

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER SOCIETY



YEAR OF
**CORRUPTION'S
GRASP**

Scenario #2-00

Levels 7-8

KING IN THORNS

By Kate Baker and Dennis Muldoon



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HOW TO PLAY



PLAY TIME: 4-5 HOURS



LEVELS: 7-8



PLAYERS: 3-6

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GM RESOURCES

Campaign Home Page: pathfindersociety.club

Books: *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder Bestiary*, *Pathfinder Bestiary 2*, *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*, and *Pathfinder Lost Omens: Gods & Magic*

Maps: *Pathfinder Map Pack: Fungus Forest*, *Pathfinder Flip Mat: Ambush Sites Multipack*, *Pathfinder Flip Mat Classics: Deep Forests*, *Starfinder Flip Mat: Jungle World*

Online Resource: Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd

SCENARIO TAGS

Scenario tags provide additional information about an adventure's contents. For more information on scenario tags, see the *Guide to Organized Play: Pathfinder Society* at organizedplayfoundation.org/paizo/guides/



METAPLOT

SUMMARY

Ready to face the Thorned Monarch—an ancient, evil fey that once vexed the Pathfinder Society's founders—the Pathfinders embark on an expedition through the Mwangi Expanse to the location of a gateway the fey has long guarded, the Door of Seasons. They meet obstacles along the way: illusions, creatures, magical gateways, and natural hazards. Once they open the Door, they find that Pathfinder Society founder Gregaro Voth is still alive, though held prisoner in the demiplane that lies beyond the Door. The Pathfinders place the Monarch's *Perennial Crown* on Voth's head, but he needs time and magical assistance before he can use the crown to take control of the demiplane. The Thorned Monarch is determined to prevent Voth from doing so. The Pathfinders must help Voth attune himself to the crown with a magical ritual while also keeping the Thorned Monarch's forces at bay. Finally, the Thorned Monarch and their top lieutenants attack.



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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

When four of the founding members of the Pathfinder Society—Selmius Foster, Durvin Gest, Kerinha Napsunar, and Gregaro Voth—discovered the magical Door of Seasons deep in the heart of the Mwangi Expanse, they believed themselves on the path to a great treasure. The taunting voice of the gate’s guardian—the malevolent fey, Qxal, known as the Thorned Monarch—told them that there was indeed a great treasure beyond the gate, but there was a catch—the door could only be opened by a single person—whichever of the four of them was the last to survive. The Thorned Monarch expected them to turn on each other there and then, leaving one survivor to claim the treasure beyond. Instead, the Pathfinders swore an oath to each other to leave the gate alone until the dangers of exploring or the weight of years had claimed all but one of their lives. This oath, the Open Road Pact, helped to lay the foundation for the Society’s strong ethos of cooperation.

In truth, only the Thorned Monarch’s power could open this gateway. The Monarch wanted the Pathfinders to battle until only the strongest survived, at which point the fey would have taken control of the survivor and use them to claim the treasure they wanted above all else: the *Perennial Crown*. For what lies beyond the gate is a demiplane with strong connections to the First World, a demiplane that the Thorned Monarch created to serve as a staging point for a planned conquest of Golarion. That is, until ancient heroes wrested away Qxal’s crown, in so doing cutting the fey off from the ability to access and control much of their own magic.

Decades later, Gregaro Voth believed himself to be the final survivor of the Open Road Pact. He returned to the gate with a group of hired jungle guides and attempted to open it, only to fail once again. The frustrated Thorned Monarch saw little use for the aged adventurer, so they shoved Gregaro Voth into the demiplane. To cover the demiplane’s secret from any witnesses—and hopefully inspire other Pathfinders to come looking for Voth’s remains—the Monarch spun an illusion of Voth’s death. The guides witnessed Voth being torn apart by

WHERE ON GOLARION?

Part 1 of *King in Thorns* takes place within the northwestern part of the Mwangi Jungle, in the heart of the Mwangi Expanse. During Part 2, the PCs journey to a demiplane with close ties to the First World, the realm of the fey. More information on the Mwangi Expanse begins on page 84 of *Pathfinder Lost Omens World Guide*.



fey and dragged off into the jungle. And so, according to the Pathfinder Society’s official records, Voth died that day. In reality, though Voth never managed to escape the demiplane, he didn’t die, either. The demiplane has sustained his life for the past three centuries. With each passing day, the demiplane extends its roots deeper into Voth, restricting his mobility further while keeping his mind and body from deteriorating.

Over the past year, Pathfinder Society agents have slowly uncovered pieces of this story, starting from the existence of the Open Road Pact. Pathfinders also traveled to Bhopan, where the *Perennial Crown* was hidden away. Here, they defeated an avatar of the Thorned Monarch, weakening the fey more than ever before, and unraveled a web of trickery and courtly intrigue. When they ultimately departed the island, they left with the *Perennial Crown* and permission from the royal family to use the crown to put an end to their ancestral foe.

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With the crown in hand, Pathfinders combed through evidence and followed numerous leads until they located the Door of Seasons. Now, a large group of Pathfinders stands ready to enter the gate and take control of the demiplane beyond. This mission is far easier said than done, as hordes of the Thorned Monarch's most devious allies, most treacherous traps, and most dangerous magics stand ready to defend their realm.

RUNNING THE EVENT

The King in Thorns is meant to accommodate varying House sizes (from 3 tables up to 150+ tables). To facilitate a more cohesive process for seating players at larger events, the introduction and player mustering phases are built into the scenario during the introduction (page 5). There is no requirement to have everyone seated before players begin the introduction, and Table GMs should be ready to start as soon as four or more players have been seated at the table.

Because of the nature of mustering, players may need to be moved from one table to another to achieve minimum numbers or table balance. If players whose tables are already underway are asked to move, the Table GM should encourage them to bring along any information they discovered at their initial table and share it with their new table.

This scenario has three versions: one designed for Levels 1–2, one for Levels 3–6, and one for Levels 7–8 (this version). When assigning and adjusting tables, remember that PCs can only play at a table if their level falls within the range for that version. Each of these versions counts as a separate scenario. Players and GMs may earn credit for each of these three versions once.

For ease of running this event, text intended for Table GMs to read aloud is red, while text intended for the House GM to read aloud is blue. More information on these terms appears in the glossary below.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The King in Thorns uses several terms unique to the Pathfinder Society Special format. Each participant's role in the event is outlined under the respective entry. **House:** All the PCs participating in the adventure across all levels.

HQ Staff: These are support personnel who tabulate results and handle player table assignments at the beginning of the event. Members of the HQ Staff are responsible for managing the results of table actions during the event.

Part: This event is broken into three separate segments. To a degree, each individual table can move through encounters at its own pace, but the entire

House starts and ends each part simultaneously to ensure the stage of play remains synchronized across the entire House.

House GM: This Game Master manages the timing, scoring, and flow of the event. In addition, she makes announcements about the amount of time remaining and events that impact the entire House, as well as presenting the opening and closing scenes of the adventure. The House GM should have some means of signaling to the entire room, especially Table GMs, who are her liaisons to the players. This can be a bell or other auditory signal that can cut through the din of a room full of excited players, or it could be a visual signal like a flashing light or waving flag. The signal indicates that everyone in the House should be silent and direct their attention to the House GM.

The House GM should inform all Table GMs what this signal is prior to the event's start and ensure that they are all positioned to be able to see or hear it during the event.

Table GM: Each of these Game Masters manages a single table of players. Tables are run exactly like one would run a standard Pathfinder Society table, with the following exceptions. Table GMs must follow the timing of the event as set by the House GM. Whenever the House GM announces the end of a part, that part is finished for all tables, and the Table GMs must follow the instructions for getting the PCs to the next part in the scenario. Likewise, if a Table GM has a group that finishes the part before the House GM calls time, she must notify the House GM.

Runner: For smaller events (30 tables or fewer), each table should nominate one player to be a Runner. These players are responsible for delivering notes from their Table GMs to the HQ Staff and vice versa.

Courier: For larger events, the HQ Staff needs to provide some Couriers, volunteers who wander among the tables and collect notes that report successes.

Challenge Points: A measure of the PCs' overall strength that Pathfinder Society scenarios use to adjust the difficulty of encounters for groups of varying sizes and levels. More information on this system appears on page 42.

AID TOKENS

During the event, players at one table can assist those at another with handouts called Aid Tokens. Each Aid Token represents the assistance that Pathfinder agents provide to each other during the mission, moving back and forth to provide critical healing, skills, and combat support to those agents who need it most. Each table begins the adventure with four Aid Tokens (page 41)—

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one of each of four types. The powers of each type of Aid Token are described in **Handout: Aid Token Reference** (page 40). These starting tokens represent the assistance that a table can give to other Pathfinders throughout the course of the events. The table can't use its own starting Aid Tokens; it must pass them on. At some point during each of the four major parts of this adventure (Introduction, Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3), the table should choose one of these four Aid Tokens to pass to another table. Some tables might want to pass tokens at the beginning of each part, while others may prefer to hold on to the token until later in the part to see if other tables need help.

Before passing an Aid Token, the players can boost its potency by having one PC expend some of their own resources or attempt a skill check. A table can't retry a skill check to boost an Aid Token. A table can boost an Aid Token even while in combat without taking any in-round actions; the scenario assumes the aid was granted before that encounter began. Whether or not the Aid Token is boosted, the player who expended their resources or attempted the check should record their PC's name on the Aid Token so it's clear who granted the aid.

TIMELINE

The King in Thorns is designed to take less than 5 hours, including a modest amount of time for mustering and setup. Each section transitions automatically after a certain amount of time passes, though the introduction is somewhat flexible based on mustering needs. The following is a measure of how long each part should last.

Introduction: 15 minutes (or longer, if mustering requires)

Part 1: 120 minutes

Part 2: 75 minutes

Part 3: 60 minutes

Conclusion: 15 minutes

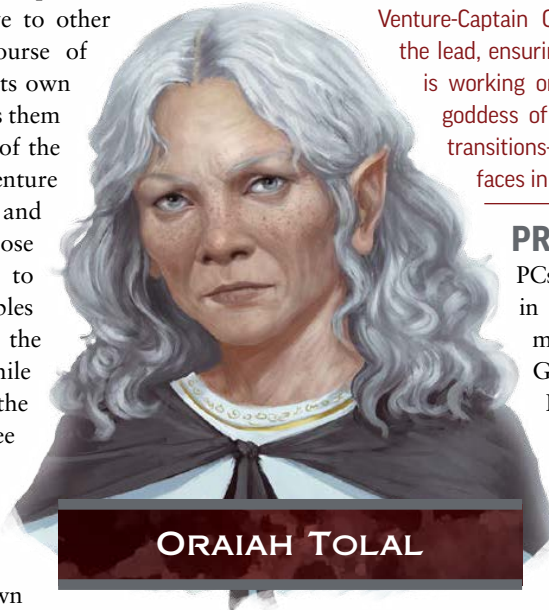
INTRODUCTION: THE EXPEDITION BEGINS

During the introduction portion of this event, Pathfinder Society leaders ensure that Society members are fully prepared for the expedition ahead. As players arrive at the table and get ready for the event, Table GMs should read the following to orient them.

Pathfinders hurry around the makeshift camp, packing and unpacking supplies, making repairs, and scribing scrolls.

The atmosphere is excited but tinged with some trepidation.

Venture-Captain Oraiah Tolar from Nirmathas takes the lead, ensuring everyone has an assignment and is working on it. A religious symbol of Alseta—goddess of doorways, portals, thresholds, and transitions—hangs from her neck, showing two faces in profile.



PREPARATIONS

PCs can attempt the following tasks in any order while the House is mustering. For each task, the Table GM describes the task, engages the PCs in some brief roleplaying (1–2 minutes), and then prompts the PCs to each attempt one of the listed skills for that task. The DC of the task is 23. If the highest result succeeds at the task, the PCs receive the standard

reward. If anyone critically succeeds at

the task, the PCs instead receive the greater reward. The PCs can Aid each other, but any PC who attempts to Aid can't attempt their own check.

Venture-Captains Oraiah Tolar, Bjersig Torrsen, and Khoumrock Blackthane accompany the Pathfinders on this mission, along with faction leaders Calisro Benarry of the Horizon Hunters, Fola Barun of the Envoy's Alliance, Urwal of the Verdant Wheel, and Valais Durant of the Radiant Oath. Venture-Captain Tolar is the head Pathfinder for this mission, but all of these leaders participate in the expedition. Art for these leaders appears in Appendix 2.

INVENTORY

Relevant Skills Nature, Society, Survival

Task Details Verdant Wheel faction leader Urwal lays on the ground, making marks on a scroll that stretches over 10 feet long. "This is our supplies list. Everything from rations to ammunition to the mounts needed to transport it all with us. We need to ensure that we know where everything is. I'm not letting anyone try to forage while we're traveling."

Standard Reward Each PC receives a moderate elixir of life, as Urwal finds that the Society packed in excess for the potentially dangerous mission.

Greater Reward Each PC also receives their choice of a moderate bravo's brew, greater cheetah's elixir, greater eagle-eye elixir, or greater leaper's elixir.

MAGICAL SUPPLIES

Relevant Skills Arcana, Nature, Occultism, Religion

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RELEVANT SCENARIOS

During this time, Table GMs should check with each player to determine which of the following scenarios their PC has played.

PCs who played either part of the Perennial Crown series know additional information about the Thorned Monarch. The fey being originally named Qxal sought to conquer Golarion before returning to usurp the First World from the Eldest. They poured much of their power into a demiplane to prepare for an attack on Golarion. Their symbol of rulership, the *Perennial Crown*, is an artifact that is the key to controlling the demiplane. It was only thanks to the efforts of heroes from the ancient empire of Bhopan, who managed to wrest the crown away from Qxal, that their attack was unable to proceed. The enraged Qxal destroyed most of the empire in fury, forcing its people to retreat to the island that still bears the empire's name.

Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1: Opal of Bhopan: PCs who played this scenario gain a +2 circumstance bonus to checks to convince the Befuddled Pathfinders in area C. PCs with the Blood Offering boon gain a -2 circumstance penalty to the Will save to detect the illusion in area C. In area J, The Thorned Monarch also gains a -1 circumstance penalty to saves against such PCs' abilities.

Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-17: The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch: PCs who played this scenario gain a +1 circumstance bonus to checks made in the ritual in area H1.

Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-20: The Lost Legend: PCs who played this scenario gain a +1 circumstance bonus to checks made to chart the course in area E.

Task Details Envoy's Alliance faction leader Fola Barun directs a group of Pathfinders who are carefully blending magic and ingredients inside glass vials. "Come help us ensure that everyone is well supplied for this journey."

Standard Reward Barun and her team make an abundance of materials. Each PC receives their choice of a *barkskin potion* or a *potion of leaping*.

Greater Reward There is enough time to make higher quality supplies. Each PC also receives their choice of a *young dragon's breath potion*, *moderate potion of resistance*, or *standard potion of flying*.

MAPPING

Relevant Skills Nature, Survival, Perception

Task Details Venture-Captain Bjersig Torrsen scrutinizes a map as his loyal dog, Mahki, lies by his feet. Mahki barks to alert Torrsen to approaching Pathfinders. He says, "I'm verifying all of our maps against what we can see from here. Landmarks can easily change. Why don't you see if you can find any discrepancies?"

Standard Reward Torrsen shares his information. The PCs receive a survey map for one encounter of their choice in Part 1.

Greater Reward Torrsen has the area mapped thoroughly. The PCs receive a survey atlas with a map for each encounter in Part 1.

MORALE

Relevant Skills Deception, Diplomacy, Performance

Task Details Horizon Hunters faction leader Calisro Benarry waves the group over. "Some of the newer Pathfinders seem a little nervous about this mission. Can you cheer them up a bit? This is exciting, after all!"

Standard Reward The neophyte Pathfinders are in much better spirits for the journey ahead and can lend the PCs a hand. Once during the adventure, each PC can receive a +1 circumstance bonus to one skill check or attack roll, representing the fellow Pathfinder succeeding at a check to Aid them. The PC must decide to use this benefit before rolling.

Greater Reward As the standard reward, but the bonus is instead a +2 circumstance bonus, representing a critical success on the roll to Aid.

REPAIRS

Relevant Skills Athletics, Crafting, Guild Lore

Task Details Venture-Captain Khoumrock Blackthane ensures that groups of smiths and carpenters accompanying the Pathfinders have everything they need. "A lot of this gear got damaged on the voyage over. We need to make sure that everything is in tip-top shape."

Standard Reward Each PC receives three pieces of non-magical low-grade cold iron ammunition of their choice from the *Core Rulebook*.

Greater Reward As the standard reward, and each PC receives their choice of a single non-magical low-grade cold iron simple or martial weapon from the *Core Rulebook* or an additional 10 pieces of non-magical low-grade cold iron ammunition.

RESEARCH

Relevant Skills Nature, Society, Survival

Task Details Radiant Oath faction leader Valais Durant oversees a small army of Pathfinders poring over books and scrolls. A few use magical methods to absorb information even faster. "Oh good, you're here to help. I was able to

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get these reference materials from local institutions. There's information on local plants, animals, and fey that I couldn't get at home. We're about to face a lot of dangers. Choose your favorite topic and start reading."

Standard Reward The background information helps the PCs readily identify threats during the journey. Once during this adventure, each PC can gain a +2 circumstance bonus to any one check to Recall Knowledge.

Greater Reward The PCs thoroughly reviewed the information provided by Valais Durant. Instead of the standard reward, each PC can once during the adventure automatically succeed at one check to Recall Knowledge.

THE EXPEDITION SETS OFF

Venture-Captain Oraiah Total calls for all of the Pathfinders at the camp to gather for an announcement.

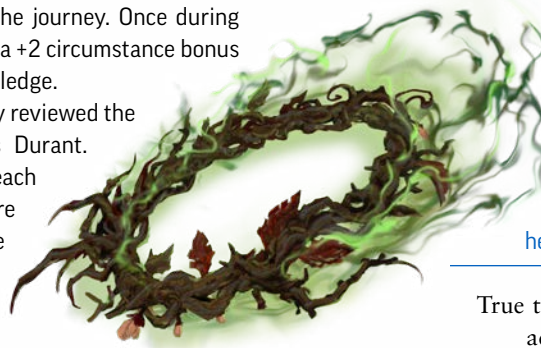
Once everyone is finished mustering, the House GM should read or paraphrase the following.

Everyone gathers around a makeshift stage as the sun starts to slip below the horizon. Pathfinders whisper to each other in anticipation.

Venture-Captain Oraiah Total addresses the group. "Pathfinders, our expedition begins tomorrow. We have a day's travel to reach the site where we will find the Door of Seasons. The founders of our Society may have been unable to reach the realm that lies beyond this magical gateway, but we have something they lacked." The Venture-Captain holds a verdant crown aloft. "This is the *Perennial Crown*, an artifact that will serve as the key to opening the door. I hope that Alseta will bless us as we find this doorway to a new place. From what we've been able to gather, there's a demiplane on the other side. The demiplane and the crown alike are closely tied to the Thorned Monarch, Qxal, an evil fey who once terrorized this region. The Pathfinders who recovered this crown faced steep opposition from the Monarch, and I have no doubt they will defend the Door of Seasons even more fiercely. Be wary any fey you see along the way; they are likely to be working for Qxal. Stay in groups of four or more for safety and help each other. Make any final preparations that you require and get a good night's sleep; your next few nights will be on the trail. We leave an hour after dawn."

This text alerts Table GMs that they need to wrap up the preparations section and prepare to begin Part 1. Once every table is ready, the House GM should read or paraphrase the following text.

Day breaks, and the excitement around the camp is too high to allow any Pathfinder to oversleep. Agents perform morning rituals, eat breakfast, and take a final look through maps and plans. Venture-Captain Oraiah Total gathers everyone together one last time. "I know that we've prepared well. We're going to stop this Thorned Monarch. I have a small gift for each of you: a signal whistle with an engraving of the Perennial Crown. Use it to signal your fellow Pathfinders if you need help. And now, into the wilderness!"



PERENNIAL CROWN

True to her word, each PC begins this adventure with a signal whistle. This whistle does not force other Pathfinders to come to the PCs' aid, but it does provide an explanation for the Aid Token

mechanic. Tables that are struggling are welcome to ask nearby tables if they have Aid Tokens to spare.

PART 1: FINDING THE PATH

The expedition begins quietly, but Qxal knows the Pathfinder Society approaches, and as the adventurers approach the Door, they encounter obstacles and impediments to fey left to wear the intruders down. The PCs can do the following five encounters in any order. These encounters all take place on the same day, and the PCs can take time to Treat Wounds, Refocus, or Repair equipment in between encounters. These encounters do not need to be run in any particular order, though the optional encounters in area G should only be run if all others have been completed. The players have 120 minutes to complete as many missions as they can.

Table GMs should read or paraphrase the following.

Fola Barun examines maps and charts spread across a long crate of supplies, pointing out areas of note to the assembled Pathfinders. Her concentration is broken, however, as an excited husky appears by her side. The husky sniffs the maps and the Pathfinder alike before running off with an excited bark as a harried gnome rushes to catch up. "Mahki, heel!" calls a deep voice. With a reluctant grumble, the dog trots to the side of Bjersig Torrsen, striding over to join the briefing. "Apologies, Fola," the dashing half-orc signs; the gnome translates his words into spoken Common. "Mahki is just excited to be somewhere new." Barun rolls up the map and turns to greet him, signing and speaking, "Quite all right, Bjersig, we were just wrapping up. I have one more piece of advice for them."

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Fola addresses the group, "As the most experienced agents here, you'll be facing the greatest threats. I'm counting on you to look out for your fellow agents. But don't rush in so fast you get in over your own heads. You are role models now, and others are watching you to learn what it takes to become a rising star."

ANNOUNCED CONDITIONS

There are six conditions the House GM might announce, each tied to the House completing an objective in one of six mission locations. These conditions grant each table a single-use benefit that the players can choose to activate as a group.

Mushroom Ring Disabled: At the beginning of one combat encounter, the PCs can reduce their Challenge Points by 2 for the purposes of scaling the encounter.

If applied to an encounter for which this adjustment would otherwise have no effect, decreases the AC, attack modifiers, DCs, saving throws, and skill modifiers of any creatures or hazards the PCs face by 2. Additionally, decrease the DC of all skill checks during this encounter by 2.

Animals Defeated: At the start of one round of combat, a group of animals rushes into battle to assist. For that round, any PC making a melee Strike can treat their target as flanked.

Pathfinders Rescued: With the befuddled Pathfinders protected, they can assist with medical needs. At the end of one encounter, a helpful cleric casts a 3-action *heal* spell, restoring 4d8 Hit Points.

Plants Cut Down: The PCs can use their experience cutting through plants easily. For one round, the PCs can ignore difficult terrain. This benefit works against Qxal's Grasping Visions.

Course Charted: The PCs don't have to worry about finding the path and can be on the lookout for danger. At the start of one encounter, the PCs each gain a +2 circumstance bonus to their initiative rolls.

Shifters Defeated: The PCs are good at avoiding being caught by surprise. For one round of combat, the PCs can't be made flat-footed.

When the House GM says that the Door of Seasons is almost within the PCs' grasp, there are only 5 minutes remaining in Part 1. Quickly bring your encounter to a close and proceed to Part 2, giving the PCs a chance to rest and recover.

HOUSE GM INSTRUCTIONS

During Part 1, the House GM is responsible for tallying the number and type of each success reported and, when the House has accumulated the requisite number of successes for a mission, announcing that the mission

is completed. If displaying a visual aid, the House GM should update it after the completion of each mission.

The House's goal is to complete as many of the missions as possible before time runs out. Once the House has reported enough successes, the mission is complete. Make the announcement that corresponds to that location, as listed below. The number of successes required depends upon the size of the House—if the House has between four and nine tables, they need a number of successes equal to half (1/2) the number of tables. If the house has 10 or more tables, they need a number of successes equal to three-fifths (3/5) the number of tables.

Because tables complete and report encounters at different rates, some tables may report successes for missions after the House GM has already announced the success condition for those missions. The House GM can apply these successes to any combination of location goals, helping realize goals that are nearly done or shore up goals in underrepresented locations.

When the House has acquired enough Mushroom successes from area **A**, read the following aloud.

The mushroom rings have been disabled! The Thorned Monarch's tide of reinforcements has slowed.

When the House has acquired enough Animal successes from area **B**, read the following aloud.

Qxal's animal allies have been defeated! The animals that remain may even aid us in battle.

When the House has acquired enough Befuddled successes from area **C**, read the following aloud.

Excellent teamwork, agents! We have rescued our fellow Pathfinders from mortal peril!

When the House has acquired enough Plant successes from area **D**, read the following aloud.

The Thorned Monarch has enchanted the plants of this area, but they were no match for the Pathfinders! The enchanted plants have been defeated.

When the House has acquired enough Charting successes from area **E**, read the following aloud.

Those hazards were no match for our trailblazers, Pathfinders. The new course has been charted!

When the House has acquired enough Shifted successes from area **F**, read the following aloud.

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Qxal's forces were tricky, but we came out on top! The shifted forces have been defeated!

After the House has successfully completed all 6 missions or after 115 minutes have passed, whichever comes first, read or paraphrase the following to give tables a 5-minute warning.

At last, you see an archway of woven vines in the distance, filled a shimmering pool of magic. Pathfinders, the Door of Seasons is almost within your grasp!

Five minutes after reading this warning, proceed to Part 2.

A. THE MUSHROOM RING MODERATE

From her vantage point high up a tree, Fola drops a heavy stone to the ground to draw attention, then calls out, "More fey! They must have a gateway to the First World somewhere around here." She gestures to the forest around her as she continues." Find it and seal it, before we're overrun!"

Hazard: The Thorned Monarch is using mushroom rings to draw reinforcements from the First World. If the Pathfinder Society can destroy the rings, they can prevent some of the Thorned Monarch's forces from even making it to the fight. Unfortunately, they are already operational.

First, the PCs must locate a mushroom ring, which easily blend into the wilderness. PCs should each attempt a DC 28 Perception or Survival check to notice the mushroom ring. If the PCs all fail this check, then one elanax has already emerged from the mushroom ring before the PCs arrive at the location, but no further checks are required to find it. The mushroom ring then activates its portal reaction when the PCs approach. The squares with mushrooms and with water are difficult terrain. Use the map on page 10 for this area.

Once the PCs approach the mushroom ring, the Table GM should read or paraphrase the following.

In the middle of a small pond, a ring of large toadstools glows with a slight magical energy. The ground inside wobbles, appearing almost translucent, as if it were possible to step right through it.

MUSHROOM RING

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HAZARD 8

Development: When the PCs destroy the mushroom ring, the Thorned Monarch can no longer use it to bring in extra reinforcements from the First World.

Reporting: If the PCs successfully destroy the mushroom ring, the table should report a Mushroom success.

B. IT TALKS!

MODERATE

"They say that nature speaks, if we pay attention." Torrsen says. "Go find out what it has to say, would you?"

