

P R I M E V A L

THE WHEEL

ACROPOLIS OF VOOR DARAYN

by Stephen Schubert



An adventure for characters of levels 5-9





ACROPOLIS OF VOOR DARAYN

Centuries ago, the dark sorcerer Tur Nyaan built an extravagant palace atop a hill called Voor Darayn. For decades, he demanded tribute from nearby cities and trade routes, and summoned mighty demons or conjured terrible curses to punish those who refused him. Tur Nyaan's reign of terror ended a century ago, when death finally claimed him . . . or so it is believed. So why is it that summoned demons have once again appeared in the nearby cities, demanding tribute in his name?

This one-session adventure is designed to provide you with an exciting taste of the PRIMEVAL THULE Campaign Setting—a primordial land of fierce barbarians, elder horrors, and savage wilderness. Four pregenerated player characters are included so you can begin play immediately!

Adventure in a Savage Age





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Based on the PRIMEVAL THULE *Campaign Setting* by Richard Baker, David Noonan, and Steve Schubert

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INTRODUCTION



Four hundred years ago, the dread wizard known as Tur Nyaan built an extravagant palace atop a rocky spire in the deep jungle. A master of the dark arts and worshipper of Tsathoggua, Tur Nyaan summoned demons and cast terrible curses to force all nearby cities to pay him tribute. For centuries, the cities gave in to the demands of Tur Nyaan, sending rich gifts to his demon-haunted palace of Voor Darayn . . . until one day, a hundred years ago, a tribute caravan from Katagia arrived to find all of Voor Darayn's inhabitants slain and Tur Nyaan gone. The caravan drivers fled in fear, leaving their tribute behind. The demands from the wizard ceased, but his deadly spells still guarded the palace. Travelers have avoided Voor Darayn ever since, but many are the tales told of the long-dead Tur Nyaan and his demon-guarded treasure.

INTRODUCTION

This short adventure details Voor Darayn, an adventure location in the savage world of PRIMEVAL THULE. While the names and places are drawn from Thule, the adventure could be placed in any existing campaign world. Ideally, Voor Darayn would be in a wilderness area close to major trade routes, or close to a city or village in your campaign.

This adventure is designed with a quick-start in mind—choose characters, pick a hook or motivation, and start exploring—but it can also fit in a longer campaign. See the Beginning the Adventure section below for more detail.

Pregenerated Characters: The centerfold of this booklet includes four pregenerated characters. You can remove the centerfold by simply bending the staples and cut the character sheets apart on the dotted lines, or just photocopy the characters for your own use.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Deep in the jungles of the Daray Peninsula, the ruin of Voor Darayn has long been a lure for adventurers seeking the magical secrets or the legendary treasure of Tur Nyaan. The most recent of these seekers is a human sorceress named Alsuvess, a follower of the forbidden god Tsathoggua. She enlisted the help of a band of serpentmen to explore and secure the site. Alsuvess was unable to access the palace proper, but she discovered some lost rituals hidden in a shrine atop the spire. These rituals would allow her to summon powerful fiends to do her bidding, but required human sacrifice.

Alsuvess concocted a plan to lure people to her by pretending to be Tur Nyaan, and renewing the old demands for tribute from nearby cities—and her plan is working, so far. The first demons she sent to Lomar and Katagia with her tribute demands threw those cities into a panic. Some leading citizens call for placating “Tur Nyaan” with whatever gifts are necessary, others wish to hire assassins to put an end to the threat, and a few of more opportunistic sorts wonder where all that treasure is going.

When the characters arrive at Voor Darayn, they are set upon by the serpentmen, who do not take kindly to intruders. The serpentmen hold a number of human prisoners—tribute escorts or would-be thieves, charmed to ensure their compliance. Eventually, the heroes reach the pinnacle of Voor Darayn, where they find Alsuvess and confront her. Bold heroes may then go on to explore the ruins of Tur Nyaan's palace for themselves.

Encounter Difficulty: *Acropolis of Voor Darayn* is intended for a group of four characters of 5th to 9th level. Like most of PRIMEVAL THULE, the fights can be brutal and tough for the unprepared. Even so, the PCs can potentially circumvent some of the serpentmen at Voor Darayn. The confrontation with Alsuvess is the key to stopping the tribute demands and attacks, and is likely a combat encounter, but you may decide to allow crafty PCs to come up with an alternative solution.

If you'd like to increase the difficulty, you might provide additional serpentman encounters, or incorporate barlgura or other moderately-powered demons in the existing encounters.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins near the foot of the rocky pinnacle of Voor Darayn, and assumes the PCs have already made the trek through the jungle. PCs proficient in History may recall some of the details of Voor Darayn (DC 15 provides the overview on page 2).

Motivations: Why are the PCs here? Choose one (or more) of these motivations, or be inspired to create your own!

- **Lost Person.** The PCs have been hired to track down a merchant or old acquaintance that recently traveled to Voor Darayn bearing tribute to the resurgent Tur Nyaan.
- **Stolen Item.** One or more items was stolen from its rightful owner, and then sent as tribute to Voor Darayn. Perhaps the Seven Knives organization wants its ornate daggers back, or an Atlantean noble is missing his clockwork birdcage.
- **Plunder.** It is so considerate of these cities to send all this gold to one place.
- **Investigate.** The PCs have been sent to investigate the truth of Tur Nyaan's resurgence.
- **Dimensional Shift.** The PCs have been magically summoned to Voor Darayn by some unknown force (possibly even Tur Nyaan himself). They receive whispered instructions to "Cast down the imposter from the top of the spire," and "Your way home lies in the room of doors in the north wing." This option works well as a brief interlude from your usual campaign.

The Journey: The adventure focuses only upon the site of Voor Darayn. You can quickly hand-wave travel to the ruins to get on with the action, but as part of

a longer campaign you may wish to provide random encounters. Roads from major cities, or at least what passes for roads in Thule, can get the PCs close to the jungles of the Daray Peninsula, and these nearby roads are typically patrolled by warriors from Lomar.

