers who remain with me at the arch are the only family I have left. I will slaughter anyone who harms them."

Flaw. "I am so certain of my destiny that I am vulnerable to those who feed into my growing ego."

PARTING THE VEIL

The Seekers make use of the Moon Arch to look into possible futures, witness distant lands, and pierce the veil of reality to see with eyes unburdened by the limitations of physical sight.

A character can enter a meditative state while staring into the waters beneath the Moon Arch to catch glimpses of other places and possible futures. When the meditation ends, the character gains the ability to cast a handful of spells for a limited time.

A character who performs this meditation ritual gains the following feature. There is a 25% chance that a Seeker the characters encounter has gone through this process within the past 24 hours.

VISIONS OF PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The Seeker meditates for 1 hour, during which time they can do nothing but stare into the waters of the lake. At the end of the hour, provided the Seeker's meditation has been uninterrupted, the Seeker gains a measure of innate spellcasting ability based on Wisdom. For the next 24 hours, they can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day: *augury*, *clairvoyance*

1/day: *scrying*, *true seeing*

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

Characters who learn of the Moon Arch and its connection to Seeker Eyvreyn might visit the location to search for clues about the eldritch and his plot. They might also wish to use the scrying powers of the lake to locate the child Avross.

This chapter describes the Moon Arch in detail in the event the characters choose to visit it.

Characters may be surprised to discover the number of powerful Iosans loyal to Eyvreyn who dwell here. They are more likely to succeed on a trip to the Moon Arch if they are at least 5th level. Characters of lower levels might find the combats challenging, taking more frequent rests or spending more resources to survive.

REACHING THE MOON ARCH

The Moon Arch is located about 50 miles southeast of the Gate of Storms. Characters can attempt to navigate the Knot or travel through the forest, traversing shallow rivers and dense undergrowth to reach it.

If the characters go on foot, it takes them about two days to make the trip, and you can use the Archenbough Forest Random Encounters table (chapter 2) to determine any random encounters experienced along the way.

Characters who travel along the Knot see the graceful arch of the site between the towering trees about an hour before arriving. Characters in the forest aren't afforded that early view of the arch and first catch sight of it when they reach the clearing surrounding the lake.

When the characters reach the edge of the clearing around the Moon Arch, read the following:

Like mushrooms growing on a fallen log, a cluster of white stone structures emerge from the verdant forest. Beyond them lies a flat and glassy lake kissed with a veil of mist. Rising above them both is a slender curve of white stone, a crescent that embraces the lake beneath it.

APPROACHING THE ARCH

The characters have the option of approaching the Moon Arch from any direction. Those who approach the place without trying to hide are detected by the soulless in the watchtowers (area 6), who raise the alert. Characters have a better chance of infiltrating the arch if they approach quietly, taking advantage of the environment and concealing their movements with dense fog, camouflage, or magic. Make a group Dexterity (Stealth) check against the soulless tower guards' Wisdom (Perception) check, regardless of how the characters approach the den. (For all the soulless in the towers, roll once.) If the characters took pains to conceal their approach, the soulless make the check with disadvantage.

DENIZENS

When the characters arrive at the arch, Seeker Hallyr prepares to use the waters to contact and summon a potent ally. The other Seekers are preparing for a journey to Shaelvas (chapter 5), overseeing the soulless servants who attend to the more menial labor.

Most of the Seekers are not skilled in warfare, relying on the soulless to defend them against martial combat, but each possesses some degree of magical skill. Seeker Hallyr is by far the most potent spellcaster among them.

Each of the Seekers is prepared to cast *dancing lights* directly overhead if there is any trouble. The Seekers are not expecting the characters to arrive, but the situation in Ios has created tension between numerous different factions. If a Seeker casts *dancing lights*, it is a clear signal to all at the arch to prepare for intruders.

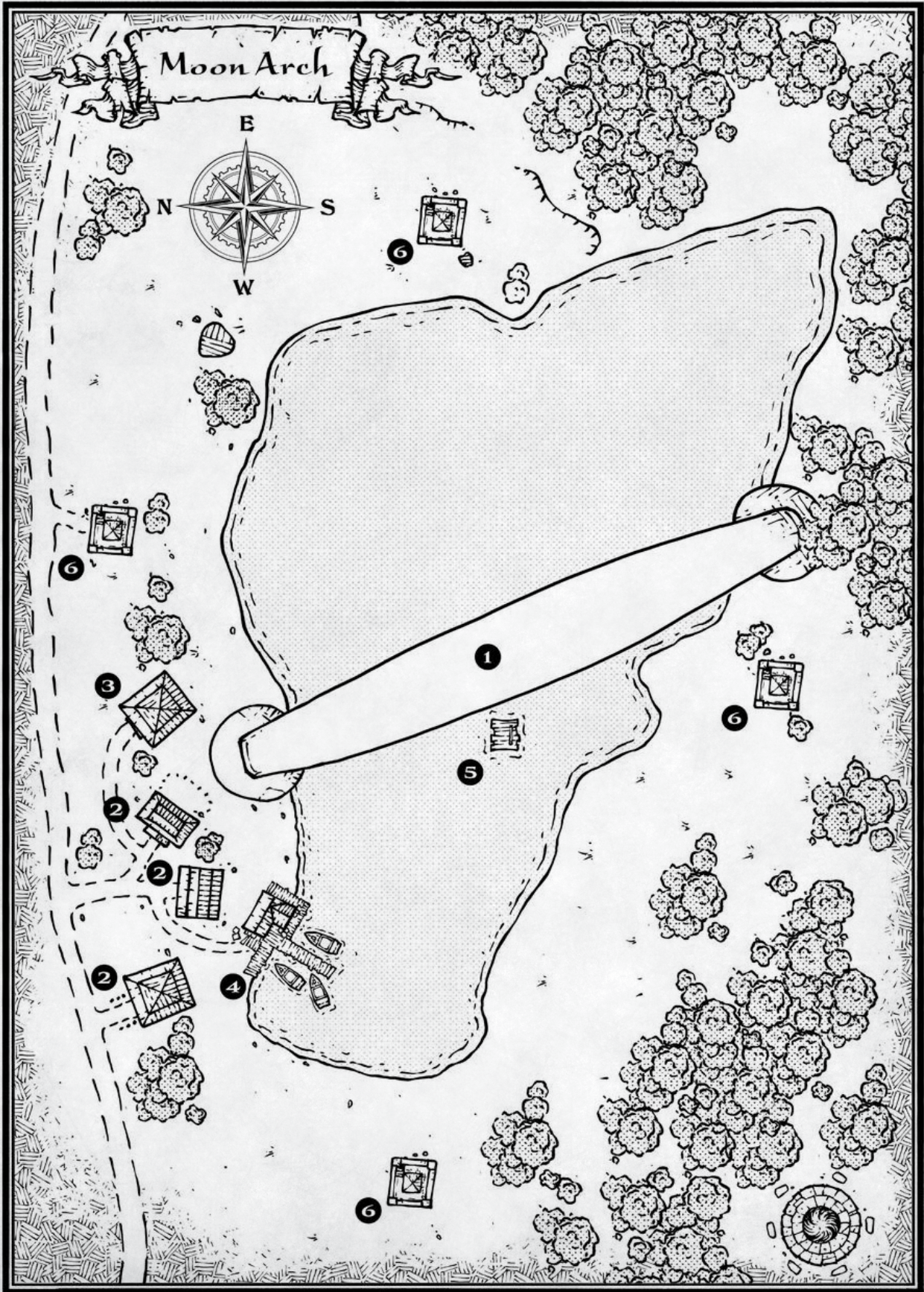
The Moon Arch Roster table specifies the locations of the occupants and provides general notes about them.

PATROLS

In addition to the creatures noted below, two patrols consisting of four soulless houseguard and one Seeker travel on a path between the towers. A patrol completes an entire circuit every 2 hours.

MOON ARCH ROSTER

Area	Creature(s)	Notes
1	—	—
2	Special	Occupants determined by Home Occupants table
3	4 Seekers , Seeker Hallyr	Seeker Hallyr only present during daytime
4	2 soulless houseguard	—
5	Seeker Hallyr, 2 Seekers , 2 soulless escorts	Only present during the night
6	Each tower contains 2 soulless houseguard gunners	—





MOON ARCH: GENERAL FEATURES

The Moon Arch is a graceful white stone arch that crosses diagonally from the southeastern to the northwestern shore of a vast lake, positioned to follow the rise and travel of the moon Calder. A complex knotwork of runes carved into its surfaces glow brightly whenever Calder pulls against it.

