

THE DRAGON PRINCE

# Tales of Xadia™

—▶ ROLEPLAYING GAME ◀—



The Tale of the  
Lost Oasis

# Introduction

A mysterious tomb-delving Moonshadow elf named Feathershawl (they/them) has commissioned a crew (that's your characters, players) to investigate an abandoned city, one that floats on an island high across the Xadian sky. The city is called Innean, a name unspoken in everyday conversation in Xadia for a long time. Natural wind currents high in the atmosphere have set the island on a collision course with a mountain range at the Border, and there's no way to counter the power of the floating city and stop the collision. The clock is ticking for Feathershawl—and you—to salvage a rare artifact from it.

The powerful artifact you're hunting is the Primal Well, and it conducts Sky and Earth magics through itself, keeping Innean aloft. Feathershawl is obsessed with bringing this artifact back to the Moonshadow elves, as they claim their people's lives depend on it. They tell you that there's only a 12-hour window to ride to Innean on a magic beam of moonlight and get in and out before the city is destroyed forever. But don't worry, they say. Should be an easy job, they say. There aren't any bystanders at risk of getting hurt in an abandoned city. And Innean contains everything from baubles to lost legends, all headed for destruction.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

To narrate the *Tale of the Lost Oasis*, you need access to and some familiarity with the *Tales of Xadia Game Handbook* or the *Tales of Xadia Rules Primer*.

You also need character journals for your players (available at [TalesOfXadia.com](https://TalesOfXadia.com)), dice (either physical or virtual), a way to track plot points, and a couple of friends ready to enter the world of Xadia with you!



## Note to Players

Skywing PCs, such as Pyrda and Easgann from the ready to play characters at [TalesOfXadia.com](https://TalesOfXadia.com), may have an interesting perspective on visiting Innean, but they won't have a particular advantage. The Skywing elves of Innean have been isolated for so long that the culture feels both familiar and alien. Since stopping the city's collision is impossible, anything you can save will be a gift not just to yourself, but to history. You have the chance to salvage hope from this destruction.

Remember that it's okay for PCs to separate from one another. You might even find it more expansive and fun to follow different threads or, as some tabletop games call it, "split the party." This isn't a bad thing in a Cortex game! In fact, some obstacles might prove easier if your PCs choose to split up and follow threads in separate locations.

But now, dear player, we must part ways. What lies ahead is strictly for Narrator eyes and contains major spoilers. Farewell, and see you when you decide to come back and take your turn as Narrator.

## Note to Narrators

*The Lost Oasis* has a plot urgency due to the ticking clock. Consider the following, should players dilly dally or bend the possibilities of the plot.

The city and its connection to the Primal Well have created a magical force so strong that this collision cannot be stopped. You might remind players that as they approached, they took in the enormity of the city and its buildings and realized not just how much history could be lost, but just how impossibly massive and powerful the city looks cutting through the clouds.

This tale has two catalysts, special Narrator characters vital to the story and instrumental to the outcome.

Both catalysts welcome help from the PCs, but they move forward through the plot on this tight schedule, whether PCs wish to join them or not. Whenever the catalysts meet, they're likely to clash and disagree with each other's motives.

The catalysts are both keenly aware of the urgency. And quickly all Narrator characters are as well. They can serve as the voice of the ticking clock, so to speak.

Or as Feathershaw himself puts it...

I've lost both possessions and confidence since being ghosted by the Moonshadow society. However, I'm convinced I can find something on Innean to save lives and make up for the shortcomings that brought me to that rather traumatic ritual. I have my eye on one artifact in particular, that Primal Well. You see, I underestimated a plague of worms that destroyed my people's crops, and this artifact could easily float the crops above the now desperately infested soil. I truly hope this excursion will not only help me but also my people. I will give them this artifact and ask nothing in return.

It's too important for me to risk extracting the artifact alone. I've studied it, but there's little to study. There's no record of Innean being in contact with Xadia in centuries. It's most certainly abandoned. This should be simple. Yet I may well need the likes of you because even my rather capable powers have their limits.

I shall use my cloak to harness a major moonbeam only present during this rare moon phase which lasts for a mere 12-hour window! There will never be another chance, for Innean faces destruction. We shall glide up the moonbeam as if it is a river of light and we float upon a raft. Sorry I can't tell you more; time is of the essence, and I need to bring sustenance to my people. Wasting too much time was my greatest mistake back home, and I'm weary of doing it again. Hurry, now!

## Tale Overview

As Narrator, you have a lot to remember, but there's a lot to look forward to! Here's a breakdown of important narrator characters (NCs), items, terms, and events. Scan it to see where this is all going, even before the hypothetical dice pools roll.

**Act One: Rabble, Rabble:** PCs land in Innean to the shock of both them and NCs. They must quickly decide whether to follow one of the catalysts or help the townspeople evacuate.

**The Collision:** Innean is going to hit the mountain soon. Even sooner when Feathershaw accidentally directs Moon magic into the Primal Well.

**Act Two: After the Collision:** The bedrock of Innean begins to grind into dust against the mountain, so it's time to escape.

**Innean:** A small floating town inhabited by Skywing elves. Locals sometimes call it a city, because they've never seen another settlement before to compare its size to.

**Feathershaw:** A tall, lanky Moonshadow elf catalyst who means well, but is obsessed with retrieving the Primal Well, so they may be a bit rude at times.

**Nausics:** The elder of Innean, this Skywing elf catalyst also means well. Unlike Feathershaw, however, the grim mistakes of his past were deliberate. So much so that his own obsession is getting the chance to make a formal and respectful confession.

**Primal Well:** An ancient artifact installed in Innean that gives the town its gravity-defying abilities.

**Cuirass of Vuxen:** A powerful piece of chest armor that allows a single person to hold the Primal Well with their own hands.

## Many Threads

*The Lost Oasis* is told in two acts, each made up of scenes involving three intertwining threads: one with each of the two catalysts, the third involving the evacuation of Innean's townspeople. The collision of Innean with the mountainside marks the point where Act One ends and Act Two begins.

The main reason the threads exist is to reflect the passage of time during a tense, time-sensitive story. It might be preferable if players split up to deal with multiple threads through the adventure. Players can create their own threads if they wish, and we offer suggestions in case things go awry (page 23).

### However...

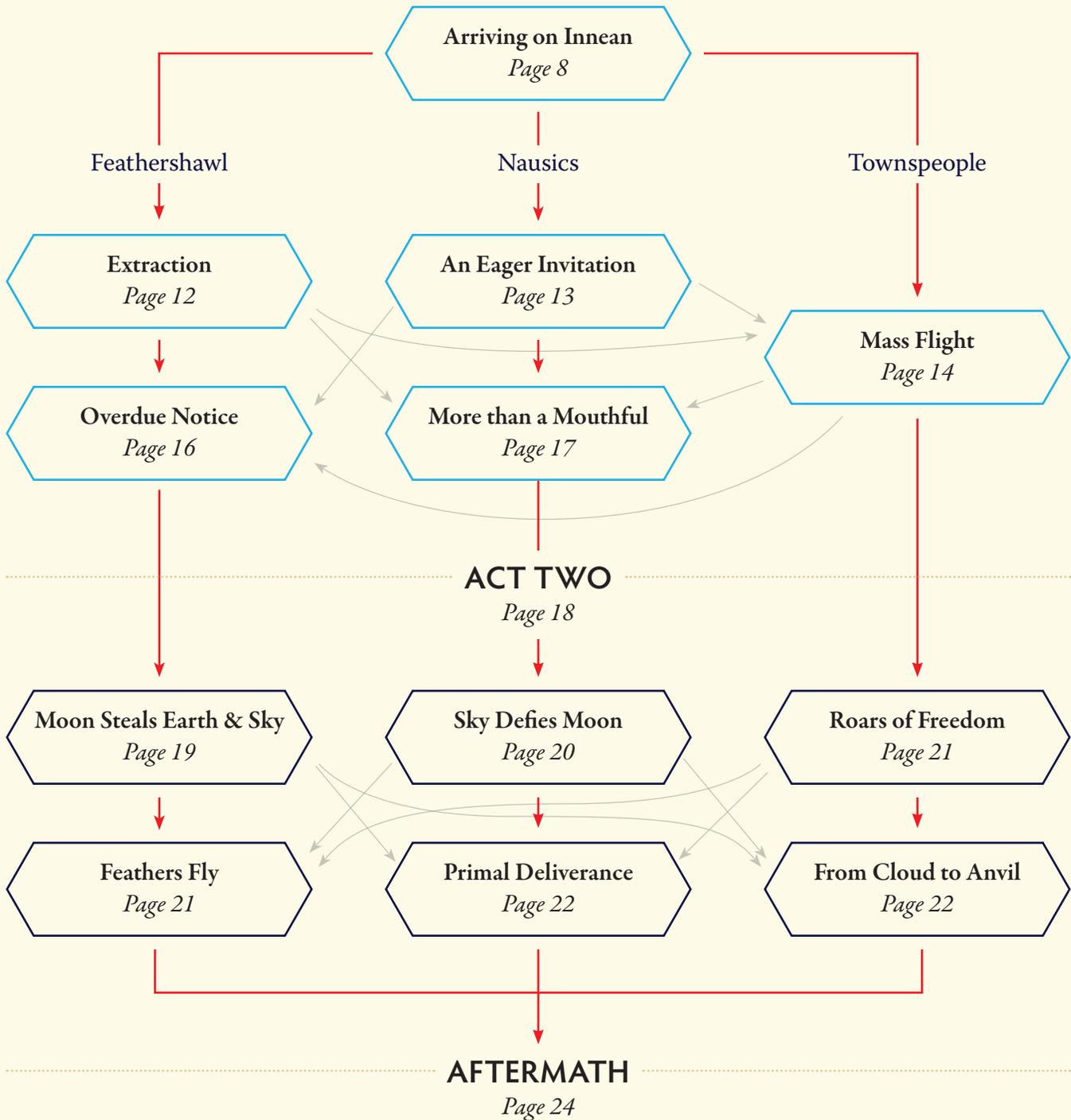
...The three narrative threads forge ahead with or without the attention of the PCs, and there are consequences for neglecting them. Anyone who went with a catalyst has a harder time getting off the island if there isn't someone else helping the evacuation effort. If nobody helps the catalysts, their final confrontation is offstage and lacks a mediator; consider additional ways the landscape might suffer, both narratively speaking and the actual earth-and-stone landscape.