Voor Darayn isn't particularly difficult to find—after all, tribute caravans have to reach it—but the route there is still dangerous. Once in the jungle, the PCs might have to deal with giant spiders or snakes, the occasional troll, or even a band of low-level demons (the product of Alsuvess's early summoning attempts).

VOOR DARAYN

The acropolis sits high atop a rocky outcropping, more than 200 feet above the jungle floor. The ancient ruins of a serpentman city encircle the hill, engulfed by the surrounding jungle.

I. WARRIOR'S COURT

A mostly-overgrown road leading through serpentman ruins opens into a wide plaza at the foot of a massive pillar of rock that rises hundreds of feet into the air. A gleaming white palace shines from the top of the pillar, and a series of wide ledges cling to the side of the spire. A wide stair leads up past the ruined structures on these ledges.

A ten-foot tall stone statue of a humanoid figure stands near the middle of the plaza, covered in vines that obscure its features. One arm of the statue is raised, its empty hand no longer grasping whatever weapon it once wielded. The other arm lies broken on the ground in front of it.

A squat stone building stands mostly intact along the right-hand side of the plaza, its interior too dark to make out detail through the open stone doors. A partially cleared path leads to the left of the plaza, past what appears to be an intact wooden cart forgotten alongside crumbling stables.

Statue: The vine-choked statue depicts an armored Atlantean human. An inscription in Atlantean near the statue's base reads: "The light of the Spear of Asura will forever keep the darkness at bay." The statue was tribute to Tur Nyaan from the Lemurian invaders who originally settled Lomar. It was originally stolen from an Asuran temple in Atlantis before that city was destroyed. A PC trained in History can attempt a DC 20 Intelligence/History check to recall some of the statue's backstory. The inscription is also a hint that the statue's missing weapon is a *spear of Asura*, a magic weapon of great power that has since been placed in the mausoleum of area 3 to keep the undead there in check.

Barracks and Stables: The larger building to the right of the plaza was once a barracks that housed Tur Nyaan's guards. The smaller building to the left of the plaza was a stable. Now the serpentmen use the barracks as a lookout post, watching the open plaza through cracks in the walls or through the open main doors. Both buildings are otherwise empty.

VOOR DARAYN



Creatures (3,600 XP): Two serpentman fang guards hide in the barracks. Upon noticing the PCs in the plaza (Perception +4, if the PCs are trying to be sneaky), the fang guards spend a few rounds poisoning a few arrows each, then attack. Initially, one focuses on the strongest-looking foe, while the other targets any PC that looks like a healer. The fang guards attempt to remain hidden as long as possible, while firing arrows from the shadows of the barracks building. When one of the serpentmen is slain, the other attempts to withdraw and heads toward the Dragon Stair (area 2) to raise the alarm.

- 2 serpentman fang guards (see page 14)

Cart: The cart belonged to the most recent group bringing tribute to Tur Nyaan. Its recent arrival is apparent because no foliage grows upon it, and it is in serviceable condition. A discarded cloak in the back of the cart has a golden clasp (25 gp) in the shape of the arms of Lomar.

Development: If one of the serpentmen escapes, it runs up the Dragon Stair and alerts Zanathim, the leader of the serpentmen in area 4. Zanathim will then expect the PCs to come up the stair and through the passages of area 4, and directs the patrolling fang guards of area 3 to lie in ambush near the mausoleum along the Dragon Stair.

THE ASCENT AND UPPER TUNNELS

The main palace lies atop the rocky outcropping known as Voor Darayn. Along the southern side of the hill, steps have been carved into the cliff faces of two shorter plateaus, providing a circuitous route up to a tunnel entrance some 100 feet above the ground. The path was once lined with grand guest houses and guardposts, but these buildings have fallen into decay. Only the columned mausoleum still stands undamaged by the ravages of time. At the top of the Dragon Stair, an ornate tunnel leads into an underground shrine, and provides the sole access to the plateau atop Voor Darayn.

2. DRAGON STAIR

The incessant buzz of insects fills your ears as you pass what must have once been ornate reflecting pools, now filled with brackish water. The path rounds a great pinnacle of rock carved with images of serpentman victories, revealing a staircase cut into the cliff wall that rises up to a ledge a third of the way up the side of Voor Darayn. A statue of a great dragon looms over the top of the first stair, while beyond the dragon, crumbled ruins of buildings line the path along the ledge. The trail continues upward past the buildings.

Statue: The statue depicts a Thulean dragon. Centuries ago, it was provided to Tur Nyaan as a gift from the elven city of Imystrahl and placed here to awe visitors.

Ruins: The buildings at the lower elevation are in ruins. The first building was a guardpost, but is now little more than waist-high rubble where walls once stood. The facade of the second building stands, but its roof and back wall have collapsed. The circular mausoleum still stands, and is detailed in area 3, below. The furthest building, closest to the tunnel entrance, stands mostly intact, though its doors have fallen off and holes are developing in its roof.

Creatures (4,125 XP): If the alarm has not yet been raised, the PCs encounter servants of Alsuvess descending the path from area 4:

The path leading upwards past the ruins on the ledge leads to a tunnel mouth at its northern edge. A group of four humans dressed in dark robes emerges from the tunnel, dragging a wooden sled piled with several human corpses. A serpentman armed with a bow accompanies them.

If the alarm has been raised, instead read:

The path leading upwards past the ruins on the ledge leads to a tunnel mouth at its northern edge. A group of four humans dressed in dark robes stands guard at the mouth of the tunnel.

The humans (three guards and a cleric of Mithra) have been magically dominated by Zanathim, the serpentman sorcerer in area 4. They are disposing of the bodies of the sacrificial victims from the plateau above. One serpentman fang guard accompanies them, while another watches from a hiding spot near the tunnel entrance.

