

OVERVIEW

Adventure

Plotpoints

Arrival in Nil'szata

A Night in Custody

Daylight

The Bridge

The Enigmatic Lynx

Attack of the Lesser Creatures

Treacherous Casket

Poisonous Swamps

The Ruins of Zakant

Zarkszar's Story

Chamber of Illusions

Rakya's Mob

Negotiations

Rakya's Demise

Rakya's Reward

Escape

Non Playable Characters

RAKYA ULOTA

ZARKSZAR

ZARA NOARA

FARIN BURAR

VYALIN T'MUR

NELYA UNARA

KOLYIN UNAR

WIKI TEXTE

Adventure Description

Welcome to this Distortion adventure. On their way towards Uara, the heroes chance upon a small town called Nil'szata. According to its residents, they are being terrorized by an evil Void k'thar who has been stealing and devastating their property. But in reality, these acts of destruction are perpetrated by other townspeople and their leader Rakya in particular. She discredits all voices of reason and creates an air of mistrust and hatred. In order to have her fellow citizens rally behind her, she takes advantage of their racism towards the k'thar. The two have a long ranging history with each other: more than forty years ago, they destroyed her home. What Rakya does not know, the k'thar has long turned away from their magic and deeply regrets all of their many wrongdoings. But even if she did, she is not one to readily forgive. The heroes are charged with the destruction of a magical artifact that is in the k'thar's possession and allows them to create powerful illusions. These prevent the townspeople from reaching the tower, where the magician resides. In return, the town promises great reward for their assistance, and the heroes set out for Zakant.

During the course of the game, you will encounter several abbreviations: S, O, and Ex.

S stands for Situation and refers to past events. Simply choose whichever situation matches your round.

O stands for Option. All of the important possible courses of action or outcomes for the group of heroes and how they impact the story later on are listed.

Ex stands for Example. Here you get sample monologues and dialogues. If you feel uncertain, you can make reference to them. Naturally, you can choose to narrate the story according to your own preferences as well. They are simply there to assist you if necessary.

The adventure is structured into three parts. At first, the heroes arrive in the town of Nil'szata and are introduced to its conflict with the Void k'thar. If a k'thar is part of the band of heroes, they are met with considerable distrust and animosity. However, even if the residents seem a little brisk, their worries and hopes appear to be legitimate. Rakya, the town's leader, makes a positive impression. They do not yet have a reason to suspect her of foul play.

The second part details their way to Zakant. It is filled with illusions and magical traces. Here, it is necessary to unsettle the heroes. Time is also of the essence: depending on their specific choices, the heroes collect time units that influence the rest of the story.

During the last and final chapter, everything comes together. The heroes meet the magician Zarkszar and are confronted with their version of events. It is possible for the town and the k'thar to talk things out. However, these discussions may very well end in death and destruction.

Enjoy your time with Nil'szata, Rakya and Zarkszar!

This adventure was brought to you by Hektyk

Plotpoints

Arrival in Nil'szata

The Adventure Begins

Exhausted from their long journey, the heroes make for the small town of Nil'szata to rest. They are on their way north to explore the ruins of Uara, the ancient capital of Zakar. When sunset nears, they call on the local inn and decide to round off the evening with a visit to the adjoining tavern.

As they sit, eat, and enjoy a drink or two, a dispute erupts between the landlady Zara and the visibly intoxicated Vyalin at the next table. Their argument grows heated and soon the heroes can overhear every single word. Vyalin, the local blacksmith, complains how much time pressure he is under and questions Rakya's motives. She recently placed a sizable weapon's order with him. First, Zara is stunned, but becomes more irritated with every sentence and vehemently defends Rakya.

Ex: Argument

Zara: I don't understand what the problem is. You have an opportunity to help. I thought that's exactly what you wanted?!

Vyalin: Not like this! I need more time! Nobody can work this quickly! And what does she need all these weapons for anyway?

Zara: Our armor and weapons are in terrible shape. We can't defend ourselves like this.

Vyalin: Defend ourselves? Against who? I'm slaving away because of a maniac's fever dreams.

Zara: Hold your tongue, if you want to keep it. Rakya is three times the person you'll ever be.

Vyalin: (unintelligible grunting)

Zara: Stop always trying to blame others for your pathetic existence. The only one responsible is you!

Fist Fight

At this point in the conversation, Vyalin reaches for an empty bottle and flings it at Zara. She ducks down just in time and is not hit. A random hero needs to pass a dice trial of Stealth to dodge the bottle as well. If he is unsuccessful, he takes 1D20/4+1 damage. The heroes can intervene, attempt to mediate or flee, but soon the city guard with Farin at its helm arrives in the tavern and they take Vyalin and the heroes into custody. Fighting is useless, since the heroes are grossly outnumbered. They are brought to the town hall and locked into separate small cells.

A Night in Custody

The Night

Farin guards the prisoners. He is brisk and tries to avoid any conversation. He points out that if the heroes are in fact blameless, they have nothing to worry about and need simply await the morning. Occasionally he answers a few questions about Rakya, Zara and Vyalin. The blacksmith himself is too drunk to react to the heroes. He simply lies there muttering random syllables under his breath.

The Morning

After a turbulent night, Rakya, the town's leader, joins the heroes and apologizes to them. As she releases them from their cells, she notes how Nil'szata has grown unusually twitchy and paranoid since the arrival of the menace that is a dark Void Magician. She asks the heroes for help in this matter: the Void k'thar known as Zarkszar resides in a ruin towards the north, and repeatedly attacks the city. However, they are protected by a magical artifact, the so-called Ro'jā, which allows them to create illusions that render the townspeople incapable of finding their tower. Rakya entreats the heroes to seek out this magician on their way towards the north and destroy the Ro'jā. Her people would then take care of everything else themselves and Nil'szata would show itself to be generous in its gratitude. Their curiosity has arisen, and the heroes agree to search for the magician. They can either leave directly or first take a stroll around the town to look for more clues.

