

# AMARUNE'S ADVENTURES



## The Nightmare Web of Adhe Wood



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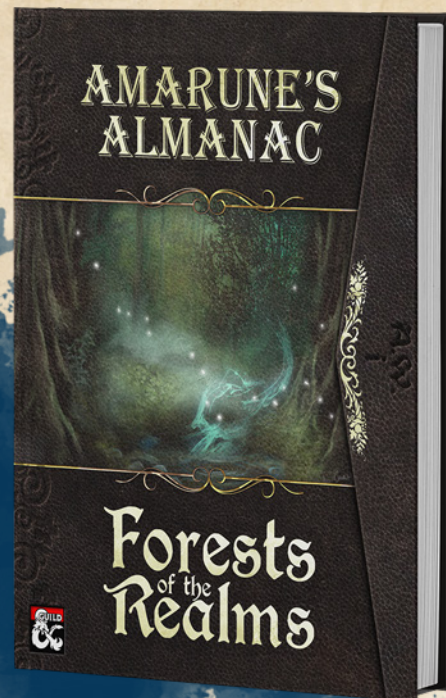
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*Amarune's Adventures | The Nightmare Web of Adhe Wood*



## *The Nightmare Web of Adhe Wood*

### *Adventure Overview*

In this adventure, adventurers are tasked with saving a young girl from Adhe Wood. They will encounter horrific monstrosities, learn the secrets of the Aranea of Sevenecho, and foil the machinations of an evil primordial bent on ending the world.

*The Nightmare Web of Adhe Wood* is designed for four to five Tier 3 (levels 10-15) adventurers. It is easily adaptable to higher- and lower-tier play. This adventure is broken into three sections:

- Part 1: Sevenecho
- Part 2: Adhe Wood
- Part 3: The True Nightmare

### *Background*

Located in The Vast north of the Sea of Fallen Stars, Adhe Wood is a small but deadly place. Legends swirl of a mysterious temple in Adhe Wood where statues of snakes hold massive emeralds. But the citizens of Sevenecho, the town nearest to Adhe Wood, seem to know nothing of this legend and refuse to speak of it. Travelers into Adhe Wood rarely return, devoured by the mutated spiders that lurk in the trees.

In truth, some of the residents of Sevenecho are Aranea. Sometimes called “were-spiders”, Aranea are a magical race that can shift their shape at will between humanoid and arachnid. In their arachnid form, they appear as massive spiders capable of magical feats. Not everyone in Sevenecho is an Aranea, but those that are hold themselves to a sacred duty.

Within Adhe Wood is a temple to Dendar the Nightmare Serpent. Worshipped by Yuan-Ti

across Faerûn, it is believed Dendar feasts on the nightmares of mortals. When Dendar has consumed enough, she will come forth and devour the world.

The Aranea of Sevenecho hold this legend to be true, and that the temple within Adhe Wood is a gateway to Dendar’s mouth through which nightmares travel. They believe that their webs, spun into magical dreamcatchers, may prevent Dendar’s feeding and therefore prolong the world.

Regardless if the temple is truly a pathway to Dendar, the magical webs of the Aranea work at trapping nightmares. Unfortunately, nightmares were never meant to be caught in the mortal realm. Over time, trapped nightmares fester and grow, eventually bursting forth as feral, mutated nightmare spiders. These monstrosities have overwhelmed Adhe Wood, making travel deadly for humanoids and difficult even for the Aranea. Nonetheless, the Aranea of Sevenecho continue to spin their webs and forestall the hunger of Dendar.

Before the adventurers arrive at Adhe Wood, a young girl has gone missing from Sevenecho. Mihalia Taneva was always a precocious child who showed a bit too much familiarity with the spiders of Adhe. Her father, Sacha Taneva, is an Aranea. Mihalia knows this as she knows the true nature of the nightmare spiders, and yet her parents frequently have found her in and around Adhe Wood.

In truth, Mihalia has been chosen by Dendar to act as the Serpent’s agent. An incomplete dreamcatcher above Mihalia’s bed was just enough to allow Dendar to infiltrate the girl’s dreams, filling her sleeping hours with lies and promises of power. Eventually Mihalia succumbed and has departed into Adhe Wood to break the webbing across the Temple of Dendar, allowing Dendar to feast on the previously-trapped nightmares.

## Adventure Hooks

- The adventurers have heard legends of the serpent temple located in Adhe Wood. These stories only tell of the massive emeralds left unclaimed; they notably leave out the part about the temple being surrounded by mutated arachnids.
- The adventurers are simply passing through the small town of Sevenecho when they are approached for aid by the townsfolk.
- A character's god or divine patron senses the machinations of Dendar, and has sent a vision guiding them to Sevenecho.

## Part 1: Sevenecho

Sevenecho has been described as a "small, not especially unique hamlet". Located along the North Road, there is little of note in the town itself. It is mostly residential, with a few general goods stores. Fewer than a hundred people live within Sevenecho. Sevenecho's only attraction is the Worried Wyvern Inn, a very fine inn and tavern known throughout the region.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Welcome to Sevenecho. A minor stop along the North Road, there is little around that would take your attention from any other destination. A two-story manor dominates the center of town, clearly well-crafted from wood. But before you can inspect anything, you hear a shout from the West. Not far off the road, a group of people are gathered near the tree line of Adhe Wood. A woman is being held back by others, straining to get free.