The Seekers of the Moon Arch have constructed several shelters on the lake's shore with two clusters around each base of the arch. At the center point of the arch in the heart of the lake, the Seekers have constructed a platform floating on the water.

Illumination. The runes of the arch reflect off the surface of the lake. Despite the dense forest canopy overhead, the lake and its surroundings are bathed in cool blue, dim light at all times of both night and day.

Sights and Sounds. The air beneath the arch shimmers with a faint ripple of prismatic light reflecting the pale stone and lake surface. The air tingles with a soft humming sound, almost musical in its gentle tone.

AREAS OF THE MOON ARCH

The following encounter locations are keyed to the map of the Moon Arch.

1. THE MOON ARCH

The great arch of white stone rises hundreds of feet into the air. Sweeping runes glow with an inner power along its surfaces, and occasional arcs of energy flash between them like minuscule bolts of lightning. The air around the arch shimmers with power.

The arch itself is made of smooth stone that rises from either side of the lake. A creature attempting to climb the arch must succeed on a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

Moon-Touch. The arcane energy within the arch is a robust reserve that a creature can draw upon but at a risk. When a creature in contact with the Moon Arch casts a spell, the creature can draw on the arch's power to empower the spell's casting. The spellcaster can reroll any number of damage dice from the spell cast but then immediately takes 1d4 radiant damage per the number of rerolled dice.

After using this feature of the arch, a creature can't use it again until the next moonrise.

2. SOULLESS HOMES

The dozens of smaller homes scattered around the lake are now abandoned or home to soulless elves who serve the Seekers. The buildings are modestly furnished—most of the objects within were taken years before the Sundering.

If you need to determine the occupants for one of the homes, use the Home Occupants table.

HOME OCCUPANTS	
d12	Occupants
1–8	No current occupants
9–10	A group of 1d4 soulless commoners
11	A soulless escort
12	A soulless houseguard

3. SEEKER'S LODGE

The lodge is a large wooden structure that serves as the communal dwelling for the members of the Seekers sect at the Moon Arch. It is well maintained compared to the other dwellings and structures surrounding the Moon Arch, tended to by elves loyal to the Seekers cult.

3A ENTRY HALL & REFECTORY

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

A haze of incense smoke hangs in the air of this large room. Beyond the entry doors, a pair of long wooden tables with benches take up the majority of the space. In the northwest corner, an open hallway leads to the source of the incense. Closed wooden doors stand at the northeast, southwest, and southeast corners of the room.

If the characters enter the lodge during the day, there is a 20% chance that 1d4 soulless **commoners** are here taking a meal. Otherwise, the chamber is empty.

3B KITCHEN

The southeast door leads into the lodge's kitchen, an ample space with several earthen ovens, stone countertops, and modest (but still good quality) utensils and kitchen instruments. The contents of the kitchen are sufficient to piece together ten sets of cook's utensils, if the characters are so inclined.

If commoners are eating in the refectory, 2 soulless **commoners** are in the kitchen cleaning up after preparing a meal.

3C STORAGE ROOM

East of the kitchen, a door leads into the lodge's storage room. While the Seekers no longer need to eat, their servants do, and the storage room is filled with foraged plants, roots, and berries as well as the drying carcasses of elk that were recently hunted.

3D SEEKERS' DORMITORY

This dim, stone-walled room contains a half-dozen simple cots. Once, it might have been the shared bedroom of a family, but the air now carries the stink of a mausoleum, barely covered by the lingering scent of incense.

Four **Seekers** are in the dormitory, gathering their personal effects in preparation for the journey to Shaelvas. The Seekers are prepared to fight if they discover the characters. If they hear a disturbance anywhere in the lodge, the Seekers move to investigate.

3E TEMPLE CHAMBER

Thick clouds of incense fill the air of the chamber. Rising up from the haze, looming silhouettes of eight figures tower over your heads: statues of all the dead gods of Ios.

Two large thuribles fill the chamber with powerful incense. On the elevated podium, marble statues of the Divine Court cast a half-lidded gaze down to a rug where the Seekers would kneel together in prayer.

Contained within the shrine are minor sacraments for the safety of the Vanished, the contents of a priest's pack, one pint of anointed oil, and two sets of hooded Seeker's robes.

3F ARCHIVE

The chamber smells of the warm, comforting scent of old parchment. Other than a writing desk in the center of the room, its only contents line its four walls. Floor-to-ceiling shelves, made up of hundreds of small compartments like the comb of a beehive, each containing a single scroll.

The archive contains written records of all the visions Seeker Hallyr has experienced in her time at the Moon Arch—visions spanning many centuries. Written onto scrolls and tucked into the honeycomb shelves lining all of the archive's walls, it would be a monumental undertaking to read them all, but a character who spends time in the archive may find some useful bits of information tucked away within.

Characters can go about locating helpful information in the archive in several ways. A character who makes a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check can intuit how the scrolls are organized and have a general idea of which ones are older or more recent. A character can make a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check to discover which scrolls have been disturbed most recently. A character who makes a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check to search the area can find one of the pertinent scrolls among the dizzying assortment on the shelves.

The following records written in Shyr, the elven language, contain information useful to the characters.

THE RETURNING SHADOW

This record describes a vision Seeker Hallyr experienced shortly after the Sundering, in which she saw a figure garbed in shadows rising up from the west to come into Ios. She writes about fearing it might be one of the infernals coming to finish off the last holdouts of her people.

THE REGROWN VINEYARD

This record, dated a few months ago, describes a vision of a great vineyard, like those Hallyr remembers in the city of Shyrr, being rendered to ashy vines with withered, black grapes rotting on the ground. But as she walks through it, the Shadow from the West takes her by the hand and shows her how to renew the rotting vines. He holds a wriggling serpent and draws the breath from its body into his own before blowing a mist of glittering spirit energy into the desiccated vines. Before her eyes, green leaves begin to grow across the vineyard, gradually giving way to ripe and luscious clusters of fruit.

THE DEAD CHILD

The most recent record depicts Seeker Hallyr walking with the Shadow from the West. It is clear from the text that she has thrown in her lot with this shadow and now uses the arch as a means to find what he seeks among the scattered pockets of living Iosans. In this scroll, she describes her search for the Dead Child, a young Iosan whose spirit rings with spiritual echoes of the old Divine Court. She further writes that she's found the boy just beyond the border of Ios, hiding like a grass snake might curl up under the fan of new growth.

TREASURE

Aside from a pot of ink, pens, and blank parchment, the scrolls themselves could be valuable to a collector of Iosan mythology and history. To the right buyer, a scroll can command up to 2d10+5 gp.

If you feel generous, you can also have one or more of the scrolls be a spell scroll—misfiled by a well-intentioned but mistaken servant.

3G HALLYR'S CHAMBER

The door opens into an open and airy bedchamber, lit by the soft glow of an arcantrik torch set in the ceiling. Only a few simple pieces of furniture occupy the space: a bed with clean linens, a dressing stool, a wardrobe, and a table with a basin and pitcher.

During the day, Seeker Hallyr can be found meditating here. If the alarm is raised or if she hears the sound of battle within the lodge, she immediately moves to protect her fellow Seekers.

If the characters search the wardrobe, they discover three identical sets of ceremonial robes hanging within.

4. LAKESIDE DOCK

The dock is a simple wooden platform extending into the lake. There are three rowboats tied up here during the day, and at night, Seeker Hallyr and her companions take two out to the floating platform.

A pair of **soulless houseguard** keep watch at the dock at all times.

Rowboats. Each boat can carry 4 Medium or smaller creatures. A large creature occupies the space of 2 Medium creatures. The maximum carrying capacity of a boat is 500 lbs.

5. FLOATING PLATFORM

Tethered at the lake's midpoint directly beneath the arch, the floating platform allows Seeker Hallyr to scry in the waters. During the day, the dock is abandoned, but at sundown, Seeker Hallyr, 2 of her fellow **Seekers**, and 2 **soulless escorts** row out to the platform using one of the boats at the lakeside dock (area 4). The trio remains on the platform from Calder's moonrise to moon fall, studying visions in the water.

6. WATCHTOWERS

Four tall stone towers stand at the cardinal directions around the lake. A pair of **soulless houseguard gunners** take shifts in the towers, watching for any potential intruders. Soulless in the towers have an unobstructed line of sight to most of the clearing around the lake, but the dense forest to the east, west, and south limits their ability to spot creatures moving in those areas.

If the soulless see suspicious creatures approaching the arch or if it is clear that the arch is under attack, they attempt to provide covering fire from their elevated positions.

