



MASTER DUNGEONS PRESENTS DRAGORA'S DUNGEON



A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE
by Harley Stroh



MASTER DUNGEONS



M1: DRAGORA'S DUNGEON
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DRAGORA'S DUNGEON

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MASTER DUNGEONS

Some explorers perish in pit traps while others found fiefdoms. What sets them apart? Master dungeons: heroes are chiseled from the challenges they face, and those who conquer master dungeons rise to be kings. Lost artifacts that raise continents from the sea, an empire's treasures buried to avoid capture, nascent godlings amassing divine energies: choose these challenges over the goblin cavern if you want to prove yourself worthy of glory and empire!

INTRODUCTION

Legendary heroes are the result of epic adventures. While some explorers wile away their lives battling kobolds and goblins over grubby pieces of gold, heroes answer the call to high adventure. Many will try and many will fail, but those that survive will have earned the fated title of conqueror.

Dragora's Dungeons is designed for 5 characters of 1st level, but can easily be scaled to accommodate higher-level PCs or larger adventuring companies. A high fantasy adventure that pits the heroes against a warrior-queen, her green dragon lover, and the remnants of an ancient civilization, Dragora's Dungeon is designed to challenge a well-balanced party of heroes. Each of the major roles will see action in and out of combat. Adventurers accustomed to cleaving their way through any obstacle will be sorely tested, but – as in every edition of D&D – careful play coupled with courage (and no small amount of luck) will surely prevail!

Caution: While Dragora's Dungeon is for low-level characters, it is not recommended for first-time GMs or players. The adventure is designed to reward intelligent play, just as foolish choices must surely be punished. But for players and GMs looking for a challenging, dynamic adventure, Dragora's Dungeon will not disappoint.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Many eons ago, the fabled sorcerer-kings of Parhok perished in a rain of eldritch fire. But legends hold that one tribe survived the apocalypse, fleeing with their slaves to a hidden city. There the greatest enchanters of all time could sleep away the centuries, and awaken in a future age as rulers of a ruined land.

Now, once more the forbidden spells of the Parhok threaten the Known Realms. A kingdom lays ensorcelled, and a royal family has been ensnared by the forgotten dweomers of a long-dead race. When the best attempts of seers and diviners have failed, the call goes out for heroes courageous enough to save a kingdom from certain doom.

The adventure begins when the heroes track an arcane assassin back to his lair: a yawning chasm opening to seething mists. Plumbing the depths of the chasm, the heroes discover an arcane vault from a forgotten age. What appears at first to be merely the eldritch remnants of a lost civilization is swiftly revealed to be something altogether more sinister: A race of ape-men – once slaves

to the enchanters of Parhok – has inherited their master's cruel legacy. Duped by a dragon pretending to be the living incarnation of Tiamat, the ape-men are massing for an assault on the surface lands. Can the heroes defeat an army of ape-men and their sinister commanders? Or will they be the latest to succumb to Dragora's Dungeon?

GAME MASTERS SECTION

ENCOUNTER TABLE

To help the GM prepare, we have included a quick reference table showing all encounters at a glance (see page 4). The abbreviations are: *Loc* the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. *Pg* the module page number that the encounter can be found on. *Type* this indicates if the encounter is a trap (T), puzzle (P), combat (C), or hazard (H). *Encounter* the key monsters, traps or NPCs that can be found in the encounter.

SCALING INFORMATION

Dragora's Dungeon is designed for 5 characters of 1st level, but it can be easily modified for parties of different sizes or levels.

With this in mind, consider the following suggestions:

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters):

Remove the gelatinous cube from area 1–2; remove 2 green spiretop drakes from area 2–5; replaces all zain-kin legionnaires with hastati; replace all zain-kin centurions with legionnaires; remove the infiltrators from area 4–3.

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or higher than 1st level):

Replace the decrepit skeletons in area 1–2 with skeletons; add 5 green spiretop drakes to area 2–5; replaces every 3rd zain-kin hastati with a legionnaire; add 1 zain-kin centurion to every encounter with 5 or more zain-kin; add 2 infiltrators to area 4–3; increase both Dragora and Mouringlar by 2 levels.

GETTING PLAYERS INVOLVED

This adventure assumes the kingdom's ruler has been incapacitated by eldritch powers, and the heroes are called to his citadel for protection and investigation. The details are left intentionally vague, for you to adapt to your campaign.

Location	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
A-1	6	C	Zain-kin Infiltrator	1
1-1	8	C	Two zain-kin hastati	1
1-1a	10	T	Rubble trap	1
1-1b	10	T	Pit trap	1
1-2	11	C/T	Phammut the Imp Needlefang Swarm Ten Decrepit Skeletons Gelatinous Cube	4
1-4a	15	T/C	Crushing Boulder trap Two bristleback spiders	3
2-1a	17	C	Sicuriju	1
2-1b	18	C	Vine horror	1
2-1c	18	T	Quicksand pit	1
2-2a	19	T	Hidden Sinkhole	1
2-3	19	C	Two Rock viper swarms	1
2-4	20	C	Three Serpent Wraiths	2
2-5	29	C	Five Green spiretop drakes	1
3-1	29	C/P	Zain-kin hastati legionnaires and centurions	Variable
3-2	30	C/P	Domastrus, Zain-Kin Warlord Three zain-kin legionaries	3
3-3	31	P	Variable	
3-4	32	P	Variable	
4-1	34	C	Mouringlar, Wyrmling Green Dragon Various zain-kin	3+
4-2	36	C	Two Zain-kin legionnaire	1
4-3	37	C	Two Zain-kin infiltrators Pendulum scythes	2
4-4	39	C	Lady Dragora	1
Conclusion	40	C	Lady Dragora Mouringlar, Wyrmling Green Dragon	4

BACKGROUND STORY

The unbridled ambition of mankind has always been its greatest strength, yet history has shown – time and again – those that hunger for power must ever end their lives in tragedy. And perhaps no race of man was more ambitious than the fabled enchanters of Parhok.

The seers and sages cannot agree on the events that led to the Parhok's demise. Some claim that the wizards fell to warring amongst themselves. Others hypothesize that, intoxicated with their god-like power, the enchanters dared to reshape the world in their vision. Others point to ancient scrolls that hint that the enchanters, seeking to discover the source of magic, tapped into a fount beyond even their control.

Regardless of the reasons, the outcome is not in dispute: torrents of fire and brimstone rained destruction down

upon the golden towers and shining spires, and in a fortnight, the mighty empire of Parhok was no more.

But not all the enchanters perished in the apocalypse. Legends hold that seven cabals sought refuge from the cataclysm. Their fates are all retold in apocryphal, dubious tales, but whether or not any of the magi survived, many certainly sought shelter from the rain of fire.

Chief among them was a cabal of enchanters known as the Ordo Thraxus, a circle renown for their love of slavery and devotion to the goddess Tiamat. The Ordo fled underground to wait out the apocalypse, hoping to return in the next eon as rulers over a ruined land. While the mages slept out the ages, their weakening physical shells would be cared for by their creations — a slave race of ape-like creatures called zain-kin.

Their plans worked all too well, and the ape-men displayed far more intelligence and cunning than their masters had ever intended. Once the mages slipped into the ageless sleep, their slaves rose up and cast down their masters. Unable to break the eldritch seals that trapped them beneath the earth, the ape-men settled into lives of isolation, ruling their prison in imitation of their past masters.

THE LOST CITY OF THE PARHOK

When the zain-kin cast down their cruel overseers, it brought an end to the great magics that sustained the city. In the chaos that followed, majestic towers collapsed, blood cascaded down the steps of the Temple of Tiamat, and fires raged. When the slaughter ended, the fabled enchanters of Parhok were laid low by their own slaves.

Some residual enchantments persisted, but they grew weaker by the century. The forgotten city's days were numbered, and the knowledge of this weighed upon the new zain-kin lords. In an attempt to save their kind, the lords revived the old ways, embracing the martial law once imposed on them by their slave masters, and taking up the worship of Tiamat with religious zeal. Ape-man warred against ape-man, competing for limited resources, and the zain-kin fractured into scores of tribes. Eventually 3 tribes rose to dominate the rest, but with no one powerful enough to quell all challengers, the zain-kin seemed doomed to battle themselves into extinction.

RETURN OF THE DRAGON

The zain-kin might have continued to live undisturbed, were it not for the legacy of the Parhok. Tales of the enchanter's might fired the imaginations of treasure seekers and sages across the Known World. While many sought to acquire the legacy of the Parhok, none were as persistent as Lady Dragora. Aided by her lover, the green dragon Mouringlar, the warrior-princess uncovered ancient texts recording the flight of the Ordo, and their retreat beneath the earth. Retracing the steps of the Parhok, Lady Dragora discovered the location of the enchanter's redoubt and dismissed the eldritch seals that had stood undisturbed since before recorded history.

The shattering of the seals released a series of arcane spells intended to herald Parhok's return. The land heaved and trembled, lightning rained down from the heavens, and the earth was rent asunder. A mighty, seething chasm was torn open, and an army of zain-kin emerged.

Exiled from her homeland, the villainous Dragora sought out the lost city of the Parhok. Joined by the

green dragon Mouringlar, her investigations brought her to a chasm hidden deep in the heart of an ancient wood. Together, Dragora and Mouringlar explored the depths of the chasm, and then passed through the ancient portal, arriving in the city of Parhok.

The zain-kin dismissed the arrival of Dragora, her appearance resembling their stories of ancient Parhok slave masters. But when the ape-men saw the green dragon that accompanied the warrior-princess, they fell to their knees in abject worship: Tiamat, the god of monsters from out of time, was made manifest before them.

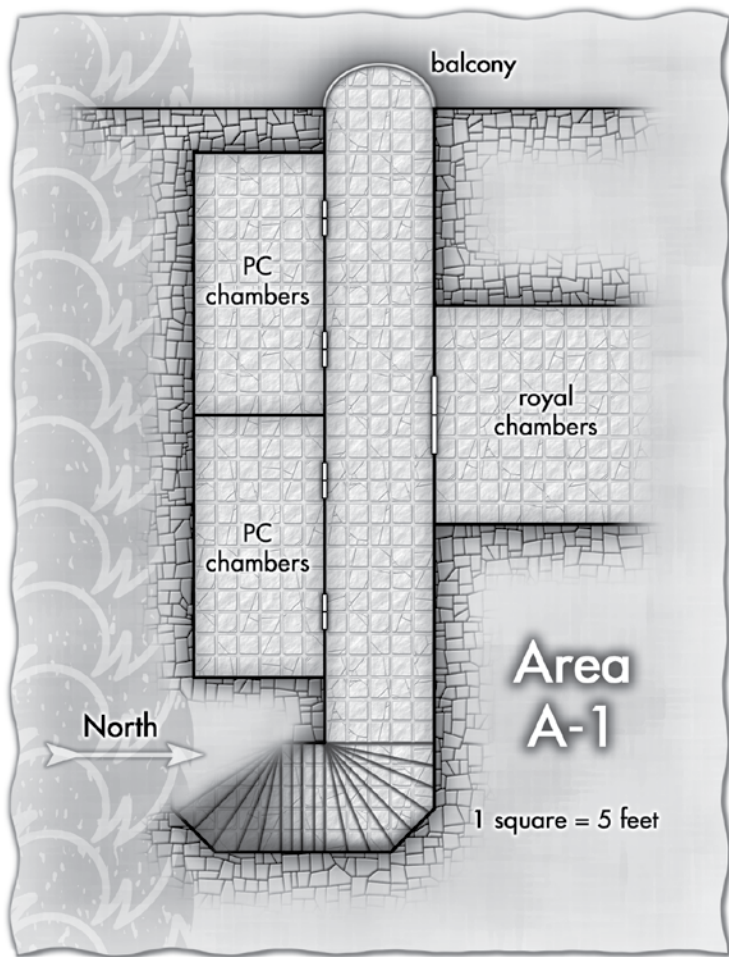
The zain-kin stood in the presence of a god.

United under Mouringlar's leadership (secretly directed by Dragora), the zain-kin have begun rebuilding their ancient city. Once more the ancient wyrmportals crackle with eldritch flames, permitting raids upon the surface lands. The three great tribes, having warred for so long, laid down their blood vendettas, and instead took up the banner of Tiamat.

Of course, not all is as it seems. While each of the three zain-kin lords pay lip service to Mouringlar, only two of the tribes truly believe that the young green dragon is the divine avatar of the Parhok's god. And even those that do believe cannot help but wonder at the wisdom of embracing a god worshipped by their former slave masters. The zain-kin are a proud, savage race, and the slightest upset would be enough to return them to bloody, internecine warfare.

For her part, Dragora is not above using the ape-men as an army against those that would thwart her ambitions. But she realizes that the true value of her discovery is the Parhok ruins. She (rightly) believes that if she can tap into just a shard of the enchanters' legendary arcane power, it will rival the might of any army in the world. She races to learn the rituals of the forgotten people, knowing that it is only a matter of time before would-be heroes discover the lost city. She has mastered the first of the enchantments (the magical slumber that has overtaken the PCs' realm), but this is only the weakest of the fabled spells.

Like those of the Parhok enchanters before her, Dragora's hunger for power drives her on. Will the PCs put an end to her schemes like the gods did to the sorcerer-kings of Parhok? Or will Dragora emerge as the last enchantress, ruling the Known World by the awful dweomers of the Parhok?



PLAYER BEGINNING

(EL 1, XP 200)

The adventure begins at night, with the PCs together in the citadel of their liege or king. See map A-1 and begin the adventure by reading the following:

The citadel is eerily quiet. Even the flickering torches seem subdued, as if deadened by a fell enchantment. Your heads nod and droop, and the taste of copper is thick on your tongue.

A spell has fallen over the citadel, enchanting all within. While the rest of the palace has fallen prey to the enchanted slumber, the PCs have a chance at resisting the dread spell. The enchantment attacks each PC (+5 vs. Will). PCs that succumb are slowed for the duration of the encounter, and fall into a deep slumber (saving throw ends).

If any PCs remain awake, read or paraphrase the following:

From beneath your door, you hear a soft scratching, like daggers drawn against the floor.

The beast outside the door is a zain-kin assassin, a hulking, silver-backed man-ape sent to slay the PCs and their masters. The zain-kin carries a censer, the source of the wicked spell that has enchanted the castle, and has a short sword slung over its back.

The zain-kin tries the door; if it is locked or barred, the beast breaks the door down in 1d4 rounds. The zain-kin is heedless of the noise, mistakenly believing that the entire palace is ensnared in the eldritch spell. Unless the PCs give themselves away, they surprise the zain-kin.

Tactics: The ape-man fights with deadly skill and speed, using *assassin's mark* to press its advantage against the PCs.

If the PCs succeed in bruising the assassin, it flees through the palace window, dropping down to the ground and retreating back to the rift. Once the encounter is resolved, proceed to The Investigation, below.

Zain-Kin Infiltrator

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 5 Lurk

XP 200

Init +10

Senses Perception +9

low-light vision

HP 56

Bloodied 28

AC 19

Fort 17, Ref 18, Will 16

Spd 7

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin infiltrator can make 2 short sword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

⚡ Assassin's Mark (minor; refresh 4-6): Ranged 5; the target is marked and grants the zain-kin infiltrator CA until the end of the zain-kin infiltrator's next turn.

CA: The zain-kin infiltrator deals an additional 2d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has CA against.

Align Evil

Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +6, Stealth +11

Str 16 (+5)

Dex 19 (+6)

Wis 14 (+4)

Con 15 (+4)

Int 14 (+4)

Cha 10 (+2)

Possessions: leather armor, short sword

THE INVESTIGATION

Once the zain-kin has been defeated, the PCs are free to investigate the rest of the palace. While most of the sleeping guards can be awakened, those of royal blood (other than the PCs) remain trapped in the eldritch slumber. It falls to the PCs to track the assassin back to its lair and lift the curse.

Examining the Body: If the PCs succeeded in slaying the zain-kin, their first order of business is likely examining the body. The enormous man-ape dwarfs most humanoids; stretched out, it is over 7 feet in height, weighing as much as 3 grown men. A successful DC 15 Arcana or Nature check confirms what the heroes likely already suspect: the creature is not natural, but likely a creation of sorcerous experimentation. It wore a shirt of armor composed of crude iron links sewn into a leather jerkin. The leather appears to be from some sort of cave lizard. The sword was forged of the same low-grade iron; its haft wrapped in braided dark elf hair. The weapon has seen battle before and has multiple nicks and scars.

