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ADVENTURE PATH[™]



REIGN OF WINTER

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE

by Tim Hitchcock




TOWERING OVER THE DEEPRUN
CREVASSE LIKE THREE TITANIC
GODDESSES ARE THE MAIDEN,
MOTHER, AND CRONE OF ARTROSA,
THE THREE SACRED ASPECTS OF
WOMANHOOD TRADITIONALLY REVERED
BY THE WITCHES OF IOBARIA. LEGENDS
SAY THE COLOSSAL STATUES OF ARTROSA
CONTAIN WONDERS AND SECRETS
OF WITCHCRAFT BEYOND ANYTHING
KNOWN IN THE WORLD TODAY, BUT THE
TRINITY GUARDS ITS MYSTERIES WELL.
SOME EVEN WHISPER THAT THE GIANT
CARVINGS REPRESENT THE QUEEN OF
WITCHES HERSELF—BABA YAGA, THE
GREAT CRONE WHO HAS LIVED THROUGH
ALL THREE AGES AND HAS GAINED
GREAT WISDOM AND POWER, BUT WHO
JEALOUSLY HOARDS HER SECRETS.



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REIGN OF WINTER

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 3 OF 6

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE

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LAND OF PLAGUE AND RUINS

By this point in the Reign of Winter Adventure Path, the PCs are in possession of the legendary *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga*, and while they might not yet have complete control over the wondrous artifact, they can certainly use it to travel to interesting and exotic locales—like Iobaria, the setting for this month’s adventure, “Maiden, Mother, Crone.” But what is Iobaria, and why go there?

As we were outlining the Reign of Winter Adventure Path, we knew we wanted the *Dancing Hut* to take the PCs to a number of new locations, each time getting farther and farther away from the “core” campaign setting of the Inner Sea region. We wanted to start in Irrisen, or at least get the PCs there quickly, but once the hut was in their hands, the whole Great Beyond would be open to them. So where should they go? We thought we might take them to another planet, and then maybe on to one of the Outer Planes, or somewhere even more exotic (there’s a guy named Rasputin from a place

called Earth who kept popping up in our brainstorming sessions), but we needed an intermediary step before we left Golarion behind—something still connected to the Inner Sea to ease the PCs into their new roles as extraplanetary travelers. I immediately thought of Iobaria.

Little has been said about Iobaria up to now, beyond a relatively brief mention in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* and a gazetteer in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #33: The Varnhold Vanishing*—hardly surprising, given that Iobaria lies in the continent of Casmaron, beyond the bounds of the Inner Sea region. But Iobaria’s not that far away, and it still retains cultural connections to the realms of Avistan. Ulfen explorers from the Lands of Linnorm Kings were the first to “discover” Iobaria, Mendev was settled by Iobarian exiles, and Iobaria lies just off the map to the east of the nation of Brevoy. All of which made Iobaria a perfect locale for the Reign of Winter Adventure Path.

FOREWORD

Truth be told, something about Iobaria had always intrigued me. I studied Russian in college (though I've forgotten most of it other than how to read and write in Cyrillic), as well as Russian history, and to me, Iobaria always seemed to be the most Russian-inspired land on Golarion, evoking the Russia of the Dark Ages and Slavic fairy tales, with deep, snow-covered forests, icy rivers, and scary monsters in the woods right outside your door. Add in a few more details from the gazetteer in "The Varnhold Vanishing," such as the massive stone maiden, matron, and crone carvings of Artrosa and the cyclopean watchtower of Hask-Ultharan with its ties to the demon lord Kostchtchie—who already had a history with Baba Yaga—and it soon became clear that if there was anywhere on Golarion where Baba Yaga would appear (other than Irrisen, of course), it would be Iobaria.

But "Maiden, Mother, Crone" is not my first visit to Iobaria. In fact, I was so impressed with the Iobaria gazetteer in "The Varnhold Vanishing" that when I started an office Kingmaker game, I decided to set it not in the Stolen Lands of the River Kingdoms, but just a little farther east, in the unknown wilderness of Iobaria. Sadly, like the fallen empire of Iobaria itself, my "Kingmaker: Iobaria" game did not survive long. One of the advantages of the Adventure Path format is that it gives you just about everything you need to run an entire campaign, but once you start changing things, particularly something as drastic as the Adventure Path's assumed setting, the workload increases dramatically. It soon became apparent that I had bitten off more than I could chew, so the campaign came to an end before the PCs ever got to face the Stag Lord in "Stolen Land."

Nevertheless, we still had a lot of fun with the game, and my coworkers came up with a memorable cast of characters, like James Jacobs's cleric of Desna, Echo Sidra, with her fear of open graves and propensity for repeatedly poisoning herself; Crystal Frasier's halfling druid Z (and her elk animal companion Zachariah), a constant source of comic relief; and Sara Marie's witch, Bribri, who taught the group the valuable lesson that just because you've been killed by zombies doesn't mean you're really dead, when she reanimated as a zombie herself and had to be put down for good by her former allies.

But most importantly, I learned that I wanted to do more with Iobaria—and so here we are. Tim Hitchcock did an amazing job of bringing the three linked dungeons of Artrosa to life, and he and Adam Daigle added some more detail to the lands of Iobaria with their gazetteer of the Dvezda Marches. The Reign of Winter marches on, and Iobaria will be left behind when the *Dancing Hut* travels to its next destination, but I'd love to go back there someday and learn some more of its secrets.

As usual, we'd love to hear what you think about this latest foray to far-off lands. Stop by the messageboards on paizo.com to tell us your opinion, and let us know if you'd

ON THE COVER

This month's cover gives us the centaur Vsevolod, priest of the demon lord Kostchtchie. He leads the army of frost giants and demons invading Baba Yaga's statue-dungeon of Artrosa in search of the treasures and secrets of the Queen of Witches—and the PCs must get past him to claim one of the keys they need to take the *Dancing Hut* to its next destination.

like to see more of Iobaria or other remote locales. And get ready to leave Golarion behind, because the PCs are about to find themselves on the distant world of Triaxus in "The Frozen Stars," the next installment of the Reign of Winter Adventure Path!

LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

In "Maiden, Mother, Crone," for the first time in the Reign of Winter Adventure Path the PCs are taken away from the Inner Sea region to the land of Iobaria, where the "Common" tongue of Taldane is spoken rarely, if at all. As the campaign progresses and the PCs venture into even more far-flung locales, the chance of meeting characters with whom the PCs share a language drops even further.

The PCs can of course learn new languages by putting additional ranks into the Linguistics skill, and spells such as *comprehend languages* and *tongues* can remove most language barriers, but there may be times in the campaign where the PCs encounter a new language and have not yet put that extra rank into Linguistics, or don't have a spellcaster with *comprehend languages* prepared. In these cases, you might want to consider implementing a house rule allowing a PC to use the Linguistics skill to understand unfamiliar spoken languages as well as written languages. Use the same DCs as for deciphering written text: DC 20 for simple ideas, DC 25 for everyday speech, and DC 30 or higher for intricate or complex concepts. Alternatively, the PCs can attempt a DC 20 Sense Motive check to get an idea of what someone is saying at a more emotional level by reading body language and facial expressions, though only the most general concepts, rather than specific information, can be gleaned in this way. In both of these cases, however, the PCs should get only a basic understanding of what is said. To have a true conversation, a PC still needs to learn the language or use magic to communicate.

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PART ONE: THE DANCING HUT

PAGE 8

The PCs must explore the new layout of the Dancing Hut to find the exit and learn their new location.

PART TWO: THE DVEZDA MARCHES

PAGE 15

The PCs face frost giants and centaurs as they explore their surroundings in the land of Iobaria.

PART THREE: THE THREE WHO WATCH

PAGE 20

In search of the keys Baba Yaga left behind, the PCs journey to the gigantic carved statues of Artrosa.

PART FOUR: THE MAIDEN

PAGE 24

The PCs delve into the first of Artrosa's three dungeons, inside the Maiden carving.

PART FIVE: THE MOTHER

PAGE 35

The PCs continue their exploration of Artrosa's three linked dungeons, now inside the statue of the Mother.

PART SIX: THE CRONE

PAGE 44

Entering Artrosa's third and final dungeon, which lies inside the Crone, the PCs face the leader of the forces invading Baba Yaga's sacred statues.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Maiden, Mother, Crone" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

7

The PCs begin this adventure at 7th level.

8

The PCs should be 8th level before they first enter Artrosa—if they're not close by this point, consider adding a few extra encounters during the trek to Artrosa.

9

The PCs should be 9th level before they enter the cavern of the Eon Pit and face the centaur priest Vsevolod.

The PCs should be 10th level by the end of the adventure.

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Following the collapse of the empire of Old Iobaria, a barbarian warlord named Kostchtchie claimed Iobaria's wild northeastern territory, the Dvezda Marches, as his personal kingdom. To consolidate his power, he sought out the Queen of Witches, Baba Yaga, and demanded she give him the secret of immortality or face the full might of his barbarian horde. Baba Yaga granted Kostchtchie his wish, but only after stealing a part of his soul and transforming him into a twisted giant. In shame, Kostchtchie fled, and with Baba Yaga's counsel and aid, a coalition of Kostchtchie's rivals fell upon the warlord's armies, driving them from the region and forcing the scattered remains deep into the Ice Steppes of the frozen north.

But Kostchtchie himself had not been defeated. He fled to the Abyss, where his immortality allowed him to gain power and eventually supplant the demon lord Sithhud, becoming a powerful demon lord in his own right. Over the centuries, Kostchtchie slowly built up his power and his followers, as he became more and more obsessed with reclaiming the stolen portion of his soul and gaining revenge against Baba Yaga.

Baba Yaga expected that some day Kostchtchie might return, however, and so she created the towering cliff carvings that became known as Artrosa, "The Three Who Watch," in the Deeprun Crevasse. Each massive figure corresponds to one of the threefold aspects of womanhood—maiden, mother, and crone—and within each figure the Queen of Witches built a separate fortress-dungeon linked to the others via magical portals. The womb of each dungeon protected a sacred stone circle through which Baba Yaga could keep watch over the region through the carvings' eyes, and she forged a magic ring that would grant a chosen warden great power within the fortresses, allowing the warden to shift between the three ages of womanhood, move freely between Artrosa's dungeons and scry their rooms, and even see the future.

Eventually, Baba Yaga departed Iobaria for worlds unknown in her *Dancing Hut*, leaving Artrosa in the hands of a chosen warden who would be responsible for the dungeons' day-to-day upkeep. Since that time, Baba Yaga has appointed 11 wardens, in most cases a powerful hag or witch devoted to her service. Only minimal evidence of Baba Yaga's connection to the strange, towering figures remains today, yet to Kostchtchie and his followers, Artrosa remains a symbol of disgrace and defeat.

Although she rarely stayed long, Baba Yaga continued to visit Artrosa now and then, most recently when she began to suspect that Elvanna's scheduled abdication might not go as planned. Baba Yaga's divinations had revealed that some treachery would befall her in the near future, though she was unable to pinpoint the exact nature of the betrayal. As a contingency against this, the Queen of

Witches summoned her Three Riders to her and informed them that if she did not make her scheduled appearance in Irrisen, they should go to Artrosa, where they could learn her fate and if necessary, come to her aid. Baba Yaga's plan was to leave behind a trail of sorts, consisting of copies of the keys used to control her *Dancing Hut*, thus enabling the Three Riders (or other rescuers) to use the hut to retrace her steps and eventually rescue her. Before leaving Iobaria, Baba Yaga placed copies of two keys in Artrosa—the next "breadcrumbs" in her trail. As an additional failsafe, she then hid clues within her hut pointing to the keys. Hopefully, Elvanna would not notice the clues, but anyone determined to find Baba Yaga would be able to discover them. With the trail laid, Baba Yaga departed Golarion.

When Elvanna betrayed Baba Yaga and put the captured *Dancing Hut* on display in Whitethrone, word soon reached other enemies of the Queen of Witches, including Kostchtchie's faithful in Iobaria. For centuries, they have waited in their secret ice temples and cavernous strongholds for Baba Yaga to falter or drop her guard, which would allow their forces to charge down from the Ice Steppes and reclaim the Dvezda Marches, and now the time had come.

One of these followers of the demon lord is a centaur priest named Vsevolod, who commands a tribe of Kostchtchie-worshiping frost giants. When Vsevolod learned of Baba Yaga's failure to appear in Irrisen for the first time in 1,400 years, he immediately initiated his own plan to seize and pillage Artrosa and steal Baba Yaga's most precious secrets. At the same time, Vsevolod sent a band of frost giants south to wait at the traditional spot where Baba Yaga's hut manifests when she travels to Iobaria. There they wait, in case the Queen of Witches or her hut should unexpectedly return.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins as the *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* arrives in a new location, and the PCs must find their way out by exploring the hut's new layout, which consists of a single hallway bent into an infinitely repeating triangular knot. Inside the hut's rooms, three raven oracles test the PCs' strength, wit, and endurance in a series of challenges. If the PC succeed, the ravens award them magical amulets that also serve as clues to the location of the cauldron keys Baba Yaga left behind. Collecting all three amulets reveals a secret door that leads to the hut's control room and exit, but before they can leave, the PCs encounter a former Iobarian warlord sentenced by Baba Yaga to guard the hut's entrance.

Upon exiting the hut, the PCs encounter an army of frost giants surrounding them. Warriors of a cult devoted to the demon lord Kostchtchie, the frost giants were sent here by their centaur leader Vsevolod to guard the area in case of Baba Yaga's return. The PCs have no chance against these overwhelming odds, but as the giants lay siege to the

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mythic construct, the *Dancing Hut* springs to life to defend itself, giving the players the opportunity to take on the frost giants with the hut.

With the frost giants defeated, the PCs explore the surrounding territory in order to determine where the hut has taken them—to the northern region of Hoofwood in the land of Iobaria. After encountering scouts of the Rashalka centaur tribe, the PCs are introduced to the centaurs' clan chieftain, Korak Kaag, who can give them more information about the area and also provide them with a local guide. Once the PCs have established their location, they travel northward toward the three massive statues of Artrosa in order to recover a new set of keys that will take the *Dancing Hut* to its next destination.

Known as the “The Three Who Watch,” Artrosa is a well-known Iobarian landmark, consisting of three female figures carved into the side of three adjacent mesas. The giant nude figures, each half a mile high, resemble a long-haired maiden, a pregnant matron, and a hunchbacked crone, and each contains a dungeon inside it, built by Baba Yaga years ago. Although the three figures stand miles apart, magic portals within their passages connect the three dungeons together.

As the PCs explore the three dungeons of Artrosa in search of the two keys left behind by Baba Yaga, they encounter a number of Baba Yaga's allies and guardians, as well as the opposing agents of Kostchtchie that have forced their way inside to pillage the fortress and steal its secrets to increase the glory of their demonic patron. During their explorations, the PCs have several opportunities to interact with the changeling witch Jadrenka, who assumes the age and physical appearance of the three mythic aspects associated with each dungeon. Jadrenka serves as Artrosa's warden, and carries one of the keys to the *Dancing Hut*. The other key lies in the hands of Vsevolod, the centaur priest of Kostchtchie, whom the PCs face in the final encounter of the adventure. Only when the PCs have both keys can they leave Artrosa and return to the *Dancing Hut* to continue following Baba Yaga's trail.

PART ONE: THE DANCING HUT

The adventure begins moments after the PCs mix the two keys given to them by the Black Rider—a lock of hair from a frost giant's beard and a plague doctor's mask—in the magic cauldron inside Baba Yaga's *Dancing Hut*, which currently stands in the middle of the city of Whitethrone. As the PCs stir the stew in the cauldron, everything in the room seems to swirl and shift. The PCs experience a strange, almost euphoric, sense of momentary displacement, before the room solidifies with a final shimmer—but it is not the same room the PCs were standing in just moments before. Although the PCs likely do not yet realize it, the *Dancing Hut* has just traveled to the land of Iobaria, far to the east of Irrisen. As a result,

the hut's entire layout and interior design has changed, as it does whenever it travels to a new location. In effect, the PCs now find themselves in a completely new *Dancing Hut*.

The *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* is fully detailed on pages 61–63 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68. The lock of hair and mask the PCs placed in the cauldron disappear, but they reappear 1 hour later somewhere else in the hut. For the rest of the campaign, these keys remain in the hut, regardless of its present configuration, and they can be used again later to return the hut to Iobaria.

The PCs begin the adventure in area **A1**. They must explore the hut's new layout and find an exit before they can see where they've arrived. If the kikimora Zorka (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68 58) is with the PCs, she can describe what has happened, though she does not immediately recognize this layout of the hut, and cannot tell them where the hut has arrived.

A1. CAULDRON ROOM

A sturdy black cauldron sits in the middle of a rustic room with timber floors, log walls, and a high ceiling framed by long beams cut from whole trunks. A grand cobblestone hearth fills one corner, its dying embers feeding the room with a dull red glow. Various barrels, farm tools, crates, and other miscellaneous items clutter the remainder of the space. In the corner opposite the fireplace, a rickety wooden staircase climbs to a small wooden landing. A shallow alcove off the landing holds two thick oaken doors.

As in the hut's Irrisen configuration, the cauldron in this room is used to transport the hut to other locations, though the PCs will need to find new keys to take the hut to its next destination. The cauldron is a part of the hut and cannot be removed. The crates and containers in the room hold simple, mundane tools and supplies. Though heavy, the doors atop the landing are unlocked and open into the middle of a long corridor that seems to continue endlessly in either direction (area **A2**).

Development: See Concluding the Adventure for details on what happens when the PCs place the keys found in Artrosa in the cauldron.

A2. THE KNOTTED CORRIDOR

A long corridor stretches out to both sides, the aged plank floors seeming to continue forever. Solid logs form the passage walls, intricately carved with knotted designs and images of lances, and centaurs, ravens, and female figures. Pale-winged moths and tiny fireflies flutter through the hallway, their flickering glows filling the corridor with dim light.

The basic design for the hut's Iobarian configuration is a single corridor that twists to form a triangular Celtic knot

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and connects a series of rooms. The passage connecting the hut's rooms seems to run endlessly in a straight line; powerful illusions cause the designs on the walls to change, making it appear that a great distance has been traveled when in fact the corridor simply doubles back upon itself. To a creature in the corridor, however, there seem to be no turns, just a single straight hallway. A character can leave area **A1** and walk in a straight line until he once more returns to the door to area **A1** from the opposite direction. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check confirms that the corridor just leads in a circle.

The wall opposite the doors to area **A1** contains a secret door, but the illusions that cover the endless hallway also mask the door (Perception DC 30 to spot). Once the doors to all three of the outer chambers at the corners (areas **A3**, **A5**, and **A7**) have been opened, the illusion is dispelled, though the door remains difficult to spot (Perception DC 20 to find). The door has no visible handle or hinges, and its facade looks much like the log walls that cover the rest of the passage, though the logs sections are cut in a rectangular shape consistent with that of a door. Baba Yaga herself placed an *arcane lock* (CL 20th) upon the door that keeps it held fast (break DC 35, Disable Device DC 20), though the third raven oracle's amulet easily opens it (see area **A7**).

A3. CHAMBER OF TWILIGHT (CR 7)

A symbol carved upon the door to this chamber resembles an inverted half-circle with a horizontal line across the top and several lines exiting the circle. A single extended arrow points downward in the center. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Linguistics check reveals the carving to be a symbol for twilight, in a style favored by Iobarian witches. Any character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs open the door.

A slight chill wafts through this room, carrying the stale scent of carrion and peat. Beyond, an impossible forest seems to have devoured the entire chamber. The walls are woven from tangled knots of black, leafless trees, and fine flakes of rusted iron cover the floor, softly crumbling to dust. A pale light emanates from a fist-sized orb that rests within a nest of black iron branches in the center of the room, turning all forms into ebon silhouettes.

The room's only other exit, a narrow passageway lined with jutting, leafless branches, hides behind a tangle of dead branches at the rear of the room (Perception DC 15 to spot). The passage leads to the Challenge of Strength (area **A4**).

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THE RAVENS THREE

Three awakened raven oracles inhabit the outer chambers at the three corners of the triangle forming the current configuration of the *Dancing Hut*, entrusted by Baba Yaga with the clues pointing to the keys she left behind in Artrosa. Baba Yaga awakened the three ravens centuries ago, and they have served her faithfully since.

The first time the PCs meet one of the ravens, allow them to attempt a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (local) check to recall tales of Baba Yaga's intelligent raven allies who sometimes serve as her prophets. Three in all, they are said to guard the mysteries of the auspicious times of Twilight, Night, and Dawn, when the boundaries between the worlds blur. Legends often call the birds "The Liar Seers," for they shroud their wisdom in tangled riddles and rarely offer any insight without demanding some sort of favor or task in return.

Intelligent, conniving, and loyal to Baba Yaga, the ravens possess the clues that point to the keys hidden in Artrosa, and are intent on testing the PCs to see whether the adventurers are worthy of the knowledge they guard. They demand that the PCs perform three challenges—of strength, wit, and endurance—to earn their clues. If the PCs complete the challenges, each of the ravens awards them with a clue in the form of a magic amulet.

Alternatively, the PCs can fight the ravens and seize the clue amulets, but doing so invokes bad luck. If a raven is slain, its amulet becomes cursed, and any character who attempts to take the amulet from the dead raven is struck by a *baleful polymorph* spell that turns the character into a toad (CL 20th, save DC 17). Once the spell is triggered, the amulet loses all of its magical properties and transforms into a rusted lump of iron, though fortunately the clues on the talisman remain and can still be deciphered.

Creature: This room is the demesne of Moc, one of Baba Yaga's three raven oracles (see the sidebar above). Shortly after the PCs enter the room, the raven flies out of the darkness and settles atop the glowing orb, casting a huge, ominous shadow. With a successful DC 15 Perception check, a PC notices a small iron amulet hanging from a leather thong about the bird's neck.

Initially, Moc holds his thoughts, waiting and listening. Eyeing the PCs suspiciously, he darts his head in short, crisp movements. If the PCs don't address him first, Moc's initial attitude is indifferent. If the PCs tell him they have come seeking to undo Baba Yaga's fate and make Moc friendly, he accepts their story. Alternatively, clever roleplaying can convince Moc of the PCs' good intentions. If all else fails, or if the PCs remain silent, Moc uses his

brain drain revelation to learn the reasons for the PCs' presence before initiating conversation.

Once convinced the PCs want to aid Baba Yaga, the raven caws, "Baba Yaga is not here, but you can find her, never fear. First, however, you must persuade me you possess the strength necessary to bear my knowledge. My question is a simple one:

*Born twins, they live not,
Yet they grow until death.
Their fates are of'n tied.
Ever-crescent, as the moon,
Symbols of the warrior's pride.*

"The answer to this question lies in the chamber beyond. Bring me the answer, and I shall give you what you seek."

Moc's cryptic demand refers to the tusks of the fiendish dire boar that roams the adjacent chamber (area A4). If the PCs simply answer the raven's riddle, he reiterates with stronger emphasis, "BRING me the answer."

MOC

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male advanced awakened raven oracle 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*

133, 294, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

N Tiny magical beast (augmented animal)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size)

hp 90 (11 HD; 3d8+8d8+41)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee bite +15 (1d3-2)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Oracle Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12)

4th (4/day)—*inflict critical wounds* (DC 18), *legend lore*, *terrible remorse*^{UM} (DC 19)

3rd (6/day)—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 17), *locate object*

2nd (7/day)—*darkness*, *hold person* (DC 17), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 16), *levitate*, *minor image* (DC 16), *silence* (DC 16), *tongues*

1st (7/day)—*doom* (DC 15), *endure elements*, *forbid action*^{UM} (DC 16), *identify*, *inflict light wounds* (DC 15), *obscuring mist*, *sanctuary* (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *guidance*, *light*, *mage hand*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *spark*^{APG} (DC 14), *virtue*

Mystery lore

TACTICS

During Combat Moc makes every effort to avoid combat, using spells like *forbid action*, *hold person*, and *sanctuary* if necessary. If forced to fight, he uses his spells to deal as much as damage to and hardship on his enemies as he can.

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE

Morale Bound to Baba Yaga and the *Dancing Hut*, Moc fights to the death if forced into combat.

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 20, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 25

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Defensive Combat Training, Eschew Materials, Skill Focus (Perception), Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Appraise +18, Diplomacy +18, Fly +22, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +27, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +27

Languages Aklo, Common, Hallit, Iobarian, Skald, Sylvan

SQ oracle's curse (haunted), revelations (automatic writing, brain drain [2/day, DC 18], focused trance)

Gear iron amulet (as *brooch of shielding*)

Treasure: In addition to providing the PCs with a clue, the iron amulet also functions as a *brooch of shielding*.

Development: If the PCs defeat the dire boar in area **A4** and present the tusks to Moc, he congratulates them and gives them his iron amulet as a token of his esteem.

"This amulet holds only one of the three clues you seek. It reveals the first ingredient for Baba Yaga's kettle. Look for this key where time catches up to us all."

Clutching a boar's tusk in each talon, Moc lifts himself atop the glowing orb in the nest. As he lands, the orb's light winks out and the raven disappears, but not before he caws one last mysterious phrase:

"Look for the Mother when the moon is full!"

Once the raven is gone, anyone inspecting the orb discovers that it has transformed into a solid sphere of rust-coated iron.

Moc's iron amulet is engraved with a single Iobarian rune. With a successful DC 20 Linguistics check (or a spell such as *comprehend languages*), a PC correctly interprets the meaning of the rune as "dragon." This refers to the dragon scale key left behind by Baba Yaga. Moc's first cryptic clue—"where time catches up to us all"—refers to the Eon Pit, a pit in the womb of the Crone dungeon (area **Eg**) that ages all who enter it, and where Baba Yaga hid the dragon scale. His second clue about the Mother refers to the phase of the moon when Artrosa's door appears atop the Mother figure (see *Entering Artrosa* on page 20).

Story Award: If the PCs solve Moc's riddle and earn the amulet without fighting the raven, award them 3,200 XP as if they had defeated Moc in combat.

A4. THE CHALLENGE OF STRENGTH (CR 7)

The walls of this wide chamber are lined with gray, lifeless trees and thorny tangles of brush. In the center of the room stands a gnarled and leafless tree whose outstretched branches twist like cruel, beastly talons.

Creature: The Beast of Gelglast, a hideously scarred dire boar of monstrous proportion, resides within this chamber, brought here by Baba Yaga after one of her extraplanar travels. The Beast hides in the shadows of the far corner, ready to run down and gore to ribbons whatever hapless sacrifices wander into its abode. It fights ferociously to the death.



IRON AMULET

BEAST OF GELGLAST CR 7 XP 3,200

Male advanced fiendish dire boar
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 36, 294)

NE Large animal

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 73 (7d8+42)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities ferocity, **DR** 5/good; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +13 (2d6+13)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks smite good 1/day (+1 attack, +7 damage)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 14, **Con** 21, **Int** 2, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Perception +12, Stealth +5

Development: After defeating the boar, the PCs must succeed at a DC 14 Survival check to properly remove the great beast's tusks.

A5. CHAMBER OF NIGHT

A symbol carved upon the door to this chamber resembles a downward facing crescent resting on a horizontal line with arrows pointing outward. A vertical bisecting line with arrows pointing both directions runs from top to bottom. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Linguistics check reveals the carving to be the Iobarian witch symbol for night. A character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check.

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Wavering darkness devours everything that lies beyond the threshold. Thick stone columns and wooden beams, entangled with pale moonflower blossoms, support the room's high-vaulted ceiling. A faintly glowing blood-red orb dangles from a black iron chain in the center of the room.

Permanent magical *darkness* swallows the entire chamber, but the glowing red orb provides dim light in a 10-foot radius. The room is also under the effects of a permanent *forced quiet* spell (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 221), which muffles sound in the room, making creatures within unable to shout or make loud noises. Both effects are at CL 20th.

Creature: Another of Baba Yaga's three raven oracles (see the sidebar on page 10), Rozum, inhabits the Chamber of Night. A hideous albino raven with red eyes, Rozum perches in the rafters, hidden amid the moonflower blossoms. Shortly after the PCs arrive, he hops forth along the beams before fluttering to rest atop the orb.

Like Moc in area **A3**, Rozum eyes the PCs when they arrive, waiting for them to address him. The PCs must convince him of their intentions before the raven offers his counsel. Rozum's initial attitude is indifferent, but showing Rozum an amulet earned from a previous challenge immediately convinces him. If the PCs wait too long or fail to convince him, Rozum uses his brain drain revelation to find out why they have come. Still, he too requests they earn the knowledge he holds with a challenge.

"While you have convinced me of your intentions, you have yet to convince me of your wit. To prove your cleverness, you must find the answer to my riddle.

*I mark night's coming,
I will mark your end.
I run not in fear,
I have not a friend.*

"The answer to the riddle lies within the passage of night. To find the path to what you seek, drink from the silver chalice within the grotto. Go now and do not return to me unless you can prove your worth."

Rozum's riddle refers to the hourglass hidden in the adjacent chamber (area **A6**). If the PCs simply answer his riddle, he repeats, "GET me the answer."

ROZUM

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male advanced awakened raven oracle 8 (see page 10)
hp 90

Treasure: In addition to providing the PCs with a clue, Rozum's amulet also functions as an *aegis of recovery* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 254).

Development: If the PCs complete the challenge and return the hourglass from area **A6** to Rozum, the raven presents them with his iron amulet.

"You have taken upon yourselves a great burden," Rozum caws, "for that which you desire, the changeling holds. Know this as well—you will find the Crone only when the moon wanes."

The raven clutches the hourglass in his talons and wings off into the passage to area **A6**, vanishing into the darkness.

Rozum's iron amulet is engraved with an Iobarian rune, which a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Linguistics check identifies as the rune for "gold," which refers to the gold nugget key left by Baba Yaga. "The changeling" mentioned by Rozum is Artrosa's warden, Jadrenka, who holds the key. His mention of the Crone and the waning moon refers to the phase of the moon when Artrosa's door appears atop the Crone figure (see Entering Artrosa on page 20).

Story Award: If the PCs solve Rozum's riddle and earn the amulet without fighting the raven, award them 3,200 XP as if they had defeated Rozum in combat.

A6. THE CHALLENGE OF WIT (CR 6)

Hundreds of tangled roots dangle from the raw earthen ceiling of this rough-hewn, circular grotto, which is filled with dark, placid water. A narrow stone walkway leads to a circular platform in the center of the room upon which rests a stone table set with five silver chalices. About the perimeter of the grotto, a few feet above the waterline, five deep alcoves have been dug into the grotto walls. Though shadowed by darkness, a faint glitter sparkles from deep within each alcove.

The ceiling of the grotto is 20 feet high, and the water is 20 feet deep. The room is dark, and the alcoves in the grotto walls are cloaked in magical *darkness* (CL 20th), so they are not illuminated even if light is brought into the chamber. Each alcove contains an object, locked within a cage and chained and padlocked to the stone floor (hardness 10, hp 10, break DC 26, Disable Device DC 30). The objects are a mirror (area **A6a**), an apple (area **A6b**), an hourglass (area **A6c**), an athame (area **A6d**), and a key (area **A6e**).

The five chalices on the table in the center of the room are half full of dark red wine, and the rim of each chalice is etched with a specific rune in a repeating pattern. Each rune corresponds to one of the objects hidden in each alcove. With a successful DC 20 Linguistics check, a PC identifies each rune and the object it corresponds to. The chalices have an aura of transmutation and evocation. No matter how much wine is drunk from a chalice, it always remains half-full, as long as it is within this chamber. The chalices become nonmagical if removed from this room.

Touching a chalice reveals the corresponding object in its alcove, as a pale flash of moonlight illuminates the alcove for a few short seconds, just long enough for someone on the platform to identify the object within.

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To correctly answer Rozum's riddle and pass his test, the PCs must bring him the hourglass.

Trap: To access an alcove, one must drink from the corresponding chalice. When this occurs, three stepping-stones rise from the black waters, creating a path to the alcove. Unfortunately, Rozum has poisoned every chalice except the one with the hourglass rune with dark reaver powder (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 558). To add to the difficulty of this challenge, the stepping-stones only remain solid for 1d4 rounds, after which they vanish again, dropping anyone standing on a stepping-stone into the black water. Any living creature that enters into the pool or passes above the surface of its dark waters without using the stepping-stones (such as by flying, jumping, using a rope, or the like) triggers a trap. The stepping-stones reappear if someone else drinks from the correct chalice.

THE DROWNING POOL CR 6

XP 2,400

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*true seeing*); **Reset** automatic (immediate);

Effect spell effect (*suffocation*^{APG} [CL 10th] for 3 rounds, Fortitude DC 17 partial)

Story Award: If the PCs somehow bypass the trap or successfully recover the hourglass without triggering the trap, award them 2,400 XP.

A7. CHAMBER OF DAWN (CR 7)

A symbol carved upon the door to this chamber resembles an upward facing half-circle resting on a horizontal line. Several arrows point outward from the circle. At the center of the half-circle, a single extended arrow points upward. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Linguistics check reveals the carving to be the Iobarian witch symbol for dawn. A character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check.

Flowering vines drape the walls of this chamber. Winding, pebble-strewn pathways weave through a magnificent garden of honeysuckle and lilac. A pale, warm light fills the room, emanating from a stone-lined pool of water in the center. The purple and orange reflection of the early morning sky glitters upon the pool's surface.

Creature: Tryva, the third raven oracle, guards the Chamber of Dawn. She is tasked with testing the PCs' endurance. When the PCs enter, she flutters down from a nearby shrub and perches at the pool's edge, opposite the PCs. Like the other ravens, Tryva gives the PCs a short time to state their purpose and convince her of their intentions. Her initial attitude is indifferent, but showing Tryva an amulet

earned from a previous challenge immediately convinces her. If necessary, Tryva uses her brain drain revelation to extract this information forcefully. Like her siblings, the raven demands the PCs earn her gift by completing a challenge:

"Before I aid you, you must first convince me you have the resolve to fulfill your desire. To prove your mental fortitude, you must face what I, the herald of the coming day, cannot.

Each night it visits—

Sometimes horror,

Sometimes wonder,

Sometimes prophet,

When dawn wakes, it flees.

"When you face this thing, you shall know its desire. In its desire, you shall find your own. Only by sharing this desire with me can I bind your fates. Once they are bound, I will be able to see your destiny."

Tryva's cryptic riddle refers to an animate dream in the adjacent chamber (area A8), a creature formed from the nightmares of Baba Yaga's most recently slain daughter. To gain Tryva's aid, the PCs must face the animate dream and tell Tryva of its desires.

TRYVA CR 7

XP 3,200

Female advanced awakened raven oracle 8 (see page 10)

hp 90

Treasure: In addition to providing the PCs with a clue, Tryva's amulet also functions as a *chime of opening*. The amulet can be used a total of nine times, after which it loses all of its magical properties. The amulet automatically opens the *arcane locked* secret door in area A2.

Development: If the PCs defeat the animate dream in area A8 and tell Tryva the dream's desires, the raven gives them her iron amulet and replies:

"So be it. Seek now the sisters three who are one: Mother, Maiden, Crone. But know that the Maiden is elusive, and may only be caught with the waxing moon."

After handing the PCs the amulet, Tryva crows three times and then flies into the pool. There is no splash when she touches the surface. Instead, she seems to pass into another world and wings off into a glorious sunrise, her form growing smaller and smaller until it disappears. If anyone touches the pool's surface, the water ripples and the sunset reflection immediately fades to reveal a shallow and ordinary pool of water.

Tryva's iron amulet is engraved with a third Iobarian rune. A successful DC 20 Linguistics check reveals the rune's meaning to be "Artrosa." A successful DC 20 Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check is enough for a creature to recognize this as the name of a trio of giant, carved figures in northeastern Iobaria, also known as "The Three Who Watch." Tryva's other clue about the Maiden

REIGN OF WINTER

and the waxing moon refers to the phase of the moon when Artrosa's door appears atop the Maiden figure (see Entering Artrosa on page 20).

Story Award: If the PCs solve Tryva's riddle and earn the amulet without fighting the raven, award them 3,200 XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

A8. THE CHALLENGE OF ENDURANCE (CR 8)

This small, candlelit bedroom is empty save for a plain wooden bed and a night table where a pale candle burns in an iron candleholder. The bed is perfectly made, but the sheets display an ominous, dark crimson stain in the middle of the bed.

Creature: To complete the Challenge of Endurance, the PCs must confront the animate dream of Baba Yaga's most

recently slain daughter, Yelizaveta. This is not the actual Yelizaveta or her spirit, but an ethereal fragment of one of her nightmares, given vengeful life by the magic of the *Dancing Hut*.

Shortly after the PCs enter the room, the Witchdaughter's Nightmare manifests from the stain on the bed. Her vaguely humanoid form continually morphs and distorts, though PCs who study the creature can attempt a DC 20 Perception check to note her base appearance is that of a female Jadwiga, with a similar appearance to that of the current queen of Irrisen. With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (nobility check), a creature recognizes her as Yelizaveta, the thirteenth daughter of Baba Yaga and former queen of Irrisen.

To complete the challenge, the PCs must determine the animate dream's desire before destroying her. The dream doesn't want to share her desire with mortals, however, so the PCs must trick her into revealing information. Each round, the PCs may attempt to trick her into answering questions by attempting an opposed Bluff check against the dream's Sense Motive check. If the PCs are successful, the dream answers the question honestly. However, each time the creature gives an honest answer, she becomes more enraged and more violent. The Witchdaughter's Nightmare fights until destroyed.

The dream is aware that she is a prisoner, neither dead nor alive and trapped in an eternal netherworld to repeat the same cycle of nightmares for all eternity. Therefore, her desire is twofold—she seeks freedom from Baba Yaga's binding clutches and vengeance against the Queen of Witches. Questions about the dream's identity, how she came to be within the *Dancing Hut* (Baba Yaga killed her and captured her soul), or similar lines of questioning should produce enough evidence for PCs to guess her desires.

THE WITCHDAUGHTER'S NIGHTMARE

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female animate dream (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 29)

hp 90

A9. CONTROL ROOM (CR 9)

The secret door in area A2 leads to a shallow foyer blocked by two more double doors, which are carved to resemble an oversized gate guarded by a scrawny dog. These doors are unlocked, but iron bells nailed to the opposite side of the doors sound when the doors are opened. If the PCs specifically state they are trying to open the doors quietly, allow them to attempt a Stealth check with a –10 penalty to avoid alerting the occupant of the room beyond. Once the PCs open the doors, read or paraphrase the following.

This spacious room resembles the interior of a wooden cottage. Stairs to the right of the entrance climb to balcony atop which rests a wooden table. A wooden walkway continues around the

THE WITCHDAUGHTER'S NIGHTMARE

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room to a small landing and another set of stairs to the left of the entrance. A third staircase leads down from the walkway to an alcove opposite the door. Crates, boxes, barrels and other mundane materials crowd the space.

The ceiling is 20 feet high in this room; the balcony and walkway are 10 feet above the floor. A cracked clay bowl sits atop the table on the balcony, with a brownish, speckled hen's egg inside. Together, the bowl and egg act as the hut's control system, though the PCs are unlikely to possess either the knowledge or the skill to work the hut's controls at this time. On the landing to the left of the entrance, a wooden ladder climbs to a trap door in the ceiling; this leads to a dusty, disused loft. The crates and containers in the room hold more mundane tools and supplies. In the back alcove, a wooden door leads outside to the *Dancing Hut's* porch. Windows in the alcove look out into a snowy forest clearing.

Creature: An Iobarian warlord called Ratibor the Bold guards this area. A prisoner of Baba Yaga, Ratibor is bound to serve her and guard the *Dancing Hut* from intruders. However, his orders are to defend the hut against intruders from the outside—they say nothing about intruders from the inside, such as the PCs, who are likely coming from within the hut itself.

When the PCs first enter this room, Ratibor is standing guard facing the hut's outer door. When he notices them, there is a moment of confusion. Never before during his service have people come from within the hut unaccompanied by Baba Yaga, and he is unsure what he should do. Ratibor hails the PCs and informs them of his duty, first in Iobarian, then in Draconic, and waits for their response. He is suspicious of the PCs but does not attack outright, waiting instead to see whether he can learn who they are and the reason for their presence in the hut.

