



Year of the Open Road



**PATHFINDER
SOCIETY**

THE PERENNIAL CROWN PART 2: THE THORNED MONARCH

By Alexander Augunas

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How to Play

Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-17: The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 3rd- through 6th-level characters (Tier 3-6; Subtiers 3-4 and 5-6). As a scenario, this adventure is designed to take about 4 hours to play. It is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. For more information on the Pathfinder Society campaign, how to read the attached Chronicle sheets, and how to find games in your area, check out the campaign's home page at PathfinderSociety.club.

GM Resources

The Thorned Monarch makes use of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder Bestiary*, *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*, and *Pathfinder Lost Omens: Gods & Magic*, as well as *Pathfinder Flip-Mat Classics: Ship*, *Pathfinder Flip-Mat Classics: Town Square*, and *Pathfinder Flip-Tiles: Dungeon Starter Set*. All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd, and creature stat blocks from the *Bestiary* are reprinted at the back of the adventure for the GM's convenience.

Scenario Tags

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



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GM SYNOPSIS

This adventure begins immediately after the events of *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1: Opal of Bhopan*. It includes skill based encounters, a chase scene, and several combat encounters.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For time immemorial, the jungles of South Garund have harbored an ancient evil, an imprisoned fey lord whose wrath nearly destroyed the ancient empire of Bhopan. The people of the Mwangi jungles have called this entity by many names: the Death that Strides Among Leaves, the Burrower Through the Barrows, and the Thorned Monarch, among others. But among fey, they were once known as Qxal, twelfth child of the Green Mother. Cast out of the First World and imprisoned on Golarion within an insignificant seed during the Age of Darkness, Qxal's fate was to remain imprisoned on a world forever blanketed by darkness. But the Age of Darkness ended, and under the light of a new era, Qxal was reborn. Crowning himself the Thorned Monarch, Qxal sought dominion over Golarion to build their military strength before launching an assault upon the First World. To plan for this assault, they poured much of their power into a demiplane with close ties to the First World. They used this power to create the *Perennial Crown*, an artifact that served as both a symbol of their rule and the key to controlling the demiplane. With their might established, the Thorned Monarch laid waste to the surrounding lands and their inhabitants.

They were ultimately stopped by a group of Bhoponese heroes. These heroes infiltrated the demiplane and wrested away the crown while Qxal was focused on expanding their domain, spiriting it as far from the monarch as they could to an island to the east. Without the crown, Qxal lost control of their own power and was forced to flee the realm of their own creation. Since then, they have guarded the demiplane's entrance, all the while plotting to restore their power and regain the crown. A key element of this plan has taken place on the last surviving vestige of Bhopan, a remote island in the middle of the Obari Ocean, where the crown has remained safely locked away for centuries. On this island of Bhopan, the Thorned Monarch has encouraged bloodletting traditions that have allowed them to slowly grow their influence over the land and people.

A few centuries ago, a group of Pathfinders found the demiplane's entrance. Most of them resisted Qxal's ploys, but one among their number, Selmus Foster, was tempted by Qxal's whispered promises that if he

WHERE ON GOLARION?

Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-17: The Perennial Crown Part 2 takes place in Bhopan, a small island to the east of Nex off the shores of the continent of Garund. The peoples and civilizations of Bhopan are poorly understood by the inhabitants of both Avistan and Garund due to their isolation from the mainland. Bhopan is home to Bhoponese humans, each of whom possesses qualities resembling those of various kinds of fey and animals, particularly canine pugwampis and batlike jinkins. More information about Bhopan and the Bhoponese people can be found in *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1*.



recovered the crown from Bhopan and brought it to the gateway, he would gain access to a bounty of ancient treasures. Ignorant of the true nature of the mysterious fey who called to him, Foster traveled to Bhopan to take the crown. He failed, and was executed for his attempted theft from the royal vaults.

Pathfinders on the trail of Selmus Foster's old mission have just reached the royal vault and found the crown. Qxal hopes to manipulate these Pathfinders for their own ends, but the reawakened spirit of one of the heroes that stopped their original plot has other ideas. With her help, these Pathfinders can turn the tables on Qxal, banishing the fey's influence from Bhopan.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs begin immediately following the conclusion of *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: Opal of Bhopan*; they are on the island of Bhopan just off the shores of Nex in Garund, currently in the royal vaults with the *Perennial Crown* before them. After revealing itself to be a sapient vessel for the soul of an ancient Bhoponese hero, the

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Perennial Crown hastily warns the PCs of an entity called Qxal, the Thorned Monarch, that seeks ownership over the crown for their own twisted purposes. As the fey force makes their presence known upon Bhopan, ruptures in the ground collapse the main passageway back to the surface, forcing the PCs to delve deeper into the vaults in search of escape. After navigating the ruined vaults, the PCs find their passage to the surface blocked by Webhekiz, King of Bhopan, now a pawn of Qxal.

Whether the PCs slay Webhekiz or spare his life, they emerge onto the streets above to find absolute chaos. Guards and citizens fight one another like souls possessed, obeying the call of the Thorned Monarch. The PCs meet up with the semiretired Pathfinder who sailed them out to Bhopan, Khoumrock Blackthane, amid the chaos. Blackthane suggests they take an early leave of Bhopan by way of his ship, the *Unsinkable*. Before the Pathfinders can escape, they're attacked by various fey and plants commanded by Qxal. Finally, the monarch manifests a fearsome avatar of their strength in the center of Bhopan. Urged by Khoumrock Blackthane, the PCs flee back through the jungle to the *Unsinkable*, hoping to make a grand escape from the island before Qxal can claim the crown for their schemes.

GETTING STARTED

The PCs begin in Bhopan's capital, Hoba Dukuza, in the vaults beneath King Webhekiz's palace. This adventure takes place immediately following the conclusion of *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1*, and regardless of the choices that the PCs made during that scenario, it's assumed that they currently have the *Perennial Crown*. During Part 1, the PCs stopped a steward of Bhopan, Lelzeshin, from taking the crown for himself. This scenario assumes that Lelzeshin is either dead or unconscious at the PCs' feet. The adventure begins abruptly as earthquakes rumble through the vault, and a mysterious voice addresses the PCs. If one or more of the players has not played Part 1, refer to the How Did I Get Here?! sidebar on page 5.

To begin, read or paraphrase the following

The ground trembles. A smattering of dirt and debris trickles from the ceiling of King Webhekiz's vaults, then a chunk of the ceiling collapses, blocking off the vault's entrance. Cracks appear in the vault's mirrored walls. With a thunderous crack, the walls shatter, revealing new tunnels. On the ground, blood oozes from the corpse of a Bhoponese human man, his long aardvark snout twisted into an agonized snarl. In the center of the vault is a pedestal covered in greenery, upon which rests a wooden circlet. The circlet sprouts flowers and leaves that flourish, wither, and die in an endless cycle.

As the tremors end, a telepathic voice reaches out from within the circlet. "Wh-who are you? You are not of Bhopan, yet you stand before the Perennial Crown. A-and that presence. Such rage, such bloodthirst. Tell me it is not so. Tell me that Qxal has not discovered Bhopan. Tell me that they have not discovered the crown."

Naturally, the PCs might have reservations about conversing with a sapient crown while underground during what appears to be an earthquake of some magnitude. Below are some of the PCs' likely inquiries and the *Perennial Crown's* responses. Once the PCs have asked any questions they have, the crown tells the PCs that it is not safe for her to remain here, and entreats the PCs to take her with them. With the vault opened, she explains, its protections against Qxal are gone too. If she's stuck here, it's only a matter of time before Qxal finds her and uses the crown's power to bring ruin once again.

Who are you? "When I was alive, I was known as Audho of Bhopan. My people settled in the Mwangi Expanse long ago but were ultimately slain by Qxal before myself and a few others stole their crown. I was lucky enough to survive, and I swore to protect the crown until my people were safe from Qxal's influence."

Who is Qxal? "We knew Qxal by many names: The Death that Strides Among Leaves, the Burrower Through the Barrows, and the Thorned Monarch. Whatever the name, they are a malevolent fey who was imprisoned upon Golarion long ago—an entity older than most civilizations, utterly consumed by spite. My people were able to learn little else before we were almost entirely destroyed."

Why did Qxal destroy your people? "They seek to control everything they see and built a demiplane within which to magnify their control and magic. But when we stole this crown—the key to controlling the plane's power—they were left with a shadow of their former abilities. Even so weakened, they were able to lay waste in retribution to those of my people who could not flee to this island fast enough, though I suspect revenge was merely a whim compared to their ongoing schemes to get the crown back."

