

NMR5-06

The Forsaken Valley

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]

Nyrond and Her Environs Metaregional Adventure

Version 1.2

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Since ancient times, the Phostwood has suffered from the onslaught of a disease that has cursed the Phost trees. Now, like so many of the other nearby forests – the Celadon, the Gamboge, and the Nutherwood – the Phostwood is under a new form of attack. But this time, no blight is to blame. This time it is the trees themselves. An adventure for APLs 10-16.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Playing the Game

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters to participate in the adventure before the session begins, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Tracking

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out the RPGA Tracking Sheet. The DM should complete the top of the form and list his name and RPGA number. The players should each list their name and RPGA number. After the form is filled out it should be given to the Event Coordinator.

Living Greyhawk

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials discussed in the Preparation section above that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars

paladin's mounts, etc.) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately. Nevertheless, if a character has the Mounted Combat feat, he may bring a single warhorse, light or heavy, with him in the adventure and it will not count toward the APL calculation.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
7	7	9	10	11	

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC may gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character will receive only one-half of the experience points for the adventure. Further, if the PC is three character levels or more lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that PC will receive one-half gold for the adventure as well. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Further, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the scenario unless the highest APL supported by the adventure is APL 12.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If a group is APL 1 there are two things that the group can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.

- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round metaregional adventure, set in Nyron and Her Environs. Characters native to the metaregion pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

In a time long forgotten there lived a wild elf druid named Mhaerlin who roamed the ancient Phostwood. He was particularly fond of casting spells to *awaken* creatures. He brought sentience to countless animals and trees, most of which died long ago. Mhaerlin himself died over 1,500 years ago. However, many trees are very long lived and some of his progeny survive to this day.

With such long lives, these intelligent trees had considerable time to spend in thought or pursue various activities. Some developed talents in magic, some sought knowledge of the forest, and others honed their physical skills. But with such a long time passing, the minds of most of the *awakened* trees grew stagnant. Many of the intelligent trees succumbed to insanity.

The trees gathered into groups of like species, at first out of natural desire to be among their own kind. Eventually they became obsessive and xenophobic. No longer would they associate on friendly terms with each other. They each divided up territory in the large valley they called home, and refused passage to any intelligent creature. In addition, they only allowed their own species of trees to take root within the area that they controlled. Such a strange place this became that the elves of the forest have dubbed it the Forsaken Valley.

The four surviving species of intelligent *awakened* trees are the pine, phost, spruce, and oak. With their isolation they have grown bizarre and decadent. Each area is considered by the trees to be their own “kingdom” that has taken on a strange mix of customs that have been generally borrowed and adapted from human lands. Thus each “kingdom” is ruled by a “king” who has his “subjects” ranging from other *awakened* trees, treants, and normal trees of that type. With the passing of time, many of the trees have become exceptionally powerful, and since most of them suffer from some degree of insanity, all other intelligent creatures avoid the Forsaken Valley.

Less than a year ago, a new visitor arrived. This creature was Yndorn’ix, a shadow demon who is not only stealthy, but thoroughly evil and deceptive. His true power is his ability to gather worshippers who dedicate themselves to his cult that serves his demonic master Lupercio, a demon lord who rules an entire layer of the Abyss.

Yndorn’ix has infiltrated each of the four kingdoms with followers. He has had little success converting the pines, but the phost have a few cult members, while the spruce and oak are nearly completely converted to his cult, including their kings.

The demon has promised great power to those that worship his demonic master, but he also demands great sacrifices. These sacrifices come in spilled blood (or tree sap in many cases). The toll on the forest has been significant – not only have the tree kingdoms been fighting each other, but they also have moved beyond the Forsaken Valley in search of creatures to sacrifice to the glory of Lupercio. War and great destruction is coming to the Phostwood, and with such powerful creatures being manipulated by the demon, it is surely a dangerous situation.

The Pine Kingdom has suffered the most, due to their resistance to the infiltration of the evil cult. Their trees have been slowly destroyed by the stronger groups of trees. Also hard pressed are the Phost trees, who have also resisted the cult. The Spruce and Oak have grown stronger with their indoctrination to the evil cult.

All the activity has not gone unnoticed by the forest denizens who dwell near the Forsaken Valley. The Phostaldaron elves have moved farther away from the valley in the hopes of providing a buffer zone. Meanwhile a treant by the name of Filidor narrowly escaped the assault of a crazed raiding party of *awakened* oak trees, who were attempting to capture him for ritual sacrifice. Filidor managed to meet up with another treant by the name of Chester, who recommended contacting some people from the outside to help. Chester knew several adventurers who were both kind to the forest and knew how to solve problems. With this information, Filidor set out into

human lands attempting to recruit help for the forest under siege from the trees of the Forsaken Valley.

Adventure Summary

The PCs are contacted by a treant named Filidor, who asks them to investigate the attacks on trees in the Phostwood. He gives them details about the problems and also provides a strange note written in Abyssal. This note is difficult to translate, but if successful, the PCs will learn it is some sort of demonic ritual.

The PCs make their way into the Phostwood, escorted by Filidor. During their journey, they come across several of the sites where trees were killed. The treant departs once the PCs reach a place called The Forsaken Valley.

The PCs arrive at a valley where 4 species ancient intelligent trees reign supreme – pine, phost, spruce, and oak. Each is effectively their own mini-kingdom, ruled over by a “king”. No other species of tree, or much of any other living thing, is allowed to pass into their kingdoms.

The PCs will need to get information from these trees. The Pine can be persuaded to cooperate with their investigations, and so can the Phost to a lesser degree. The Spruce and Oak are quite hostile.

Through speaking with the Pines, the PCs gradually learn about some of the problems regarding the tree killings. After a short while smoke is spotted nearby in the Pines.

The PCs must first face off with a malevolent swarm of cinders that have been sent by a behind-the-scenes demon cult leader with the task of burning up the pine trees as punishment for both resisting the cult and for dealing with outsiders (the PCs). After the PCs have defeated the fire creatures, they must then deal with the forest fire itself, if they can. Depending on their success, large or small portions of the Pine Kingdom are burned.

Not long afterward, the PCs learn of a cult being led by a tree. The PCs can go investigate, where they come across what appears to be a gather of evil intelligent plant creatures who seem to be upset at being discovered. In reality, they are a ruse sent by the true cult leader. The hope is that the PCs defeat them and go away.

If the PCs don’t believe the problem is solved at this point, they can persevere and find the location of the demonic cult leader in one of two ways: spend a fair amount of time among the pines, or go speak with the Phost King and agree to a deal that will suck some of the life out of one PC for an extended period of time. Either way, the PCs eventually will find a young intelligent pine tree that will tell them how to find the demon cult leader.

The PCs may then travel to the location of the cult leader and engage him, along with his allies (if any). He resides in a shadowy portion of the forest that is protected in several ways by dark magical powers. A “rain of leeches” manifests when the combat ensues – this effect causes black leeches brought forth from the Abyss to rain from the sky and damage non-evil characters. Meanwhile the PCs battle Yndrorn’ix, the shadow demon cult leader.

After defeat of the demon and his allies, the PCs can find a portal to the Plane of Shadow, where he has stashed some treasure and some further clues that are part of a bigger plan to threaten forests throughout the western Flanaess.

Preparation for Play

The judge should keep strict timing on this scenario in convention play situations as it tends to run long. If the PCs attempt to fight encounters that will not give them experience (such as the patrols for the Oak and Spruce areas), steer them away from fighting these encounters in limited time play situations.

Introduction

The scenario begins when the PCs are in the Theocracy of the Pale. It is up to each PC to determine why they might be there to begin with. The most likely city for PCs to begin in is Hatherleigh. However, you may substitute another location that borders on the Phostwood if desired.

Throughout this scenario, the weather is cold. The northern lands near the Theocracy of the Pale are currently experiencing a “Troll Winter”, where the nearby Troll Fens freeze over. This weather phenomena also affects the Phostwood to some degree. While the cold temperatures are not enough to have a significant game impact, there is still an occasional snowfall, and light snow is frequently found in the forested areas.

Creature: A treant named Filidor has traveled across the Phostwood (his home) and crossed into the Theocracy of the Pale under the cover of night. By day he has been hiding, posing as a normal tree. Filidor looks much like a typical treant, although his specific tree characteristics most resemble that of a birch tree.

Filidor, treant: hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244.

The treant seeks out one (or more at your discretion) of the PCs. He is looking for someone who fits the description that a fellow treant Chester provided to him. Chester was encountered in NMR 5-01 Under the Boughs. (If no PCs have previously encountered Chester, pick a PC that might have some

notoriety.) Filidor has spent several days tracking down the PC he’s heard about.

At the beginning of the scenario, the PC(s) is awakened during the night by a rumbling sound as Filidor attempts to get his attention by lightly pounding on the window to whatever place they happen to be at. Unless you come up with another starting location, you can assume the inn is a place called The Oaken Hearth located in the elven quarter of Hatherleigh – a place where a small minority of elves, half-elves, and humans intermingle. Across from the Oaken Hearth is a popular tavern called Talrhin’s Tavern, run by a large half-elf named (Talrhin).

Once it is dark outside, and the PCs have gone to bed, Filidor slowly moves to the window of the room that he’s finally figured out the PC is staying in. He gently taps his branches against the wall and window to get attention. When the PC(s) respond, he politely asks for him to come outside and talk.

Filidor doesn’t want to cause any trouble with humans, and he doesn’t want to be noticed by the Pale authorities. He’s heard terrible stories about what the humans here do to outsiders, and he’s sure that they would burn him alive if he was detected. (In fact, the Palish authorities would do no such thing, although he’d likely be asked to leave, since his presence is considered to be a chaotic influence.) Filidor asks the PCs to follow him to an out-of-the-way area where passersby are infrequent. In the elven quarter of Hatherleigh, there are numerous gardens, and trees are plentiful.

Once he feels comfortable, he speaks to the PC(s) present. He has the following information to convey:

- He is a treant whose home is in the western Phostwood.
- He has seen portions of the woods be destroyed. Large swaths of forest are reduced to black ash, but there is no sign of fire.
- The blackened areas seem to have poisoned the plants somehow. No new plants grow in these areas.
- He has seen evidence of some tree massacres. Limbs have been torn off and shredded, leaving only a dead stump. The massacres typically were done to pine, phost, or spruce trees. Anywhere from 1 to 20 trees were killed.
- Some of his fellow treants have gone missing recently. He fears the worst.
- These problems seem to center around a region of the Phostwood called the Forsaken Valley. This is a place of intelligent trees that are inhospitable to outsiders. Like other denizens of the Phostwood, he avoids this place.

- These problems started happening sometime less than a year ago, and have gotten progressively worse.
- Most recently, he was attacked by a marauding band of intelligent trees – three massive oaks, who chased him for several miles. He barely managed to escape, but not before they threw a vile liquid onto him that made his branches wither.
- When he was attacked he also noticed that one of the trees was carrying some items including several scroll cases. During the skirmish, one of the scroll cases inadvertently fell to the ground. Filidor took special note of where it was, and later returned to acquire it. He opened the scroll case and found a note inside, but couldn't understand what it said. (Give the players Handout #1.)
- Filidor asks that the PC(s) look into the dreadful problem of the Phostwood. See what is happening first hand and stop the attacks and the poisoning.
- He can escort the PC (and companions) to the Forsaken Valley, but he hopes to not become directly involved in fighting other trees. He hopes the PCs are powerful enough to solve whatever the problem might be.

THE NOTE

Filidor gives the PCs a note. (See Handout #1.) It is written in a very cryptic form of Abyssal, and tinged with elements of Dark Speech – a language of unspeakable evil. The note essentially describes how to perform a hideous ritual of tree sacrifice to the demon Lupercio.

To understand any of the note, one must first understand the Abyssal language. The abstract literal translation is contained in Player Handout #1, although it has little meaning. Only with some effort can one understand the true meaning, but this also invokes some of the power of evil that surrounds such knowledge. Attempting to decipher the document takes 1d4 hours.

Upon a successful DC 25 Decipher Script check, provide Player Handout #1 and #2. A PC who has “The Tome” from NMR5-04 *Charity of Friends* may add a +5 circumstance bonus to this check. Additionally, the PC deciphering the document has

tapped into vile knowledge and is dealt 1d6 points of Charisma damage (DC 25 Will save half).

Upon a successful DC 30 Decipher Script check, provide Player Handout #1, #2, and #3. Additionally, the PC deciphering the document has tapped into vile knowledge and is dealt 2d6 points of Charisma damage (DC 30 Will save half).

It is unlikely that any ability damage sustained will be of any consequence, since a high level party can easily heal the damage with magic, and there will be enough days of travel involved that it will heal naturally. Nevertheless, the PCs will get a feel for the powerful evil they are dealing with.

If the players wish to use knowledge skills to understand any of the various parts of the note, you should adjudicate each portion as you see fit. In general, most of the references to such things as Lupercio or other aspects of this demon require a Knowledge (planes) check on the order of DC 30.

If the PCs lack the skills to decipher the script, it is possible they may wish to seek out a sage of some sort. Assuming the PCs are in Hatherleigh, with some effort and 100 gp, they can find a hire the following NPC:

Marduin: Male human Exp8 (AL LG, Decipher Script +15, Knowledge (all) +10)

Once Marduin has taken Charisma damage, he will become more hesitant to help the PCs and he will

THE CULT

The sinister “cult of the trees” is organized by the shadow demon Yndrorn'ix. He has previously organized several other cults dedicated to his demonic master Lupercio, but none have ever been so powerful. Yndrorn'ix has been granted many boons by his master for his work in gaining cult followers and the numerous sacrifices that have been made in the name of Lupercio.

Yndrorn'ix keeps a very close watch over all of his cultists, frequently using his abilities to locate them and *scry* on them. He also has a large enough following that very little escapes his attention, thanks in part to the prying eyes of his cultists, who keep him aware of every detail that occurs in his sphere of influence.

Should any of his cultists attempt to betray him in any way, his response is swift and severe: death to the offender. Indeed, he has frequently killed cultists for seemingly trivial offenses, both to instill fear and because he enjoys inflicting suffering. Although the cultist may make a saving throw against the death effect, typically they voluntarily fail it out of fear of a much worse fate that Yndrorn'ix would bestow upon them if they lived.

Under almost any circumstances, the cult members would never reveal any information to the PCs. No amount of coercion or even magic would compel them to talk. Even if they did talk for some reason, Yndrorn'ix would likely know about it and kill the cultist before anything was said.

Even the powerful *discern location* spell should be of no use in locating Yndrorn'ix, since the PCs won't ever have seen him, and no objects of his will have been touched by the PCs.

require another 100 gp to assist the PCs with further inquiries.

Encounter One: Into the Phostwood

Once PCs agree to look into the matter, Filidor will guide the PCs safely through the Phostwood. He can deftly guide them through the forest and avoid the many dangers. On the way, he shares some stories of life in the Phostwood. From Hatherleigh, the travel to the Forsaken Valley takes 10 days on foot. Filidor is somewhat distrustful of magic and does not wish to travel by any other means than by foot.

During the course of this scenario, there are no random encounters that occur in the forest at any time. You may wish to describe evidence of various creatures: ogres, elves, animals, etc., but despite these potential conflicts, none ever come to actual combat. Interaction with the elven tribes of the Phostwood is also beyond the scope of this scenario. The PCs will likely camp for many nights in the Phostwood. No hostile encounters will occur.

On the way to the Forsaken Valley, Filidor takes the PCs past several sites where trees have been ripped up from the ground and where earth has been laid barren with black ash covering a swath of land. These sites are locations of attacks by the powerful cult trees. In some cases they have merely killed the trees, while in others, trees have been ceremonially sacrificed to the dark demonic powers of Lupercio. There is little evidence that will help the PCs gain information here. The black ash is a result of a strong plant poison and there are signs of large plants such as treants that have left tracks and signs of violence.

Filidor also warns the party about the hostile trees of the Forsaken Valley. He makes special mention of the spruce and the oak, being sure the PCs know the difference in the various types of trees.

Encounter Two: The Four Kingdoms

The encounters in this section are meant to be role playing encounters. However, they can easily become combats if the PCs make certain decisions. While the Pine and Phost are less likely to be hostile, the Spruce are likely to attack any outsider, and the Oak will do so immediately upon detecting intruders. The PCs are not expected to fight the tree kingdoms directly, and cannot earn xp by defeating them through combat.

The PCs may choose to approach the Forsaken Valley from any direction. If they travel around the perimeter of the valley, they can learn the approximate

limits of each domain of trees. (See Player Map #1.) Several hills punctuate the valley, effectively helping to provide a natural boundary between the tree kingdoms. A wide, slow moving creek divides the floor of the valley, with occasional fish swimming in the small eddies that flow around the smoothed rocks.

Surrounding the Forsaken Valley is the normal backdrop of the Phostwood, containing many species of animals and trees, including the namesake Phost trees whose dying wood emits an eerie glow at night.

Once the PCs have chosen to approach a particular domain trees, go to that section detailed below. If they do not specify a preference, assume that they approach the Pine first.

The eerie tangle of the Phostwood gives way to a new section of the forest. Ahead lies a dense area of sturdy trees, but little else. In fact each of the trees are of the same species, and no other plant life can be found. The forest is unusually quiet, as if birds and other animals know to avoid this place.

In general, the PCs will be interacting with some of the intelligent trees of the area trying to figure out what is going on. This encounter is structured to slowly provide enough information for the PCs to act on, as well as provide a backdrop for the remaining encounters. And while the PCs are looking into the affairs of the trees, the cult members are looking into the activities of the PCs, making sure to report every detail they see back to Yndrorn'ix.

The presence of outside influences has gotten the astute attention of Yndrorn'ix. He will attempt to do whatever he can to make the PCs go away, either by tricking them or killing them. So long as the PCs are present, no cult members directly interact with Yndrorn'ix, so it will not be possible for PCs to merely discover a cult member, and then follow them back to the leader of the cult.

The presence of the cult will likely be slowly revealed to the PCs. For the PCs to finally discover the location of Yndrorn'ix, there are two expected ways to achieve this:

- The PCs locate a young pine sapling who knows the location, and is obscure enough to avoid the attention of the cult.
- The PCs make a deal with an unseelie fey and the King of the Phost. The fey can tell the PCs how to find Yndrorn'ix, but he charges for his knowledge in blood.

Pine

Pine (thorp): Monstrous; AL CG; Population 31 intelligent plants; 40 gp limit; Assets 62 gp; Isolated (see inhabitants below).

Authority figures: Hrodgerd the Elder, King of the Pines.

The Pine kingdom is Chaotic Good, based upon German/Swedish royalty. They are not converted to the cult of Yndorn'ix – cult penetration: 6%.