Quick-thinking PCs can convince Ratibor to let them leave the hut with a successful Diplomacy check. Ratibor's starting attitude is unfriendly, but if he is made at least indifferent, he lets them pass without attacking, so long as they do not try to reenter the hut (see Development, below). If Ratibor is made friendly or helpful, the PCs can question him about Baba Yaga, the *Dancing Hut*, and their current location (see page 56 for how Ratibor can help the PCs). If the PCs make Ratibor hostile or try to pass by him without befriending him, he immediately attacks.

RATIBOR THE BOLD CR 9
XP 6,400
hp 115 (see page 56)

Development: If the PCs leave the hut and then attempt to reenter, even if only for a moment, Ratibor is bound to fight them, and he attacks. Only releasing him from his servitude to Baba Yaga frees him from this duty.

PART TWO: THE DVEZDA MARCHES

Exiting the *Dancing Hut*, the PCs find themselves in a clearing in a dense, snow-covered forest. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (geography) or Survival check is enough for them to realize that the hut is no longer in Irrisen, though it does not reveal their exact location. In fact, the hut now stands in Iobaria, in a region called the Dvezda Marches. Although it is likely still summer, the northern latitude, coupled with an unseasonable cold for this time of year (unrelated to Irrisen's supernatural winter or Queen Elvanna's winter portals), makes it seem more like winter. Temperatures are cold (40° F or below), and snowstorms (and even an occasional blizzard) are not uncommon.

Before the PCs can learn their whereabouts, however, they discover that a band of frost giants now surrounds the *Dancing Hut*. These fanatics, devout followers of the demon lord Kostchtchie, were commanded to guard this clearing against Baba Yaga's return by one of the demon lord's high priests, the centaur Vsevolod.

GIANT SENTRIES (CR 9+)

Creatures: A total of eight frost giants guard the forest clearing now holding the *Dancing Hut*. A single frost giant stands watch over the *Dancing Hut's* front door. The moment the PCs emerge from the hut, the giant attacks, calling out an alarm to alert the rest of the giants. Each round thereafter, an additional frost giant rushes to the sentry's aid and attacks the PCs. It should quickly become obvious to the PCs that the onslaught of giants will quickly overwhelm them. Fortunately, the hut takes matters into its own hands on the third round of combat, activating to defend itself from the frost giants and allowing the PCs to retreat back inside, if they want to avoid the combat. Although the PCs have likely not yet learned to use the hut's controls, for this combat, they should take turns actually playing Baba Yaga's hut as it fights the frost giants. Give the PCs the stat block for the *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* on page 63 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68. PCs who are not actively playing the hut can still participate in the combat by lobbing spells or missile weapons out of the hut's windows or from the hut's porch, or even racing out of the hut to join in the fray in person.

During the combat, the *Dancing Hut* lashes out at the giants with its claws and slam attacks, while the giants attack the hut with their greataxes and thrown rocks. While eight frost giants are an almost certainly deadly CR 15 encounter for the PCs, in truth they pose little threat to the CR 17 hut, with its high AC, damage reduction, and fast healing. This is not meant to be a challenging, or even especially dangerous, encounter. Rather, the point of this encounter is to foreshadow the later conflict with Vsevolod's frost giants in Artrosa while at the same time giving the PCs a glimpse of the true capabilities of the powerful artifact now in their possession.

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FROST GIANTS (8)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 133 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

TACTICS

Morale Once four of the frost giants are defeated or killed, the remainder of the giants break off combat and flee northward toward Artrosa.

Treasure: The giants have little treasure beyond their gear, though one of them is carrying a fist-sized glass bauble in its sack, wrapped up in a bundle of hay. This bauble is a new magic item, a *globe of blizzards* (see page 61).

Story Award: Award the PCs 6,400 XP for using the hut to defeat the frost giants, regardless of how many frost giants were actually slain. Even eight frost giants make up an easy encounter for a creature as powerful as the *Dancing Hut*, and the PCs should not receive full XP for giants that the hut defeated.

HOOFWOOD

Once the band of frost giants has been defeated, the PCs can safely exit the *Dancing Hut*. Following the clues gleaned from the three raven oracles in the hut, the PCs likely know they are seeking a place called Artrosa, but it's just as likely that they have no idea where they are, so their first order of business is probably to attempt to determine their actual location by exploring the surrounding territory.

The forest encompassing the *Dancing Hut* is a large, coniferous woodland in eastern Iobaria called Hoofwood, home to a race of centaurs called the Rashalka. The northern reaches of Hoofwood fall within the sacred tribal territories of a centaur clan known as the Voaldyn. For generations, the Voaldyn have served as Hoofwood's first line of defense against the Rashalka's enemies, the northern Tsolniva centaurs, who make infrequent raids upon Rashalka territory. Upon witnessing the arrival of both the *Dancing Hut* and Vsevolod's frost giants in the forest, the Voaldyn immediately began fortifying their defenses, perceiving the arrival of the *Dancing Hut* as an omen and fearing that Baba Yaga has come to subjugate them and engulf their sacred lands in endless winter. As a result, the clan's chieftain, Korak Kaag, has posted scouts in a 1-mile-diameter ring in the woods around the hut in order to keep his people warned of any new threats or developments—from either the giants or agents of Baba Yaga.

SPEARS IN THE FOREST (CR 8)

Korak Kaag's centaur scouts have encircled the clearing where the *Dancing Hut* now stands in a ring 1 mile in diameter. Whichever direction the PCs go when they leave the hut, they encounter a group of these scouts. Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs approach the scouts.

The wood is dense, comprising tall trees with long needle-like leaves clustered into spiral arrangements. High above, their branches lock together, blotting out the sunlight. Below the canopy, the tree branches are thin, losing their foliage from lack of sunlight, and jutting out from the vast maze of peeling trunks like skeletal arms. A blanket of fallen needles covers the ground. Locked in the gloom and cold, the forest floor seems nearly barren, except for patches of lichen and moss that cling to the rocky soil and the lower trunks of the towering trees.

Creatures: A small band of Rashalka centaur scouts wait in this section of forest for anyone coming from the *Dancing Hut*. They have witnessed the hut's destruction of the frost giants, and are expecting agents of Baba Yaga, but the arrival of humanoid strangers—a rarity in Hoofwood—takes them aback. Unsure how to proceed, the centaurs decide to question the PCs about the reasons for their presence in Hoofwood. The leader of the scouts hails the PCs (first in Iobarian, then in other languages, if they don't seem to understand), demanding that the PCs state their business. The scouts assume the PCs are agents of Baba Yaga sent to prepare the centaurs' tribal lands for her coming, so they have an initial attitude of unfriendly. If the PCs can communicate with the centaurs, however, they can attempt Diplomacy checks to try to convince the centaurs that they have not come to destroy the centaurs. If asked, the scouts know little about Artrosa or Baba Yaga, but they offer to take the PCs to meet their chieftain, Korak Kaag, who might be able to answer the PCs' questions.

If the PCs refuse to answer the scouts' questions or make any hostile moves, the centaurs attack. These warriors have orders to bring any trespassers back to the centaur encampment for questioning, but they will kill intruders rather than sacrifice their own lives.

RASHALKA SCOUTS (4)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Centaur (Rashalka) rangers 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 42)

N Large monstrous humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +2 shield, -1 size)**hp** 47 each (5 HD; 4d10+1d10+20)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.**Melee** mwk longsword +9 (1d8+4/19-20), 2 hooves +3 (1d6+2)**Ranged** mwk spear +8 (1d8+4/×3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** favored enemy (monstrous humanoids +2)

TACTICS

During Combat The scouts work in pairs to surround opponents

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and block their escape. The centaurs try to subdue opponents and capture them, but they do not hesitate to kill if there seems to be no other option.

Morale Once two or more of the centaurs have fallen, one of the scouts breaks from combat and attempts to flee back to the centaur camp to warn Korak Kaag of the intruders.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 23 (27 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Run, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Perception +10, Stealth +9, Survival +10

Languages Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Sylvan

SQ track +1, undersized weapons, wild empathy +1

Gear mwk studded leather, mwk heavy wooden shield, mwk longsword, mwk spear

Development: If the PCs fight the scouts and defeat them, they can track the centaurs back to their camp with a successful DC 13 Survival check. A captured scout can also reveal the location of the centaur camp. If one of the scouts escapes or if all of the centaurs are killed, Korak Kaag sends out a second party of eight Rashalka scouts to deal with the problem forcefully. These centaurs have orders to capture the PCs and bring them to the centaur camp as hostages.

Story Award: If the PCs avoid combat with the centaurs and receive an invitation to speak with Korak Kaag at the centaur encampment, award them 4,800 XP as if they had defeated the scouts in combat.

KORAK KAAG'S CAMP

Although the main settlement of the Rashalka centaurs lies in the city of Vurnirn to the south, the Rashalka chieftain Korak Kaag has recently established a camp in northern Hoofwood to guard against the frost giants, Baba Yaga's agents, and the ever-present threat of the Tsolniva centaurs of the north. If the PCs are not accompanying the centaur scouts from the previous encounter, they might approach the camp of their own volition, seeking information from the local centaurs or in an attempt to spy on the centaurs if they believe that the centaurs might be allied with the frost giants who attacked the *Dancing Hut*. However they arrive, when the PCs near the centaur encampment, read or paraphrase the following.

Ahead in the distance, a thin plume of smoke drifts above the trees. Soon enough, a large clearing containing a sizable encampment appears through the trees. Broad, circular tent-huts made from hides stretched over wooden frames form a crescent around a large campfire. The muddy ground is churned with numerous hoofprints.

Throughout the camp, centaurs mill about, performing mundane tasks such as carrying firewood, filling water

buckets, or roasting spitted pheasants over a pit of glowing coals. Once the PCs enter the camp, these activities stop as the centaurs shift their attention to the outsiders. Few of them have ever seen a human, and the PCs' presence is enough to make centaur children gawk.

The adventure assumes that the PCs arrive at the camp escorted by Rashalka scouts, but this encounter can be easily modified if the PCs arrive by themselves. The centaurs in the camp far outnumber the PCs, and the guards at the camp will quickly surround any trespassers and take them to see Korak Kaag.

A MEETING WITH KORAK KAAG

The Rashalka scouts immediately escort the PCs to the tent of their clan chieftain. This tent is much larger and of finer construction than the others, and stands in the middle of the crescent of tents, facing the communal fire. No guards stand outside the tent, but the PCs' escort waits just outside as the PCs are ushered in to meet the chieftain.

Korak Kaag (LN male centaur [Rashalka] barbarian 5) is a powerful centaur with broad shoulders, a full beard and long mustaches, and a dark bay coat. He is one of the most prominent Voaldyn chieftains, responsible for the defense of northern Hoofwood, and he interrogates the PCs as to their loyalties and reasons for trespassing in centaur tribal lands. This encounter gives the PCs a chance to learn more about the region, the centaurs, and Artrosa, but Korak Kaag is a shrewd leader who expects information in return. He has no love for the frost giants, nor is he a friend of Baba Yaga or those who serve her.

If the PCs arrived at the camp willingly or of their own volition, Korak Kaag's initial attitude is indifferent. If they were brought before the chieftain as prisoners or they killed his scouts, his initial attitude is unfriendly. During the course of the interrogation, the PCs can attempt Diplomacy checks to change Korak Kaag's attitude to friendly, or even helpful (his Charisma modifier is +2).

Korak Kaag can share much of the information presented in the gazetteer of the Dvezda Marches (see page 68). He doesn't know much about Artrosa, as his people avoid the ancient site, but he can give the PCs a description of the three giant figures, and relate the legend that they contain dungeons deep inside them. He can also warn them of the will-o'-wisps that lair around the three mesas. While Korak Kaag doesn't know any more details personally, he is aware of stories that claim the door to Artrosa's dungeons lies at the top of one of the carvings' heads. According to these tales, the entrance is somehow tied to the phases of the moon, and is protected by a powerful guardian. The centaur chieftain knows nothing else about the ancient carvings.

If Korak Kaag is made at least friendly, he offers the PCs the hospitality of his camp for the night before they embark on their journey to Artrosa.

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Story Award: If the PCs successfully befriend Korak Kaag and learn information about Artrosa and how to enter its dungeons, award them 3,200 XP.

DEMONS IN THE NIGHT (CR 8)

Alerted by the failure of his frost giants to stop the PCs at the *Dancing Hut*, the centaur priest Vsevolod concludes that the PCs are agents of his patron's despised enemy, Baba Yaga, and need to be destroyed.

Creatures: During the PCs' stay at the centaur encampment (or during their journey to Artrosa, if they do not take advantage of Korak Kaag's hospitality), Vsevolod sends a gang of three andrazkus, also known as misogyny demons, to assassinate the PCs. The andrazkus look like hunched gorillas with white fur, ram horns, and cloven hooves. The demons wait until nightfall to steal into the camp and brutally slash the PCs' throats while they sleep. Unfortunately for Vsevolod's plans, the andrazkus are not

very stealthy. Even if the PCs don't set a watch, allow sleeping PCs to attempt Perception checks to detect the demons before they can carry out their bloody task.

ANDRAZKUS (3)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 57 each (see page 84)

TACTICS

During Combat Once they are detected, the andrazkus charge opponents using their powerful charge ability, then attack with their slam and bite attacks. As the battle progresses, the surviving andrazkus attempt to summon more demons to replace those fallen in combat.

Morale Called to this plane for this task, the andrazkus fight to the death.

A NATIVE GUIDE

Before the PCs leave the centaur encampment, Korak Kaag offers them one of his best scouts, a young ranger named Erdija, to guide them to Artrosa. Even if the PCs didn't befriend Korak Kaag, he still offers Erdija's services to them, but for his own reasons. In fact, Erdija is more than just a guide. Korak Kaag has instructed her to keep an eye on these outsiders and make sure that they pose no threat to the Rashalka.

Erdija is a young centaur of less than 20 winters, with long, wild brown hair and a chestnut coat. She is amiable, quick to laugh and make friends, but also quick to anger if insulted. She enjoys strong drink and storytelling, and listens with rapt attention to the PCs' stories of adventures in far-off lands. When the situation calls for it, however, Erdija is disciplined and efficient. She is a skilled scout, and is quite knowledgeable about Hoofwood and the Deeprun Crevasse, including Artrosa, though she knows no details of the legendary dungeon's interior. Erdija accompanies the PCs for as long as they allow her to, carefully observing them and their actions. Any hint of betrayal on the PCs' part sends her back to report to Korak Kaag as soon as she can safely get away.

ERDIJA

CR 6

XP 2,400

Female centaur (Rashalka) ranger 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 42)
CG Large monstrous humanoid

Init +8 (+10 in forests); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12 (+14 in forests)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 natural, -1 size)

hp 69 (7 HD; 4d10+3d10+31)

Fort +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.



ERDIJA

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE

Melee mwk longsword +10/+5 (1d8+3/19-20), 2 hooves +4 (1d6+1)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +12/+7 (1d8+4/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks favored enemy (giants +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Erdija prefers to engage foes from a distance with her bow, using her speed to keep out of reach of melee combatants. She hates giants and attacks them over other foes.

Morale Erdija's loyalty is to her clan, not to the PCs, and her first priority is to report to Korak Kaag rather than sacrifice herself for non-centaur strangers. Nevertheless, she won't abandon allies unless it's clear that the battle is lost.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 18, **Con** 19, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26 (30 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Run, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (geography) +9 (+11 in forests), Knowledge (nature) +9, Linguistics +2, Perception +12 (+14 in forests), Stealth +6 (+8 in forests), Survival +10 (+12 in forests)

Languages Common, Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Sylvan

SQ favored terrain (forest +2), track +1, undersized weapons, wild empathy +3

Combat Gear *potion of resist energy* (cold); **Other Gear** chain shirt, mwk composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 +1 arrows, mwk longsword, *ring of protection* +1, 14 gp

TREK TO ARTROSA

Once the PCs have determined where they actually are, they must make their way north through the Dvezda Marches to Artrosa. They will likely have to leave the *Dancing Hut* behind at this point, however, as it requires a successful DC 30 Use Magic Device check to pilot. If the PCs travel with Erdija as their guide, they have no chance of getting lost. Otherwise, the PCs must make a successful DC 16 Survival check once per hour to avoid losing their way in the dense forest of Hoofwood (see page 424 of the *Core Rulebook* for the effects of being lost).

With the exception of one encounter (see below), the adventure assumes that the PCs journey through Hoofwood and up the Deeprun Crevasse with no other major encounters until they arrive at the foot of the three mesas that form Artrosa. If you wish, you can further liven up the journey with more encounters using the random encounter table on page 81. Erdija can also guide the PCs to the centaur city of Vurnirn in Hoofwood if the PCs want to buy or sell new gear, either before or after delving into Artrosa. Vurnirn is the only major settlement for miles, and with the *Dancing Hut's* next destination still unknown, the PCs would well be advised to take advantage of the city's shops while they have the opportunity. The Dvezda Marches (and

Vurnirn) are detailed in the gazetteer beginning on page 68 of this volume, while a gazetteer of the entire nation of Iobaria is presented in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #33.

THE COLD RIDER (CR 9)

Creatures: As the PCs leave Hoofwood and make their way down into the Deeprun Crevasse toward Artrosa, they encounter a solitary sentinel. Mounted on a mighty white-furred Iobarian great elk, this cold rider is a terrifying fey creature of the north, a skeletal humanoid with icy blue antlers wielding weapons and armor of magical ice. The cold rider, named Hmmin, has no connection with either Baba Yaga or Kostchtchie; he was drawn to this region by the movement of Vsevolod's frost giants from the Ice Steppes into the Dvezda Marches. Curious, he followed them, but was stymied when the centaur and his followers entered Artrosa. Hmmin decided instead to follow the frost giants Vsevolod sent south, but takes delight in slaughtering any living creature he comes across, including the PCs.

HMMIN

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male cold rider (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 59)

hp 97

TACTICS

Before Combat Hmmin casts *freedom of movement* before combat.

During Combat Hmmin casts *ice storm* on a group of foes on the first round of combat, then charges in to attack with his glaive and his mount's powerful charge ability, using Spirited Charge and Ride By Attack, and using his ice walking ability to move through the area of the *ice storm* without penalty. He casts *chill metal* on heavily armored foes and targets spellcasters with *deep slumber*. If his mount is slain, Hmmin immediately casts *phantom steed* to remain mounted for the combat.

Morale Hmmin's attack is one of opportunity; he has no wish to die in pointless combat. If reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, the cold rider flees into the wilderness.

IOBARIAN GREAT ELK

CR 5

XP 1,600

Boreal megaloceros (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 187, *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #67 72)

N Large magical beast (cold)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 38 (4d8+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

Immune cold

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

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Melee gore +8 (2d6+6 plus 1d6 cold), 2 hooves +3 (1d4+3 plus 1d6 cold)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks powerful charge (gore, 4d6+9 plus 1d6 cold)

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** 20, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Run^B

Skills Perception +9, Stealth -2 (+2 in snow), Survival +0 (+4 in snow)

SQ trackless step

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Trackless Step (Ex) A boreal creature does not leave a trail in snow and cannot be tracked. It can choose to leave a trail, if it so desires.

Treasure: Although the cold rider's armor and glaive melt into water soon after its death, Hmmin also carries a *horn of fog* and two aquamarines worth 500 gp each, which remain behind when he is killed.

PART THREE: THE THREE WHO WATCH

After traveling across the eastern Iobarian wilds, the PCs eventually navigate their way down the steep cliffs of the Deeprun Crevasse and arrive at their desired destination, the giant figures of Artrosa. When the PCs arrive, read or paraphrase the following description.

Wispy clouds race across the gleaming blue sky overhead, but the floor of the crevasse lies in shadow, the sunlight blotted out by the massive cliffs on either side. Gray grasses and scraggly trees poke through drifts of ice and snow, weaving their way through black boulders that lie at the base of the towering cliffs.

Crudely carved into the face of these cliffs, several miles apart, stand three impossible sculptures that each rise over half a mile in height. Each carving depicts a naked humanoid woman holding forth a warning hand. The first resembles a young maiden with flowing hair, the second depicts a pregnant matron, and the third a stooped and withered crone.

PCs searching the region around the bases of the giant carvings can attempt a DC 20 Survival check to uncover tracks and various other signs that indicate both frost giants and centaurs have recently passed through this area, as well as the presence of an inordinate number of humanoid bones of varying ages in the area.

THE ASCENT (CR 8)

In order to get into the dungeons inside Artrosa, the PCs must scale one of the figures to reach the top of the mesa behind each carving's head. The total distance between the base of a figure and the summit is approximately half a mile, or 2,600 feet. Magical flight is the easiest

way to traverse this distance. Climbing the cliffs requires round-by-round DC 20 Climb checks, but the PCs can mitigate this by using ropes (reducing the Climb DC to 10) and taking 10 on their skill checks. If the PCs take care and plan their ascent, you can reduce the number of Climb checks needed significantly, perhaps to every 500 or 1,000 feet, for example. In addition, if the PCs rope themselves together for the climb, falling characters can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to catch themselves before they fall all the way down the cliffs, reducing falling damage on a successful save to 3d6 points of damage.

Creatures: A number of will-o'-wisps lair among the cracks and fissures of Artrosa's mesas, perhaps attracted to the residue of the powerful magic used to construct the figures. As the PCs ascend the mesas, whether flying or climbing, a pair of will-o'-wisps emerge from their hiding places, attempting to use their eerie powers to lead the PCs astray. The will-o'-wisps form strings of light in an effort to lure victims into precarious areas (the DC of Climb checks in these areas increases to 30). If unsuccessful in leading victims astray, the will-o'-wisps attack, hoping to make climbers fall and feed on their terror.

WILL-O'-WISPS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 40 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 277)

TACTICS

Morale If reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, a will-o'-wisp flees. The will-o'-wisps also break off their attack if their opponents reach the top of the mesa.

ENTERING ARTROSA

Once the PCs complete the grueling ascent to the top of one of Artrosa's mesas, they can seek out one of Artrosa's entrances. Each of Artrosa's three dungeons has its own entrance, situated atop the individual mesa from which the massive figure was carved, on a broad ledge directly behind the carving's head.

But while each dungeon has its own entrance, all three share the same door, which only manifests atop one of the mesas according to the current phase of the moon. The Maiden is tied to the waxing moon, the Mother is tied to the full moon, and the Crone is tied to the waning moon. In order to enter one of Artrosa's dungeons, one must be at the correct site during the proper moon phase. The time of day doesn't affect the manifestation of the door, only the current lunar phase. The clues the PCs received from the three raven oracles in Part One should help them determine where the door is during any given lunar phase.

The adventure assumes the PCs arrive during the moon's waxing gibbous phase, which means Artrosa's door is only accessible from atop the Maiden figure. If more than a week's time passes before the PCs ascend the mesa,

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the moon shifts phase to the full moon, and Artrosa's door manifests atop the Mother figure.

If the PCs arrive at an entrance site during the wrong phase, neither the door nor the guardian (see below) appears—there is only a blank rock wall. If they arrive during the correct phase, go to Artrosa's Door, below.

B. ARTROSA'S DOOR (CR 10)

This encounter occurs when the PCs arrive at an entrance site during the proper moon phase, as both gate and guardian manifest. Read or paraphrase the following.

Vertiginous cliffs surround the mesa top on all sides, though a rock wall backing the top of the figure's head rises above the plateau, creating some cover from the cold winds blowing across the mesa. From every direction the view is dizzying, offering a clear panorama of miles and miles of lobarian wilderness. A small copse of bare, weathered trees stands in the shelter of the rock wall, their knotted roots clinging desperately to the cold, hard stone. Dozens of bones litter the ground before the grove, some so ancient that the trees' roots appear to grow right through them. Behind the trees, a shadowy arched opening in the wall leads deep inside the rock.

The arch in the rock wall is the physical manifestation of Artrosa's only door. During the moon's waxing phase, the door leads to area **C1** in the Maiden dungeon. During the full moon, the door leads to area **D1** in the Mother dungeon. If the moon is waning, the door leads to area **E1** in the Crone dungeon.

If this is the first time the PCs have arrived at a manifested entrance, they also see the gutted carcass of a centaur hanging from one of the trees. This was Vsevolod's sacrificial offering to the door's guardian in order to gain passage into the dungeon.

Creature: A wicked plant creature known as a witch tree stands in the middle of the copse of trees atop the mesa, serving as the guardian of Artrosa's door. Nearly 18 feet tall, the witch tree appears similar to a willow tree with a trunk in the shape of a woman. This encounter is almost identical for all three of the entrance sites to the dungeons, though the witch tree's appearance varies by site, seemingly grown to resemble the maiden, the mother, or the crone, in accordance with the figure carved on the mesa.

Bound by ancient pacts to protect Artrosa, the witch tree's primary purpose is to slay trespassers, but Baba Yaga made sure to leave a way for those who serve her to safely gain entry past the guardian. Still, after centuries of guard duty, the witch tree takes great pleasure in twisting her obligations as much as she can, offering entry into Artrosa in exchange for blood sacrifices. The witch tree is an epic encounter for a party of 7th-level PCs, but there are ways to get past the creature without fighting it.

As soon as the PCs enter the grove, the witch tree addresses them:

"All who seek to enter Artrosa must first present me with a sacrifice."

The witch tree points to the gutted centaur in the tree as an example of the type of sacrifice she desires, but explains that the PCs' sacrifice needn't be as extravagant as such a gift of one of their own kind, though she adds that she very much appreciated the sentiment. If asked about who sacrificed the centaur to gain entry, the witch tree readily describes Vsevolod and his entourage of half a dozen frost giants, but she quickly returns to the subject of her sacrifice.

"You must prove your worth to pass inside. Offer me something warm, living, and bloody, or I will take a sacrifice myself—one of my choosing. I have stood here for centuries and claimed many sacrifices. Their bones are a testament to their foolishness in thinking they could win their way past me."

At this time, the PCs may attempt to offer valuable objects as a sacrifice to the witch tree, but she is only interested in blood or flesh—not wealth, nor magic items, both of which she considers meaningless. She requires the sacrifice of a living, warm-blooded creature of at least Medium size with greater than animal intelligence (Intelligence of 3 or higher) to allow the PCs to pass. Anything less, and she demands more before she'll allow them to pass. A summoned creature could fulfill the requirements, but the PCs must get past the witch tree before the creature dies and disappears.

Alternatively, the PCs can attempt to bargain with the creature. A successful DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that the witch tree is hiding something, that perhaps a sacrifice is not the only way to get past the guardian. If the PCs succeed at a DC 24 Diplomacy check, the witch tree reluctantly reveals that they can also prove their worth by answering a riddle. If the PCs claim to be servants of Baba Yaga, or mention the mantle of the Black Rider, they gain a +4 circumstance bonus on this check. If the PCs accept the challenge, the witch tree grins wickedly. She explains that if they answer her riddle correctly, she will allow them to pass. If they fail, however, she will take her sacrifice.

Once the PCs accept her terms, the witch tree recites the following riddle:

*Midnight, Morning, Bright Sun—
Spoke thee with but one.
Accursed now you be,
For he befell the wrath
Of two times seven.
Oh tell me, who is he?*

The answer to the riddle is "Illarion Matveius," the true name of Baba Yaga's Black Rider, whom the PCs met in "The Snows of Summer." If the PCs answer "the Black Rider" or something similar, the witch tree says, "Tell me his name!" Baba Yaga gave the riddle to the witch tree

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to use in the event her suspicions were correct, for only one who had spoken to the rider would understand the seriousness of her plight.

The witch tree allows no one to pass without a sacrifice or the correct answer to her riddle. If the PCs fail to offer her an appropriate sacrifice or give an incorrect answer to the riddle, the witch tree attacks to gain her chosen sacrifice. She casts *dominate person* on one character (she prefers gnome or orc flesh above all others), grabs the victim in her iron branches, and constricts. If the PCs allow her to claim her sacrifice, the witch tree thanks them and allows them to enter the arch unmolested. More likely, they will try to stop the witch tree, who defends herself while still trying to claim her prize. Bound to guard the entrance, the witch tree fights to the death.

WITCH TREE CR 10

XP 9,600

(*Tome of Horrors Complete* 644)

CE Huge plant

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 7, flat-footed 23 (-1 Dex, +16 natural, -2 size)

hp 127 (15d8+60)

Fort +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9

DR 10/magic; **Immune** plant traits; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 21

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 4 tendrils +18 (1d8+8 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+8)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +19)

5/day—*charm person* (DC 15)

2/day—*dominate person* (DC 19)

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 9, **Con** 19, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +21 (+23 bull rush, +25 grapple); **CMD** 30 (32 vs. bull rush)

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tendrill)

Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Perception +19, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +12

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Giant, Iobarian, Sylvan

Treasure: Scattered among the bones among the roots of the trees is the witch tree's treasure, gleaned from countless sacrifices over the centuries, consisting of a suit of +1 *half-plate*, a +1 *ranseur*, a *potion of levitate*, a *scroll of wall of fire*, two pieces of amber worth 100 gp each, a deep blue spinel worth 150 gp, two jaspers worth 50 gp each, 12 pp, 110 gp, 707 sp, and 830 cp.

Story Award: If the PCs win their way past the witch tree through negotiation or by answering her riddle, award them 9,600 XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

ARTROSA FEATURES

Each of Artrosa's three giant figures contains a dungeon buried deep in the rock behind it, named for the figure carved on the cliff face outside. Although the towering stone carvings stand miles apart, the dungeons behind each figure are connected by magic archways that teleport travelers from one dungeon to the next. These teleportation arches are marked on the maps of Artrosa's dungeons with the letter **T** and a number; arches with the same numbers connect to one another (for example, the **T1** arch in the Maiden dungeon connects to the **T1** arch in the Mother dungeon). Whenever an individual passes through the threshold of one of these arches, he is instantly transported to another passageway several hundred feet away in another dungeon, providing a seamless transition from one dungeon to another. The effect is instantaneous and isn't readily noticeable, so you shouldn't tell the PCs that they've been transported when they pass through one of these archways. Instead, subtle changes in each dungeon's motifs and encounters should gradually suggest to the PCs that they have somehow moved to a different dungeon.

Each of Artrosa's dungeons has a different motif, described in the dungeon's individual description, as well as several features distinctly its own. Whenever the PCs teleport to a new dungeon, describe the changes in the motif of the decor and furnishings in the room and passages, and allow the PCs to follow their natural suspicions and seek answers on their own. PCs who take note of the varying features should eventually become familiar enough with the motifs to distinguish the difference between the three dungeons and determine their relative locations. The changing of these motifs should also spur them to investigate and uncover some of the teleportation arches.

A teleportation arch can be detected with a successful DC 31 Perception check by a character inspecting one of the archways. Once detected, an arch can be temporarily disabled with a successful DC 31 Disable Device check. If this occurs, the passage transforms into a dead end. Jadrenka, the changeling witch who serves as Artrosa's warden, can sense disabled archways and quickly moves to repair them. It takes Jadrenka 1d6 minutes to reach a disabled arch. Once she arrives, it takes her 10 minutes to reactivate it.

Unless otherwise noted, chambers within Artrosa have ceilings 30 feet high, while the ceiling height in passageways between rooms ranges from 8 to 10 feet. All doors within the complex are stone (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28) unless otherwise noted. Within all three dungeons, a small army of permanent unseen servants cleans and maintains the rooms and passages.

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE



Baba Yaga designed the dungeons of Artrosa to keep her treasures safe and secure; therefore, she populated it with creatures she believed could fulfill the task. When Jadrenka became Artrosa's appointed warden, the changeling added some of her own guardians as well. But not all of Artrosa's previous denizens appreciated her appointment, including a small coven of hags led by Jadrenka's mother, the annis hag Caigreal, who believes that Baba Yaga should have granted her the position. While the coven's enmity toward Artrosa's current warden doesn't prevent the hags from carrying out their task of protecting the dungeons, neither do they come to Jadrenka's aid.

THE WARDEN OF ARTROSA

Since creating Artrosa almost 2,000 years ago, Baba Yaga has left the responsibility for the defense and care of its dungeons in the hands of a chosen warden. The current warden of Artrosa is a changeling witch named Jadrenka, who has loyally served Baba Yaga for more than 200 years. Jadrenka is fully described in the "NPC Gallery" on page 54.

Artrosa's enigmatic and elusive warden plays a distinct and influential role in how the PCs experience the dungeons. The PCs should encounter Jadrenka at least

one time in each of the three dungeons (provided they haven't killed her before visiting all three dungeons). In each dungeon, the artifact she wears—the *Artrosa Ring*—causes her to appear differently, changing her age and visage to match that aspect of womanhood reflected in the dungeon and the carved figure outside. She appears and disappears several times to either aid or thwart the PCs, depending on how they treat her. Although the adventure contains several set encounters with Jadrenka, she can appear anywhere in Artrosa's three dungeons, and you should feel free to have her turn up in various locations at different times during the PCs' exploration of Artrosa.

When Jadrenka first encounters the PCs, she is curious about them and tries to spy on them to learn their motives. If, during her interactions with the PCs, she learns that Baba Yaga needs help, Jadrenka must be convinced that such a thing can even be true (an initially unbelievable concept). If the PCs can convince Jadrenka of their plans and the fact that they intend to aid Baba Yaga, her dealings with the PCs focus on testing their worthiness for the task ahead. Only by helping her defeat the dangers currently facing Artrosa—both Vsevolod and his frost giant invaders, and Caigreal's coven—can the

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JADRENKA'S KEYS

Throughout the adventure, Jadrenka leaves behind keys for the PCs to find. She randomly distributes her keys, however, so they may or may not be useful to the PCs. Whenever Jadrenka decides to gift the PCs with one of her keys, roll 1d8 on the following table to randomly determine which key she leaves; if you roll a number a second time, roll again.

1d8	Key
1	Key to the door in area C2 that leads to area C4
2	Key to the door in area C5 that leads to area C8
3	Key to the door in area C7
4	Key to the trapdoor at area D4a
5	Key to area D6
6	Key to area E7
7–8	Useless key to an unknown lock

PCs truly prove their loyalty to Baba Yaga, and therefore to Jadrenka.

Jadrenka wears a necklace of keys around her neck. Some of the keys open locked chambers in Artrosa's dungeons, while others belong to unknown and unnamed locks. After an encounter with the PCs, Jadrenka may decide to leave one of the keys from her necklace behind, either to see what the PCs might do with a key or as a gift to them (see the sidebar above for details about Jadrenka's keys). Along with her keys, Jadrenka also wears a gold nugget on a chain around her neck. This is one of the two keys needed to take the *Dancing Hut* to its next destination, given to Jadrenka by Baba Yaga herself. Jadrenka surrenders the nugget to the PCs only if they first defeat the centaur priest Vsevolod and recover the second key, a dragon scale, from the Eon Pit (see area **E9**). Alternatively, of course, if the PCs kill Jadrenka, they can simply take the gold nugget from her.

THE INVADERS

In addition to Artrosa's normal guardians, a second group of creatures is currently present in the complex: demon-worshipping centaurs led by the centaur Vsevolod, priest of the demon lord Kostchtchie. Vsevolod has come to Artrosa to claim Baba Yaga's fortress and the secrets hidden within in the name of his demonic patron. Besides his devout frost giant followers, Vsevolod has summoned a number of andrazku demons over a period of several weeks to bolster his forces, and the giants and demons now rampage through all three dungeons.

Upon arriving at Artrosa, Vsevolod encountered the annis hag Caigreal, who immediately recognized the invaders as potential allies in her quest to overthrow her daughter. She formed a pact with Vsevolod—in exchange for his help in capturing Jadrenka, she revealed the

location of the two keys to Baba Yaga's *Dancing Hut*, which the Queen of Witches left behind in Artrosa.

Of course, Caigreal and Vsevolod are allies of convenience only. Caigreal is not about to let the *Dancing Hut* fall into the hands of followers of one of Baba Yaga's most hated enemies. She is only using Vsevolod to get to Jadrenka. Once the centaur's giants and demons defeat Jadrenka, Caigreal will become Artrosa's warden, and she will deal with the invaders then. On the other hand, Vsevolod is not about to let a "mere woman" dictate his actions. Once he has established a foothold in Artrosa and defeated its other guardians, he will turn his attention to Caigreal. Vsevolod plans to sacrifice the hag and her coven to Kostchtchie, then claim the *Dancing Hut* for himself, using it to help him carve out his own empire in Iobaria.

PART FOUR: THE MAIDEN

The dungeon behind the maiden carving is simply known as "the Maiden." The motif throughout this dungeon reflects the season of spring, with elements of new life, verdant growing things, and blooming flowers. Unless otherwise detailed, all of the doors within the Maiden are carved with the image of a pretty young woman standing in a tangled field of blossoming wildflowers. Similar motifs adorn the walls of the dungeon's passages. Piles of smooth, pale pebbles that glow with a faint violet light lie scattered along the walls of the passages. The pebbles emanate a warm violet glow, reminiscent of the light at dawn, and illuminate the corridors with dim light. The pebbles glow continuously and can be freely moved throughout the Maiden, but their light immediately winks out if they are removed from the dungeon.

C1. THE UNLIKELY WITCH (CR 8)

If the PCs enter the Maiden from the archway atop the mesa, the door they find leads to a long and twisting flight of stone stairs carved into a cramped passage of cold black basalt. Ancient wall carvings on both sides of the passage depict wide fields filled with wildflowers and springing deer. After a final turn, the stairs end 500 feet below in a large, rectangular chamber. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter the room.

Hewn from the surrounding basalt, the walls of this large chamber have been chiseled into an incredibly intricate display of thousands of wildflowers. In the middle of each of the carvings, a wreath of pinecones encircles a life-sized carving of a young nude woman. On the north wall, the figure washes her hair. On the east wall, the figure sits staring upward at a crescent moon. On the south wall, the figure picks a bouquet of flowers, while to the west, the figure points to a triangular, knot-shaped symbol. To the north, a curving stone staircase climbs up and disappears into the western wall, while an open archway beckons in the southwest corner.

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If the PCs examine the carvings on the walls, a successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the moon's phase on the east wall as the waxing crescent. With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check, a PC identifies the triangular knot on the west wall as a triquetra, a symbol used by Iobarian witches to represent the journey through the three stages of a woman's life—mother, maiden, and crone. A character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check. These carvings are a clue to bypassing the trap in area C9.

The stone staircase leads to Artrosa's door atop the maiden carving (area B), though the door exists only during the moon's waxing phase. During any other lunar phases (when the door manifests at one of Artrosa's other dungeons), the stairs end in a blank rock wall.

Creature: An ettin witch named Gurrigurra keeps watch over this chamber. Surprisingly intelligent for an ettin and possessing a natural aptitude for magic, Gurrigurra came to Artrosa to learn magic. Even more surprisingly, Jadrenka agreed to take the ettin in. While not a stellar pupil, Gurrigurra has managed to master some witchcraft, though truthfully, she has reached the limits of her power. Although loyal to Jadrenka, Gurrigurra did not have the gall to question Caigreal when the hag showed up to escort a fierce-looking centaur and his cadre of frost giants past the ettin's dutiful watch and into the dungeons. Gurrigurra has started to question her decision to let Caigreal and her "guests" past, and at present is arguing with herself over what should have done (her left head, which goes by Gurra, believes she made a reasonable choice, but her right head, which also goes by Gurra, thinks she should have questioned Caigreal more closely and considered Jadrenka's reactions). The two heads are at a stalemate, and thus far Gurrigurra hasn't told Jadrenka about the incident, fearing the warden's wrath in the event that Gurrigurra has failed in her duties. The PCs' arrival interrupts Gurrigurra's argument with herself, and not willing to make the same mistake twice, she attacks as soon as she spots the PCs.

GURRIGURRA CR 8

XP 4,800

Female ettin witch 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 130, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+2 deflection, +1 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 101 (14 HD; 10d8+4d6+42)

Fort +11, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 2 mwk sickles +14/+9 (1d8+5)

Ranged 2 javelins +9 (1d8+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks double hexes, hexes (cackle, evil eye [-2, 4 rounds], slumber [4 rounds]), superior two-weapon fighting

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +5)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 13), *pox pustules*^{APG} (DC 13)

1st—*ear-piercing scream*^{UM} (DC 12), *fumbletongue*^{UM} (DC 12), *ray of sickening*^{UM} (DC 12), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 11), *dancing lights*, *guidance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 11)

Patron wisdom

TACTICS

Before Combat Gurrigurra casts *shield of faith* when she hears movement from the steps up to area B.

