NUMENÉRA™

EXPLORER'S KEYS

TEN INSTANT ADVENTURES FOR NUMENERA

By Bruce R. Cordell and Sean K. Reynolds

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Improv Game Mastering	5
Cypher List	10
Embassy of the Inconstant Moon	12
Protomatter Heist	18
Duplexity Cleave	24
Goliaths in the Earth	30
Twins of Revelation	36
Under a Stalactite Sky	42
Flight of the Seraph	48
From the Earlier	54
Trailblazer Trials	60
Microfugue State	66
Show 'Ems	72
Numenera Quick Reference	82
Pregenerated Characters	83

Numenera Discovery *Numenera Destiny*

Throughout this book, you'll see page references to various items accompanied by these two symbols. These are page references to the *Numenera Discovery* and *Numenera Destiny* corebooks, respectively, where you can find additional details about the items. It isn't necessary to look up the referenced items in the corebooks; it's an optional way to learn more about the game and provide additional information to your players.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had an adventure planned out, but for some reason or other, the PCs fail to find the vital clue that will allow them to proceed? Maybe they have to talk to an important NPC, find the right piece of revelatory information, or discover a map. But for reasons that make sense to your players, they try to kill the important NPC, disbelieve the revelatory information, or discard the map as unimportant.

Throughout this book, you'll see references to Show 'Ems. These images are designed to be shown to your players at the moment they come upon a particular scene in an adventure. Show 'Ems are found starting on page 72.

Rather than toss the whole adventure out, the GM needs another way to get that clue to the PCs. The adventures in *Explorer's Keys* are designed to do this, and in a way that requires essentially no preparation on your part.

During the course of a game, players should be allowed to go where they want to go, do what they want to do, and find interest in whatever they want. But at the same time, the GM needs to guide things along at least enough so that the group doesn't spin its wheels and get frustrated.

This means that in each scenario, certain key factors—which we call keys—need to be identified to create a possible throughline so that something interesting happens while everyone's at the table.

Using the Keys, page 6

Each adventure in *Explorer's Keys* has a number of keys. The keys might be important to the flow of the scenario, or they might be things that are just so cool that you don't want the PCs to pass them by—perhaps a challenge to overcome, a bit of amazing treasure, or something the characters will really need.

For ease of use, this book includes the Numenera Quick Reference Sheet (page 82) and six pregenerated characters (page 83). GMs should feel free to copy or print those tools ahead of time for players.

Keys help with pacing, give the GM a way to manage the flow without being draconian, and don't require a lot of prep time. Obviously, the scenarios need to be short—just a single session—so the GM doesn't have a lot of reading. Each instant adventure includes only what is needed for that session. Instant adventures are also designed to avoid a lot of book referencing or page flipping, so, as much as possible, once the GM spends about five minutes reading the basic info, they never need to look at anything but a single two-page spread at the heart of each scenario. The spread has a map or a graphic to show the possible progression of events. Any text pertaining to a spot on the map is right there on that spread. No flipping.

The scenarios in *Explorer's Keys* require a GM to do a little improvisational game mastering so they can take a very brief encounter write-up and flesh it out as needed. But frankly, every GM needs to be ready to do that anyway. Rather than a designer trying to cover every contingency or crazy scheme the players might come up with, perhaps it's better to arm the GM with the basics and let them come up with more when needed. If the PCs sneak by the abhumans, for example, a lengthy discussion of their battle tactics isn't really needed.

To sum up, this book presents ten scenarios in a different way than how published adventures are typically presented and used, requiring hardly any GM prep while still allowing players to easily find the fun. Over the years since the concept was introduced in *Weird Discoveries*, we and our players have found that instant adventures are easy and fun to run. We hope that you find that to be true as well.

IMPROV GAME MASTERING

If you're a game master, you've done it without thinking about it. The players came up with an idea—big or small—that you weren't ready for, and on the spot you came up with a response, a judgment call, an answer, or whatever was needed. You used improvisation to run your game, and more than likely, it worked out wonderfully.

Many GMs prefer to run a game with little preparation, making it all up as they go along. Some find this harder. *Explorer's Keys* is an attempt to bridge that gap by empowering GMs who don't want to spend a lot of time preparing while still informing those who don't want to make it all up on the fly.

Before we go any further, here's the best bit of advice you'll get on this subject: don't be afraid. Don't be afraid to come up with whatever the game needs. Fear leads to hesitation, and that slows down the game. It also means that you might not make the best decision. Don't think ahead—just come up with what's needed at the moment. Don't think about what another GM would do. Don't think about what the players will think of you. None of that will help—it will only slow you down.

Don't worry about being cliché or obvious. Neither of those things ever ruined a game. In fact, sometimes they're just what is needed (clichés are used often for a reason). You can always inject a nice dose of creativity or weirdness later.

GMs are called upon to make things up on the spot all the time—NPC names, place names, little details (of people, places, and things), game stats, NPC reactions, the consequences of actions, and more. Sometimes whole adventures. But it's not hard. In fact, it's just the opposite. As the GM, you almost can't make the wrong choice. If you say that there's a bakery in the village, then there is one. Poof! No one can tell you there's not.

PICKING PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

The instant adventures in this book are intended to be used with the pregenerated characters included starting on page 83. Everything in *Explorer's Keys* is provided so that no one has to prepare and you can run a game of Numenera on the spur of the moment.

The intention is that by the time the players choose their pregens and become familiar with what they can do, the GM is ready to go.

GAME MECHANICS

Mechanically, Numenera offers a lot of advantages in improv GMing. NPC stats are a breeze and require no preparation— just give them a level. If you want to get fancy, give them armor or something special, but that's not necessary—their level tells you everything you need to know. A task, an object, or a challenge of any kind simply needs to be rated on a scale of 1 to 10. We do that kind of thing naturally. Just think about it: on a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable is the seat you're sitting in right now? On a scale of 1 to 10, how hard would it be to jump up and touch the ceiling?

See? Using improv in Numenera game mechanics is no harder than that.

Sometimes the best adventures are simple ones. A lot of clutter and background can get lost without the players ever discovering or remembering it. Sometimes a good adventure is just starting at Point A, a good reason to get to Point B, and a handful of interesting things that occur on the way.

USING LOGIC TO GUIDE YOU

Logic is your friend. Make things logical when you create them, and you'll always do well. Things should generally operate the way it seems like they should. Water flows downhill. Animals flee when frightened. Stone walls are more durable than wooden walls. People don't like it when you start murdering in the middle of their town. And so on. The only time you should go against logic is when you're trying to make things weird. Any of the previous statements turning out to be untrue would be weird. (And weird is good in Numenera, but most things should not be weird.)

Don't let game concerns trump logic. Particularly in a game like Numenera, don't worry about "breaking the game." If it's logical that the wealthy NPC whose house the PCs just broke into would have lots of valuables to snatch, then he does. It's probably also logical that he's got a guard, an alarm, or the like.

The scenarios in this book assume that the GM will use logic, so most of the time, they don't provide those kinds of details. If the PCs go into a cave, it's likely dark and damp and has uneven surfaces. If they go into a tavern, it will have tables, chairs, a bartender, and plenty of drinks. Facts like these are rarely given in the descriptions in *Explorer's Keys*.

The best way to prepare for when the PCs don't do what you expect? Don't build expectations ahead of time about what they'll do. Don't prepare for them to do one particular thing because then you're not caught by surprise when they do something else. Keep yourself open.

FLESHING OUT THE DETAILS

The devil is in the details, of course. The players want to know how big the town square is, what the water in the pool tastes like, or what happens when they try to activate the crystalline device while holding it upside down.

If you're not sure of a detail, don't flip through the book looking for the answer—

USING THE KEYS

The biggest difference between running typical published adventures and running the scenarios in *Explorer's Keys* is that you need to manage when and where the keys show up. A key might be an object, a person, or a bit of information. Regardless, the GM determines when it shows up in the scenario rather than letting the scenario make that decision.

Another way to look at it: the players and the GM working together to create a story is what determines when a key makes its appearance.

There are two kinds of keys: those that are probably necessary for the completion of the scenario, and those that just make things more interesting.

Keys that are probably necessary. If the PCs need several components to summon a titanothaur (in *Flight of the Seraph*), each of those components is a key. Since the components are crucial to the forward motion of the session, the GM should pace things so the characters have a chance to find them. However, the GM might decide that the final component shouldn't show up too soon, for fear that the session will end too quickly. This is their prerogative and is up to their sense of pacing. Some GMs, for example, might want to reward smart play by enabling the PCs to reach their goal early, pacing be damned.

Keys that just make things more interesting. These keys are almost their own kind of GM intrusion. Such a key might be a device that causes harm or makes things more complicated. It might be something that helps the PCs (perhaps undoing a key that inflicts harm or complication) but isn't directly related to reaching a successful end of the scenario.

These keys are not crucial, but they make things more fun. What's more, they inject drama into the metagame. If the PCs find a strange-looking device, they shouldn't know automatically that it's directly related to the plot. Maybe it's just a strange device. Worse, maybe it's dangerous. They've got to look at it closely to figure out which.

come up with it on your own. For example, in *Embassy of the Inconstant Moon*, the PCs find something that allows them to survive for several days on the surface of the airless moon. Is it some kind of symbiont that fuses with the character and allows them to breathe? Is it a more traditional suit with a transparent helmet? Is it a pill that lets the PC stride about unconcerned with the vacuum by silvering their skin and performing other temporary transformations internally? That's up to you. Go with whatever seems most appropriate or most interesting. It's the kind of detail that a GM can come up with on their own, and by not writing a long paragraph describing how it works (text that the GM needs to read, absorb, remember, and later reference), we can make the adventure easier and faster to run.

We've got your back. If there's a detail you need help with, we'll provide it. But if it isn't provided, make it up! We'll give you a solid framework, but it's the GM who builds the façade that goes over it—the thing that people see and admire. We'll make you look good.

DEVELOPING LOCATIONS

You're in charge of what places look like. If you want the leaves of the trees to be orange, they're orange. Liven up any and all scenarios with weird descriptions as the mood strikes you. A weird tentacled bird in the tree will surprise and delight the players, even if it has no impact on the scenario. If there are no details about a house or another inhabited place, use logic. A hermit's cabin isn't going to be bare—someone lives there and probably has for years. They'll have food, tools, and some useful equipment like rope or a glowglobe. Never worry about access to mundane items unless it's somehow important to the scenario to do so. The PCs might think of getting a glowglobe as "treasure," but that doesn't mean you have to manage it.

At the same time, don't worry about describing everything in a location. Allow the players to do some of that for you. Let them say, "I could use more rope. Did the old hermit have some lying around?" If it seems logical, say, "Yeah, he has some stashed with some tools under the bed."

DEVELOPING PEOPLE AND CREATURES

Do the same thing with NPCs that you do with places. Maybe you have nothing more than a name, a level, and a few small details for an NPC, but once they're on stage in the game, they're a person and you've got to portray them as such. That's easy (and often unimportant) if they're a cobbler in the village, but it's more challenging if they join the PCs on a mission and stay with them throughout a whole session or more. Now you have to delve a bit deeper and give them a personality. Likes and dislikes. Goals and motivations. (If you know an NPC's goals, you always know how they'll react in a given situation. That's why Numenera creature stats include motive.) You should also give a little more thought to what they look like, what they're wearing, and what they're carrying.

The same is true of creatures. You might know how a beast acts in battle, but occasionally throw in a random detail like how it smells, that it has a huge scar over its eye, or something similar. This affects nothing, but it makes things more interesting.

One place you can get tripped up is when the PCs interact with a person or creature in a way you weren't expecting. They might talk to the ravenous beast and try to calm it, suddenly threaten the mayor of the village, or sneak around the guards rather than fight them. You've got to use logic to figure out what the creature or NPC will do. How will it react? What will it do afterward? This is your opportunity as the GM to do some honest-to-goodness roleplaying. Put yourself in the NPC's place and decide what it would do, just as you would if you were playing it as a character in the game—because you are.

WHEN IT TURNS VIOLENT

You never know when an encounter might become a combat encounter. Sometimes, all you know about an NPC is the level. Always feel free to assume that an NPC is equipped logically. If they're in a location or a situation where danger is likely, they're probably wearing armor (usually Armor 1). Many people, not just warriors, can produce some sort of weapon in a fight by pulling a knife from a boot or grabbing a heavy candlestick from a table. Remember, it doesn't matter what weapon is used, even if it's just a punch or a kick—NPCs inflict damage equal to their level unless described otherwise.

THE FORMAT OF THESE SCENARIOS

The scenarios in *Explorer's Keys* are designed to be easy to use and easy to grasp with just a quick skim. Each starts out with a brief summary and a few paragraphs that add more detail. Then the most important salient points are called out, this time in a bulleted list to help you remember them (and to help you reference them later). You must read all of this and absorb it before play starts. Fortunately, these sections are short and written for easy comprehension and retention.

Next, you'll find a section that details the keys involved in the scenario. Before play begins, you must have a good idea of what the keys are, but you don't need to know how they'll show up. In fact, that's the point. Where the keys are located and when they come into play are decided by the flow of the session.

After the keys, you need to read the Starting Point and Wrap-Up sections, which are pretty self-explanatory.

All encounters that the PCs will experience in the session are found on a two-page spread, organized in a map or chart (which can be followed just like a map). The encounters are designed to be short and easy enough to skim through before play starts.

Some of the encounters have symbols designating that one or more of the keys might be present.

Some of the encounters have predesigned GM intrusions, which are always optional.

After that essential spread (the meat of the scenario), you'll find a section called More Details. If you've got time, reading this will help flesh out the details—the places, the people, and so on. But nothing in this section is crucial. The scenario works fine without it.

Finally, each scenario ends with notes for GMs who want to incorporate it into an ongoing campaign or place it specifically in the Ninth World. You'll also find ideas for further development if you want to keep things going after the adventure is done. This includes awarding experience points (XP) for discoveries and actions. None of this needs to be read ahead of time. Don't even bother with any of it until the session is over.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

You might decide you want more preparation. Some GMs do. Or maybe you're a GM who doesn't necessarily want to use these adventures as impromptu sessions. Instead you want to read this entire book ahead of time. You're going to prepare for these low-prep scenarios.

That's okay. It's your book. Use it however you want.

This book presents ten scenarios. You will also see the term "session" many times. In this case, the two terms are synonymous. The idea is that each scenario is the equivalent of one four- to five-hour game session for three to five players.

GM Intrusion, page 123

CYPHER LIST

Cyphers, page 272

The following cyphers are ready to use in the scenarios in this book, alleviating prep time and cutting down on the need to reference books during a session. Use them when you are in need of a random cypher.

Level 6 amulet: Target gains access to one additional focus ability from their next higher tier (up to a maximum tier equal to the cypher's level), as if they had selected that ability as an advancement for one hour.

Level 6 crystalline rod: Target touched by the tip falls asleep for ten minutes or until awoken by a violent action or an extremely loud noise.

Level 4 shoulder-mounted device: Allows the user to project a ray of energy up to 200 feet (60 m) that paralyzes the target for one minute.

Level 6 goggles: Allows the wearer to mentally record everything they see for thirty seconds and store the recording permanently in their long-term memory. This cypher is useful for watching someone pick a specific lock, enter a complex code, or do something else that happens quickly.

Level 3 injector: For the next 28 hours, the character is trained in ranged attacks.

Level 4 handheld device: Becomes a multiarmed sphere that floats. It repairs one designated numenera device (level 4 or less) that has been damaged but not destroyed. The repair unit can even create spare parts unless the GM rules that the parts are too specialized or rare (in which case, the unit repairs the device entirely except for the specialized part). Repair time is 1d100 + 20 minutes.

Level 2 handheld device: Puts the user out of phase for one minute. During this time, the user can pass through solid objects like a ghost, as if the objects were entirely insubstantial. They cannot make physical attacks or be physically attacked.

Level 5 pill: Renders the user immune to poisons of the same level or lower for 28 hours (and ends any such ongoing effects already in the user's system, if any).

Level 3 glowing slime in a tube: Slime dissolves 1 cubic foot of material each round for three rounds.

Level 5 vial of liquid: The victim suffers Intellect damage equal to the cypher's level and cannot take actions for five rounds.

Level 6 crystal nodule: When attached to a melee weapon and activated, every time the weapon strikes a solid creature or object, it generates a burst of electricity, inflicting 1 additional point of damage. This is true for every attack for 28 hours after the nodule is activated.

Level 6 synth glove: One unanchored item your size or smaller within long range is drawn immediately to the device. It takes one round to arrive. The item has no momentum when it arrives.

Level 4 datasphere siphon: Tapping into the knowledge of the datasphere, the user can learn the answer to one question.

Level 3 injector: If a creature is injected, it gains +1 to its Speed Edge for one hour.

Level 3 needle: If inserted in the user's flesh, the needle creates a shimmering energy shield around the user for one hour, granting +3 to Armor.

Level 4 handheld device: Becomes a 1-foot (30 cm) diameter sphere that hovers overhead for one minute, healing up to 2 points of damage each round to designated creatures within short range.

Level 7 silvery device: Everyone within immediate range is coated in a silvery substance that allows them to survive (and breathe) in water, lethally hot areas, lethally cold areas, and even airless vacuums for seven hours.

Level 5 handheld projector: Over the next hour, scrubbing nanobots move across (and into) a nearby structure up to the size of a ten-room home. The structure is cleaned and tidied as if subject to the expert attention of a reliable cleaning service.

Level 6 pair of crystals: When the device is activated, any sound produced near one crystal is emitted by the other. Range is unlimited, and the crystals remain active for 28 hours.

Level 8 pill: Over the next ten minutes, the user grows to a height of 30 feet (9 m) and remains big for one hour, gaining the following effects: +15 points to Might; +2 to Might Edge; +1 Armor; deals 4 additional points of damage with melee attacks; and Speed defense tasks are hindered by three steps. If used as part of a conflict involving a ranked horde or community, treat the user as a rampaging beast with a rank of 2 during that community action.

Rampaging beast, page 315

Community action, page 305

Level 7 bulky device: If used while the sun is in the sky, it creates a total eclipse in an area 10 miles (16 km) in diameter, centered on the location where the cypher was activated, for ten minutes.

Datasphere, page 355

Level 4 boxy mechanism with dial: Water pours from the device at a prodigious rate, filling a low-lying area a long distance across to a depth of about a foot (30 cm) within a minute. Water continues to emerge for four minutes, and if the terrain isn't conducive to so much water, the flood becomes a rank 2 disaster that lasts about one hour.

Ranked disaster, page 309

Level 6 rod with switches: When activated, the user learns the surface thoughts of all creatures within immediate range. The effect lasts for one round.

Level 5 powder in a tube: Mixed with water, this powder instantly hardens into a rocklike material. Can cover an area up to 15 feet by 15 feet (5 m by 5 m).

Level 4 synth mesh vest: Once activated, wearer can breathe both air and water for 28 hours, and gains +2 Armor against all damage inflicted by cold.

EMBASSY OF THE INCONSTANT MOON

Huluraloch: *level 6, perception as level 10; exists only as pure thought and perception; cannot be harmed physically or interact with the physical world; cannot be detected in any way except in dreams*

The Tragedian: *level 8; appears as a field of blue energy but can take on the shapes of different terrifying creatures with matching abilities and level of that shape (though it often chooses a callerail); heals 5 health per round*

"Night sight,
Moon sight,
Stripe tonight,
Night sight?"
~children's rhyme in Navarene

BRIEF SUMMARY

The PCs investigate an ancient structure that appears only during certain "phases" of the moon.

DETAILS

The PCs learn of a strange structure of twisted metal and crystal (the embassy) that appears whenever the moon overhead is full and is *not* displaying its belt. (The moon that the people of the Ninth World see changes. On any given night, it might have a blue-green stripe running across its middle. Some call it the moon's belt. Others refer to the occasions it appears as a "bounded moon.") The structure's periodic appearance is a relatively new phenomenon, having started a few months ago.

Entering the structure is as simple as finding a whorled, tubular opening along the base, and engaging the weird airlock-like mechanism (a level 4 Intellect task that triggers the crystal to briefly flow like liquid to open and close). Explorers who enter discover that they've left Earth completely, eventually realizing that they've come to the moon, at least as the moon existed well over a billion years in the past (before humans evolved on Earth). Exploring for the sake of discovery is a viable aim in the embassy, but the PCs are likely eager to find a way back to Earth *and* back to the present.

The encounters within the embassy include interactions with alien intelligences and the numenera. The PCs eventually meet the alien huluraloch, who might be persuaded to help the characters get home. The huluraloch dwell within the embassy and are sustained by it. They are beings of pure perception, and the embassy is a massive circuit that holds them the way seawater holds salt. Complex crystalline devices run throughout the framework of the structure, providing the huluraloch with a fourth-dimensional space from which they can observe Earth.

Whereas the huluraloch are aloof, an entity called the Tragedian is dangerous. It's an extraterrestrial from the PCs' time period. The huluraloch captured it, believing it was up to no good. But the Tragedian recently escaped, though it remains locked in the past. Its machinations disrupted the embassy and caused an echo of the structure to appear on Earth in the PCs' present. The echo structure that the PCs entered is a one-way passage to the moon and the distant past. Getting back requires the huluraloch's aid.

In order to motivate the PCs to bend all their concentration to getting back to their own time and back to Earth, the Tragedian manifests as a terrifying creature apparently intent on killing them. However, it intentionally never quite manages to completely destroy them (though it may kill one or two) because it needs them to forge a path out of the embassy. In this way, some of the PCs' time in the structure becomes a sort of cat-and-mouse game with the characters in the role of the mice.

SALIENT POINTS

- The PCs in the embassy don't have a clear way back, though they could exit to the airless face of the moon and a billion-plus years in the past before intelligent life developed on Earth.

KEYS

This scenario has four keys, all found in the embassy.

- Something that fixes the malfunctioning crystal in the chronicity cube, a temporal device that the Tragedian had when it first arrived. Most likely, this is a resonance that the PCs must learn to hum from a dream visit with the huluraloch, but it could be an object that gives off the right sound.
- A level 7 crystal device filled with thousands of tiny living slivers of white energy that infest the character touching it. The slivers visibly slide and writhe beneath their flesh, slowly multiplying. The character seems to find it pleasant; however, they descend one step on the damage track every few hours. If they die, they are transformed into a crystal shape fused with the floor, filled with tiny living slivers of white energy.
- Something that can remove the tiny living slivers of white energy infesting a character. This is likely either a resonance hum that PCs can learn from the huluraloch or an object that sends glowing red liquid into the infected PC, slowly engulfing and killing the glowing slivers. If used on a PC who is not infected, the red liquid inflicts 8 points of Might damage that ignores Armor.
- Something that allows a PC to survive for several days on the surface of the airless moon. There might be several of these scattered about the embassy.

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs eight to ten cyphers.

- Getting back to Earth and their own time requires that the PCs interact with the alien huluraloch.
- A terrifying creature called the Tragedian hunts the PCs in the embassy, but never quite catches them.
- The Tragedian's attacks are intended to motivate the PCs to find a way to return to their own time in a rush, opening the way for the Tragedian to make the trip too. It knows that if it deals openly with the PCs, the huluraloch will never agree to send them back to the "future" (the PCs' present).
- The Tragedian can take many shapes, from as small as a rodent to as large as a jiraskar.

STARTING POINT

Reveal Show 'Em A (page 72) to the players.

The PCs enter the twisted crystal structure that appeared out of nowhere while the moon is full and lacking its "belt." The air is so cold their breath steams, and gravity is one-sixth normal; while the PCs remain inside, they are subject to the effects of low gravity, and it takes a bit of practice to get used to it.

Characters stand within a chamber about 150 feet (45 m) across and a few hundred feet high that extends up past dozens of visible balconies, suggesting higher floors, though several passages also lead off this main ground-floor level. The exterior walls are translucent, and the ceiling high above is transparent. Through it, PCs looking up see Earth, though its configuration of landmasses is quite different. The stars in the sky also appear different—explorers may wonder if they have shifted to a different world, or to a moon circling a different sphere altogether.

Metallic debris is scattered about the chamber, amid clusters of strange control surfaces, consoles, and unidentifiable machinery that erupts everywhere from fixed points on the floor and walls.

THE WRAP-UP

If the PCs escape the embassy and return to Earth in their present time, the scenario is done and the echo structure no longer returns when the moon is full and beltless. However, depending on how things went, the Tragedian may also now be loose on Earth and cause future problems for the PCs. If time allows, refer to Temporal Return for additional details about the PCs' homecoming.

Low Gravity: *All move rolls are eased. Weapons that rely on weight, such as all heavy weapons, deal 2 fewer points of damage (minimum of 1 point). Weapons with short range can reach to long range, and long-range weapons can reach to very long range. Characters trained in low-gravity maneuvering ignore the damage penalty.*

Temporal Return, page 16

EMBASSY OF THE INCONSTANT MOON

MOON SURFACE

Outside, the moon is dry, desolate, and utterly void. There is no breathable air, no water that isn't frozen, and no appreciable atmospheric pressure. It is unbearably hot in the light of the sun, and deathly cold out of the sunlight. If a KEY is here, it is among a pile of dull crystals a short distance from the main structure.

Effects of Vacuum: An unprotected character moves one step down the damage track each round. However, at the point where they should die, they instead fall unconscious and remain so for about a minute. If they are rescued during that time, they can be revived. If not, they actually die.

SLEEPING IN THE EMBASSY

Eventually, the PCs will grow tired. Which is good, because the only way to communicate with the huluraloch is by sleeping. Sleepers have a shared lucid dream where they encounter a creature like a huge floating, insubstantial eye. If treated with respect, the huluraloch speaks in the dreamer's language. If not, the dream simply ends.

If the dreamers succeed in creating and continuing this interaction, they can learn the following:

- Currently (which is to say, in the PC's past), no intelligent life exists on Earth.
- The huluraloch are artificial entities created by equally alien beings from the other side of the galaxy who are interested in Earth.
- The embassies have valuable artifacts of crystalline technology that visitors can find and use.
- A prisoner of the huluraloch (the Tragedian) escaped its confinement in the embassy. The huluraloch are reluctant to talk about the Tragedian and its crimes, or allow it to escape the past (which means they don't want to help the PCs do so, either). However, if the PCs put in three sleep periods telling the aliens about their own time (and succeed on three persuasion tasks, one per sleep period), the huluraloch can be convinced to provide the KEY to repair the malfunctioning chronicity box or provide the KEY to cure a character infested with tiny living slivers of white energy.

GM intrusion: The PC does something that the huluraloch dislikes and the dream ends.

FLEXING MACHINE

A machine protruding from the floor here constantly flexes and bends, almost like a hand clenching and releasing. If present, a KEY can be salvaged as a component of the machine (a level 6 task). A failed attempt to remove the KEY indicates that those working at it are jolted with a thundering blast of sonic energy and take 4 points of damage.

GM intrusion: Loud sounds summon the Tragedian, who attacks in the guise of a callerail, a massive ape-like being of fused organic and inorganic materials.

Callerail: *level 7, Speed defense as level 6 due to size, breaks objects as level 9; melee inflicts 7 points of damage and (whether attacking or defending) on failed Speed defense roll, target's weapon is absorbed and destroyed*

STARTING POINT

The PCs first appear here. If they attempt to return back the way they came, despite seeing an airless moon surface, they can operate the airlock-controlled passage to leave. Operating the airlock (which causes the crystalline surfaces to shift like taffy to open and close) requires three rounds no matter what direction the PCs are going. Eventually, the PCs discover they are trapped in the past but can leave the embassy and venture onto the moon's surface should they wish.

LOOTED CACHE

A broken crystal façade reveals a debris-filled cavity. Amid the mess is a crystal automaton (level 2) that looks somewhat like a spider on its back with several legs snapped off. If set upright, it climbs to the top of the cache and fuses there to become a decorative element that the PCs have noticed elsewhere.

If a KEY is here, it is among the debris, which also includes 10 shins and two crystalline cyphers.

GM intrusion: The Tragedian attacks a character in the guise of a callerail, or something of the GM's choosing.

HOLE

The chamber is cluttered with mostly dead devices and a big empty space in the middle. The bare space brackets an invisible point in the air that swallows matter and sends it elsewhere.

If a KEY is here, it can be salvaged from the devices. If it is the KEY that provides protection from vacuum, the PCs find about eight instances of it.

GM intrusion: The character stumbles on the anomaly and must succeed on a difficulty 5 Speed defense task to avoid taking 5 points of damage (ignores Armor). Even on a success, they lose an article of clothing or equipment. If a PC willingly goes through the hole, see Hole to Elsewhere on the next page.

ANIMATING DEBRIS

Another chamber filled with the debris of long-abandoned alien technology. However, the devices in the chamber self-assemble over the course of one round into ten murderous automatons. If a KEY is here, it can be salvaged from five or more defeated animated automatons.

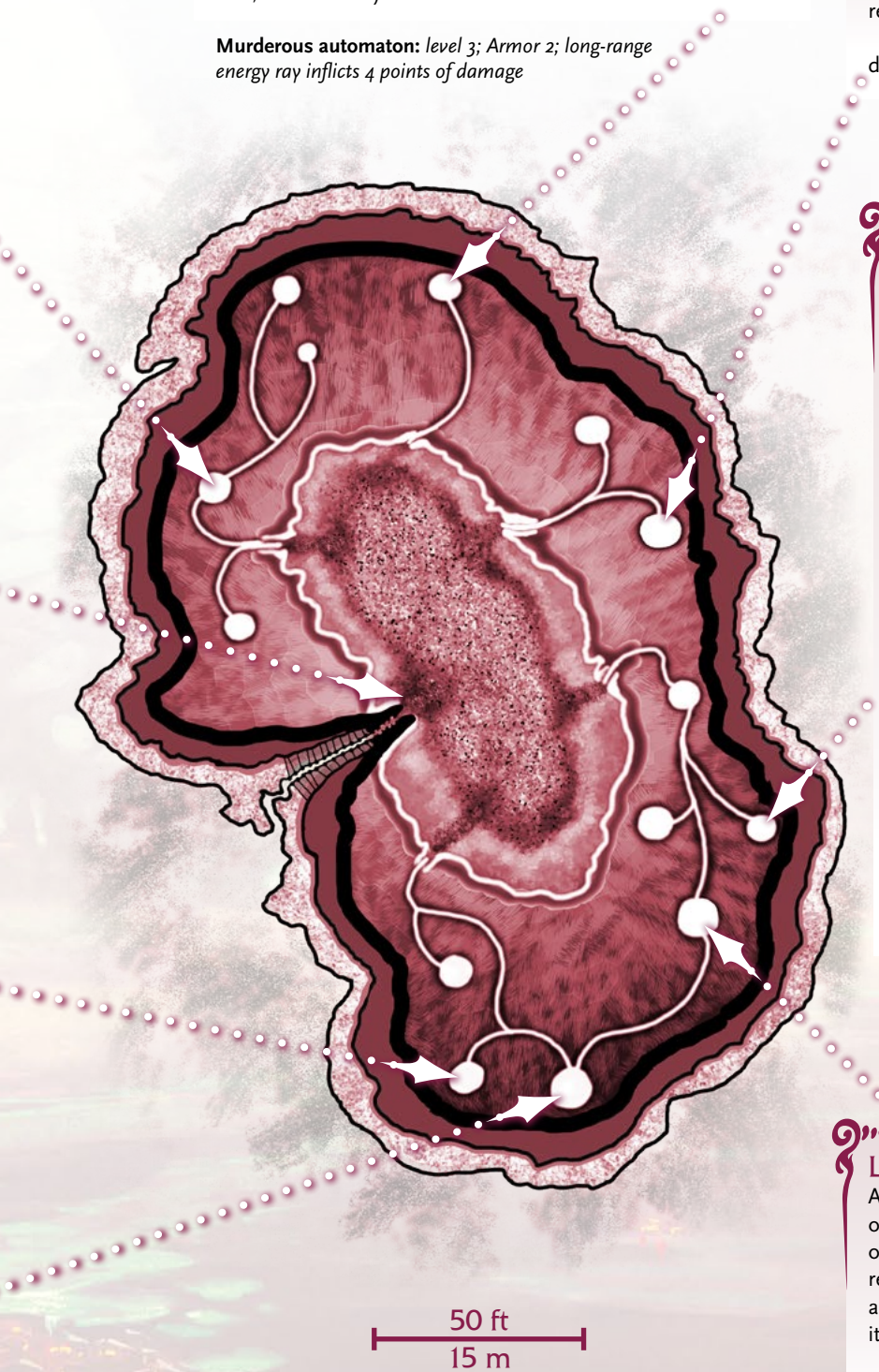
GM intrusion: The Tragedian, in the guise of a callerail, attacks the character who is already being attacked by murderous automatons. (However, if it seems that PCs might be overwhelmed, the Tragedian changes tactics and saves the PCs, then leaves.)

