



# Hearts of Chaos



CHRIS T. DIAS • CONAN VEITCH



AN  
**AMETHYST**

FREE ADVENTURE

For use with the 4th Edition

**DUNGEONS  
& DRAGONS**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME

Requires the use of the D&D Player's Handbook, Monster Manual, and  
Dungeon Master's Guide core rulebooks, available from Wizards of the Coast, Inc.





# Hearts of Chaos

An Amethyst Free Adventure

Lead Writer: Chris T. Dias

Contributing Writer: Conan Veitch

Playtesters: Schuyler Den Dulk, Chris Dias, Cameron Lauder, Conan Veitch

Cover Art and Interior Art: Nick Greenwood

Cartography: Jeremy Simmons

Editing: Elizabeth Bauman



Visit us online at [www.goodman-games.com](http://www.goodman-games.com) and [www.diasexmachina.com](http://www.diasexmachina.com)

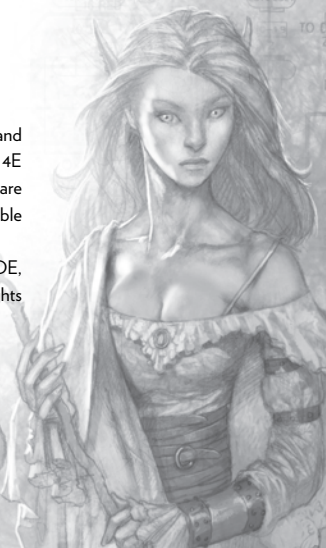
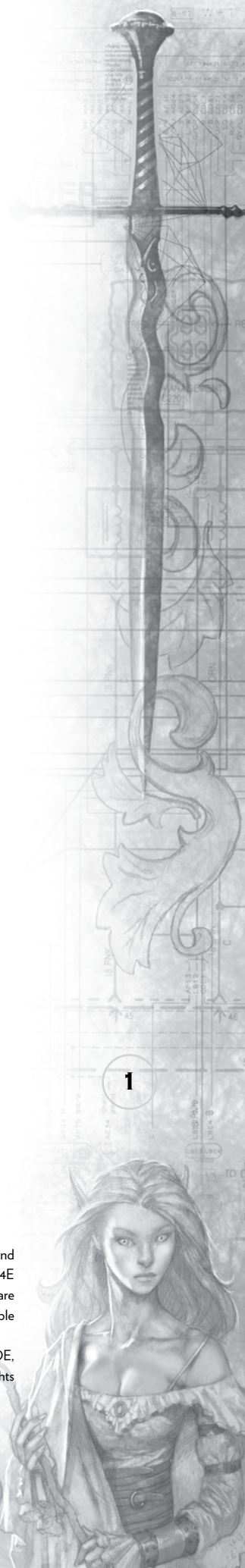
Originally released for Free RPG Day 2009. For more information on Free RPG Day, visit [www.freerpgday.com](http://www.freerpgday.com)



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Compatibility Logo, D&D, PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, and MONSTER MANUAL are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the USA and other countries and are used with permission. Certain materials, including 4E References in this publication, D&D core rules mechanics, and all D&D characters and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and are used with permission under the Dungeons & Dragons 4th Edition Game System License. All 4E References are listed in the 4E System Reference Document, available at [www.wizards.com/d20](http://www.wizards.com/d20).

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, written by Rob Heinsoo, Andy Collins, and James Wyatt; DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, written by James Wyatt; and MONSTER MANUAL, written by Mike Mearls, Stephen Schubert and James Wyatt © 2008 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved.

Hero's Handbook is a trademark of Goodman Games, Inc. Hero's Handbook: Immortals copyright 2009 Goodman Games, Inc.





## WHAT IS AMETHYST?

Coming to stores in September from Goodman Games, Amethyst is a Role Playing Game that postulates what would occur if a true-to-book fantasy setting was forced upon our real world. How would humanity truly respond? This is not some stylized, fanciful view of Earth seen in books and on TV. It is a world with all the problems, both social and political, intact. Would we welcome the world of fantasy into our lives or would we fear its very presence? This future spreads from the world we know—a world where books and movies written about fantasy existed. It forced many to question the familiarities of the world around with the fictional tomes of old including famous works from legendary authors. How would major religions respond given such massive doubts to their dogma?

On top of this dilemma, magic breaks down many of the normal rules of science that technology requires to operate. Chaos inspires creation and, although this influence won't destroy life, it does retard the progress of civilization, preventing technology from operating beyond simple mechanisms like windmills and bicycles. Where magic is prohibited, normality returns and evolution and technological advancement can continue.

The remains of old man live in cities, many like ones of present day, but walled in against the encroaching magic around it. Here, they have their cars, their central

heating, and their televisions. Outside, the fantasy world may be wondrous, but it is also real. People die from the simplest calamities. Despicable rodents with weapons and wicked brains prey on the innocent and unarmed.

Will mankind be able to retake the planet and push the fantasy back into the realms of our imagination, able to resume our blind passion for consumerism and industrialization? Is this world better than the one mankind squandered?

The fantasy carries its own mythology suggesting that there are two realms of magic: one dark, the other light. The source of this energy originates from two powerful gates, the white star of Attricana and black gate of Ixindar. The main axis between evil and good is not one where the law-abiding, civilized nations of good battle against the destructive force of chaos, but where the chaotic tendencies of life clash with the controlled and methodical might of syntropy. The conflict – at its root – sets anarchy against order, uniformity against unpredictability. Where life needs a level of uncertainty to blossom, homogeneity breeds only death. The fantasy world is not some singular entity, but a complicated multi-layered world of warring nations, political strife, and monsters smart and powerful, as well as dumb and many.

This module introduces players to several, but not all, of the concepts of Amethyst. There are five (5) pre-gen-





erated characters available online, each representing a specific build of a specific class. The full classes are available in the Amethyst: Foundation sourcebook. These are all techan classes—characters that represent the side of science. This is in contrast to the world of magic, of echa. This is only one path and the book contains several options for fantasy characters, as well. This module is designed for the classes included, but a DM may modify the setting and story to fit any group. Unlike most modules released for Amethyst, this adventure is skewed towards a techan party.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The characters are a small cell of a large international mercenary company, the Iron Sons. They have been handed a critical mission: A former Iron Sons colonel, Montgomery Cross, has gone rogue and vanished in the deep wilderness. He has information on cell locations and strengths, but—more importantly—the face of the Iron Sons highest ranking officer, General Chauk—a man with bounties for his arrest. Chauk believes this colonel to be a severe security risk, regardless of the state of his sanity. The characters are tasked with venturing into a no-man’s land where few humans have been, finding this colonel, and killing him.