Hrodgerd the Elder, King of the Pines: Gargantuan Awakened Tree Mnk4/Drd4/Rgr5/Ari2; see Appendix

Noble Tree (6): Gargantuan Awakened Tree Ftr2/Bbn2/Ari2; see Appendix

Guardian Tree (6): Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see Appendix

Awakened Tree, Gargantuan (2): hp 184; see Appendix

Awakened Tree, Huge (6): hp 76; see Appendix. (One of these creatures is in the cult.)

Treant (10): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244. (One of these creatures is in the cult.)

In addition to the intelligent plants, there are vast numbers of ordinary pine trees that are considered to be “citizens”.

When the PCs approach any of the creatures of the Pine Kingdom, their initial attitude is “indifferent”. Normally they are more hostile to outsiders, but they have fallen on hard times and have become more willing to consider outside influences that may be able to help their situation.

Creatures: A patrol (comprised from the numbers above) meets the PCs and demands to know their business.

Awakened Tree, Huge: hp 76; see Appendix.

Treant (2): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244.

“HALT! In zie name of zie glorious Kingdom of zie Pinz, state your name and bizniss!”

The patrol is not authorized to give information to outsiders about much of anything regarding the affairs of the kingdom. A DC 15 Diplomacy check is required to convince the patrol to allow an audience with their King. If the PCs mention their willingness to help, add a +5 circumstance modifier. If anyone in the party has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature), add a +2 synergy bonus to the check. Failure means the party will not be allowed passage. The PCs could try again with another patrol, but that will take some effort in order to ensure encountering a different patrol.

If the PCs are hostile with the patrol, they return any attacks. They also stomp loudly on the ground, signaling for others to help defend their territory. In 10 rounds, 25% of the population arrives to the scene and attacks any intruders. In another 10 rounds an additional 25% of the population arrives to support the attack. In another 10 rounds another 25% arrives to

attack, including the King. (The remaining 25% defend other areas.)

Assuming there is no hostility, and the party gains an audience with the King of the Pines, they will be informed of the proper protocol for addressing the King. The protocol is somewhat bizarre, fitting the insanity of the creatures:

- One must hop on one leg while approaching the King.
- One must slowly bow very low to the ground when first meeting the King, and when departing.
- When speaking, it is considered offensive to talk to the King unless one's hands are raised skyward.

The patrol will lead them through the pine forest until they reach the approximate center of the kingdom. There they are met by Hrodgerd the Elder and his court consisting of 3 noble trees and 4 guardian trees.

You are escorted to a clearing in the pines. The ground is littered with deep mounds of pine needles and pine cones. At the center of the clearing is a massive pine tree that towers above all others. He is surrounded by three other huge pine trees, each of which slowly moves about.

As your escort brings you into the clearing he lifts his branches skyward and proclaims “All Hail Hrodgerd zie Elder! Tallest of zie tall, oldest of zie old, wizest of zie wize, and mightiest of zie mighty! May hiz needlez be forever pointy, hiz bark be forever durable, hiz branches be strooong, and his cones be bountiful! May hiz dynazty lazt forevah!! ALL HAIL HRODGERD ZIE ELDER! ALL HAIL HRODGERD ZIE ELDER! ALL HAIL HRODGERD ZIE ELDER! KING OF ZIE PINNNZZZ!”

When speaking to the King, if any of the protocols are not followed, there will be a gasp from the court. If the protocols are not followed a second time, there will be a ruckus as the “court” is shocked by such rude behavior toward their King. If the protocols are not followed a third time, the PCs will be escorted out of the kingdom and the pines become unfriendly.

The King can tell the PCs some things. Although he can't steer the PCs immediately toward the correct path, he can give some helpful information about their plight. He encourages the PCs to speak to as many of the pines as possible in order to gain their insight. He can convey the follow pieces of information:

- The Pines are at war with the other tree kingdoms. This has been the case for a few centuries.
- The Oak are especially vile and treacherous.

- The pines have also discovered the areas of the forest where trees have been killed. They have not been able to figure out what is going on.
- Things have been especially bad in the last six months or so.
- He senses a new hostility among the trees.
- He encourages the PCs to speak to each of his subjects. Someone must know something. Although he hasn't been able to find out what is going on, perhaps there is a tree out there who does.

If the PCs decide to start asking questions among the pines, it will take a considerable amount of time – a number of days in many cases. The PCs will need to travel throughout the area and get stuck talking to many of the various pine trees who talk very slowly. Furthermore, it's not always obvious which trees are normal trees and which trees are intelligent trees, so the PCs may end up talking to all sorts of trees who are just normal trees. After two full days (48 hour period) of seeking out information, have the PCs perform a DC 30 Gather Information check. Each additional day spent at this task the PCs may make a new check with the DC reduced by 1 from the previous day, so eventually the PCs will succeed. A successful check locates the existence of the pine sapling known as Derig (see Encounter Five). From him they may learn the true location of the cult leader. However, events will take place prior to completion of this investigation, and this may steer the PCs away from the information they are seeking.

On the first day when the PCs are in the Pine Kingdom, a fire will break out approximately ½ mile from their current location. Go to Encounter Three for further details.

Additionally, prior to succeeding on the Gather Information check, the PCs are informed by one of the noble pines that they have finally exposed the cult leader. He can be found in the Kingdom of the Spruce. The noble pine is not aware that he has been duped by being given false information – in fact it is a ploy to get the PCs to think they've found the source of the problem, and perhaps they'll defeat it and go away. Go to Encounter Four for further details.

If the PCs return to the Pine Kingdom after this conflict, they may continue their information gathering, which will ultimately succeed if they are persistent enough.

Phost

Phost (thorp): Monstrous; AL N; Population 35 intelligent plants; 40 gp limit; Assets 70 gp; Isolated (see inhabitants below)

Authority figures: Edlee the First, King of the Phost.

The Phost kingdom is Neutral, based upon British royalty. Many of their group are diseased and stoic. Cult penetration – 20%.

Edlee the First, King of the Phost: Gargantuan Awakened Tree Ari12/Clr4; see Appendix

Noble Tree (7): Gargantuan Awakened Tree Ftr2/Bbn2/Ari2; see Appendix. (One of these creatures is in the cult.)

Guardian Tree (5): Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see Appendix

Awakened Tree, Gargantuan (4): hp: 184; see Appendix

Awakened Tree, Huge (6): hp: 76; see Appendix. (Two of these creatures are in the cult.)

Treant (12): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244. (Four of these creatures are in the cult.)

In addition to the intelligent plants, there are vast numbers of ordinary phost trees that are considered to be “citizens”.

When the PCs approach any of the creatures of the Phost Kingdom, their initial attitude is “indifferent”. Normally they are more hostile to outsiders, but they have fallen on hard times and have become more willing to consider outside influences that may be able to help their situation.

Creatures: A patrol (comprised from the numbers above) meets the PCs and demands to know their business.

Guardian Tree: hp: 118; Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see *Appendix*.

Treant (3): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244.

A DC 15 Diplomacy check is required to convince the patrol to allow an audience with their King. If anyone in the party has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature), add a +2 synergy bonus to the check. Failure means the party will not be allowed passage. The PCs could try again with another patrol, but that will take some effort in order to ensure encountering a different patrol.

If the PCs are hostile with the patrol, they return any attacks. They also stomp loudly on the ground, signaling for others to help defend their territory. In 10 rounds, 25% of the population arrives to the scene and attacks any intruders. In another 10 rounds an additional 25% of the population arrives to support the attack. In another 10 rounds another 25% arrives to attack, including the King. (The remaining 25% defend other areas.)

If the party is successful in convincing the patrol to allow an audience with the Phost King, they escort the PCs to the center of their realm. In a very old and gloomy looking area is a gathering of the largest phost trees to be found anywhere. The king, Edlee the First, is at the center. He is covered in ancient green flowing moss, and he speaks in a very slow raspy voice, occasionally coughing up some sickly powder. (You should consider using the voice of an elderly gentleman with a British accent.)

Edlee the First is mostly indifferent to their plight. He is generally unhappy about their condition, but is too sick to care very much about anything.

However, the king knows that the cult exists and can be made willing to help the PCs and find the location of the cult if they are willing to make a significant personal sacrifice in order to heal his sickness. He tells the PCs that he knows a creature who can transfer the vitality from one creature to another. The process is exceptionally painful and dangerous, and the person making the sacrifice may not ever recover. However, it would heal him in a significant way. If someone were to agree to this, he would assure the PCs that he would arrange for them to obtain the information they seek about the cult.

If the PCs have not yet played Encounter Four: You Got Me, make sure to run that encounter first. In this case, the Phost king will tell the PCs to come back in a few hours since the druid has not arrived yet. In the mean time, go to Encounter Four. If the PCs have played Encounter Four: You Got Me, go to Encounter Five: Bridging the Gap.

Spruce

Spruce (thorp): Monstrous; AL NE; Population 56 intelligent plants; 40 gp limit; Assets 112 gp; Isolated (see inhabitants below)

Authority figures: Juardo Elrudo, King of the Spruce.

The Spruce kingdom is Neutral Evil, based upon Spanish/Italian royalty. They are haughty, pompous, and a little dumb. Cult penetration – 82%.

Juardo Elrudo, King of the Spruce: Gargantuan Awakened Tree Rog11/Wiz5; see Appendix. (Juardo Elrudo is in the cult.)

Noble Tree (9): Gargantuan Awakened Tree Ftr2/Bbn2/Ari2; see Appendix. (All but two of these creatures are in the cult.)

Guardian Tree (10): Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see Appendix. (All of these creatures are in the cult.)

Awakened Tree, Gargantuan (8): hp 184; see Appendix. (All of these creatures are in the cult.)

Awakened Tree, Huge (12): hp 76; see Appendix. (All but four of these creatures are in the cult.)

Treant (16): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244. (All but four of these creatures are in the cult.)

In addition to the intelligent plants, there are vast numbers of ordinary spruce trees that are considered to be “citizens”.

When the PCs approach all creatures in the Spruce Kingdom, their initial attitude is “unfriendly”.

Creatures: A patrol (comprised from the numbers above) meets the PCs and begins taunting them, describing how they plan to tear them apart in gruesome ways. If they PCs don’t back off, they attack.

All APLs

🌿 **Guardian Tree:** Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see Appendix.

🌿 **Awakened Tree, Gargantuan:** hp 184; see Appendix.

🌿 **Treant (4):** hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244.

If the PCs are attacked by the patrol, they stomp loudly on the ground, signaling for others to help defend their territory. In 10 rounds, 25% of the population arrives to the scene and attacks any intruders. In another 10 rounds an additional 25% of the population arrives to support the attack. In another 10 rounds another 25% arrives to attack, including the King. (The remaining 25% defend other areas.)

Oak

Oak (thorp): Monstrous; AL CE; Population 70 intelligent plants; 40 gp limit; Assets 140 gp; Isolated (see inhabitants below)

Authority figures: Jeanneaux Lemagnifique, King of the Oak.

The Oak kingdom is CE, based upon French royalty. Zealous. Cult penetration – 96%.

Jeanneaux Lemagnifique, King of the Oak: Fiendish Gargantuan Awakened Tree Sor19; see Appendix. (Jeanneaux Lemagnifique is in the cult.)

Noble Tree (10): Gargantuan Awakened Tree Ftr2/Bbn2/Ari2; see Appendix. (All of these creatures are in the cult.)

Guardian Tree (12): Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see Appendix. (All of these creatures are in the cult.)

Awakened Tree, Gargantuan (10): hp 184; see Appendix. (All of these creatures are in the cult.)

Awakened Tree, Huge (17): hp 76; see Appendix. (All but two of these creatures are in the cult.)

Treant (20): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244. (All but one of these creatures are in the cult.)

In addition to the intelligent plants, there are vast numbers of ordinary oak trees that are considered to be “citizens”.

When the PCs approach all creatures in the Oak Kingdom, their initial attitude is “hostile”.

Creatures: A patrol (comprised from the numbers above) meets the PCs and immediately attacks. This battle is pointless for the PCs and no xp can be earned from defeating these creatures.

All APLs

👉 **Guardian Tree:** Huge Awakened Tree Ftr4; see *Appendix*.

👉 **Awakened Tree, Gargantuan:** hp 184; see *Appendix*.

👉 **Treant (4):** hp 66; see *Monster Manual* page 244.

If the PCs are attacked by the patrol, they stomp loudly on the ground, signaling for others to help defend their territory. In 10 rounds, 25% of the population arrives to the scene and attacks any intruders. In another 10 rounds an additional 25% of the population arrives to support the attack. In another 10 rounds another 25% arrives to attack, including the King. (The remaining 25% defend other areas.)

In general, the entire population of oaks is hostile. They cannot be reasoned with and are only interested in dominating the forest.

Encounter Three: Fire!

On the first day of investigations, a fire begins in the Pine Kingdom. The PCs begin approximately 2000 ft. from the location of the fire creatures responsible for the blaze. PCs automatically spot smoke, and then flames at this distance.

When the PCs get approximately 400 ft. from the fire creatures, they can see the following (omit if the PCs use a means of travel where they can't see as they travel, such as *dimension door*):

Heavy black smoke is billowing skyward as the fire races across the pine trees. Flames are spreading up a hillside, gaining more and more power with each new tree that is set ablaze. Ripples of intense heat and choking smoke are obvious signs of danger at the center of the inferno.

At the fringes of the fire, a crackling mass of cinders and flames is moving quickly from tree to tree. It leaps about with great speed among the

branches, and is clearly showing signs of intelligence as it moves.

At APL 12 and higher, add the following:

Looking more carefully, you see several more masses of fire that move about, spreading more and more flames among the forest.

And at APL 16, add the following:

Additionally, a gargantuan flaming inferno is at the center of the blaze. This mass of flames and lava has large fiery eyes that can be seen in its depths, occasionally disappearing into its body of fire. He emits a raging roar that shakes the earth as he knocks down several trees with a single blow from his scorching appendages.

Creatures: Fire creatures are starting a forest fire in the Pines. They have been sent by Yndorn'ix as both punishment to the Pines for their dealing with outsiders, and also as a means to test the capabilities of the newcomers.

APL 10 (EL 13)

👉 **Cinder Swarm:** hp 70; see *Appendix*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

👉 **Cinder Swarm (2):** hp 70, 74; see *Appendix*.

APL 14 (EL 17)

👉 **Cinder Swarm (4):** hp 68, 70, 74, 76; see *Appendix*.

APL 16 (EL 19)

👉 **Cinder Swarm (4):** hp 68, 70, 74, 76; see *Appendix*.

👉 **Elemental Monolith, Fire:** hp 378; see *Appendix*.

Tactics: The creatures will focus on burning the forest down until the PCs engage them. Once the PCs attack or approach within 80 ft., the creatures attack. If the PCs happen to be hiding, the creatures get Spot and Listen checks once they are within 80 ft. During the battle, any PCs that retreat will not be pursued, and the creatures will instead focus on causing more fire damage.

Development: Once the fire creatures have been defeated, the PCs must then contend with the effects of the forest fire. The amount of damage is completely dependent upon the actions of the party. If the party can quickly defeat the fire creatures and deal effectively with the fire, the damage will be greatly minimized. On the other hand, if the PCs delay, are unable to defeat the fire creatures, or are unable to come up with solutions to fight the fire, the damage to the forest will be devastating.

During the fire, a few various “spy trees” who are in the cult observe the PCs actions. A report of their observations gets back to Yndron’ix, such that he might gain a better understanding of what the PCs are capable of.

There is no specific solution that is expected to put out the fire. You should allow the PCs to be creative in their solutions, and use some common sense to ascertain what would be effective.

Additionally, the fire is started in a low-lying area and spreads up a hill. By default, the PCs should not be in direct danger of being overwhelmed by the fire if they act with caution; the fire spreads away from them most likely. On the other hand, if the PCs enter the fire area, you should adjudicate the effects accordingly.

EFFECTS OF A FOREST FIRE

The rules for forest fires are detailed in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide* page 87. They are included below:

Most campfire sparks ignite nothing, but if conditions are dry, winds are strong, or the forest floor is dried out and flammable, a forest fire can result. Lightning strikes often set trees afire and start forest fires in this way. Whatever the cause of the fire, travelers can get caught in the conflagration.

A forest fire can be spotted from as far away as 2d6×100 feet by a character who makes a Spot check, treating the fire as a Colossal creature (reducing the DC by 16). If all characters fail their Spot checks, the fire moves closer to them. They automatically see it when it closes to half the original distance.

Characters who are blinded or otherwise unable to make Spot checks can feel the heat of the fire (and thus automatically “spot” it) when it is 100 feet away.

The leading edge of a fire (the downwind side) can advance faster than a human can run (assume 120 feet per round for winds of moderate strength). Once a particular portion of the forest is ablaze, it remains so for 2d4×10 minutes before dying to a smoking smolder. Characters overtaken by a forest fire may find the leading edge of the fire advancing away from them faster than they can keep up, trapping them deeper and deeper in its grasp.

Within the bounds of a forest fire, a character faces three dangers: heat damage, catching on fire, and smoke inhalation.

Heat Damage: Getting caught within a forest fire is even worse than being exposed to extreme heat (see Heat Dangers). Breathing the air causes a

character to take 1d6 points of damage per round (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save every 5 rounds (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. A character who holds his breath can avoid the lethal damage, but not the nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a –4 penalty on their saving throws. In addition, those wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal are affected as if by a heat metal spell.

Catching on Fire: Characters engulfed in a forest fire are at risk of catching on fire when the leading edge of the fire overtakes them, and are then at risk once per minute thereafter.

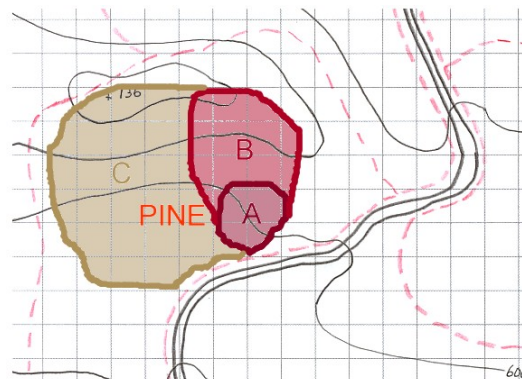
Smoke Inhalation: Forest fires naturally produce a great deal of smoke. A character who breathes heavy smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Also, smoke obscures vision, providing concealment to characters within it.

Outcome

Outcome A – stunning success! The party did not delay at all in engaging the fire creatures, and used their fastest means of transportation possible in order to attack them. After the combat, they immediately used exceptional talents to put out the fire. Examples of these exceptional talents might be the use of *control weather* (although the casting time may be deemed too long), *control winds*, multiple castings of *gust of wind* or *cone of cold*, or the use of a *decanter of endless water*. Damage to the forest is minimal. In all likelihood, the PCs will have a difficult time achieving this level of success.

Outcome B – success. This is the most likely outcome, where PCs may have taken a round to cast spells to protect themselves from the fire creatures, and defeated them in a normal amount of time. When fighting the forest fire, they used fire fighting techniques such as building a fire break, chopping down trees, or forming a bucket brigade, or minor spells such as *create water*. Damage to the forest is moderate.

