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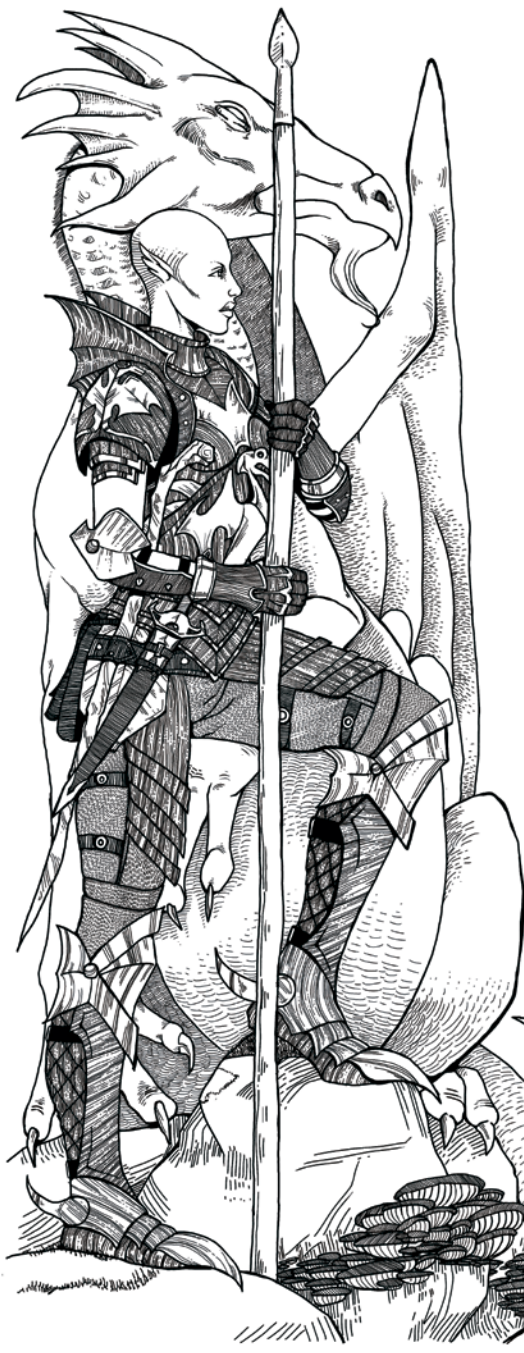
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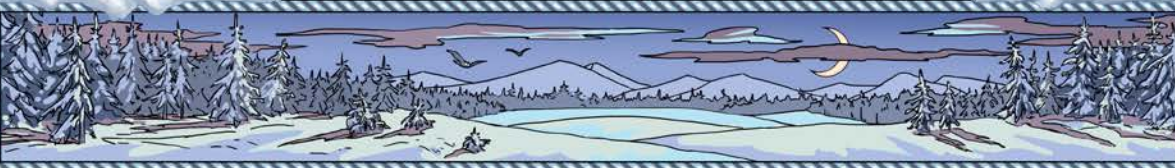
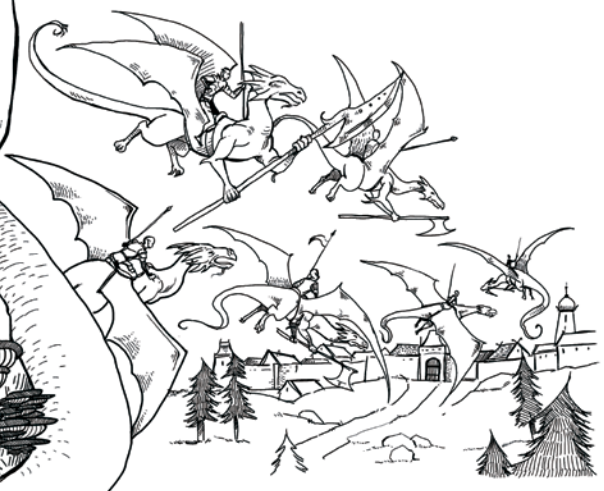
REIGN OF WINTER

THE FROZEN STARS

by Matthew Goodall




FROM THE ASHES AND CHAOS OF THE WAR OF HEROES, A UNION EMERGED, DRAGONKIN AND TRIAXIANS BANDING TOGETHER WITH RIGHTEOUS DRAGONS TO STAND GUARD AGAINST THE WICKED TYRANNY OF THE DRAKELANDS. FROM THE WINDSWEPT PARAPETS—MOUNTAINS SAID TO HAVE SPRUNG UP FROM THE CORPSES OF THE GREAT ONES, THAT THEY MIGHT CONTINUE TO GUARD THEIR COMRADES EVEN IN DEATH—THE DRAGONS AND DRAGONRIDERS OF THE SKYFIRE MANDATE CONTINUE THEIR ANCIENT ALLIANCE. THEIRS IS A BOND OF TRUST, HONOR, AND FRIENDSHIP—AND SHOULD IT EVER FALTER, ALL THE LANDS OF TRIAXUS SHALL FALL BENEATH THE DRAKELANDS' LASH.



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REIGN OF WINTER

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 4 OF 6

THE FROZEN STARS

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REIGN OF WINTER



OTHER WORLDS THAN THESE

I've always been a science fiction fan. Though the same can be said of pretty much everyone at Paizo, it was established early on in my tenure here that I might just be the developer with the highest tolerance for mixing science fiction in with my fantasy. When I first wrote up the gazetteer for Varisia in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #3, I worked carefully with James Jacobs, Wes Schneider, and other Paizo staffers to make sure key locations struck the right tone—and then went hog-wild on the rest. The spire of Spindlehorn in Varisia, for instance, was originally written as a space elevator built to let ancient Thassilonians hitch rides on passing starships. While Wes and Jacobs wisely ramped me back from that one, the fact remains that I tend to barrel past genre boundaries without noticing.

Which is why, when we started dropping alien-laden meteorites in the Second Darkness Adventure Path, they

knew exactly who to come to. In the article detailing Golarion's solar system in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #14, I did my best to pull from all my favorite science fiction tropes and subgenres. As perhaps the foremost pulp adventure historian I've ever met, Publisher Erik Mona had already dialed in Akiton and Castrovell as analogues of pulp-era Mars and Venus, so we already had the John Carter-style sword-and-planet adventure handled. For the others, however, I dug deep into my love of both science fiction and real-world astronomy, trying to cram everything in. A planet close to the sun? Clearly, the perfect place for a solar-powered AI robot society! What about a tidally locked planet, or a gas giant, or a lost generation ship? At the same time, there was also plenty of room for magic—a planet ruled by liches, for instance, or one steeped in Lovecraftian cosmic horror. I tried to approach each planet as if it were a complete campaign

FOREWORD

setting on its own, one just as ripe for exploration and GM expansion as Golarion itself.

Still, it's hard to do justice to a solar system in a few pages. And so, with the advice of my colleagues, I began work on an eccentric new campaign setting book.

Distant Worlds was a joy to write. With the rest of the staff giving me carte blanche, I got to dive into the bizarre societies and features of the planets around Golarion. Aliens! Robots! Spaceships! Freakin' *space whales*! Rather than reining me back this time, Wes and Jacobs actually pushed me farther, demanding that the book include a map of every planet, plus new monsters, advice on adventuring in space, and so on. To my delight, the book struck a chord with fans as well, selling through its first print run in record time. In its wake, it left a feeling of potential—one we've run into numerous times in the past. We'd tried something crazy, and it had worked. We felt bold. Reckless.

And then we started outlining *Reign of Winter*.

Here at Paizo, we've come to understand that the products we're the most personally invested in are often the ones that resonate most with fans. That passion and enthusiasm seeps through, and gives the books a little extra something. So for *Reign of Winter*, we pulled out all the stops.

Baba Yaga? Check.

Finally exploring Iobaria? No problem.

Another planet? Rad.

Going to World War I-era Russia and fighting Rasputin in a Siberian fortress? *Hell yes*.

Not since the beginning of *Pathfinder* have I seen a room of Paizo staffers cackle so gleefully as they did during the *Reign of Winter* outline brainstorm. If you're reading this, I hope that you either share our joy at going off the map, or else are willing to give us the benefit of the doubt and come along for the ride. Because after 70 volumes and more than 5 years, it's a fine time to shake things up a little.

LAND OF ICE AND SNOW

In this month's adventure, we travel halfway across Golarion's solar system to the mysterious planet called Triaxus. Triaxus is much like Golarion in size and composition, but with an extremely eccentric orbit. While Golarion—like Earth—gets its seasons from an axial tilt that gives each hemisphere more sunlight during different parts of its orbit, Triaxus actually moves closer to and farther from the sun, alternating between miniature ice ages and sweltering summers every 317 years.

As any George R. R. Martin fan knows, a planet with extremely long seasons isn't a brand-new idea, but it still comes with a ton of questions. How do organisms adapt to huge swings in climate? Do they evolve? Migrate? Go

ON THE COVER

This month's cover depicts an alien creature from another world—the Winterborn Triaxian Commander Pharamol, a dragonrider of the Dragon Legion. With his gold dragonkin partner Amerenth, Pharamol defends the Skyfire Mandate and the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn from an evil Drakelands army. Commander Pharamol holds one of the keys to the *Dancing Hut*, but it's up to the PCs whether they join forces with him or take part in the battle against him.

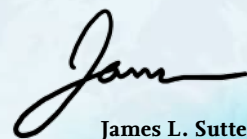
dormant? And what about the civilizations—how do they change in the summer, when food is plentiful, versus the bitter winters? How does your worldview change if you've only ever known one season?

At the same time, I didn't want the planet to be a one-trick pony. And so I brought in a classic fantasy trope we haven't touched much on Golarion: dragonriders. The image of armored warriors mounted on powerful dragons has appeared in countless fantasy novels, perhaps none so beloved as Anne McCaffrey's *Dragonriders of Pern* series. Yet on Golarion, dragons are most often aloof or terrifying, uninterested in dealing with humanoids.

On Triaxus, all that changes. While two of the major continents are controlled by the humanoid Triaxians, the third contains the Drakelands, warring kingdoms where evil dragons rule. In order to keep this threat in check, the Triaxians long ago made a pact with good-aligned dragonkin—weaker, more humanoid dragons who use weapons—to work together and keep the evil true dragons from spreading. In the famed Dragon Legions, each dragon is assigned a highly trained humanoid companion as a rider, caretaker, and comrade, allowing both dragon and Triaxian to specialize in what they do best. The focus of this effort is a narrow isthmus known as the Skyfire Mandate, and it's here that the PCs first appear. For more information, see the special double-length "Planet of Dragons" gazetteer beginning on page 64.

Whether your players decide to join the legions and become dragonriders themselves, or simply race off to the next bizarre world in the queue—our own—I hope that you enjoy our brief excursion onto one of Golarion's closest neighbors.

Now if we could just get some robots in here...



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REIGN OF WINTER



THE FROZEN STARS

PART ONE: THE DANCING HUT

PAGE 8

The PCs find themselves in Baba Yaga's garden—yet another layout of the Dancing Hut—and must explore their surroundings to find an exit and learn their new location.

PART TWO: THE SIEGE OF SPURHORN

PAGE 14

On the alien planet of Triaxus, the PCs get caught up in a war between the heroic dragonriders of the Dragon Legion and the barbarian armies of the dragon warlord Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm.

PART THREE: INTO THE DRAKELANDS

PAGE 39

The PCs encounter a variety of alien creatures as they travel across the dragon-controlled Drakelands in search of Baba Yaga's next key.

PART FOUR: IVORYGLASS

PAGE 43

The PCs must infiltrate the fortress-palace of Ivoryglass and defeat the dragon warlord Yrax to claim Baba Yaga's final key from the dragon's hoard.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"The Frozen Stars" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

10 The PCs begin this adventure at 10th level.

11 The PCs should reach 11th level during the siege of Spurhorn and before they face General Malesinder.

12 By the time they exit the Rimekeening Crevasse and enter Ivoryglass, the PCs should be 12th level.

The PCs should be 13th level by the end of the adventure.

THE FROZEN STARS

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Far, far away from Golarion and the lands of the Inner Sea lies the distant planet of Triaxus the Wanderer, the seventh planet in Golarion's solar system, known for its extreme seasonal shifts that create summers and winters lasting more than 100 years. Baba Yaga is no stranger to this alien world—she has visited Triaxus for centuries, tapping into the planet's long winters to help fuel the supernatural winter that eternally cloaks her kingdom of Irrisen on Golarion. She is not well known on this world, believing a low profile is the best way to safeguard the magic portals she created, but she has had dealings with some of the more powerful dragons of Triaxus, who both fear and covet her power and wondrous *Dancing Hut*. Outside of the Drakelands, however, the Queen of Witches is almost a complete mystery.

After summoning her Three Riders to Iobaria as part of a contingency plan to deal with her daughter Elvanna's treachery, Baba Yaga traveled to Triaxus to perform maintenance on the mystic winter portals connecting the snowbound planet to Irrisen. It was on Triaxus that Baba Yaga received a summons from her estranged son, Rasputin. He invited her back to her homeworld of Earth at the urging of his half-sister Elvanna, and planned to spring a trap on their mother there. Already suspicious, the Queen of Witches left behind on Triaxus copies of the keys that would take the *Dancing Hut* to Earth. Disguising herself as a native Triaxian, Baba Yaga gave the first key to a commander of a Dragon Legion aerie in the Skyfire Mandate for safekeeping. The second key she took across the border into the Drakelands, and once more in disguise (this time as an elven diplomat from Castrovell), she deposited it in the hoard of a powerful dragon warlord. With her trail laid on Triaxus, Baba Yaga departed for Earth.

Now, in the midst of Triaxus's decades-long winter, hostilities have reignited between the dragons of the tyrannical Drakelands and the dragonriders of the Skyfire Mandate's famed Dragon Legion. A powerful white dragon warlord called Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm, has sent a huge Drakelands army to besiege the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn. The two sides know nothing of Baba Yaga or her daughter's treachery, but their leaders possess the two keys Baba Yaga left behind, and those who would seek to follow the Queen of Witches' trail will find themselves embroiled in this ancient conflict.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs find themselves transported to the planet of Triaxus by the legendary *Dancing Hut* in their search for Baba Yaga. They also find themselves in a new layout of the hut—Baba Yaga's garden. This is an area devoted to her horticultural pursuits, and includes dangerous plants and creatures both hostile and helpful from across the planes. Exploring the garden to find the hut's exit, the PCs learn more clues about

the “trail of breadcrumbs” Baba Yaga left behind, including the two keys the PCs must find to take the hut to its next destination: a bearskin and a two-headed eagle.

As they exit the hut into Triaxus's wintry landscape, the PCs encounter natives of the planet—a Triaxian dragonrider named Bescaylie and her dragonkin mount, scouts from the nearby Dragon Legion fortress of Spurhorn. One of Baba Yaga's keys, the two-headed eagle, lies in Spurhorn, a pet of the Dragon Legion leader Commander Pharamol, but the fortress is under siege by the army of the white dragon warlord Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm, led by a silver dragonkin commander named General Malesinder.

Depending on their interactions with Bescaylie and their own scruples, the PCs have several options to acquire the key: They can join Commander Pharamol and the Dragon Legion in defending Spurhorn from the Drakelands invaders in exchange for the key, join forces with General Malesinder to conquer Spurhorn and claim the key as a portion of the spoils, or take neither side and attempt to sneak into Spurhorn to steal the eagle. Whether the PCs join the defenders and successfully lift the siege, are part of the sacking of Spurhorn themselves, or attempt to avoid the conflict altogether, they must fight a series of battles against the Drakelands, the Dragon Legion, or both before they can secure their prize.

With the first key in hand, the PCs turn their attention to the second key—the bearskin, which lies in Ivoryglass, the fortress-palace of the dragon warlord Yrax. If they aided the Dragon Legion, the PCs have the chance to become dragonriders themselves, riding on the backs of dragonkin into the heart of the dragon-ruled Drakelands. Otherwise, the PCs must arrange their own transportation, possibly piloting the *Dancing Hut* to their destination.

On the way to Ivoryglass, the PCs encounter a variety of creatures native to the alien planet, including a wolflike adlet shaman named Baknarla. The adlets are harshly oppressed by Yrax, but Baknarla believes the PCs are destined to bring down the dragon warlord and give her people back their lands, and offers to guide the travelers to the grave of a legendary adlet hero, where they can find both a weapon to use against Yrax and a hidden route to his fortress.

The palace of Ivoryglass sits inside a hollow glacier, but with the help of the Dragon Legion or Baknarla, the PCs can avoid most of the armies surrounding the fortress. Once inside, the PCs face off against the palace's defenses and Yrax's guardians, including Yrax's half-dragon son and Cesseer of Ning, an elite warrior from the south and Yrax's consort. Cesseer fights to defend Yrax, but she holds no loyalty to him personally, and the PCs might be able to convince her stand aside rather than fight them. The assault on Ivoryglass culminates in a climactic confrontation against the dragon warlord Yrax himself. Once the PCs defeat the dragon, they can claim the bearskin from his hoard and return to the *Dancing Hut* to pick up Baba Yaga's trail once more.

REIGN OF WINTER

PART ONE: THE DANCING HUT

The adventure begins as soon as the PCs place the two keys found in Artrosa—the gold nugget and the dragon scale—into the cauldron in Baba Yaga’s *Dancing Hut*. Within moments, the hut disappears from Iobaria’s Hoofwood and reappears on the distant planet of Triaxus. Inside the hut, the PCs once more experience a sense of displacement as the hut’s interior warps and shifts before their eyes, then settles into a new configuration. As before, the hut’s entire layout and interior having changed with its new location.

The *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* is fully detailed on pages 61–63 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68. The gold nugget and dragon scale 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 Triaxus.

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 any of the hut’s denizens are currently accompanying the PCs, such as the kikimora Zorka (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68 58) or Ratibor the Bold (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #69 56), they recognize that the hut has traveled to a new destination, but they do not recognize this layout of the hut or know its current location.

A1. GAZEBO

The wooden walls of the hut disappear, replaced by large windows set in delicate iron traceries that look out in all directions over a wide, gloomy garden. Thick clouds hang unnaturally low over overgrown stands of trees, barren flower beds, and white pebble paths. The sky and distant landscape seem peculiarly artificial, almost as if they were part of a faded and blurry watercolor painting. A large iron cauldron sits atop a round, marble-topped table surrounded by four white wooden chairs in the center of this circular room. A set of framed stained-glass doors to the south provide the only exit.

This gazebo sits in the middle of Baba Yaga’s gardens, protected by subtle enchantments to ward off the garden’s denizens. None of the current inhabitants of this hut configuration (with the exception of the moon-beast and denizen of Leng in area **A7**) can enter the gazebo, making it a safe haven for the PCs while they are inside the hut.

As in the hut’s previous layouts, the cauldron atop the table 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.

Outside the gazebo, the edges of the garden and the “sky” are cloaked with *permanent images* that give the

appearance of an open area, but the illusion-cloaked walls and ceiling are as impenetrable as any other part of the hut. The ceiling is in fact only 80 feet high. The artificial “sky” provides bright illumination, and once per day, magically created light rain falls for an hour.

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

A2. BLEAK GROVE (CR 11)

Deep shadows cloak the barren soil of this dense grove of coniferous trees. A twisting, disused trail winds its way into the depths of the wood.

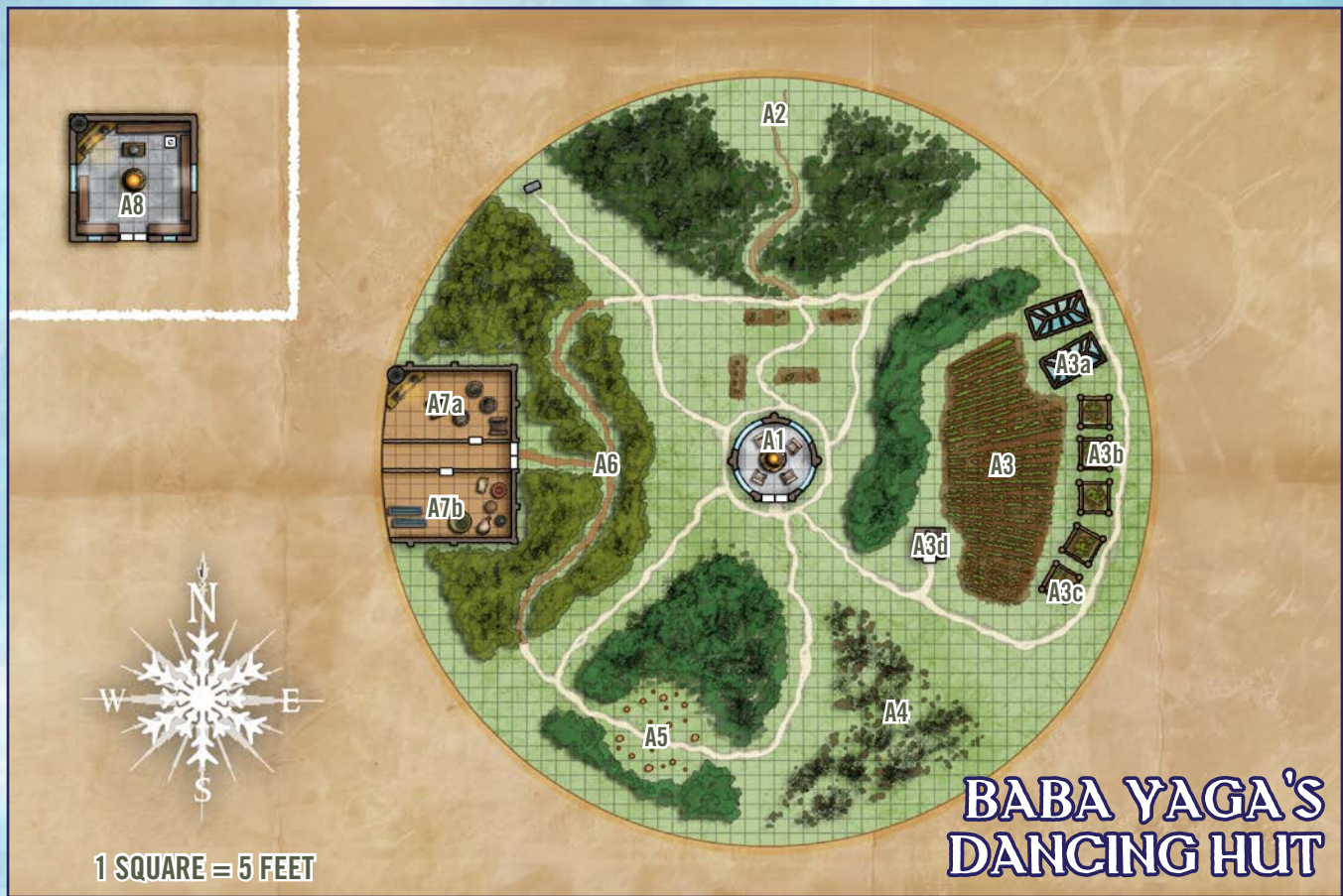
Creature: Baba Yaga sought a gardener to tend her gardens while she focused on other matters. In her journeys between the planes, the Queen of Witches captured an elder treant named Dawnbark and forced her to become the guardian of the hut’s gardens. After countless years of confinement and loneliness with only artificial sunlight and tainted soil for sustenance, Dawnbark has been driven to madness and now suffers from psychosis (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 251). The treant hibernates at the center of this large grove, rousing only to lash out at any intruders. When Dawnbark becomes aware that the PCs are in her copse of trees, she animates trees to cover the path behind them. The PCs notice the movement of the trees if they succeed at a DC 19 Perception check.

When the PCs reach the center of the grove, the crazed treant confronts them and cantankerously demands to know why they are trespassing here. Dawnbark appears as a sickly, overgrown ash tree, with tangled drooping branches jutting out at peculiar angles and malignant knots disfiguring her trunk. A PC who succeeds at either a DC 30 Knowledge (nature) check or an opposed Sense Motive check against Dawnbark’s Bluff check recognizes the physical or behavioral signs of acute mental illness in the treant.

Dawnbark’s initial attitude is unfriendly, and unless the PCs can improve her attitude to at least indifferent, she attacks after a minute of angry muttering and accusations. Any mention of Baba Yaga by name drives the treant into a fury, decreasing her attitude toward the PCs by one category. If made hostile, Dawnbark attacks immediately.

If the PCs change Dawnbark’s attitude to friendly, she grudgingly answers questions about the gardens. She knows of the giant flytrap that lurks in the brambles at the other end of the garden (area **A4**), and the moonflowers near the storehouse (area **A6**), but she isn’t aware of the wolf-in-sheep’s-clothing (area **A5**), as she shuns the dead tree stump clearing. However, in the past she has caught glimpses of a gray cat that occasionally hunts small rodents

THE FROZEN STARS



for food in the garden (this was the familiar Syvet before she ran afoul of the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing).

If the PCs change Dawnbark's attitude to helpful and are sympathetic to her plight, allow the treant to attempt a DC 20 Will save against her insanity. Success means Dawnbark is able to suppress her condition for a day and reduces the DC of further saving throws against the psychosis by 3, putting her on the path to recovery. Even if Dawnbark fails this saving throw, the PCs may be able to cure her madness with a *greater restoration*, *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell, but convincing the treant to let the PCs cast spells on her requires a successful Diplomacy check (with a +10 modifier to the DC), unless she has been made helpful.

DAWNBARK	CR 11
XP 12,800	
Female advanced treant (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 266)	
CE Gargantuan plant	
Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +17	
DEFENSE	
AC 23, touch 5, flat-footed 23 (-1 Dex, +18 natural, -4 size)	
hp 161 (14d8+98)	
Fort +16, Ref +3, Will +10	

DR 10/slashing; **Immune** plant traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +20 (2d8+13/19-20)

Ranged rock +6 (3d6+13)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Special Attacks rock throwing (180 ft.), trample (2d8+19, DC 30)

TACTICS

During Combat Dawnbark focuses on one opponent at a time, but quickly switches to any foe that uses fire attacks against her. She uses her animated trees to block opponents' escape from the clearing and to attack spellcasters and others who stay out of melee combat.

Morale Unless cured of her madness, Dawnbark fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 37, **Dex** 8, **Con** 25, **Int** 14, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +27 (+29 sunder); **CMD** 38 (40 vs. sunder)

Feats Alertness, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Bluff +11 (+21 to hide insanity), Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +17, Sense Motive +14, Stealth -2 (+14 in forests)

Languages Aklo, Elven, Sylvan, Treant

REIGN OF WINTER

SQ animate trees, double damage against objects, psychotic, treespeech

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Psychotic (Ex) Dawnbark suffers from psychosis (*GameMastery Guide* 251), changing her alignment to chaotic evil and granting her a +10 competence bonus on Bluff checks to hide her insanity.

Treasure: Hidden by one of the knots that mar Dawnbark's trunk is her only treasure, a *ring of sacred mistletoe* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 173).

Development: If the PCs help suppress Dawnbark's madness or restore her sanity, she breaks down weeping, tears of sap streaming down her face. If she is completely cured, her alignment returns to neutral good, and she offers the PCs her *ring of sacred mistletoe* in thanks. Dawnbark's greatest desire is to escape the prison of the garden. However, dimensional travel such as *teleport* only works within the hut, and as a Gargantuan creature, Dawnbark is difficult to transport in this way. *Plane shift*, on the other hand, can transport Dawnbark out of the hut. If such magic is used to move Dawnbark to Triaxus, the treant is delighted by the planet's wooded highlands, and she is happy to explore this environment and make it her new home.

Story Award: If the PCs resolve the situation peacefully, award them 12,800 XP, as if they had defeated Dawnbark in combat. If they completely cure Dawnbark of her psychosis and help her escape the *Dancing Hut*, award them an additional 12,800 XP.

A3. HERB GARDEN (CR 6+)

A wide variety of plants, from mundane shrubs to aromatic herbs to colorful exotic flowers, grow in unkempt profusion in this garden. Glass greenhouses and fenced enclosures hold more greenery, and a grove of larger trees flanks the garden. A small wooden shed sits to the southwest.

Baba Yaga grows a large number of plants for use in her witchcraft in this garden.

Creatures: While most of the plant life here is harmless, a few of the larger enclosures hold specimens of more dangerous plant creatures. Area **A3a** contains a basidirond, area **A3b** holds an assassin vine, and area **A3c** contains a shambling mound. These creatures attack anyone entering their enclosures.

ASSASSIN VINE CR 3

XP 800

hp 30 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 22)

BASIDIRON CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 28)

SHAMBLING MOUND CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 67 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 246)

Treasure: Several pounds of valuable spices in the garden, including allspice, nutmeg, saffron, and various rare herbs are ready to be harvested and are worth 450 gp in total. In addition to mundane gardening tools, the garden shed (area **A3d**) contains a cupboard holding a container of *defoliant polish* (*Ultimate Equipment* 291), four oils of *goodberry*, a *wand of plant growth* (9 charges), a *wand of speak with plants* (12 charges), and six flasks of alchemical *defoliant* (*Ultimate Equipment* 103).

A4. SNAPPERJAW (CR 10)

A tangled mass of overflowing weeds and thorny brambles grows in profusion here. A scattering of bleached bones lies entwined in the barbed tendrils of the wiry thicket.

The brambles are considered light undergrowth (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 426).

Creature: A giant flytrap lurks in the thicket, lying in wait to ambush anything that can provide it with sustenance.

GIANT FLYTRAP CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 149 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 134)

A5. WOLF IN FAMILIAR CLOTHING (CR 10)

Several flat-topped tree stumps stand amid thick grass in this clearing, hinting that this place was once as thickly forested as the surrounding wood.

Creature: A century ago, the reign of Queen Yelizaveta of Irrisen ended, and Baba Yaga reclaimed her daughter, bringing the deposed queen into her *Dancing Hut*. While Yelizaveta met the fate of all of Baba Yaga's daughters, her cat familiar Syvet managed to survive, and fled into the depths of the *Dancing Hut*, where she used her few remaining supernatural powers to hide and eke out a furtive existence.

Some time ago, however, the old cat's luck ran out and she was snared by a ruthless ambush predator in the garden, a wolf-in-sheep's-clothing. But Syvet was the familiar of a powerful witch-queen of Irrisen, and her indomitable spirit could not be snuffed out so easily. Using the last of the mystical energy granted to her by the unearthly power of Yelizaveta's patron, Syvet overwhelmed the brute intellect of the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing and merged her essence with the aberrant beast. Syvet's consciousness now exists alongside that of the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing, constantly wrestling with the alien creature's mentality for control of their shared body, while her lifeless cat body—now

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the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing's corpse lure—sits atop the creature's stump.

Syvet uses her disguise hex to make her former body appear as an old, though still-living, gray cat with white paws sitting on a tree stump. When she notices the PCs, she tries to attract their attention, using *dancing lights* or *ventriloquism*. When the PCs approach, the cat uses her tongues hex and asks them who they are and what they are doing here. Syvet is no friend of Baba Yaga, as the crone killed Syvet's mistress, but the erstwhile cat is desperate for company and more than willing to talk, even if the PCs say that they serve the Queen of Witches. Syvet explains who she is, and reveals that “a long time ago” she sneaked away to explore the hut while her mistress went with Baba Yaga. While she was gone, Syvet felt her link to her mistress irrevocably ripped asunder. She never saw her mistress again, and while Syvet believes her mistress is dead, she knows Yelizaveta's soul is not free, and believes that Baba Yaga has somehow prevented her mistress from passing on into the Great Beyond. Syvet can also give the PCs some helpful information. While a living cat, Syvet used her magic to visit several different layouts of the *Dancing Hut*, and she can give the PCs cryptic hints about areas they have already seen, or even configurations they may visit in the future, at your discretion. Unfortunately, Syvet has never been outside of this configuration of the hut, and has no idea where the hut currently is.

As Syvet relates her tale, the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing's sinister consciousness wrestles with Syvet for control of its body. The PCs can attempt a DC 20 Sense Motive check to notice Syvet's discomfort and that she seems to be struggling with something. A moment later, Syvet loses control and the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing gains dominance. Syvet has just enough time to shout a garbled warning before the cat body atop the stump goes rigid and the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing attacks.



SYVET

SYVET

CR 10

XP 9,600

Unique wolf-in-sheep's-clothing (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 285)

N Medium aberration

Init +6; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+2 Dex, +11 natural)

hp 136 (13d8+78)

Fort +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

SR 21

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., burrow 5 ft., climb 5 ft.

Melee bite +14 (1d6+5), 8 tentacles +13 (1d4+2 plus grab and pull)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with tentacle)

Special Attacks constrict (tentacle 1d4+3), hexes^{APG} (disguise, evil eye [DC 15], tongues), implant, pull (tentacle, 5 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +14; save DCs are Intelligence-based)

At will—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *ray of frost*
3/day—*ill omen*^{APG} (DC 13), *ventriloquism*

1/day—*gentle repose*

TACTICS

Before Combat Syvet casts *gentle repose* on her cat body every day.

During Combat If able to surprise victims, the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing uses its evil eye hex on the closest opponent, then pulls this creature closer with its tentacles to devour its prey.

Morale Tortured by her bizarre half-existence, Syvet longs for peace. Once combat begins, she forces the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing to fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 14, **Con** 23, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +14 (+20 grapple);

CMD 26 (can't be tripped)

Feats Alertness⁸, Great

Fortitude, Greater Grapple⁸,

Improved Initiative, Iron Will⁸,

Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack,

Skill Focus (Disguise), Skill Focus

(Perception), Weapon Focus (tentacle)

Skills Climb +17, Disguise +4 (+16 as a tree stump),

Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +14,

Knowledge (nature) +11, Knowledge (nobility) +8,

Perception +26, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +20

Languages Hallit, Skald

SQ corpse lure

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hexes (Su) Syvet can use the disguise, evil eye, and tongues hexes as a 6th-level witch.

Development: If the PCs kill the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing, Syvet's soul is freed. The cat whispers a final thank you as her body collapses and she finally goes peacefully to her death. Alternatively, the PCs might attempt to save Syvet. The cat is dead, and her consciousness is irrevocably entwined with that of the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing, but if the wolf-in-sheep's-clothing is slain, Syvet can be brought back to life, either with *raise dead* (thanks to the cat's daily castings of *gentle repose*), *reincarnate*, or similar spells. In this case, Syvet can accompany the PCs and continue to share

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information with them, effectively becoming a recurring NPC. Syvet can also provide a boon to the party's familiars. If Syvet is brought back to life, any witch's familiars in the party immediately gain two new witch spells that their witches can now learn and prepare. These spells can be determined randomly, or you can pick specific spells to meet the needs of your PCs and the campaign.

A6. ORCHARD OF MALICE (CR 10)

Towering tropical vegetation grows in profusion here, and the canopy of green foliage gives the impression of a leafy ceiling overhead. Thick creepers choke the trees and taller shrubs, each straining to reach the light above.

This area of the garden contains a thick jungle. The white pebble paths end at the edge of the jungle, turning to paths of soft and springy dirt. Because of the dense vegetation, the maximum distance to spot an encounter with the Perception skill is 2d6x10 feet.

Creatures: A cluster of moonflowers grows along the path where a second track diverges toward the west. Originally "planted" in an enclosure in the herb garden in the eastern part of the garden (area A3), the first moonflower outgrew its enclosure and made its way here, where it spawned an offspring. The two moonflowers lurk in the thick vegetation, waiting for prey large enough to capture in a spawning pod and further increase their numbers. The moonflowers are spread out roughly 40 feet apart, but quickly respond to telepathic messages from each other.

MOONFLOWERS (2) **CR 8**
XP 4,800 each
hp 104 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 192)

Treasure: One of the moonflowers has a +1 *breastplate*, a +1 *heavy flail*, a *handy haversack*, and 235 gp lodged inside it. These are the only surviving remains of the victim whose body spawned this moonflower.

A7. STOREHOUSE (CR 12)

This wooden building lies hidden in the garden's western jungle. Its two rooms hold dusty piles of old furniture, mounds of moldering herbs, bales of cloth, barrels of fertilizer, clay pots, and trays of dried seeds. The northern room (area A7a) contains a large stone fireplace with a series of iron rungs climbing up its chimney. The chimney leads to area A8. The ceilings in the storehouse are 25 feet tall.

Creatures: A moon-beast and its personal slave, a denizen of Leng, recently plane shifted into the *Dancing Hut* and are exploring the extradimensional artifact, looking for slaves and sacrifices for the moon-beast's mysterious gods. The denizen of Leng narrowly avoided being swallowed by one

of the moonflowers in the garden outside, so it convinced its master to retreat here until the area could be secured. The moon-beast now waits in area A7b while its slave thoroughly searches the storehouse. The denizen of Leng, disguised in red robes and wrappings as a humanoid, is now searching the northern room (area A7a). When the denizen spots the PCs, it briefly engages them in conversation using *tongues*, asking them to come meet its the master, who is curious about the inhabitants of this garden. The denizen even offers each of the PCs a small ruby (worth 100 gp) as enticement. If the PCs refuse to accompany the denizen, it flees to inform its master of the presence of more potential slaves. Both the moon-beast and the denizen of Leng have already used their daily *plane shift* ability to enter the *Dancing Hut*; they cannot use it again to escape until a day has passed.

DENIZEN OF LENG **CR 8**
XP 4,800
hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 82)

TACTICS

During Combat The denizen of Leng casts *hypnotic pattern* and then engages foes in melee, trying to prevent them from reaching its master.

Morale A loyal charmed slave, the denizen of Leng fights to the death to defend its master.

MOON-BEAST **CR 11**
XP 12,800
hp 133 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 195)

TACTICS

During Combat The moon-beast uses *air walk* to hover near the ceiling while using its spell-like abilities. It uses *charm monster* and *dominate person* to quickly gain more slaves to defend it from enemies.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, the moon-beast attempts to flee the storehouse using *air walk*, abandoning its denizen of Leng slave.

Treasure: While the storehouse contains nothing of value, the moon-beast possesses an *eye of the void* (*Ultimate Equipment* 296) and the denizen of Leng carries a pouch of gems containing 15 small rubies worth 100 gp each and a single larger ruby worth 6,000 gp. A small, moving humanoid figure is visible inside the large ruby, as if it were trapped inside the gem. With a successful DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) check, a PC can identify the ruby as the material component for a *trap the soul* spell. See The Planar Peddler on page 13 for details of the creature trapped inside the gem.

A8. WITCH'S HUT

This square room appears to be a cozy wooden cabin. Shelves packed with esoteric knickknacks and strange ingredients line

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the walls. A stone fireplace with a large mantel takes up the room's northwest corner, while opposite the room's only door stands a simple wooden table on which rests a cracked clay bowl. A large blackened cauldron sits in the center of the room.

This is the outermost room of this configuration of the *Dancing Hut*; once again, it is larger than the hut's exterior. The door to the south leads to the hut's porch outside, while the room's windows look out over a snowy, mountainous landscape. The fireplace contains a trap door in its floor opening onto narrow shaft with iron rungs leading downward to area **A7a**. A trap door in the ceiling opens into a cold loft above the room, empty but for dust and abandoned birds' nests. The cauldron in the middle of the room is mundane in every way; placing any of the hut's keys in this cauldron has no effect.

The clay bowl on the table contains a brown hen's egg; together, these are the controls to command the *Dancing Hut*, provided the user succeeds at a DC 30 Use Magic Device check every round to directly control the hut's actions—something that the PCs might be able to achieve at this point. If the PCs befriended Zorka earlier in the campaign, she can provide some insight into using the controls, but it is still up to the PCs to succeed at the check and command the hut. For more details on “piloting” the *Dancing Hut*, see pages 61–63 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68.

The shelves contain a variety of spell components and mundane alchemical ingredients, in addition to numerous trinkets that normally function as keys to dimensionally transport the hut. All of these keys, however, have been deactivated, with the exception of the keys the PCs have already acquired and used (such as the frost giant's beard, plague doctor's mask, dragon scale, and gold nugget), which may be found on the shelves as well.

When a character bearing the mantle of the Black Rider first enters this room, three ravens suddenly take to the air, cawing loudly as they fly about the room. The ravens are only quasi-real, the product of a *shadow conjuration* spell mimicking the *summon minor monster* spell (*Ultimate Magic*). Reminiscent of the three raven oracles encountered in the hut's Iobaria layout, the ravens cry out, “Baba Yaga has gone on, off to see her only son. But a trail she left behind, if the breadcrumbs you can find!” before picking up several objects off the shelves and dropping them in front of the PCs. First, they take a stuffed two-headed eagle from a shelf, then place an iron spur and a drinking horn beside it. Next,

they take an elephant tusk and a small hand mirror and drop them atop a bearskin rug. The ravens then disappear, repeating their cryptic phrase a final time.

The items taken off the shelves are clues to the keys the PCs must find to once more take the hut to a new destination on Baba Yaga's trail. The spur and drinking horn represent the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn, where the PCs can find the two-headed eagle. The tusk (“ivory”) and hand mirror (or “looking glass”) represent Ivoryglass, palace of the dragon warlord Yrax, who holds the bearskin key. The PCs will likely not realize the significance of these clues at first, but as they learn more about the hut's current location, they should be able to piece them together. The shadow ravens reappear and produce the clues each time someone bearing the mantle of the Black Rider enters the room.

Treasure: While most of the items in this room are nonmagical, 4 doses of *flying ointment* (*Ultimate Equipment* 299) can be found on the shelves, and a *habit of the winter explorer* (see page 62) hangs on a hook next to the outer door.



ZILVAZARAAT

THE PLANAR PEDDLER

The large ruby carried by the denizen of Leng in area **A7** is worth 6,000 gp as a simple gemstone, but it actually contains a far more valuable treasure, for trapped inside the ruby is a mercane named Zilvazaraat. A human wizard captured Zilvazaraat some years ago with a *trap the soul* spell, then sold the gem containing him to the denizen of Leng, who has possessed it ever since. If the PCs recover the ruby from the denizen of Leng and break it, they can free Zilvazaraat. In an instant, his material body reforms into a 10-foot-tall blue humanoid wearing elaborate robes. Freeing Zilvazaraat from the gem does not require him to perform a service, but he is more than willing to make a deal, if the PCs are amenable. He thanks the PCs profusely for his freedom, and ever the entrepreneur, inquires whether they are interested in doing business, claiming to be “a peddler of wondrous wares from across the Great Beyond.”

