



CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

“Evil? Evil, they call me? Do they deem the storm malicious as its winds topple trees and its lightning sets fire to dry grass? Or the river, as it makes its yearly sojourn beyond its banks? Is the spider wicked for devouring the fly? Do they name the wolf a scoundrel as it circles its frightened and defenseless prey? Does the mighty glacier hold malice in its heart when it slowly grinds mountains into plains? Do the tides make the moon into a villain for exerting its force upon the seas? No, I think not. But put a pretty face on the dangers of the world, on the power of nature, and on the laws of the multiverse that not even the gods can alter, and mortals trip over themselves to brand it the villain. Perhaps if mortals were more wary of where they found their... adventures, they wouldn’t see so many evils in the world.”

—The Green Mother

The Ironfang Invasion concludes with “Vault of the Onyx Citadel,” but the potential for many new adventures lies within the destruction the PCs leave in their wake. Over the course of this Adventure Path, the PCs have united many disparate militias into a mighty army, broken the command of the largest monster army to grace the Inner Sea region since the Goblinblood Wars, explored a lost world buried deep within the Plane of Earth, and taken the first tenuous steps toward peace with neighboring Molthune. But many avenues of adventure remain open for such legendary heroes: confronting familiar threats that survived these events, as well as new dangers set in motion by their own actions.

In addition to the adventures listed here, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lands of Conflict* introduces several potential adventure locations around Nirmathas and Molthune and provides additional information about both nations’ politics and geography.

As a Blight upon the Land: Simply slaying the corrupt dryad Arlantia in “Prisoners of the Blight” does not eliminate the demonic disease from the Fangwood—nor the threat it poses to Golarion at large. Instead, it has shattered the blighted forces and infestations, spreading them across the Fangwood as a half-dozen powerful disciples of the dead dryad now compete for her resources and domain against a weakened Accessiel Court. Many of Arlantia’s blightguards remain, some with additional class levels or experimental new hybrids incorporating other, more dangerous fey. In addition, the blighted versions of more powerful fey—ankous, hamadryads, and a norn—that were acting as Arlantia’s regional barons in distant corners of the Fangwood now prepare for war to establish themselves as the true inheritors of Arlantia’s domain.

Clone Attack: Zanathura’s interest in duplicating herself was not limited to her handful of simulacra. With the science and magic of the xiomorns at her disposal, she can easily create duplicates using the *clone* spell as well. This not only gives the cunning naga a realistic means of surviving the Adventure Path’s climax, but it also potentially grants her a veritable army of Azaersi’s lieutenants to lead. While none of these duplicates command the same tactical genius or life experience of the original, they remain deadly combatants—and unlike the original, they are unwaveringly obedient to their petty naga queen.

Dragons of the Fangwood: The black dragon Ibzairiak (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #116: Fangs of War* 58) was only one of many lovers courting Naphexi (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #119: Prisoners of the Blight* 56), many of them far older and more dangerous than the Ironfang Legion’s drooling pet. If Naphexi herself escaped death at the PCs’ hands, she has a grudge to bear, but if she perished by their blade, then a circle of nine angry dragons from the surrounding region—elder specimens of forest, green, umbral, and underworld dragons—have broken hearts and wounded pride to avenge

against the PCs. Each dragon commands its own cunning resources and has every interest in destroying that which the PCs have fought to protect.

Kraggodan and Consequence: With the history of the *Onyx Key* revealed at last, Kraggodan wishes to launch an expedition to the original Darklands Vault discovered by the legendary dwarf explorer who lent his name to the city. Royal Archivist Karburtin Lightbrand (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #118: Siege of Stone* 58) believes he has found the route of his clan’s original Quest for Sky, and retracing it would provide a wealth of historical knowledge—and treasure—for anyone who can brave the aberrations, duergar, and ghoulish wizards that prowl the Darklands. At the bottom of the world lies Kraggodan’s Vault deep in Orv—still laden with xiomorn technology and now ruled by the vile conqueror worm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 64) Xolchez.

The Molthuni Front: The PCs conclude “Vault of the Onyx Citadel” at 18th level, far more powerful than the most of Molthune’s defenders, should they choose to turn their attention to ending Molthune’s war against Nirmathas. Instead, their challenge becomes one of monitoring the extensive border between the two nations, especially with much of the border region devastated by hobgoblin occupation. If the PCs allied with General Lord Katra Sebine, they may have a foot in the door for a political end to the war or to simply annex the Mindspin territory of Molthune. If they decide to turn to violence to end the war, Molthune grows increasingly desperate, eventually taking a page from Cheliox’s playbook and recruiting otherworldly assistance, summoning inevitables and the shadow giants of the Umbral Basin to enforce their borders.

