Oghma’s Faithful

by Alexis Álvarez & Deepseek

**Chapter 14: The Wild Beyond the Witchlight**

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**Abstract:** The party—Sebenzi the cleric, Banshee the urban ranger, Eldrin the archivist, and Artemis the favored soul—found themselves drawn into the whimsical and unpredictable Feywild after Eldrin used a detect crossroads spell to locate a portal. Their journey began at the Witchlight Carnival, a magical spectacle filled with strange attractions and fey creatures. After solving a riddle to gain entry, the party explored the carnival, encountering a jubjub bird, a mischievous pixie, and the enigmatic Madame Sparklebottom, whose cryptic fortunes hinted at challenges to come.

The party’s exploration led them to the Mirthful Maze, a magical labyrinth designed to test their wits, perception, and resolve. Eldrin’s keen intellect and magical expertise proved invaluable as he deciphered the maze’s secrets, while Banshee’s resourcefulness uncovered hidden paths and treasures. Artemis faced a deeply personal challenge within the maze, confronting her fears and receiving a revelation about her true patron deity, Lurue, which left her shaken but determined to grow. Sebenzi’s cautious nature and divine insight helped the party navigate the maze’s dangers, including shifting platforms and a crystalline tree that pulsed with fey magic.

The adventure culminated in a series of revelations and transformations. Eldrin connected with the maze’s magic through a Feywild Beacon, gaining the ability to reshape its challenges. Banshee’s impulsive decision to lick a glowing fruit from the crystalline tree granted her temporary fey-like abilities, enhancing her senses and connection to the Feywild. Artemis, after a profound encounter with a unicorn, grappled with the realization that her carefree nature and devotion to beauty were at odds with her role among the scholarly Oghmanytes. The party ultimately chose to leave the Feywild, their experiences leaving them changed—and with much to ponder as they returned to the Material Plane.

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The party stood in a quiet glade deep within the Ardeep Forest. The air was thick with the scent of damp earth and pine, and the faint hum of magic seemed to linger just beyond perception. Eldrin Thistlebrook, the whisper gnome archivist, unrolled a weathered scroll inscribed with druidic runes. The spell, detect crossroads, was one he had acquired during his studies in Secomber, and now it would serve as their guide to the Feywild.

Eldrin’s voice was soft but deliberate as he recited the incantation. The runes on the scroll glowed faintly, and a shimmering thread of light extended from the parchment, winding through the air like a serpent. It led the party deeper into the forest, where the trees grew denser and the light dimmer. Finally, the thread stopped at a peculiar clearing.

The clearing was unlike any they had seen before. The trees formed a natural archway, their branches twisted into impossible shapes and draped with ivy that sparkled faintly in the dim light. The air within the archway seemed to ripple, as if the very fabric of reality was thinner here. Eldrin lowered the scroll and nodded to the others. “This is it. The crossroads to the Feywild.”

As the party stepped through the archway, the world around them shifted. The forest grew brighter, the colors more vivid, and the air itself seemed to sparkle with unseen energy. They had crossed into the Feywild. Before them stretched a winding path lined with glowing mushrooms and flowers that sang softly in the breeze. In the distance, they could hear the faint sounds of music and laughter, accompanied by the scent of caramel apples and fresh popcorn. The Witchlight Carnival awaited.

The path led the party to the edge of the Witchlight Carnival, a sprawling spectacle of lights, colors, and sounds. A large sign above the entrance read, “Welcome to the Witchlight Carnival: Where Dreams Come True!” The gates were open, and a ticket booth stood nearby, manned by a tall, thin humanoid with moth-like wings and a wide grin.



“Step right up!” the moth-like creature called. “Admission is free, but you’ll need a ticket to enjoy the attractions. Just answer a riddle, and your ticket is yours!”

Everyone looked at Eldrin, who’d memorized more riddles than the rest of the party could solve. “Shoot,” the gnome simply said.

The creature leaned forward, its antennae twitching. “Here’s your riddle: I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with the wind. What am I?”

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| **Eldrin, Skills** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Knowledge: Archit./Engin.** | 5 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 10 | 11 | 21 |
| **Knowledge: Dungeoneering** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 13 | 24 |
| **Knowledge: Nature** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 13 | 24 |

*See below.*

The archivist thought it to be a bit subject to interpretation on more than one count, but he knew this one: “Oh, right, an echo!” he calmly stated.

The jubjub bird’s antennae twitched with delight, and it clapped its moth-like wings together. “Correct! Well done, little one. Here are your tickets—enjoy the carnival!” It handed over four brightly colored tickets, each adorned with swirling patterns that seemed to shift and change as the party examined them.

“Now let me ask you, my good bird,” Sebenzi approached the jubjub bird. “Does time pass normally here in the Feywild? Is it like the Astral? How does spell preparation differ here?”

The jubjub bird tilted its head, its antennae twitching thoughtfully. “Ah, a scholar, are we? Very well, I’ll indulge your curiosity.” It fluttered its wings and leaned in conspiratorially. “Time in the Feywild is… fluid. It doesn’t always march in step with the Material Plane. You might spend what feels like a day here, only to return and find that a year has passed—or perhaps only an hour. It’s unpredictable, you see. As for the Astral Plane, no, it’s not quite the same. The Astral is timeless, but the Feywild is merely capricious.”

It paused, tapping a wing against its chin. “As for spell preparation… well, that depends on your connection to the Weave. Divine casters like yourselves draw power from your deities, and that connection remains intact here. However, the Feywild’s magic is wild and untamed. Some spells might behave differently, and you may find it harder to focus in certain areas. But generally, you should be able to prepare spells as usual.”

The jubjub bird straightened up and grinned. “Does that answer your questions, my dear? Or would you like to know more about the carnival’s history? Or perhaps the best place to find a candied cricket?”

“Yes, thank you jubjub bird!” Sebenzi said.

Artemis passed by and asked, “Can I pleeeease pet your crest feathers?”

“M-hm?” the creature said, seeming to ask.

“Oooooo!” the favored soul of Oghma said. “That’s sooo velvety! Do you like it if I ruffle them going forward?”

“Not sure. Try.”

“OK,” Artemis tried running her finger from the back of his neck to his head, and it felt good for both of them.

Banshee interjected, “Did you two need to get a bush?”

“No, pleasure’s like food here…” the bird said. “You get used to it, until the rest of the universe seems prudish.”

“Thanks!” Eldrin said again as the gates of the Witchlight Carnival swung open, revealing a wonderland of lights, sounds, and smells. The air was filled with the scent of caramel apples, popcorn, and something faintly magical. The party stepped inside, their senses immediately overwhelmed by the spectacle.

The carnival was a riot of color and activity. Stalls and tents lined the pathways, each offering strange and wondrous attractions. A carousel spun in the distance, its mounts not horses but fantastical creatures like griffons, unicorns, and even a dragon. A group of pixies zipped through the air, trailing glittering dust behind them. Nearby, a large tent advertised “Madame Sparklebottom’s Fortune Telling,” while another promised “The Amazing Zybilna’s Illusions.”

Oghmans were not known for their appreciation of illusions, though fortune telling—if soundly practiced—was a legitimate form of Divination magic, and such achievements should not be missed when the opportunity presented itself.

A rabbit with arms and arms extended

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

As the party took in their surroundings, a small figure approached them. It was a harengon—a rabbit-like humanoid—dressed in a jester’s outfit. It bowed dramatically and said, “Welcome, welcome, to the Witchlight Carnival! I’m Jinglejangle, your guide to all things fun and fantastical. Can I interest you in a game? Or perhaps a ride on the carousel? Or maybe… you’d like to meet the owners, Mr. Witch and Mr. Light?”

“Uh…” the heroes could only say at first.

The one that spoke on the group’s behalf—Artemis—piped up. “We’re a bit shy. Oghmanytes and all, bookworms. If you can direct us to the library, or a book nook, or maybe some jolly woman playing the dulcimer, we’ll be sound as a copper.”

The bookish Eldrin thought he picked up on a reference, like a pattern or some such, “Ohhhh! I get it now. ‘Echo.’”