"Let me go!" she shouts. "Mihalia is in there! I know she is, you have to let me go after her!"

A man approaches, placing his hands firmly on the woman's shoulders.

"Isidora! Calm yourself. She has been safe in the Wood before. We can--"

"She's never gone in so deep, or been gone so long!" the woman Isidora interrupts.

The man sighs and presses his forehead against hers. "I will look for her."

The woman seems to calm, and the group holding her back slowly lets go. The man looks up and sees you on the road. He watches his wife walk away and as the crowd disperses he approaches you.

The man is **Sacha Taneva** (see appendix B), father of Mihalia and husband to Isidora. He recognizes the adventurers are strangers in town, but they seem capable. Adhe Wood is dangerous, and his daughter has entered it alone. The people of Sevenecho know well the dangers and the local superstitions keep them out. Sacha knows he is unlikely to find help in Sevenecho, and so he asks the adventurers for aid. If they require further compensation, he will offer them his savings of 350 gp.

He recommends the journey begin at nightfall, if it is not already after dark. According to Sacha, the dangers in Adhe Wood are less active at night. If pressed for details, he will be cagey - he will do his best to portray Adhe Wood as dangerous, but not an actual nightmare. A **DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check** convinces Sacha to reveal there are some spiders in the trees, but he will not reveal that they are mutated abominations and under no circumstances will he reveal their true nature as nightmares at this point.

Sacha needs to gather some equipment before any expedition can begin, and he invites the adventurers to his home for any downtime. They may also explore Sevenecho, such as it is, if they have time to kill before setting out.

## The Worried Wyvern Inn

The Worried Wyvern stands in the center of Sevenecho, carved from fine *duskwood* (see appendix C) and smelling of rare *felsul* flowers (see appendix C). The first floor holds a massive drinking hall, where all travelers and most of the citizens spend their evenings. The second floor is reserved for rooms and baths, widely-known for their luxury. Few travelers think to ask how such rare and quality flora could be harvested from the deadly Adhe Wood - secretly, this is the work of the Aranea moving through Adhe Wood in their arachnid forms.

The Worried Wyvern is owned and operated by the Dimova family. It is warm, clean, and full of happily drunk people. Mostly humanoids live in this region, but the Worried Wyvern is a frequent stop for travelers of all stripes along the North Road. A massive hearth warms the interior, lit by shadow-wood logs (see appendix C).

The Worried Wyvern's prices are as follows:

- Drink: 1 sp
- Meal: 8 sp
- Room: 2 gp per night
- Bath: 1 gp
- Felsul-scented bath: 10 gp



## *Taneva Homestead*

The Taneva home is very humble. There are only three rooms: Sacha and Isidora's room, Mihalia's room, and a shared living area/kitchen. All the furniture is crafted from local woods. A simple rug before the fireplace serves as the only real cushion.

As the adventurers enter, Isidora is awaiting Sacha. She is clearly still distraught, and Sacha explains that the adventurers have agreed to help search for Mihalia. Isidora is thankful, and offers the adventurers any food or drink she can assemble. Sacha suggests that the adventurers take a few moments to find anything of use in Mihalia's room while he gathers his things.

### *Mihalia's Room*

Mihalia's room is the smallest room in the home, and seems to have been created as an addition rather than an original fixture of the structure. A bed takes up most of the space, crowded next to a small window. A small dreamcatcher is hung on the wall directly above the bed. A few toys scatter the floor with some colored chinks. If the adventurers succeed on **Intelligence (Investigation) checks**, they can find the following clues:

- **<10:** Mihalia has many drawings of spiders scattered around and under her bed. They are the crude drawings of a child, and do not seem to portray real spiders. Some have too many or too few legs, others have tails or strange colors. These are nightmare spiders, but the adventurers likely will not yet know that.
- **11-15:** Among Mihalia's drawings, one stands out. Two spiders are drawn with smiling human faces. One is labeled "me" and the other "daddy". If confronted with this Sacha dismisses it as part of Mihalia's fascination with the local spiders.
- **16+:** Adventurers notice that the threads of the dreamcatcher are spun from real silk (A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check** reveals it's *spider silk*). More importantly, one of the threads of

the dreamcatcher is broken. If Sacha or Isidora are made aware of this, they will be clearly disturbed and hasten the start of the expedition. They still refuse to go into any more detail, saying only that there is more danger than they had realized.

Once the adventurers are done with their investigation, Sacha returns with a pack of equipment, ready to go. He gives Isidora a long look, then pulls out a small amulet and hands it towards the adventurers. This is an *amulet of dendar* (see appendix A), but Sacha describes it as merely a family heirloom. The amulet is a simple oval with a carving of a serpent. The serpent's eyes are very small emeralds. Sacha explains that the amulet will provide some protection from the spiders of Adhe Wood, though he falsely claims that nobody knows why it works. If the adventurers press him, he will claim that the pendant's magic is what allows a few people from Sevenecho to venture into Adhe Wood to harvest wood and plants. He asks that they keep his secret.

In truth, the *amulet of dendar* is a remnant of Dendar's worship here. It does provide some protection from the spiders, because it makes the nightmare spiders "see" you as one of their own.