Ex: Rakya's Speech

"I am truly sorry for this misunderstanding, and I thank you for remaining calm and not escalating the situation further. It is commendable to show this level of composure in the midst of the unknown. Ordinarily, we don't have these kinds of problems. But I have to admit it doesn't fare well with Nil'szata. We're in present danger and need all the help we can get. A vicious k'thar has been terrorizing us of late. They steal our treasure and burn our houses. Their name is Zarkszar, they are a Void k'thar - it means they turned away from their species and quenched their inner flame to gain exceptional magic potency. For many years now they have been haunting Zakar. Too many cities fell victim to their cruelty, and were destroyed. I want to save Nil'szata from suffering the same destiny. We normally take troublemakers like them to task ourselves, but we cannot get close to Zarkszar. They possess a Ro'jā, a magical artifact that grants them the power to enchant and create illusions. They make it impossible for us to get within reach of the tower. I know this is a lot to ask, but if you were to seek out their tower on your journey northwards, and destroy the Ro'jā, our gratitude would hold no bounds. We can take care of all else ourselves. The path to the ruins of Zakant leads over the mountain pass to the northwest. Remember, do not trust your eyes, ever! If anyone can make it, it is you. Good luck!"

Daylight

Exploring the Town

Prior to setting out once more, the heroes explore Nil'szata by daylight. They notice how rushed and irritable everybody is. The k'thar in their midst is met with particularly keen suspicion. When the mission is mentioned, it seems like everybody has a personal story to tell of how they suffered at the hands of Zarkszar.

The landlady Zara stands in front of the tavern sweeping. She apologizes for what happened last night and returns the fees the heroes payed for her rooms. According to her, Vyalin is well-mannered enough, but alcohol just changes who he is. He had no right to talk about Rakya like that, since she makes every sacrifice to ensure her people's well-being. Zara explains how her cellars were flooded by Zarkszar, and how, as a result, the town had to suffer from hunger. There were only a handful of residents left who did not sustain any losses because of the k'thar. Many of her friends were robbed.

Kolyin sits in a corner of the tavern polishing his dagger. Before they ask a single question, he tells them his butcher's shop burned down and gnarls, Zarkszar should return to the miserable hole from whence they came.

Farin stands by the gates of the city and recounts the fire at the butcher's shop, which only just burned down because of Zarkszar. Nelya, who sits nearby, interjects that she secretly believes Kolyin simply forgot once again to extinguish the fire in the evening and just cannot admit to his mistake. Farin seems to be outraged at this interruption and exclaims she could not argue away any of the other assaults with somebody's forgetfulness. Later on he admits in private that the town's armory had been destroyed. They were trying to keep it a secret in order not to alarm the people any further.

Nelya, who sits close to Farin on a lookout meditating, wearily explains that she just wants everything to go back to normal.

The Bridge

The First Illusion

From this point forward, the amount of time it takes the heroes to arrive at the tower is important. Every choice is associated with a respective time span that the GM can alter to their wishes. The duration has implications that come into play later on.

The heroes follow the path they were given and arrive at the „Bridge of Urya“. Urya is a gorge that is over a hundred feet deep; at its bottom lies a dried out riverbed. The bridge the heroes are supposed to cross is old and brittle. Its central section has collapsed, so they cannot pass it - at least that is what it seems like. In reality, the damage to the bridge is a mere illusion; it has neither collapsed nor decayed and can be crossed without danger. Trained eyes recognize traces of magic and perceive a slight flickering in the air. The heroes have two options: they can either attempt to cross the bridge, or look for another way.

O1: The Heroes Cross the Bridge

There are several options to uncover the illusion or to test it. For example, if the heroes throw stones at the bridge, they seem to stop and hover midair. If the heroes do not recognize that it is an illusion, they can attempt to cross the gorge anyway. With the use of their abilities or skills, they can cross over or try to repair the damage. If they are unsuccessful in their attempts, nothing happens, since in a worst case scenario, they land on the bridge and realize they were never in any danger in the first place.

The heroes can cross the bridge without difficulty. Only those scared of heights may suffer from dizziness and possibly feel faint. Once they arrive on the other side, they continue following the path.

Three hours pass.

Next plot point: „The Enigmatic Lynx“

O2: The Heroes Look for a Different Way

If the heroes do not discover the illusion, they can walk alongside the gorge to find another way to cross it. After a while they do, there is another bridge in the area. Once they have crossed, they walk all the way back to return to their original path. This detour has proven to be quite time-consuming.

Five hours pass.

Next plot point: „The Enigmatic Lynx“

The Enigmatic Lynx

The Second Illusion

The heroes remain on the path Nenyara and travel northwards, as they were told. The way leads them to the „Airya Observation Deck“. They can see a little way ahead from here, and even though a thick fog has risen, they just about make out the top of a large tower in the distance that looks like Zakant. They want to follow the path further, but after a sharp turn the way narrows and is blocked by a confused, old Lynx. She seems thoroughly battered, her fur is dull and felted, her ears are frozen and she twitches slightly. She tells the heroes she will let them pass, but only if they can solve her riddle. Arguing is of no use and the Lynx does not give proper answers to questions. The heroes can attempt to solve the riddle or attack the Lynx, but they cannot avoid her.

The Lynx's Riddle

The Riddle of the Lynx is as follows:

„Despised am I by knave and liar,
After me, the wise inquire.
I rise above all death and fire.
What am I?“

The answer is „The Truth“

O1: The Heroes Solve the Riddle

If the heroes successfully solve the puzzle, the Lynx moves to the side. She stops twitching and her movements grow ever slower until she turns to stone. In reality, the Lynx was a statue that came to life through magic beguilement. The group can pass and continue along the path towards the valley.

Two hours pass.

Next plot point: „ Attack of the Lesser Creatures “

O2: The Heroes Attack

If the heroes can or will not solve the puzzle, they attack the Lynx or attempt to pass in another way. The first person to attack or touch her ends the spell and suffers D20/4 + 1 damage. In reality the Lynx was a stone statue all along that bursts into many pieces upon impact. The heroes can pass.