Use the map on page 11 for this area. The water on the map is shallow; squares with water are difficult terrain.

Creatures: A group of reptilian creatures approach the PCs, looking to attack. However, the leader of the animals is awakened and can speak both Common and Mwangi. This animal speaks to the PCs, taunting them. The PCs can try to talk the animals into a truce instead of fighting.

The animals give the PCs sufficient time to make a case before attacking, though they move around while they talk. If a PC attacks an animal at any point during the negotiations, then combat begins and there is no possibility of a diplomatic solution. Each PC has time to attempt two of the following checks to influence the animals.

- A DC 22 Forest Lore check to explain to the animals that the Pathfinders respect and care for the animals' habitat.
- A DC 22 Performance check to entertain the animals enough that they agree not to fight.
- A DC 24 Deception check to convince the animals that the Thorned Monarch will betray them.
- A DC 24 Nature check to use information about the specific animals to make an argument.
- A DC 26 Diplomacy check to simply convince the animals to ally against Qxal.

Increase the DCs of all skill checks by 1 if the table has 14 or more Challenge Points. A PC who is trained in a different but relevant Lore can attempt a check with the same DC as Forest Lore. Any PC with the wild empathy class feature gains a +2 circumstance bonus to any check attempted. A success earns the PCs 1 Influence Point and a critical success earns them 2 Influence Points, while a critical failure removes 1 Influence Point. As long as the PCs earn more Influence Points than the number of PCs, then the awakened animal agrees not to attack. If not, the animals move to attack and combat begins. Each animal fights until reduced to one-quarter (1/4) of its Hit Points or fewer, at which time it attempts to retreat.

AWAKENED MEGALANIA

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CREATURE 7

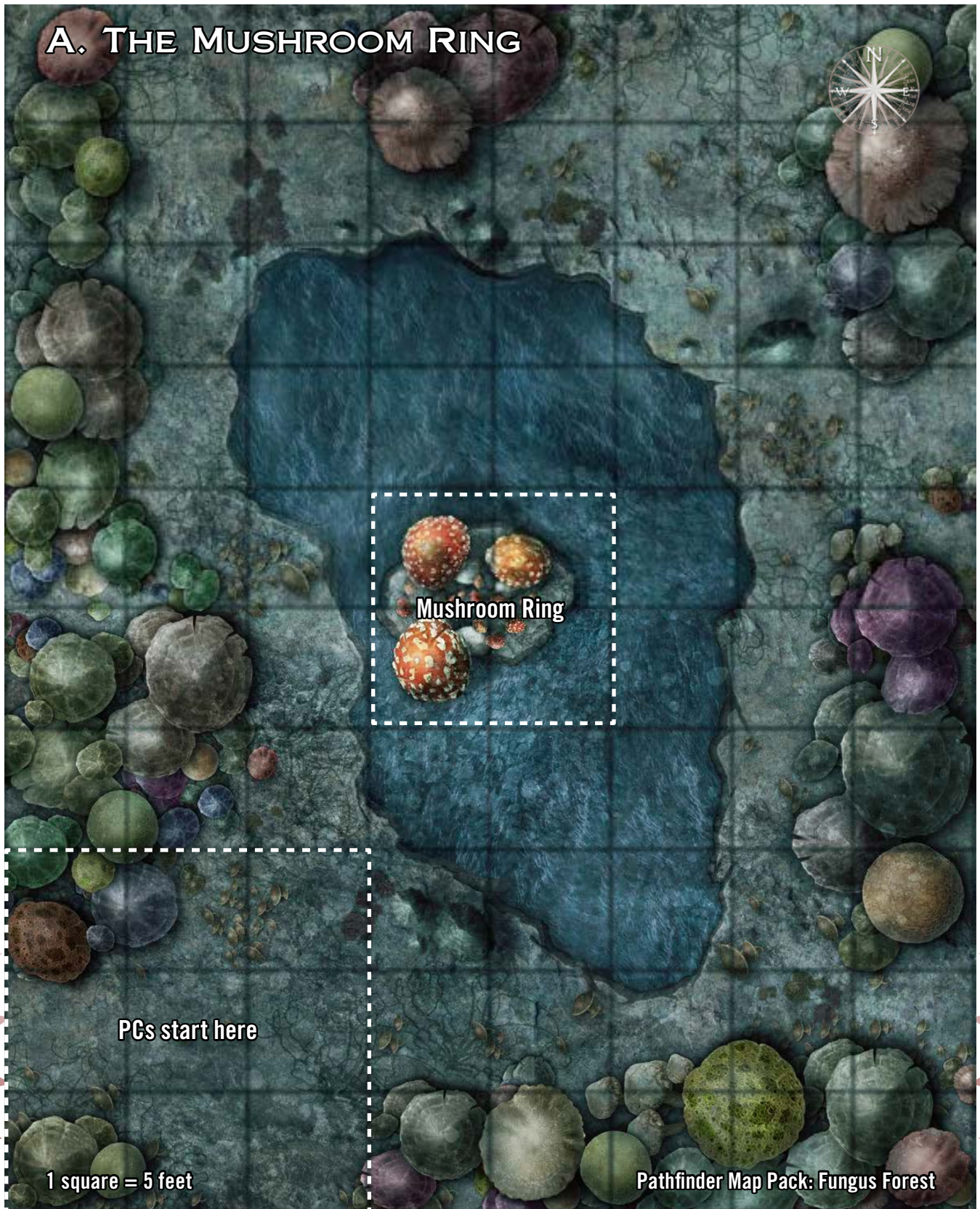
GIANT FRILLED LIZARDS (2)

Page 26

CREATURE 5

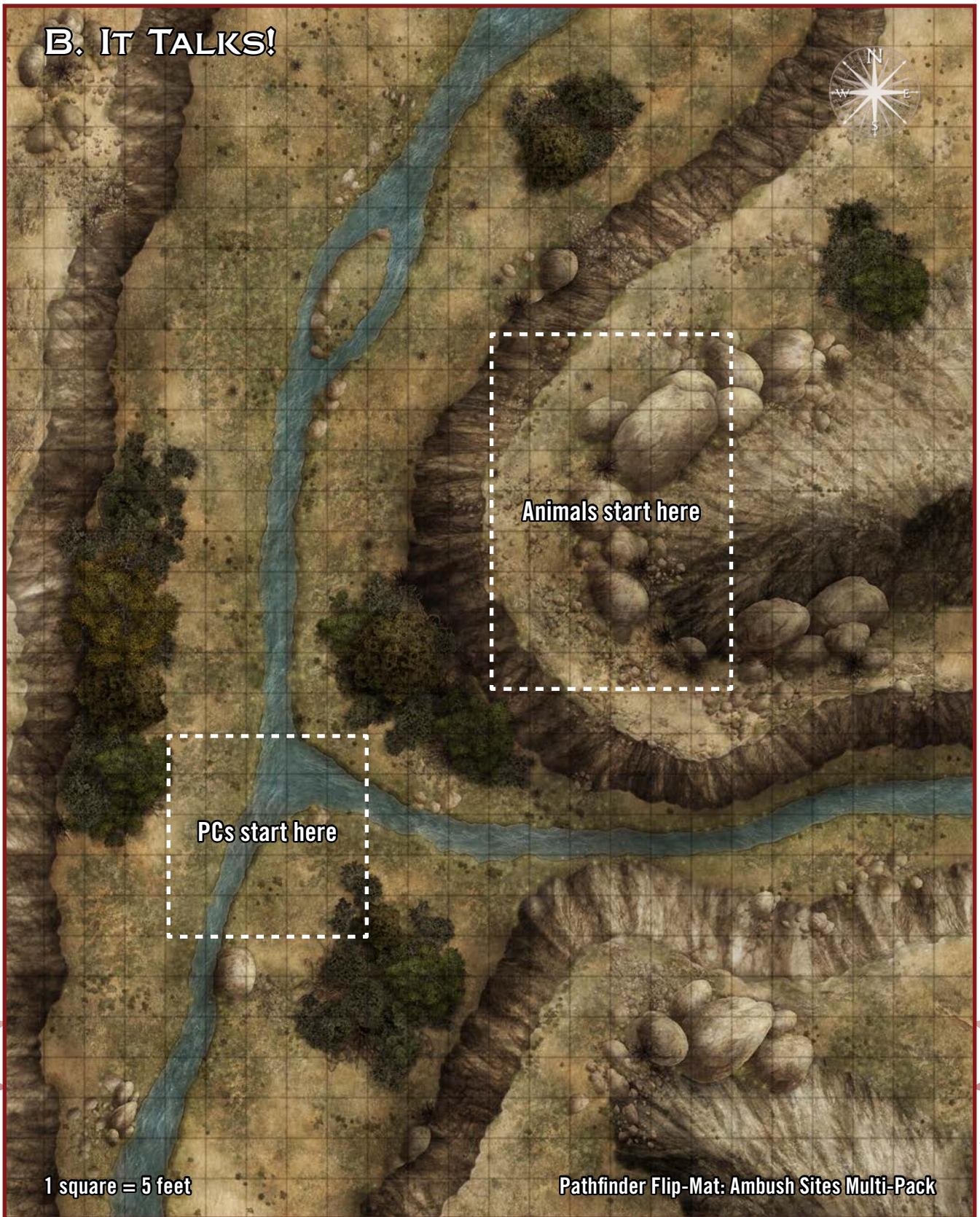
KING IN THORNS

A. THE MUSHROOM RING



KING IN THORNS

B. IT TALKS!



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Ambush Sites Multi-Pack

KING IN THORNS

Reporting: If the PCs successfully negotiate with the animals or defeat them in combat, the table should report an Animal success.

C. BEFUDDLED PATHFINDERS **LOW**

"In times of crisis, it's all hands on deck," Venture-Captain Torrsten says, watching another group of Pathfinders head off. "Still, I worry about some of our newer agents who may not be as ready for such a mission. Please, keep an eye on them as you're able."

The Thorned Monarch has disguised a steep embankment as a wide meadow. Use the map on page 13 for this area. A group of Pathfinders are about to travel through the meadow to get to the other side, but they don't realize how dangerous the meadow is. First, the PCs must attempt a DC 25 Will save to recognize the terrain is disguised. PCs with the Blood Offering boon who played *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1: Opal of Bhopan* take a -2 circumstance penalty to this saving throw.

If any PC succeeds at this saving throw, the group can try to stop the befuddled Pathfinders. Each of the PCs can attempt one of the following skill checks to explain to the befuddled Pathfinders that the terrain has been altered to appear less dangerous.

- A DC 21 Fey Lore check to explain that the Thorned Monarch is using fairy magic to be tricky.
- A DC 23 Diplomacy check to convince the Pathfinders that fording the river is a bad idea.
- A DC 23 Intimidation check to cow the Pathfinders into going a different way.
- A DC 25 Nature or Survival check to give evidence that the river is much more swiftly than it looks.

A PC who is trained in a different but relevant Lore can attempt a check with the same DC as Fey Lore. A success earns the PCs 1 Influence Point and a critical success earns them 2 Influence Points, while a critical failure removes 1 Influence Point. As long as the PCs earn more Influence Points than half the number of PCs, then the befuddled Pathfinders agree to find a different path. If not, then the befuddled Pathfinders refuse to listen to the PCs and start heading for the cliff. At this point, the PCs can try to knock out or restrain the befuddled Pathfinders to stop them if they want. If a PC kills a befuddled Pathfinder in this encounter, that PC gains 1 Infamy.

If the PCs can't stop the befuddled Pathfinders by force or if the PCs did not spot the illusion in the first place, then the befuddled Pathfinders stumble and fall down the slope amid a shower of rocks. Though the falling damage is not enough to kill the Pathfinders, they are battered,

trapped, and slowly crushed by the rock slide their tumble causes. If the PCs don't free them within 5 rounds, the weight of the rocks proves too great and the Pathfinders are crushed. Freeing each Pathfinder from the landslide requires 3 Interact actions, though these do not have to be performed consecutively or spent by the same PC. The embankment is 50 feet tall and requires a successful DC 21 Athletics check to Climb. For tables with at least 12 Challenge Points, there are more Pathfinders to save (see this encounter's entry in Appendix 1 on page 27).

Creatures: If more information about the Pathfinders is needed, such as if the PCs engage them in combat, use the following statistics to represent them. If the PCs attack the Pathfinders, they are outraged and respond in kind, but they use nonlethal tactics whenever possible.

FENCE **CREATURE 5**
Page 27

PLAGUE DOCTOR **CREATURE 5**
Page 27

TOMB RAIDER **CREATURE 5**
Page 28

Reporting: If the PCs successfully convince the Pathfinders not to proceed down the slope, stop them by force without killing any of them, or save them from being crushed, the table should report a Befuddled success.

D. MURDEROUS PLANTS **MODERATE**

Fola Barun reads the note handed to her, then thanks the runner and reports its contents. "As if the Thorned Monarch weren't enough, it seems a group of carnivorous plants has decided that travelers make easy prey. They have accosted scouts in the forest ahead. Go forward and find the ones that are proving an active danger. Meanwhile, I'll survey the nearby flora for other potential threats."

Creatures: Two mandragoras have struck a mutually beneficial bargain with a drainberry bush to waylay travelers, drain their blood, and sell the resulting berries. They see the passing Pathfinders as perfect targets for their scheme. The plants fight to the death. Use the map on page 14 for this area.