During Combat Gurrigurra initiates combat with both an evil eye hex and a slumber hex using her double hexes ability. The ettin prefers to fight with her magic, but if her opponents seem mostly unaffected by her spells, Gurrigurra reluctantly pulls out her weapons and fights hand to hand.

Morale Gurrigurra has no wish to fail Jadrenka a second time, so if she is reduced to fewer than 20 hit points and it looks like she won't be able to stop intruders, she drinks her *potion of reduce person* and attempts to flee up the stairs and out the entrance with her familiar.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 12, **Con** 17, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 28

Feats Alertness^B, Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +17, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +12, Use Magic Device +12

Languages Iobarian; pidgin of Giant, Goblin, and Orc

SQ witch's familiar (pig named Bekkin)

Combat Gear *potion of reduce person*, *wand of levitate* (19 charges); **Other Gear** javelins (4), mwk sickles (2), spell component pouch, 12 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

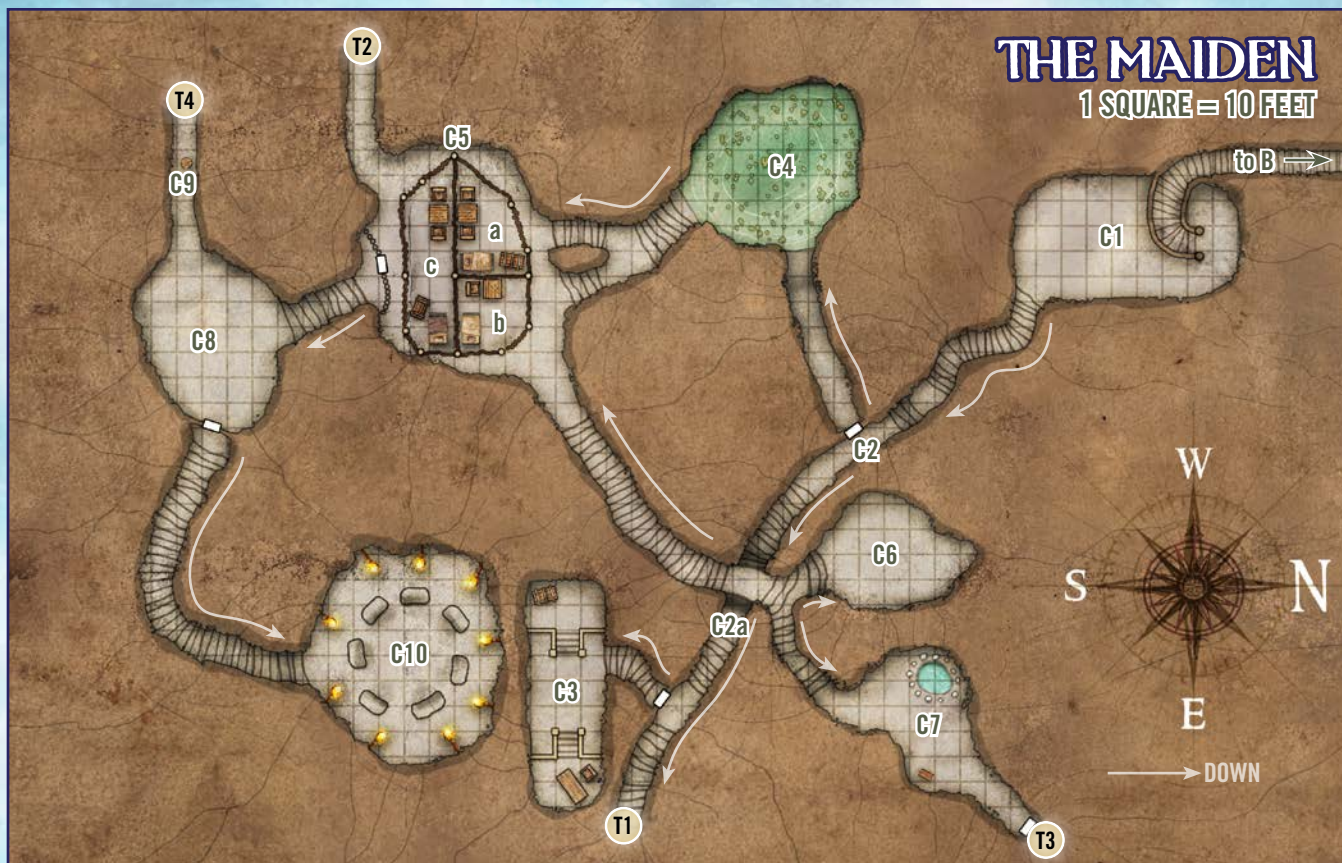
Double Hexes (Ex) Whenever Gurrigurra uses a hex as a standard action, her second head can use an additional hex as a swift action.

C2. FIST OF FROST (CR 9)

Crude stone stairs twist through this winding passage. The temperature drops sharply and a rime of hoarfrost settles upon the walls.

This passage is one of several within Artrosa containing one of the teleportation arches that magically link the sister dungeons together. Anyone passing through the archway at the southeastern end of this

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corridor (marked T1 on the map) is instantly teleported to another passageway inside the Mother dungeon, just outside area D6. Approximately halfway down the corridor in the western wall is a locked stone door (Disable Device DC 30) that leads to area C4.

Creature: When the PCs first enter this corridor, they face one of Artrosa’s invaders, a lone frost giant exploring this tunnel. Unfortunately for the bulky giant, the human-sized passages are too small for him to navigate without crawling on his hands and knees. The giant is at the point marked C2a on the map. Facing northwest toward area C1, he fights hunched over on his knees. As long as the PCs force the giant to fight within this narrow passage, he is considered to be squeezing and takes a –4 penalty to his AC and on attack rolls. As soon as the giant spots intruders, he bellows loudly, trying to alert his demon allies in area C3 just down the hallway (see Development, below).

FROST GIANT **CR 9**
XP 6,400

hp 133 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

TACTICS

During Combat The giant knows that he’s at a disadvantage as long as he remains in the cramped confines this passage, so he does his best to back out of the tunnel,

taking a 5-foot step each round back toward area C3, as he attacks foes with his axe.

Morale The giant fights to the death.

Treasure: The frost giant is wearing a pair of huge, finely crafted silver and copper wristbands worth 350 gp apiece.

Development: When the giant bellows a warning cry, the andrazkus in area C3 can attempt DC 20 Perception checks to determine whether or not they hear him. Presently, the demons are loudly whooping it up and not paying much attention to anything outside their room. If the andrazkus haven’t arrived in 2 rounds, the giant bellows again, repeating his cries every 2 rounds until the demons come to his aid. If the andrazkus hear the giant, they come out into the corridor, but they cannot move past the giant in the cramped passage. When they discover this, they race back into area C3 and wait for the giant to pass the doorway. Once he is beyond the doorway, the demons rush out to attack anyone in the corridor. C3. Invaders’ Base Camp (CR 9 and 7)

Stone stairs lead into a narrow, rectangular chamber filled with the overwhelming stink of urine. The walls and floor are haphazardly covered with countless lines of jagged runes. Two short flights of stairs climb to small platforms at either end of the chamber.

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This room has been taken over by the forces of the centaur priest Vsevolod. When Vsevolod arrived at Artrosa with his small band of frost giant allies, the annis hag Caigreal led him first to this chamber, where he established a defensible base camp from which to launch his explorations of Artrosa. Vsevolod wasted no time in sanctifying it in the name of his patron Kostchtchie, scribing crude demonic symbols upon the walls in blood and other unknown fluids. The runes are in Abyssal and anyone speaking that language can easily read the runes. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check, a creature can identify the writings as prayers to the demon lord Kostchtchie.

A table sits atop the raised platform to the east. Vsevolod scribed a crude map on the wooden tabletop, recording some of the areas he visited with the hags. After showing him some of the locations within the Mother dungeon, Caigreal directed him straight toward the Eon Pit in the Crone dungeon (area E9). At this point, Vsevolod abandoned his map, leaving it incomplete. It only shows areas C1, C2, and C3 in the Maiden, and areas D5 and D6 in the Mother. On Vsevolod's map, area C2 connects directly to area D6—the centaur had no knowledge of the teleportation arches.

Creatures: Vsevolod left four andrazku demons to watch over this room and cover his rear, ordering them to slay any agents Baba Yaga might have set upon his trail. Since then, the thuggish demons have been passing the time by engaging in vicious sparring matches and contests of pain tolerance. Unless successfully alerted by the giant in area C2, the demons are initially unaware of intruders and carry on wildly—whooping, screaming, and making a tremendous amount of noise. Once they become aware of intruders, the demons split up, moving to opposite sides of the room and trying to force intruders to step between them so they can flank them.

ANDRAZKUS (4) CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 57 each (see page 84)

TACTICS

During Combat The andrazkus try to flank opponents from either side. If pressed, the demons move backward up the stairs to get the advantage of higher ground. The demons attempt to summon more andrazkus to replace those fallen in battle.

Morale The andrazkus fight to the death.

Trap: A wooden chest secured with a heavy chain and a good lock (Disable Device DC 30) sits atop the western platform. The chest is trapped, however; its surface is smeared with a contact poison made from terinav root.

POISONED CHEST CR 7

XP 3,200

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect poison (terinav root)

Treasure: The chest contains several pieces of equipment Vsevolod used to enter Artrosa, including a *potion of nondetection*, a *potion of gaseous form*, a *rope of climbing*, a *wand of air walk* (7 charges), a hammer and a score of iron spikes, two blocks and tackle, and four 50-foot ropes. Next to the chest is a giant-sized portable ram.

C4. THE GARDEN FEEDER (CR 8)

Unless the PCs are deliberately attempting to be stealthy as they approach this area, the evil half-fiend satyr inside the chamber (see Creatures below) hears their approach and begins playing his pipes, using *suggestion* to lure them into the room.

This natural cavern is warm and humid, and stinks of stagnant water. Wisps of water vapor hover just above the floor, somewhat concealing a swampy morass of fungus. In some areas of the cave, large lumpy piles of fungus rise from the slop like fetid islands, and long, rubbery fungal strands hang from the ceiling and walls.

A slowly trickling hot spring provides this cavern with a steady source of geothermal heat, accounting for the increased temperature in the chamber. Anyone who examines the lumpy piles of fungus discovers that they are the decomposing corpses of large herd animals. The fungus is harmless. A freshly killed bull carcass lies in the passage to the south between areas C4 and C5.

Creatures: This chamber serves as the lair for a tendriculos, which the forlarren alchemists in area E4 bred for its spores. The tendriculos understands some words in Sylvan, allowing the forlarrens (and their servant, Poryphanes) to communicate with it, after a fashion. As long as they regularly feed the strange plant creature, the tendriculos is content to stay in this cavern and even refrains from attacking them.

A half-fiend satyr named Poryphanes is currently working within this room as well. A debauched and incorrigible seducer of maidens, Poryphanes seduced and impregnated the debased nymph Kyrisjana (see area C10) against Baba Yaga's wishes. As punishment, Baba Yaga sentenced him to serve his bastard forlarren sons as little more than a slave, until he can purchase his freedom with the blood of 100 sacrifices. The forlarrens have sent Poryphanes here to feed the tendriculos the bull carcass now lying in the corridor to area C5. Upon hearing the PCs' approach, Poryphanes left the carcass in the hall and crept forward to investigate and play his pipes. Poryphanes has nothing but disdain for Baba Yaga, but he is bound to serve here until he has sacrificed enough creatures to pay his debt (he has killed 81 creatures so

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far), and so he does his best to kill the PCs with the help of the tendriculos.

PORYPHANES CR 6**XP 2,400**

Male half-fiend satyr (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 171, 241)

CE Medium outsider (native)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 68 (8d6+40)

Fort +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

DR 5/cold iron and magic; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (good)

Melee bite +9 (1d6+5), 2 claws +9 (1d4+5), gore +9 (1d6+5)

Ranged shortbow +8 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks pipes (DC 19), smite good 1/day (+5 attack and AC, +8 damage)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +13)

At will—*charm person* (DC 16), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *sleep* (DC 16), *suggestion* (DC 18)

3/day—*darkness*, *poison* (DC 19)

1/day—*deseccate*, *fear* (DC 19), *summon nature's ally III*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

TACTICS

During Combat As soon as opponents enter the room, Poryphanes takes to the air, using *suggestion* to lure trespassers closer to the tendriculos. If any of his foes are female, the satyr casts *charm person* or *suggestion* on them to take them out of the fight in hopes of seducing (and then sacrificing) them after the battle. If threatened, Poryphanes casts *unholy blight* and *fear*, then fights with his natural weapons and castings of *poison*. If necessary, he casts *summon monster III* to summon a wolverine as another ally.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, Poryphanes attempts to flee and rejoin his bastard sons in area E4.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 19, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Toughness

Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Fly +15, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (nature) +9, Perception +18, Perform (wind) +22, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +19

Languages Iobarian, Sylvan

Gear shortbow with 20 arrows, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, mwk panpipes

TENDRICULOS CR 6**XP 2,400**

hp 76 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 259)

TACTICS

During Combat The tendriculos attempts to grapple and swallow any creature within reach, other than Poryphanes, specifically targeting those opponents who appear most affected by the satyr's pipes.

Morale The tendriculos fights to the death.

C5. THE COVEN QUEEN (CR 9)

A series of head-high partitions fashioned from intricately brocaded cloth panels stretched over wooden frames take up the center of this cavern, forming a large enclosed area in the center of the chamber.

The partitions divide the cavern into three separate compartments that function as living quarters for a coven of hags who serve Baba Yaga. Each compartment contains a sleeping pallet, a large clay vase filled with water, and a table set



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with various items such as small stones, clay plates, bones, knives, and wooden drinking cups, as well as hooks upon which hang cloaks, blankets, and other sundries. The northwest compartment (area **C5a**) belongs to the green hag Grishelmuk (see area **D7**), the northeast compartment (area **C5b**) formerly belonged to the witchfire Silyzil (see area **D5**), while the largest compartment, to the south (area **C5c**), belongs to the annis hag Caigreal (see Creature, below). The northwest and south compartments each also hold a trunk fashioned from hardened leather. With a successful DC 15 Perception check, a creature notices that area **C5b** is dusty and disused; since becoming a witchfire, Silyzil has had little need of a place to sleep.

In the southern portion of the chamber, a wall of unmortared fieldstone covers the natural cavern. A locked stone door (Disable Device DC 30) carved with the image of a young maiden walking with a deer in a wood stands in the center of the wall. Arches in the southwest and northeast corners lead to additional corridors; the southwest passage contains a teleportation arch (marked **T2**) that connects to area **E4** in the Crone dungeon.

Creature: At present, all but one of the coven members lurk elsewhere in Artrosa's winding dungeons. The remaining hag is Caigreal, a wicked annis hag who is not only the coven's leader, but also Jadrenka's mother. A cleric of Mestama, the demon lord of hags, Caigreal has never been especially loyal to Baba Yaga, but she has served the Queen of Witches for centuries, though not always willingly. When Baba Yaga appointed Caigreal's daughter Jadrenka warden of Artrosa instead of her, the annis hag felt betrayed—especially since Caigreal had her own plans for her daughter once she fully transformed into a hag. As a result Caigreal's principal concern has been to break her daughter's oath to Baba Yaga, thereby divesting Jadrenka of her title and forcing her final transformation into a hag. To accomplish this task, Caigreal assembled a coven with two of Artrosa's other hags, Grishelmuk and Silyzil, to ensure Jadrenka's failure as warden. Caigreal's scheming led to open warfare between Jadrenka and the hags, culminating in Jadrenka's brutal slaying of Silyzil. Jadrenka drove the rest of the coven, her mother included, back into the shadows. The hags and the changeling avoid each other for now, their violent feud at a standstill, but their rivalry continues. After the coven's divinations revealed that Vsevolod and his frost giant allies wanted to enter Artrosa's dungeons, Caigreal decided to duplicitously help them enter the fortress, in hope that their invasion would result in Jadrenka's failure to defend Artrosa, thus breaking her vow to Baba Yaga.

Within the Maiden, Caigreal uses *alter self* to assume the form of a beautiful, barefoot young human woman with long, dark hair wearing a simple homespun dress, and this is how she appears when the PCs first encounter her. Rather than attacking the PCs, Caigreal greets them

excitedly, hailing them as her saviors. In her guise as a maiden, Caigreal appeals to the PCs for help against Artrosa's warden, whom she describes as a malicious monster who wears a false human guise. Caigreal claims this creature imprisoned her and performs all manner of atrocities upon those who inhabit Artrosa. At no time does Caigreal reveal that Jadrenka is her daughter.

Caigreal focuses on one PC, preferably a man, and begs him to protect her and kill the wicked warden, for only then can she escape. If possible, she secretly uses *charm person* or *suggestion* to gain an ally on the party. Caigreal will accompany the PCs throughout the dungeons, but will not join in any combats, claiming to be unskilled in the ways of war. Her primary motive is to feel out the PCs' strengths and weaknesses, then slip away at a convenient moment to bring her findings to her coven to discuss how they can best manipulate these heroic intruders against Jadrenka, or failing that, how to destroy them. If Caigreal fails to convince the PCs to help her or her true identity is somehow revealed, Caigreal doesn't hesitate to attack, assuming her true form—that of a horrific, 8-foot-tall, hunchbacked annis hag with a horribly scarred abdomen, wearing a dress made of human skin.

CAIGREAL (MAIDEN FORM)

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female annis hag cleric of Mestama 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 16)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +2 Dex)

hp 117 (13 HD; 7d10+6d8+52)

Fort +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14

SR 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee quarterstaff +18/+13/+8 (1d6+10)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 15, 5d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +9)

3/day—*alter self*, *fog cloud*

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +10)

7/day—*copycat* (6 rounds), *dazing touch*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +10)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *suggestion*⁰ (DC 17)

2nd—*disfiguring touch*^{UM} (DC 16), *death knell* (DC 16), *dread bolt*^{UM} (DC 16), *invisibility*⁰, *undetected alignment*

1st—*charm person*⁰ (DC 15), *divine favor*, *murderous command*^{UM} (DC 15), *ray of sickening*^{UM} (DC 15), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *guidance*, *mending*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Charm, Trickery

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TACTICS

Before Combat Caigreal casts *undetected alignment* every day. Before meeting the PCs or before any combat, she also casts *shield of faith*.

During Combat Once her true form is revealed, Caigreal begins combat by casting *fog cloud* to buy herself enough time to bolster herself with spells like *divine favor* and her copycat ability. Next, she channels negative energy and targets opponents with her offensive spells. She has no qualms about engaging foes in melee combat, combining *disfiguring touch* or spontaneous inflict spells with her natural attacks.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, Caigreal casts *invisibility* and flees from the combat. She heads straight

for her coven sisters, first racing to the green hag Grishelmuk in area **D7**, then to the witchfire Silyzil in area **D5**, where the coven makes its final stand.

Base Statistics In her normal form, Caigreal is Large, and her statistics are **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **AC** 24, touch 14, flat-footed 22 (+3 deflection, +2 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size); **DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Speed** 40 ft.; **Melee** bite +16 (1d6+6), 2 claws +17 (1d8+6 plus grab); **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.; **Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 2d8+9); **Str** 22; **CMB** +18 (+22 grapple); **Skills** Intimidate +24, Stealth +8.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 14, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 33

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Intimidating Prowess, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Bluff +14, Craft (alchemy) +12, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +14 (+24 with alter self), Intimidate +21, Knowledge (religion) +12, Perception +16, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +12

Languages Abyssal, Common, Giant, Iobarian

Gear quarterstaff, *phylactery of negative channeling*, iron key to area **D5**, spell component pouch, wooden unholy symbol of Mestama

Treasure: The leather trunks in the partitioned compartments are unlocked and hold ragged feminine clothing (those in **C5c** are sized for a Large creature). In addition, the trunk in area **C5a** contains a *potion of protection from arrows*, a black star sapphire worth 3,000 gp, and a jar of earwigs, while the trunk in area **C5c** holds a *scroll of flame strike*, a bejeweled skull worth 1,200 gp, a leather sack containing 800 gp in assorted coins and small gems, and a wooden case containing what appears to be a collection of children's scalps.

C6. THE MAIDEN IN THE FIELD (CR 8)

Beyond a stone arch lies an impossible expanse of broad meadow in bright daylight filled with swaying wildflowers.

The field is a cleverly crafted illusion, a *mirage arcana* created by the *Artrosa Ring* (see page 60).

Creature: A young farm maiden stands in the center of the field, her right arm draped over the muscular neck of a great ox. She is no more a farm maiden than the creature beside her is an ox, however. This is the changeling Jadrenka, Artrosa's elusive warden, here to observe the PCs and learn their intentions. In the Maiden dungeon, Jadrenka takes the idealized form of a maiden—in truth, not too different from her normal appearance. If the PCs have already encountered her in her mother or crone forms elsewhere in Artrosa, a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a familial



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resemblance, as if she were the daughter or granddaughter of the person they previously met. The ox is actually a trained gorgon under the effects of *veil* from the *Artrosa Ring*.

Jadrenka's behavior toward the PCs varies depending upon any previous encounters with them. If this is the first time she has met them, Jadrenka's initial attitude is friendly. She is curious, questioning the PCs about their motives for being in Artrosa, and whether they have news of Baba Yaga or know anything about the frost giants now invading the dungeons. In her maiden form, Jadrenka is playful and flirtatious, and the conversation may wander a bit, but under no circumstances does she reveal who she is, or any of Artrosa's secrets. If the PCs make her helpful with a successful Diplomacy check, Jadrenka gives them a random key (see the sidebar on page 24) before departing. If the PCs are hostile toward Jadrenka or attack her, she immediately teleports away. In either case, once Jadrenka leaves the room, the illusion fades. The field becomes a bare cavern, and the ox is revealed to be a gorgon. Once Jadrenka is gone, the gorgon attacks with its breath weapon, then charges any living creature in the room. It fights to the death.



JADRENKA THE MAIDEN

JADRENKA (MAIDEN FORM) CR 11

XP 12,800

Female advanced changeling witch 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 184, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

LE Medium humanoid (changeling)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 18, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 111 (11d6+70); regeneration 1

Fort +11, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Immune bleed; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +7 (1d4+2) or
mwk dagger +8 (1d4+2/19-20) or
mwk quarterstaff +8 (1d6+3)

Ranged mwk dagger +11 (1d4+2/19-20)

Special Attacks hexes (agony [11 rounds], cackle, charm [2 steps, 5 rounds], evil eye [-4, 8 rounds], flight [*feather fall* at will, *levitate* 1/day, *fly* 11 minutes/day], tongues [11 minutes], vision)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +16)

6th—*unwilling shield*^{APG} (DC 22)

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20), *major curse*^{UM} (DC 21)

4th—*confusion* (DC 19), *ice storm*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 19), *wandering star motes*^{APG} (DC 19)

3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *howling agony*^{UM} (DC 19), *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *sands of time*^{UM}

2nd—*false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 17),

haunting mists^{UM} (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *invisibility*

1st—*bungle*^{UM} (DC 16), *mage armor*, *peacebond*^{UC}, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17), *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism* (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 16)

Patron deception

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 21, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 25

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting,

Dodge, Iron Will, Spell Focus

(necromancy), Toughness, Mother's Gift^{ARG} (uncanny resistance)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +18, Fly +16, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +12, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +16, Swim +6, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Russian; *tongues*
SQ hag trait (mist child^{ARG}), Warden of Artrosa, witch's familiar (rat named Adelia)

Gear see page 54

GORGON CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 100 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 165)

Treasure: Hidden by the *mirage arcana* in the back of the cavern lies the half-eaten corpse of a frost giant, the gorgon's most recent victim. A quick search of the corpse yields a sack made from a goat's stomach containing a climber's kit, 50 feet of giant-sized rope, and rough-cut gemstones worth a total of 2,650 gp.

7. THE MOTHER'S RITE (CR 9)

While the walls of this small cavern are rough and jagged; the stone floor is smooth and has been swept clean. A small pool of water surrounded by pale white stones lies to the west. Along the opposite wall to the east, an oaken table holding a wooden bowl and a silver chalice sits in a small alcove.

REIGN OF WINTER

To the northeast, a short passage leads to a stone door engraved with the image of a naked, pregnant woman sitting in a meditative pose. The woman's hands lie folded in her lap, and a full moon is painted upon her belly. A trio of waist-high pillars of stout gray stone stands in the corridor just before the door.

The shallow pool to the west is filled with a foot of fresh, clean water. Jadrenka replaces the water daily from a nearby mountain spring. The wooden bowl on the table contains corn seed. The silver chalice is empty.

The tops of the three stone pillars in the northeast passage have been hollowed out to create shallow fonts or bowls, each with an engraved symbol chiseled into the bottom of the font. From west to east, the symbols are a stylized ear of corn, a six-spoked wheel, and a downward-pointing triangle inside a circle. In order, these symbols represent corn, the sun, and water. These three elements are part of a crop-planting fertility ritual used by Iobarian witches to celebrate the passage into womanhood. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check or DC 25 Linguistics check successfully deciphers the symbols' meaning. A character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check. The door beyond the pillars is a teleportation arch (marked **T3**) that connects to area **D2** in the Mother dungeon. The carving of the pregnant woman on the door also represents fertility.

Trap: The door is both locked with an *arcane lock* (CL 9th, Disable Device DC 40) and trapped. Jadrenka carries a key to this door on her necklace. Any creature that passes through the door without bypassing the trap is affected by a maximized *wind blades* spell, which hardens the air around a target into jagged, invisible blades that deal damage as the target moves through them. Movement that doesn't pass through air (such as burrowing, swimming, or teleportation) doesn't cause this damage.

To bypass the trap and open the door safely, an individual must perform a fertility ritual using the objects in the room. To successfully perform the ritual, the proper items must be placed into the correct fonts on top of the pillars. Corn seed must be placed in the first font, water must be collected from the pool with the silver chalice and poured into the third font, and light must be placed into the middle font. While the corn seed and water are available in the room, the PCs must provide their own light source for the ritual. Any light source, such as a candle, a torch, a sunrod, a *light* spell, or even dust from the lurkers in light in area **C8**, completes the ritual requirement, so long as it is placed within the font. The items may be placed into the fonts in any order, but the ritual is complete only once all three fonts hold the proper ingredients. Successfully completing the ritual deactivates the trap for 3 minutes, at which point the

items in the fonts disappear, the door relocks, and the trap reactivates.

MOTHER DOOR TRAP

CR 9
XP 6,400
Type magic; **Perception** DC 33; **Disable Device** DC 33

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Duration** 9 rounds; **Reset** automatic (immediately)

Effect spell effect (maximized *wind blades*^{ARG}, 6 points of slashing damage if the target moves at least 5 feet, plus 6 points of slashing damage for each additional 10 feet of movement); Will DC 17 negates)

Treasure: The silver chalice is worth 300 gp.

Story Award: If the PCs use the fertility ritual to bypass the Mother door trap, award them the full 6,400 XP for the trap.

C8. FOUNTAIN OF LIGHT (CR 9)

As the PCs approach this chamber, they see bright light leaking out from the room into the surrounding corridors. Within the room, the light becomes painfully bright, nearly blinding. Upon entering the room, all sight-dependent creatures must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or be dazzled by the light for the next 1d6 rounds. The source of the intensely bright light is a 6-inch-diameter hole in the floor in the center of the cavern from which the energy spews forth like a fountain. Covering or filling the hole with an opaque object blocks the light, and makes the lurkers in light in the room visible (see *Creatures*, below). The door to the southeast is locked (Disable Device DC 30).

Creatures: Four strange and evil fey creatures known as lurkers in light guard this chamber. Effectively invisible in the bright light, the lurkers wait for intruders to enter their demesne, using *ghost sound* to lure trespassers in by creating beckoning whispers, then swoop in to attack.

LURKERS IN LIGHT (4)

CR 5
XP 1,600 each
hp 44 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 180)

TACTICS

During Combat The lurkers in light gang up against foes, flanking them and blinding opponents using *blindness/deafness*. They concentrate on taking opponents down one at a time. If the lurkers successfully kill two opponents, they use their ritual gate ability to summon a Small air elemental.

Morale A lurker in light continues to fight until dropped to fewer than 15 hit points, at which point it uses its daylight door ability to leave the dungeon. If it is currently night, the lurkers in light are unable to leave, and fight to the death.

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Treasure: The fountain of light is the product of a magically enhanced and magnified crystal in the hole in the center of the room. If removed, the crystal becomes a *gem of brightness* with 25 charges.

C9. MAIDENS IN A RING (CR 9)

Tiny pieces of quartz form an inlay of a crescent moon in the floor of this passage, surrounded by a ring of runes. A few yards beyond the inlaid symbol, a small round table stands in the middle of the tunnel. A wooden bowl filled with fresh wildflowers sits in the center of the table.

The runes around the moon inlay are in Iobarian. Anyone who speaks that language or succeeds at a DC 20 Linguistics check can decipher the runes: "From one stage unto the next, let my light always guide your path."

Anyone who investigates the contents of the bowl finds four tiny wooden figurines about 6 inches tall hiding within the flowers. Each figurine depicts a nude maiden performing a different task. One is standing, holding a bouquet of wildflowers. Another is kneeling, and seems to be washing her hair. The third one holds a triangular knot in her hands, and the last figurine is sitting with her head gazing upward.

Trap: Twenty feet west of the table, the passageway continues to a teleportation arch (marked **T4**) which connects to a long corridor in the Crone dungeon leading to area **E7**. Baba Yaga placed a deadly trap in the corridor to keep it safe from interlopers, however. Anyone who moves past the table triggers the trap. The maiden figurines quadruple in size and animate into wood golems that attack anyone in the corridor. The golems fight until destroyed.

Only those who properly arrange the maiden figurines upon the table can bypass the trap safely. The figurines in the bowl are similar to the carvings on the walls of area **C1**. To bypass the trap, one must place the figurines on the table in the proper arrangement, as depicted in the first chamber. The sitting figurine matches the figure staring at the moon in the original carving. This figurine must be placed on the table so that its gaze faces east, toward the moon inlay in the floor. The remaining figurines must then be placed relative to their positions in area **C1**: the figurine with the bouquet of flowers to the south, the figurine with the triquetra knot to the west, and the kneeling figurine washing her hair to the north. Lastly, the wildflowers in the bowl must be scattered across the table, representing the wildflower carvings on all of the walls in area **C1**. Arranging everything correctly disables the trap. If the PCs are having trouble figuring out the puzzle, you can allow them to attempt DC 15 Intelligence checks to remember the carvings in area **C1** as a hint.

WOODEN MAIDENS TRAP

CR 9

XP 6,400

Type magic; Perception DC 33; Disable Device DC 33

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*true seeing*); Reset automatic (1 minute)

Effect spell effect (*polymorph any object*, transforms wooden figurines into wood golems)

WOODEN MAIDENS (4)

CR —

Unique wood golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 164)

N Small construct

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 48 each (7d10+10)

Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +5

DR 5/adamantine; Immune construct traits, magic

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +10 (2d6+2)

Special Attacks splintering (4d6, Reflex DC 13 halves)

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 21, Con —, Int —, Wis 17, Cha 1

Base Atk +7; CMB +8; CMD 23

Treasure: If the golems are destroyed, they return to their figurine state and their original size, displaying no signs of damage. Each of the figurines is carved from rare woods and is worth 300 gp.

Development: If the PCs successfully bypass the trap using the ritual and have not yet encountered Jadrenka, doing so immediately attracts the warden's attention. Jadrenka teleports in front of the teleportation arch, appearing as a young maiden. She acts as described in area **C6**, questioning the PCs about their motives. She does not divulge her identity, nor does she reveal that continuing down the corridor will transport the PCs miles away to another portion of the dungeon. Again, if the PCs make her helpful, she gives them a random key (see the sidebar on page 24). If the PCs have defaced rooms within the dungeon or otherwise behaved badly, however, Jadrenka's starting attitude is unfriendly. She scolds and berates them, demanding they leave Artrosa immediately. If the PCs refuse, she gives them one warning, attempting to demoralize them with her Intimidate skill. If the PCs continue to press her, she attacks.

Story Award: If the PCs properly arrange the figurines to bypass the wooden maiden trap, award them the full 6,400 XP for the trap.

JADRENKA (MAIDEN FORM)

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 111 (see page 54)

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C10. RING OF THE SUN (CR 9)

Flickering light fills this cavern, emanating from the eye sockets of nine skulls hanging from chains staked into the walls with iron spikes. Huge stone menhirs form a ring about the perimeter of the chamber, catching the candlelight and tearing it into swaths of wavering shadow. The gutted corpses of two frost giants hang from two of the menhirs, facing each other from the east and west. Bound to the massive stones with rusted chains, the giants are soaked in their own blood, which flows into the center of the room to disappear into a huge pile of wilted wildflower blossoms.

In the core of the Maiden, Baba Yaga erected a ring of sacred stones dedicated to the worship of the sun and the sacred passage from maidenhood into motherhood. These stones have a strong transmutation aura, and allow a creature standing in the center of the stone circle to transfer her consciousness into the giant image of the maiden outside, seeing through its eyes and even animating the carving to a limited degree, as the *enter image*^{APG} spell (CL 20th).

A character wearing the *Artrosa Ring* (see page 60) can activate this power of the stones with ease.



KYRISJANA

Otherwise, a character must succeed at a DC 35 Spellcraft check to identify this ability, or a DC 25 Use Magic Device check to blindly activate the stones' power. The skulls along the walls contain *continual flames*.

Creature: The pile of flowers in the center of the ring hides the room's guardian, Kyrisjana, who languishes in a shallow pool of the giants' blood (Perception DC 30 to detect). Once a glorious nymph, Kyrisjana foolishly bargained with Baba Yaga for greater power. Baba Yaga granted Kyrisjana the power she craved, but it set the nymph on the path to evil and corruption. Seduced by the half-fiend satyr Poryphanes (see area C4), Kyrisjana is the mother of the deformed forlarren triplets in area E4. Now a cruel and malicious creature, Kyrisjana enjoys teasing and tempting both Poryphanes and her bastard sons while turning down all of their advances. She also tried (unsuccessfully) to seduce Marislova (see area D2), but she did give the half-elf a lock of her hair as a token of her affection, thus sowing a seed of jealousy in Jadrenka's mind and driving a wedge between the two lovers.

Kyrisjana's skin has darkened to reflect the wickedness in her soul, and her nails have become grasping talons, but the debased nymph still possesses a terrible beauty, capable of blinding or stunning those who look upon her, and she revels in destroying the beauty of others with her defiling touch. Kyrisjana is the guardian of these sacred stones, and she defends them from any trespassers. When two of Vsevolod's frost giants entered this chamber during their explorations, Kyrisjana killed them and sacrificed them upon the menhirs—her arms are still drenched with their blood up to her elbows. Utterly mad and brutally savage, Kyrisjana attacks any living thing that enters the room.

KYRISJANA **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Female advanced debased fey nymph (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 217, *Tome of Horrors Complete* 716)

CE Medium fey

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +18

Aura blinding beauty (30 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 23, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +7 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 102 (12d6+60)

Fort +13, **Ref** +20, **Will** +16; +4 vs. spells or spell-like abilities of good-aligned fey

DR 15/cold iron

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d8+2 plus defiling touch)

Special Attacks stunning glance (DC 21)

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11)

1/day—*dimension door*

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +12)

5th—*summon nature's ally V*

4th—*bloody claws*^{APG}, *flame strike* (DC 17)

3rd—*burst of nettles*^{UM} (DC 16), *call lightning* (DC 16),
contagion (DC 16), *fungus infestation*^{UM} (DC 16)

2nd—*frigid touch*^{UM}, *resist energy*, *spider climb*, *stone call*^{APG},
tar ball^{UM}

1st—*endure elements*, *entangle*, *feather step*, *longstrider*,
produce flame

0—*create water*, *guidance*, *light*, *spark*^{APG}

TACTICS

Before Combat Kyrisjana casts *endure elements* and *longstrider* every day. Before combat, she casts *feather step* and *bloody claws*.

During Combat Kyrisjana emerges from the pile of wildflowers and casts *stone call* while her blinding beauty affects all who look at her. She casts *summon nature's ally V* to summon a large air elemental, taking advantage of its whirlwind ability to increase the damage of her *call lightning* spell. Kyrisjana uses her stunning glance to throw her opponents off guard before attacking with her claws and defiling touch, reveling in the sensation of her enemies' blood on her bare skin.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, Kyrisjana offers to surrender, promising a variety of depraved pleasures to her captors if they let her live, though she turns on those who show her mercy at the first opportunity. If her offer is rebuffed, Kyrisjana fights to the death, hurling curses at her foes.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 25, **Con** 18, **Int** 16, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 31

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved

Natural Attack (claw), Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +20 (+24 when jumping), Bluff +18,

Diplomacy +18, Escape Artist +20, Intimidate +15,

Knowledge (nature) +15, Perception +18, Sense Motive +16,

Spellcraft +15, Stealth +20, Swim +18

Languages Aklo, Auran, Common, Iobarian, Sylvan

SQ anathema, inspiration, unearthly grace, wild empathy +23

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Anathema (Su) Kyrisjana has been rejected by the purity of nature. Normal plants within 20 feet wither and die if she remains in proximity for more than 5 minutes. Pure environments such as untouched forests and clear streams and ponds may become spoiled and polluted if she remains in that environment for more than 1 day. Each round that a plant creature remains within 20 feet of Kyrisjana, it must succeed at a DC 21 Fortitude save or take 1d2 points of damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Defiling Touch (Su) A creature struck by Kyrisjana's claws takes 1d6 points of Charisma damage (Fortitude DC 22 negates), in addition to the attack's normal damage. The damage dealt by

Kyrisjana's natural attacks resists all magical healing (though it can be healed normally through rest). A creature attempting to cast a cure spell or *heal* spell on a creature damaged by Kyrisjana's claws must succeed at a DC 22 caster level check, or the spell has no effect on the injured creature. The DC is Constitution-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Spells Kyrisjana casts spells as a 9th-level druid.

Treasure: One of the glowing skulls is a *grim lantern* (*Ultimate Equipment* 301).

PART FIVE: THE MOTHER

The dungeon behind Artrosa's mother carving is simply known as "the Mother," and is decorated with a summer motif that incorporates elements of abundance, fertility, and motherhood. All passages within the Mother are unlit unless otherwise noted, and the doors are carved with a symmetrical maze-like pattern surrounding an inlaid iron wheel. With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check, a creature identifies the wheel as an Iobarian witch symbol that represent motherhood. A character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check.

D1. THE MAD NURSERY (CR 9)

This chamber is formed from an impossibly huge natural chimney. A single staircase cut into the side of the chimney spirals upward along the walls, disappearing into the darkness overhead. A tremendous stone stage crafted from a single massive stalagmite whose top was sheared off stands in the center of the room's boulder-strewn floor. An elaborate, concentric pattern of runes is carved into the top of the stage.

The ceiling in this cavern is 700 feet high, and the stone staircase climbs the entire height of the chamber, ending at Artrosa's door on the plateau atop the mother carving (area B). This door exists only when the moon is full, however. During any other lunar phases (when the door manifests at one of Artrosa's other dungeons), the stairs end in a blank rock wall. The stalagmite stage is 20 feet tall. No stairs lead to the top of the platform; a successful DC 15 Climb check is required to scale its sides.

Creatures: A tall and handsome woman who is visibly pregnant and nearly naked, wearing only a cloak trimmed with raven feathers, stands in the middle of the platform. Half a dozen small children race about the cavern, howling playfully. The woman laughs back, seemingly enthralled with their behavior.