WEBHEKIZ'S VAULTS

Once the PCs have conversed with the *Perennial Crown*, they can begin searching for a way out of the vaults of Bhopan. The earthquakes that wracked the island just moments beforehand have completely collapsed much of the ancient vaults, shattering passageways and creating new ones as hallways burst open into sealed chambers. Navigating the shattered vaults is difficult, but ultimately necessary if the PCs wish to escape from Bhopan, and Qxal, alive.

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HOW DID I GET HERE?!

Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-17: The Perennial Crown Part 2, The Thorned Monarch assumes that the players are in the thick of their adventures in Bhopan; the adventure begins with the *Perennial Crown* in hand immediately after defeating Lelzeshin at the end of *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1, Opal of Bhopan*. If one or more players at your table haven't played this adventure yet, consider framing those PCs' presence within the scenario as one of the many machinations of Qxal. As a powerful fey skilled in manipulation and mind control, Qxal has secretly been keeping tabs on and influencing the actions of other Pathfinders for centuries, ever since the Society founders first encountered them centuries ago. PCs who are playing this scenario immediately after the previous installment watch any newcomers stumble into the vault, clearly enchanted, until Audho's powers free them from Qxal's influence. From there, she briefs newcomers and veterans alike as described in the Getting Started section.

The Shattered Vaults

On their way through the tunnels under the royal palace, the PCs face three major obstacles: collapsed pits, enormous roots, and a strange blood haze. Whenever the PCs encounter an obstacle, each PC must attempt one of the listed checks, with a DC of 18 (DC 20 in Subtier 5–6). PCs who critically succeed gain two successes toward bypassing the obstacle, PCs who succeed gain one success, and PCs who critically fail reduce the number of successes the group has earned by one.

The number of successes the PCs earn determines their result. If they earn a number of successes equal to half the number of PCs (rounded up) or fewer, the PCs fail their attempt to bypass the obstacle, experiencing the failure effect listed in the obstacle before eventually slogging through. If they earn more successes, they don't experience any ill effects from the obstacle.

The Perennial Crown: If a PC wears the *Perennial Crown*, Audho automatically assists their attempt to overcome one of the obstacles. Her aid grants a +1 circumstance bonus on the check to the PC.

TREACHEROUS PIT

The floor of the vaults has given way, collapsing hundreds of feet down into the Darklands.

Associated Skills: Acrobatics (to balance along a thin ledge), Athletics (to scale across a jagged wall).

Failure: The PCs attract the attention of terrible swarms of many-eyed creatures from the Darklands. Although they manage to escape, each PC takes 2d6+5 poison damage (2d10+13 in Tier 5–6) and is sickened 1. They cannot reduce this condition's value until they reach area A.

PROTRUDING ROOTS

Massive, thorny roots over six feet in diameter have burrowed through the walls of the vaults, creating a tangle of brambles.

Associated Skills: Nature (to realize that these roots retract when exposed to heat), Survival (to pick your way through the thorns).

Failure: Disturbing the roots causes them to lash out and assail the PCs while they try to seize the *Perennial Crown*. The PCs manage to dispatch these or evade these foes, but each takes 2d10+7 piercing damage (4d8+10 damage in Tier 5–6).

BLOOD HAZE

A contingent of canine-featured Bhopanese guards has wandered into the passage ahead, into a sanguine haze. The guards tear at each other in confusion, unable to recognize friend from foe.

Associated Skills: Diplomacy (to gently guide the guards back into rational thought), Intimidation (to assert your dominance over the guards), Performance (to rouse the guards from confusion).

Failure: The PCs succumb to the blood haze themselves, blacking out and taking 2d6+5 damage (2d10+13 damage in Tier 5–6). When they come to, the PCs discover blood on their weapons and all the guards dead. The lingering mental fog leaves the PCs stupefied 1 for 10 minutes (until after the encounter in area A).

Treasure: If the PCs bypass at least one obstacle without experiencing the failure effect, they find a mambele with orchid etchings (*Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 120). This represents 1 Treasure Bundle. If the PCs successfully cleared at least two obstacles, they discover additional art objects representing 2 Treasure Bundles instead; if they cleared all three, they earn 3 Treasure Bundles instead.

A. The Burrower's Breach

Moderate

After escaping the devastation of the Shattered Vaults, the PCs arrive in an antechamber where Qxal's roots have smashed through the northernmost wall, exposing a ruined sewer. Within, King Webhekiz and his honor guard await the PCs, their minds having been completely twisted to Qxal's will from decades of unwittingly offering the fey their blood.

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When the PCs enter this chamber, read or paraphrase the following.

A gagging stench permeates this once-grand vault, the decorated walls and ornate tiled floor standing in stark contrast to the southwestern wall, which has been utterly obliterated by a massive entanglement of roots. The source of the vile odor is immediately apparent; an exposed sewer line on the far side of the collapsed wall that's visibly choked with debris and filth. King Webhekiz and a contingent of his armed guards stand among the ruins, covered in blood and minor scratches, their weapons drawn.

"Beware!" Audho's thoughts radiate forth from the *Perennial Crown* with a sense of urgency. "I sense Qxal's twisted presence, their spite and malice like a briar patch that chokes the thought from the minds of my fellow Bhopanese." Webhekiz bellows an inhuman roar and charges forth with deadly abandon, as if to confirm the warrior-hero's warning.

Creatures: After it became clear that the PCs triumphed over Lelzeshin, Qxal set their countermeasures in motion, triggering several localized earthquakes across Bhopan with their roots to buy themselves time to build their influence. In doing so, Qxal has seized control of the many Bhopanese citizens who unwittingly wet their vines with blood offerings over untold centuries, including the king of Bhopan himself, Webhekiz, whose mind is now completely entangled by Qxal's powers. He is accompanied by what remains of his honor guard after they too succumbed to Qxal's influences and began attacking each other and any civilians who did not succumb to the fey's sway.

So long as Qxal's stranglehold remains on Bhopan, nothing is left of the man the PCs interacted with during *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1-16: The Perennial Crown Part 1*.

SUBTIER 3-4

WEBHEKIZ **CREATURE 3**
Page 15, art on page 23

GUARDS (2) **CREATURE 1**
Page 15

SUBTIER 5-6

WEBHEKIZ **CREATURE 5**
Page 19, art on page 23

PALACE GUARDS (2) **CREATURE 3**
Page 19

Development: Though it will take some time for word of the events that transpired in the vaults to get out, if King Webhekiz dies by the PCs' hand, word eventually spreads of the cruelty of the Pathfinders who visited Bhopan, granting each PC 1 Infamy. Regardless of whether or not the PCs show mercy to the king and his guards, Audho telepathically bemoans what has befallen her people, while offering a warning. So long as Qxal's influence is directed upon Bhopan, the people of Bhopan will suffer. With resignation, Audho surmises that the best way to draw the Thorned Monarch's attentions away from Bhopan would be to take the *Perennial Crown* far from the island, which would force Qxal to spend time and energy locating the crown once more.

The sewers are exposed to the surface after the collapse, choked with stone rubble and the bodies of unfortunate Bhopanese civilians who happened to be walking above when the shocks hit. Escaping the sewers is a relatively simple matter now; using Athletics to Climb up the rubble requires a successful DC 20 Athletics check. Note that if any of the PCs are an expert in Athletics, untrained PCs can Follow the Expert to help themselves escape this area. If every PC succeeds at their check, escaping the sewers takes less than a minute. If any PC fails, the group takes 1 minute to escape the sewers. If any PC critically fails, the group takes 10 minutes to escape the sewers.

Treasure: Dozens of personal affects protrude from amid the wreckage of the sewer. The PCs receive 2 Treasure Bundles representing these affects for completing the encounter with Webhekiz, regardless of whether they take the items or not.