Sacha insists that a player must wear the amulet to enter Adhe Wood unmolested. He explains that it causes nightmares, but that will hopefully not be an issue - they will not be resting in Adhe Wood. If asked, he will state plainly that he wishes not to wear it. His daughter is missing in a dangerous forest. He is already living a nightmare, and cannot bear to carry any more.

Once a player agrees to wear the amulet and night has come, Sacha leads the adventurers back to the edge of Adhe Wood to embark. Along the way, a few of the Sevenecho citizens give curious looks, and a few give solemn nods as they understand the gravity of Mihalia entering Adhe Wood. Most citizens also likely understand the severity of Sacha entering Adhe Wood in his humanoid form with strangers, but they make no move to stop anyone.

## Part 2: Adhe Wood

Read or paraphrase the following:

Adhe Wood is dark, an air of menace seeming to permeate everything around you. Moonlight hits the ground and trees in odd patterns, and you look up to slowly realize why: webs surround you, creating a canopy of silken threads. At the corner of your eye, movement - but what was it? It was large and fast, skittering along a strand of webbing. Could that have been a spider? It couldn't have been, it was too large. Surely the webs are the work of thousands of small spiders. The threads are thick enough that for one spider to make them it must be at least the size of a dog. Or larger. As the glowing torches of Sevenecho fade behind you, it grows eerily quiet. Was that the sound of leaves blowing in the wind, or something moving behind you? You feel the inescapable sensation of being watched - so strongly, you know that there must be many eyes upon you. You feel something behind you as sure as you can feel your own limbs. You fight the sensation to look, but it's so strong that you eventually give in and glance back - only to see nothing there. Your foot catches slightly and you have to fight the panic as you realize you've stepped into a patch of webbing. Before you, everything - the ground, the trees, the sky - is covered with a sticky, off-white net of spider's webs. You can still see the pinpricks of torchlight from the town - wait, no, that was the other direction. Then what are those red orbs glinting in the darkness? You're about to find out. Welcome to Adhe Wood.

This section of the adventure plays as atmospheric horror. Take your time and build a frightful environment.

Nightmare spiders surround the adventurers. Some stay distant, others may venture closer and allow the adventurers to catch a glimpse. The nightmare spiders are mutated abominations, unnatural semi-magical beasts birthed of horror. They have odd amounts of legs and eyes. Some have spots or striped hair, others have no hair at all. Their eyes have a variety of colors, sometimes even on the same spider. Some nightmare spiders even have different natural weapons such as claws, extra fangs, razor spines, bone ridges, and scorpion tails. They are not hostile so long as the adventurers stay within 60 feet of the active *amulet of dendar* and do not provoke the spiders, but if a player gets too far from the party the spiders may attempt an attack.

The player wearing the *amulet of dendar* will start to experience a disconnect from reality at the DM's discretion. They may see things that aren't really there, as well as a faint swirling energy emanating

from the nightmare spiders. Occasionally, they may hear the sound of a serpent hissing. No other player experiences these sensations.

Traversing Adhe Wood, the adventurers can occasionally see glowing webs, usually with some intricacy and detail. If asked, Sacha explains that there is deep magic within Adhe Wood and that some of the spiders are obviously afflicted by it. In truth, these are magical webs spun by the Aranea that function as dreamcatchers. If inspected, the adventurers can see pustules in the glowing webs - these are nightmares trapped in the Material Plane. Some pustules are still small, others are larger and pulsing. Partway through the journey, a large pustule bursts open before the adventurers and a **nightmare spider** (see appendix B) emerges, hisses at the adventurers, and awkwardly stumbles off into the Wood on uncertain new legs. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check** reveals the pustules are not natural (magic or otherwise); a failed check causes speculation that perhaps the pustules are magically-mutated egg sacs.

While the nightmare spiders are clearly dominant over Adhe Wood, they are not the only form of life. **Redwood crawlers** (see appendix B) can sometimes be spotted moving along the ground and within the roots of trees. More often, they can be seen stuck in webs, struggling for freedom or encased in a web cocoon. No other noteworthy animals can be seen outside of a carcass on a web. Fauna available for discovery and possible collection are:

- *beetle palm* (see appendix C)
- *duskwood* (see appendix C)
- *shadowtop* (see appendix C)

While gathering these ingredients can be an interesting secondary objective, be sure to keep the pace and the threat up. If the adventurers dawdle too long, Sacha will urge them forward. Any significant interaction with the web or prey of a nightmare spider might provoke a response.

For the duration of the journey through Adhe Wood, the ground is sticky - not enough to count as difficult terrain, but each player loses 5 feet of movement per turn.

Nearly all trees are coated with webs and the journey is difficult. Webbing frequently covers pathways; it can be cut by blade but Sacha recommends taking a slightly longer route that disturbs as few webs as possible to maintain the magic of the amulet. Any player falling on, walking into, or otherwise significantly interacting with a web must make a **DC 10 Strength check** to break free.

## Part 3: The True Nightmare

Adhe Wood is not very large, and it does not take long for the adventurers to find their way to the Temple of Dendar.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Within Adhe Wood, a mysterious temple stands. Many have heard the legends of a ruined building, decorated with sculptures of serpents. The legends are true, but always omit the small detail that the temple is completely encased in webs. A relatively small, mundane stone building sits in a clearing, decorated with serpentine patterns. Twelve-foot tall statues of rearing cobras with eyes made of carved emerald loom menacingly before the temple entrance. Glowing webs crisscross in swirling patterns, intersecting with mundane webs at odd junctions. Throughout the area, throbbing pustules of all sizes shift slightly. Some are barely bigger than a coin, others larger than you. You can see movement within.

