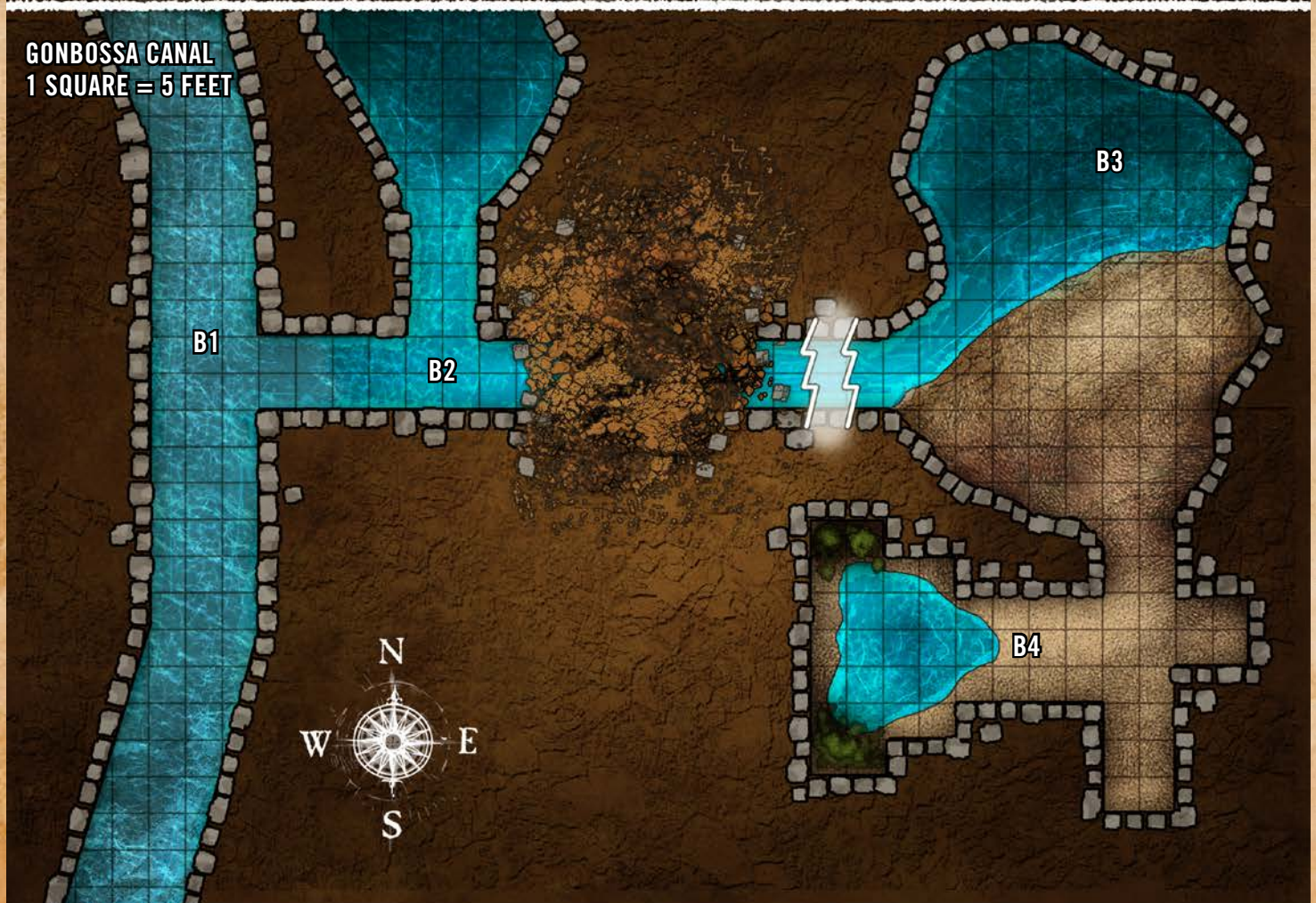


PATHFINDER®

THRESHOLD OF KNOWLEDGE

A PATHFINDER ADVENTURE FOR 1ST-LEVEL CHARACTERS **BY JABARI WEATHERS**



PATHFINDER

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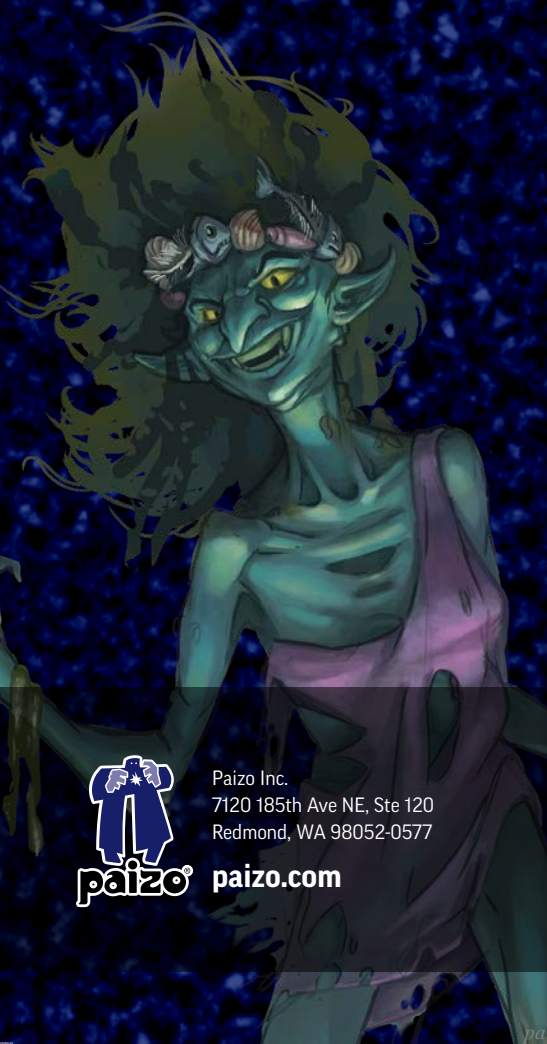
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Threshold of Knowledge is a Pathfinder Adventure designed for five 1st-level characters and uses the rules from the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* and *Pathfinder Bestiary*. This adventure is designed for play in the Pathfinder campaign setting, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd.

ON THE COVER

Ekene and Ufi prepare to face off against the vile hag, Ngaja, in this beautiful cover by Luis Salas Lastra.



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Adventure Background

Arcane knowledge pulses through the canals of Nantambu, and that knowledge runs from the city's heart: the magical school known as the Magaambya. The Song-Wind City was built up around the generous ambitions and desire of Old-Mage Jatembe and the Ten Magic Warriors who followed him, united in their desire to share knowledge of Golarion's mysteries of the mundane and magical alike. The Magaambya and, by association, Nantambu as a whole have fostered a culture of education and discovery for those who are willing to work for it and share in it.

More malevolent forces also seek to cross the threshold of knowledge that the Magaambya acts as a bridge to, and their goal is not one of sharing, but of domination. In an attempt to gain further power and knowledge, the sea hag Ngaja set her sights on secrets within the Magaambya. Afraid to trespass on the school grounds herself, Ngaja spent several weeks beguiling two younger

students to win their aid. With promises of magical power and great treasures dancing in their heads, the students began the work of acquiring information for Ngaja. Unbeknownst to them, Ngaja has no intention to uphold her end of the bargain. These misguided students are merely pawns in Ngaja's cruel machinations.