If the PCs manage to stay out of sight and watch the proceedings, the robed humans drag their sled to the door of the mausoleum (area 3). One of the men opens the mausoleum and appears to grab a spear-like object, holding it toward the inside of the building, while the other three grab the bodies and toss them inside. When they are done, the first man leaves the spear inside the mausoleum and shuts the door, then the group moves back up toward the tunnel.

Under the robes, the guards wear the insignia of the Red Legion, a group of mercenaries from Lomar. The cleric still wears the trappings of Mithra (the Thulean sun-god). When fighting, the dominated humans hiss words like “unbeliever!” or “heretic!” A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom/Insight check can determine that the men are acting under a charm effect.

- 3 dominated warriors (use cultist)
- 1 dominated cleric (use cult fanatic)
- 2 serpentman fang guards (see page 14)

Development: If somehow released from the sway of the serpentman sorcerer (for example, through *protection from evil* or by slaying the serpentman charmer), the Lomari are grateful, but horrified at the sacrifices they witnessed and were a part of. They can describe the area of the shrine in the tunnel (area 4) and the upper plateau. They can also describe the serpentman charmer in area 4, and indicate that “some sorcerer woman” is summoning a fell beast atop the plateau.

3. MAUSOLEUM

Massive columns support a stone cupola over this circular building. Each column is covered in bas-reliefs depicting demonic, tentacled creatures reaching from the base to grasp at human figures near the middle, which in turn are reaching for angelic figures near the top. The stone steps leading to the door are marred by a trail of streaks of what looks like blood. Either something bloody was recently dragged out of the building, or dragged in. The door is closed, and barred from the outside.

While the door is barred, it is a simple matter to lift the bar and open the door, as there is no lock. The bronze doors are solid, and very little sound comes through. If a PC listens at the door, he hears the shuffling of feet or gnawing of teeth on bone from inside with a successful DC 20 Wisdom/Perception check.

Upon entering the mausoleum:

The smell inside this structure is overwhelming. Bodies, in various stages of decay, are unceremoniously piled in the center of what must be some sort of mausoleum. Smaller nooks and shelves line the walls; dark shapes within them might be ancient corpses, or might be piles of dust. Just inside the door, a golden spear lies on the floor, its gleam out of place in this charnel house.

Spear: The spear upon the ground is the *spear of Asura*, stolen ages ago from a temple in Atlantis. The *spear* is a formidable weapon against undead creatures, and the ghosts that lurk in the alcoves are loathe to approach it. Alsuvess placed the spear here to keep the ghosts from escaping or eating her minions. The *spear of Asura* is detailed in the PRIMEVAL THULE *Campaign Setting*, and is a +1 *spear* that deals an additional 1d6 radiant damage when it strikes an undead creature.

Bodies: The pile of bodies consists of many humans and one serpentman. Most of these humans were sacrificed in recent months by Alsuvess in her demon-binding rituals, and show marks of slices or stabs as likely cause of death. A few were killed by the serpentmen, who lost one of their own in a recent battle. Many of the bodies have been gnawed upon by the resident ghosts. The bodies are devoid of treasure, as Alsuvess and her minions are sure to take anything of value before throwing the bodies in here.

Creatures (1,800 XP): Alsuvess began depositing the corpses of her victims into the mausoleum soon after she arrived at Voor Darayn. But lingering necromantic magic from Tur Nyaan’s defenses infused some of the bodies, turning them into ghosts. So far, they have been content to feed upon the plethora of bodies delivered by Alsuvess’s ongoing work, and their fear of the *spear of Asura* keeps them from approaching the door. When the PCs enter, three of the ghosts are tucked away in alcoves along the walls, and one is buried in the pile of bodies. If the PCs spend more than a few rounds in the mausoleum, the ghosts’ hunger gets the best of them and they attack, though they avoid engaging a PC that carries the *spear of Asura*.

- 4 ghosts

ABOUT PRIMEVAL THULE

PRIMEVAL THULE is a sword-and-sorcery campaign setting available in versions compatible with several popular RPG systems. Inspired by the pulp fantasy and horror stories of writers such as Robert E. Howard, Edgar Rice Burroughs, and H.P. Lovecraft, Thule is a continent of savage, intense adventure set in a lost age of the Earth. If you’d like to learn more about the setting, visit DriveThruRPG.com and download the PRIMEVAL THULE *Traveler’s Guide*, a FREE PDF introduction to the setting. The PRIMEVAL THULE *Campaign Setting* is available in better gaming stores around the world, or you can find PDF versions along with other Thule adventures and products on sites that sell PDF downloads.

4. WHISPERING PASSAGE

The ascending path along the south side of the rocky pinnacle ends at a sheer cliff-face pierced by a tunnel. The mouth of the tunnel is carved to resemble a gaping maw, with eyes carved above staring down at those who enter. A faint wind blows through the tunnel, mimicking the sound of many voices whispering. Just inside the tunnel, a stairway ascends to the left, while the tunnel continues to an exit a hundred feet through the hill to the north. Torchlight flickers ahead from an opening along the right-hand wall.

Some of the whispering is a product of the tunnel's unique construction and layout. However, more whispering comes from prisoners in the shrine area to the east, where those charmed by the serpentman sorcerer softly chant to Set while they await their final fate.

Stairs: The stairs lead up to the top of of Voor Darayn, emerging in the midst of the Upper Court (area 5).

Servant Quarters: At the northern end, the tunnel opens to another ledge, with a single building upon it. This building was once the servant quarters. It is in good repair since the jungle has yet to encroach upon this overlook, but the building is otherwise empty.

Shrine: The opening in the eastern wall of the tunnel reveals a simple shrine, which has been repurposed by the resident serpentmen as an altar to Set, the god of snakes and secrets.

Creatures (5,600 XP): Zanathim, a serpentman sorcerer and beguiler, keeps watch over his remaining prisoners—a half-dozen merchants from Ikath. He has charmed each of the prisoners to keep them docile and obedient until they are needed by Alsuvess for sacrifices on the plateau above. Zanathim is accompanied by a human Set cultist, also from Ikath.

