

Ascension

A Living City Adventure

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This is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event. It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

The actual playing time will be about three hours. Make sure you use the last 20 to 30 minutes of the event time block to have the players capsulize their characters for each other and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Complete the Judge's Summary before you collect the players' scoring sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their ratings and comments.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

A note about the text: Some of the text in this module is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in bold italics. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Tier Structure

Add the levels of the PCs to determine which tier they are on. Tiered events and foes are marked throughout the text.

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|---------|--------------------|
| Tier 1: | Total levels 4-13 |
| Tier 2: | Total levels 14-25 |
| Tier 3: | Total levels 26-37 |
| Tier 4: | Total levels 38-56 |
| Tier 5: | Total levels 57+ |

GM Introduction:

Ascension is a Living City tournament with two themes. The PCs will simultaneously fulfill the burial wishes of Yadzooks, a former adventurer gnome alchemist, and participate in a struggle for succession in an Efrete emirate on the elemental plane of fire.

The adventure begins with the PCs witnessing an incredible battle in their dreams. In this battle, several Efrete appear in a cottage and open a jar containing another of their kind. A gnome then appears, a fight ensues, and at the end only the previously

“imprisoned” Efrete survives. This Efrete summons the characters to the cottage at the end of the dream; showing them the path they must take from Ravens Bluff to get there.

The survivor is an Efrete known on the prime material plane as Maelstrom, his real name is Mael al Stromi and he is a common efrete soldier. Three centuries ago he was caught courting one of the Amir's harim. For this indiscretion he was banished from the City of Brass to a remote military outpost. Maelstrom objected to this punishment and in defiance stole the Orb of Allimar, an earring that was a gift from a Pasha to the Amir and was widely considered a symbol of his power, authority, and right to rule. For 250 years Maelstrom lived on the run, fleeing one plane and world after the next just ahead of the Amir's servants. However, fifty years ago he met Yadzooks, the gnome, who hid Maelstrom in a jar in which other Efrete were unable to locate him. This was due to the fact that Yadzooks was rendered unscryable by a potion miscibility incident in his youth. The effect also affects those in Yadzook's immediate vicinity and conceals Maelstrom. Maelstrom believed the jar was protecting him, and Yadzooks did not know that Maelstrom was on the run, so the truth was unknown to both of them.

Recently, Yadzooks went on a two-month vacation, which removed his protective veil from Maelstrom. A very frustrated Jann who had spent the last several decades scrying the prime material plane located Maelstrom and reported his location to the Amir. The Amir then assembled a small strike force and went to retrieve the Orb. When the Efrete entered the cottage they set off Yadzooks' wards and the gnome returned immediately to defend his home.

In the subsequent battle, Yadzooks and all the Efrete except Maelstrom were slain. A programmed illusion of Yadzooks' last wishes appeared and charged Maelstrom with seeing to his interment. However, with the Amir dead Maelstrom feels compelled to return to the City of Brass and redeem himself in the eyes of his brothers by participating in the struggle for succession that must surely be taking place. He has summoned the PCs from Ravens Bluff to deal with Yadzooks' burial and unknowingly watch over the Orb while he returns the City of Brass and determines his next move.

The PCs will arrive at the cottage and witness a replay of Yadzooks burial instructions. In summary, Yadzooks wishes to be taken three days overland and buried with the rest of his adventuring companions from his youth. They have all been buried in the grove of the group's druid.

After this, Maelstrom will help the PCs lay Yadzooks and some of his personal effects in a wagon. Maelstrom takes the Orb of Allimar from his ear and places it on Yadzooks chest. He will then depart for the City of Brass.

The servants of the dead Amir are divided into two camps regarding succession, since the Amir died without a named heir. One of these groups is led by Maelstrom's uncle. When Maelstrom returns home, he is welcomed by his uncle and they go before the Pasha at the same time as their opposition to make a case for succession. The Pasha decrees that whichever group can bring him the Orb of Allimar will be victorious. Immediately, the opposition begins searching for the location of the Amir's death and discovers the PCs' existence within a day.

The first day of travel will pass without incident, but the PCs will be attacked by a group of followers of Kossuth during the first watch that night. The Kossuthans have been visited by an Efreeti pretending to be an avatar of Kossuth, who has commanded that they slay the PCs, steal the Orb, and bring it to their temple for sacrifice.

The next day the PCs will encounter a ranger who is atoning for slaying a dryad. If the PCs help the ranger he will give them background information for a riddle they will need to solve in order to enter the druid's grove. In the afternoon, the PCs will enter the forest that the grove is in and encounter a tribe of sylvan elves living there. That night, in their dreams, the PCs will receive a message of warning and an update of the political struggle in the City of Brass from Maelstrom.

The following morning servants of the opposition from the plane of fire will attack the PCs as they journey the final miles to the grove. The PCs will then be confronted with a riddle that they must solve in order to enter the grove. After entering the grove the PCs will be attacked by the opposition leader from the City of Brass (and depending on tier, some of his soldiers). Maelstrom will return to the prime material plane to aid the PCs in this fight. Assuming all goes well, Yadzooks will be buried at dawn the next day, and Maelstrom and his uncle will attend.