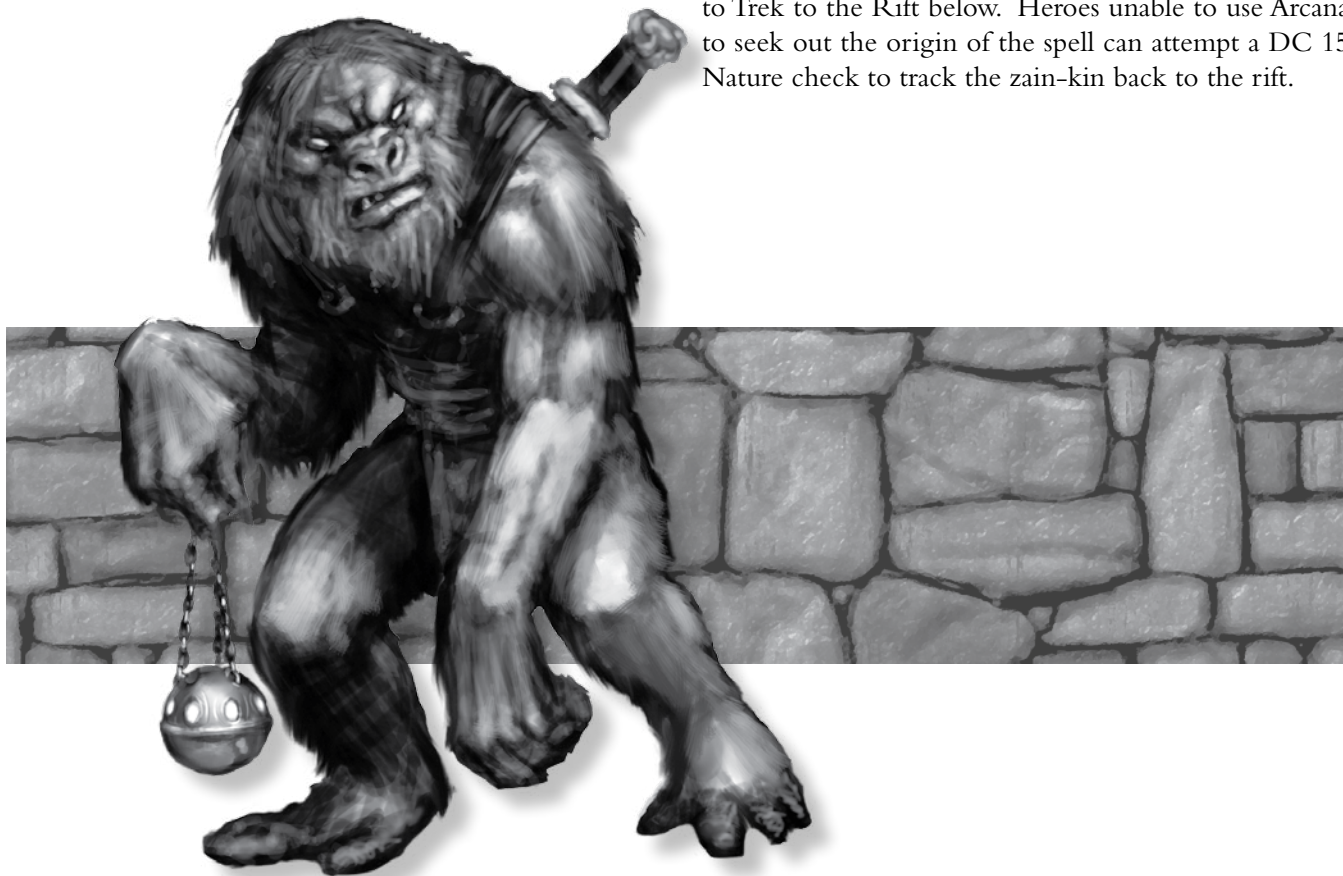
The heroes are faced with a choice: Spend the time researching the spell and its cure, or set off after the zain-kin's tracks while they are still fresh. Researching the spell takes 1d4+1 hours. For every hour spent, the DC for tracking the zain-kin (Nature, DC 15) is increased by +1.

KNOWLEDGE:ARCANA

A successful Arcana checks can identify the spell and its origin; other characters can use the aid another action to assist in the research.

- DC 15** The spell matches a legendary enchantment of the sorcerer kings of Parhok. Following the eldritch traces left by the magical censer, the heroes can track the zain-kin back to the rift.
- DC 20** All Parhok enchanters utilized orbs to focus their eldritch forces. The only way to end an enchantment is to slay the caster or destroy the orb used in the casting.
- DC 25** The ancient Parhok enchantments were lost eons ago when their empire was destroyed. Many have searched in vain for the lost civilization, in the hopes of acquiring just a sliver of its formidable might.
- DC 30** Legend holds that some tribes or cabals might have escaped the apocalypse that destroyed their empire. The tribes managed to survive the rain of fire by fleeing to cities hidden far underground.

Once PCs are satisfied with their investigation, proceed to Trek to the Rift below. Heroes unable to use Arcana to seek out the origin of the spell can attempt a DC 15 Nature check to track the zain-kin back to the rift.



ENCOUNTER AREA ONE

TREK TO THE RIFT

Tracking the assassin to the rift is a simple task, once the PCs have the trail. After a four-day journey through ancient woods and rocky badlands, the tracks end in a wide clearing.

Read or paraphrase the following:

At last your hunt has come to an end: The thick forest parts to reveal a broad clearing, split by a gaping ravine. Broken flagstones, crumbling walls, and fallen pillars litter the clearing – at one time this must have been a grand plaza, but now all is given over to ruin.

As the PCs step onto the plaza, roll 1 Passive Perception check (DC 15) for each PC. Characters trained in Arcana are granted a +2 bonus to the roll. Any PC succeeding immediately feels as if they are being watched. Characters trained in Arcana will suspect, correctly, that the party is being scryed. Dragora is watching the PCs through the scrying pool (see area 4–3), and immediately dispatches a pair of zain-kin to eliminate the PCs (see area 1–1).

A casual examination (Dungeoneering or Nature, DC 15) of the ravine reveals that it was torn open by an earthquake in the last 2 months. The walls are vertical (Climb, DC 20), and the ravine seethes with dense mists, obscuring its depth (500 feet). The mists sting the eyes and burn the lungs, but otherwise present no threat to PCs.

Descending into the rift most likely requires a series of belays, with the PCs roping themselves off as their companions rappel down to the next ledge.

AREA 1-1

THE UPPER WORKS (EL 1, XP 200)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A thundering waterfall punctures the side of the chasm, tumbling down into the swirling mists. The tumbling water crashes atop a pair of matching portals set into opposite walls of the chasm.

Once there was a worked-stone corridor here, but when the chasm was torn open, the corridor was broken in two.

Heroes rappelling down the walls of the chasm can easily reach one of the portals, but reaching the opposite side is a challenge, made more difficult due to the crashing waterfall. With a DC 15 Athletics check, a PC can swing to the far wall, but seizing a handhold and hanging on requires a second DC 15 Athletics check.

Development: As the first PCs gain the ledge, a pair of Dragora's zain-kin reaches the lip of the chasm. The zain-kin cut PCs' ropes, and then hurl rocks from above. Due to the mists, the zain-kin have only a slim chance of hitting a PC (–5 vs. Ref). Each rock does 1d12+4 points of damage and forces the character to make a DC 15 Athletics check or be knocked free from the rope. Heroes failing the check must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check or plummet the remaining 30 feet to the chasm's floor below, taking 3d10 points of falling damage. (Characters that are explicitly tied in can't be knocked free.)

The zain-kin throw a total of 20 stones before withdrawing from the lip of the chasm. The zain-kin retire to the woods to watch the chasm, waiting out any PCs that emerge from the mists.

Zain-Kin Legionnaires (2)

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 1 Sld

XP 100

Init +4

Senses Perception +2

low-light vision

HP 31

Bloodied 15

AC 19

Fort 16, Ref 13, Will 13

Spd 6

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +8 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.

⚡ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: Ranged 10/20; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin legionnaire can make 2 short sword attacks against a bruised opponent.

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin legionnaire receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil

Lang Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +7

Str 20 (+5)

Dex 14 (+2)

Wis 14 (+2)

Con 15 (+2)

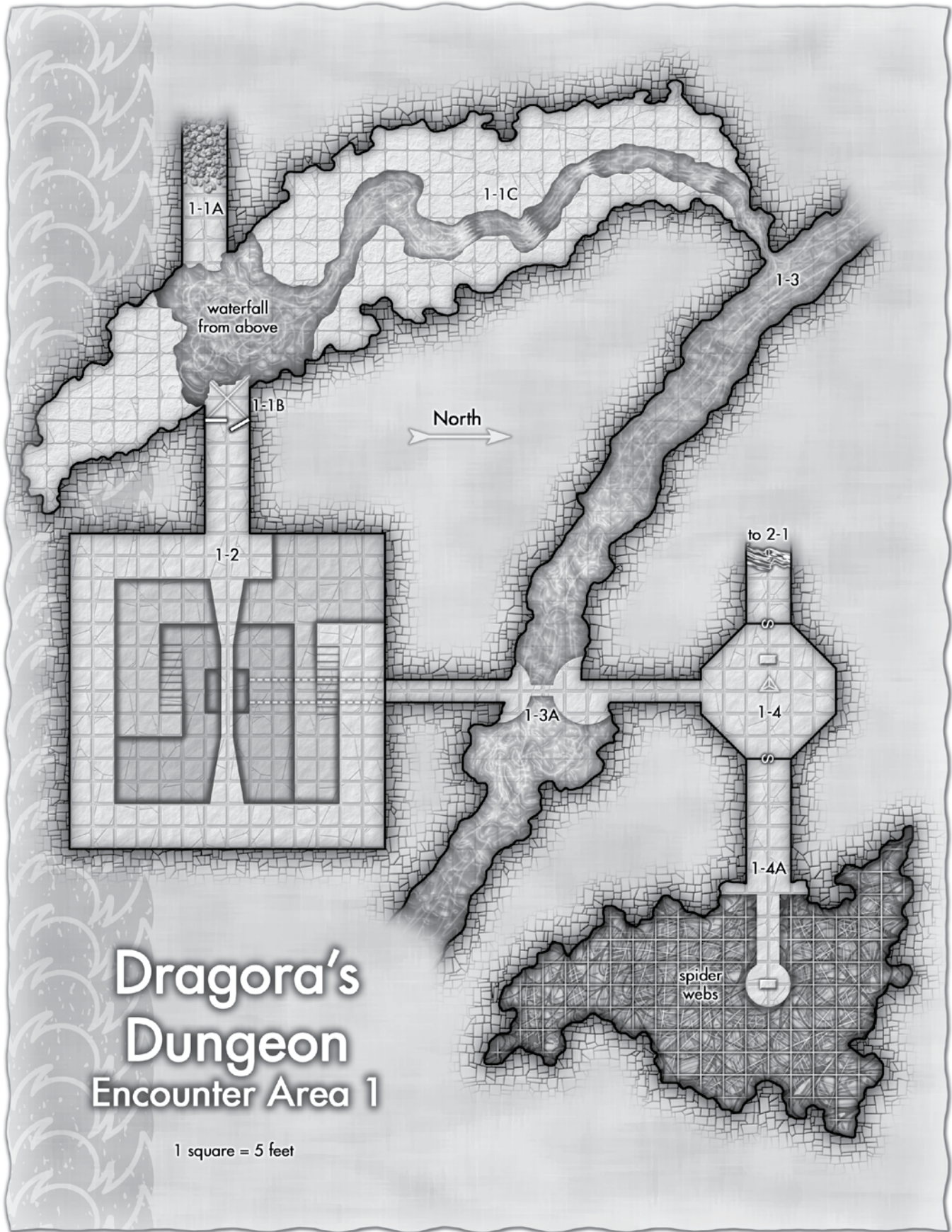
Int 10 (+0)

Cha 10 (+0)

Possessions: scale armor, heavy shield, short sword, three javelins

SYMBOLOLOGY

Not sure what the symbols in the stat blocks mean? Visit the page for this product at www.goodman-games.com for a legend.



Dragora's Dungeon Encounter Area 1

1 square = 5 feet

AREA 1-1A

RUBBLE AND RUIN (EL 1, XP 200)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The dark corridor is lined with worked stones, each engraved with scores of runes inset with gold. The corridor ends abruptly before a pile of boulders and debris.

This corridor collapsed when the chasm was opened. The rubble is unstable at best, and any activity (such as searching) that disturbs the pile triggers a second collapse.

Heroes successfully searching the rubble (Perception, DC 15) discover a broken flagstone set into the floor. Removing the flagstone (Strength, DC 20) reveals a hidden space beneath the floor. Resting inside the space is a small leather pouch and a blackened, mummified hand locked around a radiant sapphire set within a star-shaped amulet; the point of each arm cast in the shape of a rampant dragon. This amulet is the star-key used to open the portal in area 1-4. Inside the pouch are 40 ancient gold coins.

The mummified hand once belonged to a thief, and now serves as a Parhok ward against looters. The character that removes the star-key is cursed with avarice; any time the PC comes across coins or gems, the hero is struck by insatiable greed (+5 vs. Will, Miss: resist urge). The curse ends after 5 checks.

After the PCs leave the corridor, the mummified hand magically appears in the cursed hero's backpack. The hand continues to follow the PC as long as the curse is in effect. No matter how it might be destroyed, it reappears in amid the PC's gear 1d4 hours later.

⚠ Rubble

Level 5 Lrk

XP 200

Perception DC 20: The character notices the loose rock.

Trigger: Searching the rubble.

Opportunity Action Melee

Target: All creatures in burst.

Attack: Close burst 3; +8 vs. AC; Hit: 3d8+3 damage.

Miss: Half damage.

COUNTERMEASURES

- The characters can trigger the hazard from afar with missile weapons. The trap has an AC of 20, and will trigger if more than 10 points of damage are dealt to it.
- An adjacent character can disable the hazard with a DC 20 Thievery or Dungeoneering check.
- A DC 20 Nature or Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the hazard.

AREA 1-1B

SHATTERED GATES OF PARHOK (EL 1, XP 125)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A portal is set into the chasm wall, partially obscured by the crashing waterfall. A pair of bronze gates stands partially open. Each of the gates is emblazoned with a stylized 5-headed dragon. Exposed beneath the platform is a mechanism composed of rusted black gears, a massive flywheel, and 8 long, rusted glaives.

Obviously, the gates were once trapped. Much of the mechanism is frozen with rust, but even in its ruined state, the trap presents a peril to brash heroes.





Originally the trap dropped a victim into a pit, and then slashed the victim with scything blades. Now that the blades are rusted in place, the victim simply falls, plummeting 30 feet to the base of the chasm.

Pit Trap Trap

Level 2 Wrd XP 125

Perception DC 20: The character notices that the defunct trap once included a pit trap.

Trigger: The trap triggers when a character enters one of its squares.

Immediate Reaction Melee

Target: The creature that entered one of the trap's squares.

Attack: +6 vs. Ref

Hit: The pit falls open and the target falls 30 feet, takes 3d10 damage, and falls prone. Miss: The target returns to the last square it occupied, and its move action ends immediately.

Effect: The pit trap opens and the trap is no longer hidden.

COUNTERMEASURES

- An adjacent character can trigger the trap with a DC 15 Thievery check.
- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 20 Thievery check.
- A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap.
- An adjacent character can swing over the pit, landing in the corridor beyond with a DC 15 Acrobatics check.

AREA 1-1C CHASM FLOOR

Read or paraphrase the following:

The base of the chasm is a chaotic maze of boulders, the deafening crash of water, and seething mist. The rocks are slick with black slime, and the air is cold and wet, chilling you to the bone.

There is little for the heroes to discover here. Amid the boulders are a few pieces of broken tile and worked stone (fallen from the corridor above). The water leaves the ravine via a narrow fissure in the rock.

Exceedingly courageous PCs can follow the river's course, though this is perilous at best. Descending safely along the seam requires a DC 25 Athletics check; characters failing the check fall 20 feet down to a rocky slope (2d10 falling damage) before plunging into an underground river. Heroes taking basic precautions (such as roping themselves together) improve their chances considerably, aiding another as they descend the dangerous slope.

Even if heroes survive the descent, navigating the river requires creativity on the part of the PCs; failed Athletics checks can quickly prove deadly in the frigid, black waters of the Underdeep.

AREA 1-2 ELDRITCH WIZARDRY (EL 4, XP 950)

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you inch down the corridor, a sickeningly sweet stench assaults your senses, accompanied with a soft, ceaseless chanting. The floor of the corridor narrows into a slender pathway that arches over a fell laboratory of some sort. Broken into 3 tiers, each level of the chamber is home to a chaotic jumble of arcane experiments and the like. At the very base of the inverted ziggurat is a portal that glints softly in the gloom.

The chamber was once a way station for apprentices and novitiates ferrying dangerous spell components for their arcane masters. When the rain of fire sealed the city away from the surface world, the chamber fell into disuse and neglect. The way station's keeper, an aging, wicked imp by the name of Phammut, has languished here in boredom for untold centuries. The PCs are the first entertainment to come along in memory (recent or otherwise), and Phammut plans to make the very best of this opportunity.

The chamber is divided into three tiers. Each tier was once home to untold number of arcane secrets, but time has done away with most and Phammut has destroyed the rest.

Tactics: Phammut isn't looking to kill the PCs (at least not right away). Rather, he wants to see them suffer. As the PCs make their way down through the tiers, Phammut launches a series of attacks to waylay and distract the heroes.

- **Sphere of Needlefangs:** Suspended from the ceiling, and hidden amid the dozens of hanging nets, globes and icons, is a large sphere containing a needlefang swarm. As PCs pass over the arched pathway, Phammut drops the sphere from above, sending it crashing down onto the lead 2 PCs (+7 vs. Ref, 1d12 damage; knocks target prone and releases needlefang swarm). Characters struck by the sphere must succeed on a DC 20 Acrobatics check or plummet down into the 3rd tier. (See *Into the Fire* below for the potentially lethal consequences of taking the plunge.)
- **Dance of Bones:** While the PCs are distracted with the needlefang swarm, decrepit skeletons rise from their tiers, lumbering to the attack. (See the level descriptions for each tier's total number of skeletons).



- **...Into the Fire:** PCs leaping the tiers, landing directly before the glinting portal, are in for a nasty surprise. The lowest level of the ziggurat (the sole escape from the chamber) is home to a gelatinous cube. The enormous cube occupies the entire level, and cannot climb out of its level.