If the alarm has been raised, Zanathim positions himself near the altar in the nook along the eastern wall, and puts his thralls between himself and any likely enemy. If Zanathim is slain, the charm effect on the merchants ends, and they stop fighting. The remaining fanatic fights to the death, pledging to join Zanathim in the afterlife.

- Zanathim, serpentman Nessk charmer (see page 14)
- 1 cult fanatic
- 6 dominated merchants (use cultists)

Zanathim is allied with Alsuvess for the moment, using their agreement to gain more wealth from the tributes brought to Voor Darayn while plotting to return the ancient serpentman city to its former glory. So far, however, Alsuvess has kept what tributes they have received, and Zanathim is growing restless. The PCs might be able to take advantage of Zanathim's dissatisfaction, if they somehow manage to avoid a fight here.

THE PALACE GROUNDS

High atop Voor Darayn, the alabaster and marble palace of Tur Nyaan has mostly withstood the ravages of time. The gardens are overgrown, and a plain grey stone building—a dark shrine to Tsathoggua—stands across a wide plaza from the palace. Alsuvess conducts her dark rituals in the courtyard between the two buildings, and she lives in the acolyte quarters of the shrine.

5. UPPER COURT

The final steps lead upward out of the tunnel and into an open courtyard. An unnatural gloom darkens the day, casting long shadows across the grounds. Ahead of you sprawls a magnificent palace made of white stone, its massive bronze doors carved with images of genies and creatures of fire. To the south, three parallel pools lie empty, now filled with strange vines and unusual flowers. To the north, a wide plaza separates the alabaster palace from a plain stone building.

In the middle of that plaza, a chanting woman stands over a human body and raises a bloodied dagger to the sky. Blood-red energy flows from the lifeless sacrifice and coalesces into the shape of a demonic, vulture-like fiend.

The sorceress Alsuvess is in the midst of binding a demon to do her bidding, using an ancient ritual she discovered in the nearby shrine. She sends the demons to nearby cities to cause havoc and demand tribute be sent to Voor Darayn.

Gardens: The grounds to the south were once elaborate gardens with pools of clear water. Tur Nyaan cultivated a variety of exotic plants, including many toxic varieties and not a few carnivorous ones. But over the centuries the exotic plants overgrew and the water in the pools drained away, leaving a grey sludge coating the bottom of the pools.

Creatures (6,200 XP): The sorceress Alsuvess is not pleased if interrupted, but sees the PCs as a new opportunity—to summon more powerful demons, she requires more potent offerings, and one or two of the PCs would be perfect as sacrifices. She orders the vroock to attack, but to incapacitate, not kill. Alsuvess has already lost much of her sanity through her study and worship of Tsathoggua, and so believes she will be victorious, even at the moment of her demise.

- Alsuvess, human sorceress (see below)
- 1 demon (vroock)

ALSUVESS

CR 8

LE Medium humanoid (human)

XP 3,900

Senses average Perception 14

Languages Low Atlantean, High Atlantean, Abyssal, Benthic

BASE STATS

AC 15 (mage armor)

hp 68 (9d8+18)

Speed 30 ft

ABILITY SCORES

Str 10 (+0), **Dex** 14 (+2), **Con** 14 (+2)

Int 21 (+5), **Wis** 11 (+1), **Cha** 15 (+2)

TRAITS

Saves Int +8, Wis +4, Cha +5

Skills Arcana +9, Insight +5, Intimidation +6

Displacement Creatures have disadvantage on attack rolls against Alsuvess. If she takes damage, this effect ends until the start of her next turn.

Spells Alsuvess is a 10th-level caster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (DC 16, +8 to hit).

At will: *chill touch*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4): *grease*, *mage armor*, *shield*

2nd level (3): *flaming sphere*, *hold person*, *ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level (3): *dispel magic*, *haste*

4th level (3): *fire shield*, *phantasmal killer*

5th level (2): *dominate person*

Equipment dagger, cloak of displacement

COMBAT ACTIONS

Dagger (melee weapon) *Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+2 piercing damage.

Blood Summons (melee spell) *Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+2 piercing damage, and Alsuvess summons a dretch adjacent to the target. The dretch can immediately act. Alsuvess can only control two dretches at once.

Seed of Self-Doubt One enemy within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma save or make an immediate melee or ranged attack against its closest ally.

COMBAT REACTIONS

Demonic Bond When Alsuvess is hit by an attack, she can choose an adjacent allied demon to be the target of that attack instead.

6. SHRINE TO TSATHOGGUA

This unadorned stone building is as simple inside as it is on the outside, but an unnatural presence within seems to mute sounds and dull your senses. Beyond the foyer, a doorway leads to a grotesque shrine featuring the

idol of a bloated, toad-like god. Blood streaks mark the floor near a simple altar, upon which a book lies open next to an ancient scroll. Small doorways from the foyer lead north and south to acolyte chambers, one of which appears to have been occupied, and there is a stone door behind the altar.

This edifice is a shrine dedicated to Tsathoggua, the Sleeping God, and the patron of the wizard Tur Nyaan. In this place, Tur Nyaan communed with the Great Old One, hoping to further improve his mastery of demon-binding and necromancy. The smaller rooms in the shrine were used by the long-dead acolytes who once tended the altar and prepared rituals for Tur Nyaan. While much of Tur Nyaan's research was destroyed by time, a few scrolls survived in the shrine. Alsuvess discovered and deciphered these scrolls, granting her a portion of Tur Nyaan's power.

Book: Alsuvess's spellbook is on the altar next to a scroll she was transcribing. Her spellbook contains spells and rites, many referencing her former master Ebbon. Her spells include the spells from her stat block, plus 1d3 additional spells at each spell level she knows. In addition to her spells, Alsuvess transcribed many notes related to the scrolls she found here in the shrine. A warlock, wizard, sorcerer, or other arcane spellcaster can use these notes to enhance his spells—see *Ebbon's dark book*, below.