Outcome C – limited success. The PCs spent a long time getting to the combat while the fire creatures were busy setting the forest on fire. The PCs did not come up with effective solutions for fighting the forest fire. Damage to the forest is widespread. Furthermore, the pine sapling Derig dies in the fire, which makes it very difficult to proceed with the adventure. However, if the PCs



make the deal with Pleebin (see “Phost” section in Encounter Two), he might recommend they use a *spell with dead* on Derig’s “corpse”.

Developments: After putting out the forest fire, the PCs may search the area for the starting of the forest fire. The elementals and swarms were gated into the forest by the Oak trees, and the signs of this ritual may be found. However, no tracks may be found leading away from this area (as the ritualists used *pass without trace* potions). If the PCs insist on trying to follow the tracks or find the ritualists, have a Pine or Phost messenger (as appropriate) approach them and request their presence.

Encounter Four: You Got Me

The PCs are contacted by a noble pine who urgently tells the PCs that the evil cult leader and his minions have been found. Unfortunately it’s a ruse, but the noble pine doesn’t know that.

The noble pine tells the PCs that the spruce have just been seen performing some sort of strange ritual in a clearing. The PCs can get there by following the creek upstream, and they should be able to enter the glade without encountering a patrol.

Creatures: In a clearing in the Spruce Kingdom, a gathering of plants is pretending to be involved in a cult ritual. They all understand that they are being used as bait and that they are going to die. However, they are fanatical to Yndrorn’ix and willingly go along with the ruse. A treant is in the process of being ripped apart by his fellow cult members – his sacrifice is all part of the ruse. You may assume that he is taking damage right up to the point where PCs engage the other creatures; at this point, his hit points are down to 1. Yndrorn’ix is *scrying* on him, and at some point during the battle, the demon uses his *kill cultist* special ability, which automatically kills the treant when he chooses to fail his saving throw. He then begins *scrying* on whoever else remains of his minions.

The clearing is not far from the river – if the PCs follow the river upstream, they will see the clearing when they get 50 ft. from its edge. The clearing itself is 100 ft. across, and roughly circular. The creatures are in the center, surrounding the sacrificial treant, and loudly chanting in elven about the power of evil being evoked by killing plants and elves. If they spot the PCs, they attack.

During this battle, you should do what you can to make it seem like the leader is behaving as if he were the head of a cult, commanding his minions to attack, and declaring that the PCs cannot stop his evil plans, etc.

All APLs

☛ **Treant:** hp 1 (this creature is being sacrificed and does not attack; during this battle he is killed by the true cult leader Yndrorn’ix)

APL 10 (EL 10)

☛ **Treant:** hp 72 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Monster Manual* page 244; currently controlling two additional trees with *animate trees* ability.

☛ **Shambling Mound (2):** hp 60, 64; see *Monster Manual* page 222.

APL 12 (EL 12)

☛ **Guardian Tree:** hp 118 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Awakened Tree, Gargantuan:** hp 184; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Shambling Mound (4):** hp 60, 62, 64, 66; see *Monster Manual* page 222.

APL 14 (EL 14)

☛ **Noble Tree:** hp 281 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Guardian Tree (2):** hp 118; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Awakened Tree, Gargantuan (2):** hp 184; see *Appendix One*.

APL 16 (EL 16)

☛ **Noble Tree (2):** hp 203 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Guardian Tree (4):** hp 118; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Awakened Tree, Gargantuan (4):** hp 184; see *Appendix One*.

The leader(s) has *stalwart pact* (caster level 6) already cast upon him by Yndrorn’ix. (See New Rules for this spell effect.)

At APL 10, the treant begins the battle with two animated treants alongside him.

Tactics: The goal of the creatures is to convince the PCs that they are the “ring leaders” of the cult. They will talk at length about their diabolical plans to destroy the forest. Their real purpose is to throw off the party from the real cult leader. In order to do that, their fate is to die at the hands of the PCs, so that they might think they have solved the problem and go away. Furthermore, Yndrorn’ix is *scrying* on his minions, attempting to learn all he can about how the battle goes, and what the abilities of the PCs are.

Development: The PCs will hopefully figure out that this battle was a little too easy. It’s also missing signs of any real demonic activity. Nevertheless, Yndrorn’ix is

hoping that the PCs are stupid and decide to leave after they defeat his fake cult leaders. If the PCs witness the sacrifice of the Treant in the center via the sacrifice follower option, they may make a DC 25 Knowledge (Arcana) check to determine that what the ritualists were doing wouldn't likely have had that effect.

Treasure:

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 12: L: 569 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 198 gp - huge +2 wooden shield (198 gp each)

APL 14: L: 1109 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1459 gp - 2 huge +2 wooden shields (198 gp each), bracers of armor +2 (333 gp each), +2 ring of protection (667 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (63 gp each)

APL 16: L: 2220 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 2918 gp - 4 huge +2 wooden shields (198 gp each per shield), 2 bracers of armor +2 (333 gp each per item), 2 +2 rings of protection (667 gp each per ring), 2 potions of cure serious wounds (63 gp each per potion)

Encounter Five: Bridging the Gap

At this point in the scenario the PCs may have decided that the fake cultists in Encounter Four were behind all of the problems in the forest, in which case continue to the conclusion unless the PCs want to try and heal the Phost king, in which case proceed to Dealing with the fey below.

Otherwise, the PCs should at this point have two options. The first option is to return to the Pine Kingdom and continue information gathering. If they do so, return to Encounter Two: Pine section and see the Gather Information DCs, or charge an appropriate amount of days and go to the Delig section below. The second option is to make a deal with the Phost King to heal him and gain information from the druid fey, in which case continue below.

Dealing with the fey

Assuming the PCs have played Encounter Four already, Edlee the First calls an unseelie fey to his court by ringing a small bell.

Creature: Pleebin is an unseelie fey – an evil faerie creature that delights in tempting mortals and spreading havoc. He resembles a small pale-skinned elf with fiery-red eyes. He also has bat wings that he uses to fly about. Although the creature is based upon a pixie, he is thoroughly evil.

Pleebin: male pixie Drd8 (stats as pixie, except AL: NE)

Pleebin arrives *invisible*, flying in from above. He becomes visible, and has a brief private conversation with Edlee the First, wherein they discuss sucking the life out of a volunteer (PC) and giving it to the king. Pleebin laughs with delight, and agrees to perform the service. Pleebin agrees to take a small tax of this “life” for himself, and in return is to tell the PCs anything he knows about the cult.

Once this is agreed upon, Pleebin approaches the volunteer PC. He explains that it's going to hurt – a lot. Pleebin pulls out a nasty looking syringe and will proceed to suck a large quantity of blood from a PC. As this blood is drawn out, there is an excruciating pain that is felt. The PC grows pale and may perhaps have trouble standing. Pleebin will then withdraw the syringe and take his “tax” - consuming a portion of it as part of his “fee”. When he does this he quite obviously relishes the succulent taste of the blood, and he makes no effort to hide his enjoyment of drinking the PCs blood as he squirts it into his mouth from the syringe. The remainder of the blood – more than half of it - he injects into the King. The PC who has his blood sucked is drained Constitution. This magical drain will impose an immediate -4 penalty to Constitution that cannot be healed by any mortal magic. This penalty will last for the next 4 scenarios the PC plays, reduced by 1 each time. This effect is explained on the AR.

In the unlikely event that a PC happens to have the feat “Nymph's Kiss”, a limited feat from the *Book of Exalted Deeds*, Pleebin will refuse to deal with that PC under any circumstance. In fact, he would prefer that such a PC not be in his presence at all.

Once the transfer of blood is accomplished, Pleebin will privately tell the PCs about a tree that he brought back to life through *reincarnation*. He explains that the tree was killed for refusing the will of some powerful force nearby. The tree was originally a phost tree, but when he came back to life, he was *reincarnated* as a young pine tree. Pleebin explains exactly where the young tree (Derig) is currently located in the Pine Kingdom. Once he has told the PCs what he knows, he turns *invisible* and flies away.

Note that the PCs do not need to agree to this option, since the information can be found if the PCs spend enough time among the Pines. However, it is possible that they may have no other choice or are just simply impatient. And of course the evil Pleebin is more than accommodating to their needs if they are willing to pay the price.

The Phost King is notably healthier after the transfer of this “life blood”. His attitude toward the PCs does not change significantly, but he is certainly a bit happier now that his health has improved. Regardless of his attitude, he doesn't know much about the cult or the problems of the dying trees.

Derig

Derig is a young awakened pine tree. However, he wasn't always a pine – in reality he was originally an awakened Phost tree who resisted the indoctrination into the cult, and was brutally killed for his refusal to join. However, unknown to Yndrorn'ix, he was *reincarnated* by an unseelie fey druid, and when he returned to life he was reborn as a pine tree instead of a phost tree. He's been secretly living inside the Pine Kingdom, with almost no one knowing about his former life as an *awakened* Phost tree. Once the PCs locate him, he will whisper precisely how to find the location of the cult. (Go to Encounter 5).

If the PCs quiz Derig on what he knows, he can tell them about his experience with the cult ceremony. He remembers being dragged away by force by a gang of three oaks and two spruce trees. He knew it was strange that they were cooperating, since normally they hate each other. They took him to a place in the Oak kingdom not far from its northern border. Once there he was brought into a place where it suddenly became very dark. There were trees around him that seemed to be horridly dark and evil. Several other trees were also apparently taken to this place. A creature of darkness appeared out of thin air and began chanting in a terrible language that made his bark begin to crackle and burn. Such was the power of his words that he could feel his self control was being taken away. Eventually, the creature of darkness came to him and uttered words of pure evil. Somehow he resisted the creature. He was threatened with a painful death if he did not willfully succumb, but he refused. The rest of the trees then gathered around him and ripped him apart, branch by branch. They also slowly poured a liquid over him that was terribly painful, turning his branches and leaves to black ash. They tortured him for over an hour before he finally died. He then remembers waking up in a new body – the pine tree he currently exists as. He's been hiding here ever since, not wanting to expose himself to the depredations of the tree cult and its terrible leader. He didn't get much of a good look at the black creature, but he could feel the terrible evil that emanated from him.

If for some reason the PCs manage to expose the cult leader without the use of Derig, so be it. However, if they do this too quickly, not all the encounters will play out, and the players will miss out on those opportunities. You are encouraged to find ways to thwart PCs who find the information too quickly in some way. After all, Yndrorn'ix has exceptional defenses against almost any type of detection, and he has a fanatical network of cultists who are effectively incapable of betraying him.

Encounter Six: The Shadow

There is a path to the location where Yndrorn'ix holds his demonic power base. The location is inside the Oak Kingdom, but is specifically not patrolled in order to allow cultists of all species to pass into this area unmolested. The proper path is similar to many other animal trails, but if followed correctly will not trigger an encounter with the guardians of the Oak Kingdom. This trail is adequately described by Derig, such that the PCs can locate the place. The precise distance needed to travel to the place is not made clear, so PCs won't know exactly where to find it until they actually come to it – and once they are close, the battle is likely forced upon them.

The shadow demon Yndrorn'ix dwells in a forest clearing that is suffused with evil and darkness, but is masked by shadow illusions that make it appear to be healthy green glade with stout oak trees. In reality, the area is a blasted landscape covered in black ash. The oak trees that once dwelled here have been transformed into blackened wood hulks devoid of any leaves, but sustained by the dark powers here. In the center of the area is a massive black tree trunk that extends to a height of 40 ft. with several looming bare branches overhead. Granite boulders have been neatly arranged and buried into the earth, laid into the shape of a massive pentagram that circumscribes the central tree. In a portion of central tree trunk is a black portal that leads to the Plane of Shadow. (This portal is not subject to the *forbiddance* effect and therefore does not prohibit passing through it - see below.)

The area is subject to several powerful magical effects:

- Permanent *alarm* spells (caster level 15th, faint abjuration) surround the clearing. The spells are placed 100 feet beyond the outside of the clearing, spaced every 20 feet to provide a ring of detection for any approaching creature. The *alarm* is mental and keyed to Yndrorn'ix. There is no password to avoid setting off the *alarm*.
- A permanent illusion (*glamer*) makes the blasted area appear to be a normal healthy forest. Upon entering, a creature is considered to be "interacting" with the illusion, and is granted a DC 20 Will save each round to disbelieve the effect. The effect has an effective caster level of 15th and radiates strong magic and strong evil. Although the effect can be dispelled, the magic is automatically restored one round later. Anyone who has succeeded in disbelieving the effect can see through the illusion. The illusion (*glamer*) extends throughout the clearing to a height of 100 feet above the ground. Even if a creature has disbelieved the illusion, the area is also protected by a *Mordenkainen's Private Sanctum* spell (see below), which makes peering into the area

impossible and keeps sounds such as spellcasting from escaping the area. Thus those who have pierced the illusion but have not entered still only see a dark, foggy mass.

- The entire clearing is protected by a *forbiddance* spell (DC 19 Will Save, caster level 15th, strong abjuration). Per the spell, all planar travel is prohibited. In addition, the spell is aligned to chaotic evil, and it damages creatures entering who are of different alignment, unless the following password is spoken: “The Baron of Sloth devours light.” (See *Player’s Handbook* page 232 for the full effect of this spell.) The effect extends throughout the clearing to a height of 60 feet above the ground.
- The entire clearing is protected by a permanent *Mordenkainen’s Private Sanctum* spell (caster level 15th, strong abjuration). Per the spell, anyone looking from outside only sees a dark, foggy mass. Darkvision cannot penetrate it. No sounds, no matter how loud can escape the area. Divination (scrying) spells cannot perceive within the area, and those within are immune to *detect thoughts*. The effect extends throughout the clearing to a height of 30 feet above the ground and can be dispelled.
- Upon the commencement of combat, or as soon as PCs have been detected and begin casting any spells outside the clearing, the **Rain of Leeches** begins (see below).

Rain of Leeches:

A shuddering low thunder booms as a dread black cloud forms overhead. Slimy black blobs begin falling from the sky. Upon closer inspection, the blobs wriggle about. They appear to be leeches in search of blood.

This preternatural rain is the manifestation of evil that suffuses the area. It affects a one (1) square mile area centered on the clearing and lasts for 30 rounds. The leeches cause 1d3 points of damage to any living nonevil creature. The damage can be negated by spending a move action every round to take cover under a large tree or covering oneself with a cloak or similar material. A creature under the effect of *protection from evil* is immune to the damage caused by the leeches.

Since the **Rain of Leeches** automatically begins if the PCs are nearby and begin casting spells, this effectively prohibits the casting of short duration spells, such as those that last 1 round/level. The PCs may have cast some spells prior to entering the Oak Kingdom; indeed it is likely that this is the case. Spells that last several minutes or more should still be active, since the clearing is only 2000 ft. inside the Oak Kingdom.

The PCs should have a hard time detecting the precise location of the clearing until they are right on top of it. Yndrorn’ix has many powerful protections that keep it safe and hidden. However, higher level parties may still find a way to locate it and possibly gain an advantage. It should be expected that PCs – especially higher level PCs – will prepare for battle. Short term duration spells, although difficult to achieve, may still be possible if the players are creative. In contrast, those who enter this combat with no preparation at all will likely suffer.

Creatures: The shadow demon lurks within the central tree and attacks any intruders. His minions likewise follow his lead. Note that the Ironmaw (at APL 12+) is *not* the central tree, but rather should be located just off center in the clearing. The vasuthants are spread evenly about, keeping a good distance apart to avoid being caught by area effects.

APL 10 (EL 14)

☛ **Yndrorn’ix, Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6:** hp 104 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix*.

APL 12 (EL 16)

☛ **Yndrorn’ix, Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6:** hp 104 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix*.

☛ **Ironmaw:** hp 126; see *Appendix*.

☛ **Vasuthant, advanced (14 HD) (6):** hp 133; see *Appendix*.

APL 14 (EL 18)

☛ **Yndrorn’ix, Advanced Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6:** hp 130 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix*.

☛ **Ironmaw, Advanced:** hp 250; see *Appendix*.

☛ **Vasuthant (22 HD) (6):** hp 231; see *Appendix*.

APL 16 (EL 20)

☛ **Yndrorn’ix, Advanced Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6:** hp 187 and *stalwart pact* (caster level 6); see *Appendix*.

☛ **Ironmaw, Advanced:** hp 378; see *Appendix*.

☛ **Vasuthant, Advanced Evolved (22 HD) (6):** hp 275; see *Appendix*.

Yndrorn’ix has *stalwart pact* already cast upon him by Yndrorn’ix. (See New Rules for this spell effect.)

Tactics: During the course of this adventure, Yndrorn’ix should have gained significant information about the PCs. Additionally, he likely casts a *divination* every day, inquiring about the PCs, what they will do, when they might attack, etc. Therefore, he should

know roughly when the PCs are coming, and what their greatest threat to him would be. You may alter the tactics specified herein to match the current situation in your game.

Yndrorn'ix typically continually bathes his surroundings in *darkness*, which he can cast at will and the effect has a long duration. Note that much of his power is dependent on the darkness; you should not forget to add a +4 enhancement bonus to his AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, skills, and ability checks when he is within darkness, which should be all the time. In fact, in addition to the *vasuthants*, who constantly emanate darkness due to their trap light ability, Yndrorn'ix will likely have a *damning darkness* spell effect centered on him.

Upon detection of the PCs approach, Yndrorn'ix uses his spell-like ability *damning darkness* on an ornamental brooch he wears, and then casts *spell immunity*, *bless*, *magic circle against good*, and *spell resistance*. He sets his *spell immunity* to an appropriate spell that he believes he is likely to face, based upon his intelligence gathering; often a good choice is *magic missile*.

Yndrorn'ix prefers to charge opponents when possible, using his pounce and abilities. He typically makes heavy use of his Improved Combat Expertise to increase his AC significantly.

If his hit points drop below half his normal amount, the *stalwart pact* activates.

At APL 12+, the ironmaw uses its long tendrils to strike at opponents. The *vasuthants* use their improved grab and enervating crush abilities as best they can. Additionally, they use their reality distortion special ability as much as possible, altering die rolls to hopefully turn fate their way.

At APL 16, if the *vasuthants* can estimate that there are any creatures of 8 HD or lower, it will attempt to kill them off with *circle of death*. Otherwise they may attempt to damage the ability scores of a weaker creature by using *contagion*.

Development: If for any reason the PCs engage Yndrorn'ix, and then disengage him without defeating him, he almost certainly accepts that they will be back, and likely in greater force. Since he's been discovered, he takes all his belongings and flees, using *plane shift* to return to the Abyss at his first opportunity.

If the PCs defeat Yndrorn'ix and his allies, the cult still remains in place. All cult members are hostile to the PCs at all times.