Murderous automaton: *level 3; Armor 2; long-range energy ray inflicts 4 points of damage*

HUMMING PLANT

A crystal formation, almost like a plant, extends from the wall here with long reed-like stalks. Study indicates that it's not a plant, but some kind of alien machine. Images of visitors flow and twinkle along the reflective stalks, and the stalks each give off a low-level hum. If a stalk is touched, the PC is molecularly bonded to it and fused to the floor. This effect is removed when a victim suffers at least 1 point of damage.

If a KEY is here, it is one of the stalks, which can be detached from the plant-like machine.



CHRONICTY CUBE

Reveal Show 'Em B (page 72) to the players.

A yellow crystalline cube, about 12 feet (4 m) on a side, lies amid metallic debris as if it dropped from a great height destroying everything in the chamber. The cube is cracked, but not quite shattered. It shudders subtly, leaking a yellowish light and faint discordant tones. If a PC examines the cube, they can trigger a dreamlike trance in which they can learn the following:

- The cube is damaged. Normally, its four-dimensional hypercubic nature allows it to exist outside time. But the damage it has sustained has created an array of discordant temporal effects, including the echo of the embassy on Earth in the PCs' time, as well as trapping everyone who enters that echo on the moon of the past. This may be how PCs learn that they are far in their own past.
- The cube is a tool that was brought to the moon in the PCs' time by a being called the Tragedian.
- If the cube is repaired, all those native to the "future" (the PCs, the cube, and the Tragedian) will either be returned to their own time or place, or be destroyed.

See Temporal Return on the next page.

If a KEY is here, it is among the debris.

LIQUID SOUND

A cavity in the wall contains what appears to be a vertical wall of rippling golden fluid. Anyone touching it takes 3 points of damage and, through flesh induction, hears blasting resonant atonal music. If a KEY is here, it is an object from another area that must be immersed in the pool to perform its needed function.

GM intrusion: The device placed in the pool overloads and explodes, destroying itself and inflicting 3 points of damage on the character.

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

TEMPORAL RETURN

If the PCs obtain the key that fixes the chronicity cube, read or paraphrase the following.

The resonant sound you produce combines with the discordant tones leaked by the cube. A harmony emerges, building to a crescendo like a tsunami rolling into a shallow cove. As the cube pulses in time, its cracks visibly heal. The entire surrounding embassy picks up the sound, and the volume becomes intolerable. An explosion of light and sound erupts from the cube, so violent that—

The PCs experience a discontinuity in their consciousness. Ask them to make a difficulty 3 Might defense roll. Those who succeed wake up in the time and space where they first encountered the twisted metal and crystal embassy on the surface of Earth. (The echo of the embassy they entered is gone.) Those who fail fall victim to temporal distortion; they are returned to their correct time and space a few minutes later, but they're out of phase, unable to affect physical matter. The characters might need to find an Aeon Priest or someone else with appropriate numenera knowledge to try to restore the affected PCs to physical phase.

Unless the PCs took special measures to prevent the Tragedian's escape, such as locking it in a room or destroying it, it makes the transition too. It appears as a blue-colored curtain of energy, rippling almost like an aurora before it flits away.

HOLE TO ELSEWHERE

One chamber in the embassy contains an invisible hole that deposits small items elsewhere. If a PC purposefully goes through it (or if a GM intrusion rears its head), "elsewhere" is discovered to be a location on the moon's surface, in a crater many miles from the embassy (which is still visible in the distance, flashing in the sun's rays). The PC's first concern is the vacuum; without protection, they'll quickly die.

The hole in space is not invisible on this side; a 3-foot (1 m) diameter hole floats about 10 feet (3 m) above a crater. Unprotected PCs have a few rounds before they fall unconscious. During this time, they can attempt to jump (in the moon's much lower gravity) in an arc that intersects the hole and get back into the embassy, a difficulty 3 Might-based task.

If the PCs have a method to survive long enough to look around, they discover that the crater beneath the hole contains all kinds of debris tens of meters thick, and may contain one or more keys. In addition, the pile could provide several additional cyphers if the PCs try to salvage it.

Furthermore, the garbage pile has been hollowed and tunneled by automatons and entities, and PCs who spend time here salvaging may have additional encounters. For each ten minutes that they explore, choose (or roll 1d6) to determine what they encounter.

1d6	Encounter
1	Vacuum-adapted creatures called marth, similar to six-footed panthers, modified by strange devices that allow them to subsist on sunlight (but fresh flesh is much preferred).
2–3	Cavity contains an inactive automaton kept somnolent by a linked machine. If the machine is salvaged for a cypher, the automaton animates in a rage.
4–6	Cavity coated in whitish, vacuum-adapted mold. Devices and other components that rely on energy to function begin to fail as the mold starts to gleam (sucking the energy away). Spending more than a few rounds in the area drains all the PCs' devices of energy (possibly including their protective gear) and may cause a mold disease that slowly covers a PC with whitish growth.

Marth: *level 3; on a failed Might defense roll, bite risks disrupting the victim's vacuum protection*

Automaton: *level 6*

Moon surface, page 14

Mold disease: *level 5; each day a Might defense roll is failed, inflicts 5 points of Might damage (ignores Armor)*

ALTERNATE START

If the GM doesn't want to start the scenario as the PCs enter the embassy to explore, the characters can begin in a nearby community named Amber Keep, where they hear tales of a strange structure to the north and its apparent connection to the moon. If a stronger hook is desired, a tall, lean carpenter named Visso who dabbles in crafting numenera asks that the PCs enter the structure and look for a special kind of component he needs for an installation that he is building.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

Within the context of a campaign, it's easy to imagine that the PCs need or want something specific in the embassy. Maybe it's one of the keys—perhaps the one that cures a PC from infection with light slivers, or the one that provides protection from vacuum. Or something the GM places in one of the chambers or adds as a fifth key.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

The echo of the embassy can be located wherever the GM needs it. Otherwise, it appears near the city of Aian in the land of Milave.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for discovering the huluraloch in their dreams, 2 XP for convincing the huluraloch to help them repair the broken chronicity cube, and 1 XP if the PCs prevent the Tragedian from returning with them (even if that means making an explicit deal with the creature).

More areas exist within the embassy than are detailed here. GMs can expand it to be as vast as they want. In fact, the map details only a few floors; many more extend higher (and perhaps lower). The structure certainly holds more strange discoveries and treasures, not to mention more dangers.

If the PCs wish to speak with the huluraloch again after returning to their own time and space, they'll have to find a method of reaching the moon, then search them out across its surface when time shifts and the "belt" disappears. Why would the PCs want to do this? One reason might be to leave something in the deep past that they hope to discover a billion-plus years later, though of course such an item would have to be amazingly resilient to survive such unimaginable deeps of time.

Visso: *level 2, carpentry and crafting numenera as level 3*

Aian, page 159

Milave, page 158

PROTOMATTER HEIST

Protomatter, page 112

BRIEF SUMMARY

A wright and nano have learned that a container of protomatter—a bulky and dangerous type of crafting material—can be found inside an enormous vehicle, and they have a plan for the PCs to find and retrieve it for them.

DETAILS

Parvee: *level 3, crafting numenera as level 5*

Mestik: *level 3, understanding numenera as level 5*

Voidglider, page 178

A wright named Parvee and her nano sister Mestik have been working on building a voidglider for over a year, but their progress has stalled because they've been unable to discover a source of protomatter for their project. An artifact they found told them that they'd be able to find some of this material in the Convoy of the Sky God, an immense moving structure that wends through the air and appears in various places around the Ninth World. The artifact also gave an approximate time and place that it would appear—about three days from now. Parvee and Mestik have been scrambling to find anyone competent and interested in this work, and they happen to see or hear about the PCs.

The main problem with salvaging and transporting protomatter is that it is normally found within huge stronglass canisters 30 feet (9 m) long and 15 feet (5 m) wide, which weigh about 8 tons (7 t).

CONVOY OF THE SKY GOD

Hover belt, page 297

This grand object resembles a series of stubby towers laid end to end, gapped by several feet of air but somehow still connected, winding down from the sky. The vehicle exterior changes over time. Sometimes the surfaces resemble dark metal. Sometimes they're bright with complex patterns of light. When it first arrives in a new location, it announces its presence with a cacophonous blast of dreadful sound.

The Convoy of the Sky God is a spatial, temporal, and transdimensional transport, the last of its kind still operating. It persists at many objectives that are beyond the ken of humanity, though one of its primary purposes is related to securing the borders of our world from temporal or transdimensional dissolution.

Parvee and Mestik tell the PCs that their research suggests the protomatter is located in the fourth section of the Convoy. They have a short-range artifact that should signal the Convoy to open a door on its exterior, allowing people to go inside. If asked whether the artifact will give access to other sections, they don't know for sure, and they don't know how many more uses the artifact has. Time is of the essence, for the sisters only know where the Convoy will appear in a few days, and it will continue moving as the PCs search inside it. Furthermore, at some point the Convoy will vanish and reappear hundreds of miles away.

The sisters are willing to negotiate with the PCs about payment. Given their expertise, they can pay with powerful cyphers, repair a damaged artifact or two, or even craft an artifact. The sisters also lend each PC a hover belt to allow them to get from the ground up to the Convoy and back again.

SALIENT POINTS

- Parvee and Mestik are sisters crafting a complex device requiring protomatter.
- They know the Convoy of the Sky God has the protomatter they need.
- Protomatter is big and dangerous. Getting it to the ground will be difficult.
- The sisters can get the PCs up to the Convoy and inside it, but the PCs will need to find a way to move the protomatter and themselves back to the ground.
- The Convoy is moving, so the PCs will have to hurry before it gets too far away.

STARTING POINT

Traveling to the expected arrival location of the Convoy of the Sky God, the PCs find a misty plain covered in water-smoothed rocks. They hear the Convoy's noise before they see the flying structure appear out of the mist and snake its way across the sky about half a mile (800 m) above the ground. They can use their hover belts to get in the path of the Convoy as it approaches. It moves slightly faster than the hover belts, so the PCs should position themselves ahead of it.

Once the PCs are within short range of the Convoy's fourth section, they can use the sisters' artifact to open any of three recognizable exterior access doors. The GM may allow the artifact to open similar entrances on other sections of the Convoy but might require the PC to make an understanding numenera roll to do so. Alternatively, if the PCs insist on going into a section other than the ones the sisters indicated, the GM can still use this adventure as is: the source of their information was wrong or they misinterpreted it, and the PCs happened to choose the right section.

THE WRAP-UP

If the PCs get the protomatter safely to the ground and let the sisters know about it, Parvee and Mestik show up with a giant sled and a team of gallen to haul it back to their workshop, at which point they pay the characters.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys that must be found within the Convoy's interior.

◆ Something that allows the PCs to physically move the multi-ton protomatter canister within the Convoy. This might be a loading vehicle, something that reduces an object's weight, or even something as mundane as cables and grease. If the PCs already have a powerful antigravity or telekinesis ability from a device or character ability, they may not need to find this key within the Convoy.

▲ Something to transport the protomatter canister safely to the ground. This could be a teleporter, a vehicle, or an improvised parachute. As with the first key, certain character abilities may mean the PCs don't need to find this key.

● The protomatter itself.

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs six to ten cyphers.

If the PCs retrieve it but fail to get it to the ground safely, it is very likely that its stronglass canister shatters, spraying protomatter out into at least a short radius, disintegrating objects up to level 6 and moving all affected creatures one category down the damage track. If this happens in a civilized area, the sisters are horrified, want nothing to do with the characters ever again, and probably disavow all knowledge of them and the expedition.

If the PCs fail to retrieve the protomatter from the Convoy, the sisters are disappointed, but they ask the characters to keep an eye out for more of it in their travels.

Other Convoy section access doors: *level 8*

PROTOMATTER HEIST

1

ENTRANCE AND INTERIOR

Whether the PCs approach this section of the Convoy from the top, bottom, or left side determines which entrance they use to get in. The interior space of the Convoy is larger than the outside would suggest. The gravity skews very slightly high or low, varying from room to room, but not enough to affect task rolls. Narrow bands in the floor provide illumination. There is a constant gentle hum, with an occasional rumble as the exterior makes a thunderous noise. Exiting the Convoy through anything other than the door hatches is likely to dump the character into another dimension. Anything attempting to damage the structure itself is attacked by level 8 automatons and ray emitters that displace targets in time, push them into adjacent dimensions, or teleport them outside the Convoy to fall to their deaths. All numenera interfaces in this adventure are level 7.

BUSY AUTOMATONS

This chamber is a hub of activity for hundreds of automatons—some the size of a human hand, others twice the height of a human, all of them crawling, rolling, flying, interacting with each other and various numenera interfaces, and moving in and out of apertures in the walls, floor, and ceiling (which open only when an automaton transmits a signal to do so). The automatons ignore the PCs, moving around them and perhaps occasionally jostling someone. One or two of the larger automatons could be a KEY—a being capable of moving a large, heavy object (like a protomatter canister). If so, it would need to be persuaded to stop what it was doing or be controlled against its will.

If the PCs harm any of the automatons or interfere with their activities (including salvaging anything here, but not merely talking to or luring away specific individuals), all of the machines turn on them, attacking as three swarms (level 4, level 5, and level 6).

WEIRD DEVICES

Reveal Show 'Em C (page 73) to the players.

The floor here is glossy translucent synth, underneath which bubbles liquid holding dozens of weird devices. The entire floor is a numenera interface that can be used to show information about a nearby device and extrude it from the floor. Most of the devices have indecipherable purposes, do something that doesn't make sense (such as adding or subtracting "yellow" from its structure), or work like random artifacts with multiple severe quirks. After the PCs have extruded two artifacts from the floor storage, it turns opaque and no more are available.

If a KEY is present, it's a bulky device about the size of a heavy weapon that requires two hands to use. It's an artifact that can levitate even massive targets, and can telekinetically push or pull a target an immediate distance directly toward or away from the user. The device is so cumbersome that trying to use it against anything smaller than a ravage bear is hindered by four steps. Because it draws power from the Convoy, it stops working a short distance outside of it (anything being suspended by the device when it loses power immediately regains its normal mass and begins to fall).

Artifact quirks, page 290

PROTOMATTER TANKS

Reveal Show 'Em D (page 73) to the players.

Each of the four corners here has a large valve built into the wall. Two of them are connected to identical canisters of protomatter (a KEY). One corner is empty. The fourth corner is connected to a different sort of canister that contains a glowing diaphanous creature resembling spirals of green smoke. Because this room is directly connected to the entrance door in the bottom of the Convoy, it is possible to slide a canister to the door and dump it onto the ground below—but it would surely break upon impact.

The diaphanous creature can communicate telepathically with anyone touching its prison, and identifies itself as "Wohj 33 Yem," an immortal transdimensional being. It doesn't remember how it got here, and it cannot get out. It and its canister weigh about 200 pounds (90 kg), and if it's a KEY, it can be used as a unit of protomatter, although it might cause some side effects for anything crafted with it. The entity says it could carry one of the protomatter canisters to the ground if it were freed from its prison.

GM intrusion: The freed entity decides to fly away with the protomatter.

Wohj 33 Yem: *level 7; movement short when flying*

RIVAL EXPLORERS [KEY 2]

Hundreds of small alcoves line the wall of this area, some of which are open, some sealed by opaque synth panels. A group of four explorers (named Garg, Olach, Eyik, and Ravol) have set up a camp in one corner, with tents and a red-hot cypher being used as a stove. They are from a remote part of the Steadfast (compared to where the PCs arrived) and boarded the Convoy before it teleported to where the PCs found it. They have been methodically breaking into and searching the alcoves, and consider this area their claim for salvaging. If one of the explorers has a KEY, it's a level 8 cypher that will reduce an object's weight by 99 percent (making a protomatter canister weigh about as much as a person) for about an hour. This encounter can be a friendly barter, an overt battle, or an opportunity to steal, depending on how the PCs act.

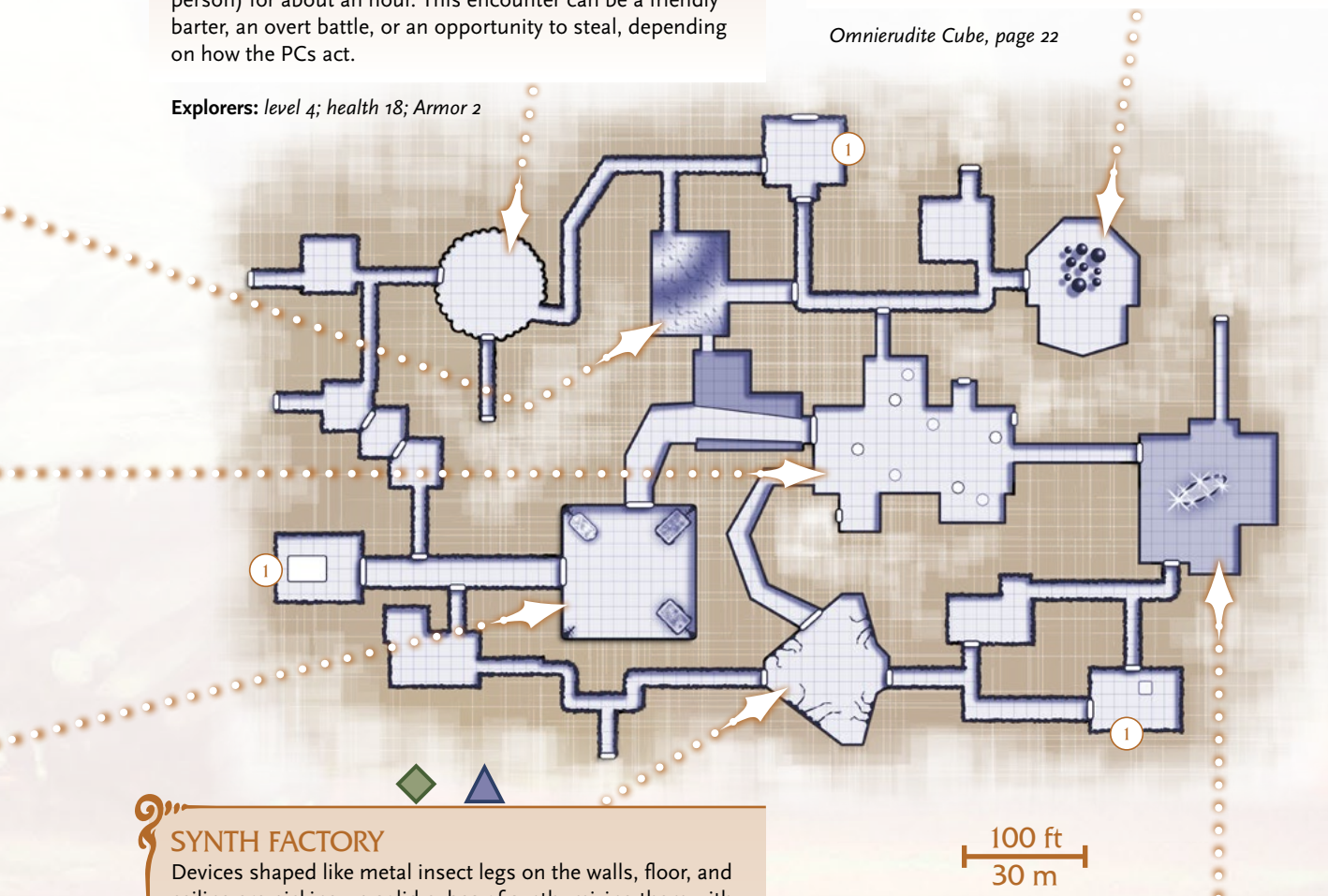
Explorers: *level 4; health 18; Armor 2*

OMNIERUDITE DATA CENTER

A numenera interface here is shaped like a cluster of black levitating orbs resembling drops of metallic ink floating in clear water. It is a communication/data device that stores information about the Omnierudite Cube, a device/mind/creature/portal that is somehow tied to the purpose of the Convoy. Using the interface informs the PCs that the Cube is in another section of the Convoy, and—if they manage to access it—can alter reality based on the user's desires.

Any KEY indicated here is actually information in the data center about how to acquire the KEY from another part of the complex. Retrieving this information is a difficulty 6 Intellect task.

Omnierudite Cube, page 22



SYNTH FACTORY

Devices shaped like metal insect legs on the walls, floor, and ceiling are picking up solid cubes of synth, mixing them with gases, and producing synth containers and simple objects. (Some of these are similar to those in the Weird Devices area.) Numenera panels allow PCs to change the shape and pliability of what is being crafted here. Options include durable synth ropes, containers full of slippery synth goo, sheets of flat flexible synth, layers of semi-springy foam, and so on.

If the PCs create ropes and slippery goo, they can use it as a KEY to move the protomatter canister laterally within the Convoy. If they create materials to make a parachute or protective foam padding, they can use it as a KEY to get the canister safely onto the ground.

GM intrusion: The created materials give off a poisonous gas as they cure, inflicting 3 points of damage each minute to anyone within short range, ending after an hour.

GM intrusion: A failsafe shuts down the unauthorized production before it is completed and alerts a repair-security automaton, giving the PCs a limited amount of materials to work with.

DIMENSIONAL INTRUDERS

A hovering band of black metal with illuminated symbols slowly rotates in the center of this area. Three ganthanhars are here—energy beings wearing special containment suits to prevent their forms from dispersing. One is manipulating symbols on the device and the other two are arguing in a strange language. The ganthanhars are looking for numenera that can stabilize their energy bleed. They are dismissive of the PCs and don't believe that people of the Ninth World have the knowledge to help them, but if they see an item they think might be useful, they attempt to acquire it. If a fight breaks out and a ganthanhar is near death, they all use devices to teleport away.

Ganthanhar: *level 4, defends as level 5, understanding numenera as level 6; health 15; Armor 2; damage inflicted 6; inflicts 2 points of radiation damage in an immediate radius each round*

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

THE SISTERS

Parvee and Mestik are sisters less than a year apart (about 30 years old), but they don't look much alike except that they both have hair that has turned grey and white very early. Mestik is curious and outgoing, and wears a one-piece garment with wide buttons down one side. Parvee is quiet and complains when interrupted; she wears a leather work coat over a fleece-like shirt and durable synth pants.

DOUBLE DEALING

Vilt: *level 3; lying, negotiation, and stealth as level 5*

If the PCs spend time in town after talking to the sisters, they are approached by a tall woman with large teeth who introduces herself as Vilt. She represents an influential person who wants to remain anonymous for now, but has an interest in obtaining the protomatter. They don't have access to powerful numenera like the sisters do, but they can offer a wide variety of weapons, poisons, lesser iotum, and quasi-legal or criminal services, as well as a large number of shins. Vilt says her benefactor is willing to match whatever price the sisters offered (or its equivalent in other goods and services) if the PCs instead deliver the protomatter to her. If they refuse, she tries to intimidate them, suggesting that it might be in their best interest to make sure the protomatter gets destroyed instead of falling into the hands of the sisters.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

In an ongoing campaign, the GM could expand upon the interior of the Convoy of the Sky God, such as by giving the PCs access to more of its building-sized components (perhaps through some sort of teleporter or by having the PCs physically leave the structure, traverse the outside, and find a different way in). Because the Convoy is also a spatial and transdimensional vehicle, it can be the springboard for journeying to other worlds or dimensions.

The Convoy itself can be the site of an extended campaign as the PCs explore more of it and attempt to find whatever force or intellect directs it to go where it does. With access to multiple worlds, times, and dimensions, it is filled with valuable numenera, as well as many dangerous creatures guarding, seeking, or consuming them.

THE OMNIERUDITE CUBE

The Convoy of the Sky God is the designated vessel containing a singular artifact of untold power called the Omnierudite Cube. It's unclear whether the cube is a possession of other entities riding in the moving structure, if it's the other way around, or if the cube is one of many entities responsible for determining the Convoy's passage. The cube's purpose is too complex to describe in a language that humans comprehend. It is a portal offering a glimpse of personal transcendence, a godlike mind from a prior world frozen and chained in the "fallen world" of matter, a direct jack into the datasphere itself, and more. It's one of several entities responsible for maneuvering the Convoy of the Sky God, though whether it does so willingly, subconsciously, or because it seeks to fulfill some hidden purpose is a matter for debate.

Sometimes the Omnierudite Cube is expelled from the Convoy, especially in the presence of large concentrations of energy or near ruins of the prior worlds. Creatures in the vicinity who see the expulsion can interact with the cube as if it were an artifact, at the risk of damaging their minds. Introducing the cube to the campaign gives the GM an opportunity to increase the scope, making the PCs aware of threats against the entire Steadfast or even the whole world.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

The Convoy of the Sky God appears in many places in the world, traversing an inconstant path through several common locations. Most reliably, it appears in a place called the Nacreous Strand, an area of coastline bordering Kelen Bay (south of Ancuan) and the Sea of Secrets. Most days along the strand are overcast and cold, with swirling "witch" lights that often dance along the beach but offer no warmth.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for exploring the Convoy, and 2 XP for delivering the protomatter either to the sisters or to Vilt. If they deliberately destroy the protomatter rather than hand it over to any NPCs, they earn 1 XP.

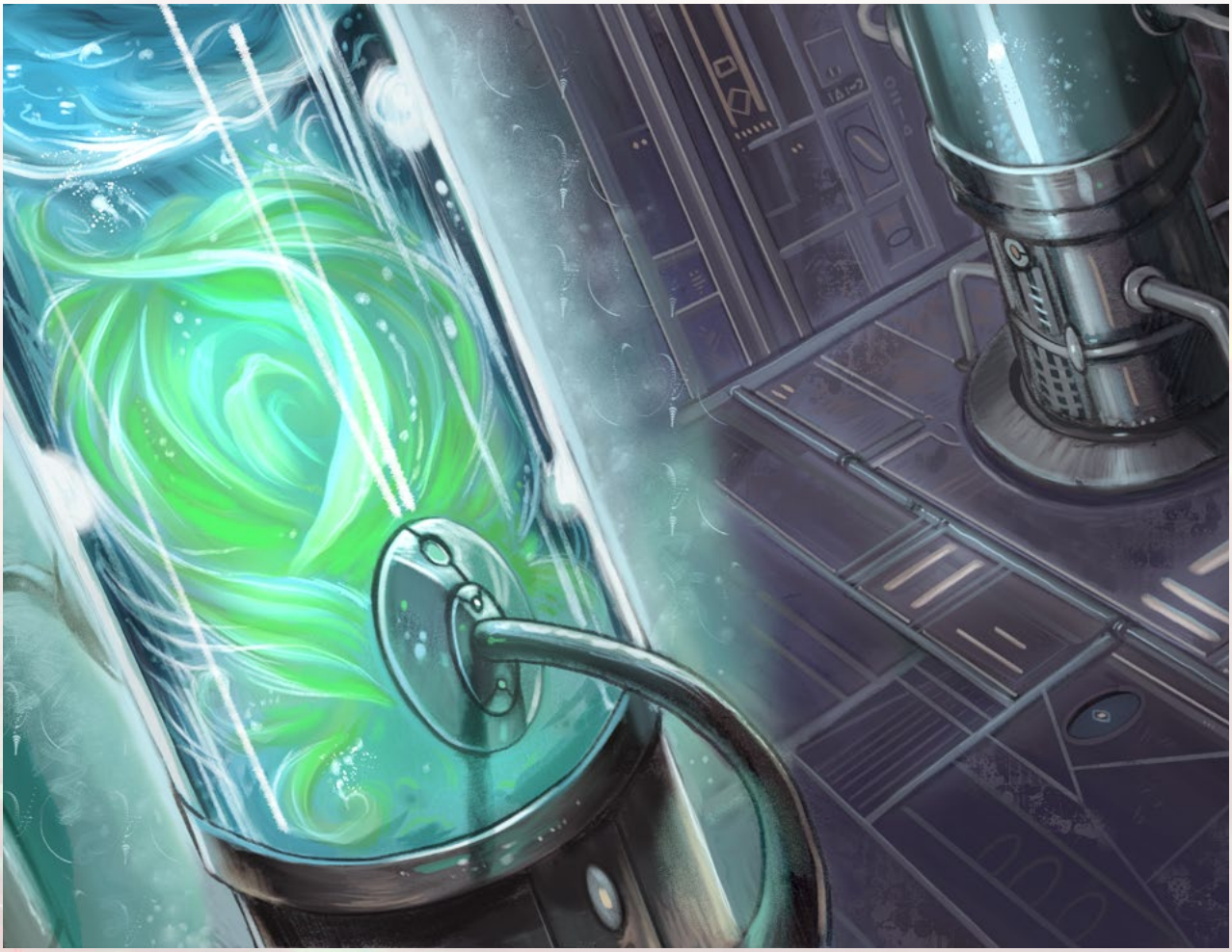
The influential criminal that Vilt represents may play a role in the future of the campaign, whether or not the PCs deliver the protomatter to the sisters. If the PCs sell the iotum to Vilt, her employer reaches out to them later with other thieving opportunities. The mysterious criminal slowly raises the stakes by offering them work as kidnappers and eventually assassins, but always respects their refusal to do certain kinds of jobs. If the PCs refuse Vilt's offer, they find themselves the frequent targets of small accidents, uncomfortable stares from dangerous-looking individuals, and harmful rumors about their reputation.