Left uncontested, Ngaja's schemes mean the end of the Magaambya, but the school is a place of great learning and even greater heroes. Several young students will find themselves embroiled in the sea hag's plot and have a chance to put an end to her wicked plans. This adventure is designed for a group of four or five 1st-level heroes. Groups who want to start right away can play using the pregenerated characters found on pages 11–15. This adventure gives promising students the chance to become heroes by saving the world's greatest magic school. This adventure also serves as a wonderful introduction for new players to Pathfinder Second Edition, and to the wider hobby of tabletop roleplaying games!

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The Initiation

Takulu Ot, known as Teacher Ot among the students and faculty of the Magaambya, gathers the heroes together within the darkness of early dawn in the Indigo Hall, a building dedicated to agricultural and medicinal teachings. Teacher Ot is the heroes' sponsor and holds responsibility for this group of initiates' presences in the Magaambya.

Read or paraphrase the following to get started.

Teacher Ot addresses the group with a welcoming warmth. "Today," he says, "begins your growth within the world. What better place than in the Indigo Hall, the building dedicated to the tradition established by the magic warrior, Ibex? Their work was the foundation of many medicines we use to this day and have since shared with the rest of Golarion in one fashion or another." He gestures at a still, mirrorlike pool in the circular plaza and sits on one of the four curving glass-blown benches surrounding the wide, ovular pool. "Community is the cornerstone on which the Magaambya and Nantambu grow. Without our community, we have nothing and learn nothing," he says. "Today, you join our communities—both of this city and of our school. Learn from them; I guarantee they will learn from you in kind."

Teacher Ot hands each student a *seeking bracelet*, a magic bracelet made of teal beads with one slightly larger burgundy bead strung among each. "We'll have your first lesson today in my office in the Heron Archives, but before we do, I want you to meet your first community contact, the fisherwoman Alandri. Help her with whatever tasks she has this morning, then meet at my office at midday for your lesson. If you make a mess that you can't clean up yourself, Alandri will summon me by crushing this red bead to tend to the issue. Make sure that does not happen."

Teacher Ot begins to walk from the overgrown plaza, looking behind him as if signaling to follow. "You can find Alandri at her home a mile and half northwest of here, opposite the canals near Sharrowsmith's Exports. She'll be expecting you before the sun finishes rising. Off you go!"

If the players are new to Pathfinder, take this time to allow them to introduce their characters to one another and become familiar with how their characters are supposed to work. You can also provide an opportunity for light roleplaying as the heroes leave the Indigo Hall.

Nantambu is overwhelming. The night stars are still visible in the slowly brightening blue of dawn, but the city already bustles around the initiates in a dizzying choreography. The floral scents of the Indigo Hall give way to a peaty mildew wafting from the nearby Gonbossa canal. From deeper in the city, the sweet scent of flatbreads being prepared fills the air.

As the heroes begin to leave the Magaambya grounds and step out into the greater city, they hear another student call out to them.

A grinning dwarf clad in full plate runs out from the Indigo Hall, waving. "I overheard where you're headed. Want to race to Alandri's stall? I'm headed in that same direction to help with Sharrowsmith. I helped Alandri a lot during my Perquisite, and I know the quickest way to get there!"

The dwarf offers a handshake to the slightest of the group, introducing himself as Haibram. He explains his route to reach the stall, and before the group can fully process his directions, he's off to the races, running ahead. Haibram yells for the heroes to follow him, insisting that they'll reach the stall in no time if they can keep up.

RACE ACROSS NANTAMBU

Haibram's directions are helpful, but he immediately commits to the race after sharing the route—whether the group accepted or not. To win, the heroes must attempt a series of skill checks. Each skill check represents a point where the one of the heroes catch sight of Haibram. Have each hero take one of the following challenges, but present them to the group in the following sequence.

Keep track of the heroes' successes as they race. A critical success grants a +1 circumstance bonus to the next hero on their skill check. A failure or critical failure doesn't cause the heroes to lose sight of Haibram, but enough successes will allow the heroes to win the race.

Haibram feints and darts through the crowd in an unexpected direction, having never clarified which way "north" actually was to the group. A hero can attempt a DC 10 Society check to Recall Knowledge of Haibram's directions and apply them to the race at hand.

Eventually Haibram comes to the edges of the residencies. He jumps onto and off a passing water taxi in one of the canals to reach the next city block. A hero can attempt a DC 12 Athletics check to keep pace.

As the heroes arrive back in the city block, the craftspeople start setting up their wares for the day's business. Haibram anticipates this and opts for the side alleys at the last second. The heroes don't have enough time to split off, so they have to weave through the crowd. Have a hero attempt a DC 12 Acrobatics check.

The race causes a ruckus among the crowd, and some Nantambu guards start chasing down the heroes. Another hero must attempt a DC 10 Stealth check to Hide from the guards.

As Haibram and the heroes hang a left onto Alandri's street, a rancher moves his team of hogs across the road, blocking the path. At this point, the remaining hero can attempt an Athletics check to leap over the hogs, an Acrobatics check to weave between them, a Nature check to convince the hogs to move faster, or a Performance check to distract the hogs and make an opening to the shack. Regardless of the skill used, the DC is 15. If you

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are playing with a party of four, have each of the heroes attempt the skill check of their choice instead.

If the heroes have at least two successes before reaching Alandri's street, they have a chance to win. As long as one hero succeeds in evading the hogs, the heroes have won the race! If all four heroes attempt a skill check, the one with the highest result is the winner. On a failure, Haibram reaches the shack just before the heroes.

If the heroes win, Haibram gives them two minor elixirs of life. Regardless of the result, Haibram thanks the heroes for a fun race and takes his leave just as the first rays of the sun hit Alandri's shack.

ALANDRI'S HOME

With the race over, read or paraphrase the following.

Alandri's wood and clay row house sits near the canal bridge, a sign hanging over the front door displaying her name. The unusual front door is a mosaic of glass scales with the abstract image of a royal-blue fish swimming in the sky. A gnome wearing a suit of dark scales like a second skin opens the door and assesses your group, her wry, scrutinizing eyes peering from beneath wild purple locks. Alandri cracks a dimpled smile and casually says, "You're late."

After the heroes enter her home, Alandri explains what she would like them to do. The heroes will help her catch the day's wares to sell later on in town. After gesturing to the now-cold breakfast, she explains that their tardiness reflects poorly on Teacher Ot. Alandri takes one of their *seeking bracelets* (page 10) and crushes the bead to summon their teacher to the house. When he doesn't show up after several minutes, she shrugs and gives the group a stern lecture, reaffirming the importance of punctuality as she proceeds to serve them reheated food.

Before they eat, Alandri presents each hero with a shiny black scale that shimmers different colors under the light. She recommends that the heroes consume their *bubbling scale* (page 10) with their meal, as it goes down easier with food and drink. Once the heroes consume their *bubbling scales*, scales cover each of their bodies. The air tastes more pronounced, and Alandri explains that the scales allow the heroes to hold their breath for longer periods of time while they work.

The Deep Dive

Alandri explains her method of fishing in the Vanji river nearby. Some of the more challenging quarry she hopes to catch swim through the river early in the morning, and she needs the group's help to acquire them before noon. After going over safety measures and instructions, she works with the heroes to seize her catch for the day.

Each hero can attempt one skill check of their choosing to represent their work in fishing with Alandri. Ask each player what skill they would like to use to try to land a catch. Some attempts might include Crafting to make a snare to catch a fish, Athletics to Swim quick enough to catch a fish, Nature to predict a fish's movement, or Stealth to stay still long enough to catch a fish unawares. Encourage players to choose a skill check and come up with an explanation on how they use it in their work. The typical DC for these checks is DC 12, but more outlandish attempts should be DC 15.

