

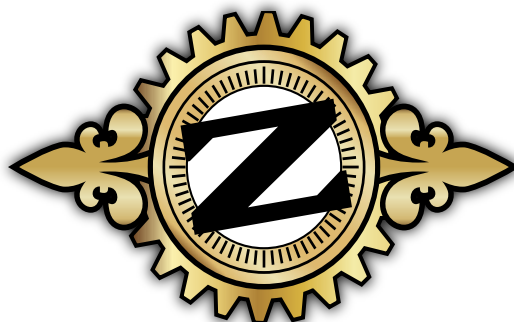


EN5ider Presents:

Diaspora

Part One

A 5E-Compatible Adventure for 13th- to 14th-Level Characters



Introduction

Wherein the Past May Be Best Left Forgotten

AT THE END OF ZEITGEIST #7: *Schism*, the party disrupted a gathering of the Obscurati conspiracy and learned their ultimate goal: alter the nature of reality by changing the order of the heavens. They also should have learned that the Ob seeks **Kasvarina Varal**, a co-founder of the conspiracy whose memories were sealed away. Should those memories be restored, she'd know exactly how to defeat the conspiracy. Divinations have traced her to ruins in the fallen eladrin nation of Elfaivar.

Memory and loss form the contours of this adventure. Kasvarina recalls the early parts of her life, but not the tragedies that motivated her to become part of the Obscurati. She knows the conspiracy has been responsible for suffering around the world, and she feels betrayed by this other version of herself she doesn't remember or understand. As she looks for a way to correct the wrongs she has committed, the party can recover an artifact known as the *Lost Arc of Reida*, which can bring to life places and events a person has experienced before. By traveling with Kasvarina, they have a chance to help her recover her forgotten past.

While combat and cunning will help the party protect Kasvarina from capture and reindoctrination by the Ob, a true victory will require connecting with her on a personal level and helping her stay true to the ideals she once had, rather than making the same choices all over again.

Personal Stories.

This adventure has just as much action and physical confrontation as any other ZEITGEIST module, but the core conflict cannot be resolved simply by hacking and slashing. Previous adventures in the campaign have focused on investigation of criminal organizations; this one focuses on investigating a single person's identity.

We acknowledge that there's a risk of making this adventure into *The Kasvarina Show*. As GM, your job will be to make sure the

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SPECIAL THANKS TO
to everyone who made *Final Fantasy VI*, since it has been pointed out to me that we sure seem to have a lot of similarities to that game (clearly we need a talking octopus); to the hundreds of gamers who backed the original release of ZEITGEIST on Kickstarter; and to the over one thousand generous patrons of EN World EN5IDER whose support has made this Fifth Edition update possible.

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party keeps the limelight since they are the protagonists, and to link their own personal stories to Kasvarina's.

Maybe before leaving the enclave to recover her memories, Kasvarina – who to her recollection was just recently fighting a holy war – bonds with one of the PCs because they're both veterans. Perhaps at the same time that she is grappling with whether she made the right choice to pursue vengeance against the Clergy, you can draw parallels with another PC who is seeking vengeance against the Ob, or who already got his revenge against Lorcan Kell. When Kasvarina is about to witness her past self speaking with her long-dead children, perhaps a PC receives a *sending* from a family member with happy news, to remind him of the people he's protecting.

Above all else, try to show that Kasvarina is on the party's side, at least at first. She wants to stop the Ob as much as they do, and she appreciates their aid. Though her restored memories might cause her to eventually turn against them, she should start as an ally.

Background

Since this is an adventure that delves into the past, there's quite a bit of background. We present it all here for the GM, but players will discover this in bits and pieces as they travel with Kasvarina. In brief, Kasvarina met Nicodemus five centuries ago, they tried to stop a holy war, and they ended up being responsible for the Great Malice. In the aftermath they formed the Obscurati and originally devoted themselves to defeating the Clergy, but later pursued Nicodemus's grand design to alter the planets that influence this world's fate. A year ago Kasvarina had her memory locked away by a former conspirator who was killed for what he did. Now she cannot recall anything that happened in the past 500 years.

The Holy War.

Approximately 550 years ago the Clergy launched a holy war against the eladrin empire Elfaivar, whose people followed a faith known as Seedism. Centuries of tension between the two religions finally boiled over into mass violence. The Clergy conquered land in what is today Crisillyr, pushed far into Elfaivar, and sacked a few eladrin cities, but weren't able to hold much territory further east than modern Vendricce. They called this war their Victory. The eladrin called it the *Perang Devar*, or Holy War.

Five decades later, the long-lived eladrin retaliated. Elfaivaran armies reclaimed stolen lands and razed Vendricce, ships assaulted human cities along the Avery Coast, and a massive force laid siege to the cities Alais Primos and Sid Minos. Far to the west in the Clergy's capital city of Methia, the hierarchs of the faith directed the conflict through portals atop an alabaster spire known as the Lance of Triegenes, but what they saw was an inevitable defeat.

Kasvarina's Past.

As she remembers it, Kasvarina was marching with the armies of Elfaivar to lay siege to Alais Primos, and then suddenly she was a prisoner in an underground fortress with walls of steel. Her captors attempted strange magic on her mind, and when that failed to restore her memories they drugged her to keep her docile.

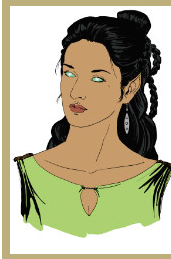
Rescue eventually came in the form of **Asrabey Varal**, an eladrin

Adapting the Adventure.

If you want to run this adventure without a pre-established global conspiracy, Kasvarina could be the only person who knew some critical secret, like the true name of a demon she used to serve, or a spell to break a curse she was responsible for laying. Her old allies or minions try to stop the party from restoring her memories.

Or you could replace Kasvarina with someone with a long history related to an existing archvillain in your campaign, giving you an opportunity to both deepen the party's knowledge of the villain while giving them a chance to learn his weaknesses.

Setting details can be fairly easily changed, with technology like muskets and cannons being replaced by rare magic. The holy war between Elfaivar and the Clergy can instead be any large scale conflict that had some memorable tragedy Kasvarina could be responsible for.



Kasvarina Varal. One of the founders of the Obscurati, Kasvarina had her memories locked away by Alexander Grappa, one of the builders of the colossus Borne. Left with the mind of a heroic young woman and memories that stopped before the great wars between Elfaivar and the Clergy, Kasvarina was wary and confused when the agents of the conspiracy locked her up. She fought them and tried to escape repeatedly, not believing their claims that she was once their leader. When Asrabey arrived and offered to take her back to her people, she knew at least that he was a fellow eladrin, and gladly went with him.

In the months since, Kasvarina has learned of the downfall of her once mighty homeland and experienced occasional flashes of recollection when exposed to things from her past. She aches to retrace her history and unlock more memories, but her fellow eladrin refuse to risk letting her out of the enclave. Worst of all are the people who still remember her as a stern matriarch responsible for ordering assassinations, but know nothing to help her discover how she came to be that person.

She knows she lived a secret double life before her memories were locked away, and she loathes those identities—both the leader of a conspiracy of steam and steel, and a vengeful matriarch of a dying race. Somewhere, she is sure, she betrayed her own ideals, and what motivates her now is undoing the damage that other version of her wrought.

claiming to be one of her husbands, though she never remembered meeting him. He spirited her away in the midst of a large battle she did not understand, and soon she was back in her homeland. Only then did she accept the truth that her homeland was gone, and that everyone she remembered was long dead.

Remembered Timeline.

Kasvarina was born in the year 213 B.O.V. and is now 713 years old, but she looks about as old as a human in her late thirties. She remembers events up to 1 B.O.V., by which time she had already trained as a mage and soldier, married a fellow warrior named Pilai, had two daughters named Launga and Dala, and lost her husband in the first holy war against the Clergy. She joined the army of Elfaivar and became an officer, wanting to protect her now-adult children from the threat the humans posed. After that her memories are blank, but she can recover the rest during this



adventure.

Meeting Nicodemus.

During the siege of Alais Primos in 1 B.O.V., Kasvarina was injured, then spared from execution by **Nicodemus the Gnostic**, a clericist monk serving as a healer. He nursed her back to health and saw that they both believed the war to be pointless. He helped her escape the city and return to her homeland, where she got permission to arrange discussions between the Elfaivaran rana-mandala (ruling circle of kings and queens) and the hierarchs of the Clergy. Before leaving she saw her daughters once more, since she expected she might be going to her death.

She and Nicodemus returned to Alais Primos and met contacts, but they were arrested and imprisoned off the coast of the city of Sid Minos, in a cursed vault known as the Crypta Hereticarum, where the Clergy put troublemakers to give them slow, painful deaths. Nicodemus and Kasvarina managed to contact the vault's greatest prisoner, Ashima-Shimtu, a demon who once advised a nation of fiends. Ashima-Shimtu was unable to escape the prison, but she could free Nicodemus and Kasvarina. In exchange, she offered them a powerful ritual, and asked that they use it to end the war.

Demon's Gambit.

That ritual, *Sacrament of Apotheosis*, was once used by the Demonocracy to empower its warlords. It transforms a person into the avatar of a specific belief. The feeble "faith" of demons was merely enough to turn men into fiery giants. And there was a drawback that if the avatar died, the believers would suffer a painful, perhaps fatal backlash. But in the midst of a holy war, with millions of worshippers on either side? The ritual could create a god, and any backlash would be cataclysmic.

The Clergy had imprisoned Ashima-Shimtu centuries ago, hoping some day she would share the ritual with them. In Nicodemus and Kasvarina, she saw a chance to punish the Clergy by giving

them exactly what they wanted. Nicodemus and Kasvarina were to trade the ritual for their freedom from the vault, then trick the Clergy into using the ritual to create an avatar of their god of war. The eladrin would slay it, and the power of the Clergy would be broken.

But the hierarchs were cleverer than Nicodemus and Kasvarina expected. They brought the pair to the Lance of Triegenes to witness the ritual, but rather than use its power not on one of their own, they had kidnapped Kasvarina's younger daughter Dala.

The hierarchs transformed Dala into an avatar of Srasama, the eladrin goddess of womanhood. They threw her through a portal and she landed in the battlefield outside Alais Primos and arose, confused at her sudden power but magically compelled by the hierarchs to join the battle. It did not take long for the Clergy's forces, who were prepared for her arrival, to kill her.

Her death triggered what today is known as the Great Malice, which slew almost every other eladrin woman, cast Methia and its surroundings into a dead magic zone, and transformed many of the people of Methia into tieflings. Kasvarina and Nicodemus escaped through the portal before the magic died, but only Kasvarina survived. Nic was seemingly annihilated in transit.

War's Aftermath.

Kasvarina returned to her homeland and discovered that her other daughter Launga had survived, since she had been on a mission in the Dreaming. They and a handful of other female survivors performed a funeral ritual wherein they forsook grief and so could never age. Then Kasvarina exiled herself, unable to face her people.

She wandered and hoped to die so her guilt would pass, but a few years later she received a magical *sending* from Nicodemus, who explained his soul had survived where his body had not. He invited her to Pala, a small city-state he had founded in the Malice Lands, which he directed using his birth name of William Miller.

Kasvarina lived for a time in Pala, a beacon of reason that attracted many noble people from across the world. Miller wrote respected philosophical treatises, speaking to common people of how to better understand neighbors whom they might distrust, in order to create more harmony and prosperity for all. But Miller pushed too hard too quickly, trying to motivate change to weaken the power of the surviving Clergy (now based out of Alais Primos, since Methia had been abandoned). As history books record, the Clergy labeled Miller a heretic, razed his city, and executed him on a pyre of his own books.

This time Kasvarina knew he would return, and when he did he cast aside his old life and became Nicodemus again, leaving William Miller to be a martyr. She advised him to pursue vengeance, but he chose a slower, grander solution.

Founding the Obscurati.

In 19 A.O.V., Nicodemus and Kasvarina returned to the Lance of Triegenes to meet with Jierre, a former acolyte of the Clergy who

had been transformed into a tiefling. They enacted a decades-long plan to stymie the Clergy and keep it from regaining the power it had lost at the end of the Second Victory.

After a century of work, they had managed to greatly weaken their enemies, and Kasvarina began to focus more on the internal needs of her people, to try to restore at least a small nation of eladrin. Though she still hated the Clergy, she had new lives that demanded care. Nicodemus, by contrast, was just a ghost untethered to life, and he had no other purpose than to defeat his old religion. Not content with only a partial victory, he cast his sights higher.

A New World.

Having learned from the skyseers of Risur the way that the planets of the night sky influence the world's fate, Nicodemus composed his plans to reshape the heavens. Though the descendants of Jierre practically revered him, Kasvarina was not motivated, and the plan languished for ten years.

Had it come any more quickly, Kasvarina might have been suspicious. An attempt to ally with the dragon tyrants of Ber to fight the Clergy turned out to be a trap, orchestrated by a rival eladrin matriarch who wanted Kasvarina's position. Her daughter Launga died, and after Kasvarina killed the traitor and the dragon tyrant, she was left grief-stricken.

She never suspected Nicodemus had arranged the betrayal, but it worked as he planned, bringing her closer to him again. With his allies in place, Nicodemus set the Obscurati on course for its grand design.

Recent Events.

The Ob's main goal in this adventure is to gain control of the colossus, Borne, which has been trapped in the Dreaming, thanks to the party and their king in *ZEITGEIST #5: Cauldron-Born*. The golem will enact the Ob's ritual to alter the shape of the heavens, but they don't have magic powerful enough to bring it back to this world.

Worse, its memories were also locked away. However, it is intuitively drawn to Kasvarina, so the conspiracy is trying to recover her in order to draw the colossus to Methia, where the veil between worlds is torn. It will be able to step back into the real world.

Adventure Overview

Both the party and the Obscurati search the jungle ruins of Elfaivar for Kasvarina, and several possible ambushes will complicate the party's search until they deal with the Ob's forces. Eventually the party locates Sentosa, an eladrin enclave hidden halfway between this world and the Dreaming. Kasvarina is guarded by **Asrabey Varal**, but is eager to set out and learn more about her past, and she has learned about an artifact called the *Lost Arc of Reida*, which will let her experience her past and regain her memories.