A Nirmathas for All: A far greater challenge than subduing hobgoblins is unifying the vigorously independent denizens of Nirmathas into a common people and nation. After saving them from this latest threat, the PCs are ideally positioned to rally the populace into developing a common identity. The politics of forging a nation could serve as a fun series of background encounters as the PCs pursue other events in the continuing campaign.

What If the PCs Lose?: If the characters fail to stop Azaersi, the Onyx Citadel comes crashing down onto Golarion, destroying a large swath of territory in the calamitous transposition—the exact region depends on how many of the geomantic nexuses remain aligned with the Onyx Citadel. With the Ironfang Legion well protected and the region devastated, Nirmathas and Molthune fall to the hobgoblins within months, and Andoran, Cheliox, and Lastwall begin a campaign of isolation to limit the borders of the newborn hobgoblin nation. Alongside the Legion and its monstrous allies, the transposition releases a number of unaligned threats from the Plane of Earth, ranging from elementals and xorns to forgefiends and shaitan warriors. Now a new generation of heroes must fight just to survive in the dust-choked empire the Ironfang Legion has birthed upon the world!

VAULT OF THE ONYX CITADEL

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A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

With the Ironfang Legion defeated and Molthune either cowed or preoccupied with rebuilding, peace would seem poised to settle on Nirmathas, but even as two great powers fade, a third rises. The druids of Crystalhurst and the fey courts grow increasingly hostile to outsiders within the Fangwood. These are the growing pains of the newly returned Accessiel Court, which struggles to reclaim its land and authority after such a long absence. The glaistig Gendwyn (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #119: Prisoners of the Blight* 54) is willing to hear input from the heroes, who have proven themselves allies, but she is only partially responsible for the actions of the forest fey. The Accessiel Court has become divided between two potential inheritors: Gendwyn and the mysterious figure Argwyn, who wields similar divine might and claims to be the glaistig's daughter, dispatched from the First World to rule where her mother failed.

The reality is—as ever, regarding fey—a complex blend of truth and lie. Argwyn arrived from the First World and indeed bears Gendwyn's blood, but her home is deep within the Fangwood itself. This unusual fey is Arlantia's greatest abomination: a fusion of her own dryad spirit and the near-divine essence stolen from Gendwyn over her centuries of imprisonment. Arlantia had hoped their “daughter” would be able to walk through the wards placed by the dwarves of Kraggodan and carry a new version of her Darkblight—deceptively beautiful blood-red flowers and vines—to new regions of the forest, but human greed destroyed the wards without requiring her involvement. As with many of her schemes, Arlantia eventually forgot about this project and left her bastard child sealed within the fungal heart of Arhlantu—until the PCs' arrival removed Arlantia from the picture and shattered the heart.

Argwyn is manic and chaotic, having inherited snippets of memory from both of her mothers but without any context. She also wields the full power of a glaistig as well as her own refined breed of the Darkblight, allowing her to reshape the world around her, infect new fey servitors, and grant divine spellcasting to loyal servants (such as corrupt dryads). She is frenetic—as much an embodiment of dryads' boundless life as of glaistigs' reserved grandeur—and she blesses her followers with health and beauty contrary to Arlantia's cruel deformations. Fittingly, Argwyn's variation of the Darkblight is a more subtle and elegant disease that preserves its hosts' attractiveness and passion; it is a parasitic flower rather than a deforming fungus.

In the few months she has known life, Argwyn has wasted little time gathering followers. While Arlantia spread her influence like a plague, creeping unbidden into minds and souls, Argwyn's vivacity has brought outsiders to her willingly. She commands a small legion of her own blighted fey swathed in the red blossoms

she commands, including rose-hued ankou guards (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 10). A trio of normally solitary taninivers (*Bestiary* 4 258) have likewise embraced the bastard princess, eager for her blight to ease the pain of their hereditary malady. Most terrifying of all, however, the dwarven druid Caargus—whose magic sealed away the Darkblight 4 centuries ago—appears to have returned from death, corrupted and vile, to serve as Argwyn's right hand (use the statistics for an earthfather on page 79 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*).