On a success, a hero catches 1 fish. On a critical success, they catch 2 fish instead. So long as the heroes catch at least 3 fish between them, Alandri is satisfied. If they catch more than 5 creatures, Alandri is thrilled and grants the group a *lion badge* (page 10) as a reward for their work. With the day's work done, Alandri hands them each an additional *bubbling scale* to use for tomorrow's work. She instructs them to arrive at her home at dawn and reminds them to be on time.

The Investigation

As noon approaches, the heroes should make their way to Teacher Ot's office in the Heron Archives for their next lesson.

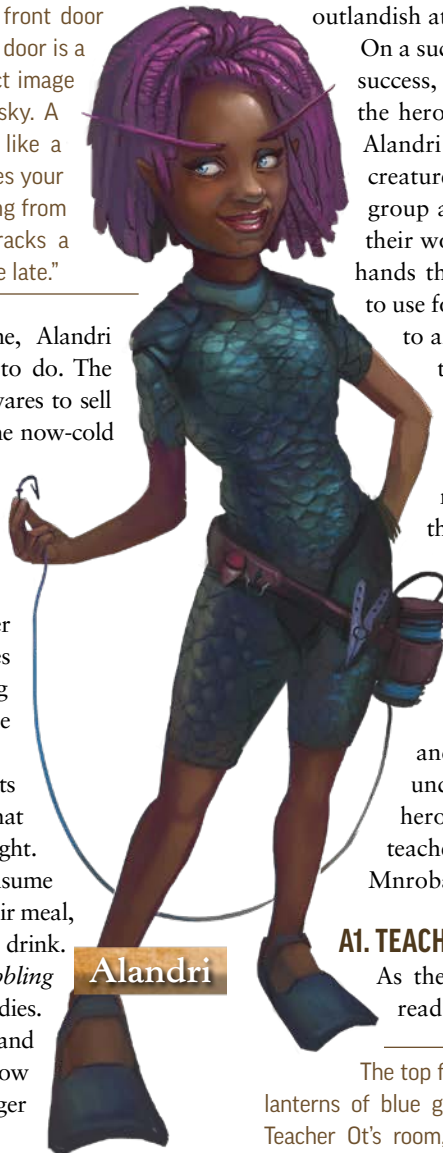
However, not all is as it seems, and the heroes will quickly realize that Teacher Ot is missing. Mnroba and Okulou, the two students in league with the sea hag Ngaja, broke into Teacher Ot's office, kidnapped him, and took him to Ngaja's temporary lair underneath Nantambu. For now, the heroes have a chance to investigate their teacher's empty office and try to pick up Mnroba and Okulou's trail.

A1. TEACHER OT'S OFFICE

LOW 1

As the heroes arrive at Teacher Ot's office, read or paraphrase the following.

The top floor of the Heron Archives is dimly lit with lanterns of blue glass, but a sliver of amber light escapes Teacher Ot's room, reflecting off of the stone through the



Alandri

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network of hallways. The door is slightly ajar, and beneath it, a puddle of water trickles into the hallway. The tapping of dripping water emanates from within the room in a dissonant rhythm. With each tap, the expanding pool of water reddens with a thickening cloud of blood.

Inside, Teacher Ot's office is in total disarray. Chairs have been overturned; books, scrolls, and writing implements have been knocked off a cracked walnut desk; and tiny bits of paper float in the puddles along the floor. The glass skylight overhead has been shattered; its jagged fragments litter the damp floor, glittering in the afternoon sunlight. A large glass display case along the left wall has also been smashed open—its contents are nowhere to be seen.

Small, skittish insects swarm around a pool of violet ichor spilling out of a cracked bowl on the desk. Another, larger group of insects, each the size of a child's palm, descend from the walls and ceiling. They land throughout the office and begin to aggressively hiss and snap!

Creatures: Teacher Ot kept young and adult flash beetles in the glass display on the shelf behind his desk to serve as decoration. He also kept a magical bowl within the case to keep the beetles fed and pacified. Mnroba and Okulou knocked over the case during their attack on Teacher Ot, which unleashed the beetles into the office. As a result of the attack, the adult beetles are agitated and frightened and lash out at the heroes when they enter the room.

During combat, the beetles attack the nearest hero, each changing focus to the hero who dealt the most damage to the respective beetle in the last round. They don't pursue the heroes beyond this room and they attempt to flee the room if reduced below half their maximum Hit Points.

Clever heroes might be able to get the beetles to stop their attack without harming them. At the start of combat, have each hero attempt a DC 13 Insect Lore or Nature Check to Recall Knowledge about the beetles. On a success, a hero recognizes the ichor on the desk as food for the beetles. A hero next to the desk can use an Interact action to scoop up some ichor and a second Interact action to present it to a beetle. Doing so automatically pacifies the beetle as it begins to feed, removing the beetle from combat.

FLASH BEETLES (4)

Pathfinder Bestiary 41

Initiative Athletics +4

CREATURE -1

Story Award: If the heroes pacify or otherwise neutralize the flash beetles without harming the creatures, award them XP as if they had defeated the creatures in combat.

Searching the Room

Once the combat has resolved, each hero can attempt a DC 14 Perception check to search the room. On a success, a hero locates a small wooden mask beneath the desk. This is a student's mask shaped like a rabbit, and its cord has been torn, suggesting it was pulled off during the attack. A critical success also turns up a small sheet of paper among the debris. The paper is marked with a strange rune and several notes analyzing various aspects of the rune. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Arcana or Nature check determines that the rune is related to conjuration magic, and the analysis on the notes is actually incorrect and led to false conclusions. A critical success determines that the rune is related to the teleportation of large masses of water.

Whether or not the heroes find any of the above evidence, they do discover a set of damp footprints that lead out of the office and into the hall. The footprints have yet to dry up and the heroes can follow them with ease to the reshelving room on this floor.

A2. RESHELVING ROOM

Following the footsteps leads to an elaborate door hewn from ebony and stone. The door has no discernible handle, but instead is inset with 12 fist-sized icons in a circle. Clockwise from the top, these engraved symbols include a star burst, blue leopard, black heron, red hyena, grey elephant, golden snake, single leaf, black ibex, frog of shifting colors, emerald spider, walnut hawk, and white bull—the Ten Magic Warriors, along with some common arcane iconography and four violet gems depicting the essences of magic, all surround a noble portrait depicting Jatembe himself.

Show the illustration of the door on the next page to the players, explaining the above mechanisms where needed, and then read or paraphrase the following.

Across from this beautiful door sits a clock with a mirror background set two feet off the ground, spanning a seven-foot radius. Every hour on the clock is positioned over a reflected icon from the door. A subtle mosaic display of a map of Nantambu corresponds to where Jatembe's portrait is positioned. On it, a canal near the Magaambya labeled "Gonbossa" has been obviously marked with a damp fingerprint. Three gold arms point at various icons on the clock. The thickest points down to the lower left, toward the ibex. The middle switches from the bull to the leopard as the thinnest laps it, ticking across each icon.

Should the group try to open the door, it doesn't budge. Instead, attempting to open the door or pressing the button with Jatembe's face causes the door to telepathically speak to the heroes. An ancient, wizened voice makes a simple request in the heroes' minds: tell the time.