After the battle, the PCs will likely investigate the area in the clearing. In the trunk of the central tree is a large black portal that leads to the Plane of Shadow. Yndrorn'ix often spends time in here, dreaming of ways to increase his power and sway over his followers.

Treasure: In the Plane of Shadow, Yndrorn'ix has placed a few interesting items. The first is a huge torture device that he uses in sacrificing trees to his demonic master, Lupercio. This device consists of large tread wheel attached to powerful gears that spin large adamantine blades capable of shredding very large trees. Although this device is very large, the PCs may be able to salvage parts of it and make a smaller version that is more portable. What they may use it for is up to them, but it cannot be mistaken for its original purpose as a device of destruction. If a PC wishes to have this item, they must immediately spend 4 TUs on this AR in order to disassemble the larger device and construct the smaller "chipper". If they do not wish to make the item, cross it off the AR. The item cannot be sold.

Additionally, there are 13 vats of plant poison. The PCs can collect some to take with them.

Also found in the area are vast writings of various types. There are discussions of the demon lord, Lupercio, and his home plane of Slugbed. Numerous demons are described that exist on this plane, and the specifics of who they are and what they typically spend their energy on. There are also some notes that discuss Yndrorn'ix's meeting with several men who told him about The Forsaken Valley, and the intelligent trees that were. It goes on to discuss how he set up his cult, thanks to the information provided by these men. Yndrorn'ix also mentions sacrificing all the elves of the Phostwood, once he had enough power over the trees such that they could defeat the Phostwood elves.

Yndrorn'ix goes into great detail over numerous sacrificial rites. He also has numerous "prayers" to Lupercio.

A curious powder substance known as "pyroclastic sulphur" is also found in some jars. This orange powder can be prepared in such a way as to cause a powerful explosive effect when used along with certain fire based spells. Nearby are some ancient scrolls, reportedly attributed to the wizard Keraptis, that discuss the complicated procedure for both preparing the substance and for using it properly. (See AR.)

A wooden device that appears to be shaped in such a way as to be able to hold a lens is also found among the possessions of Yndrorn'ix. It is difficult to determine its use, but strange runes are scribed along the wooden handle. These runes have a distinct similarity to the runes found on Talerad's Incantation from NMR5-02 *Natural Enemies*.

The demon Yndrorn'ix also has possessions he keeps on him at all times (listed in his stat block).

Also hidden among the items is a *ring of blinking*.

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 2250 gp – *ring of blinking* (2250 gp each)

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 283 gp; M: 2250 gp – *ring of blinking* (2250 gp each)

APL 14: L: 0 gp; C: 1782 gp; M: 2250 gp – *ring of blinking* (2250 gp each)

APL 16: L: 0 gp; C: 2512 gp; M: 2250 gp – *ring of blinking* (2250 gp each)

Conclusion

The status of the creatures of the Forsaken Valley is not significantly affected by the elimination of the shadow demon Yndorn'ix. Even if his cult is shattered, the tree creatures that joined are still dedicated to their new demonic purpose. For now, this area shall remain forsaken.

However, if it is any consolation, the Pine Kingdom is saved from certain destruction for the time being, since the other kingdoms are willing to accept the status quo. The pines will eventually recover from their fire damage.

The PCs may return to civilization without incident. They will likely have additional inquiries which may need to wait until the next scenario in this series.

Another loose end is the acquisition of a planar fork keyed to the Abyss. While planar travel is beyond the scope of this scenario, a future mission to explore what may lie in wait there is a possibility.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter Three

Defeat fire creatures

APL10 390 xp

APL12 450 xp

APL14 510 xp

APL16 570 xp

Encounter Four

Defeat fake tree cult

APL10 300 xp

APL12 360 xp

APL14 420 xp

APL16 480 xp

Encounter Six

Defeat Yndorn'ix and minions

APL10 420 xp

APL12 480 xp

APL14 540 xp

APL16 600 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL10 240 xp

APL12 285 xp

APL14 330 xp

APL16 375 xp

Total possible experience:

APL10 1350 xp

APL12 1575 xp

APL14 1800 xp

APL16 2025 xp

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them

during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter Four: You Got Me

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 12: L: 569 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 198 gp - huge +2 wooden shield (198 gp each)

APL 14: L: 1109 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1459 gp - 2 huge +2 wooden shields (198 gp each), bracers of armor +2 (333 gp each), +2 ring of protection (667 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (63 gp each)

APL 16: L: 2220 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 2918 gp - 4 huge +2 wooden shields (198 gp each per shield), 2 bracers of armor +2 (333 gp each per item), 2 +2 rings of protection (667 gp each per ring), 2 potions of cure serious wounds (63 gp each per potion)

Encounter Six:

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 2250 gp - ring of blinking (2250 gp each)

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 283 gp; M: 2250 gp - ring of blinking (2250 gp each)

APL 14: L: 0 gp; C: 1782 gp; M: 2250 gp - ring of blinking (2250 gp each)

APL 16: L: 0 gp; C: 2512 gp; M: 2250 gp - ring of blinking (2250 gp each)

Total Possible Treasure

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 2250 gp - Total: 2300 gp

APL 12: L: 569 gp; C: 283 gp; M: 2448 gp - Total: 3300 gp

APL 14: L: 1109 gp; C: 1782 gp; M: 3709 gp - Total: 6600 gp

APL 16: L: 2220 gp; C: 2512 gp; M: 5168 gp - Total: 9900 gp

Special

Mortally Drained: You have been drained of life by the unseelie fey Pleebin. On your next adventure you have a -4 penalty to Constitution. Each subsequent adventure, this penalty is reduced by 1, fading away after the 4th adventure following this one. This effect cannot be removed by any mortal magic, nor can it be avoided by spending TUs. If you die while this curse is active or for 2 adventures afterwards, a ruby worth 3000 gp forms from your blood and may be used as part of the casting cost for a *raise dead* or *resurrection* spell.

Planar fork (Abyss): This small forked metal rod is made from cool black iron, pocked with indentations and rust. It acts as a focus for the *plane shift* spell, keyed to the 128th level of the Abyss. This layer, known as Slugbed, is a horrid domain of both filth and beauty ruled by the demon lord Lupercio. If it is used to travel to the Abyss, there is a 20% chance of an immediate hostile encounter with either 3-5 vrockcs or 2-4 hezrou (equal chance for either). This item has no cost and cannot be sold.

Plant poison: This alchemical mixture can be thrown as a splash weapon. A direct hit deals 2d6 points of damage to creatures with the plant type. Every creature with the plant type within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits is dealt 1 point of splash damage. Plants killed by this poison turn to black ash. Price 20 gp each.

Lens holder: This strange wooden device appears to be made to hold a missing lens of some sort. Carved along its handle are strange runes.

Destruction of the Demon Cult: For destroying the demon cult, this character gains access to the items marked with an * below.

Pyroclastic sulfur: This dangerous substance can cause a violent explosion when combined with exotic magic incantations. If you have "Notes on the Pyronomicon", spend 1 TU, and 500 gp you can make enough of this substance for 5 uses (one time only). When casting a valid spell with the fire descriptor and adding this substance to the spell components, make a DC 15 + spell level Spellcraft check. If you succeed, the Explosive Spell metamagic feat (Complete Arcane) is spontaneously applied to the spell with no increase in casting time. Failure indicates the spell is cast normally without applying the feat, but the substance is still expended. However, a roll of a natural 1 on this check causes the spell with the metamagic feat applied to be centered on you.

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Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 10:

Plant poison (Adventure [limit 10], see above, 20 gp)

bracers of armor +2 (Adventure, DMG, 4,000 gp)

+2 *wooden shield* (Adventure, DMG, 4,307gp)

+2 *ring of protection* (Adventure, DMG, 8,000 gp)

* *Boots of Levitation* (Adventure, DMG, 7,500 gp)

* *Hand of Glory* (Adventure, DMG, 8,000 gp)

APL 12: (all of APL 10 plus the following):

Amulet of natural armor +2 (Adventure, DMG, 8,000 gp)

Glove of Storing (Adventure, DMG, 10,000 gp)

* *Boots of Speed* (Adventure, DMG, 10,000 gp)

* *Ring of spell storing, minor* (Adventure, DMG, 18,000 gp)

APL 14 (all of APLs 10-12 plus the following):

Amulet of natural armor +3 (Adventure, DMG, 18,000 gp)

ring of blinking (Adventure, DMG, 27,000 gp)

* *Winged Boots* (Adventure, DMG, 16,000 gp)

APL 16 (all of APLs 10-14 plus the following):

Amulet of natural armor +4 (Adventure, DMG, 32,000 gp)

Mask of the Skull (Adventure, DMG, 22,000 gp)

* *Boots of Teleportation* (Adventure, DMG, 49,000 gp)

* *Cloak of Displacement, major* (Adventure, DMG, 50,000 gp)

Appendix One – Untiered NPCs

Encounter Two

Awakened Tree, Huge: CR 5; Huge Plant; HD 8d8+40; hp 76; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp: +6/+19; Atk: +9 melee (2d6+7, slam); Full Atk: +9 melee (2d6+7, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA -; SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: (22 ranks) Diplomacy +2, Heal +2, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (any one) +2, Listen +4, Sense Motive +2, Speak Language (Common), Spot +4, Survival +2; Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Physical Description: an awakened tree looks identical to a normal tree, except for the trunk which is split into two legs.

Awakened Tree, Gargantuan: CR 7; Gargantuan Plant; HD 16d8+112; hp 184; Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 12 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +8 natural), touch 4, flat-footed 12; BAB/Grp: +12/+31; Atk: +16 melee (2d8+10, slam); Full Atk: +16 melee (2d8+10, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA -; SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +17, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 24, Dex 6, Con 25, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: (38 ranks) Diplomacy +4, Heal +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (any one) +2, Knowledge (any one) +2, Listen +6, Sense Motive +4, Speak Language (Common), Spot +6, Survival +4; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Physical Description: an awakened tree looks identical to a normal tree, except for the trunk which is split into two legs.

Guardian Tree: Awakened Tree Ftr4; CR 9; Huge Plant; HD 8d8+40 plus 4d10+20; hp 118; Init -1; Spd 20 ft. in splint mail, base speed 30 ft.; AC 23 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural, +6 splint mail, +4 +2 heavy wooden shield), touch 7, flat-footed 23; BAB/Grp: +10/+24; Atk: +15 melee (3d6+8/x3, warhammer) or +14 melee (2d6+6, slam); Full Atk: +15/+10 melee (3d6+8/x3, warhammer) or +14 melee (2d6+9, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA -; SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 23, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: (30 ranks) Diplomacy +2, Heal +2, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +4, Sense Motive +2, Speak Language (Common), Spot +4, Survival +2; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialization (warhammer).

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: splint mail (made primarily from hardwood), +2 wooden shield, warhammer, battleaxe.

Physical Description: a guardian tree looks similar to a normal tree, except for the trunk which is split into two legs, large portions of its branches clad in strips of metal, a well crafted wooden shield made of tough bark, and a warhammer grasped in a meaty branch appendage.

Noble Tree: Awakened tree Ftr2/Bbn2/Ari2; CR 12; Gargantuan Plant; HD 16d8+112 plus 2d10+14 plus 2d12+14 plus 2d8+14 plus 22; hp 281; Init -2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +8 natural, +2 bracers of armor +2, +2 ring of protection), touch 4, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +17/+36; Atk: +22 melee (4d8+10, masterwork greatclub) or +21 melee (3d8+10, slam); Full Atk: +22/+17/+12/+7 melee (4d8+10, masterwork greatclub) or +21 melee (3d8+10, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA rage 1/day; SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision, fast movement, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +23, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 25, Dex 6, Con 25, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: (58 ranks) Diplomacy +10, Heal +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (any one) +2, Knowledge (any one) +2, Listen +13, Sense Motive +7, Speak Language (Common), Spot +13, Survival +5; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Toughness,

Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub), Weapon Focus (slam).

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Rage (Ex): when raging, adjust the stat block as follows: hp 325; AC 14, touch 2, flat footed 14, Atk: +24 melee (4d8+13, masterwork greatclub) or +23 melee (3d8+13, slam); Full Atk: +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (4d8+13, masterwork greatclub) or +23 melee (3d8+13, slam); Fort +25, Will +13; Str 29, Con 29

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, +2 ring of protection, potion of cure serious wounds, masterwork greatclub (2).

Physical Description: a massive and elderly tree with a look of grandeur. A split trunk is used as legs, and a massive greatclub wielded by strong limbs in battle.

Hrodgerd the Elder, King of the Pines: Awakened Tree Mnk4/Drd4/Rgr5/Ari2; CR 15 Gargantuan Plant; HD 16d8+112 plus 4d8+28 plus 4d8+28 plus 5d8+35 plus 2d8+14 plus 31; hp 387; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 27 (-4 size, +8 natural, +4 natural enhancement, +5 deflection, +4 wisdom), touch 15, flat-footed 27; BAB/Grp: +24/+43; Atk: +28 melee (2d8+10, slam); Full Atk: +28 melee (2d8+10, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA flurry of blows, unarmed strike, ki strike (magic), favored enemy (humanoid [goblinoid]) +4, favored enemy (giant) +2, combat style (archery); SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision, evasion still mind, slow fall 20 ft., animal companion, nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure; AL NG; SV Fort +29, Ref +14, Will +23 (+25 vs. enchantment); Str 24, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 11, Wis 18, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: (108 ranks) Balance +6, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +15, Handle Animal +10, Heal +12, Intimidate +11, Jump +9, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +20, Sense Motive +11, Speak Language (Common), Spot +19, Survival +8, Tumble +5; Cleave, Deflect Arrows (B), Endurance (B), Eschew Materials, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Leadership, Negotiator, Power Attack, Rapid Shot (B), Stunning Fist (B), Track (B), Weapon Focus (slam).

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis,

polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Druid Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—[cure minor wounds (2), detect magic, light, virtue]; 1st—[cure light wounds, entangle, faerie fire, longstrider] 2nd—[barkskin, gust of wind, soften earth and stone].

Ranger Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 1st—[animal messenger].

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: ring of protection +5, amulet of natural armor +4, ring of energy resistance (fire, major), rod of security, Keoghtom's ointment, figurine of wondrous power (onyx dog), gargantuan masterwork composite [+7 Str] longbow, 40 arrows.

Physical Description: Hrodgerd the Elder is a massive pine tree with deeply rutted bark and thousands of pine cones hanging from his dark green needle-covered branches.

Edlee the First, King of the Phost: Awakened Tree Ari12/Clr4 (Beory); CR 15; Gargantuan Plant; HD 16d8+112 plus 12d8+84 plus 4d8+28; hp 368; Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +8 natural, +2 deflection), touch 6, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp: +24/+43; Atk: +28 melee (3d8+10, slam); Full Atk: +28 melee (3d8+10, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA turn undead; SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +25, Ref +8, Will +21; Str 24, Dex 6, Con 25, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: (164 ranks) Appraise +6, Bluff +14, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +28, Gather Information +9, Heal +9, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (local-NMR) +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +7, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +17, Spot +20, Survival +9; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Iron Will, Leadership, Negotiator, Persuasive, Power Attack, Self Sufficient, Weapon Focus (slam).

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—[create water (2), cure minor wounds (2), light]; 1st—[entangle*, command, deathwatch, obscuring mist, sanctuary]; 2nd—[soften earth and stone*, cure moderate wounds, lesser restoration, zone of truth].

*Domain spell. Domains: Earth (turn air creatures, rebuke earth creatures); Plant (rebuke plant creatures).

Languages: Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Possessions: ring of protection +2, horn of blasting, dust of disappearance, ring of x-ray vision, eyes of charming, holy symbol (2).

Physical Description: Edlee the First is a massive and ancient Phost tree. His bark is gnarled and weathered. His branches are draped in long flowing moss.

Juardo Elrudo, King of the Spruce: Awakened Tree Rog11/Wiz5; CR 15; Gargantuan Plant; HD 16d8+112 plus 11d6+55 plus 5d4+25; hp 314; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (-4 size, +2 Dex, +8 natural), touch 4, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +22/+39; Atk: +24 melee (3d6+6, +1 shortspear) or +23 melee (2d8+7, slam); Full Atk: +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (3d6+6, +1 shortspear) or +23 melee (2d8+7, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA sneak attack +6d6, crippling strike; SQ DR 10/slashing, plant traits, low-light vision, evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +21, Ref +19, Will +19; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 25, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: (241 ranks) Appraise +8, Balance +9, Bluff +26, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +22, Forgery +8, Gather Information +23, Heal +6, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local-NMR) +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +21, Search +8, Sense Motive +22, Sleight of Hand +9, Spellcraft +17, Spot +21, Survival +6, Tumble +17; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Extend Spell (B), Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll (B).

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/7/3/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—[detect magic, read magic, ghost sound, arcane mark]; 1st—[mage armor, obscuring mist, true strike, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, protection from law]; 2nd—[blur, scorching ray, gust of wind]; 3rd—[blink, stinking cloud].

Spellbook: 0—[all]; 1st—[alarm, endure elements, protection from chaos, protection from law, shield, grease, mage armor, obscuring mist, summon monster I, unseen servant, comprehend languages, identify, true strike, burning

hands, Tenser's floating disk, magic missile, shocking grasp, color spray, Nystul's magic aura, silent image, ventriloquism, cause fear, chill touch, ray of enfeeblement, erase, expeditious retreat]; 2nd—[obscure object, protection from arrows, resist energy, Melf's acid arrow, fog cloud, glitterdust, summon monster II, summon swarm, web, detect thoughts, locate object, see invisibility, daze monster, touch of idiocy, continual flame, darkness, gust of wind, scorching ray, blur, mirror image, misdirection, blindness/deafness, ghoul touch, bear's endurance, bull's strength, fox's cunning, whispering wind]; 3rd—[dispel magic, sepia snake sigil, sleet storm, stinking cloud, summon monster III, suggestion, fireball, lightning bolt, wind wall, displacement, ray of exhaustion, blink, haste, secret page].

Languages: Common, Giant, Sylvan, Elven.

Possessions: +1 shortspear, gloves of dexterity +4, cloak of resistance +4, ring of wizardry I, helm of telepathy, potion of fly, scroll of invisibility, wand of web (20 charges), spell components, spell book.

Physical Description: Juardo Elrudo is a massive spruce tree, wide at the base and conical in shape, towering to a point at his top. His branches contain dense and short needles, while his bark varies from light brown to orange. Small cones dangle from his branches. He also keeps his possessions worn in some way or grasped in his mobile limbs.

Jeanneaux Lemagnifique, King of the Oak: Fiendish Awakened Tree Sor19; CR 22; Gargantuan Plant; HD 16d8+112 plus 19d4+133 plus 35; hp 399; Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 24 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +5 armor, +5 deflection, +2 luck, +8 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 24; BAB/Grp: +21/+42; Atk: +27 melee (2d8+13, slam); Full Atk: +27 melee (2d8+13, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA smite good; SQ plant traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, DR 10/magic and slashing, cold and fire resistance 10; SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +26, Ref +16, Will +26; Str 28, Dex 6, Con 25, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: (76 ranks) Bluff +13, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +8, Heal +6, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +5, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +7, Sense Motive +6, Speak Language (Common), Spellcraft +9, Spot +7, Survival +5; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Power Attack, Silent Spell, Weapon Focus (slam), Widen Spell.