STREETS OF HOBA DUKUZA

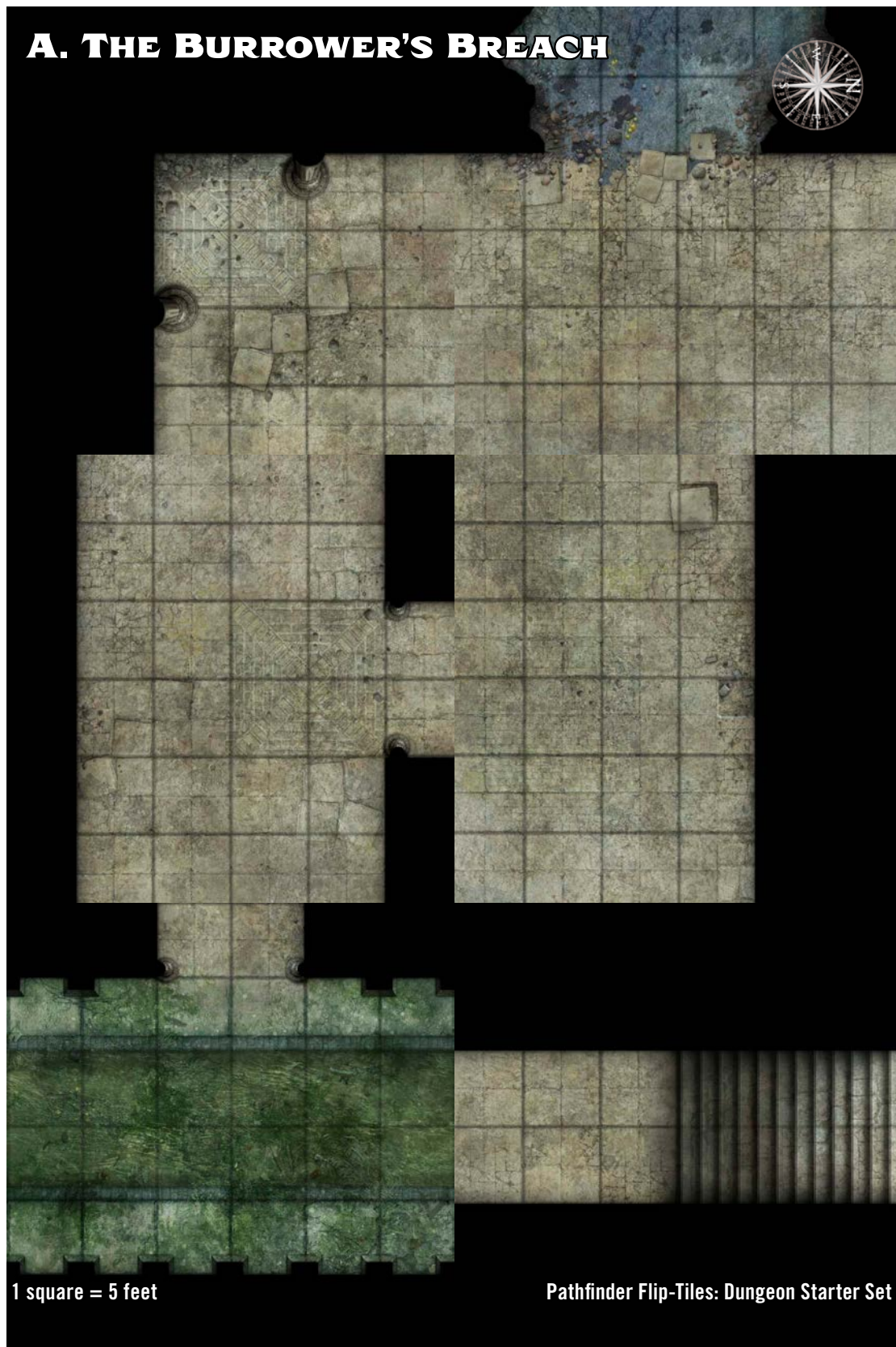
After making their way out of Bhopanese sewers and back onto the streets of Hoba Dukuzza, the PCs witness a horrific sight: dozens of Bhopanese citizens attacking their fellow citizens in a frothing rage as chaos and fire spread throughout the city streets. If the PCs wish to help the people of Bhopan, Audho commends them for their compassion, but reminds them that the best way to free Bhopan from Qxal's fury is to draw their attentions elsewhere by relocating the *Perennial Crown*.

Blackthane's Holdout

As the PCs make their way through the streets of Hoba Dukuzza, they come across the holdout of Khoumrock Blackthane and the crew of his ship, the *Unsinkable*. Blackthane is the semiretired Pathfinder and former venture-captain who originally brought the PCs to Bhopan. He had planned to wait for the PCs aboard his ship, but when chaos erupted, he and the crew came

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A. THE BURROWER'S BREACH



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onshore in an attempt to find the PCs and help them escape danger. Art for Khoumrock Blackthane appears on page 24.

In the distance, the sound of spell and clashing steel echoes out from behind a Bhopanese inn that has thus far been spared the worst of the flames that are quickly consuming Hoba Dukuza. Fey-featured Bhopanese civilians are locked in combat: some fight with abandon, their eyes blazing with distant and inhuman fury, while others battle desperately to protect the frightened families that huddle within the building. Khoumrock Blackthane, his signature diving armor glimmering in the firelight, shouts "For the Pathfinder Society! For Bhopan!" as he and a group of sailors charge forth into battle against the people whose minds are trapped under the Thorned Monarch's sway. Within seconds, the tide of battle turns, and the huddled group in the burning inn's shadow is safe, at least for a time.

By the time the PCs reach the scene, Khoumrock Blackthane and his sailors have won the battle. Khoumrock is relieved to see the PCs, expressing that he wasn't sure if the PCs survived the tremors after exploring the vaults beneath Bhopan. He listens intently as the PCs and Audho explain the situation and the events that transpired within Webhekiz's vaults. If the PCs slew Webhekiz, Khoumrock sighs and rubs his temples while audibly cursing the complications that will no doubt come about should the Pathfinder Society earn a reputation as kingslayers.

Once the PCs have debriefed Khoumrock, read or paraphrase the following.

"All right," Blackthane shouts to the Pathfinder crew of the *Unsinkable*, warhammer still firmly in hand. "Now that our ambassadors to Bhopan have returned, that means everyone's accounted for. We need to make our way to the *Unsinkable* and leave Bhopan behind, for now. By Grandpa Blackthane's burning beard, I don't like abandoning the people of Bhopan to a burning city and bloodthirsty fey, but if that magic tiara is right, we're not equipped to deal with the threat looming over this island, and leaving might be our best option of getting that thing to leave the Bhopanese people alone. Can't cause trouble here if they're too busy chasing after us, and ain't no tree-fey's gonna sink my boat!" He then turns to approximately two dozen Bhopanese people seeking shelter among the Pathfinder Society.

"The Pathfinder Society—our Society—hasn't always done the right thing in the past. Torag knows I've passed on my share of ambiguous orders from the Ten. But I ain't about to be repeating the mistakes of lesser venture-captains. Bhopan opened its doors to us, trusted us on our word, and I ain't

about to see its people burn because of some megalomaniac fey. Gather your friends and your families, anyone free from this Qxal's influence. Seek the Pathfinder Society at the docks. It's time we leave Bhopan, and any who want a place on the *Unsinkable* can have it. Some Pathfinders will lead the way as our vanguard while others protect the rear. We'll take a moment to organize, then set out. Any questions?"

B. Court of the Thorned Monarch

Khoumrock Blackthane quickly organizes people and sets off through the streets, as the Pathfinders and the Bhopanese civilians under their protection attempt to escape from Bhopan. But it is not long before these preparations are interrupted by a fey assault.

Creatures: A small horde of bloodthirsty fey under Qxal's command comes pouring into the town square. Blackthane and the ship's crew work to protect the civilians, sending the PCs to take care of a contingent of jinkins (and redcaps, in Subtier 5–6) that threaten to cut off their escape route.

SUBTIER 3–4

JINKINS (4)

CREATURE 1

Page 16

SUBTIER 5–6

REDCAPS (2)

CREATURE 5

Page 20, art on page 25

Development: After fending off the fey, Blackthane continues to lead the survivors out of Hoba Dukuza and into the jungles of Bhopan before dashing to the *Unsinkable*. However, before the PCs can escape from Hoba Dukuza, Qxal manifests one final attempt at stopping them. Because the PCs are trying to escape the city, they have no time to use activities such as Refocus or Treat Wounds; if they linger, warn the PCs that more fey are barreling toward them and the time has come to leave Bhopan with the *Perennial Crown*. When the PCs are ready to leave, proceed to Escape from Bhopan.

Treasure: The fey each have numerous trinkets looted from Bhopanese people they've slain during the attack. Together, these baubles are worth 2 Treasure Bundles.

ESCAPE FROM BHOPAN

Just as the PCs make it to the boundaries between Hoba Dukuza and the surrounding jungle, Qxal draws upon the vast well of power stored below Bhopan to manifest a terrible avatar with which to run down the PCs and claim the *Perennial Crown*.

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B. COURT OF THE THORNED MONARCH



The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

"Hurry, Pathfinders! We're nearly there!" Khoumrock Blackthane's cries pierce the chaos and confusion of Hoba Dukuza as he, Pathfinder agents, and throngs of Bhopanese civilians head for the docks and the safety of the Unsinkable. Without warning, the ground erupts beneath the Pathfinders' feet as dozens of roots emerge approximately one hundred feet behind them, weaving together into a massive creature resembling a twisted, thorn-covered butterfly standing over twenty feet tall, bellowing as it slowly lurches toward the fleeing group.