The matriarch of the enclave, **Athrylla Valanar**, never trusted Kasvarina before she lost her memories, and tries to stop her departure. The party might earn her trust or simply sneak Kasvarina out.

Eladrin weretigers (called *bagheva* in the local tongue) led by **Betronga Sidhon** claim as their home the ruins where the artifact lies, and they are resisting encroachment by soldiers of the Clergy.

PCs in the Obscurati.

In *ZEITGEIST #7: Schism* the party might have decided they agree with the conspiracy's goals, and switched sides. Nicodemus would send them to retrieve Kasvarina and help her recover her memories, with the important mission of making sure that they present her past in a light that brings her back into the fold.

If the party's smart, they'll keep their change of allegiance from the RHC. However, dragon industrialist **Benedict Pemberton** will realize the Ob is a greater threat to him than the RHC is. He'll likely be able to inform Risur of the party's change of heart, which will mean that the military forces opposing the party in Elfaivar will be Risuri, not Danoran. In Appendix Two: Recurring NPCs we present stats of some high-powered RHC agents who could oppose the party.

At the adventure's climax, a repentant Kasvarina might cast the party into the Dreaming, or if the party succeeded in their mission Nicodemus might send them there to ensure the Unseen Court is too distracted to help Risur. Those events are detailed in *ZEITGEIST #9: The Last Starry Sky*. Of course, as the party sees Kasvarina's memories, they might realize Nicodemus isn't as pure-intentioned as he presents himself.

The leader of the soldiers, a noble but stern godhand named **Aulus Atticus**, has been tasked with ending the threat the weretigers pose to nearby colonial settlements. And the ruin itself forces the party to face fiery memories both past and future in order to claim the relic. The party has to find a solution they can live with, perhaps helping the embittered eladrin slay the Clergy peacekeepers, or vice versa, or just sneaking past the weretigers to steal the artifact and avoid the conflict altogether. If they can manage to find a peaceful resolution, they'll have made powerful allies.

With the *Lost Arc* in hand, the party escorts Kasvarina to places where she had noteworthy experiences, which the artifact manifests in physical form. Several leads present themselves from memories triggered at the enclave, and Kasvarina wants to visit her original home town, Resal. There a memory reveals her early interactions with Nicodemus before they set off to try to stop the holy war.

The Obscurati had been watching Resal, and Nicodemus appears, his spirit inhabiting the body of a local. He asks Kasvarina to come with him, and when she refuses, Ob forces attack and try to capture Kasvarina and kill the party. Nicodemus watches until his body is killed, and then his spirit flies away to plot another way to reclaim her. A noose is closing around the party, and they have to keep moving to avoid being caught.

The party can scour the world for memories using the artifact, and some unlikely places can yield precious information. In particular, Kasvarina wishes to track down people she knew in her former life, or their descendants, who have scattered across the world. While this won't help the party unlock the Ob's secrets any faster, it earns Kasvarina's trust and can keep her from betraying them at the adventure's climax.

However, the main clues point to:

- ▶ **Alais Primos**, at the site where Srasama died. One memory occurs after her demise as Kasvarina cradles a woman's charred body in the wake of the Great Malice, a scene which she won't know the context of until later. Another memory shows how Nicodemus first met Kasvarina during the city's



siege, revealing that he hadn't simply stumbled upon her, but was specifically trying to treat injured eladrin officers to try to find someone with sympathetic views.

- ▶ **Sid Minos** and the cursed vault of heresies, where Kasvarina learned the *Sacrament of Apotheosis*. Oddly, no Ob forces try to stop the party, because **Grandis Komanov**, head of a cell of doomsday eschatologists, has already dealt with them. She has sent an icy simulacrum of herself, hoping to follow the party into the Vault and learn the ritual. Meanwhile dragon industrialist **Benedict Pemberton** simply has placed dupli-cants disguised as statues to find out why everyone's so keen on the place.
- ▶ The empty city of **Methia**, particularly atop the Lance of Triegenes. The party first sees several vague meetings of the Obscurati leaders, which the artifact struggles to show due to the antimagic. And then they are thrust into the final moments of the Second Victory as Kasvarina's actions cause the Great Malice.

The colossus stands waiting in Methia, and a regiment of the Danoran army guards the city with orders to block the party from reaching the tower. Forced to fight without any magic, even high-level PCs are at risk from mundane soldiers. But if they reach the Lance, the artifact manifests the city as it was before the Great Malice, restoring magic and giving the party a fighting chance.

Kasvarina's manifested memories reveal to the party that the Ob plan to assassinate the king or Risur and perform a ritual in Flint under the direction of **Roland Stanfield**, the city governor, who has secretly been part of the conspiracy this whole time.

Kasvarina's memories begin to fully click into place, and her recollection provokes the colossus, which recognizes her as its "mother." The party might befriend it briefly to climb the tower, or flee its seemingly dangerous pursuit. At the tower's pinnacle, one final memory manifests: the ritual that summoned the goddess Srasama and provoked the Great Malice. Nicodemus interrupts the memory, takes command of the colossus, and gives Kasvarina a choice to join him or stay with the party and die. Whether she abandons the party or joins them depends entirely on how they've swayed her opinions on their journey.

The party might fight, but they have the information they came for, so hopefully they'll be smart enough to escape before the tower comes down around them. As the artifact-conjured memory begins to collapse, the party can leap through one of the Clergy's portals (or simply be sucked through when the local antimagic finally shatters the *Lost Arc of Reida*). They find themselves back in Risur, but trapped in the Dreaming. *ZEITGEIST #9: The Last Starry Sky* details how they can get back to the real world in time to stop the Ob from taking control of their nation.

Adventure Layout.

Diaspora's plot has a precise beginning and climax, but the middle of the adventure can take many different paths. We roughly divide events as follows:

- ▶ **Act One: Forgotten Ruins.** The party must locate Kasvarina in the jungles of Elfaivar while the Ob try to find and kill them.

- ▶ **Act Two: I've Been Around the World.** The party retrieves the *Lost Arc of Reida*, then travels the world to witness Kasvarina's memories.
- ▶ **Act Three: To Fall Once More.** Here the party reaches Methia, find Kasvarina's final key memories, and confront Nicodemus the Gnostic.
- ▶ **Appendix One: The Eladrin Diaspora.** Side-quests that can help the party learn more about Kasvarina and earn her trust, including possibly unmasking her betrayal by Nicodemus.
- ▶ **Appendix Two: Recurring NPCs.** Stats for various allies and opponents who aren't tied to a single specific encounter, including eladrin, Danoran forces, and Risuri agents.
- ▶ **Appendix Three: Magic.** New items, including the *Lost Arc of Reida*.
- ▶ **Appendix Four: Methia Gazeteer.** Details of the ghost city where the adventure will climax.

Each act presented in this adventure takes place in order, though Kasvarina's memories in Act Two and Appendix One can be tackled in whatever order the PCs prefer.

Key Locations.

Make sure you have a clear sense of each of these locations, and how the party might travel between them. Though some ships working on behalf of the Obscurati will attack the party, in general the seas are the safest and fastest method to travel, though the party can use their ship's *portal pad* to teleport to these locations and then be able to return to a mobile safe haven.

LIST OF KEY LOCATIONS

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Sentosa	16
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Valence	6
Vigil Longis	Part Two

Akravan. An abandoned eladrin enclave frequented by Asrabey two centuries ago. Today it is overrun by giant fey versions of jungle birds.

Alais Primos. Capital city of the modern Clergy. Besieged by Elfaivar five centuries ago.

Bharat. Another abandoned eladrin enclave, sacked by the Danoran military twenty years ago. Today the site of Obscurati research to determine how to tune the *wayfarer's lantern* in order to invade other enclaves.

Ingatan's Refuge. Hidden in a jungle cave shrouded by waterfalls, this ruin houses the *Lost Arc of Reidia*, an artifact which can manifest the past.

Methia. Long-abandoned former capital city of the Clergy, now an absolute dead magic zone. Guarded by the Danoran military, who use its empty streets for wargames.

Pala. City-state once led by William Miller, an alter-ego of Nicodemus the Gnostic. Its enlightened ideology made it a threat to the Clergy, who razed it nearly five hundred years ago.

Odiem, the Cursed Isle. Just off the coast of the city of Sid Minos, this island contains the Crypta Hereticarum.

Resal. The site of this old eladrin village has since become a small settler town loyal to Risur, and over five centuries every landmark has vanished.

Rumah Terakir. A ruined riverside eladrin city. The enclave Sentosa shares the same geographical area, but exists in a parallel demi-plane.

Sawyer. Capital of the Risuri colony of Kellandia in Elfaivar. Major timber exporter and home to an orthodox druidic circle known as the Ford.

Sentosa. Eladrin enclave led by the matriarch Athrylla Valanar.

Sid Minos. City in Crisillyir. The cursed Isle of Odiem lies offshore. No plot events occur here this adventure.

Ushanti. Eladrin enclave formerly controlled by Kasvarina, now being run by an Obscurati-loyal eladrin man named Ajit.

Valence. Steampunk-y capital of the Danoran colony of Rationalis in Elfaivar.

Vigil Longis. Clergy military camp in Elfaivar, tasked with clearing out hostile eladrin.

NPC Roster.

Detailed entries of the NPCs the party meets are included throughout the adventure close to the characters' first appearances.

LIST OF PROMINENT NPCs

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Recurring Characters.

Ashima-Shimtu, Asrabey, Delft, and Nicodemus all appear prominently in later adventures. **Kasvarina's** fate heavily depends on how the party interacts with her. All other NPCs might recur in minor roles, but feel free to do with them as you wish. If anyone important dies, you can replace them with someone thematically similar.

Pacing and Leveling.

The party starts this adventure at 13th level. We recommend that they reach 14th level before entering the city of Methia, and should achieve 15th level at the end of the adventure.

Character Themes in the Adventure.

Each ZEITGEIST adventure includes one or more scenes that bring the PCs' character themes (detailed in the ZEITGEIST *Player's Guide*) to the forefront. Additionally, each theme can grant PCs a benefit when pursuing the non-mandatory memories of Kasvarina's past.

Dockers will have the best chance to learn the movements of the Obscurati forces in Elfaivar, since the dockers along the coast know where all their ships have gone. Plus, the dockers stay in good contact with the porters who carry all the Ob's heavy equipment. Additionally, a docker can easily parlay a friendship with the eclectic bard Kieran Sentacore into a path to a memory tied to one of Kasvarina's pre-war friends, Navras, who built an opera house in Flint.

Eschatologists can confront Gradis Komanov, leader of a radical doomsday cult, and they will know how to contact a group of eschatological eladrin in Drakr led by one of Kasvarina's ex-husbands.

Gunsmiths have opportunities to turn Danoran artillery against the Obscurati, and will be asked to help train the eladrin of Sentosa to use firearms, to aid their fight for their homeland. They also have the best chance of directing Kasvarina to seek a memory tied to Amielle Latimer, one of the first gunsmiths and an agent of the Obscurati whom Amielle recruited to play a pivotal role in the history of Flint. This provides a way to integrate the mini-adventure *Bonds of Forced Faith* into the course of your campaign.

Martial Scientists can learn the techniques of the eladrin war monasteries.

Skyseers can see a vision of Nem and the Gyre atop the Lance of Triegenes at the climax of the adventure. They also unerringly know the date and time of each of Kasvarina's memories.

Spirit Mediums can sense the souls trapped in the witchoil that fuels the colossus, making it easier to track to Sentosa. Likewise, Kasvarina's spirit will be torn between the person she used to be and the person she was before her memories were locked away. A spirit medium will have a chance to speak directly with her soul to help her decide who she will become.

Technologists can turn the Danoran's own technological innovations against them, including artillery and an experimental steam-powered tank. They can also most easily guide Kasvarina to where her memories were first locked away.

Vekeshi Mystics will have the opportunity to meet the founder of their order during Kasvarina's memory of a ritual to forsake grief.

Yerasol Veterans can command Risuri ships to battle a Danoran fleet that tries to engage them. They might also direct Kasvarina to a memory of when she betrayed an old friend so that the Ob could control key territory in the Yerasol Archipelago.

Rewards.

At the end of this adventure, the party's Prestige should increase by 1 step with the Unseen Court and the Obscurati if they manage to get Kasvarina to Methia. If the party either fights or aids the god-hand Aulus Atticus, or if word gets out that they returned to



Crypta Hereticarum to speak with Ashima-Shimtu, their Prestige with the Clergy goes up by 1 step. The party's Prestige with any given group can go no higher than 6, though, and they are likely near or at maximum by this adventure.

The PCs should each have about 50,000 gp in total equipment by the start of this adventure. After the retrieving the *Lost Arc of Reida*, the party can get their boss Stover Delft to approve an additional 20,000 gp stipend apiece, though retrieving items will likely require requisitioning them via magical communication and waiting for them to be delivered via teleportation to the *portal pad* that was installed on the party's ship last adventure. Alternately they might just ask for money and try to buy gear, but there are exceedingly few places that sell high-level items.

Final Word Before We Start.

As the players have grown in level since the start of the campaign, there are 1,001 different ways they may thwart the assumed course of this adventure. Be sure to let the players have their fun, and

reward creative and interesting play, with the understanding that as clever as they are, the Ob are also pretty quick.

The PCs may come up with a particularly inventive solution for finding Sentosa without having to cross paths with the Obscurati, so you can just reuse some of the ambushes later. They might come up with a convincing way to contact and befriend the colossus Borne while it is in the Dreaming, which should help hold the titan from attacking them for a while in Act Three, even though it *will* become loyal to the conspiracy once its memories return. Or they might try to abuse the *Lost Arc of Reida* by going all around the world looking for clues to mysteries that have nothing to do with the Ob, which you can use to flesh out tons of PC-specific backstories.

This deep into the campaign, it's important to let the players take charge, even if it means you have to shuffle some events and revelations around to provide satisfying pay-off. Just remember, the campaign director's party actually blew up Borne in their ZEITGEIST #5: *Cauldron-Born* playtest, so we dare your group to do better.