If Parvee and Mestik get the protomatter, they can move forward on finishing their voidglider, which means they'd be ready to start exploring other worlds. Depending on their opinion of the PCs at that point, the sisters may invite the PCs to come along on that wondrous journey—either as bodyguards or as fellow explorers.

Ancuan, page 160

Sea of Secrets, page 166

For more information about the Nacreous Strand, the Convoy, and the Omnierudite Cube, see Exploring Numenera: Strand.



THE DUPLEXITY CLEAVE

BRIEF SUMMARY

The PCs encounter an injured woman with a confusing story and a request for help, which leads them farther and farther into the interior of an ancient complex in search of an automaton and a young boy.

DETAILS

Dwelling deep in an ancient complex is an automaton who can no longer remember its name and has grown confused about its purpose. Some days it thinks that it's a hunter, stalking prey with skill and purpose. Other days, it thinks that it's a helper, and it seeks out those who need assistance. It is, in fact, both of these things, and the PCs' actions as they follow the trail of clues will determine which automaton—hunter or helper—they encounter at the end.

The PCs happen upon a badly injured woman named Rufra. She begs them for help, telling them a disjointed story about two automatons, one who helped her after she and her teenage son were attacked by a ravage bear (a bear-like savage beast with no eyes and massive tusks), and one who then tried to harm them the next day, before they were able to move on. She says one of the automatons took her injured son, Bazile, into the nearby complex, and she has no idea which one it was. Is it the one that tried to hurt him or the one that tried to heal him? (In fact, it was the same one, but neither Rufra nor the PCs know that.)

The PCs can easily follow the trail of blood to the door of the complex that Rufra mentioned, which seems to be a large, ancient structure of unknown origin and purpose. Rufra desperately wants to go with the PCs, but her leg is badly injured and she is afraid that she will slow their progress too much.

Once inside the complex, the PCs can search for Bazile and the automaton, all the while dealing with other creatures, devices, and obstacles they encounter along the way.

How the PCs interact with the keys while in the complex affects whether they will encounter the healer or the hunter. Because the automaton is closely linked to the complex, it can sense everything that happens within it. Thus, if the PCs do more helpful things within the complex, the automaton is more likely to be the helper when they encounter it. If the PCs do more harmful things within the complex, the automaton is more likely to be the hunter.

Once the PCs reach the automaton, they will encounter either the healer or the hunter. The hunter will be stalking Bazile, while the healer will be attempting to help him.

Ravage bear: *level 4, Might defense as level 5, movement tasks as level 7; health 20; Armor 1; moves a long distance each round; claws inflict 7 points of damage and hold victim until they can escape, taking 4 points of damage plus additional ravage bear attacks*

SALIENT POINTS

- An injured woman and her son were attacked by one automaton and healed by another.
- The two automatons are, in fact, the same automaton with two "modes" (hunter and helper).
- The automaton is somewhere within an ancient complex; the characters can follow clues to find it (and thus find the son).
- The automaton's personality (hunter or helper) when the PCs encounter it is determined by their interactions with the keys in the complex.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys. One is a literal key, but the other two have special significance: one is a hurt creature, and one is a malfunctioning device. Each time the PCs interact with either of these keys in a helping way (heal the ravage bear or fix the device), the automaton believes it is a helper. Each time the PCs interact with a key in a harmful way (kill the ravage bear or salvage the device), the automaton believes it's a hunter. If the PCs bash down any doors (rather than use the literal key to open them), that also makes the automaton believe it's a hunter. Whichever the PCs do more of will determine how the automaton reacts when they encounter it.

This means you should keep careful track of how each key interaction goes, and how many doors the PCs bash down rather than use the literal key.

◆ An injured ravage bear. The creature is clearly in pain and attempts to avoid the PCs. If they approach, it lashes out, doing 7 points of damage. If the PCs help it with healing of any kind, it will not continue to attack (unless provoked again).

▲ A long, thin device with green lights that looks like it might be the key to something. It is built of the same materials and is the same color as the complex itself.

● *Reveal Show 'Em E (page 74) to the players.* A level 6 device that is obviously built into the complex and seems to control some part of it. The device is broken; it makes a loud clunking noise and leaks viscous yellow liquid. If the PCs repair it (a difficulty 5 understanding numenera or crafting numenera task), there's a distant whirring sound, and small lights embedded in the walls power on throughout the complex. If the PCs salvage the device instead, they find 18 shins, two random cyphers, and an oddity (a pane of glass that makes living creatures viewed through it seem to glow).

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs four to six cyphers.

STARTING POINT

The PCs come upon a woman named Rufra who's been badly injured, perhaps in the wilderness or in the middle of an old ruin. Her leg is clearly broken and she has a few other non-lethal injuries. She is distraught, pleading with the PCs to help her injured son.

THE WRAP-UP

Inside the complex, the PCs encounter either the hunter or the helper (based on their actions throughout), as well as Rufra's son, Bazile. If they encounter they hunter, the automaton will be trying to hunt down Bazile. and will subsequently attempt to attack the PCs. If they encounter the helper, the automaton will be trying to help Bazile, and will offer to help the PCs as well (if they need it).

After interacting with the automaton or Bazile for more than just a few moments, the PCs will likely figure out that there is only one automaton, and that it is both the helper and the hunter. If they find a way to fix the automaton, it will become friendly, telling them its name is Ludroc, and it remembers that it was created in the image of a revered Aeon Priest, also named Ludroc. Its job is to protect the complex—to hunt those who hurt it and heal those who help it. As Ludroc, it retains both its hunter and its helper abilities.

If the PCs destroy the automaton, they can loot its body for two random cyphers, an amulet of safety artifact, and 37 shins.

Amulet of safety (level 3): *Plain metallic disk on a chain; once the amulet is keyed to a specific numenera weapon, the weapon cannot activate to harm the wearer. The amulet's level must be at least as high as the weapon's level. Depletion: —*

THE DUPLEXITY CLEAVE

START: THE INJURED WOMAN

The PCs come upon Rufra (level 4), who is injured and distraught. Her leg is clearly broken, and she has a number of additional non-lethal injuries, some of which have been attended to. While walking through the woods, she and her teenage son, Bazile (level 3), were attacked by a ravage bear, then healed by an automaton, then attacked by another automaton. One of those automatons (she doesn't know which one) took her son into the nearby complex. She begs the PCs to find him and offers any information or assistance she can give to them.

ENTRANCE

The PCs can follow an obvious trail of blood to this large door, which is broken and hanging off its hinges, and enter the complex. It's likely that this door has been broken for years. Once inside, the blood trail disappears, as the floor is covered with debris, pieces of machines, old bones and blood, various liquids, and rubble. Beyond any light that comes in through the open door, the interior of the structure is dark.

CREATURE DEN

In the corner of the room is the makeshift den of a large creature. Various broken devices and parts are pushed together to create something that resembles a cave. A horrible smell wafts forth from the cave, and it's clear that something has died inside. A closer look reveals the decaying body of some type of large, winged mammal.

Three steel spiders scuttle forth from beneath various parts of the cave.

If the KEY that is the ravage bear is here, it is hidden inside the den or in a corner of the room. If the KEY that is the literal key is here, it's somewhere on the floor, and the steel spiders are between it and the PCs.

Steel spiders: level 3; inflict 3 points of damage with their bite; razor-sharp webs do 4 points of damage

Loot: Scavengers can recover 11 shins from the den as well as a random cypher.

GM intrusion: One of the cyphers inside the den activates, bursting in a poisonous cloud within a short distance. The cloud lingers for two rounds, causing living creatures that breathe to lose their actions to hallucinations and visions for a number of rounds equal to the cypher level.

MACHINE ROOM

In the middle of this room, a circular moat of flowing red liquid, about 5 feet (1.5 m) across, surrounds a metal platform upon which four large machines have been placed to create a square. Each machine looks like a round tube, 5 feet (1.5 m) high, filled with bright orange light.

Anyone who touches the liquid takes 2 points of damage. Touching a machine restores 2 Intellect points. Each machine works this way only once in a given 28-hour period. If all of the machines are touched by different living creatures at the same time, there is a large scraping sound and a door in the back of the room opens. The door leads to a long tunnel.

If the KEY that is the ravage bear is here, it wanders in while the PCs are investigating.

A sealed door lies in the south wall of the room, made of material that resembles the KEY that's the literal key. Breaking down the door is a difficulty 7 Might task, while unlocking the door with the key is a difficulty 6 Intellect task (the literal key eases the task by four steps).

CORPSES

This room is littered with corpses, most of which are very old and barely more than bones and tatters. However, there are two more recent human corpses, which have been dead for at least a few days. They're infested with caffa larva and various other insects. Belongings are strewn about, including 12 shins, an explorer's pack, two random cyphers, and an automated cook artifact.

If the KEY that is the literal key is here, it's mixed in the scattered belongings (requiring a successful difficulty 6 perception task to identify). If the KEY that is the control device is here, it's on the wall.

Automated cook (level 5): *Small metal and synth cube with metallic arms and tools that prepares food. When given raw materials, it can prepare and serve a hot, nutritious, delicious meal on command. Depletion: 1 in 1d100*

Caffa larva: *level 1; bite does 2 points of damage and numbs limbs*

FUNGAL PASS

The hallway is dank and dark, with three small outcroppings on either side. Each is about 2 feet by 2 feet (60 by 60 cm) and has an ornately carved, life-sized statue of the same woman, wearing a robe and the symbol of the Order of Truth. At the slightest movement, the statues start to speak, making the same sound—"Ludroc"—over and over again. The sound is whispery and hoarse, as if they've been saying it for a very long time.

The statues (along with the outcropping walls and floors) are dotted with a black and purple fungus that writhes whenever it's touched by light. Touching the fungus is dangerous and results in 1 point of Speed damage.

If the KEY that is a literal key is here, it's on the floor, partially covered in fungus (requiring a successful difficulty 6 perception task to identify).

CAVE-IN

This area is mostly empty except for a large cave-in that's closed off most of the room, leaving only a few feet of floor space and a door partially visible above some of the rubble. Crawling over the rubble to reach the door is a level 4 task.

If the KEY that is the literal key is here, it's fallen into a cranny on the floor (requiring a successful difficulty 6 perception task to identify). If the KEY that is the device is here, it is embedded into the part of the room that's still visible and accessible.

GM intrusion: The character attempting to access the key becomes stuck in some way.

LOCKED DOOR

This large, heavy triangular door (level 7) is locked via an unseen mechanism. It's embedded with a series of blinking red lights that match the green lights on the KEY that is a literal key. Breaking down the door is a difficulty 7 Might task, while unlocking the door with the key is a difficulty 6 Intellect task (the literal key eases the task by four steps).

LUDROC AND BAZILE

Reveal Show 'Em F (page 74) to the players.

This room is filled with jumbles of old machinery, devices, and junk, but it's clear that Ludroc has been using the area as a living space. Depending on how the PCs used the KEYS, the automaton they encounter inside this room will be either a helper or a healer. The helper will be attempting to heal Bazile, while the hunter will be attempting to hunt him down.

Bazile (level 3) is injured, but not badly, and he is very scared (no matter which automaton is currently present, because he knows that they are one and the same). He sees the PCs as allies almost instantly and tries to tell them what he knows, namely that the automaton keeps changing personalities, first hurting him and then helping him.

The PCs can attempt to repair the automaton, destroy it, or run from it. Repairing the automaton causes it to become friendly—it will say its name is Ludroc, and that it was created in the image of an Aeon Priest, also named Ludroc. As thanks for repairing it, the automaton will tell the PCs of a secret door in the wilderness that goes to additional levels of the complex, where there is a great deal more to scavenge and discover.

If the PCs destroy the automaton, they can loot its body for two random cyphers, an amulet of safety artifact, and 37 shins.

Ludroc (helper): *level 5, healing and positive social interactions as level 6; Armor 2; as an action, can produce a level 5 liquid that restores 5 points to the drinker's Might Pool]*

Ludroc (hunter): *level 5, sneaking and initiative as level 6; Armor 2; as an action, can produce a level 4 detonation that can be thrown up to long range and does 4 points of damage to all creatures in an immediate radius*

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

THE COMPLEX

The entirety of this complex is much larger than it seems. There are, in fact, six floors below the main floor. Due to an explosion that sealed off part of the complex, the entrance to those floors can be accessed only by another exterior door about a mile or so away.

The complex is far older than the automaton, and its origins are unknown, but most recently, the complex was used by a group of rogue Aeon Priests who believed they could bring one of their order back to "life" by creating an automaton that replicated her.

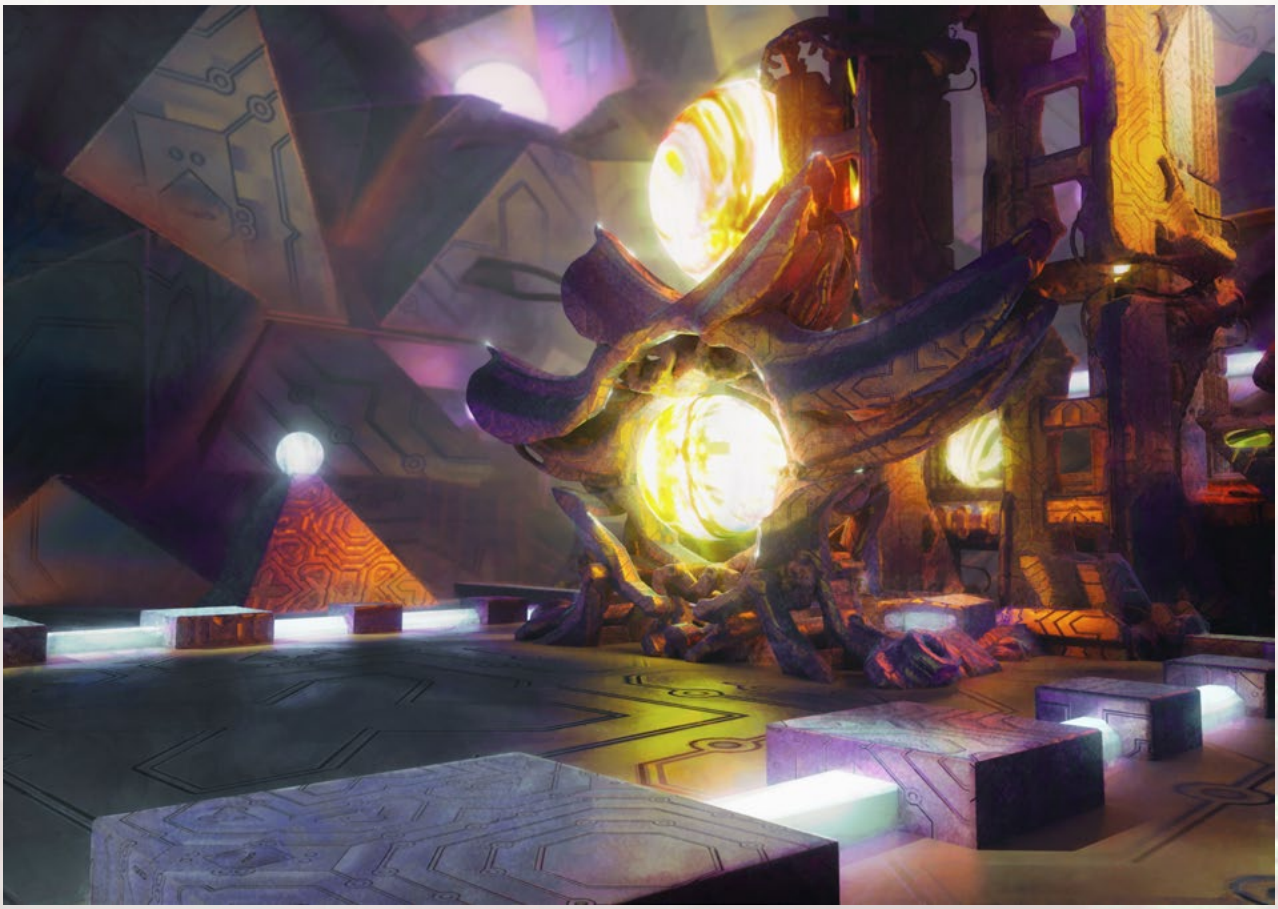
Thus, Ludroc isn't the only automaton of its kind. There are many others trapped on the floors below the main floor. All of them are attempts at replicating Ludroc, and all of them were deemed failures.

The explosion that sealed off the lower part of the complex was created by the Aeon Priests who, upon realizing they had failed, wanted to hide their failure from the world by destroying the automatons. Instead, they destroyed part of the complex, ended most of their own lives, and caused many of the automatons' personalities to splinter.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

The Duplexity Cleave is designed to be a random encounter, used while the PCs make their way through the wilderness toward an unrelated goal. This makes it simple to drop into a campaign anytime the characters cross unexplored territory. One way to do this is to plug this scenario into the middle of an unrelated task that matters to the PCs. They must decide whether to deviate from their current goal or to offer assistance.



Alternatively, the PCs' mission could be to look for Rufra and Bazile. Possibly they were hired by someone who was worried about the missing pair. Or perhaps Rufra (or Bazile) is the person they need to interact with about another task they're working on. Or maybe they were sent to find something within the complex.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

Designed to be adapted to any wilderness where the PCs find themselves, *The Duplexity Cleave* could be placed deep in the Westwood or the Ba-Adenu Forest. Both of these locations would allow for interesting interactions with creatures, such as culovas, additional ravage bears, or chirogs.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 2 experience points (XP) for dealing with the automaton, and 2 XP for finding Bazile and reuniting him with his mother.

Further exploration of the complex is possible; if the PCs repaired Ludroc, the automaton can give them the location of the second door to the complex. In fact, Ludroc might be willing to accompany the PCs, in the hopes of finding any of its lost "siblings." The lower sections of the complex could be vast, and could offer new opportunities or discoveries for the PCs. Alternatively, the lower levels could be the location of something or someone the PCs have been searching for.

Rufra and Bazile don't have much to offer, other than their gratitude, but they also know the location of the second door to the complex and are happy to share it. They might also invite the PCs back to their village or clave nearby, where the characters could find additional work, or at least a warm welcome and a meal for their assistance.

Westwood, page 137

Ba-Adenu Forest, page 184

Culova, page 231

Chirog, page 229

GOLIATHS IN THE EARTH

Convergence, page 216

BRIEF SUMMARY

The PCs explore a prior-world ruin, led there by a stranger named Bia who knows more about the ruin than she initially lets on.

DETAILS

This scenario can be used on its own or as a continuation of one of the other adventures in this compilation that mentions a nearby ruin, or as deeper levels of the same ruin (such as in *The Duplexity Cleave*). If *Goliaths in the Earth* is used on its own, the PCs are approached by Bia, a woman in robes bearing various numenera devices.

Bia: *level 5, resists mental effects as level 6; gain 4 Armor for ten minutes via esotery; long-range terrorizer attack inflicts 6 points of damage on all creatures in an immediate area, and on failed Might defense roll, victims lose their next turn*

Bia offers the PCs an opportunity to salvage never-before-seen numenera if they help her navigate a nearby ruin. She then leads them to an underground complex riddled with massive tube-like corridors that hold a frightening hodgepodge of broken machinery and, inexplicably, gargantuan petrified humanoid remains. Bia says the innermost vaults contain amazing tech of the prior worlds, if they can just find some way to get inside.

If the scenario is used as a continuation of another instant adventure that describes a nearby ruin, the PCs find Bia as they enter. In this case, she helps them out of some difficulty, then asks if they'll help her reach the innermost sanctuary, perhaps discovering some valuables along the way. The sanctuary is sealed shut to regular means of access and can't be opened easily.

Prevalent throughout the complex are the dilapidated remnants of giant objects and devices, as if built for creatures much larger than humans. In addition, predators still haunt the complex, proving a danger to the PCs. However, the biggest danger to the characters might very well be Bia.

Bia is actually a member of a much-despised organization known as the Convergence, a fact she doesn't initially reveal. The Convergence is a group that reveres the knowledge of the past, but they seek to use it to grant power to themselves, not to help others. Members—known as magisters and magistrixes—want to use the numenera to gain influence not only over the people of the Ninth World but also over the universe itself. While that idea has a certain allure, it comes with a cost many are not willing to pay, because Convergence members are utterly remorseless in the pursuit of ultimate power—morals and ethics be damned.

In her role as a secret member of the Convergence, Bia subtly maligns the Order of Truth in general and Aeon Priests in particular. She attempts to gain a sense of what the PCs think of the organization as they explore the ruin. If she thinks that any PC might hear her out, she gives them the opportunity to join her. However, once she identifies the PC she believes most likely to be her ally, she tries to approach that character privately, while the others are sleeping or doing something else, so that if things go poorly, she can attempt to eliminate that PC and blame the "accident" on an element of the ruin.

Ultimately, her goal within the ruin is to revive one or more of the goliaths, which she hopes to use as another weapon in the Convergence's arsenal. If one or more PCs oppose her, they become her enemies too. If any PCs seem open to her arguments, she

attempts to sway them with promises of favor, power, and future glory. At minimum, she seeks to disrupt the harmony of the group, even if none of the PCs agree with her. If she can fake evidence that one of them has betrayed the others and can incite intra-party conflict, that strengthens her hand when she ultimately tries to seize the artifact granting her control over the goliaths that she came to find.

SALIENT POINTS

- The PCs find a strange new ruin to explore.
- The central vault of the ruin lies beyond a sealed door, which requires a specific key to open.
- Bia may serve the PCs as a guide of sorts in the ruin, but she has her own agenda. She attempts to divide the PCs to weaken them (or subvert them to her cause, though that's less likely).
- If the group finds the means to raise goliaths, Bia tries to steal the artifact by stealth or direct force.

STARTING POINT

If Bia is the one who introduces the PCs to this scenario, the starting point is her offer of salvage of never-before-seen numenera if they help her navigate the interior of a nearby ruin. In this case, either she already knows about the characters because of their reputation, or merely by seeing them and their gear she realizes they number among the elite few who enjoy braving the dangers of the unknown.

If the PCs come upon the ruin for some other reason, the starting point is when they are ambushed by a massive purple spider-thing the size of a small house. Bia appears and helps them out, then suggests that the group work together to explore what is obviously a very dangerous complex.

KEYS

This scenario has four keys.

◆ Something that reveals more about Bia.

▲ Something that helps provide access to the ruin's innermost vault. At least three of these are required.

● Something that must be combined with ✖ to allow ✖ to function controllably.

✖ Something that animates a goliath, an entity that is part machine and part petrified humanoid skeleton four times the size of a human, which attacks the PCs. If defeated, its remains can be salvaged for an artifact capable of animating another goliath from the ruin and—if combined with ●—controlling it for 28 hours before it collapses back into immobility, wherever it happens to be (depletion: 1 in 1d20).

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs eight to ten cyphers.

THE WRAP-UP

Eventually, tensions with Bia reach a breaking point, though the magistrix doesn't push things to the edge until she gets her hands on the artifact that can animate and control goliaths, or until the PCs try to prevent her from getting it. In either case, she attacks them—directly (if she has the artifact) or with a sudden and possibly unexpected betrayal (if she doesn't). After that, the PCs can go their own way or finish exploring the complex if they haven't already.

Goliath: *level 7; Armor 5; pummeling steel fist attacks inflict 9 points of damage on two targets; regains 3 points of health each round from built-in unit that emits oily black smoke and a constant dull roar*

Spider-thing: *level 5; Armor 3; acidic webs inflict 5 points of damage on all creatures in short range standing next to each other, and on failed Might defense rolls, immobilizes them until they can escape*

GOLIATHS IN THE EARTH

START: HALL OF GIANTS

Reveal Show 'Em G (page 75) to the players.

The entry chamber of the underground ruin is massive, about 120 feet (36 m) in its longer dimension. A bit of debris lies on the floor, and the walls contain artifacts crafted as if for behemoth-sized creatures, now jumbled and broken. Most disturbing is what seems to be a gigantic petrified human skull poking directly out of the stone on one high wall. Some of the other surfaces are metal, featuring control panels, consoles, and unidentifiable machinery.

The PCs can salvage 2d10 shins and a couple of cyphers.

CENTRAL VAULT ENTRY

Huge devices and the remains of petrified giants litter the chamber around a 40-foot (12 m) diameter gold-colored metallic circular door (level 9) that is sealed. Examination reveals that some sort of large component must be placed in a keyhole to open the seal.

If the KEY that reveals more about Bia is present, it is evidence of a camp previously made in front of the door that contains a scrap of food similar to the supplies she carries. Bia never mentioned she'd already been here, but if confronted, she admits it.

If the KEY that animates a goliath is here, it is a component that can be salvaged from a device on a successful difficulty 5 salvage numenera roll.

GM intrusion: Attempts to salvage in the chamber cause an avalanche of material, burying everyone and inflicting 3 points of damage each round until they can escape with a successful difficulty 3 Might roll.

ENLARGEMENT BATH

Massive devices flank a circular pool of liquid, 40 feet (12 m) across. Anyone who touches the liquid feels a hot, racing feeling. If a creature or object is fully immersed, it swells to five times its previous size. Normal-sized PCs become over 25 feet (8 m) tall. Tasks that require interaction with the physical world (like attacks) are eased by two steps, and Speed defense rolls are hindered by two steps. Size-altered living creatures suffer 1 point of damage every few minutes.

If the KEY that reveals more about Bia is here, she lies and says that according to her understanding of numenera, the damage inflicted every few minutes will stop if someone puts up with it for a while.

If the KEY that animates a goliath is here, it is a component that can be salvaged from a device on a successful difficulty 5 salvage numenera roll.

Group GM intrusion: A goliath spontaneously animates and attacks.

DIMINUTION BATH

Huge devices flank a circular pool of liquid, 40 feet (12 m) across. Anyone who touches the liquid feels a cool, peaceful sensation. If a creature or object is fully immersed, it shrinks to one-fifth its previous size. Normal-sized PCs become about a foot (30 cm) tall. Tasks that require interaction with the physical world (like attacks) are hindered by two steps, and Speed defense rolls are eased by two steps. Size-altered living creatures suffer 1 point of damage every few minutes.

If the KEY that reveals more about Bia is here, its demonstrated when she pushes hard to find out what would happen if an already-shrunk PC was pushed into the bath a second time.

If the KEY that helps to access the central vault is here, it's a gold-colored metallic component that can be salvaged from one of the devices on a successful difficulty 4 salvage numenera task. (This KEY must be combined with two other similar components.) Salvaging the KEY de-powers the bath until the component is replaced.

STRETCHED SHADOWS

Massive devices litter this chamber. Shadows thrown in the room are much larger than normal. If any PC tries to investigate their own larger-than-normal shadow, it "rips" away (inflicting 1 point of Speed damage that ignores Armor) and begins silently motioning the PCs to leave the area. The released shadow follows its original and, after a few hours, fades away (and the PC's original shadow returns).

If the KEY revealing more about Bia is here, she seeks to torment the shadow to see what it will do.

If the KEY that helps provide access to the central vault is here, it's a gold-colored metallic component that can be salvaged from one of the devices on a successful difficulty 4 salvage numenera task. (This KEY must be combined with two other similar components.)

Shadow: *level 1; can't affect or be affected by physical matter or mundane attacks*

PHASE DOOR

Spheres 1 foot (30 cm) in diameter are embedded randomly in the walls and floor. If the KEY that helps to access the central vault is here, it's a gold-colored metallic component that can be salvaged from spheres on a successful difficulty 4 salvage numenera task. (This KEY must be combined with two other similar components.) However, the salvager must succeed on a difficulty 5 Might defense roll or become phased and be unable to affect or be affected by physical matter. This situation lasts until the target attempts to phase completely into or through an object or barrier, at which point the effect disastrously lapses, inflicting 10 points of damage, moving them one step down the damage track, and trapping them in solid material.

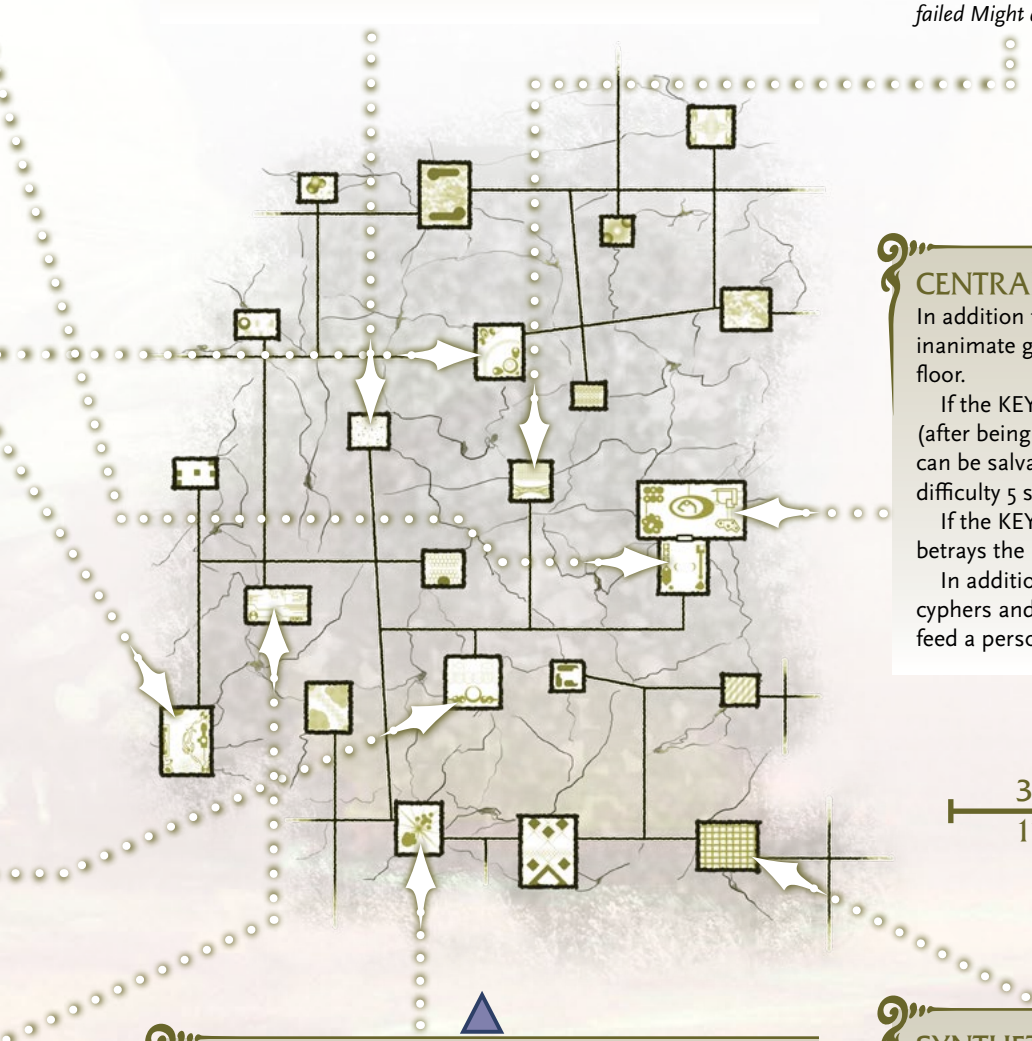
SPIDER-THING WEB

A huge web stretches across this chamber, preventing passage. Cutting through it is a difficulty 4 Might task requiring about a minute, interrupted by four angry spider-things.