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The group gets four chances to solve this puzzle by pressing the icons on the door in a sequence mirroring the positions of the arms of the clock: first pressing the hour (the ibex icon highlighted by the thickest hand), then the minute (the leopard covered by the minute hand), and then the second (the thinnest hand), before opening the door by pressing Jatembe's icon. Each press of an icon causes one of the four inset purple gems to light up in clockwise order (hinting that four presses are needed). The heroes must time their third icon press to correspond to wherever the clock's thinnest hand is positioned as it ticks away seconds. If the icons have been pressed correctly, the gems' glow shifts from purple to blue on the third press.

A hero who succeeds at a DC 13 Arcana, Crafting, or Thievery check discerns how the first three button presses correspond with the time and knows which order to press them. On a critical success, they also realize that the final button press is that of Jatembe's icon. If the heroes are successful, all of the icons begin to glow blue, followed by a satisfying click as the door opens itself.

If the heroes are unable to solve the puzzle after four attempts, an eccentric elven instructor named Nhyria approaches. She proceeds to open the door herself before asking the heroes what they need inside. (Alternatively, she approaches as the heroes solve the puzzle.) She mentions that inside is a "reshelving room" that holds supplies and assumes that the heroes are looking for something within. Nhyria becomes immediately distracted, however, as water begins to spill out from within as the door opens. From here, the heroes can investigate the room as described below.

When the door opens, a large current of stinking water flows out into the hall, carrying several arcane articles with it. The heroes find a partially flooded storage room inside. With a brief search of the room, the heroes notice a suspicious cart surrounded by all sorts of supplies in the far corner. Water bubbles from beneath the overturned cart and the heroes can locate a magical parchment underneath it.

The parchment beneath the cart bears a strange magical rune on it and is the source of the foul water flooding the chamber. A hero who examines the rune and makes

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a successful DC 15 Arcana, Nature, Occultism, Religion, or Thievery check is able to discern the means of disabling the rune and putting an end to the flooding. A critical success also reveals that the rune was improperly scribed, which led to the rune producing only a minor amount of water, rather than the massive torrent intended.

If the heroes are unable to stop the water on their own, Nhyria disables the rune herself, noting that the horrid prankster didn't even scribe the rune correctly. If the heroes were able to open the door on their own, Nhyria says it's good they opened it before the water level got too high and gives them a *scroll of magic weapon* as thanks. She then gathers some tools from the room and goes on her way, disgusted as she moves through the fetid water in the hall.

While inside the reshelving room, the heroes can attempt a DC 12 Society check to Recall Knowledge identifying the origin of the waters in the room. On a success, the heroes recognize the water's smell as similar to the Gonbossa canal just a few minutes west of the school grounds.

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

The marking on the map and identifying the water's source should be enough to point the heroes toward the Gonbossa canal. The heroes might want to head there immediately. If so, feel free to move on to the next section of the adventure. The heroes might be inclined to find help, however. In this case, allow the heroes to spin their wheels for a bit. They might look for assistance among the faculty but find that their concerns are quickly dismissed. Most answers amount to promises to look into the matter later or even incredulity at the notion that something is wrong with Teacher Ot. Make it clear that the task falls to the heroes. If they need a hint, plenty of other students complain openly about the stench of the nearby Gonbossa canal. Since it was marked on the clockface map across from the reshelving room, it seems as ideal a place as any to search next.

The Inundation

The sea hag Ngaja chose the Gonbossa canal as her hideout due to its connection to the waters of her swamp home outside of Nantambu. After kidnapping Teacher Ot, Mnroba and Okulou brought him to Ngaja, expecting a reward. Instead, Ngaja attacked the pair and took them into her makeshift lair deep within the canal. She then tasked her minions to collapse the canal tunnel to give her as much time as she wanted to draw secrets out from Teacher Ot.

When the heroes arrive at the canal, they are able to enter the canal tunnels without any opposition. They begin their exploration of the tunnels at location **B1** below.

B1. CANAL ENTRANCE

LOW 1

The dark canal tunnel grows wider here. Clouds of spores hang

in the air, glowing bright blue and amber. The walls are covered in glowing mushrooms that continue further down the tunnel, which continues ahead and branches off to the side.

This main tunnel connects to the canal running through Nantambu. The water in the tunnels is only ankle deep and even Small creatures can move through it with little issue. The glowing mushrooms sprouting from the walls provide dim light throughout the tunnel and the chambers beyond.

Creature: Hiding among the mushrooms is a fungus leshy by the name of Gusa. Gusa is the only survivor of a small group of leshys that used to dwell along this part of the canal. He only survived by offering his service to Ngaja in exchange for his safety and that of the rest of his "family," the remaining mushrooms in the tunnel.

As the heroes arrive, Gusa hides halfway down the tunnel, but he's quick to gather his courage and face these new intruders, lurching forward and demanding the heroes go no further. He insists multiple times even as the heroes approach that he's not looking for a fight, but he must defend what's his. If the heroes attack first or get within 10 feet of him, Gusa attacks. He fights to the death in an attempt to defend his family.

The heroes can attempt to talk down Gusa with a successful DC 16 Diplomacy or Nature check. If they succeed, Gusa explains what he knows about the situation, believing that the heroes might be able to put an end to Ngaja. He can tell the heroes that Ngaja is further down the canal and took some humans with her. Gusa believes that Ngaja is attempting to "gain knowledge" from a "tutor" in a closed off part of the canal. He also warns the heroes of the river devils just around the corner.

GUSA

CREATURE 2

Male fungus leshy (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 219)

Initiative Perception +6

Story Award: If the heroes are able to talk Gusa down and prevent him from fighting, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.

B2. TUNNEL COLLAPSE

MODERATE 1

A connecting tunnel continues to the east for several feet, but a large collapse prevents immediate access further down it. A small side tunnel leads to a pool of water to the north and a larger tunnel connects to the main canal on the western end.

Ngaja recruited a number of river devils, an inland cousin of the ferocious sea devils. This group of river devils used their frenzied strength to collapse the tunnel here, crushing the majority of them in the process. The pool of water to the north eventually connects to the rest of the canals.

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Investigating the tunnels reveals that the floor collapsed in the process, creating a small pool of water beneath the rubble. This pool is large enough to swim through. The heroes can hold their breath and Swim through with a successful DC 15 Athletics check. If the heroes remember, they can make use of their *bubbling scales* to hold their breath for longer. In this case, they don't need to attempt a check at all.

Creature: The remaining river devils lie in wait in the pool in the northern section of this area. If the heroes are aware of the devils, they automatically notice the devils' presence. Otherwise, the river devils attempt to ambush the heroes. In this case, the heroes are flat-footed until they take their turn in the first round of combat. Regardless of the heroes' awareness, the devils fight to the death.

RIVER DEVILS (2)

CREATURE 1

Weak sea devil scout (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 286)

Initiative Stealth +6

Treasure: A small pack lies against the wall of the northern tunnel here. The river devils took the pack from Okulou but abandoned it when they couldn't find any food. Inside is a bundle of four *minor healing potions*, which are clearly labelled. The pack also contains two vials of alchemist's fire, two vials of bottled lightning, and a beautiful sickle which is in fact a *wordreaper* (page 10).

B3. BEACH

LOW 1

The tunnel opens up to a large underground pool and a dirt shore along the southeastern half of the room. A small tunnel continues beyond to the south.

The tunnel continues for several hundred feet (as indicated by the jagged white lines on the map) before terminating at this underground pool.