Act One: Forgotten Ruins

IN THIS ACT, THE PARTY SEARCHES Elfaivar for Kasvarina, while agents of the Obscurati search for them.

Mission Briefing

Social. Real-Time. Level 13.

Stover Delft teleports aboard the party's ship to give them their mission.

It is the 8th of Autumn and the party likely is at sea near Mustravir Island, off the coast of Vendricce near Crisillyir. They should have learned during the Obscurati convocation that the Ob have made finding Kasvarina their highest priority, more critical even than recovering the colossus from where it is stranded in the Dreaming. They believe the colossus is drawn to Kasvarina, and it is so massive that its steps leave giant footprints in the real world, so they followed those prints and saw that it has been lingering near various eladrin ruins in the jungles of Elfaivar.

The party now knows what the conspiracy's plan is, but they might be at a loss of how to disrupt it. This scene gives you a way to point them in the right direction if they're confused.

Face to Face.

A *sending* alerts the party that **Chief Inspector Stover Delft** is incoming, asking for precise latitude and longitude, which the party can easily acquire. Once they report the location back, a few minutes later the experimental teleportation beacon aboard the party's ship activates, and Stover Delft arrives, accompanied by RHC teleportation specialist **Lauryn Cyneburg** and two elite Risuri marine bodyguards.

Delft opens his mouth to talk, then bends over with nausea, as do the marines. Lauryn handles it better, but says to Delft that she told him so. Once the nausea passes, Delft explains that he thought it would be cheaper and faster to just come here and talk than to trade *sending* spells for hours. Lauryn warned him something odd is happening to planar travel, but as long as it's not fatal, he's not worried.

In truth, the events of the Obscurati's ritual are having ripples even backward in time, and the closer it gets to the ritual the harder it will be to travel between planes. For the rest of this adventure, just make a point to mention fits of nausea or arriving slightly off-target if the party uses any teleportation magic.

Touching Base.

Delft asks for a full report on the events at the Obscurati convocation, then proposes the party's next mission: find Kasvarina, extract whatever information she might have about the conspiracy or how to stop the colossus, and if she's a threat, eliminate her.

Meanwhile in the News.

While the party's busy battling the Obscurati, what's the rest of the world up to? You may need to change these based on what the party's actions.

New Technology! Insert something here based on what innovations the party has chosen to task Tinker Oddcog with in *ZEITGEIST #6: Revelations from the Mouth of a Madman*.

The Primo Rising! A new crime lord has come to prominence in Flint, filling a void left since the collapse of the Kell guild. Known as "the Primo"—a subtle insult to the Clericist followers in The Family—the new syndicate's leader for now remains in the shadows, but has made a point of actively targeting dockers in the city. Workers speak of being threatened with death if they won't let agents of the Primo unload certain ships, and dozens have gone missing after refusing to let cargo be looted. A few days later their bodies have been found crushed and water-logged. Thames Grimsley has sought help from the authorities, but many dockers have vowed to seek vigilante justice.

War Footing. Relations between Danor and Risur have plummeted despite the recent peace conference. The disappearance of Lya Jierre and the accusations of RHC activities in foreign countries have increased tensions along the Avery coast. Anonymous sources inside the Risuri military say they've received reports that several Danoran battalions have been placed on high alert and moved from their normal postings, though they appear to have marched inland rather than assuming coastal positions as would be expected in the run-up to a Fifth Yerasol War. The office of Danor's minister of war Eloise Duffet responded that the troops are simply engaged in war games, and declined to comment on the minister's location.

Demonic Terrorists. A series of violent terrorist strikes in Trekhom and Mirsk has rocked the nation of Drakr. Using suicidal arcane spellcasters, a group of demon-sympathizers attacked seven separate museums and military compounds across the nation. While originally thought to just be random attacks against the establishment, investigative reporters have linked the attacks together, as each targeted suspected storage sites of ancient relics from the time of Drakr's alliance with the demonocracy. The government's Bureau of Eschatology remains tight-lipped on the subject, but updated its weekly newspaper report to remind citizens that preparedness is valuable, even for unlikely situations like an imminent apocalypse.

Fey Quietude. Reports throughout Risur show that the normal level of fey activity has decreased. Less than half of the normal offerings left for minor fey have been claimed, and larger cities like Bole and Shale have not received expected visits by minor functionaries of the Unseen Court. Asher Henton, Distinguished Professor of Otherworldly Physics at Kitham University in Shale, has sent an open letter to several newspapers under the portentous title, "Inverse Chronosomic Cascades Suggest that Extraplanar Connections Will Be Compromised in the Near Future." A more traditional source, a skyseer who was close to the late Nevard Sechim, was asked what he forseees; he replied, simply, "*The third raven has not yet landed.*"



Other Missions Against the Obscurati.

While the party is in Elfaivar, Delft will take the information they got from infiltrating the convocation and coordinate with the king. It's unclear how much time they have before the Ob can actually try their crazy world-altering magic, but Delft will suggest Risur share this information with other governments' spy agencies. Based on the other information the party acquired, he'll suggest Risur prepare naval strike forces to target lighthouses, since during their mission on the Avery Coast Railroad they saw Ob discussions that involved lighthouses and the *wayfarer's lantern*.

Targeting Axis Island?

The PCs might have pieced together the connection between Ancient planar magic, the archaeological digs funded by the Obscurati, and the *golden icons* they found on Axis Island. If so, they might rightly guess that the Ob are up to something there. If they discuss it with Delft, he'll suggest they get started in Elfaivar while he gathers information from Risuri spies in the Yerasol Archipelago.

Three days later he gets back in touch with news: Danor has increased naval patrols around Axis Island, and a handful of people who tried to get onto the island were never heard from. And there's apparently a giant barge being constructed in the harbor of Danor's capital Cherage. It looks big enough to ferry the colossus across the sea, though that might not be necessary since apparently the thing can walk along the bottom of the ocean.

Chief Inspector Stover Delft.

The party's long-time boss now is less of a superior to them and more a facilitator. Delft mostly acts behind the scenes while the party is out of Risur, arranging for resources and allies they need. He only makes an appearance in this adventure if the PCs return to Flint.



Lauryn Cyneburg. Though over seventy years old, as a half-elf Lauryn only betrays her age with the weariness of her eyes. She has traveled, almost literally, everywhere on the continent of Lanjyr. As the RHC's Director of Infiltration, her expertise in teleportation has seen her delivering agents to missions around the world, and she's tired of seeing them not return when things go wrong.

Lauryn carries herself with an odd mix of stiffness and informality. She'll never let her guard down or expose her own emotions, and she hates jokes because she hates laughing. But she's used to dealing with uncannily powerful individuals, and she has a knack for saying things that seem like insults, but only to people who fight monsters for a living and think they should be able to accomplish anything.

Though she shows little respect for anyone, not even her superiors, she long ago decided that she had to pick something to care about, or else she'd just end up teleporting around to no purpose. So she chose Risur, because its people don't take themselves too seriously.



The party might want to go there instead of pursuing Kasvarina. Delft has spoken with the king and with Viscount Inspector Nigel Price-Hill, who both agreed the island should be targeted eventually, but that it's probably too well-defended for the party to go alone. A proper strike would require an entire fleet, and the king will only commit forces if he's sure he has the right target.

Delft is actually betting that the Ob are still planning something in Flint, based on the old skyseer Nevard's vision of three ravens on Cauldron Hill. He thinks it's best to get Kasvarina and interrogate her before they risk attacking the wrong target.

Elfaivar Gazeteer.

The party's first task will be deciding how to enter Elfaivar. The most likely options are to dock at a port in the Risuri colony of Kellandia, dock in a port in another country's colony, or sail up a river and avoid ports altogether. More magically-oriented parties might instead just teleport in, but that limits how many allies they can bring along.

Six Colonies.

Following the eladrin's catastrophic defeat, the Clergy established several garrisons throughout the nation, ensuring an eternal presence to keep the eladrin from regaining any military might. In the past few centuries, other nations have looked to the resource rich remnants of Elfaivar, and have begun establishing formal colonies. While the Clergy frowns on these new colonists, they have neither the military nor inclination to get involved in political strife with these new settlements.

You can use these colonies to assist in bringing Elfaivar to life, give the PCs additional tools in their search for Kasvarina, or to build some additional adventures in the region. Even within these colonies, the region is still only sparsely populated, with vast swaths of jungle where only the eladrin are brave enough to roam. East of the colonies lie thousands of miles of lands that are effectively uninhabited.

Risur, Danor, and Drakr each control one major colony, while Crisillyr has three:

- ▶ **Angelus.** The oldest colony in Elfaivar, located across the strait from Vendricce, controlled by Crisillyr. Though safe and established, the colony's largest city still only has a population of 25,000.
- ▶ **Kellandia.** A Risuri colony along the western coast, including the large island Titania. Many Risuri who feel uncomfortable with the technological direction their nation is taking have emigrated here, and while no colony is precisely welcomed by the local eladrin, the people of Kellandia are at least on friendly terms. The capital city **Sawyer** provides magically-resonant timber for ship-builders, and is home to an orthodox druidic circle known as the Ford, which hopes to earn the trust and loyalty of the eladrin people. The party will be welcome and safe here, though it is far from where Kasvarina is hidden.
- ▶ **Otto.** A Drakran colony along the northern coast of Elfaivar.
- ▶ **Rationalis.** A Danoran colony in the southeast, separated from the Risuri colony by Tropaeum. Has a strong military presence to retaliate against native attacks, since the eladrin



are very hostile to the mining and industry. The capital city **Valence** is a technologist's paradise, combining a steady stream of engineers and scientists with arcane scholars who are free to experiment in ways the more structured society of Danor would not approve of.

- ▶ **Tropaeum.** The second Crisillyiri colony in Elfaivar, located along the southwest coast. It was the launch point for many attacks against the dragon tyrants of Ber over two centuries ago, and its churches showcase many trophies from these conquests.
- ▶ **Vigilia.** Crisillyir's youngest colony in Elfaivar, stretching along the eastern half of the north coast. No major cities exist yet, and the country is still in the process of clearing out the natives.

Sentosa lies in land that is technically claimed by Danor in Rationalis, though the nearest settlement is 200 miles away. Later when the party heads for the Ingatan's Refuge, they'll need to enter the Crisillyiri colony of Vigilia.

Minor Sites.

Described below are several settlements you can place throughout Elfaivar as needed, to give the party places to recruit help or simply to rest.

Bloody Stump Trading Posts (population <50 each): More mistakes than genuine settlements, the Bloody Stump trading posts were established by Captain McGraken – a troll from the Anthras Mountains – and his indentured crew of Beran prisoners after their ship was forced ashore by a storm. Leaving some men behind as a base camp, McGraken personally took to exploring the jungles at night, returning each morning with one of his hands bitten off by some jungle creature, but slowly regenerating. He'd take most of his men and march them until they found his hand, then nail it to a tree and have them build another camp while he went out scouting again at night. After six days and 60 miles, he found a spot with the supplies necessary to repair his ship.

He sailed back to Ber and asked for permission to reinforce his settlements with trolls from his home tribe, plus more orc, half-



What If They Go Anyway?

We ultimately will detail the defenses of Axis Island in ZEITGEIST #10: *Godmind*, but if the party wants to be mavericks and go there now instead of pursuing the Kasvarina lead, what happens?

Well, it'd be a bit like if Han, Luke, and Leia tried to sneak aboard the *Death Star II* in *Return of the Jedi* without a fleet to back them up. They might manage to evade capture if they were lucky, might even blow some things up and disrupt a few plans, but they are so hilariously outnumbered that the best they could hope for is to skirmish and escape. And in the time the party wasted, the Ob would get their "battle station" fully armed and operational and would succeed in taking over the galax— that is, the world. Just the world. For now.

If the party goes down this route, the Ob would manage to abduct Kasvarina by the 21st of Winter. The party would receive word by *sending* that people have spotted the colossus's footprints moving, heading over the course of two weeks from Elfaivar, to Crisillyir, to Drakr, to Danor. The party would have a chance to locate Kasvarina and rescue her, but if they persisted in ignoring the threat, eventually on the 37th of Winter the Ob would get control of the colossus and draw it into the real world.

On Winter 39 the colossus would be loaded onto a massive ship in Cherage. It would arrive on Axis Island on the 41st, and that evening the Obscurati would perform their ritual.

Of course, if the party waits until the Ob start shipping the colossus to Axis Island, they could speak to King Aodhan about launching an amphibious assault or targeting the convoy in transit. But the Ob know the convoy is vulnerable, which is why they've planned an attack on Aodhan himself at Torfeld Palace (detailed in ZEITGEIST #9: *The Last Starry Sky*). Ob agents have been waiting in the Bleak Gate analog of the capital Slate for months, and are ready to strike at a moment's notice.

If the party somehow thwarts this attack, they might be able to rally the military in time to engage in a massive battle on or near Axis Island. The colossus would easily destroy dozens of Risuri ships spectacularly, since neither the party nor the Risuri navy has any power sufficient to stop the titan.

Unimpeded, the colossus would make landfall, cross the island, open the giant golden plate of the Axis Seal, and begin adjusting petrified white trees in the ground in order to change which worlds float in the heavens. You could give the party a chance to disrupt the specifics of the ritual, similar to how we expect them to disrupt Roland Stanfield's eldritch machine in Flint (again, see ZEITGEIST #9: *The Last Starry Sky*). If they succeed, the colossus wavers at a key moment near the end of the ritual and is struck by a bolt of wild magic that fells it. The ritual still manages to alter the world, but because the *golden seal* is not properly shut, the party at least has a chance to set things right later.

In the meantime, however, an uncontrolled flux of magic would sweep over the island and scatter the PCs, perhaps stranding them in the Dreaming as would normally happen at the end of this adventure. They'd need to find a way back to the real world; once they did, they would find that the whole world—including Risur—has fallen under the Obscurati's control.

dragon, and goblin prisoners. Bruse Shantus agreed and named McGraken "regional overlord" of Ber's "colony" in Elfaivar. Today the various bloody stumps – now numbering in the dozens – serve as trading posts throughout the region. All criminals and villains are welcome, except thieves, who are punished as one might expect.