Two hours pass.

Next plot point: „ Attack of the Lesser Creatures“

Attack of the Lesser Creatures

The Shadow Stalker

After having followed the path to the valley, and before Nenyara crosses Zakant, it leads them through the ruins of an old fortress and its ancient gate. A storm of illusions is approaching, thick swaths of mist obstruct their view and flashes of lightning illuminate the dark, but there is no thunder or rain. In the corner of their eyes the heroes detect strange shadows, but when they turn their head they disappear. The path leads through an old gate. The heroes can either stay their course or make a detour. With every step the shadowy shapes grow denser until they materialize fully and the heroes can perceive them without difficulty. The first one to walk through the gate or attempt the detour is attacked by three Shadow Stalkers. When a Shadow Stalker dies, it leaves a trail of black smoke that slowly drifts away. The heroes have to get rid of their attackers before they can continue their journey.

Four hours pass.

Next plot point: „Treacherous Casket“

Treacherous Casket

The Third Illusion

The heroes arrive at a clearing. A massive Red Oak Tree looms over it and throws her long shadows over this peculiar place. Amid the barren mountain landscape her vibrant colors make her seem alive. The tree is surrounded by sharp, morbid looking stone formations. The heroes cannot go any further. However, in front of the tree lies a small wooden casket, which can be neither shifted, removed, let alone be destroyed. Its lid is engraved with the words „I open only for the worthy“. The heroes can attempt to open the casket, though this proves a difficult undertaking. To succeed, one of them needs to pass three dice trials: Theurgy, Attitude and Performance.

O1: The Casket Opens

If the heroes open the casket, the one who is successful gains the „Honorable“ effect for six hours. The heroes' surroundings slowly fade away and they realize they were at their destination all along. They have reached the ruins of „Zakant“.

One hour passes.

Next plot point: „The Ruins of Zakant“

O2: The Casket Remains Closed

If none of them manage to open the box, its engraving changes and reads: „You are not worthy yet. I will continue my search.“ Subsequently, it dissolves into shimmering light and dark smoke. The Red Oak Tree parts in the middle, and its halves fall to the sides. A path is revealed and the heroes are forced to continue their journey.

One hour passes.

Next plot point: „Poisonous Swamps“

Poisonous Swamps

Crossroads

The heroes arrive at a crossroads and behold the „Will-o'-the- Wisp Swamp“. Thick yellow swaths of mist hover over the marshlands; the air smells of sulfur and ash. Small ghost lights float above the paths and lure unsuspecting travelers to their doom. There are three paths the heroes need to choose from. But they have to hurry; the fumes are poisonous and randomly inflict small doses of damage. The path to the left seems to be filled with particularly strong traces of magic. The heroes must decide.

O1: The Heroes Turn Left

As soon as the heroes set foot on the path to the left, their surroundings disappear and they stumble through grey emptiness. They lose all sense of time and cannot recall how long they have been wandering, but soon they see a massive shadow in the distance. They head towards it and suddenly find themselves to be standing in the shadow of the gigantic tower amid the ruins of „Zakant“.

Two hours pass.

Next plot point: „The Ruins of Zakant“

O2: The Heroes Choose a Different Path

The heroes choose one of the other paths. Behind them, the crossroads disappears and for miles and miles they see nothing but barren marshlands. They lose all sense of time, and cannot recall how long they have been wandering, but it feels like days, maybe even weeks. They are about to lose all hope when they see a tower looming in the distance. The marshes around them disappear and they reach the tower of „Zakant“.

Six hours pass.

Next plot point: „The Ruins of Zakant“

The Ruins of Zakant

The Tower

A massive magical storm is ripping through the barren land. Shadowy shapes flutter forlorn in the wind. The heroes have arrived at the massive main gate of this morbidly looming tower in the ruins of Zakant. Thick undergrowth surrounds it, where a hatch is hidden. If the heroes search around, they have to pass a dice trail of Perception to find it. There are three possible ways to enter the tower.

O1: The Main Gate

The heroes can attempt to open the main gate. They succeed with a lot less effort than expected, but the door creaks loudly. Zarkszar, who is sitting by the fireside, is alerted to their arrival. The heroes enter the „Main Hall“.

Next plot point: „Zarkszar's Story“

O2: The Stairway

Alongside the walls are irregularities in the brick that wind around the tower and can be used as a staircase to reach a small window at the top. This is very dangerous; the heroes have to pass a dice trial of Acrobatics. Those who fail incur 1D20/4+3 damage. Through the window lies the „Chamber of Illusions“, the place where the Ro'jā is kept. They enter.

Next plot point: „Chamber of Illusions“

O3: The Hidden Hatch

The heroes have found the hidden hatch and descend a ladder to arrive at „Zarkszar's Hideout“. The apartment is below-ground; it is warm and cozy. It is plainly and functionally furnished, but in an alcove something catches their eye: a mourning altar, covered in candles and small portraits. On the back of the pictures are the names of those depicted. Amongst them are Myalek Ulot and Natya Ulota. There is another way in, other than the hatch. If the heroes explore and walk through this doorway, they get to the „Main Hall“ of the tower.

Zarkszar sits by the fire, they have not noticed the intruders yet. The heroes can either confront the magician directly or try and sneak past. They have to pass a dice trial of Stealth to do so. If they fail or choose confrontation, the tale proceeds with „Zarkszar's Story“.

Next plot point: „Zarkszar's Story“

If they successfully sneak past Zarkszar, they can walk up the stairs and arrive at the door to the „Chamber of Illusions“. It is closed and can be opened with an arbitrary dice trial. Once the door is opened, the heroes enter the „Chamber of Illusions“.