"We'll keep the creature at bay; get our people to safety!" a Bhopanese man shouts, sporting the finery of a guard captain. The captain resolutely charges at the monstrosity as it continues toward the Pathfinders, ignoring the efforts of dozens of guards as they slash at it with their weapons. Yet as many superficial wounds as they manage to inflict, the creature's flesh knits itself back together rapidly, and with a second, blood-curdling roar, a haze of thorns and tendrils explodes forth from the creature's flesh, skewering every soldier who stood before it. A terrible slurping sound fills the city streets as the Bhopanese corpses, swaying upon the manifestation's tendrils like grim fetishes, begin to pale as it drinks their blood. The creature roars again and barrels toward the Pathfinders with terrifying speed.

Chase to the Coast

It should be made obvious that the PCs will certainly die if they attempt to confront the Thorned Monarch here, and should any among them consider standing before the manifestation, Audho implores the PCs to leave quickly, noting that Qxal's accumulated power stored within the island gives the manifestation a regenerative ability that makes their manifestation all but indestructible. Audho's assessment is accurate—the wounds inflicted by the Bhopanese guards are gone in a flash—and even as the PCs flee, Qxal begins chasing the party, using their power to attempt to slow the PCs down long enough to rip the *Perennial Crown* from their corpses.

The PC's flight from the Thorned Monarch is handled using the chase subsystem on page 156 of the *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*, though all necessary rules are reprinted here. The chase is represented as series of obstacles that occur in rounds. During the chase, all the characters must overcome a series of obstacles that represent challenges during the different legs of the pursuit. Each obstacle requires a certain number of Chase Points to overcome. Typically, there are multiple ways to overcome an obstacle.

On a character's turn, they describe what they do to help the group get past the obstacle. They then attempt any required roll, or perform the required action for a choice without a check. If they attempt a roll, the result determines how many Chase Points the character gains.

SCALING THE CHASE

For each PC in the party beyond four, increase the number of Chase Points needed to overcome each obstacle by 1.

Critical Success The PCs gain 2 Chase Points.

Success The PCs gain 1 Chase Point.

Critical Failure The PCs lose 1 Chase Point.

Chase Points represent the ability of the whole group to bypass the obstacle. A character who critically succeeds is able to help the other characters continue onward, while one who critically fails needs extra assistance, setting the party back. Once the PCs accumulate enough Chase Points to overcome the obstacle, they immediately move to the next. Extra Chase Points don't carry over to the next obstacle—each requires its own number of Chase Points to overcome. However, anyone who hasn't already taken their turn that round can still take it against the new obstacle. Consequently, the characters best suited to overcoming the current obstacle might act first, since the remaining characters might be better suited against the next one. The number of Chase Points the PCs have can never fall below 0.

The PCs must surmount the following obstacles to beat the Thorned Monarch to the beach. On each round, the PCs act first, followed by the manifestation. The manifestation does not act on the first round. When it acts, it automatically clears one obstacle per round.

If the manifestation ever catches up to the PCs, it deals damage to all PCs automatically by calling forth gnarled thorns that impale them and deal 4d6 piercing damage (6d6 in Subtier 5–6), after which the PCs are able to escape. The manifestation takes the following round to absorb any blood shed by this assault rather than advancing, giving the PCs a total of two chances to earn Chase Points before the manifestation is sated and begins to move again.

If a PC is knocked unconscious during this chase, an NPC Pathfinder casts *stabilize* on them and carries them along to the next area. That PC can no longer participate in the chase unless another PC skips their turn in the chase to heal them (using Battle Medicine, the *heal* spell, consumable items, or other methods).

Hoba Dukuza Crowds

Chase Points 4; Overcome DC 18 Acrobatics or Athletics to weave or push through, DC 16 Society to follow the flow

The chaotic outskirts of Hoba Dukuza are filled with panicked mobs fleeing fey and fire alike.

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IMPENETRABLE THICKET

Chase Points 4; Overcome DC 18 Athletics to force your way through the foliage, DC 16 Nature or Survival to weave a path past the plants

Immediately outside of Hoba Dukuza is a thicket of dense foliage and plant matter, the greenery yellowed by the roaring flames engulfing the city in the distance. Myriad leaves and branches attempt to restrain anyone who passes through them, with preternatural strength.

FERAL WILDLIFE

Chase Points 4; Overcome DC 19 Deception to misdirect the herd, DC 17 Intimidation to cow the animals, DC 17 Stealth to sneak past them, DC 16 Nature to treat with them to stand down

A horde of deer, squirrels, and other usually tame wildlife approaches, their eyes shining with fey malevolence as their heads turn in unison toward any intruders.

GLADE OF SCREAMS

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 20 Perception to notice flaws that tell you the memory isn't real, DC 19 Medicine to provide mental care to your companions, DC 18 Arcana, Occultism, or Religion or DC 17 Nature to recognize the memories as fey illusion magic

At a clearing near the edge of the forest, a chill mist descends. Those who breathe the mist experience figments of their most terrifying and unpleasant memories.

BLOODY MIRE

Chase Points 5; Overcome DC 17 Athletics to haul yourself free, DC 15 Medicine or Crafting to use reagents to coagulate the sand and make escape easier

The ground suddenly gives way, in a matter akin to quicksand. Rather than silt, the ground is loose soil mixed with blood.

GRASPING DUNES

Chase Points 4; Overcome DC 18 Crafting to identify weak points in the constructs, DC 17 Deception to zigzag past them, DC 16 Acrobatics to evade them.

Massive pillars of sand shaped like grabbing hands make a final attempt to intercept fleeing people on the beach.

Development: So long as the PCs make it through the Grasping Dunes, they manage to board the *Unsinkable* before Qxal can apprehend them, allowing them to progress to Area C.

If all of the PCs are knocked unconscious, they fail the mission. Proceed to the Conclusion.

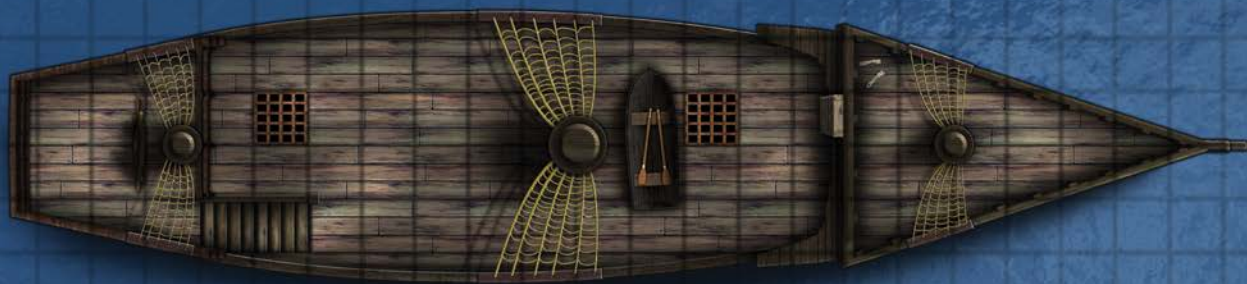
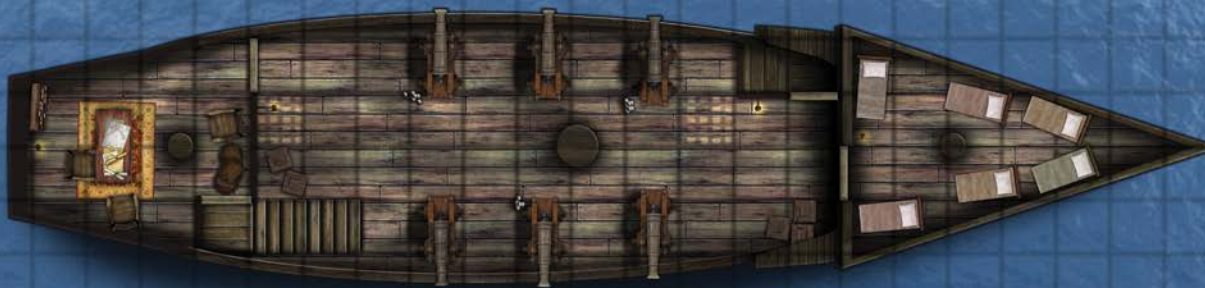
Treasure: If the PCs manage to reach the *Unsinkable* before Qxal reaches the Bloody Mire, they have enough time to spot and recover a cache of Bhopanese art objects that washed downriver during Qxal's assault on Hoba Dukuza. This cache is worth 2 Treasure Bundles, regardless of whether the PCs get compensation from the Pathfinder Society or the Bhopanese survivors they rescued.