Phammut is content to watch the action unfold, not partaking in the combat. Alert PCs succeeding on a DC 15 Passive Perception check will hear maniacal giggling throughout the encounter. Phammut remains invisible and follows the party to area 1–3a, where the devil plays its last trick on the PCs.

INVESTIGATING THE WAY STATION

Hidden amid piles of ruined crates, broken casks, and rotting sacks, the tiers' contents offer clues and hints as to the nature of the Parhok enchanters and their forbidden city. PCs taking the time to sift through the detritus discover the following:

Tier One: The mummified body of an enormous ape; seven human brains in cracked casks; 1 *potion of healing*; eight decrepit skeletons.

Tier Two: Three coffers containing ruined parchment; two casks of hardened ink; a narrow wooden box holding one dozen writing quills; 4 decrepit skeletons.

Tier Three: The sole occupant of this level is the gelatinous cube.

ESCAPING THE ZIGGURAT

If PCs succeed in defeating the cube, they can climb through the disintegrating mess to pull the brass portal open. Even in death, the cube poses a danger. PCs must stand in the collapsed jelly to pull the door open, taking 5 points of acid damage per round. Opening the portal requires a DC 20 Strength check.

Phammut, Imp

Tiny immortal humanoid (devil)

Level 3 Lrk XP 150

Init +8 Senses Perception +8
darkvision

HP 40 Bloodied 20
AC 17 Fort 15, Ref 15, Will 15

Spd 4, fly 6 (hover)

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +7 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage.

↑ Tail Sting (standard; refreshes when Phammut uses *vanish*) ♦ Poison: +8 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage, and Phammut makes a secondary attack vs. the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +5 vs. Fort; target takes persistent 5 poison damage and -2 to Will (save ends both).

Vanish (standard; at-will) ♦ Illusion: Phammut becomes invisible until the end of his next turn or until he attacks.

Align Evil Lang Common, Supernal
Str 12 (+2) Dex 17 (+4) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 16 (+4) Int 16 (+4) Cha 16 (+4)

Needlefang Drake Swarm

Medium natural beast (swarm)

Level 2 Sld XP 125

Init +7 Senses Perception +7
Swarm Attack aurora 1: the needlefang drake swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that beings its turn in the aurora

HP 38 Bloodied 19
AC 18 Fort 15, Ref 17, Will 14

Immune fear

Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks

Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks

Spd 7

↑ Swarm of Fangs (standard; at-will): +8 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, or 2d10+4 against a prone target.

↑ Pull Down (minor; at will): +7 vs. Fort; the target is knocked prone.

Align Unaligned Lang —
Str 15 (+3) Dex 18 (+5) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 14 (+3) Int 2 (-3) Cha 10 (+1)

Decrepit Skeletons (10)

Medium natural animate (undead)

Level 1 Min XP 25

Init +3 Senses Perception +2
darkvision

HP 1 (a missed attack never damages a decrepit skeleton)
AC 16 Fort 13, Ref 14, Will 13

Immune disease, poison

Spd 6

↑ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +6 vs. AC; 4 damage.

⚡ Shortbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: Ranged 15/30; +6 vs. AC; 3 damage.

Align Unaligned Lang —
Str 15 (+2) Dex 17 (+3) Wis 14 (+2)
Con 13 (+1) Int 3 (-4) Cha 3 (-4)

Possessions: longsword, shortbow, heavy shield, quiver of 20 arrows

Gelatinous Cube

Large natural beast (blind, ooze)

Level 5 Elite Brt XP 400

Init +4 Senses Perception +3
tremorsense 5

HP 152 Bloodied 76
AC 18 Fort 18, Ref 16, Will 15

Immune gaze

Resist 10 acid

Saving Throws +2

Spd 3, see also *engulf* AP 1

↑ Slam (standard; at-will): +10 vs. Fort; 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Engulf (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid: The gelatinous cube attacks one or two Medium or smaller targets; +8 vs. Ref (automatically hits an immobilized creature). On a hit, the target is grabbed and pulled into the cube's space; the target is dazed and takes persistent 10 acid damage until it escapes the grab. A creature that escapes the grab shifts to a square of its choosing adjacent to the cube. The cube can move normally while creatures are engulfed within it.

Translucent: A gelatinous cube is invisible until seen (Perception DC 25) or until it attacks. Creatures that fail to notice the gelatinous cube might walk into it, automatically becoming engulfed.

Align Unaligned Lang —
Skills Stealth +9
Str 14 (+4) Dex 14 (+4) Wis 13 (+3)
Con 16 (+5) Int 1 (-3) Cha 1 (-3)

AREA 1-3

ACROSS THE BLACK RIVER

Read or paraphrase the following:

Through the narrow crevice you can spy a raging black river that churns its way into the darkness. A pair of bleached tree trunks obscures the way.

Parties finding their way to the Black River have a difficult road ahead of them. Characters attempting to swim in the Black River must succeed on a DC 20 Athletics check every round spent in the water or take 1d12 points of damage from the crashing waves. (Characters failing the check also share the usual risk of drowning.) The river carries the PCs downstream at a rate of 4 squares per round, taking 5 rounds to reach area 1-3a.

Characters can also dislodge the tree trunks, and cling to them as they race down through the darkness. Clinging to one of the floating trunks grants a +3 bonus to the PCs' Athletics checks to swim.

AREA 1-3A

THE DEVIL & THE FORD

Read or paraphrase the following:

The sound of crashing water echoes through the hall, and the walls are slick with condensation. Ahead, the corridor opens onto a dark, raging river. A narrow stone pathway arches over the river.

Beneath the arched path, the river tumbles down in a 30-foot waterfall, crashing into a pool below. If Phammut the Imp survived the encounter in area 1-2, it has followed the party here. Still invisible, Phammut waits for the last PC to begin crossing the ford before pushing the unlucky soul off the arch and over the falls. The PC shoved by the imp must succeed on a DC 17 Acrobatics check or plummet 40 feet down to the water below, taking 2d10 points of falling damage.

The imp immediately becomes visible, and, still cackling maniacally, wings away back to the ziggurat. As soon as Phammut is out of sight of the party, he becomes invisible and flies back to the ford, hoping that PCs might still be lingering on the arch. If so, he repeats his trick, then flies off for good.

Characters swimming down river from area 1-3 must make DC 15 Athletics checks to seize the stone supports before being swept over the falls. If a PC fails the check, the current rips him away from safety, pitching him over the 30-foot falls, for 1d10 points of falling damage.

Characters finding themselves in the pool at the base of the falls must make the usual Athletics checks to stay afloat, but otherwise rescue is not difficult. (The current is slowed here where the river is wider.)

Treasure: Characters taking the time to search the bottom of the pool are rewarded for their thoroughness. Hidden beneath the muck (Perception, DC 20; Athletics, DC 15) the explorer discovers a skeletal corpse. The corpse is chained to a silver coffer (worth 50 gp) loaded down with rocks.

AREA 1-4

WYRMPORTAL

Read or paraphrase the following:

The simple, octagonal chamber is lit by a large stone globe set in the peak of the arched ceiling. Across the chamber is a broad stone altar, and in the center of the chamber is a low, pyramid-like structure. The air is deathly still, and a thick coat of dust covers the rough stone floor.

This chamber is home to the portal permitting passage from the upper works to the forgotten city of the Parhok.

Characters inspecting the altar discover a depression in the shape of a 5-pointed star, with each point of the star cut in the shape of a rampant dragon. The depression matches the star-key in area 1-1a. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a mechanism concealed beneath the altar, and a DC 20 Perception check reveals the chamber's twin secret doors.

The proper way to open the portal is to place the star-key in the slot. Alternately, the PCs can trigger the mechanism by succeeding on a DC 20 Thievery check. Finally, if the PCs discovered the chamber's secret doors, they can be pried open with a DC 25 Strength check.

However the PCs manage to open the secret doors, read or paraphrase the following:

A grating sound echoes through the chamber, and dust begins to sift down from the ceiling. Two of the chamber's eight walls fall away. To one side is a glimmering portal wreathed in blue flames. To the other side is a narrow footbridge arching out into darkness. At the end of the bridge you can spy a glinting silver coffer.

Peering through the portal, the PCs see a dimly lit, otherworldly swamp, shrouded by mists. Heroes venturing through the portal vanish, reappearing in area 2-1.

For heroes unlucky enough to investigate the coffer, see area 1-4a.

AREA 1-4A WITH BAITED DEATH (EL 2, XP 500)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow bridge arches over a vast cavern, terminating at a narrow pillar rising from the gloom below. Seated atop the pillar is a simple silver coffer, glinting in the darkness. Each corner of the coffer appears to have a locking mechanism of some sort.

The silver coffer is nothing more than bait devised to lure explorers to their doom. The coffer is empty, and is merely silver plating over an otherwise worthless wooden coffer. A DC 20 Perception/Dungeoneering check notes that the corridor and the bridge angle downward, and that center of both are slightly concave.

Heroes venturing out onto the pillar trigger a pressure plate, setting into motion a deadly series of events. The first round, the enormous stone globe drops from the ceiling of area 1-4, striking the pyramid and sending the 9-foot globe shooting down the corridor towards area 1-4a. GMs should call for actions, granting each character one minor action, and either a move or standard action.

At the top of the second round, the globe rolls out onto the bridge, causing crushing damage to anyone still in its path. Characters standing to either side of the ledge are safe, and momentarily so are any PCs hanging from the bridge. As the globe continues on its course, the bridge collapses under the weight. The globe continues along its sinking trajectory, and demolishes the top 15 feet of the pillar, before shooting off into darkness.

Anyone clinging to the bridge or pillar plummets down into the darkness, only to be caught 50 feet below in an enormous spider web (taking no damage). The wreckage from the bridge and pillar rain down all around, also caught in the bouncing webs, while the globe tears through the thick webs, crashing to the base of the chamber, some 200 feet below.

A trio of ancient bristleback spiders lair in the webs. They scurry down the sticky strands, hoping to make quick meals of heroes trapped in the webs. The giant spiders lack venom, but their massive fangs are more than adequate to rip apart the heroes trapped in their domain.

The webs stretch across the entire chamber and are treated as difficult terrain, requiring a successful DC 10 Acrobatics check. The webs are highly flammable, and once ignited, the flames radiate out at the rate of 1 square per round in every direction.

Treasure: There is little in the way of treasure here. A trio of corpses hangs from the ceiling of the chamber (Perception, DC 20). Investigating the bundled corpses is a difficult climb, requiring the heroes to succeed on three DC 15 Athletics checks. Upon cutting open the webbed bundle the heroes discover the desiccated and mummified corpses of long-dead adventurers. A thorough examination of the corpses reveals a pouch containing 20 gp, a *potion of healing* in a steel flask, and a single large sapphire (worth 100 gp).

Bristleback Spider (3)

Medium natural beast (spider)

Level 2 Brt

XP 125

Init +3

Senses Perception +1
low-light vision

HP 44

Bloodied 22

AC 15

Fort 16, Ref 14, Will 12

Spd 6, climb 3

↑ **Bite (standard; at-will): +6 vs.AC; 1d10+4 damage.**

☼ **Bristle Burst (standard; encounter):** Close burst 3; the bristleback spider fires a cloud of stinging hairs from its back +4 vs. Ref; 1d4+2 damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the bristleback spider's next turn.

Align Unaligned
Skills Athletics +10

Lang –

Str 18 (+5)

Dex 14 (+3)

Wis 10 (+1)

Con 14 (+3)

Int 1 (–4)

Cha 8 (+0)

⚠️ Crushing Globe

Level 2 Wrd

XP 125

Perception/Dungeoneering DC 20: The character notices the concave corridor and bridge.

Trigger: The trap triggers when a character enters one of its squares.

Immediate Reaction **Melee**

Target: anyone in line with the rolling globe.

Attack: Can't miss

Hit: 3d8+3 damage, and the target is knocked into the webs.

COUNTERMEASURES

- An adjacent character can trigger trap with a DC 15 Thievery check.
- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 20 Thievery check.
- A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap.
- A character can cling to the side of the bridge or pillar, avoiding the crushing globe (Athletics DC 15).



Dragora's Dungeon Encounter Area 2

1 square = 5 feet

North
→

Level 3

ENCOUNTER AREA TWO

THE FORGOTTEN JUNGLES OF PARHOK

Heroes *teleporting* from the wyrmportal in area 1–4 appear at area 2–1. The sole escape from the forgotten jungles is through the stone monument of Tiamat in area 2–5.

The Forgotten Jungles were once farmlands, where the Parhok's slaves toiled day in and day out. Enchanted for enhanced fertility, the farmlands were arcane marvels where fruit and vegetables blossomed and reached maturity in mere days.

Following the fall of the city and the collapse of key caverns, the gardens have languished in disrepair. Aqueducts were quickly overrun, standing water filled much of the caverns, and pallid vines, deadly mushrooms, and black rot overtook the crops.

Now the caverns are a sinister mockery of their previous incarnation. A swampy jungle, constantly wreathed in fetid mists and the overbearing stench of decay, the caverns offer death and danger at every turn.

The caverns' artificial sun still shines overhead, but the light is muted by the thick mists. Explorers climbing more than 40 feet above the jungle floor find that the light shines as brightly as surface sunlight, but at the water level the lighting is little better than a perpetual dusk.

The bogs range from 7 to 10 feet in depth (1d4+6).

For the purposes of this adventure there are no wandering monster encounters in the lost jungles. If the heroes dally at one point in the swamps for 1 hour or more, they are investigated by the nearest living threat (either the sicuriju from area 2–1a or a vine horror from area 2–1b).

AREA 2–1 THE SUNKEN PORTAL

Read or paraphrase the following:

You step through the portal into knee high tepid water. Through the thick mists you can spy a jungle of pale, lifeless trees, hung with white vines and black moss. The stench of rot is thick in the moist air. Above, you can spy a rocky cavern wall rising towards a muted light.

The PCs appear on a raised platform, but even the platform has been overtaken by the rising waters. Explorers will need to leap to the closest fallen tree (Athletics, DC 15) or swim through the brackish waters.

Submerged beneath the water is a depression that matches the five-headed dragon star that activated the portal in area 1–4. However, without a ruby star-key, there is no returning through the portal.

AREA 2–1A DEATH'S COIL (EL 1, XP 400):

Heroes coming within 5 squares of this square draw the attention of a sicuriju, a sinuous 20-foot long boa snake, with scintillating, shimmering scales. The sicuriju attempts to mesmerize a lone PC, before devouring him. If outmatched, the sicuriju retreats towards one of the vine horrors (see 2–1b below), in the hopes that the distraction permits it to make a meal of the PC with the weakest Will defense.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check reveals a simple shrine carved into one of the dead trees littering the pallid jungle. The base of the tree has been carved so that it appears a snake is wrapped around the tree. The snake's "head" is a branch, cunningly carved to resemble a snake's fanged maw. Inside the maw are 20 gp and a single small diamond (worth 100 gp).

No matter how many shimmering boas are encountered, this treasure can only be discovered once.

Sicuriju (Simmering Boa)

Large magical beast (reptile)

Level 5 Elite Sld XP 400

Init +7 Senses Perception +9
low-light vision
HP 128 Bloodied 64
AC 21 Fort 18, Ref 17, Will 16
Saving Throws +2
Spd 6, climb 6 APs 1

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +12 vs.AC; 1d10+5 damage.

↑ Grab and Swallow (standard; at-will): Stunned target only; +12 vs.AC; 1d10+5 damage, the target is grabbed, and the sicuriju makes a secondary attack on the same target.

Secondary Attack: The sicuriju attempts to swallow a Medium or smaller creature it is grabbing; +10 vs. Fort; on a hit, the target is swallowed and restrained (no save) and takes 5 damage plus 5 acid damage on subsequent rounds at the start of the sicuriju's turn. The swallowed creature can make melee basic attacks with one-handed or natural weapons. If the sicuriju dies, any creature trapped inside it can escape as a move action, ending that action in a square formerly occupied by the sicuriju. If the sicuriju fails to swallow a target, the target is still grabbed, and the sicuriju can attempt to swallow it on its next turn. However, if the target is no longer stunned, it cannot be swallowed, although it is still grabbed.

✧ Shimmering Scales (minor; refresh 5,6) ♦ Charm: Close burst 5; +8 vs. Will; the target is stunned (save ends).

Aftereffect: The target is dazed (save ends).

Align Unaligned	Lang Old Common, Draconic	
Skills Stealth +10		
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 15 (+4)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 10 (+2)	Cha 10 (+2)

AREA 2-1B

VINE HORROR (EL 1, XP 200)

Heroes coming within 5 squares of this square draw the attack of a vine horror. Lurking amid the litter of dead trees, the horror uses its *vicious vines* attack on the party before focusing all its attacks on the weakest of the heroes. If pressed in battle, the vine horror vanishes beneath the murky waters, using its malleability to lose pursuers amid a maze of fallen trees and ropey vines.

Vine Horror

Medium natural humanoid (plant)

Level 5 Ctl XP 200

Init +7 Senses Perception +9
blindsight 10

HP 67 Bloodied 33

AC 19 Fort 17, Ref 18, Will 15

Spd 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6

↑ Claw (standard; at-will): +8 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.

✧ Vicious Vines (standard; encounter): Close burst 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Ref; target is restrained and takes persistent 10 damage (save ends both).

Malleability: The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch wide crack. Cracks and other opening more than 1-inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.

