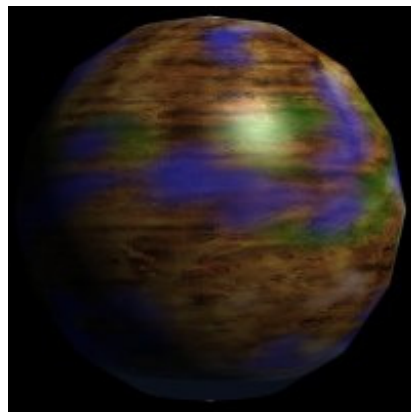


The Secrets of Langoria

Expedition to Langoria

Langoria Our heroes embarked upon a special mission to the forested world of Langoria, to accompany a probot, RKL-0G, as it explored some ruins uncovered by a small group of would-be poachers and smugglers. Due to indigenous metal-eating pests, the YT-1300 dropped the group off, then went back up to hold position in orbit until such time as they would call it back, rather than waiting amongst the trees. The band of heroes made its way to the site of the smugglers' abandoned base, where they found chewed-on remnants of a building around a hole in the ground ... a hole that happened to contain several metal-eating ferognaws, which displayed amazing speed as they charged the heroes from their burrow. They were briefly distracted by RKL-0G, which tried to poke Zaky and Choma with a syringe, claiming that its programmer had said that "Pardu are filthy and infested creatures", and therefore, "for the good of the group", it had to inoculate them. Jake Dreadar, a Fringer assigned to the group to keep the droid in line, called off the probot before any further mayhem could ensue.



The group did battle with the ferognaws, refraining from the use of blasters as they had the misperception that the creatures were immune to blaster bolts. One of the ferognaws clamped onto Trini's lightsaber, and when Choma used the Force to violently fling the creature into the bushes, the lightsaber went with it. A short battle later, two ferognaws lay stunned and two dead, with two more stunned ferognaws at the bottom of the hole. The group argued over whether to fetch the two stunned ferognaws, or simply to blast them from a safe distance, but at last Choma climbed down into the pit to fetch them -- As he did, he spied some sleeping skyrazors that (amazingly enough) hadn't been roused by the short fight. Very carefully, he climbed back out with dazed ferognaws in hand, and warned the others.

The stunned ferognaws were bound up -- two wrapped up in force tape and hung from a tree, and two more kept in a cage. Then, another cage was used to cover the top of the pit, and

Zaky rigged up a modified "warder" device, meant to ward off skyrazors, to attract them instead. Meanwhile, a native predator (a fireprowl) sneaked up behind Karl and snared a power pack from his utility belt, and bounded off into the woods. Karl decided not to make a big deal of it. Just then, the skyrazors flew out of the hole and into the cage, and the group sprang into action to snare them, caging the skyrazors and adding them to their catch.

Another Prize

A short while later, as they continued planning, Trini and Zaky noticed a fireprowl up in a tree, nosing at the two bound ferognaws that the group had put up there. They used an expanding net-pod to capture the fireprowl and suspend him from the tree. Choma attempted to stun the fireprowl with a stun baton, but found that it only made the creature angry. Trini, however, used the Force to convince the fireprowl of her friendship, whereupon it was instantly mesmerized, and amazingly docile ... to Trini, anyway. It eagerly entered its new "house" (a cage) and was given an offering of a couple of ferognaws to chew on, in hopes of pacifying it.

The team set up a (non-modified) warding rod in the center of the camp, to hopefully ward off any predators that might try to attack the caged animals, and then headed down into the pit. They found a burrowed tunnel that turned around a juncture, and Choma (taking point) observed a source of light coming from another direction ... and a moving shadow. He discovered that a branching passage led to an opening through a tangle of roots back to the surface, and the lair of another fireprowl (where he found a chewed-on power pack). The group then continued deeper into the tunnel system, at last reaching a chamber that evidenced signs of buried stonework, and a hole in the ceiling partially overgrown with tangles of roots and clumps of earth.