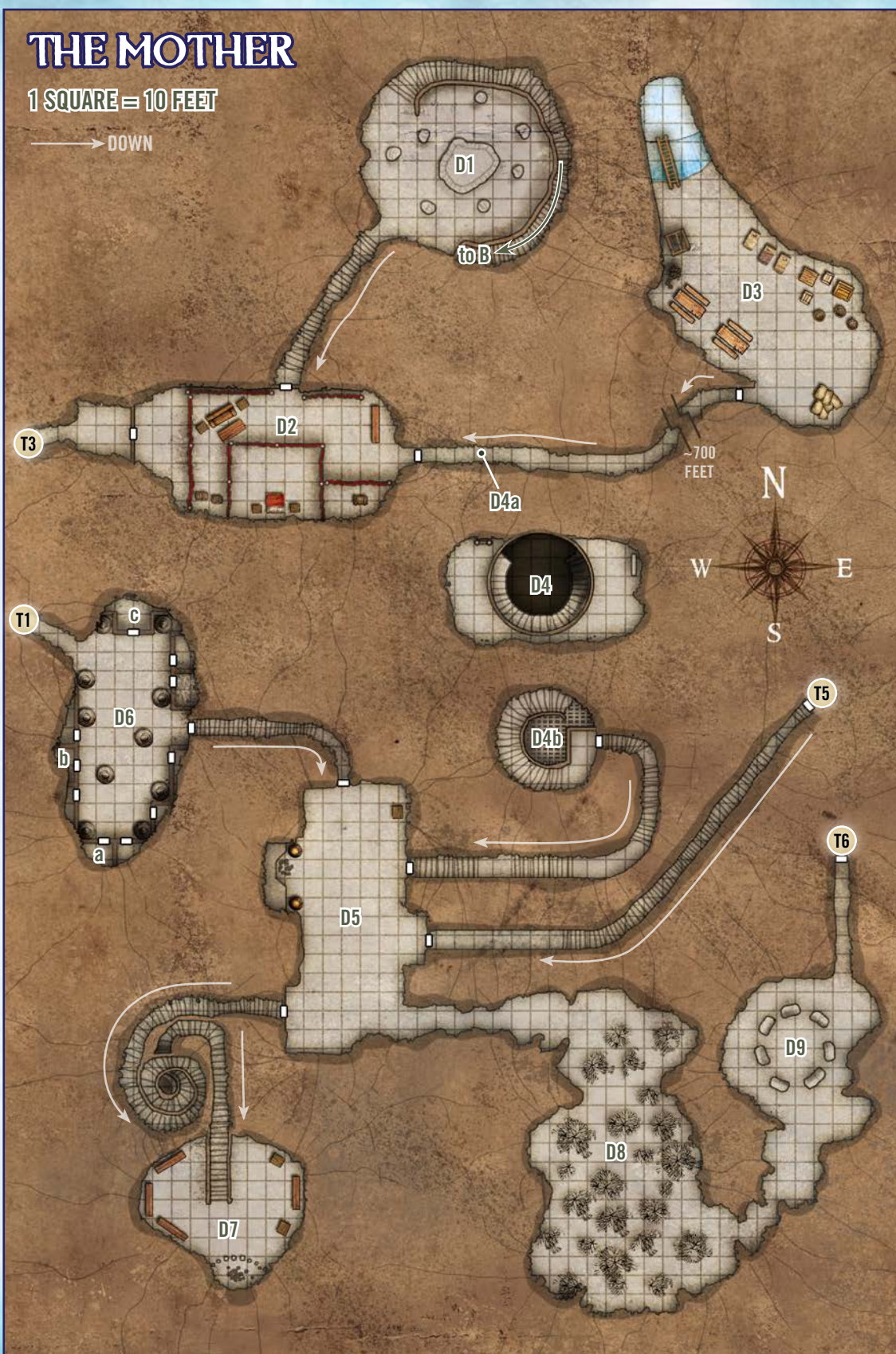
The woman on the platform is Jadrenka—in the Mother dungeon, she always appears as an idealized mother, mature and pregnant. If the PCs have already encountered Jadrenka elsewhere in Artrosa, a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a familial resemblance between

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THE MOTHER

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

→ DOWN



MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE

this person and the one they met previously. The children running around her are a group of korreds, disguised by the *Artrosa Ring's veil* ability.

When Jadrenka spots the PCs she addresses them. The nature and tone of her conversation varies depending upon previous interactions. By this point in the adventure, the PCs have likely had one or two neutral or even positive interactions with Jadrenka. In this case, she remains curious but skeptical about the PCs' intentions and abilities and seeks to question them a little more. In her mother form, Jadrenka is calm, loving, and nurturing, though she can display a stern and condescending demeanor, talking to the PCs as one might scold a child. As long as the PCs' previous interactions with her have not turned hostile, Jadrenka's starting attitude is indifferent. If the PCs have convinced Jadrenka by this point that their sole intention is to undo whatever ill has befallen her patron, or if they make her helpful with a successful Diplomacy check, she warns them to be wary of her "children" and leaves behind a random key (see the sidebar on page 24) before teleporting away. On the other hand, if the PCs previously angered Jadrenka or even attacked her, she becomes enraged and demands they leave her house at once, unleashing a short barrage of offensive spells at them before teleporting away.

Once Jadrenka leaves the room, the *veil* ends, revealing the playful children to be a gang of crazed korreds. Once unsupervised, the korreds hurl insults at the PCs, throwing rocks at them and attempting to drive them out of the room and "out of their mother."



JADRENKA THE MOTHER

JADRENKA (MOTHER FORM) CR 11

XP 12,800

Female advanced changeling witch 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 184, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

LE Medium humanoid (changeling)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 100 (11d6+59); regeneration 1

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +15

Immune bleed; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +7 (1d4+2) or

mwk dagger +8 (1d4+2/19-20) or

mwk quarterstaff +8 (1d6+3)

Ranged mwk dagger +9 (1d4+2/19-20)

Special Attacks hexes (agony [11 rounds], cackle, charm [2 steps, 6 rounds], evil eye [-4, 9 rounds], flight [*feather fall* at will, *levitate* 1/day, *fly* 11 minutes/day], tongues [11 minutes], vision)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +17)

6th—*unwilling shield*^{APG} (DC 23)

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 21), *feeblemind* (DC 21), *major curse*^{UM} (DC 22)

4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *ice storm*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 20), *wandering star motes*^{APG} (DC 20)

3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *howling agony*^{UM} (DC 20), *lightning bolt* (DC 19), *sands of time*^{UM}

2nd—*false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 18), *haunting mists*^{UM} (DC 18), *hold person* (DC 18), *invisibility*

1st—*bungle*^{UM} (DC 17), *mage armor*, *peacebond*^{UC}, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 18), *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism* (DC 17)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 17)

Patron deception

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 23, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 23

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Dodge, Iron Will, Mother's Gift^{ARG} (uncanny resistance), Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +19, Fly +14, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (history) +20, Knowledge (nature) +13, Perception +14, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +17, Swim +6, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Russian; *tongues*

SQ hag trait (mist child^{ARG}), Warden of Artrosa, witch's familiar (rat named Adelia)

Gear see page 54

KORREDS (6) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 33 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 173)

TACTICS

During Combat The korreds use their stone stride ability to meld into the boulders in the room and skip wildly about the chamber, popping out to use their stunning laugh. They further complicate the combat by pulling ropes of knotted hair from their apron pockets and animating them to attack opponents.

Morale The korreds fight to the death.

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D2. THE JILTED LOVER (CR 8)

All of the exterior doors to this room are locked with good locks (Disable Device DC 30). All three doors use the same key, which Jadrenka keeps around her neck.

Warm yellow light fills this huge and lavishly decorated bedroom from three golden chandeliers suspended from the ceiling. The walls are painted white and draped with plush velvet curtains. Finely woven rugs cover the floor, while the furniture is upholstered in fine brocade and chintz. Silk sheets and a delicate lace canopy cover an overstuffed poster bed to the south.

The fine furnishings in this bedchamber are a *permanent image* (CL 11th) that masks their true appearance. Beneath the illusion, the hanging curtains are nothing but moldering sheets, the furniture is of crude wooden construction, and the bed is just a pallet of coarse straw covered with a dirty woolen blanket. Jadrenka used to share this bedroom with the room's current occupant, but has currently taken quarters elsewhere in the complex.

The door to the west leads to a teleportation arch (marked **T3**) that connects to area **C7** in the Maiden dungeon. The teleportation arch deposits individuals who pass through it directly in front of the door in area **C7**; creatures moving in this way from the Mother to the Maiden do not trigger the trap on the door.

Creature: This chamber is currently the prison of Jadrenka's estranged lover, a half-elf huntress named Marislova. Born a man and originally named Maroslan, he fell in love with Jadrenka during one of the warden's rare forays from Artrosa. Maroslan began openly courting Jadrenka, leaving the changeling nonplussed—she had spent her whole life in Artrosa, and raised by her hag mother, knew nothing of love. But Maroslan was persistent, and Jadrenka soon returned his affections, inviting him to stay with her. Maroslan agreed, and became one of Artrosa's residents. Here in this bastion of womanhood and femininity, Maroslan discovered he was more comfortable as a woman, and using the magic of Artrosa, he transformed into the fully female Marislova.

For years, Jadrenka and Marislova were happy, but unfortunately, they are not on the best of terms at present. In malicious response to some imagined slight on the part of Jadrenka, the debased nymph Kyrisjana (area **C10**) gave Marislova a lock of her hair for inspiration, then spread rumors that she and the half-elf were having affair. Jadrenka found the token of the nymph's affection among Marislova's things, and jealously assumed the worst.

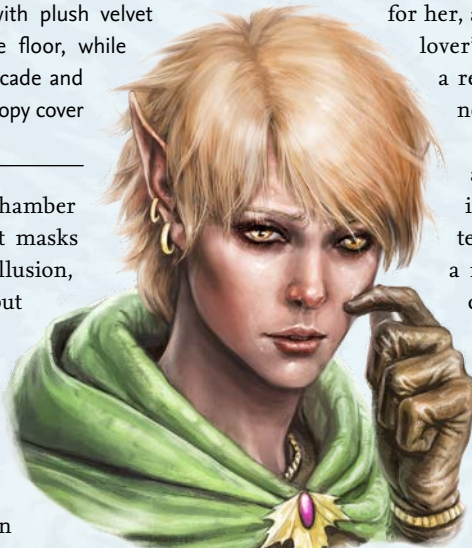
The couple had a terrible fight that ended with Jadrenka locking her lover away in this chamber. Jadrenka currently considers Marislova an "honored guest"; unsurprisingly, Marislova feels that she is her former lover's prisoner.

Marislova desperately wants to recapture Jadrenka's affections, but so far her pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

Jadrenka requires that Marislova prove her love for her, and has devised several "tests" of her lover's fidelity—all of which presuppose a relationship with Kyrisjana that does not exist.

Marislova interprets the PCs' arrival as another of Jadrenka's tricks, imagining it as another challenge or test to win back Jadrenka's favor. As a result, as soon as anyone enters her chambers, Marislova begins yelling at them, focusing on one character (preferably female) who she believes might be Jadrenka in disguise. In tears, Marislova curses her lover for her deception and unfaithfulness, and demands to be released.

Marislova's initial attitude is hostile. If the PCs make her at least indifferent with a successful Diplomacy check and convince her that they are neither one of Jadrenka's tricks nor her agents, she breaks into tears and begs them to help her escape. She only remains in the PCs' company until she can get to one of Artrosa's exits, however. Marislova possesses a rudimentary knowledge of the dungeons' layouts, but instead of using this information to aid the PCs, she deceptively attempts to direct them toward an exit, relying upon them for protection against Jadrenka, who she believes will not allow her to leave Artrosa. If the PCs refuse to release Marislova or are unable to calm her, she becomes increasingly frustrated and quickly turns violent, attacking anyone in sight and cursing Jadrenka all the while.



MARISLOVA

MARISLOVA

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female half-elf magus 6/ranger 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 9)

CN Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +4 shield)

hp 75 (9 HD; 3d10+6d8+27)

Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +11; +2 vs. enchantments

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

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Melee +1 *keen handaxe* +10/+5 (1d6+3/19–20/x3) or
mwk scimitar +8/+3 (1d6+2/18–20), +1 *keen handaxe* +8
(1d6+2/19–20/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (animals +2), spell combat
(–2 attack), spellstrike

Magus Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)

2nd—*blur*, *frigid touch*^{UM}, *scorching ray*, *web* (DC 15)

1st—*corrosive touch*^{UM}, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *vanish*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *daze* (DC 13), *flare* (DC 13), *light*, *ray of frost*

TACTICS

During Combat If Marislova turns violent, she uses her arcane pool to enhance her handaxe to a +1 *keen handaxe* as a swift action, then uses her spell combat ability to cast *shield* (already included in her stat block) and attacks with her axe. She continues using spell combat to cast *scorching ray* and *magic missile*, then uses spellstrike to deliver touch spells with her attacks. After 1d4 rounds, Marislova calms a bit and becomes more rational, casting defensive spells like *blur*, *vanish*, or *web* to open an escape route.

Morale Marislova is interested in her own freedom above all else. If reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, she casts *vanish* and tries to flee. If she's unable to escape the room or is cornered or captured, Marislova begs for execution rather than a return to her imprisonment.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 16, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Mobility, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Acrobatics +10, Craft (alchemy) +12, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (nature) +9, Perception +16, Spellcraft +15, Stealth +14, Use Magic Device +6

Languages Abyssal, Draconic, Elven, Iobarian, Sylvan

SQ arcane pool (6 points, +2), elf blood, favored terrain (cold +2), magus arcane (arcane accuracy, pool strike +3d6), nymph inspired, spell recall, track +1, wild empathy +3

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of spider climb*; **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, dagger, mwk composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, mwk handaxe, mwk scimitar, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +2, spell component pouch, lock of Kyrisjana's hair

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Nymph Inspired (Su) Marislova carries a lock of hair as a token of the debased nymph Kyrisjana's affection. This lock grants Marislova a +4 insight bonus on Will saving throws, Craft checks, and Perform checks. Kyrisjana retains a link to the token and Marislova as if she had cast a *status* spell on her. This effect ends if Kyrisjana is slain.

Treasure: Marislova keeps her personal possessions and valuables in a small trunk in the room, which holds a few changes of clothes, Marislova's spellbook (contains all of her prepared spells, all 0-level magus spells, plus seven random magus spells of 1st and 2nd level), a *potion of bear's endurance*, a *potion of nondetection*, a *scroll of continual flame*, a *scroll of invisibility sphere*, a *scroll of phantom steed*, *bottled yeti fur* (*Ultimate Equipment* 285), a hammered copper bracelet (worth 15 gp), a violet garnet (worth 260 gp), a gold necklace (worth 500 gp), a carved jade ring (worth 225 gp), a masterwork silver dagger engraved with the inscription "To Marislova, my love always and forever. Jadrenka," 15 pp, 248 gp, and 1,060 sp. In addition, a gold water clock worth 1,000 gp stands next to Marislova's bed.

Development: If Jadrenka discovers that the PCs have entered her lover's room or helped Marislova escape, she becomes agitated and angry. Regardless of the PCs' previous interactions with her, Jadrenka's attitude changes to unfriendly. Any suspicions she has about the PCs increase drastically, and she openly accuses Marislova of attempting to manipulate the PCs against her. If the PCs kill Marislova instead, Jadrenka becomes equally angry. Despite the fact that she kept Marislova imprisoned, she didn't want her lover dead, and demands some sort of restitution for Marislova's death, preferably the blood of the person who killed her. Unless the PCs can appease her or somehow make amends, Jadrenka soon becomes hostile toward them.

D3. THE MOTHER'S HAND (CR 10)

The corridor from area D2 traverses almost 700 feet, winding and sloping several times along its length, before ending at the door to this chamber.

Several straw pallets line the east wall of this huge natural cavern, along with stacks of crates, bundles of cloth, and barrels. On the opposite side of the room, a firepit sits in a small alcove carved out of the cavern wall. Next to the firepit, strips of meat hang from a tall wooden rack over a small iron cauldron filled with glowing coals. Two long dining tables stand on the other side of the alcove. A stack of burlap sacks filled with grain lies to the south. At the far northern end of the cavern, a crudely lashed wooden ladder climbs a steep slope to a small ledge buried beneath a sweeping snowdrift. A low, howling wind echoes from somewhere beyond.

The residents of Artrosa use this area as a common room for eating and sleeping, as well as for storage. The crates and barrels hold only blankets, clothing, dry goods, and other mundane items, all of little or no value. The snow-covered ledge to the north is 20 feet above the floor, and a 1-foot-square opening in the north wall that leads outside is the source of the snow and the howling wind. If the PCs are here during the day, sunlight streams through the hole as well. Anyone peering through the opening gets a lovely

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bird's-eye view of the Deeprun Chasm around Artrosa. To the right, Artrosa's giant Maiden carving is visible in the distance, while the Crone stands an equal distance away to the left. From the view, an observer can deduce that this chamber is located in the Mother's outstretched hand.

Creatures: A frost giant scout and two andrazku demons are exploring this section of the dungeon. As soon as any of these creatures spot intruders, they call out an alarm and attack. They all fight to the death.

ANDRAZKUS (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 57 each (see page 84)

FROST GIANT

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 133 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

D4. THE TORTURE PIT (CR 8)

The upper entrance to this chamber lies beneath a locked stone hatch (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30) carved with the face of a one-eyed crone set into the floor of the sloping passage between areas **D2** and area **D3** at the location marked **D4a**. Jadrenka carries the key to this trap door on her necklace. The hatch opens to reveal a narrow, 300-foot-long chimney with iron climbing rungs set in its wall. The chimney leads down to area **D4**.

The trap door is actually a teleportation arch that connects to the Crone dungeon. Although depicted on the map of the Mother on page 36, this chamber and the chimney above it are actually physically located deep inside the Crone. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter the room.

A deep, black pit gapes in the floor of this chamber, hewn by hand from the surrounding stone. Rows of rusted iron manacles hang along the room's walls, their chains hammered deep into the stone. A rack along the east wall holds numerous cruel-looking torture implements. A stone staircase cut into the walls of the pit descends in a curve into the depths.

The stairs descend along the walls of the pit in a counterclockwise spiral. Forty feet down, the stairs end at a narrow landing (area **D4b**). The pit continues downward, but it is covered by a massive, gore-soaked wooden grate at this level. About 10 feet below the grate, a morass of congealed blood conceals the actual pit bottom. Should anyone investigate, the congealed blood is only 2 feet deep, though over the centuries, it has hardened into the consistency of burnt sugar.

On the landing, a locked stone door (Disable Device DC 30) carved with the image of a naked pregnant woman exits to the east. The same key that opens the trap door

above opens this door. The door is another teleportation arch that connects back to the Mother dungeon, opening onto a corridor leading to area **D5**.

Creatures: Baba Yaga placed a pair of female redcaps here to serve as her personal torturers and executioners. Although easily mistaken for males, the murderous fey are twisted little crones, and a successful DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check enables a PC to identify them as female by their slimmer bodies and short, patchy beards. The redcaps are just as bloodthirsty as their male counterparts, however, and it has been some time since they've had living creatures to torture, maim, and otherwise play with.

REDCAPS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 233)

D5. TEMPLE OF MESTAMA (CR 9)

All of the doors to this room are locked (Disable Device DC 30); they can all be opened with the same key, but Jadrenka doesn't have it. Her mother, the annis hag Caigreal (area **C5**), possesses the only key.

This grand chamber has the appearance of a dark temple. Intricately woven tapestries hang from the walls, depicting dark forests beneath crescent moons and filled with beasts and capering hags. Along the west wall stands a large stone hearth containing the charred remains of a balefire. On either side of the hearth hangs a large cauldron; one is iron, the other copper. To the left of the hearth, the wall is painted with the giant image of a fanged crone with raven's wings and a donkey tail. A longspear hangs on the south wall of the room, pointing east, while a curved sword hangs on the north wall, pointing west. In the northeast corner stands a plain oaken table holding wooden panpipes, a polished copper bowl, and a silver punching dagger.

Baba Yaga allowed Caigreal to establish a temple to her patron, Mestama, in this room, and her coven used it to perform their dark rituals. After Jadrenka defeated the coven, they mostly abandoned this room, knowing that the warden frequently monitors the temple with the *Artrosa Ring's* seer ability, well aware of the coven's intents. Caigreal holds the key to the temple, however, and she still visits to pay respects to her demonic patron or to call an occasional secret meeting of the coven.

A creature that succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (planes) or Knowledge (religion) check identifies the painting of the winged, donkey-tailed hag as Mestama, the demon lord of cruelty, deception, and hags.

The middle exit in the east wall leads to a lengthy passage that climbs up a long series of steps to a stone door

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engraved with the image of a hunchbacked crone. This is a teleportation arch (marked **T5**) that leads to area **E5** in the Crone dungeon.

Creature: The second member of Caigreal's coven, Silyzil, inhabits this room. Once a green hag, she was slain by Jadrenka during the coven's fight with the warden, but returned to haunt the temple as a witchfire. The malevolent spirit viciously guards the temple, attacking any and all intruders not associated with the coven.

SILYZIL

CR 9
XP 6,400

 Witchfire (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 284)

hp 115

Treasure: The long spear on the south wall is a *+1 giantbane long spear*, while the curved sword on the north wall is a masterwork cold iron scimitar. The panpipes on the table are *pipes of haunting*, and the punching dagger is masterwork alchemical silver punching dagger. Although these items are sacred to witches and used in their rituals, taking these items doesn't anger Jadrenka, as she believes the hags have already defiled them.

D6. CRYPT OF WARDENS (CR 9)

The doors to this chamber are locked (Disable Device DC 30), but are all keyed to the same key, which Jadrenka wears about her neck.

Ten mausoleum facades protrude from the walls around the perimeter of this cavern. Above each door is a keystone engraved with a name. Throughout the room stand ten life-sized statues of proud, matronly women. The women are all barefoot and similarly dressed, but they each have their own unique appearance. Some are wear feathered cloaks or bone necklaces, others clutch gnarled staves or carry brooms, and a few have a raven or an owl perched upon their shoulders.

This room is a crypt for the former wardens of Artrosa, who were interred here upon their deaths or when their service was ended—in some cases, when Baba Yaga had no more use for a warden's services, this entombment was the cause of death. The base of each statue is engraved with a name that coincides with one of the names engraved on the keystones above each of the mausoleum doors. With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (local) or DC 30 Knowledge (history) check, a creature identifies these names as those of past wardens of Artrosa. The door to the northwest leads to passage containing a teleportation arch (marked **T1**) that connects to area **C2** in the Maiden dungeon.

Traps: The mausoleum doors are unlocked, but each is sealed with wax. Breaking a seal triggers a trap that curses those who would disturb Artrosa's honored dead.

CAIGREAL'S COVEN

If the PCs have already faced Caigreal and driven her off, she likely flees here to assemble her coven, which includes both Silyzil and the green hag Grishelmuk (see area **D7**). Once the coven is convened, the three hags can join together to cast more powerful magic (see page 167 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*). In addition, because the witchfire Silyzil is a member of the coven, they also gain additional coven spell-like abilities (*Bestiary* 2 284).

Together, the three hags likely create a very difficult encounter. To tone down this encounter, you can allow Jadrenka to appear and form a temporary alliance with the PCs. As soon as the hags convene, Jadrenka senses the potential threat and moves quickly to address it. Since the hag coven threatens her position as warden of Artrosa, she will stop at nothing to remove the threat. In this situation, she likely views the PCs as convenient pawns, not allies, and any alliance she makes with them ends the moment they defeat the coven. Still, even with Jadrenka's help, a fight with the coven promises to be lethal.

WARDEN'S CURSE TRAP (10)

CR 4
XP 1,200 each
Type magic; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*bestow curse*, -6 decrease to random ability score [roll 1d6], Will DC 14 negates)

Creatures: Although the souls of Artrosa's former wardens lie at rest, a pair of restless spirits guards these tombs. While they lived, these barbarian warriors proudly served a witch-warden known as the Spirit Mother, whom Baba Yaga executed long ago. For daring to defend the Spirit Mother against her, Baba Yaga buried the Sons of the Spirit Mother alive with their dead mistress and bound their spirits to guard the Crypt of Wardens forever after. Breaking the seals on any of the mausoleums rouses the ire of these horrifically scarred and tattooed warriors, who manifest to defend the crypt from any living intruders.

SONS OF THE SPIRIT MOTHER (2)

CR 7
XP 3,200 each

 Male human ghost barbarian 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144)
 CE Medium undead (human, incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +18

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14 (+6 deflection, +4 Dex, -2 rage)

hp 86 each (6d12+42)

Fort +11, **Ref** +6 (+2 vs. traps), **Will** +7

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Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, improved uncanny dodge, incorporeal, rejuvenation, trap sense +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee +1 *ghost touch longsword* +12/+7 (1d8+1/19-20), slam +12 (1d4+6) or

corrupting touch +10 (7d6, Fort DC 19 half), slam +12 (1d4+6)

Special Attacks corrupting gaze (DC 19), rage (18 rounds/day), rage powers (auspicious mark^{UC}, guarded stance [+2 dodge vs. melee, 6 rounds]), lesser spirit totem^{APG}

TACTICS

During Combat The ghosts initiate combat by raging, attacking with their corrupting gazes, and activating their guarded stance rage power. They then set upon their enemies with melee attacks, alternating

between their *ghost touch longswords* and their corrupting touch attacks, while their lesser spirit totems attack adjacent foes.

Morale The ghosts fight until destroyed, but they rejuvenate 2d4 days later to continue their endless vigil.

Base Statistics When not raging, the Spirit Mother's Sons' statistics are **AC** 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14; **hp** 74; **Fort** +9, **Will** +5; **Special Attacks** corrupting gaze (DC 17), corrupting touch (DC 17); **Cha** 18; **Skills** Intimidate +13.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lunge, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Fly +12, Intimidate +15, Perception +18, Stealth +18, Survival +10

Languages Iobarian

SQ fast movement

Gear +1 *ghost touch longsword*

Treasure: Inside each of the mausoleums lies the skeletal remains of one of Artrosa's previous wardens, wrapped in a fragile cotton shroud. Only two of the wardens were buried with significant valuables. The corpse in crypt **D6a** wears a necklace of feathers that are actually *feather tokens*: a bird, a fan, a swan boat, a tree, and a whip. The corpse in mausoleum **D6b** clasps a bejeweled silver athame worth 2,250 gp. Lastly, the bodies of the two Sons of the Spirit Mother lie in crypt **D6c**, from where their two +1 *ghost touch longswords* can be recovered.

Development: To permanently destroy the Sons of the Spirit Mother, the PCs must bury their remains outside of Artrosa following the customs of their tribe, which can be determined with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) or DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check. Doing so lays the spirits of these warriors to rest for good.

D7. STRANGE ALLIANCES (CR 9)

A long and winding stone staircase finally descends into a cavern whose walls support rough wooden shelves piled high with all manner of weird bric-a-brac: tiny sculptures, fetishes, amulets of metal and clay, locks of hair, pin-riddled cornhusk dolls, and more than a few weathered tomes. Yellowed glass jars hold vile and suspect-looking samples suspended in unknown fluids, and small clay pots overflow with unknown dusts, powders, and sickly colored unguents. Beneath the shelves, a couple of crude worktables, covered in mysterious stains and clumps of aged tallow, hold more items of similar nature. A huge wooden mortar bound with iron bands stands near the tables, its club-sized pestle propped within. In the

SON OF THE SPIRIT MOTHER

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south side of the room, a ring of small stones surrounds a small fire that fills the entire room with the scent of pine.

The door to this chamber is 20 feet above the floor; a rickety wooden staircase leads down to the floor of the room. At one time, Baba Yaga herself used this space as a workroom. Later, various hags and apprentices took it over, and it soon became a cluttered dumping ground for anything remotely related to the practice of witchcraft.

Creatures: The third member of Caigreal's coven, a green hag named Grishelmuk, keeps watch over this room. In the Mother, she uses *alter self* to appear as an alluring young human woman heavy with child. Grishelmuk is currently entertaining one of Vsevolod's frost giant scouts, whom she encountered exploring the dungeon.

When the PCs first enter the room, the frost giant grabs the cauldron and hurls it at them (treat as a thrown rock), then attacks with his greataxe. Grishelmuk stays out of combat at first, preferring to let the giant deal with intruders while she tries to look helpless and harmless. If the giant seems to be having trouble dealing with the PCs alone, she reluctantly enters the fray.

FROST GIANT CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 133 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

GRISHELMUK CR 6

XP 1,600

Green hag (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 167)

hp 58

TACTICS

During Combat Grishelmuk uses *invisibility* to attack opponents with surprise, foregoing her claw attacks to make touch attacks with her weakness ability before turning invisible again. She focuses her attacks on those in combat with the frost giant, but if a female character attacks her, the spiteful hag assumes her true form and attacks that foe with her claws.

Morale If she is reduced to fewer than 30 hit points and her frost giant ally has been slain, Grishelmuk flees to join her coven sister Silyzil in the Temple of Mestama (area D5).

Treasure: While most of the curiosities and components in this room hold little use and even less value, there remain a few items of interest. Baba Yaga once used the oversized pestle as a cudgel and enchanted it so that it functions as a +1 *greatclub*. A dusty stick broom lies forgotten on a shelf behind a row of jars and can be found with a successful DC 15 Perception check. The broom is magical, but though it appears to be a *broom of flying*, it is actually a cursed *broom of animated attack*. The moldering tomes on the shelves deal with a variety of esoteric subjects—most are frightfully out

of date, however. One book is of greater value, however—this *cookbook of arcane augmentation* (see page 60) contains details on the ritual used to bind Ratibor the Bold to the *Dancing Hut*.

D8. PETRIFIED ROOT FOREST (CR 9)

A strange forest of dark and leafless trees fills this expansive natural cavern, twisting upward toward the ceiling high overhead.

Upon closer inspection, the trees seem to be sculpted out of some kind of dark, layered stone rather than formed of wood. In fact, the grove was magically sculpted from the petrified roots of ancient, giant trees that once covered this region. The trees range from 20 to 40 feet tall; the ceiling overhead is 50 feet high.

Creature: An upasunda asura named Ranisukalapadi meditates in the lotus position in the center of the cavern. Appearing as a six-armed woman with three fanged faces, she guards the passage leading to the circle of sacred birthing stones (area D9), though that is not her only purpose. Ranisukalapadi originally came to Artrosa to learn the secrets of creation and destruction from Baba Yaga. She can sense the strong creation magic present in the birthing stones in the womb of the Mother, and knows that creation and destruction are but two sides of the same coin. For now, she meditates in this chamber, hoping to gain insight into how to turn their creative power into wanton destruction. The upasunda is not so engrossed in her contemplations that she ignores the call of battle, however, and eagerly accosts any intruders to test her martial prowess. Ranisukalapadi is enthralled with destruction, even her own, and fights to the death.

RANISUKALAPADI CR 9

XP 6,400

Upasunda (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 27)

hp 114

D9. THE BIRTHING STONES (CR 9)

The ceiling of this broad natural cavern arcs upward, forming a narrow crown high above the cavern floor. In the center of the cave stands a ring of worn, moss-covered menhirs, their inward faces carved with mystic symbols.

Hidden deep within the womb of the carved mother figure, this sacred ring of standing stones is dedicated to the worship of birth, the gifts of new life, and the passage from motherhood into the time when one's children depart from home to make their own way in the world. The stone menhirs stand 10 to 15 feet tall in a wide circle nearly 50 feet in diameter. These menhirs function like

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the standing stones in area C10, transferring a creature's consciousness into the gigantic mother carving outside.

To the north, a passage leads up a gentle slope to a closed door engraved with the image of a hunched and withered crone. This door is a teleportation arch (marked T6) that leads to a passage in the Crone dungeon outside area E7.

Creature: A night hag oracle named Nostafa keeps watch over the sacred circle of standing stones, serving as the guardian between mother and crone. Unlike the other

hags in Artrosa, she has rejected Caigreal's coven and remains devoted to Baba Yaga. In fact, when Baba Yaga last visited Artrosa, the Queen of Witches confided to Nostafa that she had foreseen that she would soon suffer a great betrayal. Baba Yaga then gave Nostafa a *bottle of messages* (*Ultimate Equipment* 284), telling the hag that should she fail to return, Nostafa should give the bottle to her Three Riders, who would come to Artrosa to contact her. Nostafa has heard nothing from Baba Yaga or the Three Riders since, but she dutifully remains guarding the stones until she is contacted.

If she hears the PCs approach, Nostafa casts *invisibility* to observe the intruders. Her first impulse is to attack trespassers, but if she overhears the PCs talking about Baba Yaga or the Black Rider, she holds off on her attacks. In this case, the PCs might be able to reason with her and explain their presence with a successful Diplomacy check (Nostafa's starting attitude is hostile). If the PCs manage to convince her that the Black Rider is dead and that they now possess his mantle of authority, Nostafa gives them Baba Yaga's *bottle of messages*. Otherwise, if the PCs approach the stones, Nostafa reveals herself and attacks.



NOSTAFA

NOSTAFA

CR 9

XP 6,400

Night hag (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 215)

hp 92

TACTICS

During Combat Nostafa casts *deep slumber* on the first round of combat, followed by her ranged offensive spells. Once she enters into melee combat, she ferociously attacks with her claws and diseased bite. If any of her enemies fall in battle, she attempts to use her heartstone to steal their souls with *soul bind*.

Morale Nostafa fights to the death.

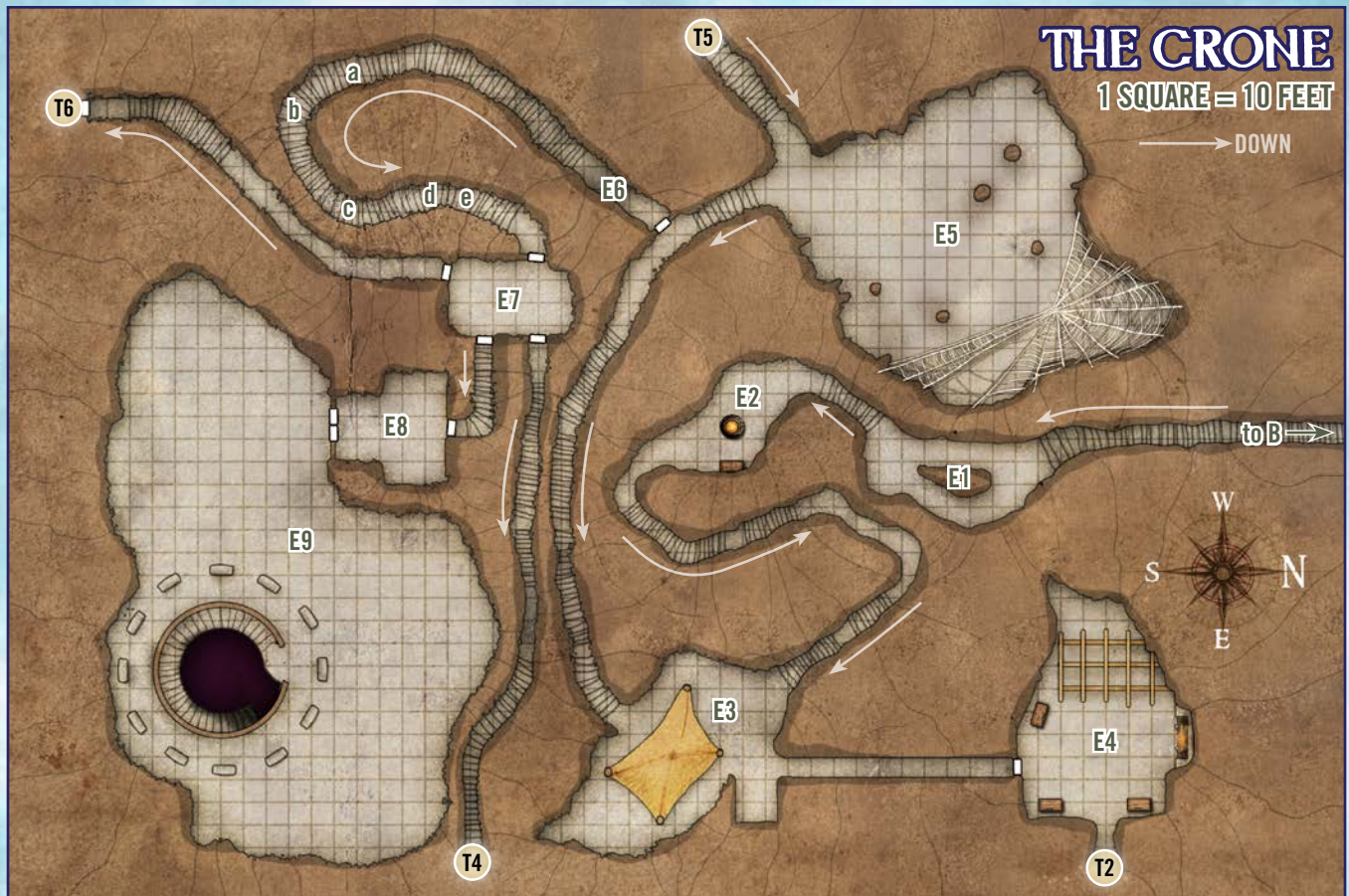
Treasure: Nostafa's heartstone is worth 2,000 gp. In addition, she is wearing a *necklace of fireballs* (type II) and carries Baba Yaga's *bottle of messages*^{UE}. If the bottle is smashed or the cork removed, Baba Yaga's voice issues from the mouth of the bottle: "If you hear these words, my own blood has betrayed me. Jadrenka has one key; the other lies in the Eon Pit. Follow my trail!"

Story Award: If the PCs use Diplomacy to get the *bottle of messages* from Nostafa without fighting her, award them 6,400 XP, as if they had defeated her in combat.

PART SIX: THE CRONE

The dungeon behind the crone carving is simply known as "the Crone." The rooms and passages of this dungeon are dark and cold, with a motif of winter, darkness, and death throughout. Unless otherwise noted, all passages within the Crone are under the effect of a permanent

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darkness spell, and are kept unnaturally cold by permanent *prestidigitation* cantrips that keep the temperature just above freezing. Doors within the Crone are decorated with wreaths of goat skulls woven together with catgut and cornhusks and then hardened and stuck to the doors with lime and shellac.

E1. SCREAMS IN THE DARKNESS (CR 10)

The passage widens here into a natural cavern divided by a thick column of stone. A thick, unnatural darkness swallows everything, and a gnawing cold creeps into the stale air.

To the north, a steep, narrow flight of stairs carved into the very stone twists between rough cavernous walls, ascending almost 800 feet to Artrosa's door atop the crone carving (area B). This door only exists when the moon is waning, however. During any other lunar phases (when the door manifests at one of Artrosa's other dungeons), the stairs end in a blank rock wall.

Creatures: A gang of deadly undead shadows, led by a powerful greater shadow, hides within these dark passages, stealthily awaiting the arrival of any wandering prey. The shadows move slowly, attempting to gang up on stragglers

and circle behind victims to surround them and create more spawn to join the shadows in their eternal vigil. The shadows fight until destroyed.

GREATER SHADOW CR 8
 XP 4,800
 hp 58 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)

SHADOWS (6) CR 3
 XP 800 each
 hp 19 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)

E2. CRONE'S CAULDRON (CR 8)

A large black iron cauldron sits in the middle of a small landing between two flights of curving stone stairs. A ring of runes surrounds the base of the cauldron, which contains a bubbling and steaming multicolored stew. To the east, a small table sits against one wall.

The cauldron has an aura of strong conjuration and transmutation. It has no fire underneath it, but its magic keeps the stew inside it piping hot. With a successful DC 20 Linguistics check, a creature deciphers the runes around

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the cauldron, which read, “Spice is the variety of life.” The table against the east wall holds a stained wooden ladle and six glass jars of spices, labeled “alicorn root,” “delicious,” “devil’s dung,” “dreamspice,” “hag balm,” and “witch’s kiss.”

Each spice can be added to the stew in the cauldron to produce a different magical effect if the stew is consumed. The stew must be consumed using the ladle on the table; if removed from the cauldron in any other way, the stew becomes nonmagical. Inside the cauldron, the stew retains its magical effect for 1 minute or until another spice is added to the stew, changing the effect. The effects of the stew are instantaneous once it is consumed. An individual can only receive the benefits of each of the spices once per day; further doses of the same spiced stew have no effect. The cauldron cannot be removed from the room. If all of the stew is removed from the cauldron, it takes a week for the stew to magically replenish itself.

The magical effects of the stew when a spice has been added are as follows (CL 20th):

- Alicorn root: *cure moderate wounds*
- Delicious: *poison* (Fortitude DC 16 negates)
- Devil’s dung: *remove disease*
- Dreamspice: *deep slumber* (Will DC 14 negates)
- Hag balm: *lesser restoration*
- Witch’s kiss: *remove curse*

Creature: A deadly mihstu from the Plane of Air guards this chamber. Brought here years ago by Baba Yaga, the mihstu dislikes the cold of the Crone’s rooms and passages, and so has taken up residence inside the cauldron here, where it can enjoy the warmth of the magically heated stew. The mihstu appears as smoke or steam rising above the stew in the cauldron, but when intruders enter this room, it rises up out of the cauldron to attack with its barbed tentacles.