Creature: Ngaja set her pet crocodile, Jubo, to defend this area. Ngaja is currently dozing off in the far end of the pool. If the heroes are attempting to be quiet, they have a chance to sneak past Jubo. Since he's asleep, his Perception DC is only 13. In this case, he remains asleep once the heroes leave the room, even if there is fighting from the grotto beyond. Otherwise, Jubo wakes up as the heroes step up onto the beach and rushes to attack.

JUBO

CREATURE 2

Crocodile (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 67)

Initiative Perception +7

Story Award: If the heroes are able to sneak past Jubo, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.

B4. GROTTO

MODERATE 1

The tunnel leads to a pleasant pool of water surrounded by bushes, creating a makeshift grotto. A trio of humans lie bound and unconscious, slumped over against the western wall beyond the pool. Short alcoves lead east and south of the grotto, but the only way in or out is from the north.

Ngaja took some time to shape this incomplete tunnel into something resembling a home. The pool of water and the bushes are filled with a variety of creatures such as frogs, lizards, and snakes that Ngaja keeps as pets (but also as snacks). The pool itself is as shallow as the water in the rest of the tunnels.

Creatures: Ngaja is sitting in the pool, seething with frustration. Her attempts at convincing Teacher Ot to tell her the secrets of halcyon magic have thus far been unsuccessful. When the heroes arrive, Ngaja's animals chitter and croak to alert her. During combat, Ngaja attempts to use her Dread Gaze against anyone who engages her directly before resorting to melee attacks with her claws. Ngaja's animals continue to croak and hiss but are otherwise harmless.

NGAJA

CREATURE 3

Sea hag (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 200)

Initiative Perception +10

Rescuing Teacher Ot

Once the heroes defeat Ngaja, they can tend to Teacher Ot, Mnroba, and Okulou. Teacher Ot is only mildly injured, though the other two have more serious injuries. Teacher Ot comes to almost immediately and is quick to thank the heroes for their help. He asks the heroes about the day's events as they undo his bindings.

Once the heroes release Teacher Ot's bindings, read or paraphrase the following.

Teacher Ot stands up with a warm smile on his face. "This isn't exactly what I intended for your first lesson, but I'm glad you found me. Unfortunately, we don't have much time." He gestures to the two injured students. "Mnroba and Okulou confessed their part in helping out this hag with her schemes. It seems she tasked the two with placing a number of magical runes throughout the Heron Archives intending to flood the Magaambya with the waters from this canal. She would then claim the Magaambya as her own domain. Luckily for us, Okulou was never very skilled at producing runes, so I believe we may still have some time to prevent this attack. I'll tend to these two and then alert the rest of the staff. I'm trusting you to take care of those runes. Now, go!"

The heroes might wish to have Teacher Ot with them to help with the runes, but he insists that the heroes go on their own, as it's too dangerous to bring Mnroba and

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Okulou along. Additionally, he notes that the heroes have already encountered one of these runes, so their experience will surely help them with disabling the rest of the runes.

AWASH IN THE BRINE

MODERATE 1

As the heroes arrive at the Heron Archives, they find the top floor flooded with knee-high water and see the faculty evacuating the students from the area, leaving the heroes as the only ones around to stop the flooding.

The heroes need to locate the four hidden magical runes around the top floor, noted by the dots on the map on the inside cover. The runes are hidden behind chairs, underneath tables, or obscured beneath objects around the floor. The heroes automatically notice a rune once they are within 20 feet of it. Disabling the rune requires a total of two Interact actions. If the heroes recognize the rune on the paper in Teacher Ot's office or disable the rune in the reshelving room themselves, they know the intricacies of the rune and only require a single Interact action to disable a rune.

Creature: Unfortunately, the flooding runes have inadvertently summoned a brine shark. The water is deep enough for the shark to swim through, and the creature starts off in the hall just south of Teacher Ot's office. The shark uses hit and run tactics and attempts to use the runes to maneuver about the floor. If the shark swims over one of the active runes, it randomly teleports to another active rune. When the shark teleports, roll a d4 to determine which rune it moves to. This teleportation immediately ends the shark's movement, so it must Stride again to keep swimming after teleporting. The brine shark fights until destroyed. Disabling all four runes dismisses the brine shark as if it were defeated.

BRINE SHARK

CREATURE 3

Pathfinder Bestiary 152

Initiative Perception +8

Story Award: If the heroes are able to disable the runes before slaying the brine shark, award them XP as if they had defeated it in combat.

CONCLUSION

With the disruption of Ngaja's runes, the heroes have finally put an end to the sea hag's scheme. The heroes have earned a chance to rest and the recognition of not only Teacher Ot but the rest of the Magaambya's faculty and their fellow students. A week after the events, Teacher Ot is fully recovered and calls the heroes to his office.

Read or paraphrase the following to conclude the adventure.

Teacher Ot has a warm look on his face as he gets up from behind his desk. "Welcome to the Magaambya,

esteemed initiates. You've acquitted yourselves quite well in your first week of study and saved my life. Thank you. The Magaambya and Nantambu are built on community first, and you have all shown you understand this deeply. We're truly fortunate to have such promising students join us"—he smiles knowingly—"no matter how much trouble you might get up to. No matter which paths you might take, I believe you all will bring honor to the school." With that, Teacher Ot gestures to the door. "Now you better get going, or you'll be late to help Alandri!"



Ngaja



ADVENTURE TOOLBOX

As a magic school, the Magaambya has many unusual treasures tucked away on dusty shelves and in hidden nooks. It's not unusual for curious students to discover overlooked magic items, rare spells, or fragments of forgotten lore.

Items

The following new items appear in this adventure.

BUBBLING SCALE

ITEM 2

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Price 5 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk –

Activate ♦ Interact

This dark, iridescent scale is about the size of a small coin. When you swallow the scale, you immediately grow a patch of scales that cover the majority of your body. For 1 hour, you can hold your breath for 15 rounds plus your Constitution modifier (instead of 5 rounds + your Constitution modifier) before drowning. It has no effect in non-aquatic environments that require you to hold your breath. After this time, the scales wither and fall off your body.



Bubbling Scale

LION BADGE

ITEM 4

UNCOMMON ABJURATION CONSUMABLE MAGICAL TALISMAN

Price 15 gp

Usage affixed to armor; Bulk –

Activate ♦ envision; Trigger You gain the frightened condition as a result of a Will save; Requirements You're an expert in Will saves.

This plain wooden badge has the face of a roaring lion etched onto its surface. When you activate this talisman, reduce the value of your frightened condition by 1 (to a minimum of 0). When this talisman is used, the image of the lion fades and the item becomes a plain, non-magical wooden badge.

SEEKING BRACELETS

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON ABJURATION CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 12 gp

Usage worn bracelet; Bulk –

Activate ♦♦ envision, Interact

Both beaded bracelets in this pair have an even larger bead in their center. The bracelets are magically linked and only interact with their counterpart from the same pair. When you crush the largest bead to activate the bracelet, it creates a mental alert in the mind of the wearer of the paired bracelet. This alert works at any distance as long as both bracelets are on the same plane.

WORDREAPER

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON DIVINATION MAGICAL

Price 55 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

The blade of this +1 sickle is engraved to look like the curving feather of a particularly elaborate quill. The wooden handle has a pen nib at the base. You can use the *wordreaper's* handle as an ink pen and it never runs out of ink.

Activate ♦♦♦ Interact; Frequency once per day; Effect You use the *wordreaper* to inscribe the words "read by" and your name inside a non-magical literary work (such as a non-magical book, scroll, or play). You immediately gain cursory knowledge of the literary work as though you had skimmed it for 5 minutes.