Lair of the Rockspear

Choma, Trini and Zaky (in that order) started climbing up, and Choma discovered a stone chamber at the top, with trickling streams of water going along channels on the floor. He also discovered the lair of a very large burrowing predator known as a Rockspear, and its three eggs. The Rockspear lashed out at Choma's glowrod, ripping it off from where it had been force-taped to his tail. Choma retaliated by attempting to cut off the beast's head, but his blade bounced off of its thick armored carapace. The Rockspear then proceeded to savage it with pincer blows and tail stabs, sending the greatly wounded (and unconscious) Pardu falling back into the pit, right on top of Trini. Zaky and Trini retreated with the fallen Choma, to get him medical attention back at the bottom, while Karl and Bail watched the hole in the ceiling, guarding it with their blasters ready. They heard the creature raging about above, and for a time, it started to descend and to knock a considerable amount of dirt down below ... but then the noises died away. When Bail and Karl went up to investigate, they found a side tunnel freshly dug off from the vertical shaft, apparently the creature's escape route. Once they verified that the upper chamber was now quite empty, the whole group climbed up the shaft and set up a temporary base in the stone chamber, surrounded by doors leading in many directions, with strange hieroglyphs on the ceiling and walls.

Puzzle of the Doors

Here, the group set up camp, Choma and Trini getting some rest after their misadventure. Afterward, they searched the room, and Karl discovered that one of the doors could be opened fairly easily by pushing upward on it. Beyond, a passage branched off into three corridors, and turned a corner. As the group explored the passages, they discovered that they followed an abstract pattern: the outline of a stylized Rocksphear, which was also represented carved on the ceiling of the central chamber. Six chambers represented the legs, with closed doors, while another door at one end represented the head, and the reverse the tail. They visited one of these rooms and found that inside there were a number of weapons across the way, and six strange rocks on the floor. Trini carefully made her way across the room, following a path described by an inscription of a "leg" of the creature on the ceiling. One of the weapons was marked with a symbol that matched that shown on a similar weapon back in the main chamber, and she selected that one. When she did, it was observed by those back in the main chamber that the "tail" door opened up ... revealing another door behind it.

Zaky and Karl were very curious about the weapon, and examined it closely. It seemed to be made from stone, and had a very sharp blade on it. It also had what appeared to be an opening for a slugthrower-type weapon, and a release for a "magazine" filled with water. Upon firing it down the pit, they discovered that it fired small, voracious insectoid projectiles. Zaky was very impressed with the weapon, and took charge of it for the time being.

Faulty Construction

The group continued on to the next chamber, where there were several statues bearing shields. It seemed that a similar process would be involved in this room, but it was complicated when part of the floor -- cracked from age and seismic disturbances -- gave way, nearly pitching Trini into a pit. Bail and Shannara (a Wookiee scout) hauled Trini out, and the Jedi used the Force to grab the shield at a distance and pull it across the room to her just in time ... as the room collapsed in on itself in a tumult of rock and water.

After that narrow escape, the group observed that the next door was cracked and leaking water -- and thus possibly a hazard, as they surmised that there might be a considerable amount of water underneath. Zaky checked his map and found that their present location would put them directly beneath a large reservoir, and thus it would be quite possible that this could flood them out. They opted to try the other side instead, where they found a number of cups to choose from, and through the same general process, chose the correct one, and opened yet another tail-door. Zaky took some time to examine some tablets located in this room, and saw some pictographs that showed a scene of what might be the Langorian concept of the afterlife, with depictions of Langorians being rejuvenated in the "afterlife" by drinking glowing water, and then being taken by a Rocksphear to their version of heaven, deep within the earth.

The Cup of a ... Langorian

The group discovered that when water was poured into the chalice, it glowed faintly, but when water was poured out, it lost the effect. Choma, feeling brave, filled the cup up with water, and tried drinking from it, whereupon he passed out cold, and defied attempts to wake

him up. (At this, Shannara wondered aloud, in her native tongue, whether Choma was Zaky's test subject for experiments.) Zaky eventually regained consciousness, slightly rejuvenated for his trouble.