This journey takes the group deep into fantasy, where they encounter various fae monsters, suffer a vehicle breakdown, and fall under a pagus attack (a corrupted race of fae and loyal soldiers of darkness). Eventually, they rescue some chaparrans from attacking pagus and the survivors reveal they are under protection by the Colonel.

Cross is not a danger to himself or others. He has turned over to the side of fantasy, given up his old life, and wishes to remain with the chaparrans. He has become their leader, taking control of the military operations against the pagus. The pagus, a rarity in Canam,

have braved a water crossing in primitive boats on the pressure from their god, the death dragon, Reaper. The dragon is closing in on the village and will surely kill anything it sees. The characters realize that, even though Cross has become a bit of an anarchist, he is not evil—nor is he a threat. They must choose to kill him, surely dooming the village to the hands of darkness, or leave him alive, and risk castigation from their own commander. Alas, by the end of the adventure, their vehicle will be permanently disabled, stranding the characters alone in the echan wilderness, regardless of their decision.

## EXPAND THIS MODULE

Want a greater challenge? Want to draw out the drama. Go to [www.diasexmachina.com](http://www.diasexmachina.com) or [www.goodmangames.com](http://www.goodmangames.com) and download the FreeRPG Supplement module for free. The supplement includes the five pre-generated characters, as well as an expanded Encounter table with more events to lengthen the characters’ stay in fantasy.

**Area 1:** The scrambler is moving through the forest path when a swarm of puggs and their skegg drivers attack. The characters must rely on their area effects and mobility to avoid being overrun.

**Area 2:** As the scrambler enters a dense forest, the vehicle disrupts. The characters must figure out what’s causing the malfunction as a very loud roar is heard, followed by heavy footfalls in the distance. That is a battle they must avoid as it is a chiggoth, a level 25 encounter!

**Area 3:** The group is still in the dense forest when they are attacked by raid of pagus. As the battle concludes, the chaparran kitarris (an elite order of elvish archers) arrive to lead the characters to Cross.

## ENCOUNTER TABLE

Location	Page	Type	Encounter	EL
Area 1 (Forest Map)	8	C	48 puggs 3 skegg drivers	6
Area 2 (No Map)	9	P	Vehicle Disruption	5
Area 3 (Forest Map)	11	C	4 pagus	6
Area Finale (optional) (Village Map)	12	C	Montgomery Cross 15 chaparran ktarris	6
Area Finale (Village Map)	15	C	Reaper the death dragon 8 risen pagus	8





**Area Finale:** Cross's Leviathan has been turned into a Keep. The map features a small house and the surrounding farmlands leading to the forest beyond. If the characters kill Cross, the kitarri will attack. If Cross convinces the characters to hold their orders, he and the chaparrans will help the characters fend off the death dragon Reaper in its assault. Reaper and his pagus have crossed the canal with a small army and are moving inland. This village has been the only defense against the rest of the land. If the characters follow orders, they will face Reaper alone. If the characters kill Cross after the dragon encounter, the kitarri will still attack.

### THE SET-UP

The player group is a five-man lance—the standard outfit—and have known each other for many months (and five levels), but have been operating the relatively safe zone outside the bastion of York. There have been no major attacks on the city in years and the group has not traveled out of view of the bastion their entire lives. When the adventure begins, the characters already have their mission and are several days away from any sign of technology. So far, there has been no incident.

If there are four players, it is recommended that Elias Hannover be an NPC and remain with the vehicle, avoiding actual combat and offering his mechanical

skills as necessary. The other option (which is preferred) is to have one player take on dual responsibility.

### THE VEHICLE

The scrambler is a standard echan terrain transport (ETV) characters around this level might be able to acquire. An ETV is a massive, durable all-terrain vehicle which is shielded from outside magical disruption. Unlike the ones in the rulebook, this one is strictly a plot point. It moves at the speed of the story, suffers from acts of god on cue, and is indestructible until you decide it is not.





This vehicle is a fragile and precious piece of technology and should avoid combat whenever possible. It should not be used as cover or as a weapon. It is their lifeline and if it is lost, they are stranded. This luxury should not be taken lightly. If the characters squander this resource, putting it in harm's way often, don't be afraid of destroying it completely, increasing the group's solitude. To do this, the vehicle shudders to a stop, as gears and pistons fuse together or break. Perhaps an axle breaks or the electrical system fries. Regardless of its path, it is destroyed by the end of the adventure.

The vehicle has side entry points and a rear loading ramp, but no top hatch. It has significant ground clearance and enough torque to drive up a 60 degree incline. If used during an encounter, it only has an acceleration of 2 square per round (increasing by 1 square every round thereafter). If the vehicle manages to build up enough speed, any creature caught in the path is attacked with a +10 vs. Reflex or suffer 1d6 damage per 2 squares of movement the vehicle had accrued (e.g.: The vehicle builds up acceleration for three rounds, that's speed 6, or 6d6). After ramming, the vehicle loses 2 squares of movement for every target it hit. It cannot build up a speed higher than 10.

## GM PREPARATION NEW RULES

Although Amethyst is a GSL compliant campaign, it does offer new rules players must be made aware of:

**Akimbo:** The akimbo feat is designed for those characters wielding two weapons simultaneously. If you use the same ammunition with your secondary weapon as your primary weapon, you add +1 damage.

**Automatic Weapons & Ammunition:** An attack power with the auto keyword requires the use of a weapon with the auto property. An auto weapon can still be used with other powers. When using an auto weapon, you may fire one shot with any ranged attack power that does not have the auto property. A weapon with an auto property utilizing a power with the auto keyword uses 10 rounds of ammunition. You also use additional ammunition through a sustain effect, but not with ongoing damage.

**Burst Fire Feat:** If you use this feat while wilding an auto weapon you use 3 more shots for every attack and add +1 damage per hit (three additional rounds of am-

munition are used every time you add this damage). It can be used with normal powers and auto powers.

**Reloading Weapons:** All weapons are manual or clip-loading. Though these clips may be energy cells, they necessitate the same time to reload. Reloading one techan weapon of any type requires a move action. Reloading does not provoke an opportunity attack.

**Small Arms, One Handed:** One-handed small arms (pistols) do not grant opportunity attacks if fired.

**Small Arms-Two Handed:** Two-handed small arms (rifles) grant opportunity attacks to adjacent squares if fired. If you do anything but shift on your move action, you suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls with two-handed small arms when fired on that same round.

