



NUMENÉRA™

# SHARDS OF THE LOOKING GLASS

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# SHARDS OF THE LOOKING GLASS

*Aldeia: A village in the Beyond centered around a cave of Aeon Priests.*

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**Phreas:** Pronounced  
*free-us.*

As the PCs bring a gift for the Aeon Priest living in an aldeia called Tavrul, the area around the village is plagued by hostile creatures resembling dead people. It turns out these are duplicates of dead people, copied and animated by a damaged numenera structure. The problem grows worse as the numenera starts to duplicate living villagers, each filled with animosity toward their original counterparts. Can the PCs discover the cause and correct the problem before the aldeia is torn apart by infighting?

## OVERVIEW

This adventure was designed for convention use; as such, it's intended to be played in a four-hour block. Several features facilitate this style of play:

- Throughout the text, a lot of information is provided in bullet-point format (like this section). This makes it

easier to find and interpret information on the fly. Descriptions in particular are often in bullet points. You can read these bullets to the players, but the real intention is for you (the GM) to glean the key concepts easily, then put them into your own words.

- Margin notes near the start of each section provide timing guidance, with a target time suggested for completing that part. This helps you keep the adventure on track for completion in a four-hour time slot, but it's advice rather than a requirement. If you're running *Shards of the Looking Glass* at home or otherwise have more time freedom, feel free to ignore this advice. The time given is in hours and minutes from the start of the adventure.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Tavrul, the aldeia at the center of this story, is doubly blessed by the wonders of the ancients. For generations uncounted, the people of this area have benefitted from not one but two distinct and powerful numenera phenomena:

- **The Heavenly Phreas:** This large structure is partially buried in the foothills to the west. Drinking the water pooling within it gives health and long life. This association with health has given the Phreas a religious status among the villagers. They name their babies while standing in the pool, lay their dead in the many chambers deep within the Phreas, and perform other similar ceremonies in and around the structure.



### Numenera Destiny

Throughout this adventure, you'll see page references to various items accompanied by this symbol. These are page references to *Numenera Destiny*, where you can find additional details about that rule, ability, creature, or concept. Often, it will be necessary to look up the reference to find information you need. Other times, it's not necessary, but looking it up can deepen your experience and understanding of the game and the setting.



- **The grist:** Grist is a substance that rises from the earth in large slow-moving bubbles, which the locals call drupes. These drupes range in diameter from about 3 feet to about 25 feet (1 to 8 m). Their movement is slow and inexorable—they push their way out of the earth over the course of weeks, rise slowly into the air (unaffected by wind or weather) for another few weeks, then fade away. They glow faintly, and it's believed that their light keeps hostile creatures away. If broken (which is very difficult), they disintegrate into a dust that is beneficial to farmers' fields.

The grist and the Heavenly Phreas are probably not related phenomena. Nobody knows where the grist originates from, but it must be well below the depths of the Phreas. The events of this adventure are the result of a grist drupe rising into, and damaging, the heart of the Phreas.

#### EVENTS LEADING UP TO OUR STORY

For as long as anyone can remember, the grist drupes have risen in the area around Tavrul, seemingly at random. They tend to appear within half a mile (800 m) or so of the village, but occasionally arise a mile (1.6 km) or farther away. At any given time, there are perhaps a dozen in the air around the village, and another dozen slowly emerging from the earth somewhere nearby.

Unbeknownst to the locals, one drupe has begun its upward journey toward the surface from beneath the Heavenly Phreas, and in its inexorable rise dislodged some of the numenera devices that power the structure's beneficial effects. This has triggered a new life-giving effect within the Phreas: the duplication and reanimation of dead people interred within it, but with beast-level intelligence and an inherently aggressive nature. (During this adventure, the damaged Phreas starts to duplicate *living* people who've spent time inside it.)

About a week ago, the aldeia's aging Aeon Priest, Chev, died peacefully in her sleep. In accordance with their customs, the mourning villagers tended to the body, dressed it in burial clothes, and brought it to the Heavenly Phreas for interment. Roughly a dozen villagers brought the

body down into the catacombs. They then returned to the aldeia and their daily lives.

#### THE DUPLICATED DEAD

The Phreas has hundreds of dead villagers interred within it. The local climate and conditions within the structure means that these bodies tend to mummify over time rather than putrefy, so they're mostly intact (other than drying out). For example, the corpse of someone buried twenty years ago might have sunken eyes and a rictus grin from the lips shrinking back, but otherwise is recognizable as the person they were in life. Each is dressed in burial clothes, and in most cases these clothes are sewn in place or tied (individually) at the wrists, neck, and ankles to prevent them from coming loose. (Any person from Tavrul can recognize these clothes on sight or from a PC's description as being the garments they bury their dead in.)

When the damaged Phreas creates a duplicate from one of these corpses, the duplicate looks identical to the original, including its burial clothes, except it has multiple spherical tumors on its skin, each the color and size of an egg yolk. (Inside the corpse's skull is more of this material, acting like a primitive brain that is more resistant to influence and harm

#### NOT FANTASY UNDEAD

These duplicates are not undead in the fantasy sense. There's nothing supernatural about them, any more than implanting a numenera device in a corpse's brain to move the body with electrical signals is supernatural. However, many people of the Ninth World have beliefs and superstitions about souls, death, and undeath. A nano or other learned person is unlikely to accept a supernatural explanation for an apparently living corpse, but an ignorant person may jump to frightening conclusions. Regardless, impress upon the players that meeting an ambulatory dead-looking creature like this isn't the typical zombie encounter they might find in a fantasy dungeon crawl—it's as surprising and terrifying to their PCs as it would be in real life.

than a typical human brain). Their flesh is also tougher than the original corpse's skin. Irrational and bloodthirsty, these animated duplicates attack other creatures without hesitation.

The duplicated dead are effectively mindless (they react like non-sapient beasts) and lack strategy, but they'll pick up nearby objects—rocks, branches, and so on—to use as rudimentary weapons. They attack viciously until destroyed.

## THE DUPLICATED LIVING

Duplicates of living NPCs—and ultimately PCs—start appearing partway through this adventure. Duplicates are formed deep within the Heavenly Phreas, hours or days after the original visited its inner chambers. (Characters who haven't been in the Phreas, or didn't go deeper than the Pool of Life, won't be duplicated.) Not every creature that ventures into the Phreas is duplicated—the process, and its timing, seems to be random. Duplicates of the living are entirely faithful to their originals:

- A duplicate looks, speaks, and acts just like its original. It has the same personality and capabilities.
- A duplicate and its original have an instinctive aversion to each other. All interactions between them (or by PCs trying to make them get along) are hindered by three steps, and if they spend more than a few minutes in each others' presence, they're likely to start fighting.
- When created, the duplicate is dressed as it was when the original was in the Phreas. Cyphers and artifacts carried by the original are duplicated in a nonfunctional form (much like how a wooden carving of a cypher doesn't have any special abilities). Iotum and character abilities powered by numenera function normally.
- A duplicate's memories are identical to the original's up to a day or two before duplication, after which they draw a blank.
- A duplicate can't explain its creation. It has murky memories of "waking up" in the Heavenly Phreas, and then wandering toward Tavrul in a daze.

- A duplicate does not know, at the time of creation, that it's a duplicate. How it reacts to evidence of its true nature depends on the individual person.

The duplicates' motivations, and their interactions with villagers, vary with the personalities of the originals. A duplicate of a person who is compassionate and well-adjusted might try to find a place within the village, assuming they don't have to see or interact with their original (much like feuding members of the same family). A conniving, manipulative person and their duplicate might plot to eliminate each other, afraid that the other is planning the same fate for them. A duplicate of a person with deep self-doubts might become depressed when they realize that they aren't their "true" self.

## HOW THE ADVENTURE UNFOLDS

- As the PCs head toward Tavrul, they're attacked by duplicates of the dead.
- The next morning, they find a wandering living villager who says she saw an "evil" copy of herself in the village. When the PCs get to Tavrul and other duplicated living and dead start to appear, it becomes clear that the aldeia is gripped by a strange new situation.
- Clues lead the PCs to the Heavenly Phreas. Exploring within, they discover the damage caused by the grist.
- Destroying the grist requires a device from Chev's laboratory, leading the PCs back to the village.
- Returning to the Heavenly Phreas and restoring the machinery is a fairly simple matter. But there may be duplicates (or even originals) who have different desires.