Only by playing effectively and somehow nurturing all three threads can players save the most lives, rescue as many Innean artifacts and remembrances as possible, and get away with the Primal Well.

# Scene Guide

## ACT ONE Rabble, Rabble Page 8

**Note:** This flowchart shows the most likely paths through the tale. It's possible you'll add in scenes, play them in a slightly different order, or have some PCs jump across to a different thread. The threads run concurrently, so if a PC changes threads, make sure they don't accidentally travel back in time!



## Innean

Innean is a small floating, isolated, Brigadoon-like city where a small population of Skywing elves have lived in harmony for centuries, separated from the rest of Xadian Skywing culture and unaware of Xadia's politics and conflicts with humans. Life has become more pastoral than adventurous, as stratospheric winds quickly made visiting Innean all but impossible and round trips to the ground below are extremely unappealing. The city feels the strain of its isolation, however, as people have begun to disappear (later, players discover people have gone missing as a result of Nausics' experiments). Innean has drifted west over the years and is now about to collide with a mountainside along the Border. Feathershawl's research has yielded hints that the city is occupied, but they've conveniently left that out. PCs are told the city is abandoned—until they arrive and see differently.

Time is of the essence, but here are some tidbits of Innean history you can share:

- Skywings rarely gather in communities.
- Innean is the only commonly known community to ever have existed; it is quite unique.
- Few on the ground even know Innean exists at all, it has been so long since it rose to the sky.
- The story goes that long ago, Earthblood elves helped the Skywing elves shape the massive stone foundation and install the Primal Well.
- Somewhere in Xadia, there is rumored to be a giant spiraling stone pit, a foundational bed where Innean once stood, before it unscrewed itself and rose to the clouds.

## Cuirass of Vuxen and the Primal Well

The Primal Well is a chest-sized chunk of marble, taller than it is wide, faceted like a diamond, and reverberating with the residual magic it collects from the world around it. This is redirected downward, pushing Innean to a great height. If anyone touches the Primal Well, their skin turns into magical stone until they are a frozen statue.

The Primal Well can only be safely handled by using the Cuirass of Vuxen, forged by Innean's talented blacksmith Vuxen under the direction of Nausics. The cuirass redirects ribbons of Earth and Sky magic energy around the wearer, protecting them. It's an asset, the **CUIRASS OF VUXEN** 10, and it's rather simple to pick up the Primal Well while wearing it.

## Narrator Characters

This tale includes many Narrator characters for you to describe, and even roleplay if you wish. Chief amongst them are Feathershawl and Nausics, though a whole retinue of Innean citizens will reveal themselves in the opening scenes.

- With **Feathershawl**, consider the gravitas and confidence of *The Dragon Prince* character Runaan. Though Feathershawl has lost their status, they're clinging to the last remaining shards of their ego to push them through this difficult mission.
- **Nausics** also has gravitas, but is far more broken inside. He has an unflappable poker face, hidden behind his tattoos and lines of worry and age, but he wishes to make a confession and wants the perfect setting for it. He is calm for all his evasiveness.
- **Nekrex** is all talk. This outgoing NC is eager to puff up his chest but it will always end in bluster. He's a great way to introduce some details of Innean culture through his feathery armor and job as a guard, but his inability to establish authority also provides a quick narrative exit.
- On the other hand, **Olanna** is brimming with ideas from her days as an architect, and throws herself headlong into chaos. As Nausics deflates, she's likely to see the void of leadership and plunge herself into it without a second thought.
- **Vuxen** is ashamed of making the Cuirass for Nausics, and might be eager to share some special knowledge of Sky magic with PCs who endear themselves to him.
- **Wiggy** and **Beebee** in particular can become loyal companions. Assets, even, if that makes sense to you as Narrator. All livestock in Innean are considered the community's responsibility and no one's property, so no one stops a PC from picking up or keeping Wiggy or Beebee. Both animals can learn to answer to new names with some attention.

See Townspeople of Note (page 14) for details about some of these NCs and more to see who will best suit your players as they explore Innean.

# The Catalysts of the Lost Oasis



## CATALYST 8

### DEVOTION 4

*Love means little if it makes you powerless.*

### GLORY 8

*Achievements are a powerful currency for me.*

### JUSTICE 6

*All crimes are relative to their effect.*

### LIBERTY 8

*My survival and legacy are deeply pressing concerns.*

### MASTERY 8

*Developing power can solve most of my problems.*

### TRUTH 8

*The relativity of truth is keeping me alive.*

VALUES

DISTINCTIONS

### MOONSHADOW ELF 8

### EXILED MOON MAGE 8

### SINGLEMINDEDLY ACUTE 8

## SPECIALTIES

### HISTORY 8

### MOON MAGIC 10

## ASSETS

### OWLFEATHER CLOAK 6

## FEATHERSHAWL (they/them)

Feathershawl is a tall, lanky Moonshadow elf with quiet but grim eyes. Once an elder of the Moonshadow elves, they were exiled from The Hollow Wood for failing to honor an oath that cost elves their lives, and though they never meant to hurt anyone they're ashamed to discuss how horribly they've failed. Their focus is entirely on how to rejoin their society after having been made into a ghost—something most exiled elves are unable to return from—and they'll stop at nothing to bring back the Primal Well as proof of their commitment to Moonshadow elf culture. They also have a literal magic cloak of owl feathers that allows them to float along beams of moonlight during special phases of the moon. They apologize to PCs for their shrewd and myopic nature, but they're also very distracted by how little time there is and their dream of returning to their people; they're willing to sacrifice manners to achieve their goal. This Primal Well simply must work, they tell themselves, though there are no clear routes to being welcomed back after being ghosted.

They offer the PCs a chance to rescue history before it's destroyed forever, but neglect to mention the Skywing elves still occupying Innean after all these centuries. Once on Innean, they spend little to no time fraternizing with anyone unless they can provide information on the Primal Well.

Feathershawl's primary value is **LIBERTY**. They want not only the Primal Well, but the opportunity it may provide for Feathershawl to escape their ghost status and rejoin Moonshadow society. If they win a contest that involves **LIBERTY**, their **LIBERTY** die steps up, and another one of their value dice steps down at the Narrator's discretion. Particularly vulnerable to be stepped down are Feathershawl's sense of **MASTERY** and **TRUTH**, as each matters less the closer Feathershawl gets to pulling off what is essentially a heist.

"The tree-lined cliffs clinging to these mountains are beautiful. I might consider relocating here, if not for the debt I owe The Hollow Wood, and the fact that a floating city is about to make a mess of these pines."

# The Catalysts of the Lost Oasis



## CATALYST 8

### DEVOTION 6

*I remember the love of others like a nostalgic dream.*

### GLORY 4

*I am genuinely selfless in my pursuit of freedom for Innean.*

### JUSTICE 8

*I see the greater good and the sacrifices needed with brutal clarity.*

### LIBERTY 6

*I am a servant to my people, whether they understand or not.*

### MASTERY 8

*To know a power is to control the future.*

### TRUTH 8

*Patience may keep me from being transparent, but I mean well.*

## NAUSICS (he/him)

Nausics is a stocky, older Skywing elf with elaborate facial tattoos. Like most Skywing elves in Innean, he was born without wings. This Innean elder is the Keeper of the Primal Well. He's known for years that Innean was drifting towards the mountains. He's formulating a plan to take the Primal Well with him during the inevitable evacuation.

He has secretly forsaken his oath to not touch the Primal Well—by luring citizens into his keep and convincing them to try to hold the Well. His experiments haven't been successful. The frozen bodies of these elves are kept in a lair beneath Nausics' study, at the end of a staircase hidden behind a bookshelf. After many failures, Nausics now has armor—the Cuirass of Vuxen commissioned from the local blacksmith, who is proficient in weaving powerful Sky magic into the city's rare metals—which should allow the wearer to carry the Well.

Nausics' lies have drawn lines on his face, though he hides it behind the warm demeanor of a respected public figure. He's eager to confess the truth and repent for his horrible experiments, something he believed was necessary but hated to do.

Nausics is driven primarily by the value of **TRUTH**. He is desperate to confess his sins to someone, and he stops at nothing to make PCs complicit in his redemption quest involving the Cuirass of Vuxen. By succeeding in contests of **TRUTH**, his **TRUTH** value die rating steps up by one, to a max of 12. But for each of those wins, another one of his values is stepped down at the Narrator's discretion. Particularly vulnerable to be stepped down are Nausics' sense of **MASTERY** and **JUSTICE** as he descends into his obsession.