MANIFESTATION OF QXAL

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

C. TO CHALLENGE A NAMESAKE



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat Classics: Ship

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

C. To Challenge a Namesake

As the *Unsinkable* casts off from Bhopan, the NPC Pathfinders aboard the ship largely think of themselves as being home free. Audho is silent amid the celebrations. The PCs have about 12 minutes to rest and recover. After this short reprieve, read or paraphrase the following.

Several minutes pass in silence. As the *Unsinkable* sails away from Bhopan at full speed, plumes of smoke still visibly rising from Hoba Dukuza, the atmosphere upon the ship is one of celebration and hope. Yet not all aboard the ship celebrate; both Khoumrock Blackthane and Audho from within her Perennial Crown are quiet, Blackthane's eyes locked upon the shoreline. After ten minutes pass, the passengers aboard the *Unsinkable* see the terrible avatar of Qxal arrive upon the shore, its bellows of frustration barely audible beneath the sound of the roiling surf. It flutters back and forth agitatedly against the shoreline before its tendrils sink into the sand.

Nearly simultaneously, Audho and Blackthane both cry out, in words and in thoughts respectively.

"Pathfinders! To yer battle stations!"

"It comes for the crown!"

Before any aboard the ship can react, a massive arm formed from roots and thorns reaches up from beneath the sea, splitting into a net of seaweed and vines that entangle the *Unsinkable* and hold it against the beating winds. The manifestation of the Thorned Monarch leaps powerfully from the beach and soars toward the ship, the water flattening in the wake of its outspread wings, as the hateful fey creature readies to sink the *Unsinkable*.

Creatures: Qxal has sent their manifestation off the shores of Bhopan and out onto the open seas to confront the PCs, hoping to drown them beneath the waves and pluck the *Perennial Crown* from their bodies in the process. This is an incredibly risky play for the Thorned Monarch, however, as their manifestation is unable to regenerate itself so far from Bhopanese soil, and the loss of their avatar would undoubtedly loosen their stranglehold on Bhopan for a time; facts that Audho is uniquely aware of. She encourages the PCs to strike at the Thorned Monarch with all their fury, explaining the change in circumstances that now provide them with a rare shot at defeating the menace and saving Bhopan from destruction.

The loss of the Perennial Crown has limited Qxal's immense power, though there is a terrible loophole to this limitation—the Thorned Monarch's abilities are more effective against those whose blood they have drunk with their roots. If a PC has a Blood Offering boon (from *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1–16: The Perennial Crown Part 1*) or took any amount of Hit Point damage

from the Thorned Monarch during the chase, they take a –1 status penalty on their saving throws against the manifestation's abilities.

During the fight, Khoumrock Blackthane and the crew of the *Unsinkable* have their hands full attempting to free the ship from the Thorned Monarch's vines, repairing hull breaches below deck, and protecting the Bhopanese civilians on board, though the crew does manage an occasional barrage of cannons. These attacks are more effective if the PCs assist them (see the Appendixes for more information).

SUBTIER 3–4

MANIFESTATION OF QXAL **CREATURE 6**
Page 17, art on page 26

THORNED COCOON **CREATURE 2**
Page 18

SUBTIER 5–6

MANIFESTATION OF QXAL **CREATURE 8**
Page 21, art on page 26

THORNED COCOON **CREATURE 4**
Page 22

CONCLUSION

After defeating the manifestation, it becomes apparent that Audho was correct; the destruction of the Thorned Monarch's avatar has left Qxal without a foothold from which to terrorize Bhopan, freeing the island and its people from the fey's grasp. As the writhing thorns along the shoreline rapidly wither to dust, Audho lets out a wearied telepathic sigh from the *Perennial Crown* and her spirit passes on, content that her people are finally free of Qxal. Before she departs, however, the ancient hero warns the PCs that what they defeated was only a sliver of the Thorned Monarch's power and that they still lie scheming somewhere in Garund. Khoumrock suggests that the PCs return posthaste to Ambrus Valsin in Absalom. After dropping the Bhopanese citizens off at the now-safe beach, Blackthane assures them that the Pathfinder Society will be sending assistance for recovery, and directs the *Unsinkable* for Quantum for rest and resupply before beginning the voyage for Absalom.

Back in Absalom, Ambrus Valsin is astonished and concerned by the PCs' report of what transpired in Bhopan. He summons for the Grand Lodge's masters—Sorrina Westyr, Marcos Farabellus, and Kreighton Shane—at once, stating that the Pathfinders need to begin preparations for

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

an expedition to find the door opened by the *Perennial Crown*. After handing off the *Perennial Crown* to Sorrina Westyr, he congratulates the PCs on a job well done, though he confesses some amount of worry regarding the severity of the situation at hand. He turns to Khoumrock Blackthane and professes a need for levelheaded experience leading the Pathfinder Society in the days to come and requests that Blackthane end his retirement for the sixth time, reinstating himself as a venture-captain proper. Blackthane accepts with a hearty laugh, informing Valsin that he needs to pay back “that thorn-covered wretch” for damages done to the *Unsinkable* during his last voyage anyway.

In the unlikely event that all of the PCs were knocked unconscious during the chase, the PCs fail their mission. Unable to tend to both the PCs and continue their efforts to get the crown off the island, Blackthane and his crew made the difficult decision to leave the PCs behind and raced for the ship. While they manage to keep the Monarch from taking the crown for now, it sinks to the bottom of the ocean with their ship, and Qxal’s rage remains over Bhopan. Surviving PCs are able to lie low in Bhopan for several weeks. They are eventually rescued by a Pathfinder vessel that comes in to pick up the pieces. Together, the PCs and rescuers claim the crown, but not before Qxal completely devastates Bhopan.

Reporting Notes

If the PCs spared King Webhekiz, check box A on the reporting sheet. If the PCs slew King Webhekiz, check box B on the reporting sheet.

Primary Objectives

The PCs fulfill their primary objective if they return to Ambrus Valsin in Absalom via the *Unsinkable* with the *Perennial Crown*. Doing so earns each PC 2 Fame and 2 Reputation for any faction associated with their currently slotted faction boon.

Secondary Objectives

The PCs fulfill their secondary objective if they complete any 2 of the following tasks. Doing so earns each PC 2 Fame and 2 Reputation for any faction associated with their currently slotted faction boon.

- Spare King Webhekiz in Area A.
- Reach the ship before Qxal reaches the Bloody Mire in Chase to the Coast.
- Offer to return all Treasure Bundles looted during the scenario to the Bhopanese survivors.

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

APPENDIX I: SUBTIER 3-4 ENCOUNTERS

The statistics presented in this appendix include full stat blocks for creatures and hazards appearing in this scenario, including any variation described in the text. Some encounters require adding creatures or making other adjustments to scale for different party sizes. Follow the instructions in the Scaling Encounter sidebars to adjust the encounter appropriately. If your group has between 16 and 18 Challenge Points and has four PCs, refer to Appendix 2 for your encounters.

Encounter A (Subtier 3-4)

Webhekiz uses Squad Tactics to help position his guards. Whenever possible, he casts a spell, then uses Bespell Primal Weapon followed by an attack with his scepter. The king and his guards fight until subdued or killed.

WEBHEKIZ

CREATURE 3

UNIQUE **N** **MEDIUM** **FEY** **HUMAN** **HUMANOID**

Perception +11; low-light vision
Languages Common, Mwangi, Sylvan
Skills Acrobatics +8, Bhopan Lore +15, Diplomacy +10, Heraldry Lore +13, Nature +10, Society +10
Str +2, **Dex** +1, **Con** +0, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +3
Items +1 *scepter* (functions as club), regal vestments
AC 18; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12
HP 45
Speed 25 feet
Melee **◆** *scepter* +12 (magical, two-hand d8); **Damage** 1d6+5 bludgeoning
Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 20, attack +12; **2nd** (3 slots) *acid arrow*, *barkskin*, *entangle*; **1st** (4 slots) *heal*, *shillelagh*, *shocking grasp*; **Cantrips (2nd)** *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *know direction*, *produce flame*, *tanglefoot*
Bespell Primal Weapon **◆**; **Frequency** once per turn; **Requirements** Webhekiz's most recent action was to cast a non-cantrip spell. **Effect** Webhekiz channels primal energy into his scepter or another wooden weapon, causing it to bloom a poisonous flower or sprout prickly thorns. Until the end of Webhekiz's turn, the weapon deals an extra 1d6 poison or piercing damage.
Squad Tactics **◆** (auditory, linguistic) Webhekiz directs his guards to a more strategic position. Each guard can spend their reaction to Stride.