The party might encounter a Bloody Stump Trading Post anywhere in Elfaivar.

Macdam (population 3,200): One of the first areas colonized in Elfaivar by a nation other than Crisillyir, the settlement of Macdam lies on the massive isle of Titania, technically within the Risur colony of Kellandia. Founded during the Second Yerasol War when Risur was particularly hostile to the idea of technology and industry, the town became home for misfit technologists.

Located along a river and backed by high cliffs riddled with canyons, Macdam is excellently defended and serves as a safe haven against pirates. With Risur's recent adoption of more technology, Macdam has begun to seek stronger connections with the homeland. Pemberton Industries was in the process of building a factory here when its founder fell out of favor with King Aodhan.

Port Perrault (population 947): Not officially recognized as a Danoran colony, Port Perrault was established by a Danoran commodore tasked with hunting pirates in the region. Chosen for nearby hills that provide coal for refueling steam engines, the port is slowly expanding its tendrils into Elfaivar's natural resources, and might eventually become a full-blown shipyard. Currently the port is home to a duo of vessels operated by the elite *Porteurs de la Mort* – the *Boucherie des Mers* and *La Rêve Invincible*.

Shaha (population 4,340): A city founded by an eastern border state of little regional power, Shaha is infamous as the capital of the modern slave trade. Peoples from the far southeast can be bought here, and the leader of the colony – known as "daimyo" – has used slave labor to construct extravagant architecture, believing these great edifices will aid in taming the nearby jungle.

Clues So Far.

So where should the party start? The foremost clue about Kasvarina's location is that the Ob think the colossus has been somehow following her, and since the giant machine leaves twenty-yard footprints wherever it goes, the party could simply track it. Weeks ago it crossed over from Ber near Seobriga, came ashore in Kellandia, then walked through the jungle all the way to the Danoran colony of Rationalis. This fits with the simplest and safest option of making landfall in Kellandia, but it's not the fastest.

Kasvarina was last seen with Asrabey Varal, and though they are both shielded from scrying because they're technically on another plane in the fey enclave Sentosa, some divinations can help point the way to them. If PCs divine the nearby ruins of Rumah Terakhir (which is semi-coterminous with Sentosa) they can catch brief flashes of the enclave. Divinations that can provide information about subjects on other planes work on Asrabey normally, but whenever a character attempts to divine Kasvarina's location, thoughts, status, or the like, that character must make a DC 26 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a failure, the magic reports something deceptive, usually in a way to lessen suspicions.



Weather and Endurance.

It is late Autumn going into early Winter, and the subtropical Elfaivar is warm and humid but not sweltering. Rainstorms sweep south to north across the region every few days, but tend to linger along the north coast.

Docker Informants.

Any PC with the Docker theme can easily get information from dockworkers at whichever ports the party lands in. Word travels up and down the coast, and dockers are generally on good terms with the porters who haul supplies inland. Rumor has it a lot of Danorans have been landing in Valence, capital of the colony Rationalis. They offloaded tons of advanced instruments and a fair bit of artillery, then marched it north into the jungle some one hundred miles, stopping at three different ruins along a river.

A DC 23 Intelligence (History or Nature) check lets PCs know three eladrin enclaves Asrabey was said to have connections to before he came to Risur and allied himself with the Unseen Court. The three enclaves – Sentosa, Akraivan, and Bharat – all lie generally in the southeastern part of Elfaivar, near the Danoran colony Rationalis. While docking at a Danor-controlled port is foolhardy, the party might decide to at least start closer, by going to Tropaeum, a Crisillyiri colony.

A DC 21 Intelligence (History) check lets the PCs use centuries-old maps to locate the three enclaves, and with a successful DC 18 Intelligence check can then find a passable river that comes within 20 miles of each enclave. Divinations might even pinpoint Sentosa as the target of choice. If the party has the archaeological assistance of Xambria, they have advantage on these checks.

A Spit for Good Luck.

Once the group has figured out its plans, Lauryn makes preparations to teleport back to Risur. Delft pops some fresh chewing tobacco in his mouth, then does a quick tour of the ship getting to know the crew and encourage them to live up to the example the PCs set. Then he shakes each constable's hand, apologizes for thinking every time he sees them now that it will be the last, and then spits on the deck, saying it's for good luck.

Lauryn replies that Delft should have given the party his spittoon instead; it must be terribly lucky. Then she takes the Chief Inspector and his bodyguards and teleports away.

False Flag

Action. Tactical.

Danoran warships flying Risuri colors hunt for the party at sea.

Under the orders of Han Jierre, elite military units loyal to the Sovereign move against the party. While action has not been officially sanctioned by Nicodemus (who has another ambush in mind; see You Can't Go Home Again, in Part Two of this adventure), the Danoran Sovereign has made his vendetta against the PCs personal based on the party's continued meddling in Obscurati affairs, but his ire is especially great if they fought and/or killed his daughter Lya.

This attack occurs while the party is aboard their ship, but the specific location depends on how the party arrives in Elfaivar and when they might reasonably be tracked down by the conspiracy.

Naval Surveillance.

After the party leaves Mutravir Island, Ob agents loyal to Sovereign Han Jierre use numerous *scrying* spells and other divinations try to pinpoint their location. Some of these spells target the PCs personally, other spells target their ship, and still others target potential arrivals at various ports along the coast. The party might be blasé about the threat, they might cast a few anti-divination spells, or they might blanket themselves with protections and illusions and then use *sending* to set up fake meetings in hope the Ob find out and go after the wrong place. Use your best judgment to determine whether the party's efforts at secrecy amount to "minimal," "moderate," or "extensive," then adjust based on which port the party chooses to make landfall at.

Choosing a Risuri port is very predictable, so the party's precautions count as one step less useful if they head for Kellandia. Heading to one of the various foreign colonies provides no modifier, and if they avoid ports altogether and head straight for the river that passes near the eladrin enclaves their precautions are one step more effective.

- ▶ If the party has taken *minimal* precautions, the Danorans get ahead of them and place an ambush in the harbor wherever they're heading, with some ships flying false Risuri colors to trick the party.
- ▶ If the party has taken *moderate* precautions, instead the attack occurs when the party's ship is in open sea.
- ▶ If the party has taken *extensive* precautions, the Ob cannot locate them, and indeed the party (or other RHC agents providing counter-surveillance) discovers where the Ob fleet is hiding, giving the party the option to ambush *them*.

Porteurs de la Mort.

Danoran military specialists from the vaunted *Porteurs de la Mort* ("Bearers of Death") have only been operating in Elfaivar for about two weeks longer than the party, but already they've assembled networks of informants both on land and at sea to keep them abreast of potential threats. Between their own spies and information gleaned by Obscurati divinations, they have a good chance of finding the party.

The *Porteurs de la Mort* are Danor's relatively recent response to the tactical nightmare foreseen in combating the RHC agents of Risur. Tasked in dealing with broadly equipped and skilled units, the *Porteurs* bring a mix of differing skills to put down mixed enemy formations. Like many secretive agencies, the *Porteurs* have no formal markings or rank insignia, acting entirely "off the books," leaving little to trace them back to Danor. They travel in a pair of steam frigates that can conjure fog banks to conceal themselves, and they are accompanied by a smaller steamship that has been modified to resemble a Risuri design. They're even adept at faking accents, and prefer to pose as coming from an ambiguous "east."

The *Porteurs* are Danoran military, and are not technically part of the Obscurati, but they have occasionally collaborated with Ob agents on covert missions.



Small Fleet Tactics.

The *Porteurs* operate from a pair of steam frigates – the *Boucherie des Mers* (“*Butchers of the Seas*”) and the *La Rêve Invincible* (“*The Invincible Dream*”), currently based out of Port Perrault – and are accompanied by a smaller steamship, the *Ipsum*, that has been enchanted at great expense in order to increase its speed to match the mighty warships. Recently they were joined by a top-of-the-line steam submarine named *Lya’s Lament* (this vessel is named the *Sovereign’s Knife* if *Lya Jierre* is still alive).

The *Porteurs*, having been warned of the party’s combat prowess, seek to ambush the PC’s ship, distract them with a boarding action, and then have the two frigates hang back and attempt to sink them from afar.

Though loyal and well-trained, the *Porteurs* are not suicidal. When one of their ships is boarded by the PCs, other nearby ships will close and try to board as well. However, if it looks like the party has the clear upper hand, the remaining ships try to flee.

We present here statistics for the Danoran vessels. See the *ZEITGEIST Player’s Guide* for stats of possible PC ships.

Terrain at Sea.

If the *Porteurs* attack while the party is at open sea, you might include a few stages of safe water, a stage with reefs and shoals (with dense catch hazards), and a stage with narrow but tall islands for the frigates to hide behind. A mild storm hangs over the area, slightly lessening visibility and producing mild chop.

The two frigates lie concealed with their illusory shrouds behind the islands. A DC 28 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the atypical fog at the islands while the party passes through an adjacent stage. *Lya’s Lament* stays near the frigates, observing the surface through a periscope.

The steamship *Ipsum* patrols along the party’s expected course, flying a Risuri flag. If the party’s ship’s lookout succeeds a DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check, he notices the ship before it spots the party, separated by three stages (about half a mile). The party’s lookout gains a +5 bonus to this check if their ship uses sails, since it won’t have a telltale smoke plume to mark its passage.

Technologist PCs recognize that the steamship is actually a Danoran design modified to look Risuri. Other adventurers might note it with a successful DC 22 Intelligence check.

If the *Ipsum* spots the party it uses semaphore to signal for help, mention that they were trying to evade a Danoran ship, and ask for protection to the nearest port. Then they try to sail with the party. Once the group is within two stages of the islands where the frigates hide, or if the party attacks, the *Ipsum* launches a red flare out of a mortar to alert the frigates.

Terrain in Port.

If the *Porteurs* attack as the party is preparing to dock, pertinent stages include the docks for large vessels, the adjacent docks for small vessels (which has dense crash hazards), the inner harbor, the mouth of the river (which has a slight current), the outer harbor, the close sea, and the islands east of the harbor.

As above, a mild storm limits visibility to three stages and produces mild chop.

Sinking and Boarding.

This encounter serves one major role in the overall campaign: it shows that the Obscurati view the party as major threats and are willing to commit extensive resources to stopping them.

Even with two ships at their side, this encounter can be overwhelming if the party did not upgrade their ship’s armaments and defenses in *ZEITGEIST #6: Revelations from the Mouth of a Madman*. They might be able to handle the *Ipsum* and *Lya’s Lament*, but the frigates have a very good chance of sinking the PCs’ ship unless the party uses smart tactics.

If the party’s ships sink, the *Porteurs’* vessels will approach to loot and ransom survivors. Depending on how many crew the party still has available and how much damage they dealt to the enemy, they might have a chance of turning the tables and claiming a frigate for their own, or they might just sneak aboard the submarine and escape.

Simplified Fleet Combat.

If you don’t want to deal with multiple ships maneuvering, you can simply play out the following scenario. Let the party make three attack rolls each naval turn (at +6). The first naval turn they can only target the steamship, which attacks back at +4 each turn (or +8 if it can get within 500 feet).

Starting the second naval turn, the two frigates begin targeting the party’s ship and attack at long range (+8 with disadvantage). Then the submarine tries to ram (+10), and if it inflicts at least 1 strike it disgorges its boarding party. In the third naval turn and thereafter, the frigates close and keep attacking (+8 and +8).

If a boarding action occurs, for each strike that hit a Danoran ship deals 6d10 damage to one of the troops. If there are no troops left, each strike kills 1d6 crew.

The two frigates hide amid the islands, concealed with their illusory shrouds. A DC 28 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the fog while the party is in the close sea stage, before entering the harbor. *Lya’s Lament* stays near the frigates. *Ipsum* falsely flies a Risuri flag and sits docked among the large vessels. *Porteurs* on shore watch and send up a flare when the party enters the harbor.

The frigates approach the party from behind, and the *Ipsum* signals that it will fight by their side. On the next round, the *Ipsum* sails up beside the party and opens fire at point-blank range.

Enemy Vessels

- 2 *Porteurs de la Mort* steam frigates with illusory shrouds, *Boucherie des Mers* and the *La Rêve Invincible*
- 1 Danoran steamship (*Ipsum*)
- 1 Danoran submarine (*Lya’s Lament*)

Submarine Crew

- 8 *Porteurs de la Mort* marines
- 8 Danoran seamen

Steamship Crew

- 1 *Porteurs de la Mort* artillery
- 2 *Porteurs de la Mort* marines
- 6 Danoran seamen
- 1 Danoran rifle troop

**Frigate Crew, each**

- 8 *Porteurs de la Mort* artilleryists
- 4 *Porteurs de la Mort* snipers
- 32 *Porteurs de la Mort* marines
- 4 Danoran rifle troops
- 2 Danoran artillery troops

You can find enemy stats in Appendix Two: Recurring NPCs.

Porteurs de la Mort Steam Frigate

Huge Level 17 Vehicle (111,000 gp)

Hull Integrity 4; Defense 25

Maneuverability 4; Speed 14

Crew 32, minimum 8; Total Complement 140

DESIGN

Length 170 ft.; Beam 35 ft.

Masts 0 (steam engine); Decks 4

ARMAMENTS

Fog Shroud. A haze of fog rises up from the sea, concealing the massive vessel. The ship's engineer can spend his action to activate the shroud. This blocks line of sight to and from the ship.

While the fog is up, the steam frigate has disadvantage on vehicle (water) checks. Also, the steam frigate's gunner must succeed a Wisdom (Perception) check (DC 10 against a ship firing cannons, DC 15 against a normal ship in motion, or DC 20 against an immobile ship running silently) to target an enemy effectively unless it is at short range. Even if a target is located, the ship has disadvantage on attack rolls.

In addition, while the fog is up, enemy ships must make the same Wisdom (Perception) checks as above to target the steam frigate.

Cannon Turrets. Two turrets at the ship's fore and another pair at the aft can cover any firing arc, though they can concentrate the most fire to the broadside. They mount extremely long-bored cannons, which are designed to fire great distances. Dozens of men scurry across the deck carrying munitions or manually cranking wheels to adjust the mighty weapons' aim. *Crew:* 40. *Attack:* +10 to broadsides, or +6 fore or aft. Can attack at long range with disadvantage.