Plant traits (Ex): a plant creature has low-light vision, immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits. Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Jeanneaux Lemagnifique can make a normal melee attack to deal +20 damage against a good foe.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/8/7/7/7/7/6/6/4; base DC = 16 + spell level): 0—[acid splash, detect poison, detect magic, read magic, light, ghost sound, touch of fatigue, mending, arcane mark]; 1st—[magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, true strike, shield, expeditious retreat]; 2nd—[mirror image, blur, resist energy, see invisibility, web]; 3rd—[fireball, displacement, blink, haste]; 4th—[dimension door, dimensional anchor, enervation, solid fog]; 5th—[blight, dominate person, overland flight, wall of force]; 6th—[repulsion, disintegrate, Tenser's transformation]; 7th—[delayed blast fireball, Bigby's grasping hand, Mordenkainen's Sword]; 8th—[maze, polar ray, summon monster VIII]; 9th—[time stop, wail of the banshee].

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: +5 bracers of armor, ring of protection +5, cloak of resistance +5, ring of elemental command (fire), staff of power, spell component pouch (4).

Physical Description: a massive oak with huge gnarled branches, blackened with evil malice. His trunk is split into two hefty legs, and large demonic cat-like eyes leer at his next victims. His gigantic maw is covered in spiny thorns that act like sharpened teeth.

Appendix Two – APL 10

Encounter Five

Yndorn'ix, Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6: CR 14; Medium Outsider (chaotic, evil, incorporeal); HD 10d8+20 plus 6d8+12; hp 104***; Init +14; Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 26 (+10 Dex, +6 deflection), touch 26, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +14/+24; Atk: +24 melee (1d6 vile, claw/incorporeal touch); Full Atk: +24 melee (1d6 vile, 2 claws/incorporeal touch); SA Improved grab, pounce, rake, spell-like abilities, flesh-ripping claws, kill cultist; SQ Darkness enhancement, immunities, incorporeal traits, light powerlessness, outsider traits, blood oath, locate cultist, undetectable alignment, transfer spell-like ability, sponsor worshipper, *scream on cultist*, torture cultist, mind shielding; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +22, Will +16; Str -, Dex 30, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +21 (15 ranks), Concentration +21 (19 ranks), Diplomacy +17 (7 ranks, 4 synergy), Hide +33* (13 ranks, +10 racial), Intimidate +8 (0 ranks, 2 synergy), Knowledge (arcana) +16 (13 ranks), Knowledge (religion) +18 (15 ranks), Knowledge (the planes) +11 (8 ranks), Listen +20 (16 ranks), Search +17 (13 ranks), Sense Motive +20 (16 ranks), Spellcraft +22 (19 ranks), Spot +23 (19 ranks); Combat Reflexes, Combat Expertise, Improved Combat Expertise**, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes. **See New Rules.

****Stalwart Pact:* Yndorn'ix has cast *stalwart pact* (see New Rules) on himself. Per the spell description, once he has reached half his normal hit points, the effect is activated. He immediately gains 30 hp, damage reduction of 5/magic, and a +4 luck bonus on saving throws.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shadow demon must hit with its claw/incorporeal touch attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake. A shadow demon may use the improved grab ability on a creature its own size or smaller.

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow demon charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +24, damage 1d6 vile.

Spell-like abilities: At will: *darkness*; 1/day – *deeper darkness*, *damning darkness***; 1/week – *magic jar*. Caster level 10th; save DC 16 + spell level. **See New Rules.

Darkness Enhancement (Ex): Shadow demons gain power from being within darkness. They gain a +4 enhancement bonus to AC, attack rolls, damage

rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks in such conditions.

Flesh-Ripping Claws (Su): When a shadow demon's claws touch flesh, they become corporeal, allowing the creature to claw, rake, and even grapple with opponents, yet still ignore their armor. The shadow demon's claw and rake attacks are thus made as touch attacks. Fleshless creatures, such as certain constructs, are immune to the attacks of a shadow demon. Corporeal foes attempting to grapple the demon can only attempt to escape; they can't deal damage or pin in a grapple. All damage a shadow demon's claws deal is vile damage.

Immunities (Su): A shadow demon is immune to fire, cold, and electricity as well as mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Light Powerlessness (Ex): A shadow demon is drained in bright light (such as sunlight) and flees from it. Within such light, it takes a -4 penalty to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks.

Skills: *A shadow demon receives a +10 racial bonus on Hide Checks.

Fiend of Blasphemy Spells Prepared (4/4/3/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level, caster level 6): 1st—[*protection from good**, *bless*, *detect good*, *protection from law*]; 2nd—[*desecrate**, *bear's endurance*, *silence*, *undetectable alignment*]; 3rd—[*magic circle against good**, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*]; 4th—[*divination**, *spell immunity* (2)]; 5th—[*dispel good**, *spell resistance*]. **See New Rules.

*Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Pact [Complete Divine]** (add Appraise, Intimidate, and Sense Motive to class skills). **See New Rules.

Possessions: *plane shift* spell focus: planar fork – 128th layer of the Abyss, 3 crystals (100 gp each), holy symbol.

Physical Description: a gaunt, angular shadowy humanoid figure with batlike wings.

Appendix Three – APL 12

Encounter Five

Yndorn'ix, Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6: CR 14; Medium Outsider (chaotic, evil, incorporeal); HD 10d8+20 plus 6d8+12; hp 104***; Init +14; Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 26 (+10 Dex, +6 deflection), touch 26, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +14/+24; Atk: +24 melee (1d6 vile, claw/incorporeal touch); Full Atk: +24 melee (1d6 vile, 2 claws/incorporeal touch); SA Improved grab, pounce, rake, spell-like abilities, flesh-ripping claws, kill cultist; SQ Darkness enhancement, immunities, incorporeal traits, light powerlessness, outsider traits, blood oath, locate cultist, undetectable alignment, transfer spell-like ability, sponsor worshipper, *scream on cultist*, torture cultist, mind shielding; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +22, Will +16; Str -, Dex 30, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +21 (15 ranks), Concentration +21 (19 ranks), Diplomacy +17 (7 ranks, 4 synergy), Hide +33* (13 ranks, +10 racial), Intimidate +8 (0 ranks, 2 synergy), Knowledge (arcana) +16 (13 ranks), Knowledge (religion) +18 (15 ranks), Knowledge (the planes) +11 (8 ranks), Listen +20 (16 ranks), Search +17 (13 ranks), Sense Motive +20 (16 ranks), Spellcraft +22 (19 ranks), Spot +23 (19 ranks); Combat Reflexes, Combat Expertise, Improved Combat Expertise**, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes. **See New Rules.

****Stalwart Pact:* Yndorn'ix has cast *stalwart pact* (see New Rules) on himself. Per the spell description, once he has reached half his normal hit points, the effect is activated. He immediately gains 30 hp, damage reduction of 5/magic, and a +4 luck bonus on saving throws.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shadow demon must hit with its claw/incorporeal touch attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake. A shadow demon may use the improved grab ability on a creature its own size or smaller.

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow demon charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +24, damage 1d6 vile.

Spell-like abilities: At will: *darkness*; 1/day – *deeper darkness*, *damning darkness***; 1/week – *magic jar*. Caster level 10th; save DC 16 + spell level. **See New Rules.

Darkness Enhancement (Ex): Shadow demons gain power from being within darkness. They gain a +4 enhancement bonus to AC, attack rolls, damage

rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks in such conditions.

Flesh-Ripping Claws (Su): When a shadow demon's claws touch flesh, they become corporeal, allowing the creature to claw, rake, and even grapple with opponents, yet still ignore their armor. The shadow demon's claw and rake attacks are thus made as touch attacks. Fleshless creatures, such as certain constructs, are immune to the attacks of a shadow demon. Corporeal foes attempting to grapple the demon can only attempt to escape; they can't deal damage or pin in a grapple. All damage a shadow demon's claws deal is vile damage.

Immunities (Su): A shadow demon is immune to fire, cold, and electricity as well as mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Light Powerlessness (Ex): A shadow demon is drained in bright light (such as sunlight) and flees from it. Within such light, it takes a -4 penalty to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks.

Skills: *A shadow demon receives a +10 racial bonus on Hide Checks.

Fiend of Blasphemy Spells Prepared (4/4/3/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level, caster level 6): 1st—[*protection from good**, *bless*, *detect good*, *protection from law*]; 2nd—[*desecrate**, *bear's endurance*, *silence*, *undetectable alignment*]; 3rd—[*magic circle against good**, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*]; 4th—[*divination**, *spell immunity* (2)]; 5th—[*dispel good**, *spell resistance*]. **See New Rules.

*Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Pact [Complete Divine]** (add Appraise, Intimidate, and Sense Motive to class skills). **See New Rules.

Possessions: *plane shift* spell focus; planar fork – 128th layer of the Abyss, holy symbol, 5 crystals (100 gp each), 1198 gp.

Physical Description: a gaunt, angular shadowy humanoid figure with batlike wings.

Vasuthant, advanced (14 HD): CR 6; Large undead; HD 14d12+42; hp 133; Init +5; Spd Fly 30 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +7/+17; Atk: +12 melee (1d8+9, slam); Full Atk: +12 melee (1d8+9, slam) and up to 4 enervating crushes (1d8+9 plus 1d4 Str, 4 enervating crushes); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +2 turn

resistance, blindsight, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, resistance to fire 5 and electricity 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 22, Dex 12, Con -, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12*, Listen +10, Spot +10; Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Grapple (B), Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 1d8+9 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full normal hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of its enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks or using its spell-like abilities.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as daylight) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearby magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally

within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier X its Hit Dice.

Skills: Vasuthants have a +2 racial bonus on Listen checks and Spot checks. *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Appendix Four – APL 14

Encounter Five

Yndorn'ix, Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6: CR 16; Medium Outsider (chaotic, evil, incorporeal); HD 14d8+28 plus 6d8+12; hp 130***; Init +14; Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 26 (+10 Dex, +6 deflection), touch 26, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +18/+28; Atk: +28 melee (1d6 vile, claw/incorporeal touch); Full Atk: +28 melee (1d6 vile, 2 claws/incorporeal touch); SA Improved grab, pounce, rake, spell-like abilities, flesh-ripping claws, kill cultist; SQ Darkness enhancement, immunities, incorporeal traits, light powerlessness, outsider traits, blood oath, locate cultist, undetectable alignment, transfer spell-like ability, sponsor worshipper, *scream on cultist*, torture cultist, mind shielding; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +24, Will +18; Str -, Dex 30, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 23.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +25 (19 ranks), Concentration +25 (23 ranks), Diplomacy +25 (15 ranks, 4 synergy), Hide +39* (19 ranks, +10 racial), Intimidate +8 (0 ranks, 2 synergy), Knowledge (arcana) +20 (17 ranks), Knowledge (religion) +18 (15 ranks), Knowledge (the planes) +19 (16 ranks), Listen +21 (17 ranks), Search +16 (13 ranks), Sense Motive +21 (17 ranks), Spellcraft +26 (23 ranks), Spot +27 (23 ranks); Combat Reflexes, Combat Expertise, Hold the Line**, Improved Combat Expertise**, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes. **See New Rules.

****Stalwart Pact:* Yndorn'ix has cast *stalwart pact* (see New Rules) on himself. Per the spell description, once he has reached half his normal hit points, the effect is activated. He immediately gains 30 hp, damage reduction of 5/magic, and a +4 luck bonus on saving throws.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shadow demon must hit with its claw/incorporeal touch attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake. A shadow demon may use the improved grab ability on a creature its own size or smaller.

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow demon charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +28, damage 1d6 vile.

Spell-like abilities: At will: *darkness*; 1/day – *deeper darkness*, *damning darkness***; 1/week – *magic jar*. Caster level 10th; save DC 16 + spell level. **See New Rules.

Darkness Enhancement (Ex): Shadow demons gain power from being within darkness. They gain a +4 enhancement bonus to AC, attack rolls, damage

rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks in such conditions.

Flesh-Ripping Claws (Su): When a shadow demon's claws touch flesh, they become corporeal, allowing the creature to claw, rake, and even grapple with opponents, yet still ignore their armor. The shadow demon's claw and rake attacks are thus made as touch attacks. Fleshless creatures, such as certain constructs, are immune to the attacks of a shadow demon. Corporeal foes attempting to grapple the demon can only attempt to escape; they can't deal damage or pin in a grapple. All damage a shadow demon's claws deal is vile damage (see New Rules).

Immunities (Su): A shadow demon is immune to fire, cold, and electricity as well as mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Light Powerlessness (Ex): A shadow demon is drained in bright light (such as sunlight) and flees from it. Within such light, it takes a -4 penalty to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks.

Skills: *A shadow demon receives a +10 racial bonus on Hide Checks.

Fiend of Blasphemy Spells Prepared (4/4/3/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level, caster level 6): 1st—[*protection from good**, *bleed*, *detect good*, *protection from law*]; 2nd—[*desecrate**, *bear's endurance*, *silence*, *undetectable alignment*]; 3rd—[*magic circle against good**, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*]; 4th—[*divination**, *spell immunity* (2)]; 5th—[*dispel good**, *spell resistance*]. **See New Rules.

*Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Pact [Complete Divine]** (add Appraise, Intimidate, and Sense Motive to class skills). **See New Rules.

Possessions: *plane shift* spell focus; planar fork – 128th layer of the Abyss, holy symbol, ruby gem (10,000 gp), 5 crystals (100 gp each), 192 gp.

Physical Description: a gaunt, angular shadowy humanoid figure with batlike wings.

Ironmaw, advanced: CR 15; Gargantuan Plant (Extraplanar); HD 20d8+160; hp 250; Init -1; Spd 10 ft.; AC 28 (-4 size, -1 Dex, +23 natural), touch 5, flat-footed 28; BAB/Grp: +15/+42; Atk: +26 melee (3d6+15/19-20, tendrils); Full Atk: +26 melee (3d6+15/19-20, 4 tendrils) and +21 (2d6+7, bite); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft. (60 ft. with tendrils); SA attach, engulf, illness, tendrils, wounding; SQ acid resistance 10, sonic resistance 10,

cold immunity, electricity immunity, DR 15/magic and slashing, plant traits; SR 30; AL NE; SV Fort +20, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 40, Dex 9, Con 27, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +2*, Listen +18, Spot +17; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (tendrils), Improved Natural Armor, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Attach (Ex): If an ironmaw hits with a tendrils attack, the tendrils, in addition to dealing normal damage, attaches to the opponent's body. A tendrils draws a stuck opponent 10 feet closer in each subsequent round (no attack of opportunity) unless the opponent breaks free, which requires an Escape Artist check (DC 25) or a Strength check (DC 26). An ironmaw can draw in a creature within 20 feet of itself and bite with a +4 attack bonus in that round. An ironmaw can draw a creature into its space and attempt to engulf it as well.

A tendrils can be severed by a single attack with a slashing weapon (made as an attempt to sunder a weapon) dealing at least 13 points of damage.

Engulf (Ex): As a standard action, an ironmaw can attempt to engulf a Huge or smaller creature that enters its space. The victim of the attack can make an attack of opportunity, but if it does, it is not entitled to a saving throw. A victim that does not attempt an attack of opportunity must make a Reflex save (DC 19) or be engulfed; on a success, the victim is pushed back or aside (but not freed from attached tendrils). An engulfed creature takes 3d6+15 points of bludgeoning damage within an ironmaw's trunk each round and must hold its breath or begin to suffocate.

Illness (Ex): An ironmaw's tendrils can sap an opponent's health. Anyone caught by a tendrils must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 28) or take 1d6 points of Constitution damage.

Tendrils (Ex): An ironmaw can attack with its four tendrils from up to 60 feet away. Anyone struck by a tendrils takes damage, loses blood, may suffer illness, and risks being drawn toward the ironmaw's trunk.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from an ironmaw's tendrils attack bleeds for an additional 3 points of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wounds for 6 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can be stopped only by a Heal check (DC 10) or the application of any cure spell or other healing spell (*heal*, *healing circle*, or the like).

Plant Traits (Ex): An ironmaw is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects. An ironmaw also has low-light vision.

Skills: Ironmaws receive skills as though they were fey. An ironmaw has a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. *In wooded areas, an ironmaw has a +15 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Vasuthant, advanced (22 HD): CR 8; Huge undead; HD 22d12+88; hp 231; Init +4; Spd Fly 30 ft.; AC 16 (-2 size, +0 Dex, +8 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +11/+29; Atk: +19 melee (2d6+15/19-20, slam); Full Atk: +19 melee (2d6+15/19-20, slam) and up to 4 enervating crushes (2d6+15 plus 1d4 Str, 4 enervating crushes); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ +2 turn resistance, blindsight, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, resistance to fire 5 and electricity 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +14; Str 30, Dex 10, Con -, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12*, Listen +14, Spot +14; Alertness, Awesome Blow, Flyby Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Grapple (B), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Power Attack.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 2d6+15 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full normal hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of its enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks or using its spell-like abilities.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant

can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as daylight) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearby magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier X its Hit Dice.

Skills: Vasuthants have a +2 racial bonus on Listen checks and Spot checks. *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Appendix Five – APL 16

Encounter Five

Yndorn'ix, Shadow Demon/Fiend of Blasphemy6: CR 18; Large Outsider (chaotic, evil, incorporeal); HD 16d8+64 plus 6d8+24; hp 187***; Init +13; Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 24 (-1 size, +9 Dex, +6 deflection), touch 24, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +20/+33; Atk: +28 melee (1d6 vile, claw/incorporeal touch); Full Atk: +28 melee (1d6 vile, 2 claws/incorporeal touch); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab, pounce, rake, spell-like abilities, flesh-ripping claws, kill cultist; SQ Darkness enhancement, immunities, incorporeal traits, light powerlessness, outsider traits, blood oath, locate cultist, undetectable alignment, transfer spell-like ability, sponsor worshipper, *scurry on cultist*, torture cultist, mind shielding; AL CE; SV Fort +19, Ref +24, Will +19; Str -, Dex 28, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 23.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +27 (21 ranks), Concentration +29 (25 ranks), Diplomacy +27 (17 ranks, 4 synergy), Hide +41* (21 ranks, +10 racial), Intimidate +8 (0 ranks, 2 synergy), Knowledge (arcana) +22 (19 ranks), Knowledge (nature) +10 (7 ranks), Knowledge (religion) +20 (17 ranks), Knowledge (the planes) +22 (19 ranks), Listen +21 (17 ranks), Search +16 (13 ranks), Sense Motive +21 (17 ranks), Spellcraft +26 (23 ranks), Spot +27 (23 ranks); Combat Reflexes, Combat Expertise, Deft Opportunist**, Hold the Line**, Improved Combat Expertise**, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes. **See New Rules.