Next plot point: „Chamber of Illusions“

Zarkszar's Story

Confrontation

Zarkszar faces the heroes. The k'thar breathes with difficulty and relies heavily on a walking stick. They ask, if Rakya has sent them. Regardless of their answer, they begin telling their tale. The k'thar describes their youth and all the terrible cruelties they had done. They tell them about an incident that happened 42 years earlier, when Zarkszar annihilated Rakya's hometown and family in one fell swoop. They did not know she now resided in Nil'szata when they moved to Zakant. They just wanted to die in peace, although this has now grown impossible because the townspeople started attacking him. That is why they need the Ro'jā. Even though they do not deserve any kindness, they entreat the heroes to reconsider their mission and if not willing to actively help them, to at least not interfere any further.

The heroes are entitled to attack Zarkszar before the conversation, of course. Right before they finish the k'thar, they fall to the ground and plead with them to listen. Hopefully they will do so at this point.

Ex: Zarkszar's Story

„I knew that this day would come. You have come to kill me. But where is Rakya? None but her have the right to carry out my sentence. Or have you come to destroy my Ro'jā? Without her I am lost. I do not know what Rakya has told you about me, but I entreat you to listen to my story, and judge for yourselves.“

Many, many years ago, I made a foolish and cruel decision. I quenched my inner flame and devoted myself to Void Magic. Surrounded by the whispers of this dark power, I turned away from all that is good and roamed the path of hatred and destruction. I could not be swayed by reason or mercy. Without even the least amount of scruples I razed Rakya's home to the ground more than forty years ago. She was the sole survivor. Nothing can wash away this guilt. When I returned to my senses many years later, it was too late for forgiveness. But it was not too late to do penance. I came to Zakant to die in peace. But the village people did not grant me this wish. Time and time again they came and attacked me, but without magic, I have no way of resisting. That is why I activated the Ro'jā. Never again do I want to hurt someone; I just want to be left alone. You can take whatever treasure you want, but please, leave with me the only protection I have, so I don't have to cast another spell. I do not believe peace is possible. How could Rakya ever forgive me? It is impossible."

S1: The Ro'jā is active

If the Ro'jā is still active, the heroes have three options:

1. They grant Zarkszar's wish and do not interfere. As a result, the k'thar leaves them their entire possessions. The heroes then set forth on their original journey northwards to explore the ruins of Uara.

THE END

2. The heroes do not believe a thing Zarkszar has told them and follow through with their original plan. They want to visit the Chamber of Illusions, but Zarkszar puts himself in their way. The k'thar does not attack or defend themselves should the group charge, but simply pleads with them to change their mind. They can shove them to the side and they will let them go. If the Chamber of Illusions has not yet been opened, this has to happen now. Different dice trials are available to unlock the door. Once they are successful, the heroes enter the „Chamber of Illusions“.

Next plot point: „Chamber of Illusions“

3. The heroes convince Zarkszar that a peaceful solution is possible. For this to occur, at least one of the heroes has to pass a dice trial of Attitude, which can be done in multiple steps. Once they convince the k'thar, it is decided to deactivate the Ro'jā for now, so that the townspeople can make their way to the tower. Zarkszar opens the door for them and they all enter the „Chamber of Illusions“.

Next plot point: „Chamber of Illusions“

S2: Die Ro'jā wurde deaktiviert

If the Ro'jā has already been deactivated or destroyed, the heroes can hear steps and voices outside the tower. Rakya and her followers have arrived.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Mob“

Alternatively, if the Ro'jā was simply deactivated and not destroyed, the heroes can choose to reactivate the artifact. Thus, they comply with Zarkszar's wishes to not interfere. As a result they are given all of the k'thar's possessions and subsequently set forth on their original journey northwards.

THE END

Chamber of Illusions

The Ro'jā

The heroes enter the Chamber of Illusions. In its center lies the infamous Ro'jā. The character with the highest value of Perception has to pass a dice trial of Theurgy so as to not be put under its spell. If he fails, he is confused for three hours. The heroes can either deactivate or destroy the artifact and its protective spell. The character who attempts this has to pass a trial of Theurgy and Prestidigitation. If this proves unsuccessful, the Ro'jā is destroyed immediately. If the artifact is merely deactivated, it can be reactivated at any point.

S1: No Conversation with Zarkszar Yet

If the heroes have not yet had a conversation with Zarkszar, and they are still alive, the k'thar limps up the stairs and confronts the heroes.

Next plot point: „Zarkszar's Story“

S2: Conversation with Zarkszar Already Happened

If the heroes already talked to Zarkszar, they hear cheering from afar. Soon Rakya and her followers arrive at the tower.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Mob“

Rakya's Mob

The Mob

The size of the crowd gathered in front of the tower is determined by the amount of time the heroes spent on their way to Zakant. If it was 15 hours or less, Rakya, Farin, and Zara lie in wait. Otherwise they are joined by Kolyin and Nelya as well. Irrespective of whether Zarkszar is still alive or present, the heroes have two options: fight or discuss.

S1: Zarkszar is Alive

In case Zarkszar is still alive, the heroes can convince the k'thar to flee. A fight can be avoided and the group receives their promised reward from Rakya nonetheless.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Reward“

Even if the heroes can persuade Zarkszar to seek refuge, an honest discussion with Rakya is still possible (see „O2: Conversation“).

S2: Zarkszar is Dead

If Zarkszar has already been killed, the heroes can hand over the body. They return to Nil'szata with Rakya and receive their reward there.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Reward“

O1: Fight

Generally speaking, the heroes will not be attacked until they enter the battle themselves, unless they have previously provoked Rakya's army to such a degree that they charge at them blindly.

Rakya and her followers immediately attack Zarkszar if the heroes do not interfere.