**Switching Weapons:** Although drawing a weapon is a minor action, switching weapons without dropping one requires two minor actions (one to return—or sheath a weapon—the other to draw the second). Although this would never be an issue with fantasy characters, techan characters may often switch weapons several times through an encounter.

**Tech Level (TL):** The Tech Level is applied to damage rolls and attack rolls as an enhancement bonus. These bonuses have been added into the powers of the pre-generated techan characters

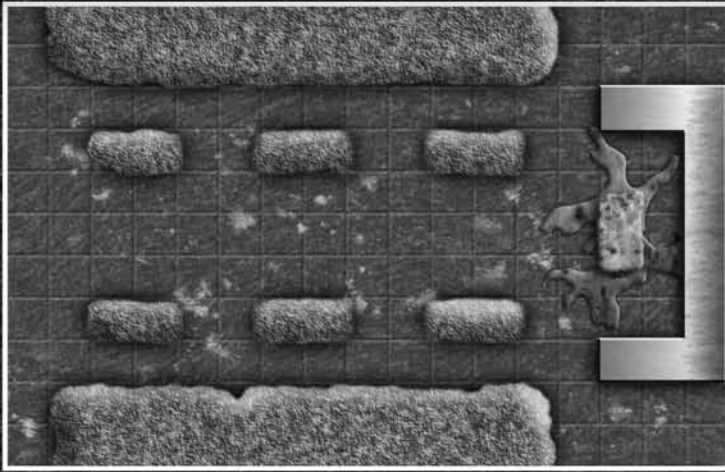
## ECHAN DISRUPTION FIELD (EDF)

Magic retards the progression of technology. It breaks down lubrications. It jams gears and shorts out electronics. It overloads batteries. Almost all of humanity's technology, postindustrial age, is vulnerable. The more advanced the technology, the more susceptible it is.

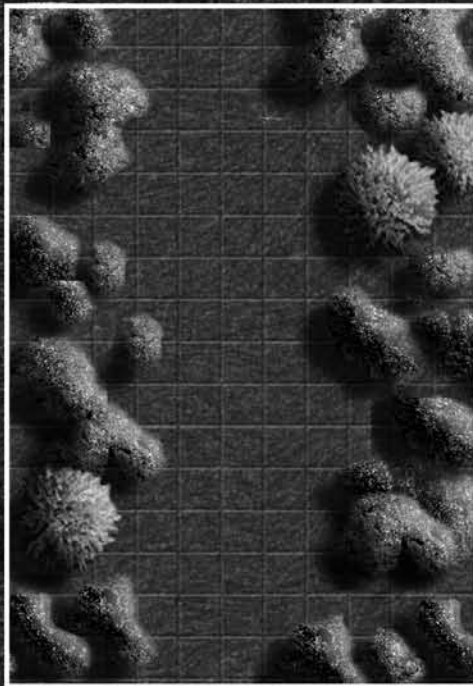
The effects of magic against technology became referred to as the EDF or Echan Disruption Field (although sometimes referred to as the Enchanted Disruption Field). The low level EDF saturating the entire world prevents communication between the bastions and limits the lifespan of batteries, preventing most travelers from even reaching any significant distance away from their home.

**How Does a Disruption Event Happen?** EDF rolls occur at the end of the initiative order. The DM makes a single D20 roll to check if an item is disrupted and which technology is affected.

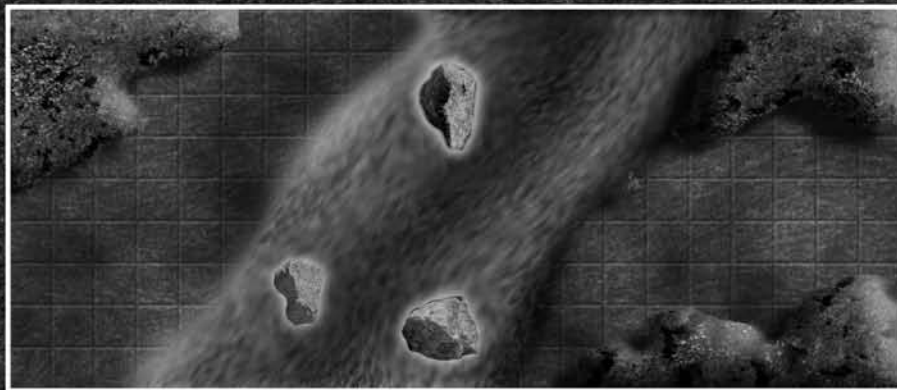





VILLAGE MAP



FOREST MAP



RIVER MAP (DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT)

 = 5 ft.





## Modified EDF

d20 Roll	Result
0 or lower*	Tech Levels 0 and up affected.
1	Tech Levels 1 and up affected.
2	Tech Levels 2 and up affected. There is no TL 3 and up gear in this module...
7-20	No disruption effects.
Natural 20	Critical Collapse.

\*Tech Level 0 items are only affected if the roll is modified.

The result indicates the highest tech level items which are affected that round, if at all.

**Increase Risk:** To escalate tension, the EDF roll suffers a -1 penalty from the beginning of the module, a -2 when they arrive at Cross's Fortress.

**Who is Affected?** If a disruption occurs, the last one to act is the first one affected. Each time a disruption roll is made, move up to the next player in the next initiative order. When all the players have been rolled for, return to the bottom of the initiative order.

**What is Affected?** The highest technology able to be affected by the disruption roll on the player in question is affected first. Because of the equipment of our Iron Sons lance, their weapons are affected first. A few have secondary equipment, like a medical kit.

**Natural 20, Critical Collapse:** If a natural 20 is rolled, every techan party member suffers a disruption event. The highest tech level item they have that is able

to be disrupted and is not currently suffering disruption is affected.

**How is an Item Affected by EDF?** Once a player and an appropriate item are selected, the item is disrupted. The item no longer offers its tech level as an enhancement and/or item bonus to relevant abilities or skills. Weapons jam and cannot fire. The disruption remains in effect until a successful saving throw is made (a disruption save).

**1<sup>st</sup> Saving Throw Failure:** If the first saving throw fails, the item remains disrupted.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saving Throw Failure:** If the second saving throw fails, the item remains disrupted.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Saving Throw Failure:** A third and final failed saving throw renders the item broken. It can no longer be used that encounter save for a miracle (which some class powers can accomplish. If a saving throw is made before the item breaks, it resumes functioning the round the save is made. If an encounter is resolved before the item breaks, but before a successful save is made, the item is assumed to have survived without breaking. For the purposes of the module, Elias Hannover repairs all broken technology between encounters.