“The riddle earlier?”

“Yeah, and now this Bunnyman.”

Sebenzi and Banshee looked at him sideways.

“Echo and the Bunnymen? No? Never mind. Forget I said anything,” Eldrin made it evident just how socially awkward they could be at times.

Jinglejangle the harengon offered to guide them to various attractions.

Having smoked a little indica on the way to the crossroads, Artemis said, “Yeah, I definitely don’t want to meet your bosses right now... narcs, right?” she said to the harengon. “How about that carousel, though, eh?”

Eldrin wasn’t a fan of carousels, or anything that shook one about to no practical end. “I’d be keen to go see this Madame Sparklebottom, and get a sense of what she calls Fortune Telling.”

Banshee was up for a bit of those games of skill the harengon had mentioned. “We talking physical skill?”

Sebenzi considered what there was here in the way of games involving mental skill and strategy.

“Mind you, we don’t want to end up separated,” Eldrin minded his friends. “Let’s all stick together and figure out where everything is so we can do more of a linear path through the attractions?”

Artemis added, “Also, if there’s a petting zoo—especially with baby unicorns—I’m there. Don’t deprive a favored soul of her unicorns.”

The party huddled together, their voices overlapping as they debated their next move. Jinglejangle the harengon stood patiently, his jester’s hat bobbing slightly as he waited for their decision.

Artemis, still riding the gentle high from her earlier indulgence, grinned at the harengon. “Yeah, I definitely don’t want to meet your bosses right now... narcs, right?” She winked conspiratorially. “How about that carousel, though, eh?”

Eldrin, ever the pragmatist, shook his head. “I’d be keen to go see this Madame Sparklebottom and get a sense of what she calls Fortune Telling. If it’s legitimate divination, it could be worth our time.”

Banshee cracked her knuckles, her urban ranger instincts kicking in. “I’m up for a bit of those games of skill you mentioned. We talking physical skill? I could use a challenge.”

Sebenzi, the cleric of Oghma, stroked her chin thoughtfully. “I’d prefer something that tests the mind. Are there any games of strategy or knowledge here?”

Eldrin raised a hand, cutting through the chatter. “Mind you, we don’t want to end up separated. Let’s all stick together and figure out where everything is so we can do more of a linear path through the attractions.”

Artemis nodded enthusiastically, then added, “Also, if there’s a petting zoo—especially with baby unicorns—I’m there. Don’t deprive a favored soul of her unicorns.”

Jinglejangle clapped his paws together, his ears perking up. “Ah, splendid! I can see you’re a group with diverse interests. Let me guide you to Madame Sparklebottom’s tent first—it’s just over there.” He pointed to a large, colorful tent adorned with stars and moons. “After that, we can hit the games, the carousel, and yes, even the petting zoo. Baby unicorns, you say? Oh, you’re in for a treat!”

The party followed Jinglejangle to Madame Sparklebottom’s Fortune Telling tent. The entrance was flanked by two glowing lanterns, and a sign above the door read, “Madame Sparklebottom: Seer of Secrets, Knower of Fates.” The harengon gestured grandly toward the tent. “Step inside, and prepare to have your fortunes revealed!”

As the party entered, they were greeted by the scent of incense and the soft glow of candlelight. A plump, elderly woman with a flamboyant headscarf and a crystal ball sat at a small table. She looked up and smiled warmly. “Welcome, travelers. I am Madame Sparklebottom. Come, sit, and let the Feywild’s magic guide your future.”

As Eldrin looked around for anything unusual or magical about the tent or Madame Sparklebottom herself, Artemis spoke, “Thank you. My friends and I are Oghmanytes, and we love learning. Please do impart your gifts of wisdom on us, but let us know your price beforehand, so we feel good about silver changing hands.”

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| **Artemis:**  **Relevant Skills** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Diplomacy** | 1 | **Cha (+3)** | 0 | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| **Gather Information** | 0 | **Cha (+3)** | 0 | 3 | 15 | 18 |
| **Knowledge: Arcana** | 8 | **Int (+1)** | 0 | 9 | 9 | 18 |
| **Perform: Storytelling** | 1 | **Cha (+3)** | 0 | 4 | 10 | 14 |
| **Profession: Storyteller** | 2 | **Wis (-1)** | 0 | 1 | 12 | 13 |
| **Sense Motive** | 1 | **Wis (-1)** | 0 | 0 | 18 | 18 |

*Artemis is wondering about their future, but is also listening for any telltale elements of a storyteller’s reliance of imagination and improvisation rather than factual accounts. The party has had run-ins with followers of Lliira, who—while good intentioned—have a habit of embellishing history and contemporary truth with tall tales and sensationalism, and this tends to rub the PCs wrong. She’s also looking for cues of a charlatan in the sense of her crystal ball being fake, or anything else that’s Arcanely off.*

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| **Eldrin:**  **Relevant Skills** | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Appraise** | 0 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| **Craft: Alchemy** | 1 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 6 | 14 | 20 |
| **Decipher Script** | 4 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 11 | 19 | 30 |
| **Gather Information** | 2 | **Cha (+1)** | 2 | 5 | 17 | 22 |
| **Knowledge: Arcana** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 13 | 7 | 20 |
| **Knowledge: Archit./Engin.** | 5 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| **Knowledge: Dungeoneering** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 4 | 15 |
| **Knowledge: History** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 4 | 15 |
| **Knowledge: Local** | 5 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 10 | 4 | 14 |
| **Knowledge: Nobility & Royalty** | 1 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 6 | 18 | 24 |
| **Knowledge: Nature** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 10 | 21 |
| **Knowledge: The Planes** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 20 | 31 |
| **Knowledge: Religion** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 16 | 27 |
| **Search** | 4 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 11 | 6 | 17 |
| **Sense Motive** | 0 | **Wis (+2)** | 0 | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| **Spellcraft** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 13 | 20 | 33 |
| **Spot** | 0 | **Wis (+2)** | 0 | 2 | 9 | 11 |

*These skill checks are intended to yield information about the value, nature, magical properties, and functions of the architecture, furnishings, and other items in the room/tent, as well as any social cues given off by Madame Sparklebottom. If there are any scripts to decipher, he’ll try to do so. Lastly, is there anything historically or factually inconsistent about the information that Sparklebottom imparts on the PCs?*

Artemis found the fortuneteller to be quite congenial and waited to hear the woman’s fee.

Madame Sparklebottom chuckled warmly at Artemis’s question about payment. “Ah, a practical one, I see! No need to worry, my dear. The first reading is free—a gift from the Feywild to its guests. If you find my insights valuable, we can discuss further arrangements.” She gestured to the chairs around her table. “Please, sit. Let the magic of the Feywild guide us.”

As the party took their seats, Eldrin’s sharp eyes scanned the tent. The crystal ball on the table radiated a faint magical aura, and the intricate patterns on the tent’s walls seemed to shift subtly, as if alive. His knowledge of the planes told him that the Feywild’s magic was inherently unpredictable, but there was no immediate sign of deception or illusion. The tent itself was a marvel of fey craftsmanship, blending natural and magical elements seamlessly.

Artemis, meanwhile, watched Madame Sparklebottom closely. The woman’s demeanor was warm and genuine, but there was a hint of theatricality in her movements—a storyteller’s flair. Still, nothing about her suggested the kind of embellishment or sensationalism that the party had encountered with followers of Lliira. If anything, Madame Sparklebottom seemed to embody the whimsical yet earnest nature of the Feywild itself.

Madame Sparklebottom placed her hands on the crystal ball, and its interior swirled with colors. “Now, let us see what the Feywild reveals…” She peered into the ball, her expression growing distant. After a moment, she spoke, her voice taking on a melodic, almost hypnotic quality.

For Artemis: “I see a path lit by starlight, leading to a creature of pure grace and magic. The unicorn you seek is closer than you think, but beware—its purity may reveal truths you are not ready to face.”

“I’m pretty sure I’m alright with purity,” Artemis mumbled to herself, shrugging. “Purity of thought, right?” she frowned.