If the KEY that reveals more about Bia is here, she seems more surprised by the web than normal (because it wasn't here the last time she came through this chamber).

If the KEY that helps to access the central vault is here, it's a gold-colored metallic component stuck in the webs. (This KEY must be combined with two other similar components.)

Spider-thing: *level 5; Armor 3; acidic webs inflict 5 points of damage on all creatures in short range standing next to each other, and on failed Might defense rolls, immobilizes them until they can escape*



CENTRAL VAULT

In addition to all kinds of inert machines, a massive inanimate goliath is sprawled here, partially phased into the floor.

If the KEY that allows the goliath to be controlled is here (after being connected with KEY 4), it is a silvery device that can be salvaged from one of the machines with a successful difficulty 5 salvage numenera roll.

If the KEY that reveals more about Bia is here, she either betrays the PCs or tries to steal the goliath-animating artifact.

In addition, the PCs can salvage the area for a couple of cyphers and a level 4 artifact that creates a food brick able to feed a person for a day (depletion: 1 in 1d100).

PINPOINT DOORWAY

A sphere of brilliant light hangs in midair over several large devices. A successful difficulty 6 understanding numenera roll suggests that the sphere is a pinprick into a "dimension of pure brilliance," whatever that means.

If the KEY that helps to access the central vault is here, it's a gold-colored metallic component that can be salvaged from one of the devices on a successful difficulty 4 salvage numenera task. (This KEY must be combined with two other similar components.) However, salvaging it summons a hungry brilliance eel from the discontinuity that is thin as a thread and 50 feet (15 m) long.

Brilliance eel: *level 5; can attack all creatures in an area a short distance across; touch burns like fire and cuts like wire, inflicting 6 points of damage*

SYNTHETIC INFECTION

A grid of wires and synth covers the walls, and devices stud the floor. All sounds made here die away immediately. Anyone entering risks acquiring a synthetic disease that slowly coats a victim's throat and lungs with a yellowish grid of wires and synth.

If the KEY that reveals more about Bia is here, it's demonstrated when she insists that a PC enter the room and attempt to salvage one of the devices, certain that it's what they need.

If the KEY that animates a goliath is here, it is a component that can be salvaged from a device on a successful difficulty 5 salvage numenera roll.

Synthetic disease: *level 5; each day that a Might defense roll is failed, victim takes 5 points of Might damage (ignores Armor) and sound is nullified within their immediate range*

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

WITHIN THE RUIN

All the ceilings in the ruin are almost 60 feet (18 m) tall, if not taller. Though various machines and devices are common, most are defunct, apparently because they've been shifted in space and possibly in size, and many are fused into other nearby objects, floors, or walls, as if some sort of terrible phase-and-scale-related disaster occurred here long ago.

The ruin is always cold, with breath steaming from explorers. In addition to the noted spider-things, many much tinier versions scurry in dark corners, along the walls, and across the ceilings. Otherwise, the area is lifeless.

BIA THE MAGISTRIX

If you'd like to add a little complexity to Bia's character, soften her apparently completely self-serving nature by making her more sympathetic to the PCs the longer she spends with them. Provide opportunities for her to change her mind if the PCs try to reason with her and make a compelling case. Adjust her back story so that rather than being a hardened, long-time member of the Convergence, Bia is a probationary magistrix. To gain full membership, she must retrieve the artifact that raises goliaths and return it to the nearest Convergence sanctum.

Because of a personal relationship she had with an Aeon Priest mentor who was horrible, she fled the Order of Truth. Before she does something completely terrible, the PCs may be able to convince her that the Convergence is likely *full* of bad seeds like the Aeon Priest who brought her so much sorrow.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under any time pressure).

If the PCs are involved in a campaign, they may have known about the ruin for a long time, possibly drawn to it specifically because of the rumors of unquiet goliaths that roam below the earth. Alternatively, perhaps the PCs have heard that some quality of the ruin can either shrink or expand objects, and they need that effect for some reason of their own.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

The ruin of the goliaths can be found almost anywhere in the Ninth World. If the GM has no preference, the ruin is in the Beyond, on the northwestern edge of the Ba-Adenu Forest.

Ba-Adenu Forest, page 184

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for exploring the ruin, 1 XP for finding a way into the central vault, and 1 XP if they defeat Bia or change her mind about delivering the goliath-animating artifact to the Convergence.

More areas exist within the ruin than are detailed here. GMs can expand it to be as vast as they want. In fact, the map provides information for only some of the rooms shown. While areas not keyed on the map could simply be empty, they could hold more strange discoveries, treasures, or dangers, as described on the Additional Areas table.

ADDITIONAL AREAS

1d6	Encounter
1	Discolorations on the floor turn out to be disturbing silhouettes of a couple of previous explorers burned into the floor. The source of this sad outcome is not apparent.
2	A gel-filled canister contains what seems like a human brain (level 6), though one five times too big to fit in a skull. Wires and shunts extrude from the brain and canister. The brain is in stasis, but if a PC attempts to communicate with it in any fashion, they must succeed on an Intellect defense roll or their consciousness is sucked out of their head and deposited in the brain. Getting the consciousness back out again requires three successful understanding numenera tasks before two failures.
3	Black fluid covers the floor here up to the PCs' shins. It contains an invisible energy that sickens anyone who touches or drinks it.
4	The force of gravity here is twice normal, hindering all physical actions (including attacks) for the characters, but not for the spider-thing that takes advantage of any affected PCs.
5	A large device in the center of the area casts a shadow, but the device itself is invisible. The PCs can salvage a couple of cyphers from it, but the invisibility hinders salvage tasks by two steps.
6	Instrumentation, controls, and various smaller subsidiary devices are connected to an elaborate device fixed in place. If the complexity doesn't stymie those attempting to understand it, it is revealed as something that can end any harmful or unnatural condition affecting a creature (depletion: 1 in 1d10).

Black fluid disease: *level 5; each day a Might defense roll is failed, a victim takes 5 points of Might damage (ignores Armor)*

Spider-thing, page 31

Elaborate device: *level 8*

TWINS OF REVELATION

BRIEF SUMMARY

Someone kidnapped one of the two "Twins of Revelation" that a community relies on to see it through periodic dangerous weather, and the PCs must determine the culprit (and perhaps return the missing twin).

DETAILS

Twin of Revelation: *level 5, Speed defense and attacks as level 7 due to seeing a bit into the future; can predict the coming of a spark storm up to one day in advance, but only if other twin is present*

Spark storm, page 39

Beckter: *level 3, persuasion as level 5*

The Twins of Revelation—called Anar and Davn—are a pair of orange-skinned individuals that the valley community of Fortune relies on to predict the erratic and sudden appearance of spiraling spark storms. The twins are human-like beings with mechanical aspects who've been around since anyone in Fortune can remember. Their presence allows Fortune to survive, even with spark storms being a constant danger. A tree found nowhere else but in the valley produces gently buzzing and bulbous "humfruit" that provides nutrition and other benefits to the village.

Before Davn disappeared, the twins lived together as siblings, rarely engaging with other residents much (with notable exceptions) except to provide warnings. Most Fortuners regard them as simple-minded. It was easy enough to keep them happy with new toys, sweets, and games.

PCs looking into the matter discover many potential perpetrators, such as someone who wanted a twin's prediction power for themselves, foul play by someone who wanted to destroy Fortune by leaving it vulnerable to spark storms, and even someone who just didn't like the twins. Or maybe one of the twins (Anar) finally gave in to anger that had been building for a long time and, in a fit of violence, killed the other twin (Davn) and hid the body in a ravine higher up in the valley.

The truth is for the PCs to figure out. The keys present an array of possible perpetrators, and you as the GM can determine which NPC is responsible, depending on the actions the PCs take. (However, if you'd rather not be so freeform, then the culprit is Anar, though getting them to admit it isn't easy.)

The PCs might be passing through Fortune, be staying in the area to explore a ruin rumored to lie beneath the valley, or have come to the community specifically to help. Beckter, the portly arkus who leads Fortune, asks them to help recover the missing twin, Davn, or at least get to the bottom of what happened. Davn has already been gone for seven days, and everyone worries that a spark storm could strike at any time. If the PCs agree to help, Beckter promises that they will be suitably rewarded with a specially prepared humfruit pie; anyone who consumes one of the six slices gains +1 to their Speed Edge for about a day.

To learn what happened, the PCs need to talk to the residents of Fortune, follow a trail of clues that lead them from one suspect to the next, and eventually find the ravine where Davn has been stashed. After that, the PCs are free to determine who they think is responsible. The residents of Fortune are likely to believe whatever the PCs claim is true.

SALIENT POINTS

- Fortune is in a valley plagued with erratically occurring dangerous phenomena called spark storms.
- Fortune was able to weather these storms thanks to the advance warning provided by the Twins of Revelation, not-quite-human siblings named Anar and Davn. Both are required to successfully prognosticate.
- One of the twins—Davn—has disappeared under mysterious circumstances.
- The village leader, Beckter, offers a special concoction made with local humfruit if the PCs can discover what happened to the missing twin.
- Several people in Fortune have a motive for kidnapping or doing away with one or both of the twins.
- The PCs must investigate Fortune to solve the mystery.
- The actual culprit is determined during the course of the adventure.
- Davn's body lies in a ravine higher up in the valley. Because the twins are not quite human, it might be possible to "repair" Davn, bringing them back to life and function.

STARTING POINT

Fortune lies in a valley thick with humfruit trees. The community is home to over a hundred people, many who live in simple homes that can be quickly "stormproofed" by applying silvery sheets over doors, windows, or any other opening to the exterior. When a home or shelter is properly stormproofed, the effects of a spark storm are nullified for anyone inside.

People rely on humfruit for all kinds of needs, including nutrition, construction, shelter, artistic pursuits, and trade.

Fortune has a public house where the PCs can get food and drink and possibly a place to rest. It also has a small marketplace where they can buy common items, including humfruit and material useful for stormproofing.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys, two of which are sources of information, and one of which is an object.

◆ Someone who provides a clue that points the PCs to another person or place of interest.

▲ Someone who is either the perpetrator or a red herring; the GM decides which NPC is the culprit based on what the PCs do during the session.

● A toy or sweet that Anar especially wants, which delights them.

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs four to six cyphers.

Determining the Culprit: This adventure is set up to allow play to determine which of the NPCs is the perpetrator. However, if you'd rather not be so freeform, then the culprit is Anar, though getting them to admit it requires first giving them at least a couple of the keys that delight them.

After asking the PCs to look into the matter, Beckter the leader recommends that they talk first to the surviving twin, Anar, as well as to the twins' main caretaker, Niliza, both of whom claim they witnessed something the night Davn disappeared.

THE WRAP-UP

Whether or not the PCs find out what happened, Davn is defunct. Without some other method to prognosticate the spark storms, Fortune becomes a much less safe place to live. However, the PCs may be able to "fix" Davn, as described under More Details.

GERALINE THE DELVE

Geraline (level 3) is a delve who sustained an injury that left her lame when she was exploring ruins beneath the valley. She is thin, scarred across half her body, and opinionated, and she has a poor opinion on most topics, including the future of Fortune.

If Geraline is the KEY that provides a clue, she says that the night Davn disappeared, she saw lights up on the valley rim where no one usually goes. If the PCs pursue the matter, she can provide directions so they can find the ravine holding Davn's body.

If Geraline is the KEY who is the perpetrator, she got it into her head that maybe the twins could use their abilities to heal her lame body. She took Davn, and when the twin couldn't help her, she reacted violently. It wasn't premediated murder, but she killed Davn all the same.

If Geraline is not either KEY, she might make up something just to cause trouble and falsely accuse someone else in town.

THE RAVINE

If the PCs have directions from the delve or just spend enough time looking, they find the ravine that contains Davn's body. The twin is completely inert, but not rotting. The devices on and under their skin are unpowered. For all intents and purposes, Davn is dead.

If the KEY that provides a clue is here, it is one of the following items: a half-eaten baked good made by Carsten, a device made by Arithin the Aeon Priest, a device from the ruin that was taken from Beckter's home, a threat penned in Geraline's hand, or a toy liberated either from Niliza's stash of confiscated toys or from the twin Anar. Based on how the PCs investigate the mystery, the GM can determine the nature of the KEY, which points to who is ultimately responsible.

GM intrusion: When the PCs are investigating the ravine, five babirasa attack. Babirasa are many-legged predators with coal-black flesh studded with metallic spines that spark with static.

Babirasa: *level 3, stealth as level 5; targets close to two or more babirasa take 3 points of damage each round; bite inflicts 3 points of damage, and on an additional failed Might defense roll, 3 points of damage from electricity; electricity heals a babirasa instead of harming it*

Aeon Priest, page 264

BECKTER THE ARKUS

No one in Fortune says anything that implicates Beckter as having a motive, but if the PCs have more questions for him, they find him puttering away in his immaculate home. He has several strange devices that he says come from the ruin under the valley. Though talkative when he initiates a conversation, he is reticent if the PCs come looking for him.

If Beckter is the KEY that provides a clue, he mentions that he thinks Niliza is overly strict and possibly given to violent outbursts. He is pretty sure that he once heard her slap Davn for "mouthing off" to her.

If Beckter is the KEY who is the perpetrator, it's because he was under the influence of a device (level 5) that came from under the valley. The animating intelligence in the device wants to clear the valley of humans. It's the same intelligence that has been sending the spark storms, and for the same reason.

If Beckter has a KEY that will delight Anar, it is a strange device, taken from the ruin, that floats and flashes.

CARSTEN THE BAKER

Carsten (level 3) is a heavy, bald man wearing an apron and smelling of bread and pies. He works in Fortune as a baker. Once he made a honey bread pudding that Davn hated and dashed to the ground; he doesn't like to recall it.

If Carsten is the KEY that provides a clue, he mentions that Geraline the delve hates everyone in Fortune, and if anyone wouldn't mind if spark storms destroyed the place, it's likely her.

If Carsten is the KEY who is the perpetrator, it's because he tried to make up for the bad bread pudding with a special concoction that accidentally poisoned Davn. Carsten hid the body to cover up his mistake.

If Carsten has a KEY that will delight Anar, it is a special cake with orange frosting, which he knows the twin loves.

ARITHIN THE AEON PRIEST

Arithin the Aeon Priest is a short, kindly, older man who has a small workshop in Fortune. He makes odds and ends (and cyphers) for residents. He is fascinated by the twins' ability to see the future and has even built devices to measure it. In the past, he had one or the other twin over to his home to test them. He offers the PCs a few random cyphers, saying that it might help them solve the mystery and recover Davn.

If Arithin is the KEY that provides a clue, he mentions that, in recent weeks, the twins were always bickering about something or other, be it missing toys or one eating the other's sweets.

If Arithin is the KEY who is the perpetrator, he tried a new device on Davn to learn more, but the device accidentally killed the twin. So Arithin hid the body up in a ravine, mortified at what he'd done.

TWINS' HOME

Reveal Show 'Em H (page 76) to the players.

A gong-like instrument the twins sound whenever they foresee an approaching spark storm stands on the porch of this home strewn with toys, arts and crafts, and the remains of various half-eaten sweets. Visiting hours are two hours in the middle of most days. During this period, Fortuners can interact with the twins.

Currently only Anar is present, who says they miss Davn and hope the twin returns soon.

If Anar is the KEY that provides a clue, they indicate that Arithin the Aeon Priest always asks about the twins' ability to prognosticate and tends to show up at odd hours, even after midnight.

If Anar is the KEY who is the perpetrator, they won't confess unless they're given at least a couple of things that delight them. If they confess, Anar says that Davn took the last of the cake, like always. So Anar hit Davn, who fell into a ravine. Anar hasn't seen Davn since.

GM intrusion: One of the PCs does something that scares Anar, and they hide and won't talk anymore.

NILIZA THE CARETAKER

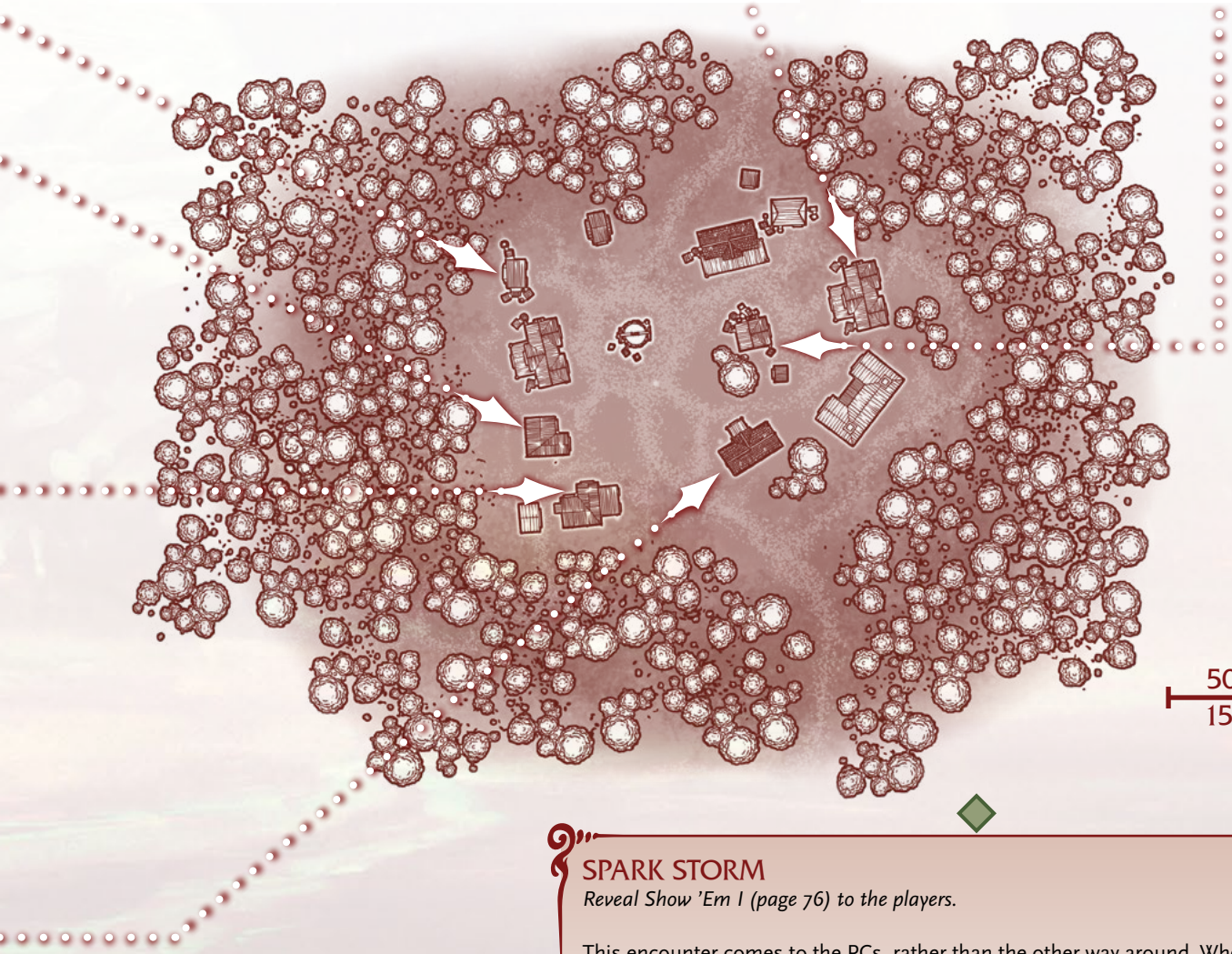
Niliza (level 3) is a human female who works as the twins' caretaker. She is soft spoken, careworn, and seemingly truly shaken by Davn's disappearance. She wrings her hands when she speaks.

If Niliza is a KEY that provides a clue, she mentions that Davn always disliked Carsten the baker for some reason—no one knew why.

If Niliza is the KEY who is the perpetrator, she led Davn to the ravine and said to stay there until their behavior improved (the twin kept pinching their sibling); she didn't expect Davn to die from exposure!

If Niliza has a KEY that will delight Anar, it is a special talking toy creature that roars when squeezed. She took it away to punish Anar for cursing.

GM intrusion: Niliza reveals her temper by screaming at a PC who fails to wipe their feet or otherwise show proper respect; afterward, all interactions with Niliza are hindered.



SPARK STORM

Reveal Show 'Em I (page 76) to the players.

This encounter comes to the PCs, rather than the other way around. When the GM feels it would be best, a spark storm that isn't prognosticated descends on Fortune (as a group GM intrusion), lasting for about an hour. The spark storm is a tornado-like shape of electricity that reaches high into the air like a tower of lightning. This electricity doesn't physically harm objects, but it might harm creatures with minds that are not in stormproofed shelters and have no other defenses. That said, the storm comes with high winds, which might have additional damaging effects.

If the spark storm is a KEY that provides a clue, it blows in a piece of bloodstained clothing from Davn, which is discovered in the aftermath of the storm.

Spark storm: *level 4; 1 point of Intellect damage per round on a failed Intellect defense roll*

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

Be aware that this scenario focuses on interaction rather than combat or action. This is important only in that some groups breeze through noncombat encounters quickly, and the session might end sooner than planned. If this seems likely, other characters in the village can provide additional encounters, either unrelated or as additional red herrings. Use the following extraneous people, if necessary.

OTHER PEOPLE OF FORTUNE

Other people of Fortune: *level 2, one additional skill (trading, crafting, entertaining, and so on) as level 3*

The village of Fortune, despite being under risk of spark storms, was thriving thanks to the forewarnings provided by the twins. Residents eat a diet of humfruit and other forest plants, including carrot flower, dog leaf, and white thistle. Everyone knows almost everyone else, and PCs might meet the following residents:

- Serwa is a stand-offish younger woman who sells crafts and jewelry made of humfruit seeds that are polished to a gleam and still hum. She suffers from a minor parasitical disease (level 2) that leaves her skin pitted and discolored.
- Halavish sells synthsteel harvesting tools and weapons. He has a pet rat-like beast called Nia.
- Saja bears brightly colored tattoos up and down one arm and on one side of her face. She says she got them in a faraway city when she was young, though she can't recall its name.
- Brak always wears a full-head helmet with a smoked visor. He sells much-sought-after incenses, at least when he is sober. Most nights he stays up drinking humfruit liquor (through a straw in his helmet) with Lecki.
- Lecki is short, middle-aged, and almost always intoxicated on humfruit liquor. She is friendly unless someone tries to take her liquor away.
- Darnton has been in trouble with Beckter, the village leader, on more than one occasion for theft. He doesn't do much of anything other than try to get out of work. That said, he has found a way down into the ruin, though he's afraid to go too far on his own.

Major damage, page 122

SEEING JUSTICE DONE

If the PCs find the perpetrator, the punishment handed down by the village isn't drastic, though the PCs might decide to get involved and sway the sentence. Essentially, the perpetrator is branded with a symbol indicating their misdeed for all to see anytime they interact with other residents. Some perpetrators might accept this as fair; others might flee town and go somewhere where the significance of the symbol isn't known.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

REPAIRING DAVN

The twins are not living creatures in the same way that humans are; they are biomechanical. If time allows, you could extend play by allowing the PCs a chance to try to repair Davn. In this case, Davn has sustained major damage, which means

they are broken and no longer function. However, Davn can be repaired. If the PCs succeed on a difficulty 4 crafting numenera task while examining the body, they learn that Davn needs a special component called oraculum as a replacement for what was destroyed when the twin fell. If the PCs have a few units of oraculum, they can attempt the repair themselves immediately (a difficulty 6 crafting numenera task that requires a few days of labor). Otherwise, it's possible that the substance might be available down in the ruin, given that the earliest memories the twins have are of "emerging from beneath the valley."

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

Fortune can be found almost anywhere in the Ninth World. If the GM has no preference, the community is in the Beyond, on the southeastern edge of the Plains of Kataru.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) each for taking on the mystery, and 2 XP for learning the identity of the perpetrator (whoever it turns out to be). If the PCs become more invested and manage to repair Davn, they earn an additional 2 XP.

After dealing with the mystery of the missing twin, the PCs could look into the source of the spark storms. This might lead to a deeper exploration of the ruin.

THE RUIN

During the course of this adventure, the PCs hear about a ruin beneath the valley at least once. Some Fortune residents might even suggest that the unclean influences there led to Davn's death. Finding the entrance is a level 5 task and likely takes several hours, unless the GM decides that someone in town knows exactly where an entrance lies. The ruin is part of an unbelievably ancient structure that is part of the valley itself—the "valley" is actually two parallel projections of the ruin, buried in layers of sediment. If the PCs get inside, they find winding corridors leading every which way, cluttered with all manner of mostly defunct and unpowered devices, with a few exceptions.

The PCs encounter some the following interesting and dangerous things while searching the ruin. If you're looking to extend gameplay even further, refer to *Goliaths in the Earth*.

d6	Encounter
1	Among several inert machines is one that still hums and clicks (level 6) that attempts to pull the nearest PC inside with a force beam. Unless the PC can escape, they are put in a state of suspended animation until they can break loose or are freed.
2	A free-floating cube (level 7) in the chamber flickers to life when the PCs enter. It connects to the datasphere and answers one question, but upon doing so, it launches a spark storm inside the ruin. Is this device responsible for the spark storms that plague the valley?
3	A machine attempts to surgically implant strange devices into a PC. The devices look similar to those invested in the twins, though their use is not immediately obvious.
4	The torso and head of a third "twin" are found in a pod. Oraculum could be salvaged from it.
5	A powerful but inert automaton (level 9) is encountered. Each round the PCs mess with it, the more it wakes up.
6	Inert synth spheres cover this area to a depth of 10 feet (3 m).

Oraculum, page 114

Goliaths in the Earth, page 30

Plains of Kataru, page 179

UNDER A STALACTITE SKY

BRIEF SUMMARY

The PCs fall into an enormous underground cave-ruin where abhumans, primitive humans, and intelligent fungi are in a stalemate over control of their realm, and a giant aquatic reptile preys on all of them.

DETAILS

Hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth, an ancient coral-like ruin surrounds a cave that contains a lake and several small populations of intelligent creatures. They have eked out a living for centuries, closed off from the rest of the world in a state of near darkness, with only glowing fungi and small lights from the ruin providing regular illumination. The PCs unexpectedly fall through the roof of this cavern (perhaps due to a sinkhole, earthquake-created chasm, or a pit in a surface structure), splash into the lake, and then must swim to shore to avoid the giant reptile hunting them. On the fringes of the lake live three primitive tribes—one human, one abhuman, and one plant—that have fragmentary knowledge of their history in this place, which they call the Dark Hollow. The PCs can investigate, parley with, or conquer these groups to gain access to their resources and piece together enough information to find a way to escape from this weird self-contained realm.

The Dark Hollow has three resident tribes of intelligent creatures: the Pale Claws, the Last People, and the Grey Sprouts.

PALE CLAWS

A killist is a diminutive kind of abhuman. Pale, greasy, and sharp-toothed, even at the best of times killisti have a penchant for murder, thievery, and deception. Trapped in this giant cave, they have nothing to do but plot ways to capture and kill the humans of the Last People tribe. Their leader is a matriarch named Zouk, mother or grandmother to most, and more devious and crueler than any. Killisti speak their own language, but about half of them (including Zouk) know a few words of the Truth. Armed only with their poisonous claws, they prefer ambushes, and they build spiked pit traps and nets out of bones and hair to trap humans.

Zouk: *level 4, stealth as level 6; health 12; poisoned claws inflict an additional 3 points of Speed damage if the target fails a level 5 Might defense roll*

LAST PEOPLE

According to their oral history, the last people were brought to the Dark Hollow by a "blue god" six to eight generations ago because the world was going to end. They believe they are the only people left in the world and that they must wait in this place until they are worthy of being taken to a realm of paradise, a gift they pray for at a glowing blue altar after every sleep. The Last People are the only tribe to use fire, sometimes burning djog oil for cooking. They wear scraps of flexible synth and other long-lasting materials that have been repurposed into clothing. At some point it became a cultural norm in the tribe to eat the flesh of their dead—they don't hunt people for food, but they have seen too much starvation to let a dead person's meat go to waste.

Their leader is a priestess named Homni.

Last People tribe member: *level 2, fishing and survival as level 3*

Homni: *level 3; can perform small "magic" tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, mend a broken object, and so on.*

GREY SPROUTS

Not so much a tribe as a collection of intelligent carnivorous plants, these creatures have evolved or been changed to allow them to survive underground.

Killist: *level 3, stealth as level 4; health 9; poisoned claws inflict an additional 3 points of Speed damage if the target fails a Might defense roll*

They look like vaguely humanoid, pale grey leafy plants with bioluminescent highlights. The Grey Sprouts is a fairly prosperous tribe compared to the others because they don't require much solid food, subsisting mainly on special lights and only sometimes absorbing decaying organic matter. Individually, grey sprouts are not much smarter than an animal predator, but collectively they function at about the same intellect level as a smart human. They slowly patrol the edges of their territory, having been attacked in the past when the other tribes got too hungry, enticed by the plants' intriguing smell. Legends of their deadly natural defenses make the other tribes hesitant to approach them these days. They do not speak any humanoid language, but they can hear; telepathy and abilities that communicate with plants work on them.

Every grey sprout produces a scent that induces internal bleeding in most other living creatures. Victims who succumb and die collapse into a bloody, nutritious slurry. The sprout can suppress this ability by tightly folding its petals, but it otherwise happens automatically regardless of any actions the sprout takes. A character is immune as long as they hold their breath, but doing so is a short-term solution that also prevents extended conversation.

Grey sprout: *level 4; health 16; unless suppressed (or targets hold their breath), the sprout's intriguing scent inflicts 5 points of damage on all living creatures within short range each round*

SALIENT POINTS

- The PCs fall into a giant underground cave with a lake.
- There's a dangerous creature in the lake and three warring tribes living on the shores.
- There doesn't appear to be a way out, and the creatures have been stuck here a long time.
- Remnants of old numenera divided among the tribes can be pieced together to remove a poisonous barrier and create an escape route.

STARTING POINT

The PCs fall into a steep, smooth chute. Three places in the chute have sharp rocks or sudden turns, requiring each PC to make a level 4 Speed defense roll or take 2, 4, or 6 points of damage as they collide with these hazards. Finally, they emerge from the ceiling of a huge cave that has a lake, several shores along the edge, and a central island. The PCs fall almost 200 feet (60 m) into the water; the impact causes 10 points of damage (ignores Armor), or only 5 points if they make a level 5 Speed defense roll. Their splashes attract the attention of the morigo in the lake, and the PCs must swim to dry land to avoid being attacked.