DRAINBERRY BUSH **CREATURE 7**
Page 29

MANDRAGORAS (2) **CREATURE 4**
Page 29

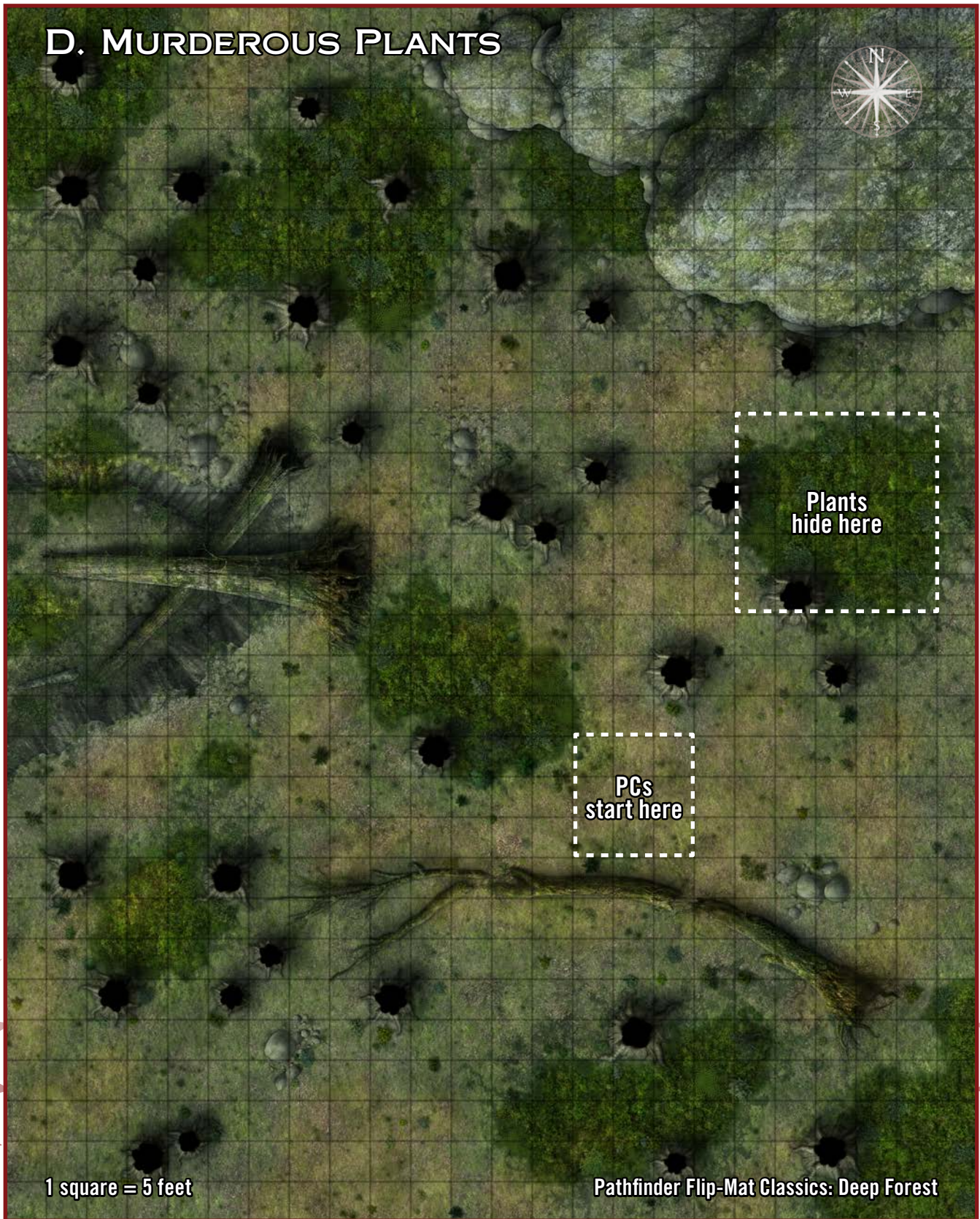
KING IN THORNS

C. BEFUDDLED PATHFINDERS



KING IN THORNS

D. MURDEROUS PLANTS



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat Classics: Deep Forest

KING IN THORNS

Reporting: If the PCs successfully defeat the plants, the table should report a Plant success.

E. CHART A COURSE

Bjersig Torrsen pores over a map spread neatly upon a crate, pen in hand. With a few quick strokes, he makes a correction, then rolls up the map. "Qxal has changed things in an effort to throw us off course. We must make our own adjustments to counter. Let's go ahead to chart a new course. Keep your eyes open, though; the fey are sure to have set a few surprises for us."

With a surge of primal magic, the Thorned Monarch obscured the path to the Door of Seasons and filled it with deadly hazards. The PCs must accomplish several tasks to find a new path to the site of the Door that the entire Society can use to approach. Each PC must attempt a DC 25 skill check to bypass each obstacle. PCs who played *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1–20: The Lost Legend* gain a +1 circumstance bonus to checks to chart the course.

If at least one PC succeeds, the group succeeds; for groups with 12 or more Challenge Points, two successes or one critical success is necessary to bypass an obstacle instead (see page 42 for a description of Challenge Points). If a PC casts a particularly appropriate non-cantrip spell, such as *gust of wind* to deal with the dangerous gas, they can bypass the obstacle automatically. The PCs can take time to Treat Wounds in between obstacles.

First, there is thick undergrowth where previously there were clear paths. The PCs must find a better path or clear a route through this brush. The skill options are:

- Athletics to force through the brush.
- Acrobatics to skirt it.
- Nature to recognize the plant from a distance.
- Survival to spot its habitat.

Any PC who critically fails the check takes 7d6 piercing damage from the brush (DC 24 basic Reflex save).

Next, Qxal has created pockets of dangerous gas. The skill options are:

- Medicine to recognize the harmful gases.
- Nature to recognize vents where gases emerge.
- Survival to get through the pockets quickly.
- Perception to smell the gas.

Any PC who critically fails the check takes 7d6 poison damage (DC 24 basic Fortitude save).

Lastly, there are sudden powerful bursts of wind that can push Pathfinders off ledges or into trees. The skill options are:

- Athletics to withstand the blast.
- Nature to notice when the wind is about to start.
- Survival to find a safe place to shelter.

- Stealth to hide behind cover.

Any PC who critically fails the check takes 7d6 bludgeoning damage (DC 24 basic Fortitude save).

Reporting: If the PCs successfully bypass two out of three obstacles, the table should report a Charting success.

F. THE DISGUISED FORCES LOW

Fola Barun returns from a trip to the front of the caravan. "Please, I'd like you to go and relieve the vanguard for a while. Beware, though, as we travel deeper into this forest. Some things are not meant to be found, and not all who guard them are what they seem."

Creatures: The Thorned Monarch has set many hazards in place to stop the Pathfinders before the Society can reach the site of the Sealed Door. Qxal convinced two blodeuwedds living nearby that the oncoming Pathfinders are a threat to a nearby gate to the First World the creatures guard. The blodeuwedds takes the form of a pair of prairie owls and pretend to be caught in a trap, hooting mournfully until a PC approaches to free them. The blodeuwedds have used nature's infusion and have 15 temporary HP. Use the map on page 16 for this area.

BLODEUWEDDS (2) **CREATURE 6**

Page 30

Reporting: If the PCs successfully defeat the blodeuwedds, the table should report a Shifted success.

G. ADDITIONAL ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters provide more content for tables where the players move quickly through their missions and have extra time. Table GMs can use these encounters at their discretion during Part 1; the encounters can take place in any of the previous locations, but only after the PCs have successfully completed all available missions. GMs can use the reverse side of any appropriate Pathfinder Flip-Mat from Part 1 to add encounter variety, at their discretion.

Reporting: If the PCs complete one of these encounters, the table should report one success of a type of their choice to the HQ staff.

G1. TERRITORIAL APES **MODERATE**

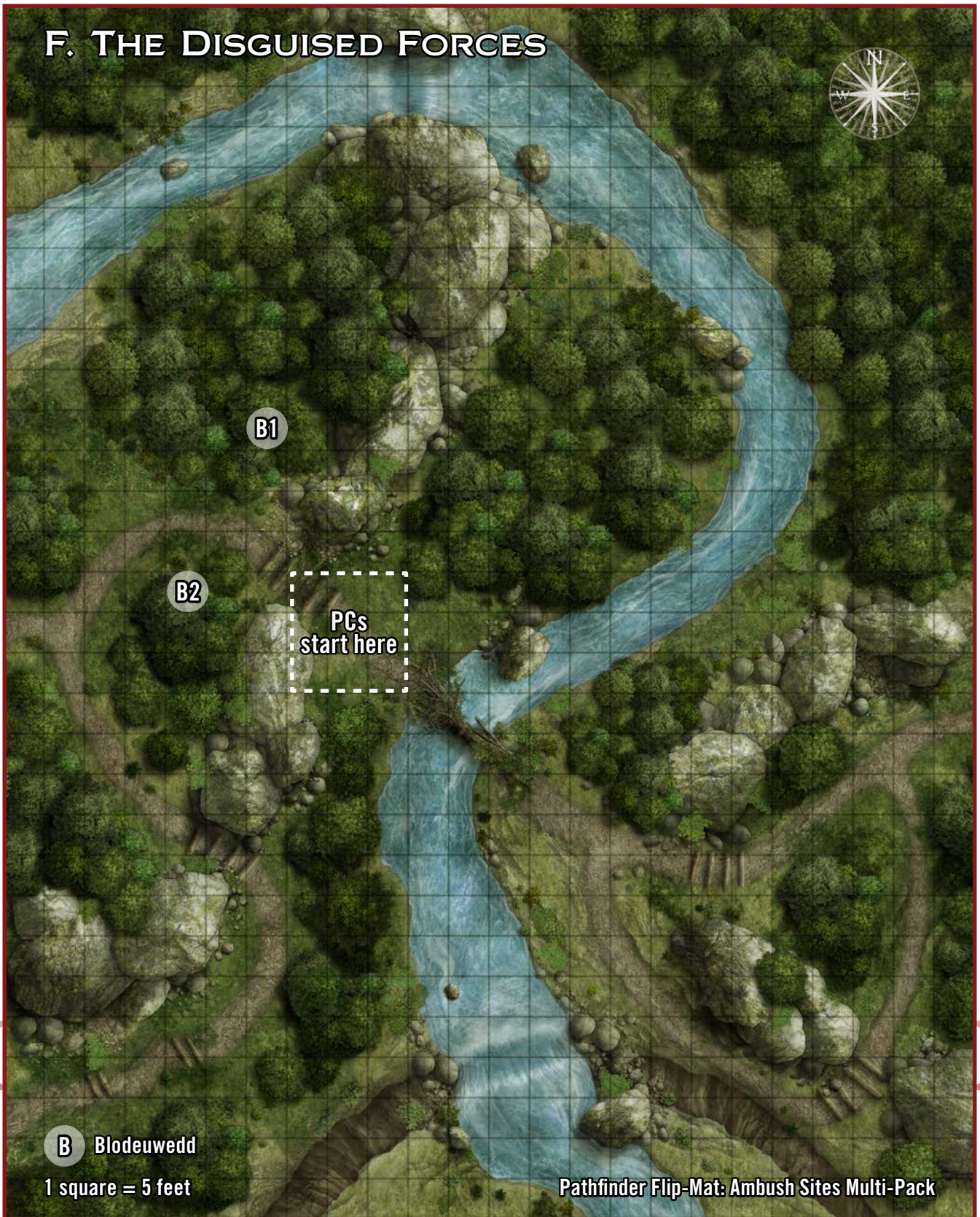
Creatures: A troop of gorillas led by a towering megaprimatus has claimed the area; they fiercely attack the intruding PCs.

MEGAPRIMATUS **CREATURE 8**

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KING IN THORNS

F. THE DISGUISED FORCES



KING IN THORNS



GORILLAS (2)

Page 31

CREATURE 3

G2. MANIPULATED MOLLUSK

LOW

Creature: Allies of the Thorned Monarch have lured a dangerous giant slug to a nearby shaded hollow. They drive the hungry creature out onto the path as the Pathfinders approach.

GIANT SLUG

Page 32

CREATURE 8

PART 2: OPENING THE DOOR

All PCs can take an overnight rest before the Door of Seasons is unsealed, as Oraiah Tolar wants the Pathfinders to be fully prepared. Pathfinder Society medics heal everyone completely and remove any lingering conditions such as poison or disease. While the PCs rest, Oraiah Tolar and Radiant Oath faction leader Valais Durant carefully study the doorway. Meanwhile, the other leaders keep watch in shifts, starting with Venture-Captain Bjersig Torrsen and his canine companion Mahki.

The House GM should read or paraphrase the following.

"Well, everyone, this is it," Oraiah Tolar begins, standing next to the portal. "We have reached the Door of Seasons. This crown should allow us to open it. We don't know exactly what awaits us on the other side, though we do know that it is not of this world. Be prepared for anything. May Alseta guide us through this passageway." She holds the crown in front of the Door, and the shimmering magic within dissipates.

The demiplane on the other side of the door is green and vibrant, but the plants take on an otherworldly quality. A half-orc man, his age difficult to determine, is bound by vines and flowers. He looks up. His voice is halting and hoarse, as though he had not used it in a long time, "Can it be...Pathfinders?"

After a moment, Oraiah Tolar realizes who he is. "How can this be? Gregaro Voth! You're still alive!"

The man replies, "It is me. How many years has it been? Wait, there's no time. That crown! It's the key to this plane! We've got to use it!" As Oraiah Tolar places the crown on Voth's head, a strange wave emanates from the crown and passes over the assembled Pathfinders. Voth looks hopeful for a moment but then struggles against his bonds, still held fast.

"That would have been too easy. It's going to take some time to harness the magic to unlock the power of the crown, and Qxal won't wait long."