MIHSTU

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 92 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 190)

E3. TOTEM ROOM (CR 9)

The air is still and rancid in this cavern, permeated with the scent of rotting flesh. At first glance, the floor and walls appear curiously wrinkled, but closer inspection reveals they have been carpeted with some sort of dried flesh. In the center of the chamber, five wooden totem poles hold aloft a macabre canopy crafted from an untold number of poorly preserved skins crudely stitched together. The poles supporting the canopy are carved with the leering faces of old women. Each of the carved faces is slightly different, though all are hideous and disfigured, with hooked noses, oversized warts, snaggletoothed maws, and other exaggerated features.

This entire chamber is charged with necromantic energy, and has an evil evocation and necromancy aura.

Creatures: An emaciated, hunchbacked, porcupine-quilled creature called a pukwudgie lurks in this chamber. Named Ungrist, this creepy zombie-maker serves as one of Baba Yaga’s favorite prisoner-guards. Ungrist wears a smock made of human skin, and has personally decorated this chamber to suit his tastes. He has slain a number of hoarpanthers with his quills, reanimating them as zombie slaves. The necromantic energies present in this chamber

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enhance the power of Ungrist's quills, and any creature slain by his poisonous quills is animated as a fast zombie. When the PCs first arrive in this area, the gruesome pukwudgie is busy cleaning himself, licking rotted flesh from his quills, but he quickly commands his hoarpanther zombies to attack intruders.

HOARPANTHER ZOMBIES (8) CR 1

XP 400 each

Leopard fast zombie (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 40, 288)

NE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+5 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 22 each (4d8+4)

Fort +1, **Ref** +6, **Will**

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d6+4), 2 claws +7 (1d3+4), slam +7 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks quick strikes

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness^B

Skills Climb +12

UNGRIST CR 7

XP 3,200

Male pukwudgie (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 223)

hp 85

TACTICS

During Combat Ungrist casts *invisibility* as his hoarpanther zombies attack, then seeks out vulnerable opponents engaged with his zombies using his *deathwatch* ability. Sneaking up on opponents, he takes a flanking position with his zombies and sneak attacks foes with his claws. When necessary, Ungrist defends his position by using his quills to make ranged attacks, but concentrates on murdering one victim first on which to cast *death knell* and then *animate dead* to create a new zombie.

Morale If reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, Ungrist attempts to flee, seeking out Jadrenka in area E7 for protection.

Treasure: Ungrist carries a *bone razor* (*Ultimate Equipment* 283) in a pocket of his skin smock.

Development: If the PCs allow Ungrist to flee, the next time they encounter Jadrenka in her crone form, the pukwudgie is accompanying her. Clinging to the safety of Jadrenka's skirts, Ungrist continually interrupts their exchange by howling curses at the PCs. If the PCs have not yet made peace with Jadrenka (or if they anger Jadrenka to the point combat ensues), the pukwudgie fights alongside Jadrenka.

E4. THE NYMPH'S BASTARDS (CR 9)

Like a harrowing cage woven from bone, wood, and sinew, a tangle of massive drying racks exhibit the splayed remains of dozens of woodland creatures, some dead, some still twitching. Narrow wooden planks serve as precarious walkways leading between the racks, with several rope ladders ascending to various levels. Bloodstained leather buckets filled with cruel and filthy vivisection tools hang from the hideous structure in several spots.

The vivisected creatures hanging on the racks consist of everything from rabbits and raccoons to hoarpanthers and stags. Most of the creatures are dead, but several still twitch in agony, barely alive.

A passage exits the room to the east, leading to a teleportation arch (marked T2) that connects to area C5 in the Maiden.

Hazard: As part of an ongoing experiment, ear seekers infest nearly all of the creatures displayed on the racks. Anyone investigating the racks or the creatures runs the risk of becoming infested as well.

EAR SEEKERS CR 5

XP 1,600

Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide 244

Type infestation; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset 4d6 hours; **Frequency** 1/hour

Effect 1d6 Con damage

Creatures: Three forlarren vivisectionists perform the grim work that's on display in this chamber. The bastard sons of the debased nymph Kyrisjana (area C10) and the half-fiend satyr Poryphanes (area C4), the triplets are hunched and deformed, each possessing a third twisted, vestigial arm growing out of its torso. Nevertheless, they are stronger and more powerful than most forlarrens, a product of their debased and fiendish heritage, coupled with the arcane energies of the Birthing Stones, where they were born. The squabbling triplets perform alchemical research for Baba Yaga, and Jadrenka mostly leaves them to their own devices, which more often than not involves tormenting their indentured father and making crude (and unsuccessful) overtures toward their mother. When intruders enter this area, the three brothers clamber up the rope ladders onto their vivisection racks before attacking. Climbing on the racks requires a successful DC 10 Climb check; balancing on the unsteady racks requires a successful DC 20 Acrobatics check.

NYMPH'S BASTARDS (3) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Male advanced forlarren alchemists (vivisectionist) 4

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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 125, 292; *Advanced Player's Guide* 26; *Ultimate Magic* 20)

NE Medium fey

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+6 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 68 each (8 HD; 4d6+4d8+36)

Fort +9, **Ref** +14, **Will** +8; +2 vs. poison

DR 5/cold iron

Weaknesses remorse

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +11 (1d6+6)

Ranged mwk blowgun +12 (1d2 plus poison)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +4)

3/day—*heat metal* (DC 12)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 4th)

2nd—*blur*, *spider climb*

1st—*cure light wounds*, *deathwatch*,
expeditious retreat, *true strike*

TACTICS

Before Combat The alchemists combine their shadow essence poison into 6 doses using their concentrate poison discovery and drink their Strength mutagens before combat.

During Combat The forlarrens clamber and leap about the vivisection racks, shooting poisoned darts from their blowguns while drinking extracts to increase their speed and jumping abilities. In melee, they try to stay spread apart, flanking with each other to make sneak attacks with their claws, enhanced with *true strike*.

Morale The triplets fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 22, **Con** 19, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 27

Feats Brew Potion, Point-Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Throw Anything, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +15, Climb +13, Craft (alchemy) +12, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +15, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +15, Stealth +18, Use Magic Device +7

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Iobarian, Sylvan

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +4, identify potions), cruel anatomist, discoveries (concentrate poison, vestigial arm^{UM}), mutagen (+4/-2, +2 natural, 40 minutes), poison use, swift alchemy, torturer's eye

Combat Gear concentrated shadow essence (6 doses; DC 19, 9 rounds); **Other Gear** mwk blowgun with 10 darts, alchemist's kit, formula book (contains formulae for all prepared extracts, plus *alchemical allocation*^{APG} and *fox's cunning*)

Treasure: The various supplies in this chamber make up a complete alchemist's lab. In addition, a successful DC 15 Perception check turns up a *potion of remove blindness/deafness*—the triplets have partaken of this one potion many times over (with the help of *alchemical allocation* extracts) after visits with their mother.

E5. THE RATTER (CR 10)

A forest of stalactites covers the high ceiling of this enormous cavern. Several stalagmites rise from the floor as well, most with their tops shorn off. Huge webs fill the north end of the cavern, and a large, cryptic rune about the length of a grown human is carved into the ground at the south end of the cave.



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The cavern extends for more than hundred feet. With a successful DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) check, a creature identifies the rune as part of a *binding* spell used to create a hedged prison. Five web-wrapped cocoons, each almost 10 feet long, hang from the ceiling among the stalactites. A sixth cocoon lies on the floor near the middle of the cavern. Inspection of the cocoons reveals the corpses of andrazku demons, recognizable with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (planes) check.

To the southwest, a passage leads down a flight of stone stairs to a stone door engraved with the image of a naked pregnant woman. This door is a teleportation arch (marked T5) that leads to area D5 in the Mother dungeon.

Creature: This room serves as the lair of one of Baba Yaga's prize pets, a bebilith she uses as a "ratter" in Artrosa—primarily to hunt demons. The bebilith is confined to the dungeons of Artrosa by Baba Yaga's *binding* spell, which prevents the creature from using *plane shift* to escape. The bebilith has spent long centuries roaming Artrosa's passages, and is quite skilled in maneuvering in their cramped confines, giving it the compression ability. The bebilith currently has more available prey in Artrosa than it has had in centuries, and has just returned to its lair with its most recent kill. The bebilith has no compunction killing other creatures who interrupt its meal, however, and attacks any intruders into its lair.

BEBILITH

CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 150 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 32)

SQ compression

Development: If the PCs leave Artrosa before encountering the bebilith here and then return, they might encounter it anywhere in Artrosa's rooms or passages, as it scours the dungeons for more demonic prey.

E6. THE CRONING RITUAL (CR 7+)

The stone doors leading to this passage are locked (Disable Device DC 30). At the northern end of this passage, a string of Iobarian runes surrounds a waning crescent moon carved into the door. Anyone who speaks Iobarian or succeeds at a DC 20 Linguistics check can interpret the runes to read, "As the seasons of life change, so must we sacrifice our past for the wisdom of our winter years." Here at the top of the stairs, a successful DC 15 Perception check reveals more faded runes carved across the threshold. If successfully translated, they read, "Blessed be the path you are about to walk. Cling not to what you were, but only to what you shall become." Anyone who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check recognizes the phrase as part of a "croning ritual" performed by older witches to celebrate the symbolic and spiritual transformation from motherhood into their

elderly years. Most witches revere crones for their wisdom and see the ritual as a blessing, but there is no requirement to undergo a croning ritual if one is not ready.

Traps: Five runes have been chiseled into the steps at intervals marked on the map, each representing one of the sacrifices a witch must make when she undergoes the croning ritual. Descending the stairs in order, a witch symbolically sacrifices her youth (a), her fertility (b), her health (c), her strength (d), and finally, her life (e). With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Linguistics check, a creature can correctly decipher the meaning of each rune. A character with witch class levels gains a +10 circumstance bonus on any check made to understand the nature of the passage and the croning ritual.

The runes are *greater glyphs of warding*, each with a different effect, that trigger whenever a living creature with an Intelligence of 3 or higher that has not yet reached old age passes over one of the runes. A successful DC 26 Knowledge (arcana) check or DC 16 Spellcraft check (coupled with *read magic*) reveals the true nature and purpose of the runes. A witch who desires to undergo the croning ritual can bypass the glyphs' negative effects, though undergoing the full ritual transforms her into a crone. At each rune, the witch must say the following phrase: "I, [name], sacrifice my [sacrifice coinciding to the rune] to the Three Who Are One." This phrase deactivates that *glyph of warding*.

The ritual is complete when the creature reaches the bottom of the stairs after performing the proper rites at all five stages. If the creature is not yet of an old age for its race, it swiftly and permanently ages to the minimum age for its race's old age category. The creature's ability scores change as if it had aged naturally. This effect cannot be dispelled, but can be removed with a *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell, which returns the creature to its normal age.

The croning ritual only works if the stairs are followed from top to bottom (starting near area E5 and descending to area E7), but to protect the sanctity of the ritual, the glyphs function whenever they are encountered. If this corridor is entered from area E7, the ritual does not work, but the trapped glyphs still harm anyone daring to traverse this passage for any other purpose.

CRONING RITUAL TRAPS (5)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger spell; **Reset** automatic (immediately)

Effect spell effect (*greater glyph of warding*, CL 20th, see below)

Sacrifice of youth: spell effect (sands of time^{um})

Sacrifice of fertility: spell effect (*bestow curse*, -6 to Charisma, Will DC 17 negates)

Sacrifice of health: spell effect (*greater contagion^{um}* [bubonic plague], Fortitude DC 19 negates)

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Sacrifice of strength: spell effect (*bestow curse*, -6 to Strength, Will DC 17 negates)

Sacrifice of life: spell effect (*slay living*, 12d6+20 damage, Fortitude DC 20 for 3d6+20 damage)

E7. THE CRONE'S VENGEANCE (CR 10)

All of the doors leading into this room are locked (Disable Device DC 30). Jadrenka keeps the key that opens all of these doors on her necklace.

A withered cornfield extends in all directions beneath a waning moon in a starry night sky. Dozens of dead ravens lie strewn on the ground among the shriveled stalks.

Since her falling out with her lover Marislova (see area **D2**), Jadrenka has taken to sleeping in this room. Both the cornfield and the night sky are *mirage arcana*s created by the *Artrosa Ring* (see page 60).

Four doors exit the chamber. To the east, the northernmost door opens on a long corridor that eventually passes through a teleportation arch (marked **T4**) connecting to area **C9** in the Maiden dungeon. To the south, a passage slopes down to a door engraved with the image of a pregnant woman. The door is a teleportation arch (marked **T6**) that leads to area **D9** in the Mother dungeon.

Creature: A bent and aged crone stands in the center the cornfield, leaning heavily on a staff—Jadrenka in her crone form. In the Crone dungeon, she always assumes the idealized form of an elderly woman. If the PCs have already encountered Jadrenka elsewhere in Artrosa, a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a familial resemblance, as if she were the mother or grandmother of the person they had previously met.

As the crone, Jadrenka is crotchety and impatient, with a biting tongue, but she also possesses great wisdom and a sharp wit, and remains keen and to the point. As before, her reaction to the PCs varies depending on the nature of her previous encounters with them. If the PCs have managed to make Jadrenka helpful or convince her of their good intentions by this point, she gives them a warning and a clue: “The cancer grows in the womb of the Crone. To face the Curse of Eons, you must have time on your side.” She immediately teleports away after speaking, but leaves behind a random key (see the sidebar on page 24). Jadrenka’s cryptic warning refers to the leader of invaders, Vsevolod, who is close by in the cavern of the Eon Pit (area **Eg**), while her clue refers to the scroll in her chest (see *Treasure*, below), which may prove useful in recovering

the second key to the *Dancing Hut*. If, on the other hand, the PCs’ interactions with Jadrenka have turned hostile, or if she perceives them as interlopers, she attacks them. Unsure of the PCs’ intentions, she can’t allow them to join forces with Vsevolod, who she knows is close by.



JADRENKA THE CRONE

JADRENKA (CRONE FORM) CR 11

XP 12,800

Female advanced changeling witch 11
(*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 184,
Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player’s Guide 65)

LE Medium humanoid (changeling)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.;
Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor,
+2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge,
+5 natural)

hp 100 (11d6+59); regeneration 1

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +16

Immune bleed; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+1) or

mwk dagger +7 (1d4+1/19–20) or

mwk quarterstaff +7 (1d6+1)

Ranged mwk dagger +9 (1d4+1/19–20)

Special Attacks hexes (agony [11 rounds], cackle, charm [2 steps, 7 rounds], evil eye [-4, 10 rounds], flight [*feather fall* at will, *levitate* 1/day, *fly* 11 minutes/day], tongues [11 minutes], vision)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +18)

6th—*unwilling shield*^{APG} (DC 24)

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 22), *feeblemind* (DC 22), *major curse*^{UM} (DC 23)

4th—*confusion* (DC 21), *ice storm*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 21), *wandering star motes*^{APG} (DC 21)

3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *howling agony*^{UM} (DC 21), *lightning bolt* (DC 20), *sands of time*^{UM}

2nd—*false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 19), *haunting mists*^{UM} (DC 19), *hold person* (DC 19), *invisibility*

1st—*bungle*^{UM} (DC 18), *mage armor*, *peacebond*^{UC}, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 19), *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism* (DC 18)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 18)

Patron deception

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 25, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 22

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Dodge, Iron Will, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness, Mother’s Gift^{ARG} (uncanny resistance)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +20, Fly +14, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (history) +21,

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Knowledge (nature) +14, Perception +15, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +18, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Russian; *tongues*

SQ hag trait (mist child^{ARG}), Warden of Artrosa, witch's familiar (rat named Adelia)

Gear see page 54

Development: When Jadrenka departs or is slain, the room's illusion fades, revealing a rectangular room formed from chiseled granite blocks. Carvings of lifeless cornfields adorn the walls, and withered cornstalks and dead ravens litter the floor. A simple sleeping pallet lies on the floor against the north wall, next to a small trunk and a nightstand holding a basin of fresh water and a few candles.

As soon as Jadrenka leaves the room, a thick, evil fog begins to fill the chamber as the dead ravens on the floor slowly rise from amid the withered cornstalks. Together, the hungry fog and the undead raven swarm attack any living creatures left in the room. The raven swarm flies straight for the nearest living target, using eye-rake attacks to blind victims and draw them into the hungry fog. Both the hungry fog and raven swarm fight until destroyed.

HUNGRY FOG CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 59 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 152)

UNDEAD RAVEN SWARM CR 9

XP 6,400

(*Tome of Horrors Complete* 584)

NE Tiny undead (swarm)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size)

hp 91 (14d8+28)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee swarm (3d6 plus disease and eye-rake)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks disease, distraction (DC 18), eye-rake

STATISTICS

Str 2, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +10; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +16, Perception +15

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) *Raven Plague*: Swarm—injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d4 Str damage and 1d2 Str damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Eye-Rake (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a raven swarm must succeed at a DC 18 Reflex save or be blinded as the swarm scratches and tears at the victim's eyes. The blindness lasts for 1d4 days or until healed with *remove blindness/deafness* or a successful DC 20 Heal check. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Treasure: The chest next to Jadrenka's pallet is unlocked and contains a few changes of clothes, as well as a *scroll of age resistance* (*Ultimate Magic* 205), which can help in staving off the negative effects of the Eon Pit (see area E9).

E8. THE SHATTERED CRONE (CR 11)

The door leading into this room from the corridor to area E7 hangs open on bent hinges and bears huge gashes on its splintered surface.

The remains of a giant wooden statue, carved to resemble a stooped and ancient beldame, lie broken and scattered across the floor of this chamber. A set of massive iron double doors stands in the south wall, their faces engraved with a procession of humanoid figures. At the top of the doors, the figures are young women in the bloom of youth, but as the parade continues down the doors, the figures age, turning into pregnant matrons, stooped crones, and finally, at the bottom of the doors, into capering skeletons that vanish into a gaping tomb.

This chamber serves as a sort of atrium to the Eon Pit beyond. To reach the cavern of the Eon Pit, Vsevolod had to fight his way past the guardian Baba Yaga placed here, a unique construct called a crone golem, whose shattered remains now cover the floor. In the southern half of the room, a short passage is inscribed on each of the walls in Iobarian (Linguistics DC 20 to decipher). The west wall reads, "Beneath the waxing moon in spring, youth." The east wall reads, "Under the full moon in summer, motherhood." The inscription above the huge doors to the south reads, "When the moon is dark in winter, death." The written passages refer to the moon phases and seasons most auspicious to the three aspects of womanhood.

Creatures: Two of Vsevolod's frost giants now guard this room against anyone who would disturb their high priest. As soon as intruders enter, the giants draw their greataxes, call out a warning to Vsevolod in the chamber beyond, and charge to attack.

FROST GIANTS (2) CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 133 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

E9. THE EON PIT (CR 12)

Vsevolod barred the heavy iron doors leading into this chamber with the shaft of one of the frost giant's greataxes

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THE CURSE OF EONS

The Eon Pit represents the passage from life into death, and unleashes one of Baba Yaga's most powerful curses. As a creature descends the steps into the Eon Pit, she begins to age rapidly, which takes a toll on her sanity as well. For every round spent within the Eon Pit, a creature must attempt two saving throws. The first is a DC 18 Fortitude save to avoid aging +50% of the creature's current age toward the next age category. The second is a DC 18 Will save to avoid the effects of an *insanity* spell (CL 20th). If the pit ages a character beyond her maximum age limit, she dies of old age. A *lesser age resistance*^{UM} spell grants a +2 bonus on these saves; *age resistance*^{UM} grants a +4 bonus, and *greater age resistance*^{UM} grants a +6 bonus. A character who is already of venerable age is immune to the effects of the Curse of Eons. Both the aging effects and insanity are permanent, though a *greater restoration* or *heal* spell can restore the creature's sanity, while a *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell both cures the insanity and restores the creature to its original age.

(hardness 10, hp 120, break DC 25). If the PCs somehow managed to slay the giants in area **E8** without alerting Vsevolod, battering through these doors likely alerts him to their presence.

This vast natural cavern is drowned in darkness. To the southeast, a ring of towering black basalt menhirs surround a great gaping pit torn into the cavern floor. Spiraling runes etched in white chalk cover the faces of the standing stones, which are painted with fresh blood. The bodies of two frost giants lie on the floor outside the ring. A border of countless skulls, both human and animal, surrounds the pit. A break in the border forms an entrance leading to the edge of the pit. There, a flight of stone steps carved into the perimeter descends into the abyss. The air above the pit seems to waver and ripple as if from heat, though there is no discernible change in temperature.

Deep within the womb of the Crone stands a ring of sacred stones dedicated to night, winter, aging, and the inevitable arrival of death. These menhirs function like the standing stones in areas **C10** and **D9**, enabling a creature to transfer her consciousness into Artrosa's crone figure. The stones also encircle a yawning pit more than 50 feet wide. Known as the Eon Pit, the pit has a strong aura of necromancy. A long flight of stone-carved stairs coils along its inner perimeter, descending 120 feet down into the darkness. Living creatures that enter the Eon Pit risk suffering the effects of the Curse of Eons (see the sidebar above). The ceiling in the cavern soars to almost 100 feet at its highest point.

Creatures: Slowly circling the perimeter of the stone ring trots a fierce-looking centaur carrying a great warhammer,

his hirsute body drenched head to hoof in blood. The gore-sodden centaur is Vsevolod, priest of Kostchtchie, covered in the blood of his last two frost giant allies, whom he has just finished ritually sacrificing to his patron demon lord. In exchange for this sacrifice, Kostchtchie has rewarded his favored priest by sending Vsevolod a powerful servant creature to aid him and ensure his victory in this final hour. The servant is a svathurim, a centaurlike creature with a frost giant's torso atop the body of a tremendous eight-legged stallion.

If alerted by the frost giants in area **E8**, Vsevolod waits just west of the Eon Pit for his enemies to come through the door. The svathurim waits in the shadows at the eastern end of the cavern, just north of the standing stones. Vsevolod tries to draw the attention of intruders toward him, then calls forth his newest servant from the shadows. Once opponents are inside the cavern and within 100 feet, the svathurim charges out, attempting to trample foes or impale them with his lance.

SVATHURIM

CR 11
XP 12,800
hp 147 (see page 90)

TACTICS

During Combat The svathurim races about the room, trampling, goring, and jabbing with its lance, doing its best to keep opponents separated and distracted. If an opponent moves within 10 feet of the Eon Pit during the combat, the svathurim attempts to bull rush the foe into the accursed pit. If necessary, the svathurim uses its skyrunner ability to attack flying opponents, but does so only as a last resort, to avoid becoming fatigued.

Morale The svathurim fights to the death.

VSEVOLOD

CR 9
XP 6,400
hp 102 (see page 58)

Treasure: A large, ironbound chest sits on the floor near the standing stones. It is locked (Disable Device DC 30), but Vsevolod carries the key. This is Vsevolod's "war chest," containing the funds for his expedition: coins, rough-cut gems, art objects, and jewelry worth 12,000 gp in total.

The bottom of the Eon Pit is covered with the countless bones, mostly humanoid, of those who have succumbed to the Curse of Eons. There is nothing of value among the dusty, aged bones, though a successful DC 25 Perception check reveals a single blue dragon scale lying on the stone floor in an area cleared of bones. This is one of the two keys left behind by Baba Yaga that will take the *Dancing Hut* to its next destination.

Development: Defeating Vsevolod and his giant centaur-beast removes the biggest threat currently facing Artrosa.

MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE



If the PCs haven't yet acquired the gold nugget from Jadrenka, and they've remained on relatively good terms with her, she appears once they've recovered the dragon scale from the Eon Pit to present the gold nugget to them as well. At this time, she apologizes for her uneven reception and thanks the PCs for their great efforts. By slaying Vsevolod, they've proven the integrity of their intentions, their worthiness for the task they have accepted, and that it would best serve the preservation of Artrosa to aid them.

If asked about the keys, Jadrenka shares what little she knows. She can tell the PCs that the keys they now possess are not the original keys, only copies left here by Baba Yaga. If the Queen of Witches did not return to Irrisen as planned, her Three Riders were to use the keys to follow her in her *Dancing Hut*. Unfortunately, Baba Yaga never told Jadrenka where these keys would take the hut.

Story Award: If the PCs recover the dragon scale from the bottom of the Eon Pit, award them 9,600 XP. Likewise, if the PCs befriended Jadrenka and they were able to acquire the gold nugget from her without fighting her, award them 12,800 XP, as if they had defeated her in combat.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs recover both the dragon scale and the gold nugget, they possess the two keys necessary to take the *Dancing Hut* to the next stop on Baba Yaga's trail. If the PCs haven't yet explored all of Artrosa, they may want to do so at this point. If the PCs need more experience or want to explore other areas of Iobaria (such as the centaur city of Vurnirn or the cyclops ruins at Daruthrost), you can use the information in the Dvezda Marches gazetteer on page 68 to prepare a few more adventures for them, though the mantle of the Black Rider should serve to guide them back on the path to rescuing Baba Yaga before too long. The journey back to the *Dancing Hut* can be quick and uneventful, or you can spice it up with a few more encounters.

Once back inside the *Dancing Hut*, the PCs need only follow the same procedure used to bring the hut to Iobaria—simply placing the two keys in the hut's cauldron in area A1 and stirring the stew within. As before, the PCs' surroundings alter and shift as the hut slips between dimensions, arriving on the strange and alien world of Triaxus, which the PCs can explore in the next adventure, "The Frozen Stars."

REIGN OF WINTER

JADRENKA

The current warden of Artrosa, Jadrenka guards Baba Yaga's hidden dungeons from both invaders and the machinations of her own mother, the annis hag Caigreal.

JADRENKA**CR 11****XP 12,800**

Female advanced changeling witch 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 184, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

LE Medium humanoid (changeling)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 17, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 100 (11d6+59); regeneration 1

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +14

Immune bleed; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +7 (1d4+2) or

mwk dagger +8 (1d4+2/19–20) or

mwk quarterstaff +8 (1d6+3)

Ranged mwk dagger +10 (1d4+2/19–20)

Special Attacks hexes (agony [11 rounds], cackle, charm [2 steps, 5 rounds], evil eye [-4, 8 rounds], flight [*feather fall* at will, *levitate* 1/day, *fly* 11 minutes/day], tongues [11 minutes], vision)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +16)

6th—*unwilling shield*^{APG} (DC 22)

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20), *major curse*^{UM} (DC 21)

4th—*confusion* (DC 19), *ice storm*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 19), *wandering star motes*^{APG} (DC 19)

3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *howling agony*^{UM} (DC 19), *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *sands of time*^{UM}

2nd—*false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 17), *haunting mists*^{UM} (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *invisibility*

1st—*bungle*^{UM} (DC 16), *mage armor*, *peacebond*^{UC}, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17), *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism* (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 16)

Patron deception

TACTICS

Before Combat Jadrenka casts *false life* and *mage armor* every day.

During Combat If she must fight, Jadrenka begins combat by casting *unwilling shield*, then uses her spells to take

opponents out of the combat as quickly as possible, such as by transforming a warrior into a harmless mouse with *baleful polymorph* or targeting a spellcaster with *feeblemind*.

Morale If reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, Jadrenka uses the *Artrosa Ring* to teleport to safety, where she can regenerate and return to the battle later on her terms.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 21, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 24

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Dodge, Iron Will, Mother's Gift^{ARG} (uncanny resistance), Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +18, Fly +15, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +13, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +16, Swim +6, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Russian; *tongues*
SQ hag traits (mist child^{ARG}), Warden of Artrosa, witch's familiar (rat named Adelia)

Combat Gear *potion of resist energy* (cold), *potion of resist energy* (fire); **Other Gear** mwk dagger, mwk quarterstaff, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *Artrosa Ring* (see page 60), *cloak of resistance* +3, gold nugget (key to *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga*), necklace of keys, spell component pouch

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Warden of Artrosa (Ex) Jadrenka was granted the title and position of Warden of Artrosa by Baba Yaga. This infusion of power grants Jadrenka the advanced simple template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294).

Jadrenka is a changeling, the daughter of the foul and twisted annis hag Caigreal. In the years before Jadrenka was born, Baba Yaga approached Caigreal and offered her a position as one of the guardians of Artrosa, promising to share her otherworldly knowledge and power with the hag. Caigreal readily accepted. Sometime thereafter, the hag disguised herself, seduced an Iobarian hunter, and became pregnant. Caigreal gave birth to a daughter in Artrosa's temple. She named the changeling Jadrenka, and raised her within the dungeons. Even at a young age, Jadrenka showed an innate talent for witchcraft. Curious as to the changeling's potential, Baba Yaga began to teach her some of her craft. Jadrenka's talents grew swiftly, greatly

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pleasing her mother, who began making preparations for her daughter's transformation from changeling into hag.

One day while performing mundane research, the naive child happened upon several tomes on the subject of hags. Much to Jadrenka's horror, she discovered details of the barbaric ritual used by hag mothers to transform changelings into hags like themselves. Though Jadrenka had always suspected that she was something more than human, this revelation of her eventual fate proved utterly terrifying. Jadrenka sought out Baba Yaga and pled for help resisting her mother's call. Unsurprisingly, Baba Yaga had an answer for the young changeling—Jadrenka could avoid the horrifying transformation if she agreed to serve as Artrosa's next warden. Artrosa was the only home she'd ever known, so Jadrenka quickly agreed, making a pact with Baba Yaga that for as long as she serves as warden of Artrosa, her transformation into a hag will be stayed.

Jadrenka's new position infuriated Caigreal, who had coveted the title herself. Fearing her daughter's growing power, Caigreal grew determined to force Jadrenka's transformation into a hag by making her break her oath to Baba Yaga. Despite her determined efforts, however, Caigreal has little influence over Jadrenka.

As Artrosa's warden, Jadrenka's appearance frequently shifts between the three aspects of maiden, mother, and crone. Although her natural form most closely resembles the maiden, Jadrenka is actually several hundred years old, her youth preserved by the powerful magic of her patron Baba Yaga. Her above statistics represent her true form, without the effects of the *Artrosa Ring*.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Jadrenka serves as both a foil and unlikely ally for the PCs, and she also holds one of the keys the PCs need to take the *Dancing Hut* to its next destination. She has full access to every room in Artrosa, and the PCs should encounter her in each dungeon in a different one of her three guises.

Jadrenka's primary motivation is defending Artrosa against intruders—be they Vsevolod's frost giants or the interloping PCs—but she is canny enough to realize that if she can aid the PCs in their quest to free the Queen of Witches, she might win Baba Yaga's gratitude and a release from her long indentured servitude. If the PCs can convince Jadrenka of their good intentions, she finds ways to aid them indirectly while still ostensibly acting as an antagonist. Jadrenka won't intercede on the PCs'

behalf during encounters with Artrosa's guardians, but neither will she attack the PCs directly. Likewise, she can't tell them the proper passages to take, though she can tell them that she can't reveal any of the dungeons' secrets.

If Jadrenka helps the PCs directly, her oath to Baba Yaga is broken, and the *Artrosa Ring* vanishes from her finger and reappears on Caigreal's withered talon. If this occurs, Caigreal becomes the new warden of Artrosa, and her first act is to gather her coven, hunt down her wayward daughter, and finally force Jadrenka's transformation into a hideous hag.

If Jadrenka survives this adventure, she remains in Artrosa as its warden. What happens after Baba Yaga is freed is up to the GM. Baba Yaga might keep the changeling imprisoned forever or reward her loyalty by granting her freedom. If the latter occurs, Jadrenka might seek out the PCs to offer them her thanks and personal services, or to secure their aid in helping her prevent her predestined transformation.



REIGN OF WINTER

RATIBOR THE BOLD

Once a powerful Iobarian warlord, Ratibor the Bold betrayed Baba Yaga, and now serves eternal penance as a guardian of her Dancing Hut.

RATIBOR THE BOLD**CR 9****XP 6,400**

Male human (Iobarian) barbarian 10

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +13**DEFENSE****AC** 21, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+8 armor, +2 Dex, -2 rage, +3 shield)**hp** 115 (10d12+45)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +5 (+3 vs. traps), **Will** +5; +4 vs. magic**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3;**DR** 2/—**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** +1 *battleaxe* +18/+13 (1d8+7/19-20/x3)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +13/+8 (1d8+4/x3)**Special Attacks** rage (24 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, guarded stance [+2 dodge vs. melee, 4 rounds], quick reflexes, superstition +4, unexpected strike)**TACTICS**

During Combat Ratibor uses little in the way of strategy. He simply rages and attacks the nearest target within range, though he does take advantage of his rage powers—particularly guarded stance and unexpected strike. He holds his ground and tries to prevent his enemies from getting past him.

Morale If guarding the *Dancing Hut*, Ratibor has no choice but to fight to the death. If his opponents flee, he follows them wherever they go, but he is forbidden to exit the hut itself.

Base Statistics When not raging, Ratibor's statistics are **AC** 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21; **hp** 95; **Fort** +9, **Will** +3; **Melee** +1 *battleaxe* +16/+11 (1d8+5/19-20/x3); **Str** 18, **Con** 14; **CMB** +14; **Skills** Climb +8, Swim +8.

STATISTICS**Str** 22, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 26**Feats** Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (*battleaxe*), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*battleaxe*)**Skills** Acrobatics +11 (+15 when jumping), Climb +10, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +12, Perception +13, Ride +11, Survival +13, Swim +10**Languages** Draconic, Iobarian**SQ** fast movement

Other Gear *icelink chainmail* (+2 *chainmail*, see page 61), +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *battleaxe*, mwk composite longbow (+4 Str) with 20 arrows, *boots of the winter jarl* (see page 60), gold necklace worth 500 gp

Almost 200 years ago, Ratibor the Bold stood among the most powerful barbarian warlords of central Iobaria. During this time, the lands from Okor's Basin west to Fangard were a massive, bloody battleground for would-be emperors. Ratibor commanded a vast army and held control over an expansive territory that stretched along the western border of Fangard from the Ardshrod River to the Syrzemyan highlands. His power and position placed him among the foremost contenders to take the throne of the remnants of New Iobaria. But as has happened time and time again throughout Iobaria's history, plagues ripped through Ratibor's lands and chewed through his battalions. In a matter of a few short months, Ratibor lost several thousand troops to disease. Desperate, he sought the counsel of his witchwomen. Acting upon their advice, he called upon the legendary Baba Yaga, Queen of Witches, to bargain with her for powerful magic to aid his cause. He petitioned Baba Yaga to teach his witches the secrets of the mystic roots that according to legends would stave off the sickness. In return, he swore an oath that he would bring her the head of one of the demon lord Kostchtchie's most zealous champions—the frost giant jarl-priest Utgaardt Hoarwind. Ratibor promised to slay all of Utgaardt's clan and scour the Ice Steppes of Kostchtchie's worshipers.

But Ratibor remained skeptical of Baba Yaga's powers. Full of ambition, arrogance, and pride, the would-be conqueror hedged his bets, forging an alliance with Utgaardt instead of slaying the giant jarl as promised. To appease Baba Yaga, Ratibor brought her the head of one of Utgaardt's weaker rivals, but the Queen of Witches immediately saw through Ratibor's treachery. Her fury over the betrayal was fierce and relentless. She rallied her allies, laid waste to Ratibor's army and nascent kingdom, and imprisoned the warlord in her *Dancing Hut* as punishment for his arrogance and deception. Now, 200 years later, Ratibor remains bound to guard Baba Yaga's hut against intruders.

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CAMPAIGN ROLE

Ratibor's primary role in the adventure is as a guardian of the *Dancing Hut*, but he can also provide the PCs with information about Baba Yaga, the *Dancing Hut*, and their current location. Unfortunately, much of his information is 200 years out of date. Ratibor knows little of Baba Yaga beyond his personal dealings with her. He's willing to tell his story, but his recounting portrays himself as a hero and Baba Yaga as a scheming villainess. He can confirm that the hut's layout changes each time it travels, though since he's bound to this configuration, he's familiar with only the current layout. He knows the hut now stands in Hoofwood in eastern Iobaria, in a region called the Dvezda Marches, but beyond that much of his information is suspect. Prior to his tenure as Baba Yaga's enslaved servant, Ratibor had never been to the Dvezda Marches. Since he was imprisoned, he had been allowed to leave the hut only a few times and has no idea that 200 years have passed. Still, the major sites of the Dvezda Marches haven't changed that much, so Ratibor is at least familiar with places like Artrosa, Daruthrost, and Vurnirn. Never having visited these places, however, he can provide only their general locations. Though he probably knows more information than the PCs, most of his knowledge is based on either folklore or tales heard from various adventurers, settlers, and other Iobarians who wandered through the east.

By questioning Ratibor, one of the raven oracles, or even Zorka (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68), the PCs can learn that there's a way to free Ratibor from his servitude. Baba Yaga bound the warlord to the *Dancing Hut* with a ritual contained in her *cookbook of arcane augmentation*. During one of the hut's recent visits to Iobaria, Baba Yaga left the hut with the cookbook in hand but returned without it. It's possible Baba Yaga left the book in Iobaria—most likely somewhere in Artrosa—and that the book contains the secret to freeing Ratibor.

If the PCs free Ratibor from his servitude, his first impulse is to flee the hut. Despite his long years of imprisonment, Ratibor remains committed to his deluded dream of claiming an empire for himself. The warlord simply can't comprehend how much time has passed and that history has forgotten him entirely. His sole desire is to pick up where he left off, and he fully intends to reconnect with his allies, raise an army, and conquer all of Iobaria.

If the PCs return victorious from Artrosa or plan on returning to the fortress, Ratibor becomes enticed by the lure of Baba Yaga's fabled fortress and decides to travel with the PCs for a bit. He has heard legends about the magical *Artrosa Ring*, and he plots to steal the ring

and use it to take Artrosa for himself, making it the capital of his new kingdom. He offers his services as a retainer to the PCs, but he betrays them as soon as the opportunity presents itself. If the PCs have befriended Ratibor, however, they can perhaps convince him that his time is over. Freed from service and with his empire lost, Ratibor could become an ally of the PCs—or even a character to be used by a new player or to replace a fallen PC.

SIDE QUEST

The PCs can free Ratibor from his servitude to Baba Yaga with a ritual found in her *cookbook of arcane augmentation*, which is stored in area **D7** in the Mother dungeon of Artrosa. If the PCs find the book, they can return to the *Dancing Hut* and perform the ritual to free Ratibor.

Reward: If the PCs free Ratibor from his service, award them 6,400 XP as if they had defeated him in combat.



REIGN OF WINTER

VSEVOLOD

A devoted priest of the demon lord Kostchtchie, Vsevolod has invaded the stronghold of his patron's greatest enemy, Baba Yaga, with an army of frost giants and demons.

VSEVOLOD**CR 9****XP 6,400**

Male centaur (Tsolniva) cleric of Kostchtchie 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 42)

CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 15, flat-footed 21 (+8 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 natural, -1 size)

hp 102 (12 HD; 4d10+8d8+44)

Fort +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +15

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee *frost-thunder hammer* +14/+9 (1d8+8/19-20/x3), 2 hooves +8 (1d6+2)

Ranged spear +12 (1d8+4/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 19, 4d6), might of the gods (+8, 8 rounds/day), weapon master (8 rounds/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +13) 8/day—battle rage (+4 damage), strength surge (+4)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)

4th—*chaos hammer* (DC 19), *divine power*^P, *freedom of movement*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic vestment*^P, *prayer*

2nd—*bull's strength*^P, *disfiguring touch*^{UM} (DC 17), *dread bolt*^{UM} (DC 17), *effortless armor*^{UC}, *hold person* (DC 17)

1st—*deathwatch*, *doom* (DC 16), *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*^P, *murderous command*^{UM} (DC 16), *ray of sickening*^{UM} (DC 16), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Strength, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Vsevolod casts *magic vestment* every day.

Before combat, he casts *freedom of movement*, *effortless armor*, and *shield of faith*.

During Combat Vsevolod tries to avoid melee combat, keeping his distance and casting ranged offensive spells like *blindness/deafness*, *chaos hammer*, and *unholy blight* while his svathurim ally engages foes. Once engaged in melee,

Vsevolod casts *divine power* and switches tactics, slamming his magic warhammer on the ground and attempting to encase an opponent in ice before charging into the fray.