For Eldrin: “The threads of knowledge you weave are strong, but they are tangled. Look for the hidden pattern, the one that connects all things. The answer lies not in what you know, but in what you have yet to discover.”

The gnome didn’t find that too helpfully specific. Finding hidden patterns is something he did regularly, but sure, he’d keep an eye out for a particularly meaningful pattern.

For Banshee: “Your strength is your blade, but your heart is your compass. A challenge awaits you, one that will test both. Trust your instincts, for they are sharper than any weapon.”

For Sebenzi: “The light of Oghma shines brightly within you, but shadows gather on the horizon. Seek the balance between wisdom and action, for the path ahead is fraught with choices.”

Madame Sparklebottom’s readings were cryptic but seemed to hold kernels of truth. The party thanked Madame Sparklebottom and asked, “We’re hoping to find some good food here in the carnival. Do you recommend a particular vendor?”

Madame Sparklebottom smiled warmly, her eyes twinkling with amusement. “Ah, food! The sustenance of both body and soul. If you’re looking for a truly Feywild culinary experience, I highly recommend Pip’s Peculiar Pies. It’s just a short stroll from here, near the carousel. Pip’s pies are legendary—each bite is a surprise, and no two pies are ever the same. You might taste the sweetness of a summer breeze or the tang of a moonlit glade. Just be prepared for the unexpected!”

She leaned in slightly, lowering her voice as if sharing a secret. “And if you’re feeling adventurous, ask Pip for the Midnight Morsel. It’s not on the menu, but it’s said to grant a glimpse into the dreams of the Feywild. Though, fair warning, it might also make your hair change color for a day or two.”

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Having thanked the fortuneteller and meandered a bit around the grounds before finding Pip’s Peculiar Pies, they were now in line, and saw someone walking away from the tent with their Midnight Morsel. “Enjoy that!” Artemis called out to the guy whose hair was about to frizz up and yellow.

They discussed their respective readings amongst themselves, trying to make sense of the cryptic language of their “fortunes”. “What’d you all make of it?” Banshee asked the others.

Sebenzi shook her head slightly. “Oghma’s direct wellspring of knowledge is all I rely on… but it was fun.”

Artemis agreed, “Fun, yeah. Everything here seems fun!”

It was their turn to order, and they all went with the most mundane things they could see on the menu, not wanting to be too adventurous culinarily.

Eldrin was bored. “I think we should go.”

“Where?” Banshee asked. “Back to the Material Plane? We have to find the next crossroads that’ll take us back there. By my map, it’s a few miles away. We don’t want to hang out here little longer?”

“Naaaa,” Eldrin voted.

“I totally want to stay,” Artemis argued.

Sebenzi was neutral, and the cleric and urban ranger were enjoying the lightheartedness, so they agreed to stay a little longer.

A few minutes later, they’d gotten their tofurkey legs and some mead, and were sitting at a wooden picnic tables near the children of fey creatures frolicking. The carnival was surrounded by a field of spice and lilies where it almost seemed that mythologies were born. Satyrs, centaurs, pixies, sprites, and faeries of every sort mingled and discussed the gossip of the forest. It was idyllic. Eldrin worried that something was off, however. His experience always had him on edge when things went well. “What great price will we have to pay for this momentary peace and prosperity?” he asked himself as he munched on the tofurkey and the others talked about how cute the harengon children were.

The party sat at the picnic table, enjoying their tofurkey legs and mead. The atmosphere was idyllic, with the laughter of fey children and the gentle rustling of the spice-and-lily fields surrounding the carnival. Satyrs played flutes, centaurs galloped in the distance, and pixies zipped through the air, trailing glittering dust. It was a scene straight out of a storybook.

Artemis leaned back, her face glowing with contentment. “This is amazing. I could stay here forever.”

Banshee chuckled, tearing a bite off her tofurkey leg. “Forever might be a bit much, but I see your point. It’s nice to just… relax for once.”

Sebenzi nodded, sipping her mead thoughtfully. “The Feywild has a way of making even the simplest moments feel magical. But Eldrin’s right to be cautious. This place is beautiful, but it’s not without its dangers.”

Eldrin, ever the skeptic, scanned the surroundings. His eyes narrowed as he noticed something peculiar. The fey creatures seemed to be casting occasional glances toward the party, their expressions a mix of curiosity and… something else. Was it amusement? Wariness? He couldn’t quite tell.

“Something’s off,” Eldrin muttered, more to himself than to the others. “This place feels too perfect. Like it’s trying to lull us into complacency.”

As if on cue, a small figure approached the party. It was a pixie, no taller than a foot, with shimmering wings and a mischievous grin. She hovered just above the table, her voice tinkling like a bell. “Hello, travelers! Enjoying the carnival, are we?”

Before anyone could respond, the pixie darted forward and snatched a piece of tofurkey from Artemis’s plate. She took a bite, her grin widening. “Mmm, not bad! But you really should try the Midnight Morsel. It’s much more… exciting.”

Artemis blinked, momentarily stunned. “Hey! That was mine!”

The pixie giggled, flying a few feet back. “Oh, don’t be such a stick-in-the-mud. Here, I’ll make it up to you.” She waved her tiny hand, and a shower of sparkling dust fell over the table. The tofurkey legs transformed into golden pastries, steaming and fragrant.

“There! Now you’ve got something truly Feywild to enjoy,” the pixie said, clearly pleased with herself.

As an Archivist of Nature (from Heroes of Horror), Eldrin’s studies had included fey creatures. He now invoked his Dark Knowledge, looking the pixie over and boosting the party’s puissance against any trickery on the part of any pixies in their midst.

*The PCs gained +2 to all Saves vs. pixies’ spells, attacks, etc.*

Sebenzi could see the concern in her comrade’s face, and was far from a diplomat. The cleric cast *detect magic [expired in 5 minutes]*, saying nothing afterwards; just sitting there looking the pixie over, and then everyone else within 60’ of her such that she had a better understanding of their circumstance.

Artemis ate up a raspberry cupcake, “Ohhh! Mmmmm!” she delighted in the revelry, the indulgence! The others abstained until Sebenzi gave the clear. They’d been through a poisoning attempt before, but Artemis’ constitution was tough, and she experimented wantonly with the sugary treats.

“You know,” Eldrin took the opportunity to speak while their spokesperson was stuffing her mouth. “There’s a creature that is known to hail from the Feywilds... it resembles a company of men and women—all young, usually—but it is a single creature, I assure you.”

The pixie’s wings stopped fluttering as she landed on the picnic table, looking curious and nodding.

The archivist continued and smirked awkwardly, “I trust you are familiar with the bacchae…? These beings are characteristically persuasive, and enjoy treating guests to spirits and libations, making merry while enticing travelers to settle in with them and essentially become part of their herd. Do you get many of them in these parts? Does the carnival attract those stoic and vivacious fey hives?”

The pixie tilted her head, her wings twitching slightly as she considered Eldrin’s words. Her mischievous grin softened into something more thoughtful, though her eyes still sparkled with amusement. “Bacchae, you say? Oh, yes, I know of them. They’re quite the lively bunch, always looking for new friends to join their revels. But don’t worry—they don’t come around here much. The Witchlight Carnival is a bit too… structured for their tastes. They prefer the wilder parts of the Feywild, where the wine flows freely and the parties never end.”

She fluttered her wings and hovered just above the table again, her voice taking on a playful tone. “As for me, I’m just a simple pixie. No hives, no herds, no tricks—well, not *mean* tricks, anyway. I just like to have a bit of fun. And speaking of fun…” She gestured to the golden pastries on the table. “Those are perfectly safe, I promise. Go on, try one! You’re in the Feywild, after all. Where’s your sense of adventure?”

Sebenzi, her *detect magic* spell active, scanned the pixie and the surrounding area. The pixie herself radiated a faint aura of Illusion magic, typical for her kind. The golden pastries, however, glowed with a stronger enchantment—a mix of transmutation and conjuration magic. There was no sign of harmful or necromantic energy, and the spell didn’t detect any poison or curses. The enchantment seemed benign, though its exact nature was unclear.