Spells

The heroes may find the following new spells useful in this adventure.

GRITTY WHEEZE

SPELL 1

UNCOMMON AIR EARTH EVOCATION

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Area 15-foot cone

Saving Throw Fortitude; Duration see below

You exhale desiccating grit and sand in a small cloud. Creatures in the area take 2d4 bludgeoning damage and must attempt a Fortitude save. Water creatures and plant creatures use the outcome one degree of success worse than the result of their saving throw.

Critical Success The creature takes no damage.

Success The creature takes half damage.

Failure The creature takes full damage and is dazzled for 1 round.

Critical Failure The creature takes double damage and is dazzled for 1 minute.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 2d4.

NETTLESKIN

SPELL 1

UNCOMMON PLANT TRANSMUTATION

Traditions primal

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Duration 1 minute

Thorns sprout from your body; they pass through and don't damage any clothing or armor you wear. Adjacent creatures that hit you with a melee or unarmed attack take 1d4 piercing damage as the nettles jab them and break off. Each time a creature takes damage in this way, *nettleskin's* duration decreases by 1 round.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 1d4.

THRESHOLD OF KNOWLEDGE



EKENE

Many in the Mwangi Expanse believe Ekujae elves are dedicated isolationists, but they are actually close allies of the Magaambya. On a trip to deliver relics there, two Ekujae lore-bearers brought their daughter, Ekene. After concluding their business, they told Ekene that she was to stay and learn. Her first lonely night in the dormitory was also the first time the serious young elf ever wept.

Ekene spent her youth training to be one of the Ekujae's defenders. She believed the warrior's road was her life's path, not that of a scholar. She works hard at her studies to make her parents proud, even though she still doesn't feel like she belongs. Ekene's traditional Ekujae paint markings have faded since her arrival and she has intentionally chosen not to reapply them. She hopes to have her family apply new markings upon her return that better represent the person she will become upon leaving the Magaambya, whether or not it's who they expect her to be.

Ekene is generally amiable, but is particularly close with Muruwa, as the two share a love for climbing trees and spending time outdoors.

only Strikes she can make are crane wing attacks. While in Crane Stance, reduce the DC for Ekene's High Jump and Long Jump by 5, and when she Leaps, she can move an additional 5 feet horizontally or 2 feet vertically.

Flurry of Blows ♦ **Frequency** Once per turn; **Effect** Ekene makes two unarmed Strikes. If both hit the same creature, combine their damage for the purpose of resistances and weaknesses. Apply her multiple attack penalty to the Strikes normally.

Ancestry Feat Otherworldly Magic

Class Feat Crane Stance

Skill Feats Cat Fall

EKENE

UNIQUE LG MEDIUM ELF HUMANOID

Female elf monk 1

Heritage seer elf

Background martial disciple

Perception +4; low-light vision

Languages Common, Elven, Mwangi

Skills Acrobatics +7, Arcana +4, Athletics +6, Nature +4, Stealth +7, Survival +4, Warfare Lore +4

Str 16, **Dex** 18, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Items lesser alchemist's fire (2), backpack, chalk (10), dagger (2), minor elixir of life (2), rope, writing set, 9 sp

AC 19; **Fort** +5; **Ref** +9; **Will** +6

HP 16

Speed 30 feet

Melee ♦ fist +7 (agile, finesse, nonlethal, unarmed), **Damage** 1d6+3 bludgeoning

Melee ♦ crane wing +7 (agile, finesse, nonlethal, unarmed), **Damage** 1d6+3 bludgeoning

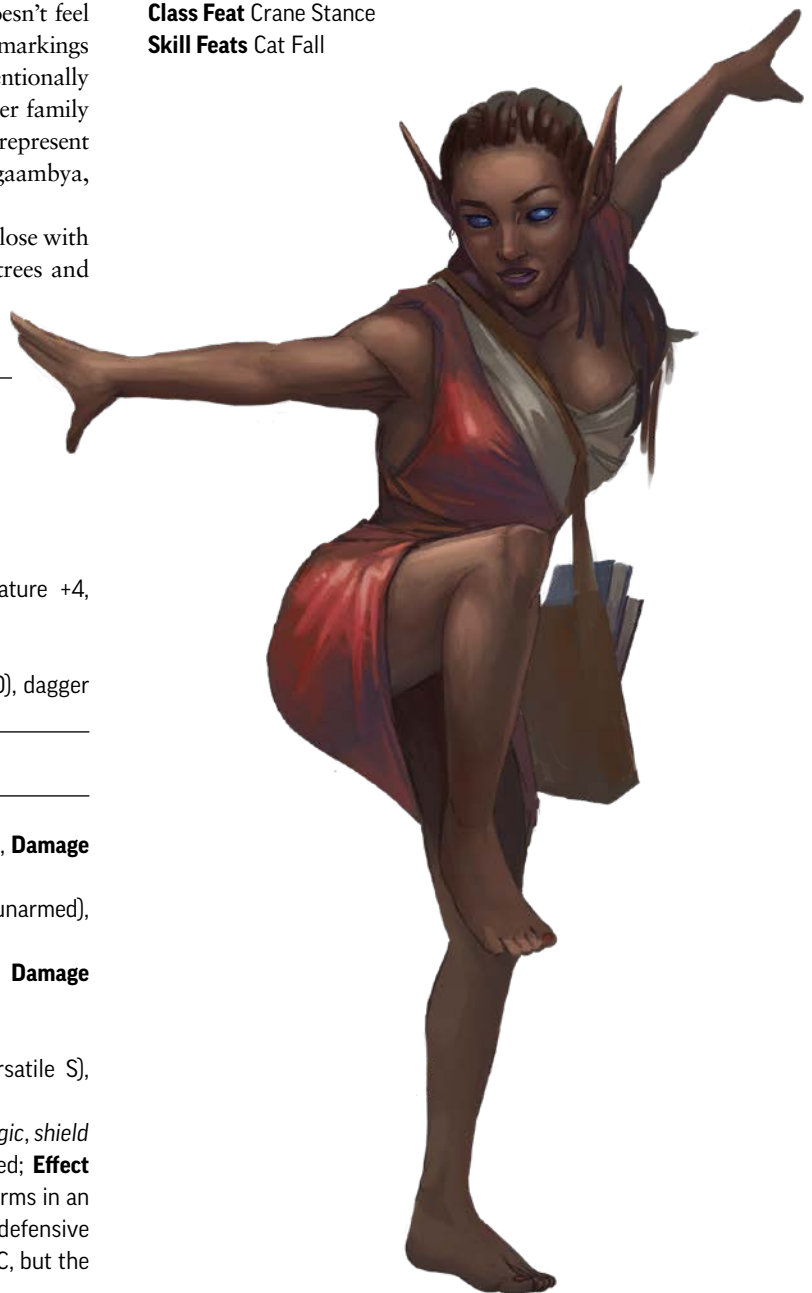
Melee ♦ dagger +7 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+3 piercing

Ranged ♦ bomb +4 (thrown 20 feet), **Effect** varies

Ranged ♦ dagger +7 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+3 piercing

Arcane Innate Spells DC 13; **Cantrips (1st)** *detect magic*, *shield*

Crane Stance ♦ **Requirements** Ekene is unarmored; **Effect** Ekene enters the stance of a crane, holding her arms in an imitation of a crane's wings and using flowing, defensive motions. She gains a +1 circumstance bonus to AC, but the



KALAGGI NAKUTU

Bundasu is one of countless villages that lie hidden in the depths of the Mwangi Jungle. As a child there, Kalaggi learned that the stars told a story with her in the role as Bundasu's next keeper, the village's physical and spiritual protector. Kalaggi was quick to learn combat and hunting. Tapping into her spiritual side, however, was much more difficult. Rather than push the young girl and risk her

losing confidence, the villagers focused her training in the areas she was already competent.