## GETTING READY

Before starting the adventure:

- Have the players choose their PCs and introduce their characters.
- If the characters need cyphers, issue them cyphers up to each PC's cypher limit.

**Timing tip:** This adventure benefits from the players really enjoying their characters, so let them chat for 10 or 15 minutes if that helps. Move on to the first duplicate attack no later than 15 minutes after the start of the adventure.



Here's an overview of the PCs' situation:

- They're heading to an aldeia called Tavrul to deliver a gift (a **locked box** of numenera) to the resident Aeon Priest, Chev, and to see if the villagers have any goods they want to trade.
- They've been traveling along an ancient road made of hard green pebbly synth. The road becomes obscured every now and then (and probably wasn't intended to be a road by its past-world builders) but is easily navigable.
- The road has passed through an arid, cold region for the past several days, winding through occasional large rocky hills and outcroppings.
- The ancient road leads generally north-south and connects a number of scattered villages (some of which are aldeias), so they expect to reach a settlement every few days or so.

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE: DUPLICATES OF THE DEAD

Kick the adventure into high gear by starting in media res with the attack by the duplicates of the dead.

- After a long day of travel northward following the remains of the road, the PCs are encamped in a clearing just off to the side. Several large toadstool-like fungi, big enough to almost stand up under, provide shelter from a faint drizzle of rain.
- The campfire has all but burned down; it's quite dark.

Pick one of the players at random. That PC was on watch and is awake while the others slumber. Announce a GM intrusion and award 2 XP to that character:

- A humanlike figure, shrouded in tattered clothing, shuffles from the darkness. It hefts a large rock, raising it high to bash in your head.

The figure is the duplicate of **Moln**, a village headwoman who died over twenty years ago. Although the body is well preserved, it's obviously that of a corpse: the flesh is shriveled and grey, the eyes sunken, teeth exposed in a rictus grin. Moln's clothing—clearly ceremonial in

nature, and sewn shut in a way that she couldn't have done herself—is decayed and tattered. She also has a dozen tumor-like growths on her head and hands, each about the color and size of an egg yolk.

A round or two into the combat, introduce a GM intrusion for a different PC as another corpse-like person joins the fight and attacks them. This one is of **Etreas**, a villager of a previous generation. The original Etreas was mauled by a griffalo, which tore open his abdomen; the duplicate has these same wounds under his burial clothes, but he doesn't seem concerned or hindered by the fact that his midsection is torn and his shriveled internal organs are exposed. Like Moln, this duplicate is similarly dressed in faded and decayed clothing of obviously ceremonial nature, and has several visible “egg yolk” tumors.

The duplicates of the dead attack viciously until destroyed.

With good light (such as daylight), the PCs can find tracks indicating these creatures came from the north, mostly following the road.

## THE GRIST DRUPE

Upon resuming their travels in the morning, the PCs round the next bend and discover they had camped not too far from a rather odd feature.

- A large globe-like object, perhaps 15 feet (4.5 m) in diameter, is embedded in the earth. With its orange-yellow hue and slight shine, it looks like a massive egg yolk.
- The ground around it is uplifted and broken, as though the object has been pushed up from below.
- A small tree lies steeply a tilt, forced aside by the strange sphere's rise. Its roots still grasp the displaced earth, and wilted leaves attest that it hasn't been dead for long.

The surface of this **grist drupe** is smooth, rubbery, and tough. PCs attempting to cut, damage, or attack it have little luck—while not indestructible, the drupe can absorb a lot of damage with little discernible effect. Damage that does affect it creates gouges or scratches, or might remove a small amount

*Gift for Chev, page 16*

**Timing tip:** *After the players pick characters and possibly chat for a bit, move quickly into this scene. Wrap it up no later than 30 minutes after the start of the adventure.*

*A character who examines the dead duplicates and succeeds at a level 4 understanding numenera task realizes that the “tumors” aren't human flesh, but more like a soft, rubbery kind of synth.*

**Moln and Etreas duplicates:** *level 3, resists mental attacks and influence as level 7; health 12; Armor 2; improvised medium weapon inflicts 4 points of damage*

*If a character uses a mental attack on a duplicated dead, tell the player that their PC can sense there is a living mind within the creature, but it seems to be partially shielded by a numenera effect.*

**Grist drupe:** *level 6, resists damage as level 9; can't be salvaged*



*If a PC compares the drupe to the skin tumors in the previous encounter, they are similar in color and shape, but the drupe is obviously much larger and tougher.*

**Bels duplicate:** level 2, singing and rituals as level 3

*Unlike the duplicated dead, Bels has no yellow-orange tumors (and neither do other duplicates of living creatures).*

*The structure in the center of the plaza is a numenera device that draws water from the air that passes through it. The water collects in the pool beneath, which is the village's main water source. The locals can tell the PCs it was created by Maymon, an Aeon Priest who lived generations ago, and greatly improved by Chev, a respected Aeon Priest who died about a week ago.*

**Timing tip:** This scene with the Bels duplicate should take about 15 minutes. Move on about **1 hour** after the start of the adventure.

of hard, rubbery material that disintegrates to a gritty orange dust. The drupe doesn't have a skin or any internal structures; it's solid grist the whole way through.

The grist drupe is slowly rising, but its motion isn't perceptible. It's taken two weeks for this much of it to break through the surface, and it will take several more weeks before it's completely clear of the earth.

## BELS WATCHING

As the PCs examine the grist drupe, a furtive figure approaches. This is the **duplicate of Bels**.

- A middle-aged woman in simple garb, her unruly reddish hair tied back, emerges from the nearby brush. She has a kind face and is a little heavysset.
- She is clearly frightened, and her face is tear-streaked. She seems to be alone and unarmed.

Bels gratefully receives any aid the PCs offer. She's cold and hungry, confused, scared, and lonely. It takes little effort to get her story:

- She awoke in the Heavenly Phreas. She is the hymnal of her aldeia (Tavrul), which means she leads the ceremonial songs and helps with rituals, so she's often in the Phreas even when it's not a holy day.
- She doesn't remember how she got there this time. She doesn't remember leaving the village to go to the Phreas.
- As she approached the village, she saw a terrible sight: her adult daughter was laughing and talking with a woman who looked *just like her!* And they went into their house together. She felt instant revulsion for this imposter, but doesn't know how to get them away from her daughter.
- She ran away and has been hiding in the hills for the past couple of days. She is at a loss for what to do.

She begs the PCs to help, and will gladly lead them north along the road to the aldeia, which is at most a couple of hours away.

## ARRIVING IN TAVRUL

The aldeia of Tavrul is situated in an arid plain surrounded by jagged ridges and rock formations, all colored in reds and ochres.

- Two dozen structures, each a pointed dome of rough-hewn stone, form concentric half-rings around a central plaza. A similar structure, but larger and shiny, sits just outside the other buildings.
- A metal tube-like structure, mounted on a squat tower, sits in the center of the plaza. The tube rotates slightly in reaction to the breeze, making an audible sighing sound as the light wind passes through it. At the base of the tower is a pool of clear water.
- A dozen or more orange spheres hover motionless over the surrounding lands, some about 36 feet (11 m) above the earth, others much higher. Beneath each is a crater of broken earth.
- Villagers tend gardens on the outskirts of the settlement and fields beyond, while older folk—and there seem to be a lot of them—pursue household chores or chat in the plaza. The place seems reasonably prosperous.

Although the PCs likely arrive during the day, at night they can see the glow of the grist drupes. The drupes' light is not much stronger than starlight—distinct, but too dim to cast a shadow or help a person see on a dark night.

## INTO THE ALDEIA

The people of Tavrul are welcoming and friendly. They believe the grist drupes repel hostile forces, and their lifestyle lacks a few of the hardships common to the Beyond. They're curious about travelers on the road and welcome opportunities for trade and news. The PCs are offered lodging and food.

PCs asking about local news and events quickly learn the following:

- For decades, the village has benefitted from the wisdom and inventiveness of the Aeon Priest Chev. Sadly, she passed away a week or so ago. The locals are still mourning.
- Chev was buried in the catacombs beneath the Pool of Life, at the





Heavenly Phreas. The locals say the PCs should definitely visit the Pool while they are here—its health-giving properties are legendary! (Despite the Pool's potency, these properties not well known outside the village because travelers are rare.)