### VALUES

### DISTINCTIONS

### SKYWING ELF 8

### KEEPER OF THE PRIMAL WELL 8

### DARK SECRETS 8

### SPECIALTIES

### HISTORY 8

### MOON MAGIC 10

### ASSETS

### NECKLACE OF WARNING 6

“Let's see—a dash of radish paste here, a little more vegetable stock... and oh! I do love the earthy flavor of Pondaryss' parsnips! Yes, yes, never mind the rumbling. It will resolve itself shortly.”



## When Catalysts Collide

Feathershawl (they/them) and Nausics (he/him) are the catalysts in this tale. Early in Act One, the two argue and become very distrustful of each other. Their personalities are oil and water, and just can't seem to line up no matter how similar their goals are. But it's important to remember that they both value the PCs and both do their best to endear themselves, at least in Act One.

Nausics feels like he's seen Feathershawl's type a thousand times—rude, arrogant, condescending. It doesn't matter that Feathershawl is a former Moonshadow elder and has seen quite a few things in their day, Nausics is grimly unimpressed and demands more respect be paid towards his quickly fading culture.

Feathershawl means well from the bottom of their heart, but manners and anxiety management are huge blindspots for them. Feathershawl sees the equivalent of a clock ticking from 11:59 to midnight every time they look Nausics in his rambly face.

If you wish they'd interact with each other more, remember that Feathershawl gave Nausics a chance to follow their lead, but quickly switches their intent to breaking into Nausics' basement when Nausics doesn't fall in line. Keep track of their tension as the tale unfolds, as it may be central to your unique version of this tale.

## Act One: Rabble, Rabble

Remember to give your players some version of Feathershawl's speech, and make it clear that this is an urgent mission with specific parameters.

Give players an opportunity to establish their characters here at the very beginning of your tale—they might deliver a clever one-liner about the chicken or the landing, remark on anything else they might find interesting, etc. If players start making choices that make any of the upcoming tests, contests, and challenges seem unimportant, feel free to skip them or invent your own. All are mere suggestions for keeping the tale moving.

As a catalyst, Feathershawl is a crucial character for the plot, and the shape of the story will change depending on how PCs interact with them. Despite their occasional brusqueness, they seem genuinely grateful to have the PCs with them. The loss that motivates Feathershawl underlies a lot of their interactions. For instance, if PCs make fun of their name, Feathershawl might remark that it's the only thing they have left of their family, and let any possible uncomfortable silence be felt.

We suggest a few key points when Feathershawl might reveal more about their mission and why it's so important (this is detailed much more in *The Tale of the Gloaming Glade*). But overall they have their eye on the figurative ticking clock, and rather than explaining completely they're more likely to say things like, "I know, I've been curt, please believe me that I am much more empathetic when I am not in a crisis situation!"

Nausics is quite the tragic figure. He's done truly terrible things; let there be no ambiguity. Nausics knows he's done horrible things and has no plans to escape punishment; he's only selfishly delaying it over dinner and a well presented confession.

## Opening Scene: Arriving on Innean

After a long period of floating upwards along a pale beam of moonlight towards the ominously floating civilization, the PCs arrive in Innean with a loud WHOOOMP. The violet magic that brought them to the island still swirls around them in tufts. Everyone adjusts to the unusual feeling that they stand upon floating earth. Feathershawl casts an illumination spell that lights up the area around them with their left hand, but the spell they cast for the journey continues to swirl curiously from their right hand. You may want to make it clear that this continuation of the spell isn't nefarious. Feathershawl is just now noticing that the spell is being interacted with somehow and they are regarding it curiously.

Boots are all now planted in a small stone courtyard, in the supposedly abandoned city of Innean. Although, it looks curiously clean and well-kept. The soft purple light of Feathershawl's illumination spell reveals that the cobblestone isn't dirty or dusty, it appears swept, and the high stone walls around the edges of the city are occasionally broken up by archways that once led outside of town. Raised bridges close the archways, apparently built by an optimist who imagined a controlled landing more than a collision.

Everyone feels the sensation that they're slowly drifting west towards the looming mountainside. The PCs hear Feathershawl mutter, "Well, that's interesting!" to themselves. The pale purple moonbeam magic from their right hand continues to arc and swirl from their fingertips, only now it seems to be pulled forcibly between the buildings and towards some sort of keep at the center of town. PCs get the immediate impression that Feathershawl is surprised by the way that spell is acting. It's almost as if something unseen is drawing energy from the spell.

A small chicken skitters around the corner, intrigued by the bright alien magic. The sight of a living thing may very well be a big surprise for the players!



### Wiggy (she/her)

The first creature to scope out the party, Wiggy is a proud hen who suffers no fools. She loves the child Peraka dearly, whom players will meet soon. Wiggy enjoys perching on shoulders and being coddled; she tends to seek out the

nearest high-status person and cling to them for clout. This hen is called Wiggy because of her wig-like floppy head feathers. Innean chickens have crossed beaks, where the top of the beak angles a bit to one side and the bottom to the other, because they're used to being hand-fed. If frightened, Wiggy lays an egg, but won't leave it under any circumstances. This can become awkward when the egg is laid on a person's shoulder, but she has perfected advanced beak-wing-and-foot juggling techniques to keep the egg secure as if in a nest.

### CHEERY CHICKEN 6 SASSY 6

Innean is a city stuck in time, centuries ago. PCs who are familiar with Skywing culture find the scenery eerily familiar yet impossibly alien, as even some of the writing on signs seems to have drifted into a strange dialect. This self-sufficient society seems to show a learned simplicity and peace.

It's quite clear that this city is occupied and there was some serious omission of that fact. There's what looks like a functioning library, a functioning blacksmith, and the noises of civilization. Only a few shops appear to have been recently boarded up, as if their occupants are gone.

Invite players to question Feathershawl, who's been nice enough but is now unquestionably distracted by the spell they're casting. Purple swirls arch dramatically from their fingers. PCs with any magical abilities notice the odd trail the spell leaves as it drifts, compass-like, towards the keep. Suggest that the players discuss amongst themselves what they think the best course of action is now that there are potentially people to save.

Remember to let Feathershawl be changed by how PCs treat them; they are dynamic in their tone just like the PCs your friends control. If the PCs mostly abandon Feathershawl, note that as PCs break away, they notice Feathershawl dart their eyes towards the leaving PCs, gritting their teeth a bit as they realize they're on their own. They'll likely meet up again with any PC who locates the Primal Well.

If challenged, Feathershawl defends their continued casting of this swirling moonbeam-journey spell, but players can try to stop them with a contest. Narrators can also clarify that Feathershawl isn't casting a specific spell; they're simply continuing to harness general moon magic. They observe as this strange trail of said magic dances through the streets, which may be having a mysterious effect. It's careless, but there's no ill intent.

Here's what that contest might look like, though you can encourage approaches other than the suggested dice as the player assembles their dice pool.



### CONTEST: Convince Feathershawl to stop casting the spell

Here are some examples of values the PCs might use:

- **DEVOTION:** Tell Feathershawl there are more important things to cast than this spell
- **TRUTH:** Insist that no magical shenanigans are allowed until they come clean about why there's a chicken and tidy streets in this abandoned city

Feathershawl is primarily motivated by **LIBERTY**, so they use that in this contest.

If players succeed, Feathershawl relents, but with immediate consequences. As soon as the spell stops, the entire city shudders and shakes, tilting what seems like a full ten degrees for a moment. PCs hear voices in the distance cry out in fear, voices they were promised wouldn't be present in this supposedly abandoned city that Feathershawl had so carefully researched. Ask the player which value of Feathershawl's they want to step up or down.

"Maybe you should have let me keep that spell going, huh?" Feathershawl retorts, though they also admit, "I wasn't sure what was going to happen there, wish I'd known better." Innean's ground levels out, but now it seems to glide through the air faster. Everyone has the distinct (and unfortunate) impression that it will collide with the mountains much sooner than originally expected.

If players fail the contest, step up Feathershawl's **LIBERTY** and step down their **TRUTH**. Feathershawl continues casting, eyeing the flow of the purple light as townspeople begin to arrive. PCs take **INSECURE** stress equal to the effect die on Feathershawl's successful roll as they realize that not only is Feathershawl hiding something, but another shoe may be about to drop.

Even if the PCs fail to stop Feathershawl from casting now, eventually the spell must end—they can't keep casting forever—at which point the consequences of ending the spell occur as described for a success. Remember that Feathershawl had no clue what would happen when they stopped; this isn't sabotage on their part.

Regardless of the outcome of the contest, Feathershawl is more focused after the distracting conversation. "We must hurry off to work! Lives are in the balance!"

This mission suddenly seems to have a lot more moral obligation than was promised by Feathershawl, who appears more interested in slipping away than addressing the issue.

An increasingly large crowd of Skywing elves surrounds the PCs, with more chickens and a pig underfoot. None of them were supposed to be here. Feathershawl indicates that it's best not to engage the crowd and to stick close to them, but of course PCs aren't obligated to take them up on it. Far from it. The crowd is generally welcoming and curious about the visitors.



### Beebee (he/him)

An inquisitive pig about the size of a French bulldog starts scoping out the party's feet with his snout. Innean pigs have developed short wool to stay warm at high altitudes, as well as short horns for digging grubs out

from between cobblestones. Beebee considers everything that fits in his mouth either food or something to play fetch with. Overtly friendly and trusting, he occasionally rolls on his back, inviting the PCs to rub his belly. He's happy to join the party if invited and can be convinced to do many simple tasks if vigorously touselled.

### WIGGLY PIG 6 CURIOUS 6

Feathershawl rushes up to one of the elves, an older man with elaborate face tattoos who appears to carry himself with some authority (this is Nausics). PCs can hear their conversation if they follow Feathershawl, but the thick crowd follows, insistent on getting a lift out of the floating city.