Ipsium, Danoran Steamship

Large Level 14 Vehicle (24,400 gp)

Hull Integrity 3; Defense 15

Maneuverability 6; Speed 14

Crew 8, minimum 2; Total Complement 25

DESIGN

Length 85 ft.; Beam 25 ft.

Masts 0 (steam engine); Decks 3

TRAITS

Big Block. The smokestacks for this steamship are unusually large, suggesting a very powerful engine for a vessel of its size (see Speed).

ARMAMENTS

Cannon Turret. A pair of massive cannons in a turret. *Crew:* 15. *Attack:* +4, forward or broadside.

Lya's Lament, Danoran Submarine

Huge Level 13 Vehicle (36,360 gp)

Hull Integrity 4; Defense 20

Maneuverability 4; Speed 8

Crew 16, minimum 3; Total Complement 16

DESIGN

Length 150 ft.; Beam 30 ft.

Masts 0 (steam engine); Decks 1

Special sealed hull accessible by central hatch; forward boarding compartment in ram-prow

TRAITS

Boarding Ram-Prow. Forged with the face of a glaring female tiefling, the fore of this vessel is made of reinforced metals and bears a brutal set of horns designed to drill into opposing vessels. When the *Lya's Lament* rams another vessel, prevent the first strike the rammed ship would deal to the submarine. In addition, following the ram, the vessel can unload as many crewmembers as prepared onto the enemy ship through the area impacted by the ram.

Once the *Lya's Lament* disengages following a ram attack, the enemy ship is considered to be sinking slowly from the resultant wound.

Nautilus. The *Lya's Lament* can submerge to a depth of 30 feet, and holds up to 4 hours of air with full complement. A periscope allows a crewman to act as look-out while inside the hull.

Aftermath.

If the party sinks the *Porteurs'* ships, they won't have to worry about naval threats for several adventures. If they lose and are captured, give them a chance to escape – perhaps a sympathetic crewman lets them steal a runabout, or a clever message to Lauryn Cyneburg can net them a teleportation rescue.

If you need a *deus ex machina*, the party's nearby Beran waters. Perhaps the Bruse learns their fate and sends a small orc fleet to swarm over the Danoran vessels and free them.

Seeking Kasvarina**Exploration. Montage.**

Hundreds of miles of trackless jungle hide the party's target.

The party might handle this step simply by sailing up a river, hiking out to Akraavan and Bharat and finding them empty, and then docking amid the ruins of Sentosa's old port and finding the Obscurati (see Footprints of the Colossus). But if they failed to pinpoint the three eladrin enclaves Asrabey frequented, they'll have the unenviable task of searching thousands of square miles of jungles.

Even if they just follow the colossus's footprints, the colossus can cross about 200 miles in a day, whereas a group of humanoids will travel at 10 miles per day, or perhaps 15 miles on strong mounts. It's a 600-mile trail before reaching Rumah Terakir and the entrance to Sentosa, so the party would be advised to call in help.

The party's Prestige lets them call in favors in the various colonies. Risur prestige functions in Kellandia. Clergy prestige functions in Angelus, Tropaeum, and Vigilis. Unseen Court prestige can help slightly in all locations. Though we don't track



Prestige with Ber, you can treat the party as having an effective Prestige of 4, if the Bruse died and was replaced, or 5, if they saved the Bruse's life.

For favors using Clergy Prestige, if the party sends a message to Morgan Cippiano in Flint, he can grant them a one-time +5 bonus to a Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check to speed up the timeline, since he knows the right people to ply. For favors using Unseen Court Prestige, contacting Gale can grant advantage to the check.

Kellandia.

The party on their own would spend likely two weeks following the trail of the colossus through this colony. However, if they call in a rank 8 favor, they can get civilians out searching the entirety of the colony for information about the colossus. The time it takes to fulfill the favor is equal to the time it takes to get information (so with Risur Prestige 6, it takes a week, or just a day if they can succeed on a DC 30 Charisma [Intimidation or Persuasion] check).

All a thorough search discovers, though, is that the colossus passed through, stopped briefly at an old Elfaivaran city, then kept on traveling. There are signs that some other group was investigating the same ruin – human footprints and marks in the ground where tents were set up in or near the colossus footprints. These were Obscurati researchers, trying to detect planar fluctuations that would indicate an eladrin enclave.

If the party calls in a rank 9 favor, they can get several military units and mercenary search parties to sail east, make landfall in Tropaeum, and scout the colossus's path in that colony. (With Risur Prestige 6, this takes a month; a week if the party succeeds on a DC 31 Charisma [Intimidation or Persuasion] check.)

Angelus and Vigilis.

The party might call in favors in these colonies (a rank 8 favor with Clergy Prestige can yield a colony-wide search), but they won't uncover anything relevant to their mission, at least not yet. Once the party learns about the *Lost Arc of Reida* from the eladrin in Sentosa, a rank 5 favor is enough to get a friendly welcome at Vigil Longis.

Tropaeum.

A rank 8 favor with Clergy Prestige results in a colony-wide search for signs of the colossus, the Ob, and Kasvarina. As in Kellandia, this search will reveal that the colossus stopped at a few ruins, tromped through them, and then kept going, and that some time later a group of people came and investigated. One group of Clergy searchers went out to check a ruin and did not return (the Ob killed them, though this particular ruin is not where Kasvarina is).

Rationalis.

The party cannot call in favors from the Danorans here, but a rank 6 favor with Unseen Court Prestige (which would have to be requested by someone in Risur, since the Court doesn't operate in Elfaivar) yields the names of the three eladrin enclaves Asrabey frequented, as mentioned in Clues So Far (in Part Two of this adventure).

A rank 7 favor with Ber (which again would have to be requested by someone in Ber) could get the Bruse to order "Regional

Overlord" McGraken to send his men from the Bloody Stump trading posts on raids into the Danoran colony, looking for clues. Since technically they're all criminals in Ber anyway, the Bruse can easily keep his nose clean while these ruffians indulge their cultural heritage of pillage and plunder (the high rank of the favor is not because getting the prisoners to raid is hard, but just because it takes a while to get them all to return and give their reports.)

The Beran raids discover current activity at three eladrin ruins – Sentosa, Akravan, and Bharat. The party still has to find a way to get there; the coastal Bloody Stump Trading Post is about sixty miles away from the ruins.

Jungle Trek.

At the party's level, nothing that simply roams the jungles of Elfaivar poses an existential threat. If you want to add some flavor, they might cross paths with a parade of elephants accompanied by some local fey, or be stalked (but never attacked) by a dire tiger, or come across a ruined village with a centuries-old stone marker listing the names of every woman who perished there from the Great Malice.

If they spend enough time in the wild, they might be accosted by an eladrin hermit who performs mild curses and leaves bloody totems in their path to try to make them leave his territory. The Dreaming bleeds through in places, and perhaps one morning they wake beside a grotto that wasn't there at nightfall, and that sings for them to come down into its depths. If you want to work in a sidequest where the whole party explores a mutual dreamscape and confronts a PC's inner demons, this is the right place for you.

Two Dead Ends.

If the party goes to Akravan and Bharat, they find signs of recent Obscurati activity around the colossus footprints. The strongest signs of activity cluster near the handful of archways or doorways that have not crumbled from centuries of disuse. Detecting magic there reveals strange planar energies similar to that involved with traveling to the Dreaming.

The party can also find, tossed into bushes, discarded glass vials with traces of oil infused with different planar energy. The Ob agents are trying to figure out how to use their *wayfarer's lanterns* to open a path into an eladrin enclave, a task that normally requires an enchanted *enclave key*.

Right Ruin.

When the party reaches Rumah Terakir, an ominous hush hangs over the jungle. Hot winds stir the trees but only a few animals cry or chirp, because intruders have disturbed the area.

Likely the first glimpse the PCs have of the city (should they arrive by boat), are the colossal stone statues of bare-chested warriors that protect the long-since crumbled and flooded docks. Four intact statues stand guard over the river-way entrance, while the ruins of three shattered ones block off portions. In at least one instance, this has led to a waterfall rushing down the ruined chest of a toppled and broken statue.

Crumbling marble structures and stonework temples are all that remains of the once-proud eladrin city, but some kind of magical force repels the jungle from simply reclaiming the ruins. Massive in size, the surviving city encompasses about 70 square miles.



Where Is Everyone?

The eladrin enclave of Sentosa occupies the same space as Rumah Terakhir, but resides in a transitory demi-plane between the material world and the Dreaming. Enchanted *edgestones* line the internal border of the demi-plane; these hedge out the jungle and repel the colossus, due to the witchoil flowing within it.

The people dwelling in Sentosa can see into the ruins of Rumah Terakhir; travelers in the material plane show up as incorporeal monochrome figures in their colorful world. Even the sounds of those on the material plane are brought across to Sentosa, though words are muted and devoid of emotion, sounding like the hauntings of a ghost. Those in the real world cannot sense Sentosa, though, at least not without the aid of magic.

Skyseer PCs feel a sensation as if being watched by someone on the other side of a mirror, and will sometimes even glimpse brightly-colored figures reflected in pools of water or polished metal. No magic they should have access to, though, can gain them full entry to Sentosa's demi-plane.

Sites of Interest.

Eventually the party should come across the archway entrance to Sentosa and the Obscurati researchers working there (see Footprints of the Colossus), but before then they might wander the city and take in the sights.

Edgestones: At the boundary of the jungle, the PCs may notice faintly visible shimmering that suggests overlapping abjuration spells. These are the effects of the *edgestones*, which lie in the Sentosa demiplane but have an effect in the real world.

Casting a *plane shift* spell within the boundaries of the *edgestones* can transport the PCs into the enclave, but each round each PC has a 10% chance of being shunted back into the material world.

Footprints: Beyond the *edgestone* boundary are the colossus's massive footprints, as well as toppled and crushed trees from its trek through the jungle. Each footprint is a 10-foot deep impression, 50 feet long, with traces of witchoil pressed into the dirt.

The Temple of Hewanharimau: This ominous stone structure stands out for the lack of any other structures within 100 feet of it, and the large stone slab that covers the entrance. The stone can be moved with a DC 22 Strength check, causing it to fall onto its side and reveal the pitch black interior.

The inside of the temple is plain with only a handful of long rotted animal pelts dangling from the low ceiling. A single brass urn rests in the center of the chamber, raised on a stone plinth. The contents of the urn are a foul red substance (tiger's blood that will always replenish). Consuming the blood causes the drinker to contract lycanthropy and become a weretiger unless they succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw.

This temple was long-abandoned even before the fall of Srasama and the coming of the Clergy. Hewanharimau was a Seedism deity who embodied the importance of animals, but who was cast out of the pantheon for afflicting elves with a curse that turned them into half-beasts. His punishment was being turned into a tiger that walked as a man: a rakshasa. Not wishing to attract the attention and ire of the rakshasa, the elves of Rumah Terakhir left the simple temple, but they closed it off and enchanted it with a guardian who will punish any who seek to praise the reviled god.

If a creature enters the dark temple, as it leaves it is confronted with a hooded feminine figure that glows faintly blue and appears incorporeal. It holds a shining blue star in its hand, which materializes into a bastard sword. Then in an old eladrin tongue it says, "*Will you stand against evil, no matter its shape?*"

This is a summoned outsider, effectively a **stone golem**, but with a body of wood and flowers rather than machinery. It wields the legendary *arsenal of Dhebisu*, a mutable weapon forged from a fallen star said to have defeated Hewanharimau. The outsider exists only to find a warrior worthy of wielding the weapon.

It attacks any creature who openly prayed to the god within, but is content to simply drive an intruder from the temple by using *suggestion* to make it leave. Against any creature who drank the tiger's blood, it uses *suggestion* to get the creature to surrender and submit to a *geas* spell. Then it sends the creature on a mission to cure its lycanthropy.

Finally, if a PC claims it will stand against evil, the outsider uses *suggestion* with the recommendation, "*Then arm yourself and prove it.*" It attacks to subdue, only using its weapon, not any innate spell-casting. Each round it transforms its weapon into another shape – bastard sword, spear, greataxe, shortsword, heavy flail, light pick, shortbow, and so on. If the PC survives the fight for 12 rounds, or if it manages to defeat the inevitable, the outsider yields and hands over the *arsenal*. It vanishes shortly thereafter. It also vanishes if after the duel begins another PC joins the battle, or if its opponent is primarily fighting without weapons or is acting cowardly.

A character can attempt to defeat the inevitable once per day, but once it hands over the *arsenal*, it simply wields a bastard sword and no longer offers to duel. See Appendix Three for details on the *arsenal of Dhebisu*.

The Temple of Ingatan: Built downward into the ground like a 20-foot deep inverted step-pyramid, this temple's walls are inscribed with delicate script, long since worn away.

PCs that interact with the script can make DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to realize there is a second set of script on the walls, illusionary script that appears when touched. Alternatively, PCs with *true seeing* or other means of bypassing illusions can identify the hidden script that overlays all the text on the walls.

The illusionary script is a full record of devotional rites to the Seedism deity Ingatan. Modern scholars view Ingatan as a trickster deity who traded people fire for stories and then left as their homes burned down. The illusionary script presents Ingatan as not a trickster, but a deity devoted to accumulating knowledge and preserving memories. It emphasizes that despite his seemingly odd or malicious actions, the deity acts with a long-term plan in mind.

An adventurer with a spellcaster level of 5th or higher who spends the day reading these writings gains insight from the unique perspective of Ingatan. As a one-time boon, the spellcaster may select any 1st-, 2nd-, or 3rd-level spell from any spell list. They can cast that spell once between long rests.

The Temple of Srasama: A dominating temple resides within the center of the former city; a great stepped pyramid topped by the legs of a giant made of stone. Beyond the legs, the torso is broken in twain. Rocks litter the grounds around the statue. Observation and cataloguing of the stones reveals them to be pieces of the eladrin deity Srasama.