Player Introduction:

The night is restless, despite the cool fall air you sweat in your fitful sleep. In your mind you see a flicker, a spark, a glow of red light and then darkness. Abruptly, it is afternoon and you look down on a quaint cottage and its kitchen. You know you are dreaming.

Without warning, a dozen Efreet warriors dressed in basalt armor and bearing flaming swords storm into the kitchen and maliciously rip a red and bright yellow bottle from one of the shelves. The largest Efreeti smiles a fanged grin and twists the top of the bottle open. In a cloud of smoke and stars another Efreet appears. He stands taller than the others and begins to speak in commanding tones, "Who has summoned Maelstrom from the great beyond to . . ." He trails off recognizing the others and shrinks to be of similar size to them. If Efreet expression knows fear then you are witnessing it.

There is suddenly a resounding POP and a gnome appears on the kitchen table. His arms are crossed, his expression perturbed, and he taps one foot expectantly. "Well . . ." he asks. The greatest of the Efreet smiles at him indulgently and replies, "I am Amir al Ravvan and I have come for what is mine." With that he grasps Maelstrom by the throat.

The gnome replies, "My army of Djinn may have something to say about that," as the roof of the cottage is lifted off by seven resplendent servants of the air. A battle of flames and tornadoes ensues and shortly all the Efreet attackers except the Amir are dead.

As the remaining six Djinn begin to close in on him for the kill his expression shifts from confusion to cruel amusement. He laughs triumphantly, and the Djinn are gone. "Very good, little one. I nearly fell for you illusionist's trick, but now for my property." With that he moves meaningfully toward Maelstrom. A cone of ice and snow erupts from the gnome into the Amir and he staggers momentarily. Seeing his opportunity Maelstrom leaps onto the great Efreet rending flesh with his claws. The Amir shrugs Maelstrom from him and realizing the greater danger turns toward the gnome. The gnome conjures another freezing blast and then the Efreet is on him, slashing with his fiery blade. Maelstrom returns to the fray digging into the other Efreet's back over and over with his claws. The three go down in a heap; dead gnome beneath dead Efreet beneath Maelstrom who continues to frenziedly thrust his taloned hands into his enemy. Slowly, the tearing turns to pounding, and the pounding to a scream of frustration. Molten tears flow down Maelstrom's face and he turns to look directly at you. "Please, come to this cottage. I must have your help."

You see the one day journey from Ravens Bluff and know the roads that lead to the cottage. It is dawn, you wake.

As you travel out of the city and east along the Fire River you note that there are several other travelers

taking the same roads as yourself. Realizing that it may take most of the afternoon to reach the oversized thatched cottage that is the gnomes home, a conversation begins.

At this point the PCs should describe and introduce themselves.

Encounter 1 - Last Wishes

The last rays of sun are falling across the hills when you reach the cottage that belonged to the gnome. It appears exactly as it was in your dream. The Efreeti, Maelstrom, is struggling with two very unhappy looking mules beside the cottage as you approach. Noticing you he calls out, "Praise the flames, some have responded."

Maelstrom is attempting to care for the mules that will be used to bear the wagon in Yadzooks' funeral procession. Unfortunately, the creatures have a sour disposition to start with and his supernatural nature has put them off even more than usual. Once the PCs arrive, Maelstrom will invite them inside, share salt with them, and serve them dinner. NOTE: Sharing salt in Zakharan culture is considered a symbol of an honor bound oath of peace between creatures lasting for three days.

Maelstrom will explain that last night he sent a vision to numerous adventurers in Ravens Bluff synopsisizing the preceding day's events. He will tell the PCs has summoned them because the attack of the Efreet and the death of the Amir has made it clear to him that he must immediately return to the City of Brass; home of the Efreet. However, upon his death a programmed illusion of Yadzooks appeared to deliver his last requests. The illusion stated that it would replay ever day for a week at dawn. Maelstrom feels compelled to honor these and since he dare not attend to it himself, he hopes to hire adventurers from Ravens Bluff, a practice of which Yadzooks was fond.

Maelstrom will ask the PCs to please wait to ask further questions until tomorrow morning after they have seen the illusion below.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Due to an accident that occurred when Yadzooks drank improperly mixed *potions of clairaudience, clairvoyance, and invisibility* on the same day, no mind reading, detection, or alignment determining spells or abilities function within a one hundred yard radius of his body. Maelstrom has deduced that this is the case from his recent experiences and will share

this information with the PCs. Maelstrom will also submit to alignment determining spells outside of this range for the PCs peace of mind. He is chaotic neutral.

Roosters are crowing from all corners of the cottage to announce the breaking of a new day. Despite the cacophony that continues for several minutes, no fowl are in sight. Maelstrom appears from nowhere, explaining that this was just Yadzooks' way of making sure no one ever overslept. When all is again quiet a vision of an elderly gnome appears on the kitchen table pacing seriously. "Hello, my friends. Sorry to be so preoccupied, but I am dead after all. Don't worry, I'm sure it's lovely where I am. After all my years as a devoted priest I know well the ways of Baravar Cloakshadow. However, since I did have theological differences with several of my closest friends in life I shall doubtless never see them again. That being the case, I wish to have this body buried with theirs that we might be together forever in at least one sense.