- If the PCs have the duplicate of Bels with them, the villagers are only somewhat surprised and alarmed to see her. It turns out that as of yesterday, there are two versions of a man named Fetr in the village, each claiming to be the real one and insisting that the other is an evil imposter. The two of them eventually started fighting and had to be separated.
- As far as the villagers can tell, the two Fetrs look and act the same, and they can't figure out which one is the real one. (One honest villager admits to the PCs that Fetr isn't well liked in the village, and having two of them is definitely worse for everyone.)

- Opinions on what to do about the duplicates vary widely. Most of the villagers are at a loss, especially now that this isn't just limited to Fetr. People like Bels, and it's upsetting to see how the two Bels obviously hate each other.
- The villagers haven't seen any dead people walking around, and think the very idea of it is horrifying.
- Those big orange things? We call them grist drupes. They rise out of the ground and into the air, so slowly you can't see it if you watch. Their light keeps bad things away. Don't they have them where you come from?

Many of the villagers, especially the older ones, would be able to recognize Moln and Etreas (the duplicated dead whose duplicates attacked the PCs) by sight or perhaps with a vivid description, although neither person had skin tumors while they were alive. A description of the burial clothes alone prompts an interest in returning to the PCs' campsite and examining the remains of the attackers.

**Reminder:** The only way to tell a living person from their duplicate is by asking about their memories. The duplicates remember waking in the Heavenly Phreas without knowing how they got there, whereas the originals remember all of the normal details of their daily lives and don't have a mysterious wake-up experience.



*Bels, Fetr, Ludmul (page 16), and Sana (page 16) were part of the group that interred the dead Aeon Priest in the Heavenly Phreas.*

**Bels:** level 2, singing and rituals as level 3

**Pahey:** level 2

**Fetr and duplicate:** level 3, positive social interactions as level 2

**Ozo:** level 3

## KEY TAVRUL NPCs

The following are the key NPCs in this adventure. If the GM needs others (particularly other duplicates), see Additional Tavrul NPCs (page 16).

**Bels:** Heavysset and a little disheveled, Bels's kindly face reflects her demeanor. Like most of the villagers, she farms for a living, but she also serves as a sort of assistant to the Aeon Priest in the performance of religious observances. (Her knowledge extends purely to ceremonial traditions—she is not skilled in numenera.) Until the PCs brought the other Bels here, this Bels didn't realize a duplicate of her existed. She is a compassionate person, but that urge is overcome by her instinctive dislike of the duplicate.

**Fetr:** A tall, thin carpenter with a deep scowl, Fetr is not the most popular member of the village; he's always involved in some sort of squabble or attempt to get the better of his neighbors. When his duplicate showed up, he quickly opined that they must be some sort of plot by "outsiders" to take over the aldeia. When Bels's duplicate arrives, he becomes even more suspicious. Duplicate Fetr is convinced that *he's* the original and is biding his time until he can prove it (or take appropriate action). Because nobody is willing to take him in, he sets up a little camp about a ten-minute walk from the village. Either Fetr (or both, separately) might attempt to enlist the PCs in a scheme to rid the village of "the fakes."

**Ozo:** Gruff, argumentative, and built like a barrel, Ozo maintains a sizable herd of ithsyns, which provide meat for the village. The PCs won't encounter him until the next part of the adventure; he lives alone at one end of the aldeia (his wife Lyna died a few years ago). Like the rest of the village, Ozo doesn't understand where these duplicates have come from. But ithsyns can be difficult to breed, and if told that the Heavenly Phreas might be creating duplicate

humans, he quickly wonders if it couldn't make duplicate ithsyns. (He hasn't thought this through enough to realize that doing so would create animals that hate their originals in the flock, making handling the feisty beasts even more difficult.)

**Pahey:** About twenty years old and with features similar to her mother Bels, Pahey is a weaver. She is at a loss for how to react to her mother having a duplicate, especially as the two of them are uncharacteristically hostile to each other.





**Peppest:** A thin lad with dark hair in an unflattering bowl cut, Peppest had for several years been a sort of assistant to Chev. He had only recently been talked into training to be the next Aeon Priest. If he was trepidatious about the role before Chev died, he's downright terrified of the responsibility now, especially with duplicate angry villagers showing up.

### CHEV THE AEON PRIEST

Tavrul's Aeon Priest, Chev, recently passed away from natural causes after a very long life. She is succeeded by Peppest, who is something of a novice—barely more than an apprentice when Chev died.

- Chev was revered in the village. She is remembered as wise and inventive, but disorganized and sometimes unreliable.
- She lived in the Hall of Wonders at the top of the village. The Hall is a fascinating place, but also a mystery—most villagers have never been beyond the first room.
- Chev built the “well” at the center of the plaza. It draws clean, pure water right out of the very air. The villagers are quite proud of it.
- She invented a method of rupturing the grist drupes. The resulting grit is excellent for fertilizing gardens. She didn't do it very often, because the drupes are so beneficial and a little of the dust goes a long way.
- Peppest was studying with Chev, and is now starting to move into the Hall of Wonders. He's . . . well, perhaps someday he'll be able to match Chev's wisdom.
- If the PCs mention the gift of iotum for Chev, the villagers assume it should go to Peppest, as (unlike most people) he at least has some knowledge of the numenera.

## THE DEAD RETURN

After the PCs arrive at Tavrul and have had some time to learn about the situation with the duplicates (and perhaps find someone to house the Bels duplicate until this is resolved), use a GM intrusion: one character hears loud squawking and

screeches, followed by an all-too-human scream. A duplicate of the dead has appeared, and this one has found its way into Ozo's ithsyn pen!

By the time the PCs arrive at the pen, two ithsyns are already dead and a **dead-looking human** (a duplicate of an individual so decayed and mummified that even the villagers can't identify it) is attacking a third. Like the other duplicated dead, this person has visible yellow-orange tumors on their skin.

Upon seeing this walking corpse, several villagers flee in fright. Others hesitate, uncertain of what to do in the face of this horrific revenant. The surviving ithsyns (about a dozen of them) squawk and croak loudly as they try in vain to escape the pen. If the PCs need incentive to get involved, perhaps one of the villagers jumps the fence and faces the attacker—and is brutally struck down. Unless the PCs intervene, the terrible creature will destroy the bulk of the livestock before seeking more human victims.

Although the duplicate can't be identified specifically due to the age of the corpse, the burial clothes allow the villagers to immediately recognize that it is one of their ancestors from the Heavenly Phreas. (The corpse's strange tumors are unfamiliar to the villagers—they haven't seen them before, and can't recall anyone in the village who had such things.) This

### ITHSYN GAS

A creature that fails a Might defense roll against the ithsyn's gas behaves randomly on their next action. Roll a d10 and consult the table below.

#### d10 Victim's Action

1–2	Run off in a random direction for a short distance
3	Attack the nearest creature with whatever means is closest at hand
4–6	Do nothing but cough and shout
7–8	Fall down and roll on the ground
9	Drop whatever is held and cover eyes and face with hands
10	Activate most powerful available ability, cypher, or artifact that is not an attack (if none, roll again)