****Stalwart Pact:* Yndorn'ix has cast *stalwart pact* (see New Rules) on himself. Per the spell description, once he has reached half his normal hit points, the effect is activated. He immediately gains 30 hp, damage reduction of 5/magic, and a +4 luck bonus on saving throws.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shadow demon must hit with its claw/incorporeal touch attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake. A shadow demon may use the improved grab ability on a creature its own size or smaller.

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow demon charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +28, damage 1d6 vile.

Spell-like abilities: At will: *darkness*; 1/day – *deeper darkness*, *damning darkness***; 1/week – *magic jar*. Caster level 10th; save DC 16 + spell level. **See New Rules.

Darkness Enhancement (Ex): Shadow demons gain power from being within darkness. They gain a +4 enhancement bonus to AC, attack rolls, damage

rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks in such conditions.

Flesh-Ripping Claws (Su): When a shadow demon's claws touch flesh, they become corporeal, allowing the creature to claw, rake, and even grapple with opponents, yet still ignore their armor. The shadow demon's claw and rake attacks are thus made as touch attacks. Fleshless creatures, such as certain constructs, are immune to the attacks of a shadow demon. Corporeal foes attempting to grapple the demon can only attempt to escape; they can't deal damage or pin in a grapple. All damage a shadow demon's claws deal is vile damage (see New Rules).

Immunities (Su): A shadow demon is immune to fire, cold, and electricity as well as mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Light Powerlessness (Ex): A shadow demon is drained in bright light (such as sunlight) and flees from it. Within such light, it takes a -4 penalty to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks.

Skills: *A shadow demon receives a +10 racial bonus on Hide Checks.

Fiend of Blasphemy Spells Prepared (4/4/3/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level, caster level 6): 1st—[*protection from good**, *bless*, *detect good*, *protection from law*]; 2nd—[*desecrate**, *bear's endurance*, *silence*, *undetectable alignment*]; 3rd—[*magic circle against good**, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*]; 4th—[*divination**, *spell immunity* (2)]; 5th—[*dispel good**, *spell resistance*]. **See New Rules.

*Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Pact [Complete Divine]** (add Appraise, Intimidate, and Sense Motive to class skills). **See New Rules.

Possessions: *plane shift* spell focus: planar fork – 128th layer of the Abyss, holy symbol, ruby gem (13,000 gp), 7 crystals (100 gp each), 1372 gp.

Physical Description: a gaunt, angular shadowy humanoid figure with batlike wings.

Ironmaw, advanced: CR 17; Gargantuan Plant (Extraplantar); HD 28d8+252; hp 378; Init -1; Spd 10 ft.; AC 31 (-4 size, -1 Dex, +26 natural), touch 5, flat-footed 31; BAB/Grp: +21/+48; Atk: +32 melee (3d6+15/19-20, tendrils); Full Atk: +32 melee (3d6+15/19-20, 4 tendrils) and +27 (2d6+7, bite); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft. (60 ft. with tendrils); SA attach, engulf, illness, tendrils, wounding; SQ acid resistance 10, sonic resistance 10,

cold immunity, electricity immunity, DR 15/magic and slashing, plant traits; SR 30; AL NE; SV Fort +25, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 40, Dex 9, Con 29, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +2*, Listen +22, Spot +19; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (tendrils), Improved Natural Armor (x4), Iron Will, Power Attack.

Attach (Ex): If an ironmaw hits with a tendril attack, the tendril, in addition to dealing normal damage, attaches to the opponent's body. A tendril draws a stuck opponent 10 feet closer in each subsequent round (no attack of opportunity) unless the opponent breaks free, which requires an Escape Artist check (DC 25) or a Strength check (DC 26). An ironmaw can draw in a creature within 20 feet of itself and bite with a +4 attack bonus in that round. An ironmaw can draw a creature into its space and attempt to engulf it as well.

A tendril can be severed by a single attack with a slashing weapon (made as an attempt to sunder a weapon) dealing at least 13 points of damage.

Engulf (Ex): As a standard action, an ironmaw can attempt to engulf a Huge or smaller creature that enters its space. The victim of the attack can make an attack of opportunity, but if it does, it is not entitled to a saving throw. A victim that does not attempt an attack of opportunity must make a Reflex save (DC 23) or be engulfed; on a success, the victim is pushed back or aside (but not freed from attached tendrils). An engulfed creature takes 3d6+15 points of bludgeoning damage within an ironmaw's trunk each round and must hold its breath or begin to suffocate.

Illness (Ex): An ironmaw's tendrils can sap an opponent's health. Anyone caught by a tendril must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 33) or take 1d6 points of Constitution damage.

Tendrils (Ex): An ironmaw can attack with its four tendrils from up to 60 feet away. Anyone struck by a tendril takes damage, loses blood, may suffer illness, and risks being drawn toward the ironmaw's trunk.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from an ironmaw's tendril attack bleeds for an additional 3 points of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wounds for 6 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can be stopped only by a Heal check (DC 10) or the application of any cure spell or other healing spell (*heal*, *healing circle*, or the like).

Plant Traits (Ex): An ironmaw is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects. An ironmaw also has low-light vision.

Skills: Ironmaws receive skills as though they were fey. An ironmaw has a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. *In wooded areas, an ironmaw has a +15 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Vasuthant, advanced evolved (22 HD): CR 10; Huge undead; HD 22d12+132; hp 275; Init +4; Spd Fly 30 ft.; AC 18 (-2 size, +0 Dex, +10 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 18; BAB/Grp: +11/+31; Atk: +21 melee (2d6+18/19-20, slam); Full Atk: +21 melee (2d6+18/19-20, slam) and up to 4 enervating crushes (2d6+18 plus 1d4 Str, 4 enervating crushes); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA spell-like abilities, enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion; SQ fast healing 6, +2 turn resistance, blindsight, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, resistance to fire 5 and electricity 5, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +14; Str 34, Dex 10, Con -, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 23.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12*, Listen +14, Spot +14; Alertness, Awesome Blow, Flyby Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Grapple (B), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Power Attack.

Spell-like abilities: 1/day – *circle of death* (DC 22), *contagion* (DC 20). Caster level 20th.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 2d6+18 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full normal hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of its enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks or using its spell-like abilities.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as daylight) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearby magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier X its Hit Dice.

Skills: Vasuthants have a +2 racial bonus on Listen checks and Spot checks. *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

Appendix Six – New Rules Items

New Monsters.

DEMON, SHADOW (Book of Vile Darkness)

Shadow demons are denizens of the Abyss without corporeal forms, formed from the very essence of evil on that plane. They skitter and flit about with great speed and a supernatural nimbleness, often mistaken for undead shadows. They resemble gaunt, angular shadowy humanoids with batlike wings.

Shadow demons, like night hags and a few other creatures that inhabit the Lower Planes, trade in souls. They use their *magic jar* ability to trap souls and sell or trade them to more powerful fiends. On the Material Plane, shadow demons sometimes work as advisors or assistants to evil creatures of great power: a dragon, an evil king, a powerful demonologist, or similar villain. Shadow demons generally serve their chosen master well, especially if they are able to gain a great many souls while doing so. If the souls are evil, all the better. Shadow demons are also interested in tempting and corrupting mortals. And if, when its master finally dies, the shadow demon is able to snatch its soul too, all the better.

Shadow demons sometimes serve demon lords directly, but they rarely interact with tanar'ri or other demons.

Shadow demons employ a straightforward strategy in combat: immerse the battlefield in darkness, then tear foes to shreds with their inky claws.

Shadow Demon (base creature): CR 8; Medium Outsider (chaotic, evil, incorporeal); HD 10d8; hp 45; Init +11; Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 22 (+7 Dex, +5 deflection), touch 22, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +10/+17; Atk: +17 melee (1d6 vile, claw/incorporeal touch); Full Atk: +17 melee (1d6 vile, 2 claws/incorporeal touch); SA Improved grab, pounce, rake, spell-like abilities, flesh-ripping claws; SQ Darkness enhancement, immunities, incorporeal traits, light powerlessness, outsider traits; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +14, Will +10; Str -, Dex 24, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +18 (13 ranks), Concentration +13 (13 ranks), Diplomacy +12 (5 ranks, 2 synergy), Hide +30* (13 ranks, +10 racial), Intimidate +7 (0 ranks, 2 synergy), Knowledge (arcana) +16 (13 ranks), Knowledge (religion) +16 (13 ranks), Knowledge (the planes) +11 (8 ranks), Listen +16 (13 ranks), Search +16 (13 ranks), Sense Motive +16 (13 ranks), Spellcraft +16 (13 ranks), Spot +16 (13 ranks); Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shadow demon must hit with its claw/incorporeal touch attack.

It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake. A shadow demon may use the improved grab ability on a creature its own size or smaller.

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow demon charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +17, damage 1d6 vile.

Spell-like abilities: At will: *darkness*; 1/day – *deeper darkness*, *damning darkness***>; 1/week – *magic jar*. Caster level 10th; save DC 15 + spell level. **See New Rules.

Darkness enhancement (Ex): Shadow demons gain power from being within darkness. They gain a +4 enhancement bonus to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks in such conditions.

Flesh-Ripping Claws (Su): When a shadow demon's claws touch flesh, they become corporeal, allowing the creature to claw, rake, and even grapple with opponents, yet still ignore their armor. The shadow demon's claw and rake attacks are thus made as touch attacks. Fleshless creatures, such as certain constructs, are immune to the attacks of a shadow demon. Corporeal foes attempting to grapple the demon can only attempt to escape; they can't deal damage or pin in a grapple. All damage a shadow demon's claws deal is vile damage.

Immunities (Su): A shadow demon is immune to fire, cold, and electricity as well as mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Light Powerlessness

(Ex): A shadow demon is drained in bright light (such as sunlight) and flees from it. Within such light, it takes a -4 penalty to AC, attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and skill and ability checks.

Skills: *A shadow demon receives a +10 racial bonus on Hide Checks.

“What is vile damage?”

From the Book of Vile Darkness:

VILE DAMAGE

Vile damage, like regular damage, results in the loss of hit points or ability score points. Unlike regular damage, vile damage can only be healed by magic cast within the area of a *consecrate* or *hallow* spell. Vile damage represents such an evil violation to a character's body or soul that only in a holy place can healing magic repair the damage.

VASUTHANT (Monster Manual III)

Small Undead

Hit Dice: 2d12 plus 4 (17 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)

Armor Class: 17 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+1

Attack: Slam +2 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: Slam +2 melee (1d4) and up to 4 enervating crushes (1d4 plus 1d4 Str)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Enervating crush, improved grab, reality distortion

Special Qualities: +2 turn resistance, blindsight, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and cold, immunity to light, resistance to fire 5 and electricity S, trap light, undead traits, unholy toughness

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +4

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con -, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Hide +9*, Listen +4, Spot +5

Feats: Flyby Attack, Improved Grapple (B)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 3-5 HD (Small); 6-9 HD (Medium); 10-16 HD (Large); 17-25 HD (Huge); 26-34 HD (Gargantuan); 35-48 HD (Colossal)

Level Adjustment: -

A spherical cloud of impenetrable darkness floats toward you. As it draws near, black tendrils reach out from the cloud's opaque core.

Vasuthants are shadowy, undead abominations. These life-hungry creatures vary greatly in size and power, each one growing larger as it sucks in more life energy. Smaller vasuthants appear as shadowy clouds, while larger varieties are colossal spheres of pitch-black nothingness that can suck up nearby light, sap strength, and manipulate gravity and time. Vasuthants possess immunity or resistance to most forms of energy.



Vasuthant

A Small vasuthant is about 2 feet in diameter. As it advances in Hit Dice and becomes larger, its diameter increases to 5 feet at Medium size, 10 feet at Large size, 15 feet at Huge size, 20 feet at Gargantuan size, and 30 feet at Colossal size. Vasuthants are weightless and know no languages.

COMBAT

A vasuthant desires to feed off the positive energy of every living thing it encounters. In every round, the creature attempts to use its improved grab ability to initiate an enervating crush attack.

Enervating Crush (Su): A successful grapple attempt by a vasuthant against a living creature of the same size or smaller pulls the victim into the center of the vasuthant. In that round and every round thereafter, a grappled victim takes 1d4 points of damage plus 1d4 points of Strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by a vasuthant dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Every point of Strength damage dealt by a vasuthant heals the creature of 1 point of damage, or gives it 1 temporary hit point if the creature is at full normal hit points. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

A vasuthant can grapple with one creature of its size, or can simultaneously grapple one or two creatures one size smaller or up to four creatures two or more sizes smaller. Creatures that become pinned are suspended inside the vasuthant while their life energy is crushed out of their bodies.

The use of its enervating crush ability does not prevent a vasuthant from making slam attacks or using its spell-like abilities.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a vasuthant must first hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, a vasuthant immediately employs its enervating crush attack.

Reality Distortion (Ex): A vasuthant has limited influence over the forces of time and reality. Three times per day (but only once per round), a vasuthant can take a free action to reroll any unfavorable die roll or force its opponent to reroll a favorable die roll. The vasuthant must accept the result of the reroll.

Immunity to light (Ex): Unlike many other undead creatures, a vasuthant is immune to any harmful effects of light, either natural or magical. All cleric spells of the Sun domain as well as other spells with the light descriptor (such as daylight) produce no adverse effects on a vasuthant.

Trap Light (Ex): A vasuthant effectively absorbs nearby magical and nonmagical light, creating a 60-foot emanation of shadow. All creatures within this area, including the vasuthant, gain concealment. Creatures with low-light vision or darkvision can see normally within the area of the emanation. Light sources within the area are suppressed, not dispelled. If a vasuthant moves out of range before the light source's duration expires, the light source illuminates again (though its illumination still cannot extend within the area of the vasuthant's trap light effect).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): A vasuthant gains a bonus to its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier X its Hit Dice.

Skills: Vasuthants have a +2 racial bonus on Listen checks and Spot checks. *A vasuthant gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In areas of bright illumination, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

EVOLVED UNDEAD (*Libris Mortis*)

An evolved undead is an undead whose body is flushed with more negative energy than normal due to an exceptionally long lifetime. Any undead may gain this template, and in doing so, it retains all its previous abilities, but becomes more powerful than before.

When an intelligent undead creature survives for 100 years or more (or when the DM decides to create an undead monster with a twist), there is a 1% chance that its connection to the Negative Energy Plane grows more mature. When this "evolution" occurs, the undead gains this template. Each additional 100 years of existence affords an additional 1% chance of a more mature connection, plus an additional 1% chance for

each previous evolution. For example, if an undead creature's connection to the Negative Energy Plane evolved three times previously, it has a 4% chance to gain one more step of maturation the next time its age requires an evolution check. Every step of evolution means that the evolved undead template can be applied again to the undead creature (setting this template apart from most other templates, which can be applied only once).

CREATING AN EVOLVED UNDEAD

"Evolved undead" is an acquired template that can be added to any undead with an intelligence score (referred to hereafter as the base creature). An evolved undead uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here. This template does not alter the creature's type.

Note: Unlike most templates, an evolved undead can potentially acquire this template more than once, evolving more with each application.

Armor Class: The base creature's natural armor bonus improves by 1. If the creature is incorporeal, its deflection bonus to AC improves by 1.

Special Attacks: An evolved undead retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains one spell-like ability from the following list. You can choose this ability from the list below, or roll randomly. The spell-like ability gained herein can be used once per day. If the undead already has the indicated ability, it gains another use; if it already has the ability as an at-will ability, choose another ability. The spell-like ability has a caster level equal to the evolved undead's HD (if the caster level is too low to cast the spell in question, choose another). The save DCs are Charisma-based:

d12	Spell-like Ability
1	circle of death
2	cloudkill
3	cone of cold
4	confusion
5	contagion
6	creeping doom
7	greater dispel magic
8	greater invisibility
9	haste
10	hold monster
11	see invisibility
12	unholy blight

Special Qualities: An evolved undead retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the one described below.

Fast Healing (Ex): An evolved undead heals 3 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Abilities: An evolved corporeal undead gains +2 Strength and +2 Charisma. An evolved incorporeal creature gains only +2 Charisma.

Organization: An evolved undead usually becomes a leader among those of its base kind.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +1.

IRONMAW (*Fiend Folia*)

Huge Plant (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 12d8+72 (126 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 10 ft.

AC: 25 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +18 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 25

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+27

Attack: Tendril +17 melee

Full Attack: 4 tendrils +17 melee and bite +12 melee

Damage: Tendril 2d6+10/19-20, bite 1d8+5

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft. (60 ft. with tendril)

Special Attacks: Attach, engulf, illness, tendrils, wounding

Special Qualities: Acid resistance 10, cold immunity, DR 15/magic and slashing electricity immunity, plant traits, sonic resistance 10, SR 30

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +3, Will +5

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 9, Con 23, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 14

Skills: Hide +6*, Listen +14, Spot +13

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (tendril), Power Attack

Environment: Temperate and warm forest, hill, and marsh (Abyss)

Organization: Solitary, pair, or stand (3-6)

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: 1/10 coins, 50% goods, 50% items

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 13-16 HD (Huge); 17-36 HD (Gargantuan)

An ironmaw's territory is easily spotted by a trained observer. No other wildlife goes near its "home," and the ground is often littered with the remains of the creature's past victims. But most creatures never know they're near an ironmaw until it strikes.

An ironmaw stands 20 to 30 feet high. It closely resembles an oak tree, although its green leaves are covered with tiny splatches the color of fresh blood. Its

tendrils are kept wrapped around its upper trunks when not in use, and its mouth remains closed until it attacks. An ironmaw tends to stay in one place for an extended period of time. It attacks anything that comes within range of its tendrils, even if it has recently fed. Ironmaws usually relocate only when a stand grows large enough that there isn't enough food to support them all, at which point one or more of the creatures will move to greener pastures.

Ironmaws speak Abyssal.



COMBAT

An ironmaw attacks with its tendrils as soon as prey comes within reach (60 feet). An ironmaw, too slow to flee in almost any circumstance, always fights until it is slain.

Attach (Ex): If an ironmaw hits with a tendril attack, the tendril, in addition to dealing normal damage, attaches to the opponent's body. A tendril draws a stuck opponent 10 feet closer in each subsequent round (no attack of opportunity) unless the opponent breaks free, which requires an Escape Artist check (DC 25) or a Strength check (DC 26). An ironmaw can draw in a creature within 15 feet of itself and bite with a +4 attack bonus in that round. An ironmaw can draw a creature into its space and attempt to engulf it as well.

A tendril can be severed by a single attack with a slashing weapon (made as an attempt to sunder a weapon) dealing at least 13 points of damage.