"We were a company of six adventurers, and I am the second to last living. The other four were buried in our druid's grove years ago and the last will probably never join us, since he has gone mad beyond even my help. In any case, we never gave ourselves a fancy name like the Company of Yada Yada Yada, or the Brotherhood of Blah Blah Blah. We just did the job and left before anyone tried to marry us to their daughters. Sometimes we narrowly escaped losing our other wizard Wirthal to such dangers. Humans seem to be in such a hurry to may off their young to others of their kind. Poor Wirth' got knifed in the back by a jealous farmhand thirty years ago. I told him he should learn that stone skin spell, but he just never listened.

"We lost our dwarf Roberto about a decade ago. He was ambushed by a platoon of drow on the way home from visiting his family in the Underdark. Fingers, that's what our halfling insisted on being called but his real name was Roundbelly Onionfoot, died about five years ago on the wrong end of a poison needle. Our most recent loss was during the war when our druid Poplar Greenleaf died defending the forest, his grove, is in from giants. And, of course, the half-elf Loflial will probably outlive us all in his madness. Now that I'm thinking about it we did very well as a group. It seems like bad things only happened when we were working alone. I wonder if that's what happened to me.

"Oops, I'm babbling. Okay, so look in the last cabinet on the left in my bedroom. In it there are three bottles and a scroll. The scroll is a map to the

grove, and the bottles are some potions to keep as my thanks for taking me to my final resting place. Thanks and good luck.” With that the gnome disappears.

After the illusion is gone, Maelstrom will hand over the potions and the scroll which he collected from Yadzooks’ room yesterday. He will then field any questions the PCs may have, but under no circumstances should he reveal anything about the Orb of Allimar. If asked why he was being pursued he will only reveal his transgression with the member of the Amir’s harim.

Having satisfied your curiosity, Maelstrom assists you in loading Yadzooks’ cot and various personal effects into the wagon. After the mules are hitched, Maelstrom himself solemnly carries the gnome’s body out of the cottage and lays it carefully on the cot. In a proud yet profoundly sad voice, the efreeti say, “Little gnome, this body held a greater fire than that of Marrake al-Sidan al-Hariq ben Lazan himself.” With that he plucks an enormous ruby earring from his ear and places it on Yadzooks’ chest and then covers the gem with the gnomes two hands. “This is my processional gift to you. Bear it well.” With that Maelstrom steps away from the wagon. “Friends, I wish you well on your journey and will join you at its end if I am able. Good luck. I will contact you if I am able.” Maelstrom then disappears in a puff of smoke.

Treasure:

*Potion of frost giant strength
Potion of flying
Potion of gaseous form*

Encounter 2 - Kossuthans

For a day you have traveled north with the wagon holding Yadzooks’ body along the road indicated on the map. Your journey is uneventful and as you settle in for the evening this appears to be an easy job that you have taken on.

Dinners have been eaten and all but those assigned to watch have gone to sleep when the sounds of men approaching on the road are heard. After several moments three well armed men approach your camp and one shouts, “Hello, the camp fire.”

The men are part of a larger group of worshipers of Kossuth who have been tricked by an Efreeti. In the

guise of an Avatar, the Efreeti commanded the Kossuthans to steal the Orb of Allimar and return it to their temple as a sacrifice. The specialty priest that is leading the assault is hiding in some nearby with some additional warriors.

The plan is for the three men to enter the camp, befriend the PCs, and attempt determine where the orb is. The men have also been instructed to offer to “enhance” the PCs’ fire to aid in summoning the elemental. If questioned about their desire to make a larger fire the men will explain that they are followers of Kossuth and wish to honor him and their new friends. They will also state their intention to protect the PCs if the larger fire attracts trouble. The Kossuthan men will make the fire larger by adding wood and some oil. Note that the body of Yadzooks should be within one hundred yards of the camp and this should prevent the Kossuthan’s minds from being magically pried open.

Once the Kossuthans have determined where the Orb is (and summoned their elemental if appropriate) they will attack. There is some potential for the PCs to role-play their way out of this combat, but remember the Kossuthans are on a mission from their god.

Total Levels 6 - 13

Kossuth Worshipers, hm F1 (6): Int Very; AL NE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; HD 1; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (long sword); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil SZ M; ML 12.

Kossuth Priest, em SP3 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 4 (chain, dex); MV 12; HD 3; hp 21; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SA *burning hands* 1/day; SD +2 to saves vs. fire/heat, immune to non-magical fire; MR nil; SZ S; ML 15.

Priest spells: 1st Level - *fire burst, burning hands*; 2nd Level -*heat metal*.

Total Levels 14 - 25

Kossuth Worshipers, hm F3 (6): Int Very; AL NE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; HD 3; hp 27; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (long sword); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil SZ M; ML 12.

Kossuth Priest, em SP4 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 4 (chain, dex); MV 12; HD 4; hp 28; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SA *burning hands* 1/day; SD +2 to saves vs. fire/heat, immune to non-magical fire; MR nil; SZ S; ML 15.

Priest spells: 1st Level - *cure light wounds, fire burst, burning hands*; 2nd Level -*flaming sphere, heat metal*.