The great line that divides Argwyn's evil from Arlantia's is that the newborn fey was born into villainy, while Arlantia embraced it willingly. This makes Argwyn more casually cruel, but it also gives her more potential for redemption. Her spirit never rejected goodness; it is simply a foreign language unknown to her tongue. Patient and kind heroes able to curb her potential for destruction with compassion and empathy may find themselves positioned to build a true dynasty for the Accessiel Court—one that owes them favors without end.

SUCCESSION AND THE ACCESSIEL COURT

Simply slaying Argwyn is not enough to settle the chaos consuming the Fangwood any more than slaying a ruling family would bring peace to any human nation. Instead, the PCs must prove Gendwyn is the more fitting ruler—a near-impossible task with the earth goddess's divine powers currently sapped as they are—before finally confronting Argwyn. Restoring the glaistig's stolen power requires traveling to the fey realm known as the First World (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The First World, Realm of the Fey*) and finding a patron among the Eldest—deific, ancient fey who rule this chaotic realm. Player characters can expect a mind-bending wilderness and confrontations with powerful fey such as the wild hunt (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 278).

Whatever Eldest the PCs hope to beseech, only one is willing to hear them out: the personification of the wild duality between majesty and cruelty known as the Green Mother. Though widely regarded by mortals as a fertility figure, she is better known among her kind as matron of the wildest fey, and seeing one of her children hobbled and drained as Gendwyn has been is nearly enough to inspire pity in the goddess.

Nearly.

Nature is merciless, and a single mistake costs many a beast its life in the wild. So too is it with the Green Mother's children. She gave Argwyn her blessing to supplant Gendwyn as ruler of the Accessiel Court—the hybrid child approached her months ago—content that the more powerful inheritor should rule. But if Gendwyn (and her champions) can prove the elder glaistig is still the stronger hand for the throne, the Green Mother is willing to expend the divine energy to restore Gendwyn's lost mythic power so the two

scions can settle the issue themselves. The deity simply demands a fitting test of valor, such as dragging the legendary jabberwock before her in chains—a task made all the more complicated by the tampering of the fickle Argwyn and her assorted bootlickers.

ARGWYN**CR 23/MR 10****XP 819,200**

Female blighted glaistig (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6 46*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5 124*)

CE Medium fey (earth, mythic)

Init +27; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 120 ft.; Perception +39

Aura reveler's rapture (30 ft., DC 34)

DEFENSE

AC 47, touch 35, flat-footed 34 (+12 deflection, +13 Dex, +12 natural)

hp 472 (25d6+385); regeneration 30 (air)

Fort +20, **Ref** +27, **Will** +25; second save

Defensive Abilities fungal rejuvenation;

DR 15/cold iron and epic; **Immune** daze, disease, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, staggered, stunning; **Resist** acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30, fire 30, sonic 30; **SR** 34

Weaknesses airborne

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., burrow 60 ft., climb 60 ft.; earth glide

Melee earth blade +23 (10d6+34/19-20/×3 plus hex)

Ranged earth blast +38 (10d6+34/19-20/×3 plus hex) or

leaf blast +38 (20d6+44/19-20/×3 plus hex) or thorn throw +25 (1d4+11 plus parasitic bond)

Special Attacks infusions (deadly earth, entangling infusion, extended range, extreme range, flurry of blasts, fragmentation, grappling, impale, kinetic blade, pushing infusion, snake, wall), mythic power (10/day, surge +1d12), parasitic bond, terrakinesis, witch of the fey

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 25th; concentration +37)

Constant—*freedom of movement*, *pass without trace*

At will—*confusion*, *create water*, *know direction*, *purify food and drink* (DC 22), *transport via plants*

3/day—*clashing rocks*^{APG} (DC 31), *flesh to stone* (DC 28), *move earth*, *summon nature's ally IX*

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 36, **Con** 34, **Int** 28, **Wis** 28, **Cha** 34

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +23; **CMD** 71

Feats Combat Casting, Deadly Aim^M, Improved Critical^M, Improved Initiative^M, Improved Precise Shot, Iron Will^M, Point-Blank Shot^M, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (Diplomacy, Intimidate), Stealthy, Toughness^B