Zilvazaraat is willing to sell the PCs any of the items in his *secret chest* (see *Treasure*, below), and will even buy magic items from them, though he will need to leave and return the following day (using *plane shift*) to get the required funds for payment. The mercane has no interest in mundane gear or valuables, only magic items. Once a deal is concluded, or if the PCs are not interested in doing business at this time, Zilvazaraat presents them with a small token: an *obsidian raven* (see page 63) that will allow them to call on him later

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ON ANOTHER PLANET

While Triaxus is similar in many ways to Golarion, it is an alien planet, and you should try to give the PCs a sense of the world's "alien-ness" as they adventure on Triaxus. One of the easiest ways to do this is with descriptions of spell effects. Spellcasters on Triaxus use the same spells as Golarion spellcasters, but they should look different from what the PCs are used to (which might even increase the DC of Spellcraft checks to identify spells being cast by 5). For example, a Triaxian *magic missile* would function exactly the same, but it might look like a shard of glowing blue ice, or take the form of a spiraling, serpentine shaft.

Things might smell different on Triaxus than on Golarion, food looks and tastes a little strange, and even relatively mundane details like doors, windows, and furniture could have slightly different shapes and forms. Remember that the clothing, armor, and weapons of Triaxians likely looks slightly different as well—it's still obvious what they are, but the styles should be completely different from anything seen on Golarion. Obviously, Triaxian cultures will be different from those on Golarion, with different customs and rituals, and it would be exceedingly unusual for a Triaxian to speak Taldane, Golarion's common tongue.

In general, play up the subtle differences in the most ordinary things rather than the big differences. It's these little details that will help make the PCs' time on an alien planet memorable.

if they wish to avail themselves of his services. Before leaving, the mercane thanks the PCs again for freeing him, expresses his wish for lucrative dealings for both parties in the future, then bids them a fond farewell and plane shifts away. If the PCs attack Zilvazaraat, he tries to flee using *plane shift* as soon as he is able.

From a campaign standpoint, Zilvazaraat can be used as a traveling "magic item shop" that the PCs can use wherever the *Dancing Hut* takes them. As they journey to ever stranger and more distant places, the PCs will have few or no opportunities to sell magic items or buy new gear (even on Triaxus, they are far from any major settlements), so Zilvazaraat can fulfill that role for the PCs. The mercane is equivalent to a large city in terms of his items available and purchasing power (base value 8,000 gp, purchase limit 50,000 gp). The PCs can send Zilvazaraat a "shopping list" using the *obsidian raven*. Once the mercane has gathered the necessary items (a process that takes 1d4 days on average, depending on the rarity of the items requested), he uses the *obsidian raven* to plane shift to the PCs with the requested items in his *secret chest*. Because of the inaccuracies of *plane shift*, Zilvazaraat recommends doing business in the *Dancing*

Hut. Each of its layouts is a separate, finite demiplane, so finding the PCs in one of the hut's layouts would be significantly easier than trying to track them down on the Material Plane.

ZILVAZARAAT

CR 5
XP 1,600

 Male mercane (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 188)

hp 51

Treasure: In addition to the *obsidian raven* (see page 63) that Zilvazaraat gives to the PCs, his *secret chest* currently holds the following items (their prices are in parentheses): a +1 *defiant*^{UE} (*chaotic outsiders*) *mithral buckler* (5,155 gp), a +1 *darkwood composite longbow* (+4 Str) (2,830 gp), an *elemental gem* (fire) (2,250 gp), an *oil of bless weapon* (50 gp), a *ring of sustenance* (2,500 gp), a *stonemist cloak*^{UE} (3,500 gp), a *scroll of searing light* (375 gp), a *scroll of elemental body I* (700 gp), and a *wand of see invisibility* (38 charges) (3,420 gp).

Story Award: If the PCs rescue and befriend Zilvazaraat, award them 9,600 XP.

PART TWO: THE SIEGE OF SPURHORN

Exiting the *Dancing Hut* brings the PCs into a wintry region of snow-covered mountains. These are the Parapets, the mighty mountain range that separates the Skyfire Mandate from the Drakelands on the world of Triaxus, the seventh planet in Golarion's solar system, now in the middle of its generations-long winter. While it isn't readily apparent where the PCs are, it is immediately clear that they are no longer in Iobaria.

During the day, the sun is much smaller than it should be—it's not much more than a pinprick of light, though still blindingly bright to look at—and stars are visible in the sky. The sun never provides illumination equal to bright light; even direct sunshine at high noon is only normal light, and dim light prevails for much of the morning and afternoon. At night, no moon is visible in the sky. Plants are different from those on Golarion, however, with different colors and shapes, though there is precious little vegetation here in the depths of winter. In the Parapet Mountains near Spurhorn, the temperature averages around 30° F during the day and 10° F at night, but can become even colder during one of the region's wild storms. Temperatures in the eastern Drakelands are slightly warmer, with an average of 40° F during the day, but daytime temperatures drop to an average of 20° F on the Vahara Glacier around Ivoryglass.

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check is enough for the PCs to recognize that they are now on another planet, while a result of 40 or higher successfully identifies the planet as Triaxus. The border region between the Skyfire Mandate and the Drakelands is detailed in the

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gazetteer beginning on page 64 of this volume, while more information on the entire planet of Triaxus may be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Worlds*.

LONE DRAGONRIDER (CR 11)

Creatures: Shortly after the PCs leave the *Dancing Hut* to explore the surrounding area, they encounter natives of the region—a Triaxian dragonrider named Bescaylie and her dragonkin partner Efrixes. They are scouts from the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn who escaped the siege to seek allies and observe enemy movements. Bescaylie and Efrixes have just returned from another Dragon Legion stronghold, where they delivered word of the Drakelands incursion and the siege of Spurhorn. Fearing that the PCs and the *Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* are enemy reinforcements, the pair descends for a closer look.

Bescaylie is a tall Winterborn Triaxian with blonde body fur. She has served the Dragon Legion all her life; her parents are high-ranking retainers at the Legion stronghold of Stalwart Hall, and Bescaylie grew up knowing she would become a legionary. Efrixes is a red-scaled dragonkin, a bipedal draconic creature capable of wielding weapons with its front arms. Bescaylie and Efrixes bonded when they were both adolescents; Efrixes is platonically (though unrequitedly) in love with Bescaylie and would do anything to protect her. This has stirred up a few nasty rumors back at Spurhorn, but their relationship has never been anything but professional.

When Bescaylie realizes the PCs are not Triaxian natives (she's never seen a human before), she cautiously tries to establish communications with them. First, she and Efrixes swoop over the PCs at an altitude of 50 feet. This is a tense situation—from Bescaylie's and Efrixes' perspective, the PCs are alien creatures, and any mistaken gesture, including drawing weapons or casting spells (even

harmless magic like *comprehend languages* or *tongues*) has the potential to trigger a fight. On the other hand, the PCs see what appears to be a red dragon flying over them. Although the coloration of dragonkin is not tied to alignment the way true dragons' colors are, alien visitors to Triaxus (such as the PCs) might easily mistake the red-scaled dragonkin for an evil red dragon and make unfortunate assumptions.

If the PCs' reaction isn't immediately hostile, the dragonrider and dragonkin land at least 150 feet away. Bescaylie makes a clear show of leaving her weapons behind and then slowly approaches the PCs, hoping to establish contact with them. Her initial attitude is indifferent, but a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check (provided the PCs can speak with her) is enough to make her friendly (see Development, below).

If combat does break out, Efrixes surges forward to protect Bescaylie at the slightest hint of treachery from the PCs. He attempts to put himself between her and the PCs, using his breath weapon and fending off attackers while she mounts and they both take to the air to regain their aerial advantage.



BESCAYLIE

BESCAYLIE CR 9

XP 6,400

Female Winterborn Triaxian fighter (dragoon) 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 46 and see page 86)
LN Medium humanoid (Triaxian)
Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+10 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex)

hp 109 (10d10+50)

Fort +13, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6 (+3 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 lance +18/+13 (1d8+9/x3) or mwk spear +16/+11 (1d8+6/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +13/+8 (1d8+3/x3)

Special Attacks banner +2/+1, spear training +2, spinning lance

TACTICS

During Combat When fighting from astride Efrixes, Bescaylie charges an opponent with Spirited Charge, soaring past with Ride-By Attack.

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FINDING THE KEYS

Once the PCs decipher the clues found within the *Dancing Hut*, they must go in search of the keys Baba Yaga left behind on Triaxus—one in the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn, the other in Ivoryglass, the palace of the dragon warlord Yrax. Spurhorn is closest to the PCs' current location, so the adventure assumes that the PCs will try to acquire the key held there first, but there is no reason they couldn't first go to Ivoryglass and then return to Spurhorn at the end of the adventure. In this case, run Parts Three and Four first, followed by Part Two, but bear in mind that you will likely need to adjust the CR of many of the encounters in Parts Two and Four to match the party's APL at those points.

Morale Knowing she's more useful to the Dragon Legion alive than dead or captured, Bescaylie attempts to retreat if either she or Efrixes is reduced to fewer than 50 hit points.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26

Feats Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (lance), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Spirited Charge, Toughness, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance)

Skills Knowledge (engineering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +4, Perception +12, Ride +17, Survival +8

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ armor training 1, rider bond (Efrixes), seasoned

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2), *snappleaf*^{UE};

Other Gear +1 *full plate*, +1 *lance*, mwk composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 arrows, mwk spear, *belt of giant strength* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1

EFRIXES

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male red dragonkin (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Worlds* 61)

LN Large dragon

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+2 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 115 (10d12+50)

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

Immune dragon traits, fire, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 120 ft. (average)

Melee mwk glaive +16/+11 (2d8+9/x3), bite +11 (1d8+3) or bite +16 (1d8+6), 2 claws +15 (1d6+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with glaive)

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 9d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 20 half, usable every 1d4 rounds)

TACTICS

During Combat Efrixes follows Bescaylie's orders in combat, alternating use of his breath weapon with melee attacks.

Morale Efrixes fights as long as Bescaylie does. If Bescaylie is slain, Efrixes is overwhelmed with wrath and fights to the death, focusing on killing her murderer.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** 20, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 29

Feats Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Bluff +16, Fly +13, Intimidate +16, Perception +14, Stealth +11, Survival +14

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ rider bond (Bescaylie)

Gear mwk glaive, exotic military saddle, saddlebags, trail rations (2 weeks)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rider Bond (Su) A dragonkin can form a permanent bond with its rider. Once this bond is made, a dragonkin cannot form another rider bond until its current rider dies. A dragonkin and its rider can communicate with each other as if they both had telepathy 100 ft. In combat, when a rider is mounted on her dragonkin, both creatures roll initiative separately and treat the highest result as their single result.

Development: If the PCs make friendly contact with Bescaylie and can get past the language barrier, she can answer many of the PCs' questions regarding where they are, the history and political status of the Drakelands and the Skyfire Mandate, and the current situation at Spurhorn. She has no knowledge of Baba Yaga, but if the PCs ask about a two-headed eagle, Bescaylie can inform them that Commander Pharamol, Spurhorn's commanding officer, has such a rare bird as a pet. Once Bescaylie has a sense of the PCs' natures, she asks if they are willing to help the Dragon Legion besieged at Spurhorn. While she can't speak for her commander, she knows he values the lives of the dragonriders and dragonkin serving under him far more than a mere pet bird. If the PCs agree, Bescaylie offers to guide them to a good vantage point where they can view the siege for themselves and work out a way to get past the attackers and into the fortress.

If the PCs capture Bescaylie and Efrixes, the two may answer general questions about Triaxus, but they refuse to give any information about the defenses or layout of Spurhorn. If the PCs drive off or kill Bescaylie, the PCs should encounter some local Triaxian herders or mountaineers. These peasants are apprehensive of strangers, especially aliens like the PCs, but they can provide the PCs with general information about Triaxus and Spurhorn.

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Alternatively, if you think the PCs are more likely to join the Drakelands army besieging Spurhorn, they can encounter one of the supply caravans bringing provisions to the Drakelands encampments. The caravans are guarded, but once the Triaxians driving the caravans see that the PCs aren't Dragon Legionaries or even native Triaxians, they assume the PCs are either neutral or allies of the besieging force and become reasonably open to contact. The PCs can receive the same information as above from these Triaxians but with a different bias: the Drakelands are recovering lands stolen by the wicked Dragon Legion during the "Dragonbane War," when the evil Triaxian nations banded together and tried to wipe out all of the noble true dragons. The caravan's leader invites the PCs to come with them and meet with the leader of the Drakelands forces, General Malesinder.

Spurhorn lies about 10 miles away from the *Dancing Hut*'s current location, through trackless mountain terrain. On foot, assuming an average speed of 30 feet, it takes most of a day to reach the site of the besieged fortress.

Story Award: Award the PCs 12,800 XP if they successfully establish peaceful communication with Bescaylie and Efrixes without fighting them.

SPURHORN UNDER SIEGE

The Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn is an imposing fortress perched high atop a large rocky crag in the Parapet Mountains on the western edge of the Skyfire Mandate. Currently, the fortress is under siege by an army from the Drakelands, sent by the dragon warlord Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm. The Drakelands army outnumbers the defenders by at least three to one, but the climb up the steep cliffs surrounding Spurhorn makes an assault on the fortress a difficult and bloody proposition. However, the sheer size of the Drakelands army is enough to bottle up Spurhorn's defenders inside the fortress.

From the clues found in the *Dancing Hut*, the PCs should be able to work out that the first of Baba Yaga's keys, a two-headed eagle, lies inside Spurhorn. The exact methods the PCs use to acquire the key is up to them, but they have three major options: helping defend Spurhorn from the Drakelands army in exchange for the eagle; joining forces with the Drakelands army attacking Spurhorn to take the eagle; or avoiding both sides of the conflict to sneak into Spurhorn and steal the eagle. Each of these options is detailed below.

JOINING THE DEFENDERS

Spurhorn's primary defenders are the Triaxian dragonriders and dragonkin of the Dragon Legion, supplemented by low-level soldiers (N Triaxian rangers 1), Dragon Legion crossbowmen, and a detachment of winter oracles known as ice seers. Commander Pharamol, the highest-ranking

TAKING ON AN ARMY

The siege of Spurhorn involves hundreds of soldiers and allied monsters from both the Dragon Legion and the Drakelands army. While the PCs are powerful, they are greatly outnumbered, and it should be made clear that single-handedly attacking either side won't break the siege, and will likely get all of the PCs killed. Both armies are familiar with common magical ploys such as *invisibility*, and have defenses set against them. This doesn't mean that such approaches will automatically fail, but it should be a challenge for even high-level characters to succeed.

officer stationed at Spurhorn, leads the troops, maintaining discipline and upholding the noble traditions and ideals of the Skyfire Mandate in the face of the enemy siege.

To join the defenders, the PCs must first get past the attacking army to reach Spurhorn without coming under attack from the aerie's defenders. Once inside Spurhorn, the PCs must convince Commander Pharamol and the Dragon Legion that they are trustworthy allies who want to help defend the fortress. If the PCs met and befriended Bescaylie and Efrixes, the two legionaries can help the PCs get into Spurhorn, though they'll still likely have to face some of the attacking army on their way in. See *Getting into Spurhorn* on page 18 for more details on how the PCs can join the defense of Spurhorn.

JOINING THE ATTACKERS

Most of the army besieging Spurhorn is made up of frost drakes and Triaxian barbarians from the Drakelands, with smaller detachments of cryohydras, dracolisks, and dragonkin. The army is split between three encampments, each positioned about a third of a mile away from Spurhorn to the north, southwest, and southeast. Aerial frost drake patrols keep watch on Spurhorn and the surrounding area, while summoned ceustodaemons guard the encampments and keep a sharp eye out for magically disguised spies or invisible attackers. A silver dragonkin named General Malesinder commands the Drakelands army from the southeastern encampment. If the PCs want to join the attacking army, they must make their way to one of the three camps of the Drakelands army. See *The Drakelands Encampments* on page 26 for details on how the PCs can join the siege of Spurhorn.

SNEAKING INTO SPURHORN

The PCs' third option is to attempt to sneak into Spurhorn and steal the key without joining either Spurhorn's defenders or the Drakelands attackers. The PCs can avoid local politics by taking this route, but they will still have to fight members of both the Dragon Legion and the attacking

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USING THE DANCING HUT

In “Maiden, Mother, Crone,” the players were able to use the *Dancing Hut* as a weapon against a horde of frost giants, even though the PCs were likely not directly in control of the artifact. By this point in their careers, however, the PCs might well be able to command the hut (see area **A8** for how this can be accomplished). While the PCs can certainly use the *Dancing Hut* as a means of transportation from place to place, the ruggedness of the terrain around many of the locations in this adventure (the sheer cliffs around Spurhorn, the depths of the Rimekeening Crevasse, and the glacier surrounding Ivoryglass) mean that the PCs cannot simply have the hut fight all their battles for them while on Triaxus.

Drakelands army before they can make off with their prize. See Stealing the Key on page 27 for details on this strategy.

GETTING INTO SPURHORN

The Dragon Legion is vigilant in its defense of Spurhorn. Dragonriders mounted on dragonkin patrol the air close to the aerie, and Dragon Legion crossbowmen and ice seers patrol the walls. The ice seers maintain a constant vigil from strategic vantage points around Spurhorn, and possess the ability to see clearly through snowstorms (with snow sight) and the ability to see invisible creatures (with *invisibility purge*). Lastly, Spurhorn itself possesses intrinsic defenses against teleportation. But Spurhorn’s defenders are not the only obstacles to safely getting inside the aerie. The Drakelands army also regularly patrols both the air and ground approaches to Spurhorn, and anyone approaching the fortress will likely have to deal with these patrols.

Because of the sheer cliffs surrounding Spurhorn and the besieging army encircling the fortress, the two most likely ways of entering Spurhorn are via dimensional travel or flight.

Dimensional Travel: If the PCs discuss using dimensional travel such as *teleport* or similar spells to enter Spurhorn, Bescaylie warns them that Spurhorn has some form of protection against teleportation, but she knows no more than that. In fact, ancient wards inscribed into Spurhorn’s foundations divert teleporting intruders into a secret, guarded room deep beneath the fortress that has been long forgotten and is unknown to the aerie’s current defenders. The wards are a series of permanent *teleport traps* (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 296) that cover the entire area of Spurhorn out to a distance of 200 feet from the outer walls. This effect redirects all forms of teleportation into or out of this area, regardless of the intended destination. A creature attempting to teleport into or out of Spurhorn can resist the effect with a successful DC 20 Will save—if successful, the creature doesn’t teleport

at all, but the teleport effect is still consumed. On a failed save, the creature teleports directly to area **B45** in Spurhorn. A successful DC 27 Knowledge (arcana) check allows the creature to identify the presence of the *teleport trap*, but doesn’t reveal the destination of the diversion. Note that other forms of dimensional travel, such as *ethereal jaunt*, *shadow walk*, or other non-teleportation spells, are not affected by Spurhorn’s *teleport traps*.

Flight: Flying is the most obvious way to get into Spurhorn without having to battle through an army. If the dragonrider Bescaylie is with the PCs, she recommends that they make the attempt during the day, as any force approaching at night is likely to be mistaken for a Drakelands surprise attack by the defenders on the walls. Bescaylie also warns that any invisible creatures approaching the aerie will be considered hostile by the crossbowmen defending Spurhorn’s walls.

If the PCs attempt to fly into Spurhorn, they encounter a succession of three aerial Drakelands patrols, though some of these patrols can be avoided depending on the PCs’ actions. If all of the PCs are invisible, they automatically avoid Patrol 1. If all of the PCs can fly at a speed greater than 60 feet, they can avoid Patrols 1 and 2. If the PCs approach Spurhorn at night, they automatically avoid Patrol 3. Once the PCs are past the patrols, however, they must face Spurhorn’s defenders as well (see The Walls of Spurhorn on page 20).

PATROL 1: FROST DRAKES (CR 10)

Creatures: This patrol is made up of three frost drakes patrolling the aerial approaches to Spurhorn. The drakes fly to investigate and intercept any visible creatures heading toward the fortress.

FROST DRAKES (3)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 84 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 108)

TACTICS

During Combat The drakes use their breath weapons as soon as they are in range, and use their speed surges to move and make full attacks in the same round, or to pursue fleeing foes.

Morale A drake breaks off the attack if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to avoid or evade this patrol, award them 9,600 XP, as if they had defeated the patrol in combat.

PATROL 2: CEUSTODAEMONS (CR 10)

Creatures: Triaxian priests of Dahak loyal to Yrax have cast *planar ally* spells to summon greater ceustodaemons to reinforce the Drakelands army. More easily pressed into service as guardians than others of their kind,

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these daemons watch over the Drakelands encampments as well as patrol the environs surrounding Spurhorn. The ceustodaemons have orders to attack any invisible creatures approaching either the encampments or the besieged fortress. As soon as the ceustodaemons spot intruders, invisible or otherwise, they cast *fly* and move to intercept, using *dimension door* to catch up to distant opponents if necessary.

GREATER CEUSTODAEMONS (3) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Advanced ceustodaemon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 65, 292)

hp 84 each

TACTICS

During Combat The daemons cast *dispel magic*, *hold monster*, or *slow* to hinder and delay intruders. Once in range, they use their breath weapons, then close to melee range to attack with teeth and claws.

Morale Bound to serve the Drakelands army, the daemons fight to the death.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to avoid or evade this patrol, award them 9,600 XP, as if they had defeated the patrol in combat.

PATROL 3: DRAGON AND SORCERER (CR 11)

Creatures: A Drakelands sorcerer and a brass dragonkin attempt to intercept anyone approaching Spurhorn. The sorcerer casts *fly* as soon as enemies come in sight, and *haste* to catch up to faster foes. This patrol engages opponents approximately 200 feet from Spurhorn's walls.

DRAKELANDS DRAGONKIN CR 9

XP 6,400

CE brass dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

Immune fire

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, 9d6 fire damage)

TACTICS

During Combat The dragonkin tries to catch as many enemies as possible in the line of its breath weapon, then flies into melee combat, using *Flyby Attacks* if possible.

Morale The dragonkin breaks off pursuit if reduced to fewer than 60 hit points.

DRAKELANDS SORCERER CR 9

XP 6,400

Winterborn Triaxian sorcerer 10 (see page 86)

CE Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +3 natural, +4 shield)

hp 92 (10d6+55)

Fort +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12

Resist cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee heavy mace +6 (1d8+1)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +8 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-foot cone, 10d6 cold, DC 18, 1/day), claws (2, 1d6+1, treated as magic weapons, 6 rounds/day)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +13)

5th (3/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 18)

4th (5/day)—*fear* (DC 17), *shout* (DC 17), *wall of fire*

3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *fly*, *haste*, *lightning bolt* (DC 16)

2nd (7/day)—*false life*, *flurry of snowballs*^{POTN} (DC 15), *resist energy*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*

1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *obscuring mist*, *shield*, *snowball*^{POTN} (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 13), *flare* (DC 13), *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Bloodline draconic (white)

TACTICS

Before Combat The Drakelands sorcerer casts *false life* and *mage armor* every day, and casts *shield* before combat.

During Combat The sorcerer stays out of melee combat, using his spells to support the dragonkin and damage opponents. He casts *see invisibility* to reveal invisible foes and *dispel magic* on those using magical flight, and uses his breath weapon against any approaching enemies.

Morale The sorcerer retreats if he is reduced to fewer than 50 hit points.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Casting, Elemental Spell (cold)^{APG}, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Fly +10, Perception +11

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ bloodline arcana (energy spells that match bloodline energy deal +1 damage per die), seasoned

Combat Gear *necklace of fireballs* (type II), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of dimension door*, *scroll of whispering wind*; **Other Gear** heavy mace, mwk light crossbow with 20 bolts, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *ring of protection +1*

Development: Any character who moves within 120 feet of Spurhorn during this encounter comes into range of Spurhorn's defenders. These crossbowmen fire on any seemingly hostile creatures, including the PCs (see *The Walls of Spurhorn* on page 20).

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Story Award: If the PCs manage to avoid or evade this patrol, award them 12,800 XP, as if they had defeated the patrol in combat.

THE WALLS OF SPURHORN (CR 11)

Creatures: Spurhorn's defenders line the walls of the fortress, ready to attack any approaching creatures they don't recognize. Equipped with a *lantern of revealing* that negates all forms of invisibility within 25 feet, the defenders consider any invisible creature an enemy. At night, hooded lanterns on the walls provide normal light within 30 feet and dim light within 60 feet. As the PCs approach the aerie, four Dragon Legion crossbowmen open fire on them, assuming they are part of the Drakelands army besieging Spurhorn.

If Bescaylie or Efrixes is with the PCs, they call out a pass phrase when they get within 60 feet of the parapets, and the crossbowmen break off their attack. If the PCs are by themselves, their best chance of getting into Spurhorn alive is to immediately surrender as soon as they land within the fortress. Alternatively, the PCs can attempt to persuade the crossbowmen that they are allies, provided they have some way to communicate with the aliens (see Arriving at Spurhorn on page 24).

DRAGON LEGION CROSSBOWMEN (4) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Winterborn Triaxian fighter 8 (see page 86)

LN Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +4 Dex)

hp 80 each (8d10+32)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6 (+2 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +10/+5 (1d8+1/19–20)

Ranged +1 heavy crossbow +15/+10 (1d10+4/17–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (crossbows +1)

TACTICS

During Combat The crossbowmen focus their fire on creatures closest to reaching the walls, using Deadly Aim and Rapid Shot if possible.

Morale The crossbowmen fight to the death to defend Spurhorn.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Crossbow Mastery^{APG}, Deadly Aim, Improved Critical (heavy crossbow), Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow), Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow), Weapon Specialization (heavy crossbow)

Skills Climb +7, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Perception +12

Languages Triaxian

SQ armor training 2, seasoned

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, alchemist's fire (2);

Other Gear mwk breastplate, +1 heavy crossbow with 40 bolts, mwk longsword, *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, 41 gp

Story Award: If the PCs manage to get inside Spurhorn without fighting the crossbowmen, award them 12,800 XP, as if they had defeated the crossbowmen in combat.

SPURHORN

Built for the dragonriders and dragonkin of the Dragon Legion, the aerie fortress of Spurhorn has no ground level entrances, and no paths or roads climb up the steep mountain that supports it. The icy cliffs beneath Spurhorn are 120 feet high, and require successful DC 20 Climb checks to scale.

Spurhorn has the following features unless otherwise noted. Doors are made of stone (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28) and are usually left open to allow for swift relocation of troops during the siege, but can be barred with iron bars (break DC 30) or locked (DC 25 Disable Device check) if needed. Interior passageways are 15 feet high, and most interior rooms are 20 feet high. Everburning torches in sconces throughout the fortress provide light in the dark Triaxian winter.

Most of Spurhorn's rooms are built underground; its aboveground walls, towers, and central keep were built primarily for defense. While Spurhorn contains numerous rooms, not all of them are vital to the adventure. Certain areas warrant additional detail and are described after the room summary.

B1. Outer Walls: Spurhorn's outer walls are 30 feet high and 10 feet thick. Slick with ice, they require a successful DC 35 Climb check to scale. The walls are crenellated, and groups of four Dragon Legion crossbowmen regularly patrol the battlements.

B2. Bastion: Eight of these squat towers protrude from Spurhorn's outer walls. Forty feet tall, each bastion has two floors aboveground, equipped with arrow slits on all sides. Each bastion has a crenellated roof and holds two light ballistae, one heavy ballista, and one firedrake (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 161), usually covered to protect them from the weather. Doors provide access to the tops of the outer walls (area **B1**) and interior stairs lead down to the bastion armories (area **B15**). Ten Triaxian soldiers serve as crews for the siege engines on each bastion.

B3. Courtyard: This wide, open area is used for mustering the troops. Its large paving stones are currently buried beneath several feet of snow.

B4. Blockhouse: These squat, solidly built stone structures contain stairs leading to Spurhorn's lower level.

B5. Keep: Five towers flank Spurhorn's pentagonal central keep. The keep is 30 feet tall, the four western towers

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SPURHORN

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



GROUND LEVEL

LOWER LEVEL



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are 40 feet tall, and the eastern tower (the “Lord’s Tower”) is 60 feet tall. At ground level, the keep is a solid stone block. Ten feet above the courtyard to the northeast and southeast, huge 20-foot-wide doors open onto a sloping flight ramp that leads down to the assembly hall (area **B38**) on the lower level, allowing for quick deployment of flying dragonkin. These doors are 8 inches thick and kept barred (hardness 8, hp 120, break DC 30).

B6. Tower Armory: These rooms, at the bottom of the keep’s central towers, store armor and weapons, all of normal make, for Spurhorn’s defenders.

B7. Guest Quarters: These chambers contain spare but comfortable furnishings for visitors to Spurhorn. If the PCs join the fortress’s defense, they are housed in this area.

B8. Private Garden: This garden is a refuge of quiet and solitude for Spurhorn’s commander and visiting guests. Built on the roof of the keep, the garden is open to the sky above and is currently buried under several feet of snow.

B9. Tower Guard Post: Six Triaxian soldiers are posted in each of these guardrooms. Stairs lead up to trap doors in the towers’ crenellated roofs.

B10. Guard Quarters: The guards stationed in the tower guard posts (area **B9**) are quartered in these rooms, each of which includes a small storeroom under the stairs.

B11. Conference Room: This room contains a long table and comfortable seating for around 20 humanoids or dragonkin. Commander Pharamol holds his war councils here. A door to the west leads to the private garden (area **B8**), and stairs climb to the commander’s office (area **B12**). A small storeroom under the stairs holds extra furniture, rugs, tapestries, and other decorations.

B12. Commander’s Office: This area is detailed below.

B13. Commander’s Quarters: This area is detailed below.

B14. Lord’s Tower Parapet: The crenellated roof of the Lord’s Tower contains a secret trap door that leads down to the commander’s quarters (area **B13**). Only Commander Pharamol and a few of his higher ranking officers know of the existence of this door, which requires a successful DC 35 Perception check to find from this side.

B15. Bastion Armory: These rooms hold ammunition for the siege engines atop the bastion’s roofs (area **B2**), as well as additional weapons for Spurhorn’s defenders.

B16. Access Stairs: These stairways lead up to the blockhouses (area **B4**) in the courtyard above.

B17. Workshop: The chambers hold tools and supplies used for the maintenance and repair of the fortress and its equipment.

B18. Smithy: Several forges for the crafting and repair of armor and weapons are located in this chamber. Chimneys in the blockhouse above the smithy provide ventilation for the forges.

B19. Storeroom: These storerooms hold a wide variety of tools and raw materials, including cloth, fur, leather,

metals, and wood. Firewood (in the summer) and coal (in the winter) for the fortress’s fireplaces, ovens, and stoves are also stored in these rooms.

B20. Barracks: The majority of Spurhorn’s soldiers, including the crossbowmen and dragonriders, are quartered in these large rooms, which are filled with rows of bunk beds.

B21. Officers’ Quarters: Spurhorn’s officers share these quarters next to the troops under their command.

B22. Common Room: This large chamber contains a number of tables and seating for both Triaxians and dragonkin. Members of Spurhorn’s garrison congregate here when off duty, maintaining their gear, playing games, or just relaxing and socializing.

B23. Mess Hall: Spurhorn’s defenders eat in this large hall filled with long tables and bench seating.

B24. Kitchen: A small army of servants prepares meals for Spurhorn’s garrison here. Chimneys in the blockhouse above the kitchen provide ventilation for the large ovens along the south wall.

B25. Food Storage: These rooms store all manner of preserved foodstuffs to see Spurhorn’s garrison through the winter or long sieges.

B26. Laundry: Servants clean the fortress’s linens and the garrison’s clothes in this room.

B27. Servants’ Quarters: Spurhorn’s large staff of servants (N Triaxian commoners 1) are housed in these rooms. These servants perform a variety of mundane tasks in the fortress such as cooking and cleaning, but they do not take part in its defense.

B28. Seneschal’s Quarters: The blue dragonkin Nevra (see page 25) occupies these quarters. As Spurhorn’s seneschal, she oversees all of the aerie’s servants and support staff and manages the fortress’s supplies and daily upkeep.

B29. Baths: These chambers contain communal baths for both Triaxians and dragonkin. Large stoves heat the chill water from the cistern (area **B30**) to comfortable temperatures.

B30. Cistern: Rainwater and snowmelt collect in this subterranean chamber, which is the only source of fresh water in the aerie.

B31. Armory: This large, central room contains mundane weapons and armor for Spurhorn’s garrison, as well as crates full of arrows and crossbow bolts.

B32. Infirmary: Priests of Apsu care for wounded soldiers in these chambers.

B33. Medical Storeroom: Herbs and medical supplies for the infirmary are stored here, including 10 *potions of cure light wounds*, six *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and two *potions of cure serious wounds*.

B34. Chapel: A large statue of a dragon in flight dominates this small shrine dedicated to Apsu the Waybringer, god of the metallic dragons. Apsu is the patron deity of the Dragon Legion, and many legionaries

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and dragonkin are his faithful followers. Six priests of Apsu (LG dragonkin or Triaxian cleric 5) tend the chapel.

B35. Priests' Quarters: The half-dozen priests of Apsu stationed at Spurhorn who oversee the infirmary (area B32) and chapel (area B34) share these chambers.

B36. Hall of Remembrance: Paintings, plaques, and small statues honor past heroes of the Dragon Legion in this gallery.

B37. Guard Post: Two pairs of dragonriders and dragonkin, as well as four Dragon Legion crossbowmen, staff this guard post at all times.

B38. Assembly Hall: The dragonriders and dragonkin of the Dragon Legion assemble in this chamber below the flight ramp for sorties out of Spurhorn's central keep (area B5).

B39. Dragonkin Armory: Weapons and riding tack for the Dragon Legion's dragonkin are stored in this chamber.

B40. Training Hall: Members of Spurhorn's garrison keep their fighting skills honed through regular practice bouts and training sessions in this large hall.

B41. Dragonkin Officers' Quarters: Spurhorn's dragonkin officers are housed in these quarters.

B42. Dragonkin Barracks: The rank-and-file dragonkin of Spurhorn's Dragon Legion are quartered in these large rooms.

B43. Jailer's Guard Post: Two Triaxian soldiers are usually posted here, but if the PCs have been captured, two Dragon Legion crossbowmen and an ice seer are assigned to guard the prisoners. The guards hold the keys for the cells in area B44.

B44. Jail: Spurhorn's jail holds cells for both Medium and Large creatures. The cells are currently empty, but if the PCs have been captured, they are stripped of their gear and imprisoned here. The cell doors are made of iron bars, and equipped with good locks (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30). A stairway at the far southern end of the jail leads to the *teleport trap* chamber (area B45), but the stairs were blocked off and bricked over long ago, and a successful DC 40 Perception check is required to discover the passage. Once the passage is found, it is easy to pry away the brittle mortar and break open the wall.

B45. Teleport Trap: This area is detailed on page 24.

B46. Ice Seers' Barracks: The Dragon Legion's ice seers stationed at Spurhorn are quartered in these rooms.

B47. Library: All of Spurhorn's garrison has access to this library, which contains books on a wide variety of topics, from popular fiction to military strategy and theory.

B48. Archive: The books and scrolls filling the shelves in this chamber contain a complete history of the Dragon Legion and the Skyfire Mandate, with a focus on the holdings of the Parapet Mountains, as well as ledgers and records detailing the settlements and inhabitants of the holding of Spurhorn.

B12. COMMANDER'S OFFICE

This room contains a neat and orderly writing desk and comfortable armchairs, sized for both humanoids and dragonkin. A map of Spurhorn and the surrounding area is spread out on the desk. Several bookcases line the curving southern wall between glassed-in arrow slits, where a large map of a mountainous region also hangs.

The doors to this room are normally kept locked (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30); Commander Pharamol and Amerenth carry the only keys. The map on the desk details all of Spurhorn's rooms as well as the positions of the Drakelands army and their encampments outside the fortress. The large map on the wall depicts the border region between the Skyfire Mandate and the Drakelands; the locations of both Spurhorn and Ivoryglass are marked on this map.

Commander Pharamol manages the daily operations of Spurhorn and administration of its holding from this office. Currently, he is also organizing and directing Spurhorn's defense from here. If not resting or sleeping in area B13, Commander Pharamol can usually be found here working, or patrolling the fortress and keeping up the morale of his troops, his dragonkin partner Amerenth never far from his side.

Treasure: Pharamol's desk holds a platinum holy symbol of Apsu (worth 500 gp), a cherished gift from his dragonkin partner Amerenth. In addition, a locked chest in the room (Disable Device DC 30) contains the Dragon Legion's payroll and funds for Spurhorn's upkeep, totaling 15,000 gp.

B13. COMMANDER'S QUARTERS (CR 12)

This tidy bedroom contains both an oversized canopied bed and a simple sleeping pallet, as well as wardrobes, chairs, and other furnishings. Tapestries cover the narrow windows and thick carpets line the floor. A large birdcage covered with a pale cloth stands next to the eastern window.

Commander Pharamol and his dragonkin partner Amerenth sleep in these quarters. The door to the south leads to Pharamol's office (area B12) and is normally kept locked (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30); Pharamol and Amerenth carry the only keys. Close to the north wall, a secret trap door in the ceiling leads to the parapet of the Lord's Tower (area B14). The trap door can be discovered with a successful DC 25 Perception check. A 25-foot-long folding ladder stands against the wall nearby, hidden behind a tapestry (Perception DC 15 to notice).

Creatures: During the evening, Commander Pharamol and his dragonkin partner Amerenth can usually be found resting here. If alerted to intruders, the two assume the

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PCs are assassins or spies and raise the alarm as they fight to defend themselves.

AMERENTH

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female gold dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

COMMANDER PHARAMOL

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 118 (see page 58)

Treasure: The birdcage next to the window holds a two-headed eagle, one of the two keys left on Triaxus by Baba Yaga that will take the *Dancing Hut* to its next destination. Aside from having two heads, the bird is in all ways a normal eagle (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 118). If the PCs steal the eagle, it recognizes the mantle of the Black Rider that they bear and goes with them peacefully and quietly. See *Stealing the Key* on page 27 if the PCs take the bird and then need to escape Spurhorn.

Development: If Pharamol and Amerenth raise the alarm, guards on duty elsewhere in the keep rush to aid their commander. These reinforcements are likely to arrive after the fight is over, but if the PCs tarry too long, they could well have to face even more defenders.

B45. TELEPORT TRAP (CR 13)

The smell of death hangs heavily in the stale air of this disused square stone chamber. The decomposing corpses of a Triaxian and a frost drake lie crumpled on the floor, the thick dust around them showing signs of recent and violent disturbance. A sealed stone portal stands in the western wall, long lines of script engraved above it.

Long forgotten by the aerie's current inhabitants, this 30-foot-high chamber is the diversion destination of the *teleport trap* wards around Spurhorn (see page 18). While it is common knowledge in the Dragon Legion that teleportation into or out of Spurhorn is impossible, the details of why this is true have been lost to time. These days, a Dragon Legion spellcaster wishing to teleport to Spurhorn normally teleports to a spot well outside the fortress, then enters by more conventional means. The dead Triaxian was a Drakelands sorcerer ordered to test Spurhorn's defenses several weeks ago. He teleported in with a frost drake escort and was slain by the room's guardian.

The door is a solid block of granite 10 feet in diameter and 18 inches thick (hardness 8, hp 270), weighing over 20,000 pounds. The script above the door is written in an archaic form of Triaxian using draconic characters. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Linguistics check (a character who

speaks either Draconic or Triaxian gains a +2 circumstance bonus on this check) or magic such as *comprehend languages* can decipher the writing, which reads, "We must never forget the sacrifice of the Great Ones. Honor the fallen by naming the first and the last." This is a reference to four of the Dragon Legion's greatest champions of the War of Heroes: the dragonrider Aernon and the dragonkin Vayus, the first casualties of the war; and the dragonrider Nurylae and the dragonkin Zentar, who were the last to die before victory was achieved. These four names are the password used to command the room's guardian to open the portal.

If Bescaylie or another Dragon Legionary is with the PCs, she automatically knows the answer. Otherwise the PCs will likely have to use divination magic such as *contact other plane*, *divination*, or *legend lore*, or perhaps the Drakelands sorcerer's *scholar's ring* (see *Treasure*, below), to discover this information.

Creature: A 15-foot-tall iron golem sculpted to resemble a dragon-headed humanoid stands against the west wall, ominously clear of dust. Created long ago as an ever-vigilant guardian, the golem does not automatically attack creatures entering the room. Instead, it waits for the correct password to open the stone portal, the only exit from the chamber. If intruders attempt to open the portal themselves, damage anything in the chamber, or attack, the golem attacks. The golem fights until destroyed or until there are no intruders left in the room.

IRON GOLEM

CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 129 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 162)

Treasure: The corpse of the Drakelands sorcerer still wears some of its equipment, including an *amulet of natural armor* +2, a *cloak of elvenkind*, and a *scholar's ring* (*Ultimate Equipment* 177). At your option, the corpse could also be carrying a few scrolls containing new spells—spells that might be common on Triaxus, but that are rare or even unheard of on Golarion.

Development: If the PCs give the golem the correct password, it opens the stone portal, dragging the giant stone block out of the way. Once alone in the chamber, the golem reseals the portal. A short flight of stone stairs beyond the portal ends at a brick wall at the top. The mortar between the bricks is ancient and brittle, and breaking a hole in the wall isn't difficult. Spurhorn's jail (area B44) lies on the other side of the wall, though it is currently empty.

ARRIVING AT SPURHORN

Once inside Spurhorn, the PCs need to convince the Dragon Legion that they are trustworthy allies who want to help defend the fortress. The defenders' reaction to the PCs depends largely on whether Bescaylie or Efrixes are

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accompanying them. The defenders know the dragonrider and dragonkin, and after briefly confirming their identities, the defenders welcome them home with a cheer. If Bescaylie vouches for the PCs, they are admitted into Spurhorn. The PCs are quartered in the guest quarters (area **B7**) until Spurhorn's commanding officer, Commander Pharamol, can meet with them the next morning.

If the PCs arrived without Bescaylie, they must convince the Dragon Legion of their good intentions. Fighting the massed defenders of Spurhorn at this point would be fatal; the dozens of dragonkin and scores of archers surrounding them should convince the PCs that diplomacy or surrender is the best option. The defenders have an initial attitude of hostile; a successful DC 29 Diplomacy check is required to make them indifferent. The PCs gain a +2 circumstance bonus on this check for each enemy the defenders saw them slay on their flight into Spurhorn. If the PCs fail this check, or if they surrender upon arriving at Spurhorn, they are stripped of their weapons and magic items and imprisoned in area **B44**. Two Dragon Legion crossbowmen and an ice seer (see page 23) are posted outside their cells until the council meeting the following morning.