**Aftereffects:** It is important to note that an item that is currently being disrupted cannot be disrupted again. Disrupting an item currently suffering the effects does not prolong the disruption nor change the results of saving throws.

**Offensive EDF:** Other than the end of the initiative order, there may be times where an EDF roll may be forced. This occurs under high saturation, usually coinciding with a monster's more powerful effects. An offensive EDF check occurs the moment the action does. Offensive EDF rolls also carry a -2 penalty to the EDF roll. Roll for an offensive EDF roll if a magical creature scores a critical hit.

## PLAYER BEGINNING

**Read or paraphrase the following:**

*As you count off the first week without incident, a sense of overconfidence begins to settle in. Your vehicle is old, worn, and reliable. Your weapons are clean and maintained. You had been trained for months, some years, to deal with whatever you may encounter. After seven days without even a thrown rock or sharpened stick as an opponent, you all began thinking this mission's threat level was greatly exaggerated. Despite this, the lingering dread of what you may face and the decision that awaits you*





at the end of the journey is always present at the back of your thoughts.

Every day that passed was another reminder of the wasteland you were entering. The towers of York vanished days ago. You were going beyond even the civility of primitive nations. The gravity of the crisis and repercussions for failure were made clear from the beginning...

The scrambler was a monstrosity half the size of a house. Twenty forward-mounted high intensity discharge lights breathed a swath of light across the clearing. It was a brute capable of uprooting small trees, ignoring pesky obstructions like animals, plants, or elves. It was too valuable to risk in combat as it was your only way home.

Your mission commander's instructions were to the point: Your target is Colonel Montgomery Cross. He was General Chauk's highest ranking division commander—authority over seven cells in the North, including yours. Six months ago, he fell off network. No warning, no other signs of distress from him or his men. Your Command believes his Leviathan is 550 kilometres northeast of York. It's a dense forest devoid of any technology. All evidence points that Cross has not been killed, but has in fact done rogue, turning to the side of enchantment.

Cross knows cell locations, unit strengths, weapon load outs, vital information regarding your company's financial status, technology development, most of all, he has seen the face of Chauk... and that makes him a liability and target for any number of opponents including rival mercenary companies, echan nations, and bastions that would like an image to accompany their bounties. That's the side effect of being successful in war.

Your mission will be to follow Cross's routine until you pick up his path, track him to this chaparran forest he's claimed and verify the status of his unit...and his health. If he's dead, get proof. If alive, regardless of his mental condition, he simply cannot be allowed to continue his... lifestyle. You are to arrest him and any survivors of his unit. If they refuse, they are to be eliminated. There is a 2,000 uc bonus for each team member upon your safe return.

## AREA 1 - INVASION

### Forest Map

Immediately after reading the introduction, read or paraphrase the following:

The path became dense and rocky, forcing the scrambler to muscle over bushes, pushing small trees and shrubberies out of the way. Finding your way back would be an easy journey. No matter your course, returning would take half the time

### Skegg Pugg-driver

Level 4 Brute (Leader)

Medium Fae Humanoid

XP 175

**Initiative** +3 **Senses** Perception +5; Low-light vision

**HP** 62; **Bloodied** 31

**AC** 15; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 13

**Speed** 6

⊕ **Pugg Prodder** (standard; at will) \* Weapon  
Reach 2; +6 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage; reach; the skegg inciter may attack through squares occupied by puggs.

**Nice Throw, Boss!** (minor; at will)

The skegg pugg-driver may shift an adjacent pugg four squares.

\* **Rabble Rouse** (minor; encounter)

Close burst 6; allies in the burst each count as two allies for the purposes of the puggs' Bloody Innumerable ability until the end of the skegg inciters next turn.

**Vicious Temperament** (immediate Reaction; when first damaged; encounter)

The skegg pugg-driver may immediately make a basic melee attack. This attack deals an additional 1d6 damage.

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil **Languages** Ferran

**Str** 15(+4) **Dex** 14(+4) **Wis** 8(+1)

**Con** 10(+2) **Int** 14(+4) **Cha** 8(+1)

**Equipment** Leather armor, pugg prodder

**Skills** Intimidate +6, Endurance +7

### Pugg

Level 1 Minion

Small Fae Humanoid

XP 15

**Initiative** +1 **Senses** Perception +0; Low-light vision

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

**AC** 12; **Fortitude** 11, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11

**Speed** 5

⊕ **Sticks and Stones** (standard; at will) \* Weapon  
+2 vs. AC; 2 damage

**Bloody Innumerable**

If the pugg and its allies outnumber their enemy by two to one in an encounter, it gains +2 to melee attack and damage rolls. If the pugg and its allies outnumber their enemy by three to one, this bonus increases to +3 to melee attack and damage rolls.

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil **Languages** Ferran

**Str** 6 (-2) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 8 (-1)

**Con** 9 (-1) **Int** 6 (-2) **Cha** 6 (-2)

**Equipment** Barely even clothed

**Skills** None unless domesticated

as long as you follow the scar your vehicle cuts through the wilderness.

The vehicle suddenly shudders and the axle seizes. The scrambler starts grinding gears. It slows to a stop. This has happened before on this journey. Magic breaks technology and the more advanced the technology, the greater the

chance of disruption. Your mechanic steps out to take a look.

It will take at least 5 minutes to clear the jam and get the machine working again. As the mechanic (NPC or PC) is working on the machine, read or paraphrase the following:

*Up ahead, you find a dumpy, hairless figure jabbing a dead jackrabbit repeatedly with a sharpened stick. Despite the state of the prey, the predator continues to perforate the body. As the glare of your vehicle looms over creature, it utters a scream that crosses the laugh of a monkey with the shriek of a bat. In response, a much larger figure walks onto the path. A man-sized fae wearing worn clothes lashes a whip in the air and dozens more vermin like the first swarm from the trees towards you.*



The scrambler has wandered into a skegg slaver band. Skeggs are a branch of fae known for their vicious temperaments and enslavement of the most primitive fae branch, the feral puggs. Puggs will quickly flood into the encounter and the terrain is far too hazardous for the vehicle to make a break for it.

### **Level 6 encounter (xp 1250)**

48 puggs (level 1 minion)

3 skegg pugg-drivers (level 4 brute)

Place the scrambler at one end of the map. Only 1 skegg-pugg driver appears initially with 12 puggs 4 squares from the other end of the map. Every round after, place another pugg-driver along the forest line with 12 more puggs, all crowding in every available square around the skegg. On the following round, the puggs that emerge that round will attack. On the fourth round, place the remaining puggs.