**Peppest:** level 2

#### Unidentifiable duplicated dead:

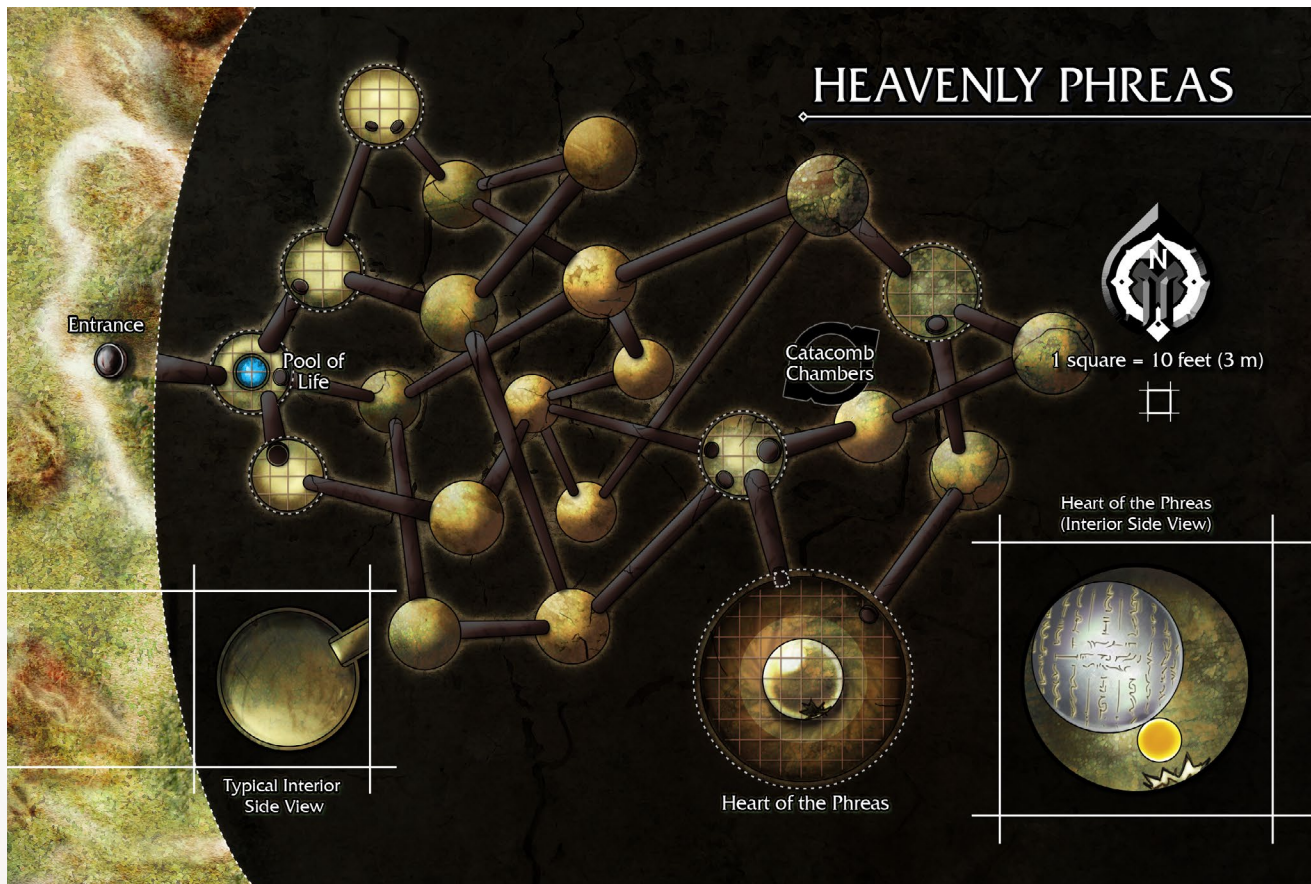
level 3, resists mental attacks and influence as level 7; health 12; Armor 2; improvised medium weapon inflicts 4 points of damage

**Timing tip:** *There are lots of great roleplaying opportunities as the PCs investigate the duplicates. But cut it off by jumping to the next section no later than 2 hours after the start of the adventure.*

**GM intrusion:** *A panicked ithsyn, already releasing its defensive gas, begins attacking a character that is fighting the duplicated dead. (Note that the character can attempt to calm the creature instead of fighting it, or ask Ozo to help them do so.)*

**Panicked ithsyn:** level 4, perception and resisting mental attacks as level 3; Armor 1; bite or kick inflicts 4 points of damage; can attack and move a long distance as a single action; as a reaction to being attacked, automatically releases addling gas (see Ithsyn Gas) in immediate range





observation, or perhaps questioning by the PCs, prompts Peppet or another villager to realize that Bels and Fetr were part of the group that entered the Heavenly Phreas to bury Chev a few days ago. (That group included **Ludmul and Sana**, neither of whom has a duplicate . . . yet.)

At this point, the PCs should realize they need to investigate the Heavenly Phreas. If they don't, the villagers nominate Peppet to go see what's going on there, and the young man nervously asks the PCs to go with him (he's obviously scared that the place is filled with more revived dead villagers).

## THE HEAVENLY PHREAS

The entrance to the Heavenly Phreas is easy to find—there is a human-made path, partially lined with stones, leading west out of the village. Over the course of a mile (1.6 km), the path climbs over a low rise and to the edge of a rocky incline, where there is an obviously artificial structure embedded within it.

- A shiny metal tube, 12 feet (4 m) across, juts at an angle from the earth.
- The tube's rim is rounded and smooth, giving it an aerodynamic appearance. It has a similar look to the tube on the tower back at the aldeia.
- A faint sound, like a low, resonant moaning, seems to come from the opening.
- Five or six stone steps lead up to the mouth of the tube, obviously of recent human construction (within the past hundred years or so).

*Ludmul and Sana, page 16*

**Timing tip:** *This scene should take about 15 minutes. Move on about 2 hours and 15 minutes into the adventure.*

*The ground outside the Phreas slopes down to the south and up to the east (toward the village), so any duplicated dead that leave the Phreas tend to head southward, which is where the PCs first encountered them.*



The moaning sound is simply the result of air flowing through the Phreas. It's quietly audible, sometimes as a sigh or breathy whistle, throughout the structure.

### THE POOL OF LIFE

This is the space most frequently visited by the villagers. The large round room is a place of worship and ceremony. It is dimly lit (in the daytime) by sunshine from the opening.

- The large spherical space is perhaps 50 feet (15 m) across. The inside surface is metallic.
- A flat stone floor is clearly an addition, not part of the original structure. In the center is a shallow pool of water about 10 feet (3 m) wide.
- A variety of colorful symbols have been painted lovingly on the inner surface of the sphere.
- Three other tubes—shiny, rounded, metallic, and similar in scale to the entrance tube—penetrate the chamber from seemingly random directions and angles.
- A faint flow of air can be felt, as if the room is breathing. The airflow makes a low, resonant sound.

For the people of Tavrul, the pool is the religious center of the structure. The mystic properties of its water gives them health and long life. It is here that they name their children, dipping them as babies into the water to instill upon them its lasting effects. Many other rituals of their religious calendar rely on this chamber and its pool. They gather in the space around the pool—most of their ceremonies do not involve going any further into the Phreas.

The PCs can benefit from the Pool of Life if they choose; in fact, the villagers highly recommend it. A PC who drinks heartily from the pool, or bathes in it, permanently increases their Might Pool by 1 point. Furthermore, barring illness or injury, they become resistant to the general infirmities of old age, adding about ten years to their natural lifespan. These benefits can be gained only once, regardless of how much water the PC drinks or bathes in. The water has this power only within the Heavenly

Phreas; if put in a container and taken elsewhere, it's just water.

The duplicating effect in the Heavenly Phreas doesn't (yet!) extend to this outer room; people who go no further are not currently in danger of being duplicated.

Pepprest explains that of the rooms in the Heavenly Phreas, some are empty, some have been converted to catacombs, and there is one especially holy place called the **Heart of the Phreas**, which only Chev and Pepprest are allowed to visit. Of course, insistent PCs can easily pressure or persuade him into taking them to the Heart, although he meekly objects for the entire walk to it.

### CATACOMB CHAMBERS

The tubes leading out of the pool chamber connect to additional sphere-shaped rooms. Pepprest is happy to lead the PCs on a tour of the catacombs, as long as they're respectful of the dead.

The rooms, of which there are more than twenty, have no light source other than what the PCs bring with them. All are similar in the essentials:

- A spherical room with a metal surface.
- Multiple tube-like openings lead out in various directions.
- A faint flow of air can be felt, as if the room is breathing. The airflow makes a low, resonant sound.
- Shelf-like structures, clearly not part of the ancients' design, ring the room in several tiers.
- On these rest the bodies of Tavrul's dead, dressed in ornate burial clothes. They died anywhere from a few years ago to centuries ago, but the bodies are all surprisingly well preserved.

**Surprise Attack:** Although only a few duplicated dead have been able to find their way out of the Heavenly Phreas, **quite a few more** have been created and are wandering around within the tube-tunnels and chambers of this place. (Like the other duplicated dead, they're dressed in burial clothes and are spotted with tumors.) Because there are so many paths and connections in the catacombs, it's very likely that the duplicated dead approach the PCs

*If the PCs attempt to salvage any numenera from the Heavenly Phreas, Pepprest (and any other villagers who are present) are offended and horrified and tell them to stop, and physically intervene if the PCs ignore this request. Salvaging this place is like visiting someone's temple and using the furnishings as firewood.*

*Heart of the Phreas, page 12*

**GM intrusion:** A PC recognizes one of the bodies—that of Moln or Etreas. This body doesn't have any tumors on it. (The PCs were attacked by duplicates of those dead people at the start of the adventure, not these actual bodies.)