NEVRA

COUNCIL MEETING

The morning after the PCs' arrival at Spurhorn, Commander Pharamol calls a council of the Dragon Legion's senior officers in the conference room (area **B11**). If the PCs arrived peacefully, they are invited to attend. If they were taken prisoner, they are escorted to the meeting under guard.

Besides Commander Pharamol and his dragonkin partner Amerenth, eight officers of the Dragon Legion, both Triaxian and dragonkin, are present, as well as Bescaylie and Efrives, if they accompanied the PCs into Spurhorn. These officers are detailed below, along with roleplaying notes and their initial attitudes toward the PCs. Commander Pharamol is fully detailed in the NPC Appendix on page 58.

Amerenth (LN female gold dragonkin): Amerenth is Commander Pharamol's bonded partner. While Pharamol is officially Spurhorn's commander, in reality, Amerenth shares many of the post's duties and responsibilities with him. Amerenth remains quiet throughout the council meeting, letting Pharamol speak for the both of them.

Calissus (NG female white dragonkin): Calissus is heavily adorned with jewelry and carries a masterwork guisarme. She has a quiet voice and is a calm and patient presence on

the council, but she is initially undecided about the PCs. Calissus is bonded with the dragonrider Sumira (see below).

Herjan (N male black dragonkin): Herjan is a veteran of many battles, and his head bears the scars to prove it. He carries his own lance and is bonded with the dragonrider Zusk (see below). Herjan is gruff and pragmatic, and seems bored by the proceedings, but he is initially suspicious of the PCs.

Jarilne (LG female Winterborn Triaxian oracle 10): Almost blind, with her white body fur turning gray, Jarilne is the oldest legionary in Spurhorn. She leads the ice seers of the Dragon Legion, and her wisdom is greatly respected by the council. Although she is favorably disposed toward the PCs, she seeks confirmation of her initial feelings with probing questions and insightful commentary.

Nevra (NG female blue dragonkin): Armed with a masterwork glaive, Nevra is a beautiful dragonkin with a slim neck and sleek body. One of only a few dragonkin in Spurhorn without a bonded partner, Nevra serves as the aerie's seneschal, though she would love to find the right person to bond with and give up her mundane responsibilities inside Spurhorn's walls for the thrill of battle and adventure in the open air. Nevra is open and curious about the PCs, and responds favorably toward them.

Sumira (NG female Winterborn Triaxian fighter 8): Sumira is the bonded rider of the dragonkin Calissus (see above). She dresses in immaculate white armor, matching her dragonkin's scales. She is passionate and inquisitive, and is initially sympathetic to the PCs' position.

Talsune (N male copper dragonkin): Talsune has large horns and thickly ridged shoulders, and wields a masterwork greatsword in combat. He is intent and determined, and listens carefully to the PCs before he makes up his mind about them. Talsune is currently without a bonded rider; his last partner, Grithis, died in battle a few months ago, and Talsune feels at least partially responsible for her death. Although he has not yet chosen a new rider to bond with, Talsune is slowly coming to grips with the loss of Grithis and may soon start looking for a new partner.

Thronull (LN male Winterborn Triaxian fighter 8): Wiry and balding, Thronull is not a dragonrider. Instead, he commands Spurhorn's crossbowmen. A veteran of the Dragon Legion, Thronull is well respected by the other officers. Thronull is logical and a natural skeptic, and is initially suspicious of the PCs.

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Zusk (N male Winterborn Triaxian fighter 8): Zusk is a muscular Triaxian with short, grizzled body fur. The bonded rider of the dragonkin Herjan (see above), Zusk is confident and insistent, but he respects bravery. Like Herjan, he is suspicious of the PCs, but he wants to hear what they have to say to confirm his initial opinion.

Once everyone is assembled, Commander Pharamol asks the PCs to state their case, then tells his officers to question the PCs and give their opinions before he makes a decision. The PCs need to convince Commander Pharamol and Spurhorn's officers that they are willing to help defend the aerie and would be trustworthy allies.

Nevra and Sumira are initially friendly toward the PCs, eager to hear their story, while Herjan, Thronull, and Zusk are distrusting and antagonistic. The rest of the officers are undecided. To gain further understanding of the PCs and their motivations in offering to defend Spurhorn, the officers question the PCs about their place of origin, their presence on Triaxus (and specifically, in the Skyfire Mandate), their experiences, and their objectives.

To convince the council of their good intentions, the PCs must succeed at a total of three Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks (at least one of these checks must be a Diplomacy check). The DC of these checks is 23 (28 if the PCs were brought into Spurhorn as prisoners). Each failed check increases the DC of the next check by 5. Only one PC can attempt each check, but other PCs can aid another. If present, Bescaylie can also speak on the PCs' behalf, granting the PCs a +2 circumstance bonus on one Diplomacy check. This is primarily a roleplaying encounter; give the PCs the opportunity to state their case, and use the NPCs to guide the discussion before asking for skill checks. Particularly good roleplaying may, at your option, add additional bonuses to the checks.

If the PCs succeed at all three checks, Commander Pharamol and his officers agree to accept the PCs' help and welcome them to the ranks of Spurhorn's defenders. The PCs are assigned to the guest quarters (area B7) for the duration of their stay. If asked, Commander Pharamol agrees to turn over his two-headed eagle to the PCs in exchange for their help once the siege is lifted. The bird is a rare and valuable pet, but it is a small price to pay for the aid of powerful allies against the superior numbers of the besieging Drakelanders. None of Spurhorn's officers have heard of Baba Yaga (Commander Pharamol received the eagle as a gift from a village under his protection, and has no idea of its function as a key for the *Dancing Hut*). They have no knowledge of the bearskin key either (the Triaxians

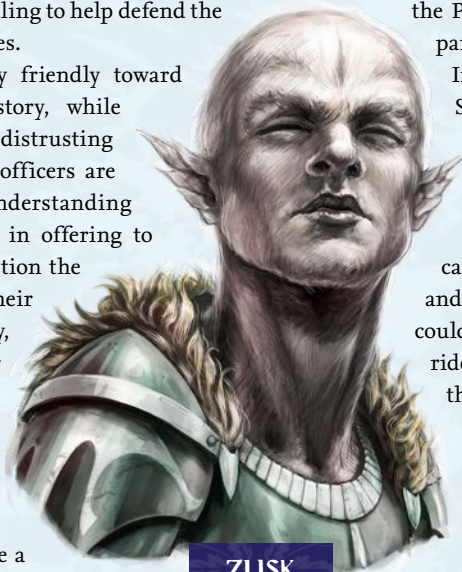
don't even know what a bear is), but they can tell the PCs that Ivoryglass is the stronghold of the dragon warlord Yrax, whose army is now besieging Spurhorn. If the PCs help lift the siege, Commander Pharamol offers to help them get to Ivoryglass as well. Go to Assault on Spurhorn on page 28 for the next stage of the adventure.

The adventure assumes that the PCs befriend Spurhorn's defenders, but if the PCs fail to convince Commander Pharamol, he places them under arrest, locking them up under guard in the cells (area B44). If this happens, the PCs should have opportunities to escape, particularly during the assault on Spurhorn.

In this case, you can use the ideas in *Stealing the Key* (see page 27) to create encounters for the escaping PCs.

Development: The dragonkin Nevra and Talsune are both currently without bonded riders. If the PCs present their case eloquently during the council meeting and then help loyally defend Spurhorn, there could be an opportunity for a PC to form a rider bond with one of the dragonkin. See the sidebar on page 38 for more details on bonding with a dragonkin.

Story Award: If the PCs convince the Dragon Legion to accept their help and join Spurhorn's defenders, award them 19,200 XP.



ZUSK

THE DRAKELANDS ENCAMPMENTS

If the PCs want to join the Drakelands army in attacking Spurhorn instead of joining the defenders, they must travel to one of the Drakelands encampments and face the same patrols that guard the approaches to Spurhorn. These patrols are not interested in talking, and attack any unauthorized creatures approaching the army's camps. Use the three patrols beginning on page 18 for these encounters, and see *Getting into Spurhorn* on page 18 for ways to avoid the patrols. In this situation, *The Walls of Spurhorn* encounter does not occur.

Once the PCs are past the patrols, they must convince the pickets posted outside the camps that they are worth General Malesinder's attention, which requires one of the following: a successful DC 17 Bluff check, DC 29 Diplomacy check, or DC 20 Intimidate check. If the check is successful, the PCs are admitted into the camp and allowed to keep their weapons, but are placed under heavy guard until General Malesinder deigns to grant them an audience. If the check fails, the PCs are barred entry, but they may try again at another camp. Alternatively, the PCs can surrender to the guards, in which case General Malesinder is curious about the "alien prisoners" and has them brought before her.

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MEETING THE GENERAL

Once the PCs have gained entry into the Drakelands encampments, General Malesinder eventually orders the aliens brought before her. Malesinder receives the PCs in her large, luxuriously appointed tent in the southeastern encampment, guarded by dragonkin and Drakelands barbarians. The silver dragonkin general reclines on plush cushions under a banner displaying a white dragon skull on a dark blue background—the personal heraldry of Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm. Attended by scantily clad Triaxian slaves, General Malesinder drinks chilled icewine and questions the PCs about where they're from, why they're on Triaxus (and in the Skyfire Mandate), and what they want. This should be a chance for the PCs to roleplay and present their case for joining forces to the general.

Malesinder is not about to turn away an offer of aid from these outsiders, but she would like to know more about their capabilities. When the PCs are finished, Malesinder tells them that she is willing to let them join the Drakelands army and gain a share of the stronghold's spoils (including the two-headed eagle, if the PCs mention this), but they must first prove their offer to join the assault on Spurhorn is sincere by demonstrating their skill in battle. If the PCs agree, Malesinder arranges a combat exhibition (see The Proving Grounds, below). If the PCs refuse, Malesinder curses them for wasting her time and signals her guards to kill them. In the middle of the Drakelands encampment, the PCs face overwhelming odds, and their best option is to flee immediately—Malesinder is more concerned with her upcoming attack on Spurhorn, and does not waste additional resources pursuing the PCs. General Malesinder is fully detailed in the NPC Appendix on page 60.

THE PROVING GROUNDS (CR 11)

To prove themselves to General Malesinder, the PCs must show that they are capable combatants. A makeshift arena is soon cleared in the middle of the Drakelands camp, and the troops gather along the edges to watch the combat, along with Malesinder herself.

Creatures: Malesinder commands four Drakelands barbarians to face the PCs. These are not her best soldiers, but she has plenty of them, and if the PCs kill them, their loss will have little impact on her battle plans. This battle is to the death; combatants are only allowed to leave the arena once all of their opponents are dead. The barbarians fight to the death in the service of their general.

DRAKELANDS BARBARIANS (4) **CR 7**
XP 3,200 each
hp 97 each (see page 29)

Development: If the PCs defeat the barbarians in combat, General Malesinder welcomes them to the ranks of the

Drakelands army. She rewards them by having a finely crafted surcoat or tabard tailored for each PC, worth 100 gp each. Emblazoned with the white dragon skull insignia of Yrax, this attire doesn't provide an official rank, but identifies the wearer as part of the Drakelands army. She assigns them tents in the camp, and advises them to be ready to attack at a moment's notice. Go to Assault on Spurhorn on page 28 for the next stage of the adventure.

Story Award: If General Malesinder accepts the PCs as allies and they join the attack on Spurhorn, award them 19,200 XP.

STEALING THE KEY

The PCs might also plan to steal the two-headed eagle from Spurhorn without making a deal with either the Dragon Legion or the Drakelands army. With no local allies, the PCs' largest obstacle will be getting inside Spurhorn itself, and they will likely face the same Drakelands patrols outside the fortress. See Getting into Spurhorn on page 18 for the difficulties on reaching the fortress, and use the three patrol encounters beginning on page 18 as written. Once past the patrols, the PCs must still get inside Spurhorn's walls without being detected. Teleportation will get the PCs inside, but not before they are diverted by Spurhorn's teleport trap to area **B45**. Attempting to physically enter the aerie requires scaling the steep cliffs below Spurhorn as well as the fortress's walls, and climbers will likely face defenders on the walls (see The Walls of Spurhorn on page 20). Alternatively, if the PCs have convinced Spurhorn's officers that they want to help with the defense, they might decide to try to steal the eagle from Commander Pharamol's quarters (area **B13**) during their stay at Spurhorn.

Once the PCs are inside Spurhorn, they'll need to stealthily explore the fortress in search of the eagle-key. Using *invisibility* or disguises has a reasonable chance of working inside Spurhorn, as most of the ice seers (who have blindsense and can cast *invisibility purge*) are either posted on the walls or resting in their quarters, but the PCs will still face some defenders before they can get into the Lord's Tower and up to Commander Pharamol's quarters where the eagle is kept. This task is made even more difficult once General Malesinder launches her assault on Spurhorn.

Rather than use the five events from Assault on Spurhorn as written, you should create similar encounters for stealthy PCs within Spurhorn using the stat blocks from those events to create encounters of equivalent CRs. For example, the PCs could encounter three Dragon Legion crossbowmen or dismounted dragonriders (a CR 10 encounter) while searching Spurhorn for the key. Once in the Lord's Tower, the PCs encounter two alert Dragon Legion crossbowmen and an ice seer (a CR 11 encounter) guarding the conference room (area **B11**). Upon entering the commander's quarters (area **B13**) the PCs confront

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Commander Pharamol and Amerenth (a CR 12 encounter). Once the PCs have the eagle in hand, they'll need to escape Spurhorn, perhaps running into some of the Drakelands attackers, such as two dracolisks and a war hydra or a squad of four Drakelands barbarians (both CR 11 encounters). If the PCs use flight to flee, they could face pursuit by a Dragon Legion dragonrider and dragonkin (a CR 10 encounter), while four Dragon Legion crossbowmen fire at them from the walls (a CR 11 encounter). Once free of Spurhorn's defenders, the PCs still need to break through the Drakelands army's lines, encountering a pair of frost drakes (a CR 9 encounter) before facing off against General Malesinder herself (a CR 12 encounter).

Story Award: If the PCs successfully steal the two-headed eagle from Spurhorn, award them 19,200 XP.

ASSAULT ON SPURHORN

A few days after the PCs arrive on Triaxus and have had the opportunity to make contact with and join one of the factions, the Drakelands army launches a major attack on Spurhorn. Under cover of a heavy snowstorm at night, several units of Drakelands troops assemble at the bottom of the sheer cliffs below Spurhorn, and using both stealth and magic, set up a series of ropes and ladders to slowly convey ground troops and materiel up the escarpment at one of Spurhorn's few defensive blind spots. As Malesinder correctly predicted, the storm's powerful winds and whiteout conditions dramatically curtail the Dragon Legion's aerial scouting, and her troops are in position by dawn.

General Malesinder's strategy is to launch a strike on Spurhorn's western parapets with a large force of frost drakes and Drakelands barbarians from the northern and southwestern encampments. Meanwhile, troops from the southeastern camp will attempt to breach the fortress's eastern wall while Spurhorn's defenders are distracted and out of position. Once the breach is secured, large numbers of Drakelands barbarians in the southeastern encampment will quickly advance and climb the ropes to swarm straight into Spurhorn, overwhelming the defenders. Malesinder holds her small force of dragonkin in reserve to combat any dragonriders who get airborne. Although she expects heavy losses, especially among her frost drakes, Malesinder considers their loss well worth the cost to seize Spurhorn.

Where the PCs are when the battle starts depends mainly on which side they have chosen to support. If the PCs have joined the Dragon Legion in defending Spurhorn, Commander Pharamol asks the PCs to be ready to help wherever they can do the most good. During the battle, he communicates with the PCs using *sending*, cast from a wand by one of his ice seers, asking for their assistance in specific areas. If the PCs have joined the Drakelands army, General Malesinder keeps the PCs in the dark about her plans, sending a messenger to their tent only minutes before the

attack commences. During the battle, Malesinder directs the PCs from one event to another by having one of her Drakelands sorcerers cast *whispering wind* to communicate with the PCs over long distances and guide them to the parts of the battlefield where they are needed.

BATTLE EVENTS

The battle for Spurhorn is a closely fought struggle, and the PCs' actions during the conflict could well be the deciding factor. The fight is a chaotic scene, with the sounds of battle cries, the clash of steel, and the screams of the wounded ringing out through white flurries of falling snow. Many combatants are involved on both sides, but rather than simply slogging through wave after wave of low-level foes, the PCs face certain specific events during the battle that have the potential to be crucial to the battle's outcome.

Each of these events is divided into two encounters, but the PCs face only one encounter per event, depending on whether they are defending Spurhorn or attacking it. You can ignore the unused encounter. These events happen in order and in relatively quick succession. Unless otherwise noted, the PCs should have no more than a few rounds between each event to catch their breath, cast spells, heal themselves, and otherwise prepare themselves for the next encounter.

VICTORY POINTS

Each encounter provides the opportunity for the PCs to gain Victory Points (VP) based on how well they perform at these critical points in the conflict. Throughout the battle, keep track of how many Victory Points they earn (or lose). At the end of the battle, the PCs' Victory Point total determines the battle's outcome.

EVENT 1: BASTION UNDER ATTACK (CR 10)

General Malesinder begins her attack by launching a strike on the western side of Spurhorn with the majority of her frost drakes, each of which carries two heavily armored Drakelands barbarians. Malesinder's objective is to quickly land as many troops on Spurhorn's western walls as possible to gain a foothold for the remainder of her forces to exploit.

This encounter occurs at dawn atop one of the western bastions (area B2). The bastion holds a battery of siege engines vital to Spurhorn's defense, including two light ballistae, one heavy ballista, and one firedrake (*Ultimate Combat* 161), and 10 Triaxian soldiers (N Triaxian rangers 1) are stationed here to crew the weapons. See *Ultimate Combat* for rules on using siege engines in combat.

The distant morning sun provides only dim light, and snow is falling. All creatures have concealment (20% miss chance) from those without darkvision, and the reduced visibility results in a -4 penalty on Perception checks and a -4 penalty on ranged weapon attacks (but not siege weapons attacks).

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Defend

If the PCs have joined the Dragon Legion, Commander Pharamol sends them to one of the western bastions to help defend against the attackers' initial rush toward the western parapets. As the PCs approach, they spot a frost drake and two ice barbarians swooping down to land on top of the bastion, followed by cries of pain from the siege engine crews atop the bastion. When the PCs arrive, the 10 Triaxian soldiers crewing the siege engines are unconscious after being caught in the frost drake's freezing mist breath. A 20-foot-radius area on the western side of the bastion around the siege engines is slippery with ice from the drake's breath, and is considered difficult terrain for 2d4 rounds.

Creatures: Two Drakelands barbarians have just dismounted on the north and south sides of the bastion, each next to a light ballista (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 50) and they're about to start hacking the siege engines apart to disable them. The frost drake perches on top of the firedrake (AC 3, hardness 10, hp 70) on the bastion between them and moves to intercept anyone trying to stop the barbarians.

DRAKELANDS BARBARIANS (2) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Winterborn Triaxian barbarian (armored hulk) 8
(*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 28 and see page 86)

CE Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, -2 rage, +3 shield)

hp 97 each (8d12+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +2 vs. fear, paralysis, and sleep

Defensive Abilities indomitable stance, resilience of steel (+2); **DR** 1/—; **Resist** cold 6

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +14/+9 (1d10+5/19-20), bite +7 (1d4+2)

Ranged javelin +10 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks rage (20 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury, dragon totem [white]^{uc} +2, dragon totem resilience^{uc}, intimidating glare)

TACTICS

During Combat The barbarians rage and focus their attacks on the siege engines until someone engages them in combat, at which point they turn their fury on their attackers.

Morale The barbarians fight to the death.

Base Statistics When not raging, a Drakelands barbarian's statistics are **AC** 24, touch 11, flat-footed 23; **hp** 81; **Fort** +8, **Will** +4; no cold resistance; **Melee** +1 *bastard sword* +12/+7 (1d10+3/19-20); **Ranged** javelin +10 (1d6+2); **Str** 15, **Con** 15; **CMB** +10; **Skills** Climb +7, Perception +15.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +12 (+13 overrun); **CMD** 22 (23 vs. overrun)

Feats Blind-Fight, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Nimble Moves, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills Climb +9, Intimidate +10, Perception +17, Survival +13

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ improved armored swiftness, seasoned

Combat Gear *elixir of dragon breath* (green dragon)^{ue}, *war paint of the terrible visage*^{ue} (2); **Other Gear** +1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 bastard sword, javelins (3), 42 gp

FROST DRAKE CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 84 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 108)



DRAKELANDS BARBARIAN

REIGN OF WINTER

TACTICS

During Combat The frost drake must wait 1d6 rounds to use its breath weapon again, so it makes Power Attacks against the fire Drake until its breath weapon recharges, at which point it targets attackers with its freezing mist breath. It only breaks off its attacks against the siege engine if attacked in melee combat.

Morale The drake fights to the death.

Development: Once the PCs defeat the frost drake and barbarians, friendly reinforcements arrive to crew the siege engines and defend the bastion.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 1 VP for each light ballista that survives and 2 VP each if the heavy ballista and fire Drake survive, but they lose 1 VP for every siege engine that gains the broken condition.

Attack

If the PCs have joined the Drakelands army, General Malesinder orders the PCs to aid the drake assault on the western side of Spurhorn by quickly destroying or disabling the siege engines atop one of the bastions. If any of the PCs are unable to fly, Drakelands sorcerers cast *fly* (CL 10th) on them before the attack.

A frost drake has already taken out the siege engine crews, leaving the siege engines themselves undefended. There are two light ballistae (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 50), a heavy ballista (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 100), and a fire Drake (AC 3, hardness 10, hp 70) on the bastion. A siege engine can be attacked and damaged normally, and is considered “destroyed” if it gains the broken condition (reduced to half its hit points or fewer). A siege engine can be also disabled with 2d4 rounds of effort and a successful DC 20 Disable Device check.

Creatures: Although the siege engine crews are no longer a threat, a Dragon Legion dragonrider riding a green dragonkin swoops down to stop the PCs from destroying the battery. The dragonrider and dragonkin fight to the death to defend Spurhorn.

DRAGON LEGION DRAGONRIDER

CR 7

XP 3,200

Winterborn Triaxian fighter 8 (see page 86)

LN Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 80 (8d10+32)

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6 (+2 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 lance +13/+8 (1d8+7/×3) or

mwk battleaxe +11/+6 (1d8+2/×3)

Ranged mwk javelin +12 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks weapon training (spears +1)

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 23

Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Spirited Charge, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance)

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +11, Ride +15

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ armor training 2, seasoned

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of heroism*, *snapleaf*^{UE}; **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, +1 lance, mwk battleaxe, mwk javelins (3), *cloak of resistance* +1, 27 gp

GREEN DRAGONKIN

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 115 (see page 16)

Immune acid

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 9d6 acid damage)

Development: After 12 rounds, the Dragon Legion forces move to retake the bastion. Malesinder sends a *whispering wind* to the PCs, ordering them to fall back. If the PCs don't retreat from the bastion, add increasing numbers of Dragon Legion attackers to the combat every other round until the PCs withdraw.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 1 VP for each light ballista destroyed or disabled and 2 VP each if they disable or destroy the heavy ballista or fire Drake. If they are unable to destroy or disable any of the siege engines, they lose 4 VP.

EVENT 2: BREACH THE WALLS (CR 12)

Overnight, Drakelands soldiers laboriously dragged a siege tower up Spurhorn's cliffs piece by piece, and it is now approaching the fortress's southeast wall, pushed by a pair of Drakelands war hydras. If the tower makes it to the wall, hundreds of barbaric Drakelandsers can rush straight into the heart of Spurhorn. This encounter occurs at Spurhorn's southeastern wall (area B1) immediately after Event 1. It is still early morning; all creatures have concealment (20% miss chance) from those without darkvision.

The siege tower (*Core Rulebook* 436) begins 60 feet away from the wall on a steep 45-degree slope. The tower and moves at a speed of 10 feet, pushed by a pair of hydras. If only one of the hydras pushes the tower, it has a speed of 5 feet. The siege tower takes up a space 15 feet across. The hydras pushing the tower have improved cover against attacks from the other side. Smaller creatures behind the tower have total cover.

Defend

Lookouts on Spurhorn's walls spot the siege tower's approach, and Commander Pharamol requests the PCs'

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aid in preventing the tower from reaching the wall. Destroying the entire siege tower before it reaches the wall is unlikely—its wooden walls are 1 foot thick (hardness 5, hp 120) and covered in wet hides to prevent it being set on fire. However, a character who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) or Profession (siege engineer) check notices that the steep angle of the rocky slope makes the tower extremely unstable; an attack against the tower's rear wheels would likely destabilize the tower, causing it to tip over, possibly sliding back down the slope and dragging the hydras with it.

To reach the tower's rear wheels, the PCs must get inside the tower, which has a single entrance in back at ground level. Alternatively, the PCs could try to break through the walls of the tower. Once inside, a character can attack the iron-banded wheels themselves (hardness 10, hp 60) or attempt to sabotage them with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check taking 2d4 rounds.

Creatures: Two war hydras push the tower, while two frost drakes guard them against attackers from Spurnhorn. The drakes move to engage anyone approaching the tower. The hydras can't push the siege tower and attack at the same time, so they concentrate on moving the tower forward; they don't attack until the tower reaches the wall, or if a creature attempts to interfere with or get into the tower. Both the drakes and the hydras fight to the death.

FROST DRAKES (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 84 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 108)

WAR HYDRAS (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

Advanced seven-headed cryohydra (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 178, 294)

N Huge magical beast (cold)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +10 natural, -2 size)**hp** 80 each (7d10+42); fast healing 7**Fort** +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6**Immune** cold**Weaknesses** vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.**Melee** 7 bites +11 (1d8+5)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** breath weapon (15-ft. cone, 3d6 cold damage, Reflex DC 19 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), pounce

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 16, **Con** 22, **Int** 6, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 27 (can't be tripped)

WAR HYDRA

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Attack

General Malesinder orders the PCs to take out any Dragon Legion forces that threaten the cryohydras pushing the siege tower and to ensure that the tower reaches the wall.

Creatures: As the hydras struggle to push the siege tower into position, two Dragon Legion dragonriders mounted on dragonkin fly out of Spurhorn to halt the tower's advance. The dragonkin attack the hydras with their breath weapons, but the dragonriders turn to face other opponents (such as the PCs) while their mounts' breath weapons recharge.

DRAGON LEGION DRAGONRIDERS (2) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 80 each (see page 30)

BLACK DRAGONKIN CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 115 (see page 16)

Immune acid

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, 9d6 acid damage)

RED DRAGONKIN CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 115 (see page 16)

Development: If the PCs are unable to defeat the Dragon Legionaries, the dragonkin's breath weapons soon take out the hydras, and the Dragon Legion topples the tower before it can reach the walls. If the PCs defeat the Dragon Legionaries, the hydras push the tower to the wall, and the Drakelands army takes advantage of the breach to move a large number of troops inside Spurhorn's walls where they can better attack the fortress's defenders.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 10 VP if the tower makes it to the wall.

EVENT 3: FORCE AN ENTRY (CR 11)

With some of her troops already inside Spurhorn's walls, General Malesinder wants to break through into the fortress's lower level. This encounter occurs a few minutes after Event 2 next to one of the blockhouses (area B4) leading into Spurhorn's interior. Snow has started falling again, and the reduced visibility results in a -4 penalty on Perception checks and a -4 penalty on ranged weapon attacks. The stone door of the blockhouse is locked but not barred (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 25).

Defend

Commander Pharamol sends the PCs to stop the Drakelands forces from getting into Spurhorn's interior and holding the blockhouse until reinforcements can arrive.

Creatures: Two Drakelands barbarians and a Drakelands sorcerer are trying to batter their way into the blockhouse.

One of the barbarians carries an adamantine warhammer, wielding it two-handed to break open the door. Meanwhile, the other barbarian and Drakelands sorcerer attack anyone interfering with her task.

DRAKELANDS BARBARIANS (2) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 97 each (see page 29)

Resist cold 6, fire 20

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +14/+9 (1d10+5/19-20), bite +7 (1d4+2) or

adamantine warhammer +12/+7 (1d8+6/x3), bite +7 (1d4+2)

DRAKELANDS SORCERER CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 92 (see page 19)

Resist fire 20

TACTICS

Before Combat The Drakelands sorcerer casts *false life* and *mage armor* every day. Before combat, he casts *see invisibility* and *shield* on himself and *resist energy* (fire) on both the barbarians and himself.

During Combat The sorcerer casts *haste* on the first round of combat (including the barbarians in its effects), then targets groups of enemies with *cone of cold*, *lightning bolt*, or *shout*.

Morale If the two barbarians are killed, the sorcerer attempts to flee. Otherwise, he fights to the death.

Treasure: In addition to their gear, one of the Drakelands barbarians carries an *alpine ice axe* (see page 62).

Development: Once the door is open, the Drakelands move inside the blockhouse, while the sorcerer covers their rear with a *wall of fire*. If the Drakelands break through the door but are defeated by the PCs, a Dragon Legion ice seer arrives on the scene shortly after the fight and reveals the portal with *stone shape*.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 4 VP if they stop the Drakelands from getting inside, but they lose 2 VP if the Drakelands manage to break through the door.

Attack

General Malesinder instructs the PCs to open the doors to one of the blockhouses leading to Spurhorn's lower level and deal with any defenders stationed there to clear the way for her troops.

Creatures: A Dragon Legion ice seer and a bronze dragonkin are quickly sent to stop the PCs from breaking in the door.

BRONZE DRAGONKIN CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 115 (see page 16)

Immune electricity

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Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, 9d6 electricity damage)

TACTICS

During Combat The dragonkin uses its breath weapon against anyone trying to get through the door, then makes Flyby Attacks while its breath weapon recharges. It lands next to the ice seer to get healing when needed.

Morale The dragonkin fights to the death in Spurhorn's defense.

ICE SEER

CR 9

XP 6,400

Winterborn Triaxian oracle 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42 and see page 86)

LN Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +6; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, snow sight; **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+8 armor, +3 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 88 (10d8+40)

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

Resist cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk spear +7/+2 (1d8-1/x3)

Ranged dart +9 (1d4-1)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +14)

5th (3/day)—*holy ice*^{UM} (DC 19), *icy prison*^{UM} (DC 19), *mass cure light wounds* (DC 19)

4th (6/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *freedom of movement*, *ice storm*, *order's wrath* (DC 18)

3rd (7/day)—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *sleet storm*, *stone shape*

2nd (7/day)—*aid*, *arrow of law*^{UM} (DC 16), *cure moderate wounds*, *frost fall*^{UC} (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*

1st (7/day)—*bles*, *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic weapon*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*, *stabilize*, *virtue*

Mystery winter^{POIN}

TACTICS

Before Combat The ice seer uses his *ice armor* revelation and casts *freedom of movement* and *shield of faith* before combat.

During Combat The ice seer casts *icy prison* on anyone he catches attempting to break down or open the blockhouse door, then focuses on aiding the dragonkin with his spells and healing her when necessary. The ice seer then targets anyone else who is attempting to open the door with his offensive spells.

Morale The ice seer fights to the death to defend Spurhorn.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 22

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Extra Revelation^{APG}, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Heal +13, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +12, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +10, Survival +8

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ oracle's curse (clouded vision), revelations (cold aura 3/day, ice armor, icy skin, snow sight), seasoned

Combat Gear *potion of levitate*, *wand of cure moderate*

wounds (45 charges), thunderstone (2); **Other Gear** padded

armor, darts (6), mwk spear,

cloak of resistance +2,

headband of alluring

charisma +2, spell

component

pouch, 27 gp



ICE SEER

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SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cold Aura (Su)

As a swift action three times per day, an ice seer can cause waves of cold to radiate from his body. This cold deals 5d6 points of cold damage to all creatures within 10 feet (Fort DC 19 half). In addition, a flurry of snow momentarily surrounds the ice seer, granting him concealment until his next turn.

Ice Armor (Su) An ice seer can conjure armor of ice that grants a +8 armor bonus to AC in cold conditions. The ice seer can use this armor for 10 hours per day. This duration does not need to be consecutive, but must be spent in 1-hour increments.

Icy Skin (Ex) An ice seer gains cold resistance 10.

Snow Sight (Su) An ice seer can see through falling snow and sleet without taking any penalties on Perception checks as long as there is enough light for him to see normally.

Development: Whether or not they defeat the ice seer and dragonkin, if the PCs don't get the door open after 10 rounds, the Dragon Legion rallies its defenders to hold the blockhouses, and General Malesinder orders the PCs to abandon the blockhouse. If the PCs don't withdraw,

add increasing numbers of Dragon Legion attackers to the combat every other round until the PCs retreat. If the PCs manage to open the door within 10 rounds, Drakelands forces soon arrive to relieve the PCs and pour into the lower level.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 4 VP if they open the blockhouse door within 10 rounds, but if they don't kill the ice seer or the dragonkin, they lose 1 VP for each of the two who survives.

EVENT 4: UNLEASH THE DRACOLISKS (CR 11)

Near midday, General Malesinder plans to release a pair of hostile dracolisks into Spurnhorn to wreak even greater havoc among the fortress's defenders. This event follows Event 3.

Defend

Following Event 3, Commander Pharamol sends a message to the PCs asking them to report to the conference room in the Lord's Tower (area **B11**). As the PCs make their way across the battlefield, they see two dracolisks accompanied by a blue Drakelands dragonkin soar over the walls and land in the keep's private garden (area **B8**). Most of the Dragon Legion archers on the keep's towers are turned to stone by the dracolisks' gaze attacks; those that are left soon fall to the dragonkin's breath weapon.

Creatures: The two dracolisks are half-black dragon, half-basilisk, with eight legs, acidic breath weapons, and a basilisk's petrifying gaze. The dragonkin flies above the dracolisks, taking care to remain at least 30 feet from them to avoid their petrifying gaze.

DRACOLISKS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Half-black dragon basilisk (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 170)

hp 73 each

TACTICS

Morale Each dracolisk fights until it is reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, at which point it attempts to fly off.

DRAKELANDS DRAGONKIN

CR 9

XP 6,400

CE copper dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

Immune acid

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, 9d6 acid damage)

TACTICS

During Combat The dracolisks are immune to the dragonkin's acid breath, so it uses its breath weapon as often as possible, even if the dracolisks are in its area of effect. In melee, the dragonkin makes Flyby Attacks.

Morale The dragonkin flees if both of the dracolisks are killed or driven off. Otherwise, it fights to the death.

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Victory Points: The PCs gain 2 VP for each dracolisk they kill or defeat.

Attack

General Malesinder informs the PCs that she is sending in a pair of dracolisks to break into Spurhorn's central keep, but she is concerned about the threat of Dragon Legionaries emerging from the flight ramp inside the keep (area B5). The PCs must secure or block the large doors on the northeast side of the keep so the dracolisks can reach the keep's garden safely. The doors are 20 feet wide and located 10 feet above the ground. The easiest way to do this is with magic—*arcane lock* and *hold portal* are obvious choices, as is *stone shape* or any of the wall spells. Otherwise, the PCs need to physically block the doors, something that can be accomplished with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check taking 2d4 rounds.

Creatures: As the PCs work to block the doors, four Dragon Legion crossbowmen on the keep's parapets (30 feet above the ground) open fire on them with crossbows. The crossbowmen focus their shots on anyone attempting to block the flight doors. These Dragon Legionaries fight to the death.

DRAGON LEGION CROSSBOWMEN (4) CR 7
XP 3,200 each
 hp 80 each (see page 20)

Development: The PCs have 10 rounds to block the doors and defeat the crossbowmen so the dracolisks can get inside the keep. If the doors are not secured by this time, a dragonrider and dragonkin fly out of the doors every round until the PCs withdraw.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 2 VP for blocking the door and 2 VP for defeating the crossbowmen.

EVENT 5: THE FINAL ASSAULT (CR 12)

As the day draws to a close, General Malesinder launches her dragonkin against Spurhorn's defenders in a final effort to capture the aerie. A lethal dance of wing and claw plays out in the skies above Spurhorn. Drakes and dragonkin slash and tear at each other's wings to knock their foes from the skies. Mortally wounded dragons fall to their deaths, their shattered bodies lying broken and bleeding upon Spurhorn's battlements. This event takes place after Event 4. Afternoon once again brings dim light, granting concealment (20% miss chance) against those without darkvision.

Defend

Creatures: In the skies above Spurhorn, a severely wounded silver Dragon Legion dragonkin named Shatha, lacking both rider and saddle, struggles valiantly to fight off a

group of Drakelands dragonkin. A gold enemy dragonkin blasts Shatha with its fiery breath weapon, while a blue one barrels into him, driving him to the ground in Spurhorn's northwest courtyard (area B3) and knocking him unconscious. Unless the PCs intervene, the blue Drakelands dragonkin is poised to kill the courageous Dragon Legionary with a coup de grace attack. If the PCs interfere, the attention of the three Drakelands dragonkin turns to them instead.

BLUE DRAKELANDS DRAGONKIN CR 9
XP 6,400

CE blue dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

Immune electricity

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, 9d6 electricity damage)

GOLD DRAKELANDS DRAGONKIN CR 9
XP 6,400

CE gold dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

WHITE DRAKELANDS DRAGONKIN CR 9
XP 6,400

CE white dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

Immune cold

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 9d6 cold damage)

SHATHA CR 9
XP 6,400

NG male silver dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115 (currently -5)

Immune cold

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 9d6 cold damage)

Development: If the PCs save Shatha, they earn his heartfelt gratitude. In addition, any PC who comes to Shatha's aid or healed him can potentially form a rider bond with him later. See the sidebar on page 38 for more details on bonding with a dragonkin.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 1 VP for each Drakelands dragonkin they kill, and if they save Shatha's life, their heroism in aiding the wounded legionary earns them an additional 3 VP.

Attack

Creatures: In a final effort to repel the Drakelands attackers, the Dragon Legion commander takes to the air astride his gold dragonkin. Commander Pharamol and Amerenth attempt to rally the scattered Dragon Legion aerial troops, exhorting them to reform and sweep through the tired Drakelands. If the dragonriders regain the

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upper hand in the air, the tide of the attack will surely turn, and the defenders will prevail.

COMMANDER PHARAMOL CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 118 (see page 58)

AMERENTH CR 9

XP 6,400

Female gold dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

Development: If the PCs slay Commander Pharamol, his defeat shatters the morale of the Dragon Legion. The remaining Drakelands drakes and dragonkin above Spurhorn drive the Dragon Legion forces back and prevent them from regrouping.

Victory Points: The PCs gain 4 VP for killing Commander Pharamol and 2 VP for slaying Amerenth.

AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE

After Event 5, the battle for Spurhorn is over. Total up the number of Victory Points (VP) the PCs earned during the battle and refer to the table below for the final outcome of the battle. The consequences of this outcome depends on whether the PCs were defending or attacking Spurhorn, as described in the following section.

VP Total	Outcome
0–10	Defeat
11–19	Close victory
20–27	Victory
28+	Total victory

DEFENDING SPURHORN

The consequences of the defense of Spurhorn depend on how successful the PCs were, based on the number of VP earned.

Defeat: Despite the PCs' efforts, the Drakelands army overwhelms the Dragon Legion defenders and conquers Spurhorn. Commander Pharamol dies fighting a valiant rear guard effort to allow a small fraction of the garrison, including the PCs, to escape. If the PCs are quick, they might be able to grab the two-headed eagle from Pharamol's quarters in the chaos of the rout.

Close Victory: The Dragon Legion retains control of Spurhorn and holds off the Drakelands army, but the cost of the bitterly fought victory is high. Many of the defenders are dead, but they sold their lives dearly, taking a large number of the Drakelands troops with them. If the Drakelands forces can regroup and receive reinforcements and supplies, however, then the next attack might well spell the end for Spurhorn.

Victory: The Dragon Legion determinedly fights off the assault by the Drakelands invaders, and the banners of the Dragon Legion still fly above Spurhorn. Although weakened by heavy casualties and disheartened by their defeat, the besieging army still maintains its grip around the fortress. Until the siege is broken, Spurhorn is still threatened.

Total Victory: The Dragon Legion drives back the attacking Drakelands army and leaves it in disarray. Demoralized and lacking the numbers to effectively maintain the siege, the Drakelands are confused and disorganized. The enemy leadership makes frantic efforts to retain some authority and prevent full-scale desertion.

Development: Once the outcome of the battle is determined, go to Counterstrike on page 37.

Story Award: Award the PCs 12,800 XP for a close victory, 19,200 XP for a victory, or 38,400 XP for a total victory.

ATTACKING SPURHORN

The consequences of the attack on Spurhorn depend on how successful the PCs were during the battle, based on the number of VP earned.

Defeat: Despite the best efforts of the PCs, the assault fails and Spurhorn remains in the hands of the victorious Dragon Legion. The siege is broken and the Drakelands army is shattered. General Malesinder struggles to maintain her authority and organize an orderly retreat in the face of pursuing Dragon Legionaries. Nevertheless, Malesinder does manage to seize Commander Pharamol's two-headed eagle as a spoil of war.

Close Victory: Spurhorn falls to the Drakelands army, but the cost is high. The Drakelands suffered heavy casualties, and though the defenders were forced to abandon Spurhorn, the victorious army will be hard pressed to hold the fortress against the inevitable Dragon Legion counterattack to retake it.

Victory: Spurhorn falls, overcome by the Drakelands army, and the Dragon Legion defenders flee the fortress in disarray as Yrax's banner is raised above the battlements. Many of the Drakelands acknowledge the PCs' part in the battle, including General Malesinder herself, who publicly thanks the PCs before the victorious army.

Total Victory: The Drakelands army overruns the Dragon Legion and conquers Spurhorn. Those legionaries lucky enough to have survived the assault are cruelly executed, and the corpses of Commander Pharamol and Amerenth are hung from Spurhorn's walls as grisly trophies. The Drakelands have secured a major foothold in the Skyfire Mandate, and the PCs are hailed as the heroes of the battle.

Development: Once the outcome of the battle is determined, go to Just Rewards on page 38.

Story Award: Award the PCs 12,800 XP for a close victory, 19,200 XP for a victory, or 38,400 XP for a total victory.

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COUNTERSTRIKE (CR 12)

This encounter occurs only if the PCs joined the defenders of Spurhorn. If the PCs joined the attackers, run Just Rewards (see page 38) instead.