Engulf (Ex): As a standard action, an ironmaw can attempt to engulf a Large or smaller creature that enters its space. The victim of the attack can make an attack of opportunity, but if it does, it is not entitled to a saving throw. A victim that does not attempt an attack of opportunity must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or be engulfed; on a success, the victim is pushed back or aside (but not freed from attached tendrils). An engulfed creature takes 2d6+10 points of bludgeoning damage within an ironmaw's trunk each round and must hold its breath or begin to suffocate.

Illness (Ex): An ironmaw's tendrils can sap an opponent's health. Anyone caught by a tendril must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 22) or take 1d6 points of Constitution damage.

Tendrils (Ex): An ironmaw can attack with its four tendrils from up to 60 feet away. Anyone struck by a tendril takes damage, loses blood, may suffer illness, and risks being drawn toward the ironmaw's trunk.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from an ironmaw's tendril attack bleeds for an additional 3 points of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wounds for 6 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can be stopped only by a Heal check (DC 10) or the application of any cure spell or other healing spell (heal, healing circle, or the like).

Plant Traits (Ex): An ironmaw is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects. An ironmaw also has low-light vision.

Skills: Ironmaws receive skills as though they were fey. An ironmaw has a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. *In wooded areas, an ironmaw has a +15 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Cinder Swarm (Fiend Folio)

Fine Elemental (Fire, Swarm)

Hit Dice: 16d8 (72 hp)

Initiative: +10

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 40 ft. (good)

Armor Class: 25 (+6 Dex, +8 size, +1 natural), touch 24, flat-footed 19

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/-

Attack: Swarm (4d6 plus 3d6 fire)

Full Attack: Swarm (4d6 plus 3d6 fire)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Burn, distraction

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immunity to fire, swarm traits, vulnerability to cold

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +18, Will +7

Abilities: Str 1, Dex 22, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +16, Spot +9

Feats: Ability Focus (burn), Ability Focus (distraction), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes

Environment: Elemental Plane of Fire

Organization: Solitary, flame (2-4 swarms), or blaze (5-8 swarms)

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: None

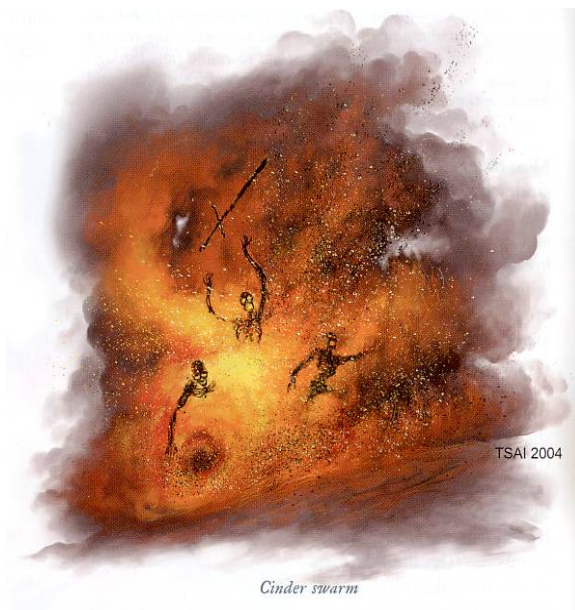
Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: -

Level Adjustment: -

Flickering flames move along the ground and through the air as one unified mass. It sparks and crackles, setting fire to all it touches.

While most elementals tend toward neutrality, cinders are most definitely evil. They glory in inflicting pain and causing destruction. Individually, they are no more significant than a fleck of hot ash that snaps out of a campfire. Collectively, they possess great destructive power.



Each elemental composing a cinder swarm speaks Ignan, but communicating with a single Fine elemental in the swarm is virtually impossible. The crackle and roar of the mass of cinders overwhelms individual voices.

COMBAT

A cinder swarm begins by attacking the nearest creature. However, in subsequent rounds, it will attack creatures that demonstrate the ability to harm it, especially those that have cold-based attacks. Unlike many fire-based elementals, cinders have a fly speed and frequently go after aerial opponents.

Burn (Ex): A cinder swarm's attack deals damage as a swarm plus fire damage from the Fine elementals' flaming bodies. Those swarmed by cinders also must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save or catch on fire. The flame burns for 1d4 rounds. A burning creature can take a move action to put out the flame. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Creatures hitting a cinder swarm with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by the swarm, and also catch on fire unless they succeed on a Reflex save.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature vulnerable to a cinder swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a DC 20 Fortitude save negates the effect. Even after a successful save, spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills requiring patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check. The save DC is Constitution-based.

ELEMENTAL MONOLITH (*Complete Arcane*)

Like their lesser kin, elemental monoliths are living incarnations of the elemental forces that compose the multiverse. They are so powerful that only the mightiest of summoning spells can draw them to the Material Plane and compel their service, and even then the caster dare not take his attention from the monolith's control for even a moment.

Monoliths are great rulers and princes among their kind, obeyed by even the elder elementals. Only the primal elementals are more powerful.

FIRE MONOLITH

Gargantuan Elemental (Extraplanar, Fire)

Hit Dice: 36d8+216 (378 hp)

Initiative: +13

Speed: 60 ft. (12 squares)

Armor Class: 29 (-4 size, +9 Dex, +14 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +27/+50

Attack: Slam +35 melee (6d6+11/19-20 plus 4d6 fire)

Full Attack: 2 slams +35 melee (6d6+11/19-20 plus 4d6 fire)

Space/Reach: 20 ft./20 ft.

Special Attacks: Burn

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/-, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immunity to fire, vulnerability to cold

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +29, Will +16

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 29, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17

Skills: Balance +13, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +16, Jump +25, Listen +43, Sense Motive +15, Spot +43, Tumble +24

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Environment: Elemental Plane of Fire

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 17

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: 37-54 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: -

A tremendous inferno approaches, slithering and bounding like a splashing stream of molten metal. From moment to moment, eyelike openings in the blazing flames seem to form and disappear, and its brilliant tendrils resemble long, slender limbs.

Leaders of the fire elementals, fire monoliths are normally encountered away from the Elemental Plane of Fire only when summoned by powerful spellcasters. They are creatures of living flame, hostile to most other forms of life. Fire monoliths speak Ignan, and their voices sound like the roaring of an inferno, but even though they are stronger-willed and more intelligent than most of their kin, they rarely have much to say to residents of the Material Plane.

COMBAT

Fire monoliths combine great physical power with incredible quickness and the ability to set their foes ablaze. Like other fire elementals, fire monoliths cannot enter water or any other nonflammable liquid, and so cannot cross water unless they can step or jump over it.

Burn (Ex): A fire monolith's slam attack deals bludgeoning damage plus fire damage because of the creature's flaming body. Anyone hit by a fire

monolith's slam attack must succeed on a DC 34 Reflex save or catch on fire. The flame burns for 1d4 rounds. Unless it is still in contact with the fire monolith, a burning creature can take a move action to put out the flames. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Creatures that hit a fire monolith with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by the monolith's attack, and also catch on fire unless they succeed on a DC 34 Reflex save.

NEW FEATS

DEFT OPPORTUNIST

(Compete Adventurer)

You are prepared for the unexpected.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Combat Reflexes

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on attack rolls when making attacks of opportunity.

HOLD THE LINE [GENERAL]

Compete Warrior

You are trained in the defensive arts against charging.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, base attack bonus +2

Benefit: You may make an attack of opportunity against a charging opponent who enters an area you threaten. Your attack of opportunity happens immediately before the charge attack is resolved.

Normal: You only get an attack of opportunity against a character that exits a square you threaten.

IMPROVED COMBAT EXPERTISE [GENERAL]

You have mastered the art of defense in combat.

Prerequisites: Int 13, Combat Expertise, base attack bonus +6

Benefit: When you use the Combat Expertise feat to improve your Armor Class, the number you subtract from your attack roll and add to your AC can be any number that does not exceed your base attack bonus.

Normal: With Combat Expertise, the number can be no greater than +5.

Special: A fighter may select Improved Combat Expertise as one of his fighter bonus feats.

IMPROVED TOUGHNESS [GENERAL]

You are significantly tougher than normal.

Prerequisites: Base Fortitude save bonus +2

Benefit: You gain a number of hit points equal to your current Hit Dice. Each time you gain a HD (such as by gaining a level), you gain 1 additional hit point. If

you lose a HD (such as by losing a level), you lose 1 hit point permanently.

Special: A fighter may select Improved Toughness as one of his fighter bonus feats.

NEW SPELLS

From Book of Vile Darkness (originally) and then Lords of Madness:

Damning Darkness

Evocation [Darkness, Evil]

Level: Cleric 4, Darkness 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Object touched

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: See below

This spell is similar to *darkness*, except that those within the area of darkness also take unholy damage. Creatures of good alignment take 2d6 points of damage per round in the darkness, and creatures that are neither good nor evil take 1d6 points of damage. As with the *darkness* spell, the area of shadowy illumination is a 20-foot radius, and the object that serves as the spell's target can be shrouded to block the darkness (and thus the damaging effect).

Damning darkness counters or dispels any light spell of equal or lower level.

Spell resistance applies to the damage dealt by this spell but not to the darkness area.

Arcane material component: A dollop of pitch with a tiny needle hidden inside it.

From Complete Divine:

Stalwart Pact

Evocation

Level: Cleric 5, Pact 5

Components: V,S, DF, XP

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Willing living creature touched

Duration: Permanent until triggered, then 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This spell allows the target to enter a binding agreement with a deity that provides a measure of protection when the need is dire.

Once the spell is cast, the pact remains dormant until the target is reduced to half or less of her full normal hit points. The target immediately gains 5 temporary hit points per caster level, damage reduction of 5/magic, and a +4 luck bonus on saving throws. The hit points, damage reduction, and saving throw bonuses evaporate when the spell ends.

XP Cost: 250 XP.

NEW DOMAINS

From Complete Divine:

PACT DOMAIN

Core Deities: none

Other Deities: Bralm, Mouqol

Granted Power: Add Appraise, Intimidate, and Sense Motive to your list of cleric class skills.

Pact Domain Spells

- 1 Command
- 2 Shield Other
- 3 Speak With Dead
- 4 Divination
- 5 Stalwart Pact
- 6 Zealot Pact (not used)
- 7 Renewal Pact (not used)
- 8 Death Pact (not used)
- 9 Gate

NEW PRESTIGE CLASSES

From Fiend Folio

FIEND OF BLASPHEMY

Mortal creatures seem to have an innate drive to offer worship to deities and form associations of a religious nature. The fiend of blasphemy is a master of the infernal art of perverting this natural desire and turning it toward the corrupt veneration of fiendish masters. Adept at exploiting mortal weaknesses, a fiend of blasphemy forms a diabolical cult whose members are hopelessly bound to the fiend, to the eventual damnation of their souls.

As the name suggests, only fiends can acquire and advance in the fiend of blasphemy prestige class. Some can qualify without any levels in other classes at all,

while others gain levels, usually as clerics, before joining the prestige class. Some fiendish sorcerers and bards, and occasionally wizards as well, use powers of illusion and enchantment to help them deceive mortals and lure them into blasphemous cults. Martial-minded fiends, with levels as fighters, rangers, or barbarians, occasionally form cults made up of brigands, pirates, or mercenaries.

Fiends of blasphemy almost always work alone. Their ultimate purpose is to drive mortals away from the worship of true deities, especially good deities, and win their souls to the Lower Planes.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a fiend of blasphemy, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Race: Outsider with the evil subtype.

Base Save Bonus: Will +7.

Skills: Bluff 10 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 10 ranks.

Feats: Leadership.

Special: Must have at least one spell-like ability that duplicates a spell effect of 4th level or higher.

CLASS SKILLS

The fiend of blasphemy's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the fiend of blasphemy prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Fiends of blasphemy gain no proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Spells: Beginning at 1st level, a fiend of blasphemy gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the fiend of blasphemy must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a fiend of blasphemy with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Fiend of blasphemy bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the fiend's Wisdom modifier (if any). When the fiend gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 1st level, the fiend of blasphemy gets only bonus spells (in addition to a domain spell slot, which it receives at every spell level). A fiend of blasphemy without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level except for its domain spell. The fiend of

blasphemy's spell list appears below. A fiend of blasphemy prepares and casts spells just as a cleric does.

A fiend of blasphemy gains access to two of its patron deity's domains. A fiend of blasphemy can choose prestige domains (described in *Defenders of the Faith*) offered by its deity. As with a cleric, each domain gives the fiend access to a domain spell at each spell level as well as a granted power. The fiend prepares one or the other of the available domain spells at each spell level each day.

Blood Oath (Su): A fiend of blasphemy has the ability to perform a ritual of initiation that binds cult members to the fiend's service. The ritual forges a magical, mental bond between the fiend and those mortals who participate. It requires one day of preparation, during which time the fiend must meditate and ready a room in which the ritual will take place. The ritual itself lasts for 2 hours, plus an additional 10 minutes per mortal initiate. If either the preparation or the ritual is interrupted, the process is ruined and the fiend must start again.

All creatures in the room (and no more than 60 feet away from the fiend of blasphemy) when the ritual begins or that enter that area during the ritual must make a Will save (DC 10 + fiend's class level + fiend's Cha modifier) or be affected as if by an *enthrall* spell. Willing participants in the ritual receive a -4 penalty on this saving throw, while hostile onlookers receive a +4 bonus.

After the first 2 hours of the ritual, each initiate is subjected to the fiend's individual attention for 10 minutes, during which time the bond between the two is formed. If an initiate wishes to resist the bond, she can attempt a Will saving throw (DC 15 + fiend's class level + fiend's Cha modifier). Willing participants may voluntarily fail their saving throws. If an initiate makes a successful saving throw, the fiend of blasphemy is aware that the bond was not properly formed, but this does not interrupt the ritual. Fiends often allow mortals to believe their resistance went undetected until after the ritual is complete.

Locate Cultist (Su): One effect of the blood oath is a sort of telepathic bond between the fiend of blasphemy and its cultists. At will, a fiend of blasphemy can use a supernatural power identical to *locate creature* to sense the location of any creature that has sworn a blood oath with the fiend.

Undetectable Alignment (Su): A fiend of blasphemy's alignment is constantly concealed from all forms of divination, as the *undetectable alignment* spell.

Transfer Spell-Like Ability (Sp): At 2nd level, a fiend of blasphemy can use a power similar to the cleric spell *imbue with spell ability* to grant its cult members access to its spell-like abilities. A fiend can give one creature that has sworn it a blood oath access

to as many of its own spell-like abilities as it desires. The cultist can use the ability once per day, with all variable characteristics (including caster level and save DC) determined as if the fiend were using the ability.

When it transfers a spell-like ability, the fiend cannot use the ability as often as usual: It can use abilities normally available at will only 4 times per day, and loses one use per day from other abilities. A fiend can bestow the same ability on multiple worshipers, or allow worshipers to use the ability more than once per day, but in doing so loses more of its own daily uses of the ability.

For example, a glabrezu fiend of blasphemy can grant two of its cultists the ability to use dispel magic once per day, or grant a single cultist the ability to dispel magic twice per day, but the glabrezu itself can only dispel magic three times per day as long as the cultists retain their ability.

The fiend of blasphemy can revoke the transfer at any time as a free action. If the cultist had already used the ability during the current day, it counts as if the fiend had used it that day as well.

Sponsor Worshiper (Su): A fiend of blasphemy that has reached at least 3rd level can channel spellcasting ability from its own fiendish master to mortals with levels in the cleric class. A fiend can sponsor a cleric whose level is no higher than twice the fiend's class level. Thus, a 3rd-level fiend of blasphemy can sponsor a cleric of up to 6th level, who receives access to the full complement of cleric spells as well as any two domains selected from those offered by the fiend's master.

Scry on Cultist (Sp): At 4th level, a fiend of blasphemy can scry on any creature that has sworn it a blood oath, as if using the *scrying* spell. The fiend cannot scry on cultists on other planes. The fiend can use this ability on any given cultist once per day, but there is no limit to how many cultists it can scry on in a day.

Torture Cultist (Su): At 4th level, a fiend of blasphemy gains the ability to inflict pain on those who have sworn it a blood oath. Distance is not a factor, but the fiend cannot torture a cultist who is on a different plane. When the fiend uses this power, the target cultist suffers excruciating pain. The affected creature takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks for 1 round per class level of the fiend. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + fiend's class level + fiend's Cha modifier) lessens the penalty to -2.

Mind Shielding (Su): At 5th level, a fiend of blasphemy gains immunity to *detect thoughts* and *discern lies* spells.

Kill Cultist (Su): At 6th level, a fiend of blasphemy gains the ability to kill those who have sworn it a blood oath if they displease it. Distance is

not a factor, but the fiend cannot kill a cultist who is on a different plane. The affected creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + fiend's class level + fiend's Cha modifier) or die. If the save is successful, the creature takes 3d6+6 points of damage. This is a death effect.