Sebenzi leaned over to Eldrin and whispered, “The pastries are magical, but I don’t sense anything dangerous. It’s up to you if you want to risk it.”

By now, Sebenzi could tell that the cupcakes were Illusory somehow, and she cast *message*, letting Eldrin know this telepathically.

The gnome blinked and nodded nonchalantly, then thanked the pixie, “… for this Illusory food. I’m allergic to pastries, so I’m going to cast a spell here just to make it a bit more palatable,” and with this he cast *purify food and drink*.

Sebenzi waited, then looked at Eldrin and telepathically said, “The pastries aren’t impure, and they’re still magically active.”

Eldrin cleared his throat, then cracked his knuckles, shifted in his seat, and emitted a few gestures and phrases consistent with the *dispel magic* spell.

Sebenzi nodded. The Illusion was lifted.

Artemis grabbed one of the disenchanted eclairs, and frowned as she bit into it, “You took out 80% of the joy I got out of eating these.”

As Eldrin’s dispel magic took effect, the golden pastries shimmered and transformed. The once-gleaming treats now appeared as simple, slightly stale pastries—still edible, but far less enchanting. Artemis took a bite of the now-ordinary eclair and frowned, her disappointment evident. “You took out 80% of the joy I got out of eating these,” she grumbled, though she continued to munch on it anyway.

The pixie, meanwhile, let out a melodious laugh, her wings fluttering with amusement. “Oh, you’re no fun! But I suppose you’re clever, I’ll give you that.” She hovered closer to Eldrin, her tiny hands on her hips. “You know, not everything in the Feywild is out to trick you. Sometimes, it’s just about adding a little magic to the mundane. But if you’re going to go around dispelling everything, you might as well go back to the Material Plane where everything’s boring and predictable.”

Eldrin wanted so badly to tell the pixie to piss off now, but he was aware that they were the foreigners, and this type of foolery was the norm here—even an expectation of decorum. One had to worry if one *wasn’t* the subject of a practical joke, as that might mean a fey creature might have been plotting something far more sinister. He smiled and wrote in his journal to make time pass while Artemis enjoyed herself.

The pixie’s expression softened, and she leaned in conspiratorially. “Tell you what—since you’re so clever, I’ll give you a real challenge. There’s a game over at the Mirthful Maze that’s perfect for skeptics like you. It’s a test of wits and perception, and if you win, you might just earn yourself a prize worth your time. What do you say?”

And while the pixie’s lingering had put in in a mood not conducive to gaming, Eldrin’s ears perked at the sound of something mathematical—logical—in a haphazard and chaotic place such as this. A rabbit-headed child vomited its own dropping pellets that it had recently eaten, and other children said, “Ewwwweee!”

“Sure, fella,” Eldrin Thistlebrook replied. “I’ll go play that if there’s a vacancy at the table.”

The pixie clapped her tiny hands together, her wings buzzing with excitement. “Wonderful! Follow me, clever one.” She zipped through the air, leading the party through the bustling carnival grounds. The path wound past colorful tents, spinning rides, and clusters of fey creatures laughing and playing. Finally, they arrived at a large, ornate tent with a sign that read, “The Mirthful Maze: A Test of Wits and Perception.”

“Ooh! Wits! You have those,” Artemis told Eldrin.

The entrance was guarded by a tall, lanky fey with elongated limbs and a wide, toothy grin. He bowed dramatically as the party approached. “Welcome, welcome! Step inside and prove your cleverness. The maze awaits!”

The pixie hovered nearby, her grin widening. “Good luck! I’ll be rooting for you—mostly because I want to see if you can actually solve it.” With a final giggle, she darted off into the crowd.

Artemis’ mind was still a bit heady from the indica she’d puffed before arriving, and she now asked the lanky man, “Hey, you a shadar-kai?”

The party stepped inside the tent and found themselves in a dimly lit corridor. The walls were made of shifting, translucent panels that seemed to ripple like water. Strange symbols glowed faintly on the walls, and the air hummed with a low, melodic tone. At the far end of the corridor, a voice echoed, deep and resonant.

“Welcome, challengers. The Mirthful Maze is a test of perception, logic, and intuition. To proceed, you must solve the riddle of the shifting walls. Choose wisely, for the maze delights in confounding the unwary.”

Artemis, Banshee, and Sebenzi stepped back. The favored soul clarified, “We’re no challengers. Your lot is with the short feller.”

The corridor split into three paths, each marked by a glowing symbol:

1. A crescent moon.

2. A swirling spiral.

3. A star with seven points.

Eldrin stepped forth onto the platform, and examined the symbols Decipher Script to interpret the symbols.

*Please roll appropriate checks based on the skill rank totals I’ve provided. Don’t share the roll so I remain unaware of any fails; just render the outcome IC.*

Just outside the game court, Banshee listened to see if the humming tone or the echoing voice provided any clues as to the nature of this event. Eldrin touched the spiral symbol to get a sense of its composition, and any magical properties. It was also time for him to cast his own *detect magic [expired in 6 minutes]* spell, which he did. He followed it up with *detect evil [expired in 6 minutes]*, *barkskin [expired in 60 minutes]*, and *shield of faith [expired in 6 minutes]*. “You think this is overdoing it?” he turned around and asked his friends jokingly.

Eldrin stepped forward, his sharp eyes scanning the glowing symbols. He reached out and touched the swirling spiral, his fingers brushing against the cool, rippling surface. The symbol pulsed faintly under his touch, and he felt a subtle vibration, as if the maze itself were alive.

Casting *detect magic*, Eldrin’s senses sharpened, and he could see the faint auras of enchantment radiating from each symbol. The crescent moon glowed with a soft, silvery light—likely tied to illusion or divination magic. The swirling spiral emitted a more chaotic energy, suggesting transmutation or conjuration. The seven-pointed star, however, had a steady, almost mathematical aura, hinting at abjuration or evocation.

Next, he cast *detect evil*, but the maze showed no signs of malevolent energy. It seemed to be exactly what it claimed: a test of wits and perception, not a trap or a trick.

Finally, Eldrin fortified himself with *barkskin* and *shield of faith*, his skin taking on a faintly woody texture and a shimmering aura of protection forming around him. He turned to his friends with a wry smile. “You think this is overdoing it?”

Banshee snorted. “Maybe a little. But better safe than sorry, right?”

Eldrin focused on the symbols, his mind racing through his knowledge of arcane lore and planar magic. The crescent moon, with its ties to illusion, might lead to a path of deception or misdirection. The swirling spiral, chaotic and unpredictable, could represent a path of transformation or randomness. The seven-pointed star, with its orderly and protective aura, seemed the most promising—a path of logic and stability.

Meanwhile, Banshee listened intently to the humming tone and the echoing voice. The melody seemed to shift subtly, almost as if it were trying to communicate something. She caught a faint whisper in the tone: *”Seek the star, for it shines true.”*

Eldrin turned to his friends, his expression thoughtful. “The seven-pointed star seems to be the key. It’s tied to order and protection, and Banshee heard a whisper about it. I think that’s our path.”

Artemis shrugged, still munching on her now-mundane eclair. “Sounds good to me. Lead the way, short stuff.”

“Oh, so you are joining me after all?” asked the archivist as the priestess, favored, and ranger followed.

Eldrin stepped toward the seven-pointed star, his hand hovering over the symbol. As he touched it, the symbol flared brightly, and the walls of the corridor shifted, revealing a new path. The air grew cooler, and the faint hum of the maze transformed into a soothing, melodic tone.

The party followed the path, which led them to a circular chamber. In the center of the room stood a pedestal, upon which rested a small, glowing crystal. The echoing voice spoke again: “You have chosen wisely. Take the crystal as your prize, and know that the maze acknowledges your cleverness.”

The glowing crystal radiated a strong aura of Transmutation magic, its energy focused and precise, suggesting that the crystal was enchanted to serve a specific purpose, possibly as a key or a conduit for magical energy. The walls of the maze also emitted faint auras of Illusion and Abjuration, likely tied to the shifting pathways and protective wards that kept the maze functioning as intended. The enchantments seemed neutral in alignment, designed to test and challenge rather than harm.