The entrance to the temple is covered by a massive web. Many spider webs are beautiful, but this web is different. It glows with an obvious pattern, swirling out in a multi-layered spiral from the center. The pustules are the most dense on this web, obscuring the beauty behind a disturbing layer of writhing blackness.

Standing at the mouth of the temple is a young girl. By Sacha's face, she's clearly his daughter Mihalia. She holds a dagger, poised to strike at the perfect web. Sacha cries out for her to stop, but too late - Mihalia cuts downward, severing a strand, and a burst of air blows past you. It's surprisingly gentle, and for a moment the forest goes quiet. Then, from the treetops, a roar. Around you, pustules begin to burst. You get the feeling that no amulet can protect you now.

Around the adventurers, six large pustules each burst a **nightmare spider** (see appendix B) out toward the adventurers. The spiders are now hostile to everyone, but specifically Mihalia (**commoner**) (see appendix B). Sacha yells out to protect his daughter and immediately moves towards her in a defensive position. During this battle, he stays near Mihalia, examining her and only attacking if Mihalia is directly threatened.

After the initial nightmare spiders are eliminated, a second roar is heard. The sound of trees breaking and snapping is growing louder. At this point, Sacha has determined that Mihalia is not in her right mind - her eyes are glazed over, and she speaks only in a distant hiss. He stands and declares:

"The Serpent has her! There's no time. I'll explain later, but you must help me! Protect the webs while I weave a dreamcatcher. It's our only chance now."

Sacha now reveals his aranea form: a large brown-green humpbacked spider with light patterning around the torso. Eight legs, but with two additional small arms hanging below the body. The arms have small claw-like hands with multiple joints. He has black eyes that maintain an air of intelligence that the adventurers have not seen in the nightmare spiders.

As Sacha's transformation completes, the **true nightmare spider** (see appendix B) crashes through the tree line. Larger by far than any other nightmare spider, the true nightmare spider is an ancient behemoth. It was one of the first, and strongest, nightmares trapped by the Aranea and it has grown fat and deformed. Trees can support its bulk, but most bend under its form. Standing fifteen feet tall, the true nightmare spider has eight legs but eleven lopsided eyes. Misshapen lumps protrude off of it, small legs sprouting from each one. They appear vestigial, but flail in an unsettling way. Several rings of fangs emanate from its maw, seeming more like a blender than a creature. Its venom actively drips from its mouth.

### *Dreamcatcher Challenge*

The dreamcatcher web requires four uninterrupted dreamcatcher web Segments, as shown on the map below.

Sacha acts on his own initiative. On each of his turns, he spends his movement moving to a new anchor point location and uses his action to spin another segment of the dreamcatcher web. This is his only action unless Mihalia is immediately threatened; he will stop the web to defend her if he must.

The nightmare spiders and true nightmare spider will attempt to attack Mihalia and disrupt the web. They can sense that Mihalia is a threat to them, and that the dreamcatcher web is keeping them from their quarry. The adventurers are a secondary quarry to the spiders, but as the adventurers act against them they will retaliate. Each dreamcatcher web segment has 14 hp. If spiders do enough damage, the web segment collapses and must be either repaired by the adventurers or re-spun by Sacha.