The group has three options in the event of a battle: They fight alongside Rakya against Zarkszar, they defend Zarkszar against Rakya, or they remain neutral and witness how Rakya kills Zarkszar. If they remain neutral or join forces with Rakya, the battle is short-lived. The game master rolls a dice trial of Survival on Zarkszar's behalf to determine if they make use of magic or not. Once Zarkszar is dead, they all return to Nil'szata.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Reward“

If the heroes decide to fight against Rakya, Zarkszar does not join them, but rather hides in the tower. The heroes are able to flee at any moment without being followed. Rakya's people are only interested in the k'thar, they do not care about the heroes. However, this results in Zarkszar's death.

Next plot point: „Escape“

The heroes can switch sides during the fight. In order to do this, they have to convince Rakya with a dice trial of Attitude to make her believe they had been enchanted and had no other choice.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Reward“

It is also possible for the group to fight until they have killed the mob.

Next plot point: „Rakya's Demise“

O2: Conversation

The heroes can attempt to solve this dispute verbally which, worst case scenario, escalates it completely. They need to appease the mob enough so that they agree to hear the group out. To do so, they need to pass a dice trial of Attitude to open negotiations.

Next plot point: „Negotiations“

Negotiations

It's not what it looks like

The heroes demand to uncover the entire truth. If Zarkszar is still alive and present, the k'thar tells their story. If not, the heroes speak for themselves. At first, Zarkszar addresses the townsfolk and assures them, that somebody else destroyed their property; the k'thar never went to Nil'szata and had turned away from magic. The sole reason for their present conflict was Rakya's desire for revenge. They quickly explains their shared history and then turns towards Rakya herself to apologize and show their remorse. Zarkszar professes to understand that she longs to kill him, but their death would mean nothing.

Rakya tries to remain calm at first, but soon, she loses all control and grows furious. She attempts to convince her followers that none of this was true. At this point, the heroes can interfere and try to persuade the individual townspeople of Nil'szata of Zarkszar's innocence with a dice trial of Attitude. It is hardest to appease Rakya, whereas Nelya and Farin are quite easy to convince (in ascending order of difficulty: Nelya & Farin; Kolyin; Zara; Rakya).

If Zara or Farin were convinced, the process for the other becomes easier. Once you convince Nelya, she joins the heroes in their attempt to calm Rakya. After Rakya has calmed down, nobody else needs to be persuaded.

Ex: Zarkszar's Apology

„You have come to kill a Void Magician, the one who has been terrorizing your city for months and destroying your property. But this sorcerer does not exist. I have turned away from Void Magic a long time ago and have never even set foot into Nil’szata. Rakya has stirred you against me, because she wants revenge. Over forty years ago, our paths crossed for the first time. I have her family on my conscience. Nothing can purge me from this guilt. But only Rakya herself can hold me to account. This is not your fight.

Rakya, I know you will never believe me, but I am sorry. I was cruel and wronged so many. Nothing can atone for what I did. You have every right to hurt me, to even kill me. But my death will not bring your family back. It will not turn back the time on all those years you spent in sorrow. I beg you, do not let yourself be led by the same hatred that drove me out of my mind. Remember this. Now do what you have to do.“

O1: Rakya is Appeased

If the heroes have successfully appeased Rakya, she collapses and starts to talk things out with Zarkszar. At first, she yells at them, but then they cry together. Rakya’s fellow citizens stand close by and watch the proceedings. After harboring anger for over forty years, Rakya forgives the Void k’thar. Both of them are shocked at this outcome. Rakya explains to the heroes and townspeople how most of the alleged Zarkszar raids were committed by their fellows. Occasionally, she assisted matters. Her followers are visibly disgruntled, but on balance remain in good spirits. Rakya awards the heroes 400 gold for their assistance, while Zarkszar leaves them all of their possessions, including the remains of the Ro’jā. The heroes will be met with grace and joy in Zakant, as well as in Nil’szata, if and whenever they choose to return there.

THE END

Ex: Forgiveness

Rakya: „You’re a monster! You knew what you were doing and did it anyway. You destroyed an entire city - just like that! We took you in and gave you food. And in return you murdered them all. Why did you do this?“

Zarkszar: „I don’t know. I have done so many terrible things. They never made any sense. I am deeply sorry.“

Rakya: „Why did you come here? So many years have gone by. Why now, why here?“

Zarkszar: „I did not know you lived in Nil’szata, I swear. My days are numbered, and I longed for a quiet spot to die in peace.“

Rakya: „You don’t deserve this! You took everything from me.“

Zarkszar: „I know. I am sorry, I am so so sorry.“

O2: The People are Appeased

If Rakya cannot be appeased, but at least three of the four townspeople are convinced of the truth, they start arguing amongst themselves. At first incredulous, they soon confront Rakya with great reproach and demand an explanation. Zara in particular is distressed by these developments. When Rakya tries to defend herself, her words just make everything worse and reluctantly, she owns up to her wrongdoings.

Rakya admits that Zarkszar had nothing to do with the raids on the town - they were either a result of other citizen’s actions or self-inflicted. She professes to have had another motive besides revenge: Aither. Enough Aither is supposed to be hidden on the property to make Nil’szata rich. However, this conclusion does not have the desired effect; the village finds her greed and lies repulsive. They turn against her, and Rakya is forced to flee.

Next plot point „Rakya’s Demise“

Ex: Rakya’s Confession

Rakya: „It’s true. Most of the attacks on Nil’szata were caused by you. Kolyin and Nelya’s home was not set on fire by Zarkszar, Kolyin once again forgot to switch off the oven before going to the tavern. All the valuables Zarkszar allegedly stole, you can be sure to find them in the hands of your neighbors. You were absolutely determined to lay blame on somebody else. Accusing a dark Void k’tar suited you just fine. Vyalin refused to forge new weapons, so I destroyed our town’s arsenal. He knew that if people found out they were defenseless because of him, the whole town would turn against him.“

Zara: „What about our food storage? Was that you, too?“

Rakya: „I needed a convincing set up. Nobody is as easily persuaded of another’s wickedness as a town suffering from a little bit of hunger.“

Zara: „A little bit of hunger? We had barely anything to eat for several weeks! You’ve been lying to us all this time?“

Rakya: „But I only ever did all of this for you. There is a deposit of Aither in Zakant. If you listen closely, you can hear it resonating with the air. We could be rich, all of us. Just imagine what we could achieve: great and stunning buildings, warmer clothes for the winter, a better life. Is that not what you want?“

Zara: „So you’re not just a lying traitor, but a greedy one at that. You disgust me. You’re no better than the Void k’tar. Just leave, and don’t ever come back!“

O3: Nobody believes the heroes

If the heroes fail to win over enough of the townspeople, they grow impatient and aggressive. Ultimately, they attack the heroes.