Arcantrik Cannons. Cannons mounted on the watchtowers can give the defenders an edge against an attacker. These weapons project raw arcane energy through crystalline prisms to detonate in a wide radius.

On its turn, a creature in the tower can activate one of the cannons and choose a point within 100 feet of the tower. A bolt of arcane energy detonates at that point in a 20-foot radius sphere. Creatures in the area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) radiant damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one.

After firing, the cannon cannot fire again for 1 minute while its arcane condenser fully recharges.

POWER OF THE ARCH

If she is able, at sundown Seeker Hallyr and her companions, a pair of **Seekers** and a pair of **soulless escorts**, take two rowboats from area 4 out to the floating platform beneath the Moon Arch. She begins to meditate on the waters while her companions prepare incense and keep guard over their leader.

Read or paraphrase the following once Seeker Hallyr begins her work:

The hooded figure of the senior Seeker sits in a meditative pose, legs folded beneath her and staff resting across her lap. With a soft voice, she begins to speak, her faint words echoing over the misty surface of the lake. Then, as if lifted up by invisible hands, she rises into the air, her flowing robes trailing below her. In response to her words, the arch overhead crackles with arcane energy that begins building in intensity.





The Seekers of the Moon Arch are preparing to conclude their time here with one final display of the relic's power before they will travel west to Shaelvas to join Eyvreyn and his forces.

THE RITUAL

The Seekers begin to chant in unison, their voices blending together with the humming of the arch. In minutes, the water starts to dance out from them in ripples of ever-increasing force. The surges seem to pulse in time with the Seeker's words. The characters cannot understand what the Seekers are saying—their words are not in Iosan or any other language they might be familiar with.

As the chanting reaches its height, the soulless escorts with Hallyr draw blades and slit the throats of the Seekers chanting with her. Their spirits visibly leave their bodies and are drawn down into the water, which begins to take on the appearance of the starry night sky above.

Seeker Hallyr calls out:

"In the names of the Vanished gods, and in the names of the dead! Lacyr of Ages and Ossyris of Hours! Ayisla of the Night and Nyrrro of the Day! Scyrah and Nyssor, Lurynsar and Lyliss! I call upon those creatures of the Veld who once served you to rise up. Destroy this place, so none may ever use it against us! Rise up and heed my commands!"

THE ARCHON RISES

Once Hallyr begins her ritual, she draws forth a creature of terrible power: an archon of the void.

The surface of the water swells, deep purple light growing ever brighter within its depths. Something rockets out of the water with tremendous force, trailing a spray behind it as it leaps into the air. Two massive wings unfurl from a strangely slender figure, its face concealed beneath a featureless mask.

The being hangs in the air, keeping itself aloft with silent pulses of its enormous wings. Looking down at the Seeker below, it seems to await her instructions.

Assuming that the characters have not already destroyed Hallyr, the void archon emerges from the lake bound to Seeker Hallyr's will and follows her commands unquestioningly. If the alarm has been raised, her first order is for the archon to seek them out and incapacitate them.

Otherwise, Seeker Hallyr instructs the archon to obliterate the Moon Arch, a process that takes even a creature of the archon's power an appreciable amount of effort. If allowed to attack it without distraction, the archon destroys the arch after 1 hour.

FIGHTING ABOVE THEIR WEIGHT CLASS

It goes without saying that a CR 17 **void archon** is well beyond the fighting capabilities of most characters at this point in their adventuring careers. A direct confrontation with this celestial being is likely to result in the characters dropping like flies.

There are ways around a total destruction of the adventurers, however. The characters can always attempt to flee the archon. Seeker Hallyr will call it back to destroy the Moon Arch before it has the chance to finish them all off.

Alternately, the archon might simply incapacitate them, leaving it to Seeker Hallyr to determine their fate. Hallyr might choose not to bother with meddlers who were so quickly incapacitated and leave them for the wildlife to finish off or decide to bring them to Shaelvas as captives and a gift for her comrade Eyvreyn.

Lastly, the archon has no particular skin in the game. It follows Hallyr's orders only because of the ritual used to summon it. If Hallyr is incapacitated or destroyed, the void archon will not continue attacking the characters. It instead studies them for a moment before deciding to leave the area, flying off toward the east.

INTERRUPTING THE RITUAL

The characters might try to intervene if they see Seeker Hallyr attempting this ritual. Fear not, however. So long as two or more eldritch die under the Moon Arch once she's started it, their spirits are drawn down into the lake to act as a lure to draw the archon out. If Seeker Hallyr isn't present for its arrival, then no one in the region can control the archon.

If that is the case, the archon fights everything it can perceive—player characters or otherwise—for three rounds before taking to the skies and flying off into the night.

XP AWARDS

In addition to the XP awards earned for the creatures the characters overpower in this chapter, the characters earn 1,000 XP (divided equally among all characters) if they prevent the destruction of the Moon Arch.

DEVELOPMENT

Unless she is defeated here, Seeker Hallyr takes any surviving elves and her thrall void archon west to the ruins of Shaelvas. There, she assists Seeker Eyvreyn in preparing the final stages of his apotheosis in his workshop within the Fane of Lyliss.

Assuming it is not destroyed, the characters can attempt to use the power of the arch as described in "Parting the Veil."

THE SHADOWBLADE

If the Shadowblade is present at the Moon Arch, the assassin bides her time. Seeker Hallyr has a sizeable group of soulless and fellow eldritch to protect herself against most attackers. Thus, the Shadowblade is willing to see how the characters operate from a distance.

Should the fortunes of battle turn in favor of the characters, particularly during a confrontation with the void archon, the Shadowblade attempts to throw the characters' plans into disarray. The assassin can quickly mount one of the watchtowers and use its arcane cannon to pressure the characters, favoring targets who attack the archon with magic or mechanika.



5



SHAELVAS, THE CITY OF THE WIND



SHAELVAS, THE FAMED CITY OF THE WIND, WAS ONCE devoted to the goddess Lyliss, the Nis-Scyir of Autumn. While not as grand and opulent as some other elven cities, Shaelvas was nonetheless a marvel to behold. Graceful towers joined by sweeping bridges linked the structures in the heart of the city, all unifying at the Fane of Lyliss in its center.

The City of the Wind is all but empty now. It suffered greatly during the Rivening, when the priesthood went mad from feeling the agony of their goddess. While some of the Divine Court perished, Lyliss was not given a merciful end, and her torment continues in the void. The priests who felt the mind-shattering agony of Lyliss were among the deadliest during the Rivening, and they used their knowledge of poisons to slay many thousands in a short time before taking their own lives.

Thus, Shaelvas was abandoned earlier than some cities, and nature has had greater time to reclaim it. Looming trees grow up and through almost every structure in the city. Those buildings on the outskirts have been slowly but inexorably pulverized by the crushing grip of tree roots. Even the largest structures in the center of the city have begun to crumble under the embrace of titanic trees.

Many of the roads and bridges the characters can follow are blocked by crumbled masonry or vegetation too dense to navigate. In many instances, they will need to enter the crumbling structures of the city to find alternate routes around such obstructions, which can lead them into perilous encounters with the creatures that have made the City of the Wind their home.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

This chapter takes the characters into a derelict, overgrown city and offers a glimpse beyond the boundaries of the physical world.

The uninformed believe the City of the Wind to be bereft of inhabitants, a place occupied only by wild beasts and the roaming shades of the dead. There is a grain of truth to that belief, but Shaelvas has never truly been empty. Deep within the city, hiding beneath the former Fane of Lyliss, is a dedicated sect of assassins. Training in a facility known as the Third Chamber, these assassins were once among the deadliest and most devoted agents of the Retribution of Scyrah.

Now the assassins of the Third Chamber have thrown in their lot with Seeker Eyvrey. In him, they see a new opportunity to become the murderous priesthood of a reborn pantheon.

Before running the chapter, read through it to familiarize yourself with the significant locations in Shaelvas and the encounters that can occur within them. This chapter is the culmination of the *Shadow of the Seeker*.

REACHING SHAELVAS

The City of the Wind lies 60 miles southwest of the Moon Arch. If the characters copied the map of Ios in the Gate of Storms, they will have no trouble finding where the city stands. Otherwise, they might have a vague idea of the city's location and will need to explore the region in order to find it.

As the characters travel to the City of the Wind, you can use the Archenbough Forest Random Encounters table (chapter 2) to present them with challenges along the way.

SHAELVAS: GENERAL FEATURES

A near-constant cold breeze works its way into every nook and cranny of the abandoned city, stirring the fog that blankets its streets.