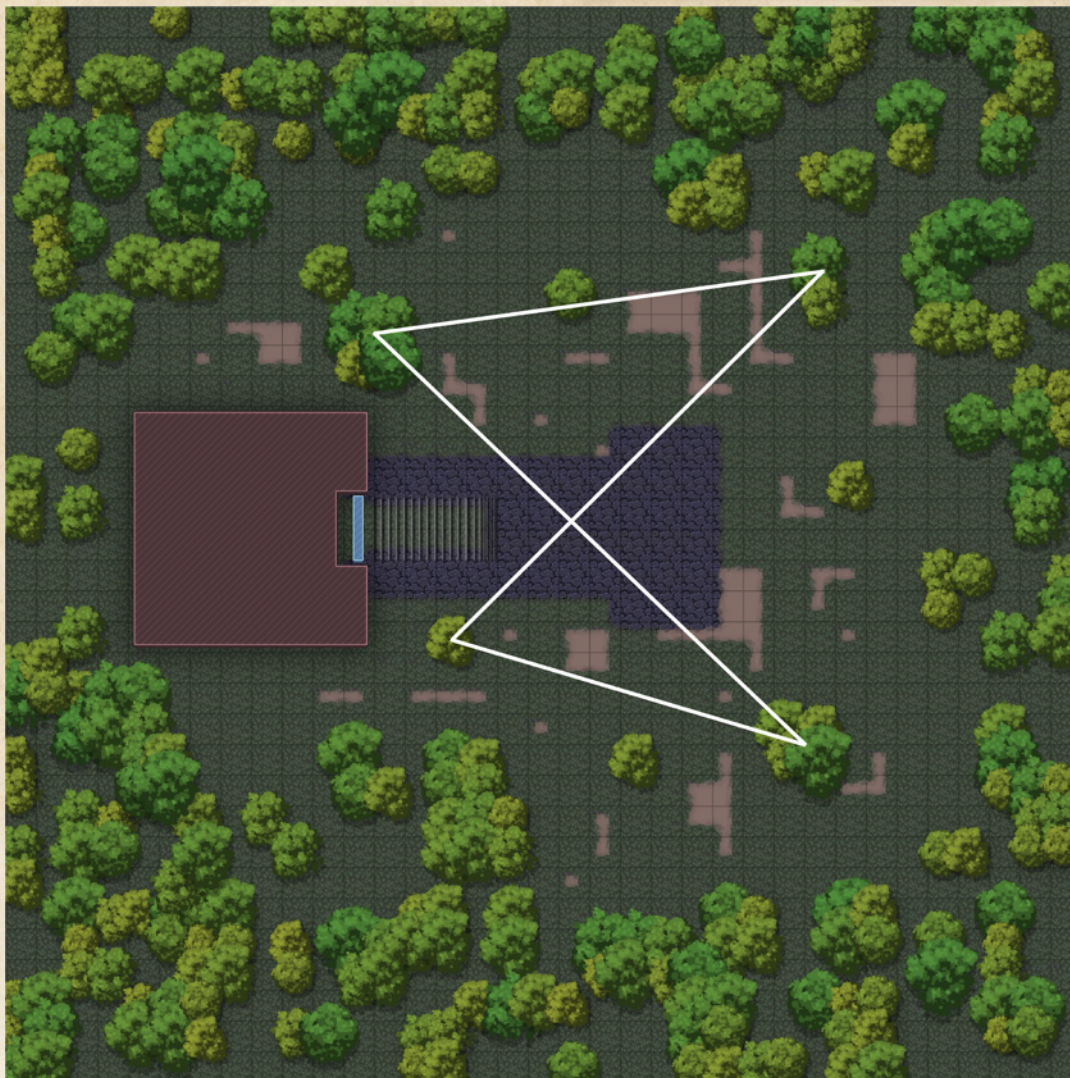
Adventurers can attempt to repair a damaged web point with a **DC 15 Strength or Dexterity check**. If they physically touch the webbing, they must also make a **DC 12 Strength check** or be stuck to the web themselves.

Each round after the first at initiative count 20, 1d6 nightmare spiders appear. Their origin point is random, as they can appear from the trees or burst out of pustules.

Nightmare spiders cannot walk on the dreamcatcher web, but may attack it. It takes an extra 5 feet of movement for them to move over or under the dreamcatcher web. As a reminder, the entire ground is covered in webbing and player characters still lose 5 feet of movement per turn so long as they walk on the ground. Additionally, any player that falls prone must make a **DC 10 Strength check** or be stuck to the ground. Sacha, as a spider, does not suffer these restrictions.

Webs, both from the nightmare spiders and Sacha, are extremely flammable. Fire deals double damage to webbing, and it is possible for the adventurers to disrupt Sacha's dreamcatcher web with fire attacks. Webs destroyed by fire cannot be repaired, and must be re-spun by Sacha.

Temple of Dendar Exterior, demonstrating the Dreamcatcher Web



#### FAILURE

It is possible for the adventurers to fail at this challenge. If Sacha dies or the adventurers are overwhelmed by spiders, there is no way to complete the web. In an instance where the adventurers survive but are unable to complete the challenge, a great gust of wind picks up, pulling them toward the temple. The spiders around attempt to flee, but begin to crumble into ash and dust that is sucked into the temple. All living adventurers get a vision of a mighty, infinite serpent rearing up and they collapse to the ground, overtaken by nightmares. They awaken later, in the daylight. The people of Sevenecho retrieved them from the Wood, which they say is now clear of spiders. Isidora sits with them, eager to hear the account of Sacha and Mihalia. She's overcome with pain as the adventurers explain their failure, and will tearfully provide backstory on the Aranea and their work against Dendar - work that is now ruined. The Aranea of Sevenecho immediately set about constructing new dreamcatcher webs, but they can only hope that the world will survive long enough for them to work.



## Escape from Adhe Wood

Once the dreamcatcher web is complete, a burst of faint white light blasts outwards from the clearing and any remaining nightmare spiders, including the true nightmare spider, flee. The powerful magic of the dreamcatcher web keeps them at bay for now, but immediately the adventurers can see new pustules forming along the dreamcatcher web. It will soon become too weak to defend them from the nightmare spiders.

Mihalia regains her senses and embraces her father, who she clearly recognizes even in his spider form. Sacha uses more silk to repair the dreamcatcher at the mouth of the Temple of Dendar, then picks up two sticks and fashions a rough, small dreamcatcher in his arms. He shifts back into his humanoid form and gives the dreamcatcher to Mihalia. It, too, is already forming very small pustules, but Sacha is confident that it will hold long enough to keep Mahalia free of Dendar's influence until they get out of Adhe Wood.

Sacha will not answer any questions until clear of Adhe Wood. The danger is passed, but far from gone. He gives everyone a moment to catch their breath, then explains that they are going to run to the edge of the wood. The nightmare spiders know where they are, so there is no need to be quiet any longer. Sacha explains that he will shift back into his aranea form and use his dreamcatcher webs to slow down pursuit, but a adventurer will need to transport Mihalia. Additionally, he states that the adventurers should not use fire, for if the fire spreads to the other dreamcatcher webs in Adhe Wood there may be nothing keeping the nightmare spiders contained.