*Although the pool is created by numenera, there's no active numenera in this chamber that the PCs can salvage.*

**Wandering duplicated dead:** level 3, resists mental attacks and influence as level 7; health 12; Armor 2; punch or bite inflicts 4 points of damage



**Timing tip:** Exploring the Heavenly Phreas can take up to half an hour, but don't let it extend past **2 hours and 45 minutes** into the adventure.

**Grist drupe:** level 6, resists damage as level 9; can't be salvaged

from an unexpected direction and attack. The GM should use one to four duplicated dead for this encounter, depending on how combat capable the PCs are.

## THE HEART OF THE PHREAS

Beyond the areas the villagers use as catacombs lies the Heart of the Phreas, a unique chamber containing the numenera that makes the entire Phreas function.

- This spherical chamber is huge—perhaps double the size of the largest room entered so far.
- It's impossible to see the whole thing; the interior space is dominated by a huge metal sphere that fills half or more of its volume.
- This shiny metal sphere is covered with illuminated glyphs and designs that constantly shift and crawl across its surface, giving off a faint light.
- This sphere is pressed against the side of the chamber by a large hovering **grist drupe**. A crater of torn metal marks where the drupe pushed its way through the floor, somewhat offset from center. Above that crater, the drupe presses against the central sphere. Where the sphere touches the wall, the glyphs on its surface flicker and become jagged and distorted.

It's evident to even a numenera layperson that the sphere has been pushed out of alignment by the drupe.

Peppest is surprised and frightened by the situation in this area. He's only been here a few times, but he knows the metal sphere normally floats in the center of the room. He says that Chev had a device that dissolves the drupes, but he doesn't know how to operate it. He speculates that—like all the other devices Chev created or was working on—it's probably in the Hall of Wonders. If the PCs return to the village with him, they can help him find it and, with any luck, figure out how to make it work. Peppest doesn't want to go alone; he's afraid that another pack of duplicated dead might find and kill him. If the PCs don't volunteer to travel with him, he asks them to accompany him.



**Random Salvage Result, page 109**

**Timing tip:** Getting the device and salvaging for cyphers and such shouldn't take more than about 15 minutes. Don't let it extend past **3 hours** into the adventure.

## THE HALL OF WONDERS

The Hall of Wonders sits on the northern outskirts of Tavrul.

- The pointed domelike building is similar in general shape to the others in the village, but much larger.
- Unlike the stone buildings of the villagers, this one is made of shiny polished metal.
- Several smaller domes are attached.
- A variety of odd structures, many looking like weird wind vanes, dot the area in front of the building.

Peppest has inherited the Hall of Wonders along with the role of Aeon Priest, but he has yet to move in. It's still as Chev left it, and Peppest's hesitancy to disturb anything—let alone make the Hall his own—is obvious.

The central chamber was Chev's living room, museum, meeting space, and storeroom combined. Benches surround a low table and fire pit at the center; around the circumference all manner of junk—numenera items, prior-world relics, and everyday gear—is stacked on tables and shelves.

Adjacent spaces include a messy sleeping chamber, an equally messy kitchen, and an even messier workshop.

Chev's device is a large handheld ray emitter. It shouldn't take long to find; Peppest can identify it after about 15 minutes of rooting around the workshop. If for some reason he isn't present, the PCs find it if they take about an hour searching for it. The device is too complex for Peppest to operate, so a PC skilled in understanding numenera will have to do it.

This is also an opportunity for the PCs to replenish their cyphers; treat this workshop as two level 4 **salvage** sources, whether the PCs are looking for cyphers, shins, iotum, or all of the above. If the PCs have been friendly toward Peppest, he doesn't mind them salvaging here. Even if they've been rude or condescending, he's probably too intimidated or overwhelmed to protest.



## BACK TO THE CATACOMBS

Having gained the device that can dissolve drupes, the PCs have the means to restore the proper operation of the Heavenly Phreas. They need to go back to the Heart, use the device to destroy the drupe that's pushing on the floating metal sphere, and then see if there's anything else they must do to get things back to normal.

Unknown to the PCs, however, Ozo disagrees with the plan to repair the Phreas—he thinks duplicating ithsyns would make it easier to add to his herd. To make matters worse, he made a foolish decision: he brought his *dead* ithsyns to the Phreas hoping to bring them back to life. Unfortunately for everyone involved, this will result in hostile duplicated dead ithsyns roaming the Heavenly Phreas. Because there are so many chambers within the Phreas, Ozo's activities remain unknown to anyone else for now, but they'll become important when the PCs try to fix the problem in the Heart.

### THINGS HAVE GOTTEN WORSE

The grist drupe in the Heart rises slowly—just an inch (2.5 cm) or so per hour. While this motion is so slow as to be invisible to the naked eye, it continues to add to the pressure on the metal sphere. Where the sphere was once merely pressed against the inner wall of the chamber, it is now creating visible cracks in that wall, and the illuminated glyphs and light trails on its surface are flickering more erratically than before.

A knowledgeable PC can **realize the danger** of allowing this to continue: the Phreas's malfunctions are likely to become more severe or numerous soon, and its beneficial effect (the Pool of Life) may soon fail permanently.

### OZO INTERRUPTS

Shortly after the PCs make their way back into the Heart of the Phreas, Ozo shows up. He is dead set against the plan to restore the Phreas. Although he is cantankerous and stubborn, he isn't violent and doesn't intend to attack the PCs. His efforts to block the restoration include:

- Shouting, pleading, or demanding that they “just talk about it for a minute.”
- Stepping between the PCs and the grist drupe, hoping to block their effort to target it with Chev's device.
- If sufficiently desperate, pulling his knife and threatening to fight the PCs. (He's unlikely to follow through.)

The PCs should have little difficulty overcoming Ozo's obstruction, given a few rounds of effort (whether through combat, intimidation, or diplomacy). Unfortunately, that's all it takes for the newly duplicated dead ithsyns to arrive.

### DUPLICATED DEAD ITHSYNS

Shortly before the PCs arrived, Ozo brought his dead ithsyns to the Heavenly Phreas. He hoped to revive his flock by bringing them back to life, not understanding that the malfunctioning numenera doesn't revive the dead, and not thinking that his duplicated livestock would be dangerous just like the duplicated dead humans. From another chamber within the Phreas, Ozo hears the PCs arrive at the Heart, at which point he left behind his dead animals to talk to them. Because the effect isn't instantaneous (nobody knows how long it takes or what prompts it to affect some corpses and not others), when he left to talk to the PCs, his beasts hadn't yet been duplicated.

But they have now. And attracted by the activity in the Heart—perhaps the volume of Ozo's entreaties—**three of them** arrive just as the PCs finish dealing with Ozo. Like the duplicates of the human dead, they are aggressive and irrational (even more so than normal ithsyns!) and have multiple “egg yolk” tumors. They attack the occupants of the Heart immediately.

### COMBAT IN THE HEART OF THE PHREAS

Like all the chambers within the Heavenly Phreas, the Heart is spherical in shape. That means it has no flat floor, and no definitive point where the “floor” joins the “walls.” The bottom of the chamber is defined by a smooth, curving slope, becoming increasingly steep around its bowl-shaped center.

**Ozo:** level 3

**Timing tip:** *Dealing with Ozo and his duplicated dead ithsyns will probably take up the remaining hour left in the game slot. Afterward, if there are still 30 or more minutes left, the GM can use the optional encounter “Faces in the Mirror” (page 14) to fill that time; otherwise, the reveal of that encounter is a fun cliffhanger.*

**Duplicated dead ithsyn:** level 4, perception as level 3, resisting mental attacks as level 7; Armor 2; bite or kick inflicts 4 points of damage; can attack and move a long distance as a single action; as a reaction to being attacked, automatically releases gas in immediate range

*Ithsyn gas, page 9*

**GM intrusion:** *One or two more duplicated dead ithsyns, created later than the others, appear and join the fight. This is a good way to adjust the difficulty of the final scene if it's going too easily for the PCs.*

**Distressed sphere analysis:** level 5 understanding numenera task



**Heart of the Phreas:** level 8 salvage source; villagers from Tavrul won't let the PCs salvage it without a fight

**Timing tip:** In a convention game, use the Faces in the Mirror encounter only if there are at least 30 minutes left in the time slot. If not, you can use the arrival of the duplicated PCs as a fun cliffhanger at the end of the adventure.