Feathershawl and Nausics argue...

"Please, old man. Take me to the Primal Well immediately. I am your only hope of leaving here alive, and I have my own people to save. Let's go!"

"Old man? Listen here, I am no uneducated fool, and I am not scared of you. I have my own magic. With an opening line like that, I certainly won't help you and your magical mystery cape fly off with the most precious artifact in my home."

Regardless of whether they're overheard, everyone can see that Feathershawl and Nausics are growing frustrated with each other. Feathershawl stomps away and begins to eye the keep, pacing up and down the cobblestone (this is a good time to stage Feathershawl stopping their spell if you haven't done so yet).

PCs suspicious of Feathershawl may wish to keep them close. Innean elves, including Nausics, approach PCs. Some point to the looming mountains. The pig snuffles at everyone's feet.

What do players choose to do? Reassure them that they don't need to all stick together and won't be punished through gameplay if they part ways. There are multiple plot threads forming that they should consider focusing on. They could:

- Check in with Feathershawl and either join them or try to stop them from stomping away.
- Approach Nausics, who is actively vying for the PCs' attention.
- Talk with the townspeople, particularly the ones worried about their impending collision.

What happens next is up to players. They may proceed as a united front or have separate scenes. If players choose to do nothing, Nausics approaches the PCs.



### Thread: Feathershawl

If players choose to follow Feathershawl, they move on to Extraction (page 12). But if players don't trust Feathershawl, they can have a contest to stop them; here's

some suggestions for players assembling that dice pool.



#### CONTEST: Stop Feathershawl from walking off

- **DEVOTION:** Appeal to their better nature
- **JUSTICE:** Appeal to their sense of fairness
- **TRUTH:** Insist they owe you and these people an explanation of what's going on
- **STRENGTH:** Grab Feathershawl

Once again, Feathershawl uses **LIBERTY** in this contest. Step it up if they win the contest, and step down **JUSTICE**. If they lose, ask the players which value to step up or down.

If players fail, they take **EXHAUSTED** or **ANGRY** stress. Players should choose whether to go with Feathershawl or proceed to An Eager Invitation (page 13) or Mass Flight (page 14).

If players succeed, they can proceed how they wish. Perhaps they pin Feathershawl to the ground. Perhaps they demand Feathershawl become more polite for the moment or make them admit that they never really focused on collateral damage, hoping the town would evacuate before you all got there. Feathershawl mutters about their own people starving, no less in need of saving than these Skywings. But Feathershawl is stopped for now, hoping to slip away soon.



### Thread: Nausics

The Skywing elder is ushering any PCs who agree to go with him into his keep for safety, and for an important conversation he wishes to have with these outsiders.

He's wary of allowing any of the townspeople in, clearly preferring to speak with PCs alone. Feathershawl can only be dragged into the keep alongside Nausics if forced, kicking and screaming, as they don't wish to waste time placating him.

If players choose to speak to Nausics, proceed to An Eager Invitation (page 13).



### Thread: Townspeople

Players who choose to talk with the townspeople now face a test to win over the crowd, collaborating on an evacuation.

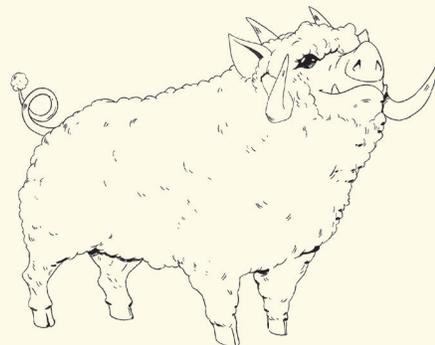
You can leave the "how" up to players; these are suggestions if you and your players aren't sure how to approach the situation. The listed traits are merely one aspect of the dice pool they're building, depending on how they want to approach the situation.



#### TEST: Get the crowd to trust the PCs (CHALLENGING 8 + CROWD 6)

- **LIBERTY:** Tell the crowd you want to bring them safely to your lands below
- **JUSTICE:** Announce that, though you came here to explore, you see lives need saving and wish to help
- **DEVOTION:** Announce that you will do your best to help save every life

The crowd is gasping "Who are you?" and "Please, help us evacuate!" Depending on how this goes, consider if the crowd interactions here create an asset or stress for one of the PCs. Regardless of the outcome, proceed to Mass Flight (page 14).



# Intrigue Scene: Extraction

*Do any PCs accompany Feathershawl?*

Assess how much PCs have warmed up to Feathershawl thus far. If PCs are joining Feathershawl now, but nobody has yet confronted Feathershawl about their spell (page 10) or trying to break away (page 11), consider adapting elements of those contests for a new contest here.

If Feathershawl gets a chance to strategize with others, they lean in with resolute excitement. Feathershawl might say:

Firstly, townsfolk are in more disarray than I'd hoped. You, you're from Innean! I need all the help I can get, but perhaps you ought to run home and stuff your pockets with keepsakes?

Better yet, grab one of my compatriots and organize a safe escape! Off with you! My mission to rescue this artifact is steadfast; if I must dash away to lose these distractions, so be it.

Feathershawl tries to dispel any townspeople, choosing only to interact with PCs. Players who feel this is callous may wish to join the townspeople instead. As players assemble their dice pool, here's a couple of ideas on where to start.

Feathershawl expresses their plan, first venting...

That one with the elaborate facial tattoos, Nausics, he claims to want to save the artifact but is obsessed with irrelevant customs and... something about a confession? Give me a break. Distract him if you like, but I suspect he's best avoided if we're to get out of here in time. Now that the city is moving a little quicker, ahem, I suspect we only have an hour or so before a collision with the mountain. And even then, only a little longer before the entire city crumbles and the artifact is possibly destroyed. Will you help me?

If PCs agree, Feathershawl lays out their plan to search for a hidden entrance to the keep. It requires all the PCs' focus and means ignoring the pleas of worried townspeople, calling "We must evacuate, now!" from the nearby square.

Clearly Feathershawl has a one-track mind. Players who wish to force them to confront any truths or morality must win a contest against Feathershawl. Here's three examples to get part of a player's dice pool started.

If the PCs haven't followed this thread, this conversation might happen later, rather than in this particular scene.



**CONTEST:** Get Feathershawl to fess up to the full story

- **DEVOTION:** Appeal to their better nature
- **JUSTICE:** Appeal to their sense of fairness
- **TRUTH:** Insist they owe you and these people an explanation of what's going on
- **STRENGTH:** Grab Feathershawl

Step up Feathershawl's **LIBERTY** and step down their **TRUTH** if they succeed in this contest. If the players succeed, they get to choose what value goes up—you can suggest that **TRUTH** is stepped up, in which case you should step **LIBERTY** down.

Feathershawl hems and haws about how the collision probably won't be fatal, but with a success they admit they'd hoped the townspeople would simply lower the bridges on their gates when Innean drifted close enough. Maybe the PCs would even provide a distraction while Feathershawl went to find the Well.

If the PCs are allied with this catalyst, this is an important contest. If the PCs succeed, Feathershawl remembers the conversation and is more likely to defend the PCs. This makes them more likely to intervene if an NC gets in a PC's way as they improvise something risky. Overall, success should cue you as Narrator to treat the catalyst in a new way during the rest of this tale.

If players fail, Feathershawl continues to be relatively cold, thinking of PCs more as means to an end than as allies, and PCs take **ANGRY** or **INSECURE** stress. When asked whether they knew about the city being occupied, Feathershawl simply sighs and rolls their eyes, insisting, "Will you help me save my people from starvation, or not?" PCs can then either join another thread, noting the evacuation only a street or two away, or agree to Feathershawl's terms and proceed to Overdue Notice (page 16).



# Intrigue Scene: An Eager Invitation

*Do any PCs go along with Nausics?*

The Skywing elder with elaborate facial tattoos introduces himself as Nausics, the Keeper of the Primal Well. Hurrying you into his keep and ignoring the voices carrying through the windy streets, he says warmly:

Welcome, welcome to Innean!

I'm so sorry to distract you from the evacuation, but my people are wise and I know they are destined to figure something out. Please, I need a desperate moment of your time.

The face of the keep is simple and more rustic than the rest of already rural Innean. The keep's wall stones are dark, flat, and round, harvested from a natural riverbed the city long ago left the geographic vicinity of.

Nausics wants to know how PCs got to Innean, asking with an element of distaste how well they know Feathershawl. He prefers to address a familiar-seeming Skywing if one is amongst the PCs, but he's still warm to all PCs.

Nausics asks the PCs to sit and eat of the local harvest and drink of the local vineyard, all while learning of Innean's history. Like a proper mayor he seems eager to share the best of his town, but unlike one he seems to be unable to react normally to the imminent collision. Narrators should note that Nausics does not simply want to confess. He knows he is caught, and wants to say goodbye to his home by serving this deeply meaningful cultural dinner first. Then, once he has gone through this dinner of grief, he will gladly confess.

If PCs ask questions regarding specific townspeople or buildings, he furrows his brow and demurs, saying he doesn't get out much and hasn't much to say about other people. He only wants to speak of his days in the Well's keep, the Keepers of old, long dead leaders of the past, and what a lovely stew he's made. It might seem rather odd, and PCs might want to call out the idea of sitting and eating at a time like this.

To learn anything more about Innean from him and grind his rambling customs to a halt, players must win a contest against Nausics. His odd demeanor is tied to a secret he wishes to reveal only in private, and he's determined to have his moment before the figurative clock times out.

Here's some suggestions of things players might want to use in their dice pool if they want to engage in this contest.