Choma got the idea that this chalice could be used to rejuvenate the dead (Langorians, anyway), and headed back to the first chamber, where he used the Force to levitate one of the "rocks" out of there, supposing them to actually be transformed Langorians. When he did so, the room began to rumble, and water spilled through slots in the walls. When the water hit the "eggs", they underwent a strange transformation ... unrolling into very emaciated-looking ferognaws! Choma immediately dropped the "egg" he was levitating, and ran for all he was worth, but the pack of hunger-maddened ferognaws caught up with him back in the main room. One of them tore the micro-comlink out of his ear, another took a bite from his vibro-axe, another set off the auto-pitons in his pack (blasting itself in the process), another set off a netpod, and for good measure, Choma's grappling gun went off, too. When the others arrived in the room, they found Choma hanging from the ceiling, caught in a net, surrounded by purple auto-piton foam, with ferognaws chewing on him, unconscious, because he'd set off a stun grenade at point blank range in a desperate attempt to deal with his attackers. The others rescued him from the remaining ferognaws -- and the little ferocious creatures disintegrated into powder. Zaky made certain that RKL-0G was recording the whole thing.

After reviving Choma, the group pressed on, checking the next chamber, and finding there a number of jarred and preserved (very preserved) foods. Using the same process, they selected the proper jar, and another door opened without incident. They went to the fifth chamber and found it shaped a bit differently than the others, with a single white "egg" near the middle of the room. Trini carefully made her way across the room and retrieved an amazing crystalline cloak, making it back out without setting off any traps. Another door opened ... but still one remained, blocking off the way to the tail chamber.

Deluge

With considerable deliberation, the group decided that they had to try opening the sixth chamber door, and expect a flood of water. They moved the probot and the repulsor sled with their spare gear over to the far end of the complex, and shut several of the doors. They ran a rope to Trini, who would be given the task of opening the door, so they could haul her back away from the flood that they expected to pour down the "drain" in the center of the complex. Just as they were about to begin, Shannara pointed out that the door directly behind the waiting group was still open -- a door leading to a room full of traps. They closed it, and then Trini opened the door. Sure enough, water spilled in, but they managed to haul Trini back, and the water soon receded, pouring down the central pit. Just to be sure, Karl went to the pit and plumbed the depths with his grapples, and found that the water leveled out at the bottom at no more than waist deep, once it had distributed in the tunnel network.

Someone noticed that Jake wasn't with the probot, and when they rushed back to check on the droid, they found that it had wandered into one of the trapped rooms, and was being chewed on by ravenous ferognaws. Karl dispatched the ferognaws, and Zaky and Bail enacted some hasty repairs, getting the probot back in working (if unrepentant and somewhat worse for the wear) order.

With considerable effort, Trini made her way across the chamber to get a pair of armored boots at the far end, and upon retrieving them (despite several falls along the way, and a rope to keep her from falling too far), she opened the last door blocking off the tail room ... revealing that a bit of water had seeped in there, too, awakening a threesome of skyrazors. Choma rushed forward, anxious to deal with the flapping predators ... only to discover a swarm of other skyrazors waiting just around the corner. They fell upon him, biting at him savagely, and he retreated back to the intersection, where the others joined in to assist him.

Attack of the Skyrazors

In a fierce battle with the savage creatures, Zaky hacked at skyrazors with the alien polearm from the first chamber (and shot one out of the air with a "lashbore" bullet), Karl and Bail took blaster shots, Shannara snared some of them with a net pod, Choma fell unconscious, Jake took pot shots at the creatures from another angle, and Trini did an amazing Jedi leap over the heads of the combatants, slicing through one of the skyrazors in mid-air, as it was about to fall upon the prone Choma. In the end, the remaining skyrazors caught in Shannara's net crumbled away, much to the Wookiee scout's disappointment.

At the end of the long chamber, they found that the passage curved upward and back ... like a Rockspear's tail. Shannara, being an adept climber, went up to scout, followed by the others. At the top was a chamber with depictions of battle, and a glowing orb at the end. They discerned that in order to cross the chamber, someone was meant to make use of the ceremonial gear acquired from the six chambers, and act out the "battle" portrayed on the pictographs. Trini volunteered, but she was too short to really be able to wear the equipment. Zaky was the right size, but his digitigrade legs made him unable to wear the armored greaves. Shannara at last was picked -- Though she lacked the others' combat prowess, she was the closest in overall proportion to a Langorian to be able to wear and wield the items.