The interior of the temple is bare, and the once elaborate murals contained within have been burned and broken. Several marks on the walls are graffiti-like gashes that proclaim the religious dogma of the Clergy. Centuries-old discarded weapons and items lie about, bearing sigils and marks revealing them to be implements once used by the Clergy.

Recent Events.

Around the same time the adventure began, the colossus stood beside the ruins, trying to find a way in. It trampled all through the jungle but could never step foot inside the area bounded by the *edgestones*. Finally on the 8th of Autumn it headed away, drawn by some temporal sense toward Methia in distant Danor.

A few days before the PCs arrive, a group of Obscurati researchers set up camp near an archway that would lead into Sentosa with the right *enclave key*. Auguries warn them that a monster guards the archway, however, so they have not tried entering yet.

Porteurs Scouts.

A few times during their jungle journey, with a DC 23 Wisdom (Perception) check the party might glimpse a *Porteurs de la Mort* scout watching them from the woods 50 feet away. A single scout poses no threat, and catching him probably won't be hard. All he knows is that his unit is looking for them, and that the *Porteurs* have been told the RHC was plotting to assassinate the Sovereign back during the peace summit.

Footprints of the Colossus

Action. Tactical.

The Obscurati are trying to find a way into an eladrin enclave at the ruin of Rumah Terakir.

A group of a dozen researchers and their *Porteurs* have set up camp around a colossal footprint at the jungle border, near an archway that would allow ingress to Sentosa with the right *enclave key*. Mostly the researchers are biding their time for the Ob to send sufficient forces to storm the eladrin enclave. The *Porteurs* have light artillery that they hoped would break through into the demiplane, but it had no effect.

Ambusher or Ambushee?

The *Porteurs de la Mort* stand between the party and Sentosa, but their encounter can go two ways.

Sneaking Up.

A cautious party can reach Sentosa before word gets to the *Porteurs* here. In this case, the researchers and *Porteurs* are active around the archway gate. Two artillery pieces sit unused in the jungle three hundred feet away, guarded only by a pair of artilleryists. While assaulting the massed troops is tough, the party might find the artillery and turn it on the Danorans.

If attacked, the soldiers try to focus fire and protect the mage, Charles Ormand. The non-combatant researchers panic, and when the fight is nearing its conclusion, have one run through the gateway arch, which brings forth the enclave's monstrous defender.

Gate Forces

- 4 *Porteurs de la Mort* artilleryists, without their artillery
- 2 *Porteurs de la Mort* marines, patrolling the perimeter
- 6 *Porteurs de la Mort* snipers, out in the open
- 2 *Porteurs de la Mort* artilleryists, watching the artillery in the jungle
- Charles Ormand, Obscurati researcher
- 11 Obscurati researchers, non-combatants

The Second in a Long Line of Ambushes.

If the party has taken no measures of secrecy, the *Porteurs de la Mort* figure out where they are headed and lay an ambush at the entry gate of Sentosa. They have camouflaged their two artillery pieces in the jungle, each accompanied by three artilleryists and a marine who scans the area with a telescope. The two artillery pieces are each 300 feet from the archway in opposite directions, and are nigh impossible to spot from the gateway arch (DC 36 Wisdom [Perception] check). Someone circling the ruins might find them with a DC 28 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Additionally, a squad of six snipers has hidden in the ruins south of the gate, concealed by a *major image* (DC 30 Wisdom [Perception] check to notice the snipers). One powerful mage waits as bait.

Ambush Team

- 6 *Porteurs de la Mort* artilleryists, 3 per emplacement
- 2 *Porteurs de la Mort* marines, 1 per emplacement
- 6 *Porteurs de la Mort* snipers, hidden near the gate
- Charles Ormand, Obscurati researcher

Tactics.

If the *Porteurs* get to spring their ambush, their plan has four phases.

Phase 1 – The Bait. What group of heroes could resist confronting a group performing strange experiments in the woods? The *Porteurs* have ordered most of the researchers to use their *wayfarer's lantern* to hide in the Bleak Gate, leaving behind the lead researcher **Charles Ormand** to tend to a campfire. He burns smoky green branches to make the camp's location obvious and draw the party in, and has cast a *major image* (using a 6th-level spell slot) of a dozen other researchers to make the place look vibrant. He also has *telepathic bond* active with the two marines and some of the snipers. If the party is spotted on the way in, the *Porteurs* tell him and he drinks potions of *mage armor*, *protection from energy* (fire), and *stoneskin*.

When the party shows up, Ormand stalls for time. A moment later the party hears a muted boom from one direction, then a second boom from a different direction.

Phase 2 – Bombardment. The *Porteurs* begin shelling the gate with their two pieces of field artillery. Each piece is set to strike a spot thirty feet away from the center of the camp (so that the researcher will be safe). The artillery has already been fixed on the campsite and fired with blanks to test the aim, so there is little chance of the shells missing. To account for wind, potential bird impacts, and other oddities, each artillery piece makes an attack roll, but will only miss on a roll of 1, in which case the shot scatters 1d6 × 5 feet in a random direction. Should the PCs move, the



artillerists must recalibrate their weapons, and use audio and visual cues to target (see rules in the *Porteurs de la Mort* Artillerist statblock in Appendix Two).

A successful strike from an artillery shell deals 21 (6d6) points of damage within a 15-foot radius. A successful DC 20 Dexterity saving throw reduces this damage by half.

In addition to their damage, the first shell fired from each artillery piece has been filled with chunks of stone from buildings in the magic-deprived ghost city of Methia, creating a lingering effect that impedes spell casting. Creatures damaged by the shells are affected as if *dispel magic* struck them (at its lowest level). Make a dispel check (d20 + 5) against each non-permanent magical effect on these creatures. Additionally, they must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 10 + spell level) anytime they cast a spell, or until someone removes the shards of stone from their skin, requiring a bonus action, action, and successful DC 17 Wisdom (Medicine) check. Any creature attempting to cast a spell within the impacted radius for 5 rounds after the shell lands must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 10 + spell level).

When the artillery hits, the *major image* of the research team flickers and is revealed to be an illusion. If Ormand wasn't caught in the area himself, he tries to trap the PCs so they'll be hit by more shells, placing a *wall of fire* encircling pointing inward.

Phase 3 – Fusillade. Coming out of cover, the six *Porteurs de la Mort* snipers move to arrive in the area depicted on the battle map, emerging from the south. Then they open fire, targeting spellcasters not caught in the blast, or PCs who have visible firearms. They prefer to use electromagnetic shots to slow approaching enemies, while saving lander shots for PCs who have gained any type of magical flight. Following their initial shots, the snipers attempt to snipe using Dexterity (Stealth).

While the snipers take shots against the PCs, the field artillerists work to re-load their mortars, a process that will take them 2 rounds. Once the mortars are reloaded, the marines call out positions in Danoran battle cant. The imprecision of this increases the miss chance to a 1-5 on the attack roll.

When the snipers are engaged in melee, one of their number is slain or incapacitated, or if the PCs are drawn out, the survivors call for Phase 4 (the final phase).

Phase 4 – Retreat. The Obscurati researchers have detected a monster lurking just beyond the archway that leads to Sentosa. If things are going badly for the *Porteurs de la Mort*, one of them rushes the archway (or perhaps Ormand sends a summoned creature in there). Any creature that enters the archway is stopped as if by a solid wall, then knocked back 20 feet (a DC 18 Strength saving throw negates). Black smoke billows out of the archway, and the ten-headed lion guardian emerges.

The *Porteurs* try to use this distraction to flee.

Aftermath.

Neither the researchers nor the *Porteurs* know anything the party doesn't already know. If the party is defeated, the GM might have the lion emerge to rescue them, or let them be dragged away and wake up later to the sounds of Asrabey slaughtering the surviving Danorans.

Charles Ormand, Obscurati Researcher

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 15 (*mage armor*)

Hit Points 120 (16d8+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws CON +7, WIS +3, CHA +6

Skills Arcana +13, Deception +10, History +9, Intimidation +6, Nature +9, Perception +3, Religion +9

Damage Resistances fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons not made out of adamantine

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Primordial

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. Charles' innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

Constant: *see invisibility*

At will: *misty step*

Spellcasting. Charles is an 11th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared from the wizard's spell list:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, fire bolt, mage hand, ray of frost, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *alarm, burning hands, detect magic, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *acid arrow, invisibility, scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *blink, dispel magic, fireball, major image, protection from energy, tongues*

4th level (3 slots): *conjure minor elementals, dimension door, stoneskin, wall of fire*

5th level (2 slots): *conjure elementals, scrying, telepathic bond, teleportation circle*

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning, programmed illusion*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

EQUIPMENT

Possessions. Charles carries 2 *potions of greater healing*, 1 *potion of displacement*, 1 *potion of invisibility*, *goggles of night*, his spellbook, 2 onyx gems (worth 300 gp), and 923 gp.





Gate of Rumah Terakir

Action. Tactical.

The enclave's supernatural guardian doesn't care if the party is friendly.

This ten-headed lion was crafted of dreamstuff and set to guard the entrance to Sentosa. Any creature that seeks to cross into the enclave without the *enclave key* will be confronted by this beast. If slain, it regenerates one day later as long as at least one eladrin survives in the enclave. It can freely travel between the real world, the Dreaming, and the enclave demi-plane.

If the party has somehow managed to contact Asrabey, or has otherwise conveyed to the people inside the demi-plane that they are friendly, guards will call off the ten-headed lion after three rounds, assuming it's safe. They won't risk opening the gateway arch if there are any other hostiles present, though.

Ten-Headed Lion

Large monstrosity, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10+48) plus floating heads (30 each)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (floating heads only)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws DEX +7, CON +8, INT +3, CHA +7

Skills Athletics +11, Perception +14

Damage Resistances fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 24

Languages understands Common and Elvish (see Steal Voice)

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Floating Heads. The ten-headed lion has 10 Small-sized heads. At any given time one is attached to its body, while the others can fly freely within 150 feet. If a head starts its turn further than 150 feet from the body, it teleports adjacent to the body or is destroyed if it cannot teleport.

Each head has its own traits. The heads all act independently on the body's initiative, and each typically either bites or uses its spell-like ability each round. The heads can be targeted individually (AC 19), and each has 30 hit points. However if a damaging source with an area of effect would strike multiple heads simultaneously, the damage is only dealt once and is divided equally among them.





For example, if a *fireball* catches three heads and would do 27 damage, each head only takes 2 damage. A *lightning bolt* that strikes four heads, if it would normally do 38 damage, instead does 9 damage to each head. A *magic missile* that targets heads with different missiles does normal damage to each head.

Head Swap. The ten-headed lion's body is immune to most detrimental effects as long as there are any heads remaining. Attacks against the body damage the attached head, and targeted effects like *polymorph* or *charm monster* only affect the attached head instead of the body. Physical obstacles might still affect the body, so *black tentacles* could grapple it, but any damage is dealt to the head instead.

As a bonus action, the ten-headed lion body can detach its current head, then teleport up to 150 feet adjacent to another head. It immediately attaches the new head to its body. The attached head uses the defenses of the body, and if it is destroyed the body can still function, though it is blind until it uses Head Swap.

Keen Smell. The ten-headed lion has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Innate Spellcasting. The ten-headed lion's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The ten-headed lion's floating heads can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

- ✦ **Cure Wounds.** The head licks itself or an adjacent head and regains 15 (3d8+2) hit points.
- ✦ **Dispel Magic.** The head gnashes its teeth, and a target within 10 feet is affected by *dispel magic* (cast with a 5th-level spell slot).
- ✦ **Entangle.** The head exhales hot breath upon the ground, and dense entangling foliage erupts in a 30-foot radius around it, lasting 10 minutes. Creatures in the area of the entangling foliage must make a Dexterity saving throw or else be restrained. Creatures that enter the area or end their turn in the area must also make a save or become restrained. The entire area is difficult terrain. The ten-headed lion and each of its heads can move freely through the entangling foliage.
- ✦ **Fear.** The head roars, and creatures in a 30-ft. cone must make a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can only be affected by this roar once per 24 hours.
- ✦ **Flesh to Stone.** The head locks eyes with a target within 10 feet, which must make a Constitution saving throw or be petrified. Creatures can use a reaction to avert their gaze against this attack.
- ✦ **Hold Monster.** The head licks its lips at a target within 10 feet, which must make a Wisdom saving throw or be paralyzed. At the end of each of its turns, a paralyzed creature can repeat the saving throw to end the effect.
- ✦ **Poison.** The head makes a bite attack. If the attack deals damage, the target must make a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned, taking 21 (6d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns for 3 rounds. At the end of each of its turns, a poisoned creature can repeat the saving throw to end the effect.
- ✦ **Searing Light.** Bright light lances out from the head's mouth at a creature within 120 feet. On a successful hit, the target takes 28 (8d6) radiant damage, and the next attack roll made against this target before the end of the ten-headed dragon's next turn has advantage due to the dazzling burst of light. Undead take double damage from this attack.

✦ **Steal Voice.** The head takes a deep breath, and a target within 10 feet must make a Charisma saving throw or feel its tongue suddenly seize with pain, as if caught with a cat's claw. The target loses the ability to speak above a croaking whisper for 1 week. It must use a bonus action each round to be able to speak at all, and even then has a 20% failure chance when casting a spell with a verbal component. The lion can only steal one voice at a time, but it can speak with that voice from any of its heads.

✦ **Telekinesis.** The head bares its fans at a Large or smaller target within 10 feet, which must make a Strength saving throw or be hurled 30 feet and be knocked prone.

Many-Eyed. For each of its heads, the ten-headed lion gains a +1 bonus to Wisdom (Perception) checks (maximum +10). If no head is attached to the body, the body is blind. Otherwise the lion and its heads are vaguely aware of what each head sees and each body party's health and condition.

Pounce. If the ten-headed lion moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the ten-headed lion can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Rake. When the ten-headed lion hits a creature in the same turn with two or more attacks, that creature takes an extra 3 (1d6) damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ten-headed lion attacks twice with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 10 (1d8+6) slashing damage.