Total Levels 26 - 37

Kossuth Worshipers, hm F4 (6): Int Very; AL NE; AC 4 (chain, dex); MV 12; HD 4; hp 32; THAC0 16; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-10+2 (two-handed sword); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil SZ M; ML 12.

Kossuth Priest, em SP7 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 3 (chain, dex); MV 12; HD 7; hp 45; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SA *burning hands* 1/day, *summon* 8HD *elemental* 1/day, *fireball* 1/day; SD +2 to saves vs. fire/heat, immune to non-magical fire, -1 per die on magical fire damage; MR nil; SZ S; ML 15.

Priest spells: 1st Level - *cure light wounds*, *fire burst*, *burning hands*; 2nd Level - *flaming sphere*, *heat metal* x2; 3rd Level - *fireball*, *dispel magic*; 4th Level - *fire shield* (precast).

Appearing in the second round of combat:

Fire Elemental (1): Int Low; AL N; AC 2; MV 12; HD 8; hp 50; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA nil; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 15.

If the summoner is killed, the elemental does not disappear. It goes on a rampage until killed or one hour passes.

Total Levels 38 - 56

Kossuth Worshipers, hm F7 (6): Int Very; AL NE; AC 2 (plate, dex); MV 12; HD 4; hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10+2 (two-handed sword); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil SZ M; ML 12.

Kossuth Priest, em SP9 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 1 (chain, dex); MV 12; HD 9; hp 28; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SA *burning hands* 1/day, *summon* 12HD *elemental* 1/day, *fireball* 1/day; SD +2 to saves vs. fire/heat, immune to non-magical fire, -1 per die on magical fire damage; MR nil; SZ S; ML 15.

Priest spells: 1st Level - *cure light wounds* x2, *fire burst*, *burning hands*; 2nd Level - *flaming sphere*, *heat metal* x2, *produce flame*; 3rd Level - *fireball*, *dispel magic*, *prayer* (precast); 4th Level - *fire shield* (precast), *protection from lightning* (precast); 5th Level - *flame strike*.

Appearing in the second round of combat:

Fire Elemental (1): Int Low; AL N; AC 2; MV 12; HD 12; hp 80; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA nil; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 15.

If the summoner is killed, the elemental does not disappear it goes on a rampage until killed or one hour passes.

Total Levels 57+

Kossuth Worshipers, hm F9 (6): Int Very; AL NE; AC 0 (plate, dex); MV 12; HD 4; hp 85; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10+5 (two-handed sword); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil SZ M; ML 12.

Kossuth Priest, em SP13 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 1 (chain, dex); MV 12; HD 9; hp 80; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SA *burning hands* 1/day, *summon* 12HD *elemental* 1/day, *fireball* 1/day; SD +2 to saves vs. fire/heat, immune to non-magical fire, -1 per die on magical fire damage; MR nil; SZ S; ML 15.

Priest spells: 1st Level - *cure light wounds*, *cause light wounds*, *destroy water*, *fire burst*, *burning hands* x2; 2nd Level - *flaming sphere* x2, *heat metal* x2, *produce flame* x2; 3rd Level - *fireball* x2, *dispel magic* x2, *Melf's minute meteors*, *prayer* (precast); 4th Level - *cause serious wounds*, *cure serious wounds*, *fire shield* (precast), *protection from lightning* (precast); 5th Level - *flame strike*, *wall of fire*; 6th Level - *harm*.

Appearing in the second round of combat:

Fire Elemental (1): Int Low; AL N; AC 2; MV 12; HD 16; hp 120; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA nil; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 18.

If the summoner is killed, the elemental does not disappear it goes on a rampage until killed or one hour passes.

Encounter 3 - Atonement

The morning of the second day of your journey to Yadzooks' burial site is well underway. Consulting your map, you see that you should soon be entering a forest, but ahead of you there is not a tree in sight.

As you continue along the road, the map's inconsistency is quickly explained. Lining the road are the stumps of trees many feet in diameter, which must have been a noble forest before they were felled. You can almost envision the leafy canopy that would have covered your route, and this makes the devastation of the forest that much more tragic.

After a few hundred yards of stumps, you notice an even stranger thing. At regular intervals between the stumps are sprouts of new trees. The sprouts are between six and twelve inches high and all appear recently watered and well tended.

Encounter 4 - The Elves

Moving further into the forest of stumps, you soon come upon a humanoid hunkered over one of the sprouts. The elf is well tanned from the sun and wears only ragged pants and sandals. He is working the soil about the sprout reverently. As he hears you approaching he looks up smiling hopefully, "Ho, travelers. Will you stop a while and plant a tree in the name of Mielikki?" He makes no motion toward the sheathed long sword on the ground as he rises and walks toward you.

The elf's name Saryl Thornberry and he is a ranger in the service of Mielikki. During the war Saryl was tasked with protecting this forest. Unfortunately, when the enemy army came here to log some of trees for ladders and siege engines Saryl was unable to stop them. His failure was made complete when one of the enemy priests cast a curse upon him that drove him mad. In his madness, Saryl cut down the tree that was home to the forest's dryad, killing her and rendering the forest even more defenseless. After the war ended and his madness was healed, Saryl sought out a shrine of Mielikki and as atonement was tasked to serve as the guardian of this forest for the rest of his life. In addition, he was commanded to cause ten thousand souls to aid in replanting the forest.