The escape takes the form of a skill challenge. A total of four successes (**DC 14**) are required to escape. The adventurers may get creative with their skill rolls, but some ideas are:

- A **Strength (Athletics) check** to cut through thick webbing
- A **Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** to run lightly, avoiding the worst of the webbing
- A **Wisdom (Survival) check** to ensure that the adventurers are on the most direct route back to Sevenecho
- A **Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** to swing from branch to branch, avoiding webbing
- A **Wisdom (Perception) check** to notice a less-difficult path

If the adventurers fail a check, the **nightmare spiders** (see appendix B) draw closer. After a total of three failures, the adventurers find themselves trapped by webbing and have another battle with 1d6 nightmare spiders. They must cut through webbing or defeat the spiders to continue to flee.

After success, the adventurers see the welcoming lights of Sevenecho and escape Adhe Wood. Sacha follows a moment after in his humanoid form. Nightmare spiders can be seen in the trees, hissing and flailing at the adventurers, but a faintly shimmering band of dreamcatcher webs keep them trapped in the trees. Eventually, they turn back to Adhe Wood.

## Wrap Up

Sacha immediately takes Mihalia home, where they are both embraced by Isidora. Sacha is careful to monitor Mihalia's dreamcatcher, which is surprisingly dense with small pustules. If the adventurers did not notice it earlier, Sacha now discovers the broken dreamcatcher in Mihalia's bedroom. Isidora retrieves a small loom of spider's silk and sets herself to work building a new, stronger dreamcatcher for Mihalia.

While she works, Sacha finally addresses player questions. He explains that he is an Aranea, one of several living in Sevenecho. He and the other Aranea work to magically seal the entrance to the mouth of Dendar the Nightmare Serpent. He explains the true history of the nightmare spiders. He begs the adventurers to keep the secret, for if the work were ever to be interrupted it could mean the end of the world at the hands of Dendar. Sacha also retrieves the *amulet of dendar* from whoever holds it.

As a reward, Sacha gives all previously promised gold. If Mihalia is safe and well, he also gives a secondary reward: an *aranea dreamcatcher* (see appendix A) for all adventurers. He recommends the adventurers keep these nearby until they are away from Adhe Wood, especially the player that previously wore the *amulet of dendar*.

## Appendix A: Magic Items

### Amulet of Dendar

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

While wearing this amulet of Dendar, a creature is perceived as passive to the nightmare spiders of Adhe Wood. This perception extends to all friendly creatures within 60 feet. All but the most vicious of nightmare spiders will not attack unless provoked.

**Curse.** The user is cursed with terrible nightmares. While wearing this amulet, a creature cannot gain the benefits of a long rest. Instead, all long rests are functionally short rests, as true rest cannot be achieved through the powerful nightmares.

### Aranea Dreamcatcher

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

This necklace is crafted of carved *duskwood*, harvested in Adhe Wood. A beautiful pattern of real spider's silk shimmers slightly in the light. While wearing an *aranea dreamcatcher*, a creature has advantage on saving throws against fear and sleep effects. Additionally, any wearer is no longer troubled by bad dreams.

## Appendix B: Creatures

### Commoner

#### Commoner

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 4 (1d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)

#### Actions

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

## Nightmare Spiders

### Nightmare Spider (armored)

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d10 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** blindsight 10ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Damage Resistances** piercing

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

#### Actions

**Multiattack.** The spider makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d10+2) piercing damage.



## Nightmare Spider (ethereal)

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d10 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** blindsight 10ft., darkvision 60 ft.

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Fugue Shift.** The spider has a stronger connection to the Fugue Plane. As a reaction, it may become partially intangible, adding +3 to its AC for one round.

**Fugue Blink (Recharge 4-6).** As a bonus action, the spider may shift from the Material Plane to the Fugue Plane, and vice versa.

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### Actions

**Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

## Nightmare Spider (standard)

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d10 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +7

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Overwhelm.** As an action, the spider can attempt to overwhelm an enemy. The target creature must make a DC 12 Strength saving throw. On a successful save, the target takes 5 (1d10) slashing damage. On a failed save, the target takes 10 (2d10) slashing damage and is considered restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The spider makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws or web, if available.

**Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Claw. Melee Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) piercing damage.

**Web (Recharge 5-6). Ranged Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

## Nightmare Spider (venomous)

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d10 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

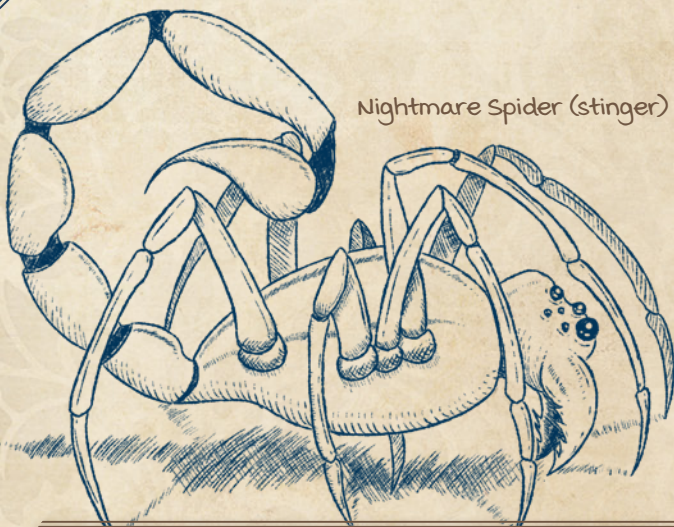
### Actions

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 12 (2d8+3) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Venom Spit.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) poison damage, and target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, target is poisoned for 1 hour.