SCALING ENCOUNTER A

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustment.

10+ Challenge Points: For every 2 Challenge Points beyond 8, add one guard to the encounter.

GUARDS (2)

CREATURE 1

LN **MEDIUM** **FEY** **HUMAN** **HUMANOID**

Perception +7
Languages Common, Mwangi, Sylvan
Skills Athletics +7, Intimidation +5, Legal Lore +3
Str +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -1
Items crossbow (10 bolts), club, sap, chain mail, simple manacles
AC 16; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5
HP 25
Attack of Opportunity **↻**
Speed 25 feet
Melee **◆** club +9, **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning
Melee **◆** sap +9 (agile, nonlethal), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning
Ranged **◆** crossbow +7 (range increment 120 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d8 piercing
Ranged **◆** club +7 (thrown 10 feet), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

Encounter B (Subtier 3–4)

Jinkins prefer to focus their attacks on a single target so that it is easier to use their sneak attack ability. Inspired to battle by Qxal's command, they fight to the death.

JINKINS (4)

CREATURE 1

CE TINY FEY GREMLIN

Perception +7; darkvision

Languages Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +7, Crafting +5 (+7 traps), Deception +5, Nature +5, Stealth +7, Thievery +7

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

Items shortsword

AC 17; **Fort** +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7

HP 19; **Weaknesses** cold iron 2

Speed 30 feet

Melee ✦ shortsword +9 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S),

Damage 1d6–2 piercing

Primal Innate Spells DC 17; **Cantrips (1st)** *prestidigitation*

Sneak Attack The jinkin's Strikes deal an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Tinker (curse, primal, transmutation) A group of six jinkins can work together for an hour to imbue an item with a curse at a range of 60 feet. While this process is lengthy, it's also unobtrusive and can be performed while Hiding. Jinkins prefer to use this ability on magic items. The curse makes the item unreliable (DC 5 flat check or waste any action to Interact with or Activate the item), adds a bizarre requirement to use the item, or imparts some other curse of a similar caliber.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustment.

10+ Challenge Points: For every 2 Challenge Points beyond 8, add one jinkin to the encounter.

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

Encounter C (Subtier 3–4)

The PCs face a fight for their lives as Qxal makes one final, desperate attempt to stop the *Unsinkable* from escaping with the *Perennial Crown*.

Creatures: The PCs face a manifestation of Qxal, which approaches from the south side of the map. When combat begins, it is 100 feet away from the south edge of the ship, but it quickly approaches. Its bloodsoaked soil ability doesn't apply in this encounter. As combat begins, one thorned cocoon (or more, when scaling the encounter) appears near the PCs, sprouting from the ship's deck. The manifestation and the cocoons fight until destroyed. If a PC has a Blood Offering boon (from *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1–16: The Perennial Crown Part 1*) or took any amount of Hit Point damage from the Thorned Monarch during the chase, they take a –1 status penalty on their saving throws against the manifestation's abilities.

Cannons: The *Unsinkable* has a bank of cannons that can be fired at the manifestation of Qxal. Each round, one PC can take the Fire the Cannons! action listed below. This action is abstract, representing some combination of personally firing a cannon, organizing crew members, reloading, and providing other assistance around the ship to allow the cannons to fire efficiently. Regardless, the PC who spends their action makes the attack roll. If no PC takes the Fire the Cannons! action, NPC Pathfinders still use the cannons, albeit less effectively. NPC Pathfinders alternate between cannonballs and harpoon attacks. After using Fire the Cannons!, NPC Pathfinders must wait 1 round before using them again (or 2 rounds after a critical failure). Additionally, when compared to the PCs, the NPC Pathfinders take a –2 penalty on their attack roll.

FIRE THE CANNONS! ⚔️

ATTACK LINGUISTIC

You help the *Unsinkable's* crew to fire the ship's cannons at the manifestation of Qxal. The cannons can fire either cannonballs or harpoons at a range of 100 feet. Attempt an attack roll with a +17 bonus against the manifestation.

Critical Success As a success, but the manifestation takes double damage. If hit by a harpoon, the manifestation is pulled 30 feet toward the *Unsinkable*.

Success The manifestation takes 2d8+9 bludgeoning damage if hit by a cannonball or takes 1d8+4 piercing damage and is pulled 15 feet toward the *Unsinkable* if hit by a harpoon.

Failure The attack deals no damage.

Critical Failure The attack deals no damage and the cannon can't be fired again on the next round.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustment.

10+ Challenge Points: For every 2 Challenge Points beyond 8, add one thorned cocoon to the encounter.

MANIFESTATION OF QXAL

CREATURE 6

UNIQUE CE HUGE FEY PLANT

Perception +17; low-light vision

Languages Common, Sylvan (can't speak any language)

Skills Arcana +15, Athletics +15, Bhopan Lore +16, Deception +18, Intimidation +16, Nature +18, Society +15

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

AC 23; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17

HP 125, bloodsoaked soil; **Resistances** acid 5, **Weakness** fire 8

Hallucinatory Scale Dust (aura, illusion, mental) 30 feet. Fey glammers shed from the manifestation's wings like scale dust, causing hallucinations. A creature entering the aura or starting its turn in the area must attempt a DC 21 Will save.

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

Failure The creature hallucinates that it is beginning to transform into a plant or animal native to its homeland, becoming either clumsy 1, enfeebled 1, or stupefied 1, at the manifestation's choice.

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

Bloodsoaked Soil Generations of Bhopanese bloodshed have soaked Bhopan's soil, giving the Thorned Monarch a vast reservoir of energy to sustain their manifestation. As long as the manifestation is touching the soil of Bhopan, it has regeneration 20.

Blood Siphon ⤴️ **Trigger** A creature within 60 feet takes persistent bleed damage. **Effect** The shed blood disperses into a fine mist that the manifestation siphons up with its proboscis. The manifestation regains 10 HP.

Speed 30 ft, fly 30 feet

Melee ⚔️ proboscis +17 (deadly d12, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d12+7 piercing

Melee ⚔️ tendril +17 (agile, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d10+5 slashing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Ranged ⚔️ thorn +17 (range 60 feet), **Damage** 2d4+5 piercing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Primal Innate Spells DC 21, attack +13; **3rd** *wall of thorns* (at will); **2nd** *entangle* (at will); **Cantrips (3rd)** *tanglefoot*

Capsize ⚔️ (manipulate) **Requirements** The manifestation is standing on the deck of the *Unsinkable*. **Effect** The manifestation shakes the ship violently. Trip every foe on the *Unsinkable* (roll one Athletics check and compare the result to each foe's Fortitude DC).

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

Flutter ♦ The manifestation Flies. Any creature it passes within 30 feet of during its Flutter is exposed to its hallucinatory scale dust.

THORNED COCOON

CREATURE 2

N **MEDIUM** **MINDLESS** **PLANT**

Perception +4; tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Stealth +6

Str +3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +4, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -1

AC 18; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

HP 34; **Immunities** mental; **Weaknesses** fire 5

Speed 10 feet

Melee ♦ tendril +9 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d10+3 slashing

Feed on Thoughts ♦♦ (manipulate, mental) The cocoon unravels as it envelops a Small, Medium, or Large humanoid creature that's unconscious, willing, or fascinated by Hypnotic Thrum, and that is within reach of the cocoon's tendrils, moving into the creature's space as part of this action. The creature must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or become stupefied 1 and take 1d12 mental damage and 1d12 slashing damage (double damage on a critical failure). Feeding on a creature's Thoughts doesn't end fascination caused by Hypnotic Thrum.

Hypnotic Thrum ♦♦ (enchantment, mental) The thorned cocoon relays Qxal's telepathic coercions in either a 30-foot line or a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the emanation must attempt a DC 18 Will save. Once a creature succeeds at any save against Hypnotic Thrum, it becomes temporarily immune for 24 hours.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is fascinated. For as long as it is fascinated, it must spend each of its actions to move closer to the thorned cocoon as expediently as possible, while avoiding obvious dangers. If the creature is adjacent to the thorned cocoon, it stays still and doesn't act.

Critical Failure As failure, but the condition doesn't end automatically. The creature can attempt a new save at the end of each of its turns. On a success, the fascinated condition ends.