Align Evil Lang Common, Elven

Skills Stealth +12

Str 18 (+6) Dex 21 (+7) Wis 14 (+4)

Con 19 (+6) Int 9 (+1) Cha 10 (+2)

AREA 2-1C

QUICKSAND PIT (EL 1, XP 100)

The areas marked 2-1c are quicksand pits. Though appearing as somewhat solid land, PCs entering the squares are immediately attacked (+4 vs. Ref). The pit sustains its attack every round, forcing the PC down 5 feet with each successful attack, and PCs slipping beneath the surface of the pit begin to drown.

The monsters in the caverns are accustomed to feeding off creatures trapped in the pits; for every round a character is caught in a pit, there is a cumulative 1-in-12 chance that the commotion draws the attention of either a sicuriju or a vine horror.

⚠ Quicksand Pit

Level 1 Obs XP 100

Nature DC 23: Character notices that the ground ahead is quicksand.

Trigger: The hazard attacks immediately when a character enters one of its four squares.

Immediate Reaction Melee

Target: Creature in trigger square.

Attack: +4 vs. Ref

Hit: Target falls into pit, and sinks 1 square down. Sinking targets grant CA. Miss: Target returns to last square it occupied and its move action ends immediately. Effect: Entire pit becomes plain to see. Sustain Standard: Atk +4 vs. Fort; target sinks 1 square to a maximum depth of 4 squares, targets in over their head begin to suffocate.

COUNTERMEASURES

- A character in the pit can rise 1 square as a move action by making a special escape attempt, using their Athletics (only) vs. Fort 13.
- A character adjacent to the pit using a long item (like a ten-foot pole, rope, or polearm haft) to help the target escape grants the target a +2 bonus to their escape attempt.
- A character with a rope around their body can easily dive in and retrieve a drowning target.



AREA 2-2 FRACTURED AQUEDUCT

Read or paraphrase the following:

A lone isle rises out of the muck and mire, a welcome refuge from the seemingly endless swamp. Through the dying marsh grasses vines and the rotting stumps of downed trees, you can spy what looks like the ruined structure of an ancient aqueduct jutting out of the cavern wall.

A narrow sinkhole is hidden by the dense grasses part way up the slope. Characters entering the squares risk plummeting 20 feet down to area 2-3 below.

A ruined aqueduct stands at the top of the isle. A constant flow of water pours from the cavern wall, crashing over a broken water wheel and spilling down into a rocky grotto. Descending the slick stones into the sunken cave requires a DC 15 Athletics check; explorers failing the check tumble down the rocky slope to the base of the grotto taking 1d10 falling damage.

AREA 2-2A GROTTO (EL 1, XP 200)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A thin trickle of water splashes down the slick stones into a small cave below. Peering into the darkness you can make out the back of the small cave, scarcely 3 paces deep.

Heroes taking the time to explore the grotto discover a small lair at the rear of the cave, where a pair of zain-kin was trapped in the caverns after the fall of the enchanters of Parhok. The ape-men lived out the remainder of the years as prisoners, fending off underdeep beasts and subsisting on bulbs, roots, and the occasional dire rat.

The pair's enormous skeletons rest at the back of the cave, beside a fire ring built of rough stones. Shards of broken clay pottery are scattered about the lair, but at the very back of the lair, where the cave narrows to only a foot or so in height, are a trio of intact clay pots. The first pot contains a handful of carefully harvested seeds. The second holds bowstrings fashioned of woven sinew and 6 arrowheads. The last pot, the largest of the three, conceals a large bundle swaddled in ancient cloth that threatens to fall apart at a touch. Inside the cloth bundle is an emerald star-key (the key necessary to activate the portal atop the Fane of Tiamat). Cast in the shape of a 5-pointed star, each point resembles a rampant dragonhead. Set in the center of the key is a glowing, faceted emerald (worth 150 gp, though PCs will be hard pressed to find a buyer for an amulet in the shape of an evil god).

⚠ Hidden Sinkhole

Elite Wrd I XP 200

Perception DC 22: The character notices the ground sagging slightly.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a creature enters one of the trap's 2 squares.

Immediate Reaction Melee

Target: the creature(s) that triggered the trap

Attack: +4 vs. Ref

Hit: Target falls down the sinkhole into area 2-3, takes 2d10 damage, and falls prone. Miss: Target returns to square last exited, move action ends. Effect: Sinkhole no longer hidden.

COUNTERMEASURES

- A character can climb down into the sinkhole with a DC 20 Athletics check.

AREA 2-3 SNAKE PIT (EL 1, XP 250)

If the PCs enter the sinkhole, read or paraphrase the following:

The floor of the sinkhole is buried in two feet of black mud. The walls of the sinkhole are large, black stones riddled with scores of small holes. A narrow, muddy tunnel, set halfway up the sinkhole wall, offers means of escape.

As indicated by the multitude of small holes, the sinkhole is home to a swarm of rock vipers. The snakes swarm from the walls, attacking any PC with the bad luck to fall into their lair. For purposes of combat, assume the 2 swarms are able to attack any creature coming into contact with the walls of the sinkhole.

Characters reaching the tunnel can pull themselves to safety. The muddy tunnel is a tight fit, forcing Medium-sized or larger creatures to succeed on a DC 15 Acrobatics check to wiggle through to the other side. This can produce unexpectedly deadly results as the rock vipers continue to attack until every character has exited the sinkhole. The narrow tunnel leads to area 2-4.

Rock Viper Swarm (2)

Medium natural beast (swarm)

Level 2 Skr

XP 125

Init +7

Senses Perception +7

low-light vision

Aurora 1 the rock viper swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its square in the aurora

HP 36 Bloodied 18

AC 16

Fort 13, Ref 16, Will 13

Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks

Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks

Spd 6, climb 6

↑ Plague of Fangs (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison: +7 vs.

AC; 1d6+4 damage, and the rock viper swarm makes a secondary attack on the same target. Secondary Attack: +5 vs. Fort; 1d6+1 poison damage, and persistent 2 poison damage.

Align Unaligned

Lang –

Skills Stealth +10

Str 11 (+1)

Dex 18 (+5)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 12 (+2)

Int 2 (–4)

Cha 10 (+1)

AREA 2–4 SHRINE OF THE SERPENT (EL 2, XP 600)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A simple stone altar, encrusted with the gore of ancient sacrifices, dominates the small cave. An enormous serpent is curled about the shadowy base of the stone, and a peculiar wooden staff is laid across the head of the altar before a common copper basin. The air is unusually cold here, and the shadows persistent, as if resistant to light.

Once a holy shrine sacred to rebellious zain-kin refusing to worship Tiamat, this place has lost none of its potency in the centuries since the fall of the city. Even now, after centuries of disuse, the shrine (and its diabolic patron) wants only for pawns willing to work its sinister schemes.

The serpent curled about the base of the altar is only a mundane skeleton, its skin hanging from the bony ribs. The staff is cut from dark, polished wood, and carved in the shape of a flaring cobra. Both the snake's skin and the staff are potent magic items – if the heroes can win them from the altar's guardian.

The Altar: The altar is formed of a stone slab laid atop two smaller stone blocks. Inside the hammered copper basin is a handful of ancient coins (1d12 cp, 1d6 sp), stained with dried blood.

Coming within 10 feet of the altar causes the shadows surrounding the altar to rise up, in the form of 3 serpentine wraiths (with stats identical to that of a normal wraith, see below). The snakes' hoods flare with aggression, and their shadow-tongues taste the air, nervously.

If the PCs make an offering of coins or blood at the altar, the snakes dissipate, returning back to the shadows from whence they came. If the PCs try to take either the staff or the skin without making an offering at the altar, the serpent wraiths attack.

Treasure: The staff seated upon the altar is a +1 *snake staff*. The partial snakeskin is composed of shimmering, scintillating scales and can be worn as a +1 *cloak of the malison*. See Appendix: New Magic for information on these items.

Serpent Wraith (3)

Medium shadow serpentine (undead)

Level 5 Lrk

XP 200

Init +10

Senses Perception +2

darkvision

HP 37

Bloodied 18

Regeneration 5 (if the serpent wraith takes holy damage, regeneration is negated until the end of the serpent wraith's next turn)

AC 16

Fort 13, Ref 16, Will 14

Immune disease, poison

Resist 10 necro, incorporeal

Vulnerable 5 holy (see also *regeneration* above)

Spd fly 6 (hover), phasing, see also *shadow glide*

↑ Shadow Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Necro: +8 vs. Ref; 1d6 + 4 necro damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

CA ♦ Necro: The serpent wraith deals an extra 1d6 necro damage against any target it has CA against.

Slithering Glide (move; encounter): The serpent wraith shifts 6 squares.

Serpent's Touch: Any humanoid killed by a serpent wraith rises as a free-willed wraith at the start of its creator's next turn, appearing in the space where it died (or in the nearest unoccupied space). Raising the slain creature (using the Raise Dead ritual) does not destroy the spawned wraith.

Align Chaotic evil

Lang Old Common

Skills Stealth +11

Str 4 (–1)

Dex 18 (+6)

Wis 10 (+2)

Con 13 (+3)

Int 6 (+0)

Cha 15 (+4)

AREA 2-5

ABOVE THE CITY (EL1 XP 500)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A stream of fetid swamp water courses down the center of the corridor. After twenty paces or so, the corridor ends, the stream tumbling away into open air. Crouching at the edge, you stare out into a dusky vista. Before you stretches the largest cavern you have ever seen, home to a city of ruins. The occasional flicker of distant torches and bonfires, and the telltale smell of cooking meat, affirms the impossible: the forgotten city of Parhok lives.

Below, seated in the heart of a great plaza, is a mighty temple surrounded by braziers that dance and writhe with flames. The temple, plaza, and indeed all the city, seems oriented towards your vantage point. And for good reason: peering above and below, you realize that you are seated in the stone maw of an enormous, five headed dragon – carved from living rock, and looming over the city like a god.

The monument of Tiamat rises over halfway up the cavern wall, and it is 500 feet to the base of the cliffs. Falling from this height means almost certain death, though not if the heroes take commonsense precautions (such as tying into their ropes, and descending one at a time). If the heroes insist on descending on their own, without the aid of ropes, the GM should feel justified in calling for no less than five DC 20 Athletics checks.

Of more immediate threat is the host of spiretop drakes lairing atop the monument. The drakes swoop down from above, snatching small items from the PCs. The drakes pose little danger unless one of them is harmed. Then the entire flock turns on the heroes, focusing their attacks on the character highest on the monument.

Treasure: The spiretop drakes make their lair in one of the lower maws. Heroes investigating the maw discover a nest of twigs, reeds, and grasses. Tucked into the cracks and crevices of the nest are 3 +1 *shuriken*, a *potion of healing*, and 32 sp.

Green Spiretop Drake (5)

Small natural beast (reptile)

Level 1 Skr

XP 100

Init +6

Senses Perception +3

HP 33

Bloodied 16

AC 16

Fort 10, Ref 13, Will 12

Spd 4, fly 8 (hover), see also *flyby attack*

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.

↑ Snatch (standard; at-will): +4 vs. Ref; 1 damage, and the spiretop drake snatches a small object or weapon from the target.

↑ Flyby Attack (standard; at-will) The green spiretop drake flies up to 8 squares and makes one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The drake doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.

Align Unaligned

Lang —

Str 11 (+0)

Dex 18 (+4)

Wis 16 (+3)

Con 13 (+1)

Int 3 (-4)

Cha 11 (+0)



ENCOUNTER AREA THREE

THE FORGOTTEN CITY OF THE PARHOK

By the time the PCs reach the Forgotten City, they should be close to second level. This level is an opportunity to get the party to second level before facing Dragora, and offers many opportunities to level up.

The City of Parhok is home to thousands of ape-men. Three tribes dominate the ruined city: House Tyrax, House Vedrius, and House Zamosh. The tribes have a bloody history of internecine warfare, battling one another for precious resources like food and water, and the prestige that comes with occupying the sacred territory between the Fane of the Dragon and the monument of Tiamat. Each tribe keeps vigilant watch over its territory; strange ape-men and foreigners are immediately captured and brought before the House's leader.

The arrival of Dragora and Mouringlar brought an end to the bloody wars, but running skirmishes and raids take place every night, and it would take only the slightest misstep to bring back the wars of old.

GMs Note: Unless the PCs take extraordinary precautions (and are exceedingly lucky), they will encounter one or more of the various zain-kin factions. While PCs might be able to battle their way through many encounters, the combined might of any one faction is sufficient to slaughter the hardiest band of explorers. Heroes hoping to survive and infiltrate the Fane of the Dragon (area 4-1) will need to think (and speak!) on their toes.

The zain-kin are not a monolithic group, and it is a mistake to portray them as a single-minded band of "dumb monsters." Your game will benefit immensely once the heroes recognize the feuding factions, and turn the age-old rivalries to their advantage.

Running these encounters requires a degree of skill as a GM, as you will have to assume the roles of the various warring factions. Study the encounters beforehand, and you should have little trouble capturing the multi-layered plots of the feuding zain-kin. It is up to the PCs to determine how best to turn the warring factions against one another. The heroes' success or failure can hinge upon which camp (if any) they throw their lots with.

Following is summary of the three dominant houses, their goals and leaders:

HOUSE TYRAX

Weakest of the three, what House Tyrax lacks in might, it makes up for in guile. A band of assassins and toughs, the zain-kin of House Tyrax respect stealth and cunning above brute strength. They are recognized for their dyed black armor and weapons, and dark hoods.

Adventurers venturing into Tyrax neighborhoods will meet little resistance at first. The zain-kin permit the PCs to press into Tyrax territory, then stage an ambush composed of 10 hastati minions, 2 zain-kin infiltrators, and one zain-kin centurion. The centurion and minions surround the party, while the infiltrators work to pick off exposed leaders and strikers.

Zain-kin of House Tyrax don't seek to kill the PCs. Instead they try to capture the PCs and bring them before their master: Scains the Black (see area 3-4).

The leaders of House Tyrax are heretical, secretly denying the divinity of Mouringlar. Instead, the zain-kin worship an ancient snake god (the same found in area 2-4). If the PCs possess the *snake staff* or *skin of the malison*, or convincingly profess their dedication to the snake god, the zain-kin welcome them as brother devotees. If the PCs can convince Scains the Black that they seek to slay Mouringlar and Dragora, House Tyrax may even aid them in their quest. (For more details, see area 3-4).

House Tyrax disdains open war, but if forced onto the battlefield, the zain-kin of House Tyrax can summon a total of 150 hastati minions, 30 zain-kin infiltrators, and 15 centurions.

HOUSE VEDRIUS

Strongest of the three factions, House Vedrius dominates its fellows through force of violence. A tribe of warriors, House Vedrius recognizes only martial prowess, disparaging all other sources of power as unclean and wicked. The warriors of House Vedrius are easily recognized by their polished bronze armor and distinctive shields emblazoned with a multicolored, five-headed dragon.

House Vedrius maintains a strict watch over its territory. Adventuring parties failing to beat 3 successful DC 20 Stealth checks are stopped by a troop of 7 legionnaires, and 3 centurions. The troop demands the immediate, unconditional surrender of the PCs. Any resistance is instantly met with force, with reinforcements of an additional troop arriving every 1d12+5 rounds. The zain-kin have little interest in sparing the PCs, save for two exceptions: wizards and warlocks will be captured

Dragora's Dungeon Encounter Area 3

1 square = 50 feet



to sacrifice to Tiamat, and the party's strongest warrior will be captured and brought to the Test of Arms in area 3-2.

The masters of House Vedrius are fanatical devotees of Mouringlar, believing the green dragon to be an incarnation of the dread wyrm Tiamat. Explorers proclaiming faith to a different god will be struck down without a thought. Those claiming to worship Tiamat will be held in suspicion until they can be brought directly before the Scion of Tiamat (Mouringlar, see area 4-1).

Always eager to do battle, the zain-kin of House Vedrius can field 100 hastati minions, 75 legionnaires, and 25 centurions.

HOUSE ZAMOSH

The rising star among the 3 factions, House Zamosh came to power a mere quarter century ago, when its elders rediscovered the art of magic. Vilified by the Vedrius, and feared by Tyrax, the masters of House Zamosh alone dare to dabble in the lost enchantments of Parhok. The casters of House Zamosh are known for wearing simple black tabards, embroidered with a large, silver skull.

Of the 3 dominant houses, Zamosh alone offers to parlay with explorers. If the PCs enter its territory, they are met with a group of 10 hastati, 3 signifiers, and 3 black guard drakes. The zain-kin are cautious but courteous, inviting the PCs to return to their tower (area 3-3) for an audience with The Seven. If the PCs insist on resorting to blows, the zain-kin make a cautious withdraw, before rallying their allies and launching a focused assault on the party.

SKILL TESTS: PARLAYING WITH THE ZAIN-KIN

In all likelihood, at some point in the adventure the PCs will attempt to parlay with the zain-kin, either in an attempt to dupe the leaders or turn one faction against another. While it is highly unlikely that they will dissuade any of the three factions from their ultimate goals, a few well-placed words of diplomacy can easily earn the PCs an edge over the less sophisticated ape-men.

Old Common: The zain-kin speak only a halting, antiquarian dialect of Common. In order to effectively manipulate the ape-men, a PC must first succeed on a DC 15 History check, demonstrating a proficiency with the ancient tongue. This permits the PCs to serve as a translator between the party and the zain-kin.

Each tribe has a different tolerance for diplomacy. In game terms this determines the number of DC 20 Diplomacy checks a diplomat can fail at before the zain-kin leader calls an end to negotiations. House Zamosh tolerates 4 failures, House Tyrax tolerates 3, and the warlike House Vedrius tolerates a mere 2 failures. Regardless of failures, no PC can make more than 5 attempts in a single, protracted conversation.