**CONTEST:** Get Nausics to get to the point

- **TRUTH:** Insist that food and stories all seem like a distraction
- **DEVOTION:** Explain that lives will be lost if you don't hurry

If players succeed, Nausics admits he's known for some time that Innean might collide with the mountains soon, and it's caused him to become even more emotionally distant from his people. Make sure to adjust his values based on player decisionmaking—you can suggest **TRUTH** be stepped up, in which case step down his **MASTERY**.

Nausics rambles on and on because this is the last meal he gets to have in his home, and he apologizes profusely. For PCs allied with this catalyst, this is an important contest. He remembers this moment and it affects how he treats the PCs who succeeded from now on. He becomes a steadfast ally for the PCs—don't forget to step up his catalyst die at the end of the session.

If players fail, Nausics wraps an arm around a PC and talks of how well the bounty of the local gardens makes for a hearty broth that, "You'll likely never find in Xadia again." Step down his **TRUTH** and step up his **MASTERY**. The losing PC probably gets hit with either **ANGRY** or **EXHAUSTED** stress for putting up with this attitude.

Regardless, Nausics expresses that Feathershawl insisted on skipping dinner and wanted to see the Well immediately, which he found impossibly rude. He adds:

The Well needs a Keeper, you see, because of its power. To touch it without guidance will likely destroy you, and I myself have taken an oath that would cause me to crumble into dust if I even dared to lay a finger on it.

Unless PCs choose to run right out of the building, proceed to *More Than a Mouthful* (page 17). Nausics checks to see if any other PCs outside might be convinced to join him and may make a passing remark that he believes this meeting in his keep is more important than "panicking" to evacuate. He's in charge here for a reason, he assures the PCs, though he twitches nervously with what he wishes to divulge next.

# Adventure Scene: Mass Flight

*Do any PCs stay to help the townspeople with the evacuation?*

**Note:** This scene counts as two scenes—the other threads use two different scenes to get to the collision, whereas Mass Flight goes straight through to the collision. Keep this in mind if any players want to move into or out of this thread.

It's time to plan an evacuation! Window-cakes in some bakeries have tilted as a result of Feathershaw's city-tipping magic surge, and everyone is eager to help. But can you meet the challenge? The townspeople are bright and brave, so if PCs are already panicking, don't be afraid to have an NC reassure them that all things are possible! If your players are having trouble figuring out their options, see "What's the Plan?" on page 16.



**CHALLENGE:** Help evacuate Innean!  
(CHALLENGING, MEDIUM ⬢⬢⬢⬢)

Impress upon your players that they should strategize how to get rid of the dice in your challenge pool. This is a ⬢⬢⬢⬢ challenge, as it is a CHALLENGING difficulty (⬢⬢) and of MEDIUM length (+2 dice) if there are, say, 4 players in this scene. Feel free to add or subtract a die depending on whether there are more or fewer players than that. And of course, here's some dice PCs might want to assemble to beat the pool.

- **AWARENESS:** Find a fortified place to hide
- **STRENGTH:** Gather resources and supplies to help
- **INTELLECT:** Plan a way off the island
- **SPIRIT:** Reassure and calm the people

Each PC has a turn to roll against the challenge pool, declaring what their part of the evacuation plan is, rolling the dice, and comparing their effect die against the challenge pool's dice (⬢). If the effect die is 10 or greater, one of the challenge dice is removed. If the effect die is ⬢ or lower, one of the challenge dice is stepped down (and can be removed on subsequent turns with a ⬢ effect die). After all the players have taken their turns, the challenge pool can target one of the PCs and try to deal **AFRAID**, **EXHAUSTED**, or **INSECURE** stress. There's a whole town full of opinionated NCs ready to react to the results of this challenge.

## Townspeople of Note

For the ensuing interactions with the people of Innean, choose from the provided NCs, or create your own. Let players find solutions on their own through their choices and successes; none of these NCs have all the solutions handy.

**Nekrex** (he/him) announces himself formally, and anxiously, with "In the name of Innean, stand down and announce y-y-your intentions!" He'll accompany the party if they ask, but he continually wonders why they don't just try to fortify Innean's foundation, because there's some really nice sports (field tag) and fermented ales (cloud turnip cider) here that he'd miss if forced to evacuate.

**Siftress** (she/her) is eager to get the party's full attention to tell them what she knows. Accompanying her, **Pondaryss** (she/her) is a consistent, if muddled, voice for evacuation.

**Olanna** (she/her) is focused on evacuation and listens attentively to any plans, determined to assist or takeover as necessary.

**Pereka** (she/her) and the animals (see **Wiggy** on page 9 and **Beebee** on page 10) are tugging at the PCs' pant legs, hoping to tag along with whatever happens next. Pereka can be shooed away, but is eager to chat up a receptive visitor.

**Vuxen** (he/him), the arcane blacksmith, fashioned quite a powerful artifact in the Cuirass of Vuxen. There isn't time for him to make a second cuirass, so the original is still needed to escape with the Primal Well. Vuxen recently learned of Nausics' dark scheme; he could be useful in a scene involving atonement or guilt-driven heroics.

**Noko** (he/him) is the aspiring apprentice to Nausics—except that Nausics doesn't want an apprentice. Noko has no real aptitude for magic but he's obsessive about lore. He's spent a great deal of time in the museum above the Primal Well but has been (ruefully) denied entry to the relics in Nausics' home. He would love to help the PCs with the Primal Well, regardless of which catalyst they choose.



### Siftress (she/her)

Siftress claims to have seen the fall of Innean coming... and though the town and party might doubt her, she really did. A light user of Sky magic, she saw the wind of fate that would carry Innean into the mountain months ago and warned Nausics of it.

**SKYWING MAGE** 6  
**HELPFUL** 6



### Pondaryss (she/her)

Pondaryss is an elderly, crotchety woman who agrees that everyone must evacuate, but thinks the PCs are a group of tricksome ghosts planning to lead them into oblivion. She is bemused but ultimately resigned to this fate and copes by taunting PCs for being so cruel and meddlesome at a time when someone should be building magic

hang gliders instead. If she meets folks in the land below, she'll of course also accuse them of being ghosts.

**GHOST WHISPERER** 6  
**CLEVER** 6



### Olanna (she/her)

Olanna is a young woman, sharp and direct and used to getting her way. She asks to accompany the PCs, and insists they focus almost entirely on the escape. She has no combat usefulness but does try to rally a rescue operation regardless of PC proximity and collaboration. Expect to see her stay behind to get every last elf off of the city island when it collides.

**FORTHRIGHT** 6  
**HEADSTRONG** 6



### Pereka (she/her)

Pereka is a young girl who's put in peril rather easily. She expresses an interest in following the PCs around but tries not to influence their choices. If allowed to tag along, she's unafraid of virtually everything and asks endless, rapid-fire questions about the world of Xadia

below Innean. She has some chewing gum made from local tree roots; she offers it in a pinch if she thinks it will soothe PCs.

**FORTHRIGHT** 6  
**HEADSTRONG** 6



### Nekrex (he/him)

Nekrex is captain of the guard, a kind of folksy, small-town, elected position that doesn't come with a guard for him to captain. He hasn't seen much trouble beyond some reckless youth and an occasional wayward vulture attacking the hens. He's never had to think about life outside of Innean and he's thoroughly

confused as to what the PCs even represent. Nekrex is very outgoing regardless of how PCs might proceed and he should step forward in a pinch. Though not capable as much more than a warm body, he does carry a small club.

**CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD** 8  
**PROUD** 6  
**CEREMONIAL ARMOR** 6



### Vuxen (he/him)

Vuxen made armor for Nausics and can be persuaded to spill the tea, especially if the PCs haven't learned about the Cuirass of Vuxen (page 5) from Nausics yet. Perhaps a curious character asking about weapons in Act One would spot his burned smock in a crowd. Vuxen could have another forged

experiment available or another item or two in stock that PCs might find useful as an asset.

**BRILLIANT BLACKSMITH** 8  
**PRIMAL LORE** 8  
**TRUSTWORTHY** 8



### Noko (he/him)

Noko wished to be the next Keeper, but he's clearly lost his chance by the time the PCs arrive. He's eager to discuss magic, and PCs might notice the robed figure and trust his youthful energy more than Nausics'. Though not intended to be a catalyst, a crafty Narrator could spin the

tension between Noko and Nausics into a new thread about Noko's sincerity and humble values de-escalating the pride of one of the two original catalysts.

**USEFUL LORE** 8  
**IN THE WAY** 8

## What's the Plan?

It's all systems go as PCs hurry to set up an evacuation via one of the plans listed here, or with one the players come up with. Keep in mind how the players did in the challenge. You can select your favorite NC to come forward and take charge if your players haven't met one or just don't seem drawn to one yet.

But before evacuation, they must brace the organized townsfolk for impact—in the middle of town, but slightly closer to the west side, so as to avoid being in direct contact with the impact or part of a now crumbling city, yet close enough that there isn't far to run to get off of Innean. For anyone in this scene, the catalysts are difficult to reach until they've finished their business with the Primal Well and are beginning their escape.

### Hang Gliders

Pondaryss has a rather goofy plan to create magically reinforced hang gliders out of palm fronds, branches, and Sky magic. Though far-fetched, a little PC enthusiasm persuades the magically studied locals Noko and Siftress to discuss and debate what they know about ancient imbuelements of Sky magic on physical material that just might work. PCs need to succeed at a Hard test (10 10) (likely using **MASTERY**, but whatever suits) to help the town pull off making enough for everyone. Helpful NCs can contribute dice to the player's dice pool.