**Advice:** The characters with area effects should put them to use to prevent the puggs from outnumbering their opponents. Grenades are a great idea here to keep the pugg numbers down. If the characters hold out without delivering these large area attacks, they are as good as dead. Get those grenades out! Remember, techan classes are not mirrors of fantasy classes. They have few powers that mark and no characters that are

weak in AC or hit points. Since the vehicle will take 5 minutes to fix, the mechanic should not bother fixing it during combat.

### **AREA 2 - BAD TIMING**

Read or paraphrase the following:

*As you follow the path dictated to you from the mission briefing, one of you listens to Colonel Montgomery Cross's final report again--a garbled transmission relayed before he went dark...*

*"I tried to be perfect. They assumed I was. It was expected. Flawless authority without a flinch or a flutter. Commit yourself to the word of a superior, never questioning, never doubting. Can't see perfection anymore. I see the sacrifices we would have to make to be perfect. Perfection is without failing, no defects. Defects breed character.*

*"You seriously think the solution to life is control? The laws you enforce that make you feel safe never do. You wear shoes to protect your feet, but when you take them off and step on a rock, it hurts. The more sanitized, the easier you make life, the less of a life you lead. You only gain immunity to something you're exposed to.*

*"The more control you enforce, the less control you actually have. Out here, you can follow your own personal morality, where you can choose to be a noble man, and not be told to do so. You can live your dream and not grow up. If that means handing over your washing machine and toaster oven,*





so be it. When you strip away all rules, you truly find out who you are. When everything is controlled...there will be nothing left that distinguishes us..."

### **No map required.**

It is later on that same day when the following occurs.

#### **Read or paraphrase the following:**

*The scrambler wheezes and coughs. A bearing is heard burning itself out. The electric motor sputters and shuts down. The massive wheels slow to a stop. An exhale of steam vents from the cooling system. The forest opened somewhat into a field of yellow and blue flowers and you can barely make out the sound of distant rushing water. You were at a dip in the road and, with the weight of the ETV and no horses nearby, pushing is not a viable option.*

The scrambler has temporarily broken down from magical disruption. A quick DC roll 15 Engineer check will reveal the disruption, though the cause and limit of the disruption is still unknown by this point. This is a moment for the mechanic-build operator but if he is an NPC, then he will ask for help in ascertaining the problem. They are looking for anything nearby that may cause the EDF to be high in this area. Before they begin their search, read or paraphrase the following:

*A deep roar resonates from the thick of trees behind you. It's a strange rumble of heavy bass that shakes apart the soil and makes sourcing a direction difficult. This is followed by the felling of many trees, snapping like twigs but hitting the ground with heavy thuds. The roar grows louder.*

The monster is a chiggoth, a fabled beast with trees and rocks growing from its back. The characters should not (and will not) get a good look at this creature aside from the tall trees rising and falling in the distance.

#### **Disruption Location**

**Level:** 5 (800 xp)

**Complexity:** 3 (8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Engineer, Nature, Perception

**Note:** For the purposes of the check, deal with Perception and Nature before Engineer.

**Perception (DC17):** You notice a strange cocoon that was picked up by the upturned soil and wedged near the axle. It looks to be from a spawn creature — a creature or magic which is not fae. It's still intact. However, a DC20 Nature check reveals it is more likely a dawnling—an extremely rare fae and a distant descendant of

the chaparrans. When this one hatches, a minuscule creature will emerge melding elf and insect parts. They are docile, shy, and totally harmless. A DC20 Acrobatics would be needed to remove the cocoon safely without damaging it.

Otherwise, it can be torn off and thrown away. If removed, gain a +1 bonus to the Engineer roll to repair the scrambler (see later).

**Nature (DC17):** This field appears unnatural as the tallest trees border the edge of the clearing. Some natural magic has opened this region for a reason. With the numerous flowers flowing in the breeze, this is the work of sylphids, a rare breed of fae, related to the dawnlings.

They are elves crossed with flowers

and plants. While they have been known to appear as adults, this is only an illusion as they are actually extremely small. The sylphids likely use this clearing for breeding or just relaxation. You are unsure if they are in the area. Kerosene is available for lighting fires. Burning the flowers will offer a +1 bonus to the Engineering roll and is unlikely to spread to the trees if handled correctly.

**Engineer (DC23):** There was a power spike in the silicon nanowire battery that overloaded the capacitor and jammed the primary electric motor; the feedback was comparable to a mild EMP which shorted out the



## Pagus Outrunner

Level 8 Skirmisher

Medium Fae Humanoid (Ixindar)

XP 350

Initiative +6

Senses Perception +4; Darkvision

HP 75; Bloodied 37

AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 22, Will 20

Speed 6

① **Falchion** (standard; at will) \* **Weapon**  
+13 vs. AC; 2d4 + 3 damage

② **Crossbow** (standard; at will) \* **Weapon**  
Ranged 15/30, +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage

**Furious Anticipation** (immediate Reaction; when an enemy enters a square adjacent to the pagus outrunner; encounter)

The pagus outrunner may immediately drop its crossbow, draw its falchion, and make one basic melee attack against that enemy.

**Focused Aggression** (immediate reaction; when bloodied; encounter)

The pagus outrunner must immediately make a basic melee attack against the enemy that triggered Focused Aggression. This attack gains +1 to hit, and +2 to damage. In addition, the pagus may immediately make a saving throw to remove any harmful effects.

Alignment Evil

Languages Paggin

Str 16(+6)

Dex 18(+6)

Wis 8(0)

Con 11(+4)

Int 12(+4)

Cha 9(+3)

Equipment Leather Armor, Heavy Crossbow, Falchion

Skills Endurance +5, Intimidate +7

the vehicle to a halt. She's thin with dark skin, wearing loose layers of fur and leather with exposed arms and shoulders to show her tribal tattoos. She didn't land gracefully, contrary to cliché. She stumbles in front of the wheel, her longbow broken at a limb. From behind her, four massive, hairless humanoids stalk from the shadows. They are taller than any of you, with bruised skin and uncaring grimaces. Two have crossbows with black bolts while the other two wield massive hammers already blessed with blood. They ignore the techan vehicle and move to finish their prey.

The chaparran is an elite Bowman of the order of Kitarri, Espallomontha, or "Espa." She is a loyal ranger of the village Erronoe. She will be killed brutally in 2 rounds if the characters don't intervene. Afterward, the pagus will direct their aggression to the vehicle, disabling it in two rounds, destroying it in four. If the characters show themselves as a target, the pagus' attention will divert only if Espa is dead. They will attempt to move by the characters to kill her. If two or more of the pagus are hit, they will all adjust their attention to the character(s) that targeted them.