**Drupe disruption:** level 4 understanding numenera task

**GM intrusion:** The resonance of Chev's device nauseates a character within short range, hindering their actions for the next hour.

*Chev's device can be used as a weapon against a duplicate of the dead (whether human or ithsyn) by any character who can easily wield it as a weapon, and it inflicts 4 points of damage at immediate range against such a creature.*

**Metal sphere slam attack:** level 6 Speed defense task; inflicts 6 points of ambient damage (ignores Armor)

- The central part of the floor in the Heart (about a short distance across) is relatively flat, and characters can easily maneuver there.
- Around that is a narrower area (slightly shaded on the map, about an immediate distance beyond the central area) where the floor curves up more steeply. Physical actions of characters on that part of the floor are hindered.
- Beyond this ring-shaped area, the floor steeply curves up and eventually becomes vertical. In this outer border area (about an immediate distance wide), physical actions are hindered, and any movement requires a successful level 4 Speed task to avoid falling prone.
- Flying characters ignore the penalties of operating in the steeply curved areas. For simplicity's sake, have the duplicated dead and any NPCs also ignore this hazard—they scramble and may appear off-balance, but it doesn't affect their actions or abilities.

## DESTROYING THE DRUPE

When operated properly, Chev's device emits a resonant energy that disrupts a grist drupe. Complete disruption requires the user to succeed in **three consecutive uses of the device**.

The grist drupe visibly weakens with each success, initially vibrating, then appearing to fracture, and ultimately beginning to crumble before collapsing into a coarse orange dust. If at any point the PC using the device is interrupted or a roll is failed, the drupe recovers its form almost immediately, and the attempt must start over.

The danger comes to an end when the PCs destroy the drupe and defeat the duplicated dead ithsyns.

Following the successful use of Chev's device, the drupe disintegrates into a gritty orange dust. (The villagers will later collect this for their gardens.) The giant sphere, no longer pressed against the wall, rocks back into the center of the chamber. Although for a moment the PCs may have the sickening feeling that it's about to crush them, only PCs who happen to be in its path through the air **may get hit** as it comes to a sudden

stop in its normal position. Once it's back in place, the flickering of the glyphs and lines on its surface seems to settle down somewhat; it appears to be returning to normal. Any duplicated dead (ithsyn or human) collapse and die, their yellow tumors leaking away.

Once the sphere is back in its normal position, the Heavenly Phreas won't create any more duplicates, and its functioning returns to normal. The existing duplicates of living people are still around, however, and seem to be unaffected by the restoration of the Heart.

With the threat to their village ended, the people of Tavrul encourage the PCs to stay for a celebratory feast, and to enjoy the health benefits of the Pool of Life as well!

## OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER: FACES IN THE MIRROR

Unfortunately, while the PCs are destroying the drupe, the damaged numenera in the Phreas had one last burst of activity—it created duplicates of the PCs, who wake up in a remote catacomb chamber, and eventually make their way into Tavrul. The duplicates are still a little disoriented. Like those of the villagers:

- They woke up in the Heavenly Phreas, which was unfamiliar to them.
- They don't know that they're duplicates.
- They have no memory of the past day or so. Their last recollection was setting up camp under some giant toadstools after a long day on the road. (Because of that, they don't recognize the village they've wandered into or any of the people they've met, and don't know about the duplicated dead.) It's likely that they assume they were drugged and moved while they slept, or perhaps even teleported.
- The duplicated and original PCs have the same animosity toward each other that the duplicated NPCs do: any interaction attempts between them are hindered by three steps, and if left too long without someone to mediate, it's likely the two groups start fighting.



In this encounter, the GM has an interesting roleplaying opportunity. They should play each duplicate NPC as faithfully as possible to the personality of the original PC. The GM should consider advice from the player as to how their PC would react. However, the GM should also remember that even the most agreeable people find something annoying and “off” about their counterpart, like two well-meaning people who keep talking over each other.

How this encounter unfolds depends on the personalities of the PCs. Those who are usually aggressive or indignant are likely to start a conflict with their counterparts, or vice versa. Suspicious ones are likely to think the duplicates have a secret agenda—and a suspicious duplicate definitely feels the same way about the original PC!

If someone starts a fight, the GM should have the duplicate mirror the tactics and character abilities that the PC has used. Note that because the Phreas doesn't duplicate cyphers or artifacts, the duplicates won't have them (but can still rely on character abilities that are powered by internal numenera or iotum). Use the following generic type-based stats as a baseline for anything the duplicated PCs do.

Despite their innate dislike of each other, the combat doesn't have to turn lethal. Once everyone gets a few turns and works off some steam, people will probably cool down a bit and agree to stop fighting.

**Arkus duplicate:** level 4, deception and persuasion as level 5; melee or ranged weapon attack inflicts 2 points of damage; uses their action to ease an ally's attack or defense by three steps for one round

**Delve duplicate:** level 4, Speed defense and perception as level 5; health 14; Armor 1; melee or ranged weapon attack inflicts 4 points of damage; delve lore hinders a foe's attack by three steps for one round

**Glaive duplicate:** level 4, attacks and Speed defense as level 5; health 16; Armor 2; melee or ranged weapon attack inflicts 6 points of damage; fighting move inflicts damage and hinders a foe for several rounds

**Jack duplicate:** level 4, Speed defense and stealth as level 5; Armor 1; melee or ranged weapon attack inflicts 4 points of damage; trick of the trade adds 2 points of Speed damage (ignores Armor) to one attack or hinders a foe's attack by two steps for one round

**Nano duplicate:** level 4, numenera attacks and Intellect defense as level 5; Armor 1 (from force field); short-range psychic bolt inflicts 4 points of force damage or 2 points of Intellect damage (ignores Armor); esotery confuses or stuns a foe for several rounds

**Wright duplicate:** level 4, Intellect defense as level 5; Armor 1; melee or ranged weapon attack inflicts 2 points of damage; inspired technique disables one numenera item carried by a foe for several rounds

### PREGENERATED CONVENTION CHARACTERS

If you're using the pregenerated PCs for this adventure, their duplicates have the following additional specific abilities:

**Auril (Glaive):** Aggression eases their attacks and hinders their defenses for the rest of the combat.

**Ketch (Delve):** Right Tool for the Job uses iotum to create an asset to a physical noncombat task for one minute.

**Marulas (Nano):** Healing Touch restores 4 health to an NPC or 4 Pool points to a PC.

**Red Yoru (Jack):** Flex Skill eases one of their noncombat skills for the rest of the day.

**Rij Ferante (Arkus):** Demeanor of Command forces foes who aren't in combat to delay entering combat for one round.

**Terbeke (Wright):** Iotum ray inflicts 3 points of force damage to one character in short range.

*In a home campaign, the GM might allow a player whose PC has died to continue playing that character—the duplicate returns to the group and the player takes over running the duplicate as their PC. The GM may even allow the player to reconfigure the character's last few advancements, representing how the duplicate made different choices than the original PC.*

**GM intrusion:** *Seeing two versions of an ally opposing each other in combat confuses and disorients a character, hindering all their actions for several rounds.*

*In a home campaign, for an additional plot twist, have the original PCs or villagers discover that before the duplicated PCs left the Heavenly Phreas, they salvaged numenera from the Heart. This means the Pool of Life can no longer enhance people (but doesn't affect those already enhanced), unless the PCs find some way to repair it.*





**Alentee:** level 2

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

When the PCs are ready to leave Tavrul, the thankful villagers provide them with as much food and clean water as they can carry.

One likely outcome for the duplicated PCs is that they strike out on their own or stay with the original PCs until they reach the next village. Duplicated villagers might want to leave Tavrul with the original PCs (or their duplicates) in the hopes of starting a new life in another settlement—particularly if doing so means avoiding their own counterpart and uncomfortable situations with relatives, friends, and spouses.

If the PCs were nice to Peppest and they didn't get any cyphers from the Hall of Wonders, he sheepishly offers to let them pick over what's in the workroom and take something they'd like (in effect, this lets them refill their cyphers if they didn't do so earlier). If they already took things from the Hall of Wonders, he suggests they keep the **gift they brought for Chev**—he already expects to take months or more sorting and deciphering the many wonders and strange things that she left behind in her workshop, so he doesn't need any more right now, and he thinks the PCs might need it.