“It’s Transmutative,” the archivist reported. Eldrin examined the glowing crystal, relying on his knowledge and understanding of spells as the others did the same to learn more about this innocuous gauntlet’s construction and magical nature. He carefully picked up the glowing crystal, its light casting soft, shifting patterns on the walls of the maze. He held it up to his eye, turning it over in his hands as he focused his knowledge of magic and the arcane. The crystal was cool to the touch, and its surface seemed to ripple faintly, as if it were alive with energy.

Using his Spellcraft and Knowledge (arcana), Eldrin quickly deduced that the crystal was a Feywild Conduit, a rare magical item tied to the essence of the Feywild. It was enchanted with Transmutation magic, designed to channel and amplify natural energies. Specifically, it seemed to function as a key or focus for navigating the maze—or perhaps even other parts of the Feywild.

While Eldrin examined the crystal, the others studied the maze itself. The shifting walls and glowing symbols were clearly the result of powerful Illusion and Abjuration magic, designed to create a dynamic, ever-changing environment. The maze’s construction was a blend of fey craftsmanship and planar magic, making it a marvel of both artistry and enchantment.

“Abjuration!” Sebenzi said, her *detect magic* spell still active. “I would’ve thought Illusions!”

Sebenzi, with her Knowledge (the planes), noted that the maze’s design was typical of fey architecture—fluid, unpredictable, and deeply tied to the natural magic of the Feywild. It was likely created by a powerful fey being, possibly one of the carnival’s owners, Mr. Witch or Mr. Light.

Eldrin turned to the group, holding up the crystal. “This is a Feywild Conduit. It’s enchanted to channel and amplify natural energies, and it might serve as a key or focus for navigating the maze—or even other parts of the Feywild. If we keep it, it could be useful later.”

Artemis grinned. “A magical crystal? Sounds like a win to me. Let’s hang onto it.”

Banshee nodded in agreement. “Better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it.”

The party now had a Feywild Conduit, a magical item that could prove useful in navigating the maze or other parts of the Feywild, and experimented with the crystal to see if it unlocked new paths or reveals hidden areas, they continued exploring the Maze.

Eldrin held the Feywild Conduit aloft, its soft glow illuminating the shifting walls of the maze. As he focused on the crystal, he felt a faint pulse of energy, as if it were responding to the maze’s magic. The walls around the party shimmered, and a new path opened before them—a narrow corridor lined with glowing runes that pulsed in time with the crystal’s light.

“It’s working,” Eldrin said, a note of triumph in his voice. “The crystal is guiding us deeper into the maze.”

The party followed the new path, which led them to a large, circular chamber. The walls were covered in intricate carvings depicting scenes of fey revelry and ancient rituals. In the center of the room stood a pedestal, much like the one they had encountered before, but this one was empty. Above the pedestal, a series of glowing symbols floated in the air, forming a riddle:

“I am not alive, yet I grow.

I have no lungs, yet I need air.

I have no mouth, yet I can drown.

What am I?”

This was the second challenge of the Mirthful Maze.

“Is it fire?” Banshee—the least educated and reasoning among them—guessed.

They thought about it. “Doesn’t a fire have mouth?” Artemis asked.

“You’re thinking of the firemouth cichlid we just saw in the fish exhibit,” Sebenzi reminded her.

“Oh, right.”

“Fire,” Eldrin spoke clearly into the pedestal.

Eldrin’s voice echoed through the chamber as he confidently declared, “Fire.” The floating symbols shimmered and rearranged themselves, forming the word *“Correct”* in glowing letters. The pedestal in the center of the room began to glow, and a new path opened up, leading deeper into the maze.

The party exchanged satisfied glances. “Nice work, Eldrin,” Banshee said, clapping him on the shoulder. “Guess I wasn’t too far off with my guess, huh?”

“You come through when the moment presents itself, sister in Oghma,” Eldrin replied.

Artemis chuckled. “Close enough. Let’s see what’s next.”

The new path led the party to another chamber, this one filled with a series of floating platforms suspended over a bottomless void. The platforms shifted and moved in a seemingly random pattern, and the only way across was to time their jumps carefully. At the far end of the room, a glowing archway beckoned, but the path was fraught with danger.

A voice echoed through the chamber: “To proceed, you must cross the shifting platforms. But beware—one misstep, and you’ll find yourself back at the beginning.”

Eldrin’s eyes were the sharpest in picking up what was unseen to others, he held up the crystal

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Eldrin:**  **Relevant Skills** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Craft: Alchemy** | 1 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 6 | 7 | 13 |
| **Decipher Script** | 4 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| **Knowledge: Arcana** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 13 | 19 | 32 |
| **Knowledge: Archit./Engin.** | 5 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| **Knowledge: Nature** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 17 | 28 |
| **Knowledge: The Planes** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 0 | 11 | 5 | 16 |
| **Spellcraft** | 6 | **Int (+5)** | 2 | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| **Use Magic Device** | 1 | **Cha (+1)** | 2 | 4 | 16 | 20 |

*See below.*

Drawing upon his studies of the Feywild’s nature, and of the architectural, structural, and alchemical composition of this elaborate construct-gauntlet, the gnome used the crystal (Use Magic Device roll 16 + 4 = 20) to try to discern more about this part of the maze.

Banshee, meanwhile, looked for alternate routes.

Eldrin held the Feywild Conduit aloft, its glow intensifying as he focused on the shifting platforms. Drawing upon his extensive knowledge of the Feywild’s nature and the maze’s construction, he channeled the crystal’s magic to gain insight into the challenge before them. The crystal pulsed softly, and Eldrin’s mind filled with a flood of information. The platforms, he realized, were not random in their movement. They followed a subtle, rhythmic pattern tied to the maze’s magical energy. By synchronizing their movements with the crystal’s pulses, the party could predict the platforms’ shifts and cross safely.

While Eldrin worked with the crystal, Banshee scanned the chamber for alternate routes. Her sharp eyes picked out a series of faint, glowing handholds along the walls—a hidden path that bypassed the platforms entirely. However, the handholds were narrow and precarious, requiring precise movements to navigate.

Eldrin guided the party across the shifting platforms by synchronizing their movements with the crystal’s pulses. The crystal’s guidance will boosted [+4] their balance and jumping skills. However, the hidden path that Banshee pointed out seemed a better bet for those who could climb.

Their cleric and favored soul were armored such that either challenge would be… challenging. As the other three climbed the secret ramp, Banshee said, I’m taking my odds with the shifting thingies instead.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Relevant Skills** | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Banshee, Balance** | 0 | **Dex (+3)** | 0 | 3 | 8 | 11 |
| **Banshee, Jump** | 1 | **Str (+0)** | 0 | 1 | 11 | 12 |
| **Artemis, Climb** | 0 | **Str (+0)** | -2 | -2 | 18 | 16 |
| **Eldrin, Climb** | 0 | **Str (-1)** | 0 | -1 | 2 | 1 |
| **Sebenzi, Climb** | 0 | **Str (+0)** | -2 | -2 | 11 | 9 |

*A few fails here should make this scene funny.*

The party split into two groups to tackle the challenge. Eldrin, Sebenzi, and Artemis opted for the hidden handholds along the walls, while Banshee decided to brave the shifting platforms with the help of the Feywild Conduit.

Banshee took a deep breath and stepped onto the first platform, the crystal in her hand pulsing softly. She timed her movements carefully, leaping from one platform to the next with the grace of an urban ranger. Her first few jumps went smoothly, her **Balance** and **Jump** skills bolstered by the crystal’s guidance.

However, as she reached the halfway point, the platforms began to shift more erratically. Banshee misjudged the timing of her next leap and stumbled, her arms windmilling as she fought to regain her balance. For a heart-stopping moment, it looked like she might fall, but she managed to steady herself and continue. By the time she reached the far side, she was breathing heavily but grinning triumphantly. “Piece of cake,” she said, though her trembling legs suggested otherwise.

