


# **PATHFINDER**<sup>®</sup> ADVENTURE PATH™

## SHATTERED STAR

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 4 OF 6

# BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR



# SHATTERED STAR

# PATHFINDER

## ADVENTURE PATH™

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# SHATTERED STAR



## DELVING THE PAST

**W**hy have elves, halflings, and humans been mysteriously disappearing and what are the strange creatures that have been raiding the peaceful Kingdom of Eltrun? Rortet, the king of the city of Eltrun, and all of his royal subjects have changed into beasts! It is up to your party to lift the Curse of Sekamina cave!"

And that's how *The Curse of Sekamina Cave* began. This adventure, written by me on my mom's old typewriter back when I was in 6th grade or so back in the early 80s, is sitting here on my desk as I write this foreword. I've preserved all the fun little grammatical errors and the like in the quote above, and it amuses me that even then, in the first thing I wrote for what would eventually become my homebrew campaign setting of Baria, there are elements that have survived about 30 years to finally make their way

into print. Sekamina, as many of you know, is the name of the middle realm of the Darklands of Golarion—but first, it was nothing more than a four-level dungeon. According to the regional map on the inside cover of *The Curse of Sekamina Cave*, the entrance to this cave is about 12 hexes away from a place called Chimera Cove. I'm not sure how many miles that is, though, since 6th-grade James Jacobs didn't see fit to grace the first map of his campaign setting with anything like a scale.

In any event, the adventure (which was pretty obviously inspired by *The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*) was always meant to be a two-part series, and so as soon as I finished writing *The Curse of Sekamina Cave*, I continued with the sequel, *The Underground Kingdom of Yamasoth*. And there, again, is a word that folks beyond my junior high school circle of gaming buddies might recognize!



# FOREWORD

In fact, the so-called “Sekamina Cave” series of adventures would explode into a never-finished seven-part epic. By “never finished,” I mean to say that I finished six of the seven parts (the other five had names like *City of Twilight*; *Isle of the Old Ones*; *Yanaron, the Plane of the Dead*; and *Shadowsea*), but that by the time I had finished generating most of the maps for the final part (which was to be titled *Descent into Neitherworld*—not sure if I actually meant to say *Netherworld* or not, though), I’d entered college, my high school game group had broken up, and a 2nd edition of the game I loved had just been published. So I did what any good gamer nerd would do. I started over.

The 2nd Edition version of the Sekamina Cave series was one big megamodule called *Into the Abyss*. It followed in the footsteps of its 1st Edition ancestor, and never really got finished—the players caught up to me before I could complete it and I ended up ad-libbing the last chapter with the maps I’d finished to that point. Of some minor note, one of the player characters in *Into the Abyss* accidentally released an ancient undead warlord named Xanderghul and his evil wizard accomplice Karzoug—two NPCs who in the original adventure were just names, but who would go on to become two of Baria’s more hated and notorious recurring villains.

So, the reason I tell you all this is to give you a little bit of background on this volume’s adventure, “Beyond the Doomsday Door.” There are elements in here that I’ve been seeding in other Pathfinder books—the qliphoth lord Yamasoth, Windsong Abbey, the cult of Groetus, and more—that all come from my homebrew world. I’ve sprinkled in bits and pieces of things from Baria before, of course, but it wasn’t until I finally started developing the adventure that I realized just how many of those elements all seemed to suddenly and subconsciously migrate into the adventure outline I’d given to Tito Leati to work from. It’s always a bit surreal for me to see how authors develop things I’ve invented, but I also suspect it might be a little frustrating for these authors to see the final result of the adventure and find out I’ve changed a few things here and there. This adventure suffered a bit more of that than normal—and I hope that’s for the best—but some of the things that Tito had created for the adventure ended up getting written out. Things like 800 words on weird redcap speech mannerisms and the story of Ricle Peaks’ manifestation of the local bogeyman legend were cool, but in the end they had to go to make room for other elements I wanted to add to the adventure. (One particularly neat element, the “Stoned Flesh Forest”—which was an underground forest of petrified trees that were originally humans who had warped and transformed over time—got cut simply because it didn’t make sense for Groetus, the god of empty places, to have a cluttered temple filled with trees.) So, I hope you forgive me, Tito, for tinkering a bit on this adventure!

## ON THE COVER

Wayne Reynolds presents my favorite Pathfinder, Koriah Azmeren, heroine of the Darklands and poster-girl for feat-intensive character builds. Turns out that dual-wielding two different exotic weapons uses up a lot of feat slots! Beyond Koriah, we get a glimpse of what might happen if Yamasoth gets through the *Doomsday Door*, in a painting that has a subject similar to the amateurish colored-pencil-and-marker scribbles I created for the cover of *The Underground Kingdom of Yamasoth* 30-some years ago. Only rendered with, you know, skill and talent.

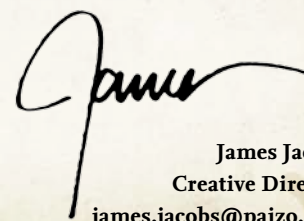
## OLD-SCHOOL MAYHEM

The original intent was for me to have this foreword written before we all went off to Gen Con, but in hindsight, I’m actually glad that these words got delayed until after.

Because now I get to brag about meeting one of roleplaying’s icons—Frank Mentzer. Having the chance at Gen Con to stop by and talk with him, get his autograph, and generally fan-boy out a little bit (I hope I didn’t overdo it!) was one of the highlights of the convention.

For you see, we don’t play just Pathfinder here at Paizo. I’ve got a long-running *Call of Cthulhu* game going, for example, and I’m hoping to start up a *Star Frontiers* game here soon. But lately, the editorial and art departments seem to have been bitten by the old school bug. Rob McCreary ran us through a *Dungeon Crawl Classics* adventure (in which all four of my characters, ill-fated brothers whose names even I’ve forgotten, ended up as chaos leviathan chow), and Andrew Vallas was so delighted with it that he’s started up a DCC campaign. I’m not immune either—I went to the Old School Renaissance booth at Gen Con on a mission to pick up a copy of *Lamentations of the Flame Princess*. Finding Frank there was a delightful and unexpected bonus.

As it turns out, all that old school mayhem is precisely what I need while developing the Shattered Star Adventure Path. With huge dungeons, complex traps, and classic monsters filling every page of this Adventure Path’s installment, I’m pretty sure I can’t get enough of the classics! Which is a good thing, because what’s coming in “The Dead Heart of Xin” is going to be epic indeed!



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