Saryl is not bitter about these tasks and is grateful to have a chance to redeem himself. He has throw himself into his work and is planting and tending trees by the road so he can meet as many travelers as possible to aid in the replanting of the forest. Saryl will ask the PCs to each plant a tree. If questioned he will somberly tell his entire story. The PCs may choose the species of tree they wish to plant and while everyone is working he will teach them a little mnemonic device to remember the life span of trees. He will most likely do this be telling the PCs what they equate to in terms of longevity, but if the players aren't getting the point he will be as blunt as possible.

Redwoods = Elves = 1200 years

Oaks = Dwarves = 350 years

Elms = Gnomes = 350 years

Maples = ½ Elves = 160 years

Willows = Halflings = 150 years

Poplars = Humans = 90 years

This information is important since it will be necessary to solve the riddle and enter Poplar Greenleaf's grove in Encounter 7. If any of the PCs do not choose to plant a tree, Saryl will not share the information corresponding to that character's race.

It has been hours since you left the ranger and his reforestation project behind. Shortly after midday, you entered the forest proper and began to experience the grandeur that Saryl is attempting to restore. The thick green canopy that you envisioned earlier covers the road and appears to extend endlessly in all directions. As night approaches the shadows in the forest grow thicker, and although you know that it is still more than an hour until dusk you are surrounded by thick shadows.

As the light continues to wane you notice that the forest has fallen silent, and you feel unseen eyes watching you. The trees sway softly with the evening wind, and then one moves toward you. No, it is not a tree, but an elf covered in branches, leaves, bark, and mud. He appears to have snapped to attention with his spear reversed as the wagon holding Yadzook's body passed.

Now that you know what to look for, you are able to pick out dozens of elves surrounding you. They hang from branches, crouch in bushes, and line the road as you pass. Acknowledging that you have seen them, the elves begin to move quickly now and leave their hiding places. The dozens you saw are now hundreds and the entire forest is alive with movement.

A proud-looking group of warriors drops from the canopy to block your progress. An elf covered with green and brown tattoos steps forward and addresses you. "We are the tribe of the Alerinakator, which means forest of the free people. We thank you for bringing the fallen lord of mischief to his resting place. While his deeds were often irritating to us, as a people who prize freedom we embrace his wild spirit. As his bearers you are summoned to his death feast this evening. Follow me."

The elf is haughty in his manner and his final words before turning his back did not sound like a request.

The PCs will be led into an extensive village of tree dwellings and huts. On an enormous platform set between five of the largest trees in the forest, the elves will treat the PCs to a hearty feast of fruits, nuts, berries, cooked meats, and a bitter wine that is very powerful. If questioned about Yadzooks, the elves will explain that they were friends with all the members of Poplar Greenleaf's adventuring company. While they make an imperious and condescending group, the tribe secretly was very fond of Yadzooks and his impish nature. As the final courses are cleared from the table, the tribe's Great Shaman will summon a

huge thunderstorm in celebration of Yadzooks passing. For effect, the shaman will call great bolts of lightning from the sky, but he is very careful not to hit anyone or anything.

In the midst of this distraction and pouring rain Aler, the chieftain, will attempt to have a serious conversation with the PCs. He will ask if the PCs know that they will need leaves to enter the grove. When they respond that they do not, he will explain that there is a stone with the name of each of Poplar Greenleaf's friends carved on it next to the wall of thorns that surrounds the grove. In order to enter the PCs will have to put a leaf from the right species of tree on top of each name. Aler will tell them that the appropriate leaf is determined by the race of the person whose name is being covered.

If the PCs have no idea what Aler is talking about he will act surprised and say that Saryl usually tells everyone about the relationship between trees and humanoid races. He will then grow suspicious if the PCs don't mention having helped Saryl and refuse to explain anything more. If the PCs mention helping Saryl plant trees, Aler will tell them that they should have all the information they need.

Encounter 5 - Warning

That night as you sleep in the elves' forest village fever overcomes you. Sweat pours from your body and in the delirium you see hear voices and see visions.

You see Maelstrom lying prone on a black marble floor, and hear a continuous stream of apologies spilling from his lips as his forehead rests against the steaming floor. A great Efreeti stands menacingly over him with a flaming sword in his hand. With inhuman speed the great Efreeti grabs Maelstrom under the arm and jerks him to his feet. With his other hand the flaming sword splits the air on a collision course with Maelstrom's neck. At the last moment the hand turns and the great Efreet clasps Maelstrom to him in an embrace of fire and strength. "You have return to us Mael al Stromi. All is forgiven." Maelstrom whispers a relieved "Thank you, Uncle."

The scene fades and you see Maelstrom and his uncle kneeling before a molten gold throne upon which sits the largest Efreet you have seen yet. Across a flaming carpet from Maelstrom and his uncle kneels another group of snarling Efreet all the size of Maelstrom's uncle. The largest of these speaks. "Great burning lord, Bazidan of the flames, you have heard both my claim and that of the weak

spark. What is thy ruling." The Efreeti on the throne smiles wickedly and then speaks, "My last Amir al Ravvan, was a proud fool too. I will not be served by molten Efreeti any more. I require tempered warriors of solid flame. He who brings me that which the old Amir lost shall be his successor. Bring me the Orb of Allimar, and I will give you your emirate." This scene also fades.