Meanwhile, Eldrin, Sebenzi, and Artemis attempted the hidden handholds. Eldrin, despite his sharp mind, was not built for climbing. His first attempt ended almost immediately as he lost his grip and tumbled back to the ground, landing in an undignified heap. “I’m fine!” he called out, brushing himself off and glaring at the wall as if it had personally offended him.

Sebenzi fared slightly better, managing to climb a few feet before her heavy armor and lack of climbing skill caught up with her. She slipped and landed with a loud *clang*, her armor ringing like a bell. “Maybe… maybe I should have tried the platforms,” she muttered, rubbing her bruised pride.

Artemis, despite her lack of climbing skill, surprised everyone by making it halfway up the wall. Her determination and sheer stubbornness carried her further than expected, but even she couldn’t overcome the odds. A misplaced handhold sent her sliding back down, though she managed to land on her feet. “Well, that was fun,” she said, dusting herself off. “Let’s try the platforms instead.”

After their respective misadventures, the party regrouped on the far side of the chamber. Banshee was the only one who had successfully crossed on her own, while the others decided to follow her lead and use the platforms with the crystal’s guidance. With Eldrin’s help, they synchronized their movements and made it across without further incident.

Taking a short breather, they discussed how to best use the Feywild Conduit moving forward.

Eldrin speculated on any additional uses the crystal may have had, either in or outside the maze.

“‘What other challenges or secrets does this maze hold?’, I wonder,” wondered Banshee.

The party gathered in a small alcove just beyond the shifting platforms, taking a moment to catch their breath and assess their situation. Eldrin held up the Feywild Conduit, its soft glow casting gentle light on their faces.

“This crystal is more than just a key to the maze,” Eldrin mused, his voice thoughtful. “It’s tied to the Feywild’s natural magic. I think it could have other uses—maybe even outside the maze. It might help us navigate the Feywild, amplify certain spells, or even open portals to other parts of the plane.”

Sebenzi nodded, her expression serious. “If that’s the case, we should be careful with it. The Feywild’s magic is unpredictable. We don’t want to accidentally open a portal to somewhere… unpleasant.”

Artemis grinned. “Or do we? Imagine stumbling into a fey party full of unicorns and pixies. That sounds like a good time to me.”

Banshee rolled her eyes but couldn’t suppress a smile. “Let’s focus on the maze for now. We can worry about unicorn parties later.”

As the party continued deeper into the maze, they found themselves in a large, circular chamber. The walls were covered in intricate mosaics depicting scenes of fey courts and ancient rituals. In the center of the room stood a tall, ornate mirror framed with twisting vines and glowing runes. The mirror’s surface shimmered like liquid silver, and a faint hum filled the air.

A voice echoed through the chamber: “To proceed, you must face your reflection. Step into the mirror and confront what lies within.”

Eldrin was a Lawful Good citizen of Secomber, and an honorary member of the faculty at Waterdeep’s Font of Knowledge. He was prepared to face whatever revelations lay beyond this precipice in his life. Examining the mirror (please roll appropriate checks), he did his best to discern its nature and properties.

Eldrin stepped closer to the ornate mirror, his sharp eyes scanning its intricate frame and shimmering surface. He focused his knowledge of magic and the arcane, using Spellcraft and Knowledge (arcana) to discern the mirror’s nature and properties. The mirror radiated a strong aura of Divination and Illusion magic, suggesting that it was designed to reveal truths or create visions. The runes etched into the frame were ancient and fey in origin, tied to the Feywild’s natural magic. Eldrin recognized some of the symbols as representing self-reflection, transformation, and hidden truths.

“This mirror isn’t just a portal,” Eldrin said, his voice low and thoughtful. “It’s a test. It’s meant to show us something about ourselves—something we might not want to see. Stepping into it could reveal our fears, our doubts, or even our deepest desires.”

He related that the mirror was enchanted with Divination and Illusion magic, designed to create visions or reveal truths. The runes on the frame were fey in origin and symbolized self-reflection, transformation, and hidden truths. Lastly, he told his mates, “The mirror’s aura is strong and complex, indicating a powerful enchantment.”

Sebenzi frowned, her hand resting on the hilt of her mace. “A test of self-reflection? That sounds… personal. Are we sure we want to do this?”

Artemis shrugged, her usual bravado undiminished. “I’m game. What’s the worst that could happen? I see myself as a unicorn? That sounds awesome.”

Banshee crossed her arms, her expression skeptical. “I don’t like the sound of ‘hidden truths.’ But if it’s the only way forward, we don’t have much choice.”

Eldrin nodded. “The mirror is clearly the key to progressing through the maze. We’ll need to face whatever it shows us if we want to move on.”

“Through the looking glass.” Eldrin stepped through the mirror to face the challenge... and perhaps himself.

Meanwhile, Sebenzi and Artemis inspected the mirror as their friend stepped through it, perhaps seeing something in it that was not evident when it was inert.

Banshee searched for another way around the mirror or a way to bypass the challenge.

Eldrin took a deep breath and stepped into the mirror, the liquid-like surface rippling as he passed through. For a moment, he felt weightless, as if floating in a void. Then, the world around him shifted, and he found himself standing in a familiar yet surreal version of the Font of Knowledge in Waterdeep.

The library was vast and silent, its shelves stretching endlessly in every direction. The air was thick with the scent of old parchment and ink, but something felt… off. The books on the shelves were blank, their spines devoid of titles. The silence was oppressive, broken only by the faint sound of footsteps echoing in the distance.

A figure emerged from the shadows—a reflection of Eldrin himself, but different. This version of him was older, his face lined with worry and his eyes filled with doubt. The reflection spoke, its voice a mirror of Eldrin’s own but tinged with bitterness.

“You think you’re so clever, don’t you?” the reflection said. “Always seeking knowledge, always trying to understand. But what have you truly accomplished? What have you *changed*?”

Eldrin frowned, his mind racing. This was a test, a challenge to confront his own insecurities and doubts. He took a step forward, his voice steady. “Knowledge is its own reward. Understanding the world is the first step to changing it.”

The reflection sneered. “And yet, the world remains the same. What good is your knowledge if it doesn’t make a difference?”

As Eldrin stepped through the mirror, Sebenzi and Artemis moved closer to inspect it. The mirror’s surface shimmered faintly, and they could see glimpses of Eldrin’s journey within—a distorted version of the Font of Knowledge, the shadowy reflection, and the tense conversation.

Sebenzi cast *detect magic* again, focusing on the mirror’s surface. The aura of **Divination** and **Illusion** magic was even stronger now, pulsing in time with Eldrin’s movements. “It’s showing him something,” she said. “A vision, maybe. Or a test.”

Artemis tilted her head, her curiosity piqued. “Do you think we’ll have to do the same thing if we go in? Face our own reflections?”

Sebenzi nodded. “Probably. And I’m not sure I’m ready for that.”

While the others focused on the mirror, Banshee scanned the chamber for another way around. Her sharp eyes picked out a faint, glowing path along the edge of the room—a narrow ledge that led to a hidden door. The door was small and unassuming, but it radiated a faint aura of magic.

“Over here!” Banshee called. “I found another way. It might not be as… personal as the mirror, but it’s an option.”

Banshee and Sebenzi exchanged a glance, then nodded in agreement. “Let’s take the hidden path,” Sebenzi said. “I’m not sure I’m ready to face whatever’s in that mirror.”

Banshee led the way, her movements careful and precise as she navigated the narrow ledge. The hidden door was small, but it opened easily, revealing a dimly lit passage that curved away from the mirror chamber. The air was cool and damp, and the walls were lined with faintly glowing moss.

As they stepped through the door, the passage widened into a small chamber. In the center of the room stood a pedestal, upon which rested a small, intricately carved box. The box radiated a faint aura of magic, and the air around it seemed to hum with energy.

“What do you think it is?” Sebenzi asked, her voice low.

Banshee shrugged. “Only one way to find out.” She reached out and opened the box, revealing a shimmering, silver key. The key was small but ornate, its surface etched with fey runes.