The siege of Spurhorn has been lifted, and the PCs and their Dragon Legion allies have emerged victorious. The evening after the battle, Commander Pharamol calls a council meeting of the surviving Dragon Legion officers (and the PCs) in Spurhorn's conference room. Spurhorn may have resisted the Drakelands attack, but the enemy leader, the silver dragonkin General Malesinder, survived the battle. As long as she lives, Spurhorn faces the possibility of another siege. Commander Pharamol proposes a bold counterattack to smash the enemy leadership and break the invasion force for good. Pharamol's plan is to lead a large force of legionaries in a feint against the besiegers' main supply depot in the encampment northwest of Spurhorn, destroying as much as they can and drawing out forces from the other encampments. At the same time, the PCs will attack Malesinder's command post in the southeastern encampment and kill the enemy general, breaking the leadership of the army. Commander Pharamol is willing to listen to alternative plans, but he feels that removing Malesinder is the only sure way to victoriously and decisively end the siege, and the rest of the council agrees with him.

Commander Pharamol launches the attack in the middle of the night. If the PCs can't fly, he assigns dragonkin to carry them to General Malesinder's camp. Pharamol also gives the PCs his last *dragon bane arrow*, telling them to drive it through Malesinder's black heart. Unless something happened to them earlier in the adventure, the dragonrider Bescaylie and her partner Efrixes volunteer to go with the PCs as well.

This encounter assumes that the PCs achieved at least a close victory in the battle and that Spurhorn remains in the hands of the Dragon Legion. If the PCs and the Dragon Legion were defeated and were forced to abandon Spurhorn, you can still run this encounter. In this case, one of the surviving council members (such as Jarilne, Nevra, or Thronull) proposes the same plan. The attack in this scenario, however, is more about revenge for Commander Pharamol's death, and the encounter likely takes place within the conquered walls of Spurhorn.

Creature: When the PCs arrive at the southeastern Drakelands encampment, they find Malesinder out in the open, attempting to reassert her authority and maintain her control over her troops, in hopes of rallying them to make a final assault on Spurhorn. If any dragonkin accompanied the PCs, they hold off the general's bodyguards and any nearby troops, allowing the PCs to face Malesinder on her own.

GENERAL MALESINDER

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 161 (see page 60)

Treasure: Once the PCs kill General Malesinder, Commander Pharamol rewards them for their assistance in the siege with spoils taken from the Drakelands attackers, consisting of a suit of +2 *copper dragonhide banded mail*, a *javelin of lightning*, a *page of spell knowledge*^{UE} (*draconic reservoir*^{APC}), *restless lockpicks*^{UE}, a *lesser strand of prayer beads*, and four *truefrost elixirs* (see page 63). Alternatively, you can replace any or all of these rewards with items of your own choosing, but the PCs should receive rewards totaling approximately 46,000 gp.

Development: If General Malesinder is slain, her death causes a total collapse of leadership in the Drakelands army. Order breaks down as bickering officers each struggle to assume command, and desertion is rampant. The siege is broken, and the Drakelands beat a hasty retreat. The Dragon Legion takes immediate advantage of the turmoil, and the chaotic withdrawal soon turns into a rout as jubilant Dragon Legionaries harry the fleeing mass of Drakelanders.

A search of Malesinder's tent reveals solid evidence that the Drakelands force that attacked Spurhorn was only a small portion of an even larger barbarian army amassed by the dragon warlord Yrax. The siege of Spurhorn was only a precursor to a much larger invasion of the Skyfire Mandate and perhaps even the Allied Territories.

When the PCs return to Spurhorn, Commander Pharamol is grateful to the PCs but troubled by the information they uncovered. Although the threat to Spurhorn has been removed, the entire Skyfire Mandate faces an even greater danger. But there may yet be hope. Pharamol believes that much of Yrax's barbarian army only serves the dragon out of fear. If the draconic warlord could be killed, the barbarian armies would likely flee back to the wilds and the border would remain secure. The PCs have already done much for the Dragon Legion by helping repel the assault on Spurhorn, but Commander Pharamol asks the PCs for their help once more—this time to travel to Ivoryglass and kill Yrax himself!

The PCs don't have to accept the mission, but they should know by now that the second key they need for the *Dancing Hut* lies in Ivoryglass, and they must retrieve it before they can pick up Baba Yaga's trail again. If they agree to help, they'll not only have the assistance of the Dragon Legion in this endeavor, but they'll earn the heartfelt gratitude of Commander Pharamol and all of the legionaries under his command, and know they've helped protect the people of the Skyfire Mandate from the tyranny of a draconic overlord.

For all the PCs have done, Pharamol is more than willing to give them his rare two-headed eagle right now, but he points out that leaving the bird here in Spurhorn

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PC DRAGONRIDERS

If the PCs fought with the Dragon Legion, they might be interested in establishing rider bonds with dragonkin, particularly if they have befriended some of the riderless dragonkin in Spurhorn, such as Nevra, Shatha, or Talsune. How exactly this is accomplished is up to you, but keep in mind that as a CR 9 creature, a dragonkin makes a powerful ally. If you do allow a PC to bond with a dragonkin, it is recommended that it be more than a simple cohort. A dragonkin is an intelligent ally and friend, and will only stay with a rider if it is treated as such. Furthermore, you might need to adjust the difficulty of some of the encounters later in the Adventure Path to reflect the additional support a dragonkin ally would bring to the party.

Alternatively, you could allow the PCs to bond with dragonkin temporarily—only for the duration of this adventure. These dragonkin are loyal members of the Dragon Legion, and might very well be uncomfortable leaving Triaxus in the company of alien strangers, no matter how friendly they've become. In short, this adventure presents a fine opportunity for the PCs to become dragonriders, but you should carefully consider the possible implications for your campaign.

might be easier and safer than bringing it with them to Ivoryglass. He will gladly hand over the eagle to them on their return.

Story Award: Award the PCs 19,200 XP for acquiring the two-headed eagle from Commander Pharamol.

JUST REWARDS (CR 12)

This encounter only occurs if the PCs joined the Drakelands army attacking Spurhorn. If the PCs joined the defenders, run Counterstrike (see page 37) instead.

The siege of Spurhorn is over, and the Drakelands army is victorious. The evening after the battle, General Malesinder summons the PCs, stating that she wishes to give them their share of the spoils from the sacking of Spurhorn. She requests that they meet with her privately, however, at a location a mile south of her camp. If the PCs had arranged a deal with her for the two-headed eagle, she explains that she can't just publicly hand over such a rare and unique treasure to outsiders, or word would get back to Yrax and she would likely be reprimanded for giving away spoils the dragon would claim for himself. Otherwise, she states the reason for the private meeting is because she wants to give the PCs a larger share than what's officially allowed by the army's regulations in recognition for their help.

In fact, Malesinder plans to take the eagle back to Ivoryglass as a trophy of victory and present it to Yrax, and she has come to the realization that the PCs (and their

amazing *Dancing Hut*) might be even better trophies to bring back with her. After the loyalty the PCs have shown to the Drakelands cause, however, Malesinder knows she can't just throw them in chains without damaging the morale of her army. At the same time, she is jealous of these strange, powerful aliens and feels threatened by the PCs, fearing that Yrax might even use them to replace her. Therefore, if she cannot capture them, Malesinder resolves to take them out of the picture altogether.

This encounter assumes that the PCs achieved at least a close victory in the battle and that Spurhorn fell to the Drakelands siege. If the PCs and the Drakelands army were defeated, you can still run this encounter. In this case, Malesinder is apoplectic over the loss, and dreads Yrax's reaction when word reaches him of her defeat. She angrily summons the PCs to her and decides to slay them out of hand, reasoning that she can blame them for the defeat. If she can't give Yrax Spurhorn, perhaps she can appease the dragon by giving him the PCs' *Dancing Hut* instead.

Creature: Malesinder doesn't trust anyone else to help her with eliminating the PCs, so she meets with them alone. The rendezvous point is in a hilly and inhospitably rugged region, making it impossible for the PCs to approach in the *Dancing Hut*. Malesinder has a small chest in front of her and a cage holding the two-headed eagle. She greets the PCs warmly and thanks them again for their bravery and assistance during the battle. She offers to make them honorary knights of the Drakelands, and bids them kneel before her to be knighted. Once the PCs' guard is down, she targets them with her breath weapon and attacks. Malesinder tries to deal nonlethal damage to each PC with at least one attack in order to take them alive if possible, but she attempts to kill them outright if capture seems unlikely.

GENERAL MALESINDER

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 161 (see page 60)

Treasure: The two-headed eagle in the birdcage is the first key the PCs seek. Additionally, Malesinder's chest contains two *truefrost elixirs* (see page 63).

Development: If the PCs kill General Malesinder, they can take the two-headed eagle, the first key they need for the cauldron in the *Dancing Hut*. The PCs should know by now that the second key, the bearskin, lies in Ivoryglass, the fortress of the white dragon warlord Yrax. With Malesinder's betrayal, the PCs have lost their only ally among the Drakelanders. To retrieve the bearskin and pick up Baba Yaga's trail, they must venture into the Drakelands to search Ivoryglass for the key themselves.

Story Award: Award the PCs 19,200 XP for acquiring the two-headed eagle from General Malesinder.

THE FROZEN STARS



PART THREE: INTO THE DRAKELANDS

Whether Spurhorn stands or falls to Drakelands invasion, or if the PCs avoided involvement in the battle by sneaking into Spurhorn, the PCs should now have secured the first of Baba Yaga's keys—the two-headed eagle. From the clues in the *Dancing Hut*, the PCs should know that the second key can be found in Ivoryglass, the fortress of the white dragon warlord Yrax, 200 miles northwest of Spurhorn.

How the PCs get to Ivoryglass is up to them, though it will involve travel through the relatively hostile Drakelands. If they joined the Dragon Legion in the defense of Spurhorn and agreed to defeat Yrax, Commander Pharamol sends a flight of Spurhorn's dragonkin to carry the PCs into the Drakelands and assist them on this dangerous mission, giving them a chance to be dragonriders themselves. Exactly who accompanies the PCs is up to you, but it should include those dragonriders and dragonkin the PCs have formed relationships with.

If the PCs joined the Drakelander, they can find a map in General Malesinder's tent that will lead them to Ivoryglass. Likewise, PCs who stole the eagle from Spurhorn

can use the map in Commander Pharamol's office (area B12) to get to Ivoryglass. Otherwise, the PCs will likely need to use magic or question locals to learn the palace's location. Without dragonkin to ride, the PCs must make their own way to Ivoryglass, though if they've mastered control of the *Dancing Hut*, they can use it as transportation.

ALIEN MONSTERS (CR 12)

Creatures: As the PCs journey through the Drakelands toward the Vahara Glacier, they come upon a wolflike humanoid creature called an adlet under attack by a pair of giant furred insects called ursikkas. Outnumbered and overwhelmed, it seems only a matter of time before the adlet is devoured by the giant insects. If the PCs are traveling with any of the Dragon Legion, the legionaries recommend helping the adlet, who seems to be no match for the ursikkas.

URSIKKAS (2)

CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 138 each (see page 88)

REIGN OF WINTER

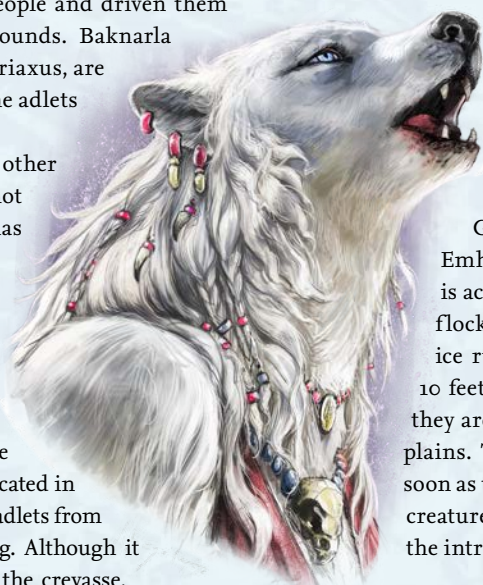
Development: If the PCs defeat the ursikkas, the adlet greets them and thanks them for their aid. She introduces herself as Baknarla, a shaman, and hails the PCs as “the destined ones.” If questioned, she claims that “the stars have spoken” about the coming of ones from beyond the sky who will give her people back their lands. She goes on to explain that the adlets inhabit the frozen wastes near the Vahara Glacier, but the tyrannical dragon warlord Yrax has harshly oppressed the adlet people and driven them out of their traditional tribal grounds. Baknarla believes that the PCs, as aliens to Triaxus, are destined to defeat Yrax, allowing the adlets to reclaim their ancestral domain.

Unfortunately, most of the other shamans in Baknarla’s tribe do not share her beliefs, and her tribe has shunned her, so she went seeking “the destined ones” on her own. Believing she has finally found them, Baknarla has a plan that can both help the PCs defeat Yrax and help her own people. One of her people’s most holy sites is a place called the Rimekeening Crevasse, located in lands that the dragon has driven the adlets from and forbidden them from returning. Although it is taboo for outsiders to set foot in the crevasse, Baknarla is willing to guide the PCs there, hoping they will help her find the last resting place of a legendary adlet hero named Sarnok. Sarnok was a mighty warrior-shaman who lived long ago and slew more than one dragon with his magic spear. He was also renowned for his wisdom, bringing about peace treaties between the adlet tribes and several Drakelands realms. The old tales say that one day Sarnok set out to explore the depths of the Rimekeening Crevasse and was never seen again, but that he will return some day to guide his people to glory once more.

If Baknarla and the PCs can locate Sarnok’s grave, the adlet hopes to find a holy relic of the hero that she can bring back to her people to restore their hope and her own position in the tribe. At the same time, Baknarla believes they will find Sarnok’s legendary spear, which the PCs can use to slay Yrax. Furthermore, Baknarla believes there is a hidden way from the crevasse into Ivoryglass. Once the PCs have the spear, they can then approach Ivoryglass through the crevasse, thereby avoiding the soldiers that patrol the glacier surrounding the palace.

If the PCs agree, Baknarla leads them to the Rimekeening Crevasse. If they refuse to help her, she pleads with them to reconsider, but does not push them. If they will not accompany her, she will go to the Rimekeening Crevasse by herself to find Sarnok’s grave. Baknarla thanks them again for their help against the ursikka and wind walks away.

Story Award: If the PCs save Baknarla from the ursikkas and agree to undertake her quest, award them 19,200 XP.



BAKNARLA

BAKNARLA **CR 11**

XP 12,800
Female advanced adlet shaman (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 9)
hp 157 (currently 73)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th, concentration +11)
1/day—*commune with nature*, *summon* (1 greater ice elemental or 1d4+1 Large ice elementals)
Languages Adlet, Triaxian

ICE RUNNERS (CR 12)

Creatures: On the way to the Vahara Glacier, on a flat plain west of the Emhos River, the PCs (and Baknarla, if she is accompanying them) come across a large flock of migrating flightless birds called ice runners. The ice runners stand about 10 feet tall and weigh over 500 pounds, and they are well suited to running across snowy plains. They are also very aggressive, and as soon as they catch sight of the PCs, eight of the creatures run forward to attack and drive off the intruders.

BAKNARLA

ICE RUNNERS (8) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each
Advanced variant boreal axe beak (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 29, 290; *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Irrisen, Land of Eternal Winter* 56)
N Large magical beast (cold)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 73 each (7d8+42)
Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

Immune cold

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.
Melee bite +12 (1d8+7/19-20), 2 talons +11 (1d4+7)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks sudden charge

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 21, **Con** 22, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 28
Feats Improved Critical (bite)^B, Improved Natural Armor, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Acrobatics +10 (+18 when jumping), Perception +10, Stealth +5 (+9 in snow), Survival +4 (+8 in snow)
SQ trackless step

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RIMEKEENING CREVASSE

The Rimekeening Crevasse cuts deeply into the Vahara Glacier, and runs from the edge of the glacier to Ivoryglass. The crevasse is a holy place to the adlets; they believe the sound of the wind whistling through the crevasse to be the howls of their ancestors, and only during rare sacred rituals do they approach close enough to hear these wails. It is forbidden for outsiders to even set foot inside the crevasse, but Baknarla is willing to break the taboo to find Sarnok's grave and help her people.

She guides the PCs to the edge of the vast fracture, which stretches off into the distance in both directions. The rift is about 500 feet wide at this point, but it narrows sharply as it descends into the glacier. Freezing winds whistle through the crevasse, producing an eerie wailing that at times seems to sound like the lonely cry of a grieving woman.

The crevasse drops almost 200 feet below the surface of the glacier. The difficulty of the climb down into the rift varies from areas of rough outcropping with adequate handholds (Climb DC 15) to sheer cliff faces (Climb DC 25). Many areas are also slippery with ice or snow, adding 5 to the DCs of some Climb checks. Of course, the PCs might also have access to magical flight or other means to make the descent, such as an *alpine ice axe*.

The bottom of the crevasse is narrow and cluttered with sharp rocks and jumbled, snow-covered boulders. Several hundred feet along the crevasse is the jagged maw of an ice cave in the cliff wall. Anyone who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notices an ancient pictogram carved above the cave entrance. According to Baknarla, the pictogram is the personal sigil of Sarnok, and it is a sign that he went this way. Inside the cave, the sound of the howling wind quickly dies down. The roughly circular passage is just over 50 feet in diameter. It slopes downward at a steep angle to the west, and all surfaces inside the cave are rimed with icy frost, making the terrain slippery (+5 to Climb check DCs, +10 to Acrobatics check DCs).

C1. FROSTCRAWLER LAIR (CR 11)

About 200 feet down the tunnel, a large, cracked recess opens in the southern wall, about 20 feet above the floor of the main passage.

Creatures: A pair of mated creatures, called frostcrawlers by the adlets, have made a lair in the recess. These many-limbed reptilian creatures are similar to behirs, but are silvery-white

in color and have evolved in response to their arctic environment, though they retain their electricity breath weapon, which they use to hunt cold-immune prey. The female of the pair has recently laid an egg, and the frostcrawlers are even more aggressive than normal. They attack any intruders in the tunnel as soon as they become aware of them, and fight to the death to protect their nest.

FROSTCRAWLERS (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

Advanced variant behir (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 34, 294)

hp 125 each

Immune cold, electricity

C2. DEVOURING SLUSH (CR 11)

The rough walls of this wide cavern glisten with sparkling crystals and mineral deposits.

Creature: A bluish-purple carnivorous crystal slowly absorbs nutrients from a deposit near the southeast fissure in this cave. When it senses the presence of highly nourishing minerals within the PCs, it activates its subsonic hum, and slithers hungrily toward them, mindlessly focusing its attacks on the creature wearing the most metal.

CARNIVOROUS CRYSTAL

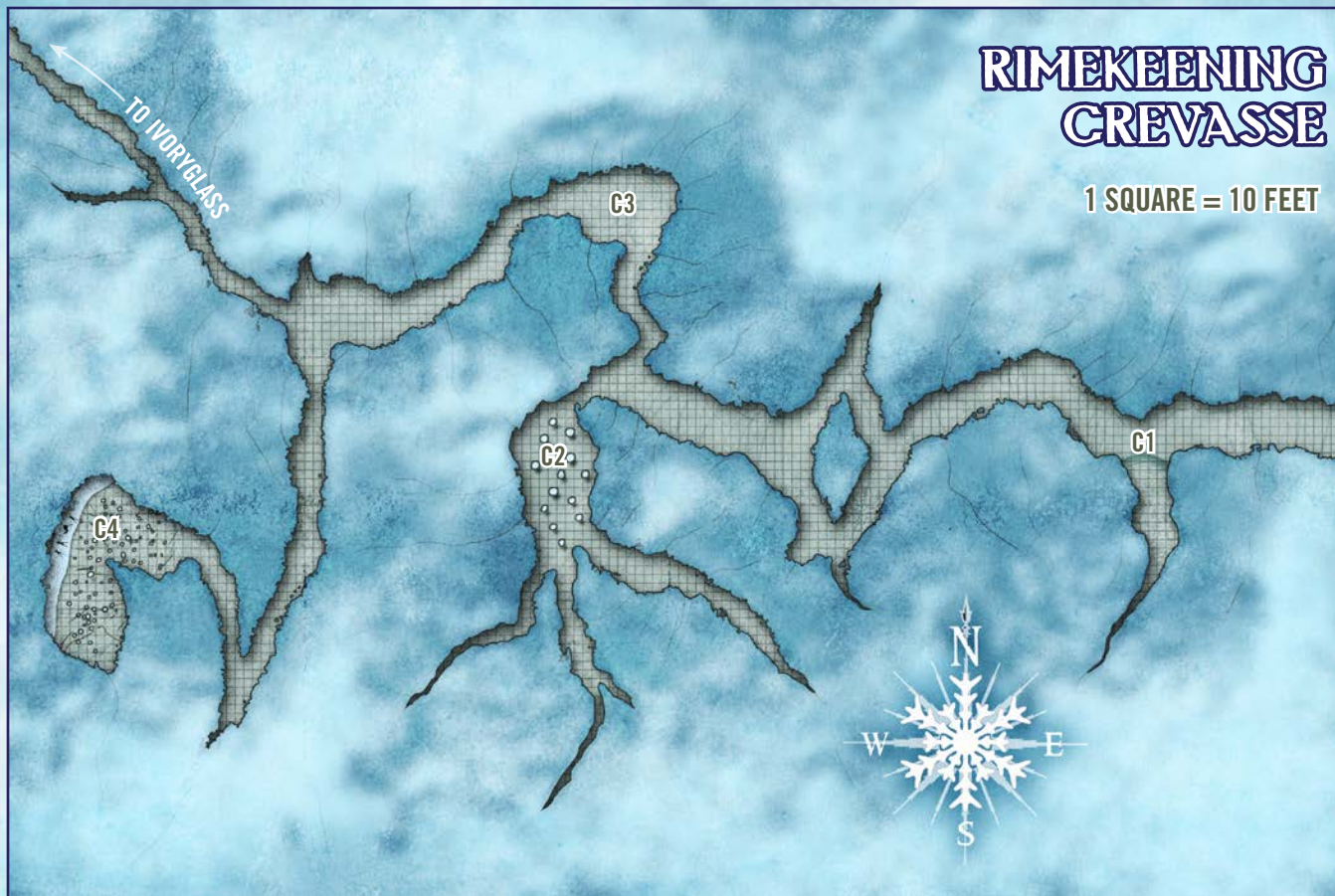
CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 136 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 45)

ICE RUNNER

REIGN OF WINTER



RIMEKEENING CREVASSE

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

Treasure: Although most of the crystals in this cavern are not of any particular value, large aquamarines worth 7,000 gp in total can be gathered from this chamber

C3. FROST WORM ATTACK (CR 14)

Creatures: As the PCs enter this chamber, the vibrations of their footsteps attract the notice of a frost worm in the ice beneath them. A round later, the frost worm bursts from the floor to attack, joined 1d4 rounds later by a second frost worm attracted by the sounds of the battle.

FROST WORMS (2) **CR 12**

XP 19,200 each

hp 168 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 126)

TACTICS

During Combat The frost worms use their breath weapons before attacking. They only use their trill ability if prey is out of reach or seems to be trying to escape.

Morale The frost worms fight to the death.

C4. SARNOK'S GRAVE (CR 12)

Cracks and fissures riddle this jagged, frozen grotto. Sharp icicles hang from the uneven ceiling and thick ice covers much of the

walls. A vertical sheet of ice fills the western end of the cavern, and the frozen remains of several creatures are visible within the ice, sealed within the frozen wall.

The roof in this cave varies between 15 and 25 feet high. Dense rubble covers the ground where indicated on the map and is considered difficult terrain. The entire floor of the grotto is slippery, increasing the DC of Acrobatics checks by 5.

The preserved corpses of seven creatures stand entombed in the western ice wall, a macabre display case of trophies of the cavern's inhabitant. The frozen creatures consist of a copper dragonkin, an elf, four Triaxians (including one Summerborn), and an adlet—the remains of the mythical hero Sarnok.

Creature: A reclusive and eccentric roper named Zavackuul lurks in one of the larger fissures running through the ceiling of this chamber. As inhumanly cruel as others of her kind, Zavackuul is a compulsive collector of her more interesting and eloquent victims, whom she slowly freezes alive and then puts on display, encased in ice. Zavackuul hangs upside down in her crevice, 25 feet above the floor near the outcropping that divides the cavern to the southeast, patiently waiting until prey approaches the

THE FROZEN STARS

ice wall at the western side of the cavern before lashing out with her strength sapping strands.

ZAVACKUUL

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female roper (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 237)

hp 162

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

Skills Climb +35, Perception +18

Languages Aklo, Triaxian

TACTICS

During Combat Zavackuul focuses her attacks on one creature, hoping to completely drain the victim's strength and claim a new trophy.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, Zavackuul calls for a truce, offering to exchange one of her precious trophies for one of the PCs' party. If they refuse, she renews her attack and fights to the death.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Stone Clinger Zavackuul has the Stone Clinger (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Dungeon Denizens Revisited*) feat instead of Skill Focus (Perception). This grants her a climb speed of 10 feet. Also, she can hang upside down from a ceiling indefinitely, and can drop on a creature below, dealing 2d6+6 points of bludgeoning or piercing damage.

Treasure: Sarnok and the other preserved creatures are entombed behind over 2 feet of ice (hardness 0, hp 80). The adlet hero still bears his +1 *dragon bane thawing*^{UE} *longspear*. Although his garb and other mundane equipment have deteriorated after years entombed in ice, he still wears a *belt of fallen heroes*^{UE} and a *prophet's pectoral*^{UE}. The *prophet's pectoral* is the holy relic Baknarla has come to claim and return to her tribe, but she offers Sarnok's spear and belt to the PCs to aid them in defeating Yrax.

In addition, one of the Triaxian corpses is wearing *hide of the dragonrider* (see page 63). The other corpses have coins and other jewelry worth a total of 425 gp, but the rest of their gear has deteriorated to uselessness.

Story Award: If the PCs recover Sarnok's spear and the *prophet's pectoral* for Baknarla, award them 19,200 XP.

PART FOUR: IVORYGLASS

After traveling through the Drakelands (and possibly the Rimekeening Crevasse), the PCs reach Ivoryglass, the glacial fortress-palace of the white dragon warlord Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm. During the long Triaxian winters, the Drakelands' white dragons often become ascendant over their kin, and Yrax is one of the most powerful white dragon warlords.

Ivoryglass sits within the Vahara Glacier, inside a large well-like shaft almost 200 feet deep called a moulin, formed over millennia from glacial meltwater. Ivoryglass

ZAVACKUUL



takes its name from an immense, circular block of smooth, palely reflective white stone over 3,000 feet in diameter that supports the entire fortress and its outbuildings. Crafted ages ago by powerful dragons, this massive stone "floats" atop the moving glacier and magically keeps the fortress level and in place, ensuring that the glacier doesn't slowly overrun and swallow the fortress. The stone has a strong abjuration aura that interferes with teleportation magic, doubling the percentage chance of a mishap, arriving off target, or appearing in a similar area. Short-range teleportation (such as *dimension door*) and planar travel are unimpeded, as are more powerful teleportation effects that lack a chance of arriving off target.

ENTERING THE MOULIN

The only apparent entry into or out of the Ivoryglass moulin is through the open top of the glacier, which is well guarded by Drakelands forces. While much of Yrax's army is mustering on the Skyfire Mandate border in preparation for the coming invasion, the warlord still retains a substantial

REIGN OF WINTER

number of troops here to defend his headquarters, and the PCs need to elude these guards to get inside.

How the PCs plan their foray is up to them. Baknarla, Bescaylie, and any other NPCs in attendance recommend that the PCs' main goal should be to get inside the palace swiftly. Even though the PCs are powerful heroes, the sheer number of troops around Ivoryglass means it would be fatal to get pinned down fighting an ever-increasing number of enemies.

If the PCs befriended Baknarla, the easiest way to gain entry to the grounds of Ivoryglass is through the Rimekeening Crevasse. The crevasse leads right to the southern wall of the moulin. Entering the moulin from above via the hole atop the glacier is still a viable option, however. The PCs can simply fly down, or if any dragonkin are accompanying the PCs, they offer to carry the PCs down to Ivoryglass. Scaling the icy, 200-foot-high cliff walls of the moulin requires successful DC 30 Climb checks.

Once inside the glacier, the PCs must make their way to Ivoryglass itself. Surrounding the palace are numerous outbuildings for the servants and subjects of Yrax, including guard posts, barracks for both dragonkin and Triaxians, drake ghettos, servant and slave quarters, smithies, storehouses, and wolloped pens. Whether the PCs enter the moulin from the crevasse or from above, they must still contend with a succession of Drakelands patrols.

EVENT 1: RAMPAGE OF DRAKES (CR 12)

Creatures: A pack of four frost drakes and their Drakelands sorcerer handler patrol the skies above the glacier, and are likely to attack PCs attempting to fly into Ivoryglass. The sorcerer casts *haste* on himself and the drakes as soon as battle is joined. Both the drakes and the sorcerer fight to the death.

DRAKELANDS SORCERER CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 92 (see page 19)

Resist fire 20

TACTICS

Before Combat The Drakelands sorcerer casts *false life* and *mage armor* every day. Before combat, he casts *fly*, *see invisibility*, and *shield* on himself and *resist energy* (fire) on both the drakes and himself.

FROST DRAKES (4) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 84 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 108)

Resist fire 20

Story Award: If the PCs manage to avoid or evade this patrol, award them 19,200 XP, as if they had defeated the patrol in combat.

EVENT 2: HYDRA PATROL (CR 12)

Creatures: A green dragonkin named Kezshar holds leashes tied to the halters of a pair of war hydras, guiding them on a regular circuit around Ivoryglass. All three have the scent ability, and Kezshar investigates anything they discern as out of place as standard procedure. Kezshar hates having to “drag smelly beasts” around on guard duty and can be fooled into thinking that a threat that catches the hydras' attention is actually something trivial and harmless, such as if the PCs are hiding near a wagon of food supplies or in a corral of wolloped. Once Kezshar detects intruders, she unleashes the hydras and takes to the air, alternating attacks between her glaive and acidic breath weapon.

KEZSHAR CR 9

XP 6,400

CE female green dragonkin (see page 16)

hp 115

Immune acid

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 9d6 acid damage)

WAR HYDRAS (2) CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 80 each (see page 31)

Story Award: If the PCs manage to avoid or evade this patrol, award them 19,200 XP, as if they had defeated the patrol in combat.

IVORYGLASS

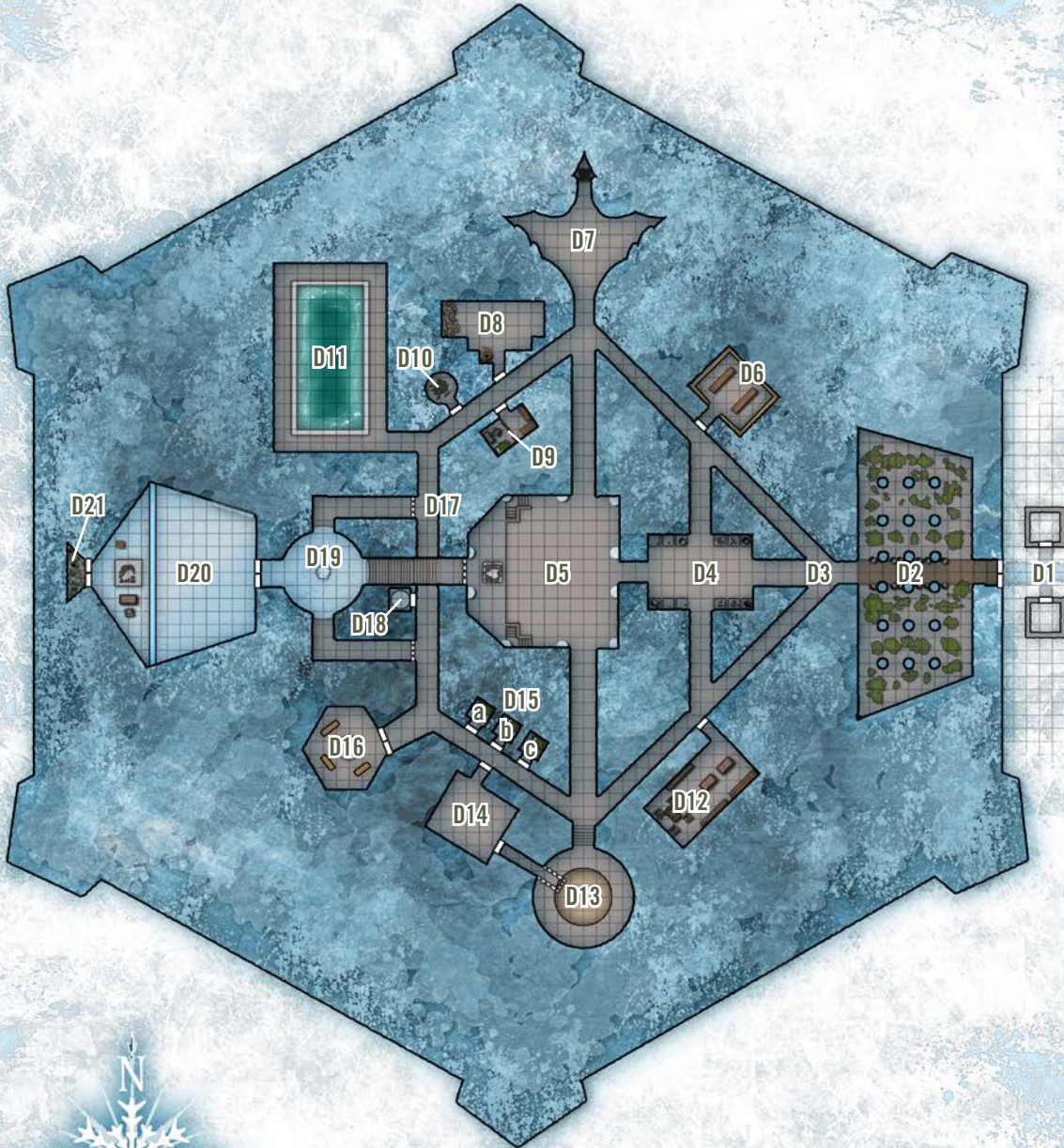
The palace of Ivoryglass is carved from a solid block of glacial ice, compacted with pressure and age to the hardness and strength of stone. The walls are 30 feet thick at their narrowest, and are scores or even hundreds of feet thick in most places. Unless otherwise noted, rooms and corridors in the palace are 30 feet high, and the temperature hovers around 30° F. Doors are made of gray stone (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28) and are typically unlocked. Numerous sky-blue *continual flames* set in sconces carved to resemble draconic claws or jaws provide illumination in the palace's passages and chambers. The entire palace is warded with a permanent *mage's private sanctum* effect (CL 15th) that prevents scrying inside its walls.

Several golems patrol the halls and chambers of Ivoryglass. These golems only follow the commands of Yrax, but they ignore the palace's permanent residents (Cesseer, Iantor, Viveka, or Yrax) and any creatures bearing Yrax's personal *arcane mark*. Guards, servants, and official visitors to the palace (including the kokogiak in area **D8** and the akhlut in area **D11**) all bear Yrax's *arcane mark*. This *arcane mark* can be forged with a successful DC 30 Linguistics check; success means the golems will not attack

THE FROZEN STARS

IVORYGLASS

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



REIGN OF WINTER

the creature bearing the forged mark. The golems attack any other creatures not bearing Yrax's mark unless they are escorted by one of the palace's permanent residents.

D1. PALACE GATE (CR 12)

The sole entrance to Ivoryglass stands in the palace's eastern wall, flanked by two stone guardhouses. Barred iron gates 20 feet wide and 6 inches thick (hardness 10, hp 180, break DC 30) remain firmly closed under most circumstances, but the PCs might be able to bluff their way in, provided they speak fluent Draconic or Triaxian and have either forged orders or an extremely compelling reason to be allowed inside.

Creatures: A squad of four heavily armored Drakelands barbarians guards Ivoryglass's gate, supported by a Drakelands ice seer. The oracle uses *detect magic* on anyone approaching to detect illusions or the possible presence of invisible enemies (casting *dispel magic* or *invisibility purge* as needed). Both the barbarians and the ice seer fight to the death.

DRAKELANDS BARBARIANS (4) **CR 7**
XP 3,200 each
 hp 97 each (see page 29)

DRAKELANDS ICE SEER **CR 9**
XP 6,400
 hp 88 (see page 33)

TACTICS

Before Combat The ice seer activates his *ice armor* revelation and casts *freedom of movement* and *shield of faith*.

During Combat The ice seer tries to avoid melee combat, using his spells to support the barbarians.

D2. ATRIUM (CR 11)

Slender ice pillars support the tall roof of this sweeping gallery. Thick blocks of translucent crystal set in the roof allow some outside light to illuminate the area. Ornamental rock gardens line both sides of a wide flagstone path running through the center of the chamber. A dozen alabaster statues, all depicting the same draconic figure, flank the pillars on either side of the path.

This atrium is 90 feet high. The gardens contain a small variety of Triaxian plant life, most of it currently dormant in winter's chill. The statues are all likenesses of the white dragon Yrax.

Creature: A score of years ago, Yrax decided he needed an heir to eventually inherit his domain. Unwilling to allow another dragon even a hint of legitimacy in his regime by producing children with her, and finding the thought of mating with a lesser (i.e., non-dragon)

species abhorrent, Yrax sought a different approach. He hired alchemical and arcane specialists and had them infuse his draconic blood into the egg of an unusual beast rarely seen on Triaxus. When the egg hatched, Yrax had his heir—a strange, eyeless half-dragon, half-detrachan he named Iantor. As Iantor matured, however, Yrax became less and less interested in him, for while the half-dragon was strong and bright, he lacked both ambition and the ability to speak, making him unsuitable as an heir or even as a leader of his father's armies. Nevertheless, Yrax has yet to dispose of his offspring simply because Iantor is no threat to him, and is a loyal, if uninspiring, son. The half-dragon has led a lonely and harsh life, but still secretly believes his father will recognize him if he can prove himself worthy. Not allowed outside the palace without permission, Iantor spends much of his time in the atrium practicing his flying and climbing skills.

Suspicious of any visitors, Iantor confronts any intruders in the atrium, flapping down to cling to a pillar 15 feet above the PCs and hissing at them. Even though he can't speak, Iantor expects the PCs to explain themselves and won't let them pass until they do. If the PCs ignore Iantor or attempt to move toward an exit without a good explanation, he eagerly attacks, hoping to gain acknowledgment from his father for killing or capturing the PCs.

IANTOR **CR 11**
XP 12,800

Male advanced half-white dragon detrachan (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 170, 294; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 83)
 NE Large dragon

Init +7; **Senses** blindsight 100 ft.; Perception +21 (+29 hearing)

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 23 (+3 Dex, +14 natural, -1 size)

hp 150 (12d8+96)

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

Defensive Abilities protection from sonics; **Immune** cold; gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and attacks relying on sight; paralysis; sleep; **Resist** sonic 30

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee bite +18 (2d6+10), 2 claw +18 (1d8+10)

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

Special Attacks breath weapon 1/day (30-ft. cone, 12d6 cold damage, Reflex DC 24 half), destructive harmonics (DC 24)

TACTICS

During Combat Iantor stays in the air and uses the Hover feat to kick up dirt, sand, and dust to gain concealment from enemies. He tries to keep out of melee combat, pounding foes with his destructive harmonics. Iantor reserves his cold

THE FROZEN STARS

breath weapon until he can catch at least 3 opponents in its cone of effect.

Morale If reduced to 50 hit points or fewer, Iantor flees deeper into the palace, either to join his father in area **D20** (50% chance) or to his own quarters in area **D10** (50% chance) to lick his wounds.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 17, **Con** 26, **Int** 19, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 33

Feats Great Fortitude, Hover, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Lunge, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +18, Climb +25, Escape Artist +18, Fly +16, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (nobility) +19, Perception +21 (+29 hearing), Sense Motive +18, Stealth +14, Survival +21

Languages Aquan, Auran, Draconic, Triaxian (can't speak)

D3. PENTAGONAL PASSAGE (CR 12)

Creatures: Three fossil golems patrol Ivoryglass's main corridor, which forms a pentagon between the atrium (area **D2**) and the western hallway (area **D17**). Constructed from the ancient, fossilized bones of prehistoric Triaxian dragons, the golems make their rounds in a staggered rotation so that each golem patrols a different side of the pentagon, with a full circuit taking 4 minutes.

FOSSIL GOLEMS (3) CR 12

XP 19,200 each

hp 122 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 136)

D4. HALL OF THE VANQUISHED (CR 12)

Massive stone plinths line both sides of this long, arched hallway. Over half the plinths are in use, displaying the skeletal remnants of draconic creatures. Sheets of ice sheathe some of the skeletons, holding their ossified remains arranged as if in life, while others are merely jumbled piles of bones.

Those who seek an audience with Yrax are shown through this disturbing gallery, which displays the remains of some of the dragon warlord's former adversaries. A few of the skeletons are from dragonkin, but the rest are those of true dragons. The bones on display here are a mere fraction of those Yrax has slain over the years—the ones he felt

were "worthy" opponents. The empty plinths are a grim reminder to visitors that there's plenty of room for their skeletons if they offend the Lord of the Howling Storm.

Creatures: Yrax has employed powerful magic to have his fallen foes serve him, even in death. Four of the skeletons on the plinths are bone golems. The golems wait until a creature reaches the middle of the room before animating and attacking.

BONE GOLEMS (4) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 90 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 133)

D5. AUDIENCE CHAMBER (CR 12)

Two sets of steps ascend fifteen feet to a huge raised dais that fills one end of this immense hall. A massive nestlike structure constructed of pale wood, masterfully carved and woven into elaborate patterns, takes up the center of the dais, next to a much smaller throne-like chair. Intricate mosaics of draconic



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forms spiral up the hall's thick stone buttresses and flow across the tall arched ceiling, giving the place an air of grandeur.

This is Yrax's public audience chamber, but it is usually empty unless the Lord of the Howling Storm is holding court or entertaining visitors from his nestlike throne atop the dais. The chair is for Yrax's consort, Cesseer of Ning, whom the dragon likes to "exhibit" as an expensive, exotic trophy when holding court. The ceiling is 60 feet high in this chamber. An *illusory wall* (Will DC 16 to disbelieve) conceals an entrance 45 feet up in the western wall, which gives Yrax the chance to observe foreign dignitaries before making a dramatic entrance. The *illusory wall* hides a short corridor and stairway that crosses over the western hallway (area D17) and descends into the antechamber (area D19). Although most of Yrax's followers (and all of the palace residents) know of the entrance, they're also aware that they could fall under Yrax's scrutiny any time they're in this hall.

Creatures: Four glass golems stand at attention in the room, two against the eastern wall and two atop the dais, flanking Yrax's throne. They attack any creatures in the room that lack Yrax's *arcane mark* unless Yrax is present.