KEYS

This scenario has four keys that must be found within the cavern.

- A clue to the existence of the Death Pit (the eventual exit from the cavern).
- A way to permanently protect the humans from the killisti.
- A way to protect against the grey sprouts' aroma or appease them so they won't attack.
- A way to regenerate the damaged coral numenera device in the southeast and activate its cleansing protocol on the contaminants there.

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs three to five cyphers.

THE WRAP-UP

If the PCs can repair and activate the cleaning device near the Death Pit (or return the coral automatons to its vicinity for that purpose), the toxic sludge there becomes purified over the course of several days. This allows the PCs to use that area to exit this place, perhaps rescuing the Last People when they do.

Death Pit, page 45

UNDER A STALACTITE SKY

CORAL AUTOMATONS

This section of shore has the last four surviving automatons that maintain this facility (the others were destroyed decades ago). Made of the same coral-like material as the substance lining the walls of the cave, the automatons have variable appearances and can slowly reconfigure themselves for different purposes. They are intelligent but single-minded; their goal is to get into the area controlled by the Grey Sprouts, but (unlike the wall coral) they are vulnerable to the plants' aroma attack, so they wait here.

If the PCs find a way to communicate with the automatons, they say they need to reach the contamination tank to the southeast (a KEY that is a clue to an exit) to make repairs. If given the means to resist the sprout aroma or shown that the plants have moved away, they go to the tank and begin making repairs to the damaged numenera there (a KEY to regenerate the device).

Coral automaton: *level 3, Speed tasks as level 2; health 12; Armor 2; bludgeon inflicts 4 points of damage; poison dart inflicts 4 points of damage and target must make a Might defense roll or be dazed for one minute*

PALE CLAWS

These ten vicious abhumans would have wiped out the Last People long ago if they attacked as a horde, but they hate a fair fight and prefer to pick off solitary humans with ambushes and traps. This tribe can be intimidated by shows of force and threats, but even as they agree to do what the PCs say, they'll be plotting betrayal. The killisti are violent and treacherous, and they'll always be a threat to the humans as long as they live in the Dark Hollow. The KEY to ending this threat might be a damaged device in their lair that will incapacitate them or send them away, but killing them is probably a more expedient solution.

Their leader's throne is a device that displays random holographic shapes in the air around her. If activated properly (difficulty 6 understanding numenera task), it shows a map of the entire cavern with markings indicating the coral growths on the walls and a large artificial-looking area to the southeast with three tunnels leading out (a KEY that is a clue to the exit).

FALLING INTO DARKNESS

The cavern is about 400 feet (120 m) across and intermittently dotted with lights from the coral machines and patches of glowing fungus. Overall, these tiny lights provide dim light throughout the entire cavern; the inhabitants have adapted to this and suffer no penalties for it.

Dim light: *Characters can see clearly only to short range, and their attacks are hindered. Beyond short range, they can see only vague shapes, and their attacks are hindered by two steps.*

MORIGO

Dark Hollow tribes avoid venturing far from the shore because the lake is inhabited by a morigo, a biomechanical reptilian creature of a prior age. Not much smarter than a typical fish, its implanted numenera gives it many advantages, and it can easily kill any other native of the Dark Hollow, so they all fear and avoid it like it's some kind of demon. PCs trying to move across the lake will have to deal with or distract the morigo, or it'll keep finding and attacking them.

If the KEY that's a clue to the exit is here, it's the morigo itself, which has clearly been feeding on creatures other than those that live in the cavern.

Morigo: *level 6, perception as level 8, swim as level 7; health 26; Armor 2; movement long when swimming; long-ranged sonic pulse attack affects all in range and has equal chances of inflicting 3 points of damage, stunning for one round, or causing a panicked retreat for one round*

LAST PEOPLE

Reveal Show 'Em J (page 77) to the players.

The southwest shore is controlled by the Last People, a tribe of fifteen human adults and a handful of children. Seeing new people—particularly humans—is very alarming to them and a shock to their belief that the rest of the world has been destroyed, but the Last People are still the easiest ones for the PCs to interact and ally with. They are grateful for any help against their neighbors but can offer little in return. They know the Pale Claws are to the north, the morigo is in the lake, and the deadly plants are to the east.

The three cave areas to the west are used for sleeping. The larger open areas are used for cultivating edible moss, crafting nets for fishing, and posting watches against the killisti to the north (the northern section of their beach is built up with sand, rocks, and debris to form a small wall).

The small southern chamber is their temple, where they keep their glowing blue altar—actually an artifact that emits the perfect type of light to feed the grey sprouts. Thus, the altar is the KEY to negotiating a permanent peace between the humans and the sprouts, assuming the Last People can be talked into giving up this connection to their "blue god."

OLD BLUE

Living in the lake is an intelligent octopus explorer that the humans call "Old Blue," but his name is actually Voolm. The tribes only see him every few years, and they talk about him like he's a myth. Voolm can communicate telepathically with humanoids but thinks the tribes are too stupid to talk to. The morigo knows the octopus is poisonous and avoids him. He has been trapped here for decades and is willing to team up with the PCs if he thinks they can find a way out. Voolm's venom makes him immune to the aroma of the grey sprouts; although he doesn't know it, anything stung by him is immune to the aroma for about a day—a KEY for surviving an encounter with the plants.

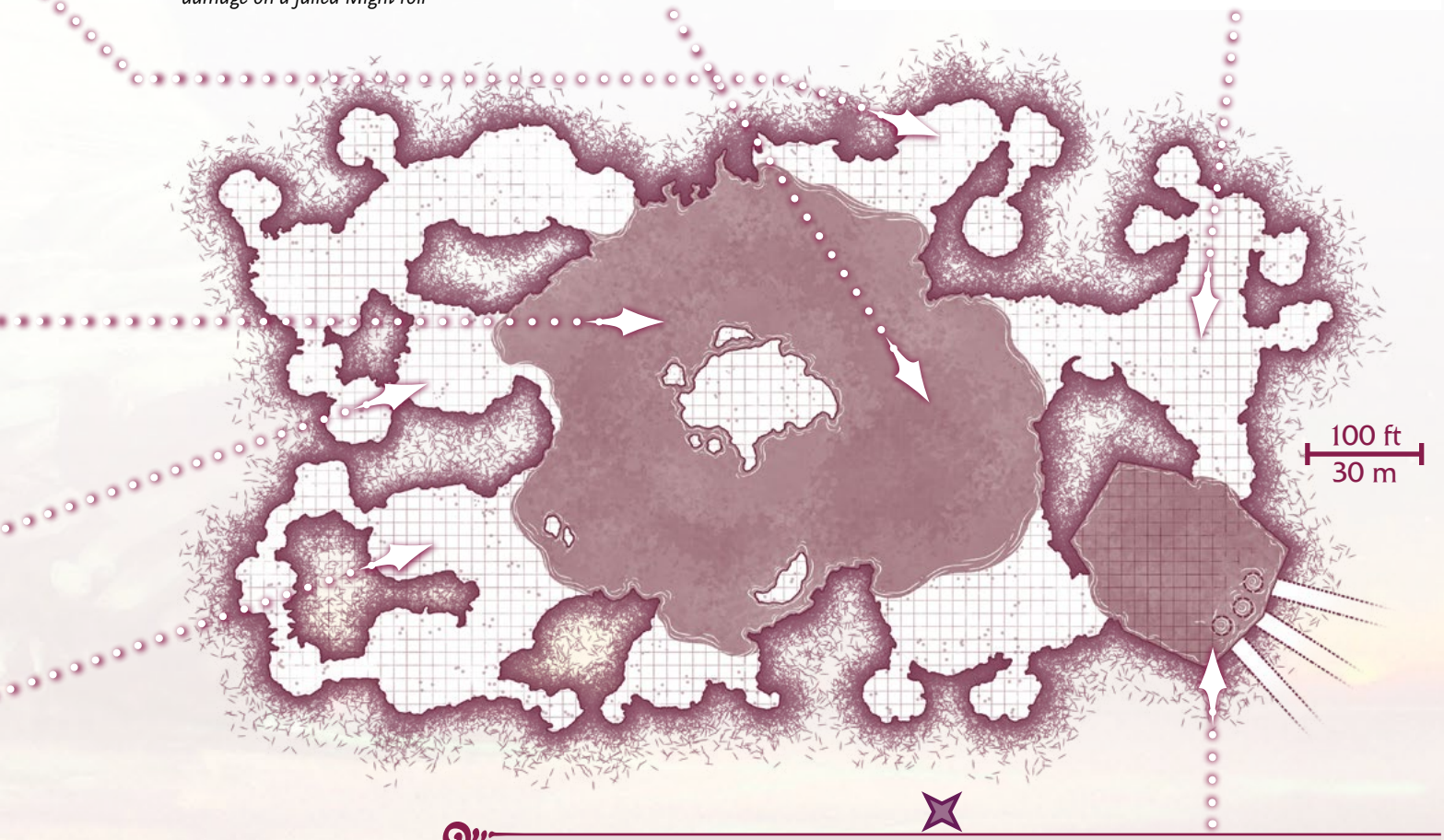
Voolm: *level 4, stealth as level 6; health 20; movement long underwater; skin contact additionally inflicts 5 points of poison damage on a failed Might roll*

GREY SPROUTS

Low mounds of rotting organic matter cover much of the floor. Usually one or two of the seven sprouts are near the shore, standing on these mounds to absorb nutrients or waiting in the shallows to kill fish with their deadly aroma and add them to the mounds. If cautiously approached, the sprouts retreat to their northern trio of caves to defend the three light-producing artifacts there that feed them (identical to the one the Last People have). If they are attacked, reinforcements from the small caves arrive to help them.

The sprouts aren't harmed by being near contamination in the Death Pit, but it is unpleasant to them, so they leave that area alone.

If the KEY that protects humans from killisti is here, it is the chance for the PCs to negotiate with the sprouts to help eradicate the murderous abhumans permanently.



DEATH PIT

Reveal Show 'Em K (page 77) to the players.

The coral numenera on the walls to either side of this large tank is clearly dead and crumbling into dust. On the north (Grey Sprouts) side, a series of synth valves allows access to a huge tank filled 20 feet (6 m) deep with foul-smelling sludge (contaminants filtered out of the main lake), with three bubbling areas in the southeast part. On the west side is a large stronglass panel overlooking the tank, but there's no way to get to it from this side without breaking the glass (level 6).

The machines that would purify this material are broken, so the levels of contaminants have built up enough to kill off the local coral. Repairing this requires iotum and three months of work, or getting the coral automatons to the north to return to this area (a KEY) and make the repairs. Touching the sludge or spending an hour near it inflicts 2 points of damage (ignores Armor) and the victim must make a Might defense roll (level 5) or catch a level 5 debilitating disease. Swimming in the sludge inflicts 5 points of damage (ignores Armor) and requires a Might roll every round.

The bubbles are from drainage hatches at the bottom of the tank; if these are opened, the contaminants drain out the hatches, and creatures can swim through the poisoned tunnels to another cave complex that eventually connects to the surface.

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

THE DARK HOLLOW ECOLOGY

The giant cavern is warm and humid. Evaporation from the lake often condenses into a mist along the ceiling, and most days experience a drizzle of rainfall. The ceiling is 200 feet (60 m) high in some areas and is covered with long, spindly stalactites. A self-replicating organic numenera machine resembling coral lines the walls of the cavern above and below the waterline for about 20 feet (6 m). The lake water is slightly smelly but safe to drink (a result of the filtration process that creates the area known as the Death Pit).

The cavern walls and ceiling are intermittently dotted with lights from the coral and patches of glowing fungus. Overall, these tiny lights provide dim light throughout the entire cavern; the inhabitants have adapted to this and suffer no penalties for it. Because there is no cycle of day or night, the residents measure time in "sleeps" instead of days and have no concept of months or years other than "many sleeps."

Dim light: *Characters can see clearly only to short range, and their attacks are hindered. Beyond short range, they can see only vague shapes, and their attacks are hindered by two steps.*

The cavern is inhabited by various inconsequential animals and fungi like fish, crickets, worms, moss, and an edible urchin-like animal called djog, all of which have adapted to living in the near-dark. Almost all of the food is controlled by one of the three tribes, and there is little surplus food for the PCs (hunting and fishing tasks are hindered).

In the two centuries that they have been trapped here, the people of the three tribes have been unable to find a way out of the cavern. The slide entrance the PCs arrived by collapses farther up, so even if the PCs retrace their steps, they can't get out that way.

LOGISTICS

The way out is through the draining pipes in the Death Pit, but the toxic sludge means the PCs probably want to activate the cleaning devices first. Otherwise, it would take multiple rounds for them to swim through the sludge to the release valves, open them, and either let themselves be carried out the pipes (still taking damage as they're swept along) or swim out of the tank to wait for the stuff to drain. Repairing the cleaning device requires iotum and several months if the PCs try it on their own, or the remaining coral automatons can do faster. So if they ignore all three tribes, meet the coral automatons, and convince them to start their repairs, at best the PCs will be here for a few days.

Furthermore, every time the PCs cross the central lake, they risk drawing the attention of the morigo. Clever PCs will find ways to distract the creature, such as by having the Last People make noise on the far side of their territory, throwing a killist into the water as bait, or using a numenera ability (such as an illusion) as a lure.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

Portions of the cave network can be expanded to have additional creatures and challenges, particularly the central island and the eastern part of the Last People's territory. The drainage pipes from the Death

Pit can lead to another level with more coral numenera, perhaps something relating to growing plants underground or in space.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

This adventure can happen anywhere underground that is convenient for the GM. One likely place is under the Black Riage, perhaps near the fungal-infested city of Hidden Naresh, or maybe the drainage pipes out of the Death Pit lead to spore-filled caverns that climb upward and eventually connect to that mysterious city.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for peacefully interacting with the Last People, 1 XP for ending the threat the killisti pose to the humans (whether through violence or other means), 1 XP for communicating or negotiating with the grey sprouts, 1 XP for getting the cleaning machines repaired, and 1 XP for escaping the Dark Hollow.

Unless the PCs have the ability to teleport or move through rock, the only way out is through the pipes in the Death Pit. Safely using that route requires fixing the cleaning devices, whether that is done by the PCs or the surviving coral automatons.

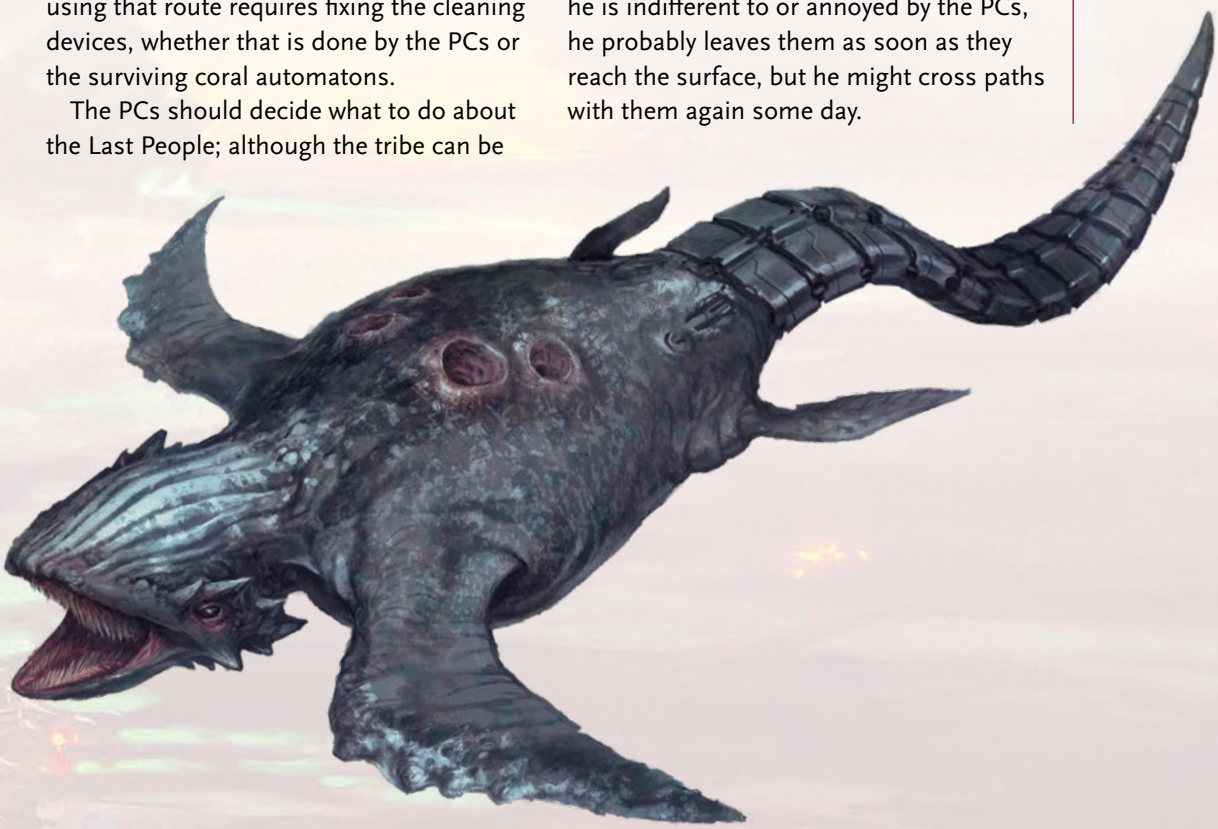
The PCs should decide what to do about the Last People; although the tribe can be left here, they're becoming inbred, and their lives are barely more advanced than those of abhumans. Convincing them to visit the surface world and finding a community that will take them in as equals are two difficult challenges. If the PCs decide to leave the Last People here, the ethical thing to do would be to remove the threat of the killisti and the morigo, make peace with the Grey Sprouts, and give them food and other supplies so they don't have to survive on scraps.

The PCs might want to help the sprouts leave the Dark Hollow as well, although a group of semi-intelligent plants with an inherently deadly scent might be too dangerous to introduce to the surface world. Because their intellect is somewhat based on how many of them are in the area, access to more resources (such as sunlight) would allow them to reproduce faster and increase their intelligence, but both of those things also lead to a greater risk for other creatures living near them.

If Voolm the telepathic octopus enjoys the company of the PCs, he might become their long-term ally or companion in exploring the Ninth World, but eventually he'll want to return to the sea and rejoin his own kind. If he is indifferent to or annoyed by the PCs, he probably leaves them as soon as they reach the surface, but he might cross paths with them again some day.

Black Riage, page 172

Hidden Naresh, page 172



FLIGHT OF THE SERAPH

BRIEF SUMMARY

A community will be destroyed by an approaching starwing seraph unless the PCs undertake a quest to raise an equally strong creature to challenge it.

DETAILS

After flying silently in the void for nearly twenty years, an immense entity called a starwing seraph is returning once again to wreak havoc on the city of Dahlinger.

Starwing seraph: *level 9; health 140; Armor 5; flies a long distance each round; wings batter all creatures in short range for 18 points of damage; very long range plasma stream inflicts 18 points of damage to everything in an area a long distance across*

The translucent-bodied starwing seraph spends most of the time in the sky or even higher. Though see-through, the vast creature is named from the unique pattern of bioluminescent dots forming a constellation-like pattern across its expanse. When it wafts overhead at night, observers notice that the star patterns they're used to seeing look different. Unfortunately, if someone on the ground beneath can see the starwing seraph's "stars," it's probably already too late for them.

The mind-blowing size of the creature means that whenever it touches down, it destroys everything nearby, up to and including entire cities.

Unfortunately, the starwing seraph's return is more than a prophecy—it's a certainty, because the creature has visited many times before. Each previous time, according to Dahlinger lore, the city was protected by a sentinel of equal ferocity called a titanomock. However, a few weeks ago that sentinel sickened and died, leaving an immense form like the skeleton of mountain near the city.

Without the titanomock, Dahlinger is doomed. Yet there is one hope. When Dahlinger was first settled a few hundred years ago, a group of Aeon Priests visited several prior-world sites in the surrounding region, collecting the components required to assemble a device that called and tamed a titanomock (a kind of titanothaur, a designation that essentially means something too big to exist normally, yet somehow they do). This expedition has come to be known as the Path of Salvation.

Dahlinger's only hope is if a new group of brave and knowledgeable explorers undertake the Path of Salvation again to try to find a way to summon another guardian titanomock.

Kol-Rets, the historian of Dahlinger, begs the PCs to take the Path of Salvation. Kol-Rets, a balding, stout man who is blind in one eye and has a machine eye in the other socket, has a crumbling map indicating the route the original saviors of Dahlinger used, as well as notes on the kinds of components they gathered to accomplish their goal. Though the task is likely to be dangerous, he believes that calling another titanomock is Dahlinger's only option. Otherwise, the city is doomed.

If the PCs are already invested in the community, their reward will be Dahlinger's continued survival itself. However, if they are merely passing through, Kol-Rets suggests that by calling and taming another titanomock, the characters will have the ability to call on it for their own needs on at least one future occasion.

To save the community, the PCs must follow a trail of clues on the crumbling map of the Path of Salvation that leads to several different (but related) prior-world ruins, gather the requisite materials, and assemble them at a site near Dahlinger. Once they do,

they can try to summon another titanothaur in time to fight off the starwing seraph and save the city.

SALIENT POINTS

- Dahlinger is a community visited by a vast creature called a starwing seraph every twenty years.
- Dahlinger used to be protected by an equally massive guardian creature called a titanomock.
- Both the starwing seraph and the titanomock are a type of creature known as a titanothaur.
- The titanomock is dead. Without its protection, Dahlinger will be destroyed when the starwing seraph returns within the next few months.
- Kol-Rets, Dahlinger's historian, asks the PCs to undertake the Path of Salvation, which could provide the means to summon a new guardian titanomock.
- The Path of Salvation prompts the PCs to visit various prior-world ruins and collect specific components.
- If the PCs are successful, they can construct a device that will call a new titanomock to protect Dahlinger.

STARTING POINT

Reveal Show 'Em L (page 78) to the players.

Dahlinger is a large town built behind high, dry stone walls, accessible by a couple of large gates. Stretching away from the city lies a vast form like the skeleton of a mountain, which is the remains of the dead titanothaur that once protected Dahlinger. As a large town, the community contains a handful of common houses where the PCs can rest, taverns where they can get food and drink, and a large marketplace where they can buy common items, as well as a few cyphers and maybe even an artifact from local crafters.

However, the city is in something of an uproar, with many people already beginning an evacuation, even though they do not know where to go. Aneen-drawn wagons overcrowded with families, handcarts piled high with hastily gathered possessions, and lone walkers crowd the streets. It's amid this chaos that Kol-Rets asks the PCs to undertake the Path of Salvation, giving them the crumbling map.

THE WRAP-UP

Reveal Show 'Em M (page 78) to the players.

The best-case scenario is that the PCs find the indicated components and return to Dahlinger to build a fixed machine. Due to the nature of the components, the PCs can assemble them simply by succeeding on a difficulty 5 understanding numenera (or crafting numenera) task, because they don't have to build the whole machine from scratch; this task is hindered if they don't have the key that provides instructions on how to assemble the components. If the PCs succeed, as the starwing seraph approaches, a new titanothaur—a titanomock—rises, taking its form from the device the PCs built, to drive the seraph off. If you have more time and have *Numenera Destiny* handy, you could play out the conflict, as described under Further Development.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys, two of which are objects and one of which is a source of information.

◆ Something that can be used as a component to build a device capable of calling a titanothaur to a specific location. (A total of four of these keys must be gathered.)

▲ Something that can be used as a component for the device that creates a compulsion that causes the titanothaur to obey. (Only one of these keys is required.)

● Instructions on how to assemble the gathered components to build the titanothaur-calling-and-taming device. (These aren't required, but not having them hinders the component assembly.)

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs six to eight cyphers.

FLIGHT OF THE SERAPH

PATH OF SALVATION

The crumbling map indicates seven specific locations in fading script, with the following cryptic instructions written in the Truth:

We found what we needed: five components, each in appearance like a crystal shard shattered from some far larger device, each imprisoning a blot of madly beating darkness.

We gathered four shards of blue and one of red from the ancient complexes nearby. And as we had hoped, based on what our sister the Eye uncovered, a vast titanomock from beyond the walls of the world thundered to our aid! And just in time, to turn away what would have otherwise been our doom.

ENCOUNTERS ON THE PATH

Each location on the crumbling map is a related, but discrete, ruin. Use the following to generate one or two encounters within or near each ruin that the PCs explore while searching for the components.

d10	Path of Salvation Encounters
1	White liquid gathers on the ceiling; the material's gravity is the opposite of regular matter.
2	Area of machines and devices that could be salvaged as a level 1d6 + 1 salvage source.
3	A pack of five hairless, red-skinned, three-legged predators gain the PCs' scent.
4	Transport tube rapidly moves PCs to another ruin on the Path, inflicting 5 points of damage.
5	Machine (level 6) could be salvaged or, if understood, used to put a target in stasis for 28 hours.
6	Delicate crystals frost the area and crumble if touched, releasing a rush of whispers in a dead language.
7	A rolling 20-foot (6 m) diameter synth watcher sphere psychically challenges newcomers.
8	Crystal disc shows dead alternate timeline version of the viewer, as if stepped on by something huge.
9	Machine turns all liquid in the area (including bodily fluids) a brilliant glowing green for 28 hours.
10	A huge pig-like beast with machine parts waits for the PCs to emerge from a ruin.

Red hairless predator: *level 3; when three or more attack the same target, treat the attack as if made by a single level 5 creature inflicting 7 points of damage*

Watcher sphere: *level 7; long-range psychic ray deals 7 points of Intellect damage (ignores Armor)*

Pig-like beast: *level 6; Armor 3; charge inflicts 10 points of damage; tusk attacks two creatures each for 6 points of damage*

WHITE BRIDGE

This structure is a vast synthsteel bridge arcing across a miles-wide valley. Parts of the bridge have fallen, and other sections are unstable. The PCs can probably get on and off it only at the ends. Sections along the bridge are completely covered, and others are open to the sky. The bridge is home to a nest of hungry blue spider-like things called vorans, each the size of a dog, that spin blue synth webs.

If either KEY is present, it can be found amid a few other shiny treasures (including a few cyphers) in a hanging voran nest.

GM intrusion: A section of the bridge crumbles, and the character could fall to a lower section, taking 5 points of damage (ignores Armor) and descending one step on the damage track on a failed difficulty 5 Speed defense roll.

Voran: *level 3; short-range web attack inflicts 3 points of damage and, on failed Speed defense roll, restrains victim until they escape*

CITY OF CRUSH

Green stone structures rise amid cratered streets of the same material. The buildings are mostly empty, and many are ruined. Here and there, dead creatures are smashed flat, as if something huge hammered them to paste. But no threat is visible.

If either KEY is present, it lies in a museum-like display case among other oddities, including an artifact.

GM intrusion: Gravity in a region an immediate distance across spikes with lethal intensity. On a failed Might defense roll, the character falls and is held fast, taking 10 points of damage each round until they can escape.

SUN TOWER

A tower of stone and synth several hundred feet tall leans to the east. Periodically, a light nearly as bright as the sun appears at the tower's top, usually shining for about an hour before dimming back to blackness. Most of the tower is solid but for a vast open cavity in the center that is constantly lashed with a never-ending rain storm.

If the KEY is present, it can be found amid the rubble of one of several crystalline statues long reduced to debris.

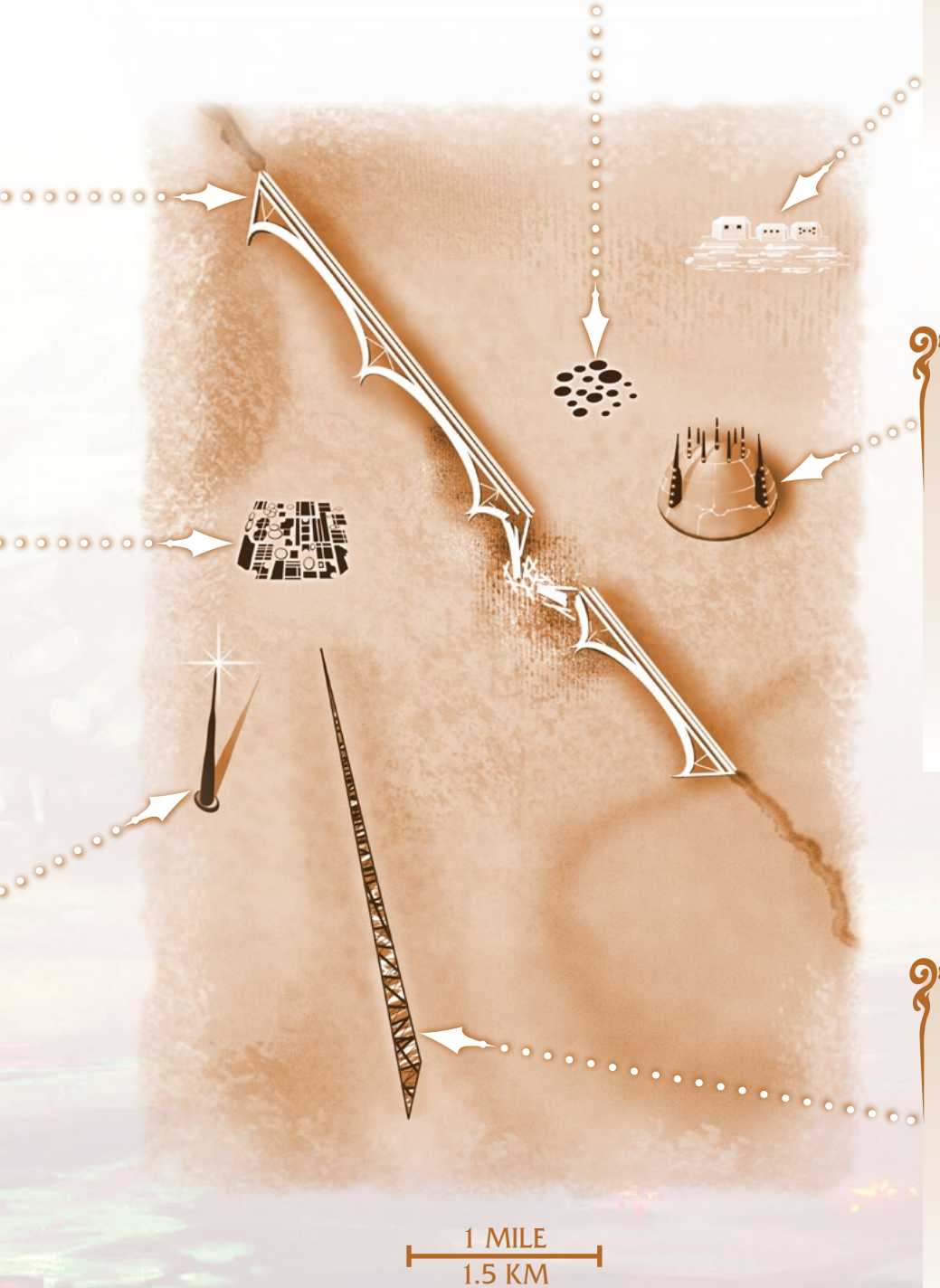
GM intrusion: Lightning strikes the character in the central chamber, inflicting 10 points of damage on a failed Might defense roll, and 4 points even on a success.