Hidden Treasury (1,400 XP): The door behind the shrine is locked; Alsuvess has the key. It opens into a small sacristy now used to store the spoils of the tribute brought to Voor Darayn. Inside are two chests full of coins and gems (silver, gold, and platinum coins and a variety of gems, all totaling approximately 5,000 gp), a polished silver mirror in a golden frame (300 gp), an intricately crafted golden birdcage with a small clockwork bird that chirps a tune when wound (400 gp), seven finely crafted bronze daggers (25 gp each) a jeweled steel dagger (150 gp), and a simple silver headpiece (100 gp).

THE PALACE

With the defeat of Alsuvess, the PCs can declare victory and leave, but curious PCs might want to see what lies within the alabaster palace of Tur Nyaan. The Great Hall was Tur Nyaan's audience chamber, and the current resting place for the long-dead wizard.

The southern wing of the palace housed servant quarters, kitchens, and a banquet hall, but one of the exterior walls has been damaged—the wing is now home to monkeys, bats, and other jungle creatures.

The northern wing contained Tur Nyaan's personal quarters, his library, and workrooms, but the mad wizard destroyed everything of note in his last days as a living man. The far northern chamber is the Conjury, detailed below.

7. GREAT HALL

All doors leading to the Great Hall have been magically locked, but a combination of skills might be able to bypass it. The PCs must first find clues to open the doors, disable the magical wards with arcane advice, and then apply some brute force to push open the bronze doors, or four successful checks in all:

- A DC 20 Intelligence/Investigation check reveals clues to open the door.
- A DC 20 Intelligence/Arcana check shows how to disable the magical wards.
- A DC 20 Dexterity/Sleight of Hand check removes the protective runes.
- A DC 10 Strength check opens the door.

The characters could instead attack the door (AC 17, 30 hit points, resistant to non-magical weapon damage, and a single attack must deal at least 8 points of damage to harm the door).

Trap (1,400 XP): Each time the door is struck or a skill check is failed by 5 or more, a magical ward zaps each involved character for 3d6 electricity damage.

Once the door is open:

Beyond the doors is a grand hall, gleaming with gold and glinting with jewels from the treasures piled up here. A large, clear pool of water fills the middle of the room, filled by a waterfall that begins in mid-air near the ceiling of this great room. As you watch, the shape of the waterfall shifts from a vertical flow to a spiral, then a sinuous wave, before reverting to its original pour.

An imposing throne rises on a dais on the far end of the pool. A robed figure sits there, with a deep hood concealing its visage.

Waterfall: The water sculpture is a persistent bit of teleportation magic, drawing water from the pool only to pour it back in an artful way. Tur Nyaan liked it so much he had its creator killed to prevent him from crafting another one.

Treasure (1,400 XP): The great hall appears to overflow with treasure, but much of it is an illusion that is only dispelled once contents are taken more than a mile from Voor Darayn. Some items of value are scattered among the illusion, but for every 100 coins or gems the PCs try to take, only 1 is real and the rest reveal themselves to be bits of wood or stone once the illusion fades. You may also place an item in this treasure hoard specific to one of the PCs, which may become part of a larger plot thread in your campaign (see Further Adventures). The actual value of the treasure in the great hall is perhaps 5,000 gp, though it appears much vaster.

Throne: The occupant of the solid marble throne is the corpse of Tur Nyaan, Prince of Katagia, Scourge of Daray, and Mouth of Tsathoggua. His final goal was to become immortal, but he realized too late that his efforts would not grant him eternal life, but instead eternal undeath. At the end of his sanity, Tur Nyaan killed his

EBBON'S DARK BOOK

This book contains notes on ancient rites and unknowable truths passed down from the mind of Tsathoggua.

Wondrous item, very rare

If you study the book's contents during a long rest and succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence/Arcana or /Religion check, the DC of conjuration spells you cast that day increases by 2. However, each time you cast such a spell, you must make a Wisdom saving throw against that spell's DC. If you fail that save, the effect of the *dark book* ends for that day.

If you roll a natural 1 on that saving throw, you have disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws until your next long rest.

Only one character can benefit from the book each day.

attendants, destroyed his work, and sat in his throne to gaze again at the magnificent wealth he had convinced himself that he had amassed, for by then even he believed his own illusions. Rather than succumb to a life of lichdom, Tur Nyaan poisoned himself, and drifted into slumber and death while seated on his imposing throne.

A confrontation with a revived Tur Nyaan may be a plot for another adventure.

8. CONJURY

The far northern wing of the palace was devoted to Tur Nyaan's ritual chambers and summoning rooms. In the innermost chamber, thick curtains along the walls hang in front of ornately carved or painted archways—once magical portals to Atlantis, other parts of Thule, or even more distant lands or planes. Unlocking and exploring these portals can be the start of a new adventure.

If you began the adventure with the PCs deposited at Voor Darayn from a different campaign world, then a portal here can lead your PCs back home.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER ADVENTURES

After defeating Alsuvev and discovering the truth of Tur Nyaan, this adventure is concluded. For further adventure in PRIMEVAL THULE, consider the adventures *The Watchers of Meng* (for characters level 5-8) or *Secret of the Moon-Door* (levels 10-12), both available for digital download on DriveThruRPG.com.

You may also consider using Tur Nyaan as a campaign villain. In this scenario, Tur Nyaan did successfully become a lich, but did not awaken until after the PCs ransacked his palace. Over the ensuing levels, Tur Nyaan begins tracking down the interlopers who stole his treasure, occasionally sending minions to retrieve the items by force. Eventually, after the PCs have had many adventures and are ready to face the full power of the lich, they return to Voor Darayn, now overrun with demons and Tsathoggua cultists, and face Tur Nyaan one final time.

ISKO YHOUN

Magic is a secret man was not meant to know. Those who study the arcane arts risk the wrath of the authorities, madness, or death in any of a thousand terrible forms . . . but you do not let these petty superstitions stop you. After all, knowledge is power.