GLASS GOLEMS (4) **CR 8**
XP 4,800 each
 hp 96 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 138)

D6. LIBRARY

This chamber contains rows of bookshelves holding oversized books apparently designed for the hands, or perhaps the claws, of large readers.

Mostly penned in Draconic or Triaxian, the books here are works of fiction and histories of the Drakelands written with an obvious bias toward flattering the land's dragon rulers. Yrax occasionally studies up on military tactics and historical battles here.

D7. SHRINE OF DAHAK

This irregularly shaped room has a high, ridged ceiling that slopes smoothly down to the sides. Huge skeletal designs carved along the floor, walls, and ceiling convey the sense of being inside a massive winged beast. A black stone altar inside the beast's "skull" at the northern end of the room is carved with symbols of a fiery falling star streaking downward.

This chamber takes the shape of a dragon in flight. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the room as a shrine to Dahak, the Endless Destruction, evil god of the chromatic dragons.

D8. GUEST QUARTERS (CR 12)

Tables, beds, and other furnishings lie heaped in a pile in one corner of this chamber, which is significantly colder than the rest of the palace. Small drifts of snow have collected in corners and at the intersections of walls and floor.

Creature: A rare creature from Triaxus's arctic called a kokogiak currently occupies this chamber. Although it looks terrifyingly like a gigantic ten-legged polar bear, the kokogiak is far more than a simple beast. In fact, the evil, cunning, and highly intelligent kokogiak is Yrax's honored guest and something of an ambassador to Ivoryglass. This kokogiak dominates a powerful tribe of barbarian Drakelanders whom Yrax wants to join his army in attacking and conquering the Skyfire Mandate. Thus far, Yrax has been unsuccessful in gaining the kokogiak's support, despite plying it with valuable gifts; the ambassador has remained noncommittal, and the dragon is growing frustrated with the creature's silence. For its own part, the kokogiak cares little for the wordly treasures Yrax has bestowed upon it, much preferring live sacrifices instead, which have been sorely lacking inside Ivoryglass's walls. The kokogiak attacks any intruders entering its quarters.

KOKOGIAK **CR 12**
XP 19,200

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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*

TACTICS

During Combat The kokogiak casts *solid fog* on the first round of combat, then uses its breath weapon against anyone trapped in the fog. With its long neck, the kokogiak can reach opponents almost anywhere in the room without needing to move through the fog.

Morale The kokogiak fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 13, **Con** 22, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

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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, Triaxian

SQ ice walker, penetrating sight, sound imitation

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.

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.

Treasure: A collection of valuable items lies heaped in one corner. These are gifts from Yrax, but the kokogiak has so far disdained them. The pile consists of an *amulet of blue dragon's breath* (see page 62); a golden bowl engraved with images of dragons (worth 500 gp); a jeweled egg containing the blood of an ancient dragon warlord (worth 4,500 gp); an engraved mithral figurine of an ursikka (see page 88) worth 500 gp; a platinum flute worth 1,000 gp; and a strange gold idol in the shape of a pregnant, furred female humanoid with insect wings, a dragon's head, and a single ruby eye, engraved with queer carvings (worth 1,500 gp).

D9. CSESSEER'S QUARTERS

A richly woven curtain divides these luxurious living quarters. The room holds magnificent furnishings and is sumptuously decorated.

Yrax prepared this opulent chamber for his new consort, Cesseer of Ning (see area **D14**), but she rarely sleeps here, preferring the simplicity of a cell near the training hall. The only personal items here are several changes of clothing belonging to Cesseer, all in current Ningese fashion.

D10. IANTOR'S QUARTERS

A large pile of furs lies in the center of this plain, circular stone cell.

The half-dragon Iantor (area **D2**) sleeps in this chamber, originally built as small guest room or prison cell for dragonkin or other large creatures. The room's stone door can be barred from the outside.

Treasure: Hidden beneath a loose rock under the furs (Perception DC 25 to find) is Iantor's most treasured possession, a miniature toy dragon made of platinum. The dragon functions as a *bronze griffon figurine of wondrous power*, but it transforms into a Large dragon-shaped creature (use the normal stats for a griffon).

D11. SWIMMING POOL (CR 13)

A long, rectangular pool of dark water fills the center of this large chamber, which is slightly warmer than the rest of the palace.

The pool is 30 feet deep, filled with ice-cold water. It has a faint transmutation aura, and is imbued with magic to keep the water's temperature just above the freezing point. Although the pool was built for Yrax, the dragon rarely feels the urge to swim, and only Cesseer of Ning (area **D14**) and the nereid Viveka (area **D12**) regularly use the pool.

Creature: The pool is also home to Yrax's newest pet, a bizarre hybrid of killer whale and wolf called an akhlut. The akhlut recognizes Yrax, Cesseer, and Viveka, but it views anyone else as potential prey. In the water, the akhlut is fully transformed into an orca, but it charges out of the water as soon as anyone enters the chamber, using its shore storming ability to take them by surprise. A skilled hunter, the akhlut pursues fleeing intruders throughout the palace, but it retreats back to the pool if reduced to fewer than 60 hit points.

AKHLUT

CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 189 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 11)

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D12. KITCHEN (CR 10)

A row of large ovens line one wall of this long, well-stocked kitchen. Oversized plates, some several feet wide, sit in neat stacks on shelves beside utensils, crockery, and culinary tools.

Creature: A nereid named Viveka works and lives in the kitchen, serving as Ivoryglass's cook and preparing meals for the palace's residents. Once a native of the Lake of the Eye north of Ivoryglass, Viveka fell afoul of a Triaxian fisherman from the city of Iris who stole her shawl. The fisherman promptly "tithed" her shawl to the city's priest-king, the blue dragon Harkor, who enslaved her and made her into an exotic trophy, training her to be his personal chef. Always one to covet the trophies of others, Yrax later bought the shawl from Harkor, and brought Viveka to Ivoryglass. Enslaved to draconic masters for the past 237 years, Viveka has resigned herself to her fate, though she would still leap at the opportunity to reclaim her shawl and her freedom. Over the years, Viveka has become quite a skilled chef and is obsessively passionate about her cooking. Unfortunately, she finds little excitement in her current role of catering for Yrax. The dragon orders the same meals repeatedly, usually consisting of lightly cooked or raw meat, and she has never received a compliment from Yrax, no matter how delicious the food. Yrax's son, Iantor (see area **D2**), just wolfs down whatever Viveka serves him. Viveka has eagerly begun learning to cook Ningese cuisine to make Yrax's consort Cesseer (area **D14**) feel more at home, but the ukara prefers very plain food, so most of Viveka's culinary creations go unappreciated.

Nevertheless, Viveka tries to maintain an effervescent and upbeat personality, and she loves to flirt with visitors and guests in hopes of finding a distraction from her mostly humdrum daily existence. When the PCs enter the kitchen, Viveka greets them enthusiastically and offers them a quick snack, even though she's fairly certain that they're intruders—that's not her problem. The nereid isn't familiar with Golarion cuisine and tastes, of course, so while the food she offers the PCs is expertly prepared, it might taste wonderful, horrible, or even just bland. Viveka's initial attitude to the PCs is indifferent, but if a PC tastes her food and offers an honest opinion—no matter whether it's complimentary or critical—she becomes friendly, considering it a challenge to create a repast suitable for the PCs' palates. Viveka knows Ivoryglass's layout, and if made friendly, she's happy to talk about

the other residents of the palace as she bustles about the kitchen. If made helpful, she even lets slip in conversation that Yrax's private chambers lie hidden to the west.

Viveka has no knowledge of Baba Yaga's bearskin, but if the PCs tell her they are here to kill the dragon, she begs them to find her shawl, which she believes Yrax keeps in his hoard. Although she'd prefer the PCs to agree to recover her shawl on their own, she uses her beguiling aura and *suggestion* ability to compel them to do so, if necessary.



VIVEKA

VIVEKA CR 10

XP 9,600

Nereid (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 198)

hp 126

TACTICS

During Combat If attacked, Viveka responds in kind, using her poison and drowning kiss against anyone not affected by her beguiling aura.

Morale If reduced to 60 hit points or fewer, Viveka attempts to flee to the swimming pool (area **D11**) where she summons a Huge water elemental to defend her.

STATISTICS

Skills Profession (cook) +18 (instead of Perform [sing])

Treasure: A *decanter of endless water* is built into a cabinet beneath the sink to provide running water for the kitchen.

Development: If the PCs recover Viveka's shawl from Yrax's treasury (area **D21**) and free her, she thanks the PCs and rewards them with the kitchen's *decanter of endless water* (see Treasure, above). Viveka attempts to leave Ivoryglass as soon as possible, but she might also be persuaded to join the PCs on their travels in the *Dancing Hut*, at your discretion.

Story Award: If the PCs successfully obtain useful information about the palace and its residents from Viveka, award them 9,600 XP, as if they had defeated her in battle.

D13. FIGHTING PIT

Wide stone stairs lead up to an elevated walkway overlooking a sunken fighting pit in this circular chamber. The floor of the pit is covered with sand, and a single passage exits the pit to the northwest beneath an iron portcullis.

Constructed to allow Yrax and favored guests to watch prisoners fight to the death, the fighting pit is 20 feet deep. A permanent widened *globe of invulnerability* effect (CL 17th) covers the entire bottom of the pit and excludes

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all spell effects of 4th level or lower. The passage at the bottom of the pit leads to the training hall (area **D14**); the portcullis is currently raised, controlled by a winch on the walkway above.

D14. TRAINING HALL (CR 12)

Training dummies, ropes, weights, and other martial exercise equipment fill this room, the floor of which is covered in padded woven mats. A weapon rack stands against the northwest wall, and iron manacles hang from the walls.

This room was once Yrax's torture chamber (the manacles on the walls are relics of those days), and the door to this room from the hallway can be barred from the outside. When Yrax acquired a member of the elite ukara warrior caste from the far-off southern land of Ning as a consort, he had the room refurbished for his new, prestigious "battleflower." The weapons on the rack are mundane weapons, blunted for practice combat. A door to the southeast leads to the fighting pit (area **D13**).

Creature: The ukara Cesseer of Ning is dedicatedly training and exercising in this chamber, even if the palace is on alert. Cesseer's official role is "consort" to Yrax, but this is a formal business relationship and she holds no loyalty to him personally. Cesseer is incredibly bored with her position in Ivoryglass; Yrax treats her more like a trophy than an honored companion, and there has been virtually no ritual combat for her to compete in, much less an audience to perform for.

When Cesseer becomes aware of the PCs, she ceases her workout and cautiously approaches them, curious to learn more of these intriguing alien creatures. While she is by custom expected to defend Yrax, their arrangement does not formally require her to do so. She greets the PCs in Triaxian, and if they respond cordially, she politely inquires about the PCs' backgrounds and homelands while describing her own in return.

Cesseer apologizes for her bluntness before inquiring whether the PCs are intruders and asking why they are in the palace. Cesseer has a dilemma, which she freely expresses to the PCs: Technically, she should either report their presence or possibly fight them to defend her employer's property, but the PCs are the most interesting people she has met since arriving at Ivoryglass. A successful DC 14 Diplomacy check to make Cesseer friendly puts her enough at ease to hint that, hypothetically, if a PC were to challenge her to a one-on-one duel and defeat her, then she would be honor-bound do nothing more to hinder them.

If a PC challenges Cesseer, she smiles happily and animatedly explains the possible forms the challenge could take. Cesseer would prefer a nonlethal combat with the option of yielding, which would forfeit the fight, as

would dealing any lethal damage to an opponent. Cesseer is also willing to accept other types of combat as long as the conditions are fair to both sides, including a duel to the death, if necessary.

If the PCs agree, Cesseer proposes holding the duel in the fighting pit (area **D13**), with the remaining PCs observing from above. Cesseer knows about the magic-inhibiting properties of the fighting pit's *globe of invulnerability*, but only uses this to her advantage if the PCs attack her immediately or if she suspects the PCs are cheating during a duel. If the combat is nonlethal, Cesseer can make nonlethal attacks at no penalty, but most PCs will take a -4 penalty on attack rolls to deal nonlethal damage.

CESSEER OF NING

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 114 (see page 56)

Development: If a PC challenges Cesseer and defeats her fairly, she bows in acknowledgment and sincerely thanks the PCs for the esteemed pleasure of facing a worthy opponent. If she has learned that the PCs are from another planet, she obliquely asks about their means of transport, hoping that they might be able to assist her in returning home to the Immortal Suzerainty of Ning. If it seems the PCs might be able to get her home, Cesseer asks if she can meet with them again away from Ivoryglass once they have finished here, planning to inconspicuously leave Ivoryglass shortly after the PCs do.

If the PCs don't agree to challenge Cesseer, or if their challenger is unable to defeat her, Cesseer bows and uses her abundant step ability to teleport to Yrax's sanctum (area **D20**) where she waits with her patron to fight the PCs when they arrive.

Story Award: If the PCs defeat Cesseer in a challenge, award them her full XP value.

D15. PRISON CELLS

These plain cells contain simple sleeping pallets and little else. Designed to confine prisoners, the cells' doors can be barred from the outside. Cesseer of Ning (area **D14**) finds these austere cells more comfortable than her assigned quarters in area **D9**, and she often sleeps in the easternmost cell (area **D15c**) as it is closer to the training hall. Cells **D15a** and **D15b** are empty.

D16. GOLEMWORKS

Impressed with the golems created by hired or enslaved wizards and sorcerers to guard his palace, Yrax has decided to try his own hand at golemcrafting, and has turned this large hexagonal chamber into his personal golemworks. Worktables lining the walls contain a variety of magical and

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alchemical crafting gear, while a large, circular stone table in the center of the room holds several bodies preserved in the cold air of the palace, including the cadavers of three Triaxians as well as several other, less easily identified corpses of native Triaxian creatures. These are the beginnings of Yrax's first creation—a carrion golem—though it is still incomplete, as Yrax has had to stop the work to acquire more scrolls for the golem's creation.

Treasure: Among the mundane supplies in this chamber are some of the ingredients needed to create a carrion golem, consisting of a *scroll of contagion*, two *scrolls of false life*, a *scroll of gentle repose*, a *scroll of lesser geas*, and special reagents worth 500 gp.

Development: The carrion golem is only half-completed, though someone with the Craft Construct feat could attempt to pick up the work where Yrax left off using the supplies in this room. Currently, 5 days have been spent on the golem's creation; it requires 6 more days of work (and the expenditure of additional costs) to be completed.

D17. WESTERN HALLWAY

Two *illusory walls* (Will DC 16 to disbelieve) in the western wall of this hallway conceal two passages leading to the antechamber to Yrax's private sanctum (area **D19**).

D18. WASTE DISPOSAL (CR 12)

A five-foot-high circular column with a stone plug a foot thick sits in the center of this small chamber.

The ceiling here is only 10 feet high. The stone plug weighs 2,500 pounds and covers a 40-foot-deep well where servants dispose of the palace's waste.

Creature: A giant, cold variant of a black pudding called a white pudding inhabits the well, thriving on the garbage produced by the palace's residents. If the plug over the well is removed, the pudding waits to be fed for only 1d4 rounds before surging up out of the well to attack any creatures nearby.

GIANT WHITE PUDDING CR 12

XP 19,200

Advanced variant black pudding (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 35*)

N Gargantuan ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Perception -5

DEFENSE

AC 1, touch 1, flat-footed 1 (-5 Dex, -4 size)

hp 178 (17d8+102)

Fort +11, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities split; **Immune** cold, ooze traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +15 (2d8+10 plus 2d6 acid and grab)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d8+10 plus 2d6 acid), corrosion

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 1, **Con** 22, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +23 (+27 grapple); **CMD** 28 (38 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +15

SQ suction

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex) A white pudding's acid is identical to that of a black pudding, but it does not affect metal or stone. The save DC for a white pudding's acid is 24.

D19. ANTECHAMBER (CR 11)

A layer of gleaming ice covers every surface of this large circular chamber. A frosty obelisk of murky ice stands at the center of the chamber, its faceted sides incised with runes and symbols.

This antechamber is the entrance to Yrax's personal wing of the palace. All of Ivoryglass's residents know that trespassing here is forbidden, and they must await their draconic lord's pleasure if they want to speak with him. The floor is slick with ice (requiring 2 squares of movement to enter a square, increasing the DC of Acrobatics checks by +5, and requiring a successful DC 10 Acrobatics check to charge or run).

Creature: The obelisk in the center of the room is actually an ice elemental. Allow the PCs to attempt Perception checks opposed by the ice elemental's Stealth check to recognize the obelisk for what it is. The elemental comes to life and attacks any creature other than Yrax or those accompanied by the dragon. Once roused, the elemental isn't confined to this chamber and pursues intruders relentlessly.

ELDER ICE ELEMENTAL CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 152 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 115*)

D20. LORD OF THE HOWLING STORM (CR 14)

The smooth walls of this gigantic pentagonal chamber curve gently inward to form a lofty domed roof above the icy floor. A raised platform sits fifteen feet above the floor at the western end of the room, with a large metal door set into the rear wall.

Atop the raised platform is Yrax's nest, a huge, circular pile of cloth heaped as bedding, and several smaller pieces of furniture, including a desk covered in written reports from Yrax's generals, a low table holding a 10-foot-square map of the Skyfire Mandate with markers showing the known locations of Dragon Legion and Drakelands forces,

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and a comfortable chair for Yrax's consort, Cesseer of Ning (though she is rarely present).

The entire floor of the chamber (including the raised platform) is slick and icy (requiring 2 squares of movement to enter a square, increasing the DC of Acrobatics checks by +5, and requiring a successful DC 10 Acrobatics check to charge or run). This ice coats the wall below the raised platform as well; a successful DC 35 Climb check is required to scale it. The ceiling is 80 feet high above the lower section, and 65 feet high above the raised section.

The double doors from the antechamber are normally open, but Yrax can close and bar them if aware of intruders (hardness 8, hp 120, break DC 30). When in residence in his sanctum, Yrax casts a mental *alarm* on the antechamber doors and on the door to his treasury (area **D21**) every day.

Creature: This is the sanctum of Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm, one of the most powerful dragon warlords of the Drakelands. Over 700 years old, Yrax has lived through two of Triaxus's centuries-long orbital years, and this is his third Triaxian winter. He has ruled the Vahara Glacier for centuries, and though his power waned during the long summer, he managed to retain control of Ivoryglass and has now mustered a powerful barbarian army capable of threatening the Skyfire Mandate for the first time in centuries. The dragon warlord is atop the raised platform, planning the next steps in his invasion of the Skyfire Mandate and the defeat of the hated Dragon Legion. Immensely proud, the Lord of the Howling Storm brooks no interruption or intrusion into his private sanctum.

If the PCs met Cesseer of Ning in area **D14** and did not defeat her, she is here as well, reluctantly but dutifully fulfilling her obligation to defend Yrax. Even at this stage, however, the PCs might still be able to convince Cesseer that she does not have to fight for Yrax with a successful DC 24 Diplomacy check. The PCs receive a +2 bonus on the check for each PC that previously dueled Cesseer, a +5 bonus if they offer to take her back to Ning, and a +2 bonus if a PC uses appropriate forms of courteous conduct and succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (nobility) check.

If the Diplomacy check is successful, Cesseer accepts that her honor has been satisfied and steps out of the way, leaving Yrax to face the PCs alone.

YRAX, LORD OF THE HOWLING STORM

CR 14
XP 38,400

 Male very old white dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 100)

CE Huge dragon (cold)

Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses, *see invisibility*, snow vision; Perception +25

Aura cold (10 ft., 1d6 cold damage), frightful presence (270 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 34, touch 8, flat-footed 34 (+26 natural, -2 size)

hp 237 (19d12+114)

YRAX

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Fort +17, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14

DR 15/magic; **Immune** cold, dragon traits, paralysis, sleep;

Resist acid 20, electricity 20, fire 20; **SR** 25

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +27 (2d8+15/19–20), 2 claws +27 (2d6+10), tail slap +22 (2d6+15), 2 wings +22 (1d8+5)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone, 18d4 cold damage, Reflex DC 25 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), crush (2d8)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 19th; concentration +21)

At will—*fog cloud*, *gust of wind* (DC 14)

3/day—freezing fog (DC 18)

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 7th; concentration +9)

3rd (4/day)—*displacement*, *ice spears*SM (DC 15)

2nd (7/day)—*mirror image*, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 13),

snowball^{POTN} (DC 13), *true strike*, *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat If aware of intruders in the palace, Yrax casts *resist energy* (acid, electricity, and fire) and *see invisibility* on himself. Once the *alarm* on the antechamber doors goes off, Yrax casts *mirror image*.

During Combat Yrax lets out a deafening roar and activates his frightful presence while creating a freezing fog around intruders entering the sanctum, followed by a blast of his breath weapon. Yrax casts *displacement* as soon as possible thereafter to protect himself against ranged attacks. Depending on the tactics of those facing him, Yrax might swoop over opponents and use Flyby Attack and Greater Vital Strike with his bite attacks. If brought to fewer than 125 hit points, Yrax lands and makes full attacks against his most troublesome foe.

Morale Here at the seat of his power, Yrax considers retreat only when reduced to 40 hit points or fewer, and then only if he has a good chance of getting away.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 10, **Con** 23, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 41 (45 vs. trip)

Feats Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Flyby Attack, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Fly +14, Heal +25, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (geography) +14, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (nobility) +15, Linguistics +6, Perception +25, Sense Motive +25, Stealth +14, Swim +18

Languages Aklo, Aquan, Draconic, Triaxian

SQ ice shape, icewalking

Treasure: Yrax stores the majority of his hoard securely in his treasury (area **D21**), but he does display some of his wealth openly, as befits a powerful Drakelands warlord. Yrax wears four huge ruby-studded bracers (worth 2,000 gp each), a gold serpentine draconic armband (worth 1,000 gp), and two gold draconic torcs (worth 1,500 gp each). In addition, a coffer near his sleeping nest contains ample healing supplies, consisting of a *potion of cure serious wounds*, two *potions of lesser restoration*, a *potion of remove blindness/deafness*, and two applications of *restorative ointment*.

D21. TREASURY

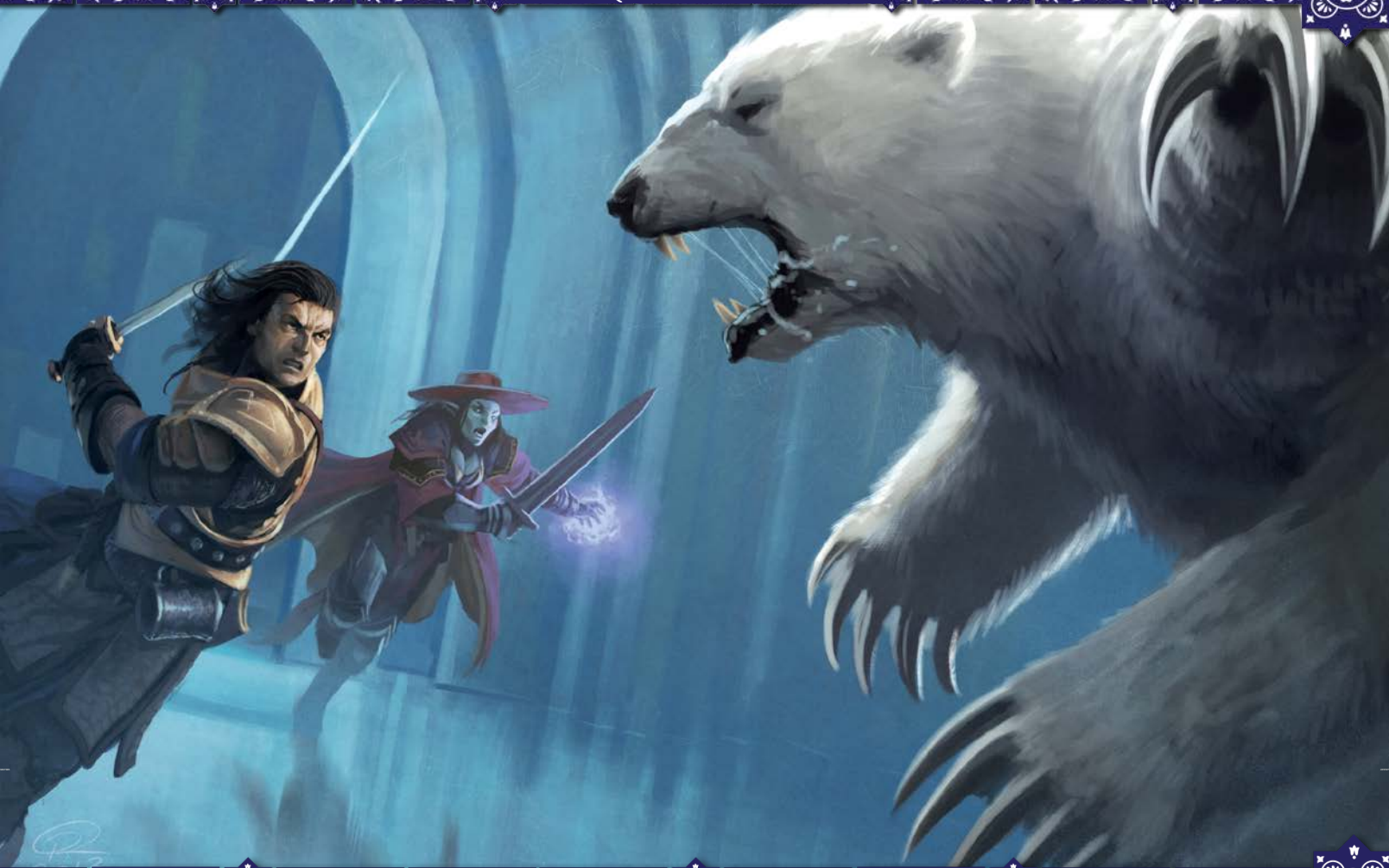
The steel door to Yrax's treasury is 2 feet thick and fitted with a highly complex lock (hardness 10, hp 720, break DC 73, Disable Device DC 40).

Treasure: Inside the vault is an immense collection of wealth, truly worthy of the title dragon's hoard. While Yrax has spent a significant amount outfitting and maintaining his invasion army, he still possesses an impressive hoard, sorted and tastefully arranged by general type. These riches consist of 75,604 cp, 8,773 sp, 6,111 gp, and 165 pp in a variety of coins, bars, and ingots; a black pearl worth 500 gp; two emeralds worth 1,000 gp each; a fire opal worth 650 gp; a sapphire worth 1,100 gp; and exotic hides, furs, and pelts worth a total of 5,000 gp. In addition to these mundane treasures, Yrax's hoard also contains a *gloom blade*^{UE}, a set of *dragonbone divination sticks*^{UE}, a *drinking horn of bottomless valor*^{UE}, a *manual of war*^{UE}, an *oil of magic vestment*, a *potion of good hope*, a *ring of x-ray vision*, a *suzerain scepter*^{UE}, and a *scroll of hallucinatory terrain*.

The PCs can also attempt DC 25 Appraise checks to find the following less obvious but highly valuable items in the hoard. A dull, pitted spherical rock 1-1/2 feet in diameter displayed on a sumptuous silk-covered stand is in fact a meteorite. It contains 15,000 gp worth of adamantite, but it weighs over 850 pounds. An unadorned leather case holds a long metallic tube and several other delicate mechanical devices, including a powerful telescope, an astrolabe, a sextant, a cylinder of star charts, and other astrophysical instruments, each beautifully constructed and exceptionally accurate (worth 7,000 gp as a set). In addition, a humanoid mannequin in one corner wears a simple white shawl; this is Viveka's shawl (area **D12**), and the source of the dragon's control over the nereid.

Finally, a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a brown bearskin among the other exotic hides and furs in the vault. This bearskin is the second key to the *Dancing Hut* that Baba Yaga left on Triaxus. A beautiful elven diplomat from Castrovel presented it to Yrax as a gift—as the pelt of a creature not found anywhere on Triaxus, the bearskin is a rare and valuable treasure, and Yrax greedily and eagerly accepted it, adding the skin to his hoard. Unknown to Yrax, the elf was actually Baba Yaga, who felt that the safest place

THE FROZEN STARS



for one of her keys was inside the treasury of one Triaxus's most powerful dragon warlords.

Development: Once the PCs have the bearskin, their business in Ivoryglass is finished. While the PCs might want to loot every copper piece in Yrax's treasury, they cannot afford to tarry. Ivoryglass is surrounded by hostile Drakelands troops, and though it will take them some time to mobilize and organize, the PCs had best be gone before Yrax's soldiers storm the palace. Escaping Ivoryglass can be as simple as the PCs retracing their steps through the Rimekeening Crevasse, flying away on the backs of dragonkin, or even casting a *teleport* spell once outside the palace.

If the PCs left the two-headed eagle with Commander Pharamol, they can return to Spurhorn to claim their reward. The Dragon Legion hails them as heroes for defeating Yrax, and following the dragon's death, the barbarian Drakelands army falls apart, no longer a threat to the Skyfire Mandate. If the PCs already have the eagle, they can return to the Dancing Hut as soon as they are able.

Story Award: Award the PCs 38,400 XP for acquiring the bearskin from Yrax's hoard.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Whatever the results of the siege of Spurhorn and the PCs' assault on Ivoryglass, the PCs have certainly changed the fates of countless beings on Triaxus—though whether this bodes good or ill for the peoples of the Skyfire Mandate and the Drakelands depends on what actions the PCs took. The PCs are free to wrap up any loose ends and say their good-byes to any newfound friends—unless those friends wish to accompany the PCs to even stranger worlds and new adventures.

With the two-headed eagle from Spurhorn and the bearskin from Ivoryglass, the PCs have the next two “breadcrumbs” in Baba Yaga's trail. As before, they should return to the *Dancing Hut* and the place the items in the cauldron in the gazebo (area A1). As the PC stir the stew in the cauldron, the hut travels to a new destination, warping and shifting again into a new layout. Once again, the PCs must explore their new surroundings—perhaps the strangest yet—in search of Baba Yaga in the next installment of the Reign of Winter Adventure Path, “Rasputin Must Die!”

REIGN OF WINTER

CESSEER OF NING

An elite ukara, or “battleflower,” from the Immortal Suzerainty of Ning, Cesseer is consort to the dragon warlord Yrax, though their relationship is a business arrangement, not an expression of her true loyalties or feelings.

CESSEER OF NING**CR 12****XP 19,200**

Female Winterborn Triaxian monk (qinggong monk/weapon adept) 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 51, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 114, and see page 86)

LN Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 23, flat-footed 24 (+2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 monk, +4 Wis, +5 natural)

hp 114 (13d8+52)

Fort +11, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** disease, poison; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 70 ft.

Melee +2 *shotel*^{NE} +15/+10 (1d8+7/×3) or unarmed strike +12/+7 (2d6+3) or +2 *shotel*^{NE} flurry of blows +17/+17/+12/+12/+7 (1d8+7/×3) or unarmed strike flurry of blows +14/+14/+9/+9/+4 (2d6+3)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, perfect strike (13/day, roll 3 times)

Qinggong Monk Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +17; save DCs are Wisdom-based)
1 ki point—*barkskin* (self only), *feather step*^{APG} (self only)

TACTICS

Before Combat Cesseer activates her *barkskin* ki power before combat or before entering the fighting pit. If in an area of difficult terrain (such as ice), she also activates her *feather step* ki power.

During Combat In a nonlethal or exhibition combat, Cesseer uses Dazzling Display in the first round to demoralize her opponent, allowing her to use Shatter Defenses and make extra attacks with Medusa's Wrath. She uses Stage Combatant to make nonlethal attacks with her *shotel* and Perfect Strike to ensure success, and uses Punishing Kick, Stunning Fist, and trip combat maneuvers to keep her opponent at a disadvantage. In a real (lethal) fight, Cesseer spends a ki point each round to gain an extra attack if she can make a full attack, or to improve her AC (if she can't).

Morale Honor is fundamental to Cesseer, and if fighting in a nonlethal duel, she yields when reduced to 20 hit points or fewer. In a lethal combat against honorable foes, Cesseer

fights to the end. If revived afterward, she surrenders and allows herself be taken prisoner. If the PCs shamefully interrupt or interfere in a one-on-one combat, Cesseer uses her abundant step ability to retreat to Yrax's sanctum (area D20) and fights at his side.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +16 (+18 trip); **CMD** 37 (39 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dazzling Display, Dodge, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Medusa's Wrath, Mobility, Perfect Strike^{APG}, Punishing Kick^{APG}, Shatter Defenses, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Stage Combatant^{UC}, Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (shotel), Weapon Specialization (shotel)

Skills Acrobatics +18 (+47 when jumping), Intimidate +21, Linguistics +1, Perception +22, Perform (dance) +15

Languages Draconic, Ningese, Triaxian

SQ abundant step, battleflower, diamond body, diamond soul, fast movement, ki pool (10 points, cold iron, lawful, magic, silver), ki power, maneuver training, purity of body, seasoned, way of the weapon master, wholeness of body
Gear +2 *shotel*^{NE}, *belt of physical perfection* +2, *headband of inspired wisdom* +2, *ring of protection* +2, Ningese ukara entertainer's outfit

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Battleflower (Ex) Because of her training as an ukara, Cesseer is proficient with all weapons with the performance weapon quality and treats all such weapons as monk weapons for the purposes of feats and the flurry of blows special ability. This replaces the normal monk weapon proficiencies.

Cesseer is a native of Triaxius's Immortal Suzerainty of Ning, an island nation far to the south of the Drakelands and the Skyfire Mandate across the Sephorian Sea. Born in a remote rural village, Cesseer was chosen from among all the children in her village to attend an elite martial academy in a large, distant city. Renouncing all ties to her former family and social class, Cesseer was inducted into the elite warrior caste called *ukara* (roughly translated as “battleflowers”), highly trained gladiatorial warriors who compete in extravagant bouts of ritualized combat before hordes of adoring spectators. Cesseer spent her childhood constantly honing the martial techniques that

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would turn her body into a weapon, as well training with a wide variety of unusual armaments. At the same time, Cesseer and her caste-siblings were taught to renounce all outward expressions of their genders, in language, dress, even in the way they moved. From that point forward, they were neither male nor female—they were ukara.

Ukara are greatly esteemed in Ning, treated as high-ranking members of the aristocracy, and the most successful ukara are courted by the wealthy and powerful as consorts, regardless of their gender or sexuality. Most often, these arrangements are formal business relationships that are mutually beneficial, markedly increasing the honor of both parties, and acclaimed ukara are widely sought after.

Knowing all of this, Cesseer was very nervous before her first official bout, but her anxiety vanished instantly when she walked out into the arena. Bathed in the noise of the crowd, she knew this was where she was meant to be. Cesseer won that first fight and many more thereafter, becoming a growing celebrity. She even traveled to the capital, where she had the supreme honor of competing before the Immortal Suzerain herself. The whirlwind of meetings, honors, and gifts bestowed on her by important nobles, powerful politicians, and influential guilds all seeking her favor seemed suitably impressive but needlessly confusing to Cesseer, because she knew that she would become the consort of the most honorable suitor who would give her the best opportunities to compete and perfect her martial art.

When Cesseer learned that a powerful dragon from across the sea had requested her as a consort, she was intrigued. The fact that the dragon had sent chests of gold, gems, and jewelry to sweeten his offer barely registered with Cesseer. To her, the chance for travel to distant lands combined with the possibility of learning exotic techniques was too good to pass up. The long voyage to the Drakelands was very exciting, and also dangerous at points, but Cesseer eventually arrived at Ivoryglass to present herself to her new patron Yrax, Lord of the Howling Storm.

Cesseer's excitement slowly faded to disappointment, however. Initially, Yrax treated her well, but as he became obsessed with his upcoming invasion of the Skyfire Mandate, he effectively ignored her unless he wanted to show her off like an exotic trophy to some visiting dignitary or supplicant. After Cesseer refused to fight a malnourished prisoner for Yrax's entertainment, the dragon stopped arranging ritual combats for her, leaving her to her own devices for weeks on end. Cesseer has come to realize that Yrax regards her as little more than another piece of treasure in his hoard, but she feels compelled by honor to fulfill her contract with him.

Cesseer is lithe and athletic, and her body fur is evenly cropped, giving her an epicene look. If competing in an official performance bout, she paints her fur with ritual symbols displaying her formal status as an ukara. When competing, Cesseer wears an elaborate Ningese costume. She speaks in a soft, musical voice with an accent that differs from the Triaxian dialect spoken in the Skyfire Mandate.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Cesseer is an obstacle the PCs must face to acquire the second of Baba Yaga's keys from Ivoryglass. She has no personal loyalty to Yrax, but she feels she must honor her contract by defending her patron and his palace from intruders and thieves. Currently, however, Cesseer is extremely bored and homesick. She misses her homeland of Ning, with its many intricate yet familiar rituals that make up everyday life. She yearns for conversations with other ukara, or even anyone who understands the disciplined pursuit of martial excellence. As a result, Cesseer might be convinced to break her contract, especially if the means to return to Ning were offered to her. Although unlikely, it might even be possible to secure Cesseer's aid in the fight against Yrax.



REIGN OF WINTER

COMMANDER PHARAMOL

The stalwart leader of the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn, Commander Pharamol will give his life to ensure its walls remain standing.

COMMANDER PHARAMOL

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male Winterborn Triaxian ranger 12 (see page 86)

LN Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +3 (+7 in cold); **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +21 (+25 in cold)

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+8 armor, +3 Dex, +4 natural)**hp** 118 (12d10+48)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10**Defensive Abilities** evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *bastard sword* +17/+12/+7 (1d10+4/19-20)**Ranged** +1 *composite longbow* +17/+12/+7 (2d6+4/19-20/x3) or Rapid Shot +1 *composite longbow* +15/+15/+10/+5 (2d6+4/19-20/x3)**Special Attacks** favored enemy (dragons +6, magical beasts +2, Triaxian humanoids +2)**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 9th; concentration +11)3rd—*instant enemy*^{APG}2nd—*barkskin*, *eagle eye*^{APG}, *effortless armor*^{UC}1st—*aspect of the falcon*^{APG}, *gravity bow*^{APG}, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat Commander Pharamol casts *barkskin* and *effortless armor* before any combat, and he casts *aspect of the falcon* and *gravity bow* before engaging foes at range (already included in his stats).

During Combat In a pitched battle, Commander Pharamol uses his hunter's bond to aid his troops as necessary. When fighting dangerous creatures who aren't one of his favored enemies, Pharamol casts *instant enemy* and declares a particular foe as his quarry, then focuses his attacks on that opponent, casting *resist energy* as needed depending on the nature of his foe. Pharamol relies on missile combat, but if necessary, he draws his bastard sword and readies an action to attack while his dragonkin partner Amerenth makes Flyby Attacks.

Morale If fighting against spies or assassins, Commander Pharamol retreats to gather reinforcements if reduced to 50 hit points or fewer. In a battle to defend Spurhorn, however, Pharamol fights to the bitter end.

Base Statistics Without his spells, Commander Pharamol's

statistics are **AC** 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; **Speed** 20 ft.;**Ranged** +1 *composite longbow* +16/+11/+6 (1d8+4/x3); **Skills** Perception +18 (+22 in cold), Ride +15, Stealth +9 (+13 in cold).

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 28

Feats Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Precise Shot, Iron Will, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Pinpoint Targeting, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills Knowledge (engineering) +11, Knowledge (geography) +8 (+12 in cold), Knowledge (nature) +8, Linguistics +0, Perception +21 (+25 in cold), Ride +17, Stealth +11 (+15 in cold), Survival +11 (+15 in cold)

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ camouflage, evasion, favored terrain (cold +4, mountain +2), hunter's bond (companions), quarry, rider bond (Amerenth), seasoned, swift tracker, track +6, wild empathy +12, woodland stride

Combat Gear +1 *dragon bane arrows* (3), *snappleaf*^{UE}, **Other**

Gear +2 *breastplate*, +1 *bastard sword*, +1 *composite longbow* (+3 Str) with 60 arrows, *belt of physical might* +2 (Str, Dex), *cloak of resistance* +2, keys to areas **B12** and **B13**

Commander Pharamol has served the Dragon Legion for most of his adult life, but he was born and grew up in a small mining community in the Titan's Mounts. The first time he saw a graceful, gleaming dragonkin soaring high above him through the blue sky over the snow-capped mountains of Triaxus, he knew he could never become a miner like his parents. When he came of age, Pharamol became one of the many hopeful recruits that arrive each year on the doorsteps of the Dragon Legion's border aeries. The punishing initiation designed to weed out those without true conviction was far tougher than he had expected, but his tenacious attitude, determination, and skills saw him graduate as the youngest legionary in his class.

Pharamol grew into a solidly built warrior and obtained a transfer to the front line, but his training was as a scout, not a dragonrider. Nevertheless, he came to see the solemn duty of the Legion as an ideal worthy of laying down his life for,

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and became a respected officer. While not much of a book learner, Pharamol dedicated himself to studying dragonkin and true dragons alike, learning every technique to stop the evil dragons of the Drakelands. Pharamol's dedication and integrity led to several promotions, which he accepted as part of his noble duty.

Twelve years ago, Pharamol finally bonded with a gold dragonkin named Amerenth. Although Pharamol was not yet a dragonrider, the young dragonkin stubbornly insisted that she was his partner and would be no matter what Pharamol said or did. Eventually, Pharamol stopped trying to convince her that he wasn't cut out to be a dragonrider, and his bond with Amerenth was forged on their very first flight together. While it may seem to outsiders that Pharamol and Amerenth differ in almost every respect, their loyalty to the Skyfire Mandate and to each other is completely unquestioned.

When the previous commander of Spurhorn retired, Pharamol was the top candidate for the position, and upon receiving the unanimous acclaim of the soldiers under his command, he became Spurhorn's new commander. Commander Pharamol has developed a discreet but intense style of leadership. A recurring Legion tale tells that once in a border skirmish, Pharamol's troops broke and fled in spite of having superior strength over the enemy, leaving the commander to face a trio of drakes on his own. Amazingly, Pharamol survived and returned to his troops, his face as red as the blood dripping from his many wounds. The only thing said about the speech he gave after that debacle was that every member of the patrol agreed it would be far better to die in battle than have to ever listen to it again.

Several months ago, a wise woman from a peasant village in Spurhorn's holding came to the aerie with a gift for Commander Pharamol, in thanks for his tireless devotion in defending their lands from the predations of the dragons across the border. The gift was a strange two-headed eagle, the likes of which Pharamol had never seen before. Not wanting to hurt the old woman's feelings, Pharamol accepted the bird and has kept it as a pet ever since—though his partner Amerenth can't get past her feelings that there is something strangely peculiar about the bird that has nothing to do with its two heads. In fact, the old crone was none other than Baba Yaga in disguise, and the two-headed eagle is an ingredient for the cauldron in her *Dancing Hut*.