Once she mastered her martial skills, Kalaggi set her sights on the spiritual once again. She ventured from Bundasu and joined the Magaambya. She believes that learning the ways of magic will allow her to better understand her own spirit. Kalaggi seeks to return to Bundasu with greater inner knowledge to fulfill her destiny.

Kalaggi is careful with her words around others. She feels an almost sibling-like bond with Ufi, however, and speaks freely with him.



KALAGGI NAKUTU

UNIQUE LN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human fighter 1

Heritage versatile heritage

Background hunter

Perception +7

Languages Common, Elven, Mwangi

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +3, Medicine +5, Nature +5, Society +4, Stealth +7, Survival +5, Tanning Lore +4, Thievery +7

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Items backpack, climbing kit, dagger, minor elixir of life, grappling hook, leather armor, light mace, longbow (30 arrows), rope, writing set, 9 sp

AC 18; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

HP 21

Attack of Opportunity ⤴

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ dagger +9 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

Melee ✦ light mace +9 (agile, finesse, shove), **Damage** 1d4 bludgeoning

Ranged ✦ dagger +9 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

Ranged ✦ longbow +9 (deadly d10, range increment 100 feet, reload 0, volley 30 feet), **Damage** 1d8 piercing

Point-Blank Shot ✦ (open, stance) **Requirements** Kalaggi is wielding a ranged weapon; **Effect** Kalaggi takes aim to pick off nearby enemies quickly. When using a ranged volley weapon while she is in this stance, she doesn't take the penalty to her attack rolls from the volley trait. When using a ranged weapon that doesn't have the volley trait, she gains a +2 circumstance bonus to damage rolls on attacks against targets within the weapon's first range increment.

Ancestry Feat Natural Skill (Athletics, Medicine)

Class Feat Point-Blank Shot

General Feat Toughness

Skill Feat Survey Wildlife

THRESHOLD OF KNOWLEDGE



MURUWA

Muruwa grew up in the jungles just outside Nantambu, her village high aloft in the treetops towering just outside the city. She spent her younger days sneaking away from her village to explore Nantambu, and the need to avoid watchful eyes, be they gripli or Nantambian, quickly taught Muruwa the necessity of stealth. While she initially used her sojourns into the city to make off with sweets and other snacks, Muruwa found herself returning to learn more about the city's people. It was during one of these visits that Muruwa learned of the Magaambya and began to develop a fascination with magic.

As her curiosity grew, Muruwa decided to enroll in the Magaambya, and so she set out for Nantambu one last time. After arriving, the intrepid gripli took to living on the streets and earning coin through various odd jobs. Once she saved enough money to buy her first set of supplies, she enrolled in the academy. Muruwa now dedicates most of her time to learning all that she can about magic and the world beyond the jungle she calls home.

Muruwa has a difficult time relating with others and takes a while to open up. She's found that sharing stories about life in the jungle with Kalaggi comes naturally, though, and Muruwa considers the Ekujae elf to be her closest friend at the academy.

MURUWA

UNIQUE CG MEDIUM GRIPPLI HUMANOID

Female gripli rogue 1 (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse*)

Heritage snap tongue gripli

Background scout

Rogue's Racket ruffian

Perception +6; low-light vision

Languages Common, Elven, Gripli, Mwangi

Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +6, Deception +3, Diplomacy +3, Insect Lore +4, Intimidation +3, Jungle Lore +4, Nature +4, Occultism +4, Stealth +6, Survival +4, Thievery +6

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Items backpack, chalk (10), crowbar, dagger (2), hand adze, hand crossbow (10 bolts), minor elixir of life, studded leather armor, thieves' tools, writing set, 3 sp

AC 18; **Fort** +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

HP 15

Nimble Dodge **Trigger** Muruwa is targeted with a melee or ranged attack by an attacker she can see; **Effect** Muruwa gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Speed 25 feet

Melee **◆** dagger +6 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+3 piercing

Melee **◆** hand adze +6 (agile, forceful, gripli, sweep), **Damage** 1d6+3 piercing

Ranged **◆** dagger +6 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+3 piercing

Ranged **◆** hand adze +6 (agile, forceful, gripli, sweep, thrown 10 feet), **Damage** 1d6+3 piercing

Ranged **◆** hand crossbow +6 (range increment 60 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d6 piercing

Snap tongue Gripli Muruwa increases her unarmed reach by 5 feet when delivering touch range spells and when performing any Interact actions she could perform with one hand.

Sneak Attack Muruwa deals an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Surprise Attack On the first round of combat, if Muruwa rolls Deception or Stealth for initiative, creatures that haven't acted yet are flat-footed to her.

Ancestry Feat Gripli Weapon Familiarity

Class Feat Nimble Dodge

Skill Feats Forager, Quick Jump



PATHFINDER

UFI

An orphan raised in the Mugumo Plains by doting farmers, Ufi always enjoyed the simple things in life. He grew to be a strong, thoughtful young man, eager to help harvest crops, build farmhouses, or haul furniture. Ufi loved his family and his village and considered himself blessed by the love they showed him in return.

During an outing to collect wood, Ufi discovered an ancient set of stone beads engraved with an intricate design resembling rays of light. A passing pilgrim took note of the beads and identified them as sacred to Tlehar, an ancient

goddess once worshipped in the city of Mzali. The pilgrim told the village that Ufi was blessed by Tlehar, destined for greater things, and he recommended Ufi hone his skills at the Magaambya. Ufi felt uncertain about leaving his village, but he traveled with the pilgrim to Nantambu, learning of Tlehar's lore along the way. He now wishes to learn as much as he can about magic and his new faith, and he hopes to protect his classmates and make his village proud.

Ufi likes all his fellow students, but he's particularly captivated by Zane's easygoing demeanor and wit.



UFI

UNIQUE NG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human cleric of Tlehar (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Legends* 100)

Heritage versatile human

Background farmhand

Cleric Doctrine warpriest

Perception +7

Languages Common, Mwangi

Skills Athletics +6, Diplomacy +4, Farming Lore +3, Medicine +7, Nature +7, Religion +7

Str 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 12

Items backpack, chain mail, club, healer's tools, morningstar, wooden religious symbol of Tlehar, steel shield (Hardness 5, HP 20, BT 10), 8 sp

AC 17 (19 with shield raised); **Fort** +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

HP 17

Shield Block ➤ **Requirement** Ufi has his shield raised; **Effect**

Ufi's shield prevents him from taking an amount of damage up to the shield's Hardness. Ufi and the shield each take any remaining damage, possibly breaking or destroying the shield.