THE ATLANTEAN NOBLE NARRATIVE

Introduced in the *PRIMEVAL THULE Campaign Setting*, character narratives are essentially “super-backgrounds”. They describe your place in the world, and include bonus skills, interaction bonuses, and special combat tactics or features you’re likely to have picked up in the course of becoming an adventurer. As an Atlantean noble, you come from a proud and wealthy family that traces its history back to the centuries before the island continent was destroyed.

Atlantis was the most advanced and powerful human realm that ever existed. Its people used their mastery of both science and magic to build a world-spanning empire. When Atlantis fell, it left behind dozens of colonies and subjugated city-states, including several on the shores of Thule. An aristocracy of Atlantean nobles still holds power in places like Katagia or Quodeth. This is your heritage, and if it provided you with great advantages in life, it also means that much is expected of you.

IN COMBAT

Magic is your weapon of choice. You are a skilled illusionist, armed with powers to confuse and mislead your adversaries . . . if you can figure out clever ways to employ them.

Your default action from round to round is to hang back and attack from a distance, using your *fire bolt* cantrip or a judicious application of your wand of *magic missiles*. When you face a large number of enemies at one time, it’s time to make use of a spell that can affect multiple targets at once, such as *color spray*, *web*, *fireball*, or *hypnotic pattern*. None of your companions can match your ability to take a number of enemies out of the fight at once.

Manage your arcane resources carefully—it’s important to save your best spells for tough encounters, and let your companions take the lead on the easier ones.

ISKO YHOUN

Level 7 Atlantean Wizard, Noble

HD 7d6

hp 44

AC 15 (*mage armor*)

Initiative +2

Senses Perception +1 (passive 11)

Languages High Atlantean, Low Atlantean, Kalay

STR	9 (–1)	INT	18 (+4)
DEX	14 (+2)	WIS	12 (+1)
CON	14 (+2)	CHA	10 (+0)

Proficiency +3

Saves Int +7, Wis +4; you have advantage on saves against *command*, *dominate* and *hold*.

Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Investigation +7, Medicine +4, Nature +7, Persuasion +3; you have advantage when interacting with nobles.

Attacks

Steel Dagger: +6 attack; *Hit* 1d4+3 piercing

Spell: +7 attack, save DC 15

Fire Bolt: +7 attack (120 ft.), 2d10 fire damage

Poison Spray: 10 ft., one target, 2d12 poison damage (DC 15 Con save)

Wand: 120 feet, 3 darts deal 1d4+1 force damage each (+1 dart per extra charge)

Features

Arcane Recovery (1/day): 4 levels of spell slots.

School of Illusion: Your *minor illusion* includes both sound and an image. You can use your action to change an illusion you cast.

Urgent Command (1/rest): Use a bonus action to direct one ally within 30 feet to make a melee or ranged attack as a reaction.

Spells Prepared and Spell Slots

Cantrips: *blade ward*, *dancing lights*, *fire bolt*, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*

- 1) *chromatic orb*, *color spray*, *disguise self*, *mage armor* (3 slots remaining)
- 2) *invisibility*, *phantasmal force*, *web* (3 slots)
- 3) *fireball*, *hypnotic pattern*, *slow* (3 slots)
- 4) *phantasmal killer* (1 slot)

Gear Steel dagger, spell components, spellbook, explorer’s kit, *wand of magic missiles* (7 charges), 2 *potions of healing*

AYILDA OF THE SNOWS

You are a fierce warrior maiden from the Nimothan tribes of the far north. You regard the city-folk of the south as soft and decadent, and aren't afraid to show your contempt for their hedonistic ways.

THE ICE REAVER NARRATIVE

Character narratives are basically “super-backgrounds” introduced in the *PRIMEVAL THULE Campaign Setting*. They describe your place in the world, and include bonus skills, interaction bonuses, and special combat tactics or features characters of that sort often learn. You have the Ice Reaver narrative—you come from one of the barbarian tribes that frequently attack and plunder the civilized peoples of Thule.

While you and your people often march against the city-states, you aren't locked in a perpetual war. Individual ice reavers often wander widely, seeking work as sellswords or looking for adventure. Your reputation for violence means that civilized folk are often a little fearful of you. But those who fight for a living—mercenaries, freebooters, and warriors of a dozen races—respect your ferocity. They listen when you speak.

IN COMBAT

You rely on speed and pure fighting rage to see you through most battles. Your Reaver's Charge ability allows you to spring into a fight and strike before anyone else even thinks about acting. Flying into a rage boosts your damage and makes it easy for you to shrug off enemy hits, so if a battle looks at all challenging, you should use one of your rages.

You follow the berserker path, which means that in addition to barbarian rage, you have the ability to frenzy. When you frenzy, you gain the powerful ability to make an extra attack each turn. However, you'll accumulate a level of exhaustion after each encounter in which you frenzy. Fortunately, your Tireless feat means that you don't begin to care about that until you reach 3 levels or more of exhaustion.

You excel at charge attacks, so look for chances to use your Charger feat whenever you can and deal heavy damage!

AYILDA OF THE SNOWS

Level 7 Human Barbarian, Ice Reaver

HD 7d12

hp 75

AC 16 (mail cuirass)

Initiative +1 (advantage)

Senses Perception +3 (passive 13)

Languages Nimothan, Low Atlantean

STR 16 (+3)

INT 8 (–1)

DEX 13 (+1)

WIS 10 (+0)

CON 16 (+3)

CHA 12 (+1)

Proficiency +3

Saves Str +6, Con +6; you have advantage on Dex saves against effects you can see.

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +4, Perception +3, Survival +3; you have advantage on checks to interact with barbarians or outlaws.

Attacks (2 per action)

Steel Glaive: +7 attack; *Hit* 1d10+4 slashing

Handaxe: +6 attack (melee or thrown, range 20/60 ft.);

Hit 1d6+3 slashing

Features

Rage (4/day): Advantage on Str checks and saves; +2 damage with melee attacks; Resistance to weapon damage; immune to charmed or frightened. You can *Frenzy* to be able to make one attack as a bonus action.