Oraiah Tolar begins to direct the assembled forces. "Pathfinders, it's time to act! Some of you need to help Voth

KING IN THORNS



with the crown. I'm sure we have a ritual to help him attune to it. The rest of you, be on alert! The Thorned Monarch could attack at any time!"

At this time, Table GMs should have their tables decide whether to help with attunement or help with defense, then proceed to the appropriate mission. The PCs should begin with Mission A on the appropriate track. After completing Mission A, they can choose to continue on to Mission B or to switch to Mission A of the other track. If the PCs complete both missions for one track, they can move on to Mission A of the other track. The PCs can take a little over 10 minutes after each mission, enough time to Treat Wounds, Refocus, or Repair their equipment, but they do not have additional time to rest.

ANNOUNCED CONDITIONS

There are two conditions the House GM might announce, each tied to the House completing an objective. These conditions grant each table a benefit in the final encounter.

Gregaro Voth Free: The Thorned Monarch and their forces are weakened by the ritual's success. The DC of all fey creatures' abilities in area J are reduced by 1.

Advance Repelled: The PCs are bolstered by defending Voth from the fey onslaught. Each PC begins the encounter in area J with 20 temporary Hit Points.

When the House GM announces that the PCs have an invasion to fight, Table GMs have 5 minutes to finish their current encounters before the beginning of Part 3. Players should not begin another mission at this point.

HOUSE GM INSTRUCTIONS

Once the House has reported a number of Ritual successes equal to the number of tables, read the following aloud.

The ritual is a success and Gregaro Voth is free! The demiplane can't control him any longer.

Once the House has reported a number of Defense successes equal to the number of tables, read the following aloud.

Excellent work, Pathfinders! We have repelled the Thorned Monarch's advance forces.

When there are 5 minutes remaining in the time allowed for the initial missions (70 minutes after

KING IN THORNS

beginning Part 2), the House GM should read or paraphrase the following.

Suddenly, there is a strange shaking, like an earthquake rippling through the ground and air alike. The plants in the demiplane begin to grow and change. Oraiah Tolal calls out, "They're here! The Thorned Monarch has arrived in the demiplane! And they're not alone. We have an invasion to fight!"

After 5 minutes have passed or when all Table GMs are ready to move on, the House GM should continue to Part 3.

H1. ATTUNEMENT A: THE RITUAL

"This crown is the key to everything! To Voth's freedom, to the Thorned Monarch's power, everything." Fola Barun speaks with conviction. "To have any hope of victory, we can't let them reclaim that power. It's up to us to help Voth master the crown!"

The Pathfinders can help Gregaro Voth use the crown by performing a ritual to attune him to the artifact. Instead of using the ritual rules from the *Core Rulebook*, this ritual uses a Victory Point system as described below. The demiplane is infused with vast stores of primal magic and is particularly mutable; together, these factors allow this ritual to be conducted swiftly and without the ritual casters needing their own source of magic. PCs who played *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1–17: The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch* gain a +1 circumstance bonus to all checks performed in the ritual from prior experience with the crown.

One PC acts as the primary caster for the ritual, but this PC does not need to be a spellcaster. The primary caster acts last. Each other PC can act as a secondary caster but is not required to do so; these PCs likewise do not need to be spellcasters to perform this role. Each secondary caster attempts a DC 24 skill check from the following options. Increase the DC by 1 if the group has 14 or more Challenge Points.

- Arcana to tap into magical forces.
- Nature to control the primal magic involved.
- Occultism to know about binding souls to objects.
- Performance to add finesse to the ritual.
- Survival to find appropriate components.
- Thievery to manipulate the ritual components.
- Any appropriate Lore.

A critical success generates 2 Ritual Points, a success generates 1 Ritual Point, a failure generates no Ritual Points, and a critical failure removes 1 Ritual Point. If a secondary caster casts a thematically appropriate

non-cantrip spell, they automatically generate a success without a skill check needed. If that spell is of the highest level that PC can cast, they instead generate a critical success.

The Primary Caster can only attempt an Arcana or Nature check and can't substitute a spell for the skill check. The DC of the check is 27, but the Primary Caster receives a status bonus to the check equal to the number of Ritual Points generated by the secondary casters. Increase the DC by 1 if the group has 14 or more Challenge Points. A critical success generates 4 Ritual Points, a success generates 2 Ritual Points, a failure generates no Ritual Points, and a critical failure removes 2 Ritual Points.

Reporting: If the total number of Ritual Points is at least equal to the number of PCs, the ritual succeeds. The table should report a Ritual success. If the PCs do not earn enough Ritual Points, Voth manages to salvage the ritual, though doing so clearly takes a lot out of him. The PCs can now attempt Attunement B, but they do not earn a Ritual success.

H2. ATTUNEMENT B: FREEING VOTH

"You've done it! You've attuned!" Barun exclaims to Voth. "I know that can't have been easy. But you're not alone anymore." She calls out to everyone nearby and gestures toward his bindings, "Quick, let's help him get free!"

Once Voth is attuned to the crown, he can start to break free of the vines that bind him to the demiplane with the PCs' help.

Each PC can attempt two DC 25 skill checks, but unless they use a different skill for the second check, the PC takes a –2 circumstance penalty. The options are:

- Arcana to use knowledge of magical forces.
- Athletics to physically help pull Voth from the ties that bind him to the plane.
- Diplomacy to encourage Voth about what he needs to do.
- Nature to use knowledge of the planes.
- Occultism to use knowledge about strange artifacts.
- Performance to inspire Voth.
- Any appropriate Lore.

A critical success generates 2 Liberation Points, a success generates 1 Liberation Point, a failure generates no Liberation Points, and a critical failure removes 1 Liberation Point.

Reporting: If the total number of Liberation Points is at least equal to the number of PCs, the PCs successfully help free Voth from the control of the demiplane. The table should report a Ritual success.

KING IN THORNS

I1. DEFENSE A: INITIAL FORCES **LOW**

During a brief lull in the action, Venture-Captain Torrsen silently converses with Fola Barun and his assistant Lirall. The peace is broken by a deep growl followed by the loud bark of an alerted Mahki. Seeing Lirall react, Torrsen follows Mahki's gaze to the trees surrounding the glen just as one of them seems to uproot itself and step forward. "Pathfinders, to arms! It seems the Thorned Monarch still has control of this demiplane. We have to buy the ritual more time!"

Creatures: The very trees around the Pathfinders awaken, brought to life by the Thorned Monarch's magic, and lumber forward to attack the Pathfinders. Use the map on page 21 for this area.

AWAKENED TREES (2) **CREATURE 6** Page 33

Reporting: If the PCs defeat the fey, the table should report a Defense success.

I2. DEFENSE B: THE BATTLE CONTINUES **MODERATE**

"They've almost completed the ritual," Torrsen signs with one hand as he points forward with his sword. "It's up to us to give them a little more time. Let's go!"

Creatures: Two culdewens abandon a nearby fishing hole in hopes of reeling in the PCs instead. Use the map on page 21 for this area; the culdewens approach from off the map.

CULDEWENS (2) **CREATURE 7** Page 34

Reporting: If the PCs defeat the fey, the table should report a Defense success.

PART 3: THE MONARCH ARRIVES

The House GM should read the following to begin Part 3.

As the last of the fey attackers fall, a sudden, eerie silence descends over the demiplane. A vision of a green moth—their

body composed of thorny vines and their eyes burning with alien malevolence—clouds the eyes of each Pathfinder, and a sinister voice rings in every ear. "You have stolen my crown and invaded my domain. I have destroyed civilizations for lesser slights. None of you shall leave this place alive!"

HOUSE GM INSTRUCTIONS

Once the House has reported a number of Monarch successes equal to the number of tables, or when only 15 minutes remain in which to complete the event, read the Conclusion.

J. THE THORNED MONARCH ATTACKS SEVERE

The Thorned Monarch and their most powerful allies descend on the demiplane, looking to slaughter Pathfinders, take the crown and with it control of the demiplane, and kill Gregaro Voth for his defiance. Qxal's forces focus on groups of Pathfinders to attack while Qxal sets their sights on Voth.

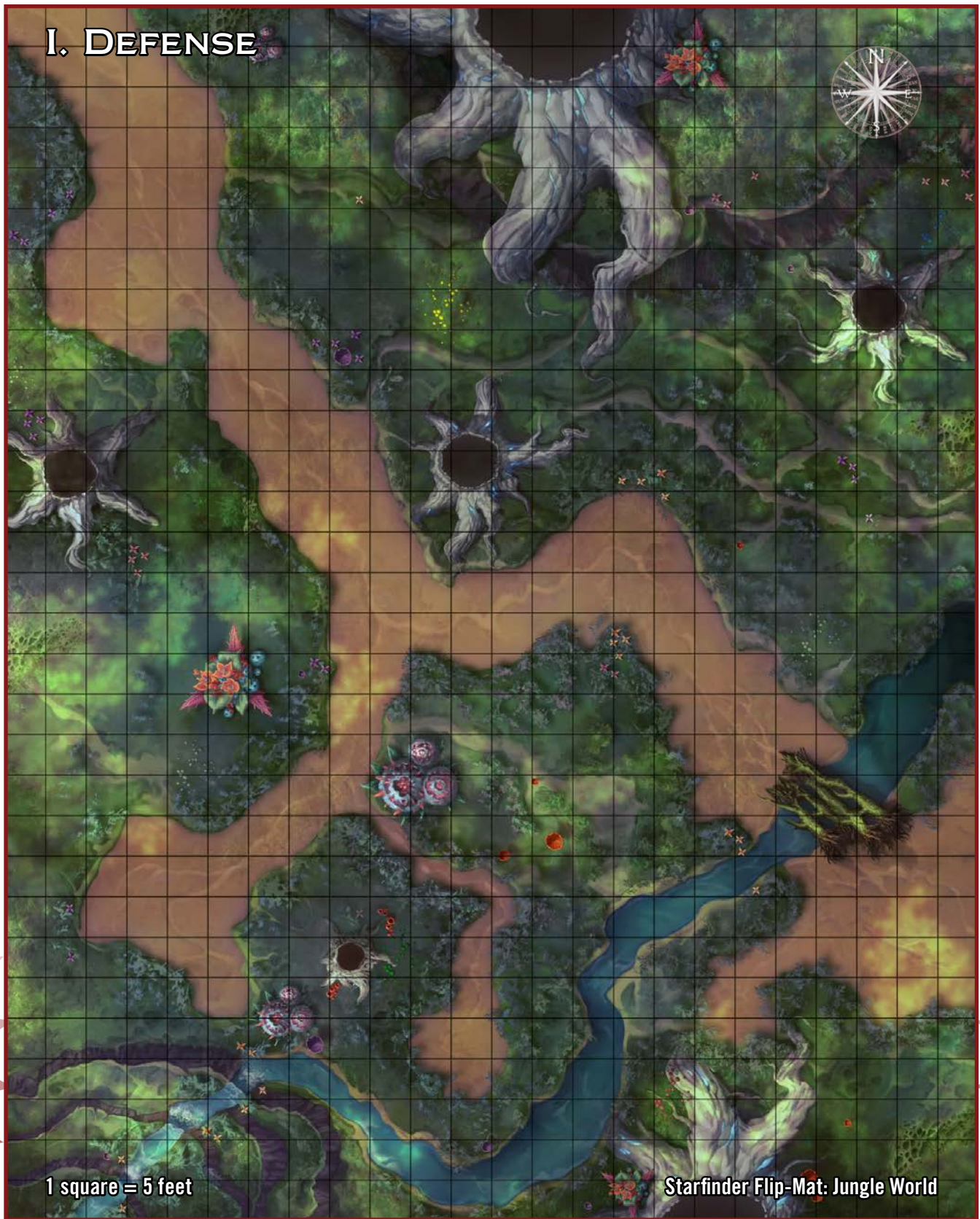
Table GMs should read or paraphrase the following.