Award each PC 1 XP for dealing with the threat of the duplicated dead, and another 1 XP each for destroying the drupe that was interfering with the Heavenly Phreas.

## ADDITIONAL TAVRUL NPCs

In a non-convention game or play environment where the PCs have more time to interact with other villagers, the GM can use the following NPCs to help flesh out the situation in Tavrul. Alternatively, if this isn't the first time the GM has run this adventure, they can have Ludmul or Sana be the first duplicated living person who returned to the village (instead of Fetr), which changes the social dynamic of interacting with the various NPCs.

**Ludmul and duplicate:** level 3

**Alentee:** A farmer, married to Ludmul. When Ludmul's duplicate arrives, she feels sympathy toward him (he obviously loves her as much as the original Ludmul does) but keeps her distance. She is easily upset by the two men's arguments whenever they're in sight of each other.

**Ludmul:** A robust man of late middle age, Ludmul is kindhearted and gentle, the type of person who seems to get along easily with almost everyone. He is regarded by his neighbors as a savvy and weather-wise farmer. Ludmul eventually gets duplicated, and when his duplicate shows up in the village, the two of them are shocked (both at the other's existence and their immediate dislike of each other). Over time, the two duplicates can learn to grudgingly get along, but they admit there's something about the other that gets on their nerves.

**Marll:** Farmer, husband of Sana, short and strong. Once Sana's duplicate arrives, Marll grows increasingly annoyed that his wife (the original Sana) won't let him out of her sight—he's not used to having her following him around while he works.

**Nellia:** Farmer, cousin of Sana's husband Marll, middle-aged with advanced grey hair. She is liked in the village, especially for her excellent singing voice. When Sana's duplicate arrives, Nellia lets her stay in her house, if only to keep the original Sana from causing a disturbance.

**Sana:** A grey-haired and stout woman, Sana is the person charged with maintaining seed grain after each harvest for sowing the following year. When her duplicate comes to the village, she is utterly freaked out. She refuses to accept that the duplicate is in any way derived from or related to her—the similarities must be a coincidence, or a strange plot, or . . . something. Since the duplicate's arrival, she hasn't let her husband, Marll, out of her sight, terrified that he might lose track of the fact that she's the "real" Sana. Sana's duplicate pines for "her" husband and refuses to interact with the rest of the village.

**Marll:** level 2

**Gift for Chev:** The box of numenera consists of two random cyphers and the following units of *iotum*: mimetic gel (1), pliable metal (2), apt clay (3), and *io* (6).



*lotum*, page 111

**Nellia:** level 2

**Sana and duplicate:** level 3



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

**Understanding (1 Intellect point):** You observe or study a creature or object. Your next interaction with that creature or object gains one asset. Action.

**Slip Into Shadow (2+ Intellect points):** Attempt to slip away from a selected target and hide from view in a nearby shadow, even if in full view of the target. For each level of Effort applied, you can attempt to affect one additional target, as long as all your targets are next to each other. Action to initiate.

**Level 7 synth rod** that delivers a powerful burst of electricity to any creature touched, inflicting 7 points of damage.

**Level 7 glass panel** that, when held against a solid surface of up to level 6, lets you see through it up to 2 feet (60 cm) for 7 minutes.

# NUMENERA

RIJ FERANTE

ISA

CURIOUS ARKUS

WHO

ACTS WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE

9

0

11

0

16

1

POOL  
EDGE  
MIGHT

POOL  
EDGE  
SPEED

POOL  
EDGE  
INTELLECT

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

1

1

TIER

EFFORT

XP

RECOVERY

1

1D6+

1 ACTION

10 MINS

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

## SKILLS / INABILITIES

Persuasion (trained)  
Public speaking (trained)  
Perception (trained)  
Detecting falsehoods, piercing disguise or illusion (trained)  
Stealth (trained)

EQUIPMENT

5

SHINS

Stylish clothing  
Blowgun (see Attacks)  
Darts (12)  
*How to Explain* (book about persuasion)  
*Ancient Arrivals* (book about visitants)  
*One Day in Qi* (storybook about Aeon Priests)  
Deck of playing cards

**Oddity:** Feathered hat that occasionally makes pleasing bird noises

**Oddity:** Small glowing orb on silver chain you keep as a "lucky" charm

ATTACKS

**Blowgun** (2 points of damage), short-range weapon fires darts—attacks eased



## BACKGROUND

You are a member of a small secret society.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. They rescued you from an awful predicament during one of the few times your luck failed you. You're a bit embarrassed that they know you have limits.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** You got in over your head pursuing something fascinating, and the other PCs rescued you.

## RIJ FERANTE

## NOTES

## CRAFTING

## FOLLOWERS

**PORTRAIT**



**ADVANCEMENT**

<p><b>INCREASE CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>◆</p> <p>+4 TO STAT POOLS</p>	<p><b>OTHER</b></p> <p>◆</p> <p>REFER TO COREBOOK</p>
<p>+1 TO EFFORT ◆ <b>EXTRA EFFORT</b></p>	<p><b>SKILL TRAINING</b> ◆ TRAIN OR SPECIALIZE IN A SKILL</p>
<p><b>MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION</b></p> <p>◆</p> <p>+1 TO EDGE</p>	

**Community Leader:** While you are present within a community, and actively and personally working on behalf of that community, the community's rank (a community stat your GM may or may not decide to use) is +1 for all purposes except damage inflicted. Enabler.

UNITS

MATERIALS

PARTS

UNITS



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Right Tool for the Job** (1 Intellect point + iotum): See Crafting.

**Imaginative Solution:** When you apply a level of Effort to any Intellect task, you gain a free level of Effort. You can do this one time, although the ability is renewed each time you make a ten-hour recovery roll.

**Fists of Fury:** You inflict 2 additional points of damage with unarmed attacks. Enabler. (figured into Attacks)

**Flesh of Stone:** You have +1 to Armor if you do not wear physical armor. Enabler. (figured into Armor)

**Trained Without Armor:** You are trained in Speed defense tasks when not wearing armor. Enabler. (figured into Skills)

**Ready For What's Next:** You add +1 to your recovery rolls. (figured into recovery rolls)

# NUMENERA

## SKILLS / INABILITIES

Interaction tasks	(inability)
Tracking	(trained)
Speed defense	(trained)
Salvaging numenera	(trained)

KETCH

ISA

INDUSTRIOUS DELVE

WHO

NEEDS NO WEAPONS

11

POOL

EDGE

MIGHT

14

POOL

EDGE

SPEED

1

EDGE

1

COST

13

POOL

EDGE

INTELLECT

1

EDGE

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

1

TIER

1

EFFORT

XP

RECOVERY

2

1D6+

1 ACTION

10 MINS

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

EQUIPMENT

10

SHINS

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

**Oddity:** Shirt that displays your muscles, bones, and internal organs when you wear it

ATTACKS

**Unarmed Attack** (fist, foot, elbow: 4 points of damage), attacks eased

**Bow** (4 points of damage), long-range weapon fires arrows

CYPHERS

2

**Level 4 wristband projector** that creates an immediate area explosion within long range, inflicting 4 points of cold damage.

**Level 3 pill** that, for the next three times the user attempts a stealth task, it eases the task by three steps.



## BACKGROUND

Before becoming a full-time explorer, you tracked down people who displeased a local noble. You brought several people to “justice” before you began to question the noble’s motives, and left. Now, the noble may be looking for you.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. You once trained with a close friend of theirs, and you owe that mutual friend much.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** One of the other PCs said they’d help you with your noble problem if you helped them.

## KETCH

## NOTES

## CRAFTING

6 units of io  
5 units of responsive synth

**Right Tool for the Job (1 Intellect point + iotum):** If you have at least 1 unit of iotum, you can fashion a temporary device that provides an asset to a physical, non-combat task (identified ahead of time). For example, if you need to climb a wall, you could create a climbing assistance device; if you need to break out of a cell, you can tune iotum in your possession to serve as a lockpick; if you need to create a small distraction, you could trigger an iotum to make a loud bang and flash; and so on. Once fashioned, the adapted iotum lasts for about a minute or until used for the intended purpose. This use destroys the iotum. Action to prepare the iotum; action to initiate.