Next plot point „Rakya’s Mob/Fight“

Rakya’s Demise

S1: Rakya Lives

If Rakya is still alive, her people have risen against her. She flees to the South and the grim residents of Nil’szata award the heroes 150 gold for destroying the Ro’jā. Afterwards, the group leaves Zakant and swear to stay away from the tower and its resident in the future.

S2: Rakya is Dead

If Rakya was killed, the survivors, if any, retreat to their homes. Zarkszar bestows all of their possessions onto the heroes as a sign of their immense gratitude. The Void k’tar looks more frail and ancient than ever. They weep for the dead and the senseless violence that had to take place, and barricades themselves in the tower.

Curious Treasures

All heroes roll a harder dice trial of Perception to determine if they find the location of the extremely rare and precious substance „Aither“ on the grounds of Zakant. They can take some with them if they want. Regardless, their adventure ends here.

THE END

Rakya's Reward

They show themselves to be grateful

The heroes follow Rakya back to Nil'szata, where they are rewarded for their assistance. If they did not join the fight, or Zarkszar fled, they are given 200 gold. If they managed to kill Zarkszar or switched sides during battle, they receive 250 gold. Their reward for fighting alongside Rakya is 300 gold.

Nelya in particular seems to be in a good mood. She tells them about the Aither deposit found on the grounds of Zakant and envisions in great detail what the town will achieve with their newfound riches.

After receiving their rewards, the heroes leave the city and can start a new adventure.

THE END

Escape

The Heroes Flee

Peace talks have failed. The heroes are no longer able to defend themselves and flee. Rakya and her followers let them go as Zarkszar's death takes priority. The heroes narrowly escape with their lives, and receive neither reward nor Skill Points.

THE END

Non Playable Characters

RAKYA ULOTA

Despite not being a Nil'szata native, this fey is its leader. She is pragmatic and resourceful - qualities that endear her to her townsfolk.

GENERAL HISTORY

Rakya, now in her late fifties, is the daughter of Myalek and Natya Ulot. The oldest of three, she grew up in a small fishing village, where she spent a blissful childhood until at the age of fifteen, Natya asks her to visit the market of a neighboring village. By the time she returned, her home had been turned into a pile of dust and ashes. Every building was destroyed and the air smelled of sulfur and burnt flesh. She found the remains of her family in the ruins of their hut. As she desperately searched for the cause of this horror, the figure of the Void k'thar who had spent the night with them loomed over the hills. Paralyzed, she watched them disappear into the mist. Rakya began traveling through Zakar to find work and a new home. At last, shortly before her fortieth birthday, she decided to settle down in Nil'szata. Its residents had always been down-to-earth and received the decisive and diligent woman with open arms. She moved up their social ranks quickly as her strength and discipline was greatly appreciated. At 43, she was appointed the town's leader, a position she holds to this day. Her people admire and respect her.

Rakya never forgot what happened to her and who was responsible. In all those years, she has kept it a secret. There are moments in which the normally quite restrained fey loses all control. She used to be able to avoid these eruptions, but since the ruins of Zakant were once again inhabited this has changed. Rakya thirsts for revenge and takes every opportunity to pursue this goal. She actively stokes the existing racism in the north and angles it towards Zarkszar by making him appear responsible for every negative incident: a harsh winter is the result of the k'thar's magic. A cellar was flooded and a building burned down? Zarkszar has it in for them; that is what the k'thar are like, especially the Void k'thars: they hate fey and want to hurt them. If there is a period without sufficient tragedies, she helps matters along. She spreads carefully crafted rumors and prevents any inquiries meant to discover the true causes of trouble. Those of her fellow townspeople who see through her game she convinces to join forces with her, like Nelya, whom she baits with her greed. If they still resist her, she manages to discredit their voices so that nobody will believe them. Vyalin? He does not understand what he is talking about. His alcoholism has progressed so far that there is no turning back for him. Together with her followers she plans to murder the evil dark magician. Rakya is convinced that she needs a crowd by her side. She knows the immensely potent destruction of Void magic and has not yet found out that Zarkszar has turned away from it.

RELATIONSHIPS

In **Zara**, Rakya sees the woman she might have been without Zarkszar. She would like to avoid the landlady as much as possible, but Zara's popularity and influence make that impractical. Despite her feelings on the matter, she has taken in the young woman as a sort of protégé. Rakya recognizes great potential in the young captain **Farin**. Although he can occasionally be simple-minded, he is a disciplined and capable fighter. Rakya respects that; as leader of the town watch, he is a useful ally.

To Rakya, **Nelya** is a danger for now averted. She successfully won her over by shedding the facade of racism and admitting to an ulterior motive - precious metals and prosperity. Rakya distrusts Nelya, because she regards her as an equal.

The ally proven to be most helpful in spreading hatred and lies about Zarkszar is **Kolyin**, although the butcher is unaware of this. Kolyin is no man whom Rakya could ever respect. **Vyalin** has seen through her. That is why Rakya makes sure that the blacksmith remains socially isolated. Consequently, he drowns his sorrow in alcohol. But she depends on him regardless; she needs his skills of forging weapons to stand a chance in her fight against Zarkszar.

Rakya is obsessed with her hatred towards **Zarkszar**. Nothing is as desirable to her, as witnessing the k'thar's destruction at her hands.