You see Maelstrom standing before a shining black wall. He turns to gaze directly at you and says, "My friends I fear I have put you in enormous danger." With that you see the image of a gigantic ruby resting beneath a gnome's dead hands and hear the Pasha's words echo, "Bring me the Orb of Allimar."

In the morning the PCs will be shown back to the road and told that the grove is about three hours' journey. Aler and his people plan to join the PCs there for the funeral on the following morning.

Encounter 6 - Fire Attack

You spend the early hours of the morning traveling deeper into the forest. After your dream the previous night you expect to be attacked at any moment, but no attack has come. The constant canopy of trees has begun to periodically give way to forest meadows blooming with autumn flowers. You are about halfway across one of these meadows when you hear a cry behind you. Turning, you see several creatures step through a flaming portal about thirty feet behind you. Your anticipation was not in vain.

The creatures attacking the PCs are servants of Jaznel Ibn Ravvan, the other claimant to the dead Amir's title. Upon hearing of his subject's failure in using the Kossuthans to retrieve the Orb of Allimar, he had one of his sorcerers track the PCs magically so he could send a more powerful strike force to wrest the gem from them.

Total Levels 6 - 13

Grue, Harginn (1): Int Avg; AL NE; AC 3; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4+4 (fire); SA fire gout; SD *blink* during combat per spell, +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire based spells; MR nil SZ M; ML 15.

Total Levels 14 - 25

Grue, Harginn (4): Int Avg; AL NE; AC 3; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4+4 (fire); SA fire gout; SD *blink* during combat per spell,

+1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire based spells; MR nil SZ M; ML 15.

Total Levels 26 - 37

Salamander (5): Int High; AL CE; AC 5(head)/3(body); MV 9; HD 7+7; hp 45; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12 (tail), 1-6 (spear); SA heat 1-6 additional damage on any successful hit with spear or tail; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, impervious to fire based attacks, immune to sleep charm and hold spells, cold based attacks cause an additional point of damage per die; MR nil SZ M; ML 13.

Total Levels 38 - 56

Manscorpions (5): Int High; AL NE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 9; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8 (obsidian studded clubs) 1-4 tail (tail); SA Poison sting, save or die in 2d4 rounds; SD none; MR 20% SZ L; ML 13.

Manscorpion, Spellcaster (1): Int High; AL NE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 9; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8 (obsidian studded clubs) 1-4 tail (tail); SA Poison sting, save or die in 2d4 rounds, spells; SD none; MR 20% SZ L; ML 13.

Priest spells: 1st Level- *command, cause fear, sanctuary*; 2nd Level - *hold person, silence 15' radius*;

Total Levels 57+

Manscorpions (5): Int High; AL NE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 11; hp 85; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8 (obsidian studded clubs) 1-4 tail (tail); SA Poison sting, save or die in 2d4 rounds; SD none; MR 20% SZ L; ML 13.

Manscorpion, Spellcaster (1): Int High; AL NE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 12; hp 90; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8 (obsidian studded clubs) 1-4 tail (tail); SA Poison sting, save or die in 2d4 rounds, spells; SD none; MR 20% SZ L; ML 13.

Priest spells: 1st Level- *command, cause fear, sanctuary*; 2nd Level - *hold person, silence 15' radius*;

Iron Golem (1): Int Non; AL N; AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 4-40; SA poison gas; SD +3 or better weapon to hit, immune to all spells, healed by magical fire attacks, slowed by magical electrical attacks; SZ L; ML 20.

Encounter 7 - the Grove

You travel for several hours after defeating the minions from the plane of fire before you reach your destination. Finally, the road you have been following splits and you can see that the less traveled branch ends a few yards ahead, dead ending into an enormous wall of thorns.

At the side of the road, next to the wall is a large beveled stone. Carved upon the stone are the words, "This grove is dedicated to Meilikki and the power of friendship," and six names, "Poplar Greenleaf, Roberto Gnarledfist, Yadzooks Zazooks, Roundbelly 'Fingers' Onionfoot, Wirthal Smaltinor," and "Loftlal Lakthisis."

If the PCs helped the ranger and spoke with the elven chieftain, they should be able to deduce that they need to place a leave of the correct species on top of each name. The leaves correspond to the races of the adventurers, which were shared by Yadzooks' illusion in Encounter 1.

Redwoods = Elf = Poplar Greenleaf
Oak = Dwarf = Roberto Gnarledfist
Elm = Gnome = Yadzooks Zazooks
Maple = ½ Elf = Loftlal Lakthisis
Willow = Halfling = Roundbelly Onionfoot.
Poplar = Human = Wirthal Smaltinor

At least one of each species of tree required is able to be found within a hundred yards of the grove. When the appropriate leaf is placed on an adventurer's name a sudden gust of wind will blow the leaf away, and a ten foot wide portion of the wall of thorns will begin to unentangle itself. When all six leaves have been appropriately placed, the section of wall will have completely unwoven and retracted to grant the PCs access to the grove.