"We've done well, Pathfinders," Bjersig Torrsen says, "but the enemy is upon us, and they are as dangerous as any we've yet faced." Fola Barun lays a hand on his arm and



THE THORNED MONARCH

KING IN THORNS



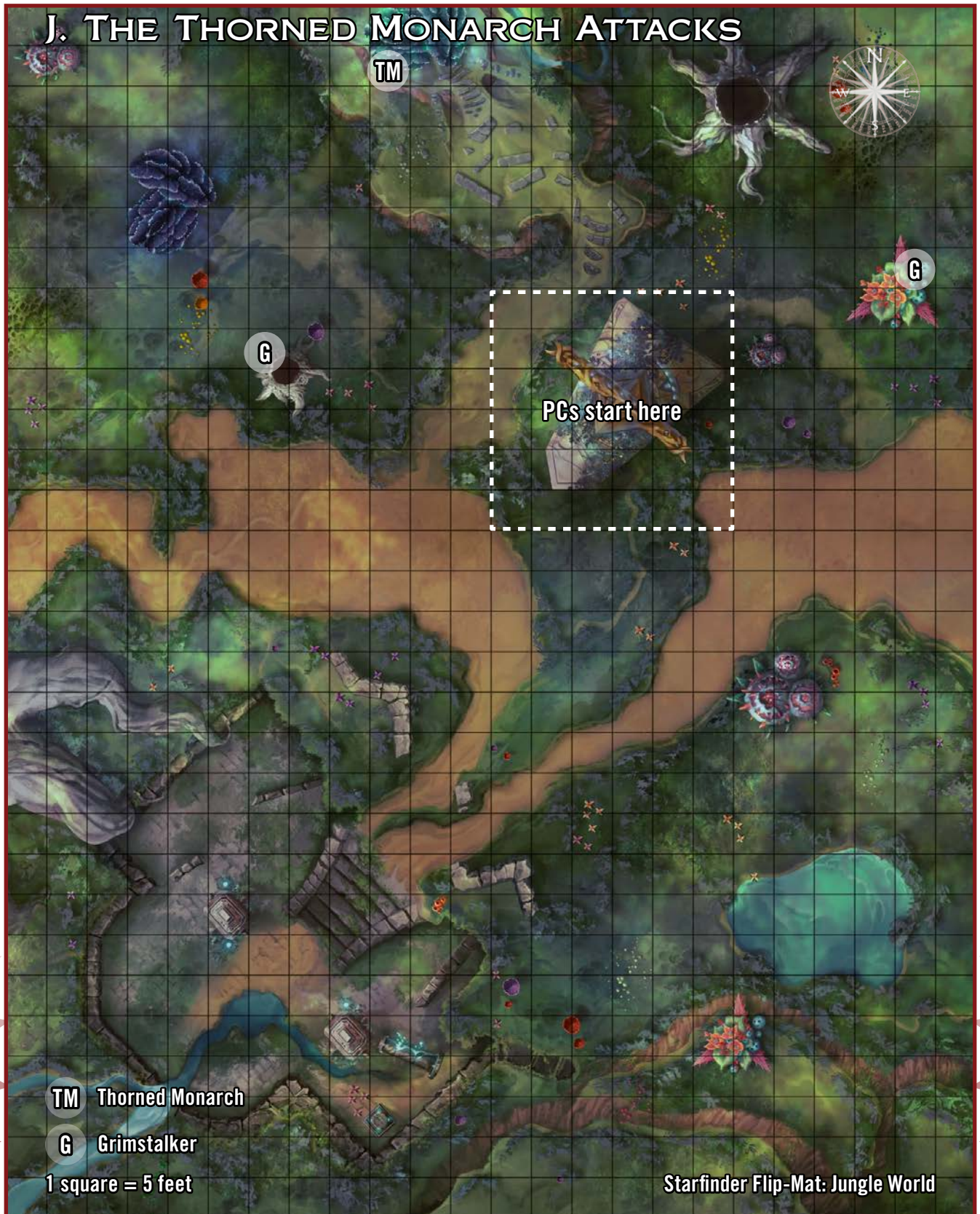
I. DEFENSE

1 square = 5 feet

Starfinder Flip-Mat: Jungle World

KING IN THORNS

J. THE THORNED MONARCH ATTACKS



TM Thorned Monarch

G Grimstalker

1 square = 5 feet

Starfinder Flip-Mat: Jungle World

KING IN THORNS

steps forward. "Keep your wits about you. We can do this!" A fierce grin spreads across the half-orc's face as he pats his dog between the ears. "Mahki, seek!"

Terrain: Use the map on page 22 for this area. Green areas on the map are light underbrush, creating difficult terrain and allowing creatures within to Hide and Sneak.

Creatures: Qxal hides in the bushes at the top of a nearby ridge, using Secret Spells against the PCs while their grimstalker allies move into position and attack. Once the PCs are engaged, Qxal uses Flutter to expose as many PCs as possible to hallucinatory scale dust, then moves into melee. Feel free to mix up these tactics based on what is best for your table. Qxal didn't survive as long as they have by being inflexible, but if the PCs struggle in this combat, it's possible that the fey's rage gets the best of them and drives them toward suboptimal tactics. Qxal fights to the death. If Qxal is defeated, the grimstalkers flee.



GREGARO VOTH

THE THORNED MONARCH

Page 35

CREATURE 9

GRIMSTALKERS (2)

Page 36

CREATURE 5

Reporting: If the PCs defeat the Thorned Monarch's forces, the table should report two Monarch successes.

If the House has not yet earned enough Monarch successes and time permits, the table can choose to fight one or more additional encounters. Give the PCs a little over 10 minutes to rest after each encounter, after which another band of Qxal's forces attacks. The GM can use the creatures from areas **D**, **G1**, or **I2** on the area **J** map, favoring encounters the table has not seen yet. Alternatively, the GM can send four grimstalkers at the PCs (plus one grimstalker for every 2 Challenge Points beyond 8 the table has). Each successful encounter earns one Monarch success.

CONCLUSION

When the tables have reported enough Monarch successes, the House GM should read or paraphrase the following.

There is a strange sensation throughout the demiplane of tension being released. It's as though the plane itself had been holding its breath for a long time and finally exhaled. The Thorned Monarch has fallen. Gregaro Voth, now freed from his planar prison, stands before the assembled group.

"Pathfinders, there are no words to thank you for coming to my rescue. I have talked with Venture-Captain Tolal, and I understand I've been trapped here for a great many years. Unfortunately, I cannot return with you to Absalom. If I leave this place, the weight of time would suddenly bear down upon me, and I would immediately die. So, I shall remain here, though I imagine I can make this a more palatable prison."

Voth, still wearing the crown, looks around him, and the landscape suddenly changes. In an instant, where before there was a copse of trees, there now stands a brand-new Pathfinder lodge with sprawling grounds. The scene is beautiful, with dozens of small buildings dotted across a verdant landscape complete with tall trees, colorful flowers, and chirping birds. "I suppose the adventure can come to me! Please, Pathfinders, stay and enjoy a well-deserved rest. Tell me of all the journeys you've taken and the discoveries that you've made!"

OBJECTIVES

This adventure has no specific objectives. For participating in this adventure, each PC earns 4 Fame and 4 Reputation for their chosen faction.

EPILOGUE

As Table GMs fill out Chronicle Sheets and players gather their things, the House GM should read or paraphrase the following.

After a full night's rest, though perhaps with a few odd dreams, Oraiah Tolal and Gregaro Voth ask everyone to meet the next morning. Agents assemble in a garden on the new lodge's grounds.

Gregaro Voth begins, "Pathfinders, you have done amazing work, defeating the Thorned Monarch and his forces after making the arduous journey out here." Oraiah Tolal continues, "But if Alseta smiles upon our work, you will have a much easier journey home." Together, they cast a spell, and a shimmering archway appears. After a few moments, Master of Spells Sorrina Westyr and Decemvirate member Eliza Petulengro walk through. Westyr exclaims happily, "Well done,

KING IN THORNS

Pathfinders, all of you!" Petulengro explains more. "We've established a link between this new lodge and the Maze of the Open Road, a hedge maze and portal network that used to be carefully restricted by the Decemvirate. You have more than earned a swift trip home. The Decemvirate is planning to add new nodes to the maze, allowing Pathfinders to swiftly travel to places far from the Society's current reach. And so, if you are ready to go home, please follow me!" Petulengro and Westyr lead the way through the portal, into the maze, and through another archway that leads straight back to the Grand Lodge.

FINAL CLOSING

The House GM should close the event, thanking the Table GMs, organizers, convention staff, and others who helped make the event possible for their hard work, and thanking the players for their support of Pathfinder Society Organized Play. Finally, they should provide the Table GMs and players instructions for submitting reporting sheets and exiting the event.

KING IN THORNS

APPENDIX 1: LEVEL 7-8 ENCOUNTERS

The statistics presented in this appendix include full stat blocks for creatures and hazards appearing in this scenario. These encounters are written for four 7th-level PCs. If your group has a different composition or size, refer to the Challenge Points section of Organized Play Tools (page 42) for instructions on how to use the scaling sidebars to adjust the encounters for your group.

If a creature is marked “(0),” don’t include it in the encounter unless otherwise specified (likely from the scaling sidebars).

ENCOUNTER A

MUSHROOM RING

HAZARD 8

RARE COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP


Stealth +18 (expert)


Description This mushroom ring forms a portal to the First World, allowing the Thorned Monarch’s reinforcements into the Material Plane. When the PCs approach, a creature emerges. Creatures continue to emerge until the mushroom ring is disabled. Disabling the mushroom ring also causes any creatures that have emerged to disappear.

Disable Thievery DC 24 (expert) or Nature DC 28 (trained) to rearrange the mushrooms to disrupt the portal (2 actions), or *dispel magic* (4th level, counteract DC 26) to counteract the magical properties; three successes are required to disable the portal

AC 27; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +13

Mushroom Ring HP 138 (BT 69); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Portal  (magical) **Trigger** The PCs approach the mushroom ring; **Effect** An elanax emerges from the portal to defend it; the *mushroom ring* then rolls initiative.

Routine  An elanax emerges from the mushroom ring and defends it. All elanaxes use the mushroom ring’s initiative.

ELANANX (0)

CREATURE 6

NE MEDIUM FEY FIRE

Perception +14; darkvision


Languages Sylvan (can’t speak any language)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +14, Survival +14 (+17 to Track)

Str +4, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** -3, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -2

AC 24; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +16, **Will** +12

HP 95; **Immunities** fire; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Cinder Dispersal  (fire, primal, transmutation); **Frequency** once per day. **Trigger** The elanax takes damage from a hostile source. **Effect** The elanax disperses into a cloud of smoke and cinders, filling its space and a 20-foot emanation. While in this form, the elanax can’t be attacked or targeted, and it doesn’t take up space. Anything inside this


SCALING ENCOUNTER A


To adjust for the PCs’ overall strength, make the following adjustments.

14–18 Challenge Points: Four successes are required to disable the mushroom ring.


cloud is concealed, and any creature ending its turn there takes 2d6 fire damage. At the start of its turn, the elanax returns to its normal form in any square the cloud covered. If the elanax Strikes a creature using its first action after returning to its normal form, the target is flat-footed and the Strike deals an extra 1d6 fire damage.

Speed 30 feet

Melee  jaws +16 (magical), **Damage** 2d6+8 piercing and 1d6 fire

Melee  claw +16 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+8 slashing

Pack Attack The elanax’s Strikes deal an extra 1d6 damage to creatures within the reach of at least two of its allies.

Pounce  The elanax Strides and makes a Strike at the end of that movement. If the elanax began this action hidden, it remains hidden until after the attack.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER B

AWAKENED MEGALANIA

CREATURE 7

UNCOMMON N HUGE ANIMAL

Perception +15; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Common, Mwangi

Skills Athletics +18, Nature +15, Stealth +15 (+17 in undergrowth)

Str +7, **Dex** +2, **Con** +4, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -2

AC 25; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13

HP 125

Speed 25 feet, swim 25 feet

Melee jaws +18 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+9 piercing plus Grab and megalania venom

Megalania Venom (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 25 Fortitude;

Maximum Duration 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and clumsy 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 2d6 poison damage, clumsy 2, and flat-footed (1 round); **Stage 3** 2d6 poison damage, clumsy 3, and flat-footed (1 round)

Swallow Whole (attack) Large, 2d10+7 bludgeoning, Rupture 16

GIANT FRILLED LIZARDS (2)

CREATURE 5

N LARGE ANIMAL

Perception +11; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet


Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +14, Stealth +10


Str +5, **Dex** +1, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

AC 22; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9

HP 75

Speed 30 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee  jaws +16 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+7 piercing

Melee  tail +16 (agile, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+7 bludgeoning

Intimidating Display (auditory, emotion, fear, mental, visual) The giant frilled lizard Strides. If it ends that Stride adjacent to at least one other creature, it suddenly displays its colorful neck frills and issues a frightening hiss. Each adjacent creature must succeed at a DC 21 Will save or become frightened 2 (or frightened 3 on a critical failure). The creature is then temporarily immune to Intimidating Display for 1 minute.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10–11 Challenge Points: Give the awakened megalania 10 additional Hit Points.

12–15 Challenge Points: Add one giant frilled lizard to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points: Add two giant frilled lizards to the encounter.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER C

FENCE

CREATURE 5

N MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +11

Languages Common

Skills Accounting Lore +13, Acrobatics +13, Crafting +13, Deception +13, Diplomacy +11, Intimidation +11, Society +11, Stealth +10, Thievery +10, Underworld Lore +15

Str +0, **Dex** +3, **Con** +0, **Int** +4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

Fence's Eye Fences live by their ability to recognize a viable trade. They can use Underworld Lore to identify an item's value and Identify Magic on an item. They gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Underworld Lore checks when doing so, and to Underworld Lore checks to determine whether an item was stolen, whether a stolen item would be too recognizable to easily move, and who would be interested in purchasing such an item.

Items *bird feather token*, dagger (10), lesser darkvision elixir, disguise kit, shortsword, lesser smokestick (2), thieves' tools

AC 20; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

HP 70

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ shortsword +12 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d6+6 piercing

Melee ✦ dagger +12 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing

Ranged ✦ dagger +12 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

Quick Rummage ✦ The fence always has a few items close at hand. The fence Interacts to draw a weapon or item that takes a single action to activate, and then Strikes with the weapon or Activates the Item.

Scoundrel's Feint When the fence successfully Feints, their target is flat-footed against the fence's attacks until the end of the fence's next turn. On a critical success, the target is flat-footed against all attacks until the end of the fence's next turn.

Sneak Attack The fence deals an extra 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

12–15 Challenge Points: Add one tomb raider to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points: Add one tomb raider and one fence to the encounter.

PLAGUE DOCTOR

CREATURE 5

N MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +13

Languages Common

Skills Intimidation +9, Medicine +13, Plague Lore +13, Religion +13

Str +0, **Dex** +1, **Con** +4, **Int** +2, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Items crossbow (10 bolts), healer's tools, *minor potion of healing* (4), staff, studded leather

AC 20; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

HP 73

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ staff +9 (two-hand d8), **Damage** 1d4 bludgeoning

Ranged ✦ crossbow +10 (range increment 120 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d8 piercing

Divine Prepared Spells DC 23; **3rd** *heal* (×3), *neutralize poison*, *remove disease*; **2nd** *death knell*, *remove fear*, *restoration*; **1st** *detect poison*, *purify food and drink* (×2); **Cantrips (3rd)** *guidance*, *light*, *message*, *sigil*, *stabilize*

Cleric Domain Spells 1 Focus Point, DC 23; **3rd** *healer's blessing* (Core Rulebook 393)

Healing Hands When the plague doctor casts *heal*, they roll d10s instead of d8s.