Commander Pharamol is a rugged and muscular Winterborn Triaxian with a mature and distinguished demeanor. He wears the uniform of a Dragon Legion officer with the ease of one long accustomed to command.

When he speaks, the deep bass of his voice and the firm conviction in his words compel an audience's attention.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Commander Pharamol holds one of the two keys the PCs need to control the *Dancing Hut* and so can be either an ally to the PCs or an obstacle for them to overcome. If the PCs help defend Spurhorn, Pharamol is likely to become a firm friend, always ready to offer assistance or support to them. If the PCs attack Spurhorn and Pharamol somehow survives, he attempts to regroup and return to retake the fortress with reinforcements from other Dragon Legion holdings. Pharamol's duty is to defend the Skyfire Mandate's border, not to track down alien creatures who aided the enemy, but woe to the PCs should they ever meet him again.



REIGN OF WINTER

GENERAL MALESINDER

The commander of the Drakelands army besieging Spurhorn, General Malesinder is ambitious, cunning, cruel, and utterly self-serving.

GENERAL MALESINDER**CR 12****XP 19,200**

Female advanced silver dragonkin (*Pathfinder Campaign*

Setting: Distant Worlds 61)

CE Large dragon

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 161 (14d12+70)

Fort +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +10

Immune cold, dragon traits, paralysis, and sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 120 ft. (average)

Melee *rimeblade* +21/+16/+11 (1d8+7/15-20 plus 1d6 cold), bite +17 (1d8+3), claw +17 (1d6+3) or bite +19 (1d8+6), 2 claws +19 (1d6+6)

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

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 12d6 cold damage, Reflex DC 22 half, usable every 1d4 rounds)

TACTICS

During Combat Malesinder unleashes her breath weapon at the beginning of combat and activates the rimefire ability of her *rimeblade* as soon as she can make full attacks. Against a particularly dangerous opponent, she uses her *rimeblade*'s special attack to stagger the foe, followed by another blast of her breath weapon.

Morale Malesinder retreats if reduced to fewer than 50 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 16, **Con** 20, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 34

Feats Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (scimitar), Multiattack, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Bluff +20, Fly +18, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (engineering) +11, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Survival +10

Languages Draconic, Triaxian

SQ rider bond (no rider currently)

Other Gear *rimeblade* (+1 frost scimitar, see page 63), *bracers of armor* +3, gold necklace (worth 500 gp), silver-chased scabbard (worth 250 gp)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rider Bond (Su) See page 16.

Born out of a clutch of eggs abandoned outside a Drakelands military hatchery, the silver dragonkin Malesinder became a soldier in Yrax's army almost as soon as she hatched. Malesinder loathed the constant drudgery and manual labor of her childhood, quickly realizing that the only way to avoid these indignities was to become an officer. She absorbed the official Drakelands propaganda, unquestioningly accepting that true dragons were the rightful rulers of not just the Drakelands but all of Triaxus, but she also realized there was a favored place for her and her kind. Malesinder quickly recognized that if she wished to rise above the common foot soldier in her draconic lord's army, she would need to be as ruthless, greedy, and cunning as the exalted great dragons themselves.

Seeing the truth of how business was done in the Drakelands, Malesinder eagerly took to learning the social arts of deceit, manipulation, blackmail, backstabbing, and betrayal. She quickly ascended through the ranks of Yrax's army, leaving behind several who hated her but who could do nothing to stop her rise. After leading several successful raids against Dragon Legion outposts in the Parapet Mountains—including a raid in which one of Malesinder's few remaining rivals died tragically, Malesinder having arrived "just too late" to save her but in plenty of time to claim both victory and the credit—Malesinder was promoted to the rank of colonel. From there, her path to general was all but assured, thanks to the numerous favors and blackmail information she had already acquired.

Malesinder's first meeting with the Lord of the Howling Storm following her promotion changed her perspective on life radically. Seeing the dragon warlord's raw power up close and actually speaking with him made her realize that the distant figure she had always looked up to as a godlike ruler was also a compelling male creature. Even in her own mind, Malesinder's feelings for Yrax were never love. Rather, they were a lustful notion of desiring a hold over him combined confusingly with wanting to become the most treasured possession in his hoard. Before, Malesinder had always seen her goal as living a life of wealth and power

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as a loyal, impersonal servitor of her ruler, but now she dared to secretly dream of more, of perhaps becoming Yrax's mistress and even siring children with him.

After her promotion, General Malesinder dramatically expanded both her official and unofficial spy rings using the new resources available to her, recruiting agents along the border with the Skyfire Mandate as well keeping her fellow generals under surveillance. After several years of building her political power base and espionage network, Malesinder leapt at the opportunity to lead the vanguard invasion army when Yrax announced his intentions to invade the Skyfire Mandate. Her orders were to take the Dragon Legion aerie of Spurhorn at all costs, both to test the Dragon Legion's defenses and to create a diversion to draw attention away from the larger army driving through the Mandate into the Allied Territories themselves. While Yrax still seems indifferent to her, Malesinder believes that if she can bring down Spurhorn, she is sure to come to his personal attention, and so she's willing to take certain risks to shower herself with glory.

Like many of the Drakelands dragonkin, General Malesinder arrogantly sees non-draconic humanoids as little better than two-legged cattle, and as such, she occasionally underestimates their abilities. She only bothers to conceal her scornful attitude toward them if she can utilize them as tools or if she senses it would be to her advantage. Like most Drakelands generals, Malesinder enforces harsh discipline on her troops, but also rewards effort, loyalty, and bravery, seeing this as a small investment whose rewards will only increase her own stature.

A powerfully built, silver-scaled dragonkin, General Malesinder proudly holds her head high. Her long, mane-like crest sweeps from the crown of her head to the tip of her tail, and her strong, elegant wings glimmer like polished silver. Preferring to present herself as much like a true dragon as possible, Malesinder wears little ornamentation. She'll have plenty of time for gems and jewelry when she sits next to Yrax as his favored consort.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

As one of Yrax's top generals, Malesinder serves as a major opponent of the PCs, though initially she may be seen as a potential ally. She is completely self-serving, however, and any alliance with the cruel dragonkin is destined to be short-term. If Malesinder survives her final confrontation with the PCs, and depending on whether Spurhorn fell to the Drakelands besiegers, she either attempts to retreat back into the Drakelands and to Ivoryglass with whatever forces she can still command or continues to hold the fortress in preparation for the larger invasion of the Skyfire Mandate. Either way, Malesinder tries to send word to Yrax, accurately reporting the situation but painting herself in the best possible light. She expects punishment from Yrax for her failures, but hopes that her record up to this point will save her from death. Whether Malesinder arrives at Ivoryglass before the PCs depends on many factors, but if she does, the PCs may need to battle her again when they enter the fortress.



REIGN OF WINTER

REIGN OF WINTER TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “The Frozen Stars.” Player-appropriate handouts appear in the *Pathfinder Cards: Reign of Winter Item Cards*.

ALPINE ICE AXE		PRICE 8,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 3rd	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA faint transmutation		



This sturdy tool has a wooden haft topped with a curved pick head backed with a sharp adze blade at one end and capped with an iron spike on the other. When used as a climbing aid, an *alpine ice axe* grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Climb checks to scale rock or ice walls. In addition,

an *alpine ice axe* negates any Climb DC modifiers for climbing a slippery surface. Three times per day as a standard action, the wielder can strike an area of ice or snow with the ice axe to instantly create a series of sturdy handholds in the ice covering a distance of up to 40 feet. An ice wall with these handholds has a Climb DC of 15.

An *alpine ice axe* is a tool, not a weapon, but it may be used as an improvised weapon with the usual -4 penalty on attack rolls made with it. An *alpine ice axe* wielded as a weapon functions either as a +1 *light pick* when striking with the pick spike or as a +1 *hand axe* when striking with the adze blade. The ice axe uses the standard threat range and critical modifier for those weapons. An *alpine ice axe* deals double damage against inanimate ice or snow, and if used as a weapon against a creature made mostly of ice (such as an ice elemental or ice golem), an *alpine ice axe* bypasses that creature's damage reduction.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 4,176 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>shatter, snow shape</i> ^{HOG} , creator must have 5 ranks in the Climb skill	

AMULET OF DRAGON'S BREATH		PRICE 4,800 GP
SLOT neck	CL 8th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate evocation		



This amulet is crafted from a dragon scale hung on a thin wire of twisted mithral. There are 10 different types of *amulet of dragon's breath*, each corresponding to one of the 10 dragon types. As a standard

action, the wearer of an *amulet of dragon's breath* can breathe out a blast of energy similar to a dragon's breath weapon. This breath weapon deals 8d6 points of energy damage (Reflex DC 16 for half). The breath weapon's shape and energy type depend on the type of dragon scale used to craft the amulet (see page 75 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for a list of dragon types, energy types, and breath shapes). A new *amulet of dragon's breath* can be used three times before the dragon scale cracks and the amulet becomes useless.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 2,400 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>dragon's breath</i> ^{APG}	

HABIT OF THE WINTER EXPLORER		PRICE 13,380 GP
SLOT body	CL 3rd	WEIGHT 7 lbs.
AURA faint abjuration and transmutation		



This warm outfit consists of a woolen coat and pants, boots, gloves, and a heavy fur cloak with a leather hood. The *habit of the winter explorer* provides a constant *endure elements* effect in cold weather (it has no effect in warm weather), and the wearer gains a +2 bonus on saving throws against magic cold effects and spells with the cold descriptor.

When the hood of the habit is drawn up around the head, the wearer's eyes turn a piercing sky blue color. The wearer becomes immune to snow blindness and gains the ability to see through natural or magical fog, sleet, snow, and other similar weather conditions with a range of 60 feet.

The *habit of the winter explorer* also grants its wearer a +4 competence bonus on Stealth checks made in cold weather (temperatures below 40° F). In addition, once per day in cold weather, the wearer may turn invisible for 3 rounds as the *vanish* spell (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 253).

All pieces of the *habit of the winter explorer* must be worn for the item to function.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 6,690 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>darkvision, endure elements, resist energy, vanish</i> ^{APG}	

HIDE OF THE DRAGONRIDER		PRICE 18,480 GP
SLOT armor	CL 8th	WEIGHT 25 lbs.
AURA moderate abjuration and enchantment		



Crafted from the scaled hide of a black dragon and lined with wolloped fur for warmth, this suit of +1 *bolstering* (*Ultimate Equipment*) *black dragonhide armor* was designed to protect and aid dragonriders of the Dragon Legion in their battles against the evil dragons of the Drakelands. *Hide of the dragonrider*

grants its wearer a +5 competence bonus on Ride checks, and the wearer does not take an armor penalty from the armor on Ride checks. In addition, when mounted, the wearer can transfer some or all of the armor's armor bonus (including its enhancement bonus) to his mount as a bonus that stacks with all others. As a free action at the start of his turn, the wearer chooses how to allocate the armor's armor bonus, and that allocation lasts until the wearer's next turn. Once per day, the wearer can imbue *hide of the dragonrider* with resistance against one type of energy, as the *energy resistance* armor special ability. This resistance lasts for 10 minutes. *Hide of the dragonrider* functions as a cold weather outfit, granting its wearer a +5 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves against the effects of cold weather.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 9,405 GP
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Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *heroism*, *resist energy*, *shield* or *shield of faith*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Ride skill

OBSIDIAN RAVEN		PRICE 15,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 11th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA moderate conjuration and transmutation		



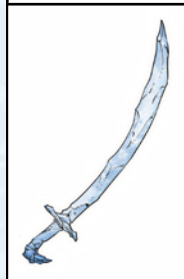
This *figurine of wondrous power* is similar to a *silver raven*, but it can be used to send messages across the planes. On command, the figurine turns into a raven (retaining its stone-like consistency, which gives

it hardness 8). Another command sends it off into the air, bearing a message as the *sending* spell (with no chance of the message not arriving). The recipient of the message can then use the *obsidian raven* to plane shift (self only) to the plane from which the message was sent. The figurine can be used in this way once per day. If not commanded to carry a message, the raven obeys the commands of its owner, although it has no special abilities, and it can maintain its non-figurine status for 24 hours per week (the duration need not be continuous).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 7,500 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects*, *plane shift*, *sending*

RIMEBLADE		PRICE 16,955 GP
SLOT none	CL 8th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA moderate evocation [cold]		



This +1 *frost scimitar* has been forged from a single piece of razor-sharp, super-hardened ice. A *rimeblade* automatically resizes itself to match the size of its wielder, and if a *rimeblade* is damaged, the wielder can cause the blade to melt away and reform with full hit points as a full-round action. This ability cannot be used if the weapon is destroyed.

Once per day on command, the wielder can transform a *rimeblade* into a beam of ice-cold flame called *rimefire*. The weapon is still wielded as scimitar, and attacks with the blade-like beam are melee touch attacks that deal 1d8+3 points of cold damage (regardless of the wielder's size). Because the beam is immaterial, the wielder's Strength modifier doesn't apply to damage. In addition, a creature that takes cold damage from the *rimefire* beam is covered in clinging frost and is entangled for 1 round. The *rimefire* beam lasts for 1 minute, after which the weapon returns to its normal form.

In addition, once per day as a swift action before an attack, a *rimeblade's* wielder can cause the blade to glow with a pale blue radiance. On a successful attack, the *rimeblade* deals an additional 4d6 points of cold damage and causes the target to be staggered for 1 round. If the attack is a critical hit, the target is staggered for 1 minute instead. This effect ends after a single attack, regardless of whether the attack is successful or not.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 8,635 GP
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Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Elemental Spell^{APG}, Rime Spell^{UM}, *chill metal* or *ice storm*, *flame blade*, *frigid touch*^{UM}

TRUEFROST ELIXIR		PRICE 1,500 GP
SLOT none	CL 17th	WEIGHT —
AURA strong transmutation		



This glowing violet liquid is ice-cold regardless of the surrounding temperature. This elixir allows a character to bypass the cold immunity or cold resistance of creatures she attacks with her magic. For 6 rounds after drinking a *truefrost elixir*, a character's spells, spell-like

abilities, and supernatural abilities that deal cold damage become supernaturally cold, and the damage caused by these effects is not subject to being reduced by a creature's cold resistance. Creatures with cold immunity take half damage from such attacks. *Truefrost elixir* has no effect on cold damage from weapons, on non-cold-based effects, or against creatures without immunity to cold or cold resistance.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 750 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *polar midnight*^{UM}

REIGN OF WINTER



PLANET OF DRAGONS

THEIR WINGS DARKENED THE SKY: DRAGONS IN SPEARHEADS A THOUSAND STRONG. BENEATH THEM CAME THEIR ARMIES, MEN AND WOMEN TOO SCARED OR CORRUPTED TO DEFY THE INVADERS. THE LAST OF THE GREAT ONES MET THEM THERE—AERNON AND VAYUS, KARAPHEL AND DOSKIS, RHASKAN THE RIDERLESS. WITH SPELL AND CLAW, THEY TORE AT THEIR EVIL BRETHERN, GIVING THEIR LIVES SO THAT OUR PEOPLE MIGHT SURVIVE.

THE GREAT ONES ARE GONE NOW, BUT THE WAR OF HEROES NEVER ENDED. THE SKYFIRE MANDATE IS NOT A PLACE, BUT A PROMISE: A VOW TO NEVER FORGET THEIR SACRIFICE.

~THE WAR OF HEROES (AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

PLANET OF DRAGONS

This volume's adventure takes place on Triaxus, another planet in Golarion's solar system that is in many ways similar to Golarion itself, with roughly the same size, gravity, atmosphere, and terrain. Yet while Golarion orbits in a standard ellipse that keeps it roughly the same distance from the sun, Triaxus's path brings it closer to the sun than Golarion at its nearest point, then slingshots it far out into the cold of space, where less of the sun's light can reach it. As a result, one orbit for Triaxus takes 317 Golarion years, and includes both sweltering, generations-long summers and seemingly endless arctic winters. These extreme seasonal shifts have defined the planet and its evolution, resulting in ecologies and cultures that oscillate in time with them.

This article is designed to supplement the adventure, and thus focuses on those regions and aspects most important to adventurers playing through this Adventure Path. For more information on Triaxus and the other planets in Golarion's solar system, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Worlds*.

PEOPLE

Just as humans are currently the primary race of Golarion, so are the humanoid Triaxians the primary race of their world. Similar to humans and elves in many ways, they are distinguished primarily by the ways in which their bodies adapt over the course of generations to the planet's dynamic environment, shifting from dark, hairless skin in the summer to sleek coats of white fur in the winter. For more information on Triaxians and their three types—Summerborn, Winterborn, and Transitional—see their bestiary entry on page 86.

Yet while Triaxians may be the most populous race on Triaxus, they share their dominance of the world with two other races: true dragons and dragonkin. Unlike Golarion, where draconic creatures tend to be few and far between, Triaxus is rife with everything from brute drakes to the awe-inspiring true dragons, and these powerful figures claim entire continents with their warring and chaotic societies. Of these varied creatures, the most common are the vaguely humanoid dragonkin—weaker versions of true dragons that have adopted the use of weapons, and often bond with Triaxian riders as partners. Contrary to the beliefs of those outside the legion, dragonkin are not the offspring of true dragons and humanoids, but rather a species all of their own. Aside from their size and relative abilities, the biggest difference between the two draconic creatures is color. While true dragons have their morality and personality tied to their scale color in ways never completely understood, dragonkin may be of any color and disposition. Most of those encountered in the Dragon Legion are good-natured—at least as much as the next soldier—yet dragonkin with their same coloration and breath weapon

ADVENTURING ON TRIAXUS

Triaxus is similar enough to Golarion that adventurers from either world can survive on the other without any special advantages or liabilities. At the time of this adventure, Triaxus is still in winter, and thus its temperatures are extremely low, similar to arctic regions on Golarion. While the weather can easily kill, cold-weather gear and spells like *endure elements* should be enough to allow Golarion natives to survive and thrive in most situations. In addition, the greater distance from the sun during winter means that even full noon never offers more than low-light conditions on the planet's surface.

It should come as no surprise to adventurers that Triaxus has as many languages as Golarion. Draconic is a prevalent language on Triaxus, not only among draconic creatures, but also among the Triaxians they rule. In the regions covered by this adventure, however, most speak a common trade language, which for the purposes of translation and language selection should be treated as Triaxian Common, allowing PCs who take it as a language to speak to most NPCs.

can be found leading the armies of the Drakelands against them, creating great confusion during battles. For more information on dragonkin, see page 61 of *Distant Worlds*.

In addition to these two great powers, Triaxus also boasts many other civilized races—more exotic organisms who may mix with others or keep to themselves in remote regions. Examples of these include the three-eyed laialar with their birdlike adolescent phase; the cave-carving ottiks; the vampiric hordes of the Uchorae; the serpentine sky-priests whose veins literally flow with divine power; and the glowing poet-whales of the arctic oceans, whose true name has no syllables, only shifting tones.

Of Golarion's main races, only a few are represented on Triaxus. Small enclaves of elves from Sovyrian can sometimes be found, having immigrated either to establish magical trading routes with Castrovel's sometimes-neighbor or to seek asylum. More populous than these are gnomes, who according to legends emerged here from the First World at the same time as they first came to Golarion, fleeing the same mysterious calamity. Triaxian gnomes, however, are somewhat less manic than their Golarion kindred, and no longer suffer from the Bleaching, speaking of it only in legends as a great struggle that they eventually overcame. Of humans, halflings, dwarves, and orcs, the people of Triaxus know almost nothing, with only the greatest scholars or those who have personally interacted with planet-walking spellcasters having any concept of their existence. To most Triaxians, stories of travelers from other worlds are little more than fairy tales, and responses to the appearance of

REIGN OF WINTER

DRAGONKIN COLORATION

While the personalities and alignments of dragonkin are not tied to their scale color, their breath weapons and innate immunities are dependent on their coloration. To determine a particular dragonkin's breath weapon and immunities, refer to the table regarding draconic bloodline breath weapons on page 75 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. A dragonkin is immune to the energy type of its own breath weapon.

adventures from Golarion may range from excitement among scholars and magic-workers to terrified violence from a fearful populace.

SEASONS

Triaxus's seasons are caused by its eccentric orbit, yet that orbit itself is mysterious and perhaps magical in nature, with the planet seeming to move in slow motion compared to its brethren. Both winter and summer on Triaxus seem reluctant to relinquish their reigns, occupying most of the planet's long "year," while spring and fall rush past in a generation.

In summer, Triaxus is a sweltering paradise of fertile fields, dangerous jungles, misty mountains, and warm seas. Food is plentiful, and many cultures abandon traditional farms and cities for long walkabouts and nomadic periods, or else expand their cultivated territories in great leaps and bounds. At the first signs of autumn, however—often given names like the Portent, the Chilling, or the Falling—wise societies begin to make arrangements for the planet's rapid cooling and ecological shifts. Glaciers spring up almost overnight as winter arrives in earnest. The seas, already gentle and languid because of the planet's lack of a moon, freeze over at the edges, and many ports are forced to either close their harbors or uproot and move their structures miles out onto the treacherous ice. Some islands find themselves suddenly connected to the mainland or each other via ice bridges, allowing people and animals to trade or migrate between them. Farming anything but those plants and animals adapted to the cold becomes folly as the ground freezes or is buried in snow, and many societies shift to hunting and gathering models. Thus, it's with great relief that most Winterborn residents welcome the eventual Thaw or Time of Floods, as spring is often known. Yet even this welcome warming of the planet is not without its dangers. As the seas warm up and the glaciers melt, the entire planet is plagued by floods and monsoons that are every bit as destructive as the bitter—but stable—cold. New predators forgotten for generations awaken, and skills developed to survive in the winter become obsolete as the traditions of summer living are dusted off.

Triaxian settlements change with the seasons. During the winter, cities are often squat and fortified against the beasts that prowl the blizzards, filled with hard people who protect what little they have with deadly efficiency. Some retreat into caves and caverns, and others craft the ice itself into great structures. Those without cities often travel in sleds pulled by domesticated beasts, dwelling in interconnected igloos or animal-skin huts. In summer, however, the stone cores of winter cities tend to be surrounded by sprawling masses of breezy, thin-walled wooden structures housing the booming population. While many winter cities have tunnels and hallways connecting important buildings, some of the greatest cities are built for both seasons, with the walls of these insulated hallways being taken down in the hot summers to reveal shaded lattice walkways.

At the time of this adventure, Triaxus is still in the grip of winter, though rumors whisper that the weathermages and meteorological prophets have seen signs of the coming Thaw, and that the first of the Transitional Triaxians have been born—though how soon the shift might begin in earnest is anybody's guess.

ECOLOGY

Triaxus's unique environment has given rise to two distinct ecosystems. While the physiology of a few creatures, including the Triaxians, shifts and adapts to the changing environment, most plants and animals are ascendant during only one season, going dormant or dying back to a tiny minimum population during the other. Such survival methods vary wildly. Some organisms bury eggs or seeds deep in the soil that are programmed not to hatch or sprout until the favorable season has returned, while sufficiently long-lived creatures might hide and hibernate. Some winter-adapted creatures like the fire-horned acelope retreat to snowy mountaintops and polar regions during the summer, while the last of the sun-loving karbalands mate and then worm their way into stony niches to die, leaving their gestating young to gnaw their way out of the corpses over the course of decades.

At the moment, the grassy prairies and deep jungles of summer are only a distant memory on Triaxus, as are its summer residents—the great silver hunting cats, leech-bats, stilt-runners, porabees, echo moles, and so on. In their place are the hard-edged predators of winter—giant furred insects whose chittering mandibles can tear a person in half, terrifying frost worms, and the snowbirds whose beaks can punch through plate armor. Some land-based herbivores manage to subsist on the snowmoss, pale fungi, and hardy icefruit trees that grow along the glaciers and frost-choked fields and taiga, yet in the winter the great lakes and seas are a far better source of food, as aquatic life proceeds with only minimal changes beneath

PLANET OF DRAGONS

the bergs and ice sheets. Those Winterborn Triaxians who don't rely on ice-fishing, whaling, sharking, and other coastal pursuits often raise herd animals like the stringy, goatlike shabals for their blood and milk, working hard to protect them from the moonflowers, stormghosts, ice-shelled gammenores, and psychically gabbling moyeyes who would happily take such easy prey.

Icy forests make up a large part of the winter landscape, and Triaxus's trees have various ways of coping with the extreme winters. Some, such as the great conifers, simply shrug it off and change hardly at all. Others lose their leaves and go dormant, sometimes actively expanding their capillaries and allowing their sap to freeze solid, turning themselves into frozen sculptures that thaw in the summer. Those that don't run the risk of exploding as their sap freezes inside the wood—the smooth-boled burst tree actually does so intentionally, filling every branch with sap as the temperature cools and using the resulting explosions to spread its seeds, and turning its groves into shrapnel-filled deathtraps. Still other trees have even stranger variations, such as long-rooted dapoya, which lifts itself above snows and floods like a mangrove, and the gora, whose thin summer trunk is wrapped in great scales of flexible fibrous bark, used by locals for everything from making twine and baskets to shingling houses and crafting armor.

One of the most common domesticated animals in the Skyfire Mandate and other portions of the northern continents is the wolliped. This creature is shaped somewhat like an eight-legged alpaca with two large, downward-curving tusks. Its copious fur keeps it warm in the winter and sheds to a length of just a few inches in the summer, with the discarded wool either felted or spun and woven to make most of the cloth in the region. In addition to its utility in textile production, the docile wolliped is also used as both beast of burden and steed, with ground-based cavalry often riding armored wollipeds into battle. Though wolliped tusks are normally used to break through ice or churn tough ground, the creatures also employ them for self-defense and mating displays—a battle-trained wolliped can inflict horrific damage on the battlefield.

THE DRAKELANDS

No one knows exactly how or when the first dragons appeared on Triaxus, but legends suggest that in the beginning, there were only the somewhat humanoid dragonkin and the bestial drakes. For untold millennia, they lived alongside the Triaxians and other races with no more or less aggression than might be expected.

Then came the true dragons. Whether these were visitors from another world or plane or a natural evolution of dragonkin into something more powerful, the newcomers immediately took up rule over their lesser cousins. From their appearance in the heart of the continent now known

FAMILIAR FOES

Though presenting another planet with all-new organisms may be intimidating to a GM, most of the differences between Triaxus and Golarion come in the animal, humanoid, and magical beast creature types. Outsiders and fey, being creatures tied to other planes and places, are roughly the same on both worlds. Undead and constructs, as created creatures, are functionally identical to their Golarion-crafted counterparts, and plants, dragons, and vermin have evolved in quite similar ways. As a result, though Triaxus boasts a host of new creatures, the worlds' similar environments mean that most monsters found in the Pathfinder RPG have corollaries somewhere on Triaxus that bear only superficial differences, and even some of the truly alien creatures can be easily simulated by re-skinning an existing creature's abilities.

as the Drakelands, the true dragons warred with each other, established nations, mustered armies—and began to spread.

Thus began the War of Heroes. For generations, the humanoid races of Triaxus not already enslaved by the draconic conquerors banded together to halt the spreading destruction. Joining them in this fight were those dragonkin who resented enslavement and subjugation, as well as the good-natured metallic dragons who sought to oppose their conquest-minded brethren. It was this first great alliance that eventually halted the dragons' advance, ceding them a single continent for their territorial disputes and establishing the Skyfire Mandate to guard against further growth.

Today, the Drakelands are a squabbling, chaotic mess of independent fiefdoms. These territories range from true nations complete with functional governments, metropolitan cities, and high quality of life for their subjects, to simple slave camps and villages paying terrified tribute to an overlord. Yet at the head of each state is a true dragon who sees the nation as his or her territory, and its governmental coffers as a shining hoard.

Life in the Drakelands flows according to a strict caste system. At the top are the "true" dragons, chromatic (and occasionally metallic) nobility with total authority over everything save each other. Below them come the less powerful but far more numerous dragonkin, who often work as generals, government officials, consorts, and other people of influence. Lesser still are the bestial drakes and dragon-blooded Triaxians—those humanoids who can trace their ancestry to a draconic dalliance. But even these are better than the mundane humanoids, who fall somewhere between peasants and livestock in the views of their superiors.

The political geography of the Drakelands is always changing, with nations falling or expanding as the dragons vie for power. This is especially true as the seasons

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change—during the winter, the barbaric whites tend to be ascendant, only to be driven back into the northern reaches during the summer by the more powerful reds and politically cunning blues. Greens and blacks, for their parts, tend to form more isolationist settlements to pursue their own ends, yet aren't above being drawn into conflicts or alliances when their territories are threatened.

Contrary to popular belief, not all of the dragons in the Drakelands are evil. While it's true that many of the noble metallic dragons were slain during the War of Heroes, and that those who weren't were hunted almost to extinction in the pogroms that followed because of their "racial treason," a few metallics still hold their own, banding together to

protect each other's nations against the chromatics. These lands are something of a fairy tale among the lowborn subjects of the other nations, and many Triaxian slaves run away in hopes of making it to these fabled utopias. The few who actually succeed find themselves welcomed with open arms—though not necessarily with the lives of leisure and plenty they might have imagined. The metallic-ruled nations are often highly militant, constantly forced to make hard choices and fight for their right to exist. Small wonder, then, that many of the metallics who managed to escape the Purges but didn't flee the planet altogether choose to forego nation-building and simply hide themselves away in remote locations, or within Triaxian societies.

THE SKYFIRE MANDATE

In the rise of the true dragons, many Triaxians saw not only enslavement, but the potential extinction of their race. It was only through an alliance of Triaxian men and women, dragonkin, and metallic dragons—an army the likes of which has never been seen before or since—that the menace was halted. Huge sacrifices were made, including the lives of most of the humanoids' true dragon allies, yet the spirit of their alliance continues to live on today in the form of the Skyfire Mandate.

The Skyfire Mandate occupies the long land bridge between Triaxus's western, dragon-controlled continent and the eastern lands of the Allied Territories. Rather than being a single nation, it is instead a vast collection of semi-independent military units in charge of protecting individual regions, called holdings. Together, these soldiers make up the famed Dragon Legion, sworn not to a monarch or a government, but to the promise of keeping the Drakelands from expanding.

Though all races are welcome to take up the Dragon Legion's cause, in practice the group consists almost entirely of Triaxians and dragonkin—hence the legion's reliance on its iconic dragonriders. These legendary pairings are fearsome in combat, the dragonkin often fighting with huge lances and glaives while their riders support them with archery or magic, yet it's a mistake to think of the dragonkin as steeds. Rather, these duos are true partnerships between equals, bonds of love, trust, and fellowship that extend beyond the battlefield, with the Triaxians acting as the dragonkin's domestic partners and caretakers.



BRIOR THE UNBLINKING

PLANET OF DRAGONS

The governmental structure of the Skyfire Mandate is a loose one. Commanders of the various holdings must be chosen by the acclaim of their soldiers and sponsored by two existing commanders from other units. Once instated, only a vote of no confidence from the men and women under their direction can remove commanders from power. Policy and overarching strategy for the legion as a whole is set in meetings of the Tribunal—13 of the most seasoned and respected commanders in the service—but beyond this, commanders have complete authority within their holdings. Though disputes between commanders are heavily discouraged, they can be settled through meetings arbitrated by other commanders (called “parleys”) or brought before the Tribunal, or in extreme cases can be decided through single combat. Outright military action against another commander is considered high treason, with all other commanders immediately seizing the offender’s holding and carrying out the sentence of death by high-altitude drop.

Of course, the majority of citizens within the Skyfire Mandate are not legionaries, but rather simple farmers, woodcutters, merchants, and other common people. They organize primarily into small townships and even city-states, though the formation of full-on nations is discouraged by the legion (a process many would-be rulers get around by establishing far-reaching guilds). These people are largely left to govern themselves, though the Dragon Legion both recruits from their ranks and retains the right to requisition what supplies they require—a little-loved process known as “tithing.” Though the commoners naturally grumble about the military “fattening itself while producing nothing,” those who’ve seen the legion or its enemies in combat rarely challenge the practice. Lately, however, many of the larger city-states to the east have begun protesting, demanding that the legion leave them alone, and sometimes even going so far as to claim that the dragons are no longer a threat.

As the Skyfire Mandate is hundreds of miles wide, the border holdings naturally see far more action than those in more eastern regions. While this gives those gung-ho commanders who claim the border fortresses that much more respect and prestige, the eastern holdings still pull their weight by regularly rotating units into certain fortifications along the border maintained specifically for that purpose, running minor invasions and annexation missions, dealing with local governments, and patrolling the vast stretches of sea to the north and south to make sure the dragons don’t simply try to fly around. Still, the fact that these soldiers get to retreat to relative safety rather than constantly living in the contested Parapets makes “eastlander” a popular insult among western legionaries.

OTHER MAJOR REGIONS

In addition to the Drakelands and the Skyfire Mandate, there are several major populated regions of Triaxus.

Allied Territories: Spanning the entire continent of Ora, this region—often simply called “the Territories”—is a riot of nations both small and large, including monarchies, theocracies, democracies, and more. Once these nations struggled against each other in a political free-for-all, yet the first great wars against the dragons of the Drakelands drove them to ally into a single federated unit in order to ensure that humanoids would survive as anything more than just a slave race. After the great victories of the War of Heroes and the establishment of the Skyfire Mandate, however, the dragons became a less immediate threat, and old rivalries began to splinter the bonds of blood and fellowship. Today, the Allied Territories are a union in name only, frequently engaging in border skirmishes and even absorbing each other completely, while still paying lip service to the humanoid alliance of old. Should the dragons ever make another significant push into their continent, however, it’s likely that such feuds would quickly be mended, and all spears turned outward.

The composition of the Allied Territories is always in flux, particularly as portions of their population are driven south from the poles in winter or drawn north in summer, but of the hundreds of nations and free cities that spring up periodically, a few are particularly well established, having survived many seasonal cycles. The riders of Aylok, for instance, hold fertile plains and are widely notorious for breeding the best cavalry. Zo, the Port of a Thousand Ships, boasts markets where anything can be found, and in winter maintains magically melted shipping lanes. Prieta, the Scholar’s Paradise, values learning above all, and even the basest of its mercenaries seek to improve their minds. And everyone in the Territories has heard of Kamora, the wealthy gateway to the Uchorae Jungle, whose residents pay for their nation’s bounty by constantly defending their high-walled cities from vampiric predators.

Ning: An island continent separated from its neighbors by the wide Sefhorian Sea, the Immortal Suzerainty of Ning is an independent empire rarely challenged by the armies of other nations. Nevertheless, the empire maintains a vast standing army that it uses to protect the countless rural villages strewn across its landscape from the many predators—both bestial and dangerously intelligent—that dwell within the forests and valleys of the continent’s interior. Many of these communities are reachable only by treacherous roads through sharp-toothed mountains and deep jungles, and thus one of the first things constructed in any new settlement is its shelterstone, a ziggurat-shaped fortress designed to house citizens during invasions by monsters, and which usually contains some magical means of contacting the empire’s military for help.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of Ning’s culture is its focus on social station, honor, and custom. Ruled by the benevolent Immortal Suzerain (a title conferred on each monarch when the previous one dies or abdicates),

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everyone in the nation, from government officials and nobility down to common farmers, is obsessed with matters of etiquette, and those who flaunt the rules—either deliberately or through ignorance—can find themselves treated as invisible by the affronted populace.

Another peculiarity of Ning society is a unique caste called *ukara*, or “battleflowers.” These individuals are elaborately decorated and androgynous warriors who renounce all ties to family, social status, and personal gender in order to compete in ritualized gladiatorial bouts. Those who do well are treated as high nobility, with great houses and powerful merchants competing for the honor of their favor, while those unable to prove their worth after their first year are banished from the major cities forever, forced to spend their lives defending outlying communities.

Sephorian Archipelago: The seas between these several hundred islands are remarkably gentle, allowing travel by canoe in the summer and by walking across mazes of ice floes in the winter. Despite regular trade between them, most of the small island communities maintain their own customs and traditions, with even a few miles between islands creating vast differences in culture. To the more “civilized” nations of the continents, the most interesting aspects of the archipelago are the mysterious cylindrical towers on some of the islands that periodically exhale smoke and, aside from being used as navigational aids, are treated as taboo by the residents. Many of the more fertile islands are also left fallow, for reasons either unremembered or unexplained to outsiders.

GAZETTEER

As the Skyfire Mandate and Drakelands together compose a larger land mass than the entire Inner Sea region, this gazetteer focuses on groups and locations situated along the border between the Skyfire Mandate and the Drakelands, where “The Frozen Stars” takes place.

Cadascon: Not every dragon demeans herself by treating with humanoids or troubles herself with wars against the Mandate. In the steaming, sulfurous pools and thorn-roofed keeps of Cadascon, City of Brimstone, the black dragon Brior the Unblinking rules a palace of drakes and evil dragonkin. While the stony fields and craggy tarns outside the city proper are worked by Triaxians, these are slaves, not citizens, and Brior ignores both the Skyfire Mandate and her neighboring dragons with equal disdain. Those who dare approach the fume-choked city, however, quickly find that Brior is more than capable of guarding both her territory and the unique magical crystals that her slaves pull from deep mines in the mountains’ roots.

Cumo: The port city nearest the Drakelands, Cumo is rewarded for its daring by playing host to a huge number of ships from Ning and the rest of the great Sephorian Sea

as well as the short-range fishers and traders who weave between the islands of Kamaya Sound. In the markets of Cumo, exotic wares change hands constantly, and all haggling is done through finger-tapping sign language as part of a sleeve-covered handshake, so that no outside observers—especially the city tax collectors—can easily ascertain what price was agreed upon.

Dragonseal: Though most of the good dragons have long since moved east or gone into hiding, Peranon the Gold chose another path. A veteran of the wars, he has since ceased fighting for the region and instead turned to watching over a single town on the western bank of Lake Laramet. There he guides and guards the humanoids with kindness and wisdom, protecting them from both draconic attack and the shadowy creatures that live in the mountains above the city. Most of Dragonseal’s residents love their ageless leader and mascot, as he asks for little in return and absolves them of the need to tithe to the Dragon Legion. Those who wonder why exactly the dragon has chosen to guard such a seemingly random town have a variety of theories, speculating that it may have something to do with the strange horrors that periodically attack the town, a slumbering or bound creature hidden in the vast lake itself, or the strange rune-inscribed stones that are sometimes found deep within the Forest of Omens. Peranon himself refuses to speak of such things, noting only that his interests are always with the people of the Mandate first and foremost.

Drakewall: Most of the border between the Drakelands and the Skyfire Mandate is guarded by the treacherous peaks of the Parapet Mountains, but at its southern tip, the mountains’ spur plays out and offers a wide, easy grassland pass into the fertile lands around Kamaya Sound. Here, the ancestors of the Dragon Legions created the Drakewall, a 50-foot-high wall of stone and magic that stretches for more than 40 miles across the plain and then 20 miles into the sea, supported above the Sephorian Sea by great pillars and arches of stone. Small fortresses dot the wall’s length, staffed by soldiers from the many eastern holdings. While the stones of the wall are a useful defense against the dragons’ ground armies, the wall’s real power is in the invisible shield of force that it projects downward to the seabed and upward into the upper atmosphere and prevents any creature of draconic heritage from passing through, save via one of the stone wall’s gates. The vast magical power behind this great bulwark appears to be tied to magical engines deep inside the fortresses, which are guarded night and day by legionaries who know that if the magic were to be disrupted, no one alive today would know how to replace it.

Emon: The sprawling lakeside city of Emon is built almost entirely of wood cut in the Hoziah Forest and towed across the Emon Deep. The city is a welcome stop for traders and legionaries headed across the Flatlands, and

PLANET OF DRAGONS

most nights see the docks rowdy and festive, with every eave and window festooned with colored lanterns denoting the items or services available within. The town's claim to fame, however, is its' citizens' unique family structure. In Emon, paternity is not recognized, and marriage is a foreign concept. Both men and women mate freely and as they choose, yet all family structure is tied to maternity and fraternity. Brothers raise their sisters' children as their own, and women pass on wealth to their children and make alliances with both men and women without any legal bonds or blending of families. Love, where it grows, is a private affair, and though a couple might share the same bed every night for decades, to acknowledge it is the highest taboo—in public, such assignations are noted only as friendship. Needless to say, misunderstandings of this social structure have led to Emon being considered the most libidinous and libertine town in the Mandate, and hedonists from all over come to sample its attachment-free delights.

Emon Deep: This massive lake appears seemingly out of nowhere in the middle of the Flatlands' plains and prairies, fed by a massive underground river called the Upwell that is believed to originate in Gosten's Rise. So deep that few have ever seen its rocky bottom, the lake is home to all manner of fish and other strange creatures, many of the deeper-dwelling ones eyeless or otherwise adapted for life in the darkness. Legends say that cracks and tunnels in the lake's floor lead to vast networks of flooded subterranean caverns, but most who live along the lake are content to ply its surface and not look too hard at the bizarre aberrations they sometimes pull from its waters.

Frostport: In Frostport, at the mouth of the River Cuin, the calm and shallow bays of summer become a liability in the winter, freezing over entirely. To keep trade flowing, the winter residents maintain a virtual fleet of nimble, ice-skimming sailing sledges that ferry goods up the river, along the frozen coastline, or out to the deepwater ice-ports, where breaker ships smash and blast their way through to the freedom of the open seas, often with the aid of elemental spellcasters specializing in fire and ice. These casters, called Waymakers, are highly respected throughout the region, and their guild doesn't take kindly to those who find ways around paying their fees.

Haydensbank: This booming metropolis along the River Ka collects great wealth from lumber in the Fellingwood, river trade, and gold washed down from the mountains. Surprisingly, however, the merchant city has used this wealth to become possibly the most educated in the mandate. On Scholar's Island in the center of the river's wide flow, two colleges bear the names of the legendary dragonkin and rider who founded them. St. Neomene's—named for the rider—rises up like a handful of needles from the island's south end, its impossibly tall and thin

towers held together by arcane forces and reminding everyone of the magical and philosophical arts studied within. The rest of the island, by contrast, is taken up by St. Morgran's, a series of halls and barracks where any of those seeking to study the art of warfare and other necessary military skills may do so for free in exchange for service in or to the Dragon Legion.

Iris: Legend says that the Lake of the Eye, 70 miles long and shot through with strange islands, was once the eye of a draconic progenitor called the World Dragon, whom the gods imprisoned beneath the earth in punishment for his ambition, only to have his eye freeze, melt, and form the lake. While this is clearly fantasy, none can deny that the strange lake's weird geography has a particular pull on dragons.