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

APPENDIX 2: SUBTIER 5-6 ENCOUNTERS

The statistics presented in this appendix include full stat blocks for creatures and hazards appearing in this scenario, including any variation described in the text. Some encounters require adding creatures or making other adjustments to scale for different party sizes. The appendixes for these encounters have the alternative creatures marked “(0)” to indicate that they should not be added to the encounter unless summoned or otherwise specified. These additional creatures are not listed with the abbreviated stat blocks in each encounter in the main body of the scenario, as the base encounters are designed for four players. Follow the instructions in the Scaling Encounter sidebars to adjust the encounter appropriately. If your group has between 16 and 18 Challenge Points and has five or more PCs, refer to Appendix 1 for your encounters.

Encounter A (Subtier 5-6)

Webhekiz uses Squad Tactics to help position his guards. Whenever possible, he casts a spell, then uses Bespell Primal Weapon followed by an attack with his scepter. The king and his guards fight until subdued or killed.

WEBHEKIZ

CREATURE 5

UNIQUE N MEDIUM FEY HUMAN

Perception +14; low-light vision

Languages Common, Mwangi, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bhopan Lore +17, Diplomacy +13, Heraldry Lore +15, Nature +12, Society +12

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

Items +1 *striking scepter* (functions as club), regal vestments

AC 21; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

HP 75

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *striking scepter* +15 (magical, two-hand d8); **Damage** 2d6+6 bludgeoning

Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 22, attack +14; **3rd** (2 slots) *lightning bolt*, *wall of thorns*; **2nd** (3 slots) *acid arrow*, *barkskin*, *entangle*; **1st** (4 slots) *heal*, *shillelagh*, *shocking grasp*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *know direction*, *produce flame*, *tanglefoot*

Bespell Primal Weapon ♦; **Frequency** once per turn; **Requirements** Webhekiz's most recent action was to cast a non-cantrip spell. **Effect** Webhekiz channels primal energy into his scepter or another wooden weapon, causing it to bloom a poisonous flower or sprout prickly thorns. Until the end of Webhekiz's turn, the weapon deals an extra 1d6 poison or piercing damage.

Squad Tactics ♦ (auditory, linguistic) Webhekiz directs his guards to a more strategic position. Each guard can spend their reaction to Stride.

SCALING ENCOUNTER A

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustment.

20+ Challenge Points: For every 4 Challenge Points beyond 16, add one palace guard to the encounter.

PALACE GUARDS (2)

CREATURE 3

N MEDIUM FEY HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +14

Languages Common, Mwangi, Sylvan

Skills Athletics +10, Diplomacy +9, Intimidation +7

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

Items crossbow (10 bolts), halberd, sap, chain mail, simple manacles

AC 20; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

HP 45

Attack of Opportunity ↻

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ halberd +12 (reach, versatile S), **Damage** 1d10+6 piercing

Melee ♦ sap +12 (agile, nonlethal), **Damage** 1d6+6 bludgeoning

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

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

Encounter B (Subtier 5–6)

Redcaps prefer foes that are clustered together to give them a chance to trigger Deadly Cleave, as well as the clearly dangerous PCs who have triggered Divine Revulsion. Any jinkins present attempt to flank. Inspired to battle by Qxal's command, the fey fight to the death.

REDCAPS (2)

CREATURE 5

CE TINY FEY

Perception +12; low-light vision

Languages Common, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +15, Deception +11, Intimidation +13, Nature +10, Stealth +13

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

Items iron boots, red cap, scythe

Red Cap (necromancy, primal) A redcap's woolen hat is dyed with the blood of its victims. If the redcap loses its cap, it no longer benefits from fast healing and takes a –4 status penalty to its damage rolls. It can create a new cap in 10 minutes, but that cap doesn't grant its powers until the redcap has turned it red with Blood Soak. A cap has no benefit for creatures other than the redcap who made it.

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

HP 60, fast healing 10; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5, divine revulsion

Divine Revulsion (emotion, fear, mental) If a redcap sees a creature brandish a religious symbol of a good deity (which requires an interact action by that creature) or use one to cast a divine spell, the redcap must attempt a DC 19 Will save. It then becomes temporarily immune to all brandished religious symbols for 10 minutes.

Critical Success The redcap is unaffected.

Success The redcap is frightened 2.

Failure The redcap gains the fleeing condition for 1 round and is frightened 4.

Speed 50 feet

Melee ✦ scythe +15 (deadly 1d10, trip), **Damage** 1d10+10 slashing

Melee ✦ boot +13 (agile, versatile B), **Damage** 1d6+8 piercing

Blood Soak ✦ (manipulate) The redcap dips its cap in the blood of a slain foe. The foe must have died in the last minute, and the redcap must have helped kill it. The redcap gains a +4 status bonus to damage rolls for 1 minute.

Deadly Cleave ➤ **Trigger** The redcap reduces a creature to 0 Hit Points with a scythe Strike. **Effect** The redcap makes another scythe Strike against a different creature, using the same multiple attack penalty as the scythe Strike that triggered this reaction. This counts toward its multiple attack penalty.

Stomp ✦ The redcap Strides up to half its Speed and makes a boot Strike at any point during that movement. If the boot Strike hits a prone creature, it deals an extra 2d6 persistent bleed damage.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B

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

19–22 Challenge Points: Add two jinkins to the encounter.

23–27 Challenge Points: Add one redcap to the encounter.

28–32 Challenge Points: Add two jinkins and one redcap to the encounter.

33+ Challenge Points: Add two redcaps to the encounter.

JINKIN (0)

CREATURE 1

CE TINY FEY GREMLIN

Perception +7; darkvision

Languages Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +7, Crafting +5 (+7 traps), Deception +5, Nature +5, Stealth +7, Thievery +7

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

Items shortsword

AC 17; **Fort** +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7

HP 19; **Weaknesses** cold iron 2

Speed 30 feet

Melee ✦ shortsword +9 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S),

Damage 1d6–2 piercing

Primal Innate Spells DC 17; **Cantrips (1st)** *prestidigitation*

Sneak Attack The jinkin's Strikes deal an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Tinker (curse, primal, transmutation) A group of six jinkins can work together for an hour to imbue an item with a curse at a range of 60 feet. While this process is lengthy, it's also unobtrusive and can be performed while Hiding. Jinkins prefer to use this ability on magic items. The curse makes the item unreliable (DC 5 flat check or waste any action to Interact with or Activate the item), adds a bizarre requirement to use the item, or imparts some other curse of a similar caliber.

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

Encounter C (Subtier 5–6)

The PCs face a fight for their lives as Qxal makes one final, desperate attempt to stop the *Unsinkable* from escaping with the *Perennial Crown*.

Creatures: The PCs face a manifestation of Qxal, which approaches from the south side of the map. When combat begins, it is 100 feet away from the south edge of the ship, but it quickly approaches. Its bloodsoaked soil ability doesn't apply in this encounter. As combat begins, one thorned cocoon (or more, when scaling the encounter) appears near the PCs, sprouting from the ship's deck. The manifestation and the cocoons fight until destroyed. If a PC has a Blood Offering boon (from *Pathfinder Society Scenario #1–16: The Perennial Crown Part 1*) or took any amount of Hit Point damage from the Thorned Monarch during the chase, they take a –1 status penalty on their saving throws against the manifestation's abilities.

Cannons: The *Unsinkable* has a bank of cannons that can be fired at the manifestation of Qxal. Each round, one PC can take the Fire the Cannons! action listed below. This action is abstract, representing some combination of personally firing a cannon, organizing crew members, reloading, and providing other assistance around the ship to allow the cannons to fire efficiently. Regardless, the PC who spends their action makes the attack roll. If no PC takes the Fire the Cannons! action, NPC Pathfinders still use the cannons, albeit less effectively. NPC Pathfinders alternate between cannonballs and harpoon attacks. After using Fire the Cannons!, NPC Pathfinders must wait 1 round before using them again (or 2 rounds after a critical failure). Additionally, when compared to the PCs, the NPC Pathfinders take a –2 penalty on their attack roll.

FIRE THE CANNONS! ⚔️

ATTACK LINGUISTIC

You help the *Unsinkable*'s crew to fire the ship's cannons at the manifestation of Qxal. The cannons can fire either cannonballs or harpoons at a range of 100 feet. Attempt an attack roll with a +17 bonus against the manifestation.

Critical Success As a success, but the manifestation takes double damage. If hit by a harpoon, the manifestation is pulled 30 feet toward the *Unsinkable*.

Success The manifestation takes 4d8+7 bludgeoning damage if hit by a cannonball or takes 2d8+3 piercing damage and is pulled 15 feet toward the *Unsinkable* if hit by a harpoon.

Failure The attack deals no damage.

Critical Failure The attack deals no damage and the cannon can't be fired again on the next round.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustment.

20+ Challenge Points: For every 4 Challenge Points beyond 16, add one thorned cocoon to the encounter.