Skills Acrobatics +41 (+53 when jumping), Bluff +40, Climb +19, Diplomacy +46, Escape Artist +45, Intimidate +46, Knowledge (nature) +39, Knowledge (planes, religion) +34, Perception +39, Perform (sing) +40, Sense Motive +37, Sleight of Hand +41, Stealth +47, Survival +34, Use Magic Device +40;

Racial Modifiers +2 Knowledge (nature), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth

Languages Common, Elven, Goblin, Sylvan, Terran

SQ blighted unity, divine source (*Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures 51*), sylvan grace, tainted blood

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SECRETS OF THE VAULT

The events of this adventure take the PCs across only a small portion of the Vault of the Onyx Citadel, leaving hundreds of miles of extraplanar wilderness to explore.

MASTER OF THE VAULT

Far beyond the vault itself—unknown to the PCs and the Ironfang Legion—the circumstances of the Ironfang Invasion have set new events in motion. The dwarves' rediscovery of the *Onyx Key* so many millennia ago piqued the interest of the citadel's creator, an ancient, ferocious, and short-tempered Vault Builder named Xulchuwath. Brilliant even by its own people's standards, this ancient creator developed the vault's artificial ley lines and used their power to build the Stone Roads so that xiomorns could travel the cosmos. While Xulchuwath left eons ago to investigate new wonders, Azaersi's assault on the Onyx Citadel alerted the distant creator, and it began the slow process of returning in order to wipe the vault clean of the vermin now infesting it.

VAULT GAZETTEER

While this gazetteer marks a few key locations within the vault, many more exist, whether relics of its creators or more recent additions. See page 26 for a map of the vault.

Argent Lake: This lake is so named due its to consisting primarily of quicksilver—a potentially priceless treasure to anyone who can brave the lake's countless predators and withstand the mind-warping poison of its waters.

Brackmere: Brackmere is a brine lake so thick with salt that its crushing density is deadly to most ocean life, but a small population of deep sea serpents (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 240) guard the lake bed, where their militant cultists of siyokoys (*Bestiary* 3 246) and deep merfolk (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 172) gather around xiomorn ruins.

Calling Pool: The waters of this icy, clear lake plunge half a mile before meeting a seemingly endless layer of silt. Once part of a large xiomorn network of portals, it remains a thin spot in the vault's planar boundaries, allowing occasional visitors from the Plane of Water.

The Crackingwild: The lands of the southeast are an ever-changing smattering of islands, each less than a mile across and sporting landscapes as diverse as forest, hills, plains, and swamps. They grind constantly against their neighbors with a deafening roar. An island moves between 1 and 10 miles per day and confounds any attempts at mapping or navigating the region. Ruins left by shaitans, sun giants, and xiomorns mark the varied landscape. Whatever force constantly shifts these massive earthworks, and why, remains unknown.

The Dustbeds: Two expansive deserts of powder-soft sand mar the southern vault, where unseen energies sap the life out of creatures that wander into them. Some pechs scavenge the deadly dust so they can resell it as a material component, claiming the wastelands are the final

mistake that drove the xiomorns from the vault, while others insist the deserts are functioning as intended. A few forgotten xiomorn strongholds dot the wastes.

Forgetting Place: Built into the crystalline walls of a sote sea, this stronghold is protected by a bevy of animated siege engines and a bone ship (*Bestiary* 5 44) that pechs call the *Last Command*. Within, cold basalt walls shift into a deadly labyrinth, filled with traps and clockwork guardians, and the innermost bailey is wreathed in crystals that function as a *mirror of opposition*. These dangers exist not to keep the curious out but to contain the most heinous mistakes created by the xiomorns in their quest for knowledge.

Glass Pinnacle: The vault's tallest peak is a shard of glittering glass as hard as steel. While it is remarkable on its own, the sight is all the more impressive courtesy of the many magical blades sealed within the unbreakable, multicolored peak. A unique, magic-devouring golem stands at the mountain's apex and offers challengers their choice of the trophies it guards if they can unseat the construct. Those who fail see their blades added to the mountain before they are cast down from its heights onto the jagged glass foothills below.

Glitterglen: Unlike many of the vault's crystalline forests, Glitterglen mimics terrestrial plant life to a startling degree, growing thick with ferns, oaks, and pines all apparently carved from delicate quartz crystal. Druids visiting the glen report strange whispers and giggles, as if a very unusual spirit—akin to nature itself but far younger and more alien—were trying to reach into their minds.