MERCHANT OF CUMO

REIGN OF WINTER



Iris, the island city at the lake's center, is almost completely surrounded by a rim of stone that creates a vast and protected bay within the otherwise wind-whipped waters. Held by dragons since the very beginning of the Drakelands, the city is a mountain of masonry, where cupolaed buildings crouch one on top of the other as they climb the island's steep slope to the temple-fortress at its crest. The stones of the buildings, quarried from ruined structures along the harbor floor, are themselves bizarre and twisted, with sinuous runes and half-observed markings whose meanings elude their residents.

Presumed to be dedicated to the World Dragon, the temple at the city's summit is home to its warlord, a blue dragon named Harkor. Styling himself a priest-king, Harkor has long preached a pogrom against the Triaxians of the Mandate, but prefers to conduct it via magical research and manipulation rather than direct assault. Humanoids in his city are considered "absolved" and allowed to live as best they can—provided they tithe most of their earnings to the dragon—while Harkor and his draconic scholars delve into the mysterious chambers rumored to hold unexplainable objects deep beneath the island-mountain.

Ivoryglass: Located on the edge of the Vahara Glacier, Ivoryglass is the fortress of the white dragon Yrax, Lord

of the Howling Storm. Administering the stronghold is General Malesinder, an ambitious commander currently gathering barbarians, mercenaries, and monsters in preparation for Yrax's latest assault on the Skyfire Mandate. For more information, see page 43 of the adventure.

Longdrop: This holding's greatest defense is its location, halfway up the sheer walls of a chasm cut by the River Shea. Hundreds of feet above the valley floor and below the cliff top, Longdrop is partly a system of caves burrowed into the rock, and partly a series of angled towers and fortified structures jutting out from the cliff face. Interspersed with the defenses are surprisingly lush gardens connected by creaking rope bridges, as well as wide landing pads for dragonkin and their riders. Though a few treacherous and easily defensible staircases climb up or down from the fortress, nearly all traffic in and out of Longdrop is on dragonback or via magical flight, though a few Triaxians still practice the ancient art of thermal-riding in bizarre frames of wood and canvas.

Governing Longdrop's soldiers are the one-eyed Commander Terem Bosk and his dragonkin companion Chiaske, who share authority equally between them. No one in the legion questions either of their abilities, yet many other commanders look askance at the pair for their

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public love affair and insistence on being recognized as husband and wife. To their soldiers, however, such taboos are a problem for small-minded peasants, not worthy of dragonriders, and over the years many riders and dragonkin with such predilections have gradually migrated to the cliffside aerie.

Meredel: In the tree-choked city of Meredel, deep in the Koracep Forest, knowledge is the greatest treasure. The city's ruler, the green dragon Aeomak, is a scholar of the highest pedigree, and recruits all those—both humanoid and drake—who wish to work his libraries and universities, even going so far as to lavish gifts and stipends on those who join them. The catch, of course, is that Aeomak is as greedy as the rest of his kind, and refuses to let any knowledge escape his clutches. Once a scholar joins his collective, which the dragon affectionately calls his “hoard,” that person is bound to him for life, and may never leave except on Aeomak's business. Though many scholars find this a reasonable price to pay for access to Meredel's incredible archives, the agonies of those who attempted escape are immortalized on the city's outer walls in colorful murals and frescoes.

Orelan: Cheren the Blue seems to be everything she purports—a capable leader who rules the port city of Orelan with a stern but fair hand. Certainly the Triaxians who live in her city seem to live as well as those in the Mandate, with the freedom to work, amass wealth, and self-govern as they choose so long as they pay their taxes and don't question her absolute rule. Yet despite Cheren's status as a seemingly reasonable monarch, the people of the Skyfire Mandate maintain only the most tenuous of trading alliances with Orelan, believing that the stable city-state the blue dragon has created is merely a ruse to help her seed spies and infiltrators into the Mandate in order to bring about its destruction—especially the removal of the Drakewall.

The Parapet Mountains: This great mountain range along the western edge of the Skyfire Mandate is the eastern nations' greatest defense against invasion from the Drakelands. The range's huge peaks and twisting passes funnel land-bound armies into narrow, easily defensible choke points even as its wild storms and strange winds play havoc with winged fliers. Said to have grown overnight from the blood of fallen good dragons during the early wars between dragons and Triaxians, the

Parapets remain the site of most skirmishes between the two powers, a constantly contested border patrolled by both sides.

In addition to the mountains themselves, the Skyfire Mandate is also defended by the Watches: magically constructed bunkers in the mountainsides where Triaxian soldiers can hide and observe wide stretches of territory, reporting on any enemy movements through magical communicators. Though well fortified and almost invisible, these listening posts are still subject to potentially devastating attacks whenever the draconic armies discover their location, and thus the Watches are moved regularly, with spellcasters digging new ones overnight via magic.

Those few Golarion scholars who've studied the Parapet Mountains have noted the striking similarity between the Watches and the anti-dragon bunkers of the Firewatch Peaks bordering Belkzen. Yet whether this is a result of simple parallel evolution or an indication of cross-pollination between the Skyfire Mandate and Ustalav remains anyone's guess.

Prophet's Rest: Having never known Aroden, Triaxus had its own varied reactions

to the end of reliable prophecy in 4606 AR. In the Skyfire Mandate, many of the prophets—particularly those who had gone mad—were sent into seclusion on the Isle of Dreams off the northern coast. Though some are still exiled in this fashion, today most of those who travel to the island are volunteers or petitioners seeking insight from the residents of the island, who have organized into a scattered society based almost entirely around oracles and prophecy. The port town of Prophet's Rest trades with and ferries such people across the monster-infested strait between mainland and island, and ensures that only those people who are allowed off the island ever leave it.

Sorrowfell: Once, Commander Ishak Ralam was the pride of the legion, yet the death of his dragonkin companion left him convinced of the futility of war. Rather than retire, the half-sane commander took Harrowfell Holding as his own, refusing to acknowledge either the Drakelands or the Mandate's authority. Those soldiers who wouldn't follow him were slain, and for the last 20 years the rest have raided their former protectorate at will, rebuffing all attempts to unseat the so-called Traitor Captain from his newly renamed stronghold of Sorrowfell.

Spurhorn: Located deep in the Parapets, Spurhorn is one of the Dragon Legion's most notorious frontline holdings,



TEREM BOSK

REIGN OF WINTER

currently run by Commander Pharamol. For more information, see page 20 of the adventure.

Stalwart Hall: This holding protects a rarity in the Mandate: a massive solar collector that captures the sun's energy and transforms it into heat, light, and magical energy for the sprawling town in the V-shaped valley at the fortress's base. Though the device is positioned well behind the front lines, Commander Quentane—a female dragonkin who has never taken a rider—knows that such strange technology is immensely valuable, and has staved off several attacks by those who would destroy or steal it for draconic tyrants.

Summerhold: The factions of the Skyfire Mandate may all share the same mission, but that doesn't mean they all see eye to eye. This is particularly true of Commander

Kariam. Within the walls of her fortress, Summerhold, Commander Kariam and her devoted soldiers refuse to acknowledge winter, believing that it's the collective power of Triaxians' belief that keeps the seasonal cycle running. To oppose it, her warriors shave all their hair and practice ritual surgery to artificially widen their naturally slitted eyes. Though they still take appropriate precautions when venturing out into the blizzards, the Summerholders keep the fortress swelteringly hot through magic, and preach their cultlike beliefs to any who listen. While this apparent insanity—combined with several other eccentricities on Kariam's part—discomfit her neighboring commanders, her military strategy is flawless, and her warriors' exceptional track record against the armies of the Drakelands keeps the rest of the Dragon Legion from acting against her.

The Three Sisters: This cluster of three active volcanoes is one of the most impressive landmarks in the Parapets. Once, untold generations ago, the mountains' calderas were home to the greatest holding of the Dragon Legion, three magically linked fortresses whose names have since been lost. Inside their walls, huge flywheels and forges harnessed the mountains' geothermal energy for immense workings of magic and machinery. Their value as an industrial center and research facility made the Three Sisters a key strategic location, and thus it was that a combined push from the dragons of the Drakelands eventually saw it blasted to rubble and its defenders charred to dust. So great was the magic unleashed that the mountains themselves erupted, pouring ash over the landscape for miles around.

Today, the half-ruined structures of the holding still stand, some with their magical subterranean engines still turning with an audible grind. Any attempt to reclaim the holding, however, is blocked by its sole remaining defender—a venerable brass dragon named Esophenes. For as long as anyone can remember, the mournful true dragon has guarded the location against legionaries and dragons alike, apologizing to those of pure heart but still refusing to offer more than a single warning before attacking.

The reasons behind his eternal vigil are the subject of much speculation; Esophenes says only that there yet lies something within the fallen walls that must remain buried for the good of the legion.

Treehome: Foregoing the mountaintop aeries so popular in the Dragon Legion, the soldiers of Treehome reside inside the hollow trunks of massive jugana trees, each bole the size of a castle tower and surrounded by thick



COMMANDER KARIAM

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walls of living wood. From her chambers in the highest tree, Commander Ventari keeps watch over the western mountains, Garndeeep Forest, and the whole of Shoshona Bay. In addition to providing fairy-tale homes for the soldiers, the jugana trees have highly alcoholic sap that keeps the trees from freezing solid in winter—and that is easily harvested, making Treehome a rowdy and sought-after posting.

The Unbound Tribes: Not everyone in the Drakelands pays allegiance to one of the draconic overlords. Ranging from small groupings of a few families to large and militant clans, the Triaxian people collectively known as the Unbound Tribes place their freedom above all, refusing to join with either the dragons or the “citified” folk of the eastern lands. Instead, they live along the borders between draconic domains, constantly moving, sometimes raiding dragon-controlled slave settlements, other times simply seeking to be left alone. The more powerful dragons, for their part, could easily wipe out these pests, yet their positions on the borderlines between territories means that any military movement in that direction would look like an invasion or annexation attempt to the neighboring dragon. What’s more, the groups’ status as constant irritants also makes them uniquely useful, and it’s not uncommon for a dragon seeking revenge against a neighbor to hire a warlike clan to cause trouble in her enemy’s domain. While some of the tribes would never agree to work for their draconic oppressors, others are more mercenary and care little where their gold comes from, so long as they can live free.

Though often lumped together into a single group by outsiders, the myriad clans of the Unbound Tribes are wildly different in their customs and practices. Some are bloodthirsty barbarians, little more than bandit gangs that prey on the cowed slave-folk of the Drakelands, while others are idealistic egalitarians fighting to liberate the continent. Still others want only to be left alone.

Several of these groups regularly pass through the region near the Parapets, and thus are well known to the people of the Skyfire Mandate. Ullos Drakeskull is a wild, savage warrior, legendary in the Drakelands for having single-handedly slain a powerful drake—whose skull he still wears as a helmet—and enslaved its brood, riding them into battle or sending them against enemies of his followers like a pack of hounds. While Ullos bears little affection for anything but gold, drink, and women, Lyara Keffa is the opposite: a peerless warrior whose tribe, the Freepeople, she regularly recruits townsfolk to her banner, leading an endless (albeit fiercely independent) crusade against the drakes with her enchanted spear. Kammon Half-Truth—the name by which he’s most often known in the Skyfire Mandate—leads his own band through cunning and carefully forged allegiances, and while he can often give useful information, he makes few bones about

ADVANCED TOPICS

For the most part, GMs running games on Triaxus can simply use the normal Pathfinder rules, treating the planet as if it were simply a different region on Golarion. This greatly streamlines gameplay, but if GMs wish to give their players more of a sense of the planet’s alienness, here are some larger considerations.

Magic: All the spellcasting classes are represented on Triaxus, but the magical traditions don’t always line up with those of Golarion. Spell components are often different, new spells have been discovered, and class spell lists might even be modified slightly. The adventure presumes that all magic functions normally, but GMs are welcome to make their own modifications.

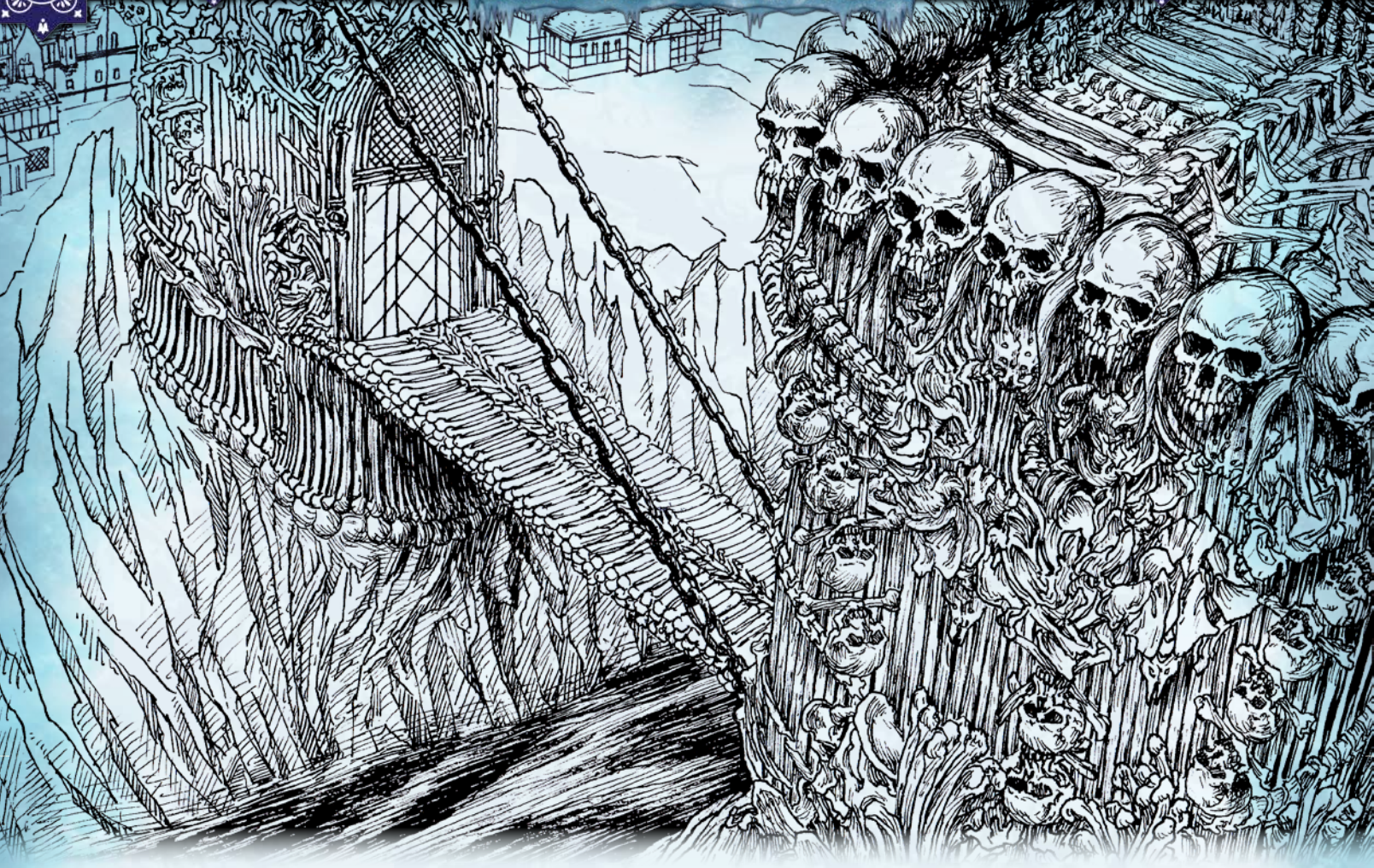
Religion: Though the gods can touch any world on the Material Plane, they have their favored peoples and regions. Divine casters from Golarion function the same way on Triaxus, but the local pantheon is markedly different. Worship of Apsu and Dahak is common, especially among dragons and dragonkin, and other lesser draconic deities have small shrines and temples across the planet. Triaxians themselves tend to worship the older gods, with Pharamasma, Desna, and Asmodeus being the most prominent, as well as several local deities, with the doctrines and interpretations of established gods sometimes deviating markedly from Golarion’s. The ascended deities—Cayden Cailean, Norgorber, and Iomedae—are virtually unknown on Triaxus.

Time: In the scientific sense, Triaxus’s orbital year is 317 Golarion years long. Combined with the planet’s lack of a moon, this creates a different reckoning of time than Golarion natives are used to. Most Triaxians reckon time in days, tendays, months (40 days), years (400 days), seasons, and cycles (an orbital year). More often, however, histories are written in terms of generations, making mathematical reckoning difficult. For ease of game play, it’s best to simply assume that units of time are being converted for players during the translation.

his willingness to sell to both sides. And of the green-painted Wilders, little is known, as the fiercely insular nomads have historically rebuffed all attempts at contact, often with blades and arrows.

Wavebreaker: Rather than isolating themselves deep in the mountains, the soldiers of Wavebreaker Holding perch on the seaside cliffs of Kamaya Sound, where their dragon-prowed ships can guard the seas and provide mobile bases for dragonkin scouts. Though some legionaries sneer at the idea of soldiers who don’t ride dragons, Commander Shen “Blackeye” Corbin is happy to defend her ships’ honor with her fists, and has cost more than one wagging jaw its teeth.

REIGN OF WINTER



THE BONE BRIDGE

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: THE BONEDUST DOLLS 4 OF 6

Being Galtan, I was familiar with the idea of being mistaken for a nobleman. Before the Revolution, it was a favorite among playwrights writing romantic comedies.

Nowadays it usually ended in a date with the guillotine.

I didn't know which applied in Irrisen, but I had been looking for an entry into the noble houses. While I had planned to go with peddling perfume and fireworks, being mistaken for a long-dead duke miraculously restored to youth and health would work.

I wondered if Dr. Orontius, who collected pre-Revolutionary art, possessed an early portrait of Arjan Devore, Duke of Dabril, and had noted a resemblance to myself. It wouldn't even be that much of a coincidence—as the joke went in my hometown, there were only five men in Dabril, repeated with variations of hairstyle and age.

I then kicked myself mentally. Forget some damned portrait: Dr. Orontius was old enough to have met Arjan Devore and know all about the duke's formulary, ruby glove, and alchemical honeymoon to Irrisen. He could have been at the wedding.

I had the guest list. Orontius's name was not on it, but then again, "Dr. Orontius" was a wizard's craft name if there ever was one. If he hadn't reinvented himself after the Revolution, I'd eat my liberty cap.

We emerged from the Four Tusks. "You will remember this from your last visit."

Grandmother Morgannan—should I call her "Byanka," I wondered?—reached into her sealskin muff and produced an ivory statuette. A goat. It lay in the palm of her mitten, its horns and hooves bright gold like the repairs on her teeth. "You had such a lovely word for this," she said. "Chryselephantine."

THE BONE BRIDGE

“Chryselephantine?” Orlin echoed.

“Ivory accented with gold,” I explained. “Ivory for flesh, gold for everything else. Popular among the ancient Taldans.”

“And you pretend to be a different man, ‘Norret Gantier,’” Grandmother Morgannan chided, taking her albino peacock feather fan and tying its strings to the goat.

I wanted to protest that I had simply heard the word somewhere—Devore’s formulary? Powdermaster Davin’s figurine collecting?—but could not immediately recall where.

The fan was chryselephantine as well. The ivory handle formed the peacock’s head and body, with the eyes, beak, and guardsticks composed of gold. Grandmother Morgannan snapped the fan open and tossed it and the statuette high into the air over Porcelain Street.

While not especially conversant in the exotic language of the fan, said to have originated in the distant east, I knew that throwing one meant *I hate you!* I could only imagine what it meant when the fan was tied to a goat.

Perhaps it only meant that the language of the fan had not made it as far as Irrisen. The feathers caught the air, spinning like a whirligig, causing the toy to drift gently down. “Trip-trap-trip!” Grandmother Morgannan doffed her right mitten and snapped her fingers thrice. “It’s time to dance and skip!”

It sounded like a rhyme from a children’s game. The goat grew larger, as did the peacock. Its tail fanned out, the golden guardsticks clutched in its claws growing along with it. A moment later, four golden hooves landed in the snow, followed by the golden runners of a peacock-shaped ivory sleigh. A shaggy white mountain goat capered about in the golden traces that had once been fan strings, dancing as if for sheer joy at suddenly being alive. The peacock sleigh sat proudly aloof, its albino plumes billowed out into an overarching canopy. It remained impassive as the goat pulled it around to the steps.

Kyevgeny assisted Irynya into the front bench, then aided his grandmother and sister. “I’d best take the middle.” He scooped up Tinka, placing her on his huge lap as he took his seat in the back. The gilded leaf springs bowed with his weight. Orlin went around the left while I squeezed in on the right. Soft-feathered lap robes blanketed us against the chill.

A cloud of color alit on the goat’s golden horns—Irynya’s parrot. “To the palace, billy-boy!” it cried.

The goat danced about, apparently considering this more merriment, until Grandmother Morgannan shook the reigns. “As the parrot commanded!” The goat took off.

“My lady,” Grandmother Morgannan glanced to Irynya, “would you find it presumptuous for me to remark that you have an extremely silly familiar?”

Irynya paused, waiting until the moment a gray cat launched itself from the last railing of Porcelain Street, only to land squalling, scrabbling, and sliding down the neck of the albino peacock. “Not at all, Lady Byanka.”

The cat suddenly levitated, as if an invisible hand had grabbed it by the scruff of the neck, dropping it in Grandmother Morgannan’s lap. Her familiar clutched her for a moment, eyes wide, accusing all of us. Then it settled down to washing its ears and ignoring everyone, especially the peacock.

“My thanks.” Grandmother Morgannan glanced over her shoulder to Orlin. “Murzik may thank you as well, but he is a cat.”

Orlin nodded.

The journey to the palace took us back past the Frosthall, east along the edge of the Merchant’s Quarter, then south on the Bone Road. The snow began to fall more heavily. Bewitched winds whisked it from the street.

I looked down at what I now knew was a river of skulls. I was uncertain whether to be appalled or just recognize that if the Gray Gardeners were to grind up all the skulls in Isarn’s catacombs, we could pave every street in the city.

The palace barbican appeared to be built from solid ice, as was the palace itself, rising high out of the lake on its frozen pillar and connected to the rest of the city by only a heavily guarded crystalline causeway. Here the Bone Road ended, the only skulls present those in the heads of traitors on pikes atop the gates. I felt sorry for the ravens; Irrisen’s eternal winter forced them to peck at frozen meat.

We bid adieu to Irynya and Olya, and Grandmother Morgannan invited me to sit in the front. “It is a pity I have a goat rather than a griffin. Otherwise, we could simply fly home.” She pointed her spiraled ivory walking stick through the snowfall to a white tower beyond the roofs to the west. Looking through a gap between buildings, I could see a great gulf between our isle and that of the tower. “It is a lovely sleigh ride, anyway.”

We went north, out of the district she called the Floes, around the splintered islets and cliffs at the south of Whitethrone, back around past the Frosthall, then south along the cliffs overlooking Glacier Lake. The snowfall lifted as we rode, and the wintry sun peeked out through the clouds, leaving Whitethrone bright and clear for the first time that day.

To our left stood a small isle, an outcropping that would have been truly impressive if not for the specter of the royal palace rising from the waves to the south. On the nearest end rose a buttressed tower with a familiar shape, supported by four immense tusks that appeared to be from two of the titanic elephants sometimes spoken of in legends. I suspected their origin was more mundane and that the Morgannans had created them via plating with ivory panels.

Then again, Irrisen was founded by a witch who traveled the worlds in a hut dancing on giant chicken legs. Taking the tusks of cosmic mammoths as souvenirs was hardly impossible where Baba Yaga was concerned.

REIGN OF WINTER

A number of large buildings occupied the center of the island. At the far end sat another tower matched by its mate on this shore; the pair looked like the rooks from an immense chess set made of bones. More rooks perched on the merlons or wheeled in the air, mixing with ravens and crows.

“As you may recall, our family built the Bone Road,” Grandmother Morgannan noted, recalling history about which she had doubtless bragged to Arjan Devore half a century before, “and after Queen Morgannan was called away by Baba Yaga, we were allowed to retain Morgannan Isle.” She waved her alicorn walking stick toward several buildings in turn. “There is the Boneworks, where our serfs make the boneware. There is the Hall of Porcelain. There is the Pearl House. And there is the old Palace of Bones—Morgannan Abbey now—where we hosted you last time.” She indicated a long building with flying buttresses protruding like ribs, making it appear to be some great beast that had died long ago.

“It is hard to believe that ours was once the highest tower in Whitethrone, but even the tallest turret of the Royal Palace will soon be overshadowed—at least if the Iron Tooth is completed before Baba Yaga’s return.” She pointed beyond the Ivory Tower to something glittering in the distance.

I dropped a series of monocle lenses and closed my right eye, bringing it into focus. I saw iron bars that looked like toothpicks upon which walked humans the size of aphids, trolls the size of ants, and frost giants the size of ladybugs.

“You didn’t see *that* the last time you were here.”

“No,” I agreed semi-truthfully.

“Do you remember me now?”

I opened my right eye and flipped up all but the smoked lens on my left. I saw a stunning woman halfway in age and appearance between Valya and the bust of Queen Morgannan.

“How could I forget?” I forced a light laugh. “You look as lovely as ever, Byanka.”

“Well, not all the time.” She slipped a silver compact back inside her sealskin muff. “But a witch has her charms...” She smiled coquettishly.

“Grandmother!” Valya protested.

Byanka pointed a finger at me. “How old do you think this man is, my dear?”

Valya glanced, uncertain. “Perhaps twenty?”

“He was far older than that when he visited fifty years ago, seeking keys to the riddle of the alchemists. Witches aren’t the only ones who know how to regain youth’s charms.”

Valya stared at me, looking betrayed, then turned on Orlin. “How old are you?” she demanded.

“Um... older than I look,” Orlin admitted bashfully.

“I brought him back to life,” I explained.

“With a philosophers’ stone,” Byanka hazarded correctly.

“A what?” asked Kyevegeny.

“A wondrous gemstone,” his grandmother explained. “Alchemists use them to turn lead into gold and for all manner of useful tricks.”

The philosophers’ stone was actually a chunk of sooty rock that looked like anthracite coal. At best it could be polished up for jet. But mourning jewelry was not its main use. If broken open, it held a measure of philosophic mercury that turned lead into gold and iron into silver. Mixed with a healing potion—easily brewed with an alicorn fragment—it resurrected the dead.

I had found a stone left by the duchess. Whether she had acquired it for study or made it herself was a question I puzzled over in the odd hours of the night.

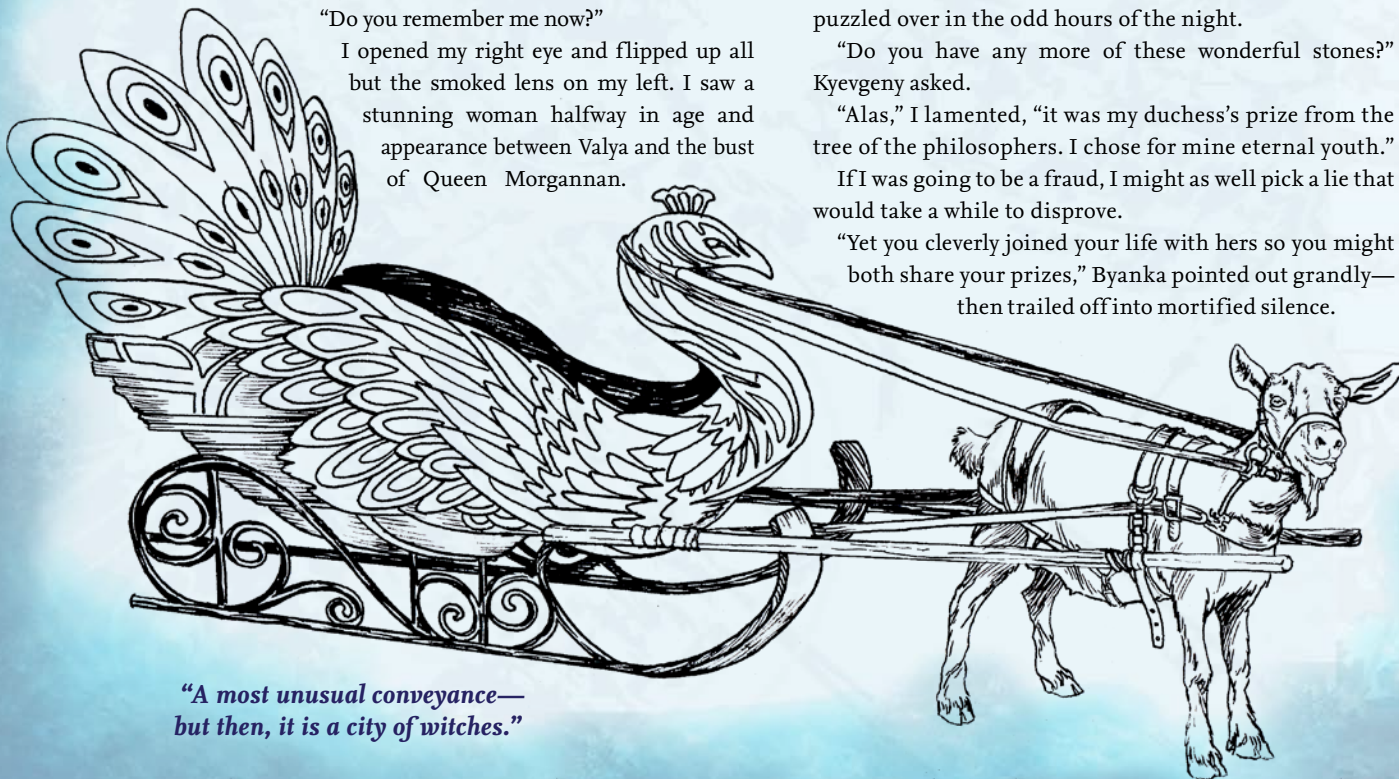
“Do you have any more of these wonderful stones?” Kyevegeny asked.

“Alas,” I lamented, “it was my duchess’s prize from the tree of the philosophers. I chose for mine eternal youth.”

If I was going to be a fraud, I might as well pick a lie that would take a while to disprove.

“Yet you cleverly joined your life with hers so you might both share your prizes,” Byanka pointed out grandly—then trailed off into mortified silence.

*“A most unusual conveyance—
but then, it is a city of witches.”*



THE BONE BRIDGE

“I—” My voice caught, more from trying to get out the lie than any true grief. “I lost Anais long ago. I try not to dwell on it.”

“I understand.” Byanka laid a sympathetic hand on my arm. “My Rezny died fighting the barbaric Linnorm Kings. Not a day goes by that I do not find some reminder of him.” She squeezed my arm. “I know how you and your duchess were linked. It takes time to pick up the pieces of a broken heart.”

I nodded, hiding my lack of tears with Arjan Devore’s unicorntskin glove, surreptitiously popping the cork of my smelling salts. Sal volatile made tears well up like actual grief.

I brushed away my false tears, pushing up my smoked lens as I did. Byanka Morgannan caught my hand before I could drop the lens back. “Your eye,” she wondered, “it is as silver as a mirror...”

“Philosophic mercury,” I explained. “It got in when I brought my brother back.”

“I wonder if anyone else looks out of it,” mused Valya.

Byanka glared at her granddaughter. “Valya, be good enough to tell Yelchev to lower the bridge. Have the tower ready to receive guests once we have toured the factory.”

“Yes, grandmother,” Valya said humbly, then took her thrush down from her hairpiece, whispering frantically.

“I know, Valya,” Koliadki chirped. “I know. I know.”

“Then fly, little one,” she said, casting him off the cliff.

The thrush spread his wings, winging across the waves and whitecaps of the channel that led to the lake. I dropped my telescopic lenses and watched until he flew through an arrow slit in the farthest tower of bone. A minute later, a whistle screamed. A plume of steam erupted from the tower’s crenellations as one side began to lower, like the grossly distended jaw of a monolithic troll skull. The nearer tower screamed in answer and the facing side lowered as well. Crows, rooks, and ravens took to the air, croaking, as the two spans of the bridge came down.

The goat trotted gaily along the cliff’s edge until we neared the tower of bones. The goat skipped right, cutting a graceful arc in the new fallen snow, then tripped across the cobbles inside the arch of the tower itself. The slats of the bridge were human femurs. The sleigh’s runners chattered across them like wooden slats, its peacock head still proudly aloof.

Standing at the far side of the bridge, blocking it easily with his massive bulk, was a huge troll. While most of his kind wore little in the way of clothing, this one was encased in layers of heavy bone armor. His eyes peered out from beneath a helmet made from the skull of a walrus, its tusks sliding down to either side of his own. He leaned on a huge whalebone club.

“Who seeks passage to the Isle of Bone?” he recited ritually.

Byanka reined in the goat and we skidded to a stop. I became quite conscious of the bridge having no railings.

She stood. “You know my sleigh, Yelchev. It’s *my* bridge you guard.”

The troll’s expression didn’t change, nor did he move aside. Byanka sighed heavily.

“I am Lady Byanka Morgannan, head of House Morgannan in Whitethrone, descendant of Baba Yaga herself. I claim right of passage across the Bridge of Bone.”

Nodding, the troll stepped aside. As the sleigh passed, Byanka sighed again. “Trolls. It takes forever to train them, and then you find you’ve trained them *too* well...”

We parked the sled and toured the Boneworks first, the air white with bonedust, frosting everything thick as talc. Serfs carved ivory chess pieces and made hat racks out of rib cages.

The Pearl House smelled worse. Great piles of bleaching mussel shells surrounded it, as did cawing, incontinent corvids. Inside I covered my nose with the duke’s glove, still scented with the duchess’s perfume. Serfs shucked mussels, putting the meat in crocks. Occasional cries of jubilation accompanied the discovery of a pearl. Foremen tallied these, taking them to the more breathable side of building to be sized, graded, and strung. Other serfs polished shells and punched buttons from them, filling the air with powdered nacre, like pearlescent bonedust. I wondered if this were the secret of Winter’s Kiss.

At the Porcelain Works, I spied the unfired parts of a doll. The vaunted clay appeared to be ordinary kaolin, grayish-white and unremarkable.

Powdermaster Davin, being a dwarf, had taught me the surest test of any earth was taste. I leaned upon a counter, peering closer at the unfinished doll—a little boy—then stepped back and bit the finger of my glove, musing. The unicorntskin had picked up crumbs of clay. It tasted smooth and earthy, but with an unexpected creaminess.

Calcium.

It tasted like the Cocoa Pot’s cocoa, minus the cocoa powder.

That richness I had attributed to milk. But calcium had other sources.

Limestone.

Shell.

Bone.

I dusted my fingers with a handkerchief, folded it, and tucked the specimen back in my pocket.

Our tour continued to where the bisque-fired porcelain received its first glaze, then into the room where glazed pieces were graced with porcelain paints before the second firing.

Painters added tiny gold spiders to a service netted with scarlet spiderwebs. I knew the secret of the ruby glaze to be more gold dissolved in aqua regia. Byanka called the costly service “Scarlet Spinner”—a commission from someone called the jorogumo, a group of spider-women in a far-off province of Tian Xia.

REIGN OF WINTER

I had had quite enough of spider women already, thank you, but professed an interest in porcelain painting. Byanka let me decorate the center of a sugar bowl's web with a vignette of spiders from Galt. I painted a garden spider crawling on a spray of eglantine, adding a rainbow raindrop as a flourish. I licked my brush to a point between each color, tasting.

"Ah, you still have Shelyn's hand!" Byanka cried delightedly.

I paused, the ruby winking on the back of my glove, then smiled in genuine appreciation. Shelyn, goddess of beauty, was Dabril's patron. It came as no surprise that her last duke had been a devotee. I had his formulary. His watercolors were exquisite, his penmanship exemplary. I had made a conscious effort to refine my cruder talents to something approaching his.

Byanka smiled back, still a beauteous young witch, only the gold-filled cracks in her teeth betraying her age. "Koliadki has informed us that tea has been made ready."

The sleigh took us to the Ivory Tower. A footman almost as tall as Kyevegeny helped Valya and Byanka alight. Once all were out, Byanka snapped her fingers, calling, "Trap-trip-trap! It's time to take a nap!"

The golden-horned goat promptly yawned and bowed its head, eyes shut. The peacock folded its tail, the canopy collapsing, the benches disappearing beneath the ruffled feathers of the lap blankets, then tucked its head beside one wing. Both dwindled.

The tall footman retrieved a toy goat and an albino peacock feather fan, presenting them to Byanka.

She led the way inside the tower, which was indeed made of ivory. Mwangi hippo-tooth doorknobs. Walrus-tusk candle sconces. Beautifully scrimshawed paneling. A tinkling of the ivories as a duet for harpsichord and pianoforte drifted from floors above. And a grand staircase made from the tusks of a mammoths' graveyard spiraled around a central chandelier fashioned from a thousand spiraled ivory horns. A thousand alicorns.

I nearly fainted, from both the enormity of the wealth represented and the crime. A thousand unicorns murdered for their horns.

Orlin, returned to life with unicorn ivory, stared at the chandelier, stricken. Some of the horns were burning.

"Oh good," Byanka said softly, her words punctuated by a harpsichord solo, "we had enough spermaceti." She moved behind Orlin and placed her mittens on his shoulders. "You must think us terribly extravagant, my dear, but I assure you, we Morgannans are not *that* rich." She gave me a knowing wink.

She wanted me to explain. Correction: she wanted Arjan Devore to explain.

I racked my brains. Arjan had written a great deal about unicorns, as they were part of his armorial bearings. Then I remembered.

"Those are narwhal tusks," I told Orlin, "and twisted spermaceti candles, both from the Erutaki whalers atop the Crown of the World."

"There's quite a trade in false alicorns," Byanka said. "And they do make a lovely chandelier."

"Isn't it a crime to kill a unicorn?" asked Orlin.

"Without a permit, certainly," said Kyevegeny. "Unicorns are reserved for the Crown."

"Please don't bring it up around Irynya," begged Valya. "You wouldn't believe how she goes on about her family's unicorn hunts. She hasn't been to one since she was eight!"

"Ah," Byanka warned, raising a finger. "Even an unfavored Elvanna is still more favored than us. Never forget that, my dear."

"Yes, grandmother." Valya bowed her head, chastened, making her familiar flutter aloft.

"Tea is in the gallery?" Byanka asked the thrush.

"Yes, grandmother!" Koliadki chirped.

"Marvelous. Let everyone know."

The thrush winged his way up the grand staircase to the next floor. We followed.

Halfway up the stairs, the music stopped.

When we came onto the landing, I stopped as well. Around us were a thousand dolls, all sitting in doll-sized chairs, posed with tiny teapots or little plates of dainties. One sat before a child's pianoforte, another before a virginal—a tabletop harpsichord—both composed of ivory.

Then I blinked. There were somewhat fewer dolls than I thought. Mirrors paneled the gallery's walls, yellowed by centuries of candle smoke, reflecting the narwhal-tusk chandelier, multiplying everything. Four oriel windows, set at the cardinal points, provided panoramic views of Whitethrone. The one to the west showed the sun setting behind a snow-capped building. The fireplaces flanking the window seat were lit, isinglass screens before them.

A few human-sized furnishings stood nearby, as well as one Kyevegeny-size chair built from sturdy whale teeth. Koliadki perched on the finial of a three-tiered tray bearing pastries and finger sandwiches beside a silver samovar and an ivory basket stacked with golden pears.

I wondered where the servants had gone, particularly the musicians. I had not recognized the composition. I assumed one of the mirrors concealed a door leading to a servants' passageway.

Kyevegeny loped to the refreshments table. He had almost touched the topmost pear when an ivory walking stick tapped the inlaid ivory floor resoundingly.

He sheepishly took back his hand.

Byanka turned to me. "I find that dolls make the perfect children. Always quiet and mindful, never needing to be told twice what's expected."

I nodded then paused, seeing a movement, a reflection of a reflection.

THE BONE BRIDGE

A soldier learns to be watchful. I turned and locked eyes with a doll. Not a Jadwiga with lapis eyes and silver hair, nor an Ulfen child with blonde or ginger locks and eyes of turquoise or jade. This was a Galtan doll, her eyes hazel like my natural shade, her chestnut tresses loose in artless dishabille. Her face was one I had seen before, a mixture of the features of Arjan Devore—or myself—and the face of his wife.

“Anais...” I breathed softly, snapping my fingers both from recognition and force of habit. The duke’s formulary appeared in my hand, summoned forth from the enchantments worked into the glove.

I acted as if this action were unremarkable, for why shouldn’t Duke Devore consult his formulary?

I flipped through the relevant sections, rites for the alchemical wedding of Anais and Arjan, the white queen and the red king. A diagram of the Crapaudine, the toad’s diamond set on the back of Anais’s glove, and the Unicorn’s Carbuncle, the legendary gem on Arjan’s. Both donated a chip, the shards united via intarsia, the gemcutter’s art, forming a diamond-ruby doublet—the heart of their “magical child.” Beside the duke’s watercolor of the babe, I perceived the faintest silverpoint script, a note in the duchess’s hand. A name: “Emilie.”

“You recognize her,” Byanka said approvingly. “I was worried. Last you were here, your wits were fading. After you asked for our arts to bewitch your glove and carbuncle, they faded further.”

Bewitched? I had assumed wizardry or sorcery. Then I remembered Dr. Orontius’s words about how the witches of Irrisen could take a shard of soul and hide it in an exquisite jewel, as Baba Yaga had done with Kostchtchie.

Or Arjan Devore and the ruby in his glove.

I then realized than Arjan and Anais had both taken fragments of their jewels, chips of chips of souls, joining them to create a new jewel. A new soul.

“Papa?” said the doll. “At long last my papa has come for me?”

There was a gasping of breath, as if a hundred dolls had opened their mouths then stayed silent.

“Yes, Emilie,” Byanka answered. “Your papa has returned. And as it has been over fifty years, I will

overlook you speaking before outsiders. This once.” She glanced to the assembled dolls. “This man is an old client. He has paid to know our secret. This boy is a witch—likewise permitted. This girl?” Byanka paused, musing. “Well, she knows. We shall simply have to deal with this. Feel free to speak, children.”

“What a happy occasion!” Madenya exclaimed, still in Valya’s arms. “For Emilie, I mean,” she added quickly to me. “I’m so sorry you lost your wife.”

“As am I,” I said, unsure. “She was... a remarkable woman.”

“All women are,” proclaimed Madenya. “I raised Valya myself after the poor dear lost her mother. At least until we got Klaufi to help.” She turned to Kyevegeny. “Where is Klaufi? He should be here!”