Morale Vsevolod can't comprehend defeat. He fights to the death, hoping to take as many foes as he can with him to the grave.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 31 (35 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Channel, Improved Critical (warhammer), Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer)

Skills Intimidate +16, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Linguistics +5, Perception +12, Spellcraft +7, Survival +12

Languages Abyssal, Elven, Giant, Iobarian, Sylvan

SQ aura, undersized weapons

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2); **Other Gear** mwk breastplate, *frost-thunder hammer* (+2 warhammer; see page 61), dagger, spear, *belt of mighty constitution* +2, *periapt of health*, key to the chest in area **E9**, spell component pouch, wooden unholy symbol of Kostchtchie

Born the only son among the children of the high chieftain of the largest clan of Tsolniva centaurs in the Ice Steppes, Vsevolod was destined to succeed his father as ruler of his clan. On Vsevolod's fifteenth birthday, he rode off with a band of warriors under the command of his older sister Myrkara. The centaurs marched deep into the Ice Steppes to drive back an encroaching horde of frost giants, but during the raid, a violent blizzard drove down from the north, separating the centaurs. Some were fortunate enough to escape, but others became stranded and hopelessly lost—including Vsevolod. For days after the blizzard broke, the giants hunted down stragglers and slaughtered them mercilessly. Vsevolod hid among the dead, and when his food ran out he was forced to eat the flesh of his own slain kin. Eventually, even the corpses ran out, and he resigned himself to death. Yet when the spring thaw came, Vsevolod had by some miracle survived.

Almost a year later, Vsevolod found his way back to his clan, though things had changed. His father had died, and without a male heir the leadership of the clan had

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passed to Myrkara. To protect her new position, Myrkara immediately accused her brother of working with the frost giants to ambush the Tsolniva warband. How else could Vsevolod have survived the winter, if not for the aid of the giants? Myrkara was well spoken, and her eloquent words swayed the clan elders, who sided with their new chieftain. Vsevolod was branded a traitor and kin-slayer and exiled into the wilderness.

Seething with rage at his sister's betrayal—for was it not she who had abandoned him to the blizzard?—Vsevolod headed north to where he'd endured his long ordeal, looking for some kind of sign. What he found was a lone frost giant encamped at the site. The giant, a priest of Kostchtchie named Geflaugr, greeted Vsevolod as a brother and said he'd been waiting for the centaur's arrival. Geflaugr invited Vsevolod to share the camp and tell his story, promising that Kostchtchie had great things in store for the exiled centaur. With nothing to lose, Vsevolod shared his tale with the frost giant, and by the end of the night he had become Geflaugr's disciple. If Vsevolod couldn't find acceptance among his own people, then perhaps he would find it with the source of his condemnation.

Vsevolod was adopted into the frost giant tribe, and learned the brutal tenets of his newfound faith. The following spring, Vsevolod led the giants in a savage raid upon his old village. In revenge for his exile, Vsevolod put to the sword those men of his clan who had sided with his sister Myrkara, and any who refused to convert to Kostchtchie's worship, and enslaved the clan's remaining women. But he saved his most savage vengeance for Myrkara herself. Before her eyes, Vsevolod killed her sisters, husband, and children in a bloody sacrifice to his demonic patron. He then entombed his sister in a cave of ice with their bodies. As Myrkara had abandoned Vsevolod to the blizzard and forced him into cannibalism, so would she be buried alive in the ice, forced to eat the corpses of those she had loved most if she wanted to survive.

When Geflaugr died not long after, Vsevolod inherited the frost giant priest's magical *frost-thunder hammer*, and was appointed the tribe's war-priest. The centaur became infamous throughout the Ice Steppes for his brutal raids and the bloody sacrifices of both his enemies and his allies, all in the name of Kostchtchie and vengeance.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Although Vsevolod serves as the PCs' primary antagonist for this adventure, ironically the centaur priest has no understanding of their underlying identities or motivations. Because they arrived in Baba Yaga's *Dancing Hut*, Vsevolod perceives the PCs only as servants of the Queen of Witches and looks no deeper into their purpose. This becomes his

sole reason for seeking their destruction, so he sends his agents to deal with them in order to focus his attention on Artrosa. Until the final encounter, he doesn't even consider the PCs a threat. Only when the PCs finally confront him does he truly see them as a challenge. Still, unless Vsevolod has learned of the PCs' true purpose by some other means, he still concludes that they must be assassins sent by Baba Yaga or her followers to execute him.

Given the circumstances of the final encounter, Vsevolod's survival beyond this adventure is unlikely, but this doesn't mean that he can't return later as a vengeful spirit or even a demon. If Vsevolod is slain, perhaps his patron Kostchtchie claims his soul and reworks him into a truly horrific Abyssal monster—possibly a demonic svathurim with extra legs, oversized clawed hands, and a monstrous head—who reappears sometime later in the Adventure Path to wreak havoc on the characters who killed him.



REIGN OF WINTER

REIGN OF WINTER TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “Maiden, Mother, Crone.” Player-appropriate handouts appear in the *Pathfinder Cards: Reign of Winter Item Cards*.

ARTROSA RING (MINOR ARTIFACT)

SLOT ring	CL 20th	WEIGHT —
AURA strong abjuration, conjuration, and transmutation		



Three faces representing the threefold aspect of womanhood—maiden, mother, and crone—adorn this solid silver ring. Baba Yaga crafted the *Artrosa Ring* for her chosen warden of the sacred site of Artrosa, and it functions as a *ring of protection +2* and a *ring of regeneration*.

Within 15 miles of Artrosa’s towering figures, the *Artrosa Ring* also grants its wearer the following abilities.

Quicksilver: The wearer can teleport to any location inside Artrosa’s dungeons or within a 15-mile radius of Artrosa. Any location in this area is considered “very familiar.”

Seer: By concentrating for 10 minutes, the wearer can see and hear everything that transpires in a single chamber inside Artrosa, as if using *clairaudience/clairvoyance*.

Shroud: Three times per day, the wearer can alter the appearance of a single room within one of Artrosa’s dungeons, as well as the appearance of any creatures inside the room, as with *mirage arcana* and *veil*. The wearer must be present in the room to use this ability, and the illusions fade as soon as the wearer leaves the room.

Threefold Aspect: Whenever the wearer enters one of Artrosa’s dungeons, her age and appearance shift to match that of the corresponding dungeon (maiden, mother, or crone) as if affected by the *threefold aspect*^{APG} spell. If the wearer moves to a different dungeon, her age and appearance change accordingly. The wearer doesn’t gain additional skill ranks, and a spellcaster doesn’t gain any additional bonus spells for her increased ability scores, but the save DCs for her spells do increase. Outside these dungeons, the wearer returns to her natural age and appearance. The wearer has no control over this ability—it automatically takes effect whenever the wearer enters one of Artrosa’s dungeons.

Vision: If the wearer is a witch of at least 10th level, she gains access to the vision major hex and can use it as if she had it as a normal class feature.

Outside of Artrosa, the *Artrosa Ring* loses all of the above abilities except its function as a *ring of protection +2* and a *ring*

of regeneration. In addition, the wearer can use the ring to cast *threefold aspect*^{APG} once per day.

DESTRUCTION

The *Artrosa Ring* must be bathed in the light of Golarion’s moon for 3 separate nights—once during the waxing moon, once during the full moon, and once during the waning moon. If the ring is then struck with Kostchtchie’s adamantine warhammer in the Eon Pit in Artrosa on the night of the new moon, the *Artrosa Ring* is destroyed.

BOOTS OF THE WINTER JARL

PRICE
20,000 GP

SLOT feet	CL 10th	WEIGHT 2 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation		



Crafted of stout, wax-treated leather and wrapped with warm fur reminiscent of a frost giant’s beard, these boots are sometimes given as gifts by the frost giant tribes of the north to their smaller allies. In addition to functioning as *boots of the winterlands*, the *boots of the winter*

jarl enable their wearer to take the form of a frost giant once per day, as with the *giant form I* spell. While in giant form, the wearer gains a +6 size bonus to Strength, a –2 penalty to Dexterity, a +4 size bonus to Constitution, a +4 natural armor bonus, low-light vision, rock catching, rock throwing, and resist cold 20, but also gains vulnerability to fire. The wearer can remain in giant form for up to 10 minutes.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 10,000 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *cat’s grace*, *endure elements*, *giant form I*, *pass without trace*

COOKBOOK OF ARCANE AUGMENTATION

PRICE
21,500 GP

SLOT none	CL 17th	WEIGHT 5 lbs.
AURA strong (no school)		



This book is bound in dyed goatskin, and its coarse, thick pages are stained in a variety of colors and covered in wavering script; rough sketches; and diagrams of various plants,

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mystic symbols, and animal parts. A crude wooden spoon serves a bookmark. A *cookbook of arcane augmentation* contains recipes that allow an arcane spellcaster who prepares spells to augment her spells with specific metamagic effects through ritual preparation. A *cookbook of arcane augmentation* contains recipes for Ectoplasmic Spell^{APG}, Persistent Spell^{APG}, Rime Spell^{UM}, and Sickening Spell^{APG}, and can be used to augment spells of 6th level or lower.

Once per day, the spellcaster can augment a spell by following a recipe as part of her normal spell preparation. To prepare an augmented spell, the spellcaster must succeed at a Craft (alchemy) check (DC 15 + spell level) while mixing the recipe's ingredients in a cauldron. (The cost of these ingredients is negligible, and they are assumed to be readily available in a spell component pouch.) If the check succeeds, the spell is augmented with the recipe's metamagic feat. This doesn't change the spell slot of the augmented spell. On a failed check, that spell can't be augmented that day, but the caster can attempt to augment another spell.

A spellcaster can prepare only a single augmented spell each time she prepares spells, and apply only one augmentation from the cookbook to any given spell, but can combine an augmentation with metamagic feats she possesses. In this case, only the feats possessed by the caster adjust the spell slot of the spell being cast. The book doesn't confer the associated metamagic feat on the owner, only the ability to use the given feat when spells are prepared.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 10,750 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, Ectoplasmic Spell ^{APG} , Persistent Spell ^{APG} , Rime Spell ^{UM} , Sickening Spell ^{APG}	

FROST-THUNDER HAMMER		PRICE 24,524 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT 10 lbs.
AURA moderate evocation		



This oversized +2 *warhammer* is forged from blue steel and engraved with Abyssal runes that read, "There are no screams for those who die the frozen death." A *frost-thunder hammer* is sized for giants; it is a two-handed weapon for Medium-sized creatures, who take a -2 penalty on attack rolls for wielding an oversized weapon.

Once per day as a ranged touch attack, the wielder of a *frost-thunder hammer* can slam the weapon against the ground to release a crackling bolt of ice that shoots across the ground toward a single target up to 100 feet away. On a successful hit, the ice immediately freezes around the target, trapping it within a 9-inch-thick solid block of pale blue ice. The ice blocks line of effect to the entrapped victim, who is helpless (but can still breathe) and takes 9 points of cold damage per round until freed. The ice has hardness 0 and 27 hit points; if the ice is

broken, the creature is freed. A creature can break the ice as a full-round action with a successful DC 24 Strength check.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 12,424 GP
Craft Magic Weapons, <i>icy prison</i> ^{UM}	

GLOBE OF BLIZZARDS		PRICE 4,550 GP
SLOT none	CL 13th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA strong transmutation		



Tiny white crystals hang suspended in a clear fluid inside this fist-sized glass ball, which contains a miniature scene of leafless trees in a snow-covered landscape. Shaking the globe (a move action) activates it, and causes the crystals inside to fly wildly about the

globe, taking on the appearance of a mad snowstorm for 1d6 minutes until they settle back down. Shattering an activated globe (hardness 1, hp 2) creates raging blizzard conditions in a 2-mile-radius circle centered on the location where the globe was shattered. In this area, temperatures drop to below freezing, winds blow at over 50 miles per hour, and heavy snow falls (see pages 438–439 of the *Core Rulebook*). It takes 10 minutes for the blizzard to form, and the conditions last for 1 hour before dissipating, at which point normal weather conditions in the area return. Once shattered, a *globe of blizzards* is destroyed.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 2,275 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>control weather</i>	

ICELINK CHAINMAIL		PRICE 15,100 GP
SLOT armor	CL 6th	WEIGHT 20 lbs.
AURA moderate evocation		



Carved from a single block of ice birthed from the breath of the great white wyrm Sjohvor, the ice-carved rings of this exquisite suit of +2 *chainmail* never thaw. If grappled, the wearer can command the armor to release an icy blast against the grappler. The armor then glows with a pale blue radiance, deals 4d6 points of cold damage to the target, and causes the target to be staggered for 1 round.

Once the armor discharges, this ability can't be used until the armor recharges 1 hour later.

Icelink chainmail is considered light armor and has an arcane spell failure chance of 20%, a maximum Dexterity bonus of +4, and an armor check penalty of -3. The armor weighs half as much as standard chainmail and floats in water.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 7,700 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>frigid touch</i> ^{UM} , <i>wall of ice</i>	

REIGN OF WINTER



KOSTCHTCHIE

KOSTCHTCHIE (KOSH-TIK-TI-KAI), ALSO KNOWN AS THE DEATHLESS FROST, IS AN IMMORTAL WARLORD TURNED DEMON, A DEFORMED GIANT COLDLY BURNING WITH A LONG-AWAITING REVENGE. TRANSFORMED BY BABA YAGA INTO THE VERY THING HE HATED MOST AFTER DELIVERING AN ULTIMATUM TO THE QUEEN OF WITCHES, HE NOW RALLIES GIANTS TO HIS BANNER AND PLANS FOR THE DAY HE CAN DEFEAT HIS WITCH ARCHNEMESIS AND RECLAIM THE HIDDEN FRAGMENT OF HIS SOUL. HE IS A BRUTAL TYRANT, CONSUMED BY HATE AGAINST WITCHES AND BURNING WITH VENGEANCE AGAINST ALL WHO WRONG HIM.

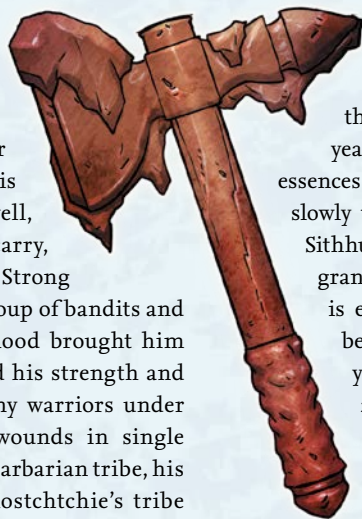
KOSTCHTCHIE

Born to Ulfen parents in Old Iobaria, Kostchtchie was raised in a household where the men ruled and women were little more than slaves. As a disease called the Choking Plague decimated the country, Kostchtchie's father found solace in drinking, and when the drunkard's wife accidentally spilled his last keg, he flew into a stumbling rage. Too drunk to sate his anger, the man ordered Kostchtchie to murder his mother in punishment for the mishap, and then his sisters when they tried to stop him. After carrying out his grim deed, Kostchtchie felt nothing but contempt at his father for being too drunk and weak to do his own killing, so he murdered him as well, gathered what few valuables he could carry, and left to make his own way in life. Strong and cunning for his age, he joined a group of bandits and eventually came to lead them. Adulthood brought him handsomeness and power, and he used his strength and charismatic good looks to gather many warriors under him. When he survived incredible wounds in single combat against the leader of an enemy barbarian tribe, his tribe dubbed him "the Deathless." Kostchtchie's tribe controlled a large territory in the aftermath of the Choking Plague, warring with other tribes, raiding cities, and battling giants, Kostchtchie's most hated foes, whenever they dared leave their mountain homes.

As he grew older, Kostchtchie the Deathless began to fear infirmity, disease, and death. Hearing rumors of a powerful witch called Baba Yaga living in a nearby forest, he hand-picked a small army of his best men and sought her out. When he found her, he issued her an ultimatum: grant him immortality, or he would destroy her with his army. The witch agreed to his terms, but since Baba Yaga almost always puts her own twist on requests, she granted his wish at a great price. She made him immortal, but transformed him into a deformed giant—meeting his price by giving him the form he hated most. As Kostchtchie twitched and spasmed with the pain of the transformation, she plucked out a fragment of his soul, placed it in a torc, and hid the torc away. She commanded his army to drag their misshapen leader from her sight and never return. Kostchtchie fled his people as soon as he could stand again, loathing his new form and ashamed that his people would see him brought so low. Shunning all humankind, he found a portal to the Abyss. After wandering for decades, he reached the frozen realm of Jhuvumirak and defeated its master, the demon lord

Sithhud, claiming the realm for himself. As word of the immortal demon-giant spread throughout the planes and the mortal realm, many frost giant priests turned to worship the aggressive Kostchtchie the Deathless Frost instead of their often-slumbering god, Thremyr.

Kostchtchie is unusual for a demon lord in that he was neither a qliphoth nor a dead soul that advanced from sin-bloated larva to greater demon to demon lord. He never died a mortal death, and the immortality granted to him by Baba Yaga allowed him to bypass the normal process through which evil souls become demons. Over years of living in the Abyss and absorbing the essences of that plane and his slain foes, Kostchtchie slowly transformed into a demon, and the defeat of Sithhud transformed him into a demon lord able to grant spells to his followers. As a demon lord, he is effectively immortal and ageless; he can only be destroyed by violence. Kostchtchie is very young for a demon lord, having spent less than 2 millennia in that role, and less than a century as a mortal. He is thus very cautious in dealing with other demon lords, suspicious of their greater experience and strange plans that may



THE DEATHLESS FROST GATHERS POWER IN THE
FORTRESS-REALM OF JHUVUMIRAK, WAITING FOR
THE DAY HE INVOKES VENGEANCE UPON THE
WITCH BABA YAGA.

~THE TALE OF THE DEATHLESS FROST

predate his own existence. At the same time, he considers himself superior to them, for he was once a human and ascended to such power without dying.

Kostchtchie is driven by two things: desire and revenge. He desperately wants the torc containing the missing piece of his soul, fearing that whoever holds it may be the key to his undoing, and hoping that he could use it to remove his deformities. He rightfully blames Baba Yaga for his deformities, and believes that perhaps only she can reverse the transformation—and if she refuses, killing her may reverse the spell anyway. As a human, he believed women were good only for breeding. As a demon, he has no need to reproduce, and has stoked his ages-old contempt into a burning hatred of women—with Baba Yaga as the tinder that fed that ember into a flame.

With his worshipers, Kostchtchie is brusque but fair. Whether worshipers are true spellcasters or creatures granted power through the Demonic Obedience feat (see Obedience and Boons), he gives them much leeway in using his magic, knowing he can make demands for specific tasks if necessary under threat of withholding that power. If a worshiper dies in his service, its soul becomes a larva in his realm and he may make further use of it. The only restriction he places upon his worshipers is the order to follow his commandments (see Commandments). Though

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he originated on Golarion, he has worshipers on other worlds, and therefore his priests rarely gain his undivided attention. Prayers to him are usually answered by demonic proxies (see Planar Allies), though if a tribal chieftain becomes a priest Kostchtchie makes an effort to speak directly to him from time to time as a sign of his favor.

As the demon lord of revenge, Kostchtchie expects his followers to avenge any slights against them. Since he is unable to strike directly against Baba Yaga, he commands his worshipers to hurt her by proxy, attacking her minions, children, and lackeys, especially in the land of Irrisen. Most of his followers are more at home in the cold than the heat, and he teaches that the dark powers granted by obedience to him will eventually blanket the world in frost, allowing his faithful even more territory to conquer and pillage. He despises any intelligent creature smaller than a human, including dwarves, gnomes, and halflings, calling them “rat-filth” and deeming them unworthy of even being slaves.

Kostchtchie appears as an immense, deformed frost giant with twisted legs, tiny white eyes, and a thick matted beard into which are woven dozens of skulls. These skulls are trophies he took from people he killed, especially mortal kings and priests of rival faiths. He always carries his adamantite warhammer, a weapon too huge for even the strongest frost giant to lift without difficulty, but he wields it with ease. In art, he is shown as an immense giant with skulls in his beard and carrying a warhammer; some depictions show only his head and beard, tangled with skulls, accompanied by an image of his hammer.

When Kostchtchie is pleased, weapons deal additional cold damage (as if temporarily becoming *frost* or *icy burst* weapons), enemies slip on ice or their weapons break, and pet dogs and wolves give birth to snow-white pups that grow up to be winter wolves. When Kostchtchie is angry, even minor wounds bleed freely, beards become tangled, and firstborn sons are afflicted with fits and warped bones.

Kostchtchie is chaotic evil, and his portfolio is cold, giants, and revenge. His weapon is the warhammer, and his symbol is an ice-caked, rune-carved warhammer. His domains are Chaos, Evil, Strength, and War. His faith is common in the Realm of the Mammoth Lords, the Crown of the World, and Iobaria, primarily among monstrous creatures, though some scattered barbarian tribes praise him as their battle-god. His priests are adepts, clerics, or rangers.

Many worshipers of Kostchtchie are frost giants, but ettins, hill giants, ice trolls, ogres, and human barbarians in cold lands pay him service (as does the occasional white dragon). They are ruthless and violent, and use their power to oppress females in the tribe (even trolls, who are normally matriarchal, tend to follow this family structure). Prone to violent outbursts and revenge plots in response to even the smallest insults and slights, they listen much and say little for fear of giving a rival an excuse to attack.

Services to the Deathless Frost usually involve sacrificing a victim, either as part of an obedience (see Obedience and Boons) or simply by piercing or crushing the sacrifice’s chest with ice, either slowly or quickly depending on the temperament of the priest and whether or not the victim is a witch. In giant tribes, the sacrifice is usually eaten afterward, though this practice is rare in humanoid cults. Episodes from Kostchtchie’s tale are sung during the ritual, and music accompanies it in the form of percussion (usually banging on a shield), a panpipe, or a simple harp (with strings made from the gut of an earlier sacrifice).

Given the demon lord’s brutality and ruthlessness, his followers have little interest in love and affection. Instead, they create blood-oaths between allied males, such as actual siblings, a father and son or nephew, or comrades-in-arms. This is a promise sworn in Kostchtchie’s name to pursue vengeance if one oath-brother is killed or shamed and unable to do it himself.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Few tribes have the interest or resources to create a separate building just for worship. In most cases, the common hall or cave has an alcove that functions as the center of worship; a dedicated temple follows this arrangement. A shrine may be as plain as a simple runestone, or may have elaborate carvings and sculptures (either in ice or stone) and be surrounded by carved wooden, bone, gemstone, or ivory offerings. The need to make blood sacrifice on snow-covered ground means most tribes have an altar outside, typically an upright stone or pole to which a victim can be tied. In tribes that have changed from worshiping Thremyr (the original frost giant god) to Kostchtchie, converting the altar area is a simple matter of adorning the carvings with skulls and carving a hammer, as both entities are depicted as bearded giants.

A PRIEST’S ROLE

A priest’s main task is to convert others to the worship of Kostchtchie, either through threats or rewards. He must follow the god’s three commandments (see below) but for the most part is left to his own discretion as to how to further the god’s agenda of vengeance and the advancement of giant-kind. A priest may seek leadership in a tribe, or be more comfortable advising the chief from a position of security. The priest’s involvement is critical in the tribe’s plans, even if those plans only involve when and where to make raids. Rather than emphasizing healing and defense, a priest primarily uses his magic to augment his power and that of key members of the tribe. Dominant priests usually have ranks in Intimidate; manipulative ones usually have ranks in Bluff.

Daily tasks for a priest are usually no different than for any other male in the tribe, except on days when a

KOSTCHTCHIE

sacrifice occurs, which requires the priest's special skills. The hierarchy within the cult may vary from tribe to tribe, with some only having one priest and others having several cooperating or vying for power.

There is no formal dress for priests, though most grow their hair long and adorn it with the skulls of witches, priests of other religions, and enemy leaders.

HOLIDAYS

Worshippers of Kostchtchie honor the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year. On this day, they make elaborate battle plans and schemes for vengeance to be enacted during the coming year. Traditionally, they sacrifice one or more witches on this day, or the lowest-ranking female of the tribe if no witches are available.

COMMANDMENTS

As Kostchtchie's followers are ordinary people pushed into extraordinary circumstances, many of the faith's common phrases are used to inspire determination.

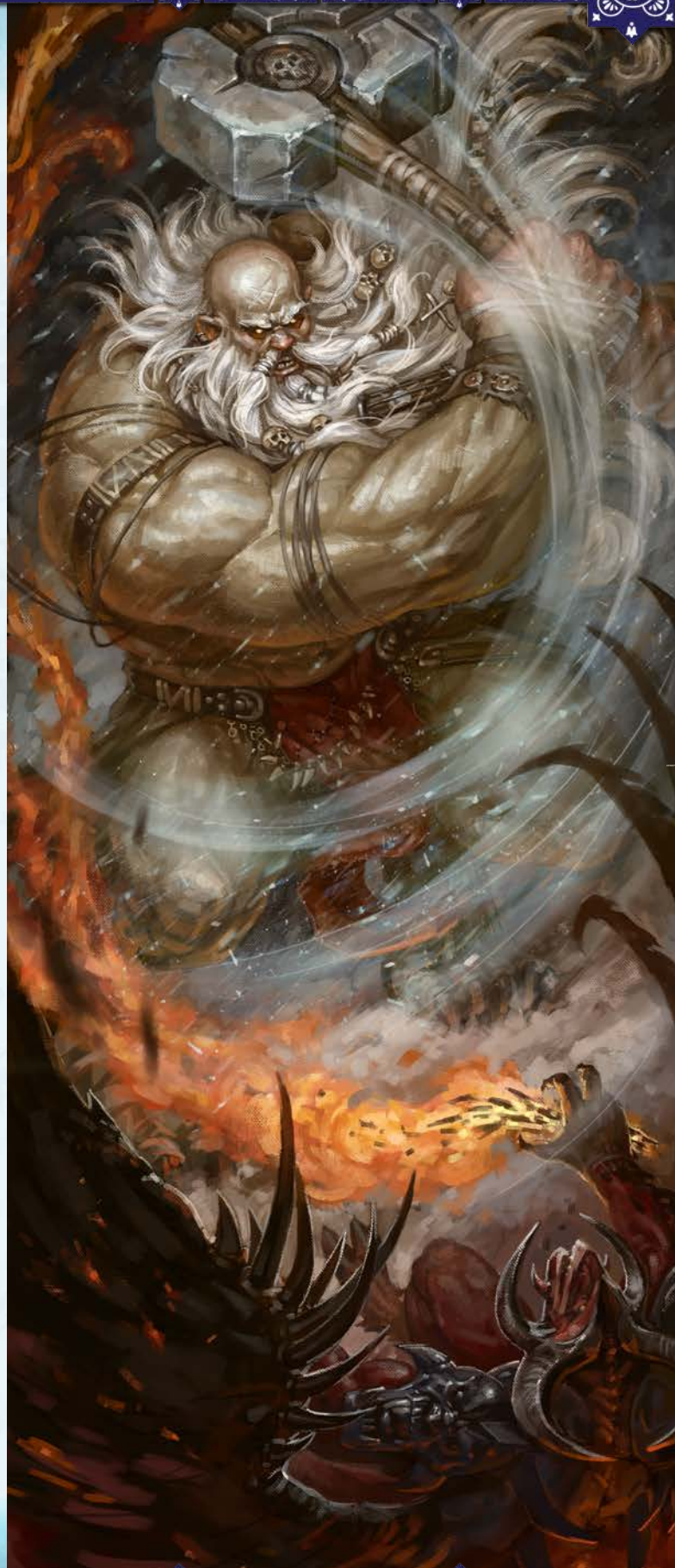
Avenge Yourself Times Three: If someone harms you, harming him back in the same way is merely fair; true vengeance harms the offender more than he harmed you. An appropriate response is to harm the offender three times as much as he harmed you. If someone puts out your eye, put out both his eyes and the eye of his friend so your enemies see you are ruthless. If an enemy cuts off your hand, cut off both his hands and his tongue so he may not strike or speak ill of you again. If a man kills your son, kill three of his descendants so that your very name becomes a demon in their memory. If it takes time to complete your vengeance, so be it—an enemy maimed twice-fold lives in fear of your third strike.

Bow to No Woman: Women serve no purpose but to pleasure men and give birth to warriors. Accepting a woman as a superior means you place yourself in a position of weakness. Cry out in rage or laughter, but never pain—screaming in pain is something women and children may do, but a man bears his wounds with dignity and honor. Even a frail man is more worthy of respect than a strong woman.

Kill All Witches: Men live by strength, whether in the, prayer, or blood. Witchcraft is women's magic, a vile thing taught in secret by hags and harridans. If you have the opportunity to kill a witch, do so before her magic saps your manhood. If you are outmatched by a witch and cannot attack, gather allies and strike when you can kill.

HOLY TEXT

The official book of the demon's cult is *The Tale of the Deathless Frost*, which is usually carved in runic form on a round or oblong stone with the words spiraling around a symbol of Kostchtchie's hammer. It tells the tale of his



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rise as a warlord, how he bargained with Baba Yaga for immortality and conquered a part of the Abyss to become a demon lord, and includes his three commandments to his worshipers. The portion about Baba Yaga states that she betrayed him, rather than the truth about his ultimatum to her and the unexpected price for his hubris. The tale is short enough that it can be memorized and recited orally, which is fortunate as the runestones bearing the tale usually weigh hundreds of pounds and are too heavy to easily carry, even for giants. If a runestone is ever destroyed, its pieces must be sunk in a frozen lake, with the fragment bearing the hammer symbol carried by a priest until a new runestone is carved, at which time the hammer fragment is buried under the new runestone.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

As a mere demon lord, Kostchtchie is beneath the notice of most of the powerful gods, though Iomedae longs to smite him as a demon, murderer, and torturer of women. Most of his rivalries are with other demon lords. He hates Mestama, patron of hags and witches, and takes great glee in sacrificing her minions and worshipers. He likewise hates Dagon, lord of deformity, seeing in that creature the worst of his own physical corruption. He lusts for Nocticula as a conquest rather than a partner, and would take her as his concubine and make her realm subordinate to his. He avoids Lamashtu and her rival Pazuzu, wary of their power and not wanting their conflict to distract him from his plans against Baba Yaga. In theory he opposes the old frost giant god, Thremyr, but that creature's indifference to worship and lack of concern about losing followers to Kostchtchie means the two powers are content to ignore each other.

NEW SPELL

Antipaladins, clerics, and rangers of Kostchtchie may prepare *hex ward* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic*) as a 1st-level spell and *chill metal* as a 2nd-level spell. His clerics and rangers may prepare *litany of vengeance* (*Ultimate Combat*) as a 4th-level spell. His priests also have access to the following spell.

FROSTHAMMER

School evocation [cold]; **Level** antipaladin 3, cleric 3, inquisitor 3, ranger 3 (Kostchtchie)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target one creature

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** yes

You create a warhammer of magically hardened ice and send it hurling toward the target.

You must succeed at a ranged touch attack to strike the target. If hit, the target takes 1d8 points of damage per 2 caster levels you possess (maximum 5d8); half this damage is bludgeoning damage, half is cold damage. The *frosthammer* counts as having a +1 enhancement bonus for the purpose of bypassing DR. If the target takes any bludgeoning damage from the hammer, you may attempt a trip combat maneuver check against that target, except you may use your caster level instead of your BAB and your spellcasting ability modifier (Wisdom for clerics, and so on) instead of your Strength modifier.



SERVITOR DEMONS

Kostchtchie hates being reminded that he is the size of a giant, and he has transformed many of his servitors into larger, deformed versions of their normal selves, often resembling giants more than demons, granting them the giant creature simple template (but otherwise not affecting their game statistics, despite any apparent deformities); even demons who are already Large or Huge usually have these alterations. For example, a glabrezu of Kostchtchie may have warped arms and legs, malformed pincers that resemble deformed humanoid hands, and a humanoid head instead of a wolflike one.

Given his hatred of women, he has very few female demons in his service, and most of them are similarly deformed and altered. For example, a succubus of Kostchtchie may be a fat, bandy-legged crone in her true form, and a marilith's upper half may be more apelike than humanoid.

A worshiper of Kostchtchie can use conjuring spells to call these deformed demons as if the creature had 2 additional Hit Dice, or summon them by using a *summon monster* spell of 1 level higher than normal. For example, a cleric could use *planar ally* to call a deformed, Large babau with the giant creature simple template as if it were a 9 HD creature, or use *summon monster VI* to summon one.

PLANAR ALLIES

In addition to his enlarged and deformed servitor demons, Kostchtchie has several proxies with magical power who transmit spells on his behalf.

Chernog Chort: This nalfeshnee was hand-crafted by Kostchtchie from the soul of one of his mortal lieutenants. When Kostchtchie wandered in the Abyss, Chernog Chort took over the tribe and used it to gather a great hoard of gold and jewels for himself. His greed in life and willingness to kill for it made his larval soul prone to becoming a nalfeshnee, and the demon lord elevated his new creation to the steward of his treasures. Hobbled by a shortened, deformed left leg, he rarely leaves Jhuvumirak except to pick over tribute and plunder. In addition to his demonic powers, he has the spellcasting ability of an 8th-level cleric.

Stoxtorn: This treachery demon was once a famous mortal witch-hunter, a soul-slaved inquisitor-priest of Kostchtchie, and is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of witches and accused witches. Stoxtorn fabricated evidence and testimony (especially against women) to stir up public hatred against witchcraft, and the blood of many innocents is directly and indirectly on his hands. After Stoxtorn's mortal death, Kostchtchie transformed his soul into a glabrezu and placed him in charge of the demon lord's spies and witch-hunters. His humanlike arms are reversed left to right and bend the wrong way. In addition to his demonic powers, he has the spellcasting ability of a 7th-level inquisitor.

CUSTOMIZED SUMMON LIST

Kostchtchie's priests can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spell descriptions (see also the section on Servitor Demons).

Summon Monster III

Fiendish ice elemental (Small) (*Bestiary 2*)

Summon Monster V

Fiendish ice elemental (Medium)

Half-fiend yeti

Summon Monster VI

Fiendish ice elemental (Large)

Summon Monster VII

Fiendish ice elemental (Huge)

Summon Monster VIII

Fiendish ice elemental (greater)

Summon Monster IX

Fiendish ice elemental (elder)

OBEDIENCE AND BOONS

Unlike normal gods, demon lords require physical and painful proof of devotion from their worshipers. Such acts are called obediences. A creature who takes the Demonic Obedience feat and performs the obedience required by its demon lord once per day gains a magical ability related to the demon lord's divine portfolio. Such worshipers gain additional abilities (called boons) once they reach 12th, 16th, or 20th level or have at least 12, 16, or 20 Hit Dice.

Kostchtchie's obedience is spilling the blood of a living creature onto snow-covered ground. The creature must remain alive during the entire obedience, and it must die within a minute of the obedience's end. Completing the obedience gives the worshiper a +4 bonus on all saving throws against cold. Kostchtchie's boons are as follows.

Frozen Wrath (Sp): At 12th level, you gain *chill touch* 3/day, *bull's strength* 2/day, or *sleet storm* 1/day.

Cold's Caress (Ex): At 16th level, you gain cold resistance 30. If you are immune to cold, you may instead gain fire resistance 30. You may likewise change this boon's benefit to fire resistance if you gain immunity to cold after gaining this boon.

Wrath of Frost (Sp): At 20th level, you can cast *giant form I* once per day. Three times during this ability's duration, you can cast an empowered *cone of cold* as a spell-like ability. This ability is the equivalent of a 9th-level spell.

More information on obediences, the Demonic Obedience feat, and demonic boons can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2*.

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THE DVEZDA MARCHES

THE WITCHWILDS, THE PLAGUE LANDS, WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT! GODS SPIT ON YOU FOOLS! ANYTHING EAST OF FANGARD WILL ONLY BRING YOU DEATH! EVERY YEAR I GET SOME IDIOT PETITIONING THE ELDERS' COUNCIL FOR MONEY TO FUND AN EXPEDITION EAST TO SEEK AND PLUNDER THE RUINS OF THE CYCLOPES. EVERY DAMN YEAR! AND FOR SOME REASON, THIS COUNCIL ALWAYS SENDS THEM! YOU PEOPLE ALWAYS SEND THEM, BUT AIN'T A DAMN ONE OF THEM EVER COMES BACK!"

—OSHLAK, ELDER OF THE ORLOVISHNAYA LONGHOUSE, DENOUNCING AN EXPEDITION TO THE DVEZDA MARCHES

THE DVEZDA MARCHES

The unclaimed wilds of Iobaria's northeast quarter don't have just one name. For centuries, its lands have belonged to no single kingdom and its denizens have bowed to no king. Some westerners refer to the region as Old Koloran—after the region's ancient cyclops name. Others call it the Wilds, the Witchwilds (a reference to the statues at Artrosa), or the grimly titled Plague Lands. However, those who make their lives there now call it the Dvezda Marches, after a group of centaurs who united all the various clans in the region and claimed the whole region as their territory, but who were almost completely wiped out by one of the land's many plagues. The Dvezda were a strong and clever breed of centaurs who had a characteristic brindled coat, and to this day, when a centaur is born with brindle markings—a rarity now—he is said to be a Lost Dvezda.

The grassy steppes in the Dvezda Marches support sizable populations of large grazing animals such as aurochs, deer, caribou, and wild horses left behind by human settlers. The lands here remain truly wild, and the chance of seeing another human remains rare. When this occurs, the individual is usually a foreigner and fellow treasure-seeking adventurer. Rarely, one might come across an abandoned farmstead or small ghost town here. The only other sites of real interest remain the numerous cyclops ruins that dot the land. These consist of tremendous stone structures, toppled, cracked, and overgrown with moss, liverwort, and lichen. While the sight of ruins tempts treasure-seekers, wise travelers have learned to avoid such areas, for within lie monstrous beasts, bandits, hungry ghosts, and accursed undead cyclopes.

There are no significant human settlements in the region, and friendly faces are few and far between. When the plagues swept through the Dvezda Marches, people fled west in mass exodus. Some, however, stayed behind. A number of people were simply too old or infirm to travel, while others wished to stay with their plague-stricken loved ones. Criminals and pariahs also remained in these lands, believing their chances against the plague were better than what they faced back home. Lastly, some who stayed behind were martyrs who thought they could cure the sick, or the madmen who convinced themselves that the entire plague rose out of some sort of conspiracy. While what happened to these people remains uncertain, small tribes of their descendants now wander the eastern steppes. They live nomadic lives, never settling long for fear of contracting some manner of plague. Tribes in the region remain small; a tribe of more than a hundred is unheard of—even taboo among some—and tribespeople fear congregating in large numbers. They roam about, setting up large animal skin tents each evening, following herd animals and making do with what resources they can scrounge from the cold and barren lands. Lacking any

LORDS OF THE MARCHES

Centaurs compose the majority of civilized creatures in the region, and they divide themselves into dozens of clans, each claiming its own territory in this harsh land. The centaurs of the area are also separated by ethnicity. The Rashalka centaurs inhabit Hoofwood and the surrounding environs and are generally the most civilized and approachable. The Azorva centaurs are stockier and more muscular, and make their homes in the mountains to the west of the Dvezda Marches. A third ethnicity, the Tsolniva centaurs, lives in the harsh Eastern Ice Steppes, its members bearing thick coats and hairy bodies.

significant bodies of water other than the Myrfrus River and scattered streams and ponds, the region receives little rainfall and the soil has turned thin and rocky. These factors combined with the cold climate have produced a region where farming is nearly impossible. The inhabitants must hunt and travel to survive, chasing the herds, gathering wild tubers and other resilient crops during the warmer seasons, and sometimes preying upon the unwary when they cross paths. Some westerners call these people the plague folk, and shun them as degenerate scavengers.

HISTORY

Though present-day life here is grim, evidence of the area's ancient civilizations litters the land. The ruins of massive stone cities, towering bridges, and great fortresses—all remnants of the once-glorious and terrible cyclops civilization of Koloran—sleep among the steppes like great cold giants. After Koloran crumbled, the region fractured into chaos while plagues devoured its people.

Swift and terrible, mysterious illnesses struck down thousands. In the end, death and fear drove nearly the entire human population from these lands. With their exodus, the humans left behind only sweeping fields of low-yield grasses, tangles of thorny shrubs, and ghost towns. Even in the present day, every human attempt to reclaim the ruins and restore the great cities of the ancients has failed. All have fallen to dark fates of which even bravest fear to speak. The only civilized creatures in this part of Iobaria are the centaurs. The nearest civilized settlement, the port city of Mirnbay, lies over 200 miles to the south on the coast of the Castrovin Sea, just west of the mouth of the Myrfrus River.