### Portable Bridge

Olanna is particularly adept at scouting solutions, and if PCs rely on her she realizes that some quick organization could get an entire bridge in town that spans a small chasm to be removed and repurposed as a portable bridge that can be secured and used to evacuate onto the mountain wherever the island makes contact, provided the collision itself doesn't send everyone straight down the mountainside. To see this physically herculean construction effort through with Olanna, players need to pass a HARD test (10 10), probably using **GLORY**.

Town guard captain Nekrex makes sure the bridge is moved safely and efficiently, if asked, providing a 8 asset.

### Convenient Cliffs

If given any responsibilities, Pereka takes some elves to the edge of the city and discovers evidence of some cliffs on the mountainside, a way some elves might be able to escape down to more relative safety. Players need to pass a CHALLENGING test (8 8), likely using **DEVOTION**, if one wants to spread the word of Pereka's observation to the entire population.

## The Collision

Unfortunately, the collision has its consequences. As the dust settles, a large cave is revealed in the side of the mountain. At first there are cheers from the people of Innean. A safe, level path off of the main body of Innean! And most of the town is standing, hooray! But suddenly, massive centipede-like creatures lurch out of the cave with horrible screeches. As the shrieks fill the PCs' ears, continue this thread with Roars of Freedom (page 21). PCs who help with the evacuation go straight to Act Two for their next scene.

If players see the plans forming with catalysts and wish to join one of those more solitary elves, they need to make a CHALLENGING test (8 8) to escape cleanly, or else the crowd insists the PC is critical to their evacuation, and the PC takes **INSECURE** stress for trying to abandon them in their hour of need.

Both catalysts wouldn't mind help; in fact, Nausics is even more insistent that PCs ignore evacuation efforts and join him instead. Feathershawl, however, is now harder to talk to if any of the townspeople are with the PCs.

## Intrigue Scene: Overdue Notice

*Do any PCs help Feathershawl look for the Primal Well?*

Pleased that PCs are joining them, Feathershawl scouts the buildings adjacent to the Well's keep, looking for basements that might allow for an underground passage to the Well's chamber, which they are convinced is one floor below ground. They are in full heist-mode now. They also apologize for not making nice with Nausics, but they assure you they anticipated a magical seal around the Primal Well and planned for such a contingency.

They scout three buildings, remarking denigratingly about each.

An inn? Here? Must be for wayward souls more than visitors. What a depressing concept.

A craft shop? Look at all the chicken feather jewelry. You'd think they'd have access to more birds than that, this high up in the sky. Not exactly my style.

A library? Ugh. With a town this small it must be all fiction. Those kinds of books are truly life's dullest! But that's our best bet for a basement, let's go.

PCs hear distant shouts that evacuations efforts are underway, but Feathershawl appears quite unmoved. If asked about it, they simply remind the PCs that this artifact represents hope for people both here and across Xadia. However, it's clear that they're obsessed with the Primal Well and it has led to them lying in the past, particularly regarding the city having a living population.

Bailynn (she/her), Innean's librarian, is on her way out with as many books as she can carry. She pauses when seeing PCs, who now face a test to see if they can convince her to give them free rein of her beloved building.



**TEST:** Get access to the library  
(EASY 6 6)

Suggested traits: **SPIRIT** or **INTELLECT**

If there's a success, Bailynn happily allows the group in and Feathershawl misleadingly promises, "We simply want to leave with as much of Innean's history as we can carry."

If PCs fail, Feathershawl harshly nudges Bailynn aside with a muted apology. She looks at PCs in horror, who can then easily follow Feathershawl or re-evaluate their thread one last time and take **ANGRY** or **INSECURE** stress.

## The Collision

After hurrying past dusty shelves and a desk with a half-eaten sandwich on it, Feathershawl finds the wall adjacent to the keep. Moonlight peers down the staircase and they reflect it onto the wall, causing bricks to float away, revealing a second, darker wall of bricks belonging to the lower level of the keep. As these bricks peel away, PCs suddenly lurch forward. Shelves fly everywhere, separating everyone from Feathershawl for at least the moment. Innean has collided with the mountain. Proceed to Moon Steals Earth and Sky (page 19).

## Discovery Scene: More Than a Mouthful

*Do the PCs go with Nausics into the keep?*

The waiting area is decorated with Innean's cultural artifacts, portraits of Keepers past, and historical links to the Skywings of Xadia below such as old tableware and pottery.

To the left is a dining room with a pleasant den built in. A warm hearth with a boiling broth, a dinner table with a dish from a local root prepared, and some kind of unusual lute hanging on the wall—a cozy spot for stories to be sure. To the right is a study with more artifacts and books and a desk.

Ahead, there's a stairwell behind a translucent, glowing blue wall of magic. It's clear, given the context, that the wall is some sort of magical protection Nausics watches over, or possibly even controls. If PCs want to see the Primal Well from where they now stand, this barrier needs to come down. And Nausics won't allow it yet.

Thank you for accepting my invitation. On behalf of my ancestors, please, sit and listen for just a breath. I have to confess.

If there's more than one PC in the keep with Nausics, one of them is invited to split off and peruse the study. Nausics says:

I suppose you should take in some of our culture. An imagination carries more stories than any satchel. But they are... technically my belongings. So please only touch the books.

PCs who enter alone or choose to sit with Nausics are served a hearty, home-cooked meal made in the roaring hearth by the dining table. The stew is made of traditional vegetables, and should you want to give Nausics a bit of eccentric flair, he might sing a strange song to himself about vegetables as he stirs the pot.

Parsnips a-plenty!  
For the woolly pigs!  
Carrots and berries!  
Pop 'em off their twigs!

As he serves dinner, he remarks he was making a meal too large to eat alone when Feathershawl's disruption occurred. He explains that he knew the collision would happen, and he finds Feathershawl's pushiness to salvage the artifact a grave insult to generations of Innean elves. Culture is his life, and dismissing culture is to dismiss a past full of accomplishments and regrets.

Nausics carefully puts out the fire, notes that the collision is imminent, and encourages PCs to brace themselves.

Don't worry, I've studied this inevitability for years. I'm certain you have at least an hour to get off this island. Only need a few more minutes of your time.

Meanwhile, back in the study, astute PCs—having been told not to—touch everything.

Whether PCs are in the study with the artifacts and books or in the den with Nausics himself, a contest using **TRUTH** reveals Nausics' hubris. He's hiding something dreadful.



**CONTEST:** Get Nausics to show you his secret

Suggested traits: **TRUTH**

With a success in the den, Nausics reveals that he's convinced more than a few Innean residents to try to touch the Primal Well with various iterations of his magical armor, the Cuirass of Vuxen, and they've all been frozen. The armor he wants a PC to wear, he admits, is the result of much suffering. You might suggest the players have Nausics' **TRUTH** stepped up, in which case step down his **GLORY**. His catalyst die goes up at the end of the session.

If the PC fails, Nausics clams up before he admits the worst, and simply moves to getting PCs to try the armor. The PC takes appropriate stress. Step down **TRUTH** and step up **GLORY**.



**TEST:** Find something in the study  
(EASY 6 6)

Suggested traits: **INTELLECT**

A failure simply gets PCs called back into the den and **INSECURE** or **ANGRY** stress. A success reveals a strange gargoyle clinging to the ceiling; tugging on the tongue that wags from its maw causes a bookcase to slide aside.

Hidden behind the bookcase is a torchlit set of stairs. There's just enough time to quietly descend into a secret lair that Nausics didn't intend anyone—let alone these interlopers—to discover. Inside there are various mummified Skywing elves, all warped by some sort of Sky or Earth magic. Their faces are frozen in horror, the rest of their bodies twisted like swirls of fiberglass and sparkling marble. They seem trapped in this stasis, frozen and not quite dead. And thankfully in such a magical solid state, they might very well survive a plunge down the mountainside when this city collapses, though only the heavens know how to cure them.

## The Collision

When the collision occurs—and you want to time it just so—let it happen as players have felt some of the tension of the Nausics conversation. Then, after the force of impact is complete and there's only a deep and ominous rumbling as the city begins its slow deterioration, tell players that no stew has spilled, and Nausics has with great skill served himself the last bowl. No matter the timing, the last thing he says before the collision is...

You and your companions are truly saviors to me, for I have taken an oath to never touch the Well. I would crumble to dust if these foolish fingers made contact with it. But one of you lot, wearing a chestplate of magical armor I commissioned and have gone to great lengths to test, can safely deliver the Primal Well from Innean. And trust me, you need the chestplate.

Before PCs in the secret lair have time to communicate with PCs in the dining room, the scene abruptly transitions to Sky Defies Moon (page 20).

## Act Two: After the Collision

There's only so much guidance we can provide from here on out, but here's a framework for your upcoming improvisations.

Make sure you congratulate players who prepared thoroughly for the collision. While the city is now crumbling slowly, you can explain that it would be absolute chaos without the PCs. Unbeknownst to them there's some monsters up ahead, so any unity amongst the townsfolk is about to become quite valuable.

You may increasingly feel like you want to allow for player ingenuity not covered here, and that's fine! Make sure you've read all the way through to the end and look Disaster Scenes (page 23) as guidance if things go poorly. Remember, you can improvise your own tests, contests, challenges, and even entire scenes if it feels authentic to your individual game.

From this point on, everyone's either headed to the Well's keep preparing for a showdown, or they're clearing the way for townspeople to evacuate, so all the PCs should be tied up with some kind of conflict that way. But soon they're all reunited in the same goal—escape. Innean isn't the quaint floating getaway it was just a few minutes ago. Removing the Primal Well no longer makes a difference to the city's infrastructure. The city's lower foundation is already beginning to crumble down the peaks.