MANIFESTATION OF QXAL

CREATURE 8

UNIQUE CE HUGE FEY PLANT

Perception +19; low-light vision

Languages Common, Sylvan (can't speak any language)

Skills Arcana +18, Athletics +18, Bhopan Lore +19, Deception +21, Intimidation +19, Nature +21, Society +18

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

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

HP 170, bloodsoaked soil; **Resistances** acid 5, **Weakness** fire 10

Hallucinatory Scale Dust (aura, illusion, mental) 30 feet. Fey glammers shed from the manifestation's wings like scale dust, causing hallucinations. A creature entering the aura or starting its turn in the area must attempt a DC 23 Will save.

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

Failure The creature hallucinates that it is beginning to transform into a plant or animal native to its homeland, becoming either clumsy 1, enfeebled 1, or stupefied 1, at the manifestation's choice. The condition lasts for 1 hour.

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

Bloodsoaked Soil Generations of Bhopanese bloodshed have soaked Bhopan's soil, giving the Thorned Monarch a vast reservoir of energy to sustain their manifestation. As long as the manifestation is touching the soil of Bhopan, it has regeneration 20.

Blood Siphon ⤴️ **Trigger** A creature within 60 feet takes persistent bleed damage. **Effect** The shed blood disperses into a fine mist that the manifestation siphons up with its proboscis. The manifestation regains 12 HP.

Speed 30 ft, fly 30 feet

Melee ⚔️ proboscis +20 (deadly d12, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d12+9 piercing

Melee ⚔️ tendril +20 (agile, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d10+6 slashing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Ranged ⚔️ thorn +20 (range 60 feet), **Damage** 2d4+6 piercing plus 1d4 persistent bleed damage

Primal Innate Spells DC 23, attack +18; **3rd** *wall of thorns* (at will); **2nd** *entangle* (at will); **Cantrips (3rd)** *tanglefoot*

Capsize ⚔️ (manipulate) **Requirements** The manifestation is standing on the deck of the *Unsinkable*. **Effect** The manifestation shakes the ship violently. Trip every foe on the *Unsinkable* (roll one Athletics check and compare the result to each foe's Fortitude DC).

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Flutter ♦ The manifestation Flies. Any creature it passes within 30 feet of during its Flutter is exposed to its hallucinatory scale dust.

THORNED COCOON

CREATURE 4

N **MEDIUM** **MINDLESS** **PLANT**

Perception +7; tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Stealth +9

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

AC 21; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

HP 66; **Immunities** mental; **Weaknesses** fire 5

Speed 10 feet

Melee ♦ tendril +12 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+3 slashing

Feed on Thoughts ♦♦ (manipulate, mental) The cocoon unravels as it envelops a Small, Medium, or Large humanoid creature that's unconscious, willing, or fascinated by Hypnotic Thrum, and that is within reach of the cocoon's tendrils, moving into the creature's space as part of this action. The creature must succeed at a DC 21 Fortitude save or become stupefied 1 and take 2d6 mental damage and 2d6 slashing damage (double damage on a critical failure). Feeding on a creature's Thoughts doesn't end fascination caused by Hypnotic Thrum.

Hypnotic Thrum ♦♦ (enchantment, mental) The thorned cocoon relays Qxal's telepathic coercions in either a 30-foot line or a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the emanation must attempt a DC 21 Will save. Once a creature succeeds at any save against Hypnotic Thrum, it becomes temporarily immune for 24 hours.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is fascinated. For as long as it is fascinated, it must spend each of its actions to move closer to the thorned cocoon as expediently as possible, while avoiding obvious dangers. If the creature is adjacent to the thorned cocoon, it stays still and doesn't act.

Critical Failure As failure, but the condition doesn't end automatically. The creature can attempt a new save at the end of each of its turns. On a success, the fascinated condition ends.

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APPENDIX 3: ART



WEBHEKIZ

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch



KHOUMROCK BLACKTHANE

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch



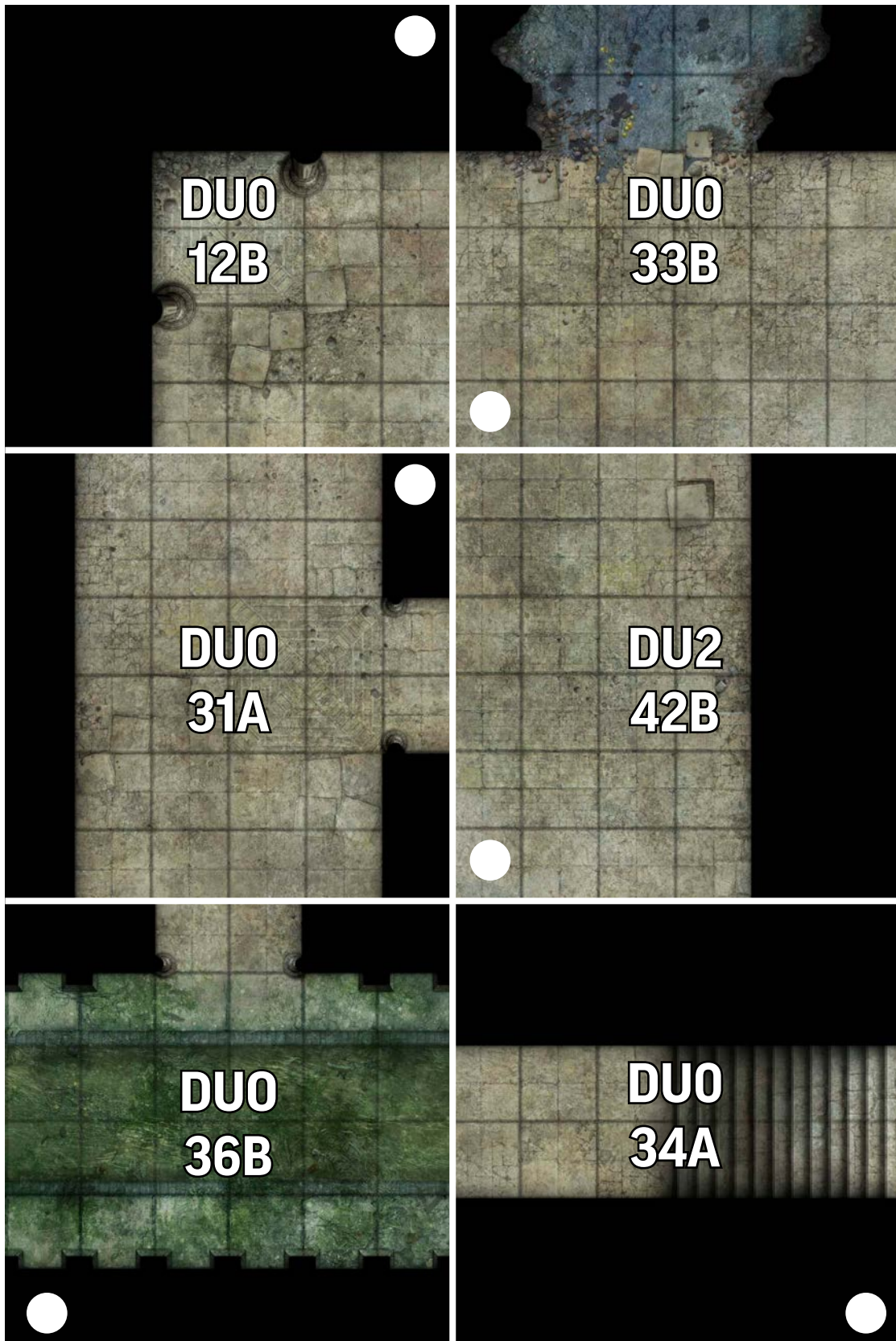
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The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch



MANIFESTATION OF QXAL

The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch



The Perennial Crown Part 2: The Thorned Monarch

GM REFERENCES

TREASURE TABLE

Level	Treasure Bundle
3	3.8 gp
4	6.4 gp
5	10 gp
6	15 gp

Chronicle Sheet

If the PCs defeat the manifestation of Qxal, all PCs earn the Fey Influence boon. If they earned at least 1 Treasure Bundle in The Shattered Vaults, they earn access to a mambele on their Chronicle sheets.

TREASURE BUNDLES:

- The Shattered Vaults, page 5: 3 Treasure Bundles
- Area A, page 5: 2 Treasure Bundles
- Area B, page 8: 2 Treasure Bundles
- Chase to the Coast, page 10: 2 Treasure Bundles



Event Reporting Form

Date _____ Event Code: _____
Location _____

GM Org Play #:	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

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

			Faction:		
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