Slips of the Tongue: For every successful Diplomacy check, a PC gleans a bit more information about the city and its politics. GMs are encouraged to role-play this; with the brutish ape-men growing ever more angry at each other as they let their "secrets" slip.

Number of Successes (DC 20)	Secret
1	The bloodthirsty zain-kin have always warred with one another. Internecine warfare is always just one word away.
2	The avatar of Tiamat, a verdant-scaled dragon calling itself Mouringlar, arrived with its human concubine not long ago.
3	Mouringlar and its concubine reside in the Fane of Tiamat, the mighty temple situated in the heart of the grand plaza. They can come and go from the city through a portal hidden inside the Fane.
4	Only House Vedrius really believes Mouringlar is the avatar of Tiamat. The agnostics of House Zamosh refuse to decide, while the heretics of House Tyrax secretly worship a snake god.
5	Be cautious trusting the Houses. The zain-kin of Tyrax are nothing but cowards, those sworn to House Zamosh always look out for themselves, and those loyal to House Vedrius are blindly devoted to their dragon god.

Zamosh's courtesy shouldn't be mistaken for weakness. The House has but a single aim: using the PCs to their advantage against House Vedrius.

The elders of House Zamosh are not fanatical devotees or heathen rebels. Rather, they recognize Mouringlar for what he is: a powerful ally. Their aim is to win the favor of the green dragon and his human lover, earning them the right to rule the lost City of Parhok uncontested.

If a battle suits their aims, the zain-kin of House Zamosh can field a total of 75 hastati minions, 25 trained black guard drakes, and 35 zain-kin signifiers.

ADVENTURES WITHIN THE CITY

Documenting every cranny and secret of the lost City of Parhok would be an encyclopedic undertaking. For the purposes of this adventure, we have included sufficient detail to allow GMs to run a convincing scenario in the city. GMs seeking greater details are encouraged to add their own details to the city. See Further Adventures at the end of the adventure for ideas on launching entire campaigns set within the city.

A large eldritch globe lights the cavern, hanging in the air high above the city. It alternates between 4-hour cycles of day and night. The globe's magic has weakened considerably since the fall of the Parhok, so that now the "daytime" cycle offers little more light than dusk on the surface lands, and during the "nighttime" cycle the city is inky black, save for the faint outline of the blue globe hanging above in the darkness.

Battles in the City: The map of the lost City of Parhok includes any number of potential city encounters. Any time the GM needs tactical details, select an area of the city, and enlarge the basic shapes of ruins and streets to battle map scale to use at the table as needed.

Wandering Encounters: Unless the PCs are in the company of the zain-kin, there is a 2-in-10 (1 or 2 on d10) chance of a wandering encounter. If the PCs rest amid the ruins, this chance is doubled unless they take pains to conceal their camp (Stealth, DC 15). If a wandering encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 and consult the following table. Note that if the PCs have succeeded in eluding the zain-kin's usual defenses, encountering additional ape-men will certainly bring a swift and violent reprisal.

Id12	Encounter
1-3	Three giant rats and one rat swarm
4-5	Two bristleback spiders
6-7	Three feral black guard drakes
8	One elite mad wraith
9	Two elite shadowhunter bats
10	Ten zain-kin hastati and one zain-kin centurion
11	Five zain-kin legionnaires and one zain-kin centurion
12	Two zain-kin infiltrators

Giant Rat

Small natural beast

Level 1 Min	XP 25	
Init +3	Senses Perception +5 low-light vision	
HP 1 (a missed attack never damages a giant rat)		
AC 15	Fort 13, Ref 15, Will 12	
Spd 6, climb 3		
↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +6 vs.AC; 3 damage.		
Align Unaligned	Lang –	
Str 12 (+1)	Dex 17 (+3)	Wis 10 (+0)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 2 (–4)	Cha 6 (–2)

Rat Swarm

Medium natural beast (swarm)

Level 2 Skr	XP 125	
Init +6	Senses Perception +6 low-light vision Swarm Attack Aurora 1; the rat swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aurora	
HP 36	Bloodied 18	
AC 15	Fort 12, Ref 14, Will 11	
Spd 4, climb 2		
↑ Swarm of Teeth (standard; at-will): +6 vs.AC; 1d6+3 damage, and persistent 3 damage (save ends).		
Align Unaligned	Lang –	
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 10 (+1)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 2 (–3)	Cha 9 (+0)

Bristleback Spider

Medium natural beast (spider)

Level 2 Brt XP 125

Init +3 Senses Perception +1
low-light vision

HP 44 Bloodied 22
AC 15 Fort 16, Ref 14, Will 12

Spd 6, climb 3

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +6 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage.

☼ Bristle Burst (standard; encounter): Close burst 3; the bristleback spider fires a cloud of stinging hairs from its back +4 vs. Ref; 1d4+2 damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the bristleback spider's next turn.

Align Unaligned Lang —

Skills Athletics +10

Str 18 (+5) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3) Int 1 (–4) Cha 8 (+0)

Black Guard Drake

Small natural beast (reptile)

Level 2 Brt XP 125

Init +3 Senses Perception +7

HP 48 Bloodied 24
AC 15 Fort 15, Ref 13, Will 12

Immune fear (while within 2 squares of an ally)

Spd 6

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, or 1d10 + 9 damage while within 2 squares of an ally.

Align Unaligned Lang —

Str 16 (+4) Dex 15 (+3) Int 3 (–3)
Con 18 (+5) Wis 12 (+2) Cha 12 (+2)

Elite Mad Wraith

Medium shadow humanoid (undead)

Level 6 Elite Ctl XP 500

Init +8 Senses Perception +6
darkvision

Mad Whispers (Psychic) aurora 3; deafened creatures are immune, any enemy in the aurora at the start of its turn takes 5 psychic damage and is dazed until the start of its next turn. (If the mad wraith takes holy damage, the aura is negated until the end of the mad wraith's next turn.)

HP 108 Bloodied 54

Immune disease, poison

Resist 10 necro, incorporeal

Vulnerable 5 holy

AC 20 Fort 15, Ref 20, Will 19

Saving Throws +2

Spd fly (hover), phasing APs 1

↑ Touch of Madness (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic: +8 vs. Will; 1d6 + 5 psychic damage, and the target takes a –2 penalty to Will defense (save ends).

↑ Touch of Chaos (standard; refresh 4–6) ♦ Psychic: +9 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target moves up to its speed and makes a basic attack against its nearest ally as a free action.

Spawn Wraith: Any humanoid killed by a mad wraith rises as a free-willed mad wraith at the start of its creator's next turn, appearing in the space where it died (or in the nearest unoccupied space). Raising the slain creature (using the Raise Dead ritual) does not destroy the spawned wraith.

Align Chaotic evil Lang Common

Skills Stealth +13

Str 6 (+1) Dex 20 (+8) Wis 6 (+1)
Con 12 (+4) Int 11 (+3) Cha 19 (+7)

Elite Shadowhunter Bats (2)

Medium shadow beast

Level 3 Elite Lrk XP 300

Init +9 Senses Perception +7
darkvision

HP 76 Bloodied 38
AC 19 Fort 16, Ref 19, Will 12

Saving Throws +2

Spd 2 (clumsy), fly 8, see also *flyby attack*
APs 1

↑ Tail Slash (standard; at-will): +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage. In dim light or darkness, a shadowhunter bat gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 6 damage.

↑ Flyby Attack (standard; at-will): The shadowhunter bat flies up to 8 squares and makes one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The bat doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.

Align Unaligned Lang —

Skills Stealth +10

Str 13 (+2) Dex 18 (+5) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3) Int 2 (–3) Cha 11 (+1)

Zain-Kin Hastati

Medium natural humanoid

Level 2 Min XP 31

Init +3 Senses Perception +2,
low-light vision

HP 1 (a missed attack never damages a zain-kin hastati)

AC 17 Fort 16, Ref 14, Will 13

Spd 7

↑ Longspear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: Reach 2; +5 vs. AC; 5 damage.

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin hastati receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil Lang Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +6, Endurance +4

Str 19 (+5) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 13 (+2)

Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 9 (+0)

Possessions: leather armor; longspear

Zain-Kin Legionnaire

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 1 Sld XP 100

Init +4 Senses Perception +2
low-light vision

HP 31 Bloodied 15

AC 19 Fort 16, Ref 13, Will 13

Spd 6

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +8 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.

⚡ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: Ranged 10/20; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard, encounter): The zain-kin legionnaire can make 2 short sword attacks against a bruised opponent.

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin legionnaire receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil Lang Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +7

Str 20 (+5) Dex 14 (+2) Wis 14 (+2)

Con 15 (+2) Int 10 (+0) Cha 10 (+0)

Possessions: scale armor, heavy shield, short sword, 3 javelins

Zain-Kin Centurion

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 3 Sld (Leader) XP 150

Init +5 Senses Perception +4
low-light vision

HP 48 Bloodied 24

AC 20 Fort 18, Ref 14, Will 15

Spd 6

↑ Long Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs. AC; 1d8+5 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin centurion can make 2 longsword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

✧ Rally Point (standard; refresh 5–6): Close burst 5; allies in the burst shift 3 squares. Allies that end up adjacent to the zain-kin centurion gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls until the end of the zain-kin centurion's next turn.

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin legionnaire receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil Lang Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +11

Str 21 (+6) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 16 (+4)

Con 16 (+4) Int 12 (+2) Cha 13 (+2)

Possessions: chainmail, heavy shield, longsword

Zain-Kin Infiltrator

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 5 Lurk XP 200

Init +10 Senses Perception +9
low-light vision

HP 56 Bloodied 28

AC 19 Fort 17, Ref 18, Will 16

Spd 7

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin infiltrator can make 2 short sword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

⚡ Assassin's Mark (minor; refresh 4–6): Ranged 5; the target is marked and grants the zain-kin infiltrator CA until the end of the zain-kin infiltrator's next turn.

CA: The zain-kin infiltrator deals an additional 2d6 damage on melee attacks against any target is has CA against.

Align Evil Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +6, Stealth +11

Str 16 (+5) Dex 19 (+6) Wis 14 (+4)

Con 15 (+4) Int 14 (+4) Cha 10 (+2)

Possessions: leather armor, short sword

EXPLORING THE RUINS

When the PCs elect to explore ruins as they make their way through the city, roll 1d12 and consult the following tables to determine the ruin's contents. Individual ruins can be as small as a single building, or as large as a block stretching along the crumbling roadway.

Table A: Ruins

1d12	Result
1–4	Empty ruin. Rough stone walls, broken tiles and plaster are all that remain.
5–6	Appears empty. A close search (Perception, DC 17) reveals otherwise. See table B.
7–9	Squatters. The ruin is home to 1d6+2 zain-kin hastati minions. The ape-men flee from a fight, summoning their comrades at the first opportunity.
10–11	Lair. See table C.
12	Special. See table D.

Table B: Secrets

1d12	Result
1	Corpse: The PCs discover the ancient, mundane skeleton of a Parhok enchanter. The skeleton still wears the tattered robes of its order. In the ruins around the skeleton are 1d20 ancient gold coins, an empty scroll case, and a rusted ceremonial dagger.
2	Cache: The explorers uncover a locked coffer (Thievery, DC 15) buried amid the rubble. Inside the coffer are 10 silver bars (worth 5 gp each) swaddled in crumbling silk.
3	Ruined Library: The PCs discover a library beneath the fallen debris. If they perform a thorough search of the rubble (2 hours or more) they discover a bejeweled dagger with a pommel forged in the shape of a raging demon. The dagger functions as a +1 wand. The zain-kin of House Zamosh recognize the blade, and will stop at nothing to possess it.
4	Ancient Armory: The ruins conceal an armory. If the PCs can remove the fallen granite pillar (Strength, DC 22), they discover a trove of 3 suits of ancient zain-kin scale armor. The armors are considered heirlooms, and PCs donning the scale mail draw the enmity of the zain-kin of House Vedrius.
5	Slavehold: The PCs discover the ruined quarters of a Parhok slavemaster. Amid the fallen stones and scattered rubble, the PCs uncover a horned great helm that

completely covers the face of the wearer: a *helm of the dread lord* (see Appendix: New Magic).

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 6 | Healing Spring: A trickle of clean, pure water drips from the basin of a shattered fountain. Drinking directly from the fountain allows a PC to recover any spent HP surges and grants 1d12 temporary HP in the next encounter. |
| 7 | Ruined Alchemist Lab: Beneath a fallen beam the PCs discover a crushed shelf. Most of the shelf's contents were ruined ages ago, but 3 <i>potions of healing</i> yet retain their potency. |
| 8 | Hidden Tomb: The PCs unearth a stone sarcophagus carved in the likeness of a demonic wizard. Prying loose the lid (Strength, DC 20) releases a Parhok wraith (see wandering monsters, above). |
| 9 | Orb of the Parhok: Gleaming beneath the sand is a forgotten obsidian orb that glows with a cold inner light. The orb functions as a +1 <i>magical orb</i> , but draws the immediate attention of the signifers of House Zamosh. So long as a PC possesses the orb, he cannot hide from agents of House Zamosh. |
| 10–12 | Forgotten Bolt Hole: The PCs uncover a cellar that survived the fall of the city. Though tight quarters, the cellar offers a safe place for the PCs to rest undisturbed (no chance of wandering encounters). |

Table C: Lairs

1d12	Result
1–3	Rats! The heroes are overtaken by a seething tide of 3 rat swarms.*
4–5	Spider-haunted ruins: The ruins are home to 3 bristleback spiders.*
6–7	Bats' Nest: The PCs disturb a pair of lurking shadowhunter bats.*
8–10	Drakes: The ruins are home to 4 feral black guard drakes. If the PCs withdraw, the drakes hold their attacks, but if the PCs attack the drakes, they respond in kind.*
11	Mad Hermit: The ruins are occupied by a zain-kin driven insane from studying the magic of the Parhok. The wild-eyed ape-man leaps immediately to the attack, doing his best to destroy the PCs with his spells.
12	Re-roll on table D: Special.

* For stats see wandering monsters above.

Mad Zain-Kin Hermit

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 2 Ctl (Leader) XP 125

Init +3 Senses Perception +5
low-light vision
HP 39 Bloodied 19
AC 17 Fort 15, Ref 14, Will 16
Spd 6

↑ Signum Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +7 vs.AC; 1d8+3 damage.

⚡ Wrath of the Legion (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic: Ranged 10; +6 vs.Will; 2d4+4 psychic damage.

☼ Sigil of Insanity (standard; encounter) ♦ Psychic, Fear: Close burst 5; +6 vs.Will; target is dazed until the end of the mad hermit's next turn. Aftereffect: the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

☼ Sigil of Destruction (standard; refresh 5-6) ♦ Force: Close burst 3; target enemies; +5 vs. Ref; 2d8+4 force damage, and the target is knocked prone.

☼ Sigil of Terror (standard; refresh 6) ♦ Psychic: Close burst 3; +5 vs.Will; and the target is dazed and weakened (save ends both).

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the mad hermit receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin
Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +5, Religion +7

Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 18 (+5)
Con 15 (+3) Int 12 (+2) Cha 16 (+4)

Possessions: scale armor, signum spear

Table D: Special

Id 12	Result
1-3	Residual Enchantment: The explorers unleash trapped magic that washes over the party in flash of light (forcing an immediate roll on the wandering encounter table). The rush of magic empowers arcane heroes, granting them a +2 bonus to attack rolls with any power with the arcane key word. The effect wears off after 3 encounters.
4-6	Anointed Blades: The PCs discover a towering statue of an armored zain-kin wielding a broken greatsword. The statue's shattered blade continually weeps oil, which has pooled on the ground before the statue. Any weapon anointed in the oil receives a temporary +2 bonus to damage rolls, but the anointed weapons break whenever a natural 1 is rolled on an attack. Both effects last for 3 encounters.

- 7-9 **Lost Shrine:** The PCs unearth a small clay idol depicting a woman, heavy with child. Sheltered inside a wooden coffer, the idol adds +2 to attack rolls with any power with the divine key word, but also doubles the likelihood of wandering encounters. The idol shatters after 3 encounters.
- 10-12 **Black Anvil:** The heroes discover an enormous black stone anvil carved out of the rock that forms the cavern floor. Beside the anvil rests a large, dusty hammer. Any martial character striking a bladed weapon between the hammer and anvil, endows the weapon with the ability to deal an extra 5 necrotic damage for the next three encounters.

AREA 3-1 MONUMENT OF TIAMAT (VARIABLE)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The wall of the cavern has been carved into an enormous statue depicting a five-headed dragon. Each terrible head is cast back, as if to roar divine fury. A small stream runs from the base of the monument, feeding a dark, silent lake. A crumbling tower stands guard over the lake, watch fires burning in the darkness.

Across the stream are the ruins of a once-mighty city. Through the gloom you can spy small campfires and torches moving in the darkness. And at the heart of the city, a towering black pyramid, lit by massive braziers.

Characters descending from area 2-5 arrive at area 3-1. The tower across the small lake is home to House Zamosh (area 3-3). The temple in the heart of the city is the Fane of Tiamat (area 4-1).

Explorers that exercise caution as they descend the face of the monument go unnoticed by the city's inhabitants. If the heroes insist on using lights, or fight a prolonged battle with spiretop drakes (see area 2-5), a troop from House Vedrius is sent to investigate. The troop is composed of 10 hastati, 7 legionnaires, and 3 centurions. The zain-kin call for the PCs' immediate surrender. If the heroes resist, the ape-men try to hold them off until reinforcements arrive. Once the war horn is sounded, reinforcements of an additional 5 hastati and 3 legionnaires arrive every 1d12+5 rounds.