Salvage source, page 108

PLAZA OF ANGELS

Synthsteel circular pads, each a long distance in diameter or larger, are scattered here. Some of them contain central features that have eroded past easy identification but may have been sculptures once—or sculptures that were also machines. One is less damaged than the others, and its winglike projections may give the place its name. It responds to questions, but only with wordless music that probably doesn't mean anything.

If either KEY is present, it can be salvaged from one of the sculpture-machines.



CRYSTAL CLIFF

This ruin is an obviously artificial cliff face of blue crystal, cut with many square openings. Inside are lighted chambers as well as white ceramic automatons that roll about, maintaining some devices but ignoring others. Four automatons attack anyone who attempts to salvage a central ceramic cube (a level 7 machine with no obvious functions) covered with wires and controls.

If the KEY is present, it is embedded as a component of the ceramic machine.

GM intrusion: The cube-like machine attempts to absorb the character, inflicting 4 points of damage (ignores Armor) each round until the character can escape.

Automaton: *level 4*

DOME OF SILENCE

The interior of a large dome with spire projections is thick with hair-like stalks that smother sound. The stalks grow from most surfaces, but they don't seem like part of the original construction—and in fact, they infested the area afterward. No sound is possible in the dome because of the growths.

If any KEYS are present, they are found in sealed chambers filled with green-tinted poison atmosphere.

GM intrusion: The character becomes stuck as new stalk growth quietly entangles them, and they must succeed on a difficulty 4 Might defense task to pull free.

Poison atmosphere: *level 5; breathing it inflicts 1 point of Speed damage (ignores Armor) each round*

THE CAGE

A perfectly cut chasm stretches for several miles. The chasm is clogged with an array of interconnected, metallic, cage-like structures of all different sizes amid wires and support structures. Most of the cages are empty, but some contain the remains of strange beings in various stages of advanced decay or mummification.

If either KEY is present, it is contained in one of the cages.

GM intrusion: A mummified biomechanical entity reanimates and attacks the character.

Mummified entity: *level 5; Armor 3; catches and squeezes for 5 points of damage*

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

THE ORIGINAL SAVIORS

If the PCs are curious, Kol-Rets can find a bit more information about the original group of brave explorers who summoned and bound the first titanomock. The group consisted of three people: Baron Sassin, a local noble with all kinds of numenera at her disposal; an Aeon Priest named Emos, who had a glass hand; and a young woman from the north who didn't speak and who everyone just called the Eye, apparently because she could see beyond what others saw and impart that knowledge merely by looking at someone.

If the PCs wish, they can find a few descendants of the saviors, including the person ruling as the current Baron Sassin—an old man with a flighty memory, in this case. If the PCs request it, he has servants bring out a dusty chest that belonged to his ancestor. In it, PCs can find a key that provides instructions on how to assemble the components to lure a titanomock (useful if the PCs failed to find it while traveling the Path). They also find a few cyphers, which the current baron gives to the PCs.

PLANS FOR THE MACHINE

As the PCs travel the Path of Salvation, they discover that the components they're looking for must come from the shattered pieces of a previously built machine of truly vast size. If they succeed on a difficulty 5 understanding numenera task, they realize that the vast machine was also a titanothaur lure, but one that was potentially capable of summoning an entire horde of gargantuan creatures at once. Thankfully, that machine is long gone and probably beyond hope for reconstruction. But its pieces can still be used to summon one titanothaur at a time, though finding those pieces is difficult.

It's possible (though not likely) that PCs could eventually put together a numenera plan of their own for building a similar device. Such a plan would look something like the titanomock lure plan provided. But they don't need to do this if they follow the Path of Salvation.

Numenera plans, page 135

TITANOMOCK LURE

Minimum Crafting Level: 10
Kind: Biological
Iotum: Immorcell colony (200 units); cognitive weave (22 units); mother marrow (14 units); optogenetic muscle (15 units); metabolic vesicle (10 units); bio-circuitry (40 units); pluripotent mass (25 units); neurofilament plexus (6 units); tamed iron (4 units); cosmic foam (1 unit)
Special Material: 1 pound (450 g) of brain matter from a titanothaur
Specifications: This plan summons a monstrously shaped mobile biological 500 feet (150 m) tall with Armor 5 that is built for destruction. A titanomock is active for only brief periods, during which it can be induced by whoever called it to target an enemy community or creature, large structures, or natural features and attempt to demolish them. It can move a very long distance per round, sometimes leaping to clear obstructions. Titanomocks use brute strength and mass to get the job done, typically inflicting 20 points of damage on all targets within immediate range each round. A titanomock can remain active for about six hours at a time, after which it must retreat and find someplace to burrow and hide, where it rests for several years.
Depletion: 1 in 1d20 (check per use)
Reproduction: None

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

More than many other adventures in this book, *Flight of the Seraph* is ideal for use in a campaign because the GM can further develop the areas shown on the map, rather than focus on a few important encounters. If the PCs are already involved in a community, perhaps an allied community desperately needs aid, and thanks to a treaty with Dahlinger, the characters are on the

hook to respond. Alternatively, Dahlinger's plight could come to the PCs' attention while they are on the way to some other task. Even so, some reason should exist for the characters to take on what is likely to be several days of exploration as they follow the Path of Salvation. Perhaps they discover that the components required to build the lure are also something they could incorporate into a machine or quest they need to build or find.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

Dahlinger and the associated region shown on the map could be almost anywhere in the Beyond. If used in the Steadfast, somewhere in the central portion of the Pytharon Empire would be ideal.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for attempting the Path of Salvation, and 3 XP for gathering the components and summoning the titanomock.

Rather than simply declare the titanomock successful, you could stage a three-way conflict between the starwing seraph on one side, and the summoned titanomock and allied community of Dahlinger on the other by using the rules for combat between communities in *Numenera Destiny*. In this case, Dahlinger gains community stats, including a rank. When the starwing seraph appears and the titanomock rises to challenge it, treat them both as rampaging beasts with their own rank. Then refer to the rules regarding conflicts between communities, hordes, and multiple sides in a fight that is handled as community actions.

Even though the PCs have already gone above and beyond to summon the titanomock, they could do more during the fight itself, attempting various community tasks to further bolster and protect Dahlinger. If they do, they'll limit the damage that the starwing seraph will still be able to do despite the titanomock's presence. After all, with two giant monsters rampaging through the community and crushing buildings, capable PCs may be the difference between limited injuries and wide-scale casualties.

Dahlinger: *rank 3*

Starwing seraph: *rank 7 rampaging beast*

Titanomock: *rank 7 rampaging beast*

Community stats, page 297

Rank, page 298

Rampaging beast, page 315

Community actions, page 305

Community tasks, page 310

Pytharon Empire, page 156

FROM THE EARLIER

BRIEF SUMMARY

A ruin protected by a bubble of time can only be unsealed by items once carried by past versions of the PCs.

DETAILS

A site called the Autotomic Spiral has claimed the lives of many explorers, and those who escaped it have experienced memory loss and rapid aging, appearing years or decades older than they were when they entered the structure. A journal from one explorer claims that they reached the door to its inner chamber and deciphered some of its controls, but failed to unlock the vault. Armed with this knowledge and some thaum dust, the PCs hope to loot this ruin of its powerful artifacts from the prior worlds.

Thaum dust, page 112

THE AUTOTOMIC SPIRAL

The Autotomic Spiral is a structure of glass and metal over three stories high, surrounded by wide bands of slow-moving debris that orbits it like leaves around a whirlpool. Reaching its one known door requires walking in the clear spaces between the bands until reaching an empty area just beyond the edge of the structure. Too much physical contact with the bands or attacks against them (or the structure itself) causes sections of the floating debris to start spinning quickly and flipping end over end like a shed lizard's tail, except that the material (level 6) is hard, sharp, and fast enough to cut through bone, synth, and steel, and it follows the perpetrator for days.

Inside the Spiral are a dozen or so rooms surrounding a central vault area sealed off by numenera devices that use time itself as a shield and lock. Low levels of chronometric energy bleed out of this shield, causing odd sensations and effects within the rest of the structure (see Time Ripples).

The floating material around the Autotomic Spiral resembles the arms of a spiral galaxy.

VAULT INTERFACE

The interface outside of the vault chamber controls the time-altering ward. Turning it completely off to access the vault requires three keys that have to be inserted in the panel at the same time. Without the keys, the interface can do only the following things with a successful understanding numenera roll (level 7):

- Make one person in the room older or younger (user's choice) by 1d6 years.
- Move the user forward 1d6 minutes in time (they vanish for a few minutes, then reappear).
- Move everyone in the room backward in time multiple hours (see Back in Time).
- Random creature in the room gains two actions on their next turn but takes 3 points of Speed damage.

TIME RIPPLES

To play up the weird sensations of being inside the Autotomic Spiral, the GM should introduce at least one of these time ripples in each of the interior rooms, affecting one or more characters with each ripple:

- A sensation of being watched (lasting only a minute), but they can't figure out where it's coming from.
- Déjà vu about being in this room or part of the room.
- Repeat an action or phrase, or see or hear another character do so.
- Disorientation, intoxication, and strange sensations for several rounds, hindering all actions by two steps.
- Unimportant recent memories altered, such as who entered the room first.
- See or hear another person vanish for a few seconds.
- Take 4 points of damage from a wound that wasn't there a moment ago.

TIME TRACKING

It is crucial for the GM to track time in this adventure, because knowing when the PCs did certain things (such as entering or leaving a room, taking a rest, or having combat) is important for when they have to use time travel to find and retrieve the broken and missing keys. The two-page map spread has squares along the bottom for the GM to track specific hours and days for these events.

BACK IN TIME

Going back in time with the vault device also moves everyone in the room through space to a location about a long distance away from where they were at the destination hour. For example, if the PCs enter the ruin at dawn, reach the vault device at noon, and use it to rewind themselves back to dawn, this physically moves them to a long distance away from the entrance of the structure because that's where they originally were at dawn. After one hour, the rewinding effect ends, and the PCs reappear at the vault one hour after they initiated time travel.

Rewinding time up to three hours is a difficulty 6 task; every three additional hours (or portion thereof) hinders the task. Connecting 1 unit of thaum dust to the machine gives an asset on this task; this does not consume the iotum, but the PCs can choose to let it be consumed to gain an additional asset.

Interacting directly with one's past self is dangerous and disorienting. Being within short range of your original past self hinders all actions, and being within immediate range hinders by two steps. Attacking, touching, or being touched by your past self moves you one category down the damage track. (Note that these penalties don't apply to your past self, nor do these interactions happen with other time-traveling versions of you.)

The constant forward movement of time means that eventually it becomes impossible for the PCs to reach their initial selves at the ruin.

SALIENT POINTS

- The Autotomic Spiral has a sealed vault at the center that contains artifacts.
- The Spiral defends itself with numenera that ages people and affects time.
- The PCs have a journal with advice on how to manipulate the vault door, and it suggests bringing thaum dust.
- The PCs need to find other devices (keys) within the structure to open the vault.
- Through GM intrusions, at least two of the PCs' keys get lost or broken before they reach the vault.
- The PCs use the vault interface to travel back in time to secretly take the lost or broken keys from their past selves and use them in the present.

STARTING POINT

The PCs have arrived at the Autotomic Spiral with the journal written by an earlier explorer, which suggests using thaum dust to help unlock the vault door. Some of the journal's pages are missing, some parts have been scratched out, and some have been edited and annotated several times, often contradicting themselves (it is possible the author was starting to lose their mind).

THE WRAP-UP

If the PCs get into the vault, they can loot its contents and leave the ruin safely, or use the ruin's time-travel abilities to start other, stranger adventures. Even if they are unable to open the vault door, nothing prevents them from leaving the structure; months or years later, its interior might reset and give someone an opportunity to unlock its secrets.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys that must be found within the Autotomic Spiral.

◆ Something that bends the vault's chronometric bubble around the PCs, bringing them within it. In some cases, this might protect PCs from negative time-related effects.

▲ Something that will harmlessly dissipate chronometric energy bleeds in a small area, like a lightning rod does for electricity. This is a large item that is too big to fit in a pack.

● A unit of thaum dust. (The PCs might start the adventure with some, but they can find more in the ruin.)

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs four to seven cyphers.

ENTRANCE AND INTERIOR

The walls, floor, ceiling, and doors look like bubbly distorted glass but feel like rough sandstone. Damaging any part of the structure is likely to create a burst of localized chronometric energy in an immediate radius that inflicts 6 points of damage and moves a creature one step down the damage track if it fails a level 6 Might defense roll.

The hemispherical doors are controlled by full-surface interface panels, requiring an understanding numenera roll to open or close. Fifty percent of the time they initiate a ten-minute countdown before opening (this can be bypassed by making a hindered understanding numenera roll). Doors close on their own 1d6 + 1 hours after being opened.

Autotomic Spiral: *level 6*

1

TIME ECHOES

These rooms might have combat encounters with transparent echoes of previous explorers or other creatures that visited here (level 4 or 5).

CHRONOMETRIC BLEED

Opening the door to this area reveals a dark hallway with odd intermittent sparks and the sound of twisting metal—obviously something is wrong. The northernmost point is a dark numenera interface. Spending any time in the small room inflicts 1 point of Might damage (ignores Armor) each minute as fluctuations of time energy impact everyone present.

A hand-sized centipede made of solid yellow light sometimes appears and walks around the room for a few minutes before vanishing. It is a KEY and doesn't vanish if removed from the room.

The numenera wall interface is shut down and can't be activated by the PCs, but it can be salvaged for 1d6 units of responsive synth and 1 unit of thaum dust (a KEY). Salvaging requires spending the normal fifteen minutes, or it can be rushed to one minute at the cost of hindering the salvage roll by three steps.

If the PCs have the KEY that dissipates energy, it flashes as it absorbs some of the discharges, and the nearby PCs take damage each minute only if they fail a level 6 Might defense roll.

Jumping, page 121

AGGRESSIVE GUARDIAN

Reveal Show 'Em N (page 79) to the players.

A guardian statue here is made of a lighter-colored version of the wall material and depicts a tall, three-armed oddly jointed creature with a spherical head and a metal staff topped with a crystal. If observed from a distance, it can be seen using its staff to collect dust and debris in the room into small piles. It otherwise is hostile and acts to prevent anyone from going farther into the structure, using the staff like a club or a fiery ray emitter. If the statue is destroyed, the structure builds another one over several weeks. The debris in this room includes shards of burned human bone (from previous explorers).

The guardian's weapon could be a KEY that dissipates chronometric energy. The staff's unusual abilities come from the guardian, not itself. The guardian can be salvaged for 1 or 2 units of thaum dust, also a KEY.

GM intrusion: The guardian uses the staff to displace a dangerous character from time, making them vanish for three rounds.

Guardian: *level 6, attacks and defense as level 7; Armor 2; staff inflicts 6 points of damage and ages target, moving it one step down the damage track (a character with the protection KEY is immune to this effect).*

THE BREACH

The floor and northwest wall are broken open, revealing a gap that disappears into darkness. The gap is at least 30 feet (9 m) deep, and anything dropped into it (including a constant trickle of dust and sand from the edge) drifts down and slightly toward the breach in the wall. Objects that vanish into the darkness are destroyed a moment later in a bright violet flash. Creatures move one step down the damage track each round they're at the bottom of the breach or northwest of the original circular edge of the room.

The narrowest part of the gap is about 10 feet (3 m) across; jumping it is a level 6 task, which can be eased by running an immediate distance before the jump.

If a KEY is here, it is a blue crystalline shield with metal protrusions, wedged into a crevice deep in the breach.

GM intrusion: The character holding the energy-dissipating KEY drops it; it falls into the breach, hits the northwest edge, and vanishes in a flash.

GM intrusion: The character carrying the protection KEY lands poorly while crossing the breach (or something similar), breaking the KEY.

VAULT DOOR

The chronometric energy in this room is palpable, and strongest along the south side. The south wall is a complicated numenera interface with two small cavities. The middle of the ceiling has a large socket. Placing the protection KEY and the thaum dust KEY in the left and right wall cavities (respectively) causes them to light up, and the ceiling socket responds similarly to the energy-dissipating KEY. If all three KEYS are inserted, the interface can be used to open the vault door. Otherwise, it has only a few functions. (See Vault Interface on page 54.)

GOLDEN WEBS

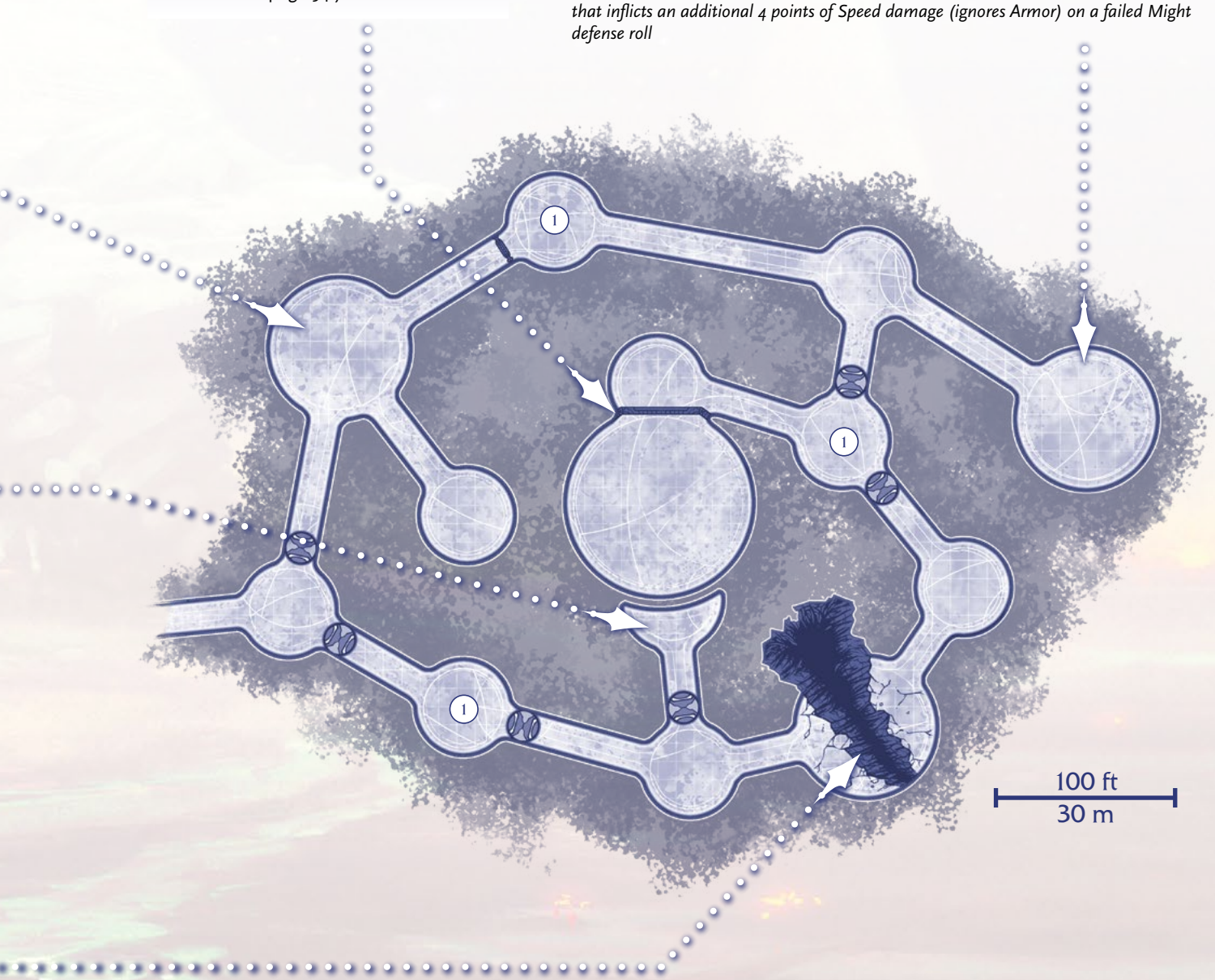
Reveal Show 'Em O (page 79) to the players.

Hundreds of metal knobs on the walls serve as anchor points for golden metal strands connecting to each other like an intricate web. In between some of the knobs are head-sized holes, and some of the strands lead into the holes. On the far end of the room is a fragile head-sized metal frame with golden threads within it, like a miniature version of the webbing structure in the room—a KEY.

Activity in the room draws the attention of the four steel spiders here, and they attack if their webs are damaged or the KEY is touched. Full contact with a web inflicts 4 points of damage; severing one requires 2 points of energy damage or at least 5 points from a blade of level 5 or higher.

GM intrusion: A metal strand slices through part of the energy-dissipating KEY, destroying it.

Steel spider: *level 3, balances and climbs as level 6; Armor 2; bite injects sharp webbing that inflicts an additional 4 points of Speed damage (ignores Armor) on a failed Might defense roll*



MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

THAUM DUST

This sparkling material, sometimes visible and sometimes not, is usually salvaged within clear synth receptacles. When used as an additional component as part of a crafting task, every 2 units of thaum dust reduces the time to craft by half. Further, 1 unit of thaum dust can be used as part of another action to gain one additional action (for a total of two actions on the round the thaum dust is used). However, this burst of quickened time inflicts 3 points of Speed damage (ignores Armor) on the character. It also uses up the unit of thaum dust. (One unit is one clear synth receptacle, which weighs about 7 ounces [200 g].)

THWARTING PARADOX

Time travel stories are often rife with paradox, especially because PC actions are unpredictable and don't always follow an easy narrative. It's quite possible that during this adventure, the GM will forget something, or a weird interaction will happen because of multiple instances of players making surprising choices. The unstable nature of time in this ruin means that once the PCs start traveling back in time, the GM can use any of the time ripples as GM intrusions to account for anything that would break the adventure. In other words, if a weird conflict happens, the timeline starts to look like a knot, a player loses track of an important detail, or it seems the PCs have found an exploit for infinite equipment, the GM should introduce a ripple GM intrusion that smooths over that complication. For a catastrophic problem, use a group intrusion to bounce all of the PCs back to the vault room in the present, effectively "rebooting" that time travel attempt.

FAR-FUTURE AND ALTERNATE SELVES

To make this adventure even more weird, have a group GM intrusion where copies of the PCs from even farther into the future interrupt the actual PCs and insist that they are the ones who really need to retrieve the key or some other item, and the two groups have to fight or negotiate. A version of a PC from a different timeline (maybe with different type and focus abilities than the current version of the character) might want to swap places with a current PC, bringing clues about an upcoming challenge or an answer to a problem the players haven't been able to deal with. The GM can also use this sort of intervention as a plot hook to warn the players about upcoming catastrophic events in the campaign, such as the iron wind destroying their favorite town or a dread destroyer approaching a major city.

These alternate-timeline character swaps are an easy way to let a player "fix" a PC that isn't as fun or interesting to play as they'd like. Of course, there's always the possibility that the replacement character is actually the evil twin of the original . . .

VAULT CONTENTS

By unlocking the vault chamber, the PCs should get access to powerful numenera, such as a battlesuit, several time dilation nodules, and a device containing a complete plan for a vehicle or installation.

Depending on how easily the PCs handled the challenges of the Autotomic Spiral, the vault's rewards might be guarded by creatures that are sensitive to temporal energy and probability, such as tachyrons (wolf-sized reptiles that perceive the near future and past simultaneously, giving them the ability to react to what its prey is about to do) and arravelons (blazing scarlet beings that steal their opponents' futures). Or perhaps the vault is actually a prison for such creatures, which are now free to enter the world at large.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

In an ongoing campaign, the GM could allow the PCs to use the Autotomic Spiral to unlock even greater time-traveling abilities, going back days or weeks in the past

Battlesuit, page 293

Time dilation nodule, page 288

Plans, page 135

Tachyron: *level 4; perception and initiative as level 10; attacks, Speed defense, and stealth as level 6; Armor 3*

Arravelon: *level 7; health 33; movement long; inflicts 5 points of Intellect damage on an opponent who fails an Intellect defense roll (hindered one step for each failure); transdimensional attacks prevent the arravelon from taking actions for one round*

Group intrusion, page 318

(perhaps at the cost of more thaum dust or other powerful iotum) to correct earlier mistakes, get additional information from people who later died, or commit small acts of sabotage in the past that benefit them in the present. Of course, these actions risk causing paradoxes and unexpected shifts in the campaign's present—equipment they carry might vanish, friends become strangers, people go missing, and so on. Abusing time-travel numenera is likely to draw the attention of powerful ultraterrestrials, whether those are bestial creatures that feed on loose time energy or intelligent timeline stewards who intervene to prevent time itself from becoming tangled. Another possible consequence is that PC actions might eradicate significant timelines, and survivors from those lost futures (known as timeline cadavers) might come to the present to hunt them down, either to prevent them from making those changes or to take their place in the surviving timeline.

The Autotomic Spiral might be able to create a portal to the dimension called Panaton, where the flow of time is variable. Panaton has its own inhabitants, challenges, and rewards, and can be a springboard to adventures in other dimensions.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

The Autotomic Spiral could be placed almost anywhere, particularly in a region where people have legends of its dangers and a wary respect for the stranger aspects of the numenera. One suitable place is near Wyrfall in Iscobal, as the local people already believe the Wyr River is full of spirits who flow backward in time, and they would consider the Spiral a holy site that should not be disturbed.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for exploring the Autotomic Spiral, 1 XP for bringing all three keys (intact or damaged) to the vault door, and 1 XP for completing at least one successful jump into the past to retrieve an intact key. If they open the vault and attempt to use it for further adventures, they earn an additional 1 XP.

A significant risk is that if the word gets out that the PCs opened the vault in the Autotomic Spiral, other explorers will journey there to access its time-traveling abilities. Having more people use the device multiplies the possibility of paradoxes and campaign-altering timeline shifts. Even if the PCs take the vault keys with them, they have basically unlocked the door and made it easier for others to use it. Finding a way to permanently seal the ruin—or salvage its numenera without causing a catastrophic temporal disruption—becomes a high priority when rival explorers claim the abandoned site for their own and start interfering with the PCs' plans.

Iscobal, page 153

Wyrfall, page 154

For more information on Panaton and dimensional travel, see Into the Outside.

TRAILBLAZER TRIALS

BRIEF SUMMARY

To get close enough to a noble's daughter to determine whether she killed her brother, the PCs join her in a series of grueling tests given by the Amber Gleaners.

DETAILS

Gilelona Mabith: *level 6, all Intellect-based tasks as level 7*

Amber Gleaners, page 245

Gilelona Mabith is one of two acknowledged children of the local noble, Viscount Mabith. Gilelona was the younger of the two—her brother Dermat was set to inherit the title. Given that the father's age was advanced, the succession seemed likely to occur within the next few years. However, recently and under what some believe to be suspicious circumstances, Dermat was found dead. Apparently, he tumbled from a high parapet in the viscount's castle after a party. The fall killed him.

Despite rumors that inevitably swirl in such circumstances, the death was declared an accident. There was a funeral. Life moved on. A shroud of grief encompassed the viscount, while his daughter moved out of the castle to "pursue other interests"—which turned out to mean that she wants to join the Amber Gleaners, an organization that specializes in exploration. Gilelona says that if she is to become the viscountess rather than her brother, she wants to devote what time is available to doing something different with her life before she must return to the castle. The viscount's role is to serve the community as a judge who arbitrates disputes with the full power of law and tradition to back them up.

Viscount Mabith sends for the PCs and asks for their help. He doesn't want to implicate his daughter in his son's death, yet the rumors have made him question his faith in her innocence. He can't in good conscience pass his title to his daughter if she murdered her brother to get it. On the other hand, he doesn't want to legitimize the rumors even a tiny bit, which would happen if he began a formal investigation of his own. That's where the PCs come in, as described under Starting Point.

The Amber Gleaners are an organization of scholars, explorers, delves, and other travelers who share with each other knowledge of the routes and locations they discover, enhancing the knowledge of everyone who joins and contributes to the organization. The Amber Gleaners may be scholarly, but the explorers who make up its ranks are hardy searchers of the unknown. They don't blanch at entering locations locals claim to be deadly dangerous, even when stories suggest especially gruesome ends to trespassers. This reputation is mostly earned by those who achieve a special rank within the organization, known as "Trailblazer." However, gaining that rank isn't easy. Each Trailblazer aspirant must successfully complete a series of examinations called the Trailblazer Trials. If someone can complete all the trials in the approved amount of time, they're eligible to gain the elite Trailblazer rank.

As it happens, Gilelona seeks to become a Trailblazer.

SALIENT POINTS

- The Viscount Mabith is getting on in years, and his title is hereditary.
- The title would have gone to his son, Dermat, but Dermat recently fell to his

death, and now the viscount's daughter Gilelona is set to inherit the position.

- Though the death was ruled an accident, rumors say that Dermat's sister pushed him.
- The viscount asks that the PCs join Gilelona as she participates in the Trailblazer Trials, a yearly examination hosted by the local chapter of the Amber Gleaners. In doing so, they are to try to secretly determine her innocence or guilt.
- The Trailblazer Trials are tough and dangerous, and the PCs will be pushed to finish them successfully.
- The PCs should eventually come to a conclusion about Gilelona based on their experience running the Trials with her. She didn't kill her brother, and the rumors are only that.

STARTING POINT

Whether the PCs have a connection with the viscount, their reputation precedes them, or for some other good reason, the viscount knows the characters and trusts their opinion. He asks that they attend a private dinner at his castle, and there he lays out the situation and asks that they apply to run the Trials that are set to begin in a couple of days. Only a select few can participate in the Trials, and those who do are highly encouraged to work in teams. As such, the PCs will have an opportunity to work closely with Gilelona in a stressful situation. Viscount Mabith asks that the characters try to determine, secretly if at all possible, her innocence (or guilt) in her brother's death. Whatever the case, they are not to mention the viscount's involvement in any way.

In return, he promises that the PCs will have his gratitude, a personal favor they can call in later, and a chest filled with numenera of all sorts that they can do with as they wish.

If the PCs want to look around the castle, they're given dispensation to do so. They don't find anything, but if you have time and want to expand this section of the adventure, see More Details.

Alternatively, this adventure might be run for just one or two PCs interested in joining the exclusive division of the Amber Gleaners known as the Trailblazers, in which case Gilelona's presence is secondary.

THE WRAP-UP

If the PCs complete the Trials, reach a verdict regarding Gilelona, and tell the viscount, he is grateful and rewards them as he described. If their verdict is that Gilelona is innocent (which is the truth), he is also relieved and gladdened. He further rewards them with free food and lodging for as long as they desire.