Improved Communal Healing When the plague doctor casts *heal* targeting a single creature, the plague doctor also restores Hit Points equal to the spell's level to himself or any other creature within range of the spell.

KING IN THORNS

TOMB RAIDER

CREATURE 5

N **MEDIUM** **HUMAN** **HUMANOID**

Perception +13

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +13, Architecture Lore +11, Athletics +13, Deception +7, Engineering Lore +11, Society +9, Stealth +11, Thievery +13

Str +4, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

Items climbing kit, hand crossbow (20 bolts), +1 *kukri*

Hazard Spotter The tomb raider automatically attempts a secret Perception check to notice a hazard when they are within 10 feet of the hazard.

AC 21; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +15, **Will** +11

HP 75

Speed 25 feet, climb 15 feet

Melee ◆ *kukri* +15 (agile, magical, trip), **Damage** 1d6+7 slashing

Ranged ◆ hand crossbow +15 (range increment 60 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d6+3 piercing

Trick Attack ◆ The tomb raider musters their guile to attempt a clever attack that catches their foe unprepared. The tomb raider chooses one of their weapons. The next attack with that weapon deals an extra 2d6 precision damage. In addition, the tomb raider can Interact to draw the weapon (or to reload it if they choose the hand crossbow).

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER D

DRAINBERRY BUSH

CREATURE 7

N **LARGE** **PLANT**

Perception +16; lifesense 120 feet

Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan (can't speak any language); telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +11, Athletics +17, Diplomacy +13, Nature +17, Stealth +11 (+15 to appear as a bush)

Str +6, **Dex** +2, **Con** +6, **Int** -2, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Nature Empathy The drainberry bush can use Diplomacy to Make an Impression on and make very simple Requests of animals and plant creatures.

AC 23; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +13, **Will** +13

HP 135; **Weaknesses** fire 5; **Resistances** negative 10

Speed 25 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee **◆** vine +17 (reach 20 feet), **Damage** 2d8+10 bludgeoning plus Improved Grab

Blood Berries The drainberry bush must drain blood from living creatures for sustenance. This causes clusters of bright red berries to grow among its branches. Each cluster of berries lasts for 1 day, and a drainberry bush typically has 1d6+3 clusters when encountered. When consumed, a cluster restores 2d8+10 Hit Points. This effect has the healing, necromancy, and primal traits.

A creature can pluck a cluster of berries with a successful unarmed Strike or Thievery check against the bush's AC.

Consume Berries **◆** (healing, necromancy, positive, primal) The bush draws nourishment from one cluster of blood berries, regaining 2d8+10 HP. That berry cluster wrinkles and dies.

Drain Blood **◆** **Requirements** The drainberry bush has at least one living creature grabbed with one of its vines; **Effect** The bush's hollow thorns siphon blood from creatures it has grabbed. Each creature must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or take 2d8+10 damage and become drained 1 (double damage and drained 2 on a critical failure). For every creature damaged this way, a cluster of blood berries (see above) immediately grows along the bush's branches.

Storm of Vines **◆◆** The drainberry bush makes up to four vine Strikes, each against a different target. These attacks count toward the bush's multiple attack penalty, but the multiple attack penalty doesn't increase until after the bush makes all these attacks.

MANDRAGORAS (2)

CREATURE 4

CE **SMALL** **PLANT**

Perception +11; blood scent, low-light vision

Languages Abyssal, Common

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +10, Stealth +12 (+20 in vegetation)

Str +2, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** -1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

Blood Scent A mandragora can smell creatures with blood as

SCALING ENCOUNTER D

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10–11 Challenge Points: Add two mandragoras to the encounter.

12–13 Challenge Points: Add one drainberry bush to the encounter.

14–15 Challenge Points: Add one drainberry bush and two mandragoras to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points: Add two drainberry bushes and two mandragoras to the encounter.

an imprecise sense at a range of 30 feet, and it can smell demons, fey, and sorcerers with blood as a precise sense at a range of 30 feet.

AC 21; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +13, **Will** +8

HP 60; **Weaknesses** fire 5; **Resistances** bludgeoning 5, electricity 5

Vulnerability to Supernatural Darkness Whenever a mandragora begins its turn in an area of magical darkness, it is slowed 1 on that turn.

Speed 30 feet, burrow 10 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee **◆** jaws +14 (finesse), **Damage** 2d8+4 piercing plus Grab

Melee **◆** thorny vine +14 (agile, finesse, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d4+4 slashing plus mandragora venom

Blood Drain **◆** **Requirements** The mandragora has a creature grabbed; **Effect** The mandragora drains blood from the creature it has grabbed, dealing 2d6 damage. If the creature is a demon, fey, or sorcerer, the mandragora gains temporary Hit Points equal to the damage dealt. A creature that has its blood drained by a mandragora is drained 1 until it receives healing of any kind or amount.

Mandragora Venom (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 21 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage, confused, and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 2d6 poison damage, confused, and stupefied 1 (1 round)

Piercing Shriek **◆** (auditory, evocation, mental, primal) **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** The mandragora emits an unsettling shriek. Each non-mandragora creature within 30 feet must attempt a DC 25 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is sickened 1.

Failure The creature is sickened 2.

Critical Failure The creature is sickened 2 and slowed 1. As long as the creature remains sickened, this slowed condition value can't be reduced below 1.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER F

BLODEUWEDDS (2)

CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON

CN

MEDIUM

FEY

PLANT

Perception +14; low-light vision

Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan; *speaks with plants*

Skills Acrobatics +15, Diplomacy +15, Nature +13, Performance +15, Stealth +13 (+17 in grasslands), Survival +11

Str +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +5

Items +1 sling

Allergen Aura (aura, primal) A blodeuwedd exudes a 30-foot aura of pollen and irritating allergens. A non-plant living creature that begins its turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 22 Fortitude save or become sickened 2. A creature that succeeds at its save is then temporarily immune to the allergen aura for 24 hours. A blodeuwedd can suppress this aura or activate it again as a free action.

Wild Empathy The blodeuwedd can use Diplomacy to Make an Impression on and make very simple Requests of animals.

AC 24; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +17, **Will** +14

HP 105; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ claw +14 (agile), **Damage** 2d8+7 slashing

Ranged ✦ sling +17 (propulsive, range increment 50 feet), **Damage** 2d6+4 bludgeoning

Primal Innate Spells DC 25; **4th** *hallucinatory terrain, modify memory, sleep*; **3rd** *wall of thorns*; **2nd** *entangle* (×3); **Cantrips (4th)** *dancing lights, tanglefoot*; **Constant (4th)** *speaks with plants*

Change Shape (concentrate, polymorph, primal, transmutation) A blodeuwedd can take on the appearance of a single unique humanoid or the form of a prairie owl. When in humanoid form, the blodeuwedd loses its claw attack. In owl form, its statistics change as follows: **Size** Small; **Speed** fly 60 feet; **Melee** [one-action] talons +15, **Damage** 1d3+1.

A blodeuwedd can return to their normal form as a free action.

Living Footsteps Every Stride action taken by a blodeuwedd causes small plants, grasses, and wildflowers to sprout from the ground, though they can suppress this effect if they desire. In a region or terrain that wouldn't normally support plant life, these plants thrive for 1 minute before withering away.

Nature's Infusion **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** While surrounded by any field or fertile plain, a blodeuwedd can infuse themselves with borrowed life energy from nearby plants and nutrients in the ground. The blodeuwedd gains 15 temporary Hit Points that last for 1 hour.

SCALING ENCOUNTER F

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments.

12+ Challenge Points: For every 4 Challenge Points above 8, add one blodeuwedd to the encounter.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER G1

MEGAPRIMATUS

CREATURE 8

N **GARGANTUAN** **ANIMAL**

Perception +15; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +19

Str +7, **Dex** +2, **Con** +5, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +2

AC 26; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +16, **Will** +13

HP 150

Speed 30 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee ♦ fist +21 (agile, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 2d8+10 bludgeoning

Melee ♦ jaws +21 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+10 piercing
Mangling Rend ♦♦ A megaprimatus makes two fist Strikes against the same target. If both hit, the attack deals an additional 2d6 bludgeoning damage, the target is flat-footed, and the target takes a -20-foot status penalty to all Speeds until the end of its next turn.

Terrifying Display ♦♦ (auditory, emotion, fear, mental) The megaprimatus beats its chest in a terrifying display. Creatures within 50 feet must attempt a DC 27 Will save. While a creature is frightened by this ability, it is flat-footed to the megaprimatus and to gorillas.

Critical Success No effect and temporarily immune for 1 minute.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is frightened 1.

Critical Failure The creature is frightened 2 and fleeing until the end of its next turn.

GORILLAS (2)

CREATURE 3

N **LARGE** **ANIMAL**

Perception +8; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +11, Stealth +7

Str +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +3, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -2

AC 19; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

HP 45

Speed 30 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee ♦ fist +11 (agile, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+4 bludgeoning

Melee ♦ jaws +11 (reach 5 feet), **Damage** 1d8+4 piercing

Frightening Display [two-actions] (auditory, emotion, fear, mental) The gorilla beats its chest in a terrifying display. Creatures within 30 feet must attempt a DC 20 Will save. While a creature is frightened by this ability, it is flat-footed to the gorilla.

Critical Success No effect and temporarily immune for 1 minute.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is frightened 1.

Critical Failure The creature is frightened 2.

SCALING ENCOUNTER G1

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10-11 Challenge Points: Add two gorillas to the encounter.

12-13 Challenge Points: Add four gorillas to the encounter.

14-15 Challenge Points: Add one megaprimatus to the encounter.

16-18 Challenge Points: Add one megaprimatus and two gorillas to the encounter.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER G2

GIANT SLUG

CREATURE 8

N **HUGE** **ANIMAL**

Perception +14; no hearing, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Skills Athletics +19

Str +7, **Dex** -1, **Con** +7, **Int** -5, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -4

AC 25; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14

HP 165; **Weaknesses** salt 5; **Resistances** acid 10

Speed 20 feet, climb 15 feet

Melee ♦ radula +21 (reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d10+10 slashing plus mucus

Melee ♦ foot +21 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+10 bludgeoning plus mucus

Ranged ♦ disgorged mucus +17 (brutal, range increment 50 feet, splash), **Damage** 3d6 acid damage plus mucus and 1d6 acid splash damage

Malleable The giant slug can fit through tight spaces as if it were a Large creature. While Squeezing, it can move at its full Speed. It can Squeeze through spaces that typically fit only a Medium creature, but it does so at the usual Speed for Squeezing.

Mucus Any creature hit by the giant slug or that moves into its mucus trail is coated in sticky, caustic mucus. It takes 1d4 persistent acid damage and takes a -5-foot status penalty to its Speeds while the damage persists.

Mucus Trail Any square the giant slug moves into is coated in mucus. These spaces are difficult terrain, and any creature that moves into one or ends its turn in one is subjected to the slug's mucus. After an hour, the mucus dries and the area is no longer difficult terrain.

Trample Large or smaller, foot, DC 27

GIANT STAG BEETLE (0)

CREATURE 4

N **LARGE** **ANIMAL**

Perception +10; darkvision

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +13

Str +5, **Dex** +1, **Con** +5, **Int** -5, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -1

AC 22; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

HP 55

Speed 20 feet, fly 20 feet

Melee ♦ mandibles +13, **Damage** 2d8+5 piercing

Melee ♦ foot +11, **Damage** 1d10+5 bludgeoning

Trample Medium or smaller, foot, DC 21

SCALING ENCOUNTER G2

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10–11 Challenge Points: Add one giant stag beetle to the encounter.

12–13 Challenge Points: Add two giant stag beetles to the encounter.

14–15 Challenge Points: Add four giant stag beetles to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points: Add one giant slug and one giant stag beetle to the encounter.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER I1

AWAKENED TREES (2)

CREATURE 6

N **HUGE** **PLANT**

Perception +13; low-light vision

Languages Arboreal (can't speak any language)

Skills Athletics +14, Stealth +9 (+14 in forests)

Str +6, **Dex** -1, **Con** +6, **Int** -5, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

AC 22; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

HP 100; **Weaknesses** axe vulnerability, fire 10; **Resistances** bludgeoning 5, piercing 5

Axe Vulnerability An awakened tree takes 5 additional damage from axes.

Speed 20 feet

Melee **◆** branch +16 (reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d8+6 bludgeoning

Melee **◆** root +16 (trip), **Damage** 2d6+6 bludgeoning

SCALING ENCOUNTER I1

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments.

12+ Challenge Points: For every 4 Challenge Points above 8, add one awakened tree to the encounter.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER 12

CULDEWENS (2)

CREATURE 7

CE SMALL AMPHIBIOUS FEY

Perception +15, low-light vision

Languages Aquan, Common, Sylvan

Skills Athletics +16, Deception +16, Intimidation +14, Nature +12, Sailing Lore +14, Stealth +15, Survival +16

Str +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +1, **Int** -1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

Items fish hook, oar (functions as mace)

Culdewen's Curse (curse, enchantment, primal) A culdewen that captures a creature is compelled to immediately retreat to a secluded place to eat, typically journeying by boat. The travel to the secluded place always takes at least 1 day. Their captive is cursed to vanish on the journey—typically being lost in the water or consumed by aquatic creatures—and can be recovered only by a *wish* spell or similarly powerful magic.