CLIMATE

The Dvezda Marches have a continental climate with little precipitation. In the most northern regions, winterlike conditions persist nearly year-round. Farther south, the climate turns more hospitable with snows lasting

REIGN OF WINTER

VURNIRN

N large town

Corruption +0; **Crime** -1; **Economy** +2; **Law** -1; **Lore** -2;
Society +4**Qualities** insular, prosperous, tourist attraction**Danger** +5**DEMOGRAPHICS****Government** council**Population** 4,955 (4,942 centaur; 13 other)**Notable NPCs****Clan Chief Aglaya Kurdst** (Voaldyn clan) (NG female centaur fighter 8)**Clan Chief Illarion Dosa** (Tsurvom clan) (N male centaur druid 9)**Chieftain Korak Kaag** (Voaldyn clan) (LN male centaur barbarian 5)**Clan Chief Makar Kuzma** (Kraask clan) (CG female centaur barbarian 7)**Prokhel Lavrenty** (LN female centaur cleric of Abadar 8)**MARKETPLACE****Base Value** 3,000 gp;**Purchase Limit** 15,000 gp;**Spellcasting** 5th**Minor Items** 3d4; **Medium****Items** 2d4; **Major Items** 1d4**KORAK KAAG**

less than half the year, gracing the region with a 4-month growing season. Though it rains little overall, the evaporation rate stays considerably lower than the annual rainfall, and therefore enough water remains to sustain plant growth. Still, poor soil quality and permafrost in the northern regions limit overall vegetation. Most of the Dvezda Marches consists of miles of low, broad steppes filled with wild grasses and low thorny shrubs. The remaining territories include the Eastern Ice Steppes, Deeprun Crevasse, and Hoofwood.

HOOFWOOD

Along the western edge of Deeprun Crevasse stands Hoofwood, a dense boreal forest, composed almost entirely of deciduous conifers. Hoofwood is named for the dozen or so Rashalka centaur clans that shelter themselves within its forests. The trees in this forest—pines and other species of hardy, winter-resistant trees—grow in close-enough proximity that their branches weave together in the canopy, blocking much of the sunlight and transforming the forest floor into a world of shadow and gloom. With little rain and low light, plant growth within

the understory remains scarce, and the hard, rocky soil is slightly acidic and nutrient poor.

Hoofwood provides a home to the Dvezda Marches' sole civilized population—the Rashalka centaurs. The four most populous centaur clans are Kraask, Phelor, Tsurvom, and Voaldyn. Most of the centaurs follow the Green Faith, or rather aspects of it, and practice both shamanistic and totemic rites.

With farming nearly impossible in Hoofwood, the centaurs rely on hunting and foraging for the bulk of their food. White-headed pheasants sit at the bottom of Hoofwood's food chain. The birds bring larger predators to the forest as well, such as hoarpanthers and occasionally polar kamadans, both of which the centaurs hunt. Centaur hunters leave no parts of their prey unused, and during tribal gatherings various clans frequently trade the cured skins, bones, and teeth of these creatures.

Due to their physiology and the lack of steady food sources, the centaur clans live nomadically for the most part, traveling the forest along ancestral paths. Each clan keeps its own distinct route. While circumstances (such as pursuing prey or avoiding natural disasters) sometime force a clan to deviate from its usual paths, for the most part the route does not change. During this time, the centaurs make numerous stops, setting up camp in favored locations or at spots they consider sacred. The most sacred of these stops is Vurnirn, a great

centaur settlement built upon the ruins of an ancient cyclops city that lies in the northern part of the forest.

Hoofpaths: The centaurs making their homes under the relative safety of Hoofwood's trees learned long ago that staying in one place would only lead to ruin. These creatures live a nomadic life in the forest following food sources, and over the years this behavior has grown more important to the psyche of the centaurs, becoming more than just a survival mechanism. As the various centaur clans make their circuits through Hoofwood, they travel different parts of the forest so as not to overlap too much with other clans. The centaurs use the time they spend traveling to pass on oral traditions to young centaurs and build a stronger community through the seasonal recitations of their past. Numerous small holidays, coinciding with phases of the moon, solstices and equinoxes, and locations of constellations in the night sky, interrupt the centaurs' hard lives while they make their way along the Hoofpaths each year.

THE DVEZDA MARCHES

The Hut's Clearing: The *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* always appears in this wide clearing when it visits Iobaria, though this fact is not commonly known.

Korak Kaag's Camp: The Voaldyn centaurs frequently camp at this location as they make their traditional circuit of the Hoofpaths. Currently, the Voaldyn chieftain Korak Kaag has occupied this site to defend the northern stretch of the Hoofwood from invaders.

Vurnirn: Humans and other outsiders typically describe Vurnirn as a city of centaurs, yet this definition lacks accuracy. Vurnirn—or the Centaur's Cliff, as it is also called—serves as a centralized location for holding massive clan gatherings. Throughout the year, centaur clans from all over Hoofwood travel through Vurnirn to trade goods, exchange news, meet with kin, and find spouses. Most nomadic clans stay for a few weeks, and then, upon wrapping up their business, pack up and move out. Therefore, while Vurnirn seems to have the population of a bustling city, it has few permanent residents.

Vurnirn also serves as a common ground to discuss political issues between the various tribes. Several times during the year, typically during the summer months unless matters of great importance affect the centaurs, representatives from the clans that call Hoofwood their territory hold conclaves to discuss important intertribal political issues, settle disputes, and reestablish shared alliances against outside invaders, such as the Tsolniva centaurs who live in the Ice Steppes to the north. Phelor commands most of the political power in southern Hoofwood, while the remaining three tribes—Kraask, Tsurvom, and Voaldyn—share power in central Hoofwood and in the north. Each of the northern clans controls a significant section of Vurnirn, and as a show of good will, they take turns hosting Phelor clans whenever the clans make their stopovers.

THE ICE STEPPES

Bordering the Crown of the World, the Ice Steppes are covered in snow year-round. In the warmer months, temperatures rise to just above freezing. During the winter, when darkness falls for nearly the entire day, temperatures drop well below freezing and icy blizzards rip through the mountains on a daily basis.

The land is cruel and inhospitable, settled by only the toughest creatures. Dire beasts from lost ages still roam these wastes, as do tribes of wolfish adlets, packs of polar kamadans, clutches of frost drakes, tribes of frost and taiga giants, and the most violent and barbaric clans of the hirsute Tsolniva centaurs.

Those outside the region remain uncertain of how these creatures survive under such extreme conditions, and at first glance, life here appears impossible. Ironically, the region's overactive volcanoes have kept these creatures

DVEZDA PLAGUE

Plague appears frequently throughout Iobaria. Over the centuries, various diseases have killed thousands, causing the collapse of entire human populations, killing off most of the dragons, and nearly wiping out an entire ethnicity of centaurs. The plague that killed the centaurs came to bear their name, and is known to this day as the Dvezda plague. While most of the centaurs living in the region have established a resistance to this plague, pockets of the virulent contagion still remain a threat to visitors. Anyone traveling through Iobaria has a +1% cumulative chance per month of contracting the plague, up to a maximum chance of 12% after 1 year. The Dvezda Plague has the following statistics.

DVEZDA PLAGUE

Type disease, ingested or inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d4 Con damage and 1 Dex damage; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

Days after contracting the virus, the victim becomes stricken with a high fever and begins sweating profusely. Later, the victim begins suffering from extreme tremors, followed by a thinning of the blood and bleeding from the tear ducts, nose, ears, and other orifices.

alive. Many lava outpourings cooled over the glaciers that filled the valleys, forming hard stone crusts between the mountains. Once encased in stone, the glaciers have been melted away by the geothermal vents beneath them, leaving behind vast subterranean caverns. The volcanic activity keeps the caverns comfortably warm year-round while the snow provides ample water. The Tsolniva shelter within these caves in great numbers, as do various giants, trolls, and other beasts.

Tsolniva Camps: The Tsolniva centaur clans may have found safe and comfortable homes in the warm caves scattered through the Ice Steppes, but they still lack sufficient food, leading them to raid their southern cousins. Their harsh lives upon the Ice Steppes has made the Tsolniva fierce and barbaric. Some claim isolated clans have even descended into demon worship. At least one clan of the Tsolniva centaurs has allied with a hunter of both centaurs and giants, a fierce white dragon named Sjhovor.

Wyrmtooth Tribe: Frost giants, bolstered by knowing they live in the lands once controlled by Kostchtchie, remain a great threat to those traveling the Ice Steppes, but another race of giants also makes its home here on the rocky tundra—taiga giants. While most taiga giants are nomadic, the Wyrmtooth tribe has remained in the region for two generations without leaving, putting these giants

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in conflict over resources with the local frost giants and Tzolniva centaurs—threats the taiga giants manage easily. Driven here to seek revenge against the white dragon Sjhvornor—who attacked an elders’ conclave hundreds of years ago, killing half a dozen influential tribal leaders—the Wyrmtooth giants seek to destroy the dragon and avenge their ancestors. Led by a young charismatic chieftain named **Drugezna** (CN female taiga giant druid 4), the Wyrmtooth clan has yet to gain entrance to Sjhvornor’s lair, though the giants keep watch on the cave and launch quick reconnaissance missions into its depths when the dragon departs to feed. Drugezna has recently learned that the Tzolniva clan is loyal to Sjhvornor, and she plans to erase it from the Ice Steppes.

DEEPRUN CREVASSE

Over 3 miles wide in places, the Deeprun Crevasse is a jagged gash torn into the face of the earth. Flanked on either side by treacherous cliffs, the Myrfrus River, also called the Deeprun, crashes through the crevasse floor, winding around a rocky, nearly barren wasteland filled with small crags, snowdrifts, and jagged blocks of ice washed south from upstream.

The northern stretch of the crevasse hosts thick, almost glacial ice on either side of the river. Here, hoarfrost coats much of surrounding area and huge snow drifts pile along the base of the cliff walls, some over 50 feet deep.

Farther south, rocky uplifts form a series of plateaus that bisect the Deeprun’s channel, creating majestic waterfalls. The mesas of Artrosa remain the largest of these formations and partition the southern parts of the Crevasse from the upper crevasse. The area is named after its most prominent feature, the 3 mile-tall stone statues carved into the precipitous face of its highest mesas.

Nearly 30 miles south of Artrosa, the trees of Hoofwood spill over the cliff face and into the crevasse. Within the shadowed depths of its great trees, the centaurs have carved stepped trails allowing access to the river below. Beyond, where the forest breaks, the Myrfrus emerges from the trees and pours over a series of rough cliffs. High upon these cliffs nest thousands of bloodhawks, eagles, and other large raptors that swoop down to pluck salmon out of the Myrfrus. From the falls, the crevasse continues south, until the cliffs descend into the plain. There, the Myrfrus forms a massive circular lake containing an island dotted with huge stone dolmens arranged in a semicircular pattern, their entrances all facing inward. On the south side of the lake, the river passes beneath the ancient ruined bridge at Daruthrost before continuing south into the Castrovin Sea.

Artrosa: Built by Baba Yaga almost 2,000 years ago, these massive figures of a maiden, mother, and crone watch over the lands once held by Kostchtchie himself. Also known as “The Three Who Watch,” the figures represent the stages

THE DVEZDA MARCHES

of womanhood. Each figure contains a magic-wrought fortress linked to the others by mystic portals. Baba Yaga only inhabited her massive complex for a short while as she kept watch over the land to ensure Kostchtchie didn't rise up and reclaim the territory he once held. Before leaving Artrosa, Baba Yaga appointed a warden to see to the place in her absence.

Despite the imposing terrain and treacherous weather conditions, Artrosa remains a desirable destination for explorers eager to climb the statues and decipher their secrets. Each year, dozens die upon the plateau's foreboding slopes, littering the rocky crevices and crannies with their remains. If any have succeeded in unlocking the mystery of these great statues they have yet to share their findings with the civilized world. More information on Artrosa can be found in this volume's adventure.

Daruthrost: The dark stones of the towering cyclopean ruins at Daruthrost stand in defiance of all natural law. The ruins are best known for the massive bridge that once spanned the crevasse, destroyed long before humans visited the area. High above the river, where the apex of the bridge would be, impossibly strong winds scream as if in agony. Below, the riverbanks on either side of the oppressive arch sport piles of sun-bleached bones, while the bridge's heavy shadow stretches outward, painting the surrounding land in gray.

In the years when humans attempted to settle these eastern lands, they found the ruins at Daruthrost and moved into the safest of the ancient structures. In the course of a generation, those pioneers transformed the encampment from a small colony into the region's primary trade hub. At its peak, it boasted several budding industries, including a lumber mill, some granaries, a tannery, and dozens of shops. However, a plague swept across the land, and Daruthrost, with its sizable population and constant influx of travelers, provided a veritable breeding ground for disease. It became known as a plague city, leading to the common saying, "All plagues start in Daruthrost." Daruthrost was soon cut off from trade routes and its people were shunned. Citizens fled by the hundreds, prompting bloody riots and rebellion. The most prominent of these uprisings was led by Kosiavitch Criath, a charismatic sorcerer who led his followers to butcher plague victims in order to prevent its spread. The victims then fled to

the bridge's upper levels and barricaded them off. Criath's followers began hollowing out a complex series of living chambers within the bridge. For nearly a decade, they survived in their isolated settlement, but the plagues at last reached them too. Driven by fear, the people turned upon each other again, resorting to gruesome violence. They raced through the settlement, raiding homes in search of anyone with the slightest sign of illness, dragging those they captured to the edge of the broken bridge and casting them to their deaths. But the plague continued to spread, and in the end, no one survived. Now the ghosts of those who succumbed to the plague and the brutality of their brethren haunt the place.

Sjohvornor: In a cave nested into the side of the crevasse, the great wyrm white dragon Sjohvor claims all of the Dvezda Marches as his personal territory. Fickle and aggressive, this dragon is one of the few of his kind that survived the Drakeplague of 4519 AR. The entrance to his cavernous lair is littered with the remains of dragons he has defeated in combat, a testament to his dislike for others of his kind and an ample warning that his caves should be left alone. He sees other dragons as competition and delights in fighting with them to reinforce his power and strength. Sjohvor slumbers much of the time, but periodically

he rises and takes to the air, surveying the Dvezda Marches and plucking meals from the snowy badlands. Though there are very few humans on whom he can dine, the centaurs of the area make for satisfying meals—aside from the Tsolniva centaurs, who have pledged fealty to the ancient dragon.

Zvartjan: Worn peaks jut from an otherwise placid Lake Pirstjoi, forming a series of islands where the Myrfrus River pools before exiting the Deeprun Crevasse. The centaur tribes call these rocky islands Zvartjan and are afraid to visit the place. Few, if any, human explorers have investigated the place thoroughly and returned to tell about it, but the prevailing hypothesis is that this geological feature was where the region's ancient cyclopes quarried some of their stone for building the many structures and monuments they left behind. The stone in this island's rocky protuberances is very dark and contains flecks of rose-colored quartz. During most of the day, a thick fog clings to the stones and seeps out over the water, and at night strange howls and frightening screams echo across the lake.



DRUGEZNA

REIGN OF WINTER



PORCELAIN STREET

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: THE BONEDUST DOLLS 3 OF 6

An alchemist learns the use of drugs as part of his work with poisons. With most, deadliness depends on dosage.

I had grown complacent. Orlin has a unicorn's talent for detecting poisons, gained from an alicorn fragment I used in his resurrection, and I had come to rely on his warnings. A less than lethal dosage of a poison, however, would not register; otherwise, unicorns would be known for trampling foxgloves rather than skewering evil creatures.

Though I had never encountered it personally, I knew that dream spider venom could be used to brew "shiver," a potent narcotic and hallucinogen. Nobles imported this exotic vice to Galt, and even after the Revolution, nests of the monstrous arachnids had been found lairing in

forgotten archives. Powdermaster Davin had warned me that the webbing itself was psychotropic.

A theory was coming together. It was said that some Katapeshi storytellers used majoun, a drugged sweetmeat, to enhance their performances. Why couldn't an Irriseni storyteller do the same? A drop of shiver in the cocoa, a shadow puppet theater screened with the webbing, and Kyevgeny's frankly mellifluous voice, trained in the charms of Whitethrone and heir to his famous ancestress? He might not be a proper witch, but Kyevgeny had found more than a crumb of magic in the charm bags Poskarl accused him of plundering.

I had more than a crumb in my bag as well. Along with the alicorn fragments, I had found a greater treasure, the unicornskin glove of Duke Devore, with its inset a ruby

PORCELAIN STREET

possessing a number of virtues. The most pertinent was its ability to neutralize poison.

Of course, alcohol is a poison, and the inability to get drunk made for a less than merry Merrymeade.

I swapped my left glove for the unicornskin one.

I felt the gem's familiar weight. Kyevegeny's theater lost its luster, the colors muting, changing from a window in time to a pretty but unremarkable toy. My theory of a mild hallucinogen was correct.

Or not, since if the unicorn's jewel had rid me of poisons, why was the being beside me still flickering back and forth from wolf to man?

I observed this phenomenon. As an alchemist, I had drunk more than my share of potions. It was to be expected that I might see things that might or might not be there.

I saw Rhodel lift the cocoa pot and pour a cup, then take my knife and cut a slice of cake. The man and the wolf both stared. It was clear that they were seeing something other than a pretty girl setting Merrymeade cake before them.

"Whose witchery is this?" asked the man. The wolf said nothing.

"Orlin's," Irynya said brightly, gesturing to my brother. "He has a ghostly helper. Isn't that marvelous, especially for one so young?"

"Who's your friend, Kyevegeny?" his sister asked.

Kyevegeny sat up straight, no longer hunched behind his toy theater. He was an absolutely huge youth, and being lit from below by the table lamp should have made him look sinister, but in that moment he looked even younger than my brother.

Poskarl looked younger than Tinka and far more frightened. Lychee, his monkey, was even more expressive, his mouth open in a grimace of horror, his hands clutching Poskarl's turban and pulling it askew as he tried to hide behind it.

"You may call me Silvertooth, my dear." The man grinned, revealing that one of his front teeth had indeed been replaced with silver. The wolf snarled and his right fang was silver as well. "I am sorry if I interrupted your amusement, but I have business to discuss with your brother and his friend." He indicated Poskarl. "If you could find some errand to take you elsewhere, it would be well." He then glared at Orlin. "I do not care for cocoa, thank you."

I knew from Cedrine that chocolate was poisonous to dogs. Perhaps the same held true with all canids.

I also discovered the reason for my double vision. The lens that let me see Rhodel had fallen halfway across my eye during Kyevegeny's puppet show. Apparently its interaction with the shiver-laced cocoa allowed me to see a shapeshifter's true form.

I flipped it up. All I saw was a white-haired man in a wolfskin coat.

I dropped another lens. Silvertooth's silver tooth glinted jacinth, the color of Andoren poppies. Clearly magical.

He turned to me. "Might you also have business elsewhere?"

I flipped the lens up, looking into the eyes of a wolf in the head of a man.

I was the first to look away. "I, um, yes." I spotted Madenya clutched in Valya's arms. "I was meaning to purchase a doll. Tinka needs one. Do you know—"

"Porcelain Street," Irynya supplied quickly. "You buy dolls on Porcelain Street. We'll show you the way. The boys can meet us later."

Poskarl and Kyevegeny still looked stricken but nodded, to which Silvertooth said, "Splendid."

Rhodel boxed up the Merrymeade cake, including Silvertooth's slice. She made a show of returning my knife past the wolfman's nose. He bared his teeth at me until I left with Orlin, Tinka, Valya, and Irynya.

"Fly, my pretty," Irynya told her parrot once we were outside the building. "Fetch us a sleigh."

Olya took wing, a burst of color against the snow. Irynya turned to Valya. "What was that about?"

"We don't want to know, but we need to anyway." She reached up to her hairpiece, taking Koliadki onto her finger. "Hurry, little one," she whispered. "Tell grandmother everything."

The thrush bobbed its tiny head and fluttered off across the rooftops.

A minute of awkward silence was broken by Olya's screeching: "There is my mistress, Irynya Elvanna, great-granddaughter of our glorious queen! Serve her well, Varki man, and you shall be rewarded from the palace purse!"

Below the fluttering parrot tromped a team of reindeer pulling a sleigh driven by a dark-haired man wearing a blue tunic trimmed with red and yellow ribbons. His feet were shod in reindeer-hide moccasins. He assisted Irynya first, then Valya and me, giving us seats in the back, then placed Orlin and Tinka with himself in the driver's box.

Olya attempted to perch on a reindeer's antlers, but the deer kept tossing their heads. "Porcelain Street!"

The driver shook his reins and the reindeer pulled the sleigh at a merry clip. We passed other wintry conveyances drawn by reindeer, horses, and dogs. A mammoth pulled a sled carrying a giant.

We came into a snow-filled plaza. Trolls were shoveling while goblins used long-handled rakes to pull snow off roofs.

Orlin turned to face us. "Where does all the snow go?"

"Some goes into the lake, some into the hot springs," Irynya explained.

"What about the snow outside the city?"

"A word of advice," Irynya cautioned. "Those who ask too many questions have their skulls used to repair the Bone Road, the street where we first met." She smiled wickedly. "It leads from the city gates to the palace barbican, is often widened, and is the one street in Whitethrone always kept well swept."

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“Those were skulls?” Orlin said, followed quickly by, “That’s not a question!”

“Indeed,” said Irynya, “it is not.” She laughed then. “But here I am acting too much a member of the royal family. A stilyagi should *like* impudent questions. Ask me your most impudent and I shall answer as best I can.”

Orlin thrust out his lower lip, thinking. “So if it’s always winter in Irrisen, do you still have Crystalhue?”

“A most impudent question!” Irynya’s parrot cackle echoed in the cold air. “Yes, winter rules eternal in Irrisen, yet time still passes, and we still have holidays. It is now Merrymead. In other lands, I hear they mourn the return of soggy springtime. In Whitethrone, we celebrate the first of the caravans from Tian Xia.” She chuckled. “As for



“Just because a wolf wears a human’s shape doesn’t make it civilized.”

Crystalhue—we have few Shelynites here, but it’s still a time for proposals and courtships.”

Valya grinned slyly. “I think Irynya’s looking forward to this next one in particular.”

Irynya flushed bright pink, and I turned from whatever scandal was brewing in their aristocratic circle in order to observe the impressive sights passing us by.

To our right, out of great blocks of snow, rose a huge ice sculpture shaped somewhat like Kyevegeny—if he were bearded, wielding a giant ax, and taller than a frost giant.

Goblins clambered up the sculpture with knives clenched in their teeth, carrying trussed sheep. A large crowd looked on.

Orlin and I are used to the sight of blood on snow. But unlike the goblins’ butchery or what I had witnessed and perpetrated on the battlefield, the guillotine is a humane and scientific instrument. Tinka did not need such sights. “Do not look,” I called out. She dutifully hid her eyes.

“Indeed,” agreed Irynya. “Sheep? What is the Frosthall coming to, that it needs to advertise its plays so?”

“Kostchtchie the Mutton Butcher,” joked Valya.

“Kostchtchie the Mutton Monger,” Irynya jested back. Her friend fell into a fit of giggles at the ribald pun. “Porcelain Street, driver,” the ice princess instructed. “No need to tarry.”

I noted the steps where Dr. Orontius wished us to meet him next Firesday, memorizing the façades of neighboring structures.

Our sleigh left the plaza, but not before the sheep began to scream.

We proceeded down a wide boulevard edged with the businesses one finds adjacent to theaters—restaurants, taverns, fashionable modistes—and turned right onto a street so calculatedly picturesque the effect could only have been achieved with witchcraft. Even the snow seemed manicured.

Covered walkways with elegantly turned posts and balusters joined shop porticos into a grand promenade on both sides of the street. Shoppers could stroll in their finest clothes unsullied by snow or soot. A precise tracing of hoarfrost ran around the edges of the windowpanes that, rather than obscuring the wares within, framed them to best advantage.

One small shop specialized in mugs and steins. A group of richly dressed dwarves eyed them covetously. A larger shop’s windows boasted full porcelain services in an assortment of patterns, from the tasteful snowflake ware used at the Cocoa Pot to baroque holiday sets, such as an elaborate tessellated pattern of interlocked bees, wasps, and daggers, obviously intended for some witch’s Merrymead feast. Others sold busts of Queen Elvanna in assorted sizes, biscuit jars in the shape of goblins, vinegar cruet trolls with removable heads, figurines and decorative plates of every description. But mostly Porcelain Street sold dolls. Hundreds of dolls lined

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the street, watching from windows like Galtan children curious about the tumbrel carts on their way to the guillotine.

"The Four Tusks, driver." Valya pointed to Porcelain Street's most elegant shop.

The Galtan in me insisted I shake the driver's hand, slipping him a few coins. It is an honor to serve the Revolutionary Council, but risky to ask payment. I presumed Queen Elvanna's palace operated similarly.

The doors of the shop were opened for us by Ulfen guards almost as tall as Kyeveny. Between them, the trolls, and the giants, Whitethrone was conspiring to make me feel positively short.

We were met by a balding, middle-aged Ulfen man sporting a kaftan of spotless white, sewn with seed pearls in a pattern that resembled four tusks, an ivory tower, or a monogrammed M—the same mark as on the back of the porcelain. "Lady Morgannan!" he greeted Valya. "What an unexpected delight! And Madenya too! Such a pleasure!"

"It is good to see you as well, Ermutt," Valya squeezed his arm, "and before you ask, Holgrim is getting on very well. Grandmother has promoted him to Kyeveny's valet."

"Oh, good! Oh, I am so happy. Oh—" He froze with the look of a frightened deer as he glimpsed Irynya.

"Lady Irynya," Valya supplied, "great-granddaughter of Her Majesty."

Ermutt bowed so low his carefully coiled forelock fell off his bald spot and onto the floor.

Irynya stifled a giggle. "You may rise." He did. She giggled more as he hastily brushed the hair out of his face and onto his head where it sat like a pile of golden cobwebs.

"Shall I clear the shop so you may browse in private, your ladyship?"

"No need." She stepped to one side and gestured to Orlin. "This talented young witch has acquired a whipping child, as is proper," her eyes flicked to me, "and his brother thought that she might want a doll." She dimpled, obviously stifling a laugh.

"Of course, your ladyship." Ermutt betrayed no impropriety. "Was your companion wanting a particular style of doll?"

"Oh, he's a stranger to Irrisen." Irynya laughed lightly. "Just show us everything."

"As your ladyship pleases."

The Four Tusks catered to the nobility. Tables displayed platters and punch bowls in the "Icicle Crown" pattern created for the coronation of Queen Elvanna, reserved for members of the royal family, and dismissed as "Oh, those," by Irynya. Vitrines on the staircase landing showcased porcelain miniatures of the wild creatures of Irrisen: a panoply of snow geese, snowshoe hares, pine martens, white harts, and gray boars. One corner curio displayed a large number of gray housecats in various charming poses.

Upstairs, hundreds of dolls—girls and boys alike—watched unblinking. Most were gold- and copper-haired

Ulfen children or platinum-tressed Jadwiga, but there were a number of dark-haired Varisians and Chelaxians represented, some Tians and Kellids, and a few from races even farther from Irrisen's borders.

"You will note," said Ermutt, proudly displaying his wares, "most of our children wear the traditional clothing of Irrisen. But some wear their native costumes, like this fine fellow in his Varki gákti," he gestured to a doll wearing a blue tunic like our sleigh driver, "and others in more exotic garb. See this lovely? She depicts one of the geishas of Minkai." He pointed out a Tian girl in an elaborate silk robe and sash, her black hair pinned up with jewels, her face painted with white lead. I didn't know what a geisha was, but she resembled a handmaid from before Galt's Revolution.

I glanced about, seeing if I could see any more mature dolls. I was rewarded with a case of older fashion dolls and a shelf with no less than a dozen crone dolls.

Ermutt followed my gaze. "Ah yes. We also have the mothers for all our sweet little children, and of course our babushkas, the grandmothers, whom no proper Irriseni home is without."

I regarded the crones. While the faces of the child dolls and the middle-aged dolls had been cast with a range of expressions—happy, sad, mischievous, petulant—they were all some variety of pleasant.

The crones wore an assortment of evil expressions—conniving, furious, gloating, malicious, disapproving, grim. All were dressed like the statue of Baba Yaga from Market Square: broomsticks in one hand, bundles of sticks on their backs, and plucked golden cockerels at their waists along with silver sickles, garlic braids, various roots and herb pouches—the tools of the witch's trade. The crones' sarafans were the moss green of woad overdyed with weld, their blouses the contrasting purple that came from the costly Taldan dye murex. Instead of kokoshniks or crowns, they all wore black leather skullcaps over their snow-white hair. Their eyes were silver and ultramarine and frighteningly intense.

Tinka pointed to one bearing a particularly haughty expression, her finger shaking. "Mother and Father kept ours beside the hearth. We told Baba Yaga when our chores were done and left her an egg cup filled with cabbage water every night." Tears welled up in the child's eyes. "But I spilled it! And Mother sold me to the thrallmistress!" She looked in horror at the dolls all around us. "The thrallmistress said the Bone Mill would grind my bones and turn me into a doll!"

Valya gasped. "The old woman said *that!*?"

Tinka nodded, eyes wide.

"Something should be done about that," Irynya sniffed. "First trying to make a witch her thrall, next telling ridiculous lies?" She shook her head. "I've heard of magic mills that churn out salt, coffee... even gold! But complete dolls? Preposterous!"

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"It would greatly simplify the process," Valya snorted, "but it's completely untrue." She knelt down, facing Tinka, her face serious. "This is Madenya." She held up her doll. "She doesn't believe a word of it. Do you, Madenya?" Valya must have had some of Kyevgeny's puppetry training, for she made her doll shake her head in an exceptionally lifelike way. "You mustn't believe a word of it," she told Tinka. "Nor repeat it to anyone else. Do you understand?"

All at once, Tinka brightened. "I don't believe a word of it!"

"Good." Valya stood, the child as good as forgotten.

Orlin locked eyes with Irynya. "Then what does the Bone Mill grind the bones for?"

"Oh, various things," she dismissed. "The nicer skulls are used to repair the Bone Road, choice bits are sold to necromancers or made into furniture, but mostly they're just ground for bread for the ogres and trolls."

Valya nodded in agreement. "Some of the poorer wolves too, though don't let them hear you saying that. It's a horrible insult to a winter wolf to accuse them of looking for scraps around the Bone Mill."

"Especially if it's true," Irynya added impishly.

"Exactly." Valya stood up. "No one eats troll bread or ogre sausage except the trolls and ogres. And sometimes the giants."

"And the goblins," Irynya added, "but goblins eat fish heads, so that scarcely counts."

"Troll bread!" squawked Olya.

Irynya mock-glared at her parrot. "Yes, and you too, but you're a featherbrain." She kissed her familiar on the cheek.

"You won't feed me to the trolls?" asked Tinka.

"Of course not," scoffed Irynya. "You're not my whipping child." She looked to Orlin.

"I'm not going to feed her to trolls!"

"There you are then," Irynya concluded. "I expect he will keep you as a pet, and you'll only be whipped when your master does wrong. If you are very good, when you're older, you may earn some trusted place in his household."

Ermutt nodded. "My son Holgrim is now a valet," he said proudly.

"Better than bodyguard," Irynya snorted. "Can you imagine?"

Valya chuckled. "He was Kyevgeny's whipping boy."

I sighed. "I take it that whipping children don't generally get toys."

Irynya dimpled. "Not new ones."

Valya nodded. "Generally they get our cast-offs."

"You could get a new doll, Valya," Irynya suggested, "and give her Madenya."

"No!" Valya cried fiercely, hugging her doll. "Grandmother gave her to me after Mother died birthing Kyevgeny. She even had Madenya's wig made from Mother's hair!"

Irynya mouthed the last words, rolling her eyes, then turned to other sport. "Mostly we give our whipping children our old clothes. Though this was especially funny with Holgrim," she explained. "He's short for an Ulfen, and looks positively ridiculous in what Kyevgeny's outgrown. Which is everything."

"We Morgannans are an old house," Valya reminded her friend. "Kyevgeny takes after our ancestress Sudreyskr is all." She looked to me and explained, "Jadwiga marry Jadwiga to keep the lines strong. The exception is when there's a fosterling, a witch of impressive power from another race—such as Orlin here—who is taken into one of our families and raised as our own. Sudreyskr was one such. There have been Morgannans since who inherited her stature or golden hair."

"A pity Kyevgeny didn't get her magic in the bargain."

"Says the girl who didn't find her familiar till last year."

"I found *her*," Olya corrected.

"That you did." Irynya kissed her parrot again. "No matter. Poskarl is a year older than Kyevgeny, and he's barely had his monkey since Crystalhue. There's time for your brother to catch up."

"Indeed..." Valya looked pensive, turning toward the windows so I saw her in profile. She was quite pretty, with fine angular features, and resembled her doll, Madenya. That was unremarkable, for the doll had been crafted in memory of her mother. What was remarkable was that, seen in profile and serious, both bore a striking resemblance to what I had taken to be a bust of Queen Elvanna. But it was not. It was the bust of another woman, one who looked close enough to Elvanna to be a sister, but instead of wearing the crown of iron icicles, wore a tiara formed of four ivory tusks.

I flipped down my telescopic lens. The inscription read as I expected: *Queen Morgannan*. The prongs at the front of her tiara formed a stylized M. I now knew who "The Mistress of the Ivory Tower" in Duke Devore's journal referred to.

A sharp tapping on one of the windows startled me out of my reverie. Valya rushed toward it, opening the casement.

A thrush flew in, landing on her hairband's cherry twigs and frantically chirped in her ear. "Grandmother!" she called out the window. "We are upstairs!"

A minute later Kyevgeny loped up the staircase, his owl-beaked hood flapping back.

"Where is Poskarl?" Irynya demanded.

"At the palace," Kyevgeny wheezed. "We left him at the palace barbican."

A minute later, a green-eyed gray cat with fur as thick and dense as plush padded purposefully up the steps, glanced at each of our faces, then sat on the top step to one side.

The woman who came upstairs could only be Grandmother Morgannan. She appeared far older than her ancestress at her prime, but had the same fine features, the same regal bearing. Her ivory M, instead of being the forepiece of a tiara, was a device worked into the front of her

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kokoshnik. Her cape was white sealskin, and her sarafan was embroidered with countless seed pearls forming a beaded mosaic of an ossuary. A thousand skulls peered out from the rows of pearls. In one hand she held an ivory staff, the haft was a tapering spiral that could only be the horn of an enormous unicorn.

She surveyed us like her cat, then said, "Koliadki has told me everything." She looked to Irynya first. "Lady Irynya, I am certain you are anxious to rejoin your cousin, Lord Poskarl. I offer transport in my sleigh if you would deem it meet. The Royal Palace is but a slight detour."

"Is he well? What's happened?"

Grandmother Morgannan inclined her head slightly. "I have found it prudent over the years not to inquire too deeply into matters which do not concern me, especially where House Elvanna is concerned. Suffice it to say that I made it clear to the wolf Silvertooth that my grandson was no part of his and Lord Poskarl's business, whatever that may be. I also noted that while I may be an 'old bitch'—to use the wolfish honorific—I find this preferable to being transformed into a chipmunk."

"Grandmother, you didn't!" gasped Valya.

The old woman smiled sweetly, revealing a number of teeth repaired with gold. "No, I did not. But I left the possibility open to be revisited in the future. Wolves are very much ruled by power and the perception of the same, and while a curse may be broken, one could never live down the shame of being a tiny prey animal scurrying about the trees stuffing his face with pine nuts."

"And Poskarl?" Irynya asked.

"I offered him the same as I do you: transport in my sleigh to the palace barbican."

"I accept, Lady Byanka." Irynya made a brief curtsy. "My thanks."

"The pleasure will be mine." She turned and looked at Orlin, then reached out a sealskin-mittened hand and tipped his chin up, then nodded. "You must be Orlin Gantier, the young Galtan witch I was told of. It would be my pleasure if you would dine with us this evening at Morgannan Abbey and allow us to show you some of the family splendors."

"Okay," Orlin said, eyes wide.

Grandmother Morgannan's old lapis eyes flicked to Tinka standing halfway behind Orlin. "This, however, will not do."

She glanced to Ermutt. "I believe you have some of the clothes we keep for the larger dolls?"

"Of course, ma'am." Ermutt held out his hand to Tinka until she took it.

Grandmother Morgannan's eyes then went to me. She looked at me for a long moment, then glanced down to my left hand, the glove of unicornskin, and the ruby cabochon winking dully on the back. She smiled. "Duke Devore,

so lovely to see you again. I congratulate you on having regained your youth. How is your clever young wife?"

"My wife?" I was conscious of everyone looking at me. "I am sorry, dear lady. You have me mistaken. I am Norret Gantier."

She paused, then said, "I am seldom mistaken." She raised her walking stick and revealed the handle. Her lapis blue eyes were magnified by the lenses of an ivory lorgnette.

She lowered the stick. "We are among friends here. There is no worry of word getting back to Galt and—" She paused then. "Your wife? She did not survive?"

"Duchess Devore has not been seen in years," I said truthfully.

The awkward silence was broken by Ermutt returning with Tinka, now dressed in Irrisen finery. "Doesn't she make a perfect doll?"

"Oh yes," said Grandmother Morgannan, taking her in. "Yes, she does."



"Grandmother Morgannan knows more than she should."

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BESTIARY

THE BLIZZARD BLOCKED OUT THE SKY. THE WORLD SEEMED TO CONTRACT INTO A COLD, DARK, SNOWY WHIRLWIND. BUNDLED IN MY FURS AND EATING THE LAST OF MY RATIONS, I HEARD, BARELY AUDIBLE IN THE BLIZZARD, THE VOICE OF MY HUSBAND. SHOCKED AT HEARING HIM, I PEERED THROUGH THE TENT'S FLAPS. IN THE FOG, JUST AT THE EDGE OF SIGHT, I SAW HIM CRAWLING NEARER, CLAWED AND BROKEN BY SOME BEAST. I RUSHED OUT TO HELP, BUT AS I NEARED HE VANISHED, AND I FOUND MYSELF FACING A MASSIVE BEAR, ITS BLACK EYES FULL OF MALEVOLENCE. FLEEING, I RAN UNTIL MY LEGS GAVE OUT AND I COLLAPSED IN THE SNOW."

~MARLISS NALATHANE, EXPLORER

BESTIARY

This month's Pathfinder Bestiary includes two obscure monsters from Inuit and Swiss folklore, a demon related to the demon lord Kostchtchie, a cruel murderous fey creature, and a tauric beast of cold spawned by Thremyr.

MORE WINTRY ENCOUNTERS

The random encounter table presented here includes a mix of creatures PCs could reasonably encounter while adventuring on the eastern edge of Iobaria. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have a 30% chance of a random encounter every 2 hours. If, when rolling on this table, you get a result that is not appropriate to the location, substitute in another result or roll again. Some of the encounters listed in the table are detailed here to help flesh out its entries.

Giant Eagle Aerie (CR 9) In the rocky crags and cliffs that make up the walls of the Deeprun Crevasse, eight giant eagles make their nests, always peering down into the crevasse hoping to spot their next meal. They typically pluck fish from the Myrfrus River, take down smaller birds, and even hunt hoarpanthers that climb along the crags. Though normally respectful of humanoids, these giant eagles don't hesitate to attack creatures that come too near their nests. The eagles take to the air and dive-bomb their enemies, each cycling through attacks in turn.

Reveling Fey (CR 8) On the edge of Hoofwood, three korreds have taken over a rocky clearing and turned it into a place of revelry. The small fey creatures dance about, led by the music of a satyr's melodic pipes. The group has been partying in the clearing for a few days, staving off hangovers by remaining drunk throughout the celebration. Creatures who interrupt the carousing are invited to take part, and the invitation becomes more insistent—even aggressive—with each refusal to stay and dance and drink. In their inebriated state, the capricious creatures are prone to switching unexpectedly from merrymaking to violence.