Light. The light that passes down through the dense canopy of leaves overhead dapples the white stones and green vegetation below. The city is dimly lit by this faintly greenish, filtered light. Patches of shadows in the belly of ruins and under overpasses are pitch dark.

Sounds. The sighing of wind rustling the leaves overhead is constant throughout the city, as are the creaks and groans of tree limbs moving under the weight of those leaves. The occasional chatter of birds and flapping of wings punctuate the gentle sounds of the wind.

Fog. Despite the stirring of the wind, a thick fog blankets the city's streets. Distant structures are reduced to vague silhouettes against the gray, and the fog washes out colors everywhere in the city. Everything in the City of the Wind is coated in a fine layer of condensation deposited by the fog.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN SHAELVAS

The expanse of Shaelvas is home to all manner of wild creatures native to Ios. It is an ideal location to include random encounters for the characters to face as they travel its streets and winding back roads.

Once per hour while the characters are exploring the ruined city, roll a d20 and consult the Shaelvas Encounters table to determine what, if anything, they encounter.

ASSASSIN PATROL

In Shaelvas, the assassins of the Third Chamber maintain patrol groups of 2 **soulless scouts** to keep an eye out for intruders. With a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check, characters moving at a regular pace spot the scouts at a distance of 100 feet.

Unless the characters move slowly and stealthily, the scouts will notice them. If they haven't already been discovered, the scouts go into hiding and begin trailing the characters in preparation for an ambush.

When one of the scouts is killed in battle, the other tries to flee. The scout uses his knowledge of the area to lure the players into one of the region's dangers. If the characters continue, roll for a new encounter to determine the nature of the danger.

If the scout retreats successfully, it returns to the Fane of Lyliss to alert the others of the characters' presence.

COLLAPSING RUIN

As the characters move through a structure or under one of the bridges or elevated walkways in the City of the Wind, they hear an ominous cracking from the stones overhead.

The characters must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one as the structure falls down on top of them. A creature that fails the saving throw is

SHAELVAS ENCOUNTERS

d20	Encounter
1–10	No encounter
11	Spider's nest
12	Hunting wolves
13	Collapsing ruin
14	Spirits of the city
15	Statue of Lyliss
16	Third Chamber trap
17	Roaming gorgon
18	Manticore
19	Dead body
20	Assassin patrol

buried underneath the rubble. The creature is prone, blinded, and restrained. A buried creature takes 3 (1d6) points of bludgeoning damage each minute that it is buried. As an action, a creature can attempt a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to pull itself free or to free a buried creature.

DEAD BODY

Despite their familiarity with the City of the Wind, the assassins of the Third Chamber also succumb to its dangers from time to time. The characters stumble upon the body of one such unlucky assassin. Roll a d6 and consult the Corpse Discovery table to determine the nature of the body.

HUNTING WOLVES

A pack of 2d8+1 hungry **wolves** prowl the streets and structures of Shaelvas, looking for anything that might make a tasty meal.

CORPSE DISCOVERY

d6 Result

- 1–2 The body is that of a soulless scout lying at the base of a tall structure. Judging by the unnatural way its limbs and neck are positioned, the scout fell while climbing the structure and died on impact. A character who searches the body discovers a medallion inscribed with the symbol of Lyliss worth 10 gp, as well as a potion of healing.
- 3–4 The corpse is a sythyss garbed in heavy armor that has been rent open by the claws of a powerful beast.
- 5 The corpse is that of an eldritch who was destroyed. Due to the eldritch being an undead creature, it is difficult to determine how long the corpse has lain here; it appears not even the rampant flora of the City of the Wind is willing to come into direct contact with its flesh.
- 6 The body has been picked clean by scavengers and has likely been in place for years, if not longer.



MANTICORE

The characters draw the attention of a prowling **manticore**. The beast stalks after them for a time, waiting for a moment when one of the characters is separated from the others or is otherwise vulnerable before it launches its ambush.

ROAMING GORGON

The characters happen upon a **gorgon** roaming the streets. The creature is out of its lair looking for a meal, and the characters have just shot to the top of its list.

TREASURE

If the characters defeat the gorgon, there is a 50% chance they discover a six-inch-wide pearl lodged in its maw. Gorgon pearls are rare and prized by collectors, and this one can fetch up to 300 gp from the right buyer.

SPIDER'S NEST

A group of $2d4+2$ **giant spiders** make their nest in the ruins of a crumbling structure. Thin webs strung across the street level act as tripwires, alerting the spiders to the presence of the characters as they pass by and prompting the spiders to leap out and attack.

TREASURE

Within the spiders' lair, the cocooned body of a desiccated elf hangs from the ceiling on thick strands of webbing. A character who cuts open the cocoon discovers a slender blade engraved with the word "Everbright" in Iosan. The magical dagger is a vicious weapon.

SPIRITS OF THE CITY

The City of the Wind is haunted by the spirits of hundreds of elves who were murdered by the priests whom they once trusted. Their shades drift through the streets, silently weeping for lost lives and loved ones.

The characters happen upon one such spirit, a **wraith**. If the wraith spots the characters, it launches a wild attack at them, focusing its greatest wrath on any clerics or paladins in the group.

STATUE OF LYLISS

The characters happen upon a 12-foot statue of the goddess Lyliiss. There is a 50% chance that creeping night's breath vines with toxic blossoms are wrapped around the statue in a carpet of greenery.

A character can attempt to harvest the blossoms. Harvesting a blossom requires a character to attempt a DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check. If the check succeeds, the character harvests $1d4+1$ flowers from the vine. If the check fails, one of the blossoms erupts in a cloud of toxic pollen, dealing 9 (2d8) poison damage.

Once blossoms are harvested or one erupts, the remaining flowers constrict into the vine.

NIGHT'S BREATH

The toxic bloom of a night's breath vine is dangerous if inhaled. As an action, you can throw a blossom up to 20 feet, causing it to erupt on impact. Make a ranged attack against a creature or object, treating the blossom as an improvised weapon. On a hit, the target takes 2d8 poison damage if it breathes in the pollen.

THIRD CHAMBER TRAP

The assassins of the Third Chamber have littered Shaelvas with numerous deadly traps in an effort to keep intruders away from their sanctum. The characters happen upon one of these traps as they explore the city. The traps are rigged to whisper-fine silver wires strung across doorways or streets. The DC to spot a trip wire is 12. Otherwise, the characters must succeed on a group DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or trigger the trap.

When the trap triggers, the character who rolled lowest on the group check and all creatures within a 10-foot radius sphere must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw as the trap detonates with a thunderous explosion. On a failed save, they take 14 (4d6) fire damage, or they take half as much on a successful one.



LOCATIONS OF SHAELVAS

This section provides details for some of the significant locations within the City of the Wind. Aside from these, the city is an overgrown maze of crumbling stone homes, pavilions, towers, warehouses, temples, and gardens.

1. STREETS OF SHAELVAS

All the streets of the City of the Wind are cobbled with masterfully crafted smooth stone. Most of the stone is white, but elaborate patterns and mosaics were worked into the major thoroughfares by artisans of House Aiesyn.

Of course, time has not been kind to the craftsmanship of the elven stonemasons. For nearly five hundred years, Shaelvas has undergone a steady decline, and what were once grand concourses through the towering structures of the city are now overgrown, choked with dense foliage and enormous trees.

NAVIGATING THE STREETS

Due to the rampant overgrowth and impassible areas of collapsed ruins, it is impossible to travel a straight line through Shaelvas. The city's streets are considered difficult terrain for the purpose of determining travel pace.

Wisdom (Survival) checks made to navigate in Shaelvas are made at DC 13.

2. MARKET SQUARE

This market square was once a thriving, bustling hub of commerce in Shaelvas. Within its walls, a year-round open-air market was held with merchants from across Ios meeting to trade with the residents of the City of the Wind. Thousands of stalls filled it from corner to corner, intercut with narrow alleys that countless Iosan feet trod. The pale cobblestones of the market square still bear marks of their passage, worn down over the course of centuries.

Now only a few echoes of its former grandeur remain. Massive trees erupt from the ground and through its walls. Curtains of moss and hanging vines have replaced the colorful pennants and banners of the merchants. Cycles of freeze and thaw have gradually forced apart the stones of its walls, leading to whole sections collapsing into rubble.

TREASURE

Relics remain in the overgrown sprawl of the marketplace. For every hour a character spends here, they can attempt a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. If the check succeeds, a character discovers 2d4 art items worth 50 gp apiece. These include intricate silver goblets, pearl and gold hair combs, jewelry, and other such items. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character finds a magic item or weapon of common or uncommon rarity.