Langorian Kata

Zaky rigged up a holoprojector to project a path for Shannara to follow, as she was move across the room and stab with the weapon or raise a shield to block at key points. Sure enough, as Shannara went through the "dance", preserved creatures erupted from the walls, only to be stabbed at key moments, or deflected by the timed raising of a shield. Spears shot from the ceiling, and floor blocks dropped away, but Shannara kept to the path, and eventually reached the end. As she touched the orb, it retracted ... and the door to the head chamber opened up.

The group convened back in the central chamber, again deliberating over what to do next. Trini volunteered to go through this challenge, but they determined that part of it involved ritually preparing for the journey by consuming some of the preserved food, and drinking from the chalice. Trini discovered that some sort of energy field was in play beyond a sheer drop-off in the next chamber ... and a platform was suspended above the pit on the other side, with a statue and a very large "egg" visible. Trini did not have the willpower to bring herself to consume the wretched preserved "food" from the jar, but Shannara found it rather palatable (and wished for more). Amazingly, Shannara managed to keep from passing out after drinking from the goblet, and, decked out in the bulky ceremonial arms and armor, stepped out into open space ... and didn't drop. A stone walkway moved out to fill the path leading to the

opposite side, and eventually Shannara made it across. Zaky and Choma headed out, too, and there was more deliberation over what to do next, but at last the Pardu opted to head back with the others, while Shannara poured water from the chalice onto the "egg".

Sentinel of the Shrine

Not all that surprisingly, the "egg" transformed, unfolding into a large and fearsome creature that seemed a cross between the depiction of ancient Langorians, and the creatures known as Rockspears. Somewhat hesitantly, she went around to climb upon the thing's back, whereupon it leaped off into the chasm and disappeared from sight. Jake Dreadar, Choma and Zaky climbed down on a rope after her, but partway down, Choma and Zaky lost consciousness due to some strange energy effect in the room, and fell on top of Jake, sending all three plummeting down ... into a deep pool of water. Jake, still conscious, managed to pull the others to a dry platform, where Shannara was standing, mesmerized by the gaze of a statue of a Langorian warrior.

Jake, Choma and Zaky met the gaze of the "statue" as well, and found themselves seemingly transported to another time ... the golden age of the Langorian Empire, before the arrival of aliens. The land was devoid of any conventional plant or animal life, but was nonetheless alive with crystal trees and strange creatures that seemed formed of living rock. The Langorians had formed an empire based upon a strange technology based upon the unique properties of the minerals and life on their world, but in their pride and lust for power had gone too far, twisting and warping patterns of life, until at last they led to their own downfall and ultimate destruction. This shrine was created in the hopes that some day, a survivor of this downfall would return, worthy of carrying on the legacy of the Langorian Empire, and to carry with him the history of its people and their ways. Jake, Choma, Zaky and Shannara were filled with an understanding of the Langorian language and its history and culture -- and even something of its technology.

When this was all done, the "statue" crumbled away, and the foursome returned to their senses, finding themselves being elevated as the platform rose back to the original level. They walked out to the others (who by this point were trying to figure out how to mount a rescue), and shared with them their bizarre experience (momentarily forgetting themselves and speaking in entirely the wrong language).

Victorious Egress

On their way out, Choma -- realizing that the area he had disturbed earlier under the roots was actually a fireprowl lair with eggs -- gathered some fireprowl eggs, and they caught some ferognaws to replace those that they discovered had been eaten by predators in their absence. (The skyrazors and the fireprowl, however, were still intact.) They called in the YT-1300 for transport off-planet. Trini was reluctant to give up the fireprowl that seemed to take a liking to her, and instead they opted to give over the eggs as a sample of Langorian wildlife, along with the skyrazors and ferognaws.

Back on Narsus Prime, even with the damage that the shrine sustained, the team was still given a warm welcome (and many credits). Although the Langorian artifacts were confiscated, Trini managed to keep the fireprowl, and Zaky conspired with Karl to try

building a replica Langorian pole-arm -- as he was fairly taken with its utility as a melee weapon.

End Game Results

Each surviving PC received 1000 experience points, and a Luck Point, plus each of the PC received a Luck Point for their part in fending off the skyrazors, and for making it through the adventure. Shannara and Jake Dreadar advanced to 2nd level, while Choma and Karl Sturmwulf made it up to 3rd level