Zain-kin hastati, legionnaires, and centurions: See above.

AREA 3-2
PLAZA OF THE KINGMAKER
(EL 3, XP 700)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The large plaza is lit by dozens of smoking torches evenly placed around its circumference. The air stinks of spilled blood, and the stained flagstones are sticky with gore. At the center of the plaza is a solitary boulder. Buried into the side of the stone is an enormous longsword. In the dim light you can see that the weapon is wreathed in faint purple flames.

The Plaza of the Kingmaker is the Old Common meeting ground for zain-kin of House Vedrius. Heroes who are captured, or that seek to parlay with the house, are brought here before Domastrus, an enormous, silver-backed zain-kin warlord. The master of House Vedrius bears the scars of hundreds of battles, and since his throat was slit in battle, his voice is no more than a deep, growling whisper. Though a cunning leader, Domastrus is exceedingly confident in the might of House Vedrius. This overconfidence leads him to dismiss the PCs as inconsequential, cowardly worms.

The Test of Arms: If the PCs are brought here, either through capture or parlay, Domastrus interrogates them, then orders their execution. If PCs protest (an act of valor that surprises Domastrus) he offers them a gambit: defeat him in combat and he will turn the heroes free. Domastrus orders the PCs to select a champion and stages the battle before the entire House, in the heart of the Kingmaker Plaza. While Domastrus battles the PCs' champion, the rest of the party is watched over by 5 hastati minions.

The combat is anything but fair. Domastrus fights with a pair of centurions as his shield men. At first the centurions do not attack, simply warding their master and hemming in the PC. But if Domastrus is bruised, the centurions leap into the fray, attacking in defense of their master. An uproar surges through the crowd, granting quick PCs the opportunity to make their escape.

Treasure: The Kingmaker Plaza takes its name from the +2 *flameburst longsword* buried in the stone set in the heart of the plaza. Vedrius legend holds that the spear can only be drawn from the stone by the True King of the Zain-Kin. The arrival of Mouringlar and Dragora ended all attempts at drawing the spear, but the legend lives deeply with the zain-kin. If one of the PCs succeeds on a DC 25 Strength check, *Kingmaker* tears free of the stone. All zain-kin, save Domastrus, ceases all actions, stunned into silence, affording the PCs 3 free rounds. In subsequent rounds, the zain-kin forces dissolve into chaos, with some ape-men

fleeing, others giving half-hearted chase to the PCs, and others attacking Domastrus and the centurions.

Regardless, once *Kingmaker* has been stolen, the might of House Vedrius is broken. So long as the PCs have the long spear in their possession, they need not fear reprisal from the zain-kin of House Vedrius.

Domastrus, Zain-Kin Warlord

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 5 Elite Sld (Leader) XP 400

Init +4	Senses Perception +2 low-light vision
HP 124	Bloodied 62
AC 24	Fort 18, Ref 17, Will 18
Saving Throws +2	
Spd 6	APs 1

↑ +1 *thundering longsword* (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +11 vs.AC; 1d10+6 damage (crit + 1d6).

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): Domastrus can make 2 longsword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

↑ Hold the Line (standard; encounter) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +11 vs.AC; 1d10+6 damage until the end of Domastrus' next turn, all adjacent allies gain a +2 power bonus to AC and cannot be pushed, pulled, or slid.

↑ Stand the Fallen (standard; daily) ♦ Healing, Martial, Weapon: +11 vs.AC; 3d10+6 damage, and all allies within 10 squares can spend a HP surge and regain 2 additional hit points.

↑ Thundering Strike (free; daily) ♦ Thunder, Weapon: Requires +1 *thundering longsword* Domastrus deals an additional 1d8 thunder damage and pushes the target 1 square.

↑ Viper Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +11 vs.AC; 1d10+6 damage; if the target shifts before the start of Domastrus' next turn, it provokes an opportunity attack from ally of his choice.

※ Inspiring Word (minor; 2/encounter) ♦ Martial, Healing: Close burst 5; targets Domastrus or one ally in burst; target can spend a HP surge and regain an additional 1d6 hit points.

Knight's Move (move; encounter): Ranged 10; one of Domastrus' allies takes a move action as a free action.

Combat Leader: Domastrus and each ally within 10 squares who can see and hear him gain a +2 power bonus to initiative.

Align Evil	Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin	
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +6, Intimidate +9		
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 14 (+4)	Wis 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 12 (+3)	Cha 14 (+4)

Possessions: +1 *thundering longsword*, +1 chainmail, light shield

Two zain-kin centurions: See above.

AREA 3-3
TOWER OF THE MAGI

Read or paraphrase the following:

The crumbling tower stands on the shore of the still lake, like an ominous specter of the past. Carefully polished stone, gracefully arching buttresses, and impossibly delicate spires – all have returned to rubble and dust. Now pelts hang from the crude windows bored into the tower, the walls are shored up with piles of granite bocks, and a sooty fire burns atop a makeshift wooden tower built atop the stonework.

The ruined tower is the home of the elders of House Zamosh. Though crude and barbaric by most standards, the tribe is composed of the finest spellcasters to emerge from the ranks of zain-kin.

Of the three dominant tribes, House Zamosh is the most cunning. Their study of lost tomes has taught them to turn the unexpected to their advantage. The other tribes of zain-kin see the PCs arrival as a threat, but House Zamosh sees it as an opportunity.



The once-mighty tower is now little more than a hollowed out ruin. The tower still has its original ground floor, but the second and third floor are built of wooden planks, scabbed together with rotting rope and dried sinew.

Test of the Magi: The House is ruled by 3 elders. If the PCs seek to parlay with the House, or are captured in battle, they are brought back to the tower and welcomed by the elders. The PCs are treated with the utmost courtesy (though the zain-kin never let their guard down). If needed, the zain-kin offer to protect the party from other houses, offering the PCs shelter and sustenance, all the while working the PCs for information, eager to determine their purpose in the city. For their part, the elders willingly share all they know about the city. (There “trust” is calculated; see below.)

Clever PCs might try to turn this to their advantage, asking the zain-kin for an audience with Mouringlar. Trusting PCs might reveal their quest, and ask that the zain-kin smuggle them into the Fane of Tiamat.

Regardless, the Zamosh have one plan: to escort the PCs to the Fane of Tiamat, and then betray them to Mouringlar. (See area 4–1 for more details.)

Treasure: In the course of their studies, House Zamosh has amassed a fair quantity of eldritch lore. Much of this is worthless (either destroyed by careless zain-kin or basic arcane knowledge understood by every modern wizard or warlock) and sorting the wheat from the chaff requires a skilled eye.

Heroes examining the tower find a collection of chests, coffers, and scroll cases. Each contains scores of fragile vellum scrolls. Many are non-magical in nature or have been ruined in the centuries since the fall of the Parhok. However, a DC 15 Arcana check, combined with successful DC 20 Perception checks turns up a wealth of ancient knowledge. For every successful Perception check roll 1d8 and consult the following table. Each search attempt takes 1 hour, and any PC succeeding on the requisite Arcana check can search up to 5 times.

1d8	Discovery
1	Ritual Scroll: <i>Silence</i>
2	Ritual Scroll: <i>Knock</i>
3	Ritual Scroll: <i>Eye of Alarm</i>
4	Ritual Scroll: <i>Detect Secret Doors</i>
5	Ritual Scroll: <i>Arcane Lock</i>
6	Ritual Scroll: <i>Magic Circle</i>
7	Ritual Scroll: <i>Raise Dead</i>
8	Roll twice.

The Zamosh elders refuse to allow anyone close to their collections of lore, defending it with their lives.

Zamosh Elder, Zain-Kin Warlock

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin)

Level 5 Elite Skr

XP 400

Init +4

Senses Perception +3

low-light vision

HP 132

Bloodied 66

AC 20

Fort 17, Ref 18, Will 18

Saving Throws +2

Spd 7

APs 1

↑ Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +6 vs.AC; 1d8+2 damage.

⚡ Eldritch Blast (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Item: Ranged 10; +8 vs. Ref; 1d10+6 damage (1d6+17).

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The elder can make 2 mace attacks against a bruised opponent.

⚡ Fiery Bolt: (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Fire, Item: +8 vs. Ref; 3d6+6 fire damage, and adjacent creatures take 1d6+7 fire damage.

⚡ Hellish Rebuke (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Fire, Item: +8 vs. Ref; 1d6+6 fire damage. If the elder takes damage before the end of his next turn, the target takes an extra 1d6+6 fire damage.

🔥 Avernian Eruption (standard; daily) ♦ Arcane, Fire, Item: Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Ref; 2d10+6 fire damage, and the target takes 5 persistent fire damage (save ends).

Fiendish Resilience (minor; daily) ♦ Arcane: The elder gains 9 temporary hit points.

Warlock's Curse (minor, at will): The elder places a curse upon any target he can see. If he deals damage to that target, he can elect to deal +1d6 damage. In addition, when a creature under the warlock's curse is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, he heals 5 hit points. Lastly, when an elder places a curse on an opponent he gains a +1 power bonus to AC until the start of his next turn.

Align Evil

Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +5, Arcana +8, Endurance +8, Intimidate +9

Str 12 (+3)

Dex 14 (+4)

Wis 12 (+3)

Con 18 (+6)

Int 12 (+3)

Cha 14 (+4)

Possessions: mace, +1 rod of dark reward, +1 leather armor

AREA 3–4 ROGUE'S HOLLOW

Read or paraphrase the following:

The city gives way here, opening to a large rocky depression. Perhaps once a sinkhole or collapse, the rocky depression has been cleared, forming a series of descending tiers. Each rocky tier is lit by a number of flickering candles, lending the depression an eerie aura, as if it were shifting just beyond your line of sight. The ground here is littered with thousands of strange white flecks.

Rogue's Hollow is the name given to the old sinkhole used as a meeting place by House Tyrax. Heroes inspecting the "white flecks" littering the ground discover that they are small scales – literally thousands of individual snake scales. Though the hollow appears empty, the PCs cannot press this far into Tyrax territory without the zain-kin's notice. If they investigate the hollow, zain-kin silently emerge from the shadows of the surrounding ruins in groups of twos and threes, until there are over 50 zain-kin watching from the top of the sinkhole (25 hastati minions, 15 zain-kin infiltrators, and 10 centurions.)

A single zain-kin in blackened leather armor steps forward to address the party. Scains is the leader of House Tyrax, an aged ape-man whose years in the ruined city have taught him great cunning. Scains calls down to the PCs, offering to parlay. If the PCs refuse, Scains gives the signal and all 50 zain-kin pour into the sinkhole, howling bloodthirsty battle cries as they charge to the slaughter.

If the PCs are wise enough to parlay with the ape-man, he asks that they elect a representative. Scains and the PCs' delegate retire to a nearby camp, while the remaining PCs are guarded by the watchful zain-kin.

Treating with the Rogues: Scains maintains a quiet, civil demeanor. He questions the PC, trying to determine the party's reason for coming to the city. (Scains is aware of the assassination attempt on the PCs, but doesn't reveal this.) Scains is not above threatening to kill the remaining PCs to coerce the delegate into revealing their reasons for coming to the city. This is spoken in a pragmatic, matter-of-fact manner, not as an angry threat.

If the PCs bear the *snake staff* or the *cloak of the malison* (both items can be found at the shrine in area 2–4), express an interest in casting down Mouringlar (the zain-kin don't know the true power behind the dragon), or succeed on two DC 15 Diplomacy checks (before failing 2), Scains reveals that House Tyrax doesn't place any stock in Mouringlar's claims to divinity. Moreover, the rogue

Scains and the zain-kin of House Tyrax offer to side with the PCs, joining them in a raid against the temple. While Scains has every intention in following through on his bargain, his cowardice proves to be his undoing (see area 4–1 for more information on the bloody consequences of Scains' ambitions).

Scains, Zain-Kin Rogue

Level 5 Elite Skr

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin) XP 400

Init +6 **Senses** Perception +8
 low-light vision
HP 132 **Bloodied** 66
AC 21 Fort 17, Ref 23, Will 18
 Resist 5 poison
 Saving Throws +2
Spd 7
 APs 1

↑ +1 Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs.AC; 1d6+5 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): Scains can make 2 short sword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

↑ Deep Cut (standard; daily) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +10 vs.AC; 2d6+6 damage, and the target takes 8 persistent damage (save ends). *Miss:* The target takes half damage, and no persistent damage.

↑ Deft Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Martial, Weapon: Scains moves 2 squares and makes a melee basic attack.

↑ Setup Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +10 vs.AC; 2d6+6 damage, and the target grants CA to Scains until the end of his next turn.

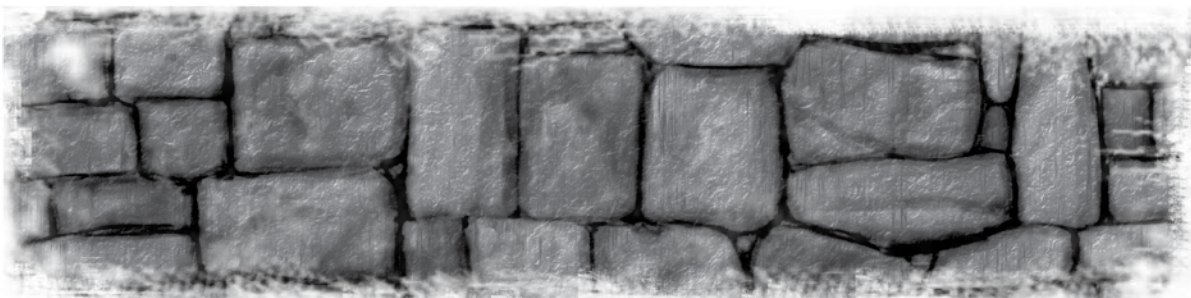
CA: Scains deals +2d6 damage against any target he as CA against.

First Strike: At the start of an encounter, Scains has CA against any creatures that have not yet acted.

Tumble (move; encounter) ♦ Martial: Scains shifts 3 squares.

Align Evil Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin
 Skills Athletics +7, Endurance +7, Stealth +11, Thievery +11
 Str 16 (+5) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 12 (+3)
 Con 16 (+5) Int 12 (+3) Cha 10 (+2)

Possessions: leather armor, +1 short sword, amulet of health +1



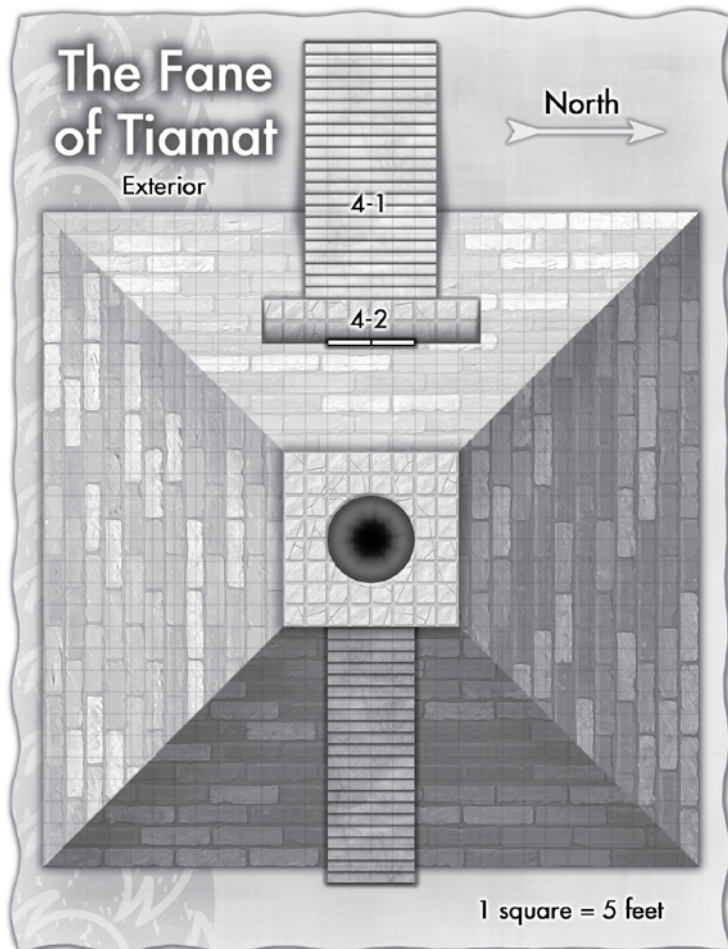
ENCOUNTER AREA FOUR

THE FANE OF TIAMAT

Set in the heart of the ruined city of Parhok, the Fane has been commandeered by Dragora and Mouringlar in the name of Tiamat. The pair has duped the zain-kin into believing that Dragora is nothing more than the green dragon's concubine, but the inverse is true. Mouringlar lives for Dragora, and will lay down its life for its mistress, while Lady Dragora cares for nothing but herself.

Peaking at 100 feet above the city floor, the pyramid displays the flawless – though soulless – craftsmanship of spell-worked stone. Naught but the slenderest hair could slip between the fitted stones, and the pyramid radiates a constant aura of magic.

Four flaming braziers set in the corners of the plaza light the temple's exterior. Once magical, the braziers now must be constantly tended by zain-kin. At any time, there is a 20% chance that 6 zain-kin hastati are tending the sacred flames. The hastati will attempt to deter the PCs, but retreat if more than 2 of their fellows fall in combat.