Reckless Attack: You can gain advantage on attacks, but enemies get advantage against you.

Feral Instinct: Act normally when surprised, but you must enter a rage.

Reaver's Charge (1/rest): Move up to your speed and make a melee attack. You can use this ability before initiative is rolled, or you can use a bonus action to do it when you reduce an enemy to 0 hp with a melee attack.

Feats

Charger (Dash, bonus action to attack; +5 damage if you move 10 feet or more)

Tireless (+1 Constitution, reduce exhaustion effects by 2 levels)

Gear Mail cuirass, steel glaive, 2 handaxes, explorer's kit, *potion of giant strength*

MARREK

Quick with a jest or an unexpected pratfall, you are easily mistaken for one of Quodeth's many street jugglers and acrobats . . . but that's exactly the mistake you want your foes to make. You are actually a very skilled thief, burglar, tomb-robber, spy, and occasional killer-for-hire. You are a member in good standing of the powerful thieves' guild known as the Seven Knives, the largest and best-organized guild in the rich city of Quodeth—a city that well earns its sobriquet as "the City of Thieves."

THE QUODETHI THIEF
NARRATIVE

First introduced in the *PRIMEVAL THULE Campaign*

Setting, character narratives are expanded back-grounds. They describe your place in the world, and include bonus skills, interaction bonuses, and special combat tactics or features heroes who share your origin or homeland are likely to master. Your narrative is Quodethi Thief, which means that you belong to a large, influential guild in the richest city of Thule. Mighty nobles and high priests fall silent when a messenger of the Seven Knives speaks!

You owe allegiance to your guild and you are expected to follow orders—for now. But you're more ambitious than the average street rat, and one day you mean to be in charge. Your superiors have learned that you work best when they leave you alone, so most of the time, you're free to pursue your own interests, as long as you set aside a cut for the guild.

MARREK'S TACTICS

You are the master of the hit-and-run attack. Your Cunning Action ability is what makes this possible—your best defense is not being there when the enemy counterattacks. If you don't have advantage against any of your foes, remember that you can still trigger your sneak attack bonus damage by attacking a foe who is busy with one of your allies.

While you are certainly useful in a fight, you also possess a variety of special abilities that let you climb, jump, sneak, and search better than anyone else in the group. No one else has your talent for getting into places you're not supposed to be or finding traps before blundering into them. Take the time to explore—you never know what you might find!

MARREK

Level 7 Human Rogue, Quodethi Thief

HD 7d8

hp 52

AC 16 (leather cuirass, cloak)

Initiative +3

Senses Perception +3 (passive 18)

Languages Kalay, Low Atlantean

STR 13 (+1)

INT 11 (+0)

DEX 16 (+3)

WIS 10 (+0)

CON 14 (+2)

CHA 15 (+2)

Proficiency +3 (+6 with thieves' tools)

Saves Str +2, Dex +6, Con +3, Int +4, Wis +1, Cha +3;

Evasion (half damage or no damage on Dex saves for half damage).

Skills Acrobatics +9, Deception +5, Investigation

+6, Perception +3, Performance +5, Stealth +9;

advantage on checks to interact with criminals and commoners.

Attacks (use dagger off-hand as bonus action)

Steel shortsword: +7 attack; Hit 1d6+4 piercing

Dagger, off-hand: +6 attack; Hit 1d4 piercing

Sling: +6 attack (range 30/120 ft); Hit 1d4+3

bludgeoning

Features

Sneak Attack (1/turn): Extra 4d6 damage if you have advantage on the attack roll or if another enemy is within 5 feet of the target.

Cunning Action (1/turn): You can use a bonus action to Dash, Disengage, or Hide, or to use thieves' tools to disarm a trap or open a lock.

Uncanny Dodge: When an attacker hits you, use your reaction to halve the damage.

Second-Story Work: Climb at full speed, increase running jump distance by 3 feet.

Thief's Feint (1/rest): When you make an attack on your turn, you gain advantage, and you can then use a bonus action to disengage.

Feats

Observant (read lips, +5 to passive senses)

Gear Leather cuirass, steel shortsword, 3 daggers, sling with 20 bullets, explorer's kit, thieves' tools, *cloak of protection*

JHAREIN KHO

You are a warrior-priest, the proud champion of Thule's leading military power: Lomar, the City of Triumphs. There are many gods in Thule, but you serve Nergal, God of the Underworld and Lord of War. The Black Lion is a grim and unforgiving deity, but he is the special patron of Lomar, and he rewards those who show valor in battle with glorious victory.

THE PANJANDRUM NARRATIVE

Character narratives are expanded backgrounds, first introduced in the *PRIMEVAL THULE Campaign Setting*. They describe your place in the world, and include bonus skills, interaction bonuses, and special combat tactics or features heroes master on their road to adventure. Your narrative is panjandrum, which means that you are an important official or commander in your native city. In Lomar, panjandrums hold military rank as well as civic authority, and carry the title of centurion.

While you belong to a well-organized bureaucracy and serve as a city magistrate, you are free to create your own definition of Lomar's interests. Panjandrums often act as far-traveling diplomats, spies, agents, and troubleshooters, finding plenty of opportunities to work alongside other adventurers. Whether you're involved in your current adventure for yourself or your homeland is up to you.

IN COMBAT

You are skilled both in melee combat and the use of divine magic. Thanks to your heavy armor and shield, you can stand up to plenty of close combat, and you wield your bronze warhammer with all the skill one would expect of a trained warrior. You excel in helping those around you to fight better. As a panjandrum, leading from the front comes naturally to you. Make sure you use your Panjandrum's Command in every battle to give an ally in trouble the opportunity to find a better position and perhaps catch his or her breath. Your Channel Divinity power also allows you to almost guarantee that an ally hits with a key attack—look for the chance to help your comrade Marrek land a devastating sneak attack or inspire Ayilda in a fierce charge.