ZARKSZAR

Even as a young child the k'thar turned away from their species and withdrew to the lowest cavern of Kar Kara to smother their flame. They are one of the most notorious Void magicians of their time.

GENERAL HISTORY

When Zarkszar left the depths of Kar Kara, they were not happy with what they saw: fey who claimed dominion over their people and attempted to force their way of living on the k'thar, who in turn seemed to willingly adapt to the fey and turn away from their own traditions. Zarkszar retreated to the depths of their homeland and started the irreversible process to smother their flame. Many followed in their footsteps and the first generation of Void k'thar was born. They relinquished their magical fire in favor of a much more ancient and powerful spell - Void magic. But Zarkszar was still not content. They left Kar Kara and wandered through Zakar and its mainland. Wherever they went, they left a trail of darkness and destruction. The devastating magic only enhanced their rage and they started to relish in the havoc they wrought. But a day came when the k'thar realized that the power they were wielding started to inflict pain back onto themselves. For the first time, Zarkszar started to be afraid. At last, the old magic that for so long had given them almost unlimited power started taking its toll. Zarkszar set off to return to Kar Kara, the place where it all began. Their pain opened their eyes to what they had done and all of its consequences. They recognized all the damage they had inflicted and were deeply ashamed. Back at home, they were met with animosity and disgust by their people. Appalled, the Void k'thar fled to the north of Zakar and determined to settle in a quiet, secluded area. Since then, they have been living in Zakant. Forgoing all luxury and comfort, they devote their entire existence to making amends. But even though they have sworn off magic, their condition steadily worsens and they know they do not have much longer to live. Despite their wishes to spend their last days in peace, their arrival has not gone unnoticed. Zarkszar constantly falls victim to racially motivated, violent attacks. To protect themselves, the k'thar activated their most precious possession, a Ro'jā, which makes it impossible to find the magician's location. Sheltered by these illusions, they spend a lot of time by the fireside reading.

RELATIONSHIPS

During one of the attacks by the townspeople of Nil'szata, Zarkszar overheard the name **Rakya Ulota**. The k'thar remembers the name Ulota only too well. Myalek Ulot and his wife Natya were among the residents of a small fishing village in the south of Zakar. One evening, the k'thar approached the town on their own and the couple invited them into their home. Zarkszar was offered food and drink and spent a convivial evening with the family. At the time, they were still young, barely any older than Rakya and her siblings. But despite the warm

welcome and charity, the Void k'thar could only see feyen deceit and maliciousness in all of their actions. When Zarkszar got up to leave the next morning, they made an impulsive decision. In one fell swoop, they destroyed the entire village and every last one of its inhabitants – or so they thought. The k'thar suspects Rakya to be behind the past raids of the townspeople. Understanding her thirst for revenge, they do not lament. However, they secretly wish for her forgiveness, even though they deem it to be unattainable.

Kolyin is one of the most ignorant and ill-tempered residents of Nil'szata. The butcher hates the k'thar more than the others and enjoys acting out on those feelings. Zarkszar is not afraid of him, but since they renounced their magic, they are barely able to defend themselves.

ZARA NOARA

This dynamic young woman owns the local tavern „Nil Nil'szata“; There she enjoys sitting in the evening, talking to her guests about Zakar and tales of heroic adventures.

GENERAL HISTORY

Zara Noara is in her late twenties and owns the local inn and its adjacent tavern „Nil Nil'szata“. She enjoys talking to all of her guests and always finds the right words. Listening intently regardless of the subject matter, she seems to discover something she finds appealing in almost everything. She adores listening to the stories of her older guests in particular, stories of stories and legends involving other creatures, places, and ages around Zakar. Zara is passionate and dynamic - no means or expenses are too dear to apply herself to something she finds exciting. She dreams of a future in which she can achieve greatness and travel the world. However, despite being beloved and welcome wherever she goes, the young fey is unhappy. She has not yet found her place in the history of Zakar.

RELATIONSHIPS

The landlady is **Rakya's** closest ally. According to Zara, the leader is without fail, and she desperately seeks to impress Rakya.

Zara and **Farin** have something in common - they both search for their role in this spot of Zakar. The two often have conflicting opinions, but they like each other. However, Zara has little attention to spare besides what she devotes to Rakya.

Nelya shies away from other people which is why she largely stays away from the tavern. As a result, the two women barely know each other. Occasionally, Zara fears that Rakya prefers Nelya and confides in her more than herself.

Zara does not like **Kolyin's** coarse mannerisms, but she takes much pleasure in listening to his evening orations. Kolyin on the other hand relishes the attention.

Zara is convinced that **Vyalin** is in essence a good guy who simply lost his way. However, she finds nothing quite as irritating as his habit of putting everything down and pointing out the lack of reason in her daydreams.

Some time ago, the cellars of her tavern were flooded. She is convinced that the Void magician **Zarkszar** is responsible.

FARIN BURAR

In spite of his young age, Farin is already captain of the town watch. His success is enabled by his respectable and disciplined manner; he takes every opportunity to prove himself.

GENERAL HISTORY

Farin Burar has already achieved much in his mere twenty years. Not only has he become the captain of the guard, but he is also part of the group closest to Rakya. Regardless, his fellows do not always take him seriously. They find it challenging to accept orders from a man whom they still remember as a toddler. They crack more or less good-natured jokes at his expense instead. Farin never knew how to deal with that. He started working twice as hard to silence all of those doubting his abilities and has grown to be a humorless and overly serious young man. But he still searches for his place within the social hierarchy of Nil'szata and for an identity besides being a strong member of the guard.

RELATIONSHIPS

Rakya has never given him the impression that he is only a small and foolish child. As a result, he greatly appreciates the leader and is easily swayed by her views and desires.

Farin greatly values **Zara's** opinion. Although he is himself more stern, he admires her easygoing nature, her passion, and her enthusiasm. He enjoys her company and would like to spend more time with her, he just does not know how.

Farin thinks **Vyalin** is a pathetic pushover, but rarely thinks about him anyway.