The Goodlands: The clean water of the Quartz River feeds the lush northern half of the vault's ecosystem. This land of forests, gentle hills, and plains hosts an earthly paradise, home to a dozen tiny pech villages similar to Stonehome. Many communities built and maintained by planar castaways lie forgotten across the landscape, including some made by refugees from Golarion who flourished for a dozen generations before fading away.

Greensend: Surrounded by volcanic peaks, Greensend is a swelteringly hot jungle filled with titanic insects. Three formian queens—Mother of Apathy, Mother of Love, and Mother of Pain—take turns holding court in an organic temple somewhere within the jungle depths. Sterile and bereft of formian servants, the trio has learned to grant sentience to the insects of the jungle.

Ketterling: Ketterling is the only permanent shaitan settlement in the vault. The caravansary boasts a population of fewer than 50 genies, and no one has seen the pasha Vatatar since the advent of the Ironfang Legion.

Lapisport: Established to take advantage of the quicksilver reservoir in Argent Lake and once a flourishing marid colony, Lapisport now stands empty. Its residents succumbed to the lake's poisonous water, leaving countless treasures behind—but also deadly magical traps as their increasing paranoia set their genie magic to terrible purpose.

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ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Ruins of Miser: Miser stood as a dwarven citadel for 2,000 years. Constructed by trapped explorers from Kraggodan with the aid of local pechs, the settlement flourished for a time, but its small number of inhabitants—fewer than 200 dwarves—led to inbreeding and degeneration. Undead steeped in forbidden magic now prowl the ruins.

Screaming Wall: The noise of the Crackingwild reverberates from the crystals in the southern wall, creating an endless high-pitched shriek. Though agonizing to most creatures, the sound attracts an enormous breed of yrthak (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 290) imported eons ago.

Shaitan Stone: This 500-foot-tall statue of a great shaitan is actually a massive tower that served as the stronghold of Xeb, the pasha who lent her face to the exterior. An arcanist and conjurer who used her magic to manage a huge trade network, Xeb reportedly left treasure untold sealed within her tower, guarded by only a single xorn.

Shatterhall: For millennia, dwarves of Kraggodan have occasionally lost their way after death, following the Stone Road to the vault rather than flowing with the River of Souls. Trapped here instead of being judged and sent to their ultimate reward, the lost of Kraggodan gather in the endless chambers of Shatterhall, a mysterious structure that grows on its own. Most of the dwarves are now petitioners (*Bestiary 2* 208), content to drink and feast on the sustenance that appears unbidden, but a few have evolved through force of will into a lawful variety of valkyrie (*Bestiary 3* 277).

Singing Keep: The xorns of the vault have long maintained this xiomorn archive. They believe it houses the secret origins of their race, though they refuse to research those details stored within the lyrical jewels or allow anyone else access to the knowledge cached there. Over the centuries, they have used the Calling Pool to conjure several powerful inevitables to guard the archives.

Soot Seas: The caverns in the vault's north and east walls are marked by soot seas—"lakes" of fine black dust that support boatlike vessels piloted by native pechs. The seas are soft enough that almost any creature setting foot on them vanishes into the soot, never to be seen again, but a race of earth-infused krakens calls the seas home and somehow manages to avoid death in the petal-soft depths.

Vale of Hungry Diamonds: Huge, dinosaur-like beasts formed of living translucent crystal battle for supremacy in this jungle of massive mineral growths. These predators

are gladiatorial beasts and beloved pets among shaitan nobility, and occasional hunting expeditions arrive in the vault hoping to take the strongest of the jewel-beasts alive.

Watcher's Forest: This woodland of towering mushrooms and lichen supports a hardy population of myceloids who worship a god they call the Watcher—actually a vishap (*Bestiary 5* 270) imprisoned by Xulchuwath after confronting the xiomorn over the blasphemy of meddling with artificial ley lines. Its blood poisons the land, allowing only the fungus to thrive, and while the myceloids worship the ancient dragon, they fear its wrath should it ever escape.

Writhing Rift: This long, gem-studded canyon is actually the digestive tract of a kingdom-sized elemental beast slain by the xiomorns eons before they settled the vault. The beast was so powerful that its death throes persist, undulating through the valley. Few details of the creature are known, however, as a powerful tzitzimitl (*Bestiary 3* 276) called Last Witness has stood sentinel over those final moments for over 8 millennia.