3. CITY COURT

The large, circular court was once a public meeting place where the elves of Shaelvas gathered for celebrations, listened to decrees from the city's leaders, and witnessed performances of theater and music. All around the court, the buildings bear ornate frescoes depicting significant points in Ios' history, effigies of the Divine Court, and elaborate runic script containing poetry to glorify the goddess Lyliss.

The floor of the court depicts a map of the city etched into the cobblestones. Some portions of the map have been destroyed by trees growing up through the stones, but otherwise it is an accurate representation of the layout of the city.

THE NEEDLE OF LYLISS

A 200-foot-tall spire rises from the center of the court, surrounded by a wide reflecting pool. Runes etched into the spire's surfaces provide adequate handholds. A character who scales the spire can get a clear view of the city and makes Wisdom (Survival) checks to navigate with advantage for 1 hour.

4. BLODYNGARDEN

Back when Shaelvas was a thriving city, the Blodyngarden was one of the finest gardens in all of Ios. It has since gone to seed, growing wild within the high stone walls and green glass domes that once contained it.

ORCHARD OF POISON

Every plant growing in the Blodyngarden is highly poisonous, but the delivery methods for these poisons vary widely: some produce painful blisters on contact, the sap of others causes breathing to become difficult, and some even release toxic spores or pollen into the air if they are so much as brushed against.

For every hour a character spends in the Blodyngarden, they must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion, representing the serious toll that the different poisons in the garden take on the living. Creatures with resistance to poison have advantage on this saving throw, as do creatures with abilities like Dwarven Resilience. Creatures immune to poison are also immune to the toxic effects of the Blodyngarden.

THE POISON FARMERS

A group of three **sythyss scouts** regularly harvest the toxic blooms of the Blodyngarden. As undead creatures, they are immune to the debilitating effects of the garden. The trio brings a harvest back to the Fane of Lyliss, where it can be processed into poisons for use by the assassins of the Third Chamber.

If the poison farmers discover the characters, they attempt to retreat back to the Fane and warn the others. If it seems like the characters will catch them before they can reach the Fane, one of them remains behind, sacrificing themselves to preserve the others.

THE HERMIT

At any point when the characters move from one location to another within the City of the Wind, they can encounter a strange and out of place figure: a wizened old elf seated in meditation, holding a massive scroll across his lap.

In the streets ahead is an ancient elf, sitting with his back against the trunk of a sprawling oak. A faint look of worry plays across his weathered face. He begins to stroke a massive scroll case lying across his folded legs, as if he were petting a beloved animal.

The elf inclines his head in your direction. "I wondered when you would arrive."

The elf is a mysterious figure known only as the Hermit of Henge Hold. The Hermit has lived beyond Ios for centuries, carrying the oversized scroll he claims contains portents of the future and hidden secrets of the past. He has come to Shaelvas to bear witness to Seeker Eyvrey'n's plot to replace the gods.

ROLEPLAYING

THE HERMIT OF HENGE HOLD

The Hermit is, by all accounts, an odd individual. He has spent many human lifespans in isolation, consumed by dreadful visions of calamities and possible futures. He often references the scroll he carries as if it were a living entity that dictates his actions, but, in truth, the scroll merely contains his own mad scrawling. The Hermit himself glimpses possible fates, conveyed to his mind from beyond Caen itself—but he'd rather not have to explain that and uses the scroll as a simpler explanation.

Ideal: "My warnings and prophecies can drive people to become heroes."

Bond: "I seek to preserve a record of all that has transpired and that might yet come to pass."

Flaw: "I must do as the visions demand of me, even if it puts my soul in peril."



The Hermit wants to aid the characters if he can. He possesses a wealth of knowledge about the present circumstances and is eager to share what he knows with the characters. If the characters ask him a question, he spends a moment consulting his scroll before responding.

However, due to how the Hermit experiences the world, the information he can share is not always reliable. Whenever the characters get information from the Hermit, roll a die. On an odd roll, what the Hermit says is true and functions effectively like the *divination* spell. On an even roll, the Hermit shares information that he believes is true but that is from one of many possible realities. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check notices a faint flicker of uncertainty if the Hermit shares information from one of these potential futures.

The Hermit is difficult to pin down in a conversation. His connection to his scroll causes him to experience events in a strange mix of the present and many possible futures. The following are some common questions that characters might ask of him and potential answers.

Who are you? “I cannot say for certain. It has been so long, and I have seen so many things, that petty matters like my name have slipped away in the dust of ages. Most just call me the Hermit.”

Why are you here? “I travel to witness events both great and terrible, as the scroll demands of me.”

How did you know we'd be here? “The scroll tells me many things. Some will come to pass, others only may. But in it I read of your arrival here, at this time. I had to know for myself.”

What are you here to witness? “I cannot say. Perhaps I am here to witness you vanquish he who seeks to throw open the veil to sit on the throne of Lacyr. Perhaps I am here to bear witness to your deaths. The scroll is...unclear on the matter.”

DEVELOPMENT

After the characters meet with him, the Hermit shadows them throughout Shaelvas. He maintains a respectable distance from them and might even vanish from sight for long periods of time only to be waiting for them at the next crossroads. Even he doesn't know how he travels in this way, and, if pressed for details, simply says, “I go where the scroll demands.”

The Hermit does not interfere as events play out. He is not here to help or to hinder, only to observe. The characters might hear him whispering mad prophecies and portents as they continue the adventure. Use the following examples for guidance on the kinds of things the characters overhear:

- “This is the place where she dies as the stones fall. Wait, no. No. Not here. Not yet.”
- “Does his shot fly true this time, or does he miss again like in all the others?”
- “If they step left, one of them will betray the others in a bid for power. If they step right, another will become a king. Oh, wait, or is it the other way around?”
- “Is it true they will see the gates? Or do they die here? Which one, which one?”
- If the characters are faced with a threat they are not likely to overcome: “In all the visions where you live, this is when you run away.”

If the characters treat him well, the Hermit may choose to “relax” his position of non-interference in minor ways. He never takes actions to directly aid them but may give the characters a silent clue, such as subtly pointing out a hidden tripwire, or help by telling a character to duck the moment before a surprise attacker fires a shot.

ENEMY AT THE GATES

This encounter occurs as the characters approach the Fane of Lyliss in the heart of the city. As they approach within sight of the fane, read or paraphrase the following:

Near the heart of the city, the streets open into a decaying and overgrown walled compound. On its other side, beyond a gate with tall spires along its length, a flight of stairs leads up to the edifice of an imposing structure. A spire wrapped in creeping vines rises from its roof to pierce the canopy of trees like a slender dagger.

Ghosteyes waits concealed in a sniper's perch 100 feet away, atop one of three towers on the gate to the fane. He has taken great pains to prepare the area leading up to the temple to aid in a confrontation with any intruders.

A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check manages to catch a glimpse of the shooter and is not surprised when he attacks.

When Ghosteyes announces his presence, read or paraphrase the following:

A faint glint of light on glass, high on a tower across the compound, is your only warning before the booming report of a rifle echoes through the city.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