JAREIN KHO

Level 7 Human Cleric of Nergal, Panjandrum

HD 7d8

hp 52

AC 18 (chain mail, shield)

Initiative +0

Senses Perception +3 (passive 13)

Languages Lomari, Low Atlantean

STR 16 (+3)

INT 11 (+0)

DEX 10 (+0)

WIS 16 (+3)

CON 14 (+2)

CHA 13 (+1)

Proficiency +3

Saves Wis +6, Cha +4

Skills Investigation +3, Medicine +6, Persuasion +4, Religion +3

Attacks

+1 *bronze warhammer*: +7 attack; *Hit* 1d8+4 bludgeoning damage

Spell: +6 attack, save DC 14

Sacred Flame: 60 ft., 2d8 radiant (Dex save)

Features

Channel Divinity (2/rest): Turn Undead (destroy CR 1/2 or lower on failed save); Guided Strike (gain +10 bonus to an attack roll); or War God's Blessing (use your reaction to grant an ally +10 on an attack roll).

War Priest (3/day): When you use an Attack action, you can use your bonus action to make one more attack.

Panjandrum's Command (1/rest): Use a bonus action, choose one ally within 30 ft. to move his speed and gain 7 temporary hp as a reaction.

Spell Prepared and Spell Slots

Cantrips: *guidance*, *light*, *sacred flame*, *spare the dying*

1) *bles*, *cure wounds*, *divine favor*, *healing word* (4 slots)

2) *hold person*, *lesser restoration*, *spiritual weapon* (3 slots)

3) *dispel magic*, *mass healing word* (3 slots)

4) *freedom of movement* (1 slot)

Gear +1 *bronze mace*, chain mail, shield, holy symbol, explorer's kit, 2 vials of holy water, *lantern of revealing*

SERPENTMAN

Serpentmen are a dangerous threat to those who explore the vine-choked ruins of the ancient Nessk empire, a continent-spanning civilization of serpentmen from an age long past. More information on the serpentmen can be found in the *PRIMEVAL THULE Campaign Setting*, but the two types that appear in this adventure are detailed here.

FANG GUARD

This bipedal snake man has a lithe form that seems to blend in with its surroundings like a chameleon. It carries a bow and a collection of fang-tipped arrows.

FANG GUARD CR 5

NE Medium monstrosity (serpentman) XP 1,800

Senses average Perception 14

Languages Draconic

BASE STATS

AC 15 (natural armor)

hp 91 (14d8+28)

Speed 30 ft

ABILITY SCORES

Str 12 (+1), **Dex** 19 (+4), **Con** 14 (+2)

Int 11 (+0), **Wis** 13 (+1), **Cha** 10 (+0)

TRAITS

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Immune poison

Slink in the Shadows The fang guard can attempt to hide as a bonus action.

Poisoned Arrow As a bonus action, the fang guard can apply poison to a single arrow. A creature hit by the arrow must succeed on a Con save (DC 15) or take 3d6 poison damage and become poisoned until the end of its next turn. The poison remains potent for 1 minute.

Sneak Attack (1/turn) The fang guard deals 4d6 extra damage with its sneak attack, as per the rogue ability.

Strike from the Shadows The first time each turn the fang guard makes a ranged attack while hidden from its target, it deals an extra 3d6 damage on a hit. If the attack misses, the fang guard remains hidden.

Equipment Scimitar, composite longbow

COMBAT ACTIONS

Scimitar (melee weapon) *Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6+4 slashing damage.

Composite Longbow (ranged weapon) *Attack:* +7 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10+4 damage.

Volley If the fang guard does not move on its turn, it can make two composite longbow attacks.

Fang guards are warriors who defend the remaining strongholds and sacred sites of the serpent race. In battle, fang guards remain hidden, striking quickly with poisoned arrows and fading back into the safety of the shadows. They rely on their Stealth ability to stay hidden.

NESSK CHARMER

This snake-headed humanoid wears long robes concealing its form, and carries a long staff carved with snake heads at both ends.

NESSK CHARMER CR 9

NE Medium monstrosity (serpentman) XP 2,900

Senses average Perception 16

Languages Draconic

BASE STATS

AC 19 (natural armor)

hp 102 (12d8+48)

Speed 30 ft

ABILITY SCORES

Str 13 (+1), **Dex** 17 (+3), **Con** 13 (+1)

Int 16 (+3), **Wis** 15 (+2), **Cha** 19 (+4)

TRAITS

Saves Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Arcana +7, Deception +8, Insight +6, Perception +6

Immune poison

Mesmerizing Gaze As a bonus action, the Nessk charmer can gaze deeply into the eyes of a target within 30 feet that can see it. The target must make a Wis save (DC 16) or be charmed for 1 round.

Confounding Glare As a bonus action, the Nessk charmer bewilders a nearby enemy within 30 feet that can see it. The target makes a melee attack against itself or a creature within its reach unless it succeeds on a Wis save (DC 16).

Spells The charmer is a 10th-level caster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (DC 16, +8 to hit).

At will: *chill touch*, *message*

1st level (4): *charm person*, *color spray*, *disguise self*, *shield*

2nd level (3): *backbiter shield**, *detect thoughts*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3): *bestow curse*, *hypnotic pattern*, *slow*

4th level (3): *confusion*, *Evard's black tentacles*

5th level (2): *hold monster*, *snake swarm**

*New spell, see Chapter 7

Equipment Staff (head shaped like a fanged snake)

COMBAT ACTIONS

Snakestaff (melee weapon) *Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one or two targets. *Hit:* 1d8+3 piercing damage and 3d6 poison damage.

Venomous Bite (melee weapon) *Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8+4 piercing damage, and if the target is a living creature, it must make a Con save (DC 16) or take 4d6 poison damage and be poisoned for one minute.

The sorcerous charmer usually leads a group of serpentmen and human thralls. It uses magic to summon forth snakes, turn enemies' weapons against them, and mesmerize its foes.

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