The pyramid has a series of steep stone steps. The western stairs climb 50 feet before ending before a giant-sized (more accurately, *dragon-sized*) brass portal (area 4–2). The eastern steps rise to the very top of the pyramid (area 4–4). A troop of 6 legionnaires led by a single centurion constantly march around the base of the pyramid, and a pair of legionnaires stand guard before the brass portal at area 4–2.

AREA 4–1

THE FANE OF TIAMAT

(EL 3+, XP VARIABLE)

As the PCs approach the temple, read or paraphrase the following:

A wide plaza opens before you. Mighty braziers stand at the plaza's corners, belching smoke and red flames. Standing in the center of the plaza is an ominous pyramid of black stone. Two sets of stairs ascend the pyramid's steep walls, one rising halfway up the pyramid to a pair of brass portals, the other rising up the back of the pyramid to its peak.

GM Note: If either House Zamosh or Tyrax accompanies the PCs, go to **Ambush!** below.

A pair of legionnaires stands guard before the brass portal. In addition, 6 legionnaires, led by a single centurion, march a constant circuit around the base of the pyramid.

Heroes that wait for the troop to circle around to the back of the pyramid can rush the stairs, facing only the 2 legionnaires. At the furthest point of their march, it takes the troop 8 rounds to reach the stairs at the front of the pyramid, virtually assuring the PCs' success.

AMBUSH!

If the PCs are brought to the temple as part of scheme fostered on the parts of either House Zamosh or Tyrax, they are in for a grim surprise:

House Zamosh, accompanying the PCs with 5 signifiers and 15 hastati, betrays the PCs at the very last moment. As the PCs begin to ascend the stairs, a signifier sounds a war horn. On the signal, 10 legionnaires emerge from every side of the plaza, charging towards the PCs as the zain-kin of House Zamosh encircle the PCs, preventing flight. Last, and worst of all, Mouringlar himself silently glides in from the gloom, landing in the plaza, cutting off the PCs' hope of flight.

House Tyrax, accompanying the PCs with 5 infiltrators and 20 hastati, breaks morale at the last instant. Their courage shattered, the rogues flee, leaving the PCs alone



on the steps of the temple. House Vedrius, anticipating the raid, is waiting outside the plaza with their legionnaires. As the cowardly rogues of House Tyrax flee, 10 legionnaires (led by 1 centurion) charge into the plaza. Meanwhile, Mouringlar drops from above, like a verdant arrow, landing on the plaza behind the PCs, ending any hope of escape.

Regardless of who betrayed the heroes, the outcome is the same: Overwhelming forces charge the heroes, their war cries filling the air.

ESCAPE!

The odds are stacked against the heroes — in order for the PCs to survive, they will need to act with courage, cunning, and conviction! The zain-kin expect the PCs to die trying to flee back into the city. In the open terrain of the plaza, the zain-kin can use their numbers against the PCs to great advantage. The heroes' best hope for survival is to fight their way into the temple, in the hopes of finding a choke point where they can even the odds.

If the PCs are somehow successful in defeating the temple's guardians, Mouringlar retreats, winging away to lick his wounds. He returns in the conclusion of the adventure below.

Various Zain-kin: See above.



Mouringlar, Wyrmling Green Dragon

Level 2 Solo Skr

Medium natural magical beast (dragon)

XP 625

Init +7	Senses Perception +8 darkvision	
HP 156	Bloodied 78	
AC 19	Fort 16, Ref 18, Will 15	
Resist 10 poison		
Saving Throws +5		
Spd 6, fly 8 hover, overland flight 12, see also <i>flyby attack</i>		
APs 2		
↑ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison: +7 vs.AC; 1d6+1, and persistent 2 poison damage (save ends).		
↑ Claw (standard; at-will): +7 vs.AC; 1d4+1 damage.		
↑ Double Attack (standard; at-will): The wyrmling makes 2 claws attacks.		
↑ Flyby Attack (standard; refresh 5–6): The wyrmling flies up to 8 squares and makes a bite attack at any point during the move without provoking an attack of opportunity from the target		
✧ Breath Weapon (standard; refresh 5–6) ♦ Poison: Close blast 5; +5 vs. Fort; 1d8+2 poison damage, and the target takes persistent 2 poison damage and is slowed (save ends). <i>Aftersave:</i> The target is slowed (save ends).		
✧ Bloodied Breath (free when first Bloodied encounter) ♦ Poison: The wyrmling's breath weapon refreshes, and is used immediately.		
Align Evil;		
Lang Common, Draconic		
Skills Bluff +13, Diplomacy +8, Insight +13, Intimidate +8		
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 18 (+5)	Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 13 (+2)	Cha 15 (+3)

AREA 4–2

THE PORTALS (EL 1, XP 200)

As the PCs approach the temple, read or paraphrase the following:

A pair of fierce zain-kin stand before the large portals, their blades gleaming in the red light of the braziers! Just past the gate you can see a hall and some sort of capstan resembling the kind used to raise and lower the portcullis.

The zain-kin are charged with the defense of the holy fane of Tiamat, and do everything in their power to defend the breach. Both would rather die than fail at their task. They hurl javelins at the PCs as the heroes charge up the stairs, then draw their short swords and close for melee.

The brass portals open and close through an elaborate system of counterweights. Spinning the capstan caused the brass portals to slam closed. The interior of the doors has

an enormous bronze bolt that can be driven home with a DC 20 Strength check. Once the portals are closed and the bolt set in place, there is little any creature can do to breach the gate. The heroes may not know this, however, and the deafening thunder of the zain-kin hammering on the doors is sure to spur the PCs to action.

Zain-Kin Legionnaire (2)

Level 1 Sld

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin) XP 100

Init +4 **Senses** Perception +2
low-light vision

HP 31 **Bloodied** 15

AC 19 Fort 16, Ref 13, Will 13

Spd 6

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +8 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.

⚡ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: Ranged 10/20; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin legionnaire can make 2 short sword attacks against a bruised opponent.

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin legionnaire receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil Lang Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +7

Str 20 (+5) Dex 14 (+2) Wis 14 (+2)

Con 15 (+2) Int 10 (+0) Cha 10 (+0)

Possessions: scale armor, heavy shield, short sword, three javelins

AREA 4-3 HALL OF DIVINATION (EL 2, XP 625)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The wide hall is hung with numerous tapestries and religious icons, all depicting the cruelty and divine malevolence of wicked Tiamat. The hall is punctuated on either side by small, non-descript doors. Ahead, at the end of the hall, is a shallow pool flanked by stairs rising into darkness.

A pair of zain-kin infiltrators hides atop a catwalk concealed by the tapestries hung across the vaulted ceiling. Once the PCs enter the hall, the infiltrators trigger a swinging pendulum trap, sending terrible blades whistling through the darkness.

There is one blade for each of the hall's first 10 rows. At the head of each round, secretly roll 1d12. A roll of 1 through 10 indicates which row that will be attacked this round. On a roll of 11 or 12, at least two blades

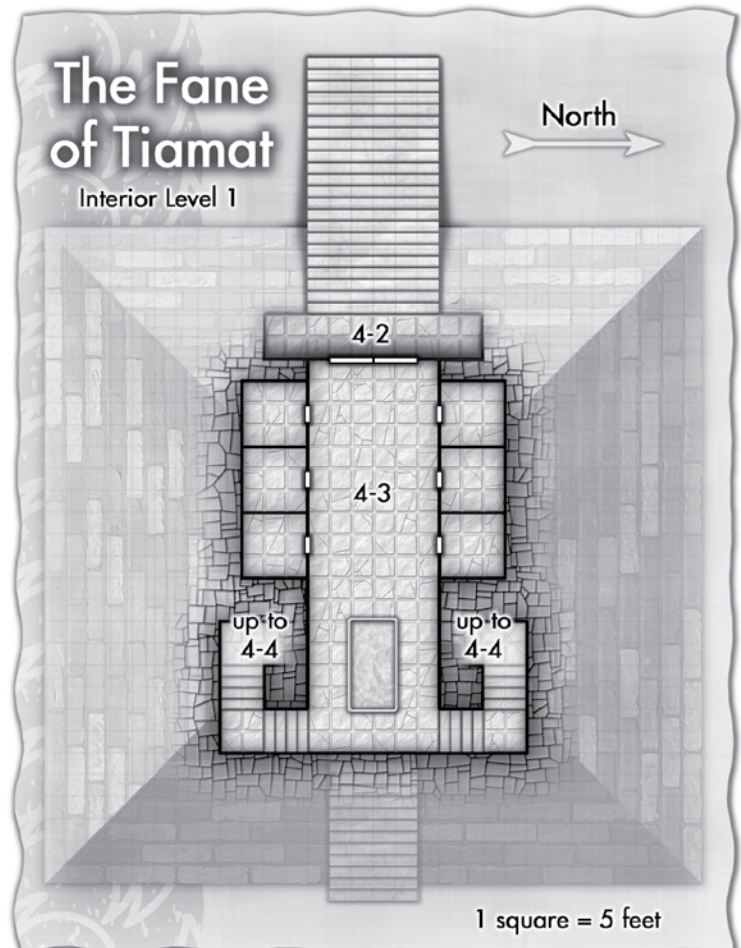
strike that round (roll 1d12 twice to determine the rows, doubling 11s and 12s as per above).

Crossing the hall can be accomplished in two ways: either by beating an attacking pendulum on initiative as the PC crosses from one square to the next, or by destroying the blade as it slices across the chamber (AC 15, others 12; hp 48).

The pendulums continue to swing until all the blades are destroyed, or a PC climbs into the vaulted loft above and succeeds on a DC 15 Thievery check, deactivating the clockwork mechanism.

The infiltrators remain hidden on the catwalks, only revealing themselves if attacked or if a PCs reaches the catwalk. Otherwise, the infiltrators wait for the PCs to exit the hall before descending to ambush the heroes as they enter area 4-3.

Scrying Pool: The pool is filled with a thick liquid resembling dark quicksilver. Heroes gazing into the pool and succeeding on a DC 15 Arcana check see themselves, depicted as if watched from above. If the infiltrators are

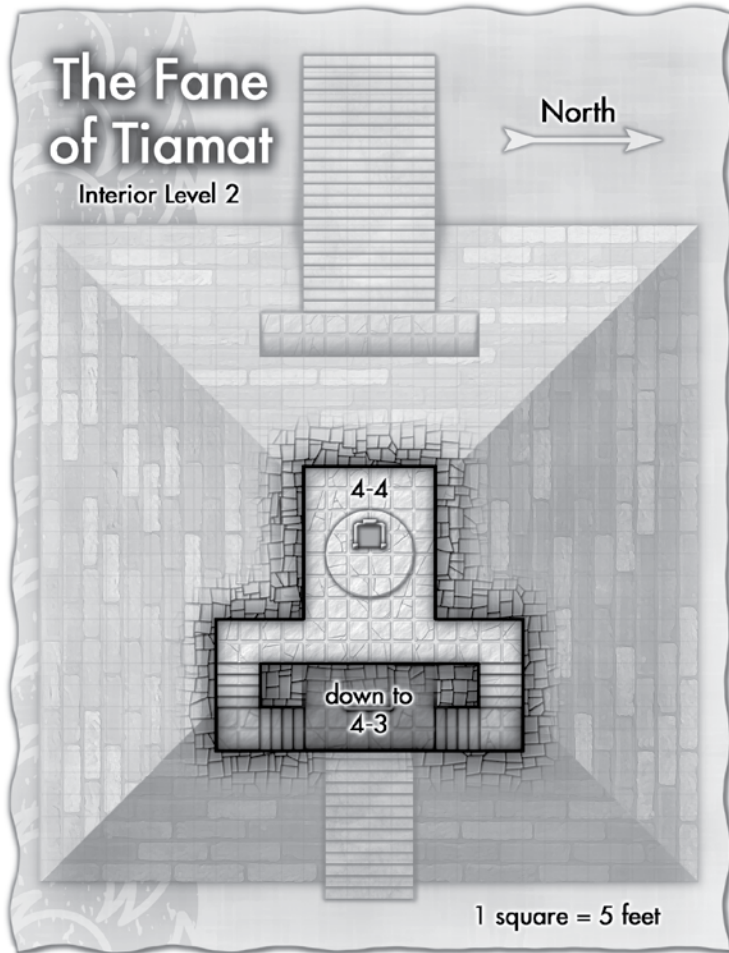


still alive, the scrying PCs also see the zain-kin lurking on the catwalk above.

A DC 20 Arcana check allows the PCs to scry Lady Dragora. If the PC succeeds on the check, read the area text to area 4-4.

Abandoned Quarters: Heroes investigating the rooms off of the great hall discover small, sparse rooms that once served as quarters for priests tending the sacred temple. Now the quarters are inhabited by naught but mice and memories.

Heroes investigating the quarters find ancient, moldering bunks, simple stools and writing desks destroyed by dry rot, and ink wells, long gone dry.



Zain-Kin Infiltrator (2)

Level 5 Lurk

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin) XP 200

Init +10

Senses Perception +9

low-light vision

HP 56

Bloodied 28

AC 19

Fort 17, Ref 18, Will 16

Spd 7

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs.AC; 1d6+3 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin infiltrator can make 2 short sword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

⚡ Assassin's Mark (minor; refresh 4-6): Ranged 5; the target is marked and grants the zain-kin infiltrator CA until the end of the zain-kin infiltrator's next turn.

CA: The zain-kin infiltrator deals an additional 2d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has CA against.

Align Evil

Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +6, Stealth +11

Str 16 (+5)

Dex 19 (+6)

Wis 14 (+4)

Con 15 (+4)

Int 14 (+4)

Cha 10 (+2)

Possessions: leather armor, short sword

⚠ Pendulum Scythes

Lrk 4

XP 225

Perception DC 17: The character notices the hanging pendulum blades concealed among the tapestries and religious icons.

A character making a DC 15 Dungeoneering check recognizes these as signs of a scything blades trap.

Perception DC 22: The character spots the pressure plates at the room's entrance.

Init +3

Trigger: The trap rolls Initiative when a creature enters a square with a pressure plate. Additionally, the trap can be activated with the control panel as a standard action.

Standard Action

Melee

Targets: All creatures in a row of squares. Roll randomly to determine the row.

Attack: +9 vs.AC;

Hit: 2d8+4 damage. *Secondary Attack:* +7 vs. Fort; Hit:

The target is pushed 1 square in the direction of the scythe's movement, knocked prone, and takes 5 persistent damage (save ends).

COUNTERMEASURES

- A character can ready an action to attack a pendulum blade (AC 15, other defenses 12; hp 48). Destroying a blade renders that row of squares safe from attack.

AREA 4-4
THRONE OF THE QUEEN
(EL 1, XP 300)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The stairs rise to a dark throne room lorded over by a mighty statue of a five-headed dragon. At the center of the chamber a great black throne sits in the center of a low stone dais. A woman lounges atop a great black throne, a scarred longsword close at hand. The air here is thick with the breath of reptiles and the smell of burning wax. Flickering red light shines in from the wide circle cut into the ceiling.

Once a chamber used exclusively for blood sacrifices in the honor of Tiamat, Dragora has commandeered the chamber for her own.

Unless the PCs infiltrated the temple without alerting the guards, Dragora is prepared for their arrival. With a wave of her hand, she beckons the PCs to enter, motioning towards a cask of wine and the piles of luxurious pillows situated along the east wall of the chamber. Use this opportunity to have Dragora speak of the zain-kin assassin that started the adventure, and lay the groundwork for your continuing adventures when she escapes. The specifics are left to the discretion of the GM. If the PCs don't partake in her ruse, she immediately attacks.

Development: In preparation of the PCs' arrival, Lady Dragora has drugged the wine with thasill root extract and sprinkled stormclaw powder poison on the lounging pillows. Poisoned characters instantly realize the duplicity. If the infiltrators from area 4-2 yet live, they take this opportunity to launch an attack on the PCs.

Drugged Wine: Attack +8 vs. Fort; slowed (save ends). *First failed save:* the target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). *Second failed save:* Target unconscious for 1d4 hours.

Dusted Pillows: Attack +5 vs. Fort; ongoing 5 poison damage and immobilized (save ends both). *Aftereffect:* The target is immobilized (save ends).

Tactics: Dragora's first goal is to survive to fight another day; the defeat of the PCs is alluring, but there is never a shortage of opportunities to humble would-be heroes. If the PCs press the attack and succeed in bruising the sword-maiden, she uses a free action to shout a command word in Draconic; instantly the temple shudders, and the throne dais rises towards the hole bored in the ceiling.

PCs not standing on the dais can use a move action (DC 15 Athletics checks) to leap aboard the rising pillar, but those

left behind will be forced to climb the sides of the pillar to rejoin the battle (Athletics, DC 15). It takes the dais a single round to rise 30 feet to the ceiling, allowing Dragora to leap from the pillar onto the top of the temple.

Characters atop the dais note that it has depressions in the shape of 5-headed dragons, identical to the depression used to activate the wyrm portal in area 1-4.

See the adventure's **Conclusion** below for details on the final battle.

Treasure: Several treasure chests sit along the walls of the chamber, strewn with tapestries, furs, and moldering bolts of ancient silk. While most of the Parhok's ancient treasure has fallen to the passage of time, some wealth yet remains: 200 gp, 550 sp, 2 *potions of healing*, and 5 gems (worth 50 gp each).

Dragora, Human Fighter

Level 7 Sld

Medium natural humanoid (human) XP 300

Init +5	Senses Perception +3
HP 86	Bloodied 43
AC 21	Fort 23, Ref 20, Will 19
Spd 6	

↑ +2 Resounding Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +14 vs. AC; 1d10+9 damage (crit 2d6+19 thunder damage).