Encounter 8 - Succession

Upon entering the grove, you see that it is a shadowy place completely surrounded by the wall of thorns. There is a simple thatched hut with the head of a unicorn carved on the door beneath a gigantic oak near the center of the grove. Off to one side of the grove is a garden that has obviously not been tended in several seasons. On the side of the oak opposite the cottage are four smaller trees of varying ages that seem to be markers of some kind. You note that they are a redwood, an oak, a poplar, and a willow.

As you take in this sight, the wagon holding Yadzooks' corpse creaks heavily distracting you for a

moment. There is a subdued flash and abruptly the smell of sulfur fills the grove. Before you, mounted on a flaming steed, is a gigantic Efreeti in steaming black plate armor. He looks on you with irritation, "You have grown tiresome to me. I will enjoy killing you now." With that he draws a flaming sword and the horse begins to move in your direction.

You are startled by a voice behind you, "I will be dead before you are Amir, Jaznel Ibn Ravvan." Maelstrom, resplendent in red-hot chainmail and wielding curved obsidian sword, has rejoined you. The mounted Efreet's only response is a sneer.

At this point a final battle should ensue with Jaznel (and his followers where appropriate) on one side and Maelstrom and the PCs on the other. Jaznel will personally attack whomever he perceives as the greatest threat, typically Maelstrom at lower tiers. Jaznel has chosen to appear personally at this point because he is frustrated with the ineptitude of his servants thus far. Also, he has anticipated Maelstrom's return to reclaim the Orb and bring it to his uncle.

Total Levels 6 - 13

Maelstrom, Efreeti (1): Int Very; AL CN; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Jaznel ibn Ravvan, Noble Efreeti (1): Int Exc; AL LE; AC -2; MV 12 fl 30; HD 13; hp 100; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24+8; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR 15%; SZ L; ML 18.

For this tier Jaznel dismounts to fight and his nightmare moves to the ethereal plane to watch the battle. The nightmare alone could probably kill the party.

Total Levels 14 - 25

Maelstrom, Efreeti (1): Int Very; AL CN; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Jaznel ibn Ravvan, Noble Efreeti (1): Int Exc; AL LE; AC -2; MV 12 fl 30; HD 13; hp 100; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24+8; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR 15%; SZ L; ML 18.

Nightmare (1): Int Very; AL NE; AC -4; MV 15 fl 36; HD 6+6; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 5-10/5-10/2-8; SA none; SD noxious cloud, save vs.

paralyzation or -2 to hit and damage; MR nil; SZ L; ML 14.

Total Levels 26 - 37

Maelstrom, Efreeti (1): Int Very; AL CN; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Jaznel ibn Ravvan, Noble Efreeti (1): Int Exc; AL LE; AC -2; MV 12 fl 30; HD 13; hp 100; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24+8; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR 15%; SZ L; ML 18.

Nightmare (1): Int Very; AL NE; AC -4; MV 15 fl 36; HD 6+6; hp 45; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 5-10/5-10/2-8; SA none; SD noxious cloud, save vs. paralyzation or -2 to hit and damage; MR nil; SZ L; ML 14.

Common Efreet (2): Int Very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Total Levels 38 - 56

Maelstrom, Efreet (1): Int Very; AL CN; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Jaznel ibn Ravvan, Noble Efreeti (1): Int Exc; AL LE; AC -2; MV 12 fl 30; HD 13; hp 100; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24+8; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR 15%; SZ L; ML 18.

Nightmare (1): Int Very; AL NE; AC -4; MV 15 fl 36; HD 6+6; hp 54; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 5-10/5-10/2-8; SA none; SD noxious cloud, save vs. paralyzation or -2 to hit and damage; MR nil; SZ L; ML 14.

Common Efreet (4): Int Very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Efreeti Sorcerer, W8 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use cast at 10th level; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Wizard spells: 1st Level - *charm person, magic missile x2, protection from good*; 2nd Level - *flaming sphere, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, web*; 3rd Level - *fireball x2, , melf's minute meteors*; 4th Level - *fire shield (precast), wall of fire*.

Total Levels 57+

Maelstrom, Efreeti (1): Int Very; AL CN; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Jaznel ibn Ravvan, Noble Efreeti (1): Int Exc; AL LE; AC -2; MV 12 fl 30; HD 13; hp 100; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24+8; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR 15%; SZ L; ML 18.

Nightmare (7): Int Very; AL NE; AC -4; MV 15 fl 36; HD 6+6; hp 54; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 5-10/5-10/2-8; SA none; SD noxious cloud, save vs. paralyzation or -2 to hit and damage; MR nil; SZ L; ML 14.

Common Efreet (6): Int Very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Efreet Sorcerer, W10 (1): Int Very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9 fl 24; HD 10; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spell use cast at 10th level; SD fire resistant; MR Nil; SZ L; ML 16.

Wizard spells: 1st Level - *charm person, magic missile x2, protection from good*; 2nd Level - *flaming sphere, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, web*; 3rd Level - *fireball x2, , melf's minute meteors*; 4th Level - *fire shield (precast), wall of fire*; 5th Level - *cloudkill, wall of force*.

After Jaznel is defeated, Maelstrom will take the Orb of Allimar and return to the City of Brass. The PCs will be left to spend the evening in the grove before the funeral the following morning.