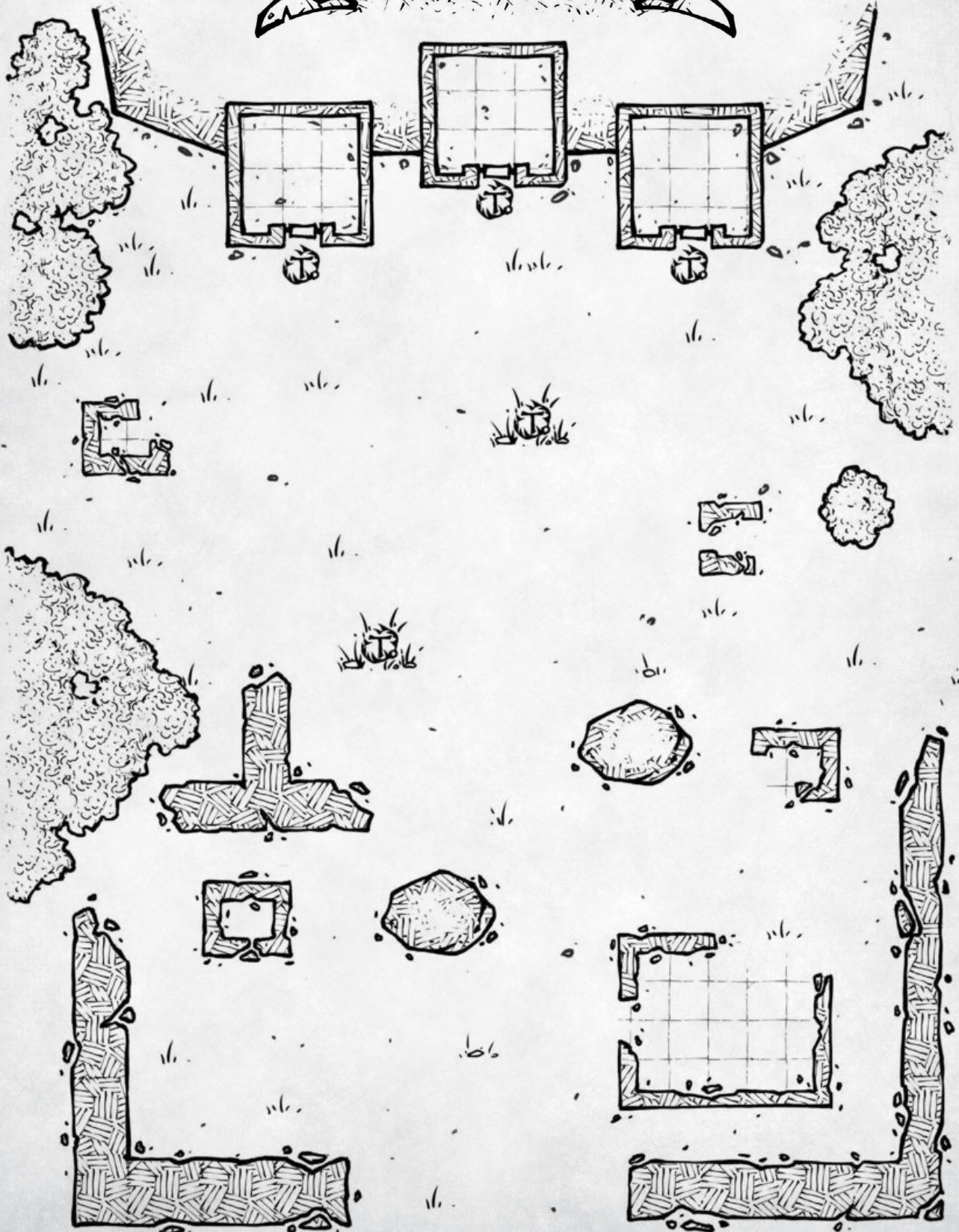
This encounter is less of a straightforward combat and more of a test of the characters' ability to deal with a dangerous situation. Allow the characters to use their skills to their advantage.

The sniper fights to the death, using the terrain to his advantage. Each round he shoots at any character he can draw a line of sight to and then shifts position to a different perch to keep the characters from getting a bead on him. He has also set up the battlefield with a number of advance preparations.

Triggered Explosives. Littered throughout the compound are five explosive charges that Ghosteyes has clear lines of sight to. On his turn, instead of shooting at a character, Ghosteyes can fire at one of these explosives to set it off. Creatures within 10 feet of the explosive must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one.

Hunting Traps. Ghosteyes has strategically placed hunting traps in areas of concealment and on the approach to his sniper nests.

Gate to the fane of Lyliss



THE GATE OF THE GODS

After dealing with the sniper at the gates, the way into the Fane of Lyliss is open to the characters.

A flight of fifty steps leads to the wide, double doors of the fane, which open into a grand hall of black marble. A statue of the goddess Lyliss lies at the back of the hall. Arrayed in front of this statue, Seeker Eyvreyn and his allies, as well as a cohort of soulless and sythyss protectors, prepare for the final step in the Seeker's plans.

When the characters enter the temple, read or paraphrase the following:

A circle of undead and black-eyed elves stands in the heart of the ancient temple. Surrounding them, strangely out of place in the elven hall, are grotesque black stone structures, covered in the grimacing and glowering faces that distinguish them as Orgoth in origin.

At the center of it all is a lean, dark-haired eldritch wearing ornate armor. He raises his voice saying, "We stand at the precipice of greatness once more. No more will we be the orphans of dead gods. Today we force open the gates of death itself. Rejoice, brothers and sisters. Today we shall become gods."

The speaker is Seeker Eyvreyn. Other than the soulless and sythyss who are guarding him, every other Iosan in the chamber is an eldritch, carefully chosen by him due to their similarity to an aspect of one of the members of the Divine Court. All of the eldritch are his willing compatriots, other than one: the child Avross.

AREA INFORMATION

The temple's great hall has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The great hall of the temple is 100-feet wide. Its vaulted ceiling is 30-feet high. Every 25 feet, a 3-foot diameter stone column provides support for the ceiling.

Light. There is a circle of bright light at the feet of the statue of Lyliss, 60 feet in diameter, produced by the unhealthy green glow of the Orgoth stones Eyvreyn has brought into the temple. Little light passes into the great hall through its double doors; everywhere outside the circle is dimly lit.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Aside from Eyvreyn and his **eldritch** allies, there are 2 **sythyss knights** and 4 **soulless escorts**. Initially, none of the eldritch participates in battle. Eyvreyn only turns to attack the characters once he has completed his ritual (see "The Ritual") or if all the sythyss and soulless escorts are destroyed.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE GOD

Eyvreyn has not been truthful with his allies. He promised them all that he would elevate them as fellow gods in a new Divine Court, but his intention is far more sinister. Using the Orgoth relic he discovered, Eyvreyn intends to transfer the energy of all of their souls into himself, granting him the power to rip open the veil between Caen and Urcaen and take his place on the throne of Lacyr as the singular god of all elvenkind.

The following table includes the identities of his potential victims and the gods for whom they stand as proxies.

Name	Identity	God	Notes
Dominie Hycienth	Mistress of the Third Chamber and principal assassin	Lyliss: Nis-Scyir of Autumn;	—
Avross Alcyan	The Yearless Child	Scyrah: Nis-Issyr of Spring; Divine Healer	Avross is bound with manacles to prevent him from interfering with Eyvreyn's plans
Aelyth Silowuyr	Former protector of the capital city of Shyrr	Ossyris: Incissar of Hours; Sovereign of Conflict; General of Lyoss	—
Seeker Hallyr	Senior Speaker of the Moon Arch	Ayisla: Nis-Arsyr of Night; Suzerain of the Fallen; Watcher of the Gates	If the characters destroyed her at the Moon Arch, Seeker Hallyr's position is empty
Dawnlord Cyrsyll Nyarr	Former dawnlord of the Dawnguard and warrior of the Retribution	Lurynsar: Issyr of Summer; Lord of the East Forest; Armsmaster of Lyoss	—
Saeryth Ryvaal	Former rysovass of the Nyss	Nyssor: Scyir of Winter; Grand Crafter; Frozen Sage	—
Lothvyn	Ancient eldritch and former member of the Cult of Nyrr	Nyrr: Arsyr of Day; Seneschal of Lyoss; Lorekeeper	—

Each of the eldritch stands on an Iosan symbol. Any character who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check recognizes the symbols as representing each member of the Divine Court and which god it represents.

CONFRONTING EYVREYN

The Seeker has come too far to allow some meddlesome adventurers to stand in his way. He orders his protectors to slay the characters before enacting the transfer of souls. He disregards the characters when their presence becomes known, other than to indicate to his protectors to cut them off.

He commands the other eldritch to remain within the circle of Orgoth stones, saying that it will all be over soon and that the characters will be insects before their combined power.

The circle of sythyss and soulless turn on the characters and launch an all-out attack. The servants of the eldritch give no quarter and fight to the death.

LAIR ACTIONS

Distracted by his goal to absorb the souls of his fellow eldritch, Eyvreyn uses lair actions to defend himself. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Eyvreyn takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects.

- Eyvreyn releases a pulse of arcane energy. Creatures hostile to him within 60 feet must make a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.
- Eyvreyn uses one of his innate at-will or 1/day spells.

Eyvreyn can only perform these lair actions while he is performing the ritual. He loses the ability to do so if the ritual fails.

THE RITUAL

While the characters are busy with his warriors, Seeker Eyvreyn begins the ritual. Using a clawed finger, he cuts the symbol of one of the gods into the forehead of an eldritch on his turn. Doing so causes an arc of energy to leap from the eldritch and into one of the Orgoth stones. The soul is drawn out of the eldritch's body by the end of Eyvreyn's turn. Eyvreyn's final sacrifice will be Avross, preceded by Seeker Hallyr, if she is present.