PORTRAIT

## ADVANCEMENT

**INCREASE CAPABILITIES**  
◆  
+4 TO  
STAT POOLS

**OTHER**  
◆  
REFER TO  
COREBOOK

+1 TO EFFORT ◆  
**EXTRA EFFORT**

◆  
**SKILL TRAINING** ◆  
TRAIN OR  
SPECIALIZE  
IN A SKILL

**MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION**  
◆  
+1 TO EDGE

## FOLLOWERS

**Community Explorer:** While you are present within a community, and actively and personally working on behalf of that community, the community’s effective rank (a community stat your GM may or may not decide to use) for purposes of finding resources, locating new trade routes, knowing about conditions just beyond the community, and detecting sneak attacks by enemies is +1. Enabler.

UNITS

PARTS  
UNITS

1000



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

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

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

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

# NUMENERA

AURIL

ISA

GRACEFUL GLAIVE

WHO EXISTS PARTIALLY OUT OF PHASE

15

1

16

1

8

0

1

5

2

**Level 1 crystalline nodule** with a clip that attaches to armor or clothing for 28 hours that inflicts 1 point of electricity damage to any creature striking the wearer.

**Level 5 pill** that restores 5 points to Might Pool

1

1

RECOVERY

1

1D6+

1 ACTION 10 MINS

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

## SKILLS / INABILITIES

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

EQUIPMENT

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

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

ATTACKS

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

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

TIER

EFFORT

XP

INTELLECT

SPEED

MIGHT

ARMOR COST

SHINS

CYPHERS

LIMIT



## BACKGROUND

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

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

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

## AURIL

## NOTES

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



PO RTRAIT

INCREASE  
CAPABILITIES

◆  
+4 TO  
STAT POOLS

OTHER

◆  
REFER TO  
NUMENERA DISCOVERY

ADVANCEMENT

+1 TO EFFORT ◆  
EXTRA  
EFFORT

◆  
TRAIN OR  
SPECIALIZE  
IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD  
PERFECTION

◆  
+1 TO EDGE



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Flex Skill:** Once each day, choose to become trained in a task (other than attacks or defense, and other than one you're already trained in) for the next 28 hours. Action.

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

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

**Level 6 shoulder-mounted device** that projects a ray of molecular-bond-disrupting energy up to very long range, inflicting 6 points of damage.

**Level 3 crystal nodule** with a metal chain that attaches to a weapon for 28 hours, adding 2 points of heat damage when the weapon strikes a solid creature or object.

# NUMENERA

RED YORU

IS A

CLEVER JACK

WHO

WORKS THE BACK ALLEYS

10

0

11

0

17

1

1

23

2

CYPHERS

LIMIT

MIGHT

SPEED

INTELLECT

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

1

1

XP

TIER

EFFORT

RECOVERY

1

1D6+

1 ACTION 10 MINS

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

## SKILLS / INABILITIES

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

EQUIPMENT

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

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

ATTACKS

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



## BACKGROUND

Your best friend from childhood is now an Aeon Priest.

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

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

## RED YORU

## NOTES

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



### PORTRAIT

INCREASE  
CAPABILITIES

◆  
+4 TO  
STAT POOLS

OTHER

◆  
REFER TO  
NUMENERA DISCOVERY

### ADVANCEMENT

+1 TO EFFORT ◆  
EXTRA  
EFFORT

◆ TRAIN OR  
SPECIALIZE  
IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD  
PERFECTION

◆  
+1 TO EDGE



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

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

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

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

**Level 8 adhesive patch** that restores 8 points to Intellect Pool.

**Level 4 device** that creates an immediate-area explosion when thrown (up to a short distance), inflicting 4 points of sonic damage.

**Level 5 metallic spike** that once activated does not move, ever, even if activated in midair. A Might action can dislodge it, but then it is ruined.

# NUMENERA

MARULAS

IS A

MYSTICAL NANO

WHO

WORKS MIRACLES

8

POOL

0

EDGE

9

POOL

0

EDGE

19

POOL

1

EDGE

MIGHT

SPEED

INTELLECT

1

TIER

1

EFFORT

XP

RECOVERY

1

1D6+

1 ACTION 10 MINS

1 HOUR 10 HOURS

## SKILLS / INABILITIES

Understanding numenera  
Charm, persuasion, and deception

(specialized)  
(inability)

EQUIPMENT

4

SHINS

Clothing

Knife (see Attacks)

*The Ancient Miracles* (book about the numenera)

Explorer's pack: 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes

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

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

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

ATTACKS

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



## BACKGROUND

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

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

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

## MARULAS

## NOTES

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



### PORTRAIT

#### INCREASE CAPABILITIES

◆  
+4 TO  
STAT POOLS

#### OTHER

◆  
REFER TO  
NUMENERA DISCOVERY

### ADVANCEMENT

+1 TO EFFORT ◆  
EXTRA  
EFFORT

◆ TRAIN OR  
SPECIALIZE  
IN A SKILL

#### MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION

◆  
+1 TO EDGE



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

**Extra Use (3 Intellect points):** You attempt to gain an extra use from a cypher. The difficulty of the task is equal to the level of the cypher + 1. A failed attempt to gain an additional use from a cypher destroys it before it can produce the desired effect. Action.

**Trigger Iotum Ray (1 Intellect point):** Trigger a unit of iotum (see the Crafting section) to release a short-range ray of force inflicting 3 points of damage. This does not destroy the iotum. Or, you can destroy the iotum and pay no Intellect cost. Action.

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

**Mechanical Assistance:** You gain +4 to your Intellect Pool (already figured in) through the use of implants and tiny processing devices. Enabler.

**Level 3 injector** that connects the user to the datasphere for the next 28 hours; whenever the user applies a level of Effort on an understanding numenera task, they can apply a free level of Effort.

**Level 6 canister of metallic clay** that can be shaped and expanded to create permanent individual objects such as a hammer, a ladder, or a basic structure such as a wall, bench, floor, staircase, and so on, as long as the total volume created fits in a 10-foot (3 m) cube.

**Level 4 gloves** that allow the user to automatically climb any surface, even vertical ones, for 4 minutes.

# NUMENERA

TERBEKE

ISA

CONFIDENT WRIGHT

WHO

FUSES MIND AND MACHINE

13

0

8

0

20

1

MIGHT

SPEED

INTELLECT

3

CYPHERS

LIMIT

**Level 3 injector** that connects the user to the datasphere for the next 28 hours; whenever the user applies a level of Effort on an understanding numenera task, they can apply a free level of Effort.

**Level 6 canister of metallic clay** that can be shaped and expanded to create permanent individual objects such as a hammer, a ladder, or a basic structure such as a wall, bench, floor, staircase, and so on, as long as the total volume created fits in a 10-foot (3 m) cube.

**Level 4 gloves** that allow the user to automatically climb any surface, even vertical ones, for 4 minutes.

1

1

XP

TIER

EFFORT

XP

RECOVERY

1

10 MINS

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

1 ACTION

1D6+

1 HOUR

10 HOURS

## SKILLS / INABILITIES

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

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

EQUIPMENT

5

SHINS

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

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

DEBILITATED

IMPAIRED

ATTACKS

**Punching dagger** (2 points of damage), attacks eased



## BACKGROUND

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

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character knows a few things that can help when your implants and enhancements malfunction.

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

## TERBEKE

## NOTES

## CRAFTING

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

### PLANS

**Numenera Plans:** You have two cypher plans, allowing you to craft

- level 3 skill boost cypher (eases perception tasks by three steps three times within one day after activation)
- level 3 catseye injector (user can see in the dark for 15 hours).

If you have iotum (3 io, 5 responsive synth, 2 apt clay, 5 parts) and can spend at least four hours crafting, you can create either of these cyphers if you succeed on three crafting numenera tasks (difficulty 1, 2, and 3 respectively). You can give them to your allies or keep them if their or your cypher limit allows. Action to initiate, hour to complete.



## FOLLOWERS

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

INCREASE  
CAPABILITIES

◆  
+4 TO  
STAT POOLS

OTHER

◆  
REFER TO  
COREBOOK

### ADVANCEMENT

+1 TO EFFORT

◆  
EXTRA  
EFFORT

◆  
SKILL  
TRAINING

◆  
TRAIN OR  
SPECIALIZE  
IN A SKILL

MOVE TOWARD  
PERFECTION

◆  
+1 TO EDGE

UNITS

MATERIALS

PARTS

UNITS