Thragandor (CR 10) This adult white dragon is engaged in an on-again, off-again relationship with the terrible great wyrm white dragon Sjhovor, who lairs in the northern reaches of the Deeprun Crevasse. Though well into her 110th year, Thragandor harbors a tendency for aggression normally held by younger dragons. She delights in wreaking havoc, especially attacking groups of Rashalka centaurs as they migrate about Hoofwood. Knowing some of the Tsolniva centaurs have pledged themselves to Sjhovor, however, she leaves them out of her rampages. Thragandor swoops through the Deeprun Crevasse and over the thick forest, always looking out for delicious sentient humanoids. The centaurs of the area are unsure exactly where her lair might be. Some claim she lairs with Sjhovor, but others suspect her cave is much closer to Hoofwood.

DVEZDA MARCHES ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01–04	1d4 andrazkus	7	See page 84
05–09	1 frost drake	7	Bestiary 2 108
10–14	1d6 perytons	7	Bestiary 2 207
15–19	1d6 werebears	7	Bestiary 2 181
20–24	1 azgenzak	8	See page 82
25–29	1d4 polar kamadans	8	Bestiary 3 158
30–34	4 Rashalka rangers	8	See page 16
35–39	Reveling fey (3 korreds and 1 satyr)	8	Bestiary 241 and Bestiary 2 173
40–44	1d4 wooly rhinoceroses	8	Bestiary 235
45–49	Giant eagle aerie (8 giant eagles)	9	Bestiary 118
50–54	1 mastodon	9	Bestiary 128
55–59	1 yrthak	9	Bestiary 2 290
60–64	1 adlet	10	Bestiary 3 9
65–69	Thragandor (1 adult white dragon)	10	Bestiary 100
70–74	1d12 winter wolves	10	Bestiary 280
75–79	1d4 frost giants	11	Bestiary 149
80–84	1 svathurim	11	See page 90
85–89	Undead warlord (1 graveknight)	11	Bestiary 3 138
90–94	1 kokogiak	12	See page 86
95–100	1 taiga giant	12	Bestiary 2 131

Tsolniva Outriders (CR 7) When Vsevolod gathered his frost giants with the intent of taking over Artrosa, he left behind a group of four centaurs to watch their backs. This small band of Tsolniva centaurs knows that a large Rashalka hunting party would overwhelm them, so they keep away from the forest, hiding among the caves and boulders of the Deeprun Crevasse. If anyone nears their concealed camp, the centaurs keep their position and ambush the interlopers. If the battle goes poorly, one of the centaurs breaks for Artrosa at full speed to warn their leader of the intruders.

Undead Warlord (CR 11) During the Choking Plague that led to the fall of Old Iobaria, Dartrus Bengelion was leading an army of mercenaries into the wild land to establish their own settlement and plunder the countryside doing so. As the plague ravaged his company, he pressed on past the Dvezda Marches and into Casmaron. Dartrus eventually succumbed to the plague himself, and the surviving remnants of his army abandoned him to die as they scattered, hoping to avoid the plague by isolating themselves. Enraged, he declared with his dying breath that he would take revenge against those who left him to die. Now he walks again, animated as a graveknight. Dartrus is slowly making his way west—back from where he came all those years ago—killing everything that still bears a spark of life.

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AZGENZAK

This undulating, amorphous sac is a turgid, brown-black mass scarcely hiding a seething jumble of rounded subcutaneous masses churning within. One end opens into a yawning maw, revealing a fiery cauldron of innumerable, lidless eyeballs of every size, shape, and color, each wreathed in sooty orange flame.

AZGENZAK

CR 8



XP 4,800

NE Large aberration (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20

Aura frightful presence (30 ft., DC 16, inverted form only)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 95 (10d8+50)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities amorphous; **Immune** fire, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 3 slams +11 (1d6+4 plus burn and grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks burn (1d6, DC 20), burning blindness, constrict (1d6+4), swallow whole (2d6 fire, AC 15, 9 hp), swarming pyrocules

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 17, **Con** 20, **Int** 7, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple); **CMD** 25

Feats Blind-Fight, Nimble Moves, Skill Focus (Perception), Step Up, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Climb +8, Perception +20, Stealth +10 (+18 when underwater), Swim +16; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth when underwater

Languages Aklo

SQ amphibious, compression, inversion

ECOLOGY

Environment warm and temperate fresh water and swamps

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burning Blindness (Su) When an azgenzak confirms a critical hit or a creature fails its save against the distraction attack of its swarming pyrocules, the azgenzak attempts to pluck out one of the target's eyes (Fortitude DC 20 negates). If the save fails, the target takes 1d6 additional points of fire damage, is sickened by pain for 1d4 rounds, and becomes permanently dazzled. If this results in the loss of all of the target's eyes, it is permanently blinded.

Inversion (Ex) As a move action, an azgenzak can invert its sac-like body, turning itself inside out and exposing its innumerable burning eyes. Doing so surrounds the azgenzak with a fiery aura and activates its frightful presence ability. These abilities are suppressed when the azgenzak is not inverted. When it's inverted, creatures adjacent to the azgenzak take 2d6 points of fire damage and risk catching on fire. A successful DC 16 Reflex save halves this damage and keeps the creature from catching on fire. An inverted azgenzak loses its racial bonus to Stealth underwater and takes a further -10 penalty on Stealth checks. In addition, when inverted, an azgenzak can't swallow its victim whole; however, if it begins its turn with a creature grappled, it can revert itself as a move action and then use its swallow whole ability. A creature swallowed by an azgenzak is subject to its fiery aura and frightful presence even when the azgenzak is not inverted.

Swarming Pyrocules (Su) As a full-round action, an azgenzak can disgorge a swarm of burning eyeballs. This swarm has the same statistics as a bat swarm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 30), except it lacks the wounding special ability, which is replaced by the azgenzak's burn ability and immunity to fire. An azgenzak using this ability takes 2d6 points of damage (though damage dealt to the swarming



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pyrocules does not damage the azgenzak). The swarming pyrocules can't survive long separated from the azgenzak, and take 1 point of damage each round at the end of its turn. The swarming pyrocules can be reabsorbed by the azgenzak as a full-round action, healing the creature of 1d6 points of damage.

Azgenzaks, also called more prosaically "sacks of burning eyes," are shapeless predators of unfathomable appetites and undeniable malevolence. They might have congealed into existence within some forgotten crack of the Outer Rifts, escaping (or being set loose) into the Material Plane ages ago. However, many theorize that these beings are entirely natural, primeval creatures that fell into savagery or never evolved from their primitive state in the first place. Azgenzaks are roughly 8 feet in diameter and weigh over 800 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Azgenzaks are amorphous, their bodies composed of a flaccid, leathery outer skin enveloping an interior of glistening, wrinkled tissue, which in turn surrounds hundreds of cilia-rimmed sockets that weep flammable mucus. An azgenzak can suppress its flames by squeezing its sac tightly closed, but it rarely does so unless it has need for stealth. If it wishes to maintain its flames even when it dives underwater, it simply enfolds a large bubble of air within its fundus, seals the aperture with a layer of mucus, and inflates itself into a lumpy spheroid, periodically venting exhaust gases to propel itself through the water. A rush of foul-scented bubbles and brief flares of deep orange below the water's surface usually accompany such venting as jets of flame escape the azgenzak's interior and are snuffed out.

Azgenzaks are primarily carnivorous, though they're able to digest any organic material, engulfing it within their flaming cavities. An azgenzak that has recently feasted—having swallowed its prey whole—might sink to the bottom of a body of water and enfold itself to slowly digest its meal, settling into a torpor for days or even weeks at a time. If undisturbed, a hibernating azgenzak might appear indistinguishable from an algae-covered boulder, a rotting log, or submerged carrion.

Azgenzaks reproduce by asexual budding, which is abetted in some unknown way by the vitreous humors found within eyeballs. Its drive to extract the eyes of its prey is to further of its attempts at reproduction, as the distilled essence of the eyes it steals germinates tissue buds within the depths of its stomach. These buds then replicate and mat together into a translucent sheath of tissue, with a portion of the eyes within the azgenzak adsorbing into this sheath as it grows. Once a sufficient sheath-mass has accreted, it begins sloughing off from the parent azgenzak's stomach walls, and is eventually disgorged and discarded

in a steaming puddle of semisolid translucent slime shot through with eyeballs. Now ravenously hungry, the parent moves on to feast elsewhere and replenish its discarded mass. Meanwhile, the newly birthed azgenzak begins to darken and congeal, baked from within by the unquenchable heat of its burning eyes, even as its outer tissues are tempered by exposure to open air and water, gradually toughening into a mottled brown outer skin. Gorging itself on organic matter, the newly formed azgenzak matures within a month and can begin to unleash the swarming pyrocules that are its deadly signature.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Azgenzaks are solitary creatures, despising the presence of others of their kind as rivals for their hunting terrain. They prefer to make their dens in murky lakes, though they are equally happy in swamps, bogs, and even slow-moving rivers. They are not powerful swimmers and avoid fast-moving water, though they are perfectly capable of climbing out of the water and traversing land in an undulant slither. Their malleable mass is able to ooze over, around, and between obstacles that might block the passage of a more solid creature.

Azgenzaks are sometimes confused with will-o'-wisps in folktales and legends, as both dwell in boglands and are blamed for mysterious marshlights that lead travelers to their doom. This is because azgenzaks are thought of more in terms of the swarming pyrocules they unleash rather than their true bodies—the strings of floating, flaming eyes are often believed to be the true creature and the "bag" of its body a gate to Hell, a fleshy opening into the Abyss, or a shroud stitched from the skins of its victims. In many cultures, strange bubbling and dancing marshlights below the water or bobbing above bogs are seen as portents of death even when seen in the far distance, regardless of the creature responsible. In lands where azgenzaks are known to dwell, animals are often blindered at night and children are taught to keep shutters and curtains drawn tight to avoid seeing the deadly lights.

In truth, azgenzaks are fairly simple creatures, mostly interested in their next meal. That said, they prefer the flesh of sentient victims and the screams of victims perishing in fear and fire. While they have no love for will-o'-wisps, they do sense a certain kinship with them, and more importantly they perceive the advantages of working with them to secure prey. Will-o'-wisps themselves offer no sustenance for an azgenzak, with their nearly immaterial bodies, but an azgenzak's ability to instill fear has much to offer hunting will-o'-wisps. The two creatures thus sometimes work in concert, with the azgenzak feasting physically upon its victims while the will-o'-wisp feeds psychically.

REIGN OF WINTER

DEMON, ANDRAZKU

This burly, primitive-looking creature has an ape-like upper body, demonic horns, cloven hooves, and skin the color of a snow-buried corpse.

ANDRAZKU

CR 5


XP 1,600

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, cold, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 57 (6d10+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

DR 5/cold iron or good; **Immune** cold, electricity, poison;

Resist acid 10, fire 10; **SR** 16

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +10 (1d6+4), bite +10 (1d6+4 plus bleed and 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks bleed 1d4, breath weapon (10-ft. cone, 3d6 cold, Reflex half DC 17, usable every 1d4 rounds), mutilating gouge, powerful charge (slam, 2d6+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8)

3/day—*cause fear* (DC 13), *locate creature*, *teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

1/day—*righteous might*, *summon* (level 3, 1 andrazku 25%)

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 13, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 22

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Bluff +11, Climb +12, Intimidate +8, Perception +20, Sense

Motive +9, Survival +6, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Giant; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ icewalking

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Icwalking (Ex) This ability works like the *spider climb* spell, but the surfaces the demon climbs must be icy.

The demon can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to attempt Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.

Mutilating Gouge (Ex) If the andrazku hits with both slams in the same round, its target must succeed at a DC 17

Fortitude save or take 1 point of Charisma damage. The DC is Constitution-based.

Andrazkus are thugs who use their strength to lord over weaker creatures. Their hatred is cold and seething, prone to suddenly snapping in an avalanche of ice and crushing

blows. Birthed from the protomatter of the Abyss with natural gifts for tracking and subduing prey, they are sometimes used as trackers and jailors by more powerful demons who need to find lost prisoners and slaves.

From the waist up these demons are built much like strong, hairy humans or dwarves, but with exaggerated proportions resembling those of a gorilla. Their thick necks sport bristling manes that merge with the hair on their backs, and their flat faces bear two ramlike horns and cold eyes filled with hate. Their breath is a freezing fog, and their teeth are small but numerous, like a shark's. An andrazku's legs seem small in comparison to its torso, bend backward like a satyr's, and end in large cloven hooves. Their skin is the dead blue of a frozen corpse or a frost giant. Their top-heavy builds mean they have difficulty standing upright and normally assume a hunched posture; many prefer to walk and run on all fours, like apes. An andrazku is 7 feet tall at the shoulder and weighs 450 pounds.

ECOLOGY

An andrazku forms from the soul of a chaotic mortal who hated women and used his or her power to oppress and demean them, such as a tyrant who selectively enforced laws against women, a priest who preached that women are the source of all sin, or a father who secretly beat his wives and daughters for their supposed failures. For this reason andrazkus are known to scholars as "misogyny demons." Few of these souls dared to greater crimes (which would cause their souls to become incubi or babaus), nor were they once mortals who hated women but never acted upon their hatred—an andrazku only forms from a soul filled with sufficient hatred toward women to provoke action, but that is hampered by enough cowardice to prevent it from performing acts of greater evil. Most of them were male mortals, but an especially misogynistic evil female creature might become an andrazku in the Abyss.

An andrazku grows excited when it senses its prey's fear, but becomes frustrated if the hunt lasts for too long. Despite these demons' masculine appearance and aggression, most of them are impotent and some completely lack genitalia, rendering their lust pointless. Their nature is to berate, degrade, and beat; they tend to kill only when they feel an urge to eat, when their stymied passion becomes too great to tolerate, or when they are mocked for their shortcomings.

An andrazku prefers to attack with its bite and fists (often contemptuously slapping foes, minions, and prey with an open hand), but a vicious one may use a scourge and jagged-bladed sword as if pretending to be a balor. Sadistic and cruel, andrazkus have been known to chase down their prey, batter it for a while, and then release

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it, giving it enough of a head start that it thinks it has a chance of escaping. The andrazkus then track it down (using *locate creature* and *teleport*) to repeat the cycle again.

An andrazku in a position of authority likes to mark its minions and slaves with a scar on one side of the face indicating the demon's ownership. The demon typically uses its breath weapon to freeze a metal brand until it is cold enough to leave a permanent mark. If a slave is resistant or immune to cold, the demon uses a knife to carve its mark into one side of the creature's face.

Because of their long-simmering tempers and magical abilities, andrazkus are often called "cold demons," and they mainly live in frigid Abyssal realms such as Jhuvumirak, home of demon lord Kostchtchie. Their intolerance of fire (despite their demonic resistance to it) and the cowardly nature of their origin-sin make them laughingstocks among demons (particularly babaus and incubi); as a result, andrazkus are sullen, resentful, and prone to take out their frustrations on weaker creatures—especially if said creatures are female.

Andrazkus prefer to lair in ice caves or tunnels dug out of hard-packed snow. Some take advantage of their cold immunity and strong swimming ability to live in simple shelters on ice floes. An andrazku's hooves and huge hands allow it to cling to ice as though it were rough stone, preventing it from slipping and allowing it to use much of the vertical space in its lair to store treasure and observe intruders.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Andrazkus loathe associating with more powerful female demons in any way, and curse under their breath at mariliths and similar demons of great stature. Among female demons of similar power, they are quick with clever words, believable boasts, and secret confessions of desire, but these are all lies to disguise the hatred crackling beneath the surface. If given the opportunity, an andrazku would capture and torture a succubus merely because she is female (though a succubus is physically more powerful than a lone misogyny demon, and the hairy brutes have to gang up to have any chance of defeating a "weakling" succubus). Succubi and mariliths are aware of these simple-minded feelings held by andrazkus and they delight in tormenting the brutish creatures. Those female demons know they hold greater strength and power than andrazkus, and they enjoy lording

over the creatures, even going so far as to kidnap them from time to time, bringing them to their own lairs and forcing the creatures into servitude.

Andrazkus band together for strength, using their telepathy to silently coordinate their attacks. They often taunt their prey telepathically, either with words, promises of violence, or mocking laughter.

When set loose on the Material Plane, an andrazku usually forces itself into a position of power over a humanoid tribe. Some ally with frost giant tribes, especially those who worship Kostchtchie. Duller ones find better company among girallons and dire apes.

SUMMONING ANDRAZKU

Andrazkus are receptive to flattery about their size and strength. They like offers of weapons and strength-enhancing items as payment for their services. They can be assigned to guard, hunt, or retrieve; any Charisma check attempted as part a spell to convince an andrazku to undertake a mission other than these kinds of tasks takes a -2 penalty. A female summoner has a -10 penalty on all Charisma checks made to bargain unless the caster acts inferior and unworthy of the demon's aid.



REIGN OF WINTER

KOKOGIAK

This hulking mountain of fur and fangs looks like a white-furred bear of immense proportions with ten legs, each ending in massive, jet-black claws. Its head, with slavering jaws and a tongue dripping silvery foam, sits at the end of a long yet thickly muscled neck. Its dead black eyes are small but infinite pits of malice.

KOKOGIAK

CR 12



XP 19,200

NE Huge magical beast

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 9, flat-footed 24 (+1 Dex, +16 natural, -2 size)

hp 172 (15d10+90)

Fort +15, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

Immune cold, illusions

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +23 (2d6+10 plus pull), 6 claws +24 (2d6+10/19-20)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (20 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks blizzard breath, forlorn gaze, pull (bite, 10 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +18)

At will—*fog cloud*, *ventriloquism* (DC 14)

3/day—*major image* (DC 16), *solid fog*

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 13, **Con** 22, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 38 (54 vs. trip)

Feats Critical Focus, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Bluff +18, Climb +22, Perception +18, Stealth +11 (+19 in ice or snow), Swim +22; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in ice or snow

Languages Aquan, Common

SQ ice walker, penetrating sight, sound imitation

ECOLOGY

Environment cold coastlines, hills, or plains

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blizzard Breath (Su) A kokogiak's breath weapon is a polar gale so bitterly cold that it saps vigor from those it touches. Once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action, a kokogiak can expel a 60-foot cone of blistering arctic winds, dealing 8d6 points of cold damage to all creatures struck. A successful DC 23 Reflex save halves this damage. Any creature damaged by this attack must then succeed at a DC 23 Fortitude save or become fatigued (or exhausted if it was already fatigued). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Forlorn Gaze (Su) As a standard action, a kokogiak can lock its black eyes on a target within 60 feet to fascinate the creature. A successful DC 20 Will save negates this effect. Creatures that fail the save are fascinated and they see the kokogiak as a lost loved one, trusted friend in danger, or ally in desperate need. Once a creature is fascinated, the kokogiak can compel the creature to move toward it.

Once adjacent, the creature is flat-footed against the kokogiak's attacks, but the creature receives a new saving throw at the beginning of its turn to break the fascination. This is a mind-affecting effect and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Ice Walker (Ex) A

kokogiak takes no penalty to speed or on Acrobatics, Climb, or Stealth checks in snowy or icy terrain or weather conditions. It can walk

across snow crusts or thin ice without breaking through. In addition, a kokogiak can choose to not leave tracks when moving in this type of terrain.

Penetrating Sight (Ex) A kokogiak's sight is not affected by its own *fog cloud* or *solid fog* spell-like abilities. In addition, a kokogiak does not take any penalties on Perception checks while its snowing.



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Sound Imitation (Ex) A kokogiak can mimic any voice or sound it has heard by making a successful Bluff check against a listener's Sense Motive check.

The kokogiak (called qupqugiaq by some tribes) is a deadly predator of the far northern wastes. At first glance, it appears to be a simple ravening beast or an enormous, unnaturally deformed polar bear, yet its raw power and cunning are legendary in the tales of northern nomads. Its name in some places is synonymous with cabin fever or deep-winter hallucinations that drive folk to desperation and madness, rushing out into the frozen wild in pursuit of some long-lost lover only to become lost themselves, victims of the kokogiak's dreadful might. Kokogiaks have an elongated neck, and are nearly 20 feet long from tail to nose. Over a dozen feet high at the shoulder, kokogiaks weigh between 6 and 8 tons.

ECOLOGY

Kokogiaks are amphibious in their habits, comfortable in and out of the water, though they are not able to breathe water as well as air. They spend a great deal of their time in the water, hunting seals, walruses, squids, and even whales in coastal waters and beneath the winter ice. While kokogiaks must surface periodically to breathe, their powerful claws enable them to rip through floating pack ice and make air holes nearly wherever they wish. Creating such air holes is actually a hunting technique—they lie in wait near the holes for seals and their ilk to surface to breathe, snatching their prey in their jaws and dragging it up onto the ice to feast. Kokogiaks also use the same trick in reverse, lurking underwater just below gaps in the ice and seizing prey traversing the ice above, or along rocky coastlines when the pack ice recedes. Even predatory creatures like polar bears and winter wolves might be dragged into the water to be drowned and devoured, and desperate kokogiaks are even known to scale arctic sea cliffs during spring thaws to feast on newborn seabirds and eggs, lapping up entire nests in a single flick of the tongue.

While they are well adapted to hunting in and around coastal icepacks, kokogiaks also roam far inland to prowl continental ice sheets. The same tactics kokogiaks use for hunting along the water's edge serve them well in the deep snowdrifts and icy spires and crevasses of the polar reaches. Kokogiaks scale rocky and icy peaks to lair in dens inaccessible to most creatures. From such high vantage points, they observe passersby; then, calling upon supernatural blinding fogs, they either descend upon their prey from above, snatching a target and dragging it to their elevated lairs, or burrow underneath and burst up from below, hauling prey into their frigid dens.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Kokogiaks live in cold arctic regions, though in winter they sometimes wander into the subarctic tundra and occasionally even into the colder latitudes of temperate climes. Those venturing so far south make their homes amid the glaciers and alpine wilderness of high mountains. While most return to the forever-winter of the arctic after taking their fill of warmer climes' abundant prey, a few make their homes permanently below the arctic circle, where their predations lend their mountain homes a deadly reputation. Such alpine kokogiaks descend with the winter storms into the huddled villages in the valleys below, luring the unwary to their doom and leaving a trail of death and terror in their wakes. In communities near a kokogiak's mountain, when the first heavy storms of winter strike, locals sometimes stake animals (or even rarely an unlucky member of the community, chosen by lottery) out in the cold in an attempt to propitiate the kokogiak's hunger and turn aside its wrath from the rest of the community.

Kokogiaks are more common in the subarctic and arctic, however, and they show no loyalty or preferential treatment to any that cross their path. They occasionally enter into alliances with creatures that will hunt for them and bring them living victims to torment and eviscerate at their leisure. They are cruel and capricious masters apt to turn on those who displease them in any way or just to ensure that others serving them do not doubt their power. More often, kokogiaks extract tribute from arctic and tundra dwelling tribes, sometimes in treasure but more often in the form of sacrifice. When refused, a kokogiak seeks to punish the unwilling by using its magic to inveigle members of that tribe to wander off from their homes and into the kokogiak's waiting clutches. Victims lured away in this fashion may simply be devoured, but the cruel beast often leaves behind bloodstained clothes or more grisly trophies torn from its victims' remains, artfully displayed for the friends and family of the deceased to find. So does the kokogiak remind them of the price of defiance.

Kokogiaks are mostly solitary, though mated pairs do sometimes join forces to spread terror wherever they roam or to take down powerful rivals. Kokogiak cubs are usually encouraged to fight one another for survival, struggling to show their dominance until only one remains. Weaklings are killed and eaten or driven out into the snows to survive or not. When the strongest cub approaches maturity, the kokogiak parents are faced with a choice: drive out the youngling when it is strong enough to survive but not yet strong enough to challenge its elders, or be prepared to face its challenge within the family group. Such challenges are usually directed at the parent of its own gender, as the youth seeks to drive out and take the place of its father or mother, proving its worthiness to take its surviving parent as its own mate.

REIGN OF WINTER

SANGOI

Dressed in tattered finery, this small, bald humanoid has a gaunt and haggard face with sallow skin drawn tight against its delicate bones. Its fingers and nails are unnaturally long and spidery, its teeth needle-sharp, and its body so thin it seems it could almost disappear if it turned sideways.

SANGOI

CR 7



XP 3,200

NE Small fey

Init +9; **Senses** hear heartbeat, low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 71 (11d6+33)

Fort +6, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

DR 5/silver

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +11 (1d3+1/19-20), bite +11 (1d4+1 plus 1d4 bleed) or bite +11 (1d4+1 plus 1d4 bleed), 2 claws +11 (1d3+1 plus 1d4 bleed)

Ranged dagger +11 (1d3+1/19-20)

Special Attacks blood rage, curse of misery, horrific critical, sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +15)

Constant—*hide from animals* (self only), *hide from undead* (DC 15; self only)

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 16), *tongues*

3/day—*animal trance* (DC 16), *invisibility* (self only), *snare* (DC 17)

1/day—*control weather*, *dominate animal* (DC 17), *speak with dead* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 21, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 21

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +19, Bluff +18, Craft (traps) +10, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +18, Escape Artist +10, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +15, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +23

Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan; *tongues*

SQ change shape (Medium or Small land animal or humanoid), sideways glance, sunlight transparency

ECOLOGY

Environment any cold or temperate land

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure standard (dagger)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Curse of Misery (Su) As a full-round action, a sangoi can deliver its curse to an adjacent humanoid as a melee touch attack. If the target fails its saving throw, the sangoi

gains the benefit of *aid* (caster level equal to the target's Hit Dice). In addition, a sangoi gains a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, and opposed skill checks against any creature affected by its curse of misery. A creature that successfully saves can not be affected by the same sangoi's curse for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Curse of Misery: Touch—contact; save Will DC 19; frequency 1 day; effect permanent crushing despair.

Hear Heartbeat (Ex) A sangoi can hear the beating hearts of living creatures nearby, granting it blindsense 30 feet and blindsight 5 feet; it can locate all creatures taking bleed damage within 30 feet as if it had blindsight. This ability does not reveal the location of creatures without hearts, including elementals, oozes, plants, undead, and incorporeal creatures.

Horrific Critical (Ex) When a sangoi enters a blood rage, its claws and teeth elongate and sharpen, threatening a critical hit on a roll of 18-20 (in addition to the other benefits of blood rage). If a sangoi reduces a humanoid to -1 or fewer hit points with a critical hit from one of its natural weapons, it can tear out the target's heart and consume it as a free action (Fortitude DC 19 negates), killing it instantly. If successful, the sangoi gains 1d8 temporary hit points and a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength. Any humanoid within 30 feet who witnesses this attack must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or become shaken and sickened for 1d4 rounds (this is a mind-affecting fear effect). The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Sideways Glance (Su) Sangois fade from view when in a creature's peripheral vision. They automatically gain concealment against creatures that they flank with another creature (another sangoi or otherwise). They can also attempt a Bluff check to feint in combat as a swift action, but only against a foe that can clearly see them.

Sunlight Transparency (Ex) Direct sunlight causes a sangoi to partially fade from view. Their bodies become almost transparent (20% miss chance), and they become fatigued and take a -10 penalty on Disguise checks as long as they remain in direct sunlight.

Sangois are malevolent nocturnal fey that haunt small towns and graveyards. Because of their taste for blood and their similar habits, they are sometimes mistaken for vampires. Sangoi appear as short, emaciated humanoids seldom over 4 feet tall and weighing 35 to 40 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Sangois thirst for the blood of the living, preferring humanoid blood, but settling for animal blood when humanoids are in short supply or when they are operating in disguise and do not wish to reveal their presence with

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an open attack. Though it is much harder to acquire, they are especially fond of the blood of good-aligned magical beasts, unicorns in particular. While blood provides physical nourishment for them, they also draw psychic sustenance from inflicting anguish and despair.

Sangois are expert trappers, catching large and small animals with magic or mundane snares. Trapped beasts might be mutilated for a sangoi's pleasure, though the wicked fey more likely dominates them and uses them to commit murder and mischief.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Sangois are natives of the fey realms of the First World, but they spend little time there. Most of their time is spent roaming the Material Plane, lurking in shadows and places where death and sorrow linger, such as graveyards and ruins. They are wanderers, moving from village to village in search of their next victims. When a target is located, a sangoi (or, rarely, a pair of sangois working together) seeks to isolate the victim in order to murder it and take its form. The sangoi poses as its victim, while draining the emotional, mental, and physical energy out of those that give them succor with its curse of misery.

Sangoi consider themselves hunters of a sort, seeking children born with certain unique characteristics or deformities, such as those born covered with a caul, or who bear a particular birthmark or hair or eye color. Sangois fear those with such marks, whatever they might be, believing they render them powerless against such creatures and that if those with the marks are able to grow to maturity, they will bring ruin to the sangoi. Each individual sangoi has its own particular mark it grows to fear.

Children so marked are spirited away from their mortal parents and slain, sold as slaves to an evil fey master, or simply imprisoned in the depths of a sangoi's lair, all to quell whatever threat the sangois believe they pose.

When such a child is found, a sangoi begins lurking about the home in the guise of an animal and might even take the form of a pet to attract the child's affection. Its curse falls upon the household with this infiltration, though sangois credit their chosen targets with immunity to their powers, or even the ability to block their powers from affecting others. Sangois attempt to abduct their targets at birth when possible, but often they do not discover them until a target is older. In such cases, sangois try to kill or kidnap their targets using dominated wild animals or traps set up to look like natural accidents.

Once a victim has been taken, a sangoi changes its shape to assume the victim's form, usually spending

several days reading the victim's thoughts or speaking with its corpse to learn about it so it might better impersonate him. The sangoi then returns to the victim's home and assumes its life, going about his daily business while keeping out of direct sunlight when possible, often feigning illness or injury.

Once the sangoi enters its victim's home, its curse of misery begins to take hold, sapping the life and spirit from the family and friends of its victim. The sangoi amuses itself with the abuse and murder of domestic animals through traps and magical compulsion, and calls foul weather to cast a pall upon the house while it waits for the family of its victim to slip into ennui. Once those in the house fall into utter despair, the sangoi plans elaborate murders in which it renders its targets helpless, often with traps using common household objects and implements, and then carves out and greedily devours the hearts of its helpless victims, savoring the sour tang of fear that lingers in broken hearts even after death.



REIGN OF WINTER

SVATHURIM

This hulking creature has the lower body of a massive stallion with eight thick legs. Rising from its equine body is the trunk of a muscled humanoid with icy blue skin and a prodigious white beard rimed with ice. Piercing blue eyes glare beneath beetled brows and a spiraling pair of horns which curl upward.

SVATHURIM

CR 11

XP 12,800
CE Huge monstrous humanoid (cold)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 11, flat-footed 23 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +10 natural, +1 shield, -2 size)

hp 147 (14d10+70)

Fort +11, **Ref** +12, **Will** +11

Immune cold

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee mwk lance +22/+17/+12 (2d6+9/x3), gore +16 (2d6+4), 2 hooves +16 (1d8+4) or
2 slams +21 (1d8+9), gore +21 (2d6+9), 2 hooves +16 (1d8+4)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +16/+11/+6 (2d6+9/x3)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (20 ft. with lance)

Special Attacks thunderous trample, trample (1d8+13, DC 26)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 17, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +25 (+27 bull rush, +27 overrun); **CMD** 38 (40 vs. bull rush, 40 vs. overrun, 50 vs. trip)

Feats Charge Through^{AP6}, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Intimidating Prowess, Natural Jousting (see the sidebar), Power Attack

Skills Acrobatics +12 (+20 when jumping), Climb +12, Intimidate +25, Perception +19, Survival +14, Swim +20;

Racial Modifiers +8 Acrobatics when jumping

Languages Giant, Skald

SQ skyrunner, undersized weapons

ECOLOGY

Environment cold hills, mountains, or plains

Organization solitary, pair, warband (3–6), or clan (1–4 svathurim plus 2–12 frost giants)

Treasure standard (mwk chain shirt, mwk light steel shield, mwk lance, mwk composite longbow with 40 arrows, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Skyrunner (Su) When charging, running, or taking a double move, a svathurim can stride across open air as if it were using *air walk*. This movement is very taxing, and a svathurim must succeed at a DC 14 Constitution check at the end of each round it uses this ability to avoid being fatigued for 1 minute. This DC increases by 2 each round after the

first. Returning to the ground resets the DC to 14, but does not negate any ongoing fatigue or exhaustion. A svathurim cannot trample when using this ability.

Thunderous Trample (Su) Any creature damaged by a svathurim's trample attack must succeed at a DC 22 Fortitude save or be deafened for 1 minute. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Undersized Weapons (Ex) Although a svathurim is Huge, its upper torso is the same size as that of a Large humanoid. As a result, it wields weapons as if they were one size category smaller than their actual size (Large for most svathurim).

Ancient tales claim the first svathurims spawned from Thremyr, akin to the creation stories of frost giants, ice trolls, winter wolves, and other creatures of snow and ice. The stories claim that when Thremyr fell into the Steaming Sea, he shed great icebergs that transformed into smaller copies of the god himself. The frost giants, spawned from his shedding body, worship this slumbering god as their creator, and thus consider svathurims their kin. The hindquarters of an adult svathurim are up to 10 feet tall and 16 feet long, while their giant trunk and head reach up to 18 feet on average. Svathurims typically weigh over 5 tons and may live up to 500 years, far longer than their frost giant kin.

ECOLOGY

Svathurims dwell deep in the frozen wastes of the tundra and arctic regions of Golarion, amid the great glaciers covering the Crown of the World. They occasionally travel along the frozen shores of polar seas, hunting seals, walruses, and whales that venture too close to shore or dragging vast nets through subarctic shallows during salmon runs. It is uncommon for svathurims to live in the vast boreal forests of the north, where their great bulk impedes movement among the trees, though some clans do dwell in the high mountains, springing from peak to peak in prodigious leaps and using their supernatural skyborne gallops.

Svathurims are omnivorous and always hungry, able to subsist on scrub plants and kelp in times of great need, or even to eke out bare subsistence on the algae and lichen embedded in ice and rocks. However, they greatly prefer fresh, uncooked meat, and will devour every scrap of whatever they kill. Their grinding teeth are capable of reducing bone to meal, so even the toughest of a victim's remains generally end up in a svathurim's gullet. In the cold and pitiless environment of the north, nothing can be wasted.

Svathurim males outnumber females by a wide margin, and these creatures are indiscriminate in their mating habits. The rare svathurim mares are little more selective in their affections than the males, and

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there is no shortage of males willing to court them. Ironically, many adult male svathurim are killed or wounded in competition for the attentions of females, either maimed and driven off by more dominant males or slain and presented as a trophy to prove worthiness to a female. Female svathurim are never monogamous, though, as mating with many males confuses the issue of parentage enough to keep their offspring safe from the predations of many adult males, lest a male inadvertently eradicate a foal svathurim that may be his own flesh and blood.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Svathurims live in clans, typically headed by the strongest and most accomplished hunter in the group, whether male or female. In some clans, svathurims gain status by the number of offspring they produce, though parentage is difficult to prove for males and leads to frequent disputes.

Where females are both strong and fertile, they are able to assert dominance both by their own strength and by the loyalty and support of those children willing to fight for them. Of course, no svathurim can feel too secure in his position, as once-loyal supporters may shift their allegiance on a whim, and even faithful children may decide that they have grown strong enough to betray their parent to a rival or gather support (often from siblings) to take power in their own right.

Svathurims sometimes build large corrals of stone, ice, or rarely bone or wood where such materials are available in plenty. Usually unroofed, these monolithic barriers serve mostly to keep predators away from their young or to protect their stores of treasure or food gathered by the clan from raiders. A rare few svathurims build more secure enclosed lodges or delve permanent hostels in caves. Svathurims that choose to settle in one area are most likely to live among frost giants.

Frost giants view svathurims with a mix of fear, respect, awe, and revulsion. Most know well the tale of the svathurims' creation, and while not all take this as evidence of pseudo-divinity and a shared creation myth, few deny the svathurims' speed, strength, and skill at hunting and killing. For some giant clans, satisfying a svathurim's whims is a small price to pay for the advantages gained by an alliance with them.

NEW FEAT

Nearly all svathurims have the following feat, which is common among tauric creatures.

NATURAL JOUSTER (COMBAT)

Prerequisite: Centaur (or any tauric creature at the GM's discretion)

Benefit: You gain proficiency with the lance. You can wield a lance one-handed as if you were mounted, and you deal double damage with a lance while charging.

Svathurims collect treasure as frost giants do, favoring precious metals in raw nuggets that are then hammered into crude tribal jewelry. Bracelets, armlets, and rings and chains they can braid into their hair, beards, and long horse-like tails are favored treasures, as are inlays and carvings made of mammoth or walrus ivory. Those in subarctic regions collect amber and rare boreal hardwoods, polishing the latter to a luxurious shine and engraving them with runic inscriptions and genealogies both real and imagined.



NEXT MONTH

THE FROZEN STARS

by Matt Goodall

Continuing their search for Baba Yaga, the heroes take the *Dancing Hut* to the planet of Triaxus, seventh world in Golarion's solar system, now in the middle of its decades-long winter. The heroes soon find themselves embroiled in a conflict between the dragonriders of the Skyfire Mandate and the barbarian armies of a white dragon warlord in their hunt for more clues to the whereabouts of Baba Yaga. Will the PCs ally with one of the warring factions to get the information they need, or will their quest come to an end on a distant, alien world?

PLANET OF DRAGONS

by James L. Sutter

Find out more about one of the other planets in Golarion's solar system in this double-sized gazetteer. As Triaxus's strange orbit brings years of winter to its surface, the planet's dragons continue their territorial wars. Exploring just one of the planet's many alien facets, this article zooms into the contested region separating the Skyfire

Mandate from the Drakelands, providing information on the important locations in the region as well as the people and creatures involved in the bitter conflict.

AND MORE!

Venture across the Bridge of Bone and uncover the horrifying secret of Irrisen's magical dolls in the *Pathfinder's Journal* by Kevin Andrew Murphy! Also, five alien monsters haunt the frozen reaches of Triaxus's long winter in the *Pathfinder Bestiary*.

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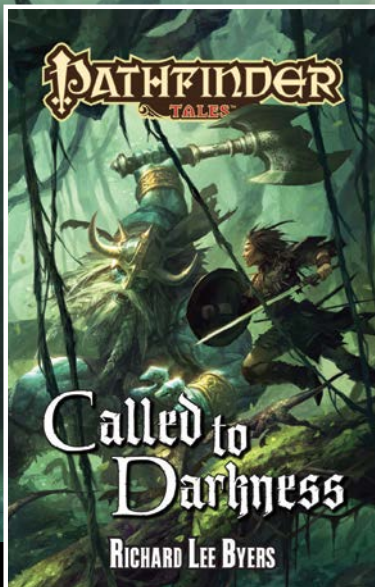
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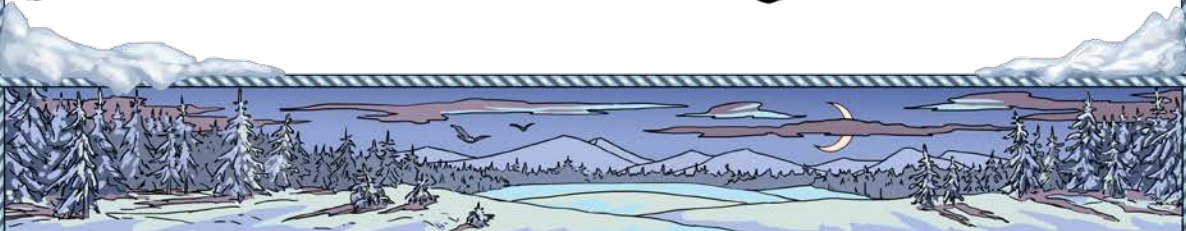
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ALL OF THE CHILDREN OF BABA YAGA CARRY THE SPARK OF MAGIC IN THEIR VEINS, INHERITING THE TALENT DIRECTLY FROM THE QUEEN OF WITCHES. IN HER LONG LIFE, THE OLD CRONE HAS GATHERED INNUMERABLE SECRETS ON HER TRAVELS BEYOND WORLDS. THOUGH DEAR GRANDMOTHER DISLIKES BEING ASKED TOO MANY QUESTIONS, FOR THE RIGHT PRICE SHE IS SOMETIMES WILLING TO SHARE HER SECRETS AND MYSTERIES WITH THOSE WHO COME TO HER SEARCHING FOR WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, AND TRUTH. SHE GUARDS THE THRESHOLD OF OTHER WORLDS, AND SHE CAN TEACH HOW TO WEAVE THE THREADS OF MAGIC.



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