Roiling Flames (Recharge 3–6). The lion releases a wave of fire in a 150-foot-radius around it. The flames roll across the ground, filling low elevations but unable to go uphill. Any creatures that are in the area or enter into it take 3 (1d6) fire damage. The flames do not damage ordinary plants.

At the start of the lion's next turn the flames grow in intensity, increasing to 7 (2d6) fire damage. One round later, the flames flash intensely and deal 17 (5d6) fire damage, then die out. For the following round, thick smoke 5 feet high provides concealment against adjacent creatures, or total concealment beyond 5 feet.

The consequence of this power should be to drive the PCs to the high ground, either onto the ruins or the fallen tree trunks. Anything with an elevation of 5 feet or more is safe, as are the colossus footprints, because the flame cannot roll over their raised edges (unless the lion is already atop the edge or inside the footprint).

Tactics.

The lion starts with the *fear* head attached to its body, but throughout the combat it will teleport its body to different heads as needed to maul the PCs. It opens combat by using Roiling Flames to drive the party to the high ground, and its heads spread out to target different PCs (and *Porteurs*, if any are present). The heads try to move adjacent to weak creatures so they can bite as opportunity attacks, but will float above foes who look like they'd be dangerous in melee. Most of the heads' powers have fairly short ranges, however, forcing them to stay close to the ground. The *searing light* head floats 30 feet up, though, so it can target the whole battlefield.



Aftermath.

One by one the heads should be eliminated by the PCs; once all the heads are gone, they can cut down the body, which will only be able to create fire or use its claws. If the ten-headed lion defeats the party, it licks each to stabilize them, then waits for the eladrin to take them captive.

If the party triumphs (or if they avoid this encounter altogether by contacting the eladrin some other way), they still cannot enter Sentosa through the archway, but they can faintly see figures through it as if through a veil. A large group organized in military formation stands behind two people who appear to be arguing, one leaning very aggressively into the face of the other. After a few moments of this, the other figure relents, pulls out some sort of small object, and then steps to the archway, which shimmers. The party can now see and pass into Sentosa.

A company of 20 male eladrin warriors wait warily under the command of an eladrin woman named **Faedravan**, who is holding a decorated ring of copper and wood known as an *enclave key*. With her is **Asrabey Varal**, who has demanded the party be let into the enclave (this assumes he and the PCs parted on good terms in *ZEITGEIST #5: Cauldron-Born*.) With a bitter glare at Asrabey, Faedravan welcomes the party to Sentosa, and asks that they enter quickly before anyone else can cross through. She does not apologize for any mauling they might have received courtesy of the enclave's guardian.

As the party enters the enclave, they feel a swing of vertigo and stumble, as if the gateway doesn't precisely line up between the two worlds.

Asrabey and the Amnesiac

Social. Real-Time.

Kasvarina asks the party to help her learn her past and fight against the Obscurati.

Faedravan and Asrabey escort the party into Sentosa, but they don't have much time to take in the enclave. Asrabey insists the party come with him first to a stone-walled home near the center of the enclave so they can speak with Kasvarina.

The enclave has most of the same buildings as the ruins, but they have been restored to liveable conditions. Their passage is watched by curious and fearful onlookers, mostly eladrin but also a few pixies and dryad-like fey. Though eladrin men still distinctly outnumber the women, the disparity is only about a 60/40 split, a far closer ratio than most scholars in the human world predicted would be possible.

Still, of the 4,000 eladrin here, a quarter are men near or over five centuries old, while the rest are younger, with nearly half the younger eladrin being women. The oldest men are almost all fiercely trained warriors, but each generation has trained in the art of battle, even if the enclave has seen relatively little combat in reality. As the PCs follow Asrabey, they pass a training field where roughly 100 young men and women practice mock combat, often two or three on one.

Convalescing Kasvarina.

Another company of 20 male eladrin warriors stands guard around and atop the building where Kasvarina resides, but with a word from Asrabey they allow the party inside. The three-bedroom home is furnished with silks and fine wood furniture fit for nobility. Kasvarina dresses in a simple day gown, and when the party arrives she's reading through a stack of books and scrolls, trying to learn about the outside world.

A fine mithral rapier lies across the table within easy reach, and as she turns the pages with one hand, Kasvarina idly taps the point of a mithral dagger into the table with her other. The sheer number of tiny stab marks is a testament both to how long she's been here and how frustrated she seems. She barely responds when Asrabey enters, and doesn't bother to look up or notice the party until her attendant clears his throat.

Historical Tutor.

Kieran Sentacore, an aged half-elf originally from Orithea, studied eladrin culture in Danor and came to the colony Rationalis to try to help the Danorans reduce tensions with the natives. Though his efforts have broadly failed, the eladrin knew enough about him that when Kasvarina demanded to learn about the five centuries she could not remember, they sent out rajputs (*elite warriors*) to kidnap him.

Kieran resides in another building – an “honored guest” always “protected” by several eladrin rajputs – but every day he comes to Kasvarina to answer her questions and suggest reading material. Mostly he just sits by and does his own reading. Today he is taking notes from the compiled works of the philosopher William Miller and scribbling a draft of his own travelogue, *The Dreams of Those to Come*, while Kasvarina studies *Wyrms Unconquered*, the story of a failed revolt against Ber's dragon tyrants from four centuries ago.

As a follower of the Panoply, Kieran has come to appreciate his unique exposure to a rare culture, but he doesn't want to be stuck here the rest of his life. He'll seek a chance to talk to the party alone and ask them to either negotiate for his release with the matriarch Athrylla, or to help him escape. It's quite possible he might actually have heard of any PC with the Docker theme, but he hasn't been to Flint for seventeen years.



Asrabey Varal. A centuries-old eladrin warrior, Asrabey was once married to Kasvarina Varal. For years he trained as an eladrin dreadnought, and he undertook many daring raids, becoming famous as one of the greatest eladrin warriors in the world. Two centuries ago, Kasvarina sent Asrabey to Risur to offer his services to the Unseen Court, and recently he has

unwittingly acted as a critical source of information and influence for the Obscurati.

After rescuing Kasvarina during the events of *ZEITGEIST #5: Cauldron-Born*, Asrabey took her to the eladrin enclave of Sentosa. He both hopes she regains her memories, and fears what truths will be revealed if she does. Stern and unsympathetic to outsiders, Asrabey displays few emotions other than righteous fury. Even with his wife Kasvarina he feels not so much love as intense devotion.



Triggered Memories.

When the party mentions the colossus, Kasvarina staggers as a flash of different memories overwhelms her. She looks up, smiles with a cruel pride, then shudders and cowers. She's remembering both her first look of the nearly completed colossus Borne a year ago, and the despair when she glimpsed the collapsing corpse of Srasama five centuries ago.

She falls against the wall and slowly regains her wits. Physical contact helps, and her first words as tries to remember where and when she are, *"This is not my home. I need to go to Resal."*

Docker Connection.

If the party has a docker or an outspoken follower of the Panopy movement, at some point Kieran Sentacore comes to that character in private. He thinks he knows something that might be of interest to Kasvarina, but he doesn't want to get her hopes up if she won't actually be leaving. In listening to her stories of her pre-amnesia life, she mentioned a performer named Navras. An eladrin named Navras built an opera house in Flint three centuries ago. He's sure the man died since then, but if Kasvarina gets a chance to visit Flint, he hopes the party could show her her friend's creation.

This provides a lead to the memory-event Navras (see Part Two of this adventure).

Eschatologist Connection.

Similarly, the party might discuss details of Kasvarina's past to try to learn about her. Kieran or Asrabey might mention Bhalu, one of Kasvarina's husbands during her time as a matriarch. An eschatologist PC recognizes the name as the leader of an infamous group of eladrin philosophers in Trekhom. This provides a lead to the memory-event Bhalu (see Part Two of this adventure).

Skyseer Connection.

At Kasvarina's urging, Asrabey lists names of Kasvarina's past associates, in hopes some might provide leads. A Yerasol Veteran PC will recognize the name of Chatwood, an eladrin skyseer who had been guiding Duchess Ethelyn of Shale with visions during the Fourth Yerasol War. Then apparently one of her visions drove her mad and she was imprisoned in an asylum. Asrabey says Chatwood was one of Kasvarina's spies in Risur.

Her Own Worst Enemy.

Asrabey briefly explains that the party are "the ones he mentioned," and that he thinks they might be able to help her. He then takes Kieran outside so Kasvarina and the party can have privacy.

For her part, Kasvarina is initially friendly, and she takes the first opportunity to make it clear that she remembers nothing of her involvement in the Obscurati. When she thinks about the version of her who oversaw assassinations as a matriarch of her own enclave, or who apparently conspired with strange "engineers" to design a metal titan, it's like she's thinking of a stranger. But it is a stranger whom she loathes, and whom she would gladly help defeat.

In the end, Kasvarina expresses her willingness to help the party defeat what this other version of her created. However, at this point, she doesn't know whether to trust them, so she asks to talk and exchange experiences before she shares her plan.

Take the time to let the party and Kasvarina get to know each other, and have her share what fragmented memories she does still have. She can speak of the following: training to protect her nation with sword and spell, singing any of a hundred songs her people have forgotten in five centuries, marrying and having two daughters, losing her husband Pillai in the holy war, using certain spices in her daughter Dala's favorite dish (spices she can't find today because the farms have been claimed by the jungle), marching to holy war, and both longing for revenge and despising herself for the slaughter she knew she'd be responsible for.

She can also tell them what she has managed to learn of her other self: she returned from the war as one of its few female survivors, she miraculously found her other daughter Launga alive, she formed an enclave and fought for a century, then she lost her daughter to betrayal from another matriarch. Apparently she tried to have more children but never could. After that she knows that she spent some centuries ordering attacks on the Clergy and thefts of treasure to strengthen her enclave, that she married half a dozen men for political reasons, and that she disappeared a little over a year ago. She thinks her own enclave – **Ushanti** – might still be thriving, but Asrabey has warned her not to go there because the Ob might have infiltrated it.

Allow the PCs to interject and ask questions, but also have Kasvarina ask about them and their pasts. Once the conversation winds down and she feels comfortable, Kasvarina goes to her pile of books and pulls out one traced with silver filigree that she wants the PCs to see.

The Lost Arc of Reida

The centuries-old book has been rebound multiple times. It contains a catalogue of mighty and dangerous artifacts the Elfaivaran empire possessed. Kasvarina has checked with scholars in the enclave, and most of these artifacts have long-since been plundered or destroyed, but one remains that they might be able to use as a weapon against the Obscurati.

The *Lost Arc of Reida*, a crown said to have been shaped from a piece of the Plane of Time that fell to the world, was a holy relic of the god Ingatan. Any who wears it and returns to the site of a memory is able to make that memory come to life. It was used in holy rites to pass on memories that must not be forgotten. The eladrin Elfaivar all know that the *Arc* was taken for safe-keeping after the Great Malice, and the first Vekeshi Mystics used it to pass along the memory of Srasama's fall. But eventually it was returned to a site known as Ingatan's Refuge, a few hundred miles to the north.

Kasvarina thinks that if she can use the *Arc*, even if she doesn't remember her past, she'll be able to see it. If she can retrace her steps, she'll surely discover something of use in defeating this shadowy group the other version of her helped found.

The problem is her hostess, Athrylla, who controls this enclave and who can limit who enters or leaves the demi-plane. Athrylla has been nothing but kind in protecting her, but Kasvarina senses that the two of them had an unfriendly history over the past five centuries, and for some reason she won't share, Athrylla has refused to let her or even Asrabey go out to seek the artifact. Kasvarina hopes that perhaps the party could convince her or, failing that, find some way to sneak out and bring Kasvarina along.



Asrabey's Duty Discharged.

Kasvarina calls Asrabey back in. If the party has agreed to help, Asrabey explains that he has tarried here longer than he wanted, and that duty demands he return to the Unseen Court. This was a mission Kasvarina herself gave him over two centuries ago: to ensure that in the eladrin time of need, the fey of Risur could be counted as allies. If the party will escort Kasvarina once she leaves Sentosa, then he will part ways with them.

Kasvarina reminds Asrabey that the order he got was from another version of her, and that his mission might somehow have served the goals of the Obscurati. He doesn't answer, but is clearly torn over his loyalty to a Kasvarina who was not quite the same woman who stands before him now. All he says is that *this* Kasvarina is soft, and a soft woman could never have protected their people like the Kasvarina he knew.

She responds angrily that the woman he *knew* apparently had no problem with state-sponsored prostitution (which Asrabey knows is a reference to *Akela Sathi*, the Lonely Companion "hotel"). She sternly tells him she much prefers the woman she is now, who, however "soft," remembers life before the world went mad.

The party might be able to convince Asrabey to come along with a successful DC 26 Charisma (Persuasion) check, but only if they can guarantee a boon to the Unseen Court in exchange. It doesn't matter for the plot whether Asrabey stays with Kasvarina and the PCs, though the GM might prefer to have fewer NPCs to keep track of.

Free Rein.

When the party is ready to go, Asrabey calls to the guards, who escort them to well-appointed private lodgings. It's up to the party where to go from here, but Asrabey or the guards can deliver a message to Athrylla if they want to set up a meeting.

Sentosa.

This large town is chaotic settlement with a population of nearly 5,000 (about 4,200 eladrin, 700 fey, 60 gnomes, 25 elves, and 15 other), and it abounds with enchanted objects. Non-elves take a -2 penalty on Charisma ability checks within its borders. In addition, as Sentosa exists between the fabric of the Material Plane and the plane of the Dreaming, it has the following traits.

Feyhealing. Fey and fey-touched races (elves, gnomes, etc.) regain 1 hit point at the start of each of their turns as long as they do not begin their turn with 0 hit points.

The Enclave Sentosa

Social. Montage.

The matriarch of Sentosa will decide whether to aid the party based on how they conduct themselves in her realm.

The old Elfaivaran city of Rumah Terakir lies in ruins, but a new settlement named Sentosa lies coterminous with it in a demi-plane between the material world and the Dreaming. The explicit name change is indicative of its matriarch's belief that her people must move forward and not cling to the past.