Meanwhile, Artemis took a deep breath and stepped into the mirror, her heart racing with excitement. The liquid-like surface rippled as she passed through, and for a moment, she felt weightless. Then, the world around her shifted, and she found herself standing in a lush, sunlit meadow.

The meadow was filled with flowers of every color, their petals glowing softly in the sunlight. In the distance, she could see a herd of unicorns grazing peacefully, their coats shimmering like starlight. Artemis’s eyes widened with delight. “This is amazing!” she exclaimed.

But as she took a step forward, the scene began to change. The flowers wilted, their colors fading to gray. The unicorns turned to face her, their eyes glowing with an eerie light. One of them stepped forward, its voice echoing in her mind.

“You seek beauty and wonder,” the unicorn said. “But do you truly understand what it means to be pure of heart? Or are you simply chasing a dream?”

Artemis frowned, her excitement fading. “What are you talking about? I just… I just wanted to see something magical.”

The unicorn’s gaze was piercing. “Magic is not just about beauty. It’s about truth. And the truth is, you’ve been running from yourself. You hide behind your dreams because you’re afraid to face reality.”

The pair of women found a silver key in the hidden chamber. It’s likely tied to the maze’s magic and could be useful later. They took the key, and explored this bizarre environment further.

Artemis faced a challenge within the mirror, confronting her own fears and doubts. She engaged with the unicorn all the while looking for anything out of the ordinary, given how weird all of this was.

Sebenzi and Banshee found themselves in a dimly lit chamber, its walls lined with faintly glowing moss that cast an eerie green light. The air was cool and damp, and the faint sound of dripping water echoed in the distance. The chamber was small but ornate, with intricate carvings of fey creatures and swirling patterns etched into the stone walls. In the center of the room stood the pedestal with the silver key, its surface gleaming faintly in the moss-light.

A narrow passage led out of the chamber, its walls narrowing as it curved away into darkness. The passage seemed to slope downward, and the faint hum of magic grew stronger as they moved closer to it. The air smelled of earth and ancient stone, and the faint sound of distant music—like the tinkling of tiny bells—drifted through the passage.

Artemis stood her ground, her eyes locked with the unicorn’s piercing gaze. “I’m not running from anything,” she said, her voice steady despite the unease creeping into her chest. “I just… I just want to see the good in the world. Is that so wrong?”

The unicorn stepped closer, its hooves barely making a sound on the faded grass. “There is good in the world,” it said, its voice echoing in her mind. “But there is also pain, and fear, and doubt. You cannot have one without the other. To truly appreciate the magic of life, you must face all of it—not just the parts that make you happy.”

Artemis frowned, her mind racing. She glanced around the meadow, looking for anything out of the ordinary. The once-vibrant flowers were now gray and wilted, and the sky above had darkened, as if a storm were brewing. In the distance, she noticed a faint glimmer—a small, silver object half-buried in the ground.

“What’s that?” she asked, pointing to the glimmer.

The unicorn followed her gaze. “A piece of the truth,” it said. “If you’re brave enough to take it.”

~\*~

Sebenzi and Banshee explored a dimly lit chamber with a narrow, sloping passage leading deeper into the maze. They carried with them the silver key, likely tied to the maze’s magic. Exploring the sloping passage, Sebenzi inspected the details of the key’s etchings to learn more about its purpose.

~\*~

Artemis retrieved the glimmering piece of truth in the meadow.

~\*~

Eldrin blinked once or twice, trying to get his bearings.

~\*~

Sebenzi and Banshee moved cautiously down the sloping passage, the faint hum of magic growing stronger with each step. The walls were narrow, and the air grew cooler as they descended. Sebenzi held the silver key in her hand, her fingers tracing the intricate etchings on its surface.

Using her **Knowledge (arcana)** and **Spellcraft**, Sebenzi studied the key’s design. The runes were fey in origin, representing concepts like “passage,” “unlocking,” and “truth.” The key itself radiated a faint aura of **Transmutation** magic, suggesting it could be used to unlock something—or perhaps transform it. “This key is tied to the maze’s magic,” Sebenzi said, her voice low. “It might open a door or reveal a hidden path. We should keep an eye out for anything that looks like a keyhole or a lock.”

Banshee nodded, her eyes scanning the passage ahead. “Let’s keep moving. This place gives me the creeps.”

Sebenzi and Banshee continue down the passage. Sebenzi smelled the key to determine anything else about it.

~\*~

Artemis knelt in the faded grass and dug her fingers into the soil, pulling free the glimmering object. It was a small, silver locket, its surface etched with delicate fey runes. The locket felt warm in her hand, and when she opened it, she found a tiny, glowing crystal inside.

The unicorn watched her silently, its gaze unreadable. “The truth is not always easy to bear,” it said. “But it is necessary. That locket holds a piece of your truth. Do you have the courage to face it?”

Artemis hesitated, her fingers tightening around the locket. “What do you mean? What’s inside?”

The unicorn’s voice was gentle but firm. “Only you can answer that.”

Before opening the locket Artemis asked the unicorn for more clarification. “You’re being a bit cryptic, noble creature of the Feywild. What ever do you mean? What’s this about? I’m a mortal manifestation of Oghma himself. I…” she waited for some disambiguation or demystification of his prophetic platitudes.

~\*~

Eldrin blinked, his mind clearing as he took in his surroundings. The surreal version of the Font of Knowledge was gone, replaced by a small, circular chamber. The walls were lined with bookshelves, but the books were no longer blank—their spines bore titles in a language he didn’t recognize.

In the center of the room stood a pedestal, upon which rested a small, glowing orb. The orb pulsed softly, and Eldrin felt a strange pull, as if it were calling to him.

Eldrin examine the orb visually. With his detection spells still active, if he saw nothing evil or harmful in it, he touched it with his gloved hand.

~\*~

Sebenzi lifted the silver key to her nose, sniffing it carefully. The key had a faint, metallic scent, but there was also a hint of something else—something earthy and floral, like the smell of moss and wildflowers. It was a distinctly fey aroma, further confirming its connection to the maze’s magic.

“It smells… alive,” Sebenzi said, her voice tinged with awe. “Like it’s part of the Feywild itself.”

Banshee raised an eyebrow. “Great. So it’s not just a key—it’s a *magical* key. Let’s hope it doesn’t bite.”

The pair continued down the passage, the walls narrowing further as they descended. The faint hum of magic grew louder, and the air grew colder. Finally, the passage opened into a small chamber. In the center of the room stood a large, ornate door, its surface covered in swirling patterns and fey runes. A keyhole in the shape of a crescent moon glowed faintly at the door’s center.

“Looks like we found our lock,” Banshee said, gesturing to the keyhole.

Sebenzi cast *find traps* while Banshee waited. “See any traps?” the ranger asked the priestess.

~\*~

Artemis held the locket tightly, her eyes fixed on the unicorn. “You’re being a bit cryptic, noble creature of the Feywild. What ever do you mean? What’s this about? I’m a mortal manifestation of Oghma himself. I… I just want to understand.”

The unicorn’s gaze softened, and it stepped closer, its voice gentle but firm. “The locket holds a reflection of your heart—your deepest desires, your fears, your truths. To open it is to face yourself, stripped of illusions and pretense. It is not an easy thing to do, but it is necessary if you wish to grow.”

Artemis frowned, her fingers tightening around the locket. “And if I don’t open it?”

The unicorn’s eyes bore into hers. “Then you will remain as you are, trapped in your illusions. The choice is yours.”

Artemis opened the locket almost out of mercurial spite.

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Eldrin stepped closer to the glowing orb, his detection spells still active. The orb radiated a strong aura of **Divination** and **Conjuration** magic, but there was no sign of evil or harmful energy. It pulsed softly, as if alive, and Eldrin felt a strange pull, as if it were calling to him.

Satisfied that the orb wasn’t dangerous, Eldrin reached out with his gloved hand and touched it. The moment his fingers made contact, the orb flared brightly, and a wave of energy washed over him. Visions flashed before his eyes—scenes of ancient fey rituals, forgotten knowledge, and hidden paths. The visions were overwhelming, but Eldrin’s sharp mind quickly pieced together their meaning.