# Adventure Scene: Moon Steals Earth and Sky

*Were any of the PCs with Feathershawl during the collision?*

Players open with a **CHALLENGING** test (8 8) to extricate their PCs from the fallen debris before the action begins to break from bad to even worse. Those who quickly free themselves hear Feathershawl note with unusual calm—and perhaps callous disregard for the others affected—that this is actually better because with a half-wrecked library and damaged foundation, the magic flows better and bricks peel away easier.

However, Nausics isn't far from the chamber on the other side, and there are traps!

Bricks that are removed from the foundation of the keep spring to life and attempt to float towards characters. If the maw stones make contact, their tiny saw-like teeth gnaw at PCs until they can be pried off in a test.



**TEST:** Break free of the maw stones  
(**EASY** 6 6 + **MAW STONES** 6)

Suggested traits: **STRENGTH**

On a success, the PC brushes off the stones and moves to the next test so fast they're a step ahead of arguing catalysts. A failure means a PC takes **AFRAID** stress and risk not getting to the Primal Well before a desperate Feathershawl or a protective Nausics.

The tiles on the floor of the Primal Well's chamber contain ancient Moon magic and touching or stepping on one activates a limb splicer trap that creates the illusion that the appropriate limb has swapped places with another limb on that person's body. It takes a certain amount of lifting/jumping up and re-initiating contact for the limbs to appear back in the right places. Here's suggestions on dice for a PC's pool.



**TEST:** Grab the Primal Well  
with your parts in the right places  
(**CHALLENGING** 8 8 + **LIMB SPLICER** 8)

- **AGILITY:** Limit contact with tiles in general
- **INTELLECT:** Track which tiles swap what limbs where
- **MASTERY:** See through the illusion used in this trap

With a failure, the limbs appear to be randomly shuffled on that person's body and they take **AFRAID** stress. As an illusion, the process is bloodless and painless but it's meant to delay intruders until Nausics the Keeper can respond to the alarm.

The process should make for an intense scene that only makes Feathershawl hungrier for the Primal Well, which floats at the center of the room. Should they reach it, transition to Feathers Fly (page 21).



# Adventure Scene: Sky Defies Moon

*Were any PCs in Nausics' keep during the collision?*

Dinner, in a sense, is spoiled. Here Nausics may hear one, possibly two alarms ring from his necklace. A chime emanating from a stone in his necklace alerts him that Feathershawl is in his basement (possibly with some fellow PC companions, who are just Feathershawl's hired goons as far as Nausics is concerned). There's a second chime alert should another character have made it to his secret lair full of frozen townspeople. Nausics starts calling on his own magical defenses—Sky magic channeled through his necklace—but he is humbled and looking for allies. He won't pick a fight unless PCs want one.

Nausics trusts that his basement traps sufficiently delay anyone a few minutes and first tries to convince the nearest PC of his intentions. If the "lair alarm" is sounded, he tells the PC to follow him to the lair and attempts a group confession.

If any trust is earned, Nausics lifts his Cuirass of Vuxen from a display mannequin. This armor was developed by Vuxen, the local arcane blacksmith, and Nausics presents it to the PCs in the room if they aren't trying to punish him. The armor allows the Sky and Earth magic coursing through the Primal Well to be pushed away from the one who touches it. Nausics couldn't test this armor himself because of his oath. So, he lured some townspeople into his keep over the last decade to have them try different iterations of this cuirass. Dozens of innocent people have been put into a kind of magical coma as a result. The armor works now... probably. He tells you he's worked extensively with Vuxen to have this cuirass fine tuned, and Vuxen himself briefly demonstrated its effectiveness before realizing its dark history and refusing to collaborate with Nausics any further. Nausics would like a PC to be the final guinea pig, if they'll trust him, and he'll plead if necessary.

He's honest and forthcoming about his dark decisions because he sees it as a part of the journey that must be confessed, in almost a religious way that one might expect from a shaman-like Keeper here in this culture.

But is anyone listening to a confession so disturbing, let alone indulging it? That's up to your players. But if no one volunteers, he brusquely places the armor on the most valiant-seeming character nearby and rushes them towards the basement.

Nausics is also willing to defend himself. If needed, his three suits of Winged Armor spring to life, grabbing at PCs.

Nausics isn't too bad with a nearby quarterstaff, either, so feel free to improvise a hand-to-hand contest with him here if you like.

Should players survive the encounter, proceed to Primal Deliverance (page 22).



**TEST:** Winged armor grapples you and tries to dispatch you (CHALLENGING 8 8 + WINGED ARMOR 6 6 6)

- **STRENGTH:** Fight the armor
- **AGILITY:** Dodge the armor
- **MASTERY:** Outwit the foolish magic animating the armor

Their magic-empowered metal wings (belonging to Skywing elves of long ago) means that their goal (in a failed test) is to drag their target out the front door, up into the open winds, and attempt to fly them off the island to be dropped to their doom. Because you don't want to just have this remove the PC from the game straight away, impose **EXHAUSTED** stress as the PC is flown away, and allow them to keep struggling against the wings until either they succeed or they're stressed out—in which case, they're gone.

## Adventure Scene: Roars of Freedom

*Were any PCs helping with the evacuation during the collision?*

There's a pretty clear objective for PCs here—they've gone from careful logistical planning to mitigating chaos. Giant centipedes are attacking the townspeople!

First, have everyone roll an EASY test (6 6) to get out of the collision rubble in the street. Then, reveal the segmented, many-legged horrors of the mountain caves as a challenge.



### CHALLENGE: Monstrous Centipedes (HARD, MEDIUM 10 10 10)

A collision with the mountains causes these creatures to be disturbed from their subterranean life, and they attempt to chase and devour townspeople and PCs alike.

You'd be wise to scale the number of giant centipedes to match the number of PCs outside—one fewer 10 if there's fewer than 4 PCs, but one more 10 if there's more than 4—but either way it's a dangerous scene. As the centipedes thunder into the city, townspeople rush towards the cave and seek cover, but they're prone to wailing and drawing attention to themselves, making them excellent sources of hostage-level peril.

Depending on how the PCs have prepared, this challenge can be resolved in many clever ways.

- They can choose to confront the centipedes directly (they must either be vanquished, subdued, or chucked off the edge of the floating city, where there's a six-foot-high stone wall to hoist them over).
- They can usher townspeople over the bridge and into the mountain paths or the cave using **DEVOTION**.
- They can evacuate themselves and other townsfolk from Innean in their new hang gliders using **AGILITY**.

Let your players keep things lively and unpredictable. Perhaps a PC who loves animals has an army of friendly pigs and chickens who might serve as an asset against a giant centipede if the dice rolls come out right. For all we know, a now-loyal Beebee the pig might be wearing the Cuirass of Vuxen with the Primal Well strapped to his back. Is that even possible? We guess so! But we'll let you write that scene yourself.

Hopefully the centipedes can be dealt with, but regardless of the outcome, proceed to From Cloud to Anvil (page 22).

## Adventure Scene: Feathers Fly

*Do the PCs attempt to remove the Primal Well with Feathershawl?*

It's time to get out of here, and the clock is ticking before Innean is completely gone. If PCs are still stuck on Innean proper dealing with the Primal Well, combat is quick and brutal and fates are sealed swiftly. But Innean isn't long for this world, so whatever time PCs have left is best spent running like the wind! Unfortunately, the Primal Well doesn't give a PC floaty-flying powers or anything; it's just a hot potato on a crumbling sky platform. PCs could be tumbling down the mountain soon, or worse!

For a PC wearing the **CUIRASS OF VUXEN**, that asset makes it as easy as plucking up the Primal Well and running.

Characters not wearing Nausica's special armor are in for a nasty surprise, and that includes Feathershawl himself. Anyone who touches the Well without the Cuirass of Vuxen must survive a difficult challenge, or else face a creeping, magical stiffening stress to their hand(s), one that ends in becoming a mummy of marble and fiberglass if they don't give up on touching it. Tell them it's alarming, their hands becoming jet black, and as the challenge progresses, they should see the ominous consequence coming. Here's some suggestions for how they can attempt to survive with their die pool.



### TEST: Survive grabbing the Primal Well with your bare hands! (VERY HARD 12 12)

It's for one player, but it's incredibly difficult.

- **STRENGTH:** Brace your body
- **SPIRIT:** Steel your soul
- **MASTERY:** Run your history with magical processes through your mind as you fight back against the magic
- **DEVOTION:** Think of the Moonshadow people who will benefit from this artifact one day

If the catalysts see each other here, they immediately lock in combat, and if PCs don't intervene, they try to incapacitate each other with Moon magic and Winged Armor, respectively.

There's just enough time to pull the Well out of the socket it hovers in, make a mad dash for the bridge (or crumbling collision-point of city and mountain), and hope the PCs land in a safe spot without too many centipedes or longneck hillwolves occupying it. That's right, longneck hillwolves—seriously, there's a lot going on.

Hopefully at least one of the PCs was helping evacuate, because if everyone went with Feathershawl there's a whole lot of conflict—by way of Nausics and monsters—in the PCs' path now. If PCs locked in a contest with Nausics lose, they're doomed to, at worst, be stuck in the keep as it crumbles, or at best flee only to vainly reach out towards the survivors who are safe.