At the start of his next turn, the soul flows from the eyes and mouths carved onto the stones in unholy green light, passing into the Seeker. Each time this occurs, Eyvreyn can restore 7 (2d4+2) hit points.

If Eyvreyn absorbs the souls of two eldritch, a rippling light appears in the center of the circle. It grows with each subsequent soul, until after the fifth when the light rips open a fissure between worlds. Read or paraphrase the following:

A mote of pale, shimmering light appears amid the gathered eldritch, playing across their distorted features. With a sound like ripping silk, the mote begins to grow and spiral in on itself, a whorl of ever-widening light.

The center of that whirling light thins, opening a portal on a vista of a different world. Painted in hypnotic patterns of flowing color, you see a vast city rising out of a forest that seems to float among a void of stars. The sweeping parapets and grand plazas before you look almost like those of the elven city in which you stand but as if constructed out of frozen moonlight. A pair of golden gates, unfathomable in their scale, stand barriers to the grand city beyond. Two stoic wardens flank the gates, radiant beings clad in armor of pearl and gold.



The portal opens onto a vista of the spirit world of Urcaen, specifically the gates of the Veld, the former home of the Divine Court. The characters can see Eyvreyn's expression of victory as he lays eyes on the kingdom that he wishes to claim for himself.

STOPPING THE RITUAL

There are different ways to stop Seeker Eyvreyn's ritual:

Destroy the Orgoth Stones. Destroying one or more of the Orgoth relics causes a catastrophic arcane backlash. A current of energy surges from a destroyed stone through all the others in the circle, causing them to detonate in a flash of green light and pulverized black stone. Each stone is AC 17, has 25 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and resistance to piercing and slashing damage caused by nonmagical weapons.

Any surviving eldritch are immediately rendered unconscious by the backlash, and Eyvreyn takes 21 (6d6) radiant damage from the blast. The whirling portal to Urcaen collapses on itself, and (if he survives) Eyvreyn hurls himself at the characters.

Destroy the Eldritch. If the characters kill the eldritch before Eyvreyn can absorb their souls, then the ritual fizzles out. Lacking sufficient energy to maintain the portal to Urcaen, the gate to the spirit world closes on itself after a few moments.

The characters will need to destroy at least 3 of the eldritch to end the ritual. If the characters manage to destroy 3 or more of the eldritch, Eyvreyn attacks.

Destroy Seeker Eyvreyn. The most obvious solution, killing Seeker Eyvreyn causes his ritual to fail.

RITUAL COMPLETE

If Eyvreyn somehow manages to absorb the souls of all the other eldritch, he is able to maintain the portal to Urcaen. Read or paraphrase the following:

The eldritch looks back at you as she crosses the threshold between the physical and spirit worlds. Eyes flashing with madness, he calls back to you, "Farewell! May you never forget the day you stood face to face with a god. When you die, know that I await you on the other side!"

With that, Eyvreyn steps through and the portal swirls shut behind him.

What ramifications the mad Seeker's actions will have on the world will remain to be seen. But the characters should be visited, from time to time, by fanatical Iosans and Nyss claiming to have heard the voice of a "new god" in their dreams who tells them to pass on the message: "He's still waiting for you."

AFTERMATH

Once the characters have defeated Seeker Eyvreyn (or if he manages to escape to Urcaen), any of his remaining allies turn on them, ready to rip them to pieces. Before further battle can commence, a voice cuts through the hall.

"Cease this!" cries the voice of the aged Hermit of Henge Hold as he crosses the threshold of the Fane of Lyliss. "I have foreseen what fate awaits you if you proceed. Unless you wish to face an eternity of torments in the place beyond this world and the next, stand down immediately."

The elves cease their hostility at the Hermit's words. He either approaches the fallen figure of Eyvreyn and consults his scroll or touches the air where the portal once stood, before saying, "So I have written, and so it has come to pass." If they defeated the rogue Seeker, the Hermit then turns to the characters.

"I cannot know what ills you have prevented today." The Hermit bends down over the unmoving form of the eldritch. When he speaks again his voice is almost tender.

"This one lived for centuries seeking hope. Hope to be the one to restore our goddess. Hope to bring Ios to eternal spring. When it was ripped away from him, everything he once was ceased to be. He turned the profane instruments of an ancient evil on himself and was rewarded as all such men are—with his own destruction."

The Hermit answers any lingering questions the characters might have (though he does so in his usual, somewhat unhelpful manner). Use the information in the "Adventure Background" to inform his answers. The Hermit wasn't present for everything that transpired up to this point, but he has gleaned enough information from his many visions to act as a knowledgeable source.

The Hermit demands that the characters be allowed to leave the City of the Wind without any interference. If Avross survived the day, the Hermit offers to return the boy to his family in Rhul, suggesting that "the scroll might have something interesting for me among the dwarves."

CHARACTER XP

In addition to any XP the characters earn from defeating monsters, award them 1,000 XP each if they manage to prevent Seeker Eyvreyn from entering the Veld.

EPILOGUE

At this point, the players have completed *Shadow of the Seeker*, but there are still many opportunities for adventure in the borderlands and beyond.

The nation of Ios is still in turmoil. Rival eldritch vie for power, and factions of the undead have begun to gather their strength. It could lead to an intense war unless skilled heroes can somehow convince the rivals to settle their disputes another way.

Beyond Ios, there are still many Iosans and Nyss who do not know the fate of the nation. Living scattered across western Immoren, these individuals struggle to make new lives and can use all the assistance that they can get. Perhaps most of all, though, these refugees crave answers about what has happened to their homeland—answers the characters can now provide.

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL NPCs

AYRED ISSYEN

Medium undead (eldritch), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +3

Skills Intimidation +3, Perception +4

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Shyr

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Charge. If Ayred moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a longsword attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 5 feet away and knocked prone.

Indomitable (2/Day). Ayred can reroll a saving throw that he fails. He must use the new roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ayred makes two melee attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.



GHOSTEYES

Medium humanoid (soulless), neutral

Armor Class 20 (+2 padded armor)

Hit Points 123 (13d8 + 65)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	22 (+6)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Int +3

Skills Acrobatics +9, Perception +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Shyr, Cygnaran

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) Proficiency Bonus +3

Arcane Anathema. When targeted by spells, Ghosteyes has advantage on saving throws to resist the effect of the spell. If subjected to a spell that does damage, a successful saving throw causes Ghosteyes to take no damage from the spell instead of the normal half damage. Ghosteyes can use magical weapons as normal.

Heavy Cover. As a bonus action, Ghosteyes can hunker down in cover. Until the start of his next turn, Ghosteyes treats half cover as three-quarters cover, and three-quarters cover as full cover.

Ghost's Eye (2/Day). As a bonus action, Ghosteyes can add 1d10 to his next attack or damage roll with a ranged weapon. This attack ignores half cover and three-quarters cover.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ghosteyes makes two attacks with his heavy rifle.

Heavy Rifle. Ranged Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, range 60/180 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (3d6 + 6) piercing damage.

Arcantrik Grapple. As an action, Ghosteyes fires a grapple line at a point he can see within 60 feet. The grapple retracts, pulling Ghosteyes to the chosen point.

THE GRAVEWHISPER

Medium undead (sythyss), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Shyr, Cygnaran

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Tempered by War. The Gravewhisper has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Gravewhisper makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Breath Taker. Ranged Spell Attack: +4 to hit, range 100 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a living creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on Strength checks and melee attack rolls until the start of the Gravewhisper's next turn.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the Gravewhisper can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that they can see within 30 feet of them makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the Gravewhisper. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the Gravewhisper is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

Parry. The Gravewhisper adds 2 to their AC against one melee attack that would hit them. To do so, the Gravewhisper must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.





REVALOR ELLOWUYR

Medium undead (eldritch), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +5

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Shyr

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ellowuyr Swordmaster. When Revalor hits with a weapon attack, he can choose one of the following effects to add to the attack:

Follow Through. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or Revalor can move up to 10 feet after performing the attack. The target cannot target Revalor with opportunity attacks during this movement.

Hew. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Pierce. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffer -2 AC against all attacks until the end of Revalor's next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Revalor makes two weapon attacks. He can replace one of those attacks with a use of Challenger's Call.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Challenger's Call. Revalor targets one hostile creature within 30 feet that he can see. If the target can see and hear him, the target must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on attacks not targeting Revalor until the end of his next turn.