### Level 6 encounter (xp 1300)

2 pagus battlesworn (level 7 soldier)

2 pagus outrunners (level 8 skirmisher)

Espa falls in front of the vehicle which is placed at the far south end of the path. The pagus emerge from the opposite forest edge. Pagus will prefer close combat when range is obviously against them. In order to give Espa an opportunity to survive, she will no longer be a target of the pagus if they are hit by a character. If the characters are completely coldhearted and plow Espa over, the pagus will stop the scrambler by shearing an axle as it passes, destroying the vehicle and forcing the fight.

**Advice:** Espa becomes a kitarri ally, so can be moved by the marshal's powers. The grounder should immediately lay down area denials to keep them back. Pagus are all about melee combat so characters should maintain their distance. Pagus don't care about stealth.

After the pagus are killed, Espa (if alive) will thank the characters in her language, uttering sounds like a lasting poem of perfect rhythm. After realizing her folly, she addresses them again in English through a thick accent. She thanks them again and would offer her bow in gratitude, as is their way, if it wasn't broken. If the characters didn't save Espa (shame on them), then a male

backup and the electronics clusters that controlled everything. Simply replace the fuses leading to the lithium-polymer batteries, do a cold reboot of the computer system, and everything should come back online.

**Success:** The vehicle comes back online and the group can leave before the chiggoth comes around.

**Failure:** A minute passes and they may try again...the growls and roars grow louder. The chiggoth is a level 25 monster and if it finds the scrambler, it will devour it. If the characters fail a third time at this skill challenge, they have to abandon the vehicle.

## AREA 3 - NOBLE RESCUE?


### Forest Map

It is a new day and reaching the afternoon when the players are read the following:

*Two arrows the widths of broomsticks dent the riot shield of the scrambler. The impacts cause no damage. An axe the height of half a man shears a thick tree-branch and wedges two inches into the cockpit glass. A moment later, a delicate figure falls in front of your path as your brakes slam*







chaparran watching them, Swaniskaskas (“Swan”), will run in to help, realize he’s late, and either thank or scold the characters depending on their attitudes in the fight. If the characters approach this entire rescue callously, Swan will vanish soon after. Swan will arrive if Espa is alive or not. They’re siblings. Believing the character’s actions are noble, Espa or Swan will recognize the techan origins of the characters and assume they mean to join with Cross.

*“You resemble one we know,” says Swan. “But ours is taller with proven wisdom. Your gallantry is commendable but I question your motives. Why are you so far from your wall?”*

Despite the character’s need to lie if directly asked, neither Espa or Swan will question the character’s desire to meet Cross, so no rolls to bluff or insight are required.

*Swan or Espa will say, “We do know the man you call Cross. He is the Fierikei, our tribal elder--a position earned with exploits and not by threats or bribe. He claims to have expected ones like you for some time, even to the details of the wagon and the symbol adorned on your armor. He insists you wouldn’t be a threat...initially...”*

*Swan will add himself, “My instinct swears deception. I am seldom wrong but will follow the judgment as asked of me. My arrow will fly first if you prove my intuition correct.”*

If asked about the pagus, Espa will reveal that these dark fae—followers of the lords of syntropy—have emerged in the past week. Pagus keep to the north. They hate water and mountains and with the forest guarded on all sides by those obstructions, some great will must have forced them to traverse.

## **AREA FINALE - WAY OF CROSS Village Map**

Montgomery Cross is not insane by the measures of the people he cares for. He abandoned his way of life because of the appeal of the chaparrans and their casual approach to their existence. He is not evil, but he has become somewhat of an anarchist and will not return to York under any circumstances. He hopes to convince the characters of his resolve and to respect his wishes for solitude. Cross is not the chaparrans’ tribal leader, just an elder with proven wisdom. The diligently enforced structure of the Iron Son and most bastions of

the world motivated Cross’ rebellion against the techan way of life; he prefers his life wild and unpredictable.

The following encounter assumes Espa and/or Swan are with the group. The characters will need to leave the scrambler outside this map before entering: Allow the characters to interact as much as possible in the upcoming scene. Read or paraphrase the following:

*You enter a vast clearing, surrounded by the heaviest trees, decorated with maize farms and punctuated by the leviathan ETV in the center. It lacks wheels and one wall has been taken down to expand into a courtyard, but the keep’s origin is obvious. Chaparran magic has grown trees to hug the vehicle, bending their large branches to shroud the shelter from the sky. Foliage and other natural camouflage have replaced the old netting. Dozens of young and elderly chaparran fae work in fields, casually breaking from their duty to watch your arrival. You count at least a dozen armed kitarri in a village of nearly fifty chaparrans. You are led on a raised path away from the crops to the court of the open leviathan.*

### **<Possible character contribution>**

*Although wood is used in construction, it is all naturally grown from the soil to be shaped into the desired structure. The tree willingly gives up the piece formed if it must. Often times, the construction remains rooted in the soil, as is the table at the front of the collapsed wall. There is no throne, only an old human with half-broken glasses and pelts covering the tatters of his uniform. His pips, chevrons, and all other military regalia are missing. He writes in a chaparran book and removes his glasses as you approach.*

### **<Possible character contribution>**

*“Espa, Swan...these are the individuals my old leader has sent to execute me. Don’t worry about the weapons or their intents, they won’t think of killing me so abruptly. If I am wrong, then it won’t matter anyway. Give us ten minutes—”*

*“But father,” Espa pleads, “the pagus were scouts and to be here means something beckoned them to overcome their fear of water.”*

*“Then five. If you hear the sound of thunder, come sooner.”*

*After the two chaparrans walk away, Cross stands. He has put on weight since last you saw him, but only in muscle. He smiles. “Stepfather, as I’m sure you were wondering.*



What were you expecting to find? I am not a god, nor do these natives think of me as one. I wear no crown. I have never concealed who I am or lied about my past. These proud warriors and farmers desperately needed help. While my comrades sit behind walls, eating fat from plastic, breathing conditioned air, I shall forge a purpose that breaks every rule they hold most dear. I do so willingly with the biggest hammer I can find.”

**Depending on the conversation, Cross has answers for most inquiries:**

**Cross’s mental state.**

“Probably a few degrees between brilliance and lunacy, if you want me to be direct. How do they say, a madman uses his genius destructively; a genius uses his madness constructively? Is that how it is; little bit from column A, little bit from column B? I suppose, if I can ask the question myself, my sanity shouldn’t be a problem. These people are smart. They can spot such an illness, especially in humans.”