Nelya and Farin have a more complicated relationship. On the one hand, he marvels at her independence and strength, but on the other, he is jealous, because unlike himself she is self-reliant enough to not need anyone else's validation.

Kolyin is probably the one Farin likes the least. He is loud, boozes excessively, and has absolutely no respect, least of all towards Farin.

VYALIN T'MUR

When this outsider moved to Nil'szata to work as a blacksmith, he longed for a fresh start. Unfortunately, things did not go as planned and he let himself go.

GENERAL HISTORY

Vyalin is in his fifties and has been residing in Nil'szata for roughly twenty years. He had previously moved around a lot and lived in many different places - on the mainland and on Zakar. He never found himself a home; no matter where he went he felt lonely and foreign. In the hopes that provided he stayed in one spot for long enough he would finally belong somewhere, he moved to Nil'szata. But he remained an outsider, and even his excellent work as a blacksmith did not help him earn high esteem. Vyalin gave up and spent more and more nights in the tavern, sitting alone in a corner. The alcohol only further damaged his public standing - the town thought it was a sign of weakness, which has no place in Nil'szata. Vyalin has keen senses and often turns out to be right. But rarely does anyone heed his advice and he lost faith in his own instincts.

RELATIONSHIPS

Vyalin simply cannot understand why **Rakya** is so heavily admired by the other townspeople. He secretly suspects that she has her own agenda and is shamelessly exploiting the village's blind trust. He senses worse things to come, especially since she placed a large weapon's order from him.

Because of his many visits to „Nil Nil'szata“, Vyalin spends a lot of time with **Zara**. He both longs for her idealism and popularity, and despises her for it.

His relationship with **Kolyin** is a lot less complicated. He detests the man.

Farin always ends up employed to step in when Vyalin has overstayed his welcome in the tavern. He respects the guard, but his presence is so deeply intertwined with his shame that he likes to pretend he does not exist.

Kolyin's partner **Nelya** on the other hand is to the blacksmith's liking. She buys hunting equipment from him, they exchange a few pleasant remarks and once she's on her way again, she leaves him be.

NELYA UNARA

Nelya has always been a loner. Wherever she goes, her grace and intelligence attract attention. She keeps her thoughts to herself and does not bother about other people's opinions.

GENERAL HISTORY

Even though Nelya has like many others spent her entire life in Nil'szata, she is the one with the most knowledge of the mountain landscape on Zakar. The hunter avoids other people and prefers to spend time in the unspoiled nature around her home town. Back in Nil'szata she meets with her partner Kolyin in the butcher's shop. Despite being somewhat of a loner, Nelya is widely respected and people appreciate her.

Nelya does not care for the growing anti k'thar rhetoric in Nil'szata and longs for the day when things quieten down again. Her daily routine is important to her and she feels her customs to be threatened. However, she has chosen to help Rakya regardless. Aware of the treasure Zakant was built upon, she is willing to let her own peace of mind suffer in order to gain material riches. But the unrest in the city still troubles her, as well as the newly ignited k'thar hatred of her partner. Consequently, she chooses to spend more and more time away from home. If she cannot leave the city due to existing engagements, she sits in front of the town's gates at the break of dawn to meditate.

RELATIONSHIPS

Nelya and **Rakya** are the only ones aware of the Aither deposit in Zakant. Nelya suspects Rakya to be hiding more behind her facade. But it does not bother her too much, since she actually enjoys spending time with her.

Nelya never visits the tavern, which is why she barely know **Zara**. She has never thought about the young woman twice.

Farin, on the other hand, she knows a lot better since she has to regularly pick up her partner Kolyin from the cell block. She thinks he is a decent and capable young man, and follows his career with interest.

Nobody knows why Nelya is with a man like **Kolyin**. Sometimes she does not even understand why herself. But by now, she has grown so used to his presence that life on her own scares her too much.

Nelya enjoys buying goods from **Vyalin**. He is a competent blacksmith and she appreciates his advice on the use of weaponry.

KOLYIN UNAR

Kolyin is a choleric and ignorant man. He spends a great deal of time in the tavern, rambling on about the War of Unity and the olden days, in which the fey ruled over Zakar unchallenged.

GENERAL HISTORY

A fey in his late thirties, Kolyin Unar is the local butcher and Nelya's partner. He is probably the one in the whole of Nil'szata who hates the k'thar and especially the Void k'thars with the most fervor and vigor. In the evenings, he often sits in Nil Nil'szata and gives exceedingly lengthy speeches on the racial superiority of the feys and a future in which they will finally regain their supremacy. The blacksmith enjoys nothing quite as much as the sound of his own voice. He continually uses it to put others down or make fun of the people around him. If anyone dares to disagree with him or question his intelligence, he quickly loses his temper. He deals with conflicts by means of his fists exclusively, and accordingly, is often involved in brawls.

RELATIONSHIPS

To Kolyin, **Rakya** is the ideal leader. She is not squeamish, and tackles every problem where there is one. She seems to share his views on the k'thar and makes him feel useful.

The landlady **Zara** readily listens to Kolyin and is the only one who actually seems to enjoy his stories. She is very pretty as well - he does not require anything else in a woman.

Kolyin does not think much of **Farin**. He considers the guard to be an arrogant boy who takes himself way too seriously.

Nelya is Kolyin's partner, in business as well as in private. He appreciates her proficiency, but they do not spend a lot of time with each other. Nelya shies away from conflict, which is why she does not often share her thoughts with him. They have very little to talk about either way.

Kolyin does not hate anybody as much as **Vyalin**. Regardless of the subject matter, they have opposing views and often clash in the town's tavern.

Since the arrival of the Void k'thar **Zarkszar** in Zakant, Kolyin has grown more and more ill-tempered and furious. He took many a trip to the tower before the Ro'jā was activated to destroy the magician's property or inflict bodily harm. Whenever anything remotely damaging or negative happens in his home, he readily blames the k'thar.