If their verdict is that she might well be guilty, he doesn't kill the messengers, but he doesn't suffer them in his castle any longer than required to fulfill his end of the bargain. The PCs later hear that the viscount's daughter has been locked up in a castle tower, which is where she will probably stay indefinitely.

Depending on how well the PCs did in the Trials, they might have the option to become full Trailblazers, with the benefits that designation provides.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys.

◆ Something that makes Gilelona take a dislike to one or more PCs.

▲ Something that puts Gilelona at ease around the PCs.

● Something that suggests that Gilelona is innocent of her brother's death.

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs eight to ten cyphers.

Numenera chest: *Contains six random cyphers and two level 4 artifacts (depletion: 1 in 1d20); one artifact grants +1 to Armor for ten minutes; the other restores 4 points to a damaged Might Pool*

TRAILBLAZER TRIALS

APPLYING TO RUN THE TRIALS

The Amber Gleaners stay in a lodge that is the living quarters for several members who are too elderly to explore. As the Trailblazer Trials approach, a man named Kester with a machine arm studded with odd devices, including weapons, takes applications. If the PCs are here on the viscount's request, Kester has already preselected them, and their applications are approved.

If the PCs haven't had any contact with the viscount and are here merely for the Trials, their first order of business is to impress Kester enough with their prowess that he signs them up.

GM intrusion: Kester takes a dislike to the character, and all efforts that character contributes toward a team's tasks are hindered.

Kester: *level 5, tasks related to perception and detecting falsehoods as level 7; machine arm can emit a variety of attacks and defenses that mimic an array of similarly functioning cyphers*

MEET YOUR TEAM

Reveal Show 'Em P (page 80) to the players.

The night before the Trials are set to begin, the Amber Gleaners throw a mixer, and the handful of people selected to participate are required to attend in order to meet their teammates. Drinks and snacks are served in the Amber Gleaner building, and the PCs can finally meet the others who will undertake the Trials with them: Gilelona, the outspoken daughter of the viscount; a boastful old man named Fabek with patchy green hair; and a quiet young man named Velivish who carries two or three books wherever he goes.

If the KEY that makes Gilelona dislike the PCs is present, it's because she thinks they are vainglorious after interacting with them.

Fabek: *level 3, tasks related to convincing others of his worth and reputation as level 4*

Velivish: *level 3, tasks that require planning, research, or cunning insight as level 5*

ASCEND THE TOWER

In an isolated area a few miles away is a 300-foot (90 m) tall ancient tower made of shifting sections of synthsteel and stone, which hinders all tasks to climb it by two steps. Climbing, of course, is the entirety of this Trial: would-be Trailblazers must gain the top of tower.

The tower contains interior chambers and stairs (some with the possibility for numenera salvage); however, because sections of floor, wall, and ceiling are constantly swapping locations, being inside when things shift just so could crush someone. The safer bet is to attempt to scale the exterior. (Simply flying up to the top is acceptable, assuming every member of the team has a method to do so). Gaining the top requires three successes, whether the group decides on straightforward climbing or interior navigation.

If the KEY that suggests Gilelona is innocent occurs, it's when she tells one character in apparent earnest confidence that her brother died from a fall, and heights still haunt her since that tragic day. She misses him so much and wishes he were still alive.

GM intrusion: Fabek panics and either causes a character to fall or pushes the character into a shifting panel; the PC takes 10 points of damage and descends one step on the damage track.

Ancient tower: *level 6*

EXPLORE THE GLOBULE

Reveal Show 'Em Q (page 80) to the players.

Perched on a promontory like a vast metallic fungal growth, the Globule is a large citadel of the prior worlds that is rich in danger and weirdness. Primary access is via a ladder the Amber Gleaners have mounted to the exterior. The inside is a maze of tunnels and chambers, many with defunct devices. To successfully complete this Trial, PCs must emerge with a map of at least four distinct areas.

Use the following table to generate four to six encounters within the ruin.

d6	Globule Encounters
1	Ink-black liquid in a well cleans and repairs most numenera dropped into it.
2	Level 6 antagonistic automaton, when defeated, can be salvaged for two random cyphers.
3	Amber light plays across character. On failed difficulty 5 Intellect defense roll, the character marches off in an apparently random direction until they take damage or are restrained.
4	Fist-sized floating hole in space drifts after intruders, inflicting 5 points of damage by touch.
5	Region of transparent flora and fauna all sustained by fluid pulsing in clear synth tubes.
6	Monstrosity trailing leaking synth tubes begins to hunt the PCs.

If the PCs save Gilelona or another NPC from a threat, that serves as the KEY that puts her at ease with them.

Monstrosity: *level 6; health 33; Armor 2; tentacle attacks inflict 8 points of damage on up to four targets, healing the monstrosity for 3 health per hit*

BREACH THE VAULT

The PCs must successfully enter a trapped artificial vault. If the KEY is present, Gilelona mentions how proud her brother would be if he could see her now (if the group gets the vault open).

Artificial vault: *level 6; the group must achieve three successes before two failures to open vault; each failure releases a level 5 burst of poison gas that inflicts 5 points of damage for three rounds.*

CHIROG GAUNTLET

Chirogs are vaguely reptilian scarlet-hued abhumans with thick armor plates. Though savage, they are craftier and more intelligent than most abhumans.

Three groups of four chirogs each infest a nearby ruin that is mostly a single long corridor about 3 miles (5 km) in length with many twists and turns. Would-be Trailblazers are instructed to go in one side and come out the other, taking as little time as possible. (PCs who try to run full speed through the ruin are likely surprised the first time a clutch of chirogs attacks, hindering their defense by two steps.)

If the PCs take an action that might be deemed unethical or if Gilelona misunderstands something they do, this triggers the KEY that is her dislike of the PCs.

If Gilelona has the chance to kill a chirog and can't bring herself to do it, that triggers the KEY that suggests she is not a murderer.

GM intrusion: A chirog trap causes a deadfall that crushes the character for 2 points of damage each round (and blocks the way forward) until it can be cleared as a difficulty 4 Might-based task that takes one minute.

Chirog: *level 4; health 15; Armor 3; bite inflicts 5 points of damage; grapples a target to hold them helpless until they can escape; attacks against grappling creatures are eased by two steps*

TRIAL HUB

A large pavilion is set up outside the community at a location previously disclosed to the PCs. The Trailblazer Trials are set to begin at dawn and run for three days. Each day, those undertaking the examination should attempt two or three Trials, then rest, as long as all six Trials are completed before sunset on the third day. After each Trial is attempted, all participants must return to the pavilion and give a summary of what happened to Kester and a few other lower-level Amber Gleaners. The entire team either succeeds at a Trial or fails, which means that a team is only as strong as its weakest link.

For his part, Kester records his reactions in a journal with stony-faced impartiality (and perhaps a bit of disdain if one of the characters managed to anger him earlier).

After each Trial is completed, all participants are asked if they'd like to vote a given team member out of the Trials. If Kester and at least one other participant votes it so, then that person is out and cannot continue.

GM intrusion: One of the NPCs selects the character to be voted out of the Trials. The character must convince Kester that the vote is unwarranted if they wish to stay.

DEFEAT THE CRAGWORM

Simple! A cragworm that lairs nearby must be defeated or at least neutralized. If the PCs aid or protect Gilelona in some fashion during the fight, that serves as the KEY that helps her warm to them.

GM intrusion: To get away from the cragworm, Velivish accidentally pushes a PC into danger.

Cragworm, page 64

WRITE UP A REPORT

For their last Trial, the group must write a report of their explorations and submit it to the judges. This is a difficulty 6 task requiring three successes (with no more than two failures) using at least four authors.

GM intrusion: A freak accident, like a downpour or a theft, risks destroying the report.

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

VISCOUNT CASTLE

If the PCs are brought on to help determine the guilt or innocence of Gilelona, they may insist on exploring the castle and looking for clues. Viscount Mabith frowns at the suggestion, indicating that he's already had his people look everything over. However, if PCs insist, he allows it.

The castle has three spires, one taller than the others, and a central keep. It has a staff of just under ten humans. A physical examination of the place where Dermat fell (and where he landed) doesn't reveal any evidence to disprove the hypothesis that he simply tumbled to his death.

If the PCs interview staff, they initially find no one willing to say anything, though a successful difficulty 3 perception task reveals that a handywoman named Maulin seems like she's holding something back. If asked, she says that she is pretty sure Gilelona pushed poor Dermat to his death. Her evidence? Just a feeling. "Those two were always running each other down!" (True, but only in the way that siblings bicker.) Maulin is one of the sources of the rumors naming Gilelona as a murderer.

Cragworm: *level 6, stealth as level 7, Speed defense as level 5, resists trickery as level 4; health 36; Armor 2; howl paralyzes victims within long range on failed Intellect defense roll for two rounds; bite inflicts 8 points of damage and, on failed Might defense roll, moves victim down one step on damage track*

Maulin: *level 2, tasks related to upkeep of the castle as level 4*

If the PCs look into Maulin further and succeed on a difficulty 5 Intellect-based task related to that activity, they discover that she and Dermat had been having a secret affair. This connection with Dermat only hardens Maulin's desire to find a culprit for her lover's death. Someone to blame, she believes, will somehow make it easier to bear.

CRAGWORM

A cragworm is a spined serpent that can grow up to 50 feet (15 m) long. Its mouth opens horizontally and has many rows of teeth. The creature has many red, glistening eyes and is known for its terrible, mournful howl. It has the intelligence of an animal and the outlook of a predator. The Amber Gleaners have managed to lure one into the area specifically for use in their next Trailblazer Trials.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

Using *Trailblazer Trials* in a campaign allows you the luxury of bringing the PCs into the situation slowly and more organically.

The characters come to the area and are occupied by other matters. During that time, they hear about the grand party the viscount is having. Perhaps they even attend, especially if one of the PCs has a connection to him. Afterward, of course, everyone in the area hears about Dermat's death, followed by rumors about his sister.

Eventually, the PCs are drawn into the investigation, but by that time they know some of the people involved—maybe even Gilelona. In fact, the conflict could be heightened if some of the characters like her, while one or two of the others have some reason to dislike the daughter of the viscount.

As part of a larger campaign, *Trailblazer Trials* could also simply be part of a scenario where one or two PCs wants to join the Amber Gleaners, and upon discovering the Trailblazer rank the group offers, they decide to try for it.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

The Amber Gleaners could set up a lodge almost anywhere. That said, it's most likely that the Trials would be held somewhere near their main headquarters, which is a grand building called the Amber Lodge, found in the city of Glavis in Ancuan.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 2 experience points (XP) for exonerating Gilelona, another 1 XP for undertaking the Trials, and another 1 XP if they actually succeed by earning a Trailblazer rank.

INNOCENT GILELONA

As previously described, Viscount Mabith is grateful if the PCs determine that his daughter is innocent. Eventually, Gilelona learns what the PCs were up to (if they didn't already come clean during the scenario). When she discovers that they were instrumental in her father taking her side, she is angry and hurt that the viscount had her secretly investigated. In fact, it's sort of touch and go whether she will accept being named his successor or take off, never to be heard from again. If the PCs are involved, they may have to participate in persuasion tasks requiring several successful rolls to calm her down and have her stay on.

GUILTY GILELONA

If the PCs' verdict is that Gilelona is the killer, she is locked up in one of the castle towers. The characters later hear that she escaped. The hardship of being falsely accused and going on the run makes Gilelona a bitter and angry woman. She might come looking for the PCs at some point, possibly even devising an elaborate trap to set them up to take the fall for a crime, hoping to strip them of their reputation and honors.

TRAILBLAZER BENEFITS

Whether or not any PCs successfully complete the Trials and become Trailblazers, they can probably join the Amber Gleaners, which offers basic benefits. If they attain the rank of Trailblazer, they gain a few additional perks and modifications.

AMBER GLEANER MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Symbol: Sphere with a single symmetrical continent stamped upon it

Motto: Be ready for anything

Badge of Membership: An oddity that (usually) points to north

Gleaner Member Benefits: Access to Amber Gleaner field stations, access to records of other Gleaners as well as the Amber Lodge's Collections, contacts among other excavators, and regular leads about sites of interest that no one else has explored yet. Sometimes the Amber Gleaners will mount expeditions or fund explorations if a member—or prospective member—makes a strong-enough case. Finally, a member is trained in all tasks related to navigation and finding one's way in an unfamiliar location.

ADDITIONAL TRAILBLAZER ELITE RANK BENEFITS

Symbol: Sphere with a single symmetrical continent across which a red lightning-like trail is blazed

Badge of Membership: Insignia of symbol provided as a badge or tattoo

Trailblazer Benefits: The envy and respect of other Amber Gleaners, a stipend paid in shins or cyphers sufficient to provide a modest living in a large city, and the opportunity to learn of newly discovered areas and structures of special interest as they come to light, with the added option of being given first dibs on exploring them (at least, first dibs as far as the Amber Gleaners are concerned).

TRAILBLAZER LEAD

If they gain Trailblazer rank, the PCs are given a heads up on a new location to explore, possibly in the scenarios *Embassy of the Inconstant Moon* or *Goliaths in the Earth*.

Glavis, page 162

Ancuan, page 160

Embassy of the Inconstant Moon, page 12

Goliaths in the Earth, page 30

MICROFUGUE STATE

BRIEF SUMMARY

A nano named Vo-Hurrin is deathly ill and needs the PCs to shrink down to the size of body cells to fix the problem before he dies.

DETAILS

Vo-Hurrin: *level 4, understanding numenera as level 5; all tasks hindered due to sickness*

Vo-Hurrin is a lattimor—a species composed of a symbiotic union between a hairy humanoid creature called a bursk and an intelligent fungal creature called a neem. The neem attaches to the bursk's back, leaving a bruised-looking patch of threadlike hairs, but that is only the neem's outer surface, and under the skin its nerves and tissues intertwine with the bursk. Together these two creatures form something that is greater than either individual. Most of the time, this union of two separate entities is not an issue.

But Vo-Hurrin, also an explorer and a nano, was exposed to a virus during a recent journey that had a unique effect on his body structure. Instead of affecting his two halves equally, the virus attacks the junctures between the two, creating dangerous tumors that interfere with the bursk's and neem's ability to communicate with each other. Eventually, these connections will be completely severed, the neem will peel off the back of the bursk like a scab, and they won't ever be united or complete again.

Vo-Hurrin is weak but patient, concentrating on remaining calm and resting. For the PCs' help in implementing the treatment he has developed, he offers 80 shins (all he has left) and the use of his workshop whenever they want (which counts as an asset on understanding numenera tasks).

The treatment involves the PCs acting at the microscale by working with his associate, Dillom. The weakened lattimor asks them to let Dillom shrink them down and send them into the frail juncture of his component entities, where they will use their abilities to effect treatment. The nano explains that Dillom normally lives at the microscale but has the ability to "jump" to the macroscale that humans live at, and back. That's because Dillom is a scrow, a species of somewhat humanoid creatures who are heavily modified by devices to be part machine. Dillom is recognizably female, however.

Dillom: *level 5; understanding, salvaging, and crafting numenera as level 7; health 20; Armor 1; ray weapon inflicts 6 points of damage to long range*

Dillom knows enough Truth to be able to communicate. She indicates that she can shrink the PCs as Vo-Hurrin suggests so they can implement the treatment, which is a three-point cure.

THREE-POINT CURE

Vo-Hurrin and Dillom explain that for the lattimor to be completely cured, three things have to be done. First, any existing tumors must be completely destroyed, and those will be obvious to the shrunken PCs. However, there is an additional complication.

As Dillom reluctantly explains, she was on the run from her micro scrow city after stealing technology when she agreed to begin treating Vo-Hurrin by counter-infecting him with nanomachines of scrow manufacture. But soon thereafter, her people caught up to her, which she hadn't expected. Now in addition to the tumors, other scrow have invaded the lattimor's flesh and are harvesting her stolen nanomachines and whatever interesting materials they can salvage, accelerating the decay of the symbiotic connections. Even worse, the presence of the scrow has attracted the attention of other size-changing predators, and Vo-Hurrin's immune system is overwhelmed with multiple threats.

Thus, the treatment is a three-point cure. In addition to destroying tumors, the PCs must drive out the invading scrow and any other invasive organisms they run across. And finally, any nanomachines the scrow removed should be reattached, which will prevent other invasive scale-jumping organisms from infecting Vo-Hurrin in the future.

SALIENT POINTS

- Lattimors are symbiotic creatures made up of a humanoid-like creature and a fungal entity.
- The PCs must shrink to the size of body cells to battle an illness inside a lattimor nano named Vo-Hurrin.
- While micronized, the PCs can swim in any direction at normal speed through a breathable airlike superfluid.
- Size-changing humanoids called scrow are harvesting materials and nanomachines from the lattimor, weakening the connections between its bursk and neem selves.
- Bestial size-changing predators called banisthers and scale worms are eating the lattimor.
- The PCs need to kill tumors and find healing accelerants inside the lattimor to cure it.
- The PCs also need to find scale-stabilizing technology inside the lattimor to prevent future invasions.

STARTING POINT

The PCs, Dillom, and Vo-Hurrin are in the nano's workroom. Dillom is ready to use her device to shrink the PCs to miniature size, telling them they'll arrive at the location of a beacon implanted in Vo-Hurrin's flesh, which will be obvious. As she prepares them with a series of injections that will adapt them to the microscale, she explains what to expect:

- A network of fleshy "tunnels" and "rooms" that are part of Vo-Hurrin's body. Damaging them will hurt him, so the PCs shouldn't use effects that affect living tissue in a large area (such as most detonations).
- Instead of air, the space is filled with a breathable superfluid, which they can swim through.
- Small creatures seen within are natural parts of the lattimor's body, appearing as cones and similar simple shapes. They should be left alone, and the injections she gives the PCs means the creatures should ignore the characters.
- Invading scrow are attempting to salvage purple crystalline nanomachines that Dillom injected into Vo-Hurrin.
- Anything else that attacks the PCs or looks like it doesn't belong should be destroyed.
- The PCs will know they're done when they've explored the limited region of superfluid that Dillom injected.
- The instantaneous shrinking process will put them near a beacon that Dillom built. Once they have finished the three-point treatment, a specific code she gives them will transport them out and return them to normal size.

With a flash that causes distorted sight and momentary nausea, Dillom activates her device and the injected PCs appear at the location of the beacon.

THE WRAP-UP

The PCs can activate the exit code for the beacon at any time. If they do so after completing their goals, they have the thanks of Vo-Hurrin and Dillom, and will be rewarded. If they fail at some or all of their tasks, Vo-Hurrin may gain a few extra months of life, but one or both of its component beings will die shortly thereafter unless someone can find a permanent cure.

KEYS

This scenario has three keys that must be found within Vo-Hurrin's body.

◆ An organic infection or infestation within the lattimor's body, several of which must be destroyed to help his immune system recover. This could also be scar tissue that could be healed.

▲ Something that will accelerate the lattimor's ability to heal himself where he is scarred. If the PCs have any healing cyphers, these would also qualify.

● Something that can be used to stabilize scale-changing effects within the lattimor, preventing other creatures from invading his tissue.

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the scenario should offer the PCs four to six cyphers.

LATTIMOR INTERIOR

The PCs have been shrunk to the size of body cells and have entered Vo-Hurrin's bursk-neem junction point. The walls, floor, and ceiling are either lavender or pale brown, and it all looks fleshy and organic, like a water-smoothed cave or the inside of an artery. Sometimes the ends of the enlarged areas pinch nearly closed for a few moments, then harmlessly release. All distances in the map are relative to the size of the PCs.

The "air" within these passages is actually a thin superfluid that humanoids can breathe like air and swim through as fast as they can normally walk; other than being able to move vertically, there's no noticeable difference to the PCs. This fluid moves in unpredictable waves every few minutes—at any particular time, it might be still, moving in the direction the PCs want to go (speeding their movement), or moving against them (slowing them down).

Swimming and crawling everywhere in this place are small cells of various shapes (resembling spheres, cones, and hairy tangles) about the size of rats, mice, and cats. These perform various biological functions, ignore the PCs and other invading creatures, and evade if attacked.

Lattimor flesh: *level 4*

BEACON ENTRANCE

Reveal Show 'Em R (page 81) to the players.

Protruding from one surface is a torso-sized device that somewhat resembles the scrow, Dillom: a mix of waxy flesh and odd machine parts. If the PCs enter the proper code, it will return them to their normal size. Before they exit the body, hopefully they can use the KEY that prevents other scale-changing creatures from invading the lattimor by connecting it to the beacon.

1

SCROW SALVAGERS

Three or four scrow are surgically extracting hard purple crystalline nodules (Dillom's stolen nanomachines) from the interior of the lattimor flesh in this area. About a dozen of the innocuous swimming creatures are dead in a pile nearby, blasted by energy weapons (they were an immune response to this attack, but were overwhelmed). Unlike Dillom, these scrow don't understand the Truth and don't want to negotiate—they consider the PCs rivals for the materials they're looting, and immediately attack. If seriously wounded, they'll scale-shift to escape rather than die needlessly.

If the KEY that heals the lattimor is here, it is an artifact carried by one of the scrow.

If the KEY that blocks scale-changing effects is here, it is a device carried by or incorporated into the flesh of the scrow leader. The crystal nodules are worthless to the PCs but can be reattached to the walls with a healing or surgery task.

GM intrusion: A scrow swims in from a nearby hall and joins the battle.

Scrow: *level 5; understanding, salvaging, and crafting numenera as level 7; health 20; Armor 1; ray weapon inflicts 6 points of damage to long range. These scrow don't use scalar detonations because it would damage the walls and potential salvage.*

2 TUMOR

Reveal Show 'Em S (page 81) to the players.

A distinctive white and red growth stands out from the typical pale lavenders and browns of the rest of the walls and floor. Parts of it pulsate and throb, swelling and shrinking like a sickly heartbeat. The various crawling and swimming lattimor cells ignore this aberrant growth. This is the KEY that is an area of organic infection, one of several that must be destroyed to keep Vo-Hurrin healthy. The tumor must be cut free of the surrounding tissue and destroyed (burned, disintegrated, dissolved in acid, etc.), which takes about twenty minutes of work.

If a healing KEY is here, it is something the PCs can find by trying to salvage or surgically examine the tumor; the cyst is filled with potent biological chemicals that accelerate tissue growth and repair. If the KEY is applied to lattimor scar tissue, it immediately begins to repair the damage.

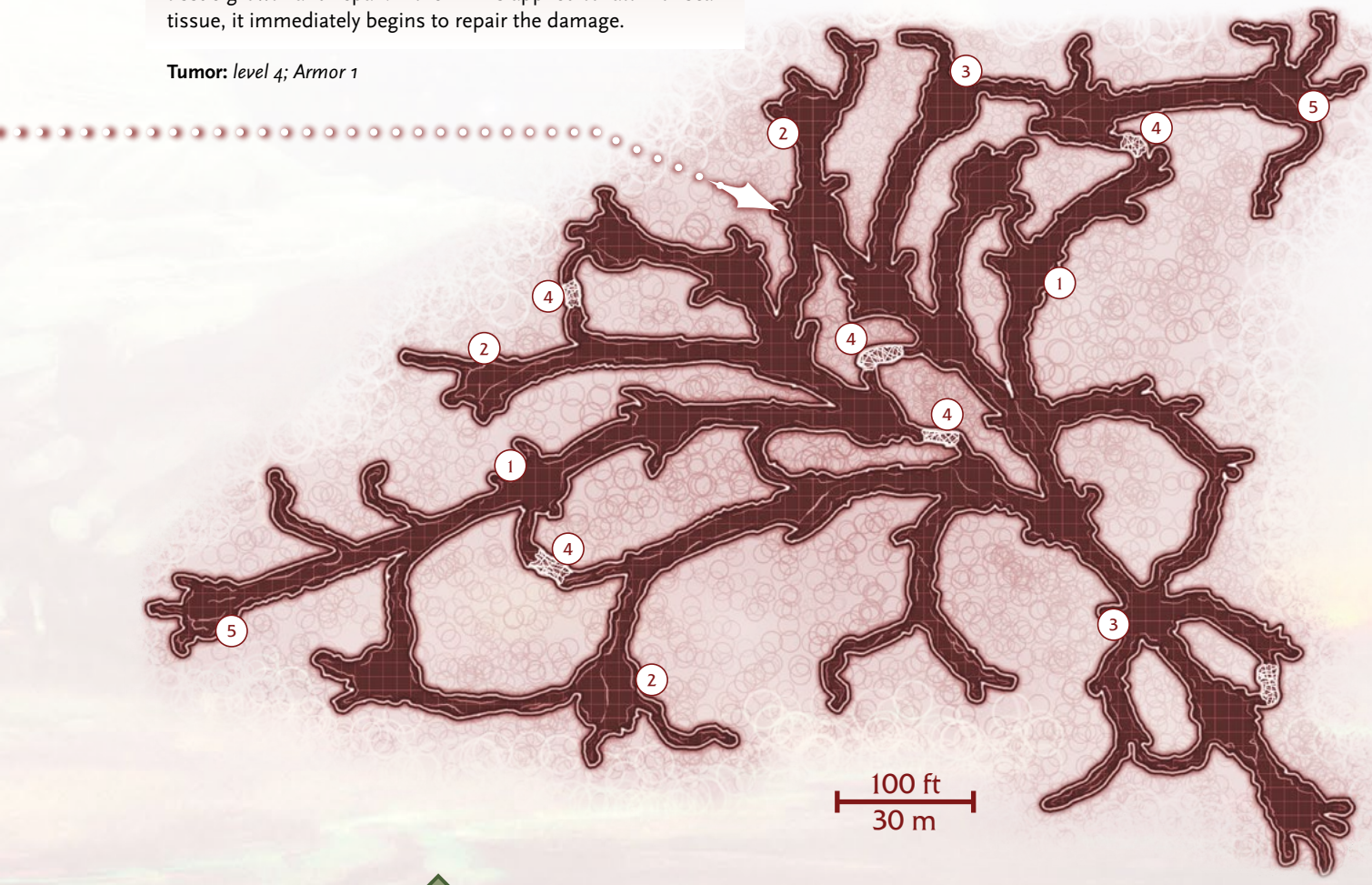
Tumor: *level 4; Armor 1*

3 HUNTING BANISTHER

This area is the hunting ground of a bestial predator called a banisther. Finding the local body cells unpalatable, it is on the lookout for fresh meat. If the scale-changing stabilization KEY here, it is an organ in the creature's tail that can be grafted onto the beacon, blocking other scale-changing invaders.

GM intrusion: The banisther damages nearby tissue, creating an area that requires healing.

Banisther: *level 6, Speed defense as level 5; health 22; movement long; attacks twice with feeding legs that inflict 6 points of damage, and target must make a Might defense roll or poison inflicts 2 points of Speed damage (ignores Armor) for three rounds; attacks up to 20 feet (6 m) away with tail that distorts target's limb size, inflicting 4 points of damage on a failed Might defense roll*



4 SCAR TISSUE

These narrow passages have turned black and hard, and have sealed the area shut, completely blocking any movement through them. The lattimor cellular entities are more common here and might be seen turning the last vestiges of wounds into more of this hard, black material. Using a KEY that heals in one of these areas starts to reverse the damage and completely mends it within about two days.

5 SCALE WORMS

A colony of three to five scale worms is here, feeding on the fibrous tissue of the lattimor. The PCs are much tastier prey, and the worms stop grazing to attack them. (When attacking creatures of the normal PC size, scale worms grab opponents and shrink them down to this size to eat them, but since everyone is already at tiny scale, they just attack as a swarm.)

Scale worm: *level 3; as part of its attack, the scale worm erratically changes the size of its foe's equipment, which remains too big or too small to use for a few rounds*

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

ADDITIONAL COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

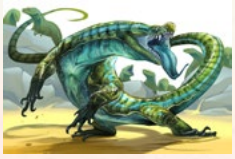
Plan seeds, page 136

The map includes many areas that don't have preset encounters. If there is extra time to play or the PCs are powerful enough to easily dispatch a few more foes, the GM can ramp up the weirdness and sense of danger by adding wandering hostile creatures to some of those areas, such as a lone scale worm (which attacks) or a lone scrow (who probably rushes to the nearest group of scrow to warn them). Alternatively, the remains of a dead and partially consumed banisther or colony of scale worms (killed by the scrow or by Vo-Hurrin's immune system cells) might be floating in a room or drifting with the current through one of the large tunnels.

For more variety, the GM can use other Ninth World creatures but change their appearance to something suitably microscopic. For example, a chunk of tumor that splits off as an independent entity with the statistics of a blood barm, or a cluster of finger-sized hooks that attacks like a swarm of laaks can be a creepy encounter using an otherwise familiar creature.

Blood barm, page 226

Laak, page 239



ATTACKING ON TWO FLANKS

This adventure assumes that there isn't a strong sense of urgency in fixing the problem; Vo-Hurrin won't die or separate in the next few days, so it's all right if the PCs stop overnight to rest. However, once the PCs are inside the lattimor's body, the GM could add time pressure by having a group of human-scale scrow (or their human agents) enter the lattimor's workshop with the intent of capturing or killing Dillom, and incidentally harming Vo-Hurrin in the process. These attacks might shake, twist, or damage the environment the PCs are exploring. If Vo-Hurrin uses a telepathy cypher to contact a PC about the attack, one or more PCs might rush back to the beacon and return to full size to thwart that attack while the rest of the group fights the miniature threats. (If the adventure extends into a second session and some of the players can't attend, or there are players present who missed the first session, these parallel stories could be handled separately.)

REWARDS

In addition to shins and the use of his workshop, Vo-Hurrin has access to advanced healing cyphers, a plan seed of interest to a PC, a partial map of a ruin, or a partially repaired artifact he can offer as thanks for saving his life.

Most of Dillom's resources relate to the scale-changing numenera of her people, which may be of limited interest to the PCs. However, she also can offer injections of specialized nanobots that permanently grant an asset against a specific kind of attack: one against poison, one against disease, and two against the size-disrupting attacks used by scrow and creatures like banisthers and scale worms.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

The scrow that found Dillom with Vo-Hurrin aren't the only ones looking for her, and these other searchers will eventually find her unless she moves away from the area (the scrow are from a microscopic city in a nearby drop of water and have little incentive to pursue her more than a few human-scale miles from that droplet). If the PCs are interested in helping or guarding her, they'll make an ally who is very knowledgeable about the numenera and could potentially decipher or build items for them. Once her pursuers are dealt with, Dillom will also have her own projects to pursue, and much like an Aeon Priest she'll need people to gather resources for her. If the PCs are interested in more tiny-scale expeditions, she could send them back to her home city to steal numenera or free human prisoners, or bring them to a rival scrow city to negotiate a trade agreement.

Assuming that Vo-Hurrin makes a full recovery, he is willing to aid the PCs in whatever way he can, including allowing them to use his workshop or accompanying

them in their explorations for a time. He knows of several interesting ruins that he only partially explored, and he is an obvious choice for helping negotiate with other lattimor NPCs. If he only partially recovers from his illness, he'll try to find other cures, which might involve asking the PCs to find rare iotum or negotiate with important people in the city for other resources.