Today Sentosa is a large settlement by eladrin standards that is also home to a growing population of fey wanderers from the Dreaming. This unique blend of populace ensures the community has an abundance of magic, and the unique properties of the planar enclave allow for greater magical feats than a similarly sized settlement would typically possess.

Reactions.

The eladrin generally fear and shun outsiders, but Asrabey's familiarity with the party means the reaction of the locals depends on the party's prestige with the Unseen Court.

0 Prestige: The "welcome party" leads them to a larger force, which insists they sit in cells and submit their weapons. Failure to comply results in the PCs being asked to leave the enclave. If the PCs refuse to obey, the full might of Sentosa is brought upon them in an effort to force them from the community.

Should the PCs submit to holding, they are eventually visited by Kasvarina, who arranges for them to meet the matriarch Athrylla.

1-2 Prestige: An escort of eight eladrin rajputs always follows the party. These soldiers are the elite of the eladrin, each a peerless warrior of unparalleled skill with blade, bow, and shield. They keep silent when spoken to, and never come closer than 15 feet unless the PCs take arms or threaten a citizen.

Shopkeepers and merchants within the city offer up goods at retail value, and locals are just brusque, rather than actively rude.



Rumor: Shadow of Borne.

Elf and fey alike speak of the terrible shadow that loomed over Sentosa recently (adjust the specific time based on how long it has been since the start of the adventure). Lasting for almost a week, the shadow was like that of a terrifying giant, visible just beyond the boundaries of the *edgestones*.

When the giant first arrived, it attempted to enter the enclave, but the stones repelled it. After several attempts of forcibly striking the magical field (and crushing the ten-headed lion three times), the giant eventually slumped and waited motionless for several days. On the eighth day, the giant turned and moved towards the north-west, as though summoned by some unknown call.

Since the arrival of the giant, the people of Sentosa have been on edge, as the shadow would indicate some creature from the Bleak Gate had attempted to enter. Of course, in truth this was the colossus Borne, drawn to Sentosa by an innate link to its “mother” Kasvarina. Around the time it wandered off, the Obscurati figured out how to “spoo” Kasvarina’s presence, and they’re using it to draw the colossus to Methia, in Danor.

Athrylla Valanar. Though a few dozen small enclaves of eladrin survive in Elfaivar, each with its own matriarch, Athrylla is the only matriarch to have survived the five centuries from the fall of Srasama. Today she rules over the enclave of Sentosa, which she fears has been endangered by the arrival of Kasvarina.



When the Great Malice occurred, Athrylla was in battle, polymorphed into the shape of a dragon. She was one of the first to advocate for the path of Vekesh, using restraint rather than seeking suicidal revenge. Centuries ago she had many arguments with Kasvarina, who took a far more active role in sending forces to attack the Clergy. Though Athrylla wished to pursue peace with the Clergy, Kasvarina’s hardline stance made it impossible for her to find any leaders of the Clergy who would negotiate.

She feels an obligation to help perhaps the only other eladrin woman as old as her, but does not actually want Kasvarina back.

3-4 Prestige: The group is followed by a single rajput, **Desok**, who has heard of the PCs’ exploits and eagerly asks them about their many battles. The detail is more ceremonial than practical, though Desok’s presence makes the locals more willing to talk. Shopkeepers and merchants within the city offer up goods at retail value with a **10% discount**.

5+ Prestige: The PCs are allowed to wander the enclave as they see fit. While no detail is assigned to them, the PCs are accosted by dozens of keenly interested eladrin and fey, all who have heard their exploits. Shopkeepers and merchants offer a **25% discount**.

Places to Go, People to See.

There are several sites within Sentosa where the PCs can explore.

Akela Sathi, the Lonely Companion. If the party needs to rest and take a load off, the best place in Sentosa is also the most awkward. A hotel called *Akela Sathi* (“Lonely Companion”) rests near the enclave’s heart. Protected at every avenue by an auspicious assembly of eladrin rajputs, the well-appointed hotel occupies the interior of a massive tree that snakes up the side of a great statue

depicting the Maiden, one of the three aspects of Srasama.

The hotel is home to several young eladrin women who have taken up the mantle of *ananta paudha*, or “eternal sapling.” Though today eladrin culture values the safety and prosperity of women above all else, long ago the matriarchs of the various enclaves struggled with the resentment and violence caused by the dramatic imbalance between the number of men and the number of women.

Their solution was to create the *ananta paudha*, a sacred role for which women volunteer for seven years. The common cultural understanding is that the women’s service is a vital one that contributes to the defense of the enclave. Once each year, any resident or visitor of the enclave in good standing can request a night at the *Akela Sathi*, where he or she can linger until dawn in luxurious pleasure in the company of an eladrin woman.

Kasvarina is disgusted by what she sees as institutionalized prostitution, and if she learns any PC spent a night at the *Akela Sathi*, it will seriously damage her estimation of the whole party.

The Bent Leaf. A local pub run by a trio of fickle gremlins, the Bent Leaf is renowned for its exquisite wine. Made from fermented fruits grown in the Dreaming, this drink – known as “Darkly Dreaming” – attracts a decent size crowd at all hours of the day. Here, the PCs could have encounters with random fey or wanderers. In particular, the fey **Copperhat the Headless**, can be found here. As he lacks a visible head, Copperhat merely holds a glass of the infamous wine in his hands, mulling it over like a drunkard debating taking another swig.

The PCs likely met Copperhat in *ZEITGEIST #7: Schism*, where the fey invited Rock Rackus on an adventure in the Dreaming. After a series of unfortunate (and hilarious) events, Copperhat was abandoned by his erstwhile companion, and found his way to Sentosa. The fey’s presence at the Bent Leaf is not relevant to this adventure. His master the Voice of Rot sent him to spy on Asrabey, but the arrival of the party is more interesting. Once he’s sure they won’t see him, Copperhat leaves the pub – and the entire enclave – to report to his master. It turns out agents of the fey titans have no trouble whatsoever entering or leaving eladrin enclaves.

Shadow Edge Arms. Run by a repatriated eladrin bladesmith named **Iomar of Travin**, this smithy produces some of the most unique weaponry in the world. Iomar is jovial in all respects, but avoids talking about his past, even though he clearly has a Drakran accent. Loud and boisterous, citizens of Sentosa often chide the smith for being more like a dwarf than a true eladrin.

The truth behind Iomar’s weaponry is that he infuses his creations with the suffering of others, a technique he learned from his less scrupulous dwarven companions. Hidden in a cellar beneath the blacksmith’s forge, are a half-dozen human captives. Each of these humans are wanderers or Clergy missionaries ambushed during a trek through the jungle. Iomar had them smuggled into Sentosa by malicious fey, and now tortures them to feed his horrific weapons.

War Monastery. Dozens of eladrin train to be resilient in battle. They mention that they’re interested in acquiring firearms, but that they have one rifle and have used it to perfect their bullet-slicing technique. A martial scientist who studies with the eladrin warriors can learn the technique *Bullet Slice* (see Appendix Three to this adventure).



Meet the Matriarch.

After a day, or if the party make an effort to speak with her, they are summoned to meet with Athrylla Valanar. She holds court atop the demi-planar double of the Temple of Srasama found in Rumah Terakhir. While this temple is bereft of the religious slander of the Clergy, it is also lacking in any dedication to the former eladrin goddess. Instead, the temple stands as a monument to Sentosa, with the colony's history inscribed upon the walls.

Three stone thrones sit in an open meeting area atop the pyramid, left empty now but intended to represent that other matriarchs are welcome to sit as equals. Today Athrylla sits alone, though a half-dozen councilors stand off to the side, and the stairs leading to the top are lined with eight guards.

Athrylla (a female eladrin **archmage**) possesses magical power normally impossible in the world, due to her connection with her enclave. If she leaves Sentosa she has disadvantage on ability checks until she returns.

Interrogation and Dismissal.

Athrylla has already decided how this meeting will go, and it's up to the party to change her mind. Kasvarina already came and asked for a chance to retrieve the *Lost Arc of Reida*. Athrylla's unwilling to let her leave and possibly regain her memories, since the woman she knew took the eladrin people down a path Athrylla did not approve of. She also wants the party gone, but doesn't want to foul possible ties to Risur. She also knows some group is trying to get into the enclave, likely to abduct Kasvarina. If that ever comes to pass, her most trusted warriors have orders to kill Kasvarina before she can leave.

Aside from being callous and calculating in order to protect her people, though, Athrylla can be quite the charmer. She commends the party for achieving what so few have: gaining access to an eladrin enclave. She asks them to explain why they have come, and explicitly encourages them not to be humble. She has known centuries of heroes, and is hard to impress with the honest truth these days.

After the party has explained themselves, she asks them to wait at the bottom of the pyramid as she confers with her advisors. A fine meal is served to them, and it might be a good opportunity to feed the players too. An hour later she calls them back and explains that she cannot let Kasvarina leave. As matriarch she feels no need to explain her reasons, and simply asks for the party to leave within a day. If they have any other requests for her, any way she can help Risur other than by letting Kasvarina go, she hopes they ask.

Changing Her Mind.

Successful rhetoric or threats can persuade Athrylla, but she's very strong-willed (a DC 37 Charisma [Intimidation or Persuasion] check is required). Athrylla is concerned first and foremost about her own race, so if the check is made by a character speaking in a language other than Elvish, it has disadvantage. High-quality boasting early on (a DC 24 Charisma [Performance] check) grants the party a +2 bonus to the check.

Elite Dreadnought

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 190 (20d10+80)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws STR +11, CON +10

Skills Athletics +16, Perception +6

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages Common

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Action Surge (2/Short Rest). Once on its turn, the elite dreadnought can take an additional action on top of its regular action and a possible bonus action.

Brutal Criticals. The elite dreadnought gains a +20 damage bonus when it scores a critical hit.

Brutal Toughness. The elite dreadnought gains a +1d6 bonus to saving throws and death saves (treating final results of 20 or higher on a death saving throw as a natural 20).

Defensive Fighting. The elite dreadnought can use a bonus action to activate a defensive stance. This defensive stance lasts until the start of its next turn. During this defensive stance, creatures within its reach provoke opportunity attacks when they move more than 5 feet, and it does not need to use its reaction to make opportunity attacks.

Fortune Points (3/Long Rest). The elite dreadnought can spend one fortune point to reroll an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, or to force an attacker to reroll an attack made against it.

Great Weapon Fighting. When the elite dreadnought rolls a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack it makes with a melee weapon that it is wielding with two hands, it can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for the elite dreadnought to gain this benefit.

Hammer Mastery. When the elite dreadnought has advantage on a weapon attack roll using its maul, on a successful hit as long as both dice have a result that beat the target's AC the target is knocked prone. When the elite dreadnought misses on an attack roll with disadvantage but would have hit on the higher result, the target takes 5 bludgeoning damage. In addition, when it uses the Help action to aid an ally making a melee weapon attack, the ally both gains advantage and if the target is making use of a shield the ally also gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll.

Indomitable (3/Long Rest). The elite dreadnought can reroll a saving throw that it fails but must use the new roll.

Prodigious. The elite dreadnought counts as Large-sized when determining its carrying capacity.

Second Wind (1/Short Rest). On its turn, the elite dreadnought can use a bonus action to regain 1d10+20 hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elite dreadnought attacks four times.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 17 (2d6+1d10+5) bludgeoning damage.



Before making the final check, give the party a chance to learn the nature of Athrylla's distrust. A slow approach and successful DC 24 Wisdom (Insight) or Charisma (Persuasion) check might let the party figure out she has an old grudge against Kasvarina. Understanding the obscure history of the enclaves with a DC 24 Intelligence (History or Nature) check recalls that sometimes matriarchs of different enclaves fought and betrayed each other.

The party might then make a DC 24 Charisma (Deception) check to compliment Kasvarina in order to goad Athrylla into opening up as to why she doesn't trust her (with a +5 bonus and advantage if they mention betrayal). Athrylla snaps that Kasvarina was betrayed by her fellow matriarchs, and that Kasvarina's only surviving daughter perished because of it. But despite the tragedy Athrylla thinks the attempt on Kasvarina's life *was worth it*. The woman cared more about revenge than survival, and if she'd died four centuries ago the eladrin people would be better off today.

Some of these likely arguments can grant modifiers to the party's final check:

- ▶ Highlighting the threat the Obscurati pose to Sentosa, +5.
- ▶ Offering favors from Risur to aid Sentosa, +5. (Diplomacy only. Athrylla would ask for the land around Rumah Terakir to be declared official eladrin territory, no longer part of any foreign colony.)
- ▶ In particular, offering to provide firearms and train her people, +2. (In addition to the +5 above.)
- ▶ Threatening to fire on Rumah Terakir with cannons, +5. (Intimidate only.)
- ▶ Pointing out that their job is to destroy what Kasvarina built, +5.
- ▶ Explaining that Kasvarina herself hates the version of herself from her missing memories, +10. (This prompts Athrylla to summon Kasvarina to explain herself.)
- ▶ Bearing the *arsenal of Dhebisu*, +5.
- ▶ Appealing to help Kasvarina just because she's another eladrin woman, -5.
- ▶ Having already tried to sneak Kasvarina out and failing, -10.



Acceptance.

With a successful check, Athrylla relents and agrees to let them take Kasvarina, but only once they've returned with the *Lost Arc of Reida*. If they succeed by 5 or more she'll even offer to send four eladrin rajputs with them (or some similar allies) to aid them in their search for the artifact. Only if they succeed by 10 or more will she risk letting Kasvarina go right away.

She will not give them an *enclave key* of their own, but will tell them of a second archway hidden in an underground ruin where she'll have people waiting to let them enter as soon as they return.

Rejection.

A failed check hardens Athrylla's resolve, leaving the party with few options. They might go on their own to find the artifact, then return and use it to discover some of the backstory between the two matriarchs, giving them a chance to try a different negotiation method.

Or they might sneak Kasvarina out, which would entail stealing an *enclave key* from an elite dreadnought (with numerous rajputs as allies; see sidebar), or perhaps a complex ad hoc ritual involving the *wayfarer's lantern*. If Athrylla finds out they've done this, however, she sends a warning to the eladrin at Ingatan's Refuge, and the weretigers there will be automatically hostile. 