Nightmare Spider  
(venomous)



Nightmare Spider (stinger)

## Nightmare Spider (stinger)

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d10 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### Actions

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Tail Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) piercing damage, and target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is poisoned for 1 hour.

# Redwood Crawler

## Redwood Crawler

Huge beast, unaligned

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d12 + 22)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 8

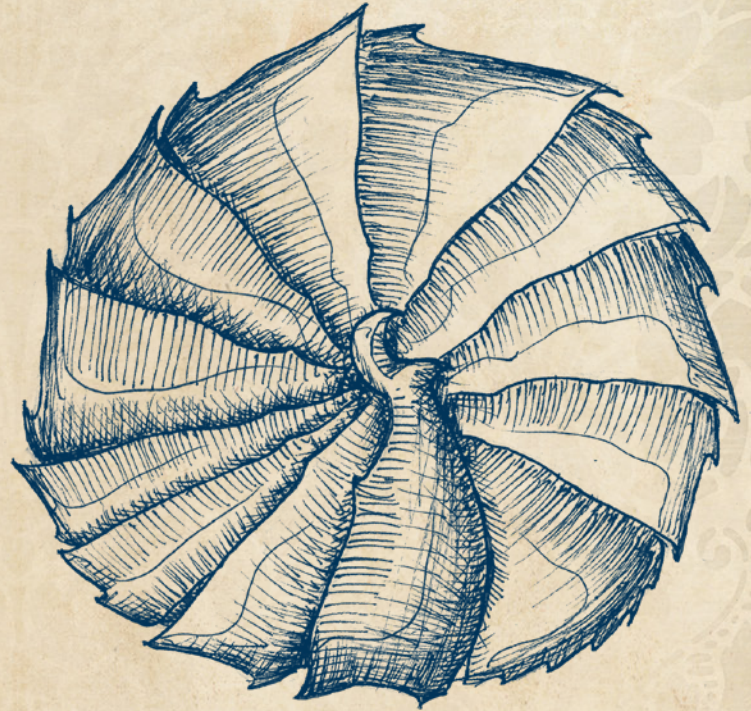
**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

### Actions

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 19 (3d12) poison damage. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

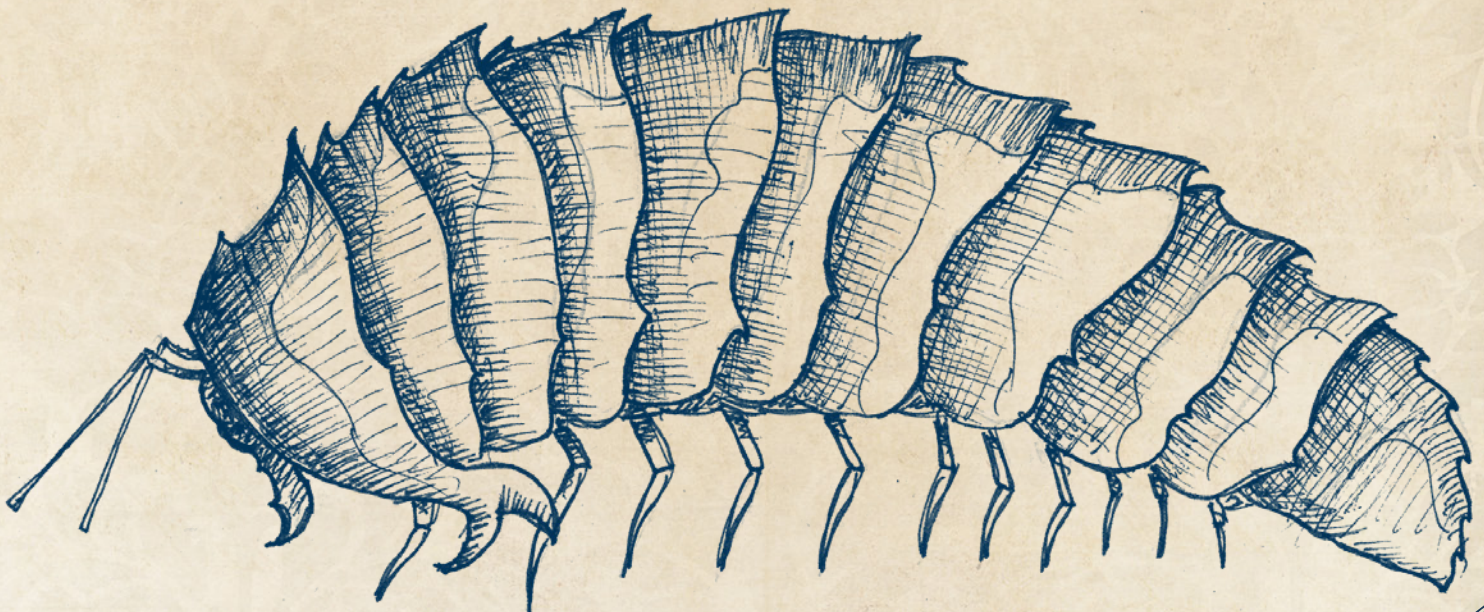
### Reactions

**Curl Up.** When the crawler takes damage, it can curl up into a defensive posture, gaining a +3 bonus to its AC until the start of its next turn. When the crawler uncurls at the start of its turn, a creature of its choice within 5 feet of it must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.