If any of the hostile scrow salvagers get away, they'll return to their home city and describe the PCs to everyone there, which results in a bounty being put out on the characters. Not only will scrow continue to appear every now and then to attack the PCs, but the scrow might also have human-scale agents interested in the reward. Because the scrow's area of influence in the large-scale world is limited (they dislike moving too far from their nearby miniaturized city), the PCs can avoid the trouble by leaving the area, but that means they'll be cut off from that human settlement.

PLACEMENT IN THE NINTH WORLD

Vo-Hurrin's workshop can be in any civilized part of the Steadfast where lattimors live and where such a being would have many opportunities to study the numenera. In particular, the city of Charmonde in Navarene is such a place, as it has a large population and a thriving university.

Charmonde, page 138

Navarene, page 137

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 1 experience point (XP) for being shrunk down into Vo-Hurrin's body and returning to normal size, 1 XP for destroying all three tumors, 1 XP for connecting a device to the beacon to prevent other scale-based infestations, 1 XP for healing at least two areas of scar tissue, and 2 XP for eliminating or driving away all invading creatures so Vo-Hurrin's immune system can rest and deal with normal threats.

Although Dillom is from an alien culture, her offer to help the lattimor was sincere, and she hopes the PCs can deal with this problem (and the invaders from her city) so she can keep working with Vo-Hurrin, whose knowledge and contacts in the city should prove useful to her long-term survival. Otherwise, she'll try to make the lattimor as comfortable as she can before she flees from her pursuers.

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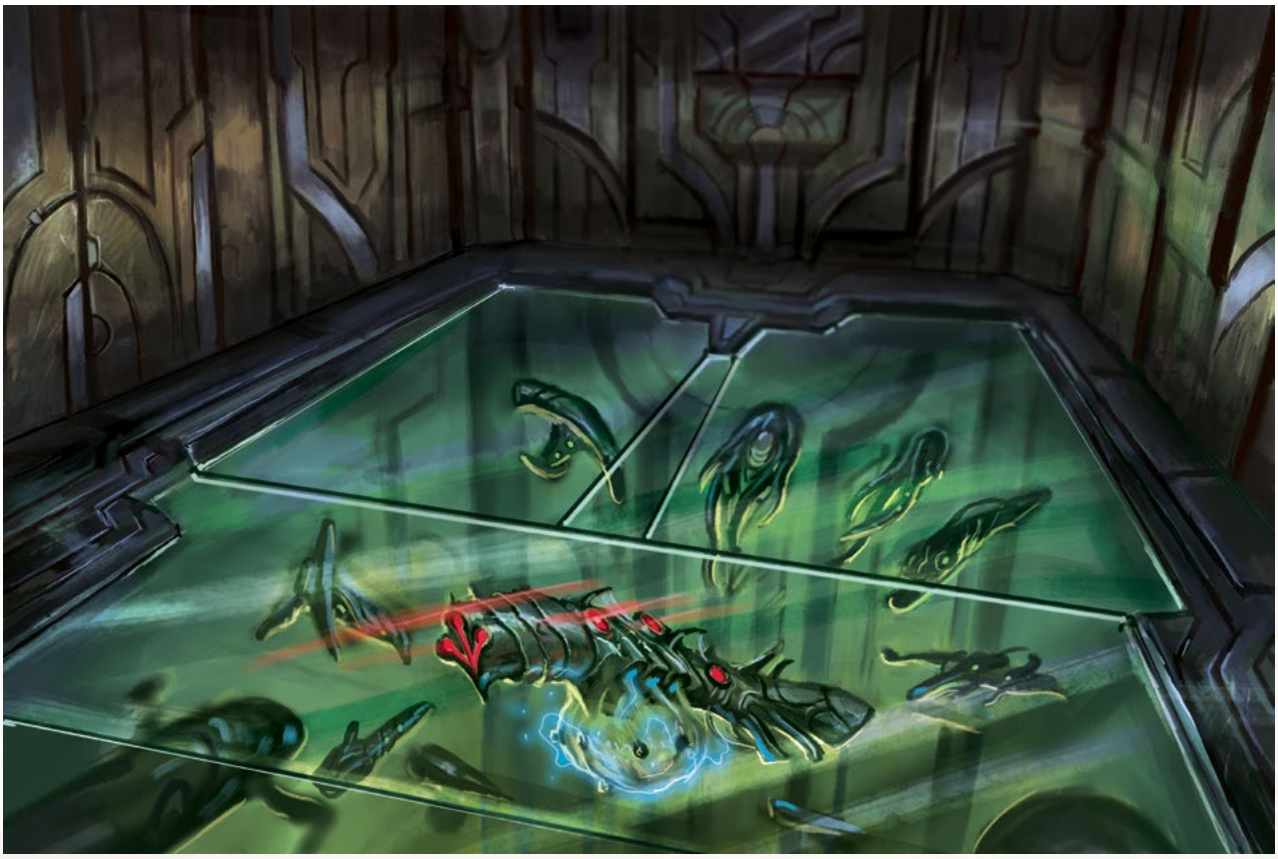

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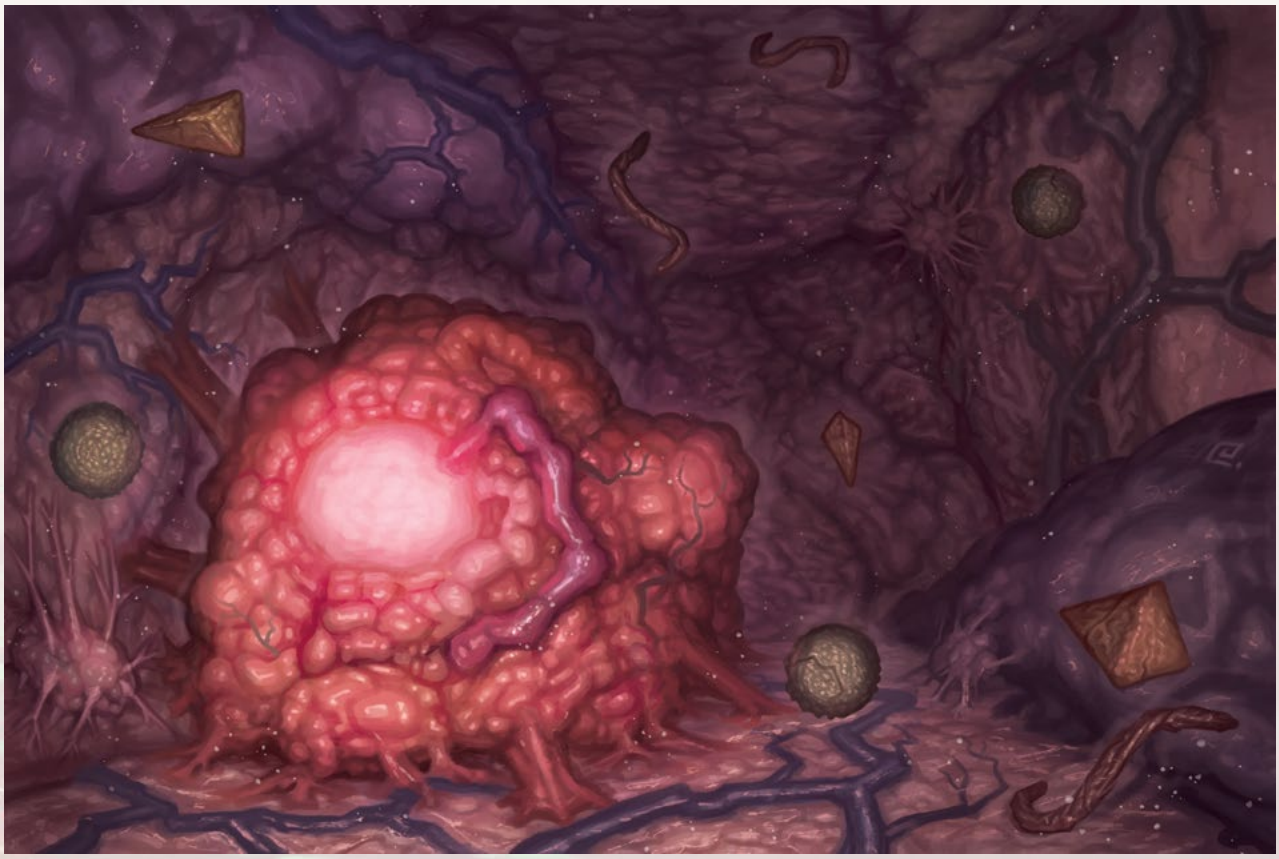

TASK DIFFICULTY

Task Difficulty	Description	Target No.	Guidance
0	Routine	0	Anyone can do this basically every time.
1	Simple	3	Most people can do this most of the time.
2	Standard	6	Typical task requiring focus, but most people can usually do this.
3	Demanding	9	Requires full attention; most people have a 50/50 chance to succeed.
4	Difficult	12	Trained people have a 50/50 chance to succeed.
5	Challenging	15	Even trained people often fail.
6	Intimidating	18	Normal people almost never succeed.
7	Formidable	21	Impossible without skills or great effort.
8	Heroic	24	A task worthy of tales told for years afterward.
9	Immortal	27	A task worthy of legends that last lifetimes.
10	Impossible	30	A task that normal humans couldn't consider (but one that doesn't break the laws of physics).

ARMOR

Armor Type	Armor Value	Speed Effort Additional Cost*
Light armor	1 point	1
Medium armor	2 points	2
Heavy armor	3 points	3

* See page 95 of *Numenera Discovery* for rules on the additional Pool cost when applying Effort and wearing armor.

WEAPON DAMAGE

Weapon Type	Damage Value
Light weapon	2 points of damage (and eases attack roll)
Medium weapon	4 points of damage
Heavy weapon	6 points of damage

NUMENERA

GM'S QUICK REFERENCE CARD

SPECIAL ROLLS

1 **GM Intrusion.** The GM makes a free intrusion and doesn't award experience points (XP) for it.

17 **Damage Bonus +1.** If the roll was an attack, it deals 1 additional point of damage.

18 **Damage Bonus +2.** If the roll was an attack, it deals 2 additional points of damage.

19 **Damage Bonus +3 or Minor Effect.** If the roll was an attack, it deals 3 additional points of damage, or the PC can choose to get a minor effect on the attack instead. If the roll was not an attack, the PC can choose which minor effect they'd like to apply in addition to the normal results of the task.

MINOR EFFECT OPTIONS (choose one or make one up):

Strike a specific body part: The attacker strikes a specific spot on the defender's body. The GM rules what special effect, if any, results.

Knock back: The foe is knocked or forced back a few feet.

Move past: The character can move a short distance at the end of the attack.

Distract: For one round, all tasks attempted by the foe are hindered.

20 **Damage Bonus +4 or Major Effect.** If the roll was an attack, it deals 4 additional points of damage, or the PC can choose to get a major effect on the task instead. If the roll was not an attack, the PC can choose which major effect they'd like to apply in addition to the normal results of the task. In both cases, if the character spent points from a Pool on the action, they immediately regain those points to their Pool as if they hadn't spent them.

MAJOR EFFECT OPTIONS (choose one or make one up):

Knock down: The foe is knocked prone. It can get up on its turn if it wishes.

Disarm: The foe drops one object it is holding.

Stun: The foes loses its next action.

Impair: For the rest of the combat, all tasks attempted by the foe are hindered.

EFFORT REDUCES TASK DIFFICULTY

Except in special cases, a character can't apply more levels of Effort than their tier, or their tier plus their first Effort advancement, up to a total of 6 levels of Effort.

Effort Applied	Pool Cost	Difficulty Eased By
1 level	3 (minus Edge)	One step
2 levels	5 (minus Edge)	Two steps
3 levels	7 (minus Edge)	Three steps
4 levels	9 (minus Edge)	Four steps
5 levels	11 (minus Edge)	Five steps
6 levels	13 (minus Edge)	Six steps

NUMENÉRA

AURIL IS A GRACEFUL GLAIVE WHO EXISTS PARTIALLY OUT OF PHASE

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Player intrusion (1 XP): Introduce an unexpected change in circumstances, like a reverse GM intrusion, but only if the GM agrees and allows your suggestion. Enabler.

Aggression (2 Might points): Gain an asset on your melee attacks, and your Speed defense rolls against melee and ranged attacks are hindered for as long as wish or until combat stops. Enabler.

Impressive Display (2 Might points): You perform a feat of strength, speed, or combat, impressing those nearby. For the next minute you gain an asset in all interaction tasks with people who saw you use this ability. Action.

Walk Through Walls (2 Intellect points): Pass through a physical (non-energy) barrier at a rate of 1 inch (2.5 cm) per round (minimum one round). You can't act (other than moving) or perceive anything until you pass entirely through. Action.

- **Combat Prowess:** +1 damage to melee attacks. Enabler. (figured into Attacks)

Trained in Armor: Speed Effort cost for wearing armor reduced by 1. Enabler. (figured into Armor)

CYPHERS

2 LIMIT

Level 3 crystal nodule (affixable to a melee weapon) that causes weapon to inflict 2 additional points of damage for 28 hours

Level 6 injector that restores 6 points to Might Pool

15 POOL	1 EDGE	MIGHT
16 POOL	1 EDGE	SPEED
8 POOL	0 EDGE	INTELLECT

1 ARMOR COST

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

1 TIER | 1 EFFORT | XP

RECOVERY

1 ACTION | 10 MINS | 1 (1D6+) | 1 HOUR | 10 HOURS

SKILLS / INABILITIES

Speed defense tasks	(trained)
Climbing	(trained)
Balancing and careful movement	(trained)
Physical performing arts	(trained)

EQUIPMENT

5 SHINS

Clothing
Rapier (see Attacks)
Spear (see Attacks)
Leather jerkin (figured into Armor)
Explorer's pack: 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes

Oddity: blob of clay that takes on various mysterious shapes when left alone

ATTACKS

Rapier (3 points of damage), attacks eased
Spear (5 points of damage), can be thrown as a long-range weapon (4 points of damage)

AURIL

BACKGROUND

You trained with a highly respected mentor. He regards you highly, but he has many enemies.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: There is reward involved, and you need the money.

Connection: Pick one other PC. You have known that character for a while, and they helped you gain control of your phase states.

PORTRAIT

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES
+4 TO STAT POOLS

OTHER
REFER TO *NUMENERA DISCOVERY*

+1 TO EFFORT
EXTRA EFFORT

SKILL TRAINING
TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION
+1 TO EDGE

NOTES

Community Defender: While you are present and actively working on behalf of a community, the community's effective rank (a community stat your GM may or may not decide to use) for damage inflicted is +1. Enabler.

NUMENÉRA

MARULAS IS A MYSTICAL NANO WHO WORKS MIRACLES

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Player intrusion (1 XP): Introduce an unexpected change in circumstances, like a reverse GM intrusion, but only if the GM agrees and allows your suggestion. Enabler.

Sense "Magic": After a minute of close study, you can sense whether the numenera is active in situations where its presence is not obvious.

Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point): Perform small tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, clean a small area, mend a broken object, prepare (but not create) food, and so on. You can't use Hedge Magic to harm another creature or object. Action.

Onslaught (1 Intellect point): Emit a short-range ray attack of force that inflicts 4 points of damage, or of mental energy that inflicts 2 points of Intellect damage (ignores Armor). Action.

Healing Touch (1 Intellect point): Touched target regains 1d6 points to one stat Pool. This ability is a difficulty 2 Intellect task. Each attempt to heal the same creature again increases the task difficulty by one step. The difficulty returns to 2 after that creature rests for ten hours. Action.

Ward: You have a shield of energy around you at all times that helps deflect attacks. You gain +1 to Armor. Enabler.
(figured into Armor)

CYPHERS

3 LIMIT

Level 5 spray canister that permanently causes a nonliving object up to the size of a human to float 1d20 feet in the air because it no longer feels gravity.

Level 4 belt that teleports user (and only the user) up to 400 miles (640 km) to a location that the user has previously visited.

Level 3 pill that allows user to designate a target in close range who the user can thenceforth mentally communicate with for three hours while the target is within long range.

	Pool	Edge
MIGHT	8	0
SPEED	9	0
INTELLECT	19	1

ARMOR COST: 1

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

TIER	EFFORT	XP
1	1	

RECOVERY

1 ACTION · 10 MINS · 1 (1D6+) · 1 HOUR · 10 HOURS

SKILLS / INABILITIES

Understanding numenera (specialized)

Charm, persuasion, and deception (inability)

EQUIPMENT

4 SHINS

Clothing
Knife (see Attacks)
The Ancient Miracles (book about the numenera)
Explorer's pack: 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes

Oddity: Metallic jar that maintains the temperature of liquid inside indefinitely

Oddity: Plastic bottle containing a spray that cleans any stain and never runs out

ATTACKS

Knife (2 points of damage), attacks eased, can be thrown as a short-range weapon

MARULAS

BACKGROUND

Your family owns a large vineyard nearby known to all for its fine wine and fair business dealings.

Initial Link to Starting Adventure: A dream guided you to this point.

Connection: Pick one other PC. This person knows a secret of yours, and you desperately hope that they do not tell anyone. You can choose whether or not you're aware of their suspicion.

PORTRAIT

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES ◇ +4 TO STAT POOLS

OTHER ◇ REFER TO *NUMENERA DISCOVERY*

+1 TO EFFORT ◇ **EXTRA EFFORT**

SKILL TRAINING ◇ TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION ◇ +1 TO EDGE

NOTES

Community Scholar: While you are present within a community, and actively and personally working on behalf of that community, the community's health and infrastructure (community stats your GM may or may not decide to use) are both increased by +1. Enabler.

NUMENÉRA

RED YORU IS A CLEVER JACK WHO WORKS THE BACK ALLEYS

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Player intrusion (1 XP): Introduce an unexpected change in circumstances, like a reverse GM intrusion, but only if the GM agrees and allows your suggestion. Enabler.

Flex Skill: Once each day, choose to become trained in a task (other than attacks or defense, and other than one you're already trained in). Action.

Face Morph (2+ Intellect points): You alter your face (only) for one hour, hiding your identity or impersonating someone well enough to fool someone who knows that person casually, and gaining an asset to disguise. Apply a level of Effort to impersonate a different species. Action.

Trained in Armor: Wear any kind of armor. You reduce the Speed Effort cost for wearing armor by 1. Enabler. (figured into Armor)

SKILLS / INABILITIES

Defense rolls to resist mental effects	(trained)
Persuasion	(trained)
Sneaking	(trained)
Pickpocketing	(trained)
Lockpicking	(trained)
Lies and trickery	(trained)
Assessing (or identifying) danger and lies	(trained)
Assessing (or identifying) quality and importance	(trained)
Assessing (or identifying) function and power	(trained)
Tasks involving lore, knowledge, or understanding	(inability)

	POOL	EDGE
MIGHT	10	0
SPEED	11	0
INTELLECT	17	1

ARMOR COST: 1

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

TIER	EFFORT	XP
1	1	

RECOVERY: 1 ACTION, 10 MINS, 1 HOUR, 10 HOURS — 1D6+ 1

EQUIPMENT

SHINS: 23

Clothing
Whip (see Attacks)
Bow (see Attacks)
Arrows (12)
Leather jerkin (figured into Armor)
Explorer's pack: 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes
Bag of light tools

Oddity: Square cage about 1 foot (30 cm) on a side that puts whatever single creature is inside it into stasis

CYPHERS

LIMIT: 2

Level 4 injector that allows user to mentally control a target device at long range for 40 minutes.

Level 4 lipstick when victim kissed on bare skin, poison enters victim's body and waits for detonation signal (a specific series of tones), inflicting 10 points of damage (ignores Armor).

ATTACKS

Whip (2 points of damage), attacks eased
Bow (4 points of damage), long-ranged weapon fires arrows

RED YORU

BACKGROUND

Your best friend from childhood is now an Aeon Priest.

Connection: Pick one other PC. The character knew you beforehand and convinced you to leave your life of crime for other pursuits—at least temporarily.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: You talked your way into the situation because you thought it might earn some money.

NOTES

Community Fixer: While you are present within a community, and actively and personally working on behalf of that community, the community's effective rank for health or infrastructure (community stats your GM may or may not decide to use) is increased by +1. You choose which is modified during any given community action. Enabler.

PORTRAIT

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES
+4 TO STAT POOLS

OTHER
REFER TO *NUMENERA DISCOVERY*

EXTRA EFFORT
+1 TO EFFORT

SKILL TRAINING
TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION
+1 TO EDGE

NUMENÉRA

ERBEKE IS A CONFIDENT WRIGHT WHO BATTLES AUTOMATONS

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Player intrusion (1 XP): Introduce an unexpected change in circumstances, like a reverse GM intrusion, but only if the GM agrees and allows your suggestion. Enabler.

Always Tinkering: If you haven't reached your cypher limit, create a random cypher 2 levels lower than normal (minimum 1). This "temperamental" cypher is fragile, useless to anyone but you. Action to initiate, hour to complete.

Scramble Machine (2 Intellect points): One machine within short range is unable to function for one round. Or, hinder any action by the machine (or by someone attempting to use the machine) for one minute. Action.

Trigger Iotum Ray (1 Intellect point): Trigger a unit of iotum (see Starting Iotum) to release a short-range ray of force inflicting 7 points of damage against automatons and machines and 2 points against purely organic creatures. This does not destroy the iotum. Or, you can destroy the iotum and pay no Intellect cost. Action.

Machine Vulnerabilities: You inflict 3 additional points of damage against automatons and animate machines of all kinds. Enabler. (figured into Attacks and Trigger Iotum Ray)

Failure Has Its Consequence: Tell the GM that you trigger a GM intrusion on roll of 1 or 2.

CYPHERS

3 LIMIT

Level 3 injector that gives user +1 to Speed Edge for one hour.

Level 4 mask allows wearer to breathe in both air and water for three days.

Level 3 belt triggers force field granting +1 to Armor for one hour.

13 POOL	0 EDGE	MIGHT
8 POOL	0 EDGE	SPEED
16 POOL	1 EDGE	INTELLECT

COST

ARMOR

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

1 TIER | 1 EFFORT | XP

RECOVERY

1 ACTION | 10 MINS | 1 (1D6+) | 1 HOUR | 10 HOURS

SKILLS / INABILITIES

Crafting numenera	(trained)
Understanding numenera	(trained)
Escaping	(trained)
Detecting falsehoods	(trained)
Perception	(trained)

Any non-combat task for 10 minutes (trained), useable once between each rest

EQUIPMENT

5 SHINS

Clothing
Punching dagger (see Attacks)
Explorer's pack: 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes
A Guide to Making (book about crafting)
Bag of crafting tools
Metallic trophies taken from previously defeated automatons

Oddity: Piece of extremely strong and thin cable 8 feet (2.5 m) long

ATTACKS

Punching dagger (2 points of damage, 5 points vs. automatons), attacks eased

ERBEKE

BACKGROUND

You lost your brother when you were young. Your only memory of him is a doll you yet keep.

Connection: Pick one other PC. You know that this character has suffered at the hands of automatons in the past, and perhaps you can convince them to help you in your calling. Regardless, you feel protective of them.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: You dragged one of the other PCs into it, certain that together you could accomplish anything.

NOTES

CRAFTING

9 units of io
10 units of responsive synth
6 unit of apt clay
60 units of parts

PLANS

Numenera Plans: You have two numenera plans, allowing you to craft a level 3 skill boost (perceiving) cypher, and a level 3 force belt. If you have iotum or can salvage it, and can spend at least one hour, you can create either of these cyphers if you succeed on two crafting numenera tasks (difficulty 1 and 2, respectively). You can give them to your allies or keep them if their or your cypher limit allows. Action to initiate, hour to complete.

MATERIALS
UNITS

PARTS
UNITS

PORTRAIT

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES
+4 TO STAT POOLS

OTHER
REFER TO COREBOOK

+1 TO EFFORT
EXTRA EFFORT

SKILL TRAINING
TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION
+1 TO EDGE

FOLLOWERS

Community Builder: While actively working on behalf of a community, +3 is added to the community's infrastructure (a community stat your GM may or may not decide to use). Enabler.

NUMENÉRA

RIJ FERANTE IS A CURIOUS ARKUS WHO ACTS WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Player intrusion (1 XP): Introduce an unexpected change in circumstances, like a reverse GM intrusion, but only if the GM agrees and allows your suggestion. Enabler.

Demeanor of Command (2 Intellect points): For the next hour, those who see you sense that you are someone important, accomplished, and with authority. Strangers not already attacking give you at least a round to speak. If they understand you, you can attempt to have them produce their leader or ask that they take you to their leader. You gain a free level of Effort that can be applied to one persuasion task you attempt during this period. Action to initiate.

Anecdote (2 Intellect points): For the next hour, those who pay attention to your story are trained in a task you choose that's related to the anecdote, as long as it's not an attack or defense task. Action to initiate, one minute to complete.

Understanding (1 Intellect point): You observe or study a creature or object. Your next interaction with that creature or object gains one asset. Action.

Slip Into Shadow (2+ Intellect points): Attempt to slip away from a selected target and hide from view in a nearby shadow, even if in full view of the target. For each level of Effort applied, you can attempt to affect one additional target, as long as all your targets are next to each other. Action to initiate.

CYPHERS

2 LIMIT

Level 4 handheld device that allows you to be heard in any location up to a short distance across that you can see, and you can hear sounds made there in return, for ten minutes.

Level 5 crystal lamp whose influence eases all positive interaction tasks within short range and grants +1 to recovery rolls for one hour.

	POOL	EDGE
MIGHT	9	0
SPEED	11	0
INTELLECT	16	1

ARMOR COST

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

TIER	EFFORT	XP
1	1	

RECOVERY

1 ACTION · 10 MINS · 1 (1D6+) · 1 HOUR · 10 HOURS

SKILLS / INABILITIES

Persuasion	(trained)
Public speaking	(trained)
Perception	(trained)
Detecting falsehoods, piercing disguise or illusion	(trained)
Stealth	(trained)

EQUIPMENT

9 SHINS

Stylish clothing
Blowgun (see Attacks)
Darts (12)
How to Explain (book about persuasion)
Ancient Arrivals (book about visitants)
One Day in Qi (story book about Aeon Priests)
Deck of playing cards

Oddity: Feathered hat that occasionally makes pleasing bird noises

Oddity: Small glowing orb on silver chain you keep as a "lucky" charm

ATTACKS

Blowgun (2 points of damage), short-range weapon fires darts—attacks eased

RIJ FERANTE

BACKGROUND

You are a member of a small secret society.

Connection: Pick one other PC. They rescued you from an awful predicament during one of the few times your luck failed you. You're a bit embarrassed that they know you have limits.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: You got in over your head pursuing something fascinating, and the other PCs rescued you.

NOTES

CRAFTING

MATERIALS

UNITS

PARTS

UNITS

PORTRAIT

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES

+4 TO STAT POOLS

OTHER

REFER TO COREBOOK

+1 TO EFFORT

EXTRA EFFORT

SKILL TRAINING

TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION

+1 TO EDGE

FOLLOWERS

Community Leader: While you are present within a community, and actively and personally working on behalf of that community, the community's rank (a community stat your GM may or may not decide to use) is +1 for all purposes except damage inflicted. Enabler.

NUMENÉRA

KETCH IS A INDUSTRIOUS DELVE WHO NEEDS NO WEAPONS

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Player intrusion (1 XP): Introduce an unexpected change in circumstances, like a reverse GM intrusion, but only if the GM agrees and allows your suggestion. Enabler.

Right Tool for the Job (1 Intellect point + iotum): See Crafting.

Imaginative Solution: When you apply a level of Effort to any Intellect task, you gain a free level of Effort. You can do this one time, although the ability is renewed each time you make a ten-hour recovery roll.

Fists of Fury: You inflict 2 additional points of damage with unarmed attacks. Enabler. (figured into Attacks)

Flesh of Stone: You have +1 to Armor if you do not wear physical armor. Enabler. (figured into Armor)

Trained Without Armor: You are trained in Speed defense tasks when not wearing armor. Enabler. (figured into Skills)

Ready For What's Next: You add +1 to your recovery rolls. (figured into recovery rolls)

CYPHERS

2 LIMIT

Level 4 gloves that can reach through solid objects for four minutes. Grants two assets if used as part of a salvaging task.

Level 6 device that encapsulates any creatures in an area an immediate distance across in a transparent bubble, which flies up to a short distance each round as user specifies for up to ten hours.

11 POOL	MIGHT	0 EDGE
14 POOL	SPEED	1 EDGE
13 POOL	INTELLECT	1 EDGE

1 ARMOR COST

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

1 TIER | 1 EFFORT | XP

RECOVERY

1 ACTION | 10 MINS | 2 1D6+ | 1 HOUR | 10 HOURS

SKILLS / INABILITIES

Salvaging numenera	(trained)
Tracking	(trained)
Speed defense	(trained)
Interaction tasks	(inability)

EQUIPMENT

10 SHINS

Clothing
Bow (see Attacks)
Arrows (12)
Bag of light tools
Explorer's pack: 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes

Oddity: Shirt that displays your muscles, bones, and internal organs when you wear it

ATTACKS

Unarmed Attack (fist, foot, elbow: 4 points of damage), attacks eased

Bow (4 points of damage), long-range weapon fires arrows

KETCH

BACKGROUND

Before becoming a full-time explorer, you tracked down people who displeased a local noble. You brought several people to "justice" before you began to question the noble's motives, and left. Now, the noble may be looking for you.

Connection: Pick one other PC. You once trained with a close friend of theirs, and you owe that mutual friend much.

Initial Link to the Starting Adventure: One of the other PCs said they'd help you with your noble problem if you helped them.

CRAFTING

6 units of io
5 units of responsive synth

Right Tool for the Job (1 Intellect point + iotum): If you have at least 1 unit of iotum, you can fashion a temporary device that provides an asset to a physical, non-combat task (identified ahead of time). For example, if you need to climb a wall, you could create a climbing assistance device; if you need to break out of a cell, you can tune iotum in your possession to serve as a lockpick; if you need to create a small distraction, you could trigger an iotum to make a loud bang and flash; and so on. Once fashioned, the adapted iotum lasts for about a minute or until used for the intended purpose. This use destroys the iotum. Action to prepare the iotum; action to initiate.

MATERIALS UNITS

PARTS UNITS

PORTRAIT

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES
+4 TO STAT POOLS

OTHER
REFER TO COREBOOK

+1 TO EFFORT
EXTRA EFFORT

SKILL TRAINING
TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION
+1 TO EDGE

NOTES

FOLLOWERS

Community Explorer: While you are present within a community, and actively and personally working on behalf of that community, the community's effective rank (a community stat your GM may or may not decide to use) for purposes of finding resources, locating new trade routes, knowing about conditions just beyond the community, and detecting sneak attacks by enemies is +1. Enabler.