**Why is Cross here?**

“I found the one place on Earth that wasn’t a bastion, as far as one could walk from that path before coming back. It wasn’t even that far away when you think about it. I can’t even remember what the threat was. There was something menacing about this place. The faeries, the elves... I came here to burn the forest down. Why would I do that? What justice was I serving? What point? I wouldn’t have acted so brazenly unless Chauk and I agreed that it was the right course. It’s against my nature to act in impulse. Perhaps we were paid. I think I remembered being paid. You know Chauk takes commissions from the same organizations that have bounties for his arrest. All blank posters with hefty rewards no one will ever claim. He can’t spend a dime as an execution awaits him at every bastion. Explain the sense in that...”

**Where are the rest of his unit?**

“My men... Cain and Baxter stayed, but I never understood why. Cain fell to an infection brought on by food he shouldn’t have eaten. Baxter fell on his head. This village may be fae, but it’s weak in ways of such magic. They are buried under trees, as is the chaparran way. They aren’t marked and I don’t recall which ones... as is also their way.

The others I offered a choice: Stay and take their chances or leave... and do the same. I didn’t kill any of them, though I signed their warrant by making them walk. I shall never regret staying despite the cost to myself or those around.”

Pagus Battlesworn		Level 7 Soldier	
Medium Fae Humanoid (Ixindar)		XP 300	
<b>Initiative</b> +5	<b>Senses</b> Perception +2; Darkvision		
<b>HP</b> 76; <b>Bloodied</b> 38			
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 18			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
④ <b>Maul</b> (standard; at will) * <b>Weapon</b> +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage			
<b>Focused Aggression</b> (immediate reaction; when bloodied; encounter) The pagus battlesworn must immediately make a basic melee attack against the enemy that triggered Focused Aggression. This attack gains +1 to hit, and +2 to damage. In addition, the pagus may immediately make a saving throw to remove any harmful effects.			
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Paggin		
<b>Str</b> 18(+7)	<b>Dex</b> 15(+5)	<b>Wis</b> 8(0)	
<b>Con</b> 11(+3)	<b>Int</b> 11(+3)	<b>Cha</b> 9(+2)	
<b>Equipment</b> Scale Armor, Maul			
<b>Skills</b> Endurance +6, Intimidate +7			

Chaparran Kitarri		Level 5 Minion	
Medium Fae Humanoid		XP 50	
<b>Initiative</b> +9	<b>Senses</b> Perception +3; Low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion			
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 16			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
③ <b>Longbow</b> (standard; at will) * <b>Weapon</b> Ranged 20/40; +7 vs. AC; 5 damage			
④ <b>Short Sword</b> (standard; at will) * <b>Weapon</b> +6 vs. AC; 5 damage			
<b>Alacrity</b> (Immediate Interrupt; at will) When an enemy charges the kitarri, the kitarri may make a single basic ranged attack against that enemy. At the end of the attack, the kitarri drops its bow and draws its short sword.			
<b>Weald Walk</b> (move; recharge ☹️☹️☹️) If the kitarri is adjacent to a tree terrain feature, the kitarri may teleport itself so that it is adjacent to another tree terrain feature within 12 squares.			
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Chaparran (Espa & Swan speak English)		
<b>Str</b> 12(+3)	<b>Dex</b> 17(+5)	<b>Wis</b> 10(+2)	
<b>Con</b> 10(+2)	<b>Int</b> 12(+3)	<b>Cha</b> 11(+2)	
<b>Equipment</b> Leather armor, Longbow, quiver with twelve arrows, Short sword			
<b>Skills</b> Stealth 9, Athletics 8, Endurance 7			







**In conclusion or if the characters bring up their mission**

*"I can see it in your eyes." He points to you all. "You're a cog, you're a spring, a lever, a belt. And what do you produce? What benefit have you offered those around? You follow the rules of the machine whose only purpose is to enforce the rules of other machines. You wake up from an alarm, you punch a clock, and you follow the routine. You will accept it as normal and consider anything outside of that deviant. Join the rest of the world. Follow a path, don't be handed one by a colonel or a president or a god.*

*"They deceived you into thinking I went insane. That's just another measure of control. There was no washing of minds, no corruption of ideals. I didn't murder anyone that disagreed with me. I remain to protect my flock from those that threaten it. If you attempt to take me against my will, I won't need to utter a threat, it will be assumed by your hand and those around shall act as is their will. By my words and planning, this village has prospered. I did so without introducing any laws. Those that threaten us do so because of their laws, their control. You've seen them already. That was just a scouting party. They're growing braver with each attack. Something out there is gathering them... and it's growing restless each time we defy it. You want to abandon this... this pure moment of heroism?"*

There are 15 kitarris combat ready. They will jump into action immediately if Cross is attacked or if the

characters attempt to arrest him. Kitarris will fight to the death if Cross is attacked or killed. The non-combat chaparrans will keep their distance out of fear. Many will vanish into the woods until the characters leave. If they remain afterward, eventually, the death dragon Reaper and his undead servants will arrive. If the characters have left, Reaper will destroy the entire village, killing everything and burning the entire section of forest. Regardless of what happens, the scrambler is broken from a massive EDF surge and cannot be repaired. This will occur as they leave or during the battle with Reaper.

The characters may still decide to kill Cross after the battle with Reaper, the true and final threat. Reaper lead a brood of pagus across the water, forced them to take the dead that drowned or starved, and raised all those that fell as undead servants. Those 4 pagus earlier could have been the last of the living fae, but you may include another encounter to threaten the village to prove the danger the people are in or the value Cross has here. He directs the innocents into the leviathan and coordinates the kitarris to maximize their firing arc.

**Alternative Ending Encounter, level 3 encounter (750 xp)**

Col. Montgomery Cross (Plot Point)  
15 Chaparran kitarris (level 5 minions)



Risen Pagus		Level 6 Minion	
Medium Natural Inanimate		XP 63	
<b>Initiative</b> +5	<b>Senses</b> Perception +3; Darkvision		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion			
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 13			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
④ <b>Falchion</b> (standard; at will) * <b>Weapon</b> +8 vs. AC; 6 damage			
④ <b>Brutal Slam</b> Instead of making a basic melee attack, a Risen Pagus may push the target back two squares and knock it prone.			
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> none		
<b>Str</b> 18(+7)	<b>Dex</b> 15(+5)	<b>Wis</b> 9(+2)	
<b>Con</b> 10(+3)	<b>Int</b> 3(-1)	<b>Cha</b> 7(+1)	
<b>Equipment</b> Shattered Jannishar platemail, rusted, broken Falchion			

### Col. Montgomery Cross

Col. Montgomery Cross has an AC of 22, Fortitude of 17, a Reflex of 18, and a Will of 16. He has 1 HP, and a missed attack never damages him. Col. Montgomery Cross will not attack the characters.