FIEND OF BLASPHEMY SPELL LIST

Fiends of blasphemy choose their spells from the following list:

1st – *bane, bless, cause fear, command, detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law, doom, protection from chaos/evil/good/law, sanctuary, shield of faith.*

2nd – *aid, bull's strength, darkness, desecrate, endurance, enthrall, hold person, silence, undetectable alignment.*

3rd – *bestow curse, contagion, create food and water, deeper darkness, dispel magic, invisibility purge, magic circle against chaos, magic circle against evil, magic circle against good, magic circle against law, prayer.*

4th – *death ward, discern lies, imbue with spell ability, lesser planar ally, poison, sending, spell immunity, status, tongues.*

5th – *atonement, commune, dispel chaos, dispel evil, dispel good, dispel law, greater command, mark of justice, plane shift, scrying, slay living, spell resistance, true seeing.*

THE FIEND OF BLASPHEMY						Spells per Day				
Class	Base	Fort	Ref	Will		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Level	Attack	Save	Save	Save	Special					
1st	+0	+2	+2	+2	Blood oath, locate cultist, undetectable alignment	0+1	-	-	-	-
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+3	Transfer spell-like ability	1+1	0+1	-	-	-
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Sponsor worshiper	1+1	1+1	0+1	-	-
4th	+3	+4	+4	+4	Scry on cultist, torture cultist	1+1	1+1	1+1	0+1	-
5th	+3	+4	+4	+4	Mind shielding	2+1	1+1	1+1	1+1	0+1
6th	+4	+5	+5	+5	Kill cultist	2+1	2+1	1+1	1+1	1+1

DM's Aid One: Lupercio

Lupercio

Baron of Sloth, Ruler of Slugbed (128th layer of the Abyss), Abyssal Lord

Symbol: Smile of razor sharp teeth on shadowy background

Home Plane: Abyss/128th/Slugbed (wanders)

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

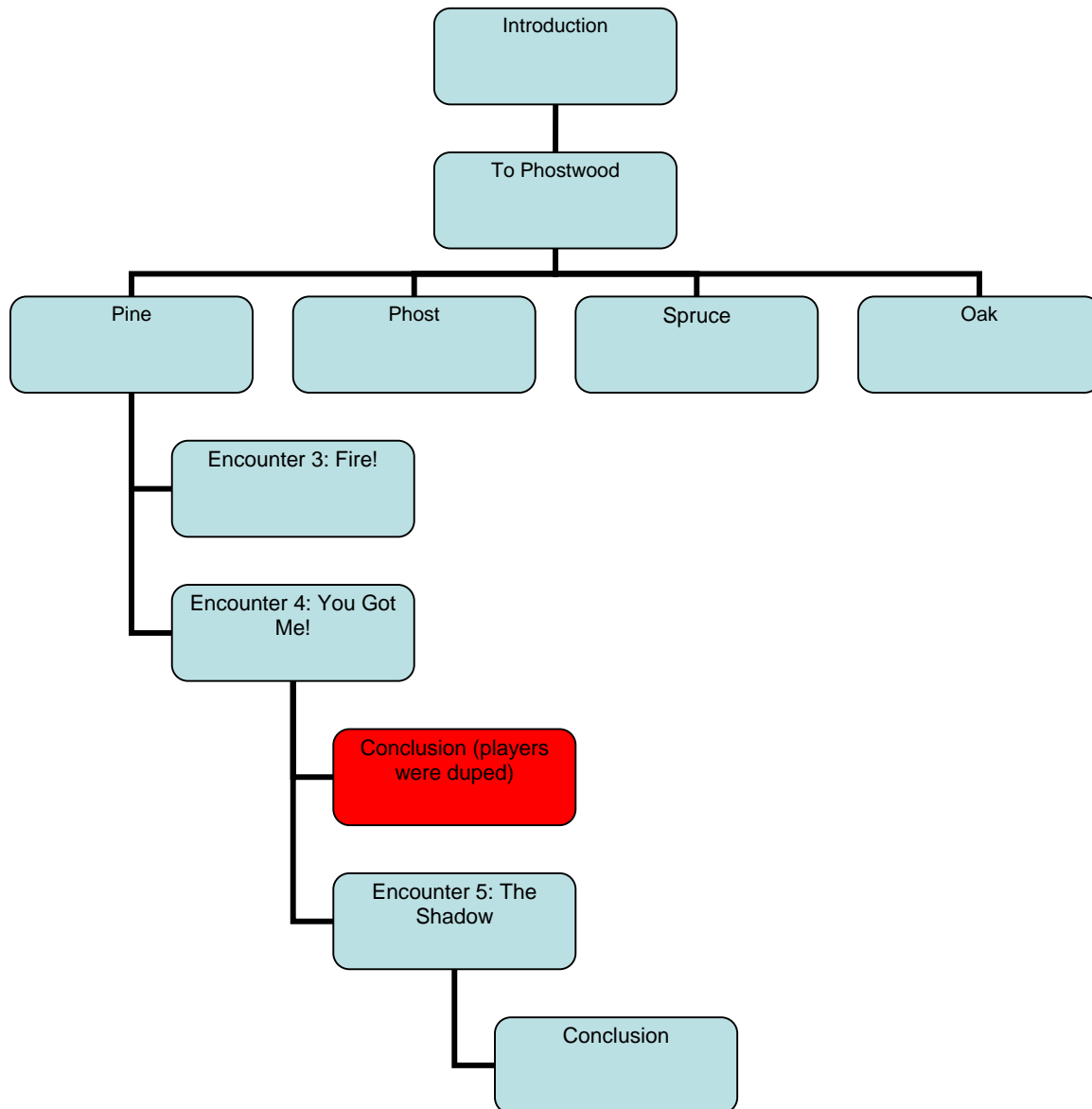
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Worshippers: Cultists, Shadow Demons, Shadows.

A prince, Baron of Sloth. Lupercio, a son of Pale Night and an unknown father, is the embodiment of the strength of darkness. He is the mother of neglect, the father of inaction, and the brother of uncaring. The darkness of his body spills for miles, with only his smiling maw visible to his victims. Shadow fiends cluster around him, eagerly feeding on his limitless shadows. When properly moved, he can strike with his mighty fists, and cause earthquakes by stomping the ground. He can utter curses so foul that they sear the air and boil flesh. His home layer, the Slugbed, is covered with his filth and dung, but also contains clouds of radiance, beautiful forests and graceful castles - there is no overriding theme. Sometimes his presence oozes onto other layers of the Abyss; Lupercio seems to hardly know the difference.

Lupercio is the embodiment of the strength of darkness. He is one of the strongest beings to walk the Abyss. Tales say he is the child of Pale Night, the ancient Abyssal Lady whose castle can be found within Baphomet's Endless Maze. If this is true, then he would also be the brother of Graz'zt, though they certainly share no outward bond. His true form is unknown, because the light around him bends, cloaking him in shadow. He switched back and forth between periods of sloth-like inactivity, and bouts of quickness and haste.

DM's Aid Two: Flow Chart



Player Handout #1

This note is provided by the treant Filidor. He acquired it from several intelligent trees that dropped it while chasing him. The note was found inside an iron scroll tube. It is written on an ancient piece of parchment stained with tree sap. It is written in a language that is some form of Abyssal. An excerpt follows:

The black slugs crawl upon the silent birds of sin. The howling winds blow through the weak trees and tear the branches. The wood has vile sap that must be consumed by the pale night.

“Oh most foul and vile darkness! Take this soul to feed your sloth!”

Player Handout #2

The note provided by the treant Filidor has some hidden meaning. Upon a successful Decipher Script check (DC 25), additional clarity becomes apparent. This triggers a partial understanding of Dark Speech, which deals 1d6 Charisma damage to the reader (Will save, DC 25 half). An excerpt follows that generally replaces the original text translation:

The blackness of slugs swim towards the essence of evil. In the pools of rot are the roots and branches of the weak who once were mighty. The rot makes the evil strong. There is radiance and strength in the land of slugs.

Limbs and bark are burned in green harvest. Graz'zt and Pale Night shall cower in fear of the true Prince of Evil. There must be sap to drip upon the floor. Great suffering is required.

“The master Lupercio consumes the light! I pray with humble faith to the dark power of Sloth! This plant shall rot for eternity! There is hunger that cannot be quenched!”

Player Handout #3

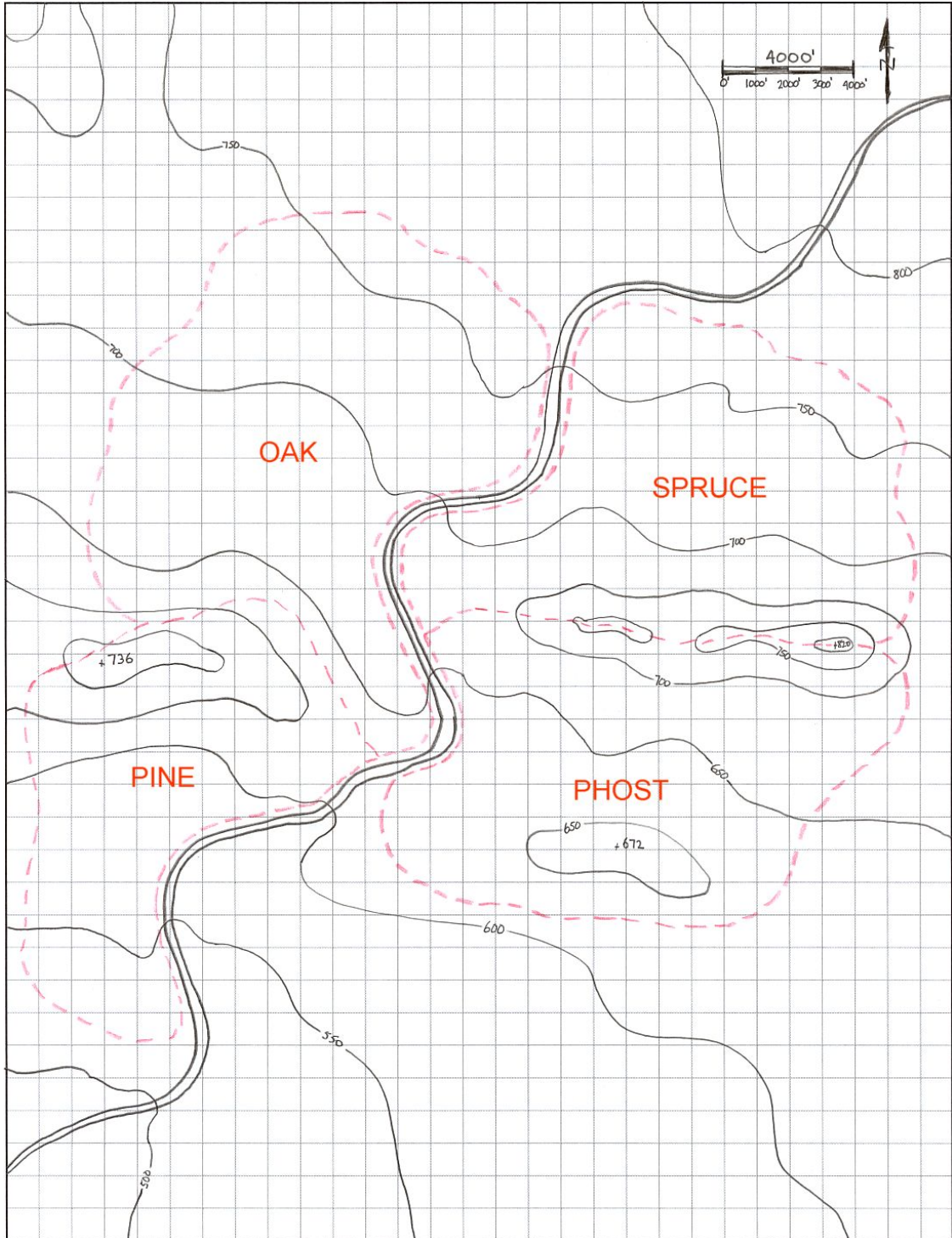
The note provided by the treant Filidor has some additional hidden meaning. Upon a successful Decipher Script check (DC 30), more evil clarity becomes apparent. This triggers a partial understanding of Dark Speech, which deals 2d6 Charisma damage to the reader (Will save, DC 30 half). An excerpt follows that supersedes the previous information:

In the eternally bleak realm of Slugbed, the pools of rot and decay bubble with the essence of pure evil. And from this vile putrefaction springs forth the mightiest trees that feed on the evil below and the radiance above. Only the strong may survive. The weak wither and die, adding to the fetid stench and decay that feeds the survivors.

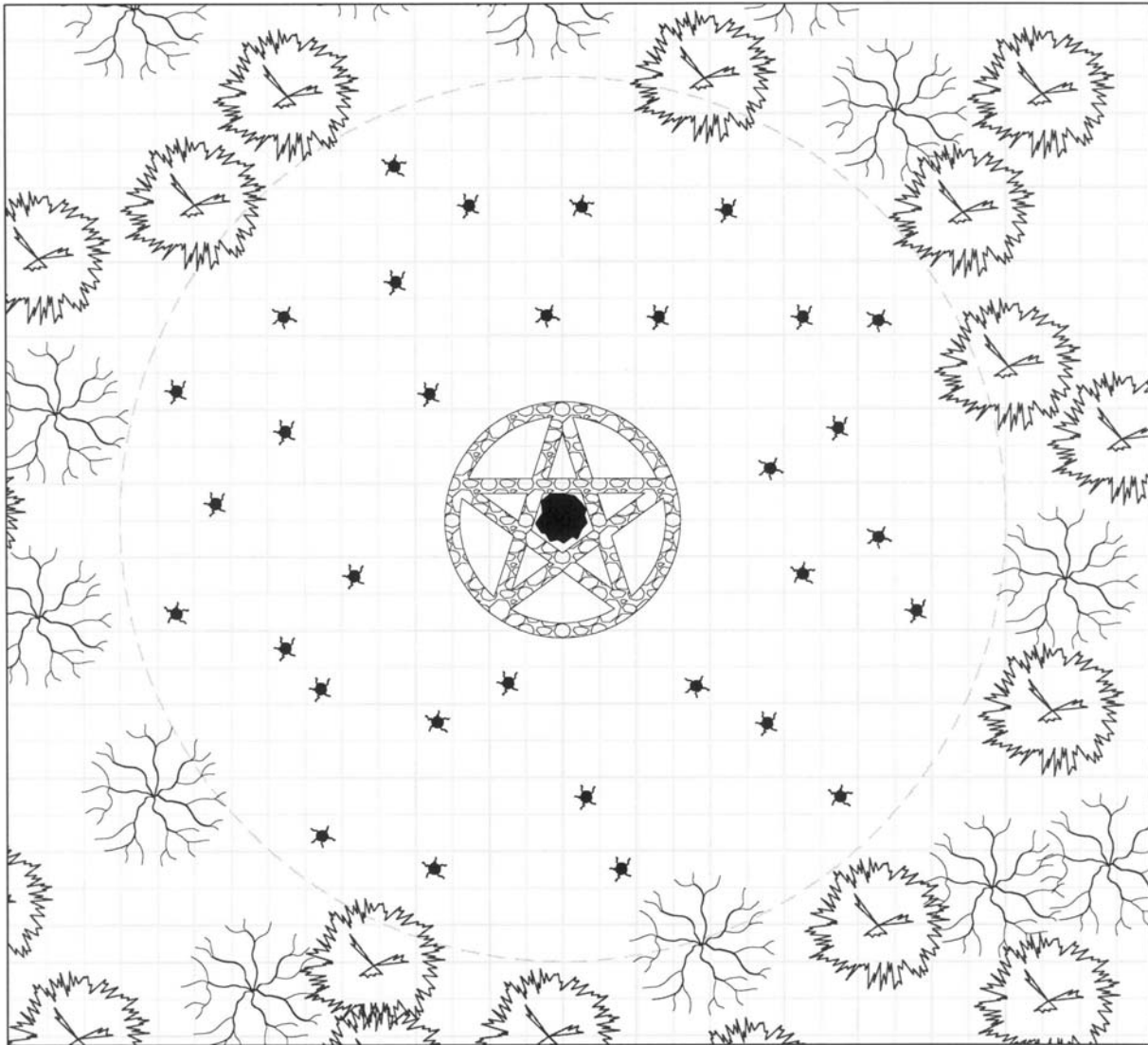
The limbs must be slowly ripped from the living. The bark is peeled, the leaves are burned, and the branches broken one by one. Sap is rended from the living and strewn across the ground. And when the suffering is the greatest, the following shall be read:

“Almighty Prince Lupercio, Master of the Abyss, Baron of Sloth, and Consumer of Light, hear my prayer! Take this plant to your realm and let it rot in eternal stench! Let the power of these branches and leaves feed your hunger! No more will there be light to feed upon, nor earth to nourish. In darkness is strength! May your merciless evil grant the most of vile of power!”

Player Handout #4: The Forsaken Valley

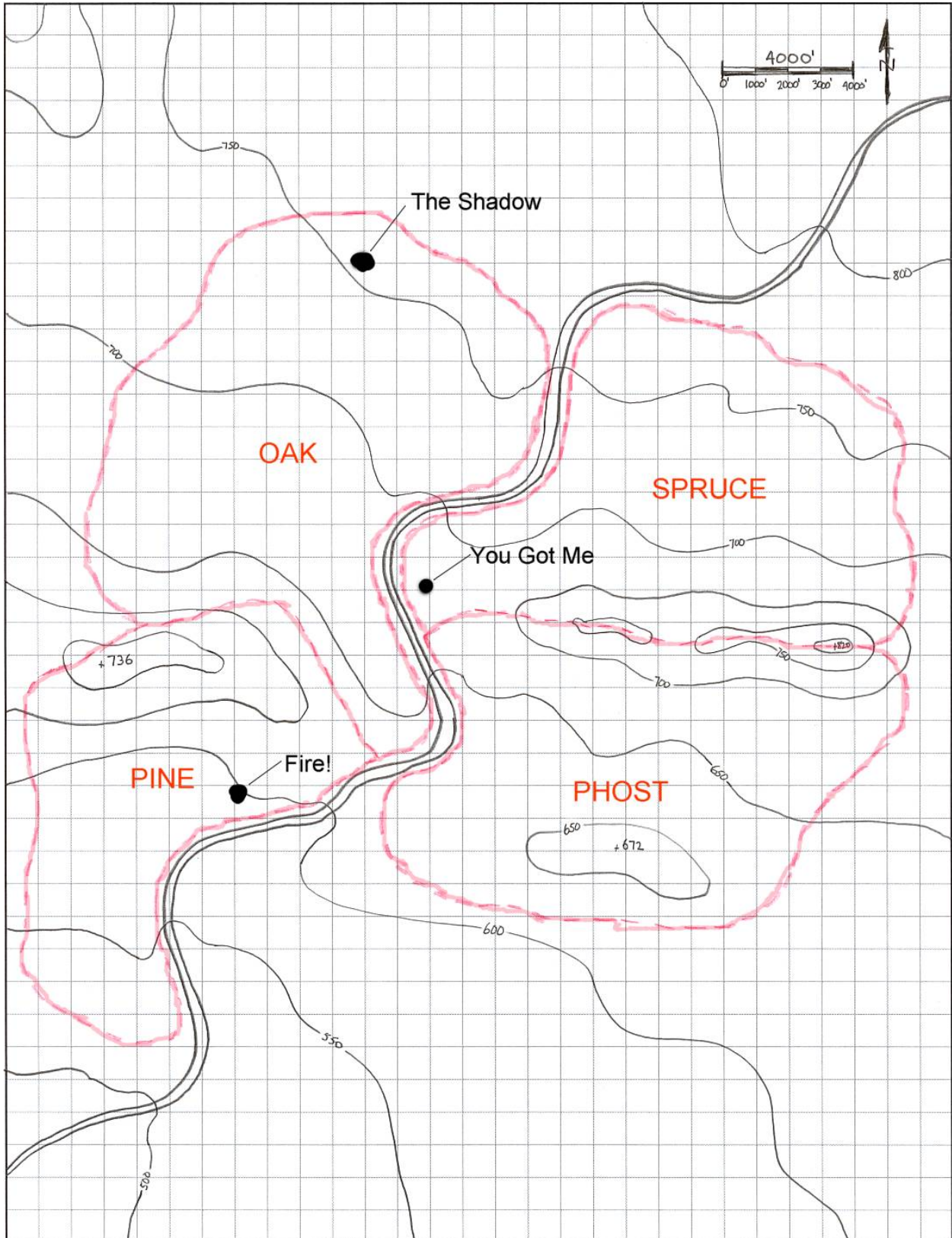


DM Map #1: Unholy Grove



SCALE: 1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

DM Map #2: The Forsaken Valley



DM Map #3: The Phostwood



Original map by Eric Anondson; edited by Joe Streeper