Speed 20 feet

Melee ➤ morningstar +6 (versatile P), **Damage** 1d8+3 bludgeoning

Melee ➤ club +6, **Damage** 1d6+3 bludgeoning

Ranged ➤ club +3 (thrown 10 feet), **Damage** 1d6+3 bludgeoning

Divine Prepared Spells DC 17, attack +7; **1st** *bless*, *heal* (x2), *magic weapon*; **Cantrips** (1st) *daze*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *stabilize*

Ancestry Feat Natural Ambition

Class Feat Deadly Simplicity

Skill Feats Assurance (Athletics), Hefty Hauler

Other Abilities anathema (lose your motivation to your regrets, spread despair, treat a loved one poorly), divine font (*heal*), edicts (give yourself fully to everything you attempt, always maintain hope that tomorrow will be a better day, treasure every gift you are given by those who matter to you)

THRESHOLD OF KNOWLEDGE



ZANE IKUNDI

Zane is the scion of a noble family in the Nine Walls, the homeland of Matanji orcs in the Mwangi expanse. He has natural charm and good looks and fully expects to become an ambassador for his people when he's older. He considers his education at the Magaambya to be a pleasant dalliance, and he spends most his time with the friends he's made there. Zane is an intelligent young man with something of a lazy streak, simply putting in the necessary work to get by.

When Zane was a toddler, his parents gave him to local priests for a blessing in a local river. Playful water spirits took notice of the baby and stole him from the inattentive priests. Zane's parents believed he'd been drowned and lost. A year and a day after Zane disappeared, he washed back up on the banks of the river and was reunited with his relieved but puzzled family. Since then, Zane has felt the stirring of fey magic within him, but his family insisted on putting the disappearance firmly in the past and moving on. Zane's budding powers frightened his family, so he learned to keep them hidden, something he no longer has to do since his enrollment in the Magaambya.

Due to his charm, Zane is quick to make friends, but he's found he has the most in common with Ekene. The two both know how it feels to be misunderstood and understand the heavy weight of the expectations placed upon them by their families and communities.

Melee ♦ dagger +3 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

Ranged ♦ bomb +2 (thrown 20 feet), **Effect** varies

Ranged ♦ dagger +5 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 17, attack +7; **1st** (3 slots) *charm*, *gritty wheeze* (page 10), *nettleskin* (page 10);

Cantrips (1st) *electric arc*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*, *produce flame*

Sorcerer Bloodline Spells 1 Focus Point, DC 17; **1st** *faerie dust* (Core Rulebook 404)

Dangerous Sorcery When Zane Casts a Spell from his spell slots, if the spell deals damage and doesn't have a duration, he gain a status bonus to that spell's damage equal to the spell's level.

Ancestry Feat Natural Ambition

Class Feat Dangerous Sorcery

Skill Feats Courtly Graces



ZANE IKUNDI

UNIQUE N MEDIUM HALF-ORC HUMAN HUMANOID ORC

Male human sorcerer 1

Heritage half-orc

Background noble

Sorcerer Bloodline fey

Perception +3; low-light vision

Languages Common, Mwangi, Orc, Sylvan

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +7, Diplomacy +7, Genealogy Lore +5, Nature +3, Performance +7, Society +5

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Items backpack, lesser bottled lightning, dagger, minor elixir of life (3), mirror, writing set, 7 sp

AC 15; **Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

HP 15

Speed 25 feet



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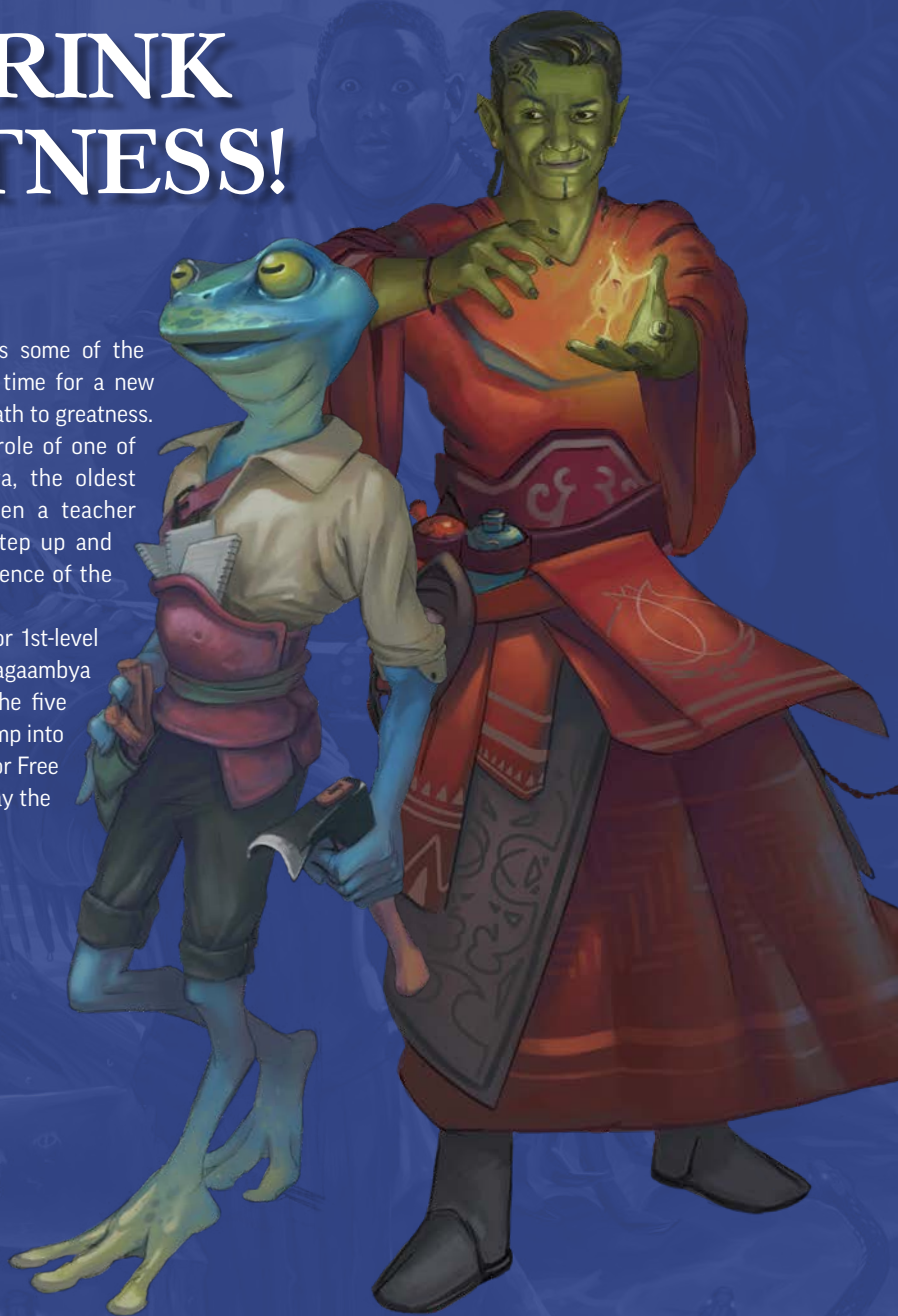
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The graduates of the Magaambya are known as some of the greatest wielders of magic in Golarion. Now it's time for a new group of students to take their first steps on the path to greatness.

In *Threshold of Knowledge*, you take on the role of one of five students from the prestigious Magaambya, the oldest school of magic in the Inner Sea region. When a teacher goes missing, it's up to these new heroes to step up and solve a wicked mystery that threatens the existence of the Magaambya itself!

Threshold of Knowledge is a short adventure for 1st-level characters that takes the heroes into the Magaambya and the nearby city of Nantambu. In addition, the five pregenerated characters provide a quick way to jump into the adventure right away in this exciting offering for Free RPG Day! Grab some dice and some friends and play the role of new heroes in training!



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