AC 25; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +18, **Will** +13; -2 status to all saves vs. curses

HP 105; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Speed 40 feet, swim 40 feet

Melee ♦ fish hook +17 (trip), **Damage** 2d10+7 piercing plus hooked

Melee ♦ oar +17 (shove), **Damage** 2d6+7 bludgeoning

Ranged ♦ fish hook +18 (thrown 30 feet), **Damage** 2d10+7 piercing plus hooked

Hooked A creature struck by the culdewen's fish hook is skewered, taking 1d4 persistent bleed damage as long as the hook remains stuck in it. The fish hook can be removed only if a creature spends an Interact action and succeeds at a DC 25 Athletics check to pull it free.

Land the Fish ♦ **Requirements** A creature is hooked by the culdewen's fish hook and adjacent to the culdewen; **Effect** The culdewen hoists the creature over their shoulder, as though it weighs no more than a fish. Unless the creature is unable to act, the culdewen must attempt an Athletics check against the creature's Fortitude DC. On a success, the creature is restrained by the culdewen. While hoisting a creature, the culdewen gains a +20-foot status bonus to their Speeds and is compelled to escape with it (see culdewen's curse above).

Reel In ♦ (manipulate) The culdewen pulls the rope attached to their hook. If they have no creature hooked, the fish hook returns to the culdewen's hand. If a creature is hooked, the culdewen attempts an Athletics check against the creature's Fortitude DC, pulling it up to 30 feet closer on a success (60 feet on a critical success).

Swear ♦ (auditory, curse, enchantment, primal) The culdewen unleashes a string of invectives. Each creature that hears them must attempt a DC 25 Will save, with the effects of *mariner's curse* and is then temporarily immune for 24 hours. Even on a failed save, the curse ends automatically after 1 day.

SCALING ENCOUNTER 12

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments.

12+ Challenge Points: For every 4 Challenge Points above 8, add one culdewen to the encounter.

KING IN THORNS

ENCOUNTER J

QXAL, THE THORNED MONARCH

CREATURE 9

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +21; low-light vision

Languages Common, Sylvan; *speaks with plants* (constant), *tongues* (constant)

Skills Acrobatics +18, Deception +23, Nature +19, Stealth +20, Thievery +18

Str +3, **Dex** +5, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +6

AC 27; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +21, **Will** +18

HP 188; **Weaknesses** cold iron 10

Hallucinatory Scale Dust (aura, illusion, mental) 30 feet. Fey glimmers shed from Qxal's wings like scale dust, causing hallucinations. A creature entering the aura or starting its turn in the area must attempt a DC 25 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and is temporarily immune to the scale dust for 24 hours.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature hallucinates that it is beginning to transform into a plant or animal native to their homeland, becoming either clumsy 1, enfeebled 1, or stupefied 1, at Qxal's choice. The condition lasts for 1 hour. Each time a creature fails this save, Qxal can choose an additional condition.

Critical Failure As failure, but the condition value is 2.

Blood Siphon **Trigger** A creature within 60 feet takes persistent bleed damage. **Effect** The shed blood disperses into a fine mist that Qxal siphons up with their proboscis. Qxal regains 14 HP.

Speed 20 feet, burrow 20 feet, fly 40 feet; woodland stride

Melee **◆** proboscis +21 (deadly d12), **Damage** 2d12+9 slashing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Melee **◆** tendrils +21 (agile, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+9 slashing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Ranged **◆** thorn +21 (range 60 feet), **Damage** 2d4+9 piercing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 28, attack +20; **5th** (3 slots) *cloudkill*, *cone of cold*, *synesthesia*; **4th** (4 slots) *confusion*, *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *wall of thorns*; **3rd** (4 slots) *blindness*, *earthbind*, *fear*, *slow*; **2nd** (4 slots) *deafness*, *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *fungal hyphae*; **1st** (4 slots) *heal*, *shockwave*, *phantom pain*, *ventriloquism*; **Cantrips** (**5th**) *acid splash*, *electric arc*, *message*, *produce flame*, *tanglefoot*

Primal Innate Spells DC 28; **5th** *hallucinatory terrain* (at will), *illusory scene*, *tongues* (constant); **4th** *speaks with plants* (constant); **3rd** *illusory disguise* (at will); **2nd** *invisibility* (at will); **1st** *command* (at will)

SCALING ENCOUNTER J

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, make the following adjustments.

10+ Challenge Points: For every two Challenge Points above 8, add one grimstalker to the encounter.

Cooperative Growth **◆ Requirement** Qxal's last action was a successful Strike against a creature adjacent to a natural surface. **Effect** Vines sprout from the surface, wrapping around the target's limbs. The creature gains the grabbed condition. To escape, the creature must succeed on a DC 28 Escape check or break the vines (AC 20, Hardness 4, HP 36, BT 18, weakness 10 to slashing).

Flutter **◆** Qxal Flies. Any creature they pass within 30 feet of during their Flutter is exposed to their hallucinatory scale dust.

Grasping Visions **◆** (illusion, mental, primal) Qxal causes one creature within 60 feet who is under a condition from Qxal's hallucinatory scale dust aura to see visions of grasping vines and swarming insects, impeding the target's every move. All squares count as difficult terrain for that creature until the end of Qxal's next turn, and during that time they gain no benefit from any ability that would allow them to ignore difficult terrain.

Secret Spells **◆** Qxal knows how to disguise the manifestations of their spellcasting to catch their foes off guard. If the next action they use is Casting a Spell that has a verbal component, they can remove the verbal component. This makes the spell quieter and allows them to cast it in areas where sound can't carry. Additionally, if Qxal has cover or greater cover against or is concealed from one or more observers while Casting a Spell, they can attempt a Stealth check against one or more of those observers' Perception DC. If they succeed at their check against an observer's DC, that observer doesn't notice Qxal is casting a spell.

Woodland Stride Qxal can pass freely through even the densest jungle. They ignore difficult terrain caused by plants, including plants manipulated by magic.

KING IN THORNS

GRIMSTALKERS (2)

CREATURE 5

CE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +12; low-light vision

Languages Aklo, Common

Skills Acrobatics +13, Intimidation +13, Nature +11, Stealth +13, Survival +12

Str +4, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

Camouflage A grimstalker can Hide in natural environments, even if it doesn't have cover.

AC 22; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

HP 60; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Speed 40 feet, climb 20 feet; woodland stride

Melee ♦ claw +15 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+7 slashing plus grimstalker sap

Primal Innate Spells DC 22, attack +14; **3rd** *earthbind*, *wall of thorns*; **2nd** *entangle*, *pass without trace*, *tree shape*;

Cantrips (3rd) *tanglefoot*

Grimstalker Sap (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 22 Fortitude;

Maximum Duration 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage and clumsy 1 (1 round);

Stage 3 2d6 poison damage and clumsy 2 (1 round)

Woodland Stride A grimstalker can always find a path, almost as if foliage parts before it. A grimstalker ignores difficult terrain caused by plants, such as bushes, vines, and undergrowth. Even plants manipulated by magic don't impede its progress.

KING IN THORNS

APPENDIX 2: ART AND HANDOUTS



ORAIAH TOLAL

KHOUmROCK BLACKTHANE



PERENNIAL CROWN

CALISRO BENARRY



KING IN THORNS

APPENDIX 2: ART AND HANDOUTS



VALAIS DURANT
URWAL



BJERSIG TORRSEN
FOLA BARUN



KING IN THORNS

APPENDIX 2: ART AND HANDOUTS



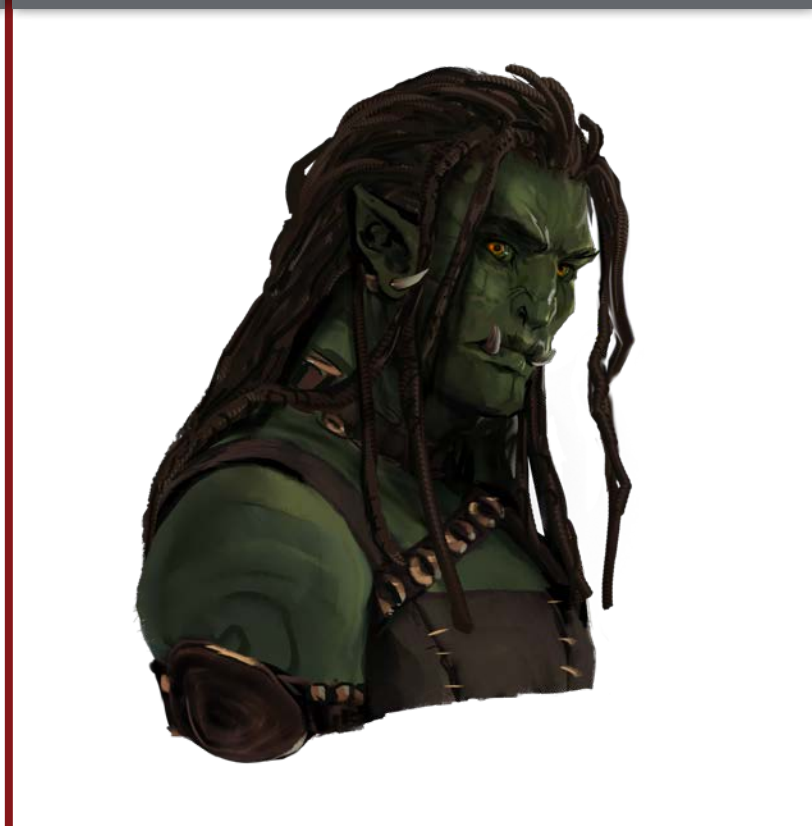
DOOR OF SEASONS

THORNED MONARCH REBORN



GREGARO VOTH TRAPPED

GREGARO VOTH



KING IN THORNS

HANDOUT: AID TOKEN REFERENCE

Each table begins with four Aid Tokens the players can pass to other tables at different points during the event. These starting tokens represent extra help that their PCs give to those of other tables, so a table cannot use its own tokens. Before passing a token, one PC at the table can perform a particular action to boost the effect. If they succeed, check the Boosted box on the Aid Token; no matter what, record the name of the PC. The table can attempt an action to boost an Aid Token only once. If it's easier, the Table GM may wish to have players roll for all boosts during mustering.

Tables can use Aid Tokens they receive from other tables whenever they like, and they can use any number in the same encounter. Each Aid Token can be used only once.

ALLIED OFFENSIVE

Other Pathfinders assist your attack, increasing the damage you deal by the listed amount.

To Boost: Succeed at an attack roll against an AC equal to the target DC in the table below.

Boosted Effect: Increase the damage dealt by 1d6.

BURST OF HEALING

A fellow Pathfinder heals all the PCs by the listed amount.

To Boost: Cast one spell with the healing trait or succeed at a Medicine check against the listed DC.

Boosted Effect: Increase the healing by 1d8.

TIMELY INSPIRATION

A fellow Pathfinder grants the benefits of a bard's *inspire courage* focus cantrip to all PCs for 1 round (a +1 status bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves against fear effects).

To Boost: Succeed at a Performance check against the listed DC.

Boosted Effect: Increase the duration by 2 rounds.

PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE

Gain the benefits of an automatic success on a check to Recall Knowledge.

To Boost: Attempt an Arcana, Nature, Occultism, or Religion check against the listed DC.

Boosted Effect: Gain the benefits of an automatic critical success on a check to Recall Knowledge.

TARGET DCs

LEVELS	TARGET DC
1-2	17
3-4	20
5-6	22
7-8	25

BENEFITS

LEVELS	ALLIED OFFENSIVE	BURST OF HEALING
1-2	1d6	1d8
3-4	2d6	2d8
5-6	3d6	3d8
7-8	4d6	4d8

KING IN THORNS

ALLIED OFFENSIVE

Aid Character Name: _____

Boosted

BURST OF HEALING

Aid Character Name: _____

Boosted

PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE

Aid Character Name: _____

Boosted

TIMELY INSPIRATION

Aid Character Name: _____

Boosted

KING IN THORNS

ORGANIZED PLAY TOOLS

TREASURE TABLE

LEVEL	GOLD EARNED
7	220 gp
8	300 gp

CHRONICLE SHEET

Unlike a typical scenario, *King in Thorns* does not have Treasure Bundles. PCs automatically earn the amount of gold listed above for completing the scenario.

CHALLENGE POINTS

Challenge Points are a system for scaling the difficulty of encounters appropriately for groups of mixed size and level. Total up the number of Challenge Points your group has.

- 7th-level PCs = 2 points each
- 8th-level PCs = 3 points each

Use this total whenever the adventure calls for using the number of Challenge Points to adjust the adventure's difficulty.

KING IN THORNS



Event Reporting Form

Date _____ Event Code: _____

Location _____

GM Org Play #: _____ -2	GM Name: _____	GM Faction: _____
Adventure #: _____	Adventure Name: _____	
Reporting Codes: (check when instructed, line through all if no conditions to report)		<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D
Bonus Faction Goal Achieved: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Scenario-based Infamy earned? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Fame Earned: _____

Character Name: _____		Faction:		<input type="checkbox"/> Slow Track
Org Play #: _____ -2		Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal <input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	<input type="checkbox"/> Dead <input type="checkbox"/> Infamy

Character Name: _____		Faction:		<input type="checkbox"/> Slow Track
Org Play #: _____ -2		Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal <input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	<input type="checkbox"/> Dead <input type="checkbox"/> Infamy

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KING IN THORNS

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