Encounter 9 - Ascension

It is just before sunrise and a great commotion outside the grove wakes everyone in your group. Elves begin pouring into the grove, some through the opening in the wall of thorns others come sliding down the great oak like a line of ants. Among the first of the elves to enter the grove is a group bearing a stout elm sapling. They immediately go over to the four other trees and begin to digging a final resting place for Yadzooks.

The elves begin to line up tight circles around the grave. They are silent and stern-looking now. Each is covered in colorful foliage and clay paints. It is as though the tribe has been dosed with a muted rainbow. A path has been left for you to bear the gnomes body to the grave they have dug for him.

At this point it is assumed that the PCs will act as pallbearers and place Yadzooks in the grave.

As you lay the gnome's body to rest, you turn and see Maelstrom and his uncle standing behind the circle of elves watching you in solemn approval. There is a gasp from the elves around you and turning to look into the grave you can see that Yadzooks' body has begun to emit a bright yellow light. A ghostly image of the gnome rises from the corpse and floats above the grove. "Thank you, my friends. Thank you." With that the image smiles and speeds east toward the rising sun.

A detail of elves places the elm sapling in the grave with the gnome's body and the fills the hole with earth. The remainder of the tribe disperses in silence with the same speed with which they arrived. You find yourselves alone in the grove with the Efreet.

Maelstrom's uncle grins at you. "You have my thanks as well." You note the Orb of Allimar burning dully in one ear. He snaps his fingers and a great carpet of gold and silk appears. "I am Amir Maraq al Hiquiz, thanks to you. Please sit." Maelstrom sits to his uncle's left as the Amir begins to speak.

"My nephew has told me of the danger you braved because of our situation and although it was unknown to you at the time you took this mission, your risk was great. Few can defy the powers of the land of flames and survive. Such bravery and strength must be rewarded. I have brought you three gifts. A sword of the sun, a ring of solid flame, and a box of true salt. Use them wisely." So saying, the Amir places a golden sword, a ruby earring and a mahogany box on the carpet. "Now Maelstrom and I must go. There are Djinn to fight." The Amir grins in anticipation and with a wave of his arm the carpet and both Efreet disappear.

At this point the PCs are left alone in the grove. When they leave, the wall of thorns will close behind them.

Treasure:

Sun blade

Ring of fire resistance

Mahogany Salt Box - persons sharing salt from this box are unable to take any hostile, violent, or aggressive action against each other for three days. The box may be refilled when empty, but salt removed from the box loses its power unless consumed in one hour.

The End

Experience Point Summary

Experience is calculated as follows for Living City events.

1. Sum the experience listed below for objectives.
2. Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-500 points). These should reward accurate character portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially.
3. Finally, multiply the total by the tier according to this chart:

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| Levels 6-13 | Tier 1 |
| Levels 14-25 | Tier 2 |
| Levels 26-37 | Tier 3 |
| Levels 38-56 | Tier 4 |
| Levels 57+ | Tier 5 |

PCs should get the experience points of the tier for which they qualify, regardless of which tier is actually played. For example, if you have a Tier 3 group and you have to bump the combats by one tier to challenge them, they still get the experience points for a Tier 3 group, not for a Tier 4 group.

Encounter Two

Defeating the Kossuthans. 100 xp

Encounter Three

All PCs plant a tree. 50 xp

Encounter Six

Defeating the Efreeti's servants 150 xp

Encounter Seven

Solving the puzzle to enter the grove 100 xp

Encounter Eight

Defeating Jaznel and servants 200 xp

Total Experience for Objectives: 600 xp

Roleplaying Experience: 0-500 xp

Total Possible Experience: 1,100 xp

For Tier 2: 2,200 xp

For Tier 3: 3,300 xp

For Tier 4: 4,400 xp

For Tier 5: 5,500 xp

Summary of Treasure

If it's not on this list, the PCs cannot keep it.

Encounter One

Potion of frost giant strength

Potion of flying

Potion of gaseous form

Encounter Nine

- *Sun blade*—this blade is the size of a bastard sword. However, its enchantment enables the *sun blade* to be wielded as if it were a short sword with respect to encumbrance, weight, speed factor, and ease of use (i.e., the weapon appears to all viewers to be a bastard sword, and inflicts bastard sword damage, but the wielder feels and reacts as if the weapon were a short sword). Any individual able to use either a bastard sword or a short sword with proficiency is proficient in the use of a *sun blade*.

The glowing golden blade of the weapon is equal to a +2 sword. In addition, the blade has a special *sunray* power. Once per adventure, upon command, the blade can be swung vigorously above the head, and it will shed a bright yellow radiance that is like full daylight. The radiance begins shining in a 10-foot radius around the sword-wielder, spreading outward at 5 feet per round for 10 rounds thereafter, creating a globe of light with a 60-foot radius. The bright radiance persists for as long as the wielder swings the sword in a circle above its head. When the swinging stops, the radiance fades to a dim glow that persists for another turn before disappearing entirely.

- *Ring of fire resistance*
- *Mahogany Salt Box* - persons sharing salt from this box are unable to take any hostile, violent, or aggressive action against each other for three days. The box may be refilled when empty, but salt removed from the box loses its power unless consumed in one hour.

Fame Award

None. No one will really be talking about this adventure, at least not in Ravens Bluff.