**Optional Encounter:** Feel free to create a larger battle including 10 pagus against the characters and all the chaparran kitarri. Although the amount of work for DM would be extensive, it would serve to progress the story better.

### Level 6 encounter (xp 1300)

- 5 pagus battlesworn (level 7 soldier)
- 5 pagus outrunners (level 8 skirmisher)

If the characters hold off killing Cross or they decide to let him live, they will have at least an hour to get to know the people of the village. If the characters came out of the previous pagus fight(s) (the optional or the one from Noble Rescue) crippled from poor strategy, feel free to make it a new day. Both Espa and Swan will be amicable and show them around the farms. The people are peaceful and have been on their own since returning to Earth. But skeggs began appearing and their armies of puggs are growing each month. They were close to being wiped out until Cross thundered in on his chariot. He helped them organize a defense, fell for and bonded with a chaparran female, and decided to stay. He first attempted to find a balance between his two lives, but the ordered life of being a techan and the chaotic life of being with the fae do not mingle. By definition,

Young Death Dragon		Level 6 Solo Controller	
Large natural magical beast (Dragon, Ixindar)		XP 1250	
<b>Initiative</b> +5	<b>Senses</b> Perception +10; Darkvision		
<b>HP</b> 282; <b>Bloodied</b> 141; see also bloodied breath			
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 24			
<b>Resist</b> 15 Necrotic			
<b>Vulnerable</b> 5 Radiant			
<b>Saving Throws</b> +5			
<b>Speed</b> 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 15			
<b>Action Points</b> 2			
④ <b>Bite</b> (standard; at will) * <b>Necrotic</b> Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 and the target is weakened until the end of the Dragons next turn.			
↗ <b>Essence Siphon</b> (minor; at will) * <b>Necrotic</b> Ranged 5; +10 vs. will; 1d8 + 3 necrotic damage, and the Dragon heals half the same amount.			
↗ <b>Necromantic Dominance</b> (minor; recharge Ⓜ) * <b>Necrotic</b> Ranged 10; +10 vs. will; 1d6 + 5 necrotic damage, in addition, the target is slowed, and loses all resistance and immunity to necrotic damage or effects (save ends all).			
↖ <b>Breath Weapon</b> (standard; recharge Ⓜ) * <b>Necrotic</b> Close blast 5; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d12 + 3 Necrotic damage Miss: half damage.			
↖ <b>Bloodied Breath</b> (free; when first bloodied; encounter) The dragon's breath weapon recharges, and the dragon uses it immediately.			
↖ <b>Frightful Presence</b> (standard; encounter) * <b>Fear</b> Close burst 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Will; the target is stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn. Aftereffect: The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> all known languages		
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +15, religion +15, Insight +10, Intimidate +10			
<b>Str</b> 18(+7)	<b>Dex</b> 15(+5)	<b>Wis</b> 20(+8)	
<b>Con</b> 16(+6)	<b>Int</b> 18(+7)	<b>Cha</b> 16(+6)	

even the slight inclusion of chaos breaks the control by those who enforce law. Finally, he cut himself off from the outside world.

Eventually, word will come down from scouts of the sight of a massive dragon on the horizon. It's Reaper, a youth death dragon who has lead its pagus to these lands. Characters will have time to prepare until Reaper arrives.


### Level 8 encounter (xp 1750)

**Reaper, the death dragon** (level 6 solo controller)  
**8 risen pagus** (level 6 minions)

The kitarri are involved in the battle, but will be taking on other risen pagus throughout the battle. The encounter listed is just for the characters. Several chaparrans, like Swan, will be killed in the battle. Cross will also be involved, equipped with a greatsword and leather armor. He will not be directly involved in the characters'







encounter. Unless the characters target him, he will not be in danger.

Three rounds after all the undead pagus are destroyed, Reaper raises five kitarri as undead servants. Use the risen pagus template and ignore the brutal slam attack. If a character is killed outright, they are risen as undead 1 round later.

After five rounds, or if an EDF event occurs, the scrambler will explode from disruption. Any time Reaper uses his breath weapon; all characters caught in the blast suffer an offensive disruption roll. If a character is nearing death, Swan could take the strike and die for the character.

**Optional:** You can place all the kitarri (15) in the battle and increase the number of pagus by 11. The battle will be larger and more epic, but may be bogged down with extensive NPC combat.

**Advice:** Reaper will prefer ranged attacks as his AC is low; giving characters the opportunity to employ area denials and ranged attacks. Characters should use grenades and area effects to take down the minions. Remember the Crossfire feat, but – since Reaper has a reach 2 – characters will still be in threat range. Both operator characters will be valuable so PCs should keep alert for disruption and wounded characters. The marshal should swap initiative with the highest character initiative and use his Warrior's Creed ability to boost the group's defense against fear. Don't bother with grenades on the dragon. They are useless. The dragon should counterattack with continuous Essence Siphon attacks when its hit points are low (as a minor action, the dragon can do three of them a round).

## CONCLUSION

Nearing death, Reaper will attempt to escape. His success or death depends on the moment or if the DM wants to bring him back as a recurring villain. Assuming Espa survived the earlier fight with the pagus, she will still be alive after the fight with Reaper. Swan, conversely, did not survive. Six kitarri have also died. Cross, too, survived.

The characters need to make a final decision: Leave the man or kill him. Espa will attempt to block if weapons are trained. Cross will push her aside and let himself die. The remaining kitarri will instantly attack. After that, the characters can leave. With their scrambler destroyed, the group is stranded and it's a two month journey back to York from here.

If alive, Cross will supply them with enough food for the journey. They can modify what remains of the scrambler to makeshift a wagon, maybe even hustle up a few mounts. By this point, their ammunition will be low and their future dim. Their orders required proof after they killed Cross. Moreover, they may not be welcome back to the Iron Sons if they return in their condition. There is no convincing way to fake a report. If they still plan on arresting Cross, Espa will privately offer them 1000 gp each to walk away and pretend the village was already destroyed. Espa adds that the leviathan could have been pushed into a river and torn apart by rapids, removing evidence of its existence. It's doubtful that the story will be believed. With the bribe, the survivors could form their own company, but if the Sons ever found out, the next target they hunt will be the characters.

Of course, Cross will also offer them accommodations here. They can abandon their techan lives and embrace the unpredictable nature of the outside world. But they would have to give up their weapons, their climate control, and their computers. The choice is theirs...