The orb was a repository of knowledge, a guide to the maze’s secrets. It showed him a hidden path—a way to bypass the maze’s challenges and reach its heart.

Eldrin received visions of the maze’s secrets, now able to bypass the maze’s challenges. Examining the orb further, he sought to know even more.

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Sebenzi cast *find traps*, her eyes scanning the ornate door and its surroundings. The spell revealed no signs of traps or harmful enchantments. The door seemed safe to approach, though the fey runes on its surface pulsed faintly, as if alive with magic.

“No traps,” Sebenzi said, lowering her hands. “But the door is definitely magical. Be ready for anything.”

Banshee nodded, her hand resting on the hilt of her weapon. “Let’s do this.”

Sebenzi stepped forward and inserted the silver key into the crescent moon-shaped keyhole. The key turned with a soft *click*, and the door swung open, revealing a brightly lit chamber beyond. The air inside was warm and fragrant, filled with the scent of blooming flowers. In the center of the chamber stood a tall, crystalline tree, its branches glowing with soft, golden light.

Entering a chamber with a glowing crystalline tree, the women examined it, looking also for clues, treasures, or hidden paths.

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Artemis hesitated for only a moment before opening the locket, her curiosity and stubbornness outweighing her fear. The tiny, glowing crystal inside flared brightly, and a wave of energy washed over her. Visions filled her mind—scenes from her past, her present, and her possible futures.

She saw herself as a child, dreaming of adventure and magic. She saw herself as she was now, chasing after beauty and wonder but always feeling like something was missing. And she saw a possible future—a version of herself who had faced her fears and embraced the truth, standing tall and confident, her heart full of both joy and sorrow.

The unicorn’s voice echoed in her mind. “The truth is not always easy, but it is necessary. You cannot truly appreciate the magic of life without facing all of it—the good and the bad, the light and the dark.”

Artemis took a deep breath, her eyes filling with tears. “I… I understand,” she whispered. “Thank you.”

The unicorn nodded, its gaze gentle. “You are stronger than you know. Remember that. And now, I must impart upon you an even bolder revelation, as it was meant to be that you and I should cross paths.”

**OOC: I’m taking creative license with another truth that will prompt character development later.**

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Eldrin focused on the glowing orb, his mind racing as he delved deeper into its magic. Using his **Spellcraft** and **Knowledge (arcana)**, he learned that the orb was a **Feywild Beacon**, a rare magical artifact tied to the essence of the Feywild. It served as both a guide and a key, revealing hidden paths and unlocking the maze’s secrets.

The visions it had shown him were not just random—they were a map, a way to navigate the maze and reach its heart. Eldrin also sensed that the orb could be used to communicate with the maze itself, allowing him to influence its magic or even reshape its challenges.

Communicating with the maze seemed a grand idea; perhaps he could influence the maze’s magic or reshape its challenges. What an unexpected academic exercise!

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Sebenzi and Banshee stepped into the chamber, their eyes drawn to the towering crystalline tree. Its branches shimmered with golden light, and the air around it hummed with magic. Sebenzi cast *detect magic*, her eyes narrowing as she studied the tree’s aura.

The tree radiated a strong aura of **Transmutation** and **Conjuration** magic, suggesting it was a focal point for the maze’s energy. Its roots spread out across the chamber floor, forming intricate patterns that seemed to pulse with life. Sebenzi also noticed small, glowing fruits hanging from the branches—each one a perfect sphere of golden light.

“This tree is magical,” Sebenzi said, her voice filled with awe. “It might be the heart of the maze—or at least a part of it.”

Banshee stepped closer, her hand brushing against one of the glowing fruits. “Do you think these are safe to touch?”

Sebenzi hesitated. “I’m not sure. Let’s be careful.”

As they examined the tree, Banshee noticed a small, hidden compartment at its base. Inside was a scroll, its surface covered in fey runes. She carefully unrolled it, revealing a map of the maze—complete with hidden paths and marked locations.

“Looks like we’ve got a way out,” Banshee said, holding up the map.

Sebenzi and Banshee examined the tree. Banshee licked one of the fruits.

Banshee’s impulsive decision to lick the glowing fruit had an immediate—and unexpected—effect. The moment her tongue touched the fruit, a burst of golden light enveloped her, and she felt a surge of energy course through her body. The fruit’s magic was potent, and its effects were both strange and delightful.

Banshee’s hair turned a vibrant shade of gold, shimmering as if lit from within. Her eyes also took on a faint golden glow, giving her an otherworldly appearance. Her senses became sharper, as if the fruit had heightened her awareness of the world around her. She could hear the faintest sounds, see in near-total darkness, and even detect the faintest scents.

The fruit’s magic also gave her a temporary connection to the Feywild. She felt a strange kinship with the fey creatures around her, as if she could understand their thoughts and emotions. The effects lasted for about an hour, during which Banshee felt more alive and attuned to the world than ever before. However, as the magic faded, she returned to normal—though she couldn’t help but feel a lingering sense of wonder and curiosity about the Feywild.

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Artemis stood in the meadow, the locket still warm in her hand. The unicorn’s gaze was steady, its voice gentle but firm. “And now, I must impart upon you an even bolder revelation, as it was meant to be that you and I should cross paths.”

The unicorn stepped closer, its horn glowing faintly as it whispered words of truth and consequence to her.

Artemis’s eyes widened, her heart racing. “What… what do you mean? That *can’t* be right!”

The woman panicked, bolting out of the area, painfully tearing through the Weave of Illusions and Divinations that constituted this place. She punctured an illusory panel and saw Eldrin Eldrin focusing on the **Feywild Beacon**, his mind reaching out to the maze’s magic. The orb pulsed softly in response, and he felt a connection form—a link between his thoughts and the maze itself. Images and sensations flooded his mind: the maze’s twisting corridors, its hidden chambers, and the powerful magic that bound it all together.

Eldrin realized he could influence the maze’s magic, reshaping its challenges or even creating new paths. He could also sense the presence of the others—Sebenzi and Banshee in the chamber with the crystalline tree, and Artemis in the meadow beyond the mirror.

Connected to the maze’s magic through the **Feywild Beacon**, Eldrin mustered a yellow, sparkly circle that served as a portal to the carnival outside. No sooner had he done this than he heard Artemis’s armored form approaching at full speed, now screaming, “Nooooo!” and making way for the portal. “Get me outtaa heeeeere!” the favored soul was visible distressed.

Just then, Sebenzi and Banshee came around the corner, following a map they’d found. “Was that Artemis?”

“Yeah,” Eldrin said as he bolted after her and into the portal.

Banshee ran in too, followed by Sebenzi.

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On the other side, Artemis was still sprinting away—southwest maybe—eager to put distance between herself and the carnival. They chased her, with Eldrin casting *footsteps of the divine* and Sebenzi casting *fly* so they could both catch up to her. Banshee huffed on foot, finally meeting up with the others, asking, “What’s going on?”

They were about 600’ from the carnival, and a handful of satyrs and briaurs had come over to see if all was well. Sebenzi warned them off, “Better that you go back. We don’t know what’s going on. Appreciate your concern.”

“Artemis, what’s going on?” Eldrin asked still a bit woozy from the illusions and spectacles in the maze.

She shook her head, having seen something she wasn’t quite prepared for. “No,” she simply said.

Sebenzi and Eldrin looked at one another briefly. “Do you want to go back?”

“No,” Artemis said again. “Let’s find the next crossroads and get out of the Feywild. I’ve had enough.”

And so they trekked another half mile, following the signs they’d been given, to the next fey crossroads, and took it back to the Material Plane where they resumed their journey back to Secomber.

OOC: Thanks for taking me through this module. This prompted a good character development plot hook for Artemis. Lurue—the unicorn-associated deity in the FR—is her actual patron deity, which explains her fickle, carefree, and unscholarly approach to life. She now has to contend with the contradictions inherent in that, and decide her role in a party of Oghmanytes, and the course of her faith.