The good news about aligning with Feathershawl is that, unlike Nausics, they've never deliberately caused harm before, making them surprisingly redeemable. They thank the PCs (if they make it off Innean in mostly one piece with the Primal Well) and share more about the time when they were underprepared for the plague of worms that decimated the Moonshadow food supplies. Hoping to bring back something that could float acres of crops, they express—even to Nausics if he's nearby—that there's a plan in place that makes good use of the Primal Well. It's just that Feathershawl is often too headstrong to stop and explain things to others before it's too late, a bad habit from when they were still a privileged elder. They reveal a small crystal, hidden in their cloak, which shimmers with the images of dozens of different Moonshadow elves as it's turned in their hand.

"These are images of my family," Feathershawl says quietly, "and thanks to you, I may see more than this illusion of them soon."

But if nobody cleaned up the monsters, they're in for one more test or contest; if PCs fail, they may go down the mountainside with a crumbling Innean or have to sacrifice the Well.

Feathershawl listens to characters rage and vent and they offer apologies. This is more than the PCs get from Nausics, who now faces his dark choices in the aftermath and feels little of anything anymore—unless Nausics was bested by an unforgiving character and didn't make it out alive.

Time to proceed to the Aftermath (page 24).



## Adventure Scene: Primal Deliverance

*Do the PCs attempt to remove the Primal Well with the help of Nausics and his Cuirass of Vuxen?*

He's quite keen on helping, but only if PCs sit and listen to his confession before he surrenders the Cuirass of Vuxen. If PCs listened and have it, the good news is he keeps Feathershawl preoccupied with his Winged Armor and quarterstaff, and he shares that the armor makes PCs immune to his traps, so they should be able to run down the stone steps, grab the Primal Well, and run! Hopefully another PC is with the second group and vouches for the PCs to Feathershawl if necessary. Otherwise it's a contest against Feathershawl.

Unfortunately, a Nausics emboldened by having a PC as an ally is more likely to try and incapacitate Feathershawl as well, so intervention is necessary if PCs wish to keep everyone safe; having had a second PC at the dinner makes such an intervention much easier. One to snatch and run, one to mediate. But who knows, maybe PCs will leave them at each other's throats, morally grey as they both seem.

If PCs somehow manage to scramble the Primal Well away and have Nausics at their side, he pledges a life of service and accountability, offering to let PCs take him to the authorities of their choice. He won't apologize for trying to take out Feathershawl, though. If the catalysts are somehow left on a mountain path or in a cave together, they certainly aren't making a lot of eye contact right now.

When you've seen who lived to be a part of the tale-telling, proceed to the Aftermath (page 24).

## Adventure Scene: From Cloud to Anvil

*Are any PCs outside in the streets helping to evacuate the citizens of Innean?*

Congratulations, because this pivotal thread required some serious selflessness, and success in Roars of Freedom means PCs could have hang gliders waiting for their friends, a large bridge assisting the escape, and maybe fewer monsters. Accomplishing any one of these three goals means every citizen could make it out alive, if things still go well here.

Manage the chaos, and ideally meet up with PCs who made a go for the Primal Well, and PCs just might survive with all the townspeople and only lose the respect of a catalyst or two. Proceed to the Aftermath (page 24).

## Longneck Hillwolves

Another danger adds itself to the centipede chaos—longneck hillwolves run along the narrow mountain path that Innean now leans against. Their painful bite is just annoying for elves and humans, but they're eager to eat the pigs and chickens and they cause anarchy in an already complicated evacuation. If the PCs don't distract the creatures or combat them mightily, panic bests everyone and a few elves (or chickens) might not get out before the landmass crumbles completely, their silhouettes disappearing in a massive cloud of dust.



### LONGNECK HILLWOLVES

A breed of creatures that look like carnivorous, fanged alpaca roams the mountains. After the collision they impede mountain trails and even run onto Innean streets. Though mostly uninterested in humanoids, they hungrily chase the chickens and pigs of Innean and are happy to bite at the terrified people as they either try to escape with livestock in tow or generally shriek at the sight of the beasts. Not as aggressive as the creatures of the caves, they can be tamed, but they're dangerous nonetheless.



**CHALLENGE:** Hide or dodge from the longneck hillwolves (EASY, MEDIUM **6 6 6 6**)

Suggested traits: **AGILITY** or **INFLUENCE**

PCs who fared well in Roars of Freedom (page 21) can use other townspeople (page 14) as assets in this scene, making it easier for their companions to emerge from the Well's keep and make it to relative safety.

## Disaster Scenes

Here are some scene ideas to guide and inspire you in case things really go awry.

### Descent of the Coward

PCs might not only hang glide to Xadia below, but selfishly bail and find themselves a relative non-participant in the great evacuation. The adventure doesn't end when they choose a hang-gliding escape. If a selfish townspeople joined them, be sure to tell the PC about how relieved (or not relieved) they are in a conversation on the way down. If a PC sadly loses the fight above and tumbles to their doom (hopefully no one is that reckless), consider mixing this with the Purgatory Plummet scene.

### Purgatory Plummet

If someone falls off Innean—through combat, as a frozen statue of magic, or other bad skydiving premise—you should break it to them: things look grim. And if you think your players might enjoy a bit of gallows humor, you can try it with a smile, like this...

Sorry to see you go, but sometimes exploring a giant floating rock up near outer space can lead to some seriously bad consequences.

You're falling fast now. Faster. Faster. The shattered remains of a nearby toy shop tumble around you. You note that instead of teddy bears, there's only plush pigs and chickens. But they're all wearing cute little outfits. You'd sure like to stay alive so you could collect them. There's a pig in a detective costume, a chicken in a lawyer costume. So creative!

You keep falling. Boy, mountains sure are high up. Eventually you see what must be the toyshop's sole plush badger. Wow, you think, how cool! Innean had stories, or drawings, of a badger! Then you realize it's not a badger, it's just a pig in a little cat burglar costume. You realize this right before you collide with the forest below.

Anyone escaping on a hang glider may hear a voice cry out above you, "Oh wow, a badger!"

Then your friend rockets past you as you hear them say "Oh, wait..."

You surmise that their last memory was a disappointing badger experience.

## Other Sad Outcomes

Escaping Innean is a matter of life and death, but you aren't required to subject your players to graphic death scenes. You can utilize the chaos to mask or imply that not everything went great, and certain fates are unknown. Do a headcount after the escape and grimly note that the number is smaller than hoped. Explain the confusion and the monsters were just too much to overcome and leave it at that. There are also plenty of consequences that can show the intensity of the situation without killing anyone off.

The Primal Well is the easiest sacrifice. If you don't want this rare artifact to disappear forever, have a centipede snag it with their mouth at the last possible second as a consequence of a fight-gone-bad, and everyone can watch the precious artifact rocket upwards, a confused centipede holding on with its mandibles, and disappearing upwards into a distant speck.

If a loss seems to suit the story, there's no need to describe a hand reaching out and falling away with the plummeting cobblestone. You can often say even more by saying nothing at all, having your NCs bow their heads in sorrow and grief, and let loss speak itself without words. If a PC's loss is appropriate, that's fine as long as the player drives the narrative of how their character dies heroically.

## Recovery Discovery

Innean has now been smote upon the mountain. The petrified forms of the Primal Well experiments are all fully intact within the rubble, and can be salvaged with a challenge. Perhaps undoing their state can be a penance for Nausics, the PCs, or all of them together. Depending on how the tale went, you can choose to have these forms stranded on a nearby cliff, or perhaps deep in the foothills if you're eager to have the group travel east, deeper into Xadia.

## The Aftermath

If characters escape with the Primal Well thanks to the Cuirass of Vuxen or amazing challenge rolls, they notice that three colored crystal deposits have formed on it: blue, red, and violet.

They represent primal sources! PCs can attempt to remove and use them, but if they touch one, the other two shatter. Try to grab two or all three at once and they all shatter. Sorry, greedy mages! Blue leaves PCs with a **SKY PRIMAL SOURCE 6**, Red with an **EARTH PRIMAL SOURCE 6**, and Purple with a **MOON PRIMAL SOURCE 6** (thanks for glomming that last one on only a few hours ago with the screw-up, Feathershawl).

PCs who escape without the glory of saving the Primal Well will see it rip itself free of something. Maybe rubble, maybe the sad hands of Feathershawl or a PC who grabbed it too late, or perhaps the hands of Nausics as he turns to ash. The Primal Well rockets upwards into the sky now that the island isn't there to lock it into a fixed altitude.

Regardless of the Well, each active Narrator character should thank the companions for whatever good they did with the time they had.

Now, perhaps they face a long trek down a mountain path. PCs could be exploring a winding cave hoping to find an opening in the foothills. They could be floating gently with their hang gliders and meeting some confused Moonshadow elves below. Or they could simply look down at the mountain path and note that a few Innean badgers are trotting along with them, a creature they had no idea existed, and now a group of them trots along with the group like a part of the community.

Thus ends your Lost Oasis tale, and the quest for the Primal Well.

## The Road Ahead

We would like to invite you to play a tale that happens in the chronological wake of this story, *The Tale of the Gloaming Glade*. There we also provide advice on how to weave the transition between tales depending on how things went during your personal play-through of *The Lost Oasis*. But that isn't the only way you can steer the story.

Players may find their character now has a vendetta, a death wish, or new trajectory for their artifact-hunting career. Pay attention to what a PC wants, desires, and excels at and you might very well find the springboard for your next adventure! There's plenty of tales you can weave for yourself now, from helping Feathershawl walk the Primal Well back to their people through a mountain pass guarded by humans, to finding Nausics a therapist while he's in Skywing prison.

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FEATHERSHAWL



NAUSICS



OLANNA



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PONDARYSS



VUXEN



SIFTRESS



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