“He’s in the theater working on a special project.”

“I know,” chirped Koliadki. “I sent Holgrim to fetch him!”

A half-eaten pear fell to the floor with a *splat*. “You did *what!*!” Kyevegeny boomed.

“He’s your valet!” the thrush chirped. “I showed him where you hid the key!”

“Did he wear the cloak and slippers?”

“What cloak and slippers?”

“No!” roared Kyevegeny, rushing up the stairs.

Everyone exchanged glances, apparently as confused as me.

Then Tinka screamed, pointing.

The situation became clearer and exponentially more horrifying as a hundred Tinka-sized blue-and-yellow spiders appeared in the mirrors. One descended by a silken thread down the stairwell.

Byanka pointed her ivory cane and hissed two words in a language I didn’t recognize. Neither sounded particularly vile, as curses go, but the spider immediately shivered and shrank, losing legs, becoming drabber and furrer until all that was left at the end of the thread was an extremely surprised chipmunk.

“Children,” Byanka ordered, “grab your knives and follow me.” The dolls did.

“Byanka may look young, but beneath the illusion lies the mind of a crone.”



REIGN OF WINTER



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THEY SAID THOSE GIANT FURRED INSECTS DIDN'T USUALLY MAKE IT FAR UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS, BUT UP IT CAME, FOLLOWING OUR SCENT AS WE SCRAMBLED TO THE SUMMIT. WE GAINED SOME DISTANCE AS THE BEAST SNAGGED A FROST DRAKE THAT FLEW TOO CLOSE AND STOPPED TO EAT IT, BUT HALF AN HOUR LATER WE COULD HEAR THE HORROR'S CLAWS AND EXOSKELETON CLACKING AGAINST THE ROCKS AS IT RETURNED TO ITS ASCENT. NEARING THE SUMMIT, WE GOT INTO HIDDEN POSITIONS AND WAITED FOR THE ENORMOUS MONSTER TO WANDER INTO THE KILL ZONE BEFORE WE UNLEASHED WITH EVERYTHING WE HAD. IT NEARLY WASN'T ENOUGH."

~THRENSTON KAL DORMINUSHI, PREITAN LORESEEKER

BESTIARY

This month's Pathfinder Bestiary temporarily leaves the monsters and threats of the Cage behind and moves onto Triaxus the Wanderer. The following pages include giant furred insects, dangerous alien hunters, and Triaxians and their favored multi-legged mounts.

MORE WINTRY ENCOUNTERS

The random encounter table presented here includes a mix of creatures the PCs could reasonably encounter while on the planet of dragons. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have a 35% chance of a random encounter every hour. If, when rolling on this table, you get a result that is not appropriate to the location, substitute another result or roll again. Some of the encounters listed in the table are presented below to help set the scene.

Creeping Destruction (CR 10): Lumbering across the snow and ice, this ursikka is ravenously hungry. Having not fed in weeks, the giant furred insectile creature wanders through the Parapet Mountains in search of anything edible. When encountered, the ursikka is digging in the snow after an animal's tunneling escape from its clutches, but when bigger and more numerous targets arrive, the creature shifts its focus to the new potential meals.

Delegation from Castrovel (CR 14): Venturing from their home of Sovyrian, this delegation arrived on Triaxus to establish trade and strengthen diplomatic ties between the two planets. The elves of Sovyrian already have contact with some of the other nations on Triaxus, but this delegation is particularly interested in exploring the Skyfire Mandate. Suspicious of others and serious about their work, this group is led by Jalathal, a sorcerer and prime diplomat (use the statistics for a fey enchantress on page 169 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*). Her attendant and fellow diplomat Oparal (use the statistics for an officer on page 252 of the *NPC Codex*) helps keep everything from consular papers to the group's weaponry in order. To provide additional discrete talents, Lornalis (use the statistics for a deadly spy on page 148 of the *NPC Codex*) plays himself off as another attendant so that no one suspects his true function in the delegation. A pair of arcane archers (use the statistics for a green warden on page 200 of the *NPC Codex*) and a pair of eldritch knights (use the statistics for a queen of staves on page 220 of *NPC Codex*) round out the group to provide protection. While they put on a friendly face, something doesn't seem quite right with them, and certainly, they don't suffer fools or let anyone get in the way of their mission.

Horrid Visitor (CR 11): Kelsranith came to Triaxus through a rift between the planes in order to consume souls. Shortly thereafter, it assaulted a contingent of soldiers from the Drakelands, killing half a dozen of them and consuming their leader. Kelsranith currently has 23 essence points, allowing broad use of its spell-like abilities.

SKYFIRE MANDATE ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-04	1 neh-thalguu	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 197
05-09	1d4 remorhazes	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 233
10-14	1 adult white dragon	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 100
15-19	Creeping destruction (1 ursikka)	10	See page 88
20-24	1d4 moonflowers	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 192
25-29	1 carnivorous crystal	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 45
30-34	1d4 greater earth elementals	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 123
35-39	Horrid visitor (1 devourer)	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 82
40-44	1d4 yrthaks	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 290
45-49	1d4 adlets	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 9
50-54	1d12 frost drakes	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 108
55-59	Tunneling disaster (1 frost worm)	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 126
60-64	1d6 greater ice elementals	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 115
65-69	1 carnivorous blob	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 51
70-74	Possessed dragon (1 intellect devourer)	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 94, 180
75-79	1d4 chernobue qliploth	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 220
80-84	1d4 derghodaemons	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 66
85-89	Delegation from Castrovel (multiple; see below)	14	<i>NPC Codex</i> (see below)
90-94	1 vemerak	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 278
95-100	1 stormghost	15	See page 84

Possessed Dragon (CR 13): Seeping up from the caverns below the Parapet Mountains, an intellect devourer slipped into an adult blue dragon's lair, killing it and stealing its body. The sinister creature then rode its new body from the lair and began hunting for its next victim. Although the intellect devourer was far more accustomed to humanoid bodies, it found this powerful new shell to be exhilarating as it could fly through the air and feel the splintering of bones in its teeth. The intellect devourer is now searching for another dragon to possess, but wouldn't miss an opportunity to take a humanoid form for the time being.

Tunneling Disaster (CR 12): A frost worm has been sighted in the Parapet Mountains! Tunneling into the mountains near one of the Skyfire Mandate's magically constructed bunkers known as Watches, this massive nuisance threatens to shake the bunker from its foundation. Eager to preserve this Watch and others in the region, the dragonriders of the Skyfire Mandate have put a bounty on the head of this menace. They are aware of the destructive death throes of frost worms, so they strongly suggest that any monster hunters lure the creature away to an isolated valley before delivering the killing blow.

REIGN OF WINTER

STORMGHOST

Matching the color of snow and ice, this menacing creature stands on four pointed legs like those of an insect. A conical head ringed with tiny eyes and sporting gnashing teeth sits atop this creature's humanoid torso.

STORMGHOST

CR 15

XP 51,200
CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +10; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 90 ft., low-light vision, scent, see in darkness, see in fog; Perception +22

Aura static aura (5 ft., 2d6 electricity)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 212 (17d10+119); regeneration 5 (acid)

Fort +12, **Ref** +16, **Will** +12

Immune disease, electricity, poison; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +24 (1d8+8), 2 claws +24 (1d8+8/19–20 plus 1d6 electricity)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with claws)

Special Attacks impaling leap, sneak attack +3d6, static blast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +14)

 At will—*alter winds*, *fog cloud*, *jump*

 3/day—*deeper darkness*, *greater invisibility*, *gust of wind* (DC 15), *ice storm*

 1/day—*control weather*, *plague storm*^{UM} (DC 19), *sirocco*^{APG} (DC 19)

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 23, **Con** 24, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +17; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 43 (47 vs. trip)

Feats Acrobatic Steps, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Nimble Moves, Power Attack, Spring Attack

Skills Acrobatics +20 (+28 when jumping), Climb +24, Perception +22, Stealth +22 (+26 in icy or snowy areas), Survival +20; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in icy or snowy areas

Languages Triaxian

ECOLOGY

Environment cold mountains

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Adaptive Camouflage (Ex) A stormghost's hide shifts coloration over time to match that of its environment. Choose a ranger favored terrain type. A stormghost gains a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks within that terrain type. A stormghost moving into a different terrain type must remain there for 1d4 weeks before the racial bonus applies to the new terrain type.

Impaling Leap (Ex) As a standard action, a stormghost can jump into the air and land on a single target at least one size

category smaller than itself, using its spiky legs to impale the victim. The target must succeed at a DC 25 Reflex save or it takes 4d8+12 points of piercing damage and is pinned. If the stormghost chooses to maintain the pin, it must succeed at a combat maneuver check as normal. Pinned foes take damage each from the impaling leap each round if they don't escape. The save DC is Constitution-based.

See in Fog (Ex) A stormghost can see in fog and foglike conditions without penalty.

Static Aura (Su) A stormghost can surround itself with crackling electricity that leaps from its body, affecting nearby creatures. All creatures within 5 feet of the stormghost take 2d6 points of electricity damage at the beginning of the stormghost's turn.

Static Blast (Su) As a standard action, a stormghost can focus its static charge into a bolt, releasing it in a 40-foot line that deals 6d6 points of electricity damage. A successful DC 25 Reflex save halves this damage. A stormghost can use its static blast once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Bestial hunters that prowl the mountains of Triaxus, stormghosts are a deadly threat to all creatures that stumble across their path. Triaxians attributed the name stormghost to these creatures because of their ability to conjure malignant weather and attack unseen. Stormghosts typically attack in remote mountainous areas, leaping down on their victims from cliff sides and ambushing them in blind mountain passes. Constantly in search of food, stormghosts are excellent hunters and trackers. These predators are completely unafraid of engaging with any target, and thus pose a risk to the humanoids of the planet—and even the dragons. As with Triaxians, stormghosts' appearances vary depending on the season. Thankfully, stormghosts are extremely rare, but the creatures live exceedingly long lives. A stormghost's regeneration diminishes long-term degradation of its body, allowing it to live for over 2,000 years. A stormghost stands nearly 8 feet tall in its regular posture, but can extend its legs to reach up to 14 feet. Formed of muscled flesh and hardened chitin, a stormghost weighs roughly 1,500 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Stormghosts are apex predators in Triaxus's hills and mountains; a few even make their way to the lowlands. A stormghost is ephemeral like a phantom, and its coloration and ability to become invisible give rise to part of its common name, as victims are typically unaware of the creature's presence until it is far too late. It can also call down storms and banks of fog—the source of the other part of its common name—and can even conjure darkness. Stormghosts themselves, however, can see through fog and darkness, and possess other specialized senses. While the creatures have no recognizable nose, they are capable of

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tracking their prey by scent using a specialized sensory organ found on the lower part of their torsos. This organ picks up faint chemical signatures with such accuracy that a stormghost can differentiate between two creatures of the same type and recall with perfect detail an individual creature's signature for years after first encountering it.

As with all successful hunters, stormghosts' senses and tenacity make them difficult to evade. These traits, in addition to their superior stamina, help stormghosts doggedly hunt down prey that initially escapes their clutches. Exceptionally single-minded, stormghosts live to hunt and hate losing their quarry, and they persistently pursue their fleeing prey, foregoing sleep and ignoring other victims that might be easier to take down—even if they're ravenous—in order to make their desired kill.

Stormghosts undergo a change during Triaxus's transitional seasons, shifting their coloration to match their environment. In the winter, stormghosts have an icy white hide that allows them to better conceal themselves in the snow. As summer comes and the planet begins to thaw, stormghosts' hides darken and a splotched coloration of grays and browns emerges. This coloration allows them to hide themselves in the mountainous terrain in which they live.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Stormghosts are solitary creatures that despise sharing their hunting grounds with other creatures, especially other stormghosts. When another predator begins hunting in the same region as a stormghost, the stormghost shifts its predation to that creature, tracking it down and consuming it. The exception to this is when another stormghost trespasses upon its hunting grounds. While the stormghost still tracks down and kills its competition as it would another creature, it does not consume the rival stormghost, finding the flesh of its own kind completely unpalatable, and instead ritualistically butchers its competitor and leaves the corpse as a sign that this territory is already claimed.

Stormghosts are exceedingly rare; fewer than 1,000 have been spotted, according to records kept by dragonriders of the Skyfire Mandate. Many of these sightings, made safely from the back of a dragonkin, are believed to be of the same stormghost, leading many scholars to estimate that the

population might be much smaller, with a few at most living in the Parapet Mountains. A naturalist in Preita recently published a journal detailing his journey in search for evidence of a stormghost, as tales of these and other vicious beasts are fashionable in the cosmopolitan cities of the Allied Territories. In this journal, he postulates that stormghosts are aliens from another world in the solar system, or perhaps beyond. Their long lives, regenerative capabilities, robust physical form, yet low population numbers suggest this hypothesis is plausible.

Although this researcher clearly lacks a greater understanding of worlds beyond Triaxus, his findings on the otherworldly origins of stormghosts are indeed quite accurate. On a planet in a nearby solar system, stormghosts were grown in facilities to be biological probes deployed on specific planets for 2,000 years before they would be retrieved. During their time on those worlds, they are tasked, compelled by their very genesis and the urge of every cell, to kill and consume organic life. Over the course of their lives, a gland within their torsos at the base of the neck collects samples of every kill.

These samples can be collected by the stormghost's creators and analyzed. What they are searching for is anyone's guess, but the number of stormghosts on Triaxus suggests these unknown creators seek a comprehensive collection of dragons and dragonkind.



REIGN OF WINTER

TRIAXIAN

This warrior looks like an attractive humanoid with pointed, featherlike ears and eyes shaped into long, horizontal slits. Though he has no true hair, his entire body is covered in short, sleek white fur.

TRIAXIAN

CR 1/2



XP 200

Triaxian ranger 1

N Medium humanoid (Triaxian)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 13 (1d10+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee lance +2 (1d8+1/×3) or

longsword +2 (1d8+1/19–20)

Ranged composite longbow +3 (1d8+1/×3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dragons +2)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +1, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +8, Ride +1, Stealth +1, Survival +6; **Racial**

Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Triaxian

SQ seasoned, track +1, wild empathy +0

Gear NPC gear (chainmail, composite longbow with 20 arrows, lance, longsword, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Seasoned (Ex) Triaxians suffer no harm from being in hot or cold environments depending on whether they are Summerborn or Winterborn. Summerborn Triaxians can exist comfortably in conditions between 90 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit without having to attempt Fortitude saves. Winterborn Triaxians can exist comfortably in conditions between 40 and –20 degrees Fahrenheit without having to attempt Fortitude saves. When in conditions of severe cold or heat, Triaxians only have to attempt Fortitude saves once per hour instead of once every 10 minutes. Transitional Triaxians do not have this ability.

Triaxians are the dominant race on the planet Triaxus, a world whose erratic orbit causes exceptionally long and disparate seasons. Though eerily similar to humans, elves, and the other mammalian humanoids common on Golarion, Triaxians have developed certain adaptations to their environment that mark them as indisputably alien.

Just like human ethnicities, Triaxian populations vary in size, weight, and other distinguishing physical characteristics, based primarily on the geographical

regions in which they reside. Most Triaxians, both males and females, are around 6 feet tall but somewhat lean compared to humans, rarely weighing more than 200 pounds. Their ears are elongated, but rather than being pointed like elves or halflings, these appendages are instead notched in a feathered or comblike pattern. The flaps created by these notches constantly move to adjust the ear's shape, operating both consciously and unconsciously to help Triaxians focus on specific sounds, not unlike the maneuverable ears of dogs, cats, and other such animals.

Like many creatures on their world, Triaxians have evolved to shift along with their environment, resulting in differences between generations of the same family that would seem bizarre to humanoids from Golarion. In the warm summer years, Triaxians are completely hairless, with skin that ranges from deep red to coffee-colored to charcoal black. This configuration allows them to better survive in the sweltering heat of the planet's tropical summers, with the increased melanin in their dark skin protecting them from the sun's intense rays. These Summerborn Triaxians, as they are known, breed true for many generations—yet as the planet begins its rapid seasonal shift, so do the Triaxians. Newborn Triaxians begin to evince new adaptations to the cooling environment, and by the time winter has come on in full, Triaxians change markedly: their pale bodies are covered in fine, insulating white fur like that of an ermine, while their eyes narrow to elongated slits to protect against snowblindness. These new traits similarly breed true until the seasons begin to change once more, at which point the eyes widen and fur recedes, starting the cycle anew.

Just as Triaxians differ physically depending on which season they're born into, so do their cultures and customs change. Winterborn Triaxians are defined by the hardship of a world whose very environment seeks to starve or freeze them. They tend to be stolid, hardworking people, with an ironclad sense of honor stemming from the knowledge that in a Triaxian winter, a broken promise can mean death for a whole clan. Even within large communities, the focus remains on survival for one's family and friends, with individuals willing and ready to share, serve, and die to protect the group. Oaths of friendship are serious affairs; once given they are rarely transgressed, and doing so risks a blood feud. With the exception of those nomadic hunter tribes that migrate in pursuit of herd animals, most settlements are permanent and fortified against the predatory horrors that stalk the blinding blizzards.

Summerborn Triaxians, by contrast, are born into a world of plenty. With forests full of fruit and game, and glaciers receding to reveal vast tracts of fertile earth, the attachment to cold stone fortresses and cramped cities weakens, and Triaxians spread out across the landscape. For many, it is a time of nomadism, living in small bands and

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temporary structures, or else participating in great waves of land-grabs as homesteaders. Though they still have the weight of history to remind them of the hardships of their ancestors—and those yet to come for their descendants—Summerborn Triaxians tend to be an easy-going, generous people, quick to accept outsiders, to break with their clans and families and strike out on their own, and to challenge convention in pursuit of greater goals. They are simultaneously less hardened and more likely to go to war, for with the business of survival taking less energy and new territory constantly being settled, leaders have more time and resources to dispute borders and jockey for power. Historically, Summerborn Triaxians are those most likely to visit other planes or worlds, as the drive to explore their newly thawed planet also leads them to look beyond it.

Transitional Triaxians occupy a much smaller portion of the Triaxian adaptation cycle than either the Summerborn or Winterborn—usually no more than a generation each orbital year—and often play an uncomfortable role in their society. To Summerborn Triaxians, a Transitional child is an ill omen—a sign that winter approaches, and that the time of plenty is drawing to a close. The first such individuals to appear are often hidden or slain by their parents, and vilified by those rebellious fools and leaders who believe that Transitional children actively bring on the winter, or who simply don't want to begin the long and arduous process of preparing for future generations' survival. Transitional children born at the tail of winter, on the other hand, are often treasured and held up as hopeful signs of a golden era to come. Yet even these may face persecution by those dynasties that fear change, or whose leaders expect a loss of power once their people are free to spread beyond their reach. In both cases, Transitional Triaxians find themselves in a society where they are visibly different from both their parents and their children, and where their very existence is a weighty portent.

Strangely, while Triaxians' mutable nature is perfectly adapted to their planet's erratic orbit, the cycle of physiological changes seems keyed to internal clocks rather than external indicators. Even in situations where these adaptations would be

disadvantageous, the small populations of Triaxians who have set up residence on other worlds or planes continue to change in time with their kindred on Triaxus.

Beyond their obvious adaptations to their environment, Triaxians are remarkably human. Their basic biology, social structures, cultures, and philosophy—while sometimes surprising to outsiders—all fall well within the bounds of what might be encountered in a humanoid race on Golarion, thus making them one of the least “alien” civilizations in Golarion's solar system. Though the statistics above represent a typical initiate training to become a Dragonrider of the Skyfire Mandate, this is by no means the standard for the race—outside of broad strokes, it's as impossible to describe Triaxians' myriad traits and predispositions as it would be to do so for humanity itself. Triaxians are good and evil, warlike and peaceful, magical and mundane, and everything in between.

For more information on Triaxians and Triaxus, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Worlds* and “Planet of Dragons” on page 64.

TRIAXIAN CHARACTERS (10 RP)

Triaxians don't possess racial Hit Dice, gaining their capabilities instead from class levels. All Triaxians have the following racial traits.

+2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, –2 Strength: Triaxians are a hardy and wily race, as befits their constantly changing environment, but their lean forms have trouble maintaining large amounts of muscle mass.

Low-Light Vision: In dim light, Triaxians can see twice as far as humans.

Keen Senses: Triaxians' unique ear construction grants them a +2 bonus on Perception checks.

Bonus Feat: Triaxians select one extra feat at 1st level.

Seasoned: See above.

Languages: Triaxians speak Triaxian (the common trade language of Triaxus). Triaxians with high Intelligence scores can choose any languages they want (except secret languages, such as Druidic).



REIGN OF WINTER

URSIKKA

This enormous, insectlike creature is covered in downy white fur, broken only by glossy black claws and portions of its exoskeleton. A pair of iridescent eyes gleams above a horrid three-part mouth that drips viscous fluid.

URSIKKA

CR 10



XP 9,600

N Huge magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, tremorsense 30 ft.; **Perception** +15

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24 (+16 natural, -2 size)

hp 138 (12d10+72)

Fort +14, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

Defensive Abilities ferocity; **Resist** cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee bite +21 (2d6+11 plus freezing viscosity), 2 claws +21 (1d8+11)

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

Special Attacks coat claws, spit

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 11, **Con** 22, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +25 (+27 bull rush); **CMD** 35 (37 vs. bull rush, 39 vs. trip)

Feats Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Snatch

Skills Climb +15, Perception +15

SQ hibernation

ECOLOGY

Environment any cold land

Organization solitary, pair, or hive (3-10)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Coat Claws (Ex) As a standard action, an ursikka can coat its pincerlike claws with its freezing viscous saliva. This coating lasts for 1 minute. Any creature hit by an ursikka's coated claws or grappled by an ursikka using the Snatch feat takes an additional 2d6 points of cold damage (Reflex DC 22 half).

Freezing Viscosity (Ex) The saliva that drips from an ursikka's mouth is maddeningly sticky as well as preternaturally cold. Creatures that take damage from an ursikka's bite attack must succeed at a DC 22 Reflex save or become entangled for 1d4 rounds. While entangled, creatures take 2d6 points of cold damage (Reflex DC 22 half). An entangled creature can break free before the end of this duration by succeeding at a DC 19 Strength check or by dealing 15 point of damage to the encasing saliva with either a slashing weapon or with fire damage. Using fire to remove the saliva damages the entangled creature as well. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Hibernation (Ex) Ursikkas can enter a state of hibernation for an indefinite period of time, typically until Triaxus's long

summer subsides. An ursikka surrounds itself with its spittle, which hardens into a cocoon. While hibernating, an ursikka doesn't need to drink or eat. The cocoon has hardness 10 and 60 hit points, and is immune to fire damage. As long as the cocoon remains intact, the ursikka remains unharmed in its hibernation. An ursikka must use its attacks to break free from its cocoon.

Spit (Ex) As a standard action, an ursikka can spit a 60-foot line of its saliva. Creatures struck by this saliva take 8d6 points of cold damage and risk being entangled. A successful DC 22 Reflex save halves the damage and negates the entangled condition. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Like enormous, nightmarish praying mantises, ursikkas roam the Triaxian wilderness during the wandering planet's winter years. These vicious, short-tempered predators rule primeval environs by default, being among Triaxus's largest, hungriest beasts. Ursikkas' towering height, which can reach 25 feet, is mostly due to the long, slender walking legs on which the creatures skitter with an eerie speed that belies their hulking size. A long, bloated abdomen accounts for most of the beasts' 20 feet of length. Ursikkas' thoraxes anchor their grasping forearms, which each end in sharp pincers capable of shearing flesh from bone like hot knives cutting through butter.

Ursikkas' white, shaggy fur covers the majority of their bodies, and their three-part maws can open wide enough to swallow a human whole. The freezing, sticky fluid that drips from their gnashing jaws aids this activity even further.

ECOLOGY

Ursikkas are specifically suited to their home planet's long winter season. Their impossibly cold bodily fluids, which allow them to thrive in subzero temperatures, grant them equally cold saliva that helps the beasts kill their prey as well as digest it. Further, the property that keeps ursikkas' spittle liquid at its freezing temperature also makes it incredibly sticky—a quality that aids the creatures in combat and when preparing for Triaxus's hot summer years.

During their planet's long winter, ursikkas terrorize Triaxus's large swaths of uncivilized land in endless quests for food. The ravenous creatures require several tons of raw meat each week to survive. Although they prefer to eat the flesh of large, cold-blooded creatures, hungry ursikkas pursue any viable prey, particularly victims that seem sluggish and easy to catch. When the end of winter approaches, the huge quantity of food they consume fuels an increased production of saliva, which they use to prepare their summer abodes.

During Triaxus's summers, ursikkas live inside cocoons constructed from their own saliva. In the weeks before the change of seasons, ursikkas choose an inconspicuous locale—such as inside cave complexes or even holes of their

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own construction—in which to spend the long summer. The creatures then tirelessly weave their spittle around their bodies until they're fully covered. In 24 hours, the chemicals in the spittle harden it into an impenetrable sheath that protects ursikkas from Triaxus's brutal summer heat. Shortly after their spittle-cocoons harden, the beasts go dormant and do not awake until the temperature returns to a more tolerable level.

Although ursikkas are known for aggressiveness during the entirety of winter, they are at their most volatile right before and right after dormancy. An ursikka that is interrupted while weaving its cocoon immediately attempts to kill the intruders. An ursikka whose cocoon is broken during the summer emerges similarly enraged; ursikkas that defeat the creatures responsible for waking them attempt to reconstruct their cocoons, but as spittle production ceases during hibernation, those efforts often fail. Some Summerborn Triaxians actively seek out the cocoons of slumbering ursikkas, knowing they can defeat the exposed beasts relatively easily.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

With their ruthless predatory skills and voracious appetites, ursikkas typically live solitary existences. However, in places where prey is abundant—such as the wilds of the Drakelands and in the Allied Territories—ursikkas sometimes live in pairs or, rarely, in small hives of three to 10. In such cases, ursikkas still hunt alone. Triaxian scholars note that the creatures don't hesitate to kill each other should one steal another's meal.

In accordance with their long life cycles, ursikkas mate infrequently. Once or twice each winter, the larger females of the species typically seek out mates as determinedly as they hunt prey. Afterward, each female lays one enormous, fertilized egg made of a secretion similar to the creatures' hardened saliva. After a 5-year gestation period, the egg hatches. If ursikka parents are even aware of their offspring, though, their behavior does not indicate it.

According to scholars, young ursikkas grow to maturity in fewer than 10 years. One disturbing speculation indicates that adult ursikkas sometimes enjoy the flesh of their younger counterparts—and

may actually hunt juvenile members of their own species if prey becomes scarce. Whether this behavior is simply a way for adult ursikkas to survive or a warped way for them to retain their territorial dominance is unknown.

Although they are very long-lived, ursikkas rarely live through more than two Triaxian winters. In the planet's most isolated territories, where few predators or stalwart hunters threaten them, ursikkas typically die of old age during their dormant period; ursikka carcasses swathed in shimmering, deteriorating cocoons are not uncommon in these frontiers. In more populated areas, ursikkas' lifespans are shorter, especially given the hardy, cold-forged winter cultures that hunt the creatures for protection, thrills, and sometimes meat. Indeed, the warriors of the most populous nations of the Allied Territories consider a slain ursikka's claws, mandibles, and bulbous eyes the ultimate hunting trophies. Some even make furred armor from ursikkas' durable exoskeletons.



REIGN OF WINTER

WOLLIPED

This shaggy, multi-legged creature has a flattened face with wide nostrils and four eyes. Ivory tusks jut downward from its mouth.

WOLLIPED (COMBAT TRAINED) CR 3



XP 800

N Large animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee gore +6 (1d8+6)

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

Special Attacks trample (1d6+6, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 3

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8 (+10 bull rush); **CMD** 20 (22 vs. bull rush, 32 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance^B, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Climb +8, Perception +6

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate hills

Organization solitary, pair, or cavalry (3-12)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spit (Ex) Once per hour, a wolliped can regurgitate the contents of its stomach, spitting the foul material at a single target within 10 feet. The target must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

WOLLIPED (DOMESTICATED OR WILD) CR 3



XP 800

N Large animal

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

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee gore +1 (1d8+2)

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

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 3

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (32 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance^B, Run, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +8, Perception +9

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate hills

Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3-12)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Docile (Ex) Unless a wolliped is specifically trained for combat (see the Handle Animal skill on page 97 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*), its gore is treated as a secondary attack and the creature lacks the trample ability.

Spit (Ex) Once per hour, a wolliped can regurgitate the contents of its stomach, spitting the foul material at a single target within 10 feet. The target must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Believed to be native to the Parapet Mountains, wollipeds were among the first beasts of burden domesticated by Triaxians. Some claim wollipeds weren't domesticated initially to be working animals, but rather were herded and bred for their extremely warm and plentiful fleece. In any case, Triaxians have a long history of using these magnificent animals for many purposes, even employing them as mounts in battle. A typical wolliped stands between 5 and 6 feet at the front shoulder and weighs upward of 1,000 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Wollipeds are social herd animals that subsist on a diet of grasses, leaves, and other plant material. Wollipeds in high mountainous environments obtain much of their food from lichens and mosses, while herds of wollipeds on the plains graze on more substantial fare. Wild wollipeds tend to migrate to more plentiful foraging lands when winter comes to Triaxus, though these can be difficult to find. Domesticated wollipeds, tended to by their Triaxian herders, are found throughout nearly all of Triaxus.

Walking on eight sturdy legs, wollipeds are exceptionally sure-footed. These creatures can climb steep mountain trails and march through heavy snow with little effort, and Triaxian cavalry have often charged up scree-choked hillsides to raid fortresses on the backs of armored wollipeds. The great beasts' facility at maneuvering in challenging environments and generally submissive nature have resulted in a long relationship with the humanoids on Triaxus. Wollipeds live for about 15 years, mating and giving birth every 11 months, and can be ridden until the final month of pregnancy.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Wollipeds are social animals, grouping together into herds for protection. When threatened, wollipeds gather in a tight cluster with the young animals kept in the very center of the herd. Domesticated wollipeds are used for casual riding, pulling plows, and walking circles to power wollimills.

While other exotic fabrics are available during a Triaxian summer, the mainstay of Triaxian winter textiles is spun

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wolliped fleece. Wolliped fibers wick water away, and still provide adequate warmth even when soaked, while the variations in coat colors and textures provide a wide array of design options.

Like Triaxians, wollipeds exhibit distinct seasonal variance. Wollipeds born during the winter have long, thick, shaggy coats of fine fibers with a hollow core, while those born in the summers have shorter, thinner coats. Rather than the coats of individuals changing, the change happens generationally; winter wollipeds give birth to short-coated summer wollipeds as the planet warms, and vice versa. The process happens quickly, usually beginning in eastern Aylok, though no one knows precisely why.

In addition to wolliped fleece, some Triaxian artisans use the ivory from wolliped tusks as a raw material, but this is most common for wollipeds born during the winter, as their tusks are three times the size of those born in summer. Winterborn wollipeds use their foot-long tusks for a variety of purposes. In addition to using them to dig in the ice and snow for deep green tubers, burmoss, and patches of sentient tulbos fungus that stretches beneath the ice, wollipeds clash their tusks together in competitions for dominance within a herd and as part of their mating displays.

Wollipeds use spitting as a form of communication as well as for defense. Most wollipeds only spit at one another, typically in the course of their tusk-clashing shows of dominance, but when threatened they can launch a nauseating wad of partially digested fodder at their attackers. Some trained wolliped mounts have honed this nature into a weapon guided by their riders.

The dragons of Triaxus have little use for terrestrial mounts, and instead use wollipeds as a consistent source of food. More than half of all domesticated wollipeds eventually feed Triaxus's dragon population, though most wollipeds used for meat are older animals whose fleece has turned coarse and brittle. Triaxians also eat wolliped flesh, but most consider young and healthy animals too valuable to eat except during desperate winter years.

REGIONAL VARIANTS

The statistics on the facing page represent the most common breed of wolliped native to the Drakelands, the Allied Territories, and the Skyfire Mandate. In addition to these, a multitude of other breeds exist throughout Triaxus.

Alurals: Triaxians of the Unbound Tribes breed the best wollipeds for battle, with their steeds recognized worldwide as being the strongest and most aggressive. Alurals are also the only known breed of wolliped that is carnivorous. Tribes here collect wolliped milk, fermenting it into a potent alcoholic beverage used for rituals, feasts, and holy days. Alurals have the advanced simple template.

Ningese Wollipeds: The remote nation of Ning breeds the smallest wollipeds on Triaxus. Ningese wollipeds are quick and nimble, using these traits to elude the hordes of monsters threatening the civilized regions of the nation. Wollipeds here are primarily used for fleece and food. In the summer, Ningese wollipeds grow to Medium size and their speed increases by 10 feet. Ningese wollipeds born in the harsh winter are Small and have 2 fewer Hit Dice; their Strength and Constitution decreases by 2, and their Dexterity increases by 2.

WOLLIPED COMPANIONS

Starting Statistics: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 50 ft.; **AC** +1 natural armor, **Attack** gore (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, scent.

7th-Level Adv.: **Size** Large; **AC** +3 natural armor; **Attack** gore (1d8); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Abilities** spit, trample.



NEXT MONTH

RASPUTIN MUST DIE!

by Brandon Hodge

The search for the Queen of Witches finally ends when the *Dancing Hut* travels to Baba Yaga's homeland of Russia on the planet Earth. The year is 1918, and the First World War rages throughout Europe. The heroes find themselves in the wilds of Siberia, where they must face Russian soldiers armed with twentieth-century technology, infiltrate an ancient monastery, and rescue Baba Yaga from her estranged son, Grigori Rasputin. Can the heroes kill the "Mad Monk," who has already cheated death once before, and free Baba Yaga, or will they too fall before the horrors of modern war?

GUNS, SPIRITS, AND REVOLUTION

by Adam Daigle and Brandon Hodge

Find out more about the hardware and cultural touchstones of Earth's own Russia in the midst of the Great War. Learn about machine guns, mustard gas, and spiritualism, and the revolution that threatened to tear this country apart—and how to bring them into your game!

SZURIEL

by Sean K Reynolds

Learn more about the Horseman of War and her cruel faith. Discover the battles and conflicts she encourages throughout worlds and find out how her blasphemous clergy and generals foster war across the planes.

AND MORE!

Heed the dangers of magical arachnids in the Pathfinder's Journal by Kevin Andrew Murphy! Also, four new monsters from a far-off world in the Pathfinder Bestiary.

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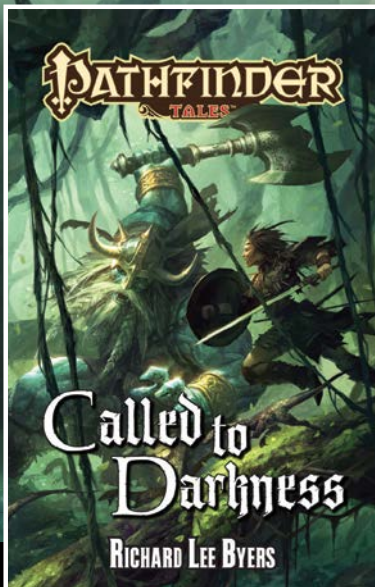
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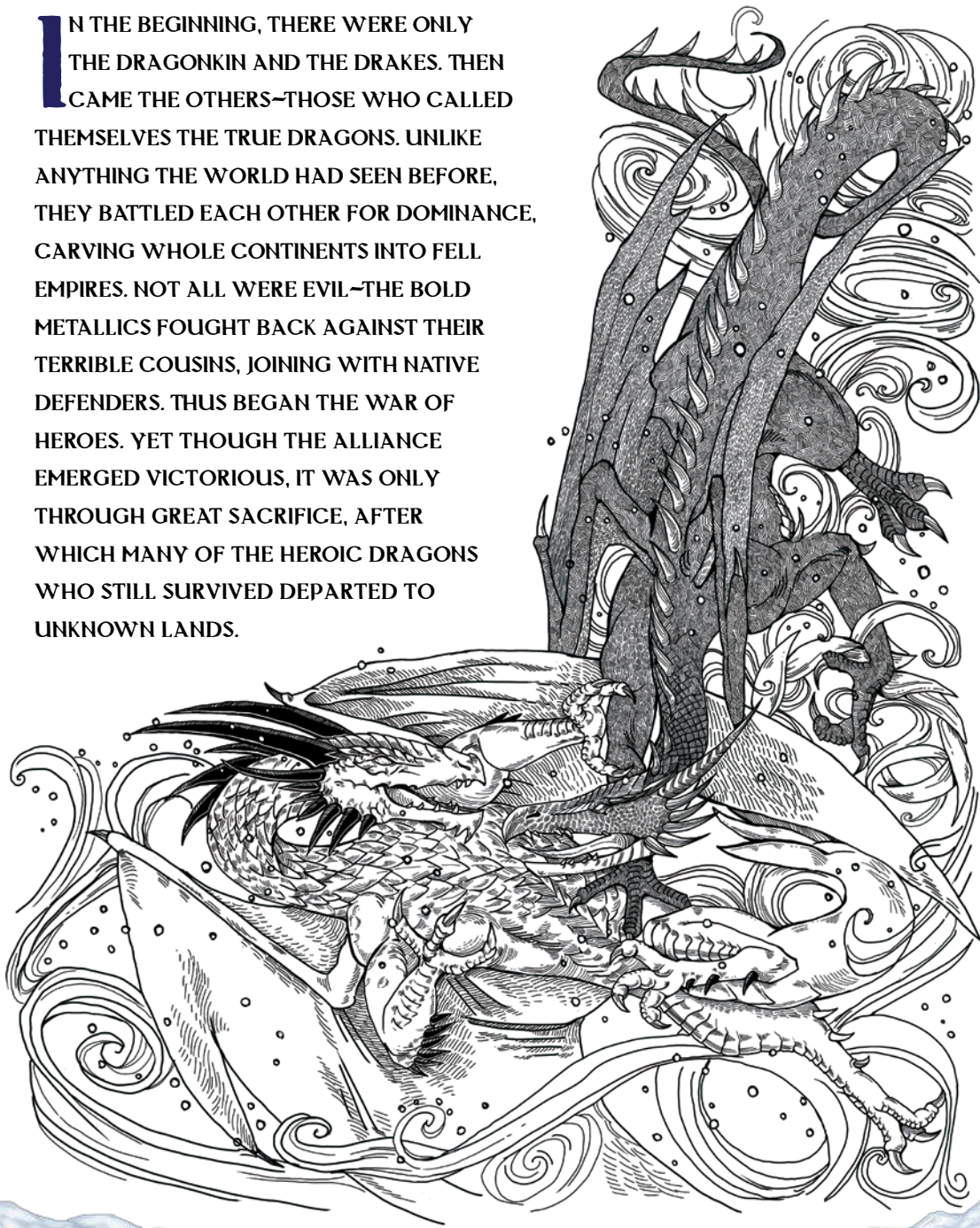
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IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WERE ONLY THE DRAGONKIN AND THE DRAKES. THEN CAME THE OTHERS—THOSE WHO CALLED THEMSELVES THE TRUE DRAGONS. UNLIKE ANYTHING THE WORLD HAD SEEN BEFORE, THEY BATTLED EACH OTHER FOR DOMINANCE, CARVING WHOLE CONTINENTS INTO FELL EMPIRES. NOT ALL WERE EVIL—THE BOLD METALLICS FOUGHT BACK AGAINST THEIR TERRIBLE COUSINS, JOINING WITH NATIVE DEFENDERS. THUS BEGAN THE WAR OF HEROES. YET THOUGH THE ALLIANCE EMERGED VICTORIOUS, IT WAS ONLY THROUGH GREAT SACRIFICE, AFTER WHICH MANY OF THE HEROIC DRAGONS WHO STILL SURVIVED DEPARTED TO UNKNOWN LANDS.

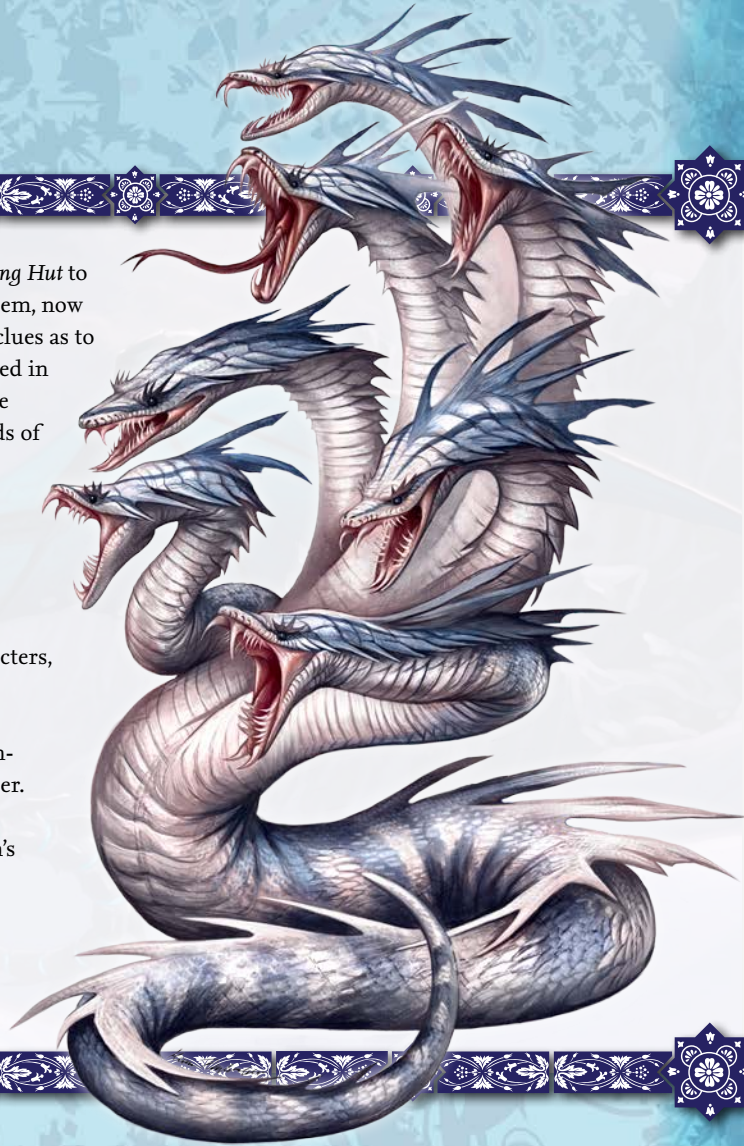


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