REACTIONS

Blade Shield. Revalor adds 2 to his AC against one ranged attack that would hit him. To do so, Revalor must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

SEEKER EYVREYN

Medium undead (eldritch), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +5, Persuasion +5, Religion +5

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Shyr

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Seeker Eyvreyrn spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *chill touch*, *darkness*

1/day each: *circle of death*, *true seeing*

Special Equipment. Seeker Eyvreyrn carries a storm inducer and wears the armor of Lesyth. As an action on his turn, Eyvreyrn can use the armor of Lesyth to cast *expeditious retreat*. He can't do so again until he completes a long rest.

Spellcasting. Eyvreyrn is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Eyvreyrn has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *fog cloud*, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *misty step*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*, *fly*

4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*

5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Seeker Eyvreyrn makes two melee attacks.

Storm Inducer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) lightning damage.

Inducer Bolt. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) lightning damage and the creature hit must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be unable to take reactions until the start of its next turn.



SEEKER HALLYR

Medium undead (eldritch), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +5, Persuasion +5, Religion +5

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Shyr

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Dark Devotion. Seeker Hallyr has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Innate Spellcasting. Seeker Hallyr's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks).

She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *augury, clairvoyance*

1/day each: *screaming, true seeing*

Special Equipment. Seeker Hallyr carries the Staff of Everfinding

Spellcasting. Seeker Hallyr is a 4th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Seeker Hallyr makes two melee attacks.

Staff of Everfinding (+1 Quarterstaff). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage or 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage when used with two hands.

THE STAFF OF EVERFINDING

Weapon (quarterstaff), rare (requires attunement by a cleric, warlock, or wizard)

Simple weapon, melee weapon

4 lb., 1d6 bludgeoning - versatile, (1d8)

This ornately topped staff is a symbol of authority among the Seekers of the Moon Arch.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic quarterstaff. While holding it, you gain a +1 bonus to spell attack rolls. While you are attuned to this staff, you gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and blindsight to 60 feet while the staff is on your person.

THE SHADOWBLADE

Medium humanoid (soulless), neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +4

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +3, Perception +3, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Shyr, Cygnaran

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Arcane Anathema. When targeted by spells, the Shadowblade has advantage on saving throws to resist the effect of the spell. If subjected to a spell that does damage, a successful saving throw causes the Shadowblade to take no damage from the spell, instead of the normal half damage. The Shadowblade can use magical weapons as normal.

Assassinate. During her first turn, the Shadowblade has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the Shadowblade scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

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

Inscrutable. Creatures have disadvantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks to determine the Shadowblade's intent or motives.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The Shadowblade deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when she 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 Shadowblade that isn't incapacitated and the Shadowblade doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Shadowblade makes two chain blade attacks or two losan pistol attacks.

Chain Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained. It takes 35 (10d6) slashing damage at the start of each of the Shadowblade's turns, and the Shadowblade can't attack another target.

Losan Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

APPENDIX B: CREATURES

ACOLYTE (SRD)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 9 (2d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spellcasting: The acolyte is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The acolyte has following cleric spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *light*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*
1st level (3 slots): *bless*, *cure wounds*, *sanctuary*

ACTIONS

Club: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

BANDIT (SRD)

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.
Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.





BANSHEE (SRD)

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 58 (13d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +2, Cha +5

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Shyr

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) Proficiency Bonus +2

Detect Life. The banshee can magically sense the presence of living creatures up to 5 miles away that aren't undead or constructs. She knows the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

Incorporeal Movement. The banshee can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Corrupting Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the banshee that can see her must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the banshee is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the banshee's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours.

Wail (1/Day). The banshee releases a mournful wail, provided that she isn't in sunlight. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of her that can hear her must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature drops to 0 hit points. On a success, a creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

BROWN BEAR (SRD)

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 34 (4d10 + 12)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

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

Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

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

Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

GIANT SPIDER (SRD)

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +7

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

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

Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Web (Recharge 5-6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

GORGON LIGHT MYRMIDON

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 66 (7d10 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +7

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +3

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Understands the language of its manufacturer, but cannot speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Arcane Condenser. The myrmidon requires power from its arcane condenser to function. Its condenser has 10 charges. It regains all charges after 4 hours of inactivity.

Cortex. The myrmidon's cortex allows it to understand basic commands from its controller (spoken verbally by most but usually communicated telepathically by warcasters). Verbal commands must be akin to those issued to a trained animal, such as "stay," "guard," "attack," and so on. The myrmidon will carry out these commands with no regard for its own safety.

Heavy Metal. The myrmidon's attacks are magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances and immunity to nonmagical attacks for steamjacks, colossals, and warbeasts.

Shyeel Light Power Field. The myrmidon has a power field that can withstand 20 points of damage before collapsing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The myrmidon makes two melee attacks.

Arm Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4+4) slashing damage.

Polarity Cannon. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60 ft. cone, one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) force damage. As part of an attack with this weapon, the myrmidon can expend 1 additional charge from its arcane condenser to kinetically bind a target creature. A creature that is bound has its speed reduced by 10 feet until the start of the myrmidon's next turn.

A myrmidon cannot use a polarity cannon if its power field has collapsed.

ISSYEN KNIGHT

Medium undead (eldritch), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 46 (7d8 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+13)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +6, Animal Handling +3, Perception +3

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Shyr

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the knight is mounted and moves at least 30 feet in a straight line toward a target and hits it with a melee attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage.

Mounted Warrior. When mounted, the knight has advantage on attacks against unmounted creatures smaller than its mount. If the knight's mount is subjected to an effect that allows it to take half damage with a successful Dexterity saving throw, the mount instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw and half damage if it fails.

ACTIONS

Barbed Lance. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

SCOUT (SRD)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Nature +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Sight. The scout has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The scout makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

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

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.



SEEKER

Medium undead (eldritch), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any one language (usually Shyr)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The seeker has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The seeker is a 4th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The seeker has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The seeker makes two melee attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

SOULLESS ESCORT

Medium humanoid (soulless), unaligned

Armor Class 14 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Shyr

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Arcane Anathema. When targeted by spells, the soulless has advantage on saving throws to resist the effect of the spell. If subjected to a spell that does damage, a successful saving throw causes the soulless to take no damage from the spell instead of the normal half damage. The soulless can use magical weapons as normal.

Martial Society. When the soulless makes an attack roll and rolls a 1, it can reroll the die but must use the new roll, even if it is another 1.

ACTIONS

Iosan Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Disbinding (Recharge 5–6). Enemy spells affecting the soulless or any ally of the soulless within 5 feet of them end immediately. The soulless and any allies of the soulless within 5 feet of them can't be affected by enemy concentration spells for 1 minute.

SOULLESS HOUSEGUARD

Medium humanoid (soulless), unaligned

Armor Class 18 (infantry armor, shield)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Shyr

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Arcane Anathema. When targeted by spells, the soulless has advantage on saving throws to resist the effect of the spell. If subjected to a spell that does damage, a successful saving throw causes the soulless to take no damage from the spell instead of the normal half damage. The soulless can use magical weapons as normal.

Charge. If the soulless moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) damage.

Combined Attack. If the soulless is within 5 feet of at least 2 other creatures with this trait, it makes weapon attack rolls with advantage.

Martial Society. When the soulless makes an attack roll and rolls a 1, it can reroll the die but must use the new roll, even if it is another 1.

Shield Wall. If the soulless is within 5 feet of 2 or more allies that are both carrying a shield, it gains a +2 bonus to AC.

ACTIONS

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage.



SOULLESS HOUSEGUARD GUNNER

Medium humanoid (soulless), unaligned

Armor Class 16 (infantry armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Shyr

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Arcane Anathema. When targeted by spells, the soulless has advantage on saving throws to resist the effect of the spell. If subjected to a spell that does damage, a successful saving throw causes the soulless to take no damage from the spell instead of the normal half damage. The soulless can use magical weapons as normal.

Combined Attack. If the soulless is within 5 feet of at least 2 other creatures with this trait, it makes weapon attack rolls with advantage.

Martial Society. When the soulless makes an attack roll and rolls a 1, it can reroll the die but must use the new roll, even if it is another 1.

ACTIONS

Hand Weapon. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Long Rifle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 60/180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage.

SPECTER (SRD)

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP) Proficiency Bonus +2

Incorporeal Movement. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the specter has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

SWARM OF WASPS (SRD)

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages –

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

SYTHYSS KNIGHT

Medium undead (sythyss), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)

Hit Points 27 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Shyr

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Breath Taker. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a living creature, it must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on Strength checks and melee attack rolls until the start of the knight's next turn.



THUG (SRD)

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

WOLF (SRD)

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses: passive Perception 13

Languages –

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell: The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics: The wolf has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

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