↑ Cleave (standard; at-will) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +14 vs. AC; 1d10+9 damage, and an enemy adjacent to Dragora takes 4 damage.

↑ Griffon's Wrath (standard; encounter) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +14 vs. AC; 2d10+9 damage; and the target takes a -2 penalty to AC until the end of Dragora's next turn.

↑ Dizzying Blow (standard; daily) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +14 vs. AC; 3d10+9 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

↑ Resounding Strike (free; daily) ♦ Martial, Weapon: +14 vs. AC; 1d10+9 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Dragora's next turn.

Combat Challenge: Every time Dragora attacks an enemy, whether that attack hits or misses, she can mark that target. The mark lasts until the end of Dragora's next turn. In addition, whenever an adjacent enemy shifts, Dragora makes a melee basic attack against that enemy (as an immediate interrupt).

Unbreakable (immediate reaction Dragora is hit by an attack encounter): Dragora reduces the damage of the hit by 7.

Align Evil	Lang Common, Draconic	
Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +10, Intimidate +9		
Str 18 (+7)	Dex 14 (+5)	Wis 10 (+3)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 12 (+4)	Cha 12 (+5)

Possessions: +2 *resounding longsword*, +2 *leather armor*

CONCLUSION (EL 4, XP 925)

The dread dragon Mouringlar waits atop the pyramid. As the dais comes within sight, the dragon leaps to the defense of his mistress. Mouringlar and Dragora fight back-to-back, affording Dragora the chance to effect the pair's escape.

Meanwhile, the plaza below has filled with hundreds of zain-kin. Witness to the battle against their living god, the enraged zain-kin storm the sides of the pyramid, charging towards the top. The ape-men stop just short of the peak, too terrified to join in the battle.

While Mouringlar holds off the PCs, Dragora fishes a emerald star-key from her pouch. Taking a minor action, she places the star-key in one of the depressions set into the dais, activating a shimmering portal over the throne. Through the portal, PCs can see a quiet, sun-dappled wood overlooking an ancient plaza sundered by a chasm, where the adventure began.

(Note that if the PCs prevent Dragora from riding the dais to the outside of the pyramid, Mouringlar drops down from above. Dragora does her best to scale the raised dais, where she uses the wyrmportal to flee the city.)

Dragora and Mouringlar fight as long as they can, doing their best to stave off the PCs, but when it becomes apparent that they cannot win this battle, the lady and her dragon plunge through the portal, fleeing into the woods.

With Dragora and Mouringlar dead or fleeing before the PCs, nothing can forestall the wrath of the zain-kin. Scores of hastati ape-men, spears raised in fury, charge the top of the pyramid. No matter how many of the zain-kin the PCs defeat, hundreds more remain. The heroes' only hope for survival is to follow Dragora and Mouringlar through the portal.

As the PCs tumble back into the surface lands, followed by a dozen hurled javelins, the arcane portal snaps shut, leaving the forgotten city of Parhok and its legions of ape-men behind.

**THUS ENDS
THE REIGN OF DRAGORA
...OR DOES IT?**

Zain-Kin Centurion

Level 3 Sld (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin) XP 150

Init +5 Senses Perception +4
 low-light vision
HP 48 Bloodied 24
AC 20 Fort 18, Ref 14, Will 15
Spd 6

↑ Long Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs.AC; 1d8+5 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin centurion can make 2 longsword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

※ Rally Point (standard; refresh 5–6): Close burst 5; allies in the burst shift 3 squares. Allies that end up adjacent to the zain-kin centurion gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls until the end of the zain-kin centurion's next turn.

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin legionnaire receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Align Evil Lang Common, Zain-Kin
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +11

Str 21 (+6) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 16 (+4)
Con 16 (+4) Int 12 (+2) Cha 13 (+2)

Possessions: chainmail, heavy shield, longsword

Beyond the warlords that rule the various factions of zain-kin society, the centurion is the pinnacle of zain-kin achievement. Each centurion is handpicked for bravery, skill at arms, and defiance in the face of death and adversity. Centurions lead other zain-kin into battle, inspiring and rallying their troops with a commanding presence and the direct threat of capital punishment should their commands be disobeyed.

ZAIN-KIN CENTURIONS TACTICS

Zain-kin centurions lead from the front, keeping their troops fired up and motivated to destroy the enemies of the zain-kin. When the tide of battle turns against the zain-kin, the centurions use *rally point* to bolster morale and move in fresh troops.

Zain-Kin Signifer

Level 2 Ctl (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid XP 125

Initiative +3 Senses Perception +5
 low-light vision
HP 39 Bloodied 19
AC 17 Fort 15, Ref 14, Will 16
Speed 6

↑ Signum Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +7 vs.AC; 1d8+3 damage.

⚡ Wrath of the Legion (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic: Ranged 10; +6 vs. Will; 2d4+4 psychic damage.

※ Sigil of Succor (standard; encounter) ♦ Healing: Close burst 5; all allies within the burst regain 5 hit points and all persistent effect upon the target end.

※ Sigil of Destruction (standard; refresh 5–6) ♦ Force: Close burst 3; target enemies +5 vs. Ref; 2d8+4 force damage, and the target is knocked prone.

※ Sigil of Terror (standard; refresh 6) ♦ Psychic: Close burst 3; +5 vs. Will; and the target is dazed and weakened (save ends both).

Heart of the Legion: When adjacent to at least 2 zain-kin allies, the zain-kin signifer receives a +1 bonus to all defenses.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Zain-Kin
Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +5, Religion +7

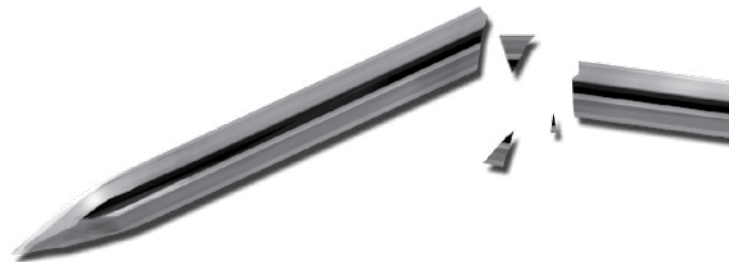
Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 18 (+5)
Con 15 (+3) Int 12 (+2) Cha 16 (+4)

Equipment scale armor, signum spear

If the legionnaires and centurions are the backbone of zain-kin military strength, then the signifers are its heart. Each signifer carries a mighty spear bearing the standard of his troop. With this spear, the signifer can call upon the might of the zain-kin gods to smite enemies and bolster the strength of his allies.

ZAIN-KIN SIGNIFER TACTICS

The signifer typically hangs back behind zain-kin lines, using *wrath of the legions* to strike down enemies from afar. He moves forward to use *sigil of destruction* and *sigil of terror* at the command of the closest centurion.



Zain-Kin Infiltrator

Level 5 Lurk

Medium natural humanoid (zain-kin) XP 200

Init +10

Senses Perception +9

low-light vision

HP 56

Bloodied 28

AC 19

Fort 17, Ref 18, Will 16

Spd 7

↑ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon: +10 vs.AC; 1d6+3 damage.

↑ Cull the Weak (standard; encounter): The zain-kin infiltrator can make 2 short sword attacks against a Bloodied opponent.

⚡ Assassin's Mark (minor; refresh 4–6): Ranged 5; the target is marked and grants the zain-kin infiltrator CA until the end of the zain-kin infiltrator's next turn.

CA: The zain-kin infiltrator deals an additional 2d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has CA against.

Align Evil

Lang Old Common, Zain-Kin

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +6, Stealth +11

Str 16 (+5)

Dex 19 (+6)

Wis 14 (+4)

Con 15 (+4)

Int 14 (+4)

Cha 10 (+2)

Possessions: leather armor, short sword

The zain-kin infiltrator is a breed apart in zain-kin society. Disdaining the honorable clash of face-to-face combat, the infiltrator does his killing from the shadows, seeking out the enemies of the zain-kin and silently dispatching them. Although not trusted by zain-kin warriors, the infiltrator serves a useful purpose, and is generally tolerated in zain-kin military units.

ZAIN-KIN INFILTRATOR TACTICS

The zain-kin infiltrator seeks to gain CA against an opponent, usually by gaining surprise or flanking with an ally. However, he can also mark a target with *assassin's mark* to ensure that his short sword finds a vital spot with each thrust.



ZAIN-KIN LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Arcana check.

DC 15: The zain-kin are race of ape-men originally used as slaves by the fabled enchanters of Parhok.

DC 20: Zain-kin were bred for their war-like nature and unquestioning subservience.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

The most common unit in the zain-kin military is the troop, which contains all the skills needed to perform a variety of martial tasks.

LEVEL 5 ENCOUNTER (XP 923)

- 1 *zain-kin* centurion (level 3 soldier)
- 1 *zain-kin* signifer (level 2 controller)
- 4 *zain-kin* legionnaires (level 1 soldier)
- 8 *zain-kin* hastati (level 2 minion)

ZAIN-KIN RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 7' 0" – 7' 6"

Average Weight: 300 – 350 lb.

Ability Scores: +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity

Size: Medium

Speed: 7 squares

Vision: Low-light

Languages: Common, Zain-Kin

Skill Bonuses: +2 Athletics, +2 Endurance

Primal Agility: You do not grant opponents CA when climbing or balancing.

Cull the Weak: You can use *cull the weak* as an encounter power.

CULL THE WEAK ZAIN-KIN RACIAL POWER

Weakness has no place on the battlefield. You slay the wounded with brutal efficiency.

Encounter

Standard Action

Personal

Effect: You can make two melee basic attacks against a Bloodied creature.

BRISTLEBACK SPIDER

Bristleback Spider

Level 2 Brt

Medium natural beast (spider) XP 125

Init +3 Senses Perception +1

low-light vision

HP 44 Bloodied 22

AC 15 Fort 16, Ref 14, Will 12

Spd 6, climb 3

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +6 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage.

✱ Bristle Burst (standard; encounter): Close burst 3; the bristleback spider fires a cloud of stinging hairs from its back +4 vs. Ref; 1d4+2 damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the bristleback spider's next turn.

Align Unaligned Lang –

Skills Athletics +10

Str 18 (+5) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 10 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 1 (–4) Cha 8 (+0)

The bristleback spider is a large predatory spider found in dense jungles and underground. It is not poisonous, but it is large enough to hunt and kill creatures up to its own size.

BRISTLEBACK SPIDER TACTICS

A bristleback attacks with its powerful fangs, which are as large as daggers and wickedly sharp. If pressed, or reduced below bruised, it will fill its immediate area with thousands of stinging hairs. These hairs irritate the eyes, momentarily blinding the spider's foes, allowing it to escape.

BRISTLEBACK SPIDER LORE

A character can learn the following with a successful Nature check.

DC 15: A bristleback spider is a large web-spinning spider resembling an oversized tarantula. Although not venomous, the powerful arachnid can kill and dismember prey with its large fangs.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Bristleback spiders often dwell with other giant arachnids and insects. In addition, certain tribes of goblins have successfully trained bristleback spiders, using them as attack beasts and even mounts.

LEVEL 3 ENCOUNTER (XP 700)

- 1 goblin hexer (level 3 controller)
- 2 bristleback spiders (level 2 brute)
- 3 goblin warriors (level 1 skirmisher)

SICURIJU (SHIMMERING BOA)

Sicuriju (Shimmering Boa)

Level 5 Elite Sld

Large magical beast (reptile) XP 400

Init +7 Senses Perception +9, low-light

vision

HP 128 Bloodied 64

AC 21 Fort 18, Ref 17, Will 16

Saving Throws +2

Spd 6, climb 6

APs 1

↑ Bite (standard; at-will): +12 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage.

↑ Grab and Swallow (standard; at-will): Stunned target; only +12 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage, the target is grabbed, and the sicuriju makes a secondary attack on the same target.

Secondary Attack: The sicuriju attempts to swallow a Medium or smaller creature it is grabbing; +10 vs. Fort; on a hit, the target is swallowed and restrained (no save) and takes 5 damage plus 5 acid damage on subsequent rounds at the start of the sicuriju's turn. The swallowed creature can make melee basic attacks with one-handed or natural weapons. If the sicuriju dies, any creature trapped inside it can escape as a move action, ending that action in a square formerly occupied by the sicuriju. If the sicuriju fails to swallow a target, the target is still grabbed, and the sicuriju can attempt to swallow it on its next turn. However, if the target is no longer stunned, it cannot be swallowed, although it is still grabbed.

✱ Shimmering Scales (minor refresh 5–6) ♦ Charm: Close burst 5; +8 vs. Will; the target is stunned (save ends).

Afterspell: The target is dazed (save ends).

Align Unaligned Lang Old Common, Draconic

Skills Stealth +10

Str 20 (+7) Dex 16 (+5) Wis 15 (+4)

Con 16 (+5) Int 10 (+2) Cha 10 (+2)

The sicuriju, or shimmering boa, is a large intelligent serpent found in jungles and swamps. It gets its name from the scintillating, rainbow patterns on its scales, which are reputed to have mesmerizing qualities.

SICURIJU TACTICS

A sicuriju begins combat by targeting foes with its *shimmering scales*. It then attempts to grab and swallow Medium or smaller creatures. It repeats this process until it has swallowed up to three Medium-sized creatures.

SICURIJU LORE

A character can learn the following with a successful Nature check.

DC 15: Shimmering boas can use their scales to hypnotize their prey before devouring them whole.

DC 20: Whole sicuriju skins can be used to cover shields, and in rare instances, armor. Once enchanted, these skins mesmerize and distract foes.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Shimmering boas are usually found with other swamp or jungle denizens, and they often work together to take down large or numerous prey.

LEVEL 5 ENCOUNTER (XP 900)

- 1 sicuriju (level 5 elite soldier)
- 2 vine horrors (level 5 controller)

ROCK VIPER SWARM

Rock Viper Swarm

Level 2 Skr

Medium natural beast (swarm) XP 125

Init +7

Senses Perception +7

low-light vision

Aurora I the rock viper swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its square in the aurora

Bloodied 18

Fort 13, Ref 16, Will 13

HP 36

AC 16

Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks

Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks

Spd 6, climb 6

↑ Plague of Fangs (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison: +7 vs.

AC; 1d6+4 damage, and the rock viper swarm makes a secondary attack on the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +5 vs. Fort 1d6+1 poison damage, and persistent 2 poison damage.

Align Unaligned

Lang –

Skills Stealth +10

Str 11 (+1)

Dex 18 (+5)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 12 (+2)

Int 2 (–4)

Cha 10 (+1)

Rock vipers are small venomous snakes that congregate in massive communal swarms, each numbering more than 100 individual serpents. Rock viper swarms typically lair in dark, out of the way places, such as caves and ruins.

ROCK VIPER SWARM TACTICS

Rock vipers use no sophisticated tactics, and simply swarm a foe, attempting to inject enough poison to incapacitate or kill their target.

ROCK VIPER SWARM LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Nature check.

DC 15: Rock vipers prefer to live amid boulder fields and other rocky environs.

DC 20: Although not normally aggressive, when riled, a rock viper swarm is an implacable foe, and typically fights to the death.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Rock viper swarms often share their lairs with other poisonous snakes.

LEVEL 1 ENCOUNTER (XP 450)

- 1 deathrattle viper (level 5 brute)
- 2 rock viper swarms (level 2 skirmisher)



APPENDIX II NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Cloak of the Malison

This snakeskin cloak shimmers in dim light, and makes soft, slithering noises when the wearer moves.

Item Slot: Neck

Power (Daily ✦ Teleportation): Move action. Teleport to 5 squares; gain CA against one adjacent enemy.

Snake Staff

The wooden staff is carved in the shape of a hissing snake, a ruby clutched between the snake's long fangs.

Implement (Staff)

Critical: +1d4 damage/plus.

Power (Daily ✦ Poison): Free Action. Use this power after a successful melee attack. The staff comes to life, wrapping around the target. Target is immobilized and takes 5 persistent poison damage (save ends).

Helm of the Dread Lord

This blackened, horned helm radiates terror and violence.

Item slot: Head

Property: +2 to Intimidate checks.

Power (Daily): Free action. Make one basic melee attack against a minion. If the attack succeeds, make another. You may continue making melee attacks until you miss.

APPENDIX III FURTHER ADVENTURES

The defeat of Dragora and Mouringlar need not bring an end to adventures in the Lost City of the Parhok. A wealth of eldritch might lurks within the ruins, calling out for heroes brave enough to venture back to the city.

Returning heroes will discover a political landscape that is at once familiar and foreign. Tribes that suffered heavy losses in the PCs' assault are slaughtered by their rivals, and weaker tribes rise to power. With this in mind, consider the following story seeds for further adventures in the Lost City of the Parhok:

- **Dreaming Crypts of the Parhok:** Not all of the fabled enchanters were slain by the raging zain-kin. Some still slumber in hidden crypts beneath the city. Masters of unmatched eldritch might, awakening (and defeating!) these dweomercrafters is a task best left to Paragon or Epic tier heroes.
- **The Prophet of Tiamat:** Zain-kin lore has long held that a prophet of Tiamat will be born among their kind, and at long last the chosen one has emerged from the rabble, uniting the squabbling tribes under a single banner. Endowed with divine cunning and powers by the Mother-Goddess of Monsters, this prophet presents a deadly foe to explorers hoping to loot the city's eldritch secrets.
- **Vault of the Archmages:** An immense treasure vault, filled to overflowing with magical items, awaits the return of the city's masters. Looting this vault requires defeating eldritch wards and devious traps that likes world has never seen, a suitable challenge for Paragon-level heroes.



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