SHIAH "CINDER" IRGANGLADEN

Redwood Crawler



Sacha Taneva (Aranea form)



## Sacha Taneva

### *Sacha Taneva (Aranea form)*

Large monstrosity, neutral good

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 100 (15d10 + 25)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +7

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Dreamcatcher Web.** As an action, Sacha can craft a section of dreamcatcher web. The webbing causes nightmare spiders to lose 5 ft. of movement when passing over or under it. The webbing can be destroyed (AC 10; hp 14; immunity to bludgeoning, fire, poison, and psychic damage).

**Innate Spellcasting.** Sacha's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Sacha can cast the following spells innately, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*, *poison cloud*, *primal savagery*, *shocking grasp*

3/day each: *charm person*, *faerie fire*, *sleep*

2/day each: *invisibility*, *mirror image*

**Spider Climb.** Sacha can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, Sacha knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** Sacha ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### *Actions*

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Web.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing, taking 7 (2d6) psychic damage at the start of each of its turns. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 13 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 7; immunity to bludgeoning, fire, poison, and psychic damage).

## True Nightmare Spider

### True Nightmare Spider

Huge monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 313 (33d12 + 99)

**Speed** 50 ft., climb 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +10

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Damage Resistances** psychic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the spider fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

#### Actions

**Multiattack.** The spider makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its bite, then uses its Nightmare Web if it can.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 17 (3d8+4) piercing damage, and the

target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10+4) piercing damage.

**Nightmare Web (Recharge 5-6).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing, taking 13 (3d8) psychic damage at the start of each of its turns. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 16 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 10; immunity to bludgeoning, fire, poison, and psychic damage).

#### Legendary Actions

The spider can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The spider regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Bite.** The spider makes one bite attack.

**Venom Spray (Costs 2 Actions).** The spider sprays venom in a 15 ft. cone. Any affected creatures must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 6 (1d12) poison damage.

#### Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the true nightmare spider summons 1d6 nightmare spiders. The location and type of these nightmare spiders is random, within 120 ft. of the true nightmare spider.

## Appendix C: Flora

### Beetle Palm

Native to the Midwood area of Cormanthor, this tree can reach upward of 100 feet. Its name comes from its smooth, black, scaled bark which is said to resemble the carapace of a beetle. The wood itself is oily and burns well, making it a good cooking material. It would be a fine building material as well, but it has the tendency to become brittle and snap into segments as it ages.

Once a year, beetle palms produce around a dozen plum-sized nuts at the base of their large, branch-like fronds. The nuts are quite bitter, but could be used as a substitute material component for the goodberry spell. If someone casts goodberry using a spell slot of 2nd-level or higher, with a freshly-picked beetle nut as a component, creatures that eat the resulting goodberries have advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks for the next hour.

## Duskwood

Duskwood trees are found all across the continent of Faerûn, and owe both their success and their name to their tendency to form eerie, dense groves wherever they arrive. These trees average around 60 feet tall, and can be easily distinguished from others by its straight, black, smooth trunk, which culminates in a single crown of lacy branches and green leaves.

Duskwood itself is known to be extremely durable and fire resistant, to the point where people claim it to be as hard as iron. It is very often used for ship masts and important structural supports. When exposed to flame, the smoke-gray wood would smolder rather than catch, and could be put out with little effort.

Although shaping it requires very specific skills, duskwood's durability allows it to be used to create any weapon that is made of mostly metal, such as a sword or mace. Weapons with large wooden hafts, such as most polearms, are untenable due to how it affects the weapon's weight distribution. Duskwood normally can't be used to make effective armor, as shaping it into fine rings is impossible and it lacks flex. However, it is known to make serviceable shields and breastplates.

## Felsul

Felsul is a small, shrubby plant that burns poorly, but its freshly scraped bark can be used to numb the throat or reduce nausea. Its flowers, however, can be made into a spicy scented perfume. It requires so many of these flowers to produce even a drop of perfume, that a one-ounce bottle can run a hundred gold pieces in any city.

## Shadowtop

Shadowtops are lovingly referred to as the soaring giants of Faerûn's forests, as they are able to reach up to 90 feet in height, and 20 feet in diameter. Their name refers to the fact that its canopy of dense, feather-like foliage leaves the forest floor below it showered in perpetual shadow. This is amplified by the fact that its leaves all cluster to the trunk's top, and have a coppery underside.

These trees are extremely common. They are found in almost every humid area across the continent of Faerûn. The wood of the shadowtop tree—called shadow-wood—is quite tough and fibrous. Shadow-wood fibers are used in small quantities in ropemaking to increase the strength and durability of the coils. The wood burns slowly and with little smoke, making it perfect for cooking. Chefs love the almost tangy aftertaste it adds to meat.

Though strong, its fibers can be easily split, making the wood unsuitable for large constructions. However, arcanists prize the wood as an affordable but potent material from which to craft wands and staves. It is said that when shadow-wood is used to house druidic spells, the